

HEYDAR ALIYEV HERITAGE RESEARCH CENTER

**30 HISTORICAL VISITS  
Official and State Visits of the  
National Leader of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev  
(1993 -2003)**

BAKU – 2013

*The book contains materials related to the official and state visits of the national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev between 1993 and 2003. It also includes extracts from the speeches and quotations by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, historical references to Heydar Aliyev's official and state visits, references. The Book is intended for the broad masses of readers.*

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# **30** HISTORICAL VISITS

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Official and State Visits of the National Leader of  
Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
**(1993 -2003)**

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Materials from the book “Modern international relations and foreign policy of Azerbaijan” by the head of the department of public-political issues of the Presidential Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan, doctor of historical sciences Prof. Ali Hasanov, have been used in the historical references.

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*As a result of the establishment of foreign political relations based on equal rights and mutual beneficial principles with foreign countries, Azerbaijan has occupied its worthy place in the international community as a country pursuing its independent policy. Heydar Aliyev's rich political experience, his global approach to the ongoing political processes in the world and particularly in the region have led to the normalization and improvement of relations with the countries which were explicitly expressing their negative attitude to Azerbaijan. Thus, as a result of the establishment of balanced relations in the field of foreign policy Azerbaijan consolidated its position in the international arena significantly.*

*In general, Heydar Aliyev, who founded the modern Azerbaijan, had an exceptional contribution to the preservation of independence of the country, to its development, and to the occupation of its worthy place among the world countries.*

***From the interview of Ilham Aliyev to the French Magazine “La Lettre Diplomatique”, July 7, 2004***

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE (December 19-22, 1993)**

“... Friendship relations connect us with France and these relations are very strong. I am sure that in future they will be much stronger. Taking into consideration all these factors, it is possible to say why the Azerbaijani President paid his first official visit to France. In 1993, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid his first official visit to France. In 2004, the Azerbaijani President paid his first official visit to France, too. This tradition has already been established and I hope that it will continue.

*From the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the official reception held in honor of the minister of defense of France Ms. Alyo-Mari - January 22, 2004*

### **President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev met President of France Fransua Mitterrand**

December 20, 1993

On December 20, in the evening, a ceremonial parade in honor of President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev was held by the administration of France in the Elysees Palace. The guard of honour lined up in the yard of the palace. The ceremonial march sounded, as the caravan of cars with the President of Azerbaijan and accompanying him persons entered the broad square in the yard of Elysees Palace. President of France Fransua Mitterrand met the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the palace stairs. Then the negotiations between the Presidents of both countries started.

The opportunities of cooperation between Azerbaijan and France were discussed thoroughly at the meeting. The war ongoing in Azerbaijan and the issues of Nagorno-Karabakh were the main topic of negotiations. Fransua Mitterrand openly stated that France recognized and supported the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Heydar Aliyev informed the French President on the realities of Azerbaijan. He changed the opinion of the French President about Azerbaijan and about the ongoing processes there. They exchanged views on the prospects of long-term cooperation between the two countries in economic, cultural and other fields. This historical meeting laid the foundation of cooperation between Azerbaijan, France and other European countries.

Fransua Mitterrand possesses great experience and authority among the political figures of the world, his special attention to Azerbaijan caused great interest in the

observers.

After the negotiations the Presidents entered the Myurat hall of Elysees Palace. Fransua Mitterrand and Heydar Aliyev signed an agreement on friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between Azerbaijan and France.

In addition, Heydar Aliyev signed the document according to which Azerbaijan joins the Paris Charter for a new Europe - one of the primary documents of OSCE. Then, the Presidents made statements in the presence of reporters of France, Azerbaijan and other countries.

Appealing to Heydar Aliyev President of France Fransua Mitterrand said: "I am pleased to meet you here. Our contacts are not so frequent and therefore your visit to Paris allows discuss closely the principal problems.

You just signed the Paris Charter for a new Europe and we both signed the agreement on friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between our countries. By signing the Paris Charter you took the commitments in the framework of CSCE and demonstrated your loyalty to the principles of UNO".

Then the French President said: "You can be confident that France will support you in the immediate restoration of peace, which is so essential for all of us. Our bilateral agreement is proof of it. This document will be an important step in the development of the French-Azerbaijani relations, it determines the frames of our future bilateral and multilateral cooperation. We mean the cooperation in the field of politics, economy, culture, science and technology, as well as in the efforts for ensuring security. And it proves our joint efforts for the expansion of our limited contacts".

Continuing his speech, Fransua Mitterrand said that France followed closely the expansion of the Karabakh conflict and expressed his regret that the peaceful population suffered there. We help this population and shall increase our help. He said that they are against the forcible alteration of borders and at the same time, solution of the conflict by using force. We respect the independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. We proposed to convene an international conference within the frames of CSCE. We call on all the interested parties to demonstrate good will. However, these principles have not been observed, where the forces of Armenia and Azerbaijan oppose each other. Today the greatest hardships are observed in the territory of Azerbaijan. I have said to the Armenian administration about it, too.

Only by relying on the international law one can win the sympathy of the world community. We shall continue my meetings with you and rendering assistance to you. This time we shall rely upon the international principles. These principles are obligatory for all the democratic countries.

**In conclusion, Fransua Mitterrand said:** We are pleased to receive you here. I wish other events were held beneficial for our both countries.

Appealing to Fransua Mitterrand President of the Republic of Azerbaijan **Heydar Aliyev** said: Mr. President, I thank you for the invitation to pay a visit to France and I am pleased to be in this historical and grand palace. I am very satisfied of the talk with you. During this talk, I felt your positive attitude to the situation in Azerbaijan and believed in your sincerity. I believe that you will help our republic to get out of this crisis. I appreciate your promise to make efforts. I signed the Paris Charter together with you with great pleasure. Thereby, Azerbaijan demonstrates its adherence to security and peace.

The treaty on friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation which we just signed is a new stage in the international contacts of Azerbaijan. The foundation for lasting cooperation between Azerbaijan and France has been laid in the Elysees Palace. It is an important historical event for Azerbaijan which gained its independence just two years ago.

Then Heydar Aliyev declared that the cooperation with such a great country as France with an ancient history, which has enriched the world civilization with cultural values, is able to exert influences actively on the international politics and is of great significance for us. France, which displays democracy, humanism and love for peace, is our important partner for us. We are pleased that we have signed this treaty with you and we rely on its realization, efficiency and practical results.

**The Azerbaijani President said:** "I appreciate your anxiety concerning the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict, as well as your statement on the primacy of law and inviolability and safety of borders of every state. I hope that making use of your personal influence and that of France, you will prevent the aggression of the Armenian armed groups against Azerbaijan and establish peace in our region. We pursue a constructive policy and rely on your efficient help. You may be sure that France will have a reliable partner in the person of Azerbaijan for many years. We shall be always loyal to the principles of peace and security, respect human rights and principles of democracy and pluralism. Building a young independent state, we shall certainly use the rich experience of France on statehood and democracy."

Mr. President, we are looking forward to your visit to Azerbaijan. I hope the development of our contacts will promote the expansion of mutual cooperation between our countries, which will benefit the Azerbaijan people. I express my gratitude for the attention to our republic and our people.

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the Press Conference during his official visit to France**  
Paris, December 21, 1993

Ladies and gentlemen, it is already my third day in France. I am quite pleased with the direction and result of the visit. And I am glad that I had an opportunity to see once more the remarkable places, unique architectural monuments and get acquainted with the boiling life of modern France and Paris. But most important aspect of this visit is that I held useful meetings and negotiations. The meeting with the President of France Republic and the agreement signed on the friendship, mutual understanding and on cooperation with France is of special importance.

Today I met Minister of Foreign Affairs Allen Juppe. We had a very productive conversation. With the President and foreign minister of France we discussed the extension of mutual relations, elimination of the existing conflict in the region, especially the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and the situation in Azerbaijan. We agreed that they will use their own influence to help us to find a peaceful settlement for this conflict.

We support the principle of peaceful solution of the conflict , cease of military aggression against Azerbaijan, but on condition of withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, inviolability of borders and territorial integrity.

It is very important to note that both the President of France and minister of Foreign Affairs confirmed once more the international principles on the inviolability of borders, inadmissibility of military occupation of the territories of other countries, as well as territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Today, I met the representatives of the French businessmen. I told them, as well the President of this country, and the minister of Foreign Affairs that Azerbaijan is open to the world, as well as to France for mutually beneficial cooperation in all the spheres, first in economy, trade, science, technology, culture. In fact, this issue was stressed in the agreement signed yesterday. In the meeting with the representatives of the business circles. I gave detailed information on the economic potentials, natural resources of Azerbaijan and on its industrial potential. These are the bases for co-operation with France, an opportunity to invest into the economy of Azerbaijan on mutually beneficial grounds.

I had a meeting today at the Diplomatic Academy and yesterday I met the representatives of diplomatic press. I attach great importance to these meetings,

because they gave me an opportunity to inform the French public about Azerbaijan, the situation of in Azerbaijan, the ways of the future development of society and the serious situation the Republic is facing.

While I was here I realized that the relations of Azerbaijan and France are not developed, information about Azerbaijan in France is very little. Sometimes non objective infirmation about Azerbaijan forms a wrong impression about the measures that Azerbaijan is taking..

Therefore, I think, a visit to France is of great importance for both sides and for establishing close relations between the leaders of the two countries as well as for creating foundation for the further development of bilateral relations for a better understanding of Azerbaijan in France.

I think that, in these days, we were able achieve it. However, we were able to lay the foundations of the cooperation which we considered to be very important.

Today and tomorrow some other meetings will be held. For example, tomorrow, I shall meet the chairman of the French Senate. Then we shall return home.

However, I am sure that all our efforts in these days will produce good results. We shall do our best for the future development of a comprehensive cooperation between Azerbaijan and France for the better representation of Azerbaijan in France and for the maximum use of the created opportunities in future.

*Question: Mr. President, you are the man who came to power at the time of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh lasting since five years, you are also the man that agreed with all the interested parties, including the party Nagorno-Karabakh to a dialogue. You had a meeting with Ter Petrosyan in September. Some Armenian political figures said to me that they welcome this meeting with Ter-Petrosyan. They also said to me that, the war after two months will come to an end. According to them, it will take place because of economic and political reasons. Because the countries at war are exposed to economic hardships and social crisis. Signature of a peace agreement is in favor of Azerbaijan. Your expected to meet with Ter-Petrosyan in October it was postponed after the rebellion in Moscow. Now the political authorities of Armenia do not seem optimistic. I would like to know, do you think that the peace agreement signed in Russia currently is not in favor of Azerbaijan?*

*Haydar Aliyev:* I do not agree with the last part of the question, the meeeting with the President of Armenia Ter Petrosyan was not postponed. I have always been the supporter of dialogue.

I started the dialogue between the ruling forces in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh; I met President Levon Ter-Petrosyan in September and was ready to meet with him as well. However, on the one hand, that meeting did not take place because

of some reasons not depending on me, the other hand, military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan in October grew more fierce. The Armenian armed forces attacked Fuzuli, Jabrail, Zangilan, Gubadli districts and invaded them. During these attacks I had conversations on the phone with Levon Ter-Petrosyan more than once. He promised to stop the attacks. However, the promise remained as a word. I do not know, either he wasn't able to do that, or there were other reasons. Therefore the dialogue is going on.

I have not retreated from those positions. But during the negotiations and after the signature of the agreement on cease fire between Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh they made next attacks and these attacks ended with the occupation of Zangilan district.

In the time of winter, the residents of this district had to cross the River Araks and enter the territory of Iran. Do you imagine, about 60 thousand people of Zangilan had to enter Iran by swimming across the River Arazks, then returned from Iran back to Azerbaijan, now they have settled in different regions of the republic. Most of them live in tents. It had not to be like that. Therefore, I did not treat from these positions. However, I repeat, while we were conducting negotiations on the cease-fire agreement, and after gaining it, more new attacks began. These attacks, of course, were deteriorating the existing situation.

*Question: Let me introduce myself. I am Abil Karimov,- a former graduate student of the faculty of history of the university , and now post-graduate student of the University of Sorbonne I would like to ask you two questions. The first question is of political character. There is no political representation of Azerbaijan in France so far to prevent the claims against the interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Therefore, it would be better to do practical measures, and open political representation especially in France. Were these issues discussed during your meeting with Mr. Mitterand? The second question is of cultural character. As far as I know you have signed the contract on the relations, and on exchanges in the field of culture with the Republic of France. The issue of student exchange interests me more. To what extend will these exchanges be practically realized?*

Because, as I know, I am the only student from Azerbaijan awarded with the scholarship of the French government.

Last year I passed the interview, it is the second year I am here in France, and I do not have any relations with my home country. At present I am working on the thesis titled "Azerbaijan in the system of post-war peaceful settlement in 1918-1920".

**Haydar Aliyev:** To open the embassy of Azerbaijan in France has already been solved. There is a French Embassy in Azerbaijan. Here, the embassy in Paris had already to function, but on the mutual basis. In this case, it is our fault that, the Embassy has not yet been opened so far. I think this issue will be solved in the nearest future. Therefore, there was no need to discuss it with the President of France. As to the cultural exchange,

student exchange, yes, we have signed an agreement on the economic, scientific-technical, cultural cooperation. The contract, of course, provides the student exchange issues. In my opinion, on the basis of this agreement our ministries, relevant departments will deal with these questions closely, there wasn't such kind of contract so far. It seems, therefore, we didn't have an opportunity to do this. After opening the embassy and starting to implement the provisions of the contract, these issues will be solved.

**Question:** *Newspaper "Izvestia" Mr. President, you know Russia very well, especially from your previous activities, I am interested in your analysis and opinion about the results of elections held recently in Russia, and about Zhirinovsky's successes. Is the relations of Russia and Azerbaijan affected by the result of the election? Did you learn anything from the results of these elections, and are there leaders in the political sphere of Azerbaijan close to the views of Zhirinovsky? Thank you.*

**Haydar Aliyev:** I do not want to assess or analyze the results of elections in Russia now, because Russia itself should analyze and evaluate the results first of all. As to the issue of changes in the Russian –Azerbaijani relations after the elections, I will answer like this: No, It did not change anything the previous level of relations remains.

Now, I would like to turn to the question about the existence of political leaders in Azerbaijan having close views with the Russian Liberal-Democratic Party leaders

At present, there are up to 40 registered parties. The views of the most of them are not known to me Therefore, I cannot say whether there are such leaders or not. It is difficult for me to talk about it.

**Question:** *Mr. President, I represent an Azerbaijani organization for the protection of human right and Azerbaijanis in Paris. I have four questions to you .*

**Mr. President,** *Did you think about the Azerbaijanis living abroad, and about the possibility of granting them citizenship in Azerbaijan ?*

*The second question - you know, all the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is always discussed in France, the Armenian propaganda works day and night, but the voice of our programs our propaganda is not heard. Therefore, I would like to know, whether you mentioned the issue of drowning out the voice of such propaganda programmes in the meeting with President Mitterand?. Third, why you are speaking in Russian.....*

**Haydar Aliyev:** I will answer the last question immediately, why I am speaking in Russian. Our language is really beautiful and I love the Azerbaijani language. This is the state language of the country; I speak only in Azerbaijanii language in my country. However, in France, first of all, as I felt there are many people who know Russian among people that I have met, so that they can receive information directly from me.

Secondly, Mr. Mitterand's translator interprets only from French into Russian and from Russian into French. For this reason, I did not want to break the rules here. In addition, Russian is one of the recognized world languages like English and French.

Well, just now the pretty lady made a speech in French that I also could ask her why she didn't address me in Azerbaijani.

Now I would like to answer the second question about the Azerbaijanis living abroad. The point is that the Azerbaijanis living abroad are few in number. Most of them have never lived in the territory of the independent Azerbaijan. However, if the Azerbaijanis living abroad want to get citizenship, I think, there will not be any obstacle.

Coming to the question about the broadcasting programs related to Nagorno-Karabakh by a lot of supporters of the Armenians here, and drowning out the voice of the program and the Azerbaijanis want to broadcast is not the issue to be discussed with President Mr. Mitterand. It is known that there are very few Azerbaijanis in France, but many Armenians live here and many of them hold quite strong positions in business, state bodies and in mass media. Apparently, the Armenians are misusing this situation. Therefore, the Azerbaijanis living in France should demonstrate more influence on social and political life of France. In such case, the voice of the programs of Azerbaijanis cannot be immersed. I will help with all means to conduct these programs.

I have given an instruction to the minister of Foreign Affairs about the humanitarian aid that you want to send to refugees (IDPs) in Azerbaijan. Today, once again I reminded him that he keep to contact with you, so you could send this aid. Today, I must meet the minister for Foreign Economic Relations. Thank you for your attention. I think our relations will continue. I would like to express my respect to press representatives and hope that irrespective of their nationality, they will convey objective information.

Thank you very much.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of France (December 19-22, 1993)**

### **Historical Reference**

Establishment of mutually beneficial cooperation and friendly relations with all the countries of the world, including the Western Europe's largest and most influential countries, is of great political and international importance for the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. The political significance of these relations is conditioned by the fact that these countries have real opportunities to render comprehensive and practical assistance to Azerbaijan for being properly represented in all the international and regional organizations, for the integration into the system of international security and cooperation and into various European structures and institutions.

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to France in the December of 1993 marked the beginning of the intensive development of relations with the Western European countries.

On December 20, Heydar Aliyev was welcomed by the French authorities in an official ceremony at Elysee Palace. The French President Francois Mitterrand met the Azerbaijani President at the stairs of the Palace. Then the French-Azerbaijani negotiations of the two presidents took place. Cooperation between France and Azerbaijan was discussed at the meeting.

Later, Heydar Aliyev and Francois Mitterrand signed an agreement on friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between Azerbaijan and France. Heydar Aliyev also signed the Charter of Paris for a New Europe.

In his statement to the journalists after the ceremony Heydar Aliyev addressed Francois Mitterrand: "The agreement on friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation we have just signed is a new stage of international relations of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Here at Elysee Palace, we laid the foundations for a long-term cooperation between Azerbaijan and France. It is a historic event for the Republic of Azerbaijan, for a state which achieved its independence only two years ago."

On December 21, at his residence Heydar Aliyev received the French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe. Peaceful solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh was discussed. Later at the national center of the French entrepreneurs, Heydar Aliyev met the representatives of business circles of the country. The Azerbaijani President informed them about the economic potential and reforms implemented in the country. Heydar Aliyev delivered a speech also at the Diplomatic Academy.

On the same day, at UNESCO headquarters Heydar Aliyev was presented a UNESCO Memorial Medal by its Director- General Federico Mayor.

In his statement on December 21 at the press conference dedicated to the official visit to France, Heydar Aliyev expressed his satisfaction with the visit and its results. Heydar Aliyev

noted: “While being here I realized that the relations between Azerbaijan and France had been very weak and there was few information about Azerbaijan in France. Sometimes biased information about Azerbaijan misleads. Therefore, in my opinion, my visit to France not only created conditions for the further development of bilateral relations, but was also important in terms of conveying true information on Azerbaijan. I do not think that we achieved all these over the past few days. Nevertheless, we laid the foundation of what we consider is important.

On the same day, Heydar Aliyev met the French Minister of Economic Affairs.

On December 22, the Azerbaijani President exchanged views with the chairman of the Senate on bilateral relations and their prospectives.

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev completed his first official visit to the Republic of France and returned to Azerbaijan.

With this visit President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev took the first step towards the integration of Azerbaijan into the European countries.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY (February 8-11, 1994)**

“...We must do our best to continue to be together in future too. This is what the great Turkish leaders wanted us to do. The famous sayings by great Ataturk in the early 20th century are quite relevant today. The statements of Heydar Aliyev, the great leader of the Azerbaijani people of the 20th century, always led us ahead. He said that Turkish and Azerbaijani are one nation but two states. We are faithful to the words of this historic personality. We remain faithful in heart as well. We must ensure that the future generations, too, will live in the atmosphere of friendship and fraternity, always help and take care of each other. These two historic expressions are not just words. There is a profound meaning in them. These historic sayings are illuminating our path. The road ahead of us must always be open and bright. We must always be together for realizing that..”

*From the speech of President Ilham Aliyev at the ceremony of unveiling the monument of the founder of the Republic of Turkey Mustafa Kemal Ataturk - May 17, 2010*

### **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the reception in “Chankaya” Palace**

Ankara, February 8, 1994

Mr. President Suleyman Demirel,

Mrs. Nazmiyya,

Dear guests and friends,

My dear friend, brother Suleyman bey, I appeal to you and all the guests gathered here. I express my deep gratitude for inviting me to pay an official visit to Turkey and for the respect and honor shown to me on my visit. Thank you! This is another confirmation of our friendly and brotherly relations going on for many years.

Distinguished Suleyman Demirel is a great personality of the Turkic world and is the well known and highly respected man in the world of politics. I am very happy that twenty-five years ago I met Suleyman Demirel. There established friendly and brotherly relations between us. Over the past period, these relations have not been violated or suspended. Finally, when Azerbaijan gained independence, there emerged great opportunities for the further expansion of fraternal and friendly relations.

My dear brother Suleyman Demirel had great services and won great reputation in the Republic of Turkey and of the Turkish people. At the same time, he has won the respect and reverence of the people and citizens of Azerbaijan. Suleyman Demirel did great work in the period when the Republic of Azerbaijan gained independence, he has great services in the recognition of independence of Azerbaijan in the rest of the world. The Azerbaijani people will never forget it and it will remain in the history of independent Azerbaijan.

Relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey have an ancient history. As it was said by Suleyman bey, we are two states, but one nation. Despite many difficulties, wars and struggles for centuries, the unity of our historical roots has never been broken. These threads were always close to each other. But there were years when the people could not see each other or communicate. But they never lost hope.

In 1992, with Suleyman bey we took part in the opening of the bridge between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Our nations called it the bridge of hope and aspiration. It is not surprising, because for many years, for 70 years, the Azerbaijanis were deprived of communication with Turkey and have always watched Turkey with great expectations and high hopes. When Azerbaijan gained independence, there occurred opportunities. Bridges from hearts to hearts were strengthened and a bridge was laid between our two countries. This bridge is really entered the history as a bridge of hope and aspiration.

Brotherly and friendly relations between our nations, our national traditions with common roots, are examples for us today, as well as very large basis and the foundation for our present and future. Azerbaijan won its independence, strengthens it and tries to make it permanent. In this case, we need the help of the world community and the just people of the world. At the same time in this case the relations with the people of Turkey are of great importance for the independent Republic of Azerbaijan and we have great hopes for them.

Our current meetings are the continuation of relations established between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the recent years. With great pride and pleasure we can say that our peoples divided from each other for 70 years united again as if those 70 years have never been. Feelings that fed hearts of each other, turned into the relations between the countries and much has been done in this field in the past years. We now have the task of continuing more intensively of this work, further expanding and deepening our relations. For this purpose, I accepted the invitation of Suleyman Demirel, and together with a large delegation I came to Turkey, Ankara. With great pride and great excitement I want to tell you that I and the Azerbaijanis who came with me feel here like at home. We do not feel like we came to a foreign country. We are in the house of our brother and we feel in this country free and very happy completely.

Appreciating our relations established earlier, we think a lot about our future at the

same time. At the talks held today with the esteemed President Suleyman Demirel, Prime Minister Tansu Chiller and other officials we discussed these issues and I believe that tomorrow for the development of relations between our countries and nations we shall sign new agreements and documents which will lay the foundations and open a new page in the history of our relations.

For the support provided by Turkey to the Azerbaijani people and the independent Republic of Azerbaijan, I express my gratitude and appreciation on behalf of the Azerbaijani people to the Turkish people, the Turkish Republic and President of Turkey Suleyman Demirel. At the same time, I want to express the hope that the subsequent help and support will be at an even higher level and on an even larger scale than before. Our people have a saying which literally says: one may feel offended when the persons in whom you cherish hopes, do not help you. That is, in whom you cherish hopes, from him you expect the support. It is meaningless to wait support from a person on whom you do not rely. With these feelings, thoughts we came to you and hope that you will understand us correctly.

The Republic of Turkey has a long history. Seventy years ago, the great leader, a genius Mustafa Kemal Ataturk laid the foundations of a great and democratic Turkey of today. The following generation continued his work and turned Turkey into an influential and a majestic country of the world.

The new independent Azerbaijan is a young country. Of course, Azerbaijan is in need of its brother and friend who has achieved such a great success. I have no doubt that my brother and friend will not refuse to provide this help. With these expectations, I expect tomorrow to continue our negotiations and signature of new agreements.

At the same time, you should know that Azerbaijan will never give up its independence, live and develop as an independent country. It means that our relations interrupted in the past will never be violated. The main problem facing us, as it was said by distinguished President Sulaiman Bey, is the struggle against the Armenian invaders, release of the occupied Azerbaijani territories, ensuring territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and creating conditions for all citizens of Azerbaijan to live in their homes, lands, and villages. Azerbaijan has over a million refugees. They live in difficult conditions, but tolerate. Because they know that they are now the owners of their lands and country. Our duty is to implement all this into life.

You can be sure that we shall do our best to expel the Armenian invaders from our land. There is no doubt that we shall strive to solve the problem peacefully, through negotiations and to drive the Armenian aggressors from the Azerbaijani lands. At the same time, by mobilizing our power and strengthening the army we shall defend our land. The Azerbaijani people are capable of it. Because the Azerbaijani people have a heroic past and a centuries-old history of the struggle for independence. Our

people are confident, because we have such a close friend and brother like Turkey. I assure you that the people of Azerbaijan will always be faithful to this friendship and brotherhood.

My dear friend and brother Suleyman bey, I once more thank you for the respect and honor and call all guests to raise the glasses to the great Republic of Turkey, the great Turkish nation, the Azerbaijani-Turkish friendship and brotherhood, to my dear friend and brother, President of Turkey Suleyman Demirel and his respected wife Mrs. Nazmiyya, to all the guests and to all of our Turkish brothers.

Thank you, be happy! I wish you more happy days and life. Cheers!

## **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the ceremony of signature of documents between Turkey and Azerbaijan**

February 9, 1994

During our visit to Turkey we witnessed great hospitality and kindness here. The members of the delegation and I came to express our gratitude and esteem to the distinguished President of Turkey Suleyman Demirel, the Turkish government and the Turkish people for all this. We really feel at home here, as Suleyman bey said, we feel like in our flat. We came here with high hopes which were justified. We felt hospitality, friendly and fraternal relations more than we expected and we are under the impression of these feelings which will be preserved for a long time. The most interesting feature is that the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan now are entering a new phase. This phase is built on the earlier work done up to now. The results of our meetings and talks are very effective for the further advancement of this work, for the expansion of cooperation in economy, trade, culture, science, education and for making our peoples and our countries come closer to each other. In a word, we are cordially pleased with the results achieved here.

Every person with whom we met treated us with great respect and care. I especially admired a lot of care and attention by my friend and brother Suleyman Demirel. I know that no matter where we visited and met yesterday and today the President of Turkey Suleyman bey keeps everything under control and personally cares. This created the conditions for the successful completion of the work carried out by us in the days of our stay here.

The developed agreements and contracts are historical documents and open new ways and new paths for our future relations. We want to ensure you that we shall follow that way and not deviate from it.

I stress it again that Azerbaijan is engaged in state-building based on democratic principles. Azerbaijan has created and will create all possibilities for democracy and political pluralism. Using the experience of Turkey and developed countries we shall expand and deepen our activities more. You can be sure that Azerbaijan is on this path and will not deviate from it. Azerbaijan is an independent country and will always follow this path. No power can make us deviate from this path. Independence is eternal for the people of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani government. We assure you that we shall always be faithful to the friendship and brotherhood in future we shall do our best to develop this friendship and brotherhood.

The main problem that our country faces is the assurance of independence, territorial

integrity and the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied lands. Our policy is unchangeable in this area. We shall make efforts to solve these issues by peaceful means. I would ask Turkey to continue to help Azerbaijan to solve this problem by peace in the international organizations, in OSCE and its Minsk Group using its other opportunities. I am sure that Turkey will not refuse to help us. At the same time, we shall unite all the forces to fight for the liberation of the occupied lands of Azerbaijan and ensure its national independence and territorial integrity.

You can be sure that our meetings inspire not only us, but also the people and citizens of Azerbaijan. We came to this ceremony with this inspiration and mood. In the same spirit we shall return home.

Dear Suleyman bey, I thank you and all your friends once more. Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey (February 8-11, 1994)**

### **Historical Reference**

The Republic of Turkey is the closest partner of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Turkey is one of the regional states which plays a significant role not only in the fate of Azerbaijan, but also of the whole Caucasus.

After Heydar Aliyev's return to power in 1993, Azerbaijan gave a special attention to the expansion of all-round partnership with Turkey on the integration into the international community, protection of regional security and realization of political-economical and scientific-cultural interests of the country and provided the increase of the development of the country on a rising line during the decade. The first step in this direction was the first official visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Turkey on February 7-11, 1994.

On February 8, 1994, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev was officially welcomed by President Suleyman Demirel in "Cankaya" Palace, the residence of the president of the Republic of Turkey. Delivering a speech at the welcoming ceremony Heydar Aliyev said: "We- Azerbaijan and Turkey are countries having friendly and fraternal relations. Unity of our nations, brotherhood and friendship were formed through the centuries and reached its present stage. Now Azerbaijan is an independent state and is the owner of its country, nation and own resources. Turkey first among the world countries recognized the independence of Azerbaijan. And it was an important step in the recognition of Azerbaijan by the world countries and the world community."

On that day President of the Turkish Republic Suleyman Demirel hosted the Azerbaijani President in "Chankaya" Palace.

Later, President Heydar Aliyev visted the grave of Mustafa Kamal Ataturk, founder of the Turkish Republic and signed the memorial book.

On February 9, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev paid a visit to the parliament of the Turkish Republic and delivered a speech there. Referring to the history of the Turkish-Azerbaijani relations, Heydar Aliyev mentioned: "I would like to inform you that the ancient history and present day of our nations are the basis for being closer friendly. I would like to assure you that we shall move further on this basis. Relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan in economy, trade, science, culture, education and other fields will be of great importance and differ from the relations with other countries because of the friendship and fraternity. Our position is clear. Be sure that the present-day Azerbaijan is and will be faithful to this position."

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev met Ihsan Dogramaci, chairman of the Executive Board of Bilkent University and a ceremony was held in which the Azerbaijani President was honoured wuth the title of the Honorary Doctor of the University.

On February 9, one of the important events of the visit was the signature of the Turkish-Azerbaijani documents. Protocol on partnership and mutual assistance between the two states, agreements on partnership in scientific, technical, cultural and economic fields, development of friendship and comprehensive partnership, political consultations, mutual encouragement and protection of investments were signed.

An agreement on Friendship and Partnership between Turkey and Azerbaijan was signed. This document is of great importance and significance for the further development of the Azerbaijani-Turkish relations. Up to 16 agreements and protocols, in general, were signed with the officials of the Turkish Republic. Expansion and development of relations in different fields were manifested in those documents.

On February 10, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met the businessmen of Turkey. He expressed his great interest in the development of economic relations with Turkey and informed that he was ready to create favourable condition for the big Turkish companies on investments.

On 11<sup>th</sup> of February having completed his meetings in Ankara, the Azerbaijani President left for Istanbul. Heydar Aliyev gave comprehensive information to representatives of mass media on the results of his official visit to Turkey.

In general, the first official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Turkey gave an impetus to the development of bilateral relations between the two countries.

## OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND (February 22-25, 1994)

“...Bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom in political, economic and other fields are successfully developing. The sphere of energy is one of the important directions of these relations. The cooperation between Azerbaijan and BP has been developing for a long time. Relations in other spheres also offer good prospects...”

*From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Gordon Brown – July 13, 2009*

### Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the meeting in the Royal Institute for the International Relations in Great Britain

London, February 23, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen!

I am extremely grateful for being inviting to the Royal Institute for International Relations and to get an opportunity to address such authoritative audience. I consider it as an opportunity to give broad information about Azerbaijan and how the young the Azerbaijani state exists, lives and develops. I want to note that as the Azerbaijani President, I was invited to Great Britain by Mr. Prime Minister John Major. We have already held meetings with the presidents of some companies. Yesterday, I had an opportunity to speak to the businessmen, today we had official talks with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Mr. John Major.

The talks passed in warm atmosphere and to my mind, they ended successfully. Signature of important documents on interstate relations between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Republic of Azerbaijan is an evidence to that. Eight documents were signed, six of them were signed by Mr. John Major and me. Among these documents there is the Declaration on friendship and cooperation between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Republic of Azerbaijan which is of great importance.

I am not going to begin to call all documents. I want to emphasize only that we also signed a memorandum on cooperation in the field of energy, in particular, in the field of petroleum industry with Mr. John Major. Our negotiations and the agreement create extremely favorable opportunity for the rapid development of economic relations between the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

It is the first visit of the President of independent Azerbaijan to Great Britain. It is of

great importance for us, for the Republic of Azerbaijan, as we consider Great Britain a country possessing great political weight in the world politics, the country taking one of the leading places in world economic system, having rich history and good traditions. In many respects it is possible to learn many things in Great Britain, and we are glad for the establishment of versatile communications.

I wish also to note that since yesterday, we are in the warm and friendly atmosphere because of the spirit of hospitality and respect by all the statesmen of Great Britain with which we had meetings. In short, we are satisfied with the beginning of our visit and we hope that it will come end at such a good level.

The President of the Institute noted that earlier you knew very little about the republics of Transcaucasia and the Central Asia. It is really so, but I cannot approve that today you know more. Those conversations, which I had since yesterday here, in London, convinced me that there is not enough information in Great Britain about Azerbaijan. It is certainly, our fault, we should give full information on our country, on its people, its life and attitude to you. I hope that our visit and the present meeting will fill the gap in some extent.

Azerbaijan was one of the republics of the Soviet Union - as you know, its structure included 15 republics, - and after the collapse of the Union it founded its state independence. Collapse of the Soviet Union was the natural result of the socio-historical processes, going on for decades both in the Soviet Union, and all over the world. Sooner or later it should have been collapsed, it has already collapsed, and all republics, which formed the Soviet Union, gained independence. We are very glad that Azerbaijan became an independent state. Our people were waiting for this independence impatiently within decades, centuries.

Azerbaijan has been a part of the Russian empire approximately for 200 years, 70 years out of it – a part of the Soviet Union. However, Azerbaijan founded an independent democratic state in a short period of its history. It was in 1918-1920. But, after two years, this state ceased to exist when the Soviet rule was established in Azerbaijan and in all the Transcaucasia.

People of Azerbaijan, as well as other peoples, who formed the Soviet Union, have traversed a long way of economic and social development within 70 years of its existence. During this time, the level of education grew sufficiently powerful economic potentials were created in the republic. At the same time, Azerbaijan was not independent as a state. Therefore, the Azerbaijani people have got an opportunity to enjoy independence. Now Azerbaijan is an independent state and henceforth will always exist. The purpose of the Azerbaijani people is to strengthen the independence and to prevent those, who try to deprive it of independence. As an independent state, when Azerbaijan conducts its internal and foreign policy, it takes its national and universal interests into account.

This policy takes into account the national features, historical past and national traditions of the Azerbaijani people and together with it, the world and international experience as well. It is especially important to know which road Azerbaijan follows. Azerbaijan has refused to pursue the communist ideology, socialist system of economy and state construction.

Rumors on the restoration of the socialist system, communist regime in Azerbaijan as well as in other republics, to my mind, have no any grounds. Anyway, I can say it in connection with Azerbaijan. The independent Azerbaijan is only two years old and these two years passed in very complicated conditions. Deep social and economic crisis after the collapse of the Soviet Union and transition from one social and economic system to another in Azerbaijan and in all the republics of the former Soviet Union, undoubtedly, complicated the life in the republic. There is another reason aggravating the situation in Azerbaijan. This is the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan, aggression of the Armenian armed forces against Azerbaijan. As a result of this aggression 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces, over one million Azerbaijani inhabitants, inhabitants of those districts of the republic occupied by the Armenian armed formations have been compelled to leave the places of their residence, become refugees and live now in heavy social and economic conditions.

All this is complicating factors of life in Azerbaijan in the years of independence. But despite all these difficulties, we pursue the road of construction of a democratic legal state and we are actively dealing with state-building work in Azerbaijan. Building the statehood on the principles of democracy, Azerbaijan aspires to benefit from the experience of the advanced, developed countries, which have already followed the road of democracy for a long time.

Our purpose is the establishment of a democratic legal society, which would grant to the citizens of the republic all freedoms - freedom of speech, conscience, business - which would provide reliable protection of human rights, equal rights for citizens, irrespective of their national identity and political convictions, provide political pluralism, a multi-party system, freedom of press - these are the basic attributes of a democratic legal society which is being formed in Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a multinational state and the citizens of Azerbaijan enjoy equal rights, irrespective of their national identity. We consider the multinational structure of Azerbaijan as a positive element of life in the republic.

As I already said, a multi-party system has been proclaimed in our country, over 40 political parties and public organizations have already undergone registration in Azerbaijan. All these parties have their press organs. As a whole, in Azerbaijan, a small country with seven million populations, there are over 600 newspapers and magazines.

There are rumors that the existence of 40 parties, 600 newspapers in Azerbaijan

is not true. Perhaps it is true, because in such a country with democratic traditions as England, there are some basic parties and newspapers, not as many as in Azerbaijan. But, probably, such position at the initial stage is comprehensible to some extent for the young independent state which follows the way of independence and democratic development.

Azerbaijan is on the intersection of Europe and Asia, it establishes friendly relations with the countries of Europe, Asia and West, with all the countries of the world. Certainly, here we assume as a basis that these relations should be established on the principles of non-interference into the internal affairs of Azerbaijan by any other country and should not damage the independence of Azerbaijan, its territorial integrity and inviolability of borders. Thus, Azerbaijan attaches great attention to the establishment of close relations with the neighboring countries. We have normal relations with our northern neighbor Russia, and also with Turkey and Iran bordering with us. We have normal relations with Georgia, but we are at war with Armenia with which we have borders of many kilometers.

Our relations with the European countries develop slowly, but consistently. In December, I was on a visit in France. We hold meetings and negotiations with the President of France Mr. Francois Mitterrand, statesmen of a country, signed a document on friendship and cooperation which is caused by the necessity of development of our economic, scientific-technical and cultural relations. In this context, we attach great importance to the establishment of much closer relations with the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Relations between Great Britain and Azerbaijan have an old and very rich history. English businessmen, merchants, travelers came to Azerbaijan in XV-XVI centuries. In the end of XIX - the beginning of XX centuries, the English capital actively streamed Azerbaijan and strongly affirmed in its economy, especially in the oil industry. So that we have experience and sufficient solid history of economic cooperation between our countries. Today, we are ready to cooperate with England in many spheres. And, as I already said, the documents, signed by us today, pave the way the for such a cooperation.

Internationally important problem for us is to end the war with Armenia, termination of military actions and restoration of territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan, maintenance of inviolability of its borders. This problem has aggravated too much.

In Azerbaijan, we are for the peaceful settlement of this problem. We attach priority to the participation of international organizations in the resolution of this problem. I mean the United Nations Organization, its Security Council, CSCE, its Minsk Group. Certainly, we attach great significance to the mediation of such leading countries of the world as the United States of America, United Kingdom of Great Britain, Russia, Turkey and others. We want the world community have a clear and precise imagination about

the situation. Azerbaijan does not want war, continuation of military actions, we are for ceasing the military actions, but on condition that the Armenian armed forces should leave the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. We are for holding peace talks on this basis. As it is known, all the military operations are going in the territory of Azerbaijan. The map of Azerbaijan is on the wall and you see clearly here: it is Azerbaijan, here the border of Azerbaijan, it is the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan. Since 1923, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province is a part of Azerbaijan. Artificial, so-called Garabagh conflict broke at the end of 1987 and the beginning of 1988.

The population of Nagorno-Karabakh consisted of 70 percent of Armenians and 30 percent of Azerbaijanis. But as a result of the aggressive military actions, all the Azerbaijanis, who lived in territory of Nagorno-Karabakh - there are 50 thousand persons - have been expelled from this territory. Moreover, the Armenian armed forces expanded the military operations and occupied a significant part of the Azerbaijani territory outside the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province. From all this territory, as I already noted, over one million people have been compelled to leave their residences, become refugees and are now suffer great difficulties. Here is Iran, Azerbaijan borders with Iran, but as a result of the capture of these areas of Azerbaijan, the significant part of the Azerbaijani border with Iran is under the occupation of the Armenian armed forces up to now.

As a result of the military actions, the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan, where the population are 350 thousand, is in the condition of full blockade. Communications, which connect Azerbaijan with Nakhchivan - railway, highway, telecommunication, energy lines and others pass through the territory of Armenia, and all of them have been broken off. The Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan has only a small opportunity by air to communicate with other regions of Azerbaijan.

This all is the result of the aggressive military actions carried out by Armenia. And our demand, our desire are to stop the aggression of the Armenian armed formations and allow the inhabitants of these territories of Azerbaijan return to places of their permanent residence though much has already been destroyed, plundered. People have lost their dwellings, property created and accumulated by many generations there. As a matter of fact, this is barbarism in relation to the population of Azerbaijan. Nevertheless, today we do not occupy the a position of an aggression or irreconcilability. We consider that Azerbaijan and Armenia are neighbor states and should live in peace condition. We think that it is impossible to be at enmity eternally, to be at war eternally with each other. It is necessary to restore the previous relations, existing until these times, but on condition that the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is resored.

What concerns the destiny or problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenian population, they are the citizens of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan will ensure the safety of all the inhabitants of Nagorno-Karabakh. We are ready to consider the problem of granting

self-administration to the Nagorno-Karabakh, after the unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed formations from the occupied territories. Once more, I emphasize that in the solution of these questions we rely, first of all, on the opportunities of international organizations. We cherish hopes in the help and support of such a great country as Great Britain, with its heavy political weight in world politics, to its objective position in the solution of the conflict.

As you know, Azerbaijan became a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States last September. Being a member of the Commonwealth of Independent States, we cherish hopes in the active participation of CIS countries in the resolution of this problem. On December 24, a summit of CIS was held in Ashgabat. I made there the official statements connected with the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and noted that Azerbaijan and Armenia as members of CIS cannot be at war, it is inadmissible and abnormal. In a word, we look for the ways of the peaceful settlement of this problem and rely on the active support of the world community.

Despite all difficulties, which now the independent Azerbaijan experience, internal political situation in Azerbaijan is stable and normal now. And Azerbaijan, having huge economic and industrial potentials, natural and human resources, can be a good partner for economic cooperation for all countries, including England.

Yesterday, speaking to the English businessmen, I invited them to Azerbaijan. And today, I address to you with the same request, with the same invitation. I would like to draw your attention that cooperation with Azerbaijan is not limited only oil industry, though Azerbaijan in general, is known as an oil country in the world. We, certainly, will continue cooperation with "BP" and other western oil companies, such as "Amoco", "Pennzoil", "Statoil", and with the Turkish oil company. I think that the commercial contract can be signed in the nearest future.

At the same time, as I already noted, Azerbaijan has many other opportunities for economic cooperation. Here, let us take the example of "Kaiser engineering". Yesterday I met its president and today a protocol was signed on joint production of aluminum. We have very powerful petrochemical complex and great opportunities. Yesterday I met the president and other representatives of "John Brown" company. Today we signed a protocol. I think that we have an opportunity for active cooperation.

Good cooperation between the Azerbaijani Ministry of Communications and "GPT" company has already been established. Azerbaijan possesses a big machine-building complex. This complex consists of oil engineering, power engineering and electronics, tool-making and other branches of engineering. Available capacities, which are not used now with full capacity for various reasons, creates favorable conditions and I can assure you that you can come to Azerbaijan and establish good economic relations. Reliability of such cooperation will be guaranteed by the state, including by the President.

## **Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the press conference on the results of his official visit to Britain**

February 24 , 1994

Ladies and gentlemen!

My visit is coming to an end, we are returning home tomorrow. The mission has been accomplished and therefore, I agreed to meet the representatives of mass media today and brief you on the outcomes of the visit and answer your questions. As you know, I am paying an official visit to the UK at the invitation of Prime Minister John Major. It is always already three days that we are in London today. We have almost accomplished the programme of the visit. Therefore, I can tell you that I am pleased with the outcome of my visit. First, the meeting and the talks with Mr Prime Minister John Major are of great significance. Prior to the meeting, we had meetings with ministers and presidents of a number of major oil companies.

At the meeting with the prime minister, we had an opportunity to exchange views on a lot of issues – both on the relations between Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom, and on our region – the situation in the Caucasian region, and on the current international situation. Our talks were held in conditions of mutual understanding, sincerity and in an extremely beneficial atmosphere. This condition was created by the British administration. The most important is that we have agreed on the measures to bolster and intensify the relations between Azerbaijan and the UK further. The issue in question is about the inter-state relations, economic cooperation as well as scientific, technical, cultural and other issues.

In our talks, we focused on economic cooperation, in particular, on the issues of cooperation between the major UK companies and the Azerbaijani Republic. In this connection, we paid a special attention to BP's involvement in the exploration of the Azerbaijani oil deposits and a contract is to be signed with the consortium of the western oil companies. The contract with the oil companies has got much coverage and attention here. I believe we have cast full light on these issues at our meetings and negotiations. Upon the completion of our talks, very important documents have been signed between our countries for the development of the relations. These, first of all, are on a joint statement on friendship and cooperation in the energy sector, including a memorandum on cooperation in the sphere of oil production between our countries – the issue in question is about BP and a number of other documents.

I believe that for the beginning of cooperation this visit has laid the foundation of cooperation between Azerbaijan and the UK, and during the visit eight other documents

were signed. Both these documents and agreements enable us to say that the relations between Azerbaijan and the UK have good prospects for cooperation.

I should say that my meetings with the Foreign Secretary Douglas Hurd, Secretary of State for Trade and Industry Michael Heseltine, ministers of energy and agriculture, minister for Overseas Development Baroness Chalker, state secretary Douglas Haig, as well as with presidents of a number of major companies were very interesting. I had an opportunity to address a meeting of representatives of business circles of your country. At the meeting I spoke of intensive economic cooperation opportunities. I attach great importance to the fact that I was given an opportunity to speak at the Royal Institute of International Affairs. Today I visited the European Bank and addressed its boards of directors. And today I was invited to the UK parliament and was present at the session there while Prime Minister John Major was on a question and answer hour. Then we had interesting discussions with the parliamentarians from both the Conservatives and the Labour parties, including Lords and Baroness Cox, who does not sympathize much with the Azerbaijanis.

We had an interesting discussion with the parliamentarians, I was given an opportunity to address them. I want to stress with great satisfaction that a friendship faction, or an inter-parliamentary group, has been set up between the British parliament and Azerbaijan. This group is establishing relations with the Azerbaijani parliament and with Azerbaijan in general. That is to say, the issue in question is about establishing active inter-parliamentary relations between our countries. I am attaching great importance to it. In all meetings and discussions, I had a chance to comment exactly and clearly on the position of the administration of Azerbaijan in domestic and foreign policy issues.

Our domestic policy is to establish a legal democratic state, democratic society, ensure all conditions for the development of democracy in Azerbaijan, to restore democratic principles, political pluralism and a multi-party system, to protect human rights and ensure individual liberties, freedom of speech, press and conscience for all the Azerbaijani citizens irrespective of their ethnicities, religion and political beliefs.

In the sphere of socio-economic development, Azerbaijan is strictly pursuing the policy of developing the market economy and free entrepreneurship, liberalization of the economic life, encouraging foreign capital and investments in Azerbaijan and creating beneficial conditions for foreign investors. In a one word, the issue in question is about the free market economy.

In this connection I invited everyone keen in economic cooperation with Azerbaijan, I mean that Azerbaijan is wide open for the world, in particular, for investments, for economic relations, Azerbaijan is open for the UK businesses. I said and repeat it in front of you that Azerbaijan has auspicious opportunities for economic cooperation

and investments, the administration of the republic, our state guarantees the protection of interests of foreign companies which start cooperation with Azerbaijan. In the sphere of foreign policy, Azerbaijan is pursuing normal and mutually-beneficial policy with all the world states – both with the neighboring countries, the western and eastern countries, in particular with the European states. Our relations with the world countries are free from all kinds of previous ideological dogmas.

As an independent state, guided by its own national interests Azerbaijan will pursue its foreign policy to strengthen its international position and independence. During our stay here I once more became sure as before that in the issues of international cooperation Azerbaijan can be a reliable partner for the UK, as well as, the UK for Azerbaijan. The ongoing war between Armenia and Azerbaijan is extremely painful and a serious problem for Azerbaijan. The war broke out artificially, it started from the fabricated Mountainous - Garabagh problem and expanded and turned into a large-scale war which resulted in the loss of thousands of lives from both sides. The heaviest toll of the on-going war is that about 20 per cent of the Azerbaijani territories have been occupied by the Armenian armed forces and about one million residents from the occupied districts have become IDPs in their own country and were obliged to abandon their homes and they have lost all their possessions. It is natural that all these weaken Azerbaijan both economically and socially, and above everything, it greatly damages the independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the republic. We – the Azerbaijani side, is making all efforts to end the military operations, the war, the bloodshed and resolve this issue through talks and peacefully. However, the Armenian side continues the military operations and wants to achieve its own aims by force, that is to say, by waging a war. Therefore, we are naturally obliged to respond to it. The objective of the Armenian side is to annex the Mountainous - Garabagh and split Azerbaijan and deprive Azerbaijan of a part of its territory. We certainly cannot agree with it, and by making efforts to resolve the problem through negotiations, we are taking measures for defending our lands and territories. Naturally, all these lead to military operations, and regrettably those operations are also underway now. However, I repeat it again that we do not want the military operations to continue, we are for a peaceful resolution of the issue.

Along with our proposal to resolve the conflict peacefully, we are implementing measures to strengthen our armed forces. No one should think that our desire to resolve the issue peacefully is a sign of our military defeat. No, we simply do not want war. At the same time, I am stating that if the Armenian side does not agree to a peaceful resolution of the conflict, naturally, then Azerbaijan will make use of its power and opportunities to liberate the occupied lands and to restore its territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, full sovereignty and independence.

While proposing a peaceful resolution of the conflict, we cherish great hopes in international organizations, the UN Security Council, the OSCE and its Minsk Group and other international organizations. They can do a lot and actually can resolve this issue. In this connection, we also hope for the active involvement of the UK government in the peace process initiated by the international organizations. One of the important outcomes of my visit to the UK is to form grounds for the development of relations between our countries, we managed, although not as much as we wanted, to give full information about Azerbaijan and the real situation in the republic, in particular, on the situation connected with the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

I invited Prime Minister John Major to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan. The invitation was accepted and we shall coordinate the date and term of the visit. I also invited several other statesmen as well as the British parliamentarians to our republic. We want as many representatives of your country as possible to visit Azerbaijan since this would enable to analyze the situation in our country unbiasedly, first, the problems related to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan and its objective assessment. I am extremely satisfied with the results of my visit and I am grateful for the hospitality we enjoyed here in the United Kingdom. I am going back home in good mood. Thank you for your attention. If you have questions, I am ready to answer them”.

***Question (SOTA news agency): “Mr. Heydar Aliyev, can you comment on Russia’s position about the Mountainous Garabagh? How do you estimate its position?”***

**Answer:** “Russia is making efforts to solve the problem peacefully. Russia is offering its mediatory efforts and several attempts were made to realize them. I guess this was on 20 November. Then, we received a Russian-proposed draft proposal on the suspension of military operations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories. But, this initiative was not realized.

On his way to Armenia from Azerbaijan, the Russian President’s envoy on Garabagh Vladimir Kazimirov came under fire by the Armenian armed forces in the Azerbaijani territory. In the person of the foreign minister and even the leadership of the Cabinet of Ministers, the Russian leadership issued a tough statement protesting against the unethical position of Armenia and demanded apology. However, the Armenian side did not do that. Thus, the negotiation process remained unfinished. Nevertheless, Russia is now also making efforts for a peaceful resolution of this problem.”

***Question (Newspaper “Economist”): “Mr. Heydar Aliyev, if you don’t mind, I would request you to say a few words about the economic cooperation in the sector of oil industry. You said a memorandum was signed, but has an agreement been endorsed or not? Besides, is there any decision on the route of the future pipeline?”***

**Answer:** “I believe that if the leaders of the two countries, Mr. John Major and I signed a memorandum on cooperation in the energy sector, including a memorandum on cooperation with BP, these are important facts. A commercial agreement should follow this and this should be signed between Azerbaijan and the consortium. The consortium is made up of BP, AMOCO, STATOIL, PENNZOIL, Turkish Oil Company and several other firms. I believe that this will soon be realized. As for the route of pipeline, obviously, this issue will be resolved simultaneously with the signature of a commercial agreement, perhaps, in autumn.”

**Question (Balkan news agency):** “*Mr. Heydar ALiyev, I have two questions. First, are we speaking of developing a new agreement if the initial project of the agreement is refused? Second, how do you appreciate the perspectives of the Black Sea countries' economic cooperation?*”

**Answer:** “First, we have not refused the first agreement, it was not simply there. Negotiations were under way and positions were shed light on to a certain extent and an agreement was to be signed on the basis of it. We thought it was necessary to analyze all these issues thoroughly. We should know that oil is the major natural resource of the Azerbaijani people and of Azerbaijan, and everything should be weighed up repeatedly prior to signing the agreement for about 30 years. We had not done this before. As it seems, nothing has changed. Simply, we are studying the issue thoroughly. As for the cooperation among the Black Sea countries, we are involved in this cooperation and estimate the process positively.”

**Question (European newspaper):** “*If I am not distorting your opinion, in your speech yesterday you said that Azerbaijan is ready to guarantee the security of the Mountainous Garabagh Armenians. What credible arguments can you give about these guarantees?*”

**Answer:** “Which arguments? If I, President of Azerbaijan, say that we undertake to guarantee the security of the ethnic Armenian residents before the world community, you can believe that these guarantees will be honoured. There is no need for additional proofs. Incidentally, the Garabagh Armenians were living very well until 1988, that is to say, before the conflict, they were living very well in this region of Azerbaijan.”

**Question (Muslim news agency):** “*Is Britain mediating between Armenia and Azerbaijan to end the conflict?*”

**Answer:** We would like Britain to more actively be involved in the efforts of the international organizations for the resolution of the problems and we are ready to accept a mediation effort of the UK government.

**Question (Pravda newspaper):** “*Mr. President, there are news, to tell the truth, such assumptions in the British mass media outlets that the Azerbaijani leadership is allegedly linking the full drafting and signing of the oil contract to the closer*

*involvement of the West, including Britain, in the resolution of the Garabagh problem. Could you please say if there is a direct link between the two issues? Simultaneously, can you assess the potential opportunities of Russia as a Caspian Sea littoral state in exploring the Caspian resources?"*

**Answer:** "There is no such a direct mutual inter-dependence. However, while agreeing to sign such a big contract - you see, this is a long-term contract - undoubtedly, we want to use it to get political support for Azerbaijan from the countries that will cooperate with us for decades in the exploration of oil deposits of Azerbaijan. And the reason is not that we want these countries do something special for our republic, simply for the reason that these countries may contribute to the fair solution of the problem which is worrying the people of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani Republic.

Thank you for coming to the press conference, come to Azerbaijan!"

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (February 22-25, 1994)**

### **Historical Reference**

More intensive development and a qualitatively new stage in the Azerbaijan-UK relations started in the second half of 1993. After coming to power, Heydar Aliyev played an important role in developing these relations.

These relations were further developed by the visit of the Azerbaijani delegation led by President Heydar Aliyev to the United Kingdom on February 22-25, 1994, at the invitation of the British prime minister John Major.

Speaking about the importance of the visit, President Heydar Aliyev said: "It is the first visit of the Azerbaijani President to the United Kingdom. It is of great importance for us, for the Republic of Azerbaijan, because the United Kingdom occupies a leading position in the global political and economic system. It is a nice country with rich history and traditions, and we think that we can learn a lot from the British experience by creating thorough cooperation."

On February 22, Heydar Aliyev met and negotiated with the UK Foreign and Commonwealth Office Minister Douglas Hogg, the GPT Company management, Director of Kaiser Engineering Company Graham Moore, former Prime Minister Margaret Thatcher, the President of BP Simon David, chairman of John Brown Company Ian Robinson. In his speech at the meeting arranged by the Confederation of the British Industry, BP and Statoil on the same day Heydar Aliyev provided information about Azerbaijan and its economic potential and invited the British businesspeople to Azerbaijan. On February 23, Heydar Aliyev received UK Foreign Minister Douglas Hogg and Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Food Mrs. Gillian Shepherd in his residence.

An official welcoming ceremony for Heydar Aliyev took place at the British Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the same day. Heydar Aliyev was welcomed by the UK Prime Minister John Major and other officials in the ceremony.

The negotiations began between Heydar Aliyev and John Major right after the ceremony. The negotiations were followed by the ceremony of signature of the documents. President Heydar Aliyev and Prime Minister John Major signed several documents between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, such as "Agreement on friendship and cooperation", "Agreement on avoiding double taxation", "Memorandum on cooperation in the energy sphere", "Agreement on cooperation in the field of air transport", "Agreement on the protection and promotion of investments".

Later on the same day Heydar Aliyev visited the Royal Institute of International Affairs and

delivered a speech there. After midnight he met the Azerbaijanis living in London at Hilton hotel.

On February 24, President Heydar Aliyev met a group of foreign journalists accredited in the UK and editors-in-chief of the British papers, answered to their questions. Later the President received the Minister of State for Overseas Development Baroness Chalker. On the same day Heydar Aliyev had a meeting at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

One of the most important meetings was held in the House of Commons, the lower chamber of the British parliament.

On February 24, in his residence Heydar Aliye met President of Buffalo Airways and Aviation Leasing Group Farhad Azima, a businessperson of the Azerbaijani origin from Iran.

Afterwards Heydar Aliyev spoke to the representatives of more than 35 mass media at a press conference dedicated to the results of his official visit to the UK.

Expressing his satisfaction with the results, Heydar Aliyev noted: “One of the most important outcomes of my visit to the United Kingdom is that we created a good basis for the development of relations between the two countries, and provided fairly enough information about Azerbaijan, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.”

Later on the same evening President Heydar Aliyev received the Turkish Ambassador to the United Kingdom Candemir Onhon. An official reception featuring the well-known scholars was arranged in honor of the Azerbaijani President at Oxford University, one of the oldest universities in the world.

A memorandum on scientific cooperation was signed between the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan and the Royal Society of London, United Kingdom, during Heydar Aliyev’s official visit.

The visit, which ended on February 25, became another success of Azerbaijan’s foreign policy. The agreements signed between Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom during the visit opened a new era in the mutual relations. According to Baroness Chalker, these agreements are corner stones of the relations between the two countries, on which a magnificent building of cooperation will be erected in future.

## OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA (March 7-10, 1994)

“..In general, China supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan in our joint declarations, in different actions, and in international organizations. It is a very important issue. You know that China is a permanent member of the UN Security Council and its attitude is surely very positive and important for us...”

*From the interview of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to the journalists within the framework of his state visit to China – March 18, 2005*

### Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the People's Republic of China

March 7, 1994

Speaking to the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev, the chairman of the PRC Jiang Jemingh said: “China attaches great importance to the development of the friendly relations with Azerbaijan, and we are ready to make joint efforts to expand cooperation in all the spheres.”

Jiang Jemingh noted that the contacts between the two countries age over 2000 years and it derives its roots from the period of the Silk Road. The Chinese people always had friendly feelings towards the Azerbaijani people.

The Chinese leader said that the declaration of the independence of Azerbaijan and establishment of diplomatic relations between Beijing and Baku have created favorable conditions for the expansion of the bilateral contacts. These contacts develop on stable and firm basis. He also said that it is possible to strengthen joint activity in the international affairs and in the framework of the United Nations as well. China is a member of the UN Security Council.

The chairman of the PRC said that he was concerned with the escalation of the conflict in Karabakh. Jiang Jemingh said: “Continuation of this conflict, which resulted in great human and material losses, is detrimental for the both parties. We sincerely wish that Azerbaijan and Armenia settle this conflict peacefully as soon as possible.”

In his turn Heydar Aliyev noted that China plays an important role in the international political and economic affairs, and Azerbaijan is interested in the study of the Chinese experience.

The leaders of the two countries expressed such an opinion that the relations

between the two states must be established on five principles of peaceful co-existence.

On the same day, Jiang Jemingh and Heydar Aliyev signed a joint statement on the development of friendly relations between Azerbaijan and PRC. Agreements on air communication, scientific-technical and cultural cooperation, medicine, radio and TV broadcasting and tourism were also signed between the two countries.

On March 8, Heydar Aliyev met the Chinese Prime Minister Li Pengh. The issues of different aspects of bilateral relations and the situation in Azerbaijan and in the region as a whole were also touched upon at the meeting.

## **Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the press conference in Beijing during his official visit to China**

March 8, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen!

It is our second day in Beijing. I am on an official visit at the initiative of the chairman of the People's Republic of China. I am accompanied by a large Azerbaijani delegation here. We had very useful meetings with the Chinese authorities. Yesterday the official welcoming ceremony was held, then I had negotiations with Chairman Jiang Tszemin. The talks ended with the signature of a number of documents. I had a comprehensive exchange of views on bilateral relations with the chairman of the People's Republic of China.

We came to a unanimous conclusion that the relations between China and Azerbaijan should be developed more comprehensively and successfully. Development of trade, economy, science, culture and tourism is reflected in the documents we signed as a result of the agreement. We exchanged views on topical issues of international situation. The position of China in international politics, in particular, in relation with the newly independent states is of great importance for us.

We found out that our positions in respect to the territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, sovereignty, independence completely coincide. I informed the Chinese leader about the current situation in Azerbaijan, as well as of the ongoing Armenian-Azerbaijani war, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, our attempts to cease hostilities, to stop the war, to reach peace through negotiations. Today I met Premier Li Peng. We discussed similar issues in our meeting. We strengthened our confidence that the position of the Chinese authorities regarding the international and domestic politics is unanimous and stable. We are very interested in the economic reforms carried out for many years in the People's Republic of China. We touched upon these issues in our meetings with the leader and Premier of China. Today we met the minister for reforms. We exchanged views on economic reforms. Our visit is still underway. Tomorrow we shall have meetings in Beijing, then depart for Shanghai. By the way, visiting Shanghai was suggested by the Chinese leader. We are satisfied with the initial results of our visit. As I mentioned, we had very useful, interesting talks and negotiations. The Chairman of the People's Republic of China and I signed a declaration on the principles of cooperation be-

tween our countries. Seven other inter-state documents were signed. These documents determine the future development of relations between Azerbaijan and China. It is also important that we could inform the Chinese authorities about the situation in our country and in our region, the ongoing war that broke out as a result of aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and many other issues. Shortly, the first visit of the Azerbaijani president to China has been successful, cordial relations between the authorities of the two countries have been established, the Chinese government was informed on the regional situation. It should be noted that the distance between our countries requires detailed and comprehensive information about our region. Azerbaijan is a newly independent state, which is going through a difficult phase of its history. Therefore, it is very important to establish high-level relations between Azerbaijan and China, to other prospects of their further development. We attach great importance to it as China occupies an important position in global economic system, enjoys high reputation in international arena, is a permanent member of the UN Security Council.

I would like to briefly inform you about the situation in Azerbaijan, the conducted measures, the solution of our problems, as well as the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and the Nagorno-Karabakh problem.

Azerbaijan gained its independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union. The Azerbaijani people lived under the Russian Empire and the Soviet Union for 200 years but they have always strived for independence. Like other peoples, the Azerbaijanis have always aspired for freedom. Therefore, achievement of independence became a historical event. However, the independent Azerbaijan faced challenges, such as socio-economic development, full sovereignty, independence, statehood, integration with international community. All these issues have been solved over the past two years in complicated circumstances also generated by the military aggression of Armenia.

The economy of Azerbaijan is in deep crisis, which adversely affects the welfare of population. There is a crisis in the republics of the former Soviet Union in recent years as a result of disintegration it has covered all the newly independent states, including Azerbaijan. The crisis is deepening in Azerbaijan because of the said aggression. The military conflict, which broke out because of the claims of Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh, has escalated and led to the occupation of almost 20% of the Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian armed forces. Over one million people from the occupied territories have lost their homes, become refugees and settled in other regions of Azerbaijan. They are now living in hard conditions.

Unfortunately, the political situation in Azerbaijan was not stable in the recent years. The war with Armenia and the struggle between various political groups for power led to the change of the government in the country. Such a difficult situation

arose last summer, Azerbaijan was on the verge of the civil war. But, in my opinion, it is possible to overcome these processes. At present, the internal socio-political situation in Azerbaijan is quite stable. Yet, all those factors had a negative impact on the socio-economic situation and caused additional difficulties. The domestic policy is now experiencing the process of building a democratic legal state. There are favorable conditions in Azerbaijan for developing democracy, political pluralism, multi-party system, protection of human rights, protection of individual freedoms, freedom of conscience, religion and entrepreneurship. The independent Azerbaijan is now building a democratic society based on the principles of freedom and democracy.

Currently, about 40 political parties and over 600 newspapers are registered and freely function in Azerbaijan. This is a big number for a small country with a population of seven million. Certainly, the parties and press have the right to express their views. Some of them are in opposition. All these factors demonstrate the complete independence and freedom for democratic development in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is a multinational state. All the Azerbaijani citizens, regardless of ethnicity, religion, political views, enjoy equal rights. Favorable conditions are being set to let every Azerbaijani citizen feel free and equal.

Azerbaijan's foreign policy is based on principles of development of equal relations with all countries of the world. We already have diplomatic relations with a number of countries. Azerbaijan is a member of the United Nations and other international organizations, intends to take an active part in the international community. Our visit to China, the documents signed between our countries prove that Azerbaijan tries to build friendly relations with other countries; this principle is the basis for the future development of the Chinese-Azerbaijani relations.

The aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan is a hard problem for us. Armenia launched the conflict in order to annex Nagorno-Karabakh, which is a part of Azerbaijan. The war complicated the situation in our region, inflicted losses on the Azerbaijani and Armenian peoples. Unfortunately, the war still continues, people are being killed, blood is being shed. I repeat that this is the most difficult problem for Azerbaijan. Our country tries to stop the war, solve the problem only peacefully. However, unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces from the occupied territories, restoration of the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders are rather inevitable conditions.

Unfortunately, some circles and countries refer to this conflict as an attempt for autonomy for the Armenians living in Nagorno-Karabakh. This is not true. Such opinion may be the result of the false information provided by the active Armenian propaganda. The Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh had an autonomy within Azerbaijan for almost 70 years. Nagorno-Karabakh was granted self-governance

because 70% of the population was the Armenians, 30% - the Azerbaijanis. The conflict broke out because of the attempts of Armenian to annex Nagorno-Karabakh. Naturally, Azerbaijan could not accept this annexation, which resulted in the outbreak of the conflict.

Our principle is to ensure the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. We do not claim to the territory of any nation, even though there is historical basis for it. And we shall not give up our own lands. We try to cease the hostilities and peacefully regulate the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations; of course, our state guarantees the security and rights of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh. If the proposal on unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces from the occupied territories is accepted, the Azerbaijani side can consider the status of autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh.

We are eager to solve all the problems through international organizations, the United Nations, the UN Security Council, the CSCE, and the Minsk Group created for solution of the problem within the frames of the CSCE. The UN Security Council considered this issue several times and adopted four resolutions on the unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied districts of Azerbaijan.

Nevertheless, the Armenian side fully ignores the resolutions. The activities of CSCE and the Minsk Group in this connection have not yielded any results so far. However, CSCE and the Minsk Group have adopted a number of decisions and even set up special schedules on the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied regions of Azerbaijan. However, they were unsuccessful. Armenia's aggressive actions against Azerbaijan and ignoring the decisions of international organizations clearly prove the Armenian attempts to violate our territorial integrity and to alter our borders. We can never accept such claims though. Backed by some foreign circles and countries, Armenia ignores the decisions of the UN Security Council, CSCE and other international organizations.

This map clearly shows the extent of the Armenian aggression. Here you can see Azerbaijan, the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, which is a part of Azerbaijan, and Armenia. The area marked in red is the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province. It is completely under the control of the Armenian armed forces. As I said, 30 percent of the population was the Azerbaijanis, expelled from there long ago. They are 50,000 people. At present, there is no person of the Azerbaijani origin in Nagorno-Karabakh, while the Armenian population still remains there.

Having expanded the scope of aggression, the Armenian armed forces occupied Lachin, Kalbajar, Agdam, Fizuli, Jabrail, Zangilan and Gubadly of Azerbaijan. The occupied territory covers 20% of the territory of Azerbaijan. One million people from the occupied region have turned into refugees. Most of them have settled in Baku, the

rest in other regions of Azerbaijan. The above-mentioned resolutions of the Security Council are related to Kalbajar, Agdam, Fizuli, Zangilan.

By occupying those districts, the Armenian armed forces have ensured a direct communication with Armenia and taken control over a 140 kilometers long border of Azerbaijan with Iran. This is Iran on the map. I think that there is no need to prove that it is a military aggression and occupation. There is no need to prove the world community that it is necessary to put an end to the aggression.

I repeat that we are trying to solve this problem peacefully. We shall continue our peace initiatives and measures. We cannot accept the current situation. If the peace efforts do not produce any results, the Azerbaijani army will conduct successful operations in order to liberate our lands by force. Recently, an agreement on ceasefire and on peace negotiations regarding the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied territories since March 1 was reached through the mediation of the Ministry of Defense of the Russian Federation. We strictly observe the principles of the agreement. However, the Armenian armed forces attacked the positions of the Azerbaijani military units on March 3 and March 5. Our troops have beaten them off properly. Those attacks led to new casualties and bloodshed on the either sides.

The territorial integrity and inviolability of borders are important principles of international law enshrined in UN documents. The Chinese officials reconfirmed their position that change of borders and aggression against the territorial integrity of any country must not be allowed. Based on these principles enshrined in UN documents and in international law and approved by all the countries, we shall be able to achieve the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Azerbaijan. Of course, we shall need the support of the world community, international organizations and countries, including the People's Republic of China. I must note that the Chinese delegation to the UN, especially to the Security Council always holds fair position when considering the issues related to aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan.

Therefore, I expressed my gratitude to the Chinese authorities for their fair position. I have informed the reporters here about the domestic situation, challenges and foreign policy of Azerbaijan, as well as about the results of our meetings in Beijing. Therefore, I will not take your time any more. I am ready to answer your questions if you have any.

***Question: What is Russia's role in the settlement of the conflict? What are the prospects for the development of the Russian-Azerbaijani relations?***

***Answer:*** I'll start from the second part of your question. At the moment, the Azerbaijani-Russian relations are normal although there were difficulties because of the position of the former authorities of Azerbaijan. These relations have been regulated since the second half of last year. I visited Russia, met President Boris Yeltsin,

Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin. We agreed upon eliminating the barriers in the Azerbaijani-Russian relations. These relations are quite friendly at present.

As for Russia's role in settlement of the conflict, Russia always takes part in the process. As you know, this conflict broke out in the early 1988, and the efforts to solve it were made within the Soviet Union. The efforts failed though. Actually it seems to me that they didn't want to settle the conflict although it was possible. In other words, given that Russia is the legal successor of the former Soviet Union, Russia has since joined this process.

Russia is a member both of CSCE and the Minsk Group. As I noted, the Minsk Group specially deals with this problem. In addition, Russia puts forward its own initiatives as well. For example, Azerbaijani, Armenian and Russian defense ministers signed a protocol in Moscow on February 18. The protocol intends the withdrawal of the Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. An agreement on ceasefire on March 1 was reached; the withdrawal of the troops was to begin three days later. However, it never happened. What can I say? Russia takes part in this process, but there is no result yet.

*Question: Mr. President, I have two questions. Recently, China has repeatedly stated its readiness to take an active part in solution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. You probably negotiated on this matter. I would like to ask whether this readiness means not only an active position in the Security Council and other organizations, but also peacebuilding in conflict zone, mediation? This is my first question.*

*The second question: did you discuss China's economic assistance, particularly loans to Azerbaijan in your talks? Thank you.*

*Answer:* Referring to your first question, I noted earlier that China holds a principled and fair position within the framework of the UN Security Council. Special processes for regulating this conflict is carried out in the framework of the CSCE. China does not belong to the European Union. No issue on mediation was raised here. As for China's assistance to Azerbaijan, our cooperation will undoubtedly be mutually beneficial. At the same time, China may provide loans to Azerbaijan.

*Question: Did you discuss the delivery of arms and military assistance from China?*

*Second question: We were just handed in a book titled "The Armenian Nasism". You just said that it would be better to provide the world community detailed and comprehensive information on the events in your region. Do you consider such publications as information or propaganda?*

*Answer:* Regarding your first question, I can say that we did not talk about China's military assistance. There is no need for it. No matter how difficult it is, Azerbaijan

does and will overcome this issue.

As for the booklet you mentioned, if you were more familiar with the Armenian agitation in other countries and international organization, you would have not spoken about this booklet so. The Armenian side spread more booklets and materials worldwide. The inequitable situation in the current conflict stems from the fact that the Armenian side enjoys more instruments to influence public opinion in other countries, while Azerbaijan does not possess them at all.

You know how strong the Armenian diaspora in Europe, the USA, Russia is. You are also informed about the efforts of the Armenian diaspora to confuse the public opinion through the Russian mass media. Thus, I don't want you to be confused by this booklet. Objectively written, this booklet aims at providing information, not agitation.

Thank you for your attention.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the People's Republic of China (March 7-10, 1994)**

### **Historical Reference**

Among the Eastern Asian countries China is the most interested in the relations with Azerbaijan. China's interest in Azerbaijan and the Caspian basin is natural. With an unprecedented fast growth over the past 20 years, China's main threat can be the shortage of raw materials and energy. In this regard, Azerbaijan is among the countries, which is attractive to China. The latter shows great interest in global projects in the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea and the Central Asia, particularly in the East-West project implemented within the framework of TRACECA.

The Azerbaijani-Chinese relations have always been developing. The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to China in March 1994 fostered this development.

On March 7, Heydar Aliyev was officially welcomed by the President of PRC Jiang Jemin. The bilateral negotiations took place afterwards. Jiang Jemin noted that China attaches great importance to the development of relations with Azerbaijan and is ready to enhance the cooperation in all the spheres.

After the negotiations Jiang Jemin and Heydar Aliyev signed a joint statement for the development of friendly relations between China and Azerbaijan, signed a series of agreements on opening air flights, on scientific-technical and cultural cooperation, on mutual activities in the field of medicine, radio and television, tourism.

On March 8, Heydar Aliyev met Prime Minister Li Peng. Various aspects of bilateral relations were discussed during the meeting.

On the same day, Heydar Aliyev held a press conference dedicated to the initial outcomes of his visit. Expressing his satisfaction with the initial results of the visit, Heydar Aliyev thoroughly informed the journalists about the biggest problem of Azerbaijan - the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and underlined the importance of combining the efforts of the UN Security Council members, including China for the solution of the conflict.

On March 9, President Heydar Aliyev delivered a speech in Beijing International Trade Development Assistance Committee. Giving information on Azerbaijan and bilateral relations, President said: "It is our third day in your country and in the beautiful capital Beijing. We have managed to exchange views on many issues and even to sign some important documents in these three days. These documents aim at further development of the relations, especially in the field of trade and economy. I appreciate this friendly atmosphere that has surrounded us thanks to the Chinese authorities and to all of those who communicated with us since our

arrival. Frankly, we feel like home here. This is very important, because we are trying to establish friendly relations with the People's Republic of China. The visit of the Azerbaijani president to China was generated by the necessity of mutual relations and their development."

By paying a visit to Shanghai, President Heydar Aliyev got acquainted with the free economic zone and China's economic model. A visit to the Great Wall was part of this introduction.

Speaking to the journalists in Almaty en route from China to Baku, the Azerbaijani President appreciated the results of his visit: "In general, I think that the visit to the People's Republic of China was a historic event. Because the relations between China and Azerbaijan have never been at this level. Of course, we can mention historical ties, the Great Silk Road and so on. However, the establishment of close interstate relations is a great political event, first of all, for the Republic of Azerbaijan."

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN  
(June 29 – July 2, 1994)**

“...After the official visit of the national leader of our nation Heydar Aliyev to the Islamic Republic of Iran our bilateral relations has been given a new impulse. We intend to develop our relations in all the fields, to strengthen our ties in all the spheres. At present, the relations between Iran and Azerbaijan are developing in political, economic, cultural, humanitarian and other fields..”

*From the statement of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of Iran Mohammed Khatami – August 5, 2004*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar  
Aliyev at the press conference in Tehran**

July 2, 1994

Ladies and gentlemen, dear members of the press,

This is the fourth day that I am in the Islamic Republic of Iran at the invitation of Mr. President Hashemi Rafsanjani. The visit comes to an end and in a few hours I shall leave Tehran. I can say that this visit is a new stage in the further development of friendly and fraternal relations between Iran and Azerbaijan.

Speaking about the visit, I want to note that the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian people are our neighbors of a friendly and brotherly country. Therefore, we believe that the relations between this country and Azerbaijan should always be sincere and friendly. Our cooperation should develop intensively in all areas.

I came here for this purpose and I can say that in the days of my visit I had fruitful meetings with the leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei, esteemed President Hashemi Rafsanjani, head of the Iranian parliament, Natig Nouri, foreign minister Ali Akbar Vilayati, minister of Cooperation Ghulam Reza Shafei and other officials. During these meetings we held discussions on the development of cooperation between the two countries and two peoples in the areas of economy, trade, culture, science, technology and others. Documents agreed on the results of these negotiations will be signed today. I believe that this issue is not limited with these documents, but our relations have much broader limits than those documents.

Certainly, we had an exchange of views on all the negotiations. In fact Azerbaijan

lives in hard conditions of war in the recent years, because of the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. As a consequence 20 per cent of our territory has been occupied, over one million Azerbaijanis have been expelled from the occupied lands.

In conditions of severe social and economic crisis, in the state of war in which Azerbaijan is at present as a result of the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan we have always felt the support of the Islamic Republic of Iran. We had discussions on this issue in our present negotiations. I expressed my gratitude to the leaders of Iran for the assistance, solidarity and for protecting our interests in the international arena.

I would note it once more that these meetings are a new stage of friendly and fraternal relations between Azerbaijan and Iran, they also create a good environment for the rapid development of these relations and the Azerbaijani side will try to effectively use this situation in future. Due to lack of time, I conclude my speech with this brief information.

***Question: Israel, as well as Armenia occupied Muslim lands. How is it happened that you decided to establish relations with Israel?***

**Answer:** First, I want to say that Azerbaijan has always observed and will observe the international principles and sacred international norms. One of the most important of these principles is the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of countries and prevention of the seizure of one country by another country. By following these principles, we stand in defense of the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of all countries, including the Islamic Republic of Iran. Azerbaijan does not claim to other countries, never will be on the path of occupant, has always condemned and will condemn the occupation. Armenia is a neighbor of both Iran and Azerbaijan. The aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan continues for more than six years, it is a big problem both for Azerbaijan and Iran. The Armenian armed forces destroy Muslim monuments, monuments of history and culture in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Thus, it does not concern only us, but also all the Muslim nations.

Azerbaijan is an independent country, builds its foreign policy on democratic principles and establishes mutual relations with all the countries of the world in order to strengthen its independence.

***Question: In one of your speeches you said that Azerbaijan wants to benefit from the support of major countries of the world. Can you tell what countries did you exactly mean? Do you observe the same principles in your relations with Russia?***

**Answer:** I noted that we want to establish mutual relations with all countries. Russia is the biggest country in the north of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan was part of Russia for about two centuries. Great economic potential of Azerbaijan developed in the time when it was a part of the Soviet Union for 70 years, it is closely connected with

Russia. Speaking about the establishment of mutual relations of Azerbaijan with all the countries first of all, I mean the neighbors.

Of course, Azerbaijan should continue to maintain good relations with Russia and we conduct our foreign policy in that direction. The Russian troops are placed in Georgia and Armenia. There are no Russian troops in Azerbaijan. In all the Muslim republics of Central Asia there are also the Russian troops. The borders of these republics, as well as of Georgia and Armenia with foreign countries, Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan are protected by the Russian troops. The borders of our country with Iran and Turkey are guarded by our own troops in Azerbaijan. If Armenia has large Russian military units then you have to think for yourself what that means. Russia tries to provide mediation in ending the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan. International organizations, in particular the CSCE and its Minsk Group also work on this issue. We want to put an end to war, to save our people from this disaster and to liberate our occupied lands. Therefore, we certainly cannot refuse all these possibilities of mediation.

***Question: Mr. President, was the status of the Caspian Sea formally raised at the high-level meetings held in Iran?***

***Answer:*** A few days before my visit to Iran the special representative of the President of Russia on the Mountainous Garabagh, Vladimir Kazimirov visited Tehran. Returning from Tehran, he came to Baku where he met me and gave information about his visit to Iran for consultations with Iran on the Mountainous Garabagh and some other issues. In regard to your question I can say that you touched on the problem not discussed during my visit. Thus, I cannot say anything about it.

***Question: On what principles and criteria does the Republic of Azerbaijan establish its relations with Tehran, Ankara and Moscow?***

***Answer:*** Let me repeat that we are willing to establish friendly relations with the neighboring countries. Therefore, Iran and Turkey are friendly and brotherly countries for us. I have given you broad information on relations with Moscow, Russia and therefore there is no need to repeat it.

Within the framework of the program of the visit there very short time was allocated to the press conference. I ask you to come to Baku where I shall have more time to answer your questions. Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Islamic Republic of Iran (June 29 - July 2, 1994)**

### **Historical Reference**

The relations existing between Azerbaijan and Iran in different fields have their own characteristic aspects. Closeness of the two nations from the viewpoint of religion, culture, and moral values, existence of a common history are factors that affect the relations between Tehran and Baku.

In the first years of its independence the relations of the countries were complicated because of the contradictory policy pursued by the governing bodies. It is possible to characterize years of 1992-1993 as the most strained period of the relations between the two countries.

Only after the return of Heydar Aliyev to power in 1993 a new stage emerged in the relations with Iran. The official visit of President of Azerbaijan Republic Heydar Aliyev to Iran, his meetings with the heads of the government, and the documents signed there stimulated the improvement of the Azerbaijani-Iranian relations.

President Heydar Aliyev met the Supreme Religious Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayetullah Seyyid Ali Khomaini during his visit. The existing relations and their future perspectives were discussed at the meeting.

President Heydar Aliyev also had fruitful meetings with President of Iran Hashimi Rafsanjani, head of the Parliament of Iran Natig Nuri, minister of foreign affairs Ali Akber Vilayati, minister of cooperation Gulam Reza Shafeyi and other officials. In these meetings negotiations were held on the development of cooperation between the two countries in the fields of economy, trade, culture, science, technology and in others, important results were achieved.

On 2<sup>nd</sup> of July Heydar Aliyev made a speech in front of the students completed their studies in the diplomatic courses of Political Studies Center of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran. While talking about his official visit to that country and the character of the relations between two countries Heydar Aliyev mentioned: "at the invitation of the President of Iran Islam Republic esteemed Hashimi Rafsanjani it is the fourth day of my official visit to Iran. Here we had very beneficial meetings and I think that this visit is an important stage for the further development of the relations between Azerbaijan and Iran."

On that day Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the press conference in Tehran. The President mentioned that he considered his first official visit to Iran was successful, and answered the questions of the journalists.

During the visit a statement containing of 13 articles on the development of friendly relations between two countries was signed. The statement determined the main principles of cooperation in all the fields of life.

As a result of the first official visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Iran and his negotiations, the process of development of the relations between two countries has started.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI  
ARABIA (July 9-13, 1994)**

“...Political relations between Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan is on a high level. This visit reconfirmed it. We always support each other, and cooperate in bilateral format and within the framework of regional partnership. As you know, Saudi Arabia explicitly has expressed its position in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh and has not established any diplomatic relations with Armenia until now. It is a good example of friendship, brotherhood and kindness...”

*From the brief interview of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the journalists in front of the mosque in Mecca after visit to Kaaba – March 9, 2005*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the press conference**  
Jeddah, Saudi Arabia, July 11, 1994

I am on an official visit to Saudi Arabia at the invitation of my dear friend and brother Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques. This visit is very meaningful and important for the Republic of Azerbaijan because we are on the sacred land and have got an opportunity to visit the two holy cities. It is also important because Saudi Arabia is the first Arab country which I visit as President of the independent Azerbaijan.

Saudi Arabia occupies a very prominent place in the Arab and Islamic world. Therefore, it is not surprising that I pay my first visit to Saudi Arabia. An official invitation of the King of Saudi Arabia, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques is very precious for me.

We have been feeling hospitality of our brothers every second since we arrived in this holy land. My visit has been surrounded by a friendly, brotherly environment. It was very valuable for me and our delegation to visit the holy Kaaba on the first day of our visit and fulfill our sacred duty. It is a great honor for us to visit the holy city of Mecca, touch the holy Kaaba stone and pray there. I thank my God that I could fulfill my intention. I also thank my dear brother, the Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, for his help. We are very pleased with this pilgrimage that we completed on the first day of our visit to Saudi Arabia.

The aim of my visit is to establish relations between Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia

and lay the foundation for the further development of these relations. My meeting and long negotiations with my dear friend Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud have paved the way for our aim. Our negotiations were held in friendly atmosphere. I was treated with the highest level of hospitality. Most importantly, our talks were beneficial and important for establishing the relations between Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia. We had an exchange of views on all issues.

We share the same views regarding the prospects of our relations. We both approved the necessity of establishing and developing these relations. We also had a wide exchange of views on the situation in the Islamic world and in international arena. My dear friend Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud displayed great interest in the past and current situation of Azerbaijan. We also talked in detail about the situation in the newly independent states. In particular, I informed comprehensively about the situation in the Caucasus, the current Armenian-Azerbaijani war, Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan, and we held a wide discussion on it. My meetings and negotiations with the Saudi king and high officials were very important for establishing and developing friendly relations between our countries.

I attended the Chamber of Industry and Commerce of Saudi Arabia, met the members of the Chamber, local businesspeople. I reckon my meeting, invitation and information on business opportunities in Azerbaijan will attract the Saudi businesspeople to Azerbaijan and contribute to the development of economic relations between the two countries.

I conducted meetings with the leaders of the international Islamic organizations headquartered in Jeddah, such as the Organization of Islamic Conference, the Organization of Islamic Union, the International Islamic Organization "Nijat", the Islamic Development Bank, the Islamic Communications Organization. We exchanged views on the relations of those organizations with Azerbaijan, and I called on them to pay more attention to our country.

During the visit the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Hasan Hasanov held talks with his Saudi colleague. In accordance with the Saudi law, the foreign ministers concluded the general agreement between Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia. As an important document, the agreement covers cooperation in economic, scientific-technical, cultural, tourism and other fields. Since I am on an official visit to Saudi Arabia, I respect local laws and traditions and accept this document as an important intergovernmental agreement.

Regarding the outcomes of my visit, we shall issue a joint Saudi Arabia-Azerbaijan statement to reflect the prospects of the relations between the two countries. Once again, I reiterate that my visit to Saudi Arabia is extremely important for the Republic of Azerbaijan. With this trip we demonstrate the Azerbaijan is part of the Islamic

world, and I am glad that we are establishing friendly and brotherly relations with Saudi Arabia which occupies a prominent position in the Islamic world.

I think that both Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia will appreciate our negotiations and the results of my visit. I can say with confidence that this visit and its outcomes will be accepted by Azerbaijani public with great respect. The most important result of our meetings and negotiations was the opportunity to give Saudi Arabia get detailed information about the independent Azerbaijan, its current hard situation. As you know, Azerbaijan gained independence only two years ago. Until then Azerbaijan had been part of Russia, then of the Soviet Union for about 200 years. National independence is a historic achievement for our country. As an independent nation, Azerbaijan is part of the world community at present. Azerbaijan is a member of international organizations. Our people have full independence.

As an independent nation, Azerbaijan faces hard and, difficult challenges. One of them is the transition from the former socio-political and economic structure to the structure which prevails in most countries. Of course, after 70 years under the communist ideology and socialist system, the Azerbaijani people face difficult problems in transition. It had led to a deep social and economic crisis in Azerbaijan. We must overcome this stage. It is impossible to switch to a new system without this transition stage. It is the same in all the newly independent states.

Another reason aggravating the situation is Armenia's military aggression that ongoing over six years. This aggression has brought much suffer to Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has been fighting bloody battles in order to protect its territorial integrity and inviolability of its borders. The independent Azerbaijan was born under these circumstances and is now taking the first steps as an independent nation.

While being here I feel that the people in Saudi Arabia and other foreign countries are poorly informed about the present situation in Azerbaijan, about the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. Information received from channels of different states is not always unbiased. Therefore, I would like to give Saudi news agencies brief information about Azerbaijan.

As you know, Azerbaijan, predominantly a Muslim country with population of 7 million, is situated in the Caucasus. Under the Soviet Union, Islam was banned in our country for 70 years. Nevertheless, the Azerbaijanis kept their religion and passed it from generation to generation. When restoring the national traditions after gaining independence, Islam claimed its own place in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan enjoys huge economic, scientific and cultural potential. Our history and roots strongly tie Azerbaijan with the Muslim countries, including Saudi Arabia. As you know, Azerbaijan was converted to Islam in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The Minister of Hajj in Saudi Arabia, who is accompanying me, informed me that according

to his researches, Azerbaijan is one of the countries where Islam was spread. Our traditions are very similar and may even be the same. The Azerbaijanis lived in the holy cities of Mecca and Medina throughout centuries. At present, people of the Azerbaijani origin still reside in these cities. Such factors prove once more that the source of our cultures and moral is the same.

Azerbaijan is rich with mineral resources. The most important one is oil. The oil industry of Azerbaijan is 150 years old, it promises bright future. Azerbaijan possesses advanced industry, a wide range of agricultural opportunities, prominent scientific centers, well-known scientists. A number of universities operate in Azerbaijan. There is almost no illiterate person in our country. In spite of this enormous potential, Azerbaijan is deprived of the opportunity to build its future because of the aggression of Armenia.

Azerbaijan and Armenia are small, neighboring nations. The Armenians are Christians. The purpose of their aggression against Azerbaijan is to annex our lands. By spreading biased information various information agencies report this military aggression as a border dispute, or call both countries equally guilty. Such information is distributed deliberately, in order to harm the reputation of Azerbaijan, by the foreign mass media which supports Armenia. Another reason of this situation is because we do not provide true information about Azerbaijan abroad, including Muslim countries.

The Republic of Armenia with an area of 29,000 square kilometers and a population of 3.5-4 million occupied a part of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan with an area 86,000 square kilometers and a population of 7 million.

Currently, 20% of the Azerbaijani territory is under the control of the armed forces of Armenia, while nearly one million Azerbaijanis have lost their homes and are living in different parts of the country as refugees. Battles between the armed forces of Armenia and Azerbaijan take place in our territory. Armenia claims to the former Nagorno-Karabakh province of Azerbaijan and wishes to annex the province with the Armenian population. 50,000 Azerbaijani residents of Nagorno-Karabakh were forced by the Armenians to leave and have become IDPs. As other districts of Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh is also under the Armenian occupation.

Defending own lands cost the Azerbaijani people many martyrs. Our people still committe to defend our lands. The present situation does not mean that Armenia is stronger than Azerbaijan. Armenia is supported and assisted by several superpowers. That is why, the Armenian armed forces were able to obtain some advantage in the war. It is a temporary advantage though. Azerbaijan must maintain its sovereignty over all its territories.

The world community adherent to international principles and norms must adopt

effective resolutions for ensuring the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of Azerbaijan. It was Armenia that launched war. We only protect our lands, and desire to put an end to this war by peaceful means. Therefore, we cherish our hopes in the international organizations and their decisions. The UN Security Council adopted four resolutions regarding the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by the Armenian armed forces. The resolutions strongly demand unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupants from the Azerbaijani territories. Armenia ignores these resolutions.

The CSCE and its Minsk Group mediate in the peaceful settlement of the conflict. We cherish great hopes in the CSCE, with which we closely cooperate. Several superpowers, including Russia also keep their mediation efforts to put an end to the Armenian-Azerbaijani war. The involvement of the Organization of the Islamic Conference into this issue would be very beneficial, too. I repeated this idea in my meeting with the leaders of the organization. In my opinion, the Organization of the Islamic Conference can function with the CSCE in this issue.

We also expect the US efforts in stopping the war and establishing peace in the region. This issue is discussed in my correspondence with the US President Bill Clinton. I discussed this problem with the United States Secretary of State Mr. Christopher in Istanbul on June 9. We suppose that not ignoring our situation, the United States, the European countries will make their efforts for establishing peace in the region, for the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands, securing the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Our people are living under hard difficult socio-economic conditions because of the war. Imagine that one million out of seven in the country are refugees. In this connection, many countries provide humanitarian aid to Azerbaijan. By the order of the Saudi king, two planes full of humanitarian aid were sent to the Azerbaijani refugees on the eve of my visit to Saudi Arabia. The International Islamic Organization "Nijat" takes care of 10,000 refugees accommodated in Barda, 3,000 in Sumgayit. The Islamic Republic of Iran sponsors 100,000 displaced people, the Turkish Red Crescent - 15,000-20,000. As this aid eases our situation, I thank those countries and organizations. Yet, this aid cannot completely heal our wounds. Under these circumstances, Azerbaijan is in need of the assistance of rich countries, such as Saudi Arabia, and I hope they will aid us.

I would like to remind once more the principles which Azerbaijan observes. Azerbaijan is an independent state. We will protect our freedom, not allow dependence on any country again. Having refused the communist ideology and socialism, Azerbaijan will not return to that policy. As a part of the Muslim world, Azerbaijan will try to obtain a worthy place in the Muslim world. Democratic

principles, such as freedom of speech, freedom of religion, in particular, freedom of conscience are and will further be guaranteed. We shall pursue the market economy, encourage entrepreneurship, private property. The Azerbaijani economy will be in close touch with the advanced economies.

For implementing the afore-mentioned principles, for developing and achieving our goals, Azerbaijan has potentials, which we shall try to effectively utilize. However, the state of war, occupation of our lands, socio-economic crisis aggravate our situation. We need support of the brotherly and friendly countries in order to overcome these problems.

We would appreciate setting up of an information and cultural center of Azerbaijan here, an Azerbaijani press office or any other organization in order to disseminate more information about our country in the Arab states, particularly in Saudi Arabia.

I hope that my visit, meetings and the present press conference create a strong bridge between our countries, and both sides will benefit from it. Another sacred visit awaits me and my delegation. Tomorrow we shall visit the holy city of Medina. Upon our return to Azerbaijan, we shall provide more information about these holy places and work for the development of our country with a new driving force.

At the end of my speech, I express my gratitude to my dear friend and brother Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud, King of Saudi Arabia, Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, for the hospitality. I wish the Saudi Arabian population all the best. Today we attended two enterprises – oil refining plant and a vegetable oil producing plant. We witnessed a high scientific and technical level in Saudi Arabia. I am confident that these opportunities facilitate Saudi Arabia's rapid development.

*Question: First of all, let me thank you for giving us detailed information. Your information already answered many questions we were going to ask you. My question is concerns your meeting with the Saudi businesspeople. You mentioned that Azerbaijan possesses rich natural resources and huge economic potentials. What kind of conditions can be created in Azerbaijan for our businesspeople?*

*Answer:* All favorable conditions will be created for the Saudi businesspeople. For example, exploitation of oil fields. We negotiate with the Western companies on joint developments in several oil fields. However, there are still unexploited oil fields. I invite the Saudi Arabian companies to Azerbaijan for the joint exploitation of oil fields. Your country has an enormous experience in oil and gas production, oil refining. All necessary conditions will be made available for the businesspeople in other fields of industry, agriculture, trade. As we build a market economy, stimulate private property, entrepreneurship, businesspeople can make huge profits if they invest in Azerbaijan. I ask you to spread it via your newspaper.

*Question: You spoke about the Armenian-Azerbaijani war, the Russian*

***mediation. What can you say about the Russian-Armenian relations?***

**Answer:** Armenia maintains very close relations with Russia. The Russian troops are stationed in the territory of Armenia. As you know, large Soviet troops were stationed throughout the Soviet Union, particularly along the borders of the constituent republics. After the fall of the USSR, the former Soviet troops were transferred to the Russian subordination. The newly independent states established their own armies. The Russian troops were withdrawn from some of the former Soviet countries, including Azerbaijan. Now there is not a single Russian soldier in Azerbaijan. But the Russian troops did not quit Armenia. On the contrary, their number has increased. At present Russia keeps in Armenia strong troops, with the status of military bases. This fact alone demonstrates the Armenian-Russian relations well.

***Question: You informed about the document signed by the foreign ministers of Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan. Does that document imply opening of embassies?***

**Answer:** Azerbaijan was the first state among the former-Soviet Muslim countries to open an embassy in Saudi Arabia. The Azerbaijani ambassador Elman Arasli, who is present here, has been operating in your country for more than three months. I ask Mr. Ambassador to stand up so that everyone can see him. I am proud that Azerbaijan was the first state among the former-Soviet Muslim countries to open an embassy in Saudi Arabia. I hope that other newly independent Muslim states will also open their embassies here.

Saudi Arabia has also appointed an ambassador to Azerbaijan. He will present me his credentials after my return to Baku. Unfortunately, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Turkey will work as an ambassador to Azerbaijan as well. I'd like Saudi Arabia to have an ambassador solely for Azerbaijan. As President, I will create all conditions for the Embassy of Saudi Arabia to Azerbaijan.

***Question: Mr. President, as far as I know, the Nagorno-Karabakh issue was first included in the agenda of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Karachi. Next meeting of the foreign ministers of Islamic states will take place in Tunisia soon. Will Azerbaijan participate in the meeting? If yes, will Azerbaijan put forward this issue and submit any draft resolution?***

**Answer:** Undoubtedly, Azerbaijan will be represented in any meeting organized by the Islamic countries. The meeting of foreign ministers in Tunisia will be attended by our Foreign Minister Hasan Hasanov. He is also present here. I would ask your newspaper and other mass media to assist us in the discussion of this issue and adoption of a final decision in the meeting in Tunisia. We will submit our draft and proposals. But I wish all the Islamic countries to make their efforts for the implementation of those proposals.

***Question: The Armenian-Azerbaijani war has been going on for several years. What kind of assistance have you received from the Islamic world all this time?***

***Answer:*** We have received some aid. Had Islamic countries supported Azerbaijan as much as non-Islamic states supported Armenia, we would have liberated our lands from the Armenian armed forces.

***Question: Has any company or businessperson from Saudi Arabia made investment in Azerbaijan or decided so?***

***Answer:*** No one yet as I am informed. The purpose of my visit to Saudi Arabia is to open our doors for you. I invite all businesspeople to Azerbaijan.

I thank you all. I invite you, reporters to Azerbaijan so that you can get acquainted with Azerbaijan and spread information about our country all over the Arab and Muslim countries.

## **Official Visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (July 9-13, 1994)**

### **Historical Reference**

Relations with the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, one of the most prominent countries of the Islamic and Arab world, is very important in the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Among other Arab countries the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev paid his first official visit to Saudi Arabia.

On July 9, the official visit of Heydar Aliyev at the invitation of King Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz al-Saud to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia started.

At the meeting the Azerbaijani and Saudi Presidents came to a common conclusion on the perspectives of the relations between the two countries, and expressed their hopes for the establishment and development of these relations. They also exchanged views on situation in the Muslim and the whole world. Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz al-Saud condemned the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and stressed the importance of the withdrawal of the aggressor from the occupied lands and restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

On July 11, a press conference of the Azerbaijani President was held in Saudi Arabia, Jeddah. Heydar Aliyev stated in the press conference: "The custodian of the two holy cities King Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz al-Saud got interested in the past and current situation of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. We talked broadly about the situation in the countries which were under the domination of the Soviet Union in the past. I gave information about the situation in the Caucasus, on the ongoing war between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. Meetings with the custodian of the two holy cities and high officials of Saudi Arabia were very beneficial for the establishment and development of friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia."

Heydar Aliyev also met the heads of the Organisation of the Islamic Conference and Islamic Development Bank, visited Mecca and Medina. During the visit five agreements on the cooperation in economy, trade, investments, culture, youth issues and sports were signed, a joint statement was adopted related to the results of the visit.

The Azerbaijani President stressed the advantages of the mutual relations with Saudi Arabia and stated: "This visit differs from others, because Saudi Arabia occupies a characteristic place in the world, this country has a special place in the Islamic world and greatly influences the world politics. Cooperation of Azerbaijan with such a country and establishment of relations in the fields of politics, economy, science and culture is very important for the consolidation of the position of Azerbaijan in the world."

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF BULGARIA  
(June 29-30, 1995)**

“...The Azerbaijani-Bulgarian relations are on a high level and cover all the fields. These relations have very bright future. Of course, these friendly relations play an important role in the improvement of bilateral relations. Our nations always cooperated in the past, and had friendly relations. When Azerbaijan gained independence these relations stepped into a new stage and currently they are very important both for our countries and the region..”

*From the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the reception held in honor of the President of Bulgaria Georgi Prvanov – March 10, 2008*

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zelev**

Sofia, June 29, 1995

Mr.President, ladies and gentlemen!

Distinguished representatives of mass media!

Unfortunately, I can not speak here to you in Azerbaijani, which is the official language of Azerbaijan. Because, we do not have enough professional interpreters, although we have a poet among our delegation. For many years, he translates the verses of the Bulgarian poets into Azerbaijani and successfully cooperates with the Bulgarian literature. But I felt that he had difficulties in translation during my speech in the Parliament. Therefore, I am going to speak Russian, to express my thoughts more clearly and understandably. In addition, you have a good interpreter.. This lady interpreters from Russian into Bulgarian and vice versa.

Perhaps you will understand me, because Azerbaijan gained its independence three years and a half ago. We used to use the Russian language in relations with other countries. But now our independent republic is using its own Azerbaijani. We have not yet been able to prepare interpreters in all languages. Of course, we have a lot of translators who know English, French and German. I believe that next time we shall have good translators for the Bulgarian-Azerbaijani languages.

First of all, I want to express my gratitude to the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zhelev for the invitation and for the official visit of the President of Azerbaijan which is coming to an end. I am very pleased with our meetings, joint work, talks and

negotiations, but most of all I am pleased with the talks with Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev, the opportunity given me to speak at the Bulgarian Parliament. I met the Prime Minister of Bulgaria. Most importantly, as Mr. Zhelev said, today we signed a very important document, the first document on friendship and cooperation between the two countries. It is an important document and lays the foundation for the future cooperation. I totally agree with Zhelyu Zhelev, the first step towards Azerbaijan from the Bulgarian side was made in 1992 when Bulgaria recognized the national independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. You know that like all the former Soviet republics, Azerbaijan gained independence after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Though Azerbaijan was independent in 1918, it was the first democratic republic in the East and existed for 23 months. But then, this republic was overthrown and the Soviet power was established in Azerbaijan. Now, after 77 years we have restored our independence and we need to be recognized by other states. Bulgaria is one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan and it is a very important fact. Unfortunately, in the time when we gained independence, Azerbaijan was at war with Armenia as well as today. The territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has been violated. Thus, the recognition of national and state independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan from Bulgaria in that period was undoubtedly a tremendous help to us. And now we are continuing our work on this basis and the contract we signed is a significant ground for the future partnership. Mr. Zhelev spoke about other signed documents and I do not want to take your time by repeating what he said. I will only say that these documents are of great significance, and give specific directions to our partnership. That is why, I am confident that the implementation of these documents will produce concrete results for developing cooperation and strengthening friendship between our peoples and countries. I agree with the opinion of Mr. Zhelev, on the areas of our cooperation that we have agreed and those we are going to agree. Indeed, they are important; they have great economic significance both for Bulgaria and Azerbaijan. We shall do everything possible to have practical cooperation on specific issues mentioned by Mr. Zhelev.

Azerbaijan is building a legal state, conducts economic reforms and marches towards the market economy. This November we shall hold the first elections to the parliament on democratic basis. We shall adopt the first constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan by a general poll of population. This year is very important for us and will undoubtedly be significant for the development and strengthening of democratic principles. Political pluralism prevails in our country. We attach great importance to the issues of protection of human rights. Our Republic is multinational. Regardless of nationality, language, religion and political views, all the citizens of Azerbaijan enjoy equal rights and they actively participate in the public life of the country.

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is a very serious problem for us. This

conflict started in 1988 with the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan in order to occupy the Nagorno-Karabakh, an integral part of Azerbaijan. It is already seven years we are at war; blood is shed, and approximately 20% of our territory has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. More than a million people have been driven out of the occupied territories. They live in tents in very critical conditions. Of course, all this aggravates the socio-economic and political situation in Azerbaijan.

Last May we agreed on a cease-fire between Azerbaijan and Armenia, which is very important. All these events take place within the frames of the Minsk Group of OSCE and with the mediation of big states of the world. As a result of these negotiations, we signed an agreement on the cease of fire on the 12th of May last year. Within 13 months, we have been observing the cease-fire agreement, and in the future we shall do everything possible to save the cease-fire regime on our own part. We think that during this time we must seek for a lasting peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia. We want to live in peace with all our neighbors, including Armenia. We do not have any claims to our neighbors; we do not set the goal of occupying part of the territory of any neighboring country. Of course, along with this, we can not reconcile with the occupation of a part of our territory.

That is why we are trying to achieve peace with the help of the Minsk Group of OSCE. We want to achieve a peace which will fully ensure the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and inviolability of its borders. Of course, we assume that the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh would be in complete security and will have an autonomy status within Azerbaijan. And this status will be much greater than it had before. But all this must be within the Republic of Azerbaijan. It is fair and conforms the international standards of law. Separatism can not be justified. We always oppose and will oppose separatism, war and aggression.

We are a peace-loving country and we want peace among our neighbors, we want peace in the Caucasian region, in the Balkans and in all the corners of the world. Therefore, I am grateful to Mr. Zhelev, for these words, because as a member of the OSCE, Bulgaria will actively participate in discussions to establish peace in the region and in the organization of peacekeeping forces to ensure the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. This is a very important issue for us, so we appeal to the world community, to all friendly peoples to help us to overcome this situation and support us.

I say again, we do not want to continue the war; we want the peaceful settlement of this conflict. I am glad that we get support of by a member of the OSCE, Bulgaria, in these issues.

I am extremely satisfied with the agreements, with the exchanged views and especially with the signed documents, and I can assure you that on our part, on the part of Azerbaijani we shall do everything to develop our cooperation. I do not want to

specify, because Mr. Zhelev has already spoken on specific issues. I agree with all the specific issues, because he expressed our common position.

Thank you for your attention.

Now I am waiting for your questions.

**Question:** *The first question. Within 77 years you lived under the rule of the Soviet Russia. How you appreciate this period for your country and do you accept such a view that you lived in the Empire of Evil? The second question: What is your attitude to the structures of NATO as a guarantor of democratization of all the post-socialist countries?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Yes, within 77 years we lived in the Soviet Union, but not as you say, under the Russian rule, because there was the Soviet Union and the Soviet Union consisted of 15 republics with equal rights. Of course, Russia had the dominant role in this alliance. Everybody knows that. But we lived in the Soviet Union. Well, what can we do, we can not cross out the history of our nation, that period of our life. During these years our people achieved great successes in economy, science and culture and had a progress in many areas. But along with this, we did not have: independence, national freedom. Of course, this factor limited the use of our potential. All this did not allow Azerbaijan discover all its internal potentials, to use its natural resources, intellectual resources and others.

We are extremely pleased that the Soviet Union collapsed and independent states emerged. I am one of those people who supported the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. Then there were attempts to preserve the Soviet Union and a referendum was held in the country for it. Though the referendum decided to keep the Soviet Union, the socio-historical course of events showed that the Soviet Union had exhausted its possibilities. That is the reason of its collapse.

I think that it had to be like that, and it enabled Azerbaijan to gain its national independence. National independence is the great achievement of Azerbaijan and of the Azerbaijani people. I am sure that we shall never tolerate the loss of our independence. In any case, what happened to the first independent democratic state in 1920 will not recur. Though, to preserve the independence is not so easy, especially for Azerbaijan. As I said, it is already seven years that Azerbaijan has been subjected to the aggression of Armenia. There are other difficulties. But we know the value of our independence and we shall cherish it as the pupil of our eye.

As for our relations with NATO, Azerbaijan was the first among the former Soviet and current independent republics to sign the “Partnership for peace” program of NATO. I paid a special visit to Brussels for this purpose was in the headquarters of NATO and signed this program on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan. We believe that this is an important factor for the stability in Europe and for the security in the

world.

**Question:** Mr. President, it would be interesting to know what was your opinion on the desire of the Bulgarian Communists to turn Bulgaria into a 16th republic? It is very interesting.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Now I see that the questions are asked not only by journalists but also by president, my friend. I am very much pleased.

There were a lot of distortions in the Soviet Union. You probably know from my biography that I am one of the leaders of the former Soviet Union. Along with this, you probably know, that in 1987, but rather at the end of 1987, I resigned and then I was subjected to repression and similar action. But in 1993, after a long deportation the Azerbaijani people demanded my return to Azerbaijan. And thus, since October 1993, I am President of Azerbaijan, elected by the people. There were many distortions in the policy of the Soviet Union and especially in the so-called socialist camp. It will take time to list them all. When I have an opportunity to write my memoirs, I shall write about many things. Because, I was more sensitive to national problems, national relations to the policy of the leaders of the Soviet Union, than others. Perhaps I felt it more than others in the administration of the Soviet Union. Of course, I could not stand against the will of the Bulgarian people and the leaders of Bulgaria. But when some leaders of Bulgaria repeatedly expressed the desire to become a 16th republic, I did not speak to them openly, but said quietly in their ears that they should not do it, better to be independent. I was able to help the Bulgarians in this way only. I think it's good that it did not work as they wanted. These might have been slogans of opportunistic nature. I don't know. But in any case, such statements were made repeatedly.

Of course, as a man who wants peoples and republics to be independent, I could openly say that it was a mistake and it would have costed the Bulgarian people too dear. It's good that Bulgaria did not become the 16th republic of the Soviet Union; it is good that not only the Soviet Union, but also the Warsaw Pact collapsed, and thus, the Eastern European countries gained freedom. Because, like other East European countries, Bulgaria is an independent state, although they were not part of the Soviet Union, they were part of the socialist camp, the Council of Mutual Economic Assistance and the Warsaw Pact. I know that it deprived the countries of independence so, to a certain extent you also have achieved independence. I congratulate you.

**Question:** Mr. President Zhelyu Zhelev, you said that Bulgaria is ready to send observers to the region. But at the Budapest Summit a decision was adopted on the formation of peacekeeping forces of the OSCE. In this case, is Bulgaria ready to send not observers, but troops to the region? Second question: How can the principle of self-determination be linked with the principle of territorial integrity of the state?

**Zhelyu Zhelev:** Bulgaria expressed its willingness to participate as a member of the

OSCE and in the peacekeeping process in Nagorno-Karabakh within the framework of our capabilities. Yes, we expressed our willingness and it was about sending civilian observers on behalf of the organization. For a just solution of this conflict, we are ready to participate in other projects. Of course, under the auspices of the OSCE.

How are the self-determination of peoples and the state independence interconnected? Personally, I do not see any contradiction between these notions.

***Question: The right of peoples to self-determination and the principle of territorial integrity..... The Armenian side always says that the peoples have the right for self-determination. Is this or the principle of territorial integrity more important?***

**Zhelyu Zhelev:** It is one of the most difficult issues we face in the post-communist period. The contradiction between the first and second part of your question to a certain extent we are witnessing in the former Yugoslavia. Of course, the principle of self-determination of the peoples is always of paramount importance. But the fact is that in the federation as Yugoslavia, the peoples do not live in one and the same territory. And when the time came to determine the boundaries, real contradictions between the principle of self-determination of peoples and the territorial integrity of state appeared. In principle, there is no such a country where only one nation lives. For example, I mean the Balkans. All the Balkan countries are inhabited by the representatives of different nations. I think this is normal. That is why, respect for human rights, execution of these rights and other issues emerged. This is one of the most difficult issues dealt with by the European Union.

Personally, I do not agree with the fact that when the people and the government solve their problems, they put the question like this: appeal to ethnic and national cleansing, drive out the national minority and deal with them ruthlessly. For example, we are witnessing just this in Bosnia, although the population in Bosnia is mixed and 60 percent of marriages are mixed in the cities. And this issue does not concern the issue of territory of this country, but concerns families.

That's why it is such a complicated issue. Therefore, we need to find out democratic ways to solve the problem. While making decisions in such countries, respect for the rights of ethnic minorities living in this country and respect for human rights must be taken into consideration.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception held on behalf of the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zhelev in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

Sofia, June 29, 1995

Mr. President Zhelyu Zhelev,

Ladies and gentlemen,

At the kind invitation of the President of Bulgaria Mr. Zhelyu Zhelev I paid a visit to Bulgaria with great pleasure and today we sum up our work together. From the first minutes of our stay in Bulgaria we faced sincerity, hospitality and friendship. This atmosphere helped us to produce a good work and sign a very important document. I and the delegation, which accompanied me in my visit, came to Bulgaria with a feeling of great respect for the Bulgarian people, for the Bulgarian land and the outstanding achievements of the Bulgarian people within a long history and with a sense of respect for the important democratic changes taken place in Bulgaria in the recent years.

In all this, I want to emphasize particularly the role of the President, the person who is the leader of the Republic of Bulgaria, who passed difficult trials for democracy, for the protection of democratic opinion and will of the people. I met and talked the head of Bulgaria, was in this country in the past, but now there is completely a different atmosphere, a different environment and a different life.

Bulgaria follows the path of democratic development and democratic society, implements into life democratic changes and follows the path of the interests and wishes chosen by the people. All of the processes taken place in Bulgaria are complicated. We are well aware of the difficulties which Bulgaria faces now in the transition period. Therefore, we feel great respect and are very optimistic about the future and, in particular, about the results of the changes taken place in Bulgaria. In the person of Bulgaria we see a European country which follows the path of civilization, democracy and national independence.

Azerbaijan honors and appreciates its national freedom and national independence gained three and a half years ago.

Our countries, we can say, faced with similar processes. I am confident that we shall overcome the trials and will reach the level of civilization and democracy. From this point of view, Bulgaria has a lot of experience and broad opportunities. Thus, we respect this valuable experience in our practical activity and work. Bulgaria and Azerbaijan intend to build long-term and friendly relations. An agreement on friendship and cooperation, and other important agreements signed today by us prove it.

I believe that we have laid a good foundation for our future cooperation and the main point is that we have mutual desire and intentions for the fruitfulness of this cooperation.

We are very serious about this and hope that our cooperation will be really efficient and useful. I take this opportunity to once more express my gratitude to Bulgaria for the attention shown to the independence of Azerbaijan. In summer of 1992, Bulgaria recognized the independence and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This is our great achievement. Bulgaria supports Azerbaijan in time hard for us, when Azerbaijan is subjected to the aggression by Armenia and suffers from heavy losses. Therefore, the support of Bulgaria for the national independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is a great help for us. I express my gratitude to the government of Bulgaria and its President for their support.

For future cooperation and most importantly for good relations and friendship we have great opportunities and a great desire. Azerbaijan has passed large trials in the recent years. Military aggression, which began seven years ago, has caused great damage to economy of Azerbaijan and, of course, the socio-political situation of our republic. In this situation there have been moments of violation of the Constitution of Azerbaijan. They have created difficulties for the social and economic development of the Republic and of course, to its exit from the crisis. With a sense of pleasure I can say that in the past two years these moments which contradict to the Constitution and laws have been removed, and now there are conditions in the country for the solution of many issues related to the socio-political development and peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Last May we were able to sign an agreement with Armenia on cease-fire which is going on for 13 months. Today I declare it once more that we shall observe the cease-fire in order to achieve complete peace and stability in the region, have good neighborly relations with all the countries which surround our republic. We attach great importance to the Minsk Group of OSCE and cherish great hopes in its activity. The resolution adopted last December at the Budapest Summit by the co-chairs of OSCE is an important event. We appreciate the resolution of the Budapest Summit and especially the contribution made by Bulgaria there in the adoption of this important document.

The statement of President Zhelev pleased me greatly in which he said that Bulgaria would take steps at the OSCE for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. I am confident that Bulgaria will contribute to the achievement of peace and to the measures taken for ensuring this peace.

I believe that everything in which we agree is a good foundation for our future cooperation. Today, summing up our joint work, I want to express my gratitude to

President Zhelev, President of the Parliament, Prime Minister, to all those who met us today and discussed issues concerning our bilateral relations and who has shown a sincere attitude, care and hospitality. Reception of guests in Bulgaria, in this beautiful land evokes the feeling of great respect for the Bulgarian people, its country and in particular for the changes taken place here in the recent times. We shall be faithful allies, remain faithful to the agreement on friendship and cooperation and shall do everything to make our cooperation fruitful and productive.

I wish the Bulgarian people happiness and peace. I wish all of our Bulgarian friends successes in the implementation of the plans.

I propose a toast to President of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zhelev, to the Republic of Bulgaria, to the Bulgarian people and to the strong friendship between Bulgaria and Azerbaijan.

To your health, thank you!

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Bulgaria (June 29-30, 1995)**

### **Historical Reference**

The importance of bilateral and multilateral cooperation with the Central and the Eastern European countries was underlined only after the election of Heydar Aliyev President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1993 and was included as a direction into Azerbaijan's foreign policy.

The mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Bulgaria were founded during the official visit of President Heydar Aliyev to Bulgaria in 1995. In his interview prior to the trip, Heydar Aliyev explained the importance of the visit: "Bulgaria and Romania are the Eastern European and Balkan countries and possess their own positions in the world processes. These countries are undergoing socio-political changes. Former members of the Warsaw pact, they are experiencing the transition from socialistic economic model to new forms. The changes in these countries and their experience are of importance for us."

The meeting of the Presidents of Bulgaria and Azerbaijan took place on the first day of the visit. The main topics of discussions were the directions of development of bilateral relations and regional issues. Then the presidents took part in the ceremony of signature of the documents. Agreements and contracts on friendship and cooperation, on economic and cultural ties were signed between the two countries.

In the press conference following the signature ceremony, the presidents expressed their hope that these documents would give an impetus to the development of bilateral relations.

On June 29, the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zhelev held an official reception in honor of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. In his speech at the reception, Heydar Aliyev spoke about the democratization and prospects of relations between the two countries.

On June 29, President Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the Bulgarian National Assembly. Informing the Bulgarian MPs about the difficulties facing Azerbaijan, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, the reforms conducted in the country, Heydar Aliyev also touched on the history of the relations between the two countries: "There are close relations between Azerbaijan and Bulgaria. These relations have been formed over the past decades. I am talking about economic, scientific, technical and cultural relations. We attach great importance to them and highly appreciate them. While Azerbaijan is a newly independent state and Bulgaria experiences important socio-political processes, our relations can rise to a qualitatively new level. My visit to Bulgaria aims at improving these relations."

During the visit Heydar Aliyev also met and negotiated with the Bulgarian Prime Minister and other government officials.

Our relations with Bulgaria have been further developed since President Heydar Aliyev's visit. In 1999, Bulgaria opened its embassy in Azerbaijan, and mutual visits have been paid by the presidents, prime ministers, speakers of the parliaments of the both countries.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO ROMANIA (July 1-2, 1995)**

“...Heydar Aliyev played a great role in development of the Romanian-Azerbaijani relations. He always expressed his great love and respect to Romania and its people. Our relations are rapidly developing and the Romanian-Azerbaijani partnership has influenced the development of both countries and positive processes are ongoing in the region...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the official opening ceremony of Heydar Aliyev Alley in Bucharest – September 24, 2007*

### **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception in his honor on behalf of the President of Romania Ion Iliescu**

Bucharest, July 1, 1995

Mr. President of Romania, Senate of Romania, honorable ministers, high officials of Romania, representatives of the public and the press, ladies and gentlemen,

I accepted the invitation of the President of Romania Ion Iliescu with pleasure and paid an official visit to your country. This invitation itself is an important step for the development of friendly relations between Romania and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Appreciating this step, I came to meet you together with my colleagues with a sense of friendship and respect for the Romanian people and the changes taking place in recent years in your country.

The Romanian people are known in the world for its great works, heroic history and the struggle for independence. Azerbaijan is well aware of Romania, the Romanian people, its history, ancient culture, literature and art. Romania is known especially for its oil. Azerbaijan as an ancient oil country has always been in contact with countries which produce oil. This also connects us with Romania. Many Azerbaijani oilmen, scientists, engineers, technicians, experts working in the oil fields in Romania, Pitesti in the 50s-60s, helped the Romanian people in the development of their country.

The Azerbaijani oilmen, including the representatives of the Azerbaijani culture, science and art created close relations with their Romanian colleagues. They were always shown hospitality, brotherly and friendly relations in Romania and felt their support. Therefore, today we have every reason to say that the Romanian-Azerbaijani relations of friendship and cooperation have their own history. Today we have to work together to stimulate our cooperation and the development of friendship between our

peoples.

In Azerbaijan people closely observe the processes taking place in Romania after the December revolution in 1989. This period in the history of Romania is related with the fact that over the years great social and political changes have taken place in order to open the potential of the Romanian people, to democratize the country, to establish human rights and independence of Romania.

From the personal contacts, meetings and information we know that these years have been difficult, painful and sometimes tragic for your people. However, these years were glorious at the same time, in the sense that great changes have been take place in the life of Romania and the Romanian people in the last years. Democratic changes taking place in your country in recent years, the process of democratization of social and political life, establishment of market economy and political pluralism, freedom of speech, press, conscience, all these developments cause a feeling of deep respect in the Azerbaijani society and our people.

We are well aware that everything that is done in these years in the true sense of the word is at the will of the people and for the people. In this regard, I would like to emphasize the role of Ion Iliescu, President of Romania, and our friend. During these years, he manages to resolve all the problems and his policy is fully consistent with the interests of the people.

Azerbaijan gained its independence as in the December of 1991. Our people consider it as a great historical achievement. At the beginning of this century, in 1918 Azerbaijan gained independence and created the first democratic government of Azerbaijan. However, it lasted only 23 months and was overthrown due to the establishment of the Soviet power in Azerbaijan and as a result of the aggression of the Red Army against Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan was part of the Soviet Union for 77 years and finally, in the December of 1991 we gained independence. These three and a half years of independence were very difficult and complicated for our country and people. The fact which mostly complicates our lives is that Azerbaijan has been subjected to military aggression by the neighboring Republic of Armenia since 1988. Unfortunately, the communist government of the Soviet Union did not prevent this aggression then. Azerbaijan and Armenia as the Soviet republics were part of a common state, the Soviet Union.

Altogether, this caused great political damage to the Caucasian region. Certainly, Azerbaijan has suffered heavy losses due to the aggression of Armenia, 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Over one million Azerbaijani citizens, residents of the lands occupied by the Armenian forces have been expelled from their homes and live in difficult conditions in tent camps.

Today, with a feeling of great regret we have to point out that the Armenian-

Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh was very contagious. Now the entire Caucasus and many regions of the former Soviet Union, including the rest of the world are surrounded with the flames of conflict. We have lost much as a result of this aggression, hundreds of people have been killed and more than 700,000 towns and villages have been destroyed in the occupied territories. As I said, a part of the Azerbaijani lands is under the occupation of the Armenian armed forces.

Despite all this, as a peace-loving country Azerbaijan is for the solution of the conflict by peaceful and political means. We have achieved certain results in this direction. Last May, we signed an agreement on cease-fire which is observed for more than thirteen months. This is only one condition for achieving a long-term and real peace. From this point of view, we cherish great hopes in the international organizations, the United Nations and, in particular, in the Minsk Group of OSCE created specifically for the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

Last December, we adopted an important document on the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict at the Budapest Summit of OSCE. We have great hopes for the implementation of this resolution.

Romania, as a member of OSCE contributes to the peaceful solution of the conflict. Thus, I accepted the declaration of Ion Iliescu, President of Romania with great pleasure which fully supports the position of Azerbaijan in the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We hope for the further cooperation with Romania in the framework of OSCE, and we believe that Romania will continue to help OSCE to take more active part in the settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the organization of work on the formation of multinational peacekeeping forces for ensuring peace in the region.

Some internal political processes also complicate the life of the independent Azerbaijan besides the military aggression. For example, in this period there were several anti constitutional actions in the republic. With pleasure I can tell you that we have overcome these difficulties and unpleasant facts and now the political situation in Azerbaijan is stable.

Azerbaijan which is an independent country, is building a legal and democratic state, conducting of reforms in the economy and integrates into the world economic system. Azerbaijan has achieved political pluralism, there are dozens of political parties, hundreds of newspapers and other freedoms.

The main principle for us is to ensure the human rights, individual freedoms and an opportunity for all the Azerbaijani citizens to enjoy their rights regardless of ethnicity, religion and belief.

On November 12 we shall hold parliamentary elections, be the first parliamentary

elections in Azerbaijan. On this day by national referendum there will be adopted the first constitution of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

In its foreign policy Azerbaijan tries to build equal relations with all the countries of the world. Azerbaijan is a member of many international organizations and is involved in the activities of the United Nations. We appreciate the fact that in the December of 1991 Romania was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan. Taking this opportunity, on behalf of the Azerbaijani people I want to thank Romania and its President Ion Iliescu.

We hope to improve the relations with all the world economic associations. We were allocated foreign investment and we adopted a broad program on privatization of state property.

Last year, Azerbaijan signed a contract with a number of foreign oil companies on joint oil developments in the Caspian Sea. We are implementing it into life.

Very important declaration, which we adopted yesterday, at the meeting of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation is of great importance. I thank the people of Romania, the Romanian government, Ion Iliescu, President of Romania for the great, efficient work done to organize the meeting of the leaders of the Black Sea countries.

We shall take an active part in the work of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and take all measures to implement our task. We shall do everything possible for the further development of the bilateral relations between Romania and Azerbaijan. We want to cooperate in economy and in all spheres of social and political life.

Azerbaijan will cooperate with the European Union, including the European communities. Last year we signed a "Partnership for Peace" program of NATO in Brussels.

The Azerbaijani people for many years tried to become independent and finally achieved it, however it faced many difficulties, hardships and all possible pressures. I hope that the international community, including Romania, will support us.

I wish the Romanian people happiness, prosperity and success in the implementation of your objectives and plans.

## **Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of Romania Ion Iliescu**

Bucharest, July 2, 1995

Ladies and gentlemen,

I sincerely thank Mr. Iliescu, President of Romania, for inviting me to visit Romania. I am pleased that my visit took place and completed successfully today. I express my gratitude to Mr. Iliescu and all our friends, to the Romanian colleagues for their warm hospitality, friendship and respect. We were surrounded with care during our stay in Romania, at the summit of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation and during my official visits yesterday and today. All this created a very favorable environment for our business meetings and for achieving our goal.

Romania is a European country with a centuries-old history and wonderful traditions. However, there are major political changes in the recent years in Romania. All this is of great interest to us. Therefore, creation of closer relations for the future cooperation is of particular importance for the independent Azerbaijan.

The Republic of Azerbaijan gained its independence three and a half years ago, it is located at the junction of Europe and Asia and tries to establish close relations with the European countries. Due to its geographical location and many other factors Azerbaijan can be a good partner for Romania in terms of future cooperation. That is what characterizes our high-level meeting.

I am pleased that this official visit took place. I am also pleased with our meetings and very effective talks with President Iliescu and the heads of other governmental bodies in Romania. I am particularly pleased that we signed important documents which lay the foundation for the future cooperation.

The statement on friendship and strategic partnership between Romania and Azerbaijan signed by the Presidents of the two countries are of particular importance. I believe that the statement is a key document and in accordance with it, we have to prepare and sign specific documents which define the particular directions of the future cooperation.

Azerbaijan is experiencing a complicated and difficult period in its history. Along with this it is a very glorious period due to the fact that Azerbaijan has achieved its independence and solves its problems independently. However, there are a lot of internal and external challenges. The most difficult problem for Azerbaijan is the war forcibly imposed on our country and our people by Armenia seven years ago. The purpose of this war is to annex a part of the territory of Azerbaijan. This war has

caused serious consequences particularly, of 20 percent of the Azerbaijani lands have been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Over a million Azerbaijanis have been expelled from these territories. Now they live in other regions of the country in tents in very difficult conditions.

We try to resolve the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan peacefully and take measures for it. We have particular hopes for OSCE and the Minsk group. The Minsk Group was specifically created to deal with this issue. Naturally, we turn to each member of OSCE, including Romania for the help and support in order to get out of this difficult situation.

We do not claim to the territories of the other countries, but try to ensure peace and stability in our region and want the world community to demonstrate justice which concerns the fate of the Azerbaijani people. An important condition for a lasting peace is the full maintenance of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, inviolability of its borders and its sovereignty.

The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, which has been continuing for seven years, and the separatism, which forms the basis of this conflict, convincingly prove that any form of separatism is condemned regardless of where and by whom it is committed. Thus, as a result of the separatist intentions of particular groups, certain ethnic groups and forces in different regions of the globe there are numerous conflicts and hot beds. Of course, it bothers the world and evokes great concern.

Azerbaijan is against any form of separatism and terrorism and believes that the international community must mobilize all the efforts to eliminate this difficult situation from several parts of the world. These issues were discussed at the past and present talks and negotiations. I am pleased that our views coincide.

This visit, which is being already completed, proves that there are great opportunities for the development of cooperation between Romania and Azerbaijan. Therefore, we shall do everything possible in Azerbaijan to make this cooperation successful.

We signed a declaration on friendship and cooperation and I can ensure you and all the Romanian public that the independent Republic of Azerbaijan will work to strengthen and develop the friendly relations between the Romanian and the Azerbaijani peoples and do everything possible for the mutual and friendly relations between the Romanian and Azerbaijani people.

I attach great importance to the meetings held here and consider them a start for the dialogue between Romania and Azerbaijan. I believe that this will continue on all levels, especially in Azerbaijan. I have officially invited President of Romania Mr. Iliescu to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan and my invitation has been accepted.

Taking this opportunity, I once more convey a deep sense of respect, friendship and best wishes to the people of Romania on behalf of Azerbaijani people and wish the

independent Romania, the Romanian people happiness, success and prosperity.

Thank you for your attention.

***Question to the Romanian President: Did you come to any agreement in connection with the start of work on some specific economic projects during the negotiations with the Azerbaijani delegation? If you did, then what kind of projects are they?***

***Second question: Is Romania ready to provide OSCE with an effective assistance in organizing the international contingent with peacekeeping forces for sending them to the region of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict?***

***Ion Iliescu:*** As to economic relations, they were the most important themes of our talks. They were the main topic at the high-level meetings which the countries of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation attended. On the one hand, we have drawn attention to the need of searching possible ways to resume the traditional economic relations. However, this time it was discussed in new conditions and terms. There are direct traditions of relations. This primarily covers such areas as oil industry, petrochemical industry, production of oil equipment and other industrial fields and sectors.

In our negotiations we also discussed the need for the structural changes in our economies and issues concerning our zones and regions. We talked about the possibilities of cooperation in future, creation of straight lines between the Caspian Sea and the Black Sea, straight lines between Azerbaijan and Romania and on the construction of gas and oil pipelines to shorten the length of the routes passing through Russia and Ukraine. All this was discussed in the framework of high-level meetings.

What concerns the establishment of a contingent of peace-keepers, we have a political decision in non-participation in such associations in the neighboring countries, as well as in the republics of the former Soviet Union and this decision is consistent with the resolutions and decisions of the United Nations.

***Question set to Heydar Aliyev: Mr. President, to what extent the membership of Azerbaijan in the Commonwealth of Independent States can affect the independence of your republic that you protect?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** Our membership in the Commonwealth of Independent States is based only on the fact that the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan cannot be prejudiced and Azerbaijan believes that the Commonwealth of Independent States is necessary first of all in terms of economic integration, and it takes as a basis the fact that in the past, in the Soviet Union our economy was closely integrated with the economies of other republics of the present Commonwealth of Independent States. We approach to the participation in the Commonwealth of Independent States only from the position of the complete independence of Azerbaijan.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Romania (July 1-2, 1995)**

### **Historical Reference**

The relations between Azerbaijan and Romania, which are based on friendship and strategic partnership, are rapidly developing. Romania is one of the first states which recognized the independence of Azerbaijan. Mutual visits of the presidents, developing economic relations, negotiations and the considered practical steps strengthen this cooperation. Principle position of Romania, especially concerning the existing conflicts in the region is highly appreciated in Azerbaijan.

The official visit of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev to Romania started on the 1<sup>st</sup> of July. On that day a meeting was held between the presidents. Bilateral relations, cooperation within the framework of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation, Armenian-Azerbaijani, and Mountainous Karabakh conflict were discussed at the meeting.

After the meeting a ceremony of the signature of the Romanian-Azerbaijani documents was held. The agreements were signed in the field of science which could lay a foundation for the future cooperation in the sphere of education, culture and sport, as well as the sphere of economic and scientific-technical cooperation. From this viewpoint, declaration signed by the presidents on friendship and cooperation between Romania and Azerbaijan has a special importance.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July on behalf of the President of Romania Ion Iliescu an official reception was held in the honor of Heydar Aliyev. President Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the reception and talked about the history of the Romanian-Azerbaijani relations, importance of the relations between the countries, Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, and the essence of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict which Azerbaijan is facing.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July a joint press conference of the Azerbaijani and Romanian President was held. In the press conference Heydar Aliyev characterized the Azerbaijani and Romanian relations like this: "Romania is an European country, and it has centuries-old history and beautiful traditions. However, in the recent years there are political changes in Romania. All these changes cause our interest. That's why, it is important for Azerbaijan to build close relations with Romania for the further cooperation in future. Azerbaijan has gained its independence three and half years ago. It is situated in the intersection of Europe and Asia, and is eager to build close relations with Europe. It can be a good partner for Romania because of its geographic location and other factors. Our high level meeting especially is based on it."

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Romania created grounds for the dynamic development of the relations with this country in future.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO GEORGIA  
(March 8-10, 1996)**

“...Heydar Aliyev used to love Georgia, the Georgian nation, always loved it sincerely and respected the Georgian people. Both in the 70s, 80s and as the President of independent Azerbaijan he visited Georgia. In the family he used to speak with love for nation, for culture and history of Georgia. It seems that it had also had a big role that our nations had never made war and lived in peace for a number of centuries, - by the way, it is not always specific for the neighbors, - did not lose former relations after gaining independence...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the solemn opening ceremony of the bust Heydar Aliyev, national leader of Azerbaijan, in Tbilisi – May 12, 2007*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the joint press conference held with the President of Georgia Eduard  
Shevardnadze after the completion of negotiations and signature of  
documents between the delegations of Azerbaijan and Georgia**

Tbilisi, March 8, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen,

My friend, President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze informed you on the details of the documents we signed on the first day of our meeting. It frees me from providing any information. I totally agree with what Shevardnadze said, with his comments and assessments.

At the same time I want to emphasize the importance of the agreement “on strengthening friendship, cooperation and mutual security” between Georgia and Azerbaijan. It is of a paramount importance if we take into account the traditional friendly relations between Georgia and the Republic of Azerbaijan existing for decades and centuries, the factor of good neighborhood and close friendship and many issues relating to each of our countries and our region and active cooperation in the international sphere.

Declaration “On Peace, Security and Cooperation in the Caucasus” which we signed is of great importance. I would say that this is the first serious and important political document of this kind. Its importance and great significance is that the Caucasus suffers

from instability, conflict and from many ethnic clashes and processes. Therefore, the aim of each of us, in particular, the heads of governments of Georgia and Azerbaijan are open the road to peace, security and cooperation in the Caucasus. The document, which we have signed, in content and character opens the way to such a cooperation. Others can also join. Therefore, I want to hope that other countries of our region, as well as other world countries will join this document.

The documents we signed today on the transportation of the early oil of Azerbaijan to the Black Sea coast through Georgia are very important. They have great importance for the economy of Azerbaijan and Georgia. This is also friendship and cooperation. I hope that the future generations will appreciate the work done by us today in this sphere. As the construction of oil pipeline from Azerbaijan to the Black Sea through Georgia will attract many companies and countries in future.

Every document we sign is of great importance for us. Thus, I am very pleased with our negotiations, the signed documents, the friendly atmosphere in our mutual relations which prevail here in Tbilisi today. I express my gratitude to Eduard Shevardnadze for the invitation to visit Georgia and for the warm reception to me and to all the members of our delegation. We feel at home, next to our brothers here. We arrived here with these feelings, and the hours spent in Tbilisi, in the Georgian land fully justify our feelings and hopes.

I believe that we shall have time to talk, as the program of my visit is quite extensive, and I think we shall meet again with the press. And now I would be satisfied with what I said and add that I invited President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze to visit Azerbaijan and today I affirm this invitation once more. I think that after a lot of work that we have done here, this visit will be fulfilled. Thank you for your attention.

*Question: Both presidents spoke about the peaceful Caucasus. Thus, I have a question to both presidents. Perhaps, with the signature of the agreement on the transportation of the early oil through Georgia Russia has lost to a certain extent its influence in the Caucasus. How do you think, will it try to restore the sphere of influence at the expense of the Mountainous Garabagh and Abkhazia where it plays a peacekeeping role, or replace it with something else?*

*E. Shevardnadze:* I think that in the transportation of the Caspian oil through the territory of Georgia, that is, in the western direction there is no need to look for any subtext. Though, it is of historic importance both for Georgia and the Caucasus, I would say that it is an ordinary decision. There is no contradiction, conflict and the decision is not directed against any country. You know that in this issue there are two directions, north and west. The desire of corporations to have two parallel routes is natural and logical. In other words, it does not affect the interests of the third countries. On the contrary, I believe that these interests are maximally taken into account.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I believe that no one has lost but won.

**Question:** *Messrs. Presidents, you spoke about the initiative to restore peace in the Caucasus. How real is the work of the formula “Peace in the Caucasus”, how confident are you in the support of the other countries of the region on your initiative? The second question is for Mr. Aliyev: How do you assess the situation in Chechnya and to what extend do you consider the transportation of oil promising via the northern route in this respect?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I noted the importance of the declaration that we signed. I think that Eduard Shevardnadze and Heydar Aliyev made a very important initiative, an initiative to strengthen peace in the Caucasus. There can be nothing above this. As to the way by which we shall implement this initiative, of course, it will not be easy. But, at the same time, if someone would resist peace in the Caucasus, it will, of course, appear in the eyes of the Caucasus and the world community as an aggressor and a supporter of conflicts and instability. Therefore, I believe that common sense will prevail and although we still suffer from conflict and instability in the Caucasus, we surely have to move here to establish peace. The Caucasus should become peaceful and safe, a region of peace, good-neighbourliness and mutually beneficial cooperation. This is all I can say about this question.

You probably know better the situation in Chechnya than I do, because you have borders with Chechnya and we do not. I do not want to evaluate the situation there as it changes daily. I can only say that we have always been against separatism and terrorism as we do now. That is my statement on this issue. As to what extent this situation could affect the transportation of the Azerbaijani oil to the Black Sea coast via the northern route, through Russia I think that the administration of Russia will take care of it.

**E.Shevardinadze:** I agree with the words of Heydar Aliyev. He gave a detailed answer to the question on our initiative. I want to add that the United Nations, the European security structures, the Security Council and the CIS are engaged in the Caucasus. Russia carries out its mediation functions. But we have not been able to make the Caucasian factor work. I mean the conflicts that have arisen in the recent years which have led to serious consequences. I think all of the value of our initiative is that the Caucasian factor will be used here, I mean the Caucasian countries and nations.

**Question:** *I would like to know your opinion about the common and distinctive features of the conflict in the Mountainous Garabagh, Abkhazia and Chechnya.*

**Heydar Aliyev:** All the three conflicts are terrible. But the worst and historically earliest of them is a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. This conflict has eight-year history. Eight years ago, the Armenian armed forces committed military

aggression against Azerbaijan and occupied 20 percent of its territory. More than a million of our citizens have been expelled from the occupied lands.

This is certainly not like any of the Abkhaz-Georgian or the Chechen conflict. Therefore, I believe that each of these conflicts is terrible and tragic for every people and every country. But each of them has its own characteristics.

## **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception hosted by the President of Georgia in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

March 8, 1996

Mr. President, chairman of the Parliament, ladies and gentlemen,

Today is very significant for me and for the Azerbaijani delegation arrived with me in Georgia, its capital Tbilisi. My friend Eduard Shevardnadze described it as a historical event. I suppose that if a very important document signed between the independent Georgia and Azerbaijan, if the heads of the two republics, the two peoples and two independent countries came together, met and made decisions for the development of further cooperation, it is truly a historic event.

God almighty has blessed our people. Benefit is that our peoples had the fortune to be neighboring nations and live in close relations with each other. It is really a great happiness. Our ancestors and great-grandfathers saw the fruits of this happiness. Our task is to give eternal life to these traditions and continue to pass them on to future generations on a higher level. The fate, which God has given us, united us for centuries. Living and working together as brothers and friends we have reached bright and happy days. Many generations before us created this friendship and brotherhood, gave them life and developed. We are lucky enough to perpetuate these friendly and fraternal relations in the second half and at the end of XX century and pass them to future generations.

One can give numerous facts and evidences of the close relations between our peoples for centuries. Our thinkers, intelligentsia, scientists, writers, composers, artists and ordinary people always have been friends supporting each other in hard times and attended the events of each other on joyful days. My friend Eduard Shevardnadze remembered the words of our great poet, Samad Vurgun. I remember the friendship between Giorgi Leonidze and Samad Vurgun. What a sincere friendship it was! What significant contribution they have made to the life of our peoples! The heritage left to us and in particular the heritage of Grigol Abashidze and Rasul Rza, Irakli Abashidze and Samad Vurgun and our contemporaries are invaluable and are also significant sources for the promotion of our friendship. The son of the late Samad Vurgun, Yusif Samedoglu is also in our delegation today. He is a member of our parliament and the chairman of the Commission on International and Interparliamentary Relations.

All this are wonderful pages of our common history. Today we are writing the history. My friendship with Eduard Shevardnadze has a 30 - year or even a longer

history. I clarify it by saying 30 years. Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia and I in Azerbaijan are engaged in the resolution of significant issues. In 1969 I was elected head of Azerbaijan and in 1972 Eduard Shevardnadze was elected the same in Georgia. We established very sincere friendship and cooperation.

I highly appreciate the historical past. But at the same time, I consider that a period when Heydar Aliyev and Eduard Shevardnadze were heads of Azerbaijan and Georgia, the Georgian-Azerbaijani relations had their brightest period. Then fate brought us both to Moscow. As I was ahead of Eduard Shevardnadze in the Caucasus, I went to Moscow before him. In late 1982, I went to Moscow. In the middle of 1985, Eduard Shevardnadze arrived in Moscow. There we cooperated mutually a few years. I think that the main feature of our work consisted in the fact that we always were loyal to our peoples, nations, country, and remained faithful till the end.

Then the changes in our life occurred simultaneously. In late 1987, I resigned in Moscow. A few years later, in 1991 Shevardnadze resigned.

Indeed, after me for some reason he lingered a bit. Therefore, I let him know that he should not linger. Finally, in late 1991 Eduard Shevardnadze once again came to power in Georgia.

*Eduard Shevardnadze:* It was agreed by us previously.

*Heydar Aliyev:* This time, he was ahead of me. Then I was told that I also have to come. But I did not come. Finally, in 1992 I had to come and thus, Eduard Shevardnadze became the head of Georgia, and Heydar Aliyev the head of Azerbaijan. This is probably a rare event in history. But our way of life and the fate are very similar and they are closely related.

I can say that in the Soviet Union there is no any republic, where the head left his post many years ago and then came back to power in another capacity. This indicates that we served our people faithfully in the time and they demand us for the second time.

For example, could our former colleague, Gorbachev again become the governor of Stavropol? No, he cannot. Or can Ligachev become the governor of Tomsk? He cannot either. That is what differs us from them.

We should be eternally grateful to our people. Not because of the fact that we once more came to power. But because of the fact that during the period of heavy processes, people have not forgotten us, needed us and invited us to lead the country. Taking up your time, the purpose of my story is to once again emphasize the great contribution of Eduard Shevardnadze in Georgia and to mention his respect among the people.

I told you about myself just because to let you know that I was together with Eduard Shevardnadze. If I did not say that the picture would not be quite clear. Despite the fact that in the past we had great achievements, the current tasks we face are much

more complicated than those and at the same time are higher. I am sure that Eduard Shevardnadze as the Georgian leader, as President of Georgia, as in the past days will fulfill his duty and after a difficult phase will lead Georgia, the Georgian people to a bright future. Therefore, a new stage of the Georgian-Azerbaijani relations is very important and responsible to us. I am aware of this responsibility, my friend. Accepting the invitation of Eduard Shevardnadze I came to you, to visit you. We are all aware of this responsibility and with great pleasure today we signed very important documents between the two countries that have a great future.

My dear brothers and sisters, you can be sure the Azerbaijani people are very loyal to friendship. I am personally one of these persons. I assure you that I shall do my best for the development of friendly and fraternal relations between Georgia and Azerbaijan in future. Eduard Shevardnadze perfectly described the documents which we signed today. I fully agree with him. The Kura River has always flowed through Georgia. But its source begins from Turkey. The Kura will continue to flow into the Caspian Sea. The Azerbaijani oil will always flow to Georgia through the pipeline and from there to the Black Sea.

Please raise your glasses to the people of Georgia, to the free, independent and democratic Georgia, to Eduard Shevardnadze, a very valuable leader and a great son of the Georgian people, to the chairman of the Georgian parliament and other leaders of Georgia present here, to eternal friendship of the Georgian and Azerbaijani people. Thank you.

## **Official Visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Georgia ( March 8-10, 1996)**

### **Historical Reference**

The relations with Georgia occupy a special place in the foreign policy of Azerbaijan. Multifaceted points of the contacts in the Azerbaijani - Georgian relations create conditions for the republics to become ally powers. Deep economical and political interests link the two countries. The existence of more than half million Azerbaijanis in this country requires a special attention to the neighbor country.

On the 8<sup>th</sup> of March a meeting was held between the delegations of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and his colleague Edward Shevardnadze. Ceremony of the signature of documents was held after the meeting. "Treaty on Strengthening Mutual Security, Friendship, and Cooperation," and "Peace, Security, and Cooperation in the Caucuses" were signed between Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Later the presidents of Azerbaijan and Georgia made speech in the press conference.

On that day an official reception was held on behalf of the President of Georgia in honor of the Azerbaijani President. President Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the reception: "It is a historical event that very significant documents were signed between the independent Azerbaijan and Georgia, heads of the two countries, republics, nations, and that the independent states have met and reached necessary decision for the further development of future cooperation."

On 8<sup>th</sup> of March President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the special meeting of the Parliament of Georgia. Heydar Aliyev spoke about the history of the Azerbaijani and Georgian relations, difficulties they faced in the period of independence, his fight against separatism, and perspectives of the relations.

On 9th of March a ceremony of rewarding of the diploma of the honorary doctor of Tbilisi State University to Heydar Aliyev was held. The Azerbaijani President expressed his satisfaction with the visit and said: "We have been celebrating this great holiday for two days. We take very valuable and courageous steps to strengthen and develop friendship, brotherhood, and cooperation between our peoples and countries. I suppose that the works we have done in these days and the important documents we have signed will serve the future of our peoples and states."

Later Heydar Aliyev attended an opening ceremony of the statue of Fatali Khan Khoyski in the Botanical Garden, visited the graves of Mirza Fatali Akhundov and Mirze Shafi Vazeh.

On that day President Heydar Aliyev met the devout Azerbaijanis in Tbilisi Juma Mosque and delegations of the Azerbaijanis in the State Academic Opera and Ballet Theatre named after Z.Paliashvili.

On 10<sup>th</sup> of March, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev gave an interview to the Georgian television. President Heydar Aliyev stressed the importance of the documents signed during the visit and added that they created legislative base for an active cooperation in the future.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF  
PAKISTAN (April 9-11, 1996)**

“...Pakistan is a brotherly country to us. We have very nice relations and we always support each other in all the issues concerning bilateral and international relations. We play a very important role on the regional level...”

*From the interview of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to the Pakistani TV- April 13, 2005*

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the official reception hosted by the President of Pakistan Farooq**

**Ahmed Khan Leghari in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

Islamabad, April 9, 1996

Mr. President Ahmed Khan Leghari,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I take this opportunity to convey the greetings to you and in your person to all the Pakistani people on behalf of the people and the citizens of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

Mr. President, I arrived in Pakistan on an official visit at your invitation. I and the Azerbaijani officials, arrived in Pakistan feel your warmth and hospitality and our meetings are held in a very friendly atmosphere. I express my sincerest gratitude to you for your invitation to visit Pakistan, for the warm, friendly welcome shown to the delegation accompanying me, for hosting us today, for the efficient work we have done and the negotiations we held.

Mr. President, your visit to Azerbaijan last October, the negotiations between the two countries, the signed documents, your acquaintance with the life of our country and meetings you held are very important steps in the development of the Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations. The Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations have a long history. Our peoples maintained close relations for centuries with each other, and our historical past, the similarity of our traditions, languages and commitment to one religion have always called us to maintain close relations.

Mr. President, today you remembered your stay in the homeland of the great Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, who lived and worked in XII century, became famous throughout the Orient and made a tremendous contribution to the world culture. Personalities like Nizami called Pakistani and Azerbaijani peoples to maintain close

relations 800 years ago. Today our relations are based on these roots. It is no accidental that when the Republic of Azerbaijan gained its national independence, Pakistan was one of the first countries to recognize the independence of our country.

Pakistan gained its independence 50 years ago. You have a lot of experience in the path of independence. Your national independence has many years. The Republic of Azerbaijan lives only the fifth year of its independence. We have very serious difficulties and problems. In strengthening and developing our independence we face many obstacles. Therefore, we need to establish close cooperation with nations and countries friendly to us. One of these countries and the most important one is Pakistan. Mr. President, last October, we held detailed discussions about it with you in Azerbaijan. Today, in the negotiations that began in Islamabad we attached great attention to these issues.

I had very detailed discussions on these issues during my meetings with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto when we were in the summits of international organizations in 1994-1995. The negotiations we conducted today with Mrs. Benazir Bhutto were the continuation of the talks held earlier and I want to express my great pleasure of it. I hope the work we have done, negotiations held today and which will be held tomorrow and the documents which we have to sign in Islamabad will create a solid foundation for the intensive development of relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan in all the spheres.

I would like to let you know that we shall do our best to make these negotiations successful. I am absolutely confident that these negotiations and meetings will open great opportunities for our future activities.

We are in Islamabad since this morning and are getting acquainted with your beautiful country. Your capital Islamabad has made a wonderful impression on us. Similarity of the climate and the character of Pakistan and Azerbaijan once more demonstrate our familiarity. Pakistan is one of the largest countries of the world, Asia. Pakistan has an ancient history and great traditions. The successes of the Pakistani people achieved on the path of independence and in the world community make us happy as a friendly country. The progress achieved on the road of national independence, changes and reforms carried out in the country, development of democracy, state-building and the formation of a society based on democratic principles make us hope that Pakistan and the Pakistani people have a reason to hope for a bright and happy future. Dear friends, I wish you successes in this way and have every confidence in the happy future of the Pakistani people.

Having a worthless place in the international organizations Pakistan also has an impact on the development of international processes. The Republic of Azerbaijan has always cooperated with Pakistan in international organizations and we believe this

collaboration is very important. As I noted, the Republic of Azerbaijan faced many challenges and obstacles on the road of independence. As you know, the Armenian armed forces committed a military aggression against Azerbaijan eight years ago. As a result of this aggression 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territories were occupied. More than a million of the Azerbaijani citizens were forcibly expelled from these lands and became homeless. Most of them live in tents in very difficult conditions. The Azerbaijani people bravely fought, suffered losses, gave martyrs and victims in defense of their land, for the integrity of its territory, its independence and sovereignty. A part of the territory of Azerbaijan has been occupied for some reason. Although Azerbaijan suffered heavy losses in May of 1994 we reached an agreement on cease-fire in order to resolve this issue peacefully.

You know that on different continents of the world there are brutal military conflicts between countries, peoples and nations in the recent years. The Caucasian region is also full of military conflicts in the recent years. Azerbaijan is against all military conflicts. Azerbaijan is against the forcible seizure of lands of one country by another one. Azerbaijan is against separatism and terrorism. We are the supporters of solution of all conflicts by peaceful means. Therefore, we want to settle the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict peacefully and take the constructive steps and work hard. We conduct peace negotiations within the frames of the Minsk Group of OSCE with the mediation of the U.S., Russia, Turkey and other countries. We try to liberate our occupied lands peacefully. We want to end the conflicts peacefully in the Caucasus, in particular, the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. I thank all of the countries which help us in our just and right cause. I thank Pakistan, in particular.

The Pakistani government has always criticized the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and condemned Armenia as an aggressor. In discussing this issue in the UN Security Council the Pakistani representative demonstrated a very fair attitude to Azerbaijan and helped us. I take this opportunity to express my gratitude for all that to Pakistan.

I highly appreciate the work of Pakistan in the name of peace and security in Asia, particularly in part of Asia where Pakistan is located. I believe that the efforts of the Pakistani government to solve these issues peacefully in Afghanistan and Tajikistan deserve high appreciation. We have supported the efforts of Pakistan in settling the largest problem for Pakistan, the Kashmir issue. We have always protected the rights and fair position of Pakistan in the international organizations and we do it today, too.

I am pleased to note that we have created favorable conditions for the intensive development of relations between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. We make democratic changes and build a legal and democratic country. We elected a new parliament and adopted the first constitution of the independent Azerbaijan based on democratic

principles. Great changes are going on in the economy of Azerbaijan. We are moving from the old socialist economic system to the market economy and implement economic reforms into life. A large program of privatization is carried out. All this creates favorable conditions for the integration of Azerbaijan to the world economy.

Azerbaijan has vast natural resources and economic potential. We want to cooperate with all the countries of the world focusing on this. Azerbaijan has opened its doors to foreign investors and created all the conditions for the investment in our country. I believe that in this field we can carry out a broader and deeper cooperation with Pakistan.

We have signed an agreement on joint oil developments in Azerbaijan with the major oil companies of the world. We shall continue this business in future. I repeat that Azerbaijan has a great potential for cooperation with all the countries. In this sense, I invite the Pakistani entrepreneurs and businessmen to Azerbaijan and encourage them to invest in the oil industry of the country. I assure you that you can get a good opportunity for joint activities in Azerbaijan.

Once again, I express my respect for the ancient land of Pakistan and the Pakistani people. I wish successes to Pakistan and its government in solving their problems. I express my respect and appreciation to the President of Pakistan, my dear friend Ahmed Khan Leghari, the entire Pakistani nation, country and governmental representatives of Pakistan present here. I wish you health, happiness and successes in your future activities. Thank you, be happy.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at  
the official reception hosted by the Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir  
Bhutto in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

April 10, 1996

Mrs. Benazir Bhutto,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I cordially greet you on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijani people and express to you and in your person to all the Pakistani people my respect and esteem.

It is the second day that we are in your country, in Pakistan. Here we feel the friendly atmosphere. I sincerely thank you for the attention, care and hospitality shown to us. Mrs. Prime Minister, I believe that the negotiations we held with you today were very fruitful and as a result, nine agreements were signed for the further development of the Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations. Negotiations and agreements signed last October during an official visit of Farooq Ahmed Khan Leghari, President of Pakistan, to Azerbaijan, as well as talks and the agreements signed by the President of Pakistan and the Mrs. Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto during my official visit, which began yesterday, are a new stage in the history of the Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations. With confidence I can say that there is friendship and close cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan. I declare to you that Azerbaijan will remain faithful to these friendly relations and cooperation and make every effort for their development.

Pakistan gained great achievements as one of the great nations of the world and the largest country in Asia in the fifty years of independence. We highly appreciate these achievements and as a friend it gladdens us. Economic reforms in Pakistan, democratic processes ongoing in the country improved the welfare of the people, peace-loving foreign policy of the country has strengthened its position in the international community and risen its reputation and respect.

We, as a friendly country of Pakistan, support its achievements and the policy it pursues, in particular the steps taken by Pakistan to establish peace and security in Asia and its position in the field of maintaining the independence. In cooperation with Pakistan in all international organizations, we have always expressed our position in support of its just cause. Today, we express our position on the issue of Kashmir. The negotiations we hold indicate that Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations have very good prospects and future. We can achieve joint success in the development of economic relations.

I invited the representatives of Pakistan to Azerbaijan for joint activities and today I once more invite them. You can be sure that we shall make every effort for the development of our cooperation.

The following year Pakistan will be celebrating its 50th anniversary of independence. Azerbaijan is living only the fifth year of its national independence. There are very heavy and difficult problems facing our country in strengthening our national independence and our sovereignty. Our greatest problem is the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and the damage caused to our country as a result of this aggression, 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory has been occupied and more than a million of our citizens have been expelled from their native lands and are living as refugees.

In the issue of the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan Pakistan has always occupied a very fair position and always condemned the Armenian aggression. In talks held yesterday and today and in her speech the Prime Minister here this morning condemned this aggression repeatedly. For all this I thank the Pakistani government, the country and the Prime Minister, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto.

Because of the difficult economic situation in Azerbaijan, poor living conditions of over a million refugees, Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto today issued a statement on the rendering aid in amount of 1 million dollars for our citizens expelled from their homes and live in tents. I am grateful for this help and this statement. I repeat once more that the friendly relations and cooperation between Pakistan and Azerbaijan are unbreakable and our country will always remain faithful to these relations. On behalf of the people of Azerbaijan and on my own behalf I convey my respect and reverence to the ancient country of Pakistan and its people.

I want to express my conviction that as a result of the reforms and democratic changes in Pakistan, the strong economic potential of the country will improve the welfare of your people.

Dear friends, it is the first time that I arrive in Pakistan. But I am informed in detail about Pakistan, its history and the 50-year struggle for independence. The world is well aware of the work done by the Pakistani people in their territory in order to preserve its independence after its acquisition. The struggle of your country for its independence is known throughout the world, including Azerbaijan. In those years, Pakistan experienced a crisis, conflicts and difficulties in the state-building. But your wise people could overcome all this and Pakistan as a major country occupied a worthy place in the world community.

Remembering the history of the recent past in Pakistan I feel a lot of respect and I commemorate the merits of Zulfugar Bhutto, the late father of the current Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto, who played a major role in the life of the country

in its present day. Continuing the work of her father, Zulfugar Bhutto, Mrs. Benazir Bhutto has great services to the people of Pakistan at a difficult period. I take this opportunity to express my respect and reverence to the family of Bhuttos and Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto.

I wish the Pakistani people new victories and successes on the road of independence and successes in solving the problems facing the Pakistani government. I express my respect and esteem to Mrs. Benazir Bhutto, Prime Minister of Pakistan, and friend of the Azerbaijani people. Thank you.

**Joint press conference of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto after the signature of the Azerbaijani-Pakistani documents**

April 10, 1996

**Heydar Aliyev:** I am grateful for the decision of the Prime Minister of Pakistan Mrs. Benazir Bhutto on rendering assistance in the sum of one million USD for over a million refugees who have lost their homes as a result of the aggression, it is done in order to ease their hardships, to demonstrate in solidarity with the citizens of Azerbaijan from their homes by the military forces of Armenia. We are grateful to you and the government of Pakistan for your humanity.

**Question: Mr. President, what would you like to say about the position of Pakistan on the Nagorniy-Karabakh conflict and the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan?**

**Heydar Aliyev:** I am pleased to note that Pakistan, its government and the leaders of this country have always condemned Armenia in connection with this aggression and made statements. After the occupation of Kalbajar in April of 1993, during the discussions of this issue in the Security Council of the United Nations, which was chaired by the representative of Pakistan, as a result of principal position and support of Pakistan a serious resolution was adopted in connection with this aggression. In all international organizations, including the meetings of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Casablanca, Pakistan expressed its principal position against the Armenian aggression in the recent years.

**Question: What factor plays the major role in the Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations, economic or political relations?**

**Benazir Bhutto:** Our relations are based on both of them. We consider Azerbaijan an important country and render to it economic and political support. We are members of the organization of ECO and conduct a regional cooperation with Azerbaijan. Today we have signed nine agreements. We consider our relations with Azerbaijan a political cooperation. We highly appreciate the work of Azerbaijan in the region and in Central Asia.

**Question: Does Azerbaijan intend to promote the development of the oil industry of Pakistan in return for the support extended by Pakistan?**

**Benazir Bhutto:** In general, we consider our relations with Azerbaijan special and do not intend to connect it to any of the oil issues. We are against the aggression. We can never accept the occupation of the Azerbaijani lands by Armenia by violating the

international principles. Wherever there is aggression, we shall raise our voices in protest. This is part of our foreign policy.

***Question: Your Excellency, what is your position in relation to the Kashmir problem? Do you know that the Indian army committed bloodshed in Kashmir?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** In connection with the Kashmir problem Azerbaijan has always supported the position of Pakistan. In discussing the issue at a meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Casablanca there were different opinions. But the Azerbaijani delegation and I myself, as the President of Azerbaijan, not only supported the position of Pakistan, but also initiated the adoption of the resolution on condemning India and supporting Pakistan in regard with the Kashmir problem.

***Question: Mr. President, speaking on the economic cooperation in the region, we cannot forget the instability in Afghanistan. What role can your country play in order to establish peace in Afghanistan for the expansion of economic cooperation in the region and how can it help?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** Azerbaijan has always been a supporter of the establishment of peace in Afghanistan and today we have the same position. We have always expressed our position, and now I once more declare it. I believe that the major countries involved in this issue, can do more to solve the problems peacefully.

***Question: Mrs. Bhutto, you just said that Pakistan wants to participate in the peacekeeping forces of OSCE for being placed in Nagorniy-Karabakh. What will be the role of Pakistan in that force and what assistance may your country provide to the formation of these forces? Pakistan attaches great importance to the development of regional cooperation. From this point of view, what specific activities does Pakistan propose to implement in order to turn ECO into an effective mechanism among the member states?***

***Benazir Bhutto:*** Pakistan has always been attentive to the efforts of OSCE to resolve the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan peacefully. We have expressed the desire to participate in peacekeeping operations as it is appropriate to OSCE. Of course, the details of this issue depend on OSCE.

On the example of the European Union, we see that the success of the regional economic cooperation depends on time. For the implementation of certain economic projects there is a need for time. Thus, it is necessary to prepare a material base and develop the details of individual projects. In this sense, we have proposals for the implementation of specific projects within ECO. For example, we have expressed our views on the establishment of common routes, shipping, common insurance and banking systems, and the Pakistani government has allocated funds for these projects.

We have a deep respect for the President of Azerbaijan, we closely watch his political career and welcome his efforts in implementing the reforms on democratic

changes in Azerbaijan and promoting the country towards the market economy. These processes, building a democratic society and formation of market relations are not easy. It takes time. We support the President of Azerbaijan in these issues and I am confident that under his wise leadership the Azerbaijani people will benefit from these changes.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (April 9-11, 1996)**

### **Historical Reference**

The Islamic Republic of Pakistan is the second main strategic ally of Azerbaijan in the world after Turkey. Relations between the two countries are very intensive within the framework of bilateral and multilateral relations. The parties share the same views in international organizations represented by them, as well as in the issue of Kashmir and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh and they also support their solution on the basis of the norms of international law.

On April, 1996, the Azerbaijani President Haydar Aliyev paid an official visit to Islamic Republic of Pakistan at the initiative of Farrukh Ahmed Khan Legari, President of Pakistan Islamic Republic. It played an irreplaceable role in the development of relations between the two countries.

Haydar Aliyev characterized the relations between the two countries as close and friendly. These relations are based on the ancient historical traditions. It is not accidental that Pakistan was one of the first countries which recognized the independence of Azerbaijan after announcing its independence. Subsequently, especially in recent years favorable relations have been established between Pakistani and Azerbaijan.

On the first day of visit the Azerbaijani and Pakistani presidents had their first meeting. Issues of mutual interest and perspectives of bilateral relations were discussed. Later, there was a reception on behalf of the Azerbaijani President hosted by the President of Pakistan.

On April 10, Haydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan met the prime minister of Pakistan. After the meeting there was a ceremony of the signature of documents between. Agreements on friendship and partnership, trade, tax, health, tourism were signed in the ceremony.

After the ceremony, a joint press conference of the Azerbaijani President and the Pakistani prime minister was held, it was mentioned there that nine agreements were signed between the two countries which would create favourable conditions for the further development of the Azerbaijani-Pakistani relations.

On the same day Mrs. Benazir Bhutto held a reception in honor of the Azerbaijani President. Delivering a speech at the reception Haydar Aliyev said: "The negotiations show that the Pakistani-Azerbaijani relations have great future perspective. We can have achievements in the development of economic relations. For joint works I have invited the Pakistani representatives to Azerbaijan and I invite them just now, too. I can assure that we shall do our best for the development of this partnership."

On April 11, Haydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, gave an interview to the Pakistani television and expressed his satisfaction with results of the visit.

During his visit, Azerbaijani president was in Lahore and got acquainted with ancient architectural and religious monuments of the city. On the same day, before his departure from

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the country, the President answered the questions of Pakistani journalists.

Azerbaijani President Haydar Aliyev's visit to the Islamic Republic of Pakistan has intensified the bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Pakistan.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE KINGDOM OF NORWAY  
(April 24-27, 1996)**

“..Relations between Azerbaijan and Norway have been established long ago and we are sure that they will develop in future more rapidly...”

*From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the meeting with Kim Traaviki, State Secretary of the ministry of foreign affairs of Norway – September 1, 2005*

**Statement of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev after the  
signature of the documents between Azerbaijan and Norway**

April 24, 1996

I am very satisfied with my first official visit to Norway as President of the independent Azerbaijan and I thank to the prime minister of Norway Ms. Brundtland for this invitation. The negotiations carried on by us and the documents have been signed just now are a great stage for the future development of the Norwegian-Azerbaijani relations, it is a historical event for the Republic of Azerbaijan, for our nation.

I think that the cooperation between Norway and Azerbaijan develops successfully, however there are great opportunities for its development in future. I thank Ms. Brundtland for the attention and hospitality rendered to me and the delegation accompanying me in Norway, in Oslo.

I have invited prime minister Ms. Brundtland for an official visit to Azerbaijan and I shall wait her visit impatiently. I shall go to Stavanger, and it is very interesting to me to get acquainted with high achievements of Norway in the sphere of oil industry, in particular in the sphere of high technology. This is a good opportunity for the Norwegian-Azerbaijani friendship.

## **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the meeting with the Prime Minister of Norway Gro Harlem Brundtland**

**April 24, 1996**

Mr. Prime Minister Brundtland,

I thank you for the warm welcome and I want to say that I am pleased to remember the meetings I held with you previously. I am grateful to you for inviting me to visit Norway and declare that I am glad to visit the friendly country.

We set the ground for the expansion of cooperation between Norway and Azerbaijan in all the spheres of the economy. With a great pleasure I want to emphasize the participation of "Statoil" company in the "Contract of the Century" along with other reputable western oil companies involved in developments in Azerbaijan and note that in our country there are all conditions for the broad activities of other companies.

Speaking about the work done for the peaceful solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, I want to note that following the decision of the heads of governments of the members of OSCE, with the active participation of Brundtland at the Budapest Summit within the framework of the Minsk Group there emerged great opportunities for holding negotiations and direct dialogues mediated by the major countries. In this issue, we cherish great hopes in the Minsk Group.

On April 21, I had a meeting with the President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan in Luxembourg. A joint statement adopted at the meeting is an important step in peaceful solution of the conflict. I declare it once more that Azerbaijan is a peaceful country and strives to solve the conflict only by peaceful means. Though our country suffered enormous material and moral damages, over a 20 percent of the territory of our country is under occupation and over a million of our citizens live as refugees in difficult conditions, still we offer a peace to Armenia.

I claim that our country is ready to provide an autonomy for about one hundred thousand Armenians in the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan according the world practice, at the same time, to ensure the security of the Armenians living in the Mountainous Garabagh who are the Azerbaijani citizens. The main cause of that we cannot achieve peace in these negotiations is the unconstructive position of Armenia, use of violence on its part, as well as support given to it by several countries. Despite these obstacles we intend to continue the peace negotiations.

I would like to emphasize the fact that Norway was one of the first European countries to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan and "Statoil" became one of the first foreign companies to work in our country. I think that our cooperation with

Norway, in particular, with “Statoil” company will be lasting. I would like to express the hope that XXI century will be a century of close relations between Norway and Azerbaijan. The relations we created are built on a strong foundation therefore, it is necessary for our countries to cooperate with all international organizations closer.

I invite distinguished Prime Minister Brundtland to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the official reception held by the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro  
Harlem Brundtland in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

April 24, 1996

Ms. Prime Minister Brundtland, President of the Parliament, ladies and gentlemen, I cordially welcome you, all the Norwegian people on behalf of the people of Azerbaijan and the independent Republic of Azerbaijan.

First of all, I express my sincerest gratitude to Prime Minister Mrs. Brundtland for inviting me to visit Norway, attention and hospitality to the delegations arrived in Norway with me.

My visit to Norway, negotiations we held today with Prime Minister Brundtland and documents which we signed are a great event and a new stage in strengthening and development of the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan. We appreciate the documents we signed today and believe that they are very important in the development of the Azerbaijani-Norwegian cooperation and relations between our two countries.

Azerbaijan lives the fifth year of its independence and for the last five years great changes have taken place both in the world and also in the life of Azerbaijan. Independence of Azerbaijan and the changes ongoing in our country are connected with the processes and changes taking place in the world in recent years. The collapse of the Soviet Union led to the end of the "cold war" and in this respect a new stage began in the world processes. As a result, the former Soviet republics gained their independences. Azerbaijan is also pleased to gain its independence. We believe that this is a historic achievement.

As a result of these processes Azerbaijan gained its independence and our present meeting is due to it, the Republic of Azerbaijan as an independent country entered into the international community and created mutually beneficial relations with the countries of the world. The relations established and developed between Norway and Azerbaijan are the logical result of these processes.

With great pleasure I would like to note that when Azerbaijan gained its independence one of the first countries to recognize its independence was Norway. I am grateful for the care that Norway rendered to Azerbaijan and its independence in connection with the historical event for us four years ago. I mention it once more that in this period the relations between Norway and Azerbaijan developed rapidly. Today we are witnessing the highest level of these relations. We pay special attention to our relations with Norway and they have a special meaning for us. As Norway is one of

the most economically developed countries, it has achieved great successes in the field of democracy and economy. The human rights, freedom of speech and conscience are priorities in Norway. All this is valuable to us. In order to use this experience we appreciate the relations between Norway and Azerbaijan.

Cooperation between our countries has already produced positive results. The biggest oil company of Norway “Statoil” is one of the first oil companies came to Azerbaijan. “Statoil” has a big share and an important place in the oil contract called “the Contract of the Century” signed in the September of 1994 between the consortium of major oil companies and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan. To do joint developments in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea we negotiate with “Statoil” and work together. I believe that it will also bring positive results. Interest of other Norwegian companies in Azerbaijan and the opening of their offices in Azerbaijan are good examples of the rapid development of our economic relations.

Azerbaijan is the biggest and the most ancient oil country. Today, I again want to emphasize that the commercial oil in the world was produced in the middle of the last century in Azerbaijan, Baku. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan now needs new technologies in oil production. Therefore, the achievements of Norway in the of-shore oil developments and the use of new technologies since the early 70s are very interesting for us. I hope that tomorrow in Stavanger, I shall get acquainted with the new technology closer and our professionals who work in the oil field will try to use this experience. In a word, the Norwegian-Azerbaijani economic relations have a bright future and I assure you that from our side we shall make every effort to expand these relations. At the same time in the Norwegian-Azerbaijani relations we try and shall try to use the achievements and experience of the Norwegian people and the Norwegian country in the field of democracy, economic reforms, all modern and progressive measures.

After gaining independence our country follows the way of building a democratic, legal and secular society and carries out serious reforms in economy on the basis of the market economy. We have adopted and conduct a program of privatization. Azerbaijan tries to develop the economy on market economy. Last November we adopted the first democratic constitution of Azerbaijan and for the first time held elections to the parliament based on democratic principles. In addition, we hold other democratic reforms.

Your country gained its independence at the beginning of this century and achieved great success at the end of the twentieth century. Azerbaijan has gained its independence in the last decade of the twentieth century and is willing to join XXI century as a democratic state. From this point of view, the national independence of Azerbaijan is a very valuable achievement for us and we shall always preserve our independence.

Ms. Prime Minister, you said kind words in your speech you spoke about the

development of democratic processes in Azerbaijan, about the first steps of our young democracy and highly appreciated our first steps. It inspires us and you can be sure that we shall always follow this path and never turn from it. We signed an agreement on cooperation and partnership with the European Union two days ago in Luxembourg in order to join it in future. We appreciate it as a historic event for the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan and for the development of democracy in our country. Of course, there are very big problems, obstacles facing our young republic. The most difficult and painful problem for us is the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and its solution. As you know, the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan has been going on continued for eight years. As a result of this military aggression, 20 percent of the Azerbaijani lands have been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. More than a million Azerbaijani citizens have been driven from the occupied territories, lost their homes and became refugees. Now most of them live in tents in very difficult conditions.

Despite huge losses, enormous material and moral damage inflicted on Azerbaijan we try to solve the conflict peacefully and achieve a lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan. For this purpose, we use all the opportunities. We try to use the negotiations held within the Minsk Group of OSCE. In this regard, we take constructive steps and do everything in our power. In order to end this conflict the armed forces of Armenia must withdraw from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the occupied territories must be liberated, Azerbaijani citizens must return home and Azerbaijan will be ready to assign the Mountainous Garabagh the status of autonomy within the Republic of Azerbaijan. On the basis of these principles, principles of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan we can achieve a lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We shall continue our efforts in all directions. I want to mention that it is already two years that there is a cease-fire between Armenia and Azerbaijan. We observe this agreement. After the negotiations with the President of Armenia Levon Ter-Petrosyan held on April 21 in Luxembourg we declared that we shall continue to maintain the cease-fire till the achievement of peace. We want peace in our country and in our region. We want to have peace in the world. We are against separatism and terrorism and shall continue to keep this position. To achieve peace in the region, of course, we need the help of the peaceful countries of the world. In this regard, I appreciate the concern and interest of Norway in our region, particularly in Azerbaijan, and with a sense of pleasure I approve the position of Prime Minister Brundtland in her speech.

The Caucasus is an important region of the world. But now the fires of conflicts burn the Caucasus. One of these conflicts is the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. I want to express my hope that the Norwegian government will continue its efforts in solving the conflicts in the Caucasus and in particular, the Armenian-Azerbaijani

conflict peacefully. Dear friends, you are in the north of the Earth and we, Azerbaijan, in the south. There is a great distance between our countries. But at the end of the twentieth century this distance does not prevent us to maintain close relations. Our present relations indicate that we are able to develop them in future.

Ms. Prime Minister, I thank you once more for your hospitality, I can assure you and the Norwegian people that the Azerbaijanis are faithful to their friendship and the Norwegian-Azerbaijani relations and friendship have a bright future.

I raise my glass to the Norwegian people and its bright future. I wish the Norwegian government success in the implementation of the duties they face. I wish Prime Minister of Norway Ms. Brundtland and the Norwegian government happiness and well-being. Thank you.

## **Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the press conference in Oslo**

**Oslo, April 25, 1996**

Ladies and gentlemen!

I arrived on an official visit to a friendly country at the invitation of the Prime Minister of Norway, Ms. Brundtland. Our delegation is also here with me. We held negotiations yesterday. I must note that our negotiations were productive. As a result of the negotiations we signed several documents between Norway and Azerbaijan.

We attach a special importance to the relations with Norway. Norway is one of the countries of the world which recognized the independence of Azerbaijan. Since then Norway has been interested in the economic cooperation with Azerbaijan. The "Statoil" and other companies of Norway have come to Azerbaijan and they have already began to cooperate with us.

At the same time the factor which made us to close cooperation is that Norway is one of the developed countries of Europe, it has obtained great achievements in the field of economy. Norway has also obtained great success in the sphere of democratic reforms. Norway has established its own state on full democratic principles and formed its society. All this cases are very attractive and interesting for us. This is also an experience to establish a legal, democratic and secular state in Azerbaijan. These factors are very important in terms of our closer relations with Norway and henceforth in the terms of their development.

Yesterday we had a broad exchange of views and held negotiations on these issues with Prime Minister Ms. Brundtland. As a result of these negotiations, we agreed to develop the relations between Norway and Azerbaijan in future. At the same time, during our negotiations we focused on the events around the globe. Protracted military conflicts and their resolution were at the focal point of our negotiations. We had the same opinion on them. Besides, our opinions and views coincide in a number of other issues. This is a good basis for our further cooperation.

Azerbaijan is located in the Caucasus. But unfortunately, there is a number of military conflicts in the Caucasus, including the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh, the most serious and dangerous conflict of the world. This conflict inflicted a great losses and damage on Azerbaijan and its people. Twenty percent of the territory of Azerbaijan has been occupied by the armed forces of Armenia and over one million Azerbaijanis have become internally displaced. They live in tents. This has aggravated the situation in our economy, as well as the situation general. We had broad talks with Ms. Brundtland about this. I informed her and I declare to you that Azerbaijan wants

to solve the conflict with Armenia peacefully. Therefore, we signed a cease-fire agreement with Armenia. We have been loyal to this agreement so far, and we shall try to observe it in the future. We hold negotiations while the cease-fire goes on. As a result of negotiations we want to put an end to the military operations and to the conflict. We are advocates of the constant peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Each country, including Armenia must observe the norms of international law in order to achieve peace. In this respect, we have very preferential and constructive proposals. The proposals oblige the Armenian armed forces to withdraw from the occupied Azerbaijani territories. The territorial integrity and the inviolability of the borders of Azerbaijan must be provided. The Azerbaijani citizens must return home. The main principle of the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is that Nagorno-Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan. We are also ready to grant an autonomy to Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan and to the Armenians living there. This autonomy can only be within the Azerbaijani territory. This status must never harm the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is in the fifth year of its independence. The independence of the state is a historical event for the Azerbaijani people. This independence is eternal for us. The independent Azerbaijan builds its life on democratic principles. A democratic and legal state is built in Azerbaijan and all the democratic principles are established in our country. Last November Azerbaijan adopted its first democratic constitution by referendum. At the same time the first democratic elections on the basis of multi-party system were held to the parliament of Azerbaijan. All of this created a good basis for democracy in Azerbaijan. Our economy is open to the whole world. We conduct reforms in the economy based on the principles of market economy. The privatization program was adopted and implemented. All this shows that within a short time Azerbaijan with its rich natural resources will become one of the most developed countries of the world. We feel very good in your beautiful city of Oslo. We are shown great hospitality here. Our meetings and negotiations take place in conditions of sincerity and friendship. All this shows that Norwegian-Azerbaijani relations have a great future and we shall do everything possible to achieve it. Thank you.

***Question: President Heydar Aliyev commented in his statement on the expansion of cooperation between "Statoil" and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan. There is a question in this regard: Is the participation of "Statoil" in the development of new oil fields in the Caspian Sea, including "Shahdeniz" field intended?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** Yes, we intend it. We hold active negotiations on this issue.

***Question: Increase of oil production means increase of transportation of oil. As it is known, the Azerbaijani oil will be transported to foreign countries through the Russian and Georgian territories. Are there other options on oil pipelines and cooperation with the Norwegian organizations?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** Yes, you are right. We have concluded a treaty with Russia and Georgia

on the construction of pipelines for the transport of early oil to Novorossiysk and Supsa ports of the Black Sea through the Russian and Georgian territories. But at the same time the construction of the main oil pipeline for the export of the Azerbaijani oil is set out in the project of the consortium. We cooperate with the Norwegian organizations about this issue and we shall keep cooperating.

**Question:** *We would like to know how Azerbaijan appreciates the role OSCE and UN in the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict? Did you discuss the issue of involving the Norwegian soldiers to the peace-keeping forces of OSCE in your meeting with the Norwegian Prime Minister?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** We use the Minsk Group of OSCE opportunities to resolve the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and we will use it further. The Minsk Group of OSCE was set up to solve this conflict by peaceful means. It is true that the work of the Minsk Group and our work through it have not yielded any results so far. But we shall henceforth use this means. Achievement of a peace agreement and its implementation implies the involvement of international peacekeepers in our region. Prime Minister Ms. Brundtland responded to the questions of the Azerbaijani journalists during the meeting. She noted that Norway had issued a statement at the Summit of OSCE, in Budapest in December 1994. The statement says that if the peace agreement is reached and the OSCE peace-keepers are sent to our region, then Norway will send its troops together with them.

**Question:** *You have already mentioned that the consortium has a project on the construction of an oil pipeline for the major oil export. But you did not say anything about the rout of that pipeline where this oil pipeline will cross and what place will be its destination. This is my first question. Here is the second one: There is no doubt that in its activity the consortium takes into the situation in the Caucasus, as well as in Chechnya. To what extent is it taken into account?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Let us talk about the main oil pipeline at first. Of course, all the options were considered and studied thoroughly. There is no final decision on this issue yet. For this reason, it is too early be specific about it. Anyway, the construction of the main oil pipeline is still a project of the consortium. We will try to achieve the construction and operation of this oil pipeline.

What concerns the situation in the Northern Caucasus, I can say that we have concluded a treaty with Russia on the construction of the oil pipeline northwards, and we have taken into consideration the difficulties that might emerge on this route. But at the same time, these difficulties can be removed.

**Question:** *Mr. President, I would like to know what is the situation in connection with the contract to be signed on the deposit of "Shah Deniz"? Do the negotiations come to an end in this area? Has the list of companies to take in exploitation of "Shah Deniz" been determined? What are those companies? Do you expect the participation of the*

***World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in funding the project of “Shah Deniz”?***

**Heydar Aliyev:** Negotiations on joint exploitation of “Shah Deniz” come to an end. I suppose that a contract will be signed in the nearest future. A number of world companies are interested in this oil deposit. We hold negotiations with them. But I do not want to give information about the companies which will participate in this project. I just want to say that “Statoil” and ”British Petroleum” have worked more in this oil field from the beginning, and of course, they are going take part in this project.

About the financing of the project, the companies in the consortium usually deal with this issue themselves. If they are part of any project, it means that they take it into account and resolve the financial problems. They might use the assistance of the World Bank and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other banks. Thank you.

## **Official Visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Kingdom of Norway (April 24-27, 1996)**

### **Historical Reference**

Development of mutual relations with Norway is one of the significant factors accelerating Azerbaijan's integration to the world community. Existence of oil production in both countries conditions the joint interests in many fields. Development of mutual relations is mainly due to this fact.

On April 24-27, 1996, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan visited Norway, held meetings with Prime Minister G.Bruntland, chairman of Storting K.Graindal, minister of Foreign Affairs B.Godal and minister of Energetics and Industry Y.Stoltenberg.

As a result of those meetings, an agreement on "Friendship and Partnership between Azerbaijan and Norway", as well as other documents was signed as they expand the legal-normative base of mutual relations between the two countries. By signing those documents, an official legal-diplomatic base of mutual relations was established between the two countries.

After the ceremony of signature, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev noted in his statement: "The negotiations and the signed documents are great steps in the further development of the Azerbaijani-Norwegian relations and are a historical event for the Republic of Azerbaijan and its nation, as well."

During the meeting, Prime Minister of Norway G.Brunntland stated that Norway seconded the integrity of Azerbaijan and supported the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh within the framework of OSCE. In this regard, in the case of establishment of peacekeeping forces Norway would also participate in it.

In his meeting on April 24, with G.Brunntland Haydar Aliyev mentioned: "Talking about the works done in the direction of peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, I would like to notify that after the decision adopted with the active participation of Mrs. Brunntland at Budapest Summit of OSCE the opportunities have considerably increased in the direction of holding negotiations and starting dialogues with the mediation of great powers.

During the visit the following exceptionally important documents were signed between the two countries:

1. Convention on "Avoiding of Double Taxation, Prevention of Fiscal Evasions from the Payment of Income and Property Taxes" between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Kingdom of Norway, Oslo, April 24, 1996
2. Protocol on the implementation of the Memorandum on Cooperation in the field of Energetics between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Industry and Energetics of Norway ( signed in November of 1994)

Within the frame of the visit Haydar Aliyev was in Norway and met with the president of "Statoil" company Harl Norving. At the meeting held between Haydar Aliyev and Harl Norving,

the document considering the participation of Azerbaijan as a partner in the construction of oil (Baku-Tbilisi-Jeyhan) and gas (Baku-Tbilisi-Arzurum) pipelines transmitting hydrocarbon resources to the world market was signed between Norway State Oil Company (Statoil) and Azerbaijan State Oil Company (SOCAR). On April 25, 1996 at an official dinner given in honor of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Haydar Aliyev stated: After Azerbaijan achieved its independence ‘Statoil’ company is one of the leading world companies willing to cooperate in the field of economy with Azerbaijan. All those led to the establishment of Norwegian-Azerbaijani relations and friendship.”

On April 25, in the press conference in Oslo President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev mentioned that the visit would be significant in the development of the Norwegian -Azerbaijani relations and answered the questions of the representatives of media.

Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the development of mutual relations with Norway is one of the successful steps in the foreign policy of Azerbaijan.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF  
GERMANY (July 1-4, 1996)**

“...Germany is a very important country and a very necessary partner for us. Our cooperation is of great importance on bilateral level and within the frames of EU-Azerbaijani relationship...”

*From the meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev with the heads of the Azerbaijani communities in Germany – Berlin, February 15, 2007*

**Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the official reception on behalf of the German Federal President Roman Herzog in honor of the Azerbaijani President**

Bonn, July 2, 1996

Mr. President, ladies and gentlemen!

I welcome you cordially on behalf of the Azerbaijan people, the independent Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is a young independent state, it achieved independence five years ago. The partner relations, established between Azerbaijan and Germany in this period are of great importance for both of us. As a result of this cooperation for the first time the Azerbaijani President has paid an official visit to Germany. Since our first step into Germany yesterday we were met with great hospitality, and since yesterday we began meetings in Germany, in Bonn in the atmosphere of friendship and sincerity. For this friendly, sincere attitude and hospitality I express my gratitude to Germany to the German government, to its President Mr. Roman Herzog and the Federal Chancellor Mr. Helmut Kohl on behalf of all the Azerbaijani delegation.

Today since the morning we had very useful, interesting and important negotiations and meetings with the President of Germany Mr. Roman Herzog, the Federal Chancellor Mr. Helmut Kohl and other officials of the country. During these meetings and negotiations we analyzed the relations between Germany and Azerbaijan in detail, and we highly estimated our cooperation existing up to now. We disclosed our views on taking measures for the further expansion and development of cooperation between Germany and Azerbaijan, and achieved a certain agreement. I highly appreciate these meetings and negotiations, the agreements which we reached I wish to express my confidence that the German-Azerbaijani relations will develop more speedily in the future on this basis.

The relations between Germany and Azerbaijan, the German and Azerbaijan peoples have a long history. Mr. president, who spoke before me, has told very valuable words on

this occasion. In the beginning of the last century, the Germans for the first time arrived in Azerbaijan. Today, with a feeling of satisfaction I can tell that when the Germans came to live in Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijan people met them friendly and in the next years they lived and created together with the Azerbaijanis.

In the Second World War the Germans were departed from Azerbaijan, nevertheless they have left their traces in our country, and the work done in Azerbaijan by them are very valuable for Azerbaijan. In the end of the past and in the beginning of this century the German capital, the German businessmen come to Azerbaijan. The traces of their works have remained up to this day. The representatives of the German company “Siemens” have found a part of the electric work in recent researches in Azerbaijan, conducted by “Siemens” in Baku in 1905, and have taken a part of them to Germany as a museum exhibit.

All this demonstrates the history of the German-Azerbaijan relations and displays the benefits which these two nations received from this friendship and cooperation.

The great and rich history of the German people was always very interesting for us and we had a sympathy for it. The German people have made a great contribution to the history of mankind, to the world civilization. It is highly estimated by the whole world. The works of Heine, Goethe, Schiller and others who form the form of the peak of the German literature, have been translated into Azerbaijani and the Azerbaijanis read them with great interest.

The German composers Beethoven, Wagner, Strauss and others are famous in the world of music are widely known in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijanis love them very much and the achievements in the classical music have been obtained under the influence of their music in Azerbaijan.

All of this are the great history of Germany and the German people. The achievements of the German people in our century in the recent years are worthy of estimation, too. After the Second World War, the German people went through very giant and difficult history. The German people achieved great successes owing to their talent, diligence. They turned Germany to one of the most advanced countries of the world from economic and cultural point of view. The greatest achievement of the German people was unification of Germany five years ago. I want to note that it was met in Azerbaijan very positively and restoration of justice as the existence of the German people within the limits of the indivisible state has been met as a fair result of the processes ongoing in the world.

After the unification, Germany began to use its opportunities more widely. The present achievements of Germany play very important role and its reputation has grown in the world. Successes of Germany in the development of science and technology, economy and culture, democracy and free economy are parameters for all the countries, including Azerbaijan. I congratulate you on these achievements and I want to note that in independent Azerbaijan we successfully use your achievements and experience in state building, development of democracy, in implementation of economic reforms.

We attach a special significance to the relations between Azerbaijan and Germany and consider them to be strategically important for Azerbaijan as friendly relations. I am very glad that Germany estimates properly the role and place of Azerbaijan in the world community. Words about Azerbaijan, about its geostrategic importance, mentioned by Mr. President Herzog in his speech pleases us very much.

I am sure that the relations between Germany and Azerbaijan have a good future. I want to assure you that we shall use our best for the expansion, development of these relations. Our duty is to strengthen and provide the irreversibility of Azerbaijan independence. We build a democratic, legal, civil state in Azerbaijan and we shall follow this way to the end. We use the achievements and experience of the world in the field of democracy, and we shall follow the road of democracy to the end.

Our basic purpose is conduct reforms in economy, in market economy and, in particular, in privatization of property. I am very glad that the achievements in the fields of democracy and economy in Azerbaijan were highly appreciated in the speech of the German President Mr. Roman Herzog. Last November the first democratic Constitution was adopted in Azerbaijan by a national referendum and democratic parliamentary elections were held. All this shows democratic image of the Azerbaijan in the world.

The agreement signed by us in April with the European Community, and admission of Azerbaijan in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe with the status of a special guest shows that Azerbaijan is a parter of Europe, and at the same time it is the appreciation of the achievements of our country in the field of democracy. We cooperate with Germany in the realization of all our achievements, aspirations and concerning the processes going in around Azerbaijan and think that this cooperation is effective.

The gravest and most painful problem for us is elimination of consequences of the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, liberation of the occupied lands and return of over one million refugees home. Today I declare again that we wish to solve the conflict with Armenia peacefully way, and we will adhere to it hence. In it we the help of the world community, the European Union, including Germany.

Thus, the relations, cooperation with Germany have great prospects and opportunities. We shall try to take advantage of these opportunities effectively. Our negotiations and meetings today make give us confident that we can successfully move forward. Once more, I heartily congratulate the German people and the government of Germany with their achievements. I wish the German people, all Europe peace and stability. I wish the German people good luck and happiness.

I ask you to raise the glasses in honor of the Federal Republic of Germany, in honor of the German people, in honor of the President of Germany Mr. Roman Herzog, in honor of the federal chancellor of Germany Mr. Helmut Kohl, in honor of the German-Azerbaijan friendship!

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the press conference dedicated to his visit to the Federal Republic of Germany**

Bonn, July 3, 1996

Ladies and gentlemen!

Thank you for inviting me to the press centre of your city, to the house of journalists.

As you know, I arrived in Germany on July 3, 1996, on an official visit at the invitation by the German government. This is the first visit of the President of the independent Azerbaijan to Germany.

Yesterday early morning we started our meetings here in Germany. I held meetings with the President of Germany Mr. Roman Herzog, Chancellor Helmut Kohl and other representatives of the German government, as well as the leaders of Bundestag and parliamentarians. We had very comprehensive discussions and talks. I suppose we did a lot for improving of the Azerbaijani-German contacts as a result of it.

Azerbaijan is a newly independent state, it gained independence five years ago and wants to occupy its worthy place in the world community. Because of it, Azerbaijan establishes bilateral and mutually beneficial contacts with all the countries of the world.

Germany is of great importance for Azerbaijan among those countries. Azerbaijan attaches special importance to its relations with Germany because of its great achievements in the sphere of economy for being a democratic state and society and one of the great powers of the world. These contacts have been established in the recent years and we have tried to improve them. My goal in visiting Germany is to raise these contacts to much a higher level, deepen and expand them, and take new steps for their development.

I suppose that a good basis has been laid for improving the German-Azerbaijani relations in our talks with the German leadership and official circles yesterday. I would like to say that I am very satisfied with these meetings and talks, with the hospitality, attention and care shown to me and to the persons who accompany me. I thank all the German people and government.

We focused our attention on the expansion and acceleration of cooperation in the sphere of economy in our talks. There are great opportunities in this sphere and we try to use them efficiently. Today I met numerous representatives of the German businessmen and directors of companies in Köln, economic and industrial centre of the country. I suppose that I disclosed all the opportunities of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Germany in this meeting extensively.

You know that Azerbaijan is a part of Europe. Situated on the crossroads of Europe and Asia, Azerbaijan occupies an important geopolitical position. Natural resources of our country, its location in the Caucasus on the crossroads of Europe and Asia attract the attention of the European countries, and all this is interesting for Germany as well. I think that the meetings held yesterday and our meetings planned for today and tomorrow will give an incentive to the Azerbaijani-German contacts, especially to our economic contacts. We are for raising this cooperation to a much higher level.

Thank you and I am ready to answer your questions.

***Question: Mr. President, You say that the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is very difficult and the international organizations could contribute to this issue. How do you see this contribution and how do you evaluate the prospect of the settlement of this difficult issue?***

**Heydar Aliyev:** Yes, the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh is difficult. This conflict started eight years ago, in 1988, and I would say that it is the longest and most complicated conflict among the conflicts of the world. This conflict erupted as a result of the aggression of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan. Armenia committed the aggression against Azerbaijan with the purpose to seize Nagorno-Karabakh province of Azerbaijan and the war broke out as a result of it. The Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 percent of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Over one million civil Azerbaijani citizens have been driven out of these territories and at present live in very hard conditions in other regions of Azerbaijan as refugees, mainly in tent camps.

Azerbaijan received hard blows as a result of the conflict and our country suffered great losses, people were killed. Houses, historical monuments, factories, plants, hydro power stations, hospitals, schools and cultural sites, everything which Azerbaijani people built in those territories for centuries were completely destroyed and plundered. Despite all of them, the Republic of Azerbaijan is for the peaceful settlement of the issue. Therefore, a ceasefire agreement was signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan two years ago. We live in the regime of ceasefire for two years. But we don't have peace at the same time.

We want peace and we do not want the start of combats again. Thus, we take serious and constructive steps to achieve peace. You said, and I confirm that to resolve this issue is not easy. But there are conditions for the solution of the conflict and they are simple. The conditions are the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied territories and restoration of the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan recognized by the international organizations. In such a case, Azerbaijan obliges to ensure the security of nearly one hundred thousand Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, and at the same time is ready to grant the highest

status of autonomy Nagorno-Karabakh existing in the world.

These conditions are simple and just. If this issue is not settled on the said conditions, it is fault of Armenia. Unfortunately Armenia has unjust approach to the settlement of the conflict. It wants to make Nagorno-Karabakh an independent state, hence to receive independence for it. Thus, these provisions are not complied with. But I declare that Nagorno-Karabakh never can be granted the status of independence. Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is in full conformity with the demands of the international law. Every country must protect its territorial integrity. But at the moment, undoubtedly, the settlement of the issue lingers on.

The Minsk Group of OSCE is busy with the settlement of this issue. It holds many meetings and talks. We submit all our proposals to the Minsk Group. But I suppose that the Minsk Group could not make a necessary decision for the just settlement of this issue yet. It is necessary to strengthen the activity of the Minsk Group and we want it. At the same time the world powers, members and non-member states of the Minsk Group must increase their efforts. Germany also can influence the settlement of this issue, as a member of the Minsk Group. I hope that this issue will be settled by peaceful means. We want peace and peaceful settlement of this issue.

***Question: Mr. President, you talked about the establishment of a constitutional and democratic state in Azerbaijan. But according to the opinion of the experts who observed the elections, they were not held democratically in Azerbaijan, the opposition parties were banned, all newspapers were shut down and journalists were arrested. How one can speak about democracy in such a country?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** I think that Mr. Manchurian's question shows how biased he is towards Azerbaijan. First, I want to say that all his statements are lie and contradict the reality. I suppose that he invents them himself.

The truth is as follows: more than 30 political parties have been registered in Azerbaijan. These parties act independently and the majority of them are opposition parties. The parliament elections in last November were held on both majoritarian and proportional system and eight parties participated in them. As a result of these elections, parliamentarians were elected from the opposition parties both on the basis of proportional system, party lists, and majoritarian system. Eight parties were represented in the parliament of Azerbaijan. Some parliamentarians are from the opposition parties.

Political pluralism and freedom of press have been completely ensured in Azerbaijan. I cannot say the exact number of newspapers, they are published in hundreds. Here you are, it was said that they are 560. The majority of them belong to the opposition parties and political organizations. There is no censure. Every journalist writes what he wants. The Azerbaijani authorities inter alia are severely criticized, and sometimes articles

tell lies and fabricate things in order to discredit the authorities as Mr. Manchurian. I consider all this normal.

In general, I suppose Mr. Manucharian's question would have been normal, if he had not have lied. I say frankly that there is not even a single journalist in prisons in Azerbaijan. One year ago one young journalist was arrested for defaming the President of Azerbaijan. I was appealed and I pardoned him. I pardoned them as soon as I knew about it, and they were released.

In April, a Turkish journalist was arrested in Baku. He was arrested not for being a journalist, but for being with criminals during the night. Although he had committed a crime, I pardoned him as well, after the appeal of the representatives of Igdir of Turkey, and he was released and sent to his motherland, Turkey.

Indeed, a democratic and constitutional state is being built and human rights are being protected in Azerbaijan. One third of the first democratic constitution adopted last November is dedicated to the protection of human rights. I answered your questions not by using common words, but facts. But thank you at the same time for asking me this question. Because, it gave me an opportunity, to inform the journalists of the ongoing democratic processes in Azerbaijan.

***Question: There were several attempts for the settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. How do you appreciate the help of the present administration of Russia in this issue, and what can Moscow do for the normalization of situation?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** There were really several states and political bodies which mediated for the settlement of the issue in past eight years. Undoubtedly, every mediation initiative contributed to the settlement of this issue in some period. But complete settlement of the issue has not been achieved yet.

I said that it is already four years that the Minsk group of OSCE is busy with this issue. Since December 1994, two countries, Russia and Finland chair the Minsk Group. Outside the framework of the Minsk Group, Russia was engaged in independent mediation initiatives. At the same time, the great world powers, the USA, Turkey and others also displayed independent initiatives and submitted proposals. Russia, its president Boris Yeltsin not once discussed this issue with me, and made statements that they would make necessary initiatives and efforts.

The United States also make initiatives in this sphere. I had meetings and talks with the US President Bill Clinton about it.

If you want a concrete response to your question that what can Russia do in this case, I can answer that it can do much and greatly influence the settlement of this issue. Russia probably will join this issue more actively.

***RIA Novosti: I would like to ask you one question. What information do you have about the presidential elections in Russia?***

*One of the reporters participating at the press conference:* to my mind everything is OK.

**Heydar Aliyev:** OK? Very fine.

*Question: Mr. President, could you say what agreements did you sign during your meetings?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Some agreements were signed between Germany and Azerbaijan during the visit of the German foreign minister, deputy Chancellor Klaus Kinkell to Azerbaijan last December. Yesterday also Mr. Kinkell and minister of economy of Azerbaijan signed some agreements. All these agreements were dedicated to the settlement of the economic issues between Germany and Azerbaijan. I suppose that these documents lay a good legal base for our economic cooperation.

*Question: Mr. President, what priority issues for Azerbaijan were discussed during your meeting with the Federal Chancellor?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Yesterday, our talks with Mr. Helmut Kohl were connected with the issues considered to be priorities from the very beginning. No issues lacking priority were discussed in the meeting. Undoubtedly, we mainly focused on the improvement of our economic contacts.

The German companies and concerns are few in Azerbaijan yet. At the same time, yesterday and today we noted that the German companies "Siemens" and "Mannesmann" began to work in Azerbaijan at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. There are great opportunities for the German businessmen and companies to work in Azerbaijan now and it concerns the spheres of oil industry, metallurgy, energy, engineering, chemistry and others. We discussed all these issues with Mr. Helmut Kohl and came in such a conclusion that the Federal Chancellor will assist in their realization concrete projects are submitted.

We held very long discussions on the Trans-Caucasian Transport Highway with Federal Chancellor. Four countries, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Georgia and Azerbaijan have already signed an agreement for the construction of such a highway. The Trans-Caucasian Highway links the Central Asia and Europe and can pass through the Central Asia, Caspian Sea, Azerbaijan, Georgia, the Black Sea to Europe, and especially to Germany across the Danube. It was also discussed as a priority issue.

Undoubtedly, the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh was in the focus of our talks. The Caucasian region, the countries of this region, the contacts of Germany with them were also discussed. You see, there is no an issue without priority.

*Question: Mr. President, I would like to give a question about Russia. Do you have any anxieties connected with Boris Yeltsin's health?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I don't know if Boris Yeltsin fell ill or no. I think he is not. But

if he is, then there are high quality doctors and medical service in Moscow. I have been living and working in Moscow for many years. I know that doctors and medical service are of high quality there. If Boris Yeltsin really falls ill he will be provided with necessary treatment, and he doesn't need my help.

*Question: Mr. President, we know that democracy develops in Azerbaijan, but there are people who act against the independence of Azerbaijan in the name of the Islamic Party. What can you say about it?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I think that democracy must be established in every country. It is proved by ongoing socio-political processes in the world in the recent years. No one can deprive us from our independence, don't worry about it.

Thank you for your attention.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Federal Republic of Germany (July 1-4, 1996)**

### **Historical Reference**

Establishment of relations with the European countries and development of these relations assume great importance in the foreign policy of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan always draws the attention of the European countries because of its political-economic and strategic position.

Azerbaijan gives a special attention to the development of relations with Germany, one of the strongest countries of Europe, from economic and political points of view. Azerbaijan opened its first embassy in this country taking into consideration the historical traditions and closeness with this country. Azerbaijan is important for Germany because of three issues. They are: integration of Azerbaijan to the West, protection of stability in the Southern Caucuses, and the important role of Azerbaijan in the architecture of energy security.

On the 1<sup>st</sup> of July, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev met the members of administrative delegation and presidium of the German-Azerbaijani Forum. Heydar Aliyev gave information about reforms conducted by the newly independent Azerbaijan, and emphasized importance of the relations with Germany. "The Azerbaijani people highly appreciate the work done by Germany and its people for the mankind and its achievements with respect. The German people have great achievements, and as a developed country, it has a great experience. Independent Azerbaijan does its best to be close to this country and to strengthen their relations day by day."

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met President of Germany Roman Herzog and federal-chancellor Helmut Koll. They analyzed the current situation of the German-Azerbaijani relations, held discussions for the further development of cooperation in future.

On that day an official reception was held on the behalf of President Roman Herzog in honor of Heydar Aliyev. Heydar Aliyev in his speech in the reception touched upon the history of the German-Azerbaijani relations and stated that the experience of Germany after its unification was very beneficial for our country.

During the visit a joint declaration on the principles of the relations between Azerbaijan and Federal Republic of Germany, as well as, a number of agreements covering economic spheres were signed.

On the 2<sup>nd</sup> of July Heydar Aliyev met the chairman of the German-Caucasian parliamentary group of Bundestag Willi Wimmer and other members of that group. He thanked them for the kind attitude to him and appreciated their objective, strong, and kind position.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the press conference devoted to his official visit to Germany. In his speech he touched upon the German-Azerbaijani relations, Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, answered to the questions, which the international community were interested in.

On the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July President Heydar Aliyev met the governing bodies of “Dutch Bank” in Dusseldorf, and made a speech in the official reception held in his honor. As a result of the meeting very important agreements were signed between the National Bank of Azerbaijan and the International Bank of Azerbaijan. The governing body of “Dutch Bank” presented books to Heydar Aliyev published for the promotion of the Azerbaijani economy.

On the same day o Heydar Aliyev held important meetings in the framework of his visit to Germany in Koln with the businessmen of Germany. In the meeting Heydar Aliyev stated: “I think that there should be more German companies in Azerbaijan. There are favorable conditions and opportunities for them. The main condition is that Azerbaijan is an open country; it has democratic principles in economy. This condition and the rule of law, the legal basis, which still is also in process, give an opportunity to the foreign companies to take an active part in the cooperation with Azerbaijan. I assure you as President that I shall take all the measures to create all conditions for each foreign company to operate in Azerbaijan efficiently.”

On 4<sup>th</sup> of July President Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the reception in the honor of him organized by the administrative personnel of the company of “Mercedes-Benz” in Baden-Wurtemberg on the last day of his official visit. The President mentioned that he was interested in broadening the relations between the automobile company and Azerbaijan.

The official visit paid by the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Federal Republic of Germany was an important step in the formation of relations on a new plane with this influential country of Europe.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE  
(January 13-15, 1997)**

“...Bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and France in political, economic, cultural and other fields are successfully developing. There is an active political dialogue between our countries. Mutual visits on various levels are paid. The leading French companies have been successfully operating in the energy and non-oil sectors of Azerbaijan...”

*From the interview of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the French magazine “La Lettre Diplomatique” – May 18, 2007*

**Speech of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the meeting  
with the President of France Jacque Chirac**

Paris, Elysee Palace, January 13, 1997

Mr. President! Thank You for the kind words about Azerbaijan and for the invitation of official visit to France, and I want to note that the independent Azerbaijan gives great attention to further strengthening of relations with all the countries of Europe including France.

The documents signed between Azerbaijan and France during my official visit to France in 1993 at the invitation of the late President Fransua Mitterand, provided a firm basis for the cooperation between our countries. I want to remind that these documents were confirmed by the parliament of the country and is being implemented successfully. Today we must think of the necessity of much closer rapprochement of contacts between our countries in the sphere of economy, culture and others and how to attain them.

The most painful problem for our independent country, which has chosen the way of democratic development, is the military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan. As a result of this aggression 20 percent of the territories of our republic has been occupied, over a million of our citizens have been forced to leave their permanent residences, they live in tents in very hard conditions, and this situation continues up to now. In this war unleashed by the Armenian armed forces, our country has suffered serious material and moral losses. You can get a thorough information only looking at a map of Azerbaijan. However, we want to settle the conflict peacefully, and just for this purpose, we want to make use of the cease-fire regime reached in the war in May 1994. We are confident that the negotiations held within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE for the peaceful settlement of the military conflict and negotiations held with the mediation of a number of great powers will give their benefit, and compel Armenia to give up its aggressive intentions.

We note the great importance give up of the declaration adopted in the Lisbon Summit OSCE in December of 1996, in settlelement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh at the same time we want to express our satisfaction with the support of France to the position of Azerbaijan in Lisbon. Our country does not want war, we want peace and therefore we take a compromising position. I am sure that those three principles adopted in Lisbon, - recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, granting a high status of autonomy to Nagorno-Karabakh in the structure of Azerbaijan, guaranteeing safety to all the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, will play an important role in a peaceful settlement of conflict.

We declare with a feeling of regret that Armenia continues to ignore the resolutions of international organizations, legal regulations recognized by all the countries of the world, and does not take any concrete steps for the settlement of the military conflict. We want the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the territory of our country, restoration of the territorial integrity and inviolability of our borders and return home.

I want to express my satisfaction for the particular attention which France pays to the relations with our country, and I am sure that France, will enlarge its activity more as an active member of the Minsk Group alongside with other states and more activate its efforts for the immediate settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

The present social and political situation in our republic is stable, and a great work is carried out in Azerbaijan in the sphere of construction of a legal democratic state and realization of reforms. Our republic pursues road of market economy, pays serious attention to the establishment of close relations with the states of the world. Our country signed contracts with a number of authoritative companies of the world on joint oil developments in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian and these contracts are steadily realize. I am very pleased that our cooperation with "Elf Akiten" and other companies of France develop successfully. I want to declare again that there are large opportunities in Azerbaijan for the activity of businessmen of foreign countries. I want to express my confidence that the signature of the contracts on joint development of deposits "Lenkoran-deniz" and "Talish-deniz" with the participation of the presidents of France, and Azerbaijan today in Paris, in France in the residence of the president in Elysee Palace, will be a historical event in the stable development of economic relations between our countries.

The friendly relations of the President of France to our country gladden us extremely and I want to express my confidence that the contacts between our countries, peoples, both situated in Europe will strengthen and develop much more in future.

Mr. President, I invite You on an official visit to our country.

## Lecture delivered at the French Institute of International Relations by the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev on the topic “Azerbaijan and the Caucasus on the eve of XXI century”

Paris, January 13, 1997

Esteemed Mr. Rector!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I am very pleased to be in Paris, France, and participate at the meeting with you and with such a prestigious audience. I am quite aware of the caliber of France, Paris and the people who have gathered here, therefore I feel honored of this meeting.

Before speaking about the issues on the subject you are interested in my biography, before I introducing it I would like to make a little correction in it. By the end of 1982, after Leonid Brejnev's death, I was invited to Moscow to occupy the post of the First vice-deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers of the USSR, at the same time; I was elected to the Politburo of the USSR. I held this position until 1987 when I had to resign because of fundamental disagreements in our views with the administration of the Soviet Union, especially with Mikhail Gorbachev and me. Then I was subjected to persecutions. You may know from the history of the Soviet Union that those, who left the high posts in the government were completely isolated from the public and political life.

On January 20, 1990, in other words, seven years ago, when the leadership of the Soviet Union decided to send a big unit of troops to Baku and suppress the national movement, I opposed this action and left the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Following it, I was subjected to persecutions, a great libel campaign was conducted against me and I had to leave Moscow in the summer of 1990. Since I opposed the unjustified actions of the soviet union leadership, unfortunately, I was not allowed to live in Baku, too, where I lived the main part of my life. I had to go to Nakhchivan, to my homeland, where I was born in and which I left when I was quite young. In these days Nakhchivan was in blockade, as it is now. I lived there for three years in isolation. In June 1993, when Azerbaijan was on the threshold of a civil war, I returned to Baku at the invitation of the Azerbaijani intelligentsia and many others representing different circles of the society in the republic. First, I was elected the speaker of the Azerbaijani parliament, and later, in October 3, 1993, as it was said here, I was elected President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I think it is necessary to add this information of which you are already aware do that not to make you think that everything was easy in my life – I was a member of the

Politburo and then, I became President of Azerbaijan.

Let's return to the main topic of our conversation. In 1993, when I returned to Baku, Azerbaijan was in trouble, a civil war was underway. In fact, this was the second year of the independence of Azerbaijan. In order to give you an idea on our country, I have to inform you about the events happened long before Azerbaijan became an independent state.

The republics which were parts of the Soviet Union obtained independence as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union by the end of 1991. However, the processes underway in the 15 republics of the former Soviet Union were not the same, they were quite different. In 1988 Azerbaijan faced an aggression; Armenia committed an aggression against Azerbaijan claiming to annex the Mountainous Garabagh region of Azerbaijan. The Mountainous Garabagh is a small region of Azerbaijan, after the establishment of Soviet regime in Azerbaijan, it was granted the status of autonomy within Azerbaijan in 1923. One should say that in the conditions of the soviet system this small autonomous region developed sufficiently. However, the nationalist and extremist circles both in Armenia and in other countries, including the Armenian party "Dashnaksutun" regularly created an atmosphere of the necessity of adherence of the Mountainous Garabagh to Armenia. However, the attempts undertaken in different periods were not successful. They were prevented and, as I said before, the Mountainous Garabagh was enjoying a successful development.

I would like to inform you that by 1988, when this conflict just started, the population of the Mountainous Garabagh 170 000 in number, 30 percent of them were Azerbaijanis, the other 70 percent – the Armenians. There was nothing surprising. The people of different nationalities live in other regions of Azerbaijan, like in other republics of the Soviet Union and in other countries. However, a movement by annexing the Mountainous Garabagh established both in the Mountainous Garabagh and Armenia, led into an armed conflict. By the way, it should be noted – I am frank with you and I refer to reliable historical sources and materials – that the interview of professor Aganbekyan to the French newspaper "Humanité" in the end of 1987 served a spark and in really an incendiary spark for inflammation of this conflict. In his interview he declared that the Mountainous Garabagh should pass to Armenia, he discussed this issue with the leader of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachev and the latter gave his consent to that. Of course, there were other similar interviews. I told you about this interview since Mikhail Gorbachev was directly referred to here. Everything started with this and it resulted in the eight-year long bloody war.

I think that when Azerbaijan and Armenia were within the Soviet Union – more than three years passed since 1988 to 1991 – the soviet leadership could prevent this conflict and its expansion which led to such grave consequences.

The unfair attitude of the Soviet leadership towards Azerbaijan caused a high tide of discontent to the communist regime and the socialistic system amongst the people of our republic. When the rage of the people caused by unfair attitude of the communist leadership of the Soviet Union reached its peak by the end of 1989, the soviet leadership and personally Gorbachev decided to suppress our people by sending a big armed unit of the soviet troops to Baku in January 20, 1990.

The tragedy of January in 1990 worsened the social and political situation in Azerbaijan. Finally, it resulted in instability in the republic. Using this opportunity, some forces in the republic struggled for coming to power. In October 1991, when Azerbaijan got its independence, it experienced a hard political situation. All this was undermining the rule in Azerbaijan resulting from coups d`etat. Such a coup d`etat took place in Azerbaijan in 1992 and the Azerbaijani Popular Front came to power. However, it could not stay in power even a year, the armed bands revolted and overthrew it, the civil war was unleashed in the June, 1993. In these conditions I assumed the responsibility to administer in Azerbaijan in 1993. Despite great difficulties, the situation in Azerbaijan was stabilized in the course of the last three years.

However, Azerbaijan was in war with Armenia. Using the lack of internal political stability in Azerbaijan, as well as the outside strong support rendered by some countries, the armed units of Armenia occupied a part of the Azerbaijani territory. Actually, some 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory is under the Armenian occupation. This includes the Mountainous Garabagh and the surrounding districts of the total territory which is about 16 thousand m<sup>2</sup>. These districts are adjacent to the territory of Armenia. Some one million of our citizens were driven out from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, they have settled in different regions of Azerbaijan, many of them live in tents.

An agreement on cease-fire was achieved with Armenia in 1994, it is being maintained as long as two years and seven months. However, the territorial integrity and boundaries of Azerbaijan has been violated, our country have suffered great material and moral damages. We don't want to resume the military operations, we think that this problem must be settled peacefully and we do our best for it on our behalf. The main condition for the peaceful solution of the problem is the withdrawal of the Armenian armed units from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, restoration of the territorial integrity of our country and return of all our citizens to home. Then it is possible to grant the highest status of self-governance to the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan and guarantee the security for all the population of Garabagh. This is a compromise formula and we do it in order to establish peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan and create a peaceful situation in our region and in the Caucasus as a whole. However, Armenia holds a destructive position, therefore we can not achieve the settlement of this problem. Armenia strives for independence the Mountainous

Garabagh and then to annex its territory. We do not agree with this, we cannot let any country have a part of our territory.

Armenia demonstrated its destructive position in the OSCE Lisbon Summit of OSCE in December, 1996. The Minsk Group of the OSCE engaged in the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict has proposed the principles for the peaceful settlement of the conflict. Three main principles are there: the recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, granting of a high status of self-governance to the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan, guarantee of the security of the population of the Mountainous Garabagh.

We agreed with these principles for the peaceful settlement of the conflict. However, Armenia rejected them and didn't give its consent for the inclusion of this project to the final document of OSCE. Nonetheless, these principles were reflected in the special statement of Secretary of OSCE due to the firm position of Azerbaijan and fair attitude of other countries. Amongst the members of OSCE only Armenia rejected these principles, consequently rejecting the main principles of the United Nations, OSCE and the norms of the international law in general. However, we think that as a result of the support of these principles by the OSCE members, especially the intensive activity of the Minsk Group member countries, these principles can serve as the basis for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and establishment of stable and lasting peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

I said you all this in order to let you have an idea in which conditions the independent Azerbaijan is building its national state and settles its social and economic problems.

If we speak about the conflicts in the Caucasus in general, about the situation here, we must mention the Georgian and Abkhazian and the Georgian-Ossetian conflicts in the territory of Georgia, the conflict between Russia and Chechnya, there are some other conflicts in the other regions of the Caucasus. Thank God, they didn't expand. We think that the adoption of the principle of inviolability of territorial integrity of any sovereign state is of crucial importance for the settlement of the Armenian –Azerbaijani and other conflicts in Caucasus. We are for the inviolability of the territorial integrity of all the countries in the world. We condemn separatism, aggressive nationalism and international terrorism in every corner of the planet.

Despite all these problems and difficulties, Azerbaijan exists and develops as an independent state and strictly follows the way of democratic, civil and civilized state building and establishment of the democratic principles in all the spheres of life. In November, 1995 we held referendum and adopted the first ever democratic Constitution of Azerbaijan, at the same time, the first multi-party elections to the parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The provisions of the Constitution are fulfilled, the parliament works, many laws for the democratic development of our

country were adopted. Political pluralism exists everywhere in Azerbaijan, we pay a significant attention to the protection of human rights, individual rights and freedoms. Azerbaijan is a multinational, where three religions – Islam, Orthodox Christianity and Judaism are practiced freely. We are reforming our economy on the basis of the free market economy, state property is being privatized and we are expecting to privatize some 70 percent of the state enterprises in the forthcoming two years. We have adopted a revolutionary for our conditions law on land reforms. This law envisages the privatization of land enabling their owners to sell and transfer it to other people.

These measures produce their results. The social and economic situation in Azerbaijan is being improved, inflation was low in the recent two years. For instance, the monthly level of inflation is less 1%, in general, it is less 5% in 1996. The rate of the national currency – manat remains stable, recently its rate in comparison with that of the USA dollar has improved. We have taken numerous measures for the liberalization of economy and foreign trade. We actively involve foreign investors for making investments to the economy of Azerbaijan, participation in the privatization process and joint exploitation of major industrial and agricultural enterprises of our country.

Azerbaijan possesses abundant natural resources, great economic, industrial, agricultural, scientific-technical and intellectual potentials. The main road, which we follow now is the formation of the economy based on the principles of the world economy, using the experience of the most economically advanced countries.

We have achieved great successes in the sphere of joint exploration of oil and gas fields of Azerbaijan together with foreign companies. In September 1994, we signed the first contract with the consortium of the international oil companies on the joint development of the oil deposits in Azerbaijan, it is called “Contract of the Century”. Today, in Paris, in the Elysee Palace, the fifth contract on joint developments “Lankaran-daniz” and “Talysh-daniz” oil deposits, located in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea was signed between the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan and “ELF Aquitaine” and “Total” of France in the presence of the President of France Jacque Chiraque and the President of Azerbaijan. The contract signed today provides the joint work for 25 years and investment of 1,5 billion US dollars. According to the initial calculations, it is expected to extract some 350 million barrels of oil from these oil deposits. Contracts signed in the last two years provide the investment of 15 billion US dollars in the economy of Azerbaijan, 16 transnational companies from 11 countries of the world take part in these contracts.

I think that these figures give you an idea on how Azerbaijan rationally uses its natural resources and high technologies and the capital of the most advanced countries in order to integrate into the world community. Hopefully, all which I say will persuade

you that our country is open to the world. The main objective of Azerbaijan is to integrate its economy to the world economy. All conditions for free entrepreneurship have been provided in our country, foreign investments are guaranteed by our legislation by Constitution and, of course, by the President. All this enable us to say that Azerbaijan has a bright economic and political future. We are confident that by following the road of democratization in all the spheres of our life we shall manage to integrate Azerbaijan to the most civilized countries of the world. Azerbaijan tries to develop friendly relations with all its neighbors. I spoke about our relationships with Armenia. Russia is our neighbor in the North, Iran – in the South and Georgia – in the West. Turkey is also our neighbor. We maintain normal relations with all these countries except Armenia and we shall do our best to strengthen them further.

Azerbaijan is of great importance because of its geographical location. I think that its geographical and geopolitical location is important not only for us, but also for the world community. Azerbaijan is located on the intersection of Europe and Asia. As a European country, it is on the edge of Europe. Azerbaijan strives to be a European country. We are actively cooperating with the European Union, our application for obtaining a guest status in the Council of Europe was accepted, and we hope to become a full member soon. We take an active part in OSCE; our country is a member of all the international organizations.

Azerbaijan is of great importance not only for the Caucasus but also for the region which is much larger than the Caucasus. I think that stability in the Southern Caucasian region – I speak about Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia – is an important factor both for the whole Caucasus, and also for Russia and other neighboring countries. As an important fact we are trying to perform our duty the as we can do best. I think that if we settle the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, it will settle all other conflicts in the Caucasus and establish peace and stability in this region, which will be of great importance for other countries and for Europe as a whole. On our behalf, we are doing our best and we shall keep on doing it for achieving of the stability and peace in the Caucasus.

Actually, Azerbaijan enjoys a stable internal political situation. Unlike the past years, we have complete social and political stability in the country in the last three years. The state has full control on the situation in the republic and I am sure that the situation in Azerbaijan will improve every month, every year.

We appreciate the development of the French-Azerbaijani relations. Today, during my talks with President Chirac, head of the General Assembly, minister of Commerce and mayor of Paris I declared once more that we shall make full use of all available opportunities for the expanding and deepening cooperation between France and Azerbaijan in economy, culture and politics. I think that the contract signed

today with “ELF Aquitaine” and “Total” companies of France is a good basis and a persuasive appeal to all other companies of France in order to get them interested in strengthening their efforts for the cooperation with Azerbaijan.

Ending my speech I would like to say that I am very pleased of my visit to France, Paris, today. The history and experience of the French Republic, experience of France in democracy and in other spheres is a rich source and example for us in democratic state building in Azerbaijan. I express my profound respect and tribute to the French Republic and French people. I wish you and all the French people happiness, prosperity and new successes. I am ready to answer to your questions. Thank you for the attention.

***De Montbrial (President of the Institute of International Relations of France):*** I thank President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. Taking into consideration that it is late already, I would like to put only three questions to the president of Azerbaijan. I think that these questions will be asked in any case.

***Question: The first question is of informative character, connected with the problem of inheritance of the Soviet Union. Is the problem of inheritance between Azerbaijan and Russia settled or there are controversial points that collide Ukraine with Russia?***

***Second question: You spoke about oil; however, you didn't mention the problems related to pipelines. Could you say some words in this regard?***

***Third question: You mentioned that you have good relations with Iran. Can the problems related to the Iranian Azerbaijan be expected?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** As for Russia – it is the heir of the former Soviet Union – of course, there are still unsettled problems. When the Soviet Union collapsed and Azerbaijan achieved its independence, I was not in Azerbaijan, i.e. I was in Azerbaijan, but I was not in politics. When I became President of Azerbaijan in October, 1993, I started to analyze. I understood the property of the Soviet Union has been distributed unfairly. As I mentioned here, I headed Azerbaijan for 14 years. I was one of the leaders of the Soviet Union for more than five years, I was aware of what is in the territory of Azerbaijan in the soviet period. Unfortunately, Azerbaijan was not let to have what it had. It was unfair. We raised some small issues recently. However, it is late now. Nevertheless, I have already said that all this was unfair.

As for the oil pipeline, the consortium of the foreign oil companies has adopted a decision to lay two pipelines for transporting oil together with the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan. One of the stretches to the Novosibirsk on the coast of the Black Sea passing through the Russian territory, – it was constructed partially, in 1996 the construction was terminated. This pipeline enables us to deliver oil to the Black Sea coast and further. Another pipeline that we are going to lay in March and finish by 1998 will pass through the Georgian territory and reach to Supsa port on the Black

Sea. However, according to the contract signed in September 1994, it is envisaged to construct the biggest pipeline up to Ceyhan on the Mediterranean in Turkey. There are several projects and proposals on the route of this pipeline. Final decision has not been taken on it yet. I think that we shall have to construct this pipeline too. Because after signing the contracts the overall volume of oil to be produced in Azerbaijan in future is increasing. The foreign oil companies operating in Kazakhstan propose to export the produced oil through the Caspian Sea and Azerbaijan to Europe. It is said that too much oil have to be exported via the territory of our country. Therefore, these pipelines should be constructed. They are needed to export the oil from Azerbaijan, Caspian basin and Central Asia. It confirms once more the great geographical, political and strategic importance of Azerbaijan.

As regards your third question in connection with Iran, as I have mentioned earlier that , we maintain friendly relations with this country and we take necessary steps to strengthen and develop them. As for the Azerbaijanis living in Iran, indeed, they are many there. I don't have an exact figure, but it is said about 20-30 millions. They are citizens of Iran. Today Mr. Jacques Chirac said that there are five million Muslims in France. They constitute a part of the French people. The Azerbaijanis living in Iran are Muslims, too, they constitute a part of the Iranian people, too. From this viewpoint, I don't see any problem. I have said already that we support the territorial integrity of all the countries – that of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Russia, France and Iran.

**De Montbrial:** I thank President Heydar Aliyev for accepting our invitation to participate in this meeting and answering these important questions. I wish a Happy New Year to the leader of Azerbaijan and persons accompanying him and let me propose to finish the meeting.

**Heydar Aliyev (jokingly):** No, let me say. First, it is not democratic. You asked your questions and did not let others to do the same. We have come to France to learn democracy; however, it became apparent that an authoritarian regime exists in this Institution. Therefore, I am going to stay here another hour and answer your questions. You should know that we follow the way of democracy and I am ready to answer all the questions. Speaking in general, I am not pleased if there are few questions.

**Question:** *Mr President, I would like to know about the real state of the Azerbaijani-Russian relations and how do you appreciate the participation of your country in CIS?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** We have good and friendly relations with Russia. We wish they were better, we take necessary steps on our behalf for it.

As for CIS, we are a member of CIS. However, we do not agree with some issues. We behave in a democratic manner; we express our viewpoint and our position. Speaking in general, we reckon that CIS must be a more democratic union. Democratic

principles must be established more in this union and CIS must improve and develop.

**Question:** *Mr President, you said that Azerbaijan is a multinational country, Russians and Jews live there. Could you say the number of Russians and Jews in Azerbaijan and what kind of rights they enjoy?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I can say it. The number of Russians is more than 300 thousand and Jews are about 50 thousand in Azerbaijan. They enjoy all rights as full citizens of Azerbaijan. We are glad that people of these live in our republic. I must say that some immigration of the Russian speaking people from Azerbaijan took place in 1988-89 and in 1993. we prevented it. Some of them left Azerbaijan because of instability in our country, in some cases they were treated unfairly. We eliminated this problem. Actually, the Russian speaking population live in normal and stable conditions in Azerbaijan. There are MPs of the Russian and Ukrainian nationalities in our parliament, the people of these nationalities work in the state and economic bodies. We consider the multi-nationality of Azerbaijan as a wealth of our country. Armenia has built a mono-national state. Not nobody except the Armenians live there, I think that they committed a mistake. However, that is their own business.

**Question:** *I would like to precise my question. Were the people of other nationalities urged to accept the Azerbaijani citizenship or did they do it voluntarily?*

**Second question:** *What kind of rights do the foreigners living in Azerbaijan enjoy but still willing to keep the Russian passport?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** You know, nobody was obliged to accept the Azerbaijani citizenship, there were people who wanted it, and people who did not. There is freedom in this regard in our country. There are Russians in Azerbaijan who have the Russian citizenship, we do not mind. The citizenship is not determined by ethnic identity. I think that the same is in France. We are guided by this principle in Azerbaijan.

**Question:** *I would like to ask a question on the status of the Caspian Sea. It seemed from what you said that there is no problem in this connection. Can the lack of agreement on the status of the Caspian sea inhibit or delay the exploration of the oil deposits there?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** You know the Caspian Sea has been existing since thousands of years. However, its status was never defined. Actually, there is a great need in that. However, negotiations on this issue are underway amongst the Caspian Sea countries. I think that we shall achieve a common viewpoint some day. Nevertheless, it can not create any difficulty for the countries to explore the oil deposits in its sector. Division of the Caspian Sea on sectoral principle has been defined long before. We use the established experience and we think it right.

Thank you.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception hosted by the French Parliament in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

Paris, January 14, 1997

I want to thank you for the friendly meeting held today. It is the second time that I am here in the parliament in a friendly atmosphere together with the Friendship Group of France-Azerbaijan. It is pleasant that we have such persistent, unshakable and reliable friends in the French parliament. I hope that today we had an open, sincere and direct talk on many issues. I spoke very openly on certain points. It may seem that these words might offend someone. However, all of this is because here we feel a friendly attitude towards us.

Feeling sincerity in relations, one does not hide anything and speak openly about all. Therefore, we talked openly about questions that worry us here in France. Naturally, it concerns the activities of the Armenian lobby and diaspora. At the same time, I feel that you want the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict to be resolved as soon as possible with all your heart. Thank you for it.

Thank you for the objective appreciation of the situation. This objectivity and fairness is a factor of paramount importance for us. We want to have a strong friendship with France and to develop the French-Azerbaijani relations in all directions. There are great prospects for our cooperation not only in the oil industry, but also in other areas. Many French companies are already functioning in Azerbaijan and all this is a good way to strengthen and develop our friendship. I am sure that in the face of Azerbaijan France will acquire a reliable, sincere and honest friend. In this regard, the parliament, in particular, its powerful members and our friends around the table can do a lot.

When talking I look at you and think that most of you are part of the history of France: during the reign of Charles de Gaulle, Pompidou and the other presidents you were ministers and now work in the parliament. What a great joy! Personally, I have great respect for history, as well as for the history of my people and other peoples. Now we have to know the price of everything that has turned to history and evaluate it all objectively. The French Republic has a rich history and we have borrowed much from the history of the French Revolution. Thus, we want to be friends with you.

Thank you for that warm welcome. I want to wish you good health and well-being. Visit Azerbaijan often and send us the members of the parliament. To your health! For France, for the French Republic! For the French-Azerbaijani friendship!

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to France (January 13-15, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

Prior to his second official visit to France President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev told the reporters that he believed that his visit would mark a new stage in the relations between France and Azerbaijan. The three-day visit was indeed a historical success of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan.

On the first day of the visit, on January 13, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev had a meeting with the French President Jacques Chirac at Elysee Palace. They discussed the French-Azerbaijani relations, the role of France as a co-chair of the Minsk Group of OSCE in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, co-operation between the two countries in the oil sector.

Following the meeting, a contract on joint development of Lankaran-deniz and Talysh-deniz oil deposits was signed between the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan and Elf Aquitane and Total of France.

On January 13, President Heydar Aliyev delivered a lecture on the topic “Azerbaijan and the Caucasus on the threshold of the 21st century” at the French Institute of International Relations. In his lecture Heydar Aliyev spoke about the history and reasons of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the ways of its solution, the political and economic reforms carried out in Azerbaijan. He sounded optimistic forecasts about the future of Azerbaijan: “Azerbaijan’s socio-economic future will be great. We are confident that by democratizing all the spheres of our life, we can evolve Azerbaijan into the group of advanced nations. Azerbaijan is trying to co-exist peacefully with all its neighboring countries.”

On January 14, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev delivered a speech at the Chamber of Commerce and Industry of France and spoke about Azerbaijan’s achievements in the recent years, measures aimed at economic integration, prospects of the oil industry.

Heydar Aliyev’s official visit to France attracted much attention of the French and global mass media. He gave interviews to France Press Agency, TV Arte, TV-5, Euronews, Le Point weekly magazine, L’Expansion magazine, answered the questions of foreign journalists accredited in France.

On January 14, speaking at the opening ceremony of the French -Azerbaijani Chamber of Commerce, President Heydar Aliyev appreciated it as an increasing level of economic relations between the two countries and growing interest of the French businesspeople in Azerbaijan.

On the same day Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the official reception organized in his honor at the French National Assembly and expressed his intention to develop mutual relations in all the directions.

On January 14, Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the official reception organized in his

honor by the French Foreign Minister Herve de Charette. The President said that he was satisfied with the results of his visit.

On the last day of his visit (January 15), President Heydar Aliyev met the representatives of the Azerbaijani community in France. Informing the participants of the meeting about the domestic and foreign policy of Azerbaijan, he spoke about the tasks of the Azerbaijani diaspora.

In general, the second visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of France was quite successful. The following documents were signed during the visit: an agreement on air communication, a joint declaration on cultural relations, agreement on free movement.

The visit which further developed and deepened the friendly relations with France playing an important role in the European and world policy, marked the great potential for the development of political and economic relations.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO UKRAINE (March 24-25, 1997)**

“...Traditionally there are partnership relations between Ukraine and Azerbaijan. After gaining independence our countries have been cooperating both in bilateral format and within the framework of international organisations. These cooperation still continues.Ukraine’s position in the regulation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, joint steps of GUAM countries in the direction of condemnation of all attempts of separatism, of course, are the elements, which complete the bilateral relations...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of Ukraine Victor Yushenko – September 7, 2006*

### **Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev for the media after the signature of the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani intergovernmental documents**

Kiev, Mary Palace, March 24, 1997

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I and the delegation from Azerbaijan which accompany me feel a deep sense of pleasure and satisfaction for being in Ukraine, Kiev. From the moment of the arrival here we were surrounded by great care and warm welcome and hospitality. This is natural, because we established good and very friendly relations between our countries and peoples there, and they have developed in the course of the official visit of the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma to Azerbaijan in the July of 1995 and our following meetings and discussions in various international organizations. These relations have been reflected in the documents, signed in Baku and in the documents, signed here today.

Today, President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma and I had a very, cordial and open talk about the problems, on the relations between our countries, our cooperation and at the same time, on the problems of our country, Europe and the world, and in particular, on the CIS of which we are members. With all the above said, I completely agree with Leonid Kuchma and our views coincide in all the issues. This gives more confidence in the fact that we need to actively work together, to expand and deepen cooperation.

And the declaration on deepening and development of cooperation between Ukraine

and Azerbaijan, signed between the Presidents of Ukraine and Azerbaijan serves it. We attach great importance to the document on cooperation in the oil and gas industry. All other documents, of course, are no less important and create a good legal basis for the successful implementation of our cooperation.

The main outcome of the previous period, besides of many documents signed today, is the friendly relations between Ukraine and Azerbaijan, and we are determined to develop and strengthen them. They provide the further strengthening and development of the independence of our countries, their sovereignty, construction of a democratic, civil countries and the implementation of economic reforms in order to overcome the socio-economic difficulties of the transition period as soon as possible.

In all these matters we share the same views and opinions and the documents we have signed today will help us to carry out successful work in our countries, strengthen and develop our friendly relations.

Mr. Kuchma, I express my gratitude for the kind welcome, hospitality, sincerity and warmth shown to us, to me and the delegation accompanying me. I want to assure you that we shall be faithful to this friendship, to all the agreements and documents that have been signed.

***Question: Are Ukraine and Azerbaijan strategic partners after signing a number of international documents?***

**Leonid Kuchma:** if we take into account the visit of Heydar Aliyev, I have no doubt that Ukraine and Azerbaijan are strategic partners. The strategic partnership is not only in the economy, it is first of all in politics. In our policy we support each other by all the existing means for making our countries independent and sovereign not only declaratively, but in essence. And for that purpose we have to arrange our economic opportunities. I am pleased to announce that Ukraine will implement it into life.

***Question: In regard with the signed documents, when the first Azerbaijani oil will be transported via Ukraine?***

**Heydar Aliyev:** I think I have to answer this question first... You know that two pipelines are being built to export the early oil from Azerbaijan to the world markets. A pipeline built by us through the territory of Azerbaijan will provide the transportation of oil to Novorossiysk port of Russia on the Black Sea. The Russian side promised that soon they will take necessary measures in its territory and the pipeline will operate. The second pipeline will be built through the territory of Georgia till Supsa of the Black Sea. Construction of the pipeline began this month. A consortium of international oil companies, which carries the entire project on oil production in the "Azeri" and "Chirag" deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea, promises to complete the construction of the pipeline by the end of 1998. Once the pipeline is ready, it will start to transport the oil...

**Leonid Kuchma:** Heydar Aliyev gave comprehensive information, thus, I have nothing to add. I would only wish that all the plans in Azerbaijan were implemented. I would like to raise another question which Heydar Aliyev did not. It is in the fact that Azerbaijan, taking into account the great potentials of the Caspian Sea invites the Ukrainian side to take part in the future oil projects.

Thank you.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the ceremony of presenting the supreme prize of Ukraine, “Yaroslav  
Mudry” order**

Kiev, Maria Palace, March 24, 1997

Esteemed Leonid Danilovich!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I was highly excited with this event. But first of all I am very glad to pay a visit to Kiev, Ukraine, at the invitation of my dear friend, very esteemed President of Ukraine Leonid Danilovich Kuchma and we began to discuss some issues which require solutions for the future development of the Ukrainian –Azerbaijani relations.

It is a great honor and, of course, extremely kind of you for awarding me with the supreme prize of Ukraine, “Yaroslav Mudry” order and to hear the sincere words from the President of Ukraine Leonid Danilovich Kuchma to the address of the people of Azerbaijan and me while awarding the order.

Leonid Danilovich, I am grateful to you. I am thankful to the Ukrainian State for this great honor and assure you that I shall keep doing my best to develop and strengthen the friendly relations between Ukraine and Azerbaijan as well as broad cooperation between these countries.

I understand how this order lays a responsibility on my shoulders and I shall do my best to be worthy of such supreme prize of Ukraine. Recently, the relations between Ukraine and Azerbaijan have been successfully developing and in this sense, there is an undeniable role of the President of Ukraine, esteemed Leonid Danilovich in it. Undoubtedly, I have taken and take appropriate measures for the development of relations and now my little work is so highly appreciated.

At the same time, I think that the people of Ukraine and President of Ukraine with this reward, express their kind attitude and friendly feelings toward the Republic of Azerbaijan and the people of Azerbaijan. I relate this prize to the development of friendly relations between Ukraine and Azerbaijan.

Frankly speaking, it is my first prize as the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. I have not won any prize in my republic since today. Of course, it is natural to my mind that the President can't be awarded by his own republic. It is also my first time that I won a prize of another country, a friendly country which is Ukraine.

You know, it is a turning point in my life and my biography in which I have won numerous awards. But this award is of special importance, has a special meaning for me. Firstly, because it bears the name of preeminent Yaroslav Mudry, secondly it is

the prize of a brotherly country – Ukraine, thirdly, I am honoured by this award by my friend, esteemed President of Ukraine Leonid Danilovich Kuchma.

I am extremely excited and happy and again, I would like to express my deep gratitude for this remarkably outstanding event related to the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani relations.

Dear Leonid Danilovich, dear friends, I would like to assure you that I will do my best to develop and deepen the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani relations and make Azerbaijan become a faithful friend and ally of Ukraine.

Thank you very much.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the official reception on behalf of the President of Ukraine Leonid  
Kuchma in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

March 24, 1997

Dear Leonid Danilovich,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I render to you the warm greetings and sincere feelings of friendship and respect of the people of Azerbaijan and all the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The official visit to Ukraine is an important event for us and I am deeply pleased that this morning we were able to do some fruitful work, which resulted in the signature of important intergovernmental and interstate documents. It opens up great opportunities for the further development and expansion of cooperation between Ukraine and Azerbaijan and strengthening the friendship between our peoples. There are close relations of friendship, mutual understanding and cooperation between our peoples. It is evidenced by the atmosphere in which we found ourselves today with the arrival on the Ukrainian land Kiev.

I want to thank my friend Leonid Kuchma for the hospitality and warmth, for the excellent atmosphere in which our meeting, visit and all our work is held. I am grateful to you, Leonid Danilovich, for the invitation and I am glad that I was able to fulfill this desire and respond to your invitation. But, at the same time, all of us today remember with great warmth the official visit of President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma in Azerbaijan in July 1995, meetings and negotiations we held, his communication with the people in Azerbaijan and the signed documents.

Enough time has passed since then and perhaps, it is the best proof that the friendship between our two countries and governments is irreversible. This friendship is based on the traditions bequeathed by our ancestors. The history of relations between the Ukrainian and Azerbaijani peoples is very large and rich in examples of cooperation, friendship and interaction of culture, science, art among various groups. This particularly applies to the period from the beginning of XX century, which is now coming to an end.

Being here, in Ukraine, Kiev, we remember with a feeling of immense gratitude the contribution made by the Ukrainian people in defeating the fascism. Today I visited the grave of the Unknown Soldier with a sense of immense gratitude to those who displayed heroism and courage and defended not only Ukraine, but also the Caucasus from the fascist invaders. Today, when I was at the tomb of the Unknown Soldier, I

remembered that here in the Ukrainian land besides the Ukrainians, other peoples and the Azerbaijanis also fought courageously.

I remembered 20 Azerbaijanis of those who fought on the territory of Ukraine – there were a lot of them - were awarded the title of the Hero of the Soviet Union. The roots of friendship go back to the past centuries, it developed during the World War Second and strengthened between our peoples after the World War Second. It contributes to our current relations, and our cooperation already gives its fruits. But at the same time, today our relations are based on a new foundation. Independent and sovereign countries of Ukraine and Azerbaijan support these relations. State independence is of historical importance for Ukraine, and Azerbaijan.

I am very pleased that, in the main, fundamental question the views and positions of Ukraine and Azerbaijan, the Presidents of Ukraine Azerbaijan completely coincide. In connection with the transition from one system to another and in connection with our efforts in on the road to independence there are many difficulties facing our countries. But despite this, I am sure that we shall overcome them. We shall overcome them because we believe that our country, our peoples and countries are capable and able to live freely and independently and to be the masters of their own destiny.

Ukraine is a big country in Europe. It has great potentials to contribute to the international community and the European Union. Azerbaijan is located at the junction of Europe and Asia, it is a part of Europe, but at the same time, from a geographical point of views is in the distant wing. Both Ukraine and Azerbaijan are of great geopolitical importance. Therefore, for the benefit of our peoples and countries the cooperation between our two countries is of great importance. There have been formed broad opportunities for cooperation in the economic sphere. Therefore, constructing the Transcaucasian highway, involving Ukraine and other countries of the Central Asia, is very important for the development of economic relations, as well as for establishing close relations and short path between Ukraine and Azerbaijan, for economic cooperation and making our peoples to communicate more actively. There are many other possibilities. We can use them to make our cooperation more effective, mutually beneficial and successful. The work we have done and the documents we have signed today also create great opportunities and open wide road for this.

I am confident that we shall be able to implement the agreements determined in these documents. I am confident that we shall reach the wider road of cooperation. I am sure that Ukraine and Azerbaijan will overcome the difficulties and challenges facing our countries in the socio-economic sphere. They will be solved, because the main thing is that we value the sovereignty and independence we have achieved.

In Azerbaijan, there are also a number of other problems. Our countries, Ukraine and Azerbaijan, which are members of OSCE, take measures in order to ensure peace,

stability and security in Europe. At the same time, you know that in the Caucasus there is no stability. Military conflicts taking place in the Caucasus affect the interests of not only Azerbaijan, but also of many other countries. Naturally, the instability of the situation in the Caucasus is a negative factor for peace, stability and security in Europe. However, being involved in the military conflict with Armenia we take the position of peace. We are for the peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but the military aggression of Armenia which began in 1988 has inflicted great damage on Azerbaijan. We lost a lot of people. We lost a lot in economy. 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Over one million residents and citizens of Azerbaijan have been expelled from the occupied territories by the armed groups of Armenia and live in refugee camps in very difficult conditions. Leonid Danilovich went to a small district of Baku, where the refugees have settled temporarily. He saw the difficult situation in which they were. It is four or five years that they live in tents. It is very difficult, I should also mention the fact that they have lost their families and relatives, their homes have been destroyed and all the property belonging to their ancestors or created by them have been plundered and destroyed. However, despite all this, we are for the peaceful solution of this conflict. That is why, in May of 1994 we signed a ceasefire agreement with Armenia. In the past two years and seven months there is no fight between Armenia and Azerbaijan and we live in conditions of cease-fire. However, a complete peace is not established either.

As I said, part of the territory of Azerbaijan is under occupation. But in spite of all these difficulties, all the losses, the huge damage suffered by the Republic of Azerbaijan, I repeat, we are for a peaceful settlement of the conflict. In this regard, we attach great importance to the results of the Lisbon Summit of OSCE, which adopted the principles providing for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. These principles are the recognition of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, granting Nagorno-Karabakh a high self-administration status within Azerbaijan and ensuring the safety of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh. We have adopted these principles as the basis for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Taking this opportunity, I want to thank President Leonid Kuchma for supporting these principles at the Lisbon Summit and for the conversation that we had during the meeting in which we discussed many issues, including this one.

I tell it to you, to our friends, because it is not only our problem. The question of sovereignty and territorial integrity of each country is an issue of the world, the entire world community and the issue of peace and security in Europe. It is the main principle of international law, the UN and OSCE. Therefore, respect for the territorial integrity of each country is important for us, including Russia and Ukraine and our neighbors,

Georgia and Armenia. But, at the same time, we want to ensure the territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Azerbaijan, to live in peace with all the neighboring countries and we want peace in our region, the Caucasus, Europe and all over the world. Once again, I note that this indicates the importance of the cooperation of Azerbaijan with all countries on the basis of mutual benefits. From this point of view, we attach great importance to the relations and cooperation with Ukraine. In this regard, I am very glad that we have had fruitful meetings and discussions, were able to sign a very important document and are here together in such a sincere and friendly atmosphere.

Talking about our problems, we must at the same time understand that every country has its own problems. Ukraine also has its problems. We fully support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Ukraine and cordially wish Ukraine to be able to use all the opportunities provided by the national independence of this country. We are confident that Ukraine, with its natural resources and high intellectual potentials will turn into a prosperous country, it is our sincere wish. Undoubtedly, the cooperation between Azerbaijan and Ukraine, which seeks mutual benefit, will make a contribution to the further development and prosperity of the friendly Ukraine.

I want to wish you all happiness and prosperity. I raise a glass to the health of the President of Ukraine, to Leonid Kuchma, to your health, dear friends, to Ukraine and to the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani friendship, to our cooperation.

Khay zhive samostiyina Ukraina! (Long live the independent Ukraine!)

**The statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma at the joint press conference**

Kiev, Marinsky Palace, March 25, 1997

Distinguished Mr. Kuchma!

Ladies and gentlemen!

My official visit to Ukraine is coming to an end. I am very pleased with it, with the friendly environment and our discussions and decisions on the further cooperation between our countries.

Mr. Kuchma, let me thank you for hospitality to me and to the entire delegation of Azerbaijan.

Mr. President, I would also like to thank you for awarding me with the Order of Yaroslav Mudriy, the highest award of Ukraine. I am returning to Azerbaijan with a Ukrainian award, which I consider is a key factor for the development of our relations.

Mr. President, you paid an official visit to Azerbaijan in 1995. This is my official visit to Ukraine now. I invite you to plan another visit to Azerbaijan. I will look forward to your next visit. I am sure that you will realize it if you have a chance. Even though various documents were signed in Baku in 1995 and in Kiev now, much is to be done for the implementation of a significant document, which is the declaration on the further development of cooperation between Ukraine and Azerbaijan signed by us yesterday. It lays on us more duties, therefore, there is a need for more meetings. Thus, I invite you to Azerbaijan.

Let me tell my impressions on Kiev and Ukraine. The Kiev Pecherska Lavra, which is an old monument of Ukraine made a great impression on me. I am glad that I visited it. I thank you for the title of the honorary guest of Kiev. I agree with Mr. Kuchma in his statement about the outcomes of our meetings and signed documents. During our negotiations we found out that our positions on many issues, such as cooperation within the CIS and European security are similar. Ukraine follows the policy of the market economy and democratization and defends its independence. It is our policy, too. Independence is the greatest historical achievement for Azerbaijan and we are going to maintain it.

Mr. Kuchma, I extend my gratitude to you and our friends in Kiev, Ukraine. I also thank the press that accompanied us yesterday and today. Thank you.

*Question: Distinguished presidents, how do you appreciate the perspectives of the CIS on the eve of its summit? The next question is addressed to Mr. Kuchma: What*

***do you comment on the statement of the Russian Defense Minister Igor Rodionov which confirms that Armenia was provided with Russian military equipment free of charge and secretly?***

**Leonid Kuchma:** I assume that we can speak about the results of the CIS summit only after it is held on March 28. But we intend to participate with great hope and express our position on the CIS there.

I think that the current shape of the organization can not satisfy any of its member countries. First of all, we want to see the CIS as a union of equal members. We want each member country to have an equal vote irrespective of its territory and number of population.

Your second question is very complicated. During my visit to Azerbaijan I witnessed refugee camps. It was shocked. Those people have lost everything and their future are problematic and uncertain. Therefore, I suppose that all the parties must observe the decisions of the Security Council, which clearly state what to do. I assign the foreign and defense ministries to look into this issue and elaborate an official position on it.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I agree with the statement of Mr. Kuchma on CIS. I also think that the union should be democratic and effective. Moreover, it should meet international standards and ensure equality of its member-countries. Unfortunately, it has not been achieved yet. But it is possible. Therefore, we need to create favorable conditions and set a mechanism for the improvement of the activity of CIS. We'll repeat our position on March 28. I hope that the effectiveness of the activity of the union will be improved after the summit.

***Question: I address my questions to both presidents: Can any third party, particularly Russia prevent the plans of Ukraine and Azerbaijan in creating an oil corridor? How would you comment on the events in Belarus?***

**Heydar Aliyev:** Some forces really want to prevent our plans. When we signed the first contract on the joint exploitation of oil deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea in 1994, there were many protests, disagreements and obstacles against us. They still exist today. As an independent country Azerbaijan uses its rights. Even though some forces try to prevent our plans, they will fail.

As for the events in Belarus, I have limited information on them. I have learnt the news only from TV. I also wonder what is happening there. Perhaps Mr. Kuchma can answer this question.

**Leonid Kuchma:** I agree with Mr. Aliyev on the first question. I thank him for his confident position. I would like to add something. We will see if Russia maintains the interests of the czarist Russia or modern democratic Russia. The oil production of Russia declines, so it may need new energy sources. Then why does Russia obstacles the plans of its neighboring and friendly countries? Democratic thoughts can win all the obstacles.

As regards to Belarus, the recent events seem not clear to me. But every nation has its right to determine its way of development.

**Question:** *My question is addressed to Mr. Kuchma. Armenia states that Ukraine supplied Azerbaijan with weapons and military equipment. How do you comment this statement? The second question is addressed to both presidents: Did you discuss the role of Ukraine in the solution of Nagorno-Karabakh problem? If yes, how can it be?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I think that I can answer the first question. Mr. Kuchma can add something if needed. Ukraine has never supplied Azerbaijan with weapons secretly. Today I state that Azerbaijan has not been provided with any weapons since the ceasefire agreement on May 12, 1994. The statement made in Yerevan is not true. I am sure that Mr. Kuchma can confirm my words.

**Leonid Kuchma:** Of course, I can, because it is true. No weapons have been supplied.

**Heydar Aliyev:** As far as the role of Ukraine in the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is concerned, I discussed it with Mr. Kuchma. It is an important issue for us. Stability in the Caucasus is also of great importance for Ukraine, since the region is close to Ukraine geographically. Furthermore, Ukraine led by President Kuchma is interested in peace and stability in other countries. We discussed it and agreed that the Lisbon declaration on the resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which includes the principles of recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, high autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan and security of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh are good basis to achieve peace.

**Leonid Kuchma:** Our position is to recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. It was our position at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE.

**Question:** *Distinguished Mr. Aliyev, what is your impression on the banknote factory? What is the reason of the interest of Azerbaijan in it?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** I will answer the second part of your question immediately. I didn't even know that there was such a factory in Kiev. But when I was introduced the program of my visit, which included a visit to that factory, I was intrigued and went there with great pleasure. The factory made a strong impression on me. It is a huge factory with modern equipment and can produce high quality products which meet the international standards. I am glad that Ukraine has such a factory and has created a promising industry. It is like this from economic point of view, and from political point of view and that of the statehood it is an important attribute of the independence of Ukraine. Ukraine is a big country with huge potentials and ability to create its own securities. It symbolizes the independence of Ukraine as I stated before. I also asked the president of the Ukrainian National Bank to meet his Azerbaijani counterpart.

want him to get acquainted with the banknote factory. We may make orders in future.

**Question:** I address my question to Mr. Kuchma: Today the Ukrainian mass media informed that the draft appeal of the presidents of Ukraine, Azerbaijan and Georgia to the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development on financing two projects, which are the Transcaucasean Transport Corridor and Transportation of the Caspian oil to Europe via Ukraine must be agreed in your negotiations. Is there such an appeal? If yes, then is the draft appeal ready?

**Leonid Kuchma:** This question has been raised several times. The Ukrainian government supposes that if the corridor for the transportation of the Caspian oil to Europe is definitely set, then the three presidents better make a joint appeal to the European Bank of Reconstruction and Development. This opportunity should be further researched. President Aliyev and I agreed on this issue and soon the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani joint commission will start working on it.

**Question:** Mr. Kuchma, can Ukraine hope that the Azerbaijani oil may be an alternative to the Russian oil in future? Mr. Aliyev, how would you comment the appointment of the president of Nagorno-Karabakh the prime minister of Armenia?

**Leonid Kuchma:** We do not count other countries' income. As I am aware, the discovered oil resources of the Caspian Sea may be a possible alternative source for many countries, not only for Ukraine. We are interested in the development of this region. So we can import the Caspian oil parallel to the Russian oil.

**Heydar Aliyev:** We consider the appointment of the leader of the Armenian community Robert Kocharyan the prime minister of Armenia as a negative and not understandable fact. Nagorno-Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh and several districts around it were occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Kocharyan took an active part in that bloody war and occupation. He presides over the Armenian community of Nagorno-Karabakh and is called the "president" of the so-called Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. It opposes moral values and the norms of international law. Therefore, this appointment is not accepted by us. Our relevant bodies have expressed our position on this fact.

**Question:** I address my questions to both presidents: Did you discuss the treaty on armed forces in Europe? How do you see the European security model of the 21st century?

**Leonid Kuchma:** Do you mean the contract on flank limitations? Yes, we discussed it. Our positions overlap in this case. Taking into consideration that this problem is of paramount importance not only for Azerbaijan and Ukraine, but also for Moldova and Georgia as well, we agreed to continue our discussions on this theme.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I also think so. We discussed the question. Our positions on this problem are similar. During our negotiations we reconfirmed our positions and

decided that we should continue discussions among Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova. Their positions are also close to ours.

As for the second question, you may be aware of the adoption of a special decision of the Lisbon summit of OSCE. We voted for that decision. I think that the document on the European security model of the 21st century includes real and implementable principles. We support them.

**Leonid Kuchma:** I agree with Mr. Aliyev on this problem. We understand its complexity and importance. Thus, the progressive steps of the countries should be appreciated. I mean the reconciliation agreement between Germany and Czech Republic. Hungary and Romania concluded a similar treaty. Ukraine also intends to sign a treaty with Romania and Poland. All these steps lead to strengthening security in Europe. But there are still some problems, which cannot be solved. One of them is separatism. Though separatism was condemned at the 50th session of the UN General Assembly, it still increases in different forms. This may lead to instability in Europe and in different parts of the world. Thus, we shall try to implement the principles declared by OSCE. Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Ukraine (March 24-25, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

Cooperation with Ukraine, one of the biggest countries in Europe, in terms of area and population, is of great importance for Azerbaijan. Having relations with Azerbaijan, which possesses rich natural resources and a favorable geographical and political position, is significant for Ukraine, too. Azerbaijan is a favorable economic and trade bridge, as well as a reliable political bridge between Ukraine and the Eastern countries.

Ukraine and Azerbaijan are allies. The mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Ukraine are well established both in the form of bilateral cooperation and within the framework of international organizations, such as GUAM, TRACECA, the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization.

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Ukraine in March 1997 played an important role in establishing a legal basis for the mutual cooperation and raising the relations to a strategic level. Talking about the importance of the visit prior to his departure, Heydar Aliyev said to the journalists: "I expect development of the Ukrainian-Azerbaijani relations in all the directions and spheres. We own a wide range of opportunities to develop cooperation in the sphere of economy, science and technology, education. A number of interstate documents on these issues has been prepared and we are going to sign them. Shortly, we have high expectations from this visit."

On the first day of the visit, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met his Ukrainian counterpart Leonid Kuchma. The two leaders discussed mutual relations, cooperation opportunities, as well as the problems which their countries face in Europe and in the CIS.

On the same day, a ceremony of signature of the documents took place. Seventeen documents on economic, political, cultural and other spheres were signed. The most important of them is the agreement on friendship, cooperation and partnership, which demonstrates the strategic nature of relations between the two countries. After the ceremony, the presidents made statements for the press.

On March 24, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev was awarded with Yaroslav Mudry Order, the highest award of Ukraine. Heydar Aliyev expressed his gratitude for the award and noted that he would further strive for the development of these relations.

During the visit, President Heydar Aliyev also met and exchanged views with the Ukrainian Prime Minister Lazarenko, Foreign Minister Udovenko, the first deputy chairman of the parliament Tkachenko.

On March 25, at the city council of Kiev, Heydar Aliyev was presented a diploma "guest of honor" and the symbolic key of Kiev.

On March 25, a joint press conference of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Ukraine was held. Speaking about the results of the visit, Heydar Aliyev said: "My official visit to Ukraine is coming

to an end. While leaving for the airport, I feel very pleased for this visit, its friendly environment, our discussions and decisions on the further development of cooperation between the two countries.

On the same day, President Heydar Aliyev met the representatives of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in Ukraine, learned about their lives and problems.

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Ukraine gave a strong impetus to the development of mutual relations between the two countries.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY (May 5-8, 1997)**

“..All our policy, steps are aimed at strengthening and enriching our country, reinforcing positions of Azerbaijan and at living in peace in the region. The Turkish-Azerbaijani alliance in this issue is a factor of great importance. Turkey immediately recognized the independence of Azerbaijan when it restored its independence and rendered assistance to Azerbaijan. We feel this help. We have always felt that, especially in the first years of our independence, when Azerbaijan suffered hardships. This support is very important for us today...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the presentation ceremony of “Politician of the Year in Eurasia” awarded by the popular Turkish magazine “Ecovitrin” – July 12, 2006*

### **Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the presentation of the state award of the Republic of Turkey “Devlet nishani” to the Azerbaijani President**

Ankara, “Chankaya” Palace, May 5, 1997

Mr. President, my dear friend, brother Suleyman Demirel!

Members of the government, statesmen, representatives of press of the Republic of Turkey!

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen!

Today we are extremely glad and satisfied with our arrival in Turkey, in its land. Turkey is a holy place for us. Turkey is a favorite country for each Azerbaijani. And therefore the arrival in Turkey is a great event, happiness in the life of every man. We had such happiness. Today I am extremely excited because my dear friend Suleyman Demirel has awarded me with, which is “Devlet nishani” of the Republic Turkey the high state prize of Turkey.

I am extremely excited. To say the truth I did not expect to be awarded with such a higher award, because to develop the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan, to enlarge them from day to day, to move them forward is my holy duty as an Azerbaijani, as a citizen.

I rule Azerbaijan for about four years. During this term I am trying to develop and expand the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan, because I know that it is useful both for Azerbaijan and Turkey. I always realized how much it was necessary,

useful for Azerbaijan, because we became estranged from Turkey for many years were way from each other for 70 years. During these years not only we, but our previous generation lived with a dream about Turkey, wished to approach and go hand in hand with Turkey, to shake hands with Turkey.

Finally, at the beginning of 1990 we reached it. It is a great happiness in the life of each citizen of Azerbaijan including me. Having achieved this, we have set the task to develop these relations, to draw together our nations, to get a profit, and I try to implement this task into life. If a work carried out by me estimated by the Republic of Turkey, by the government so highly, then I am extremely happy, satisfied.

It gladdens me that this award is award of the Republic of Turkey, of the country has been established by great Mustafa Ataturk.

As far as Mustafa Kemal Ataturk is dear and respected for you, so much he is dear and respected for the Azerbaijani. Therefore Turkey is a democratic Ataturk Republic, a native country for us. We consider it as our country, our native land.

I have already spoken about it and repeat it today: we are a nation, but two states. Awarding one of the heads of these states with the highest award of the other state is a great honour.

I assure you of that till the end of my life I shall try to justify this high confidence, honour. I do it now, shall do it hence. However, this award makes me be more responsible.

Be sure that I shall try to carry out this task. Be sure that Azerbaijan always will be independent. Independence, national freedom of Azerbaijan is inviolable. Be sure that Azerbaijan will go on the way of democracy, freedom. The way chosen by Azerbaijan is the way of creation of a democratic, legal, civilized state - this is our way. We shall never divert from this. We shall go on this way till the end and we shall raise Azerbaijan to a worthy level in the world community.

The Azerbaijani-Turkish friendship and brotherhood is everlasting and inviolable. We shall try from day to day to strengthen and to raise this friendship, brotherhood.

My dear friend, brother, I once more express my gratitude to you. Thank you very much.

***Question: Mr. Heydar Aliyev, what can you say about the route Baku-Ceyhan?***

***Answer:*** All these questions have been reflected in the declaration about the strategic cooperation, singed by us today.

***Question: Will the Azerbaijani oil reach Turkey in 2000?***

***Answer:*** Time will show when the Azerbaijani oil reach Turkey. But it will be in the nearest future.

***Question: It is known from the press that Russia delivered to Armenia a considerable quantity of weapons. Has this question been discussed in the***

***negotiations between Turkey and Azerbaijan?***

**Answer:** You knew that Armenia secretly received from Russia weapons, ammunition. In the capital of Russia in Moscow it was officially declared that Russia delivered Armenia secretly the weapon to the sum one billion dollars. It represents extremely great danger. Therefore today we had detailed negotiations, discussions on this theme. This event forces us to think about it of course. It is necessary to think. If we need unity in the work, it is possible to do it.

***Question: Mr. President, you declared that you supportthe idea of granting a higher status to Nagorno-Karabakh as a part of Azerbaijan. What does Armenia want from Azerbaijan?***

**Answer:** Armenia wants independence for Nagorno-Karabakh. We can never give it. Azerbaijan neither will give to anybody a single inch, nor a meter of its land. In spite of the fact that in the past a part of the Armenian lands belonged to Azerbaijan, we do not want other lands. We shall defend our lands in the framework of the documents accepted by the Organization of the United Nations in 1991 during the period of gaining independence by Azerbaijan and we will not give to anybody.

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev for the press at the ceremony of signature of documents between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey**

Ankara, "Chankaya" Palace, May 5, 1997

Dear members of the press!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I express my satisfaction with my official visit to Turkey at the invitation of President Mr. Suleyman Demirel, with the hospitality and friendly attitude towards the Azerbaijani delegation, and to me since our arrival here.

Today we conducted productive negotiations, discussed important issues, exchanged views. It is a vivid evidence of the friendly and fraternal relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Our peoples are united by historical roots, history, traditions, culture, language, religion.

Among the external relations which Azerbaijan has established since its independence, of special importance is its relations with Turkey. Turkey has always supported Azerbaijan, and became the first country to recognize Azerbaijan's independence. Our relations have a rich history and are rapidly growing. They are based on Turkey's special care and friendly attitude towards Azerbaijan. This attitude comes from the Turkish people, Turkish government. My dear friend and brother, President Suleyman Demirel also cares for Azerbaijan greatly.

It should be noted that Suleyman Demirel has played a special role in the recognition of Azerbaijan's independence and development of our relations.

Therefore, I express my gratitude and appreciation to Suleyman Demirel on the behalf of the entire Azerbaijani people. I also thank for the kind attitude towards me and the Azerbaijani delegation in Turkey.

My dear friend Suleyman Demirel, I thank you for your kind words about me, my service during the hard period of Azerbaijan.

Dear friends, you can be sure that the Azerbaijani people will further defend their national independence and freedom. The independence is our historical achievement, and it is our supreme duty to defend it. Our relations with Turkey are of particular importance in this respect. Our bilateral relations, especially multilateral cooperation in discussing the issues are extremely important.

A number of agreements have been signed between Azerbaijan and Turkey so far. But the documents signed today further expand and strengthen the legal basis of our relations. In particular, "The Declaration on deepening the strategic cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey" signed by the presidents is of great importance. It

displays a new stage achieved in our relations. In general, our meetings, negotiations, documents open a new phase in the Turkish -Azerbaijani relations. I hope that we can use these opportunities more effectively.

I note with great pleasure that our great biggest problems, which are Armenia's invasion, the occupation of 20% of our territories, one million refugees living in hard conditions always concern Turkey, and are in the focus of public attention of Turkey. The Turkish statespeople also pay attention to these issues. Turkey's strong position on this conflict, support our negotiations, and the consultations on the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict on the basis of the principles adopted at the Lisbon summit of OSCE. I hope that we shall achieve the peaceful solution of this conflict together with Turkey.

I also hope that these meetings will continue and our friendship will develop further.  
Thank you for the attention.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey (May 5-8, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

The Second official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey is distinguished for its comprehensiveness and number of meetings. Therefore, the Azerbaijani President held 22 meetings in Ankara, Istanbul, and Izmir.

On the 5th of May, in the reception held in “Chankaya Palace” in connection with this visit Heydar Aliyev said in his press statement: “We frequently meet you in the recent years. However, I think that achievements gained from these official visits and meetings will raise the Azerbaijani-Turkish relations to high levels. I consider that we have enough opportunities to broaden and deepen our cooperation in all the fields. As an independent country the Republic of Azerbaijan needs it.”

In the same day a meeting of the Azerbaijani and Turkish delegations was held. The parties expressed their satisfaction with the speed of development of the relations between the countries.

On the 5th of May the signature ceremony of documents between Azerbaijan and Turkey was held in “Chankaya Palace”. Eight agreements covering different fields, as well as , declaration on Deepening strategic cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey were signed. Speaking in front of press during the signature ceremony Heydar Aliyev appreciated the document as an indicator of the new stage in the relations of Azerbaijan and Turkey.

On the 5th of May, President Heydar Aliyev was rewarded with “State Order” of the Republic of Turkey. In his speech in the ceremony Heydar Aliyev told: “I have already said these words, and today I am repeating: we are one nation, but two states. As a member of one nation it is an honor tome to be awarded by the leader of the other nation.”

On the 5th of May Heydar Aliyev met the ambassadors of foreign countries to Ankara, as well as, who were appointed to Azerbaijan. In his speech in the meeting Heydar Aliyev called the ambassadors to visit Azerbaijan frequently, to collect objective information and to inform their countries.

On the same day President of Turkey Suleyman Demirel organized an official reception in honor of Heydar Aliyev. In his statement in the reception Heydar Aliyev mentioned that the Azerbaijani people will always be loyal to their friendship.

On the 6th of May Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the ceremony devoted to naming one of the central streets in honor of Azerbaijan. He appreciated this event as an attitude to the Azerbaijani-Turkish friendship.

On the 6th of May Heydar Aliyev made speeches in groundbreaking ceremony of the new embassy building of Azerbaijan in Turkey and in Bilkent University of Turkey, got acquainted with the School of Turkish Land Forces, met students and representatives of the Azerbaijani lobby, and gave an interview to the prominent journalists of this country.

On that day President Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the meeting with members of the Parliament of Turkey. Heydar Aliyev mentioned that the experience of the Turkish Parliament is not only a school for Azerbaijan, but also for all the states which follow the path of democracy and independence.

The official visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Turkey was in the focus of the Turkish media. On the 6th of May Heydar Aliyev gave an interview to “Samanyolu TV” and NTV, and on the 8th of May he met the heads of TV channels, TRT, TGRT, “Samanyolu”, NTV and answered to their questions.

On the 7th of May the Azerbaijani President went to Izmir. In Izmir the President was awarded with the title of the Honorary Doctor of “9 Eylul University.”

On the same day Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the reception organized in his honor by the governor of Izmir Kutlu Aktash. While touching upon the fraternization of Izmir and Baku, President Heydar Aliyev emphasized the importance of further expansion and development of these relations.

On the 7th of May the Azerbaijani President attended the opening ceremony of “Park of Baku” in Izmir. He highly appreciated this initiative and expressed his hope for the continuation of that tradition in other cities, too.

The President met media on the same day and the answered questions of journalists about the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, army building, religious tolerance, Baku – Jeyhan pipeline, Azerbaijan- USA, and Azerbaijani – Russiaan relations.

On the 8th of May a diploma of the honorary doctor of “Fatih University” was presented to Heydar Aliyev.

President Heydar Aliyev in his meeting with the Turkish businessmen on 8th of May called them to invest actively in the Azerbaijani economy.

On the same day the President of Azerbaijan made a speech in the Center of History, Culture, and Art of the Organization of Islamic Conference in Istanbul, and evaluated the researches conducted there.

The Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev, who completed his official visit in the 8th of May made a statement in Ataturk Airport of Istanbul: “I want to mention with pleasure that this visit was very successful for Azerbaijan. I am very pleased with this visit, negotiations and the signed documents, the meetings with the heads of the Turkish government and other meetings. I am very satisfied with the top level meetings and discussions.”

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF  
KAZAKHSTAN (June 10-11, 1997)**

“...Historical, friendly and brotherly relations between our countries confirmed themselves after obtaining independence. Thanks to Your leadership, Nursultan Abishevich, in Kazakhstan and President Heydar Aliyev in Azerbaijan, our countries gained great successes in realizing democratic and economic reforms, in strengthening independence and safety in our region. The objective task for leadership of Azerbaijan today is to continue this policy, to make our countries and nations come close to each other...”

*From the statement of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the joint press-conference held with President Nursultan Nazarbayev – March 2, 2004*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the joint press conference after the signature of the Azerbaijani-Kazakh interstate and intergovernmental documents**

June 10, 1997

Mr. President Nursultan Nazarbayev!

I thank for your invitation for an official visit to Kazakhstan and consider this visit a significant event in the Kazakhstan-Azerbaijan relations. Mr. President, your official visit to Azerbaijan last September laid the foundation of the new relations between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. Our peoples share common historical roots, rich history, close and similar traditions. We are tied by our history. However, a new stage in the development of our nations started when Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan gained their independence. Mr. President, your visit to Azerbaijan opened a new era of cooperation between our countries.

The important documents signed in Baku then are still effective and serve our cooperation. Our meeting in Almaty today is a continuation of the activities launched during your visit to Azerbaijan.

Mr. President, I completely agree with you that we possess huge potentials for cooperation in all the spheres, especially in economy. Our common borders through the Caspian Sea and the previous economic relations promise great opportunities for the Azerbaijani-Kazakh cooperation. The documents signed today pave the way for this cooperation. I attach more importance to two documents signed by the presidents.

Of course, other documents are also important. In general, taking into account your appendix, 17 documents, instead of 16, were signed. They create a legal basis for our cooperation. I am confident that both sides will make use of this opportunity to deepen and expand our cooperation.

Mr. President, I also agree with you that Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan share the same position regarding many international, regional and CIS problems. This position facilitates the solution of our problems and closely cooperates within Eurasia and the CIS.

I thank for your invitation to Kazakhstan. I hope that our meetings will lead our relations further.

***Question: Mr. Nazarbayev, what is the strategic partnership does Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan remarkable for? What perspectives do the newly signed declarations open? What contribution can it make to the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict which slows development of the economic processes leading to regional security and stability?***

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** First, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan has no reason to not have close relations. We have no reason to be dissatisfied with each other. Our economies complete one another. For example, Azerbaijan has a rich experience in oil production, oil refining, oil equipment and technology, in particular, offshore oil production. Kazakhstan may use this great experience in oil exploration and production, oil engineering. We used to purchase chemicals, produce some foodstuff and provide Azerbaijan with grain, meat products, non-ferrous raw metals, ferroalloys, etc. This relations is now broken. The total trade volume is about 40 million dollars. We should increase this volume. We have real opportunities for it, especially in oil industry.

In the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Kazakhstan will greatly need two or three pipelines besides the North Caucasian oil pipeline for transporting oil to the world market. Therefore, while being in Kazakhstan, we expressed our full support to the Caucasian transport corridor. We also learned that nearly 200,000 tons of Kazakh oil is transported through this corridor. We plan to deliver oil to the Black Sea coast, Turkey via Baku in future. We are ready to consider the issue of directly transporting the Kazakh oil to the Mediterranean Sea via the Caspian Sea and Baku, and to cooperate in this sphere. In other words, while discussing the financial aspect, we shall consider the issue with the participation of the Kazakh specialists, as much oil is needed for such projects.

Azerbaijan also possesses huge oil reserves. But investors require long-term business. This is our economic interest, too.

What about security then? Security emerges when some countries trade with one another. Positive economic relations and trade make countries continue them. Thus, trading nations will wish stability, peace and prosperity in the neighboring nations.

Therefore, all what you say is discussed and met with consent by us.

**Question:** *Mr. Nazarbayev, your speech on the relations among the CIS countries was quite sharp at the last CIS summit. Transfer of the Russian weapons to Armenia free of charge was also discussed at the summit. What is your position on this issue, not taking the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict into account? Thank you very much.*

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** The CIS mass media is well aware of my position. If you imply the Karabakh events, we are members of both the CIS and the OSCE. The main provisions of the OSCE Helsinki Act and the Paris Charter support territorial integrity and condemn separatism. If separatism spreads all over the world, then no country would avoid wars. Thus, I strongly oppose any kind of separatism. So do the Russian authorities, as I know. My position on this issue was known to you. I think that no conflicts must be allowed within the CIS. In a closed meeting of the last summit, I proposed creating a special committee of the heads of states for solving conflicts within the CIS. I think that we do have potentials to overcome the conflicts. It can also get our countries closer to one another. Moreover, individually or secretly supplying weapons to any CIS country cannot be appreciated. I hope that the acknowledgment of the Russian government will yield results. The Russian authorities promised to deal with this matter; the prosecutors have already been involved. I think that we shall soon learn the ultimate results of these processes.

**Question:** *My question is addressed to the President of Azerbaijan. Today you settled the issues related to the transportation of oil and signed a number of agreements. Which spheres of economy is your cooperation going to cover? I am also referring to the issue of the status of the Caspian Sea.*

**Heydar Aliyev:** They are connected with each other. We are working on the status of the Caspian Sea, and I must say that Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan have similar positions on this issue. We have been conducting consultations, meetings, negotiations on the determination of the status of the Caspian Sea over the last two years. It is necessary to determine the status of the Caspian Sea; many things have already been determined. During the Soviet time, the Caspian Sea was divided into sectors belonging to Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, Russia and Iran. We consider that each littoral state should operate, develop its mineral resources within its own sector. I am glad that the positions of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan are alike. I think that our efforts will lead to the solution of this issue in future.

As far our cooperation in other spheres, we signed 17 documents today. We signed 12 documents during President Nazarbayev's visit to Baku. These documents are related to various spheres of Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan which turn cooperation into a necessity. We are going to carry out this cooperation.

**Question:** *What could you say about the union of the Turkic-speaking peoples and*

*states, as well as the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Of course, we need a union. You want it, don't you? I think that the Turkic-speaking peoples have got big advantages of collaboration based on common historical traditions, language, moral and cultural values. This work is being carried out within the framework of the meetings of the heads of states, and I attach great importance to it. Gaining independence is of historic importance for Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan, and Azerbaijan. The independent, sovereign Turkic-speaking states are able to directly cooperate and achieve solidarity. I fully support these principles and will pursue them further.

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** We should eventually overcome the syndrome of socialism. If there is a meeting in Minsk, then the participants are called Slavic. A meeting in Almaty or Baku would be referred to as Pan-Turkist or Pan-Islamist. This is utterly nonsense. Our countries do not intend to build any empire after gaining independence. The totalitarian system deprived us of our roots and made our peoples forget their common origin. Of course, our peoples are very much inclined to each other. The famous personalities, like al-Farabi or Fizuli are common values of our peoples. They belong to all. Dede Korkut belongs to the entire Turkic world. Common origin, history and culture make our peoples closer. Therefore, any union should serve the integration of the CIS peoples. No one say what principles the Asian integration or the European integration are based upon. Therefore, meetings, agreements, feelings of respect serve the mankind, make people closer and prevent conflicts of any kind.

**Question:** *You just signed a memorandum on cooperation in the sphere of oil transportation. Could you please tell how you plan to transport oil through the territory of Azerbaijan? Do you plan constructing a new pipeline? How would Azerbaijan benefit from it? How much oil do you plan to transport annually?*

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** Kazakhstan used to sent seven million tons of oil to Baku through the Caspian Sea during the Soviet time. You may not know this now. At present we restore the port of Aktau. Special funds will be allocated for this purpose. Ferry transport and fuelling equipment for large tankers will operate there. We intend to export up to 10 million tons of oil through the sea. It will be delivered to the Black Sea via Baku and the Caucasian corridor. The consumers of that oil may be either Bulgaria or Ukraine or Turkey. It may also be transported through the Bosphorus. For importing oil, the port of Supsa is being reconstructed, a terminal is being built there.

It is not sufficient yet, as Kazakhstan intends to become a major oil producer. Therefore, it is necessary to construct a pipeline from Kazakhstan to Baku through the Caspian Sea. It is an international experience. The depth of the Caspian Sea is 100 meters. It will not disturb any country. It is necessary to install a direct pipeline, then to solve the issue of transporting oil through Turkey, either the Mediterranean or the

Black Sea; any option is acceptable for us. We have signed a document that supports such an option. In other words, we point out to foreign investors that the pipeline will be filled in by oil. This project will be useful for all. In terms of benefits, it will be as the international experience already was witnessed. How much oil is transported through the territory of a country, so much will be paid per barrel, everybody knows it.

***Question: What will Russia's share be in your plans?***

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** Russian companies were invited to take part in the exploitation of the Caspian Sea earlier than other companies. The Russian LUKoil possesses a 200 million USD share of the Tengiz project. Currently, LUKoil has an asset worth half a billion USD in Kazakhstan; the company has acquired this asset through tenders. Kazakhstan, Russia, Oman and other countries take part in the Caspian pipeline consortium (CPC). I am sure that Russia can easily use the southern tributaries of the oil pipelines and the CPC. Russia can also exploit with great benefit any gas pipeline going through the territory of Kazakhstan. Russia already uses the Sarakhs (Iran) – Gulf railway. The Russian cargo passes through the Druzhba station. Here we are talking about Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan only. We are not against any country. On the contrary, our doors are open to everyone.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I also think that Russia has got a big share in all projects. For example, according to the contract we signed with foreign companies in 1994, we have constructed a special pipeline to the port of Novorossiysk through the Russian territory for export of initial oil. I must say that the Azerbaijani part of the pipeline was completed a few months ago, while the Russian part is not finished yet. But according to our agreement, we had already to start the export of oil through the pipeline. We negotiated with the Russian authorities on this issue. They promised that the pipeline will be ready by October. As I said, according to the consortium contract, the first pipeline for the export of the early oil is constructed to the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk through Russia. Five contracts were signed with international consortia of oil companies in Azerbaijan. LUKoil of Russia takes an active part and has a large share in these contracts. Recently, Rosneft appealed to us; now we are negotiating with Rosneft and other Russian oil companies. Shortly, Russia has been fully involved in our projects.

***Question: You spoke of the appendix included in the general package of documents. What is that document?***

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** Cooperation in oil engineering. As known, the best oil engineering enterprises in the Soviet Union were located in Baku. We develop this sphere in our country now. But it is also necessary to exchange experts, technology, spare parts, and oil production equipment. This is my opinion.

***Question: In your interview to Komsomolskaya Pravda, you spoke of the favorable conditions in Kazakhstan for investors. What kind of conditions have been created?***

**Nursultan Nazarbayev:** Everyone is aware of this, so I do not want to waste much time. My aide on economy is present here. He may present you our laws on foreign investment. We grant privileges to foreign investor to operate in the spheres, which are priorities for us. They encompass oil and gas, and other mineral resources.

**Question:** *Although the process of determining the status of the Caspian Sea is still underway, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan operate quite actively in their own sectors. Mr. President Aliyev, could you tell whether your disputes with Turkmenistan on the status of the Caspian Sea hinder your activities?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** There are disputes, but they cannot create obstacles for us. We know our sector. Since the 1940s the Azerbaijani oil workers, scientists, geologists have discovered main deposits in the Caspian Sea and precisely know whereabouts of each of them. Therefore, there may be disputes, but they can not hinder us.

## **Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the official reception in his honor hosted by the President of Kazakhstan**

June 10, 1997

Mr. President Nursultan Nazarbayev!

Dear friends! Ladies and gentlemen!

Today is a remarkable event for the Azerbaijani delegation. The first official visit of the Azerbaijani President and delegation has started. I would like to express my gratitude to President Nursultan Nazarbayev for the invitation and the hospitality since the moment we arrived in Kazakhstan. We have been together for a few hours; we have already discussed a number of issues, exchanged views. We have signed several important documents, which will encourage developing and deepening friendly relations between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan.

We are very grateful and extremely happy to have a chance to do a lot of work in a friendly atmosphere in Kazakhstan. Of course, all these have their historical roots, which we share and appreciate. They are the basis of the Kazakh-Azerbaijani mutual relations, which have been existing for many years. History for both Kazakhs and Azerbaijanis has been troublesome. Despite difficulties, our peoples have always supported each other, felt and understood that they share the same roots. Many generations of the Kazakhs and Azerbaijanis have maintained mutual relations based on our rich and ancient culture, which is a part of the Oriental and Turkic civilization.

We can be proud of our outstanding persons, who are our treasure. Prominent representatives of our peoples, with their works in literature, art, science, have enriched the human civilization. Therefore, it is quite natural that we celebrate together the well-known persons, whom we consider our common values. In 1995, the international community celebrated the 150th anniversary of the great Kazakh thinker, writer, poet, scholar, philosopher Abay Kunanbayev.

I received President Nazarbayev's invitation. We could have simply dispatched some cultural, intellectual figures from Azerbaijan, but Abay is our common value. Thus, I visited Almaty, Kazakhstan and took part in celebrations with a great pleasure. I witnessed both the Kazakh people and the guests celebrate this anniversary at a high level.

The same happened last year, when we celebrated the 500th anniversary of Muhammad Fizuli belonging to all the Turkic peoples. We celebrated the anniversary in Baku together with the delegations of all Turkic nations, including Kazakhstan.

However, these are not the celebrations of culture and literature only. They prove

our devotion to our roots, traditions, common culture which unite us.

Completely new relations on this basis are now being established between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. President Nazarbayev's first official visit to Azerbaijan in September 1996 was a remarkable event in these relations. We did a lot of work then.

That visit laid the foundation of new relations between the independent Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. The documents signed then encouraged the development of these relations, reflected also in the documents we signed here in Almaty.

Our peoples achieved independence and sovereignty through a lot of difficulties. I will not speak of the past, but recall some episodes.

December, 1986, the period of the Soviet Union, the Communist Party. We all served faithfully the country and the party. It was time to change the administration in Kazakhstan. They decided to appoint a person, who was not Kazakh and never was and worked here. I mean Kolbin. Then I was a member of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Thus, I was involved in that process. That decision was quite surprising. For example, my approach towards such decisions was sensitive, as I thought that regardless of ethnicity, we all were equal in the Soviet Union. However, since I was an Azerbaijani and a Muslim, I perceived the injustice towards the Muslim peoples more sensitively.

Then it was explained that there was not a worthy person in Kazakhstan, therefore they needed to send there Kolbin. I talked Mikhail Gorbachev about it after the discussions. I even asked the reason of their decision. He said: the Kazakhs claim that they do not have any worthy person for that position. Dinmukhammad Konayev himself said that a candidate of Russian origin should be appointed to Kazakhstan as they lack a reasonable person in the current situation.

Of course, that was not true. I could not accept that. But I was surprised when Gorbachev told me and stated at Politburo that the Kazakhs, including Dinmukhammad Konayev recommended to appoint a Russian to Kazakhstan. He even mentioned that they expect Kruchina, who worked in Tselinograd.

But when it was time to solve the problem, the Kazakh people, especially youth and students protested.

Then the riots called "Alma-Ata events" took place in December 1986. Moscow sent a commission headed by one person, who had already worked in Kazakhstan. His name was Solomentsev. When he returned to Moscow he reported about nationalism in Kazakhstan.

I can talk about it more. I simply don't want to waste your time now. But I spoke of those events to recall how the Kazakh people demonstrated their national dignity. Although protesters were punished and the decision on nationalism in Kazakhstan was adopted, the Kazakh people showed their dignity and opposed the decision. The

subsequent events confirmed that the decision was unreasonable and misguided, also totally contrary to our principles.

Then, Nursultan Nazarbayev was the Chairman of the Council of Ministers and enjoyed a great reputation both in Kazakhstan and Moscow. Everyone questioned the appointment of someone, who was alien to Kazakhstan, whilst Nursultan Nazarbayev was already working there.

I greatly respect the brave Kazakh youth, who opposed the unfair decision of the Soviet leadership, demonstrated heroism. Although those events were condemned then, history absolved the Kazakh protesters, who showed the dignity of their people. In 1989, Moscow had to appoint Nursultan Nazarbayev to lead Kazakhstan.

Here at this reception I recall those events to show that our peoples made a hard way for independence. There were losses and victims, bloodshed. Punitive measures were carried out against persons, who demonstrated their national dignity.

A tragedy occurred also in Azerbaijan in January 1990. The people protested against the unjust decisions of the Communist regime. They did not want anything else. In response, the Communist regime decided to suppress the protests by a large contingent of Soviet troops with tanks and armored vehicles; it led to bloodshed in Baku. Then an Alley of Martyrs appeared in the center of Baku. This Alley has become a holy spot for us and the visitors.

Our peoples achieved independence through lots of difficulties. That's why, independence is a historic achievement for both the Kazakh and Azerbaijani peoples. As a person, who has been to Kazakhstan many times, I follow the processes in this country with a great interest.

An independent nation, Kazakhstan is led by the great leader Nursultan Nazarbayev. Our countries face many problems, which are being solved. Personally, I am confident that they will be resolved, and our efforts will lead to better conditions.

Azerbaijan faces lots of problems, the most important is the aggression of Armenia, which has resulted in the occupation of 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory and the birth of one million refugees. Of course, serious problems emerge in this connection. But there is a ceasefire over past three years. Having achieved the ceasefire, we are now trying to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh peacefully. And we will find the solution. We have always been feeling the support of the friendly Kazakh people, as well as that of Nursultan Nazarbayev regarding this issue. Mr. Nazarbayev took an active part in the peaceful resolution of this issue in 1991. He still holds an active position every time when this matter is discussed in the international organizations, considers that the conflicts in the CIS area, including the Nagorno-Karabakh problem should be solved by peaceful means.

I am thankful to Kazakhstan and President Nazarbayev for this fair position and

friendly support. I believe that justice will triumph, we shall regulate this issue and restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

As Mr. Nazarbayev noted here, I also consider that all the countries must observe the principles of the UN, the Helsinki Act, OSCE on the territorial integrity, inadmissibility of separatism as a threat for the whole world community. In my opinion, our fair positions are important not only for Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan, but also for peace and stability in the entire world.

Dear friends! Dear Mr. Nazarbayev! Let me thank you for your invitation and hospitality. I assure you that Azerbaijan will always observe the agreements we signed. We shall adhere to our friendship and cooperation and do our best to implement our commitments.

To the independent, sovereign Kazakhstan! To the Kazakh people! To the Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev! Cheers!

Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Kazakhstan (June 10-11, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid an official visit to Kazakhstan on June 10-11, in 1997, at the invitation of the President of Kazakhstan. The aim of the visit was to restore the relations in all the fields between the two countries and to improve cooperation. Thus, establishment of mutual relations between the two countries coincides with the period under the domination of the Soviet Union.

On the 10<sup>th</sup> of June at the meeting with President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev emphasized that he appreciated this visit as an important event in the Azerbaijani-Kazakh relations and in the life of Azerbaijan. He mentioned that the support of the Kazakh people and the President in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh was always felt, and stressed that Kazakhstan from the beginning of the conflict supported the territorial integrity and indivisibility of Azerbaijan.

On the same day a number of important interstate and intergovernmental documents were signed between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan. Agreements on the application of visa-free regime, on free trade, on legal assistance and judicial relations on the civil issues, and on the main principles of cooperation in the field of petroleum engineering were signed between the governments of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

After the signature ceremony the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev made a statement in the joint press conference: "Our people have common historical roots, rich history, rich close and similar traditions. Not only our history, but also historical events also connect us. However, after gaining independence a new stage appeared in the lives of our countries and people."

On June 11, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the Kazakh parliament, - both in the senate and the assembly.

On the same day an honorary diploma of Kazakh National State University named after Al-Farabi was presented to the Azerbaijani President. After the ceremony he met the representatives of the Azerbaijani lobby in Kazakhstan and expressed his gratitude in the interview with Kazakh journalists for the attitude towards the Azerbaijanis in Kazakhstan.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev talked about the importance of the visit and stated at the final meeting with the Kazakh businessmen in the end of the official visit: "Yesterday we signed an important document on deepening and development of the cooperation between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan. This document has a deep meaning and content. It determines the character of partnership relations and character of the strategic partnership of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan.

We signed a memorandum on the oil production in Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan and on the transportation of oil and gas to the international markets through the Caspian Sea. This

document lays the foundation for the further cooperation between Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan both in the Caspian basin and in the field of oil and gas industry.”

Today Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan actively cooperate in the fields politics, economy, culture and in international organizations.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN  
(June 18-19, 1997)**

“...I must say with full responsibility that the foundations of our present relations were built by the two great leaders – Islam Karimov and Heydar Aliyev when they began an active cooperation in joining efforts for the solution of the problems. They laid the foundations of the statehood of our countries and provided stability and a sustainable development. The countries under their presidency proved that not only they could live independently, but also they could defend the national interests successfully and could play an important role in the regional processes...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the reception held in honor of the President of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov,  
– September 11, 2008*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar  
Aliyev at the joint press conference after the signature of the  
Azerbaijani-Uzbek interstate and intergovernmental documents**

June 18, 1997

Mr. President Islam Karimov!

Dear friends!

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all, I thank President Islam Karimov for inviting me for an official visit to Uzbekistan. We have done a lot of work since this morning. This visit is the continuation of the official visit of President Islam Karimov to Azerbaijan last May. Our efforts are aimed at strengthening the Uzbek-Azerbaijani cooperation.

I thank you for your hospitality and warm welcome. We feel at home as we are surrounded by attention and friendly attitude.

President Islam Karimov spoke of our negotiations and the signed documents. I do not need to repeat them and waste your time. I fully agree with all he said. Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are loyal, reliable partners and have set the definite ways of developing and strengthening our relations in the signed documents.

The relations established between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan shortly after our independence were not what we wanted. It was the fault of the then authorities of Azerbaijan. I regret that. I have repeatedly said that the position of some people who

accidentally came to power in Azerbaijan, were not supported by everybody. They caused great damage to Azerbaijan and complicated the Uzbek-Azerbaijani relations. Despite the troubled years, we have secured rapid development of our bilateral relations and cooperation within a short period. 19 documents were signed in Baku last May; the first one is the Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. Among them, the document signed by Islam Karimov and me on strengthening the friendship and partnership between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan is of great importance. All other documents are of exceptional importance and create a solid legal basis for the successful cooperation between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. We have no doubt that all these agreements will be implemented and we will witness rapid development of our cooperation in next few years. It will benefit both Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan to the same extent.

I want to emphasize that – Mr. Karimov also noted it – we share the same position in all the discussed issues, including the issues of political significance. Establishment of a reliable partnership is extremely important both for Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, if we take into account our common interests both in regional and international issues.

I highly appreciate President Islam Karimov's support to the territorial integrity, as well as his opposition to separatism, terrorism, fundamentalism, interference in the internal affairs of other countries, attempts against sovereignty and independence. We stand firm in our positions. In this respect, similarity of our positions has a fundamental importance for the future development of our partnership.

The independence of Azerbaijan faced lots of challenges and problems: Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, violation of our territorial integrity as a result of the occupation of 20 per cent of our lands by the armed forces of Armenia, forcible banishment of one million Azerbaijanis from their homes – they are now living in extremely difficult conditions, mostly in tents, as refugees, unstable internal situation, struggle for power between the armed gangs and political groups. Therefore, we appreciate highly our national independence and freedom. We gained independence at the expense of martyrs while defending our lands from the Armenian invaders, on January 20, 1990, when Soviet troops committed aggression against the Azerbaijani people, and during the internal political struggle. We have achieved the current sovereignty and stable situation through difficulties and victims. We are eager to strengthen and develop our independence further.

In this connection, the similarity of the positions of the two presidents is of great importance and a good basis for a reliable partnership.

We want to have a reliable partnership with Uzbekistan, and we shall do everything to advance and strengthen our relations.

Thank you for your attention.

**Question:** *My question is addressed to Mr. President Islam Karimov. Did you discuss the issue of transporting the Uzbek oil to Europe through Azerbaijan? Does Uzbekistan intend to participate in the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline project supported at the recent ECO summit?*

**Islam Karimov:** In my opinion, the document on the Transcaucasian corridor encompasses Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan, Azerbaijan and Georgia. By signing the document on the transportation through the Central Asia, Black Sea, Europe and other regions, we sent a clear message that we support the development of communications in this direction.

The interesting figures Heydar Aliyev mentioned today make us think. This corridor has not been used for a long time. Not only the countries that have signed the document, but other nations are also interested in this corridor. Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Ukraine, Bulgaria, Romania and many other countries have already joined it. Therefore, when asked only about gas or oil pipelines, we have to approach this issue more comprehensively. We imply all communications, including the transportation of the crude oil.

**Question:** *Does Uzbekistan have any initiatives or intentions on implementing the Lisbon principles on settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict? May the Central Asian peacekeeping forces be involved in OSCE peacekeeping forces in Nagorno-Karabakh?*

**Islam Karimov:** In our negotiations and personal conversations, I expressed my clear and firm position regarding the solution of Nagorno-Karabakh problem. I have repeated my position several times and in various international meetings: we are confident that Azerbaijan's position on the territorial integrity, liberation of the occupied territories, return of refugees, restoration of the territorial integrity is fair, which is supported by more and more countries of the world community.

Therefore, we are pleased that Azerbaijan's position is recognized now. The increasing reputation of Azerbaijan is a natural process, in my opinion. Thus, we think that there cannot be two Armenian states in the Caucasus; It is a reasonable idea put forward by Azerbaijan. In this regard, we support the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict. There is no alternative to a political solution of this problem. Therefore, we believe that strengthening the OSCE Minsk Group on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, appointing the United States a third co-chair along with Russia and France are good incentives for the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh problem. We do not choose neighbors. Neither do the Armenians. Thus, there is no alternative to the peaceful solution of this problem.

I am also convinced that the Karabakh conflict that broke out in 1989 was initiated from outside. Neither Azerbaijan nor Armenia needs this conflict. The glowing center of tension and the inert process are suitable for some powers that carry out their

strategic intentions through this process.

As for the Central Asian peace-keepers, we decided to keep this battalion as a reserve of the UN. This battalion can operate by a resolution of the UN Security Council. It is not our job to determine where it will operate. The decision on their operation will be made by the UN Security Council.

*Question: My question is addressed to President Karimov. In your speech at the recent ECO Summit in Ashgabat, you clearly stated that there was no need to refer to one another with the words “brother” or “dear brothers” if they did not mean anything. Today, a reverse process is underway. The presidents signed a declaration. Although we did not announce the strategic partnership, the signed declaration actually confirms these principles. So that, I would like to learn your opinion: How do you evaluate the relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan? The second question: what is your position regarding illegal and free supply of weapons to Armenia by Russia? Thank you very much.*

**Islam Karimov:** Your question is quite interesting, and I would like to recall my words stated in Ashgabat. The ECO is an organization that unites 10 states of completely different political background.

Therefore, the issues related to the domestic politics, or internal politics, or political ideology cannot be compared. However, we are very interested in communications opened by the agreements within the framework of ECO. Of course, the humanitarian issues are also of great importance. When misusing the word “brother” to refer to each other, you may realize that there is no fraternal relation because of diverse background, political and ideological views. As misuse of such expressions may adversely affect fraternal relations, leaders should understand the value of these expressions.

As far as our own relations, we do not publicly use “brother”, “brotherhood” when referring to each other in order to not harm the words. But deep in my heart I am absolutely confident that Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan can maintain fraternal relations. The explanation is very simple. It is based on our common history, language, culture, roots. We can understand each other 70% when speaking. Most importantly, our peoples lived together for centuries or even millennia. There are necessary prerequisites to build brotherly relations between our nations. Building relations is the desire of our peoples. Therefore, we carry out the demands of our peoples.

As for the document we signed, it contains the concept on strategic cooperation. When signing the declaration on deepening cooperation, we declared about the strategic cooperation between our countries.

As for the second question, my attitude is, of course, negative. I have already mentioned, and I want to reconcile these two notions. I said that the Karabakh problem was initiated by outside forces. No one knows who supports this transfer of a large

number of weapons without any intergovernmental agreement or legitimate document. The Russian press is mute about this transfer. Sometimes the Russian press spreads rumors and unbelievable news. But all of a sudden, it stopped to write about transfer of the arms, as if nobody is concerned about it. Why does this incident not concern the democratic Russia? Russia is more advanced in democratic changes than many nations in the post-Soviet area, and we respect Russia's democratic traditions. Yet it is not understandable how the transfer of such a large number of weapons was made and the government of the democratic state became unaware of it. It would be a big scandal for any other democratic nation, where both prosecutors and public would get involved in it. Of course, this issue should be investigated and we have to learn who stands behind it.

*Question: Mr. Karimov, I would like to present you the magazine "Populyar". It is an international magazine printed in three languages in Azerbaijan. This edition is dedicated to our president's recent visit. In addition, a significant portion of the edition informs about Heydar Aliyev's birthplace, the Autonomous Republic of Nakhchivan.*

*Moreover, I have two questions. You said that the specific joint projects on basic spheres had been discussed during the negotiations.*

*If it is possible, could you list the projects, which are most interesting and ready for signature or implementation? This is my first question. The second one is addressed to the both leaders. What is your attitude towards the newly created union of Russia and Belarus? Have you received any proposals from the leaders of the union, including the Russian authorities to take part in or join the union? Thank you.*

**Islam Karimov:** Thank you for the magazine. As for joint projects on basic spheres, we are well aware of Azerbaijan's potential in oil and gas sphere, development and supply of relevant equipment, and we respect this potential very much. I believe that we have great prospectives to supply our countries with oil and gas. By the way, we are already self-sufficient in terms of oil and gas supply. We have big projects for the attraction of foreign investment. Like Azerbaijan, we have also created very favorable conditions for attracting foreign investments in the development of these spheres. We can not only provide our countries with hydrocarbon resources, but also export them.

That's why, I consider it very promising to develop these spheres, establish joint ventures, cooperate with the Azerbaijani companies producing oil and gas equipment. As a country that has developed its oil industry since the early 20<sup>th</sup> century, Azerbaijan has a good reputation in the world.

Chemical industry is the second sphere. This industry is well advanced in Azerbaijan, but not so developed in Uzbekistan. Chemistry implies fertilizers, first of

all. We operate in producing phosphorus and nitrogen fertilizers, and have started to produce potassium fertilizers as well. These fields are well developed in Azerbaijan. Therefore, we are eager to establish joint ventures in these fields.

The other field of importance is telecommunications. No progress can be made without them. When discussing the Trans-Caucasus corridor and communications in general, we should realize that our communication, our projects, as well as the development of important spheres are impossible without telecommunications.

Another field is metallurgy, in which Azerbaijan holds firm positions.

Next comes agriculture. This year we tested growing cotton under film in large scale. The results are amazing. The new method enables us to obtain 10-15 quintals per hectare, accelerates growth of cotton and vegetation for one month, reduces cost price and avoids some heavy operations. Those who are engaged in cotton cultivation know how much labor it requires. We can cooperate with Azerbaijan in this sphere and buy films from you – this sphere is developed in Azerbaijan. At present, we strive to develop chemical industry in our country to produce film. But we also consider it promising to purchase film from you and grow cotton under film.

I can continue this issue. For instance, winemaking. The Azerbaijani wine is certainly good. So is the Uzbek wine. Azerbaijani cognac is good. So is Uzbek cognac. Therefore, we ought to cooperate on improving the quality of our wines and deliver them to the world market. I can count our fields. But I stop it here as there will be other questions as well.

As for your second question, I will try to speak about the agreement or union between Russia and Belarus. First of all, I state that this is an internal affair of Russia and Belarus. In other words, they can create any union. By the way, the recent sitting of the parliament of the Union of Belarus and Russia attended by the Russian and Belarusian authorities, including Mr. Lukashenko, his fiery speech, the restoration of the Soviet anthem explain the direction of the union. The aims of the created union are obvious even without my comments. The union is allegedly set up only for Belarus and Russia. But all the CIS members will be demanded to join it. Mr. Lukashenko needs this union as he wants loans and other dividends from the Russian authorities. Russia needs the union in order to involve other CIS countries. A USSR-like entity longed for by the State Duma leadership will be established on the basis of the union.

I do not understand at all the statements made by some politicians supporting this union. Mr. Lukashenko openly expresses his regret on the dissolution of the USSR – I have heard him say it many times on television. His goal is to fix the errors committed by his predecessors and restore the Union. Thus, there is no comment. We are not going to join the union as we do not long for the former USSR. We believe that the USSR dealt only with its own imperial ambitions. Uzbekistan does not want to rejoin

the Soviet empire. Therefore, our position is clear: it is an internal affair of Russia and Belarus. If they are satisfied with their entity, they may develop and strengthen it.

But it concerns me to hear they say every time that the union's doors are open. Mr. President, yesterday I heard on TV that a contest to create lyrics for the Soviet anthem had been announced, but it had been made clear that the words "Russia" and "Belarus" should not have been included in the lyrics. Why? So that any other nation that joins the union feels uncomfortable. In other words, by setting a new union, the politicians already know, think, hope, believe other countries will join. The lyrics containing only the words "Belarus" and "Russia" may make new members feel uncomfortable in the union. I am absolutely sure that Uzbekistan will not be in the above-mentioned union. As for Azerbaijan, Mr. Aliyev will reveal his own position.

*Heydar Aliyev:* Today both Mr. Karimov and I have determined we had similar views, positions regarding all the issues. The views of both presidents completely match. Not to waste your time, I state that I agree with everything which Mr. Karimov said. I can add that creation of a union is the desire of Russia and Belarus. An independent, sovereign state may join the alliance with any other state. Today we also signed a declaration on partnership and cooperation. This is our own affair while the union concerns Russia and Belarus only. We stated that we do not interfere in the affairs of other countries. I reckon we should not intervene in this case.

However, I would like to say that they are involved in useless work and waste their time. I don't think any other state will join their union. I mean the union they are trying to set up, that "unbreakable union" as mentioned in the Soviet anthem they sang with enthusiasm in Belarus. Islam Karimov stated Uzbekistan would never join such a union. I openly declare that Azerbaijan would not join either. As Azerbaijan appreciates its sovereignty, joining this kind of unions may harm the independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. We shall never agree with it.

Serious people should discuss serious matters. This is not a serious matter at all. The Soviet Union collapsed after existing for 70 years. Almost all empires fell as a result of wars. The Soviet Union was dissolved from inside.

Since the Soviet Union was dissolved from inside, how can it be restored? Plus, lots of errors, crimes committed within the Soviet Union were discovered after its dissolution. Crimes were committed against the Azerbaijani people. You can recall the January tragedy that took place in 1990. A large contingent of the Soviet troops entered Baku, suppressed people, shed a lot of blood. The troops strove to hurt our national identity. They committed crimes. Thus, those who wish to restore the union, must first bear responsibility for these crimes, then start negotiations.

Shortly, I consider this matter as an unpromising job. In my opinion, this idea will benefit no other country but Belarus and Russia. Doors will remain open, but not so

many countries will enter through that door.

**Question:** *I have a question for both presidents. Did you discuss the problem of Afghanistan during your tete-a-tete meeting? Mr. Karimov, can you please comment the Uzbekistan-Russian agreement on stationing the Russian border troops in Uzbekistan for protecting the border with Afghanistan.*

**Islam Karimov:** Nice question. Heydar Aliyev and I discussed stability and security of our countries, as well as, the armed conflict in Afghanistan which is going on for many years, this problem is a direct threat to the security and territorial integrity of the neighboring nations.

As for the agreement you mentioned, there is no such agreement at all. By the way, yesterday or the day before yesterday someone on Russian TV announced about the existence of an agreement between the border forces of Russia and Uzbekistan. There is such an agreement, which serves to creating necessary relationship on the border with Afghanistan. You are well aware that the Russian border troops are stationed in Tajikistan and Turkmenistan. However, there will never be Russian border troops in Uzbekistan. Therefore, I want the reporters of Russian information centers, who are present here to disseminate this information, especially to those who spread these rumors. As the main source, I reply your question: there are not Russian troops here, and will never be. But Uzbekistan border troops will keep mutual relations with their Russian counterparts.

The agreement on mutual relations was signed by the commander of the Russian border troops Nikolayev and his Uzbek counterpart. However, no Russian troops will be stationed on our border. We are able to protect our border with Afghanistan, and we do it. If we are not capable to protect our borders, what sovereignty can we speak about? As an independent, sovereign state, we must defend our borders ourselves. This is one of the necessary conditions of free policy carried out by an independent, sovereign state.

**Heydar Aliyev:** It seems, nothing is left for me to answer. I agree with all Mr. Karimov said.

**Question:** *Among the documents prepared for discussion was an inter-governmental and inter-bank agreement on regulating the debts and demands for 1992-1994. What is the current state? What debts are present now? I have a question to Mr. Aliyev: what is your opinion about the agreement on oil transportation through the territory of Russia? Must Chechnya partake in this agreement as one of the signatory parties? Thank you.*

**Islam Karimov:** As for inter-bank debts and calculations within 1992-1993, I was just informed that these issues had been considered. There is a general agreement. It means that all the figures have been agreed at export and banks level, and there is

no disagreement. I will discuss this issue with Heydar Aliyev. His political will can encourage the signing of a relevant contract.

**Heydar Aliyev:** To reply your question, I can say that Russia and Azerbaijan signed an agreement in Moscow in January 1996 on oil transportation from Azerbaijan to the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk and on the construction of an oil pipeline. This pipeline was constructed on the territory of Azerbaijan, while the Russian part of the pipeline needed reconstruction. The events in Chechnya delayed these works. Recently, Russia and Chechnya held negotiations. Maskhadov met Russian representatives, and several documents were signed between Prime Minister Chernomyrdin and Chechnya. It is their affair. As for us, we shall work according to the documents signed between Azerbaijan and Russia.

**Question:** *I have a question to Mr. Karimov. Five years ago you declared to the people, who desired freedom and democracy that you would grant them democracy in five years. Your remarks today also confirm it. How did you achieve it?*

**Islam Karimov:** Journalists interpret some issues according to their understanding. I can understand you when you state that five years ago I promised to grant freedom. This issue depends on the model of political, democratic, economic reforms every nation chooses. We have chosen our own model based on democratic and market economy reforms in order to rebuild our society. This model is to be carried out in stages.

Our reforms are based on five principles. The most important one is the implementation of reforms. Reforms should be carried out in stages. We are against the shock therapy in economy and chaos in reforms. We wish to rebuild our state stage-by-stage. In 1990-1992, Uzbekistan was widely criticized. I was also called a post-communist nomenclature. Therefore, I was reported by mass media, especially the Russian press, to be an authoritarian leader. But the experience shows that the reconstruction stage-by-stage, as well as democratic and political reforms are reasonable in conditions of Uzbekistan. I don't know how they are carried out in other countries. But I hope that the situation is similar in other countries. This path is self-justified. In other words, there is no mystery. We cannot become democrat by declaring us democrats.

Democracy is achieved in the minds of people, in the mentality of the society. One cannot be a democrat by declaring it. We have created legal basis, made institutional changes. We haven't discovered anything new. First of all, we have benefited from the experience of the European countries. The Japanese model, the Korean model, as well as other models of other advanced Asian nations are also useful. Most importantly, we have taken into account our traditions, practices, mentality. Our achievements are synthesis of the experience of developed countries and our mentality, traditions. We cannot remain indifferent to millennial culture and great traditions of our ancestors. As Heydar Aliyev noted, each state creates its future by taking into account the interests

and features of its people. This is the secret you're trying to understand. The legal basis we need has been established. Institutional changes are underway. We have set many democratic institutions, including a national human rights institution. We also have non-governmental agencies and rights protection structures. The Monitoring Institute was founded. At present, a public survey institute, as well as non-governmental organizations in the fields of media and publishing are being created. A lot has been done for the democratization of our press. It is still not enough to achieve our tasks though. All conditions necessary for democracy are being realized.

I want to stress once more that all claims on the possibility of creating a democratic society within a couple of years following the collapse of the totalitarian system are nothing but statements only. I repeat that democratic societies are created by lower classes. Had laws and documents signed by the president realized democratic principles, all countries would have turned democratic. Unfortunately, this process is very hard. We are proud that our society, our people support the changes in Uzbekistan.

If asked about our achievements over the past six years, I would answer that our greatest achievement is the changes in the mentality, democratic values in minds.

If asked what I appreciate most and what Uzbekistan has achieved, I would point out peace and stability, civic and ethnic solidarity. We also try to avoid social polarization and conflicts while implementing the market reforms.

The majority of our population now supports our reforms. This is one of our biggest successes in the implementation of the market reforms. Today I heard that Heydar Aliyev has informed that the salaries are paid on time, all issues related to social protection of the population are being carried out in Azerbaijan. In my opinion, reforms in some post-Soviet countries failed, led to social polarization and conflict. It is not known yet when stability will be achieved.

I am confident that our path is right. At present, the world community also acknowledges that Uzbekistan pursues the correct course. Democratic changes and market reforms conducted in our country are accepted at international level.

Thank you.

## **Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the official reception in his honor hosted by the President of Uzbekistan**

June 18, 1997

Mr. President Islam Karimov!

Dear friends! Ladies and gentlemen!

I deliver to you the best regards of the Azerbaijani people. I am very pleased of being surrounded by honesty, friendship, hospitality and great respect here in Uzbekistan during my official visit. Mr. Karimov, I thank you for your invitation. I hope that our joint work and the document we signed will expand our cooperation, strengthen the friendship between our countries.

Last May President Karimov paid an official visit to Azerbaijan. It was the first visit of the Uzbek President to Azerbaijan after Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan gained independence. It became a historic event in the relations between our countries. The significance of that visit was in the elimination of difficulties between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. They have emerged due to the fault of some officials in previous years, we established diplomatic relations, discussed a number of issues, and signed important documents.

The first document on friendship and cooperation between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan signed by the Presidents in Baku on May 27 was the starting point for our relations.

The intensive relations between our countries began to develop since. We have some successes, the most important of which is the establishment of the Transcaucasian corridor. It is connecting the Central Asia, the Caucasus and Europe via reliable highways, and plays an important role in our economic relations. It is an example of establishing and effective use of communications.

As a result of our negotiations we signed significant documents today. The most important one is the declaration on the expansion and development of cooperation between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. This cooperation determines our strategic relations. Up to forty inter-governmental documents, signed here in Baku pave the way for the further development of our cooperation as a good legal basis.

I want to assure you that we shall do our best to implement into life all documents we signed in due time.

We consider that the Uzbek-Azerbaijani relations are very important for our country. Our peoples have a rich and ancient history. The Uzbek and the Azerbaijani peoples have made remarkable contributions to the Oriental and world civilization throughout

the centuries. Ancient and medieval scientific achievements of the East contributed to the development of mankind. The peoples of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan have contributed a lot to the mankind.

We can be proud of the great thinkers, our peoples who are valuable for us. It proves that our peoples share the same roots. Common religious, spiritual, moral and cultural values have always united our peoples and created conditions for friendly, mutual assistance. We speak of the eposes of "Kitabi- Dede Korkut" Alpamish, Koroglu with great pride. They are equally valuable both for the Uzbeks and the Azerbaijanis. So are Nizami Ganjavi and Alisher Navoi. Our great ancestors created masterpieces, which have enriched the world culture and literature.

Mr. Karimov is quite right when he said that Fizuli is our common wealth. It is no surprise that the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Fizuli was celebrated in Uzbekistan, Azerbaijan and other Turkic-speaking countries. The celebrations took place on an international level within the framework of UNESCO. We were very glad to see the Uzbek delegation led by the chairman of the parliament Mr. Khalilov in the celebrations in Baku.

Last October we attended the 660<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the great son of the Uzbek people, Amir Timur with a deep sense of respect and esteem to our ancestors. We visited Samarkant, got acquainted with the world-famous Registan, the Amiri Gur and the entire complex built by the Uzbek architects and passed to next generations.

As a student I studied history of architecture, and our textbooks contained information about the Samarkand architectural complex, including the Registan, the Emiri-Gur. Grand monuments were erected by the great architects of our peoples. This is the basis of new relations of Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan as independent nations. We highly evaluate our past as our wealth and achievements. However, the independence the Uzbeks and Azerbaijanis achieved at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century is of great importance. Our people earned this independence after being part of various empires and unions for centuries. Gaining independence was a difficult, troublesome process both in Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. But we have overcome all of them. We have already started our path of independence.

It is now necessary to remember how many obstacles were set for the nations, including Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan, incorporated into the Soviet Union, when they rose for freedom and independence. Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan in 1988 was not only the action of various Armenian nationalists, who were eager to seize the Azerbaijani lands, but also a part of the great policy aimed at preventing the independence movement. Uzbekistan, too, faced such problems.

Today Mr. Karimov recalled the events in Fergana, Osh, Uzen. Those were tragic events. Thank God, you stopped them. They were launched in order to delay the processes, which have already started. I remember the Soviet time. We were

discriminated in the mid-1980s. I mean Azerbaijan, Uzbekistan and other Central Asian republics. The unfair psychological and ideological aggression which was started against the Uzbek people in 1983-1984 can prove my words.

Then, we were very worried about Uzbekistan. Some people tried to discredit Uzbekistan and show as if lawlessness, corruption reigned here, everything negative in the Soviet Union was concentrated in Uzbekistan.

Similar attempts were made against Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan also faced such events, although their scope was not so large as in Uzbekistan. Those sad lessons of history recall under which circumstances we were going to achieve our freedom. Thank God, they are all behind now. Thank God, Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are independent nations now. Thank God, we can meet in equal terms, solve our problems ourselves and establish our relations with other countries independently.

Unlike the Uzbek-Azerbaijani ties in the past, our current relations are based on our independence. Over these years, Uzbekistan has experienced a long way of development. Mr. Karimov spoke about the changes, economic reforms peculiar to Uzbekistan. I would like to express my deep respect to all the work carried out during the years of independence of Uzbekistan. We know, see and feel it. I saw and received a lot of information during my last visit in October and now. But it is not all. We all possess information, statistical data about each other. Sometimes mass media spreads false information about Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan. However, it cannot deny the measures, which were and are implemented in our countries.

Over the years, Uzbekistan strengthened its independence. Major socio-economic transformations have taken place, positive results in the economy and social sphere have been obtained. As one of the major countries in Asia, Uzbekistan has found its worthy position in the world community. At present Uzbekistan the attention of investors. Rich natural resources, huge economic potential, human resources of Azerbaijan attract the attention of many big investors. These factors ensure the current successes and pave the way for the future achievements. We are happy for and proud of your successes. I love Uzbekistan. I have long been tied to Uzbekistan, due to my activities and since my youth. Therefore, everything positive in Uzbekistan gladdens me. President Islam Karimov has a great share in these achievements.

Uzbekistan experienced difficulties. So did Azerbaijan. But being honest, Azerbaijan, unlike Uzbekistan faced more hardships. On the one hand, Armenia's military aggression led to the occupation of 20% of our territories. One million people from the occupied lands have become refugees and are now living in tents in severe conditions. Azerbaijan has suffered from great moral and material damage, many casualties.

On the other hand, the internal political situation was dominated by instability,

various armed gangs belonging to political parties and forces struggled for power. As a result, the government changed three times. Because of the civil war in 1992-1993, Azerbaijan came to the verge of disaster. But we stopped the political turmoil. There is a stable, normal socio-political situation in Azerbaijan today. We were able to overcome all those difficulties.

I mean that Azerbaijan had a very difficult and challenging way. Uzbekistan had its own difficulties as well. In my opinion, the Uzbek people were lucky to be led by Islam Karimov, a politician with great political experience, rich knowledge, strong will, before, during and after Uzbekistan gained independence. He did not allow any uncertainty, hesitations, instability in Uzbekistan. It is very important. You should appreciate it. Therefore, the internal socio-political situation has been stable here since the declaration of independence. This state is much better than that during the Soviet period, which we remember very well. You have this happiness and advantage thanks to the efforts of Mr. Karimov. With his loyalty, remarkable ability, he could unite the Uzbek people during the hard period of transition. He carried out necessary reforms and measures step-by-step in order to turn Uzbekistan into a modern country.

I am very happy for these achievements. I have known Islam Karimov for a long time. I have been observing his activities since he started to lead Uzbekistan. I want to underline his courage as he managed to maintain the honor and dignity of the Uzbek people unlike his predecessors. Islam Karimov put an end to the Soviet measures on discrediting the Uzbek people, sending emissaries to create an impression as if the Uzbeks lacked capable people in Uzbekistan. He could do it with his bold nature, courage and wisdom. It is very valuable. As I worked in Moscow from 1983, I know better than others what kind of unfair measures were carried out against Uzbekistan. Islam Karimov put an end to all these measures. I consider it his historic achievement.

At present, our relations are based on mutual respect and brotherhood, which we felt today. We also felt that Uzbekistan, President Islam Karimov firmly support the international law, according to which, internal affairs of any state shall not be interfered with, territorial integrity of any country be maintained and protected, separatism, fundamentalism, terrorism be avoided. We share unanimous position and solidarity regarding these matters.

As our country faced aggression and violation of territorial integrity, as well as unfair public opinion in international arena, this kind of statements is very valuable and important for us. We are confident that the ceasefire we achieved with Armenia three years ago will lead us to peace. We are against of resumption of hostilities. We want peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, peace in our region and in the world. Yet we cannot give up our lands. We cannot allow a second Armenian state on the territory of Azerbaijan.

I am glad that the more international organizations and countries, including Uzbekistan, support our fair position. I reckon that our meetings and negotiations today will create more favorable conditions for the further development of our relations. We will do our best to develop and strengthen our cooperation in all the spheres, including economy, science, culture, human relations. We are very interested in this cooperation and will develop it.

I would love to express my deep respect to your country, to your people. Today we visited the Alisher Navoi Opera and Ballet Theatre and watched a ballet based on the music by the prominent Azerbaijani composer Arif Malikov. Mr. Islam Karimov recalled Maksud Sheikhzade. A great personality, Maksud Sheikhzade was an Azerbaijani, who found a homeland in Uzbekistan and left a rich legacy. There are a lot of examples of friendship of our cultural and scientific figures; the ballet we watched today can prove my words.

Our relations will grow more. Once again, I express my esteem to this ancient land, the Uzbek people, my dear friends.

I would like to finish my speech with a poem by the Azerbaijani poet Suleyman Rustam dedicated to his Uzbek brother:

I love your dear land, every stone of yours,  
I love, as my baby, as my mother.  
My head that never bows before enemy  
I bow to you as a brother.

These lines reveal exactly the very deep feelings of the Azerbaijanis to the Uzbek people.

To Uzbekistan, to the Uzbek people! To prosperity in Uzbekistan! To President Islam Karimov, prominent son of the Uzbek people! To you, dear friends! Cheers!

## **Official Visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Uzbekistan (June 18-19, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

The relations with Uzbekistan occupy a special place in the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in comparison with other Central Asian countries. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid an official visit to Dashkend at the invitation of the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan for strengthening and improving these relations.

On the 18th of June the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met President of Uzbekistan Islam Kerimov. At the meeting the Azerbaijani President stated that the reciprocal relations in all the fields and reliable partnership are very important both for Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan.

At the meeting of the two presidents discussed the issues, which interested both sides they held discussions on different aspects of joint cooperation.

During the visit on the 18th of June interstate and intergovernmental documents were signed between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. The agreement on strengthening friendship and partnership, and on the development of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan is the most important one. These documents created a strong base for the further succesfull cooperation. The agreement was reached on the formation of an intergovernmental comission for cooperation between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan. The Azerbaijani President stated in the signature ceremony: "We want to have reliable relations of partnership with Uzbekistan and we shall do our best to improve these relations."

The Uzbek President Islam Karimov mentioned that the relations between the two countries would be of a strategical in character. While talking about the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh he mentioned: "in connection with the issues of security of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, libeation of the occupied territories, return of the refugees and guarantee for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the position of Azerbaijan is positive, fair, and even right. Because of its position Azerbaijan is supported by a lot of partners from the internatinal communities. That is why, we are happy that the position of Azerbaijan is recognized. Strong authority and reliability of Azerbaijan on this issue is a natural process. We consider that to have two Armenian states in the Caucausus is a fiction and we apreciated this statement made by Azerbaijan. From this point of view we support the peaceful and political resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict."

On the 19th of June a diploma of honorary doctor of Dashkend University was presented to President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. In the ceremony he stated confidently that the relations between Dashkend and Baku universities, between the scientists of the two countries would strengthen the friendship and brotherhood of the two nations.

On the same day Heydar Aliyev attended the opening ceremony of the embassy of Azerbaijan to Dashkend- it was the first embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Central Asia-, and stated there that this embassy would be an embassy both for Azerbaijani and

Uzbekistan, and would fulfill its functions for strengthening and developing of the relations. The President expressed his hope for opening an Uzbek embassy in Azerbaijan.

In the opening ceremony the President met the representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Uzbekistan, asked questions about their living conditions and emphasized their duty for delivering the realities of Azerbaijan to Uzbek society.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE FEDERATION OF RUSSIA  
(July 2-4, 1997)**

“...Relations between Russia and Azerbaijan are based on friendship, kind neighborhood, history of the people and their mutual fate. Today they are based also on mutual interests and strong base...”

*From the joint statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and the Russian President Vladimir Putin for the press – August 13, 2013*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar  
Aliyev at the joint press conference after the signature of the bilateral  
Azerbaijani-Russian documents**

Moscow, Vladimir Palace of the Kremlin, July 3, 1997

Mr. Boris Nikolayevich,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Boris Nikolayevich, I congratulate you and everyone present here on this momentous event, the signature of the document on friendship, cooperation and mutual security between Russia and Azerbaijan.

Indeed, as you said Boris Nikolayevich, this document is of great historical importance. By signing this document, we, the Republic of Azerbaijan, are well aware of our responsibility for the implementation of this document and its vital importance. You can be sure that we, for our part, shall do everything to ensure that this document is implemented.

I am very pleased that a large part of economic documents is signed today. They provide a good contractual and legal basis for the further development and deepening of our cooperation in all the spheres. In general, the work we have done today is a good basis for the further deepening and development of our friendly relations and expansion of our cooperation. We do not doubt that these relations will develop, deepen and expand.

Moreover, our historic destiny, our life together for decades and centuries, our historic ties and the wealth that the Azerbaijani people acquired from the Russian culture and Russian science by being together with Russia is an invaluable treasure. We appreciate it and this is the basis for our cooperation today and a basis for the successful cooperation in future. We shall steadily follow this path. I want to tell you that the joint efforts in the recent years of 1996 and 1997 have led to positive changes

in the development of our economic relations, expanding and increasing the turnover of goods.

This is the first official visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Russia. Boris Nikolayevich, thank you very much for the invitation, for the friendly atmosphere that you created and which we all feel being here since yesterday.

I am extremely satisfied with the tete-a-tete negotiations and discussions that were held with Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, between the two delegations and I would like to hope that the issues we discussed and agreed on will further develop and deepen our relations.

Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, I once more express my gratitude to you for the invitation, for our current joint work, for the friendly and warm atmosphere that is created here for my official visit.

Thank you.

**Question:** *At the last summit of CIS it was promised that the results of the investigation on the facts of the sale of the Russian weapons to Armenia would be announced in June. What can you say about it and what will be the fate of illegally delivered weapons?*

**Boris Yeltsin:** We have agreed to set up a tripartite commission with the participation of Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. It will identify all the issues associated with weapons and equipment located in Azerbaijan and Armenia.

**Question:** *This meeting is held on the anniversary of your presidency. With what kind of mood do you meet it?*

**Boris Yeltsin:** The mood is ordinary. I work like this since the morning every day. It is true that my family congratulated me. This year has been incredibly grave and serious. I would say that I have been changed, it seems that my years cannot allow me to change, but I feel that change and it is in good direction.

**Question:** *Did you discuss the question of the Caspian oil?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** The issue of the Caspian oil was discussed and we had an exchange of views with Boris Nikolayevich. We have achievements regarding the development of oil fields in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea. The Russian "Lukoil" is involved in three contracts signed with the Oil Company of Azerbaijan with the multinational companies and today in the presence of the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan a fourth contract between "Lukoil" and the Oil Company of Azerbaijan is signed. As for the transportation of oil, we have agreed that according to an agreement signed by me and Viktor Chernomyrdin between Russia and Azerbaijan in January of 1996, the Azerbaijani oil will be transported via the northern route this year. For some reason it was delayed. Now we have found the solution and according to Boris Nikolayevich it will be provided no later than this autumn.

***Question: On what principles do you think that the conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh should be eliminated? What steps will Russia take?***

**Boris Yeltsin:** I decided and declared it to Heydar Aliyev that we shall finally get engaged in this issue as we did it regarding “the NATO-Russia issue”. Minister of Foreign Affairs will start with this problem his every working day. I agreed with Clinton and Chirac that we, the three countries, finally, shall find the will to put the two presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia to the table in order to sign a contract or agreement and end this conflict of the two neighboring countries. It is a huge process, but it will now go on intensively. We shall constantly get engaged in it. While judging ourselves as the mediators we conclude that we did not work properly. This should be assessed objectively.

**Heydar Aliyev:** We discussed this issue with Boris Nikolayevich. All that was said by Boris Nikolayevich is fully consistent with our desire. We want to end the conflict as soon as possible and we do not want the resumption of military actions. For over three years we maintain the cease-fire, but the solution of this question must be decided on the principles of the Lisbon declaration, that is, ensuring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, providing a high degree of self-administration to the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan and guaranteeing security for the people of the Mountainous Garabagh. I think this problem can be solved on these principles.

**Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the official reception held in honor of the Azerbaijani President on behalf of the Russian President Boris Yeltsin**

The Kremlin, Granovit Hall, July 3, 1997

Dear Boris Nikolayevich!

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen!

I am grateful to you, Boris Nikolayevich, for the invitation to pay an official visit to the Russian Federation. It is my first official visit to Russia as the Azerbaijani President and I am glad that it already produces its positive results. I thank all of you for the hospitality, for the warm and friendly atmosphere created for the realization of the visit of the Azerbaijani President, for friendly feelings to us, to the Azerbaijani people which we met since our arrival here.

Today, there were held fruitful dialogues, negotiations between the Presidents of Russia and Azerbaijan, negotiations and talks of delegations, which created an opportunity to sign very important documents. The treaty on friendship, cooperation and mutual security between Russia and Azerbaijan has an exclusively important historical value for Azerbaijan. We see much in this document, including two sovereign states - the Russian Federation and the Azerbaijan Republic establish relations based on international law, friendship, mutually beneficial cooperation, effective cooperation in the interests of both sides. And all other documents, which were signed, assume great significance and make a good normative-legal base for the further development of our relations.

We appreciate all this highly, because as an independent state, Azerbaijan aspires to establish relations with all the countries on mutually beneficial grounds. But our relations with the Russian Federation are of a special nature, special value. Our historical friendship, historical past and everything, remaining from the previous generations, which is characterized as friendship between the peoples of Russia and Azerbaijan, has a special value for us. Now, when these documents are signed, we enter, in our opinion, a new stage of our relations, and I assure you that Azerbaijan will do its best to develop and strengthen the friendly relations between Russia and Azerbaijan in the interests of Russia and Azerbaijan.

I highly appreciate the statement of President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin with gratitude that the process of negotiations on the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) would become more active. We hope that the efforts of Russia, as co-chair of the Minsk

Conference and a country, which has very close, direct relations both to Azerbaijan and Armenia, will lead to concrete practical results.

Today I want to declare once more that we are for the peaceful settlement of this conflict. The cease-fire achieved by us continues over three years. We do not want the renewal of military operations and we shall not allow it on our part. But at the same time, such a situation cannot last forever. Therefore, the efforts of Russia in this question, as the co-chair of the Minsk Conference, are exclusively great, and our people looks at the activity of the Minsk Conference, at the activity of co-chairs - Russia, the United States of America and France - with a special hope and great expectation. And today during the talks with Boris Nikolayevich and in connection with his statement, which he just made, our hopes, expectations have become stronger.

Yes, our peoples have a rich history of friendship and cooperation, and we highly appreciate it. We will never forget all good that Azerbaijan people obtained being a part of the state and being a friend of Russia. Russia, Russian scientists, men of science and culture rendered huge help and support to development of science, culture, education, economy of Azerbaijan. Our people know about it and appreciate it very highly. And I quite agree with Boris Nikolayevich that the friendship is highly appreciated in the Transcaucasia. And we very highly appreciate the friendship, which has been in the past, and the friendship, which we create and will create in future together with you.

Boris Nikolayevich, today is a significant day - anniversary of your reelection of President of the Russian Federation. It has a special value for Russia and for the Commonwealth of Independent States. All of us together were within the Soviet Union in the past. But all of us simultaneously got the independence, became independent states. All of us experience the transition period, the period of realization of political and economic reforms.

Russia has a great experience in the realization of these reforms. And we all know that Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin has an undeniable role in the organization and realization of political and economic reforms in Russia and in all the countries, in the states of the former Soviet Union. And consequently, I consider that reelecting Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin for the second time on July 3 last year, is an important event for Russia, for all the peoples of Russia, and it has a great importance as well as for the Commonwealth of the Independent States.

We consider the CIS as an important tool for the further development and strengthening of relations between our countries and, naturally, development of mutually beneficial economic cooperation in the Commonwealth of Independent States. Boris Nikolayevich, you make great efforts for the improvement of the activity of CIS. And we consider that if the CIS is improved, if the CIS gets more and more elements of really international organizations, it can render great assistance to the countries of

Commonwealth. We want it and we shall do all on our part for the development and consolidation of the Commonwealth of Independent States on the basis of norms and principles of international law. And Boris Nikolayevich, we cherish the great hopes in you in this issue.

It is already many times that all of us unanimously proposed you be the Chairman of the Council of CIS. And from this point of view, your reelection as a President of the Russian Federation is of great significance.

I congratulate you, Boris Nikolayevich, cordially on the anniversary of this event. I congratulate everyone here on this event and I wish, Boris Nikolayevich, you health, well-being and successes in the implementation of the historical mission. Reforms in Russia, reforms in CIS countries, reforms in Azerbaijan are our future. I want also to tell you that we in Azerbaijan attach great importance to the conduction of reforms and we will not stop on this way. And it is a good basis for the further development of our cooperation.

I raise the glass to President of the Russian Federation, dear Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin, to the Russian Federation, to the Russian people, to the further prosperity of Russia, to the Russian-Azerbaijan friendship, to friendship between Russia and Azerbaijan, to Your health.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Russian Federation (July 2-4, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

In 1991-1993 the relations between the two countries were far from normal. However, thanks to the political and diplomatic skills of Heydar Aliyev, who returned to power in the June of 1993, Russia accepted Azerbaijan as an independent country with wide prospects and created pragmatic relations with Azerbaijan.

The most important event in these relations was the official visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Russia at the invitation of the Russian President Boris Yeltsin.

The main event of the visit, the meeting of the Russian and Azerbaijani presidents took place at the Kremlin on July 3. In the meeting which passed in the atmosphere of mutual respect and friendship, they discussed the issues such as the political and economic relations, the status of the Caspian Sea, the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, illegal transfer of weapons from Russia to Armenia.

The meeting was followed by the ceremony of signature of bilateral documents. An agreement on friendship, cooperation and mutual security between the Russian Federation and Azerbaijan, as well as a number of economic agreements, were signed.

The Presidents made statements at a press conference after the signature of the documents. President Heydar Aliyev noted that the signed documents would create a favorable legal basis for the further development of cooperation in all the fields.

On July 3, President Heydar Aliyev met Prime Minister Viktor Chernomyrdin, Foreign Minister Yevgeny Primakov, Chairman of the Russian Federation Council Egor Stroyev, speaker of State Duma Gennady Seleznyov. A number of issues on bilateral cooperation was discussed in the meetings.

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev made a speech at the meeting with the representatives of Russia's financial and business circles. He noted that Azerbaijan was ready to cooperate with the Russian companies in the field of banking, oil industry, oil refining industry, and reminded existence of relevant legislation.

President Heydar Aliyev also met Russian deputy prime minister Boris Nemtsov, later with the members of the Russian Academy of Sciences. The Azerbaijani President spoke about the responsibilities of research institutions in the period of independence and emphasized the importance of the Academy of Sciences.

An official reception on behalf of the Russian President was held in honor of the Azerbaijani President at Granovit Chamber of the Kremlin on July 3. In his speech, President Heydar Aliyev spoke: "Everything inherited from the historical friendship of the Russian and Azerbaijani peoples are important for us. After signing these documents we are now stepping into a new phase of our relations, and I assure you that Azerbaijan will make efforts for developing and strengthening the friendly relations with Russia."

On July 4, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met the Russian attorney-General, gave interview to “Echo of Moscow” radio station, made a statement at a press conference arranged by RIA Novosti News Agency.

Expressing his support to the democratic processes in Russia, Heydar Aliyev said: “We want to have friendly relations with all the countries, including democratic Russia.”

Positive trends are observed in the Azerbaijani-Russian relations after this historical visit. Signed on July 3, 1997, the agreement on friendship, cooperation and mutual security plays a key role in this process.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA (July 27 – August 6, 1997)**

“...While gaining state independence Azerbaijan had several choices. Our country could develop in different directions. But the strategic choice of Heydar Aliyev was to maintain firm relations with the USA, integration to the Euratlantic structures...”

*From the interview of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to NBC TV channel of the US – June 6, 2006*

### **Statement of Heydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, at the Meeting with Outstanding Public Figures, Statesmen, Politologists and Representatives of Media**

USA , Blair House, July 30, 1997

Esteemed friends!

I am very happy to have this meeting with you. Each of you is a famous and influential political and state figure. During the Soviet years your names always appeared in newspapers or on TV. After the collapse of the USSR, the interest in your names and your work has not been lost. The reason for this is that you are the people who participated in the process of disintegration of the Soviet Union. However, there are some groups who want to revive the Soviet Union. That's why they have not forgotten you. I suppose that you have not forgotten them either.

I am very pleased to meet and welcome you from the bottom of my heart. As you know, I arrived in Washington yesterday. My meeting with you is one of my first meetings in Washington.

I am thoroughly familiar with your names. I am aware that you have played an important role in shaping the public opinion about the political and public administration of the United States, formation of the policies of and the government in the past as well as today. I had a wonderful opportunity to meet you personally some of you. However, there are also persons whom I have not met personally well, but know from books and media. Your photos have frequently appeared on TV, newspapers and books.

As you know, this is my first official visit to the United States as President of Azerbaijan. I attach an utmost importance to this visit and cherish great hopes in it.

As an independent state, Azerbaijan needs close cooperation with the United States in order to defend its freedom, build a legal, democratic and secular state. I shall do my best to strengthen the USA-Azerbaijani relations during this visit. I know that each

of you is a person who has been defending the national interests of the United States. Therefore, meeting, discussing different issues with you and getting your advice is of great importance for me.

The USA-Azerbaijani relations are developing successfully. I think that our successes in building our relations are very positive. We are laying the foundation of friendship between our two nations. However, we still have a lot of problems in this sphere. Our economic relations are developing speedily. However, Azerbaijan needs assistance in solving a number of problems so that we can guarantee the US economic interests in Azerbaijan.

The most important issues for Azerbaijan are the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and repeal of Section 907 passed by the US Congress against Azerbaijan.

I believe that you are well aware of the strategic importance of Azerbaijan in the Caucasus. Thus, your assistance in the solution of this problem is very crucial.

We may also touch upon other subjects during our discussions. I am ready to talk to you on this topic.

**Zbigniew Brzesinski:** Mr. President, thank you. The objective of this meeting is to acquaint you with the views of the people who make the foreign policy of the United States.

Our objective today is to convey the thoughts of those people who develop the policy of the USA in your region. In order to organize our meeting fruitfully, I would invite all the participants to express their views on the attitude of the USA to your region. They may ask questions if they wish.

*Question: If my memory serves me right, I met President Aliyev two years ago in Ashgabad. It seemed to me that there were similar sentiments and tendencies in the American foreign policy. I am glad that the US foreign policy has gone through a number of substantial changes. The position of the USA aimed at allowing Russia to dominate in the Caspian region has somewhat weakened. I think that now the Americans begin to realize that the Caspian Sea belongs to all the littoral countries.*

*I believe that both the US administration and people are strong supporters of the independence of the former Soviet republics. In this regard, we are for non-interference of Russia in the domestic affairs of the countries located in this region.*

*In conclusion, I would like to express my hope that you will achieve a breakthrough in your negotiations on the disputed areas. Unfortunately, we have not witnessed any progress in this direction for the last several months. Mr. President, we would like to hear your position on these matters.*

**Answer:** I will respond to this question as it is an excellent question. First, I should note that our position on not permitting Russian to dominate in the Caspian basin

completely coincides with yours. This is the main direction of our policy.

As you know, Russia ruled in the Caspian Sea for centuries. Under the soviets, the Caspian Sea belonged to the Soviet Union entirely. Iran controlled a small part of the Caspian in the south. The Soviet Union and Iran demarcated their borders from Hesenqulu to Astara. Hesenqulu is in Turkmenistan, and Astara belonged to Azerbaijan. This line marked the frontier. During that period the Soviet Union was producing oil in the Caspian Sea, and Azerbaijan was the only producer of this oil.

As you know, Azerbaijan was the first to begin deep-water oil exploration in the Caspian Sea some 50 years ago in 1947. This was a great achievement for our scientists and oilmen. However, in 1970 when Azerbaijan was already producing oil in different parts of the Caspian, the Soviet authorities started to divide the Caspian into various sectors. In 1970, the Soviet authorities issued a special decree in this regard.

I would like you to know that despite the fact that the Azerbaijani oil enterprises and facilities were producing this oil alone, the oil extracted in different sectors was to the account of other republics as the Caspian was divided into sectors. When our country gained its independence, we started to attract foreign oil capital to operate these oil deposits. In September 1994, we signed the first major oil contract named "The Contract of the Century" in the United States. We created a consortium to implement this contract. The American companies are leading that consortium. AMOCO, Pennzoil, Unocal, McDermott, Exxon, Great Britain's British Petroleum, Norwegian Statoil are all part of this consortium. After the signature of this contract, the question of the legal status of the Caspian Sea was raised. We accepted the suggestion to discuss the issue, however the positions on this matter diverged. In order to rule the Caspian against Russia since it is the most powerful of all the Caspian states, we proposed the idea of a "condominium" which means that an area up to 12 miles should be controlled by the respective states, and the rest of the sea should belong to all the countries.

We rely on the principle used since 1970, division of the Caspian Sea into sectors for developing the mineral resources.

Iran immediately accepted the Russian proposal, as did Turkmenistan. Azerbaijan insisted on its own principles, and Kazakhstan later joined the idea of dividing the Caspian into the sectors. Therefore, two out of the five Caspian states supported the sectoral division, and three prefer the "condominium" division. I suppose that there is no need to explain that the Russian proposal is accepted, Russia will gain complete domination over the Caspian. That's why we need your assistance in this question.

We give preference to the principle of division of the Caspian into sectors. The Caspian Sea is an unusual water basin. However, there are similar lakes and water basins in the world. In the case of such similar basins, there is a precedence of dividing the water basin into sectors or designating portions of the basin according to the borders

of the respective countries. This is our position, and it is irreversible.

As far as the dispute you mentioned, Mr. Hague, I know that you are a big friend of Turkmenistan, and a friend of my friend Turkmenbashi. I wish that you could explain some things to our friend Turkmenbashi when you advise him. We signed the contracts in 1994, and Turkmenbashi did not raise any question then. Only 10 to 15 days ago, he suddenly claimed that two oil deposits belonging to Azerbaijan also belong to Turkmenistan. First, his allegation is groundless. Second, if he rejects the idea of sectoral division, then how could he claim anything of this sort based on the division of the sea?

A few days before departing for the United States, I phoned Mr. Turkmenbashi and informed him that if there were any unclear issues, then our delegations could meet and discuss them. There is no need to exaggerate the issue since such an argument would only help the Russian plans of “divide and conquer.” The maps I handed out clearly expound the division principle.”

*Question: Mr. President, following on that issue, I would like to note that the Azerbaijani Republic and Azerbaijan International Operating Company have established very productive relations. The disputable issue with Turkmenistan was also touched on today. You have invited the Russian Lukoil, and I think, Transneft companies to join the projects on these disputed deposits. Could you explain your strategy in drawing the Russian companies to these particular sites?*

*Answer:* You may want to know that the companies from the US, Great Britain, France, Germany, Japan, Belgium, Turkey, Iran, Italy, and Saudi Arabia participate in these contracts. I enumerated ten countries. All these countries are located far from the Caspian Sea. But Russia is a part of the Caspian basin. Under such circumstances, it is quite natural to award a small portion of these deposits to the Russian Lukoil. First, it has a commercial importance. Secondly, in order to carry out heavy work in the Caspian, one needs to utilize the Volga-Don canal. It is impossible to isolate Russia in that regard.

*Question: Mr. President, undoubtedly, all of us who want a strong and independent Azerbaijan, clearly realize the significance of the development of the Azerbaijani oil deposits.*

*One of the factors that would indicate the success of the capital invested in Azerbaijan would be the safe and uninterrupted export of the Azerbaijani oil to the world markets. What can you say about the pipeline plans, and the conflicts they cause? In general, what can you say about the export of the Azerbaijani oil, pipeline routes? In what direction will the main pipeline lie?*

*Answer:* As you know, right after the signature of the contract in 1994, Russia began to exert considerable pressure on us. Unfortunately, both Armenia and Iran joined

Russia. They thought that although we had signed the contracts, they would prevent us from exporting the oil. Russia is convinced that all the oil extracted in the Caspian must be transported through the Russian territory. Recently when your Energy Secretary was in Moscow and meet the first deputy prime minister Nemtsov, we learned that Nemtsov informed your Energy Secretary that you, the Americans, could produce as much oil in the Caspian as you like. However, all of it must be exported through the Russian territory. In other words, even though they failed to block us from the signature the contract, they now want to obstacle the export of our energy resources. The US administration and especially President Clinton are well aware of this situation.

Thus, we have decided to lay two pipelines to transport the oil to the world markets. President Clinton repeatedly asked me to do so. One of the pipelines will cross the Russian territory to the Black Sea port of Novorossiysk, and the other will go through Georgia and reach Supsa port on the Black Sea. These pipelines are for transporting the first bulk of the oil. But we are waiting for the major part of the oil. The question is in what direction can we export not only the Azerbaijani oil, but also the Kazakh oil. We support the pipelines that will lie through Georgia to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey. Russia and Iran want the pipelines to be built through their territories. Some experts deem the Iranian route commercially more viable. Russia has already faced serious difficulties in the transportation of the early oil. The Chechens objected to the transportation of the oil through their territory where the length of the pipeline is 100 km. The Russian leaders appealed to me. The Chechen President Asian Maskhadov arrived in Baku to meet me. Then Nemtsov, the first deputy prime minister of Russia, came to Baku. We signed a tripartite agreement among Russia, Azerbaijan and Chechnya.

We also have an agreement with Kazakhstan. We already transport the oil produced by Chevron in Tengiz oil deposits via the Caspian Sea to Baku, then to the Georgian ports on the Black Sea. We carry out this operation using tankers and the railway. On the other hand, Nazarbayev and I signed a document last June to initiate the construction of a sub-water pipeline from Kazakhstan to Baku. Therefore, all the oil produced in the Caspian basin will be exported to the world markets via Azerbaijan. This route is very lucrative and convenient for the United States and the West.

***Question: In late 1995, President Clinton and Anthony Lake asked me to travel to your region to inform you of the two-pipeline position of the United States. I wonder whether Mr. Lake has anything to say regarding the position of the USA administration in this issue.***

***Anthony Lake:*** It is clear that our strategic approach is close to the position you have just described. I think that even the Russians have clearly realized our stance in this regard. I can personally attest to the fact that, during 1993 to 1995 when I

was part of a negotiating team, our positions were made amply clear to the Russians. Although I am certain that everyone sitting at this table comprehends the benefits of this issue from both strategic and economic viewpoints, it is still not fully realized by Washington. That's why I think that your visit to Washington will also contribute to clarifying this issue.

***Question: If I could, I would like to go back to Mr. Hague's question. It is the question of Nagorno-Karabakh, which is connected with the issue of pipelines. I would like to know if there is a possibility of any compromise in the settlement of the conflict? I would like to ask you to express your opinion concerning this issue.***

**Answer:** Thank you very much. This is an important question for me. As I told you, my main objective in coming to the US is to seek more support of the United States in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. You can see from the maps handed out that 20% of our lands, including Nagorno-Karabakh, have been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. We signed a cease-fire agreement three years ago, and there has been no fighting since then.

Finally, during the last OSCE Summit in Lisbon, three principals were developed for the settlement of the conflict. First, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia must be recognized. Second, Nagorno-Karabakh will be given a high-autonomy status within Azerbaijan. Third, the security of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh will be guaranteed. Although these principles did not completely satisfy us, we still voted in their favor. There, 53 out 54 member-countries of OSCE, including the United States supported these principles. Armenia opposed them.

As you know, the United States, Russia and France are co-chairs in the Minsk Group of OSCE. The presidents of these countries - Bill Clinton, Jacques Chirac and Boris Yeltsin - issued a joint statement on June 20th in Denver calling for a peaceful solution to the conflict. Mr. Strobe Talbott is an American co-chair. Three co-chairs submitted proposals to us lately, and they consisted of two components. In the first stage, the Armenian armed forces have to withdraw from six districts bordering Nagorno-Karabakh, thus returning our refugees to the liberated areas.

I would like to explain something on this map. The territory of Nagorno-Karabakh is in red. Six Azerbaijani districts neighboring Nagorno-Karabakh are colored in green. The Azerbaijani district of Lachin, which was entirely populated by Azerbaijanis and now under the Armenian occupation is in yellow. You can also see the town of Shusha inside Nagorno-Karabakh, but with the Azerbaijanis in majority. This town is the cultural center for Azerbaijan. All these lands constitute 20% of the Azerbaijani territory and are occupied by the Armenian armed forces. One million Azeri citizens have been ousted from these lands and now live in tent camps throughout Azerbaijan. Mr. Brzezinski has seen those tents. Based on the latest proposals of the Minsk Group,

we demand the implementation of the first phase of the plan, which is liberating the territories colored in green and returning the entire population. At the second stage while we discuss the status of Nagorno-Karabakh, we demand the liberation of the Azerbaijani lands, which are in yellow on the map. You know that one million refugees have been living in tents for five years now. One million people out of seven are refugees.

I would also like to inform you that Russia promised to settle the issue if they were allowed to deploy their troops in our country. However, we have not permitted the Russian bases to be stationed in Azerbaijan. There are no Russian troops or military bases in the Azerbaijani territory.

Armenia houses large Russian armies and a military base. Russia and Armenia also have a military pact. Russia is guarding the Armenian borders with Turkey and Iran. Georgia is also in the same situation. However, we are the only state in the Caucasus which has no Russian soldier on its soil.

Under such difficult conditions, the Russians repeatedly suggested to allow them to deploy their forces in Azerbaijan and then they will liberate our lands. But we refused this offer. That's why it is critical that an OSCE multi-national peacekeeping force be formed and dispatched to the region in order to secure the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied lands.

*Question: Mr. President, I would like to ask a question regarding your personal ideology. You have had a stunning political career. You were a member of the Politburo of the Communist Party, and today you are the leader of your country. How did this change in your personal philosophy happen?*

*Answer:* It may seem strange to you, however, on the other hand it is quite natural. My activities at that time are one phase of my life. The period beginning in the late 1980s, after I resigned from the Politburo in 1987, became the second stage of my life. I have a book I will give to you, and you will see how a Communist became an anti-Communist. Let me be brief.

Because of a number of differences in opinions, I resigned from the Politburo in 1987. In 1988, Armenia launched an aggressive attack against Azerbaijan, and the war broke out. I protested. But the leaders of the Communist Party - Gorbachev and others - did nothing to stop the bloodshed.

In 1990 by the order of the Communist party, large detachments of the Soviet Army invaded Baku and massacred the Azerbaijani people. They attempted to suppress the national liberation movement. I resided in Moscow at that time. During the meetings and demonstrations in Moscow, I protested against the actions of the Soviet Union and left the ranks of the Communist party. They began persecuting me for that action. Instead, I waged a struggle aimed at the destruction of the Soviet Union. They wanted

to arrest me in Moscow, so I returned to Azerbaijan. The Communist regime was still in power in Azerbaijan. I was not allowed to stay in Baku, and I had to leave for my native Nakhichevan, which was under the Armenian blockade. I lived three years there under hard exile conditions. I made the first steps toward a democratic future for Azerbaijan while I was in Nakhichevan. Since I was respected in Azerbaijan, my speeches on the necessity of the collapse of the Soviet Union and Communist Party sounded convincing to people. Since then I have desired a free, independent and democratic Azerbaijan.

In 1993 when there was a threat of a civil war, the people demanded my return to Baku, which I did. I have been involved in the process of building a democratic, legal and secular society in Azerbaijan since then. The work which I carried out during this period proves my point.

It is an intractable task to preserve full independence with 20% of our lands under the Armenian occupation. One million citizens are refugees who live in tents. We are good friends with our Georgian and Turkish neighbors. But we have very strong enemies too. Under such conditions, I strive to keep our independence and build democracy. We have political pluralism in our country. People can express their opinions as they wish. We have freedom of expression, with more than 30 political parties. Eight parties are represented in the Parliament.

*Question: Mr. President, with your permission, let's look into future. I think that after NATO's decision to expand towards the East, the Russian plans will include the formulation of policies towards the former Soviet lands. That means Russia will either attempt to make those countries economically interdependent or undermine political independence. Mr. President, if you were the national security advisor to the future president of the United States, what would be your advice to the president on how to deal with Russia regarding the former Soviet countries?*

*Answer:* I would have provided him with good advice. I ask you to appoint me to that post. (Laughs). I will help since I know Russia very well. The situation of Azerbaijan is especially difficult. Russia considers Armenia its greatest ally in the region. How many Russian troops can be stationed on a small territory of only 29,000 square kilometers? It has recently been discovered that the Russian Defense Ministry has been illegally and secretly supplying Armenia with modern weaponry for the last three years. We directed our questions to Boris Yeltsin. We have the list of missiles and tanks that were transferred to Armenia. There were even missiles with nuclear warheads. These weapons can destroy not only Azerbaijan, but also everything around it. We have handed out another map to you. This map indicates the radius that the Russian missiles deployed in Armenia can reach. Therefore, if I were the National

Security Advisor to the U.S. President, I would have advised him to pay more serious attention to the situation. We are a part of CIS, however, we have our own independent position. Because of this independent stance, we are not much liked in CIS.

***Question: When you raised this question before Mr. Yeltsin, what was his reaction? Since Russia is a co-chair in the resolution of Karabakh problem, what is your attitude to these actions?***

**Answer:** This is really paradoxical. What can I do now? We are a small nation with 20% of its lands under occupation. When I was in Moscow last March at the summit of CIS countries, I asked, "Why does Russia keep a military base in Armenia? Who needs this, and who is it aimed against? Is it possible that two member-states of CIS had such a special military agreement between them?" I told Yeltsin that all the weaponry transferred from Russia to Armenia must be returned, and the guilty party must be punished. He ordered an investigation into the matter, and the investigation is in process. But we know everything since we have all the documents. Parts of these documents were published in the press. During my meeting with Yeltsin last June, he promised me again that he would take appropriate measures. I am waiting. Now Yeltsin is on vacation. We shall see what will happen after he returns.

You are asking me questions, and I would like to ask you a question as well. Under such circumstances, U.S. Congress passed an unjust law against Azerbaijan in 1992. President Clinton stated in his conversation with me that he was against Section 907. Secretary of State Albright also spoke in favor of repealing this law. In the past, Mr. Bush was opposed to it as well. A few days ago, Congressman King submitted a draft to the Congress urging the repeal of this law.

This is too paradoxical. Armenia has occupied our lands and forced our people out of their homes. Nevertheless, we are accused of blockading Armenia and thus are deprived of the US assistance. America provides \$100 million, \$250-300 million a year to Armenia, but we get nothing. The American companies signed long-term, 30, 40, 50-year contracts with Azerbaijan, and the United States will greatly benefit from these relations. In these conditions the United States discriminates against Azerbaijan. I will speak on it today at the Congress. I have repeatedly talked to Dr. Brzezinski about these issues. I urge you to eliminate this injustice.

The greatest advantage of the United States is its just approach to the issues. However, such an unfair action of the U.S. Congress doesn't coincide with the positive image of America. When we bring up these matters, we are frequently told that the decision was made under the pressure of the Armenian Diaspora and lobby. Sometimes I wonder if the Armenian lobby is stronger than the government of the United States. I do not want to think so. I am told that there are one million Armenians residing in America. The population of the U.S. is about 300 million. If only one million Armenians could

do such tricks to you, then it won't take long before another Armenian state is created in America. You should prevent this threat.

You may remember that when I met you in Baku, I stated that we wanted real peace. Azerbaijan and Armenia will remain to be neighbors just like they have been for many centuries in the past. That's why there should be no animosity, conflict or hostilities. We genuinely want peace with Armenia, so that our previous good relationships are restored. When I say about the autonomy for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan, I would like to assure you that I really mean broad autonomy for that region. I know that there is only one way - peace, and we are pursuing this avenue.

Thank you. I am very pleased meeting you. I invite all of you to Azerbaijan. I would ask you to visit Azerbaijan. Dr. Brzezinski has been in Azerbaijan and can tell you about it. Mr. Scowcroft has also visited our country. But I am inviting each of you to Azerbaijan again. I sincerely wish that you establish friendly relations with Azerbaijan and me personally. Thank you very much.

**From the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev made at the negotiations between the high level delegations of the USA and the Republic of Azerbaijan.**

Washington, White House, August 1, 1997

Mr. President Bill Clinton!

Honorable members of the delegation of the USA!

First of all, I express my gratitude to Mr. Bill Clinton for the official invitation to visit the USA and hospitality, for attention to a steady development of the American-Azerbaijan cooperation and want to mention that I am fully satisfied with the present state of relations between our countries.

I bring to your attention that there are wide opportunities for much greater development of Azerbaijani-American cooperation and our republic is always interested in closer contacts with the USA. Much work in the field of further improvement of the relations between our countries has been done step by step.

In this sense, the participation of the biggest oil companies of the USA in the contracts signed for joint exploitation of oilfields of the Caspian Sea should be evaluated very positively. In September 1994, we signed the first contract called the Contract of the Century and five big US companies are partners in this contract. Nowadays, this contract is being practically implemented.

I have widely discussed the issues on the determination of the routes of oil pipelines, transporting oil abroad, to the West at personal meetings and in telephone talks with Mr. Bill Clinton, and I declare that definite work has already been fulfilled in this sphere. Two oil pipelines are being built to export oil to the West, to the world markets. The construction of the third big oil pipeline will start soon.

At the same time, we have never forgotten the fact that Azerbaijan, occupying a very favorable strategic position, plays an important role in even greater rapprochement of the links between the countries of the Central Asia and the world market and considerable work has been carried out in our republic toward this end. The oil extracted in the Kazakh "Tengiz" oilfield is delivered to Baku by the Caspian Sea and is transported from there to the world market. For this purpose, an oil pipeline will be laid across the bottom of the Caspian Sea to Baku.

You know that today new contracts between the US companies "Chevron", "Exxon", "Mobil" and "AMOCO" and the Azerbaijan State Oil Company are to be signed. There is no doubt that these contracts will give a new impulse to strengthening the American-Azerbaijan economic cooperation and play an important role in improving

the relations between our countries.

I state that personal friendly relations with Mr. Bill Clinton create a strong basis for the continuous development of the American-Azerbaijan contacts. Stressing with satisfaction the personal initiatives of President Bill Clinton in the field of further development of relations between our countries, I want to note that we highly appreciate this. Mr. President, you do much in this line and we constantly feel your help and support.

As we all know, much work in the field of peaceful settlement of the Armenian–Azerbaijani conflict is carried out within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE. Three basic principles on the peaceful settlement of the conflict adopted at the Lisbon Summit of the OSCE have vital importance. We mention with satisfaction the support of the US government in the adoption of these principles.

We appreciate the efforts of the USA as a co-chair of the Minsk Group of OSCE in the immediate solution of the Armenian–Azerbaijan conflict. At the same time, we would like to stress special importance of the joint statement signed in Denver by the presidents of three authoritative states – Bill Clinton, Boris Yeltsin and Jacques Chirac. Azerbaijan has taken as a basis the proposals advanced by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of OSCE connected with the solution of this conflict. We are waiting for Armenia to express its attitude to these proposals. Azerbaijan cherishes great hopes upon the immediate solution of this conflict and believes that over a million of our citizens expelled from the native territories will soon return home. We are sure that the co-chairs of the Minsk Group will render necessary assistance for the immediate settlement of the conflict based on the principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit and strive for the solution of this conflict until the end of this year.

We think it is necessary to mention again that section 907 to the “Freedom Support Act” adopted by the US Congress in 1992, is an unjust and creates definite obstacles to the development of the Azerbaijani-American relations. Therefore, the immediate repeal of this section is necessary. I have had meetings and talks with the congressmen over this issue in Washington. I want to express the confidence that necessary measures will be taken to repeal this section.

Azerbaijan has also joined the Flank agreement on the limitation of conventional armaments in Europe. Along with this, much work in the field of protection and preservation of independence, sovereignty and security of our country is being done within the established boundaries. I declare again that the independence of Azerbaijan is eternal, unalterable and irreversible. There are no troops and military bases of foreign countries in Azerbaijan and will not be henceforth.

Along with it, I want to emphasize that Russia’s illegal delivery of modern arms to Armenia worth of one billion dollars causes much concern from the point of view of

regional security.

Azerbaijan regards the USA as a close friend and a partner. I think that it important to mention that the socio-political situation in our country is stable, reforms in economy on the market principles are being carried out and important measures in the field of development of democracy and protection of human rights are realized. Henceforth, we shall follow this road. The economy of Azerbaijan is open for the entire world, including the US investments.

I think that it necessary and I am glad to mention that the achievements of the United States and personally of President Bill Clinton in foreign and internal policy, including achievements in the social field are met with satisfaction in Azerbaijan.

In conclusion, make use of the opportunity here, I invite President of the USA Mr. Bill Clinton and vice-president Albert Gore to pay official visits to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Statement of Heydar Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, at the Ceremony of the Signature of the Joint Statement on the US-Azerbaijani Relations and the Treaty between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the United States of America on the Encouragement and Reciprocal Protection of Investments**

August 1, 1997

Mr. President Bill Clinton!

Ladies and Gentlemen!

First of all, I would like to extend my gratitude to you for inviting the Azerbaijani President to the United States. You have created hospitable and favorable conditions for this official visit, for conducting very productive and important talks and signing bilateral documents today.

Mr. President, I want to declare that this visit is a historic event for the Azerbaijani Republic and Azerbaijani people. We highly appreciate this opportunity and consider it a very important stage in the development of the U.S.-Azerbaijani relations.

I am very satisfied that together the President of the United States I signed significant documents on the U.S.-Azerbaijani relations. Be sure that we shall implement all these treaties into life. Mr. President, the thoughts you have just expressed on our relations, Azerbaijan and the region in general, bear utmost importance for the U.S. I completely agree with them and support your ideas. I think that your position on these issues will further promote the U.S. Azerbaijani relations.

The signed documents, especially the joint U.S.-Azerbaijani statement and your words about Azerbaijan, inspired us. You help create vast opportunities to strengthen the independence of Azerbaijan and make progress in our development.

Azerbaijan considers its independence the greatest historic achievement, and preservation of our independence has become an issue of honor for us. Our people are dedicated to defending the statehood and national freedom, and will do so in future. That's why establishing close cooperation with the U.S. and expansion of the bilateral relations are crucial for our country. We consider the United States our greatest friend and it is an honor for us to develop our relations with the USA.

Mr. President, your ideas are important for establishing peace in our region. I thank you for it. We want peace and strive to resolve the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict on the Mountainous Garabagh (Nagorno Garabagh) peacefully. We shall make every effort in order to settle this conflict, adhere to the principles set forth by the Lisbon

Summit of OSCE. It is important that the United States is one of the members of the Minsk Group of OSCE. We welcome this and cherish great hopes in the activities of the United States in this organization.

We received the latest proposals of the Minsk Group as a basis to continue the negotiations. If these proposals are implemented, that is, if in the first stage of this plan, the Armenian armed forces are withdrawn from the six occupied Azerbaijani districts and the refugees return home, then it will be a crucial step in the peace process. As a result of this action, it would be possible to restore the communications between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

We support the continuation of intensive talks in the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE. Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the representatives of the Armenian community of the Mountainous Garabagh participate in these negotiations. We are ready to continue the talks in this framework.

Mr. President, I want to assure you that we aspire to establish lasting peace. We have managed to maintain cease-fire in the front for the third year. However, a lasting peace would create new and productive conditions for Azerbaijan, Armenia, and the entire Caucasus region. We realize that Azerbaijan can cooperate with its neighbors on an equal and mutually beneficial basis only when peace is established. The peoples of the Caucasus can prosper and develop only in conditions of lasting peace. Mr. President, I hope that the United States and you, personally, will further assist to the establishment of peace in the Caucasus - a just peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia - and the restoration of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The cooperation between the USA and Azerbaijan in the exploration and development of the energy resources in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea has been very productive. We shall continue to develop this cooperation. Four documents signed today in this hall are strong evidences of our intentions. The construction of several pipelines, including those from the Central Asia across the Caspian Sea for the delivery of the energy resources to the world markets and to the West, is a priority at the moment. We shall always cooperate with you in this direction as well.

Mr. President, I would like to express the hope that, Section 907 which is an obstacle in the development of the U.S.-Azerbaijani economic relations, will soon be repealed.

The United States is a great and powerful country with a very strong economy. It has made tremendous development in democratic values, state-building and in protection of human rights. All this accomplishments are a vivid model for the newly independent Azerbaijan, and we shall do our utmost to learn from your experience.

Today in the Roosevelt Room of the White House we remember Franklin Roosevelt with gratitude and recall his great deeds. Mr. Bill Clinton, today as the USA President, you do a lot for the prosperity and progress of the United States. As a result of your

leadership and initiative, the USA foreign policy has made substantial achievements. You have also succeeded in improving many social problems at home. Your initiatives to create ten million new jobs, eliminate the budget deficit and other proposals were welcome in America as well as in other parts of the world.

The great historic accomplishments and current progress of America are a marvelous example for many peoples, especially for the Azerbaijanis. Mr. President, I congratulate you on these achievements and wish the American people happiness. I thank you for the productive meetings, this visit, and important documents that we signed jointly.

Mr. Bill Clinton, I wish you and your family happiness and good luck in all your endeavors.

Thank you!

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United States of America (July 27 - August 6, 1997)**

### **Historical reference**

Establishment and development of relations with the United States is among the priority directions of the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan. It was noted by Heydar Aliyev like this: "The relations of Azerbaijan with the United States are important as we need to learn the Western democracy, culture, achievements, to benefit from them, to use and apply them in Azerbaijan. In this regard, the United States is a special country for us. In my opinion, studying and bringing to Azerbaijan the Western technologies, American economic experience, principles, achievements is beneficial for the future of Azerbaijan. In addition, cooperating with the United States, promoting this cooperation in all the spheres are necessary for Azerbaijan in terms of rising to a high position in the international arena and solving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is our biggest problem."

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United States on July 27 - August 6, 1997, at the invitation of U.S. President Bill Clinton is considered the peak of the U.S.-Azerbaijani relations. The visit created great opportunities for discussing bilateral relations, regional situation, international relations of mutual interest, prospects of cooperation in the field of energy.

High-level meetings and numerous negotiations at White House, State Department and other institutions reaffirmed the increased interests of the American state structures and businesspeople in Azerbaijan.

The most important was the meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev within his official visit to the United States with the U.S. President Bill Clinton on August 1, 1997. Signature of official documents as a result of the meeting the relations between the two countries rose to a new level of partnership, thus, becoming engraved as a historic event in the history of Azerbaijan.

During the tete-a-tete meeting President Bill Clinton praised Heydar Aliyev's activities and policy, the stability achieved in the country and prosperity in Azerbaijan despite the hardships.

The ceremony of the signature of the Joint Statement and an agreement on mutual promotion and mutual protection of investments between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the United States took place in the Roosevelt Room of the White House on August 1.

The joint statement signed by two presidents says: "...President Clinton and President Aliyev agreed on the importance of expanding the partnership the relations through strengthening relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United States in the fields of politics, security, economy and trade. Emphasizing that the close relations between the two countries are essential for ensuring peace, stability and prosperity in the region, President Clinton said that the United States supports independence, territorial integrity and democratic

development of Azerbaijan...”.

Signed during the visit, the joint statement on future relations between the United States and Azerbaijan in defense and military fields, the statement on intentions of establishment of bilateral dialogue between the two countries on the development of energy, the general agreement between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the National Bank and the U.S. Export-Import Bank regarding the promotion of projects, four Development and Production sharing Agreements signed between SOCAR and U.S. oil companies on the development of the oil deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea reflect the development directions of mutual relations, which fully meet the interests of both sides. Signature of the oil contracts in the White House for the first time displayed the importance attached to Heydar Aliyev’s visit to the United States.

It was noted that the Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act adopted in the October of 1992 restricts the cooperation between the two countries and its repeal was strongly supported by the U.S. President.

During his visit to the United States Heydar Aliyev had totally 88 meetings with the U.S. President, ministers, representatives of business circles, diaspora members and media in Washington, New York, Houston and Chicago.

President Heydar Aliyev’s visit to the United States was unanimously called victorious by mass media and prominent politicians. New York Times wrote on August 18, 1997: “... President Clinton demonstrated an attitude to Aliyev as a hero.”

Because of its significance, for the number and importance of meetings, for the important documents signed, this visit is considered historic. The prominent American politician Zbigniew Brzezinski appreciated Heydar Aliyev’s visit to the United States as a historic event which displayed the start of a new phase in the U.S. regional policy regarding the Caucasus.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF POLAND**  
**(August 26-28, 1997)**

“..I cherish hope and optimism for the future of the Polish-Azerbaijani relations. Poland is a friend and partner for us...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the official reception held on behalf of the Azerbaijani President in honor of the President of Poland Lech Kacinski – July 2, 2009*

**From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the tete-a-tete meeting with the President of Poland**

**Aleksander Kwasniewski**

Warsaw, Presidential Palace, August 26, 1997

Mr. Kwasniewski,

First of all, thank you for inviting me to pay an official visit to Poland and for the warm welcome. As the head of the independent Azerbaijan I appreciate my first official visit to Poland historical event.

I declare that Azerbaijan gained independence, our independence is eternal and irreversible. But after independence, we faced problems. One of them is the military aggression of Armenia against our country with the purpose of occupation of Nagorniy-Karabakh. As a result of this aggression, 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces, over one million people have been forcibly expelled from their lands and many of them live in grave conditions, in tents. Despite all this, we try to resolve this conflict peacefully, and in May of 1994 we achieved a ceasefire agreement. Let me remind you that the unconstructive position of Armenia prevents the resolution of the conflict. Armenia does not accept the principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit and the proposals of the current co-chairs of the Minsk Group of OSCE. The Azerbaijani side has accepted the latest proposals of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group as a basis in order to intensify the negotiating process and we support the resolution of the conflict in accordance with the Lisbon Principles. I especially emphasize that Azerbaijan does not claim to territory of any country, but also does not intend to cede an inch of our land to anyone.

Speaking about the internal situation in Azerbaijan we can say that lack of stability in the country for the first time did not allow to get engaged in building the infrastructure. Now the situation has changed. In Azerbaijan there is a political stability. We are building a democratic and constitutional secular state. The first democratic constitution

of the country was adopted, and a democratic parliament was elected on the basis of a multi-party system. I also want to remind the fact that Azerbaijan defends its borders on its territory itself and there are no foreign bases. We want to decide our own destiny.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the integration into the European structures and participates in the “Partnership for Peace” program of NATO. Mr. President, I thank you and the Polish government for supporting the fair position of Azerbaijan in the Lisbon Summit of OSCE. I note that in peaceful resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, we cherish great hopes in Poland as the future co-chair of OSCE.

Mr. President, informing you on the changes in our country, on the implementation of economic reforms and privatization program, I would like to note that Azerbaijan follows the path of the market economy. I emphasize that Azerbaijan wants to develop relations with all countries of the world, has signed contracts with foreign companies on joint oil development in the deposits in our country, determined the route of export pipelines and made active efforts to reach agreements on the Eurasian transport corridor which is already functioning.

I would like to note that Poland, which is located on a favorable spot in Europe, may also use this corridor. I declare that Azerbaijan considers the cooperation with Poland, which is one of the biggest countries in Europe, as an important part of its foreign policy.

At the end of our meeting, I invite you to pay an official visit to our country.

## **Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception on behalf of the President of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski in honor of the President of Azerbaijan**

Warsaw, August 26, 1997

Mr. President,

Ladies and gentlemen,

I convey the best wishes and warm greetings of the people of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Azerbaijan to you and in your person to all the Polish people.

Mr. President, I cordially thank you for inviting me to visit Poland on an official visit and express my sincerest gratitude for the hospitality, warm and friendly welcome that was shown to us from the very first minutes of my visit in Poland, Warsaw.

I totally agree with you, Mr. President, that our meeting today is the first visit of the President of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan to Poland and the event is indeed historic.

In your speech, you gave very sound facts, vividly describing the historical relations between the Polish and Azerbaijani peoples. We can be proud that our peoples, despite the great distance from each other, have always maintained the close relations and never suspended them.

Besides the words said by distinguished President Kwasniewski, there can be added a few more facts. Indeed, in the Middle Ages Poland and Azerbaijan maintained active economic and trade relations. There were delivered wonderful carpets, cotton, silk and many other important products from Azerbaijan to Poland. There were established not only trade and economic relations, but also human relations. For example, it is well known that in the fifteenth century the ruler of Azerbaijan Uzun Hasan maintained close relations with the Polish King Jagiello.

At the beginning of this century, one of the politicians and enlighteners of Azerbaijan Topchubashov translated poems of Adam Mickiewicz into Azerbaijani and the founder of the Azerbaijani professional music Uzeyir Hajibeyov, the author of the anthem of Azerbaijan, which you heard today published them in his newspaper in 1918.

In the middle of the nineteenth century the Azerbaijani writers, thinkers and philosophers, Abbasqulu agha Bakikhanov and Gutgashinly lived and worked in Poland and cooperated with their Polish colleagues. In the middle of the last century the Azerbaijani heroic epos "Koroglu" was translated and published by Hodzko, a Pole by nationality in English and French.

The end of the nineteenth and the beginning of the twentieth century are characterized

by a rapid development of relations between Azerbaijan and Poland. They were not only of economic, commercial and cultural, but also of political nature. In the Tsarist Duma the Pole Ledinsky and the Azerbaijani Topchubashov created a special fraction, which fought for the autonomy of Poland and Azerbaijan.

It is known in history that the movement, in fact, pursued the goal of achieving freedom, independence and autonomy for the Poles and Azerbaijanis in the Tsarist Russia. Pilsudski and one of the founders of the first democratic government of Azerbaijan in 1918 Mammadamin Rasul-zade actively collaborated in this field. As I said, Mammadamin Rasul-zade, one of the founders of the first independent government in Azerbaijan, later emigrated and for a long time lived in Poland in the 30s. President Kwasniewski talked about the emigrants from Azerbaijan. One of the major emigrants was Mamedamin Rasul-zade, who lived and worked here in Poland. By the way, his wife named Wanda was a relative of Pilsudski.

Azerbaijan remembers engineer Pototski with a great sense of gratitude, who was the first person to develop the project of production of oil from the Caspian Sea. In Azerbaijan we also remember Ploshko, a civil engineer who is the author of some very big architectural structures in the center of Baku.

The Poles in Azerbaijan also took an active part in the activities of the first Azerbaijani democratic government formed in 1918. For example, the Kuczynski brothers worked in the government of Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan. General Sulkevich was the first Chief of Staff of the national army of the first democratic government of Azerbaijan in 1918. After the First World War, when the Poles were deported from Poland, tens of thousands of them arrived in Azerbaijan. They lived and continue to live in Baku and other regions of Azerbaijan. Now only in Baku there are more than two thousand of Poles.

There existed very close economic, scientific, cultural and literary relations between Poland and Azerbaijan in the post-war years, I mean, after the Second World War. Many works of the Polish writers and poets were translated by the Azerbaijani writers and poets, they were published in Azerbaijani and read by the Azerbaijani readers with pleasure. The same was in Poland.

All this was remained in history. But despite all the rich history of our relations, there never took place such events as it is today. Now Azerbaijan is an independent and sovereign country. Azerbaijan lost its independence in 1920 which was found in 1918. It regained this independence at the end of 1991 after the collapse of the Soviet Union. This independence is forever and eternal.

We are grateful to Poland that it immediately responded to our call and recognized the independence of Azerbaijan in the very first few months after our independence.

Over the past years, our relations have developed. However, today, a new stage is

opening in the relations of Poland and Azerbaijan and we greatly appreciate it. I want to say once more that in the long history of our relations it is the first time that we establish bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Poland, which found their perfect expression in the documents signed today by the Presidents of Poland and Azerbaijan and other officials of Poland and Azerbaijan.

We believe that we have created a good legal basis for the development of our relations and sign contracts. We hope that this will give a new impetus to expand and deepen our cooperation. We have no doubt that within a short time the Polish Embassy will begin to function in Azerbaijan, Baku.

Poland is one of the biggest countries of Europe, it occupies an important strategic position and has a huge potential. We are well aware of the history of the Polish people and their fight for freedom, independence and statehood.

With a sense of great respect for the heroic deeds of the Polish people, I visited today the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier, who fell for the freedom and independence of Poland. It is well known what a huge loss and victims the Polish people suffered during the World War II. This beautiful ancient town Warsaw was destroyed with its great historical and architectural monuments. With a sense of great joy today we walked around the beautiful Warsaw rebuilt with the cost of work and ability of the Polish people. As your friends we are glad that great changes have taken place in the political, social and economic life of the Republic of Poland in the recent years.

As an independent and sovereign country, Poland took its worthy place in the world community and Europe. We share your successes and appreciate your actions in strengthening the security in Europe and the sovereignty and independence of Poland. I once more congratulate you on the admission of Poland to NATO. This is a great historical event for the Polish people. Besides, this is an extremely important factor in strengthening the security in Europe. Dear friends, I wish you success on this right road.

Our countries have the ability to create very favorable conditions for the economic, cultural, scientific and technical cooperation. On our part we shall do everything for that. I think that the interest of Poland in the Caucasus, in the Caspian basin and in our region should further increase. I believe that the use of the energy resources of the Caspian basin by Azerbaijan evokes great interest in Poland.

I think that the Eurasian Transport Corridor is also of great interest for Poland. By this corridor that actively operates, goods are transported from the Central Asia through the Caspian Sea and Azerbaijan to Europe and back. We are ready to present specific proposals to enhance cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland in this area.

Azerbaijan highly appreciates its national independence, sovereignty and freedom. We stand strongly on this position and never, under any circumstances, allow our

sovereignty be violated. However, the complicated processes in the Caucasus caused tremendous damage to Azerbaijan. The military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan which began in 1988 with the purpose of annexation of the Mountainous Garabagh region of Azerbaijan led to war and bloodshed. For various reasons, Azerbaijan has lost 20 percent of its territory. More precisely, 20 percent of Azerbaijan has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Over one million Azerbaijanis have been expelled from these lands by force. For over four years they live in difficult conditions and the majority of them live in tents.

We have suffered great loss and our country suffered tremendous emotional distress. But, despite this, we felt the need to achieve a cease-fire. Over three years ago, in the May of 1994, Azerbaijan and Armenia signed a ceasefire agreement. Now there is no war, but there is no peace as well. We strive for a complete peace in our region, between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but on condition of complete withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the territory of Azerbaijan and restoration of its territorial integrity on the basis of the three principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit. I take this opportunity to thank President Alexander Kwasniewski once more for supporting our republic at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE. The basic principles for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh were adopted in that Summit.

We believe that we shall achieve a peaceful settlement on this conflict. Guarantors of this are the forces of the international community, the OSCE and its Minsk Group, specifically organized to resolve the conflict and the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of OSCE, the U.S., Russia and France. We, on our part, shall do everything to maintain the cease-fire, to achieve complete peace and rely on the help and support of all members of the international community, OSCE, including Poland.

Dear friends, Azerbaijan firmly follows the path of building a democratic and secular state. We have successfully implemented economic reforms and achieved positive results. There is no old regime, the old system and the communist ideology in Azerbaijan and they will never be there. Our path is the path of a free, independent development and democracy and the path followed by all the developed countries of the world. All this is a good basis for the further consolidation and development of relations between Poland and Azerbaijan.

I wish happiness, prosperity and peace, freedom and eternal independence to the Polish people. I propose a toast to the President of Poland, my friend, a wonderful person Alexander Kwasniewski, to the Republic of Poland and the Polish people. I raise a glass to the Polish-Azerbaijani friendship and our peoples!

## **Statements and joint press conference of the Presidents of Poland and Azerbaijan after the ceremony of the signature of the documents in different fields of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland**

Warsaw, Presidential Palace, August 26, 1997

Aleksander Kwaśniewski: I welcome all of you. It is a historical visit, because we have never hosted the President of Azerbaijan in Poland.

I welcome Mr. Heydar Aliyev. We just signed several documents. They must create an effective ground for cooperation between Poland and Azerbaijan in political, economical, legal, cultural, scientific spheres and in tourism.

Poland is interested in the development of cooperation with Azerbaijan. Mr. Aliyev and I met in various international forums from Paris up to Madrid. I suppose that it is the right time to establish bilateral relations between our countries to use the opportunities both of Poland and Azerbaijan. I mean regional and international opportunities both.

I want to thank Mr. Aliyev for his obvious and cordial support to the membership of Poland in NATO in the high-level Madrid meeting. I said it during our personal meeting. The support of Azerbaijan, a member of CIS, is of great importance for us. I would like to thank you on behalf of Poland and the Poles for your obvious support to the sovereign decision of Poland and the decision of NATO concerning our membership in it.

Mr. President, I want to convince you that while presiding in OSCE next year, Poland will make its efforts to reach the fair solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. We think that Poland can play an important role in this issue as a chair. In our opinion, it is an achievement to avoid war. However, there is a conflict over the Nagorno-Karabakh; we'll try to ensure a peace there. Poland is ready for cooperation with Azerbaijan in this issue, too.

Mr. President, I want to express my satisfaction. I welcome you, the ministers and members of the whole delegation of Azerbaijan who have come to Poland. I hope that the three-day visit will be an important point in the relations between Poland and Azerbaijan. Thank you.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. President!

Ladies and gentlemen!

The relations between Azerbaijan and Poland have a rich history. They date back to the Middle Ages. There are a lot of facts proving the historicity of the relations between our nations. However, not any leader of Azerbaijan has ever visited Poland. Thus, this visit is of great significance for the development of our relations. It is an

important page in the history of relations of Poland and Azerbaijan.

Therefore, having accepted the invitation of Mr. Kwasniewski with pleasure, I visited Warsaw, Poland.

The history of Poland is known in Azerbaijan. Throughout their history, the Poles struggled for national independence and statehood. We all are glad that Poland is an independent and developing country now. Therefore, we support the steps made by Poland to strengthen the security in Europe. We supported the admission of Poland to NATO; we thought that it would help strengthen security in Europe, it fits the will of the Polish nation. The will of the nation is above all.

Now it is the stage of establishment of intensive relations between Poland and Azerbaijan. The documents signed today, especially the statement on the development of friendship and cooperation between Poland and Azerbaijan is significant. The documents establish normative-legal grounds for deepening and developing our cooperation in all the fields. I convince you that we shall fulfill all the obligations undertaken in the signed documents.

But it is just the beginning. We must continue it. Today I invited Mr. Kwasniewski to Azerbaijan. After my visit to Poland, we shall look forward to the official visit of the Polish President to Azerbaijan.

Using the opportunity, I want to thank Mr. Kwasniewski and Poland for the support to the adoption of the document on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE.

You know the history of this conflict. It broke out in 1988, in the Soviet time with the aim to annex Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Province of Azerbaijan and join it to Armenia. Unfortunately, the Soviet administration could not prevent the conflict, which turned into a war later. As a result of the conflict 20 per cent of the territory of Azerbaijan has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces. Over a million Azerbaijanis have been forced to leave their homes; most of them have been living in hard conditions, in tents for five years. Azerbaijan suffered great human and economic losses.

Our nation suffered also losses. However, we agreed to sign a ceasefire agreement in the May of 1994; we have been maintaining it for over three years. Another specific issue is that there are no foreign peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone. It is a positive factor on the background of events currenting in our region. As Mr. Kwasniewski said that there is neither war, nor peace. We try to reach peace; we want peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, in our region. At the same time, we can not reconcile with the violation of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Thus, while discussing the conflicts in different parts of Europe, adoption of the principles for the peaceful solution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict attention was paid at the Lisbon

Summit of OSCE last December.

However, the Armenian party held a non-constructive position again and did not let the adoption of the document. We had to appeal to several heads of states, including Mr. Kwasniewski; thus, it became possible to adopt the document on the principles of peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, 53 member-countries of OSCE out of 54, including Poland, supported that document. I thank Mr. Kwasniewski for the support of our fair position.

What are those 3 principles? They are the recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, granting a self-administration status to Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan, ensuring the security of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh - both of the Armenian and Azerbaijani population. There is nothing unnatural in these principles. They meet the interests of Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as of Nagorno-Karabakh. But Armenia didn't agree with it. Because it wants independence for Nagorno-Karabakh.

But we can never agree with the establishment of a second Armenian state within Azerbaijan. The Armenian nation has determined its fate, there is the Republic of Armenia, which is a member of the UN and other international organizations. Therefore, we can never allow the establishment of another Armenian state in the territory of Azerbaijan. But granting the highest status of self-administration is in harmony with the international law; it is even higher than the existing ones in the world practice.

Anyway, we hope that the world community will strive for the peaceful solution of the issue. The Minsk Group of OSCE co-chaired by the USA, Russia and France is engaged in this issue now. We cherish great hopes on them. We rely on the support of Poland, which is going to preside over OSCE next year.

We have other problems. Today we talked about them. The most important is that we signed the documents. We consider the friendship and cooperation with Poland as significant part of our foreign policy. The relations with Poland are of a strategic partnership. We shall do our best to expand our cooperation, to strengthen our friendly relations. Thank you for your attention.

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***Question: The question is addressed to both presidents. Did you discuss the issue on the transportation of the Azerbaijani oil to Europe via Poland? What decision did you reach?***

***Heydar Aliyev:*** We exchanged views on that issue. But I can respond your question broadly.

The Caspian basin contains huge oil and gas resources. The oil and gas deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea are being exploited over 50 years; during those years, hundreds of thousands tons of oil has been produced. The new stage of

the development of the natural resources in the Azerbaijani territory, including the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea is under way.

In 1994 we signed a contract on joint oil developments in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea with the consortium of the world's biggest transnational corporations. The contract implies production of 600 million tons of oil and huge amount of gas. The term of the contract is 25 years. Later other contracts were also concluded. Up to now we have signed nine contracts on the development of oil deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea. During my recent official visit to the USA, four contracts were signed in the White House, Washington. The territories of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, as well as their sectors in the Caspian Sea contain huge resources. All this creates grounds for the joint development of all these oil deposits. Many transnational corporations are interested in them. Transportation of this oil to the world market is an important issue now.

Now two pipelines are being constructed for the transportation of the Azerbaijani oil to the Black Sea. They lead to Novorossiysk, Russia and Supsa of Georgia. However, it is planned to construct a big pipeline till the port of Ceyhan on the Mediterranean coast of Turkey.

But it is not enough. It is important to construct pipelines from the Central Asia to the Black Sea and Mediterranean via the Caspian, through the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey.

At the same time, the Eurasian transport corridor has been established, which is in charge now; transportation is realized from the Central Asia to Azerbaijan and Georgia via the Caspian Sea, to Europe via the Black Sea and vice-versa. Transportation of oil and gas is of great significance for Europe, as well as for Poland. I talked to Mr. Kwasniewski on it; Poland has opportunities to secure its energy resources and must use them for the solution of the issues of transportation.

**Aleksander Kwasniewski:** I confirm what Mr. President said. We touched upon this issue. It is an interesting project. We intend to continue the negotiations.

**Question: Did you discuss the issue of opening the embassies?**

**Aleksander Kwasniewski:** Yes, we did. Today we launched new horizons for the cooperation between Poland and Azerbaijan. One of the important features of this cooperation must be the opening of the Polish embassy in Baku and the Azerbaijani diplomatic representation in Warsaw. We are not among the richest countries of the world, so it is hard to implement it into life immediately. But the embassies must be opened.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I support this idea. I think that the Azerbaijani embassy in Poland must be opened.

**Aleksander Kwasniewski:** Mr. Aliyev and I spoke that we could sign so many

documents in the absence of the embassies. We don't think that bureaucracy may prevent from the elaboration of new documents. We need representations; they symbolize mutual relations, mutual interest. Soon we can talk about our embassies.

***Question: You told that you signed important contracts. We wonder what kind of documents they are and which of them you consider decisive.***

**Aleksander Kwasniewski:** I think that the signature of so many documents during the first visit of the Azerbaijani President to Poland is an important fact. The statement we signed is an important document. It reflects the political will of both countries. The contracts on the establishment of the legal base, on the elimination of double taxation, as well as on transportation and tourism between our countries are very significant.

The contract on tourism will allow the expansion of tourism between our countries. The contract on science and culture is also important. Shortly, each contract is of special significance. The most important is that we have signed so many documents today. It will establish strong and suitable relations between the two remote countries.

**Həydar Əliyev:** I totally agree with you.

***Question: The question is addressed to the President of Azerbaijan. Mr. Aliyev, how precious is the experience of Poland, which has joined the European structures, including NATO, for you? Does Azerbaijan intend to repeat the experience of Poland in the European integration?***

**Həydar Əliyev:** In general, the experience of Poland is valuable for us. Its experience in the struggle for independence, freedom and statehood, as well as in the establishment a democratic, legal state and market economy is valuable for us. We also appreciate the experience of Poland in strengthening the European security, in recognition by the European structures. I know that Poland strives to join the EU. We praise it. We signed a statement with the European Union on cooperation. The membership of Poland in the EU will be positive for us. Azerbaijan is a member of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council; we actively cooperate within that structure. The experience of Poland and our cooperation within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council are useful for us. Life will show what will be in future.

**Aleksander Kwasniewski:** We'll work.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Poland (August 26-28, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

Economic reforms carried out by Poland and other Eastern European countries play a practical and exemplary role for the Republic of Azerbaijan which pursues the strategic line of democratic and legal state building, transition to free economic relations.

An official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev to Poland at the invitation of the President of Polish Republic Alexander Kvasnevsky, on 26-28 August, 1997 is of great significance from the point of all-around relations.

During the visit, the presidents discussed the issues on the development of bilateral relations and the international issues. Haydar Aliyev mentioned that cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland was an important part of his foreign policy.

After the meeting, the two leaders took part at ceremony of the signature of documents between the two countries. A declaration on “Friendship and Cooperation” was signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Poland. As well as a convention on Avoiding Double Taxation, Prevention of Fiscal Evasions from Payment of Incomes and Property Taxes”; a protocol on the Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Two Countries”; agreements on Cultural and Scientific Cooperation, Mutual Agitation and Protection of Investments, Civil Air Transports, Cooperation in the Field of Tourism were signed between two countries.

On August 26, after signing the documents on cooperation in different fields between Azerbaijan and Poland, Alexander Kvasnevsky, President of Polish Republic mentioned particularly that his country was interested in cooperation with Azerbaijan in all the spheres.

On August 27, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev met Yuzef Zikh, chairman of the Polish parliament. During the talks, Haydar Aliyev mentioned that Azerbaijan highly appreciated Poland’s position in “Partnership for Peace” program of NATO and considered Poland its important partner in Europe. Referring to Nagorno Karabakh conflict the Azerbaijani President gave comprehensive information to the chairman of the Polish parliament. He drew attention of the chairman to the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by the aggressive Armenia, as well as violation of norms of the international law by Armenia.

On August 27, Haydar Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan, met also Zofiya Kuratovskaya, vice chairman of the Polish Senate and discussed the socio-political relations between the two countries and the aggressive policy of Armenia, as well.

During his official visit to Poland, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev met the Chairman of the Council of Ministers of Poland Vladimir Cimosevic at “Beldever” Palace on August 27. During the meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan mentioned that he paid great attention to the cooperation with all the world countries, as well as Poland.

On August 27, during the meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Poland Darius Rosati

President of Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev expressed his hope that in the nearest future the Nagorno Karabakh problem would be fairly solved by OSCE.

Within the framework of the official visit to Poland, during his interview to “Jiche Warsaw” newspaper, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Alieyy touched upon the issues as Nagorno Karabakh conflict, “Contract of the Century”, economic reforms in Azerbaijan, involvement of foreign investments in the country, etc.. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev expressed his pleasure connected with his visit to Warsaw and noted that the establishment of direct relations between the two countries was positive: “The results are too positive. I’m very pleased. For the first time we created direct relations. This is the first official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Poland and as President Kvasnevsky mentions it is a historical event. I agree with his thoughts. For many centuries our nations have been communicating with each other. Yesterday, we gave facts on the commercial and economic relations between our nations in the Middle ages and in XV centuries as well. However, as an independent state Azerbaijan makes its first official visit to Poland in the person of its President. The fact in itself is of great political significance. We had very useful and interesting talks. On many international issues, including the security in Europe, Azerbaijan shares the position of Poland. ”

Today the Azerbaijani-Polish relations increase in the level of strategic cooperation. Expansion of existing relations with Poland, which is a member of NATO, European Union and other authoritative international organizations, is of great significance. Poland is for the fair solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and on the basis of the norms of international law.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF ITALY  
(September 25-27, 1997)**

“...Italy and Azerbaijan in the recent years have achieved development of close partnership. Undoubtedly, in future this partnership will improve further and rise to the highest level...”

*From the speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the meeting with the participation of the delegation under the leadership of the President of the Council of Ministers of Italy Enrico Letta- August 11, 2013*

**From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev at the tete-a-tete meeting with the President of the  
Italian Republic Oscar Luigi Scalfaro**

Rome, “Quirinal” Palace, September 25, 1997

Mr. Scalfaro,

First of all, thank you for inviting me to pay an official visit to your country. I gladly accepted the invitation and came here to establish personal contacts with you and to discuss the future development of relations between our countries. Expressing my pleasure with your thoughts about our country and the importance of the further development of the Italian-Azerbaijani relations, I would like to note that in late 1991, after the collapse of the USSR, Azerbaijan gained its independence. Taking this opportunity I express my gratitude to Italy for recognizing the independence of Azerbaijan immediately and for appointing an ambassador to our country. The Italian embassy in Azerbaijan is the manifestation of attention of Italy to the development of relations with our two countries. By the way, we shall soon appoint our own ambassador to Italy. We attach great importance to the relations with Italy. We consider Italy as country with democratic traditions, developed economy and a good partner for cooperation.

I thank you for your attention to the processes in our country, as well as for understanding the development and strengthening of the state independence of Azerbaijan. Despite the external and internal difficulties, we do everything possible to strengthen the irreversibility of our national independence. We are building a democratic and secular state in Azerbaijan. We build our economy on the basis of principles of the market economy and integration into the world economy. I note that these processes have been successfully implemented in our country in the recent years.

Mr. Scalfaro, You were right when you said that in the first years of our independence, the internal political situation in the country was unstable. We had great difficulties and there launched even a civil war in 1993. We managed to overcome this. Over the last three-four years, the political situation in Azerbaijan has stabilized, which is also irreversible. There have been created all conditions for political pluralism and democratic institutions. We have a lot of political parties and newspapers. There are newspapers of the opposition and these are the present-day realities of our country. For the information I note that at the end of 1995 in our country we adopted the first democratic constitution and held democratic elections to the Parliament of Azerbaijan on the multi-party system. We have taken significant steps in the field of economic reforms and these reforms, including privatization, land reform and liberalization of foreign trade, in general, are successful. The reforms have yielded then positive results. The situation in the economy has stabilized, there has been a slight increase in the production of gross domestic product, inflation has greatly reduced and the course of our national currency has strengthened.

But I want to emphasize that, in addition to all this, in our country there is a big problem. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is not our fault. The conflict began as a result of the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan in order to annex Nagorniy-Karabakh. Because of certain reasons the Armenian armed forces have occupied 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory, Nagorniy-Karabakh and seven surrounding. Over one million of Azerbaijanis have been forcibly expelled from the territories and live in very difficult conditions, in tents for four or five years. I would like to stress it in particular that one million of the 7.5 million population of Azerbaijan are refugees. Despite all of this, in the May of 1994, we signed an agreement on ceasefire and negotiated on peaceful resolution of this problem.

Mr. Scalfaro, you emphasized that the ceasefire is successful and it is observed. The ceasefire is successful because it is observed over three years. Secondly, we follow it without the foreign peacekeeping forces in the conflict zone.

Mr. Scalfaro, I think it would be better to give information about this conflict using the map: it is the territory of Azerbaijan. The colored part of the map is the territory occupied by the Armenian forces. In accordance with the proposals of the Minsk Group of OSCE, the territories painted green should be liberated in the first phase. In the territory painted in yellow there are two districts, Lachin and Shusha. The road connecting Karabakh with Armenia passes through these districts, it is expected to release these two districts in the second phase and the discussion of the status of Nagorniy-Karabakh within the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I recall that at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE there were identified three principles for the peaceful settlement of Nagorniy-Karabakh conflict: recognition of the

territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, providing Nagorniy-Karabakh a self-administration status within the Republic of Azerbaijan, ensuring the safety of all the Armenian and Azerbaijani population of Nagorniy-Karabakh. Before the conflict the number of population Nagorniy-Karabakh was 170,000, 70 percent of them were Armenians and 30 percent- the Azerbaijanis. The Azerbaijanis were driven out from there. Now only, approximately, 80 to 100 thousand Armenians live there.

Responding to your question, I note that when the conflict began, in Armenia there were about 300,000 Azerbaijanis. These Azerbaijanis deported from Armenia and now they live in Azerbaijan. In response, the Armenians living in different areas of Azerbaijan were also deported. But the difference is that the Armenians deported from Azerbaijan went to Russia, Europe, America and other places, but not to Armenia.

Speaking of the reason of why the problem has not been solved to this day, I must note that in the Lisbon Summit of OSCE 53 states of 54 voted for the three principles for the resolution of the conflict, but Armenia did not accept them. Armenia tries to get the status of independence for Nagorniy-Karabakh. Naturally, Azerbaijan cannot accept it. We cannot allow the establishment of a second state in the territory of Azerbaijan.

**Scalfaro:** Apparently, Armenia wants to annex Karabakh.

**Heydar Aliyev:** In accordance with the international law, they cannot do it. According to them, Nagorno-Karabakh will be formally independent, but in fact will join Armenia.

Mr. Scalfaro, in memory of our meeting, I present you a photo of rock inscription in Latin, associated with the Roman Empire found on the territory of our country. There is an inscription on the rock located in the south-eastern slope of Beyukdash mountain in Gobustan, which has a history of about two thousand years. It is said: “*Imperator Domisian Sezar Avqust Germanik. L. (Yusi) Yuli Maksim, Senturion of XII legion of Fulminat*”.

Mr. Scalfaro, I invite you to pay an official visit to our country.

**Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the official reception on behalf of the Italian President Oscar Luigi Scalfaro in honor of the Azerbaijani President**

Rome, "Quirinal" Palace, September 25, 1997

Mr. President Scalfaro!

Ladies and gentlemen!

I heartily welcome you. I express my profound gratitude to you, Mr. President, for the official invitation to your country, for the fruitful negotiations we held, for the friendly, warm attitude and the hospitality which we felt from first minutes of our arrival. Thank you very much.

I consider that our meeting today and, my official visit as a whole open a new stage in relations between Italy and Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan as young independent state requires and wants it very much. With great respect, we approach to the historical past, to the huge contribution of the Italian people to the world civilization and to their active role in the last 50 years in strengthening peace, well-being and peace in Europe and all over the world. Italy is one of the biggest states of the world, occupies an important place in the life of the world community, in particular, in an economic, political life of Europe. Therefore, we wish to support active relations with Italy in political, economic, cultural and humanitarian spheres. I consider that our conversation today, negotiations with you passed in this spirit.

Mr. President, thank you for your kind words about the Azerbaijani people, about their aspiration for independence, about all democratic transformations taken place in Azerbaijan after its state independence. You are right, Mr. President, that the way of transition from the centralized planned and command system to free market economy, from the system of totalitarianism, authoritarian regime to democracy is difficult and complicated. However, Mr. President, I wish to assure you and all our friends that Azerbaijan firmly stands on the position of independence and independence of our country is indestructible. We are happy is that the Azerbaijani people, the authorities in Azerbaijan and the President firmly stand in the position of the state independence. We resolutely and confidently follow the road of democratic changes, we build a democratic, legal, secular state. We carry out economic reforms and we build the economy of Azerbaijan on the basis of market relations. We conduct the privatization of the national property, privatization of land, transfer of all lands to private property ownership of peasants with the right of sale and purchase.

While implementing economic reforms, we have adopted a number of laws for

conducting reforms successfully. We have opened the doors of the economy of our country for all the world and for all foreign investors. We have created all conditions in our laws, legal documents for the attraction of foreign investors to Azerbaijan. All this yields positive results. There are positive changes in the economic life of our country. In last three years, nine big contracts with the oil companies of 12 countries have been signed on joint development of oil deposits of Azerbaijan, 20 companies have been involved in these contracts.

Since 1995, we cooperate with the “Agip” company of Italy. And today the signature of a contract is expected between State Oil Company of Azerbaijan and the “Agip” company of Italy on joint oil developments in one of the rich deposits of Azerbaijan.

If there had not been the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, if the military aggression had not led to the occupation of 20 percent of our territory, we could have been successful more achievement. More than one million Azerbaijanis have been violently expelled from the occupied areas, the majority of them live in tents for five years in very hard social and economic conditions.

Azerbaijan is a peaceful country, the Azerbaijani people are peaceful, we do not want war, conflicts. Therefore, three years ago we signed a cease-fire agreement and since we observe the regime of cease-fire. We wish to settle the conflict on the basis of the three Lisbon principles – withdrawal of the armed formation from the occupied territories, restoration of the territorial integrity of our country and return of refugees to their former places of residence, then granting a self-administration status to the Mountainous Garabagh within Azerbaijan.

The Minsk conference, the Minsk Group are actively engaged in this question. Italy possesses a worthy place in structure of the Minsk Conference, the Minsk Group. Therefore, we are grateful to the Italian Republic. I remember, in 1993, in the beginning of 1994 Italy presided in the Minsk Group. Then, we felt the fair position of Italy in the settlement of this conflict. Mr. President, today during the meeting with you I became firmly convinced that Italy is for observing the norms of international law, recognition of the territorial integrity of any country, including Azerbaijan, peaceful settlement of the conflict. Mr. President, I express my gratitude for your fair position. We hope that Italy will hold this fundamental, fair position in the future, too. By the way, it is necessary to note that Italy showed this position as well as in December, 1996, at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE.

We are optimists, we hope for the peaceful settlement to this question. And we will do our utmost for achieving it and hope for the support by the Republic of Italy henceforth.

There are great opportunities for cooperation between Italy and Azerbaijan in economic, scientific technical and cultural spheres. We shall try to use these opportunities

effectively as much as possible. The “Agip-Eni” company plays important role in this cooperation.

Today, once again I wish to express my deep respect to the history of Italy and to the present day life of the Italian Republic. Mr. President, I wish to thank you for your kind words addressed to the Azerbaijani people, to the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is a part of Europe and wishes to be a full member of the European Union, the Council of Europe. We shall rely on your support in this question.

I wish successes and prosperity, peace and well-being to the Italian people. Mr. President, I wish you, the outstanding political statesman of Italy health and long years of fruitful life. It is pleasant to me to see today your daughter behind our table and to communicate with your family. I want to wish all your family good luck and well-being. Accept my kindest wishes.

I raise the toast in honor of the Italian people, Republic of Italy, to the further strengthening and development of friendly relations between Italy and Azerbaijan, to the further prosperity of the Italian people, further strengthening peace and well-being in Europe and all over the world, to you, Mr. President, in honor of your daughter, all your family. I wish you a long life, successes in all your activities. Thank you.

**From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev with the Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi**  
Rome, the “Gichi” Palace, September 25, 1997

Mr. Prodi,

First of all, I thank you for your kind words. I am pleased of my first official visit to Italy as President of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan and I express my gratitude for the invitation. I agree with your thoughts on the continuous development of the Azerbaijani-Italian cooperation and emphasize that our country holds the same position.

I would like to note that it is important to develop the relations between our countries and there are great potentials to strengthen the Azerbaijani-Italian relations in both countries. From the geographical point of view Azerbaijan has an important place in the region. We attach particular importance to the cooperation with Italy in the political, economic, security, humanitarian and cultural fields. I want to note that Azerbaijan as a part of Europe acts as a bridge building the close relations between Europe and Asia. Our Republic is very interested in close cooperation, both with Italy and all other countries of the world and has already taken steps in this regard. Let me recall you that at the summit of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership and NATO held in July in Madrid, the independent Republic of Azerbaijan joined the “Partnership for Peace” program of NATO and I express my pleasure of the cooperation of our country with Italy in international organizations. I remember the meetings and negotiations I held with Mr. Prodi in Lisbon with pleasure.

Historical contracts were signed between influential companies of many countries and our republic on joint oil developments in the deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea. I highly appreciate the participation of the Italian “Agip” in the contract on the “Garabagh” deposit signed in 1995. I note that the document signed today on the basic commercial principles and provisions of the agreement on the exploration, development and share of production sharing in “Kurdashi” field between “Agip” and SOCAR is of great importance in the further improvement of relations between our countries. I have also to say that a number of reputable companies of the world have shown special interest in this field, but we chose Italy.

Documents signed between U.S. companies “Chevron”, “Exxon”, “Mobile”, “Amoco” and SOCAR during my official visit to the U.S. from July 27 to August 6, this year, will also be important.

I remind that rich deposits in the Caspian Sea were discovered by the oil companies

and geologists of our country 50 years ago. It should be especially noted that Azerbaijan plays an important role in the region. Great work is being done currently in the sphere of implementation of the contracts on joint developments of reserves in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea. At the same time it is necessary to finally determine the pipeline route, by which the produced oil will be transported to the world market. These pipelines will play an important role in the export of the Azerbaijani oil and the oil produced in "Tengiz" field of Kazakhstan. Stressing the particular importance of the Eurasian transport corridor in this area, I note that Azerbaijan plays an important role in the success of this corridor. Remember that this transport corridor would be useful for Italy and we could fruitfully cooperate in this area.

Speaking about the problems faced by the independent Republic of Azerbaijan in the first place, we must note the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, ongoing since 1988. As a result of this aggression, 20 percent of our country has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces and over a million of our citizens have been expelled from their homes and live in difficult conditions in the tents. Recalling that this aggression, serving the dirty goals of annexing an integral part of our country, Nagorniy- Karabakh, to Armenia and that with the help of a number of countries it caused grave damages to our country, I would like to say that we make serious efforts to ensure the peaceful resolution of this conflict. We must particularly noted the importance of the negotiations in the framework of the Minsk Group for the peaceful resolution of the conflict and of the principles for the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict adopted at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE last December. I recall that only Armenia voted against these principles supported by 53 countries. Currently, the co-chairs of the Minsk Group are the three great countries of the world, the U.S., Russia and France, and this situation increases the hope for an early resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. In this sense, the new proposals put forward by the co-chairs are interesting and Azerbaijan agrees with them. I would like to mention that the Minsk Group was chaired by Italy in 1992-1993 and I remember our meetings with Mr. Raffaelli well.

Mr. Prodi, I invite you to visit Azerbaijan.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Italy (September 25-27, 1997)**

### **Historical Reference**

Italy as one of the most important centers of power and politics in the globalizing world is seriously interested in the dynamic integration of Azerbaijan to the Eurostructures and expansion of cooperation with Azerbaijan which has become a locomotive state of the Southern Caucasus for its favorable geographic location, rich natural resources and level of democratic development.

On September 25-27, 1997, the first official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev to Poland was a significant step for the development of relations in all the fields between two countries.

On September 25, during his meeting with the president of the Republic of Italy Oscar Luigi Scalfaro, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev talked about his special attention to the development of the Azerbaijani-Italian relations, as well as considering Italy to have great democratic traditions in Europe, developed economy and a good partner for cooperation. Within the framework of the visit, they touched upon the issues of internal political situation in the beginning years of the independence and the Armenia and Azerbaijan conflict. On the same day, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev met Prime Minister Romano Prodi at Rome's "Gichi Palace", as well as the chairman of the Italian Senate N.Mansio and the chairman of Chamber of Deputies L.Violante at the Parliamentary Palace. Various aspects of bilateral relations were discussed at the meetings.

As a result of the visit of the Azerbaijani President to Italy seven agreements on political, economic, cultural and technical cooperation between two countries were signed:

Joint Declarations on the Principles of Relations, on Economic Cooperation, on Cultural, Scientific and Technological Cooperation, Agreement on Technical Cooperation between Two States in 1997-1998s, agreements on Cooperation in the Field of Tourism, on Air Services, on Protection and Encouragement of Investments were signed.

In addition, they signed a document on the main commercial principles and regulations of the agreement on exploration, development and product sharing of "Kurdashi" block between the Azerbaijan State Oil Company and "Eni-Acip" company of Italy.

On September 26, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev talked about the existence of great opportunities for reviving the Azerbaijani-Italian relations in his meeting with the president of "Alenia" company of Italy.

During his visit, Haydar Aliyev met also the mayors of Rome and Naples and the representatives of great "Enel", "ENI", "Fata" companies.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Haydar Aliyev gave interviews to "Lya Republic" newspaper and "Sole 24 ope" daily economic magazine.

In his interview to "Sole 24 ope" Haydar Aliyev mentioned: My biggest impression is that

the Soviet Union collapsed and Azerbaijan gained its independence. I believe that the collapse of Soviet Union at the end of XX century is a vital event. This is also a great happiness for the Azerbaijani people. Just as a result of it Azerbaijan gained its national liberty and independence.

The official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Italy provided favorable conditions and great perspectives for strengthening the relations in the all fields between the two countries.

## OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO VATICAN (September 26, 1997)

“...I am sure that the relations between Azerbaijan and Vatican, relations of friendship and cooperation will develop and expand for the sake of triumph of universal values and establishment of mutual understanding and solidarity among the people...”

*From the letter of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev addressed to the Pope of Rome Benedict XVI– April 2, 2012*

### From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the meeting with Pope John Paul II

Vatican, “Palace of Castel Gandolfo,” September 26, 1997

**Pope John Paul II:** Mr. President Aliyev, I cordially welcome you and express my gratitude for accepting my invitation and coming to meet me.

Mr. President, we know that you are an outstanding figure and the independent Republic of Azerbaijan took its rightful place in the world community under your leadership in the recent years. I declare that we closely follow the legal state-building and successful implementation of economic reforms in your country and support them.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Your Eminence, I express my gratitude for inviting me to Vatican, for the hospitality and kind words. I declare that I had very productive meetings with the Italian President Scalfaro, Prime Minister Prodi and other senior officials of the country and signed mutually beneficial documents for both countries.

I declare that the first democratic Constitution of the newly independent Azerbaijan chosen the path of the market economy and built a democratic country gave broad rights to the citizens in our country and ensured freedom of speech and conscience.

I emphasize that various religious denominations freely function in our country. Strong human rights are protected in Azerbaijan, the process of building a democratic society is implemented into life with great success and a wide space is given to pluralism and freedom of press.

I emphasize it once more that Azerbaijan achieved great success in building a democratic country, in the implementation of reforms, and much has been done to strengthen relations with the world community. Our country is doing everything necessary to make the independence of Azerbaijan eternal and immutable.

In 1988, Armenia committed a real aggression against Azerbaijan. As a result of this aggression, which is expanding from year to year, distinguished with ruthlessness and cruelty, the Armenian armed forces occupied 20 percent of the Azerbaijani

lands, more than one million people have been expelled from their homes and live in difficult conditions in tents. In the occupied territories of Azerbaijan valuable cultural monuments of our nation, religious centers, schools and hospitals have been brutally destroyed and devastated.

Despite these heavy blows, Azerbaijan prefers peaceful resolution of the conflict. Three years ago, we reached a ceasefire. Azerbaijan takes an active part in the negotiations for a peaceful settlement of the conflict within the frames of the Minsk Group of OSCE and in the preparation of the Great Peace Agreement.

At the Lisbon Summit in the December of 1996, the heads of countries and states which are members of OSCE, adopted the basic principles for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. We are for the resolution of the conflict on the principles approved by 53 countries.

However, Armenia ignores the Lisbon principles and trying to take advantage of a temporary success in the aggression intends to annex the Mountainous Garabagh which is an integral part of Azerbaijan and create a second Armenian state there. All this is completely contrary to the norms of international law, and, therefore, we cannot allow that.

Our republic is ready to grant the Mountainous-Garabagh the highest status self-administration within Azerbaijan. I declare that the new proposals put forward by three major co-chairs of the Minsk Group of OSCE - the USA, Russia and France, which offer a two-stage peaceful settlement of the conflict by preserving the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan on the Lisbon Principles once more affirm our position based on international law.

**Pope John Paul II:** As the head of all the Catholics of the Vatican, I also support the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict on the principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit and urge all contribute to this. I emphasize that the preservation of the territorial integrity of countries which gained their independence is very important and we must struggle together against separatism....

Mr. President, I emphasize that it is very pleasant to meet you.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Your Eminence, I express my gratitude for the warm and sincere meeting and I invite you to pay official visit to Azerbaijan. I am confident that the visit of His Eminence to Azerbaijan will be a significant event for the people of Azerbaijan and will play an important role in strengthening the cooperation between our countries.

**Pope John Paul II:** Dear President, I gratefully accept the invitation.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO JAPAN (February 24-28, 1998)**

“Japan was one of the first countries which established contacts with us after Azerbaijan restored its independence. The visit of the President of Azerbaijan, national leader Heydar Aliyev to Japan in 1998 played an important role in the development of our bilateral relations.

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the meeting at the International Relations Institute, March 8, 2006*

### **From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the tete-a-tete meeting with His Majesty Emperor of Japan Akihito**

Imperial Palace, February 25, 1998

**His Majesty Akihito:** I warmly welcome the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and I am very pleased to meet you.

Your first visit is of great importance for the continuous development of the relations between Japan and Azerbaijan. The friendly relations between Japan and Azerbaijan have a long history. Today the Japanese government has a special interest in strengthening cooperation with the independent Republic of Azerbaijan. Recently, much has been done in order to expand the relations between Azerbaijan and Japan, relations have been established with many companies in Japan and these relations are the first steps in the development of relations between the two countries. Azerbaijan has built a legal, democratic state, formed a democratic society, carried out reforms, expanded relations with foreign countries, in a word, a huge work is being done. The Japanese government follows all with an interest. I am sure that Azerbaijan will soon become one of the most developed countries of the world.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Your Majesty, thank you for your sincere words, for the hospitality, I express my pleasure with this official visit to Japan.

Our country has done a great work in building a legal, democratic, secular state and in the implementation of successful reforms. The independent Republic of Azerbaijan is very interested in the continuous development and in further strengthening the relations with Japan. As you know, Azerbaijan gained independence a few years ago. As an independent state our republic has its place in the world community. However, the state of war, which remains in our country, creates great difficulties in the life of the independent Azerbaijan. As a result of military aggression of Armenia over 20 per cent of our land has been occupied, over a million people have become refugees

and internally displaced persons. Despite all this, we want to stop the war and know well that it has no future. Azerbaijan has always paid attention to the development of mutually beneficial cooperation with other countries in all the fields. Azerbaijan has opened its door for all the entrepreneurs of the world. Stable political situation in the country has created favorable conditions for the protection of foreign investments, liberalization of foreign trade and free business activity. Now Azerbaijan has the most reputable companies of the most countries of the world, they are willing to invest in the economy of our country for developing it. I remember with pleasure the direct participation of the Japanese company "Toshiba" in the construction of an air conditioner factory in Baku during my leadership in Azerbaijan in 1970. I want to mention that our country attaches great importance to further strengthening the relations with the Japanese companies which have won great reputation in the world. I want to emphasize that in the implementation of the contracts signed for the joint oil developments in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea the company "Itochu" now has a big share. I appreciate the interest of many Japanese companies in expanding the relations with Azerbaijan in all the spheres.

We would make efforts for the further development of the Azerbaijani-Japanese cooperation and for the increase of economic and cultural relations between the two countries.

## From the talk of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Prime Minister of Japan Ryutaro Hashimoto

Residence of the Prime Minister, February 26, 1998

**Ryutaro Hashimoto:** Mr. President Heydar Aliyev I cordially welcome You. I am pleased to meet you and greet you on behalf of the Japanese people and myself. I express you my gratitude that you have accepted my invitation and paid an official visit to Japan. Very fruitful meetings lie ahead and I think this visit, being a historical event, will become an important stage of the further development of contacts between Japan and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

I am interested in Azerbaijan since my early age. This interest motivated me to get even a small piece of information about your country with great pleasure. You are an outstanding statesman of our epoch and I am well acquainted with your life and activity.

Japan, the “Country of rising sun”, situated at the beginning of the “Great silky way”, which had trade links with Azerbaijan as early as in the past centuries has always displayed an interest in your republic. The peoples of our countries have always been close to each other. Japan attaches a special significance to the steady development of cooperation with Azerbaijan situated in a very important territory from a geostrategical point of view.

I express my confidence that this visit will become the beginning of a new stage of the relations not only between the two countries, but also in the history of political, economic and cultural contacts among the countries situated along the “Great Silky Road”.

The government and society of Japan attentively follow up and pursue with interest the work done under the leadership of President Heydar Aliyev in the field of successful construction of a legal, democratic and secular state and in the implementation of reforms in Azerbaijan, where there is a progress all the time. I believe that the independent Azerbaijan will occupy a worthy place in the world community.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. Prime Minister, I express my gratitude for the sincere words and hospitality. I appreciate you for the invitation to pay an official visit to Japan and stress that this visit has a great historical significance.

We attach special importance to the further deepening and strengthening of cooperation with Japan - one of the most developed countries of the world in all the spheres.

I want to state that a great work has been done in Azerbaijan in socio-political sphere, as well as in the construction of a legal and democratic state, in conduction

of reforms. But despite the achievements, we have also problems in our republic too.

I must tell you that the Armenian armed troops committed an aggression against Azerbaijan, occupied 20 percent of the territory of our country and over a million of our citizens have been forced to leave their native places, at present they live in hard conditions in tents.

The negotiations on the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh have been held within the framework of the Minsk Group. The principles for the settlement of this conflict have been adopted at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE in the December of 1996 and the co-chairs of the Minsk Group - Russia, the USA and France have advanced proposals for the peaceful solution of this conflict. We need your support in this issue. We need Japan to support the just cause of Azerbaijan in the international organizations and forums.

We do our utmost for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict, however, the Armenia ignores the resolutions of international organizations and commonly accepted legal standards. We want the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, inviolability of our borders and return of our refugees home. And therefore, Azerbaijan has accepted the proposals forwarded by the co-chairs of the Minsk Group as a basis and continues its efforts aimed at the settlement of this conflict based on the Lisbon principles.

**Ryutaro Hashimoto:** Japan supports the independence of Azerbaijan, its sovereignty and territorial integrity and we are for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict on the principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE. Japan supports the just cause of Azerbaijan and denounces the violent seizure of the territory of any country by another country.

Your visit to Japan marks a new stage in the development of contacts between our countries. The Azerbaijani-Japanese documents are of great significance and they create a good legal basis for our continuous and developing cooperation.

Japan attaches great importance to the cooperation with Azerbaijan in all the spheres, including political, economic and cultural. In the mid of the next year the embassy of Japan to Azerbaijan will be opened in Baku. Japan is ready to render permanent assistance to the socio-political development of Azerbaijan.

Japan assumes to implement an appropriate program on rendering aid to Azerbaijan in the training of personnel and consecutive improvement of socio-political situation in your country, which has chosen the road of the market economy, and which is successfully conducting reforms. I suggest establishing closer links between our countries. The government of Japan has allotted the most preferential credit to Azerbaijan for the construction of the "Severnaya" steam-to-gas power station in the sum of 20,7 billion yens (165 million US dollars). Besides, the most favourable credit

at the rate of 75 million US dollars was allotted to finance at the reconstruction of the EP-300 facility in the ethylene-polyethylene plant. The favourable credit at 165 million dollars is extended for 40 years. Moreover, no repayment will be done by Azerbaijani within the first 10 years. And within the next 30 years, the credit will be repaid by 0,75% annually. And the preferential credit in the sum of 75 million dollars will start to be repaid on the expiry of 3 years by 2,5% annually. At the same time, Japan has granted aid to Azerbaijan at the rate of 400 million yens (3 million and 250 thousand US dollars) to increase the production of foodstuffs.

Medical equipment for the sum of 1,7 million dollars will be sent to Azerbaijan for a TB hospital. The government of Japan will expand the humanitarian aid to your country. At the same time, it will begin to render first aid to the refugees of Azerbaijan through the High Commissions of the United Nations for Refugees.

We highly appreciate the contacts of independent Azerbaijan with the international financial structures and support the affiliation of Azerbaijan to the Asian Development Bank and the World Trade Organization.

Recently, a meeting of donor-states rendering aid to your republic was held in Tokyo. This event will have a positive impact upon the further expansion of the aid to Azerbaijan. Japan supports the projects on the development of economy of your republic. I think that it is very important to expand cooperation of our countries, in particular, in the sphere of energy. We cherish great hopes on Azerbaijan as a new source of energy in the world market.

I express my gratitude for the conditions created for the Japanese companies engaged in joint oildevelopment in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea and emphasize that the further development of contacts in other areas both our countries.

I highly appreciate the share holding agreement signed between the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan and the Japanese "Mitsui". It is a constituent part of much greater development of mutual contacts between our countries.

Japan positively regards the project of reconstruction of the airport in Nakhichevan. Japan also intends to assist in funding the completion of construction of the Cancer Center in Baku.

Mr. President! I highly appreciate your visit to Japan as historical event once more. Many heads of states have paid visits to Japan. However, such a deep interest shown in your visit by the public and mass media is one of the unique events in Japan. I have a list of the meetings held by you. Such an intensive work causes admiration.

**Heydar Aliyev:** The great interest shown in Japan in the consistent development of cooperation with Azerbaijan in all the spheres proves the successful prospects between our countries. I appreciate you, Mr. Prime Minister for the attention shown to our independent state.

I stress with a feeling of deep satisfaction the great success of my visit to Japan. I highly appreciate the “diplomacy of Silky Road” declared by you and the development of all-round relations with the states of the Transcaucasia and Central Asia. Thirty-three countries are now situated along this road, which lies once from Asia up to Europe and for the discussion of issues connected with the future of the “Silky Road”, we have decided to hold an international conference of the representatives of those countries in Baku, in May, 1998, with the participation of the European Community, and we would wish a Japanese delegation to take part in this conference as well.

**Ryutaro Hashimoto:** A Japanese delegation will take part in this international conference.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I remember with satisfaction the direct participation of the Japanese “Toshiba” in the construction of an air-conditioner plant in Azerbaijan. The “Itochu” also has a great share in the “Contract of Century” on joint oil developments in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea. The “Mitsui” Company has been attracted to the implementation of another project. The negotiations with numerous Japanese companies have successfully resulted during this official visit.

I stress the great significance of the study and application of the rich experience of Japan in Azerbaijan. I am confident that the help rendered by this country to our republic in the training of personnel education will be much useful.

I emphasize the necessity of expansion of cooperation of our countries with international organizations. Azerbaijan supports the election of Japan as a permanent member of the Security Council of UNO.

Mr. Prime Minister I invite You to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

Statement of Heydar Aliyev on February 26 in the building of the government of Japan after concluding bilateral documents between Japan and Azerbaijan

Mr. Prime Minister dear friends! I congratulate you on the present event, on conclusion of very important documents - the “Joint Statement on friendship and partnership between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Japan” and on “Joint statement on cooperation in the sphere of trade and economy between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Japan”. I think that the conclusion of these documents, in particular, the statement on friendship and partnership and commercial cooperation between Japan and Azerbaijan and other documents will open a new stage in the cooperation between our countries. I declare that we shall fulfill the obligations undertaken by our countries and will be reliable partners.

## **Speech of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev and his answers to the questions of journalists at the press conference in Tokyo**

Tokyo, the National Press Center, February 27, 1998

Dear ladies and gentlemen!

I welcome you, the representatives of mass media, and express you my deep respect to you.

Today is the fourth day that I am in your nice country on an official visit at the invitation of the prime minister of Japan Mr. Hashimoto. It is the first official visit of the President of the independent Azerbaijan to Japan.

Finishing this visit, I can tell that I am fully satisfied with it and with the work done here. I think that the visit is a success. I had many meetings, talks and negotiations, His Majesty Emperor Akihito of Japan received me. I had meetings, negotiations, talks with prime minister Mr. Hashimoto, members of the government, in particular with the ministers for foreign affairs, transport and trade. I visited the parliament, had a meeting with the chairmen of the House of Representatives and chamber of councilors, met a group of the parliamentarians representing the Association of the Japanese-Azerbaijani friendship. I held numerous meetings with the representatives of the business circles of Japan. While leaving Tokyo, I can say that since February 24<sup>th</sup> I had 38 meetings. All of them were very useful, interesting and made a pleasant impression.

Meetings, negotiations, talks with the prime minister Mr. Hashimoto and signature of the intergovernmental, interstate documents assume naturally a special value. The Japanese prime minister and I signed two important documents - a joint statement on friendship and partnership between Japan and Azerbaijan and the joint statement on cooperation in the field of trade and economy. In these documents the main principles and directions of the future development of cooperation between our countries in all the spheres have found their reflection. Agreements between the ministries for foreign affairs of Japan and Azerbaijan on the mutual consultations, between the Ministry for Foreign Affairs of Japan and the government of Azerbaijan on granting a credit in the sum of 20,7 billion yens to our country for the construction of the power station "North", and on a notes on granting disinterested aid in the amount of 400 million yens to Azerbaijan have been signed.

We have signed an agreement with "Eximbank" of Japan on the allocation of the credit under the governmental guarantees of Azerbaijan for the construction of an ethylene production for the national state "Azerkimya" company. This agreement

will be realized by the Japanese company “Nichimen”, the total cost of the project is approximately 95 million dollars.

At the office of the prime minister an agreement was signed on granting a 15 percent share to the Japanese company “Mitsui” in the project of “Kurdashi” in the Azerbaijan Sector of the Caspian Sea.

In general, our negotiations with Prime Minister Hashimoto and the signed documents are events of historical value and laid a strong basis for the successful cooperation between Japan and Azerbaijan in future.

We attach great significance to the relations with Japan and especially the cooperation in the field of economy. And I am glad that during my visit it was possible to create a good basis for it.

I met the heads of many Japanese companies, the majority of them works in power engineering sphere, oil-and-gas industry. I met them because they display great interest in Azerbaijan, its economy, including oil and gas industry of our country. The Japanese company “Itochu” is already working in Azerbaijan and is a member of the first consortium established under the contract signed in 1994 with 11 oil companies on the development of three very perspective oil deposits in the Azerbaijan Sector of the Caspian Sea. In 1996, “Itochu” was included into one more consortium of foreign companies on the development of “Dan ulduzu” and “Ashrafi” deposits in the Azerbaijan Sector of the Caspian Sea with a 20 percent share of participation.

Yesterday, as I already said, “Mitsui” oil company acquired the right to work in Azerbaijan. We have many offers from the Japanese companies, they will be considered. I am personally interested in creating all conditions for them in order to expand our cooperation.

Yesterday we agreed with Mr. Hashimoto to create a special joint intergovernmental Japanese-Azerbaijani economic commission for more successful realization of cooperation between Japan and Azerbaijan.

I think that it was very important that alongside with economic questions we exchanged views with Mr. Hasimoto on international situation, in particular, the situation in the Caucasian region where Azerbaijan is situated. You know that since 1988 there is a military conflict because over the Mountainous Garabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) between Azerbaijan and Armenia. This conflict, which is characterized as a bloody war, has inflicted huge material and mental damage on Azerbaijan. Because of various reasons during this conflict the Armenian armed formations have occupied 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory, over one million of Azerbaijans, have been driven out of their lands, they now live in other regions of the country, the majority - in tents, in very heavy economic conditions.

In May, 1994 we signed an agreement on cease-fire with Armenia. Since then there

are no military operations, we negotiate on the peace full settlement of the conflict. A basis for the peace settlement of the conflict is the Lisbon declaration of OSCE adopted in December, 1996. This declaration has determined the main principles of the settlement of the conflict: Therefore, recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia, granting the Mountainous Garabagh (Nagorno-Karabakh) the status of self-administration within Azerbaijan, a guarantee of security for all the population of the Mountainous Garabagh. On the basis of these principles the chairs of the Minsk group of OSCE - Russia, the United States of America and France - have proposed a two-stage solution of the conflict. The first stage provides the withdrawal of the Armenian troops from six administrative districts of Azerbaijan around the Mountainous Garabagh and return of the refugees - inhabitants of these districts there. The second stage provides the liberasion two more districts of Azerbaijan - Lachin and Shusha and definition of the status of the Mountainous Garabagh.

We agreed with them, however in Armenia a part of the leaders has agreed, another part-not. President of Armenia Ter-Petrosyan, who agreed with these proposals of the Minsk Group, retired on February 3. Now the election of the new president is underway in Armenia. Therefore, the negotiating process has frozen and, probably, it will be continued after the election of the Armenian president.

I note with satisfaction that in the joint statement, which was yesterday signed by prime minister Hashimoto and me, Japan declared that it supports for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and also for the Lisbon principles of OSCE on the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

We think that all the countries must observe the international norms, it is impossible to change the borders of any country by force, violation of the territorial integrity of any country is inadmissible.

One of the important questions, which we yesterday discussed with Prime Minister Mr. Hashimoto, is about the "Silk Way". I highly appreciate the diplomacy, doctrine of Prime Minister Hashimoto on "Silk Way". I informed Prime Minister Hashimoto that many countries, including Azerbaijan, have already done much for the restoration of this road. In particular, the Eurasian transport highway, on which transportation of cargoes is carried out from the Central Asia to Europe and back through the Black Sea, Georgia, Azerbaijan and the Caspian Sea, has been created. As a whole 33 countries are located on "Silk Way". Japan is the most eastern point there. Azerbaijan is in the center of this way. Further it goes across Europe up to Spain, Portugal and Ireland. In the end of this May on the initiative of the European Union it is planned to hold meetings of the representatives of all 33 countries in Baku for the discussion of the questions connected with the further development of "Silk Way".

During my visit I have discussed many other questions here as well. We consider

Japan as the country, which has achieved great successes in the economic and social development, made huge contributions to the economic development of all the world community, enriching the world science and civilization with significant inventions, high technologies and techniques.

I have a profound respect to the Japanese people, to its diligence, talent, huge abilities. Leaving Japan, I wish the Japanese people good luck, welfare and peace. Thank you for your attention.

*Question (ITAR-TASS news Agency): Heydar Aliyevich, in your last interviews you disclosed your attitude to the question on the construction of the main pipeline from a deposit in the region of Baku. Nevertheless, it would be desirable to hear your position on this question, including the attitude of Russia to it. And what is your opinion about Boris Yeltsin's proposal to call the summit of the littoral five countries for the definition of its legal status? Thank you.*

**Heydar Aliyev:** It is known that one pipeline from Baku to the north via the Russia territory lies to Novorossiysk, through which we export oil, has already been constructed. The second oil pipeline will lie through the territory of Georgia to Supsa on the Black Sea. The construction of the third oil pipeline is intended. And the shareholders of the consortium think it to be more to lie expedient to through Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, it is efficient Turkey from economic point of view. You know that all oil pipelines are built by those who produce and export oil on their own account. Thus economic feasibility is on the foreground. Planning the construction of this pipeline up to Ceyhan in the Mediterranean is based on the above mentioned reason.

As to your question concerning the proposal of President Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin to call the summit of the countries of the Caspian basin and definition of the status of Caspian sea, - by the way, I do not have information about this proposal and heard about it from you, - I think that before having the summit it is necessary to prepare its agenda well. That is, first it is necessary to agree and then to call the summit for accepting the final decision. In a word, I am not against the summit, but this summit should be called only when this question is well prepared on the level of governments.

*Question (the newspaper "Mainiti"): I have a question on the peace process on the Mountainous Garabagh. As it is known, at the beginning both America and Russia supported Armenia. Nevertheless, after your visit to America in the August last year the position of Washington has changed, and Deputy State Secretary Talbot visited Armenia to make Armenia come to an agreement in the peace process. Is this agreement carried out now?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** Has he paid a visit to Armenia? No, it is not true. It is incorrect information.

**Correspondent:** *There was a certain consent that Talbot would negotiate for*

*peace. Is this initiative is realized?*

**Heydar Aliyev:** It seems you have not exact information. There is the Minsk Group of OSCE in which co-chairs are Russia, the United States America and France. And Mr. Talbot is the representative in the Minsk group from the USA. We have not data that he has visited Armenia. But negotiations, as I already said, have ceased in connection with the changes in the administration of Armenia. We hope that the co-chairs of the Minsk Group will be objective and treat equally the interests of Armenia and Azerbaijan both.

In the past the attitude to Azerbaijan was very unfair. The result of this injustice led to the adoption of Section 907 American congress in 1992 which discriminates Azerbaijan. This amendment was adopted under the pressure of the Armenian lobby in America. I hope that now all the countries will fairly approach to this question.

**Question: (Miroslava - the publicist-foreign affairs specialist): European and American companies, especially after your visit to the United States of America, have thronged to your country. Don't you think that the Japanese were late in this question?**

**Heydar Aliyev:** In general, the Japanese companies were late. And it does not suit them. The Japanese always and everywhere go ahead. I hope that after my visit and the agreements signed here, the Japanese will overcome the backwardness and we will help them in this question.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Japan (February 24-28, 1998)**

### **Historical Reference**

Japan is one of the countries which has close relations and broad partnership with Azerbaijan. Japan's interest in the Caspian region and Azerbaijan is connected with the economic factors. Although Japan is not involved in complex strategic processes in the region, it does not want to stay outside of the regional, transnational energy and economic projects. It is also of the countries which provides Azerbaijan with interest-free loans and concessional aid most. Japan is also one of the initiators of the restoration of the Great Silk Road.

The official visit of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Japan at the invitation of Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto also played an important role in further development of the relations between the two countries.

One of the major events of this visit to the Land of the Rising Sun, the meeting with the Emperor Akihito took place at the Imperial Palace on February 25. The two leaders talked about the current level of bilateral relations and underlined their great prospects.

On February 26, President Heydar Aliyev met Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto. At the meeting held in the residence of the Prime Minister, Heydar Aliyev noted that Azerbaijan attaches great importance to deepening and strengthening the cooperation in all areas with Japan, which is one of the most developed countries of the world. In his turn the Prime Minister said: "Japan supports independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Japan also support the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict on the principles adopted at the Lisbon Summit. Japan supports Azerbaijan's position and condemns the occupation of the territories of one country by another country."

The meeting was followed by the ceremony of signature of the official documents. In his statement at the ceremony, Heydar Aliyev noted: "I believe that by signing these documents, especially the agreement on friendship and partnership, we open a new stage in our cooperation. I declare that we shall fulfill all our obligations and be a reliable partner."

On February 26, the President of Azerbaijan also met chairman of the House of Representatives Ito Soichiro. Both sides noted that this official visit would open a new stage in the steadily developing Japanese-Azerbaijani relations. On the same day Heydar Aliyev met the Japanese Foreign Minister Keizo Obuchi and chairman of the House of Councillors Saito Juro.

President Heydar Aliyev had totally 48 interesting and useful meetings with the members of the Japanese government, chairs of both chambers of the parliament, representatives of business circles.

Signed by the Azerbaijani President and the Japanese Prime Minister, two documents – joint statements on friendship and partnership between Azerbaijan and Japan and on cooperation in the field of trade and economy are of great importance. These statements reflect the basic

principles and directions of the further development of cooperation in all the spheres between the two countries. The agreement on mutual consultations between the foreign ministries of Japan and Azerbaijan, the agreement on 20.7 billion yen loan for the construction of “Shimal” (“North”) power station, the notes on granting a 400 million yen disinterested loan, the agreement with Eximbank of Japan on the loan for the construction of an ethylene production plant at Azerkimya State Company under the guarantee of the Government of Azerbaijan, the contract on 15% share to Mitsui Corporation in Kurdashi oil field project were also important documents.

The visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Japan was observed by the mass media of Japan and the world. During the visit President Heydar Aliyev gave interviews to the newspapers Asahi Shimbun, Nikkei Shimbun, Sankei Shimbun, Yomiuri Shimbun, to the Tokyo-based correspondent of the Reuters agency, to NHK and Asahi TV channels.

The very successful visit introduced Azerbaijan to Japan both politically and economically.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE UNITED KINGDOM OF GREAT BRITAIN AND NORTHERN IRELAND (July 19-24, 1998)**

“...The United Kingdom is our strategic partner, an important country and one of the biggest investors in Azerbaijan. We appreciate our relations very much and I am sure that they will expand further to cover a broad agenda: political ties, economic collaboration, information technologies and education...”

*From the speech of the President Ilham Aliyev at the Royal Institute of International Affairs in London - July 13, 2009*

### **From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Elizabeth II**

London, Buckingham Palace, July 21, 1998

**Elizabeth II:** Mr. President, I welcome you sincerely and express my satisfaction with your official visit to Great Britain.

Your Excellency, I remember well our meeting at the festivities held in London in May 1995, on the occasion of the 50th anniversary of the victory in the Second World War. I must also note that the United Kingdom is interested in the development of relations with Azerbaijan.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Your Majesty, I am very pleased to meet you. Strengthening mutually beneficial contacts in all the spheres with Great Britain, one of influential states of the world, is of great importance for the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Your Majesty, everybody knows and loves you in Azerbaijan. The relations of our nations have an ancient history. There were economic, in particular, commercial relations, between Azerbaijan and England in the Middle Ages.

**Elizabeth II:** I have sufficient information about your country. The work held in Azerbaijan in the recent years under your leadership in the sphere of construction of a legal, democratic, secular state is observed with great interest in England.

I express my gratitude to you for the conditions created in Azerbaijan for the activity of the British companies. I highly appreciate the importance of contacts in all the spheres, in particular, in the sphere of science, culture and education.

**Heydar Aliyev:** The steps undertaken by the both sides in this sphere have great importance. You know that the oil companies of Great Britain take an active participation

in the realization of the signed historical contracts on joint oil developments in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea.

After the meeting with Prime Minister Tony Blair today a number of new contracts will be signed between Azerbaijan and Great Britain. The contacts between our countries in economic sphere are on a high level at present. Azerbaijan has great successes in the construction of a legal and democratic state, but it has faced a number of problems, too. One of them is the military aggression of Armenia, which is going on since 1988. As a result of this aggression, 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan has been occupied. Over a million of our citizens have became refugees and still live in hard conditions in tents. Hundreds of towns and villages of Azerbaijan have been destroyed and burned out on the occupied territories. The houses, schools, hospitals were plundered, and the ancient monuments of culture have been ruined. At present the regime of cease-fire is in force, and blood is not shed. However, it does not mean that there is peace.

Speaking about the negotiations held in the frames of the Minsk Group on the peaceful settlement of this conflict and about the co-chairs in the Minsk Group of OSCE established for this purpose the three great powers – USA, Russia and France, we can note that their proposals on the settlement of this conflict were met with an interest by Azerbaijan and studied attentively. At the Lisbon Summit of OSCE in December 1996, the principles for the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by political means, were supported by 53 states, including Great Britain. We are for the immediate settlement of this conflict on the basis of these principles.

I emphasize the importance of the immediate settlement of this conflict for the restoration of peace, prosperity in the region, the necessity of drawing the attention of the world community and influential states to this problem.

Azerbaijan, which has taken the road of democratic development, market relations in economy, has established close relations with the world community, opens wide its doors to foreign businessmen, attaches great significance to the integration of its economy into the world economy and to its participation as an equal member in the European structures. I want to remind that at present more than 100 companies of the world countries operate in our republic.

There were close contacts between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan at the beginning of the last century. We are happy that our independent republic is an ally of such an influential state as Great Britain and has found a close friend in its person. Friendly contacts have been established between Azerbaijan and Great Britain within the framework of international organizations. We are confident that England will make more efforts to support the just work of our country.

I inform that the countries of the world display great interest in the establishment of mutually beneficial relations with Azerbaijan. In our republic, which is of great strategic importance in the region, a lot of positive measures have been taken in the sphere of normal work of the European-Caucasian-Asian transport corridor. The TRACECA program is being realized successfully. The Transcaucasian transport corridor has linked Azerbaijan with the Caucasus and Europe within a very short time.

On September 7-8 of this year, within the framework of TRACECA program, there will be held an international conference under the guide the European Union on the restoration of the ancient Silk Road in Baku, which is of great importance for the establishment of economic and cultural relations between the nations of the world now. We are sure that this international measure will have great significance for all the states participating here.

The economic reforms and privatization are conducted successfully and consistently Azerbaijan for the first time among the countries of the former Soviet republics transferred the land to private ownership. Political pluralism and freedom of speech have been established in the country. Our independent republic always attaches great significance to the study and application of experience of the developed countries of the west in all the spheres.

I believe that my official visit to this country as President of Azerbaijan will open a new stage for the incessant development of the relations between Azerbaijan and Great Britain in the sphere of science, culture and education. I express my satisfaction with the efforts made by the businessmen of England, working in our republic on the expansion of cultural, humanitarian relations between our nations.

(Having reminded that during the meeting in 1995 he invited Her Majesty to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijani President said that his people would be very glad to receive her as an esteemed guest.)

**Elizabeth II:** Mr. President, I express my gratitude for this invitation, I am greatly interested in Azerbaijan.

## **From the talk of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Tony Blair**

London, July 21, 1998

**Tony Blair:** Mr. President Aliyev, I warmly greet you and express my gratitude for accepting my invitation to pay an official visit to Great Britain.

I always recollect our previous meetings with great pleasure. I state that it is a great honour for me to meet and hold negotiations with such an outstanding statesman as Heydar Aliyev.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. Prime Minister, first of all, I appreciate You for the invitation, sincere words, hospitality and declare that I am also pleased to meet you.

**Tony Blair:** I will mention that the cooperation between Azerbaijan and Great Britain is on a satisfactory level. We attach great importance to the steady development of the economic and political contacts.

Great Britain shows special interest in the Caucasus and the Central Asia and I have to inform you that Azerbaijan plays a key role in this region. I shall also mention that the United Kingdom aspires to step up political and strategic partnership relations with Azerbaijan.

I want to express my confidence that the joint declaration on friendship and cooperation to be signed together with Heydar Aliyev will open great prospects for speedier expansion of mutually beneficial contacts between our countries. I will stress that after the victory of the Labour Party in the elections, the policy of Great Britain in respect of Azerbaijan has not changed. The new government attaches special value to greater approachment of contacts with the Republic of Azerbaijan and Heydar Aliyev. Azerbaijan has a great strategic significance in the Caspian region. We regard Azerbaijan and President Heydar Aliyev our strategic ally. The new government of Britain shows great interest in the gradual development of contacts with Azerbaijan in the fields of economy, politics and security.

Mr. President, I am confident that your official visit as the head of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan will open a new stage for even greater expansion of cooperation between our countries. The government of Great Britain attentively follows and welcomes the work done within the last five years under your wise leadership in establishing a democratic, legal and secular state in Azerbaijan.

I emphasize the important role of the democratic reforms which play an important role in the protection of independence and sovereignty play in your republic and stress

once more the achievements of recent years in your country which has chosen the road of the market relations in the economy.

I also want to mention that the historical contracts signed for joint oil developments in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian Sea will play the vital role in the integration of the economy of the independent state into the world economy. I note with satisfaction that all this is due to the priceless merits of President Heydar Aliyev. I express my deep gratitude to You for the excellent conditions provided for the implementation of wide activity by the British companies in Azerbaijan.

The economic cooperation between our states creates a solid base for the improvement of interstate contacts between the Azerbaijan Republic and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. Close participation of British companies in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian Sea has a special significance both for the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan.

I want to stress, that new contracts to be signed between the British companies and SOCAR on joint oildevelopments in the Azerbaijan oilfields have great prospective for cooperation between our countries. I will also point out that the signature of such important and significant contracts in other spheres is also necessary.

I declare that Great Britain will render assistance to Azerbaijan for being represented in the European structures. We shall undertake necessary efforts, so that your country, having gained the guest status in the Council of Europe, will be affiliated as a full member of this Council and Azerbaijan can fully count on the thorough support of Great Britain in this matter.

I highly appreciate the interest of your independent state in the integration into Europe and emphasize the importance of enhancement of cooperation in the context of the NATO program "Partnership for Peace". We are ready to render assistance to Azerbaijan in it as well.

I highly appreciate that your country gives preference to export the oil extracted in the Azerbaijan sector of the Caspian Sea to the world market via several route. The oil export via several route is very useful both from the standpoint of reliability and security of the pipeline and from economic standpoint.

I declare that Great Britain is also for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group. Our country recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. There are the standards of the international law and invariable principles of the United Nations Organization and the OSCE and they should be observed.

I remind once again that Great Britain voted for the principles of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict settlement adopted at the OSCE Lisbon Summit in 1996 and state my confidence that this conflict will be settled soon.

The abolition of death penalty in Azerbaijan is estimated as a big step towards the protection of human rights and I welcome the decree signed by President Heydar Aliyev in this regard. The European countries highly appreciate the adherence of Azerbaijan to the western values.

Taking into account that your country is as a state of special significance in the Caucasian region and Central Asia, the government of Great Britain decided to intensify the activity of the embassy of Great Britain to Azerbaijan. Mr. President, I ask you to provide conditions necessary for it.

I would like to be informed on the present socio-political situation in Azerbaijan and about the process of negotiations held within the Minsk Group of OSCE for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict. I highly appreciate the work carried out in Azerbaijan for the restoration of the ancient Silky Road within the framework of TRASEKA program of the European Union and emphasize that the Europe-Caucasean-Asian main line has great prospects.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. Prime Minister! I express my sincere gratitude to you for the warm words about our country. Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the continual improvement of relations with this very authoritative European state and steady development of cooperation. I express my satisfaction with the present level of interstate and intergovernmental contacts with Great Britain after our republic gained independence.

I recollect with satisfaction my first visit to London in February, 1994, as well as the negotiations and meetings held then. I emphasize that the documents signed then played an important role in strengthening of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Great Britain.

I highly appreciate the achievement of positive progress in the country by the Labour Party, which came to power in Great Britain through as a result of the victory at the last parliamentary elections. I recollect with satisfaction the negotiations and meetings held heretofore with Tony Blair.

Mr. Blair, I declare that I am satisfied with the official visit to London at your invitation and I am confident that the meetings and negotiations held here, as well as the documents to be signed will open a new stage in the consistent development of the links between Azerbaijan and Great Britain.

I think that my meeting with Her Majesty Queen of Great Britain today as historical event. We spoke in detail about the issues necessary to be solved for expanding mutually beneficial contacts between our countries, in particular, the cooperation in the sphere of science, education and culture.

I highly appreciate that Great Britain, especially, Prime Minister Tony Blair attach great significance to the expansion of cooperation with Azerbaijan in all the spheres.

We are very satisfied that a state which has such a strong influence on the world policy, shows great interest in our country, and in our turn, we shall take necessary measures for the constant development of these contacts.

I recollect with satisfaction the thought of Prime Minister Tony Blair about increasing the staff of the embassy of Great Britain to Azerbaijan, and I declare that we shall will create all the conditions for the activity of the embassy.

I declare that I am highly satisfied with the positive estimation of the government of Great Britain concerning the progress attained within the last years in Azerbaijan which has chosen the way of democratic development and market relations, in the construction of legal, democratic and secular state and in the implementation of reforms. I declare that the first democratic constitution was adopted in our republic in 1995. The parliament, represented by all the political parties, was formed.

At the same time, serious steps in the area of economic reforms were taken in our country and I declare that our country attaches great importance to close integration of its economy into the world economy. I want to stress that a number of measures was taken in the republic for joint development of rich deposits. In 1994, we concluded the first contract on joint oil developments of the deposits in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea together with the biggest foreign oil companies by signing "Contract of century". The BP of Great Britain has also a big share in this contract. Then the interest of foreign countries in Azerbaijan started to grow and new historical contracts were signed one after another.

I remind that numerous companies from various countries work in Azerbaijan. I want to mention with satisfaction that over 100 British companies participate in the economy of our country.

Azerbaijan attaches great preference to the export of oil to the world markets via different routes. Much work is done today for the implementation of the contracts concluded on joint oil developments in the Azerbaijan Sector of the Caspian Sea. At the same time, the route of pipelines for transportation of oil to the world market must be precisely terminated and the construction of the pipelines must be fulfilled. Therefore it necessary to lay the main oil pipeline via the Baku-Jeihan across the territory of Georgia and Turkey to the Mediterranean Sea.

After this meeting, I believe that several other contracts with the British companies will be sighned deposits "Araz", "Alov", "Sharg" and "Inam" in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea, as well as the onshore "Muradkhanly" "Jafarli" and "Zardab" deposits have rich resources. I express my confidence that these contracts will give a new impulse to the expansion of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Great Britain.

I believe that the joint statement on friendship and partnership to be signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and the Prime Minister of the

United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland will open great perspectives for closer approachment of mutually beneficial contacts between our countries in all the spheres. I highly estimate the draft of the document to be signed between the administration power of Baku and the British "Morisson" on the construction of hotels and business centers in our capital.

I express my satisfaction with the attention of Great Britain, which occupies a significant place in the world policy and is one of the most influential states of Europe, to the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

I want to say a few words about the history, reasons of this conflict and about the present state of negotiations within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE. You know that as early as 1988, Armenia committed a military aggression against our country with the purpose to seize the part of Azerbaijan, that is - Nagorno-Karabakh, and annex it to Armenia. However, the Soviet government did not take necessary measures to prevent this conflict. Later it led to the Armenian-Azerbaijan war. As a result, 20 percent of the Azerbaijan territory was occupied by the Armenian armed forces, over a million Azerbaijani citizens were forcedly banished from their native lands and live now in hard conditions in tents.

In the May of 1994, we signed a agreement on the suspension of military operations that is a cease-fire with Armenia. The cease-fire regime is being observed for four years. But it does not mean that there is peace. Within all this period, we take effective steps for the peaceful settlement of this conflict. However, Armenia takes a destructive position. The principles of settlement of this conflict were terminated at the Lisbon Summit of OSCE in 1996. Three principles were determined: the recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and Armenia; granting a high status of self-administration to Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan and providing the security of all the population of Nagorno-Karabakh. We agreed with these principles although they did not satisfy us completely. We wanted to settle the problem peacefully. However, Armenia took a non-constructive position at the Lisbon Summit OSCE and did not agree with these principles. As a result, 53 out of 54 member-states of OSCE voted for Armenia against.

Since then these three principles remain as the basis for the solution of the issue. To implement them, we adopted the last proposals of the co-chairs of the Minsk group - the USA, France and Russia. However, Armenia ignores the decisions and resolutions of international organizations, international legal standards, conventional principles and the proposals of the most authoritative states of the world for the immediate settlement of the conflict. Mr. Prime Minister, I express my satisfaction that Great Britain supports the just cause of Azerbaijan in the international organizations and forums.

We think that at the moment that, the peaceful settlement of the conflict can be implemented in two stages. It is also proposed by the Minsk Group. For greater clearness, I want to demonstrate you the map of Azerbaijan. Have a look, the territories occupied by the Armenian armed forces are indicated on the map. This is the territory of Armenia and this is the territory of Nakhchivan. Nagorno-Karabakh is indicated in red colour. It is a province of Azerbaijan. The districts of Azerbaijan occupied around Nagorno-Karabakh are indicated in green and yellow. We think and it is also proposed by the Minsk Group that the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces form the territories painted with green colour, return of refugees and location of peacemaking troops of the OSCE there for the solution of the conflict should be fulfilled at the first stage. The withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from Lachin and Shusha districts and at the same time, the termination of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh as provided by the Lisbon Summit, should be fulfilled at the second stage.

We want peace and the conflict should be settled peacefully. However, we cannot give even a patch of our land to another country. It is our firm and principal position. We shall never step back from this position.

I declare that Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the participation in the European structures as a full member. I accept with appreciation the desire of the United Kingdom government to assist our republic in this issue.. I stress that the significant work has been done in our young independent state in the sphere protection of human rights, as well as in strengthening democratic principles and political pluralism.

Azerbaijan is at the threshold of presidential elections. The constitution of our country and law on elections create conditions for holding quite democratic, free and fair elections.

Azerbaijan, which occupies its worthy place in the world community attaches special significance to the efficient work of the Europe-Caucasus- Asia rout. The prospects of the Silky Road are indicated on the map here.

Mr. Prime Minister I have to inform you that on September 7-8, this year, an international conference is to be held in our republic within the framework of TRASEKA program with the support of the European Union. I invite you to take part in international event.

**Tony Blair:** I accept this invitation with pleasure. The government of Great Britain attaches great importance to the restoration of the ancient Silky Road and the delegation of our government will certainly take at this event.

Over 100 companies of Great Britain work in Azerbaijan. I think it is a good basis for our cooperation. Therefore, we attach great importance to this conference and we are confident that it will be useful for all the member-states.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. Prime Minister I express my gratitude once more for the

official invitation to visit the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. I am confident that the meetings, as well as the documents to be signed will play an important role in the development of contacts between our states in all the spheres.

I appreciate You for the sincere talk. I invite you once more to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

**Tony Blair:** Mr. President, I accept this invitation with great satisfaction.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the ceremony of signature of the statement on the friendly relations  
and partnership by the President of Azerbaijan and the Prime  
Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Northern  
Ireland Tony Blair**

London, Residence of the Prime Minister, July 21, 1998

Mr. Prime Minister!

First of all I express my gratitude to you for inviting me to pay an official visit to Great Britain. The multilateral, comprehensive and interesting negotiations held by me in your country and today with you laid a very good basis for the development of relations between our countries.

In the last four months we have gained good results in the development of relations between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan in all the spheres. All these open wide perspectives for the cooperation between our countries.

Mr. Prime Minister, we lay the foundations of future together. The political statement signed by us just now is of great importance, and I appreciate it highly. The establishment of such relations between the United Kingdom, which is one of the great states of the world, and Azerbaijan, and the signature of such a political statement are of great political importance to Azerbaijan.

The economic agreements, documents signed by us today create a very good basis for the future development of relations between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan. Gaining independence, following the road of democratization, progress and market economy are very important for us.

Your country, your nation have great historical achievements. In the second half of XX century, after the World War II your country made a big progress in all spheres. We use your experience in all the spheres. By building a legal, democratic, secular state, by creating and developing the market economy, we try to use your experience.

Joint development of the rich deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea and, the onshore oil deposits in the territory of Azerbaijan wholly with large oil companies of the United Kingdom are of great importance for us. The companies of the United Kingdom have update technology, rich experience, highly skilled personals, are able to develop the natural resources of Azerbaijan jointly in future.

I declare that we shall try to realize all the provisions of the political statement - concerning the friendly relations and partnership between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Great Britain and the Northern Ireland, we shall constantly develop our friendship,

cooperation between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan.

I congratulate You, express my gratitude for the kind words about Azerbaijan and me. Thank you.

***Question: How do you appreciate the contracts signed today? The second question: Is Russia a partner or rival of Azerbaijan in the Caspian?***

**Answer:** First of all, I appreciate them very positively, otherwise I would have not given my consent to their signature. By the way, that today the companies of Russia, Moscow also took part in the signature of an agreement. The contract on behalf of the Russian Oil Company was signed by the former minister of Energy Yuri Shaphranic. He is here. This fact is an answer to your next question. Russia is a partner of Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea, of course. Russia takes part in a number of other contracts. And now, as you see, here in London, we sign a contract with a company of the United Kingdom, the US company "AMOCO" and the companies of Russia. That is to say, we want to cooperate in the Caspian with all the companies, including Russia.

***Question: How do you appreciate the present level of the British-Azerbaijani cooperation? Can we think that after the signature of the important documents today this partnership will acquire a strategic character?***

**Answer:** This partnership is just on a high level. The political statement signed by Prime minister Blair and me, includes all the complex of questions on cooperation and friendship between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan. The content of his political statement speaks about its importance. This statement will be published, you will get acquainted with it and draw a conclusion.

***Question: Is there an item about the Nagorno-Karabakh in the statement?***

**Answer:** Undoubtedly. And not only about Nagorno-Karabakh. The question about the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh discussed broadly with the prime-minister of the United Kingdom. The United Kingdom supports the principles of the UN, OSCE and international law, of course. At the Lisbon Summit on December of 1996 the United Kingdom voted for the three principles of the peaceful settlement of the conflict. Today the prime minister again completely confirmed the former position of the United Kingdom, and naturally, expressed the desire to make efforts for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

***Question: Mr. President, can Azerbaijan rely on the assistance of England, being a member of the Council of Europe?***

**Answer:** Yes, we can rely on everybody. Many states are the members of the Council of Europe, we need the support of each of them, including the United Kingdom, and I suppose that we shall get this support.

***Question: Mr. President what can you say about the meeting with the Queen?***

**Answer:** The meeting with the Queen made a very good impression on me. We had a very comprehensive conversation about the relations between our countries and cultures at the same time on the current social and political situation in Azerbaijan, on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict and on the contacts, economic relations between the United Kingdom and Azerbaijan. I am very satisfied with this conversation.

**Question: Mr. President, was the issue of the restoration of “The Silk Road” mentioned there?**

**Answer:** Yes, I gave to Tony Blair very detailed information on the restoration of “The Silk Road”, and on the summit to be held on September 7-8 in Baku. You know that he has been invited to this summit. Prime Minister, Tony Blair was interested in this issue, gave a lot of questions, wanted to clarify some details. I think that he will take part in the summit.

**Question: Do you invite him to Azerbaijan?**

**Answer:** Yes, of course. I invite Prime Minister Tony Blair personally to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan. He accepted my invitation. And I sent him a letter to take part at the Summit to be held on September 7-8 in Baku, and I today repeated this invitation. He accepted it with satisfaction. Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland (July 19-24, 1998)**

### **Historical Reference**

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid an official visit to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland on July 19-24 at the invitation of the British Prime Minister Tony Blair. In his interview to the UK's leading media on July 20, President Heydar Aliyev expressed his opinion about the trip: "My visit aims at improving the relations between Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom."

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev met the Parliamentary Under-Secretary at the Department for International Development George Foulkes, executive director of Shell company Phil Vahtsala, President of the Lazma Company John Durbell.

The UK Minister of State for Foreign Affairs Doug Henderson hosted an official reception in honor of President Heydar Aliyev on the second half of the day. Doug Henderson emphasized Azerbaijan's strategic importance in the Caspian region, the UK's interest in establishing strategic relations with Azerbaijan. In his meeting in London with the general director of the British Council Dr. David Drewery on the same day Heydar Aliyev expressed his satisfaction with close relations between the two countries. Afterwards he met the director general of the British company Monument Oil and Gas Tim Eggar and the executive director of the company Terry Adams.

Heydar Aliyev also attended the official reception hosted in his honor by the British-Azerbaijani Society.

On July 21, in his residence in London, President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev received the International President of the magazine "First" Patrick Cormack. Later there was held a ceremony for signing an international agreement between the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the International Bank of Azerbaijan on opening a bank-credit line. The ceremony was followed by the meeting of Heydar Aliyev with the President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Charles Frank.

On the same day in London President Heydar Aliyev was received by Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, President Heydar Aliyev noted that further improvement of mutually beneficial relations between the two countries is very important for Azerbaijan. In her turn, Queen Elizabeth II expressed the British interest in Azerbaijan.

Afterwards Heydar Aliyev met Mrs. Margaret Beckett, the UK Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, chairwoman of the Chamber of Trade.

On the second half of the day, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev met the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Tony Blair. Noting that the level of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Great Britain is good, the Prime Minister said that he attached great importance to the continuous development of economic and political relations between the two countries.

Appreciating the interest of the UK and the views of Tony Blair in the cooperation with Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev mentioned that he was satisfied with the level of cooperation and would do his best to further develop these relations.

The meeting was followed by a ceremony of the signature of the documents. President Heydar Aliyev and Prime Minister Tony Blair signed the Joint Declaration on friendly relations and partnership between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland. In addition, an exploration, development and production sharing agreement on the Araz, Alov and Sharg deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea was signed by BP (Great Britain), Statoil (Norway) and SOCAR (Azerbaijan). An exploration, development and production sharing agreement on the Inam deposit was signed by AMOCO (USA), Monument Oil and Gas (Great Britain), Central Fuel (Russia), SOCAR (Azerbaijan). Ramco (Great Britain) and SOCAR (Azerbaijan) concluded an exploration, development and production sharing agreement on onshore oil deposits Muradkhanli and Jafarli, the perspective Zardab structure.

On the same day in his London residence President Heydar Aliyev met the State Minister of the Department of Trade and Industry John Batt. Considering his negotiations with the British Queen and the Prime Minister as the most significant events of his official visit, Heydar Aliyev said that the documents signed by him and Tony Blair would play an important role in the further development of the relations.

Heydar Aliyev's official visit to the United Kingdom was in the focus of attention of media. On July 21, Heydar Aliyev gave an interview to a reporter of BBC, the leading British TV channel. The interview was aired on BBC that evening.

On the same day the Lord Mayor of London, Richard Nichols hosted an official reception in honor of Heydar Aliyev.

In his speech on July 22 at an international conference "Business in Azerbaijan" organized at Royal Garden Hotel by ABC company and attended by over 300 delegates from different countries, Heydar Aliyev noted that businesspeople were welcomed to launch business in Azerbaijan which provided all favorable conditions for businesses.

On the same day, at the Embassy of the Azerbaijan, President Heydar Aliyev met the representatives of the Azerbaijani community in the UK. Later Heydar Aliyev also met the Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs and Commonwealth Robin Cook. The British official said that his country would support Azerbaijan's admission to the Council of Europe.

Within the frames of his official visit to the UK, Heydar Aliyev also visited Edinburgh on July 23. President Aliyev met the Lord Provost of Edinburgh Eric Milligan, attended the industrial and manufacturing complex in Grangemouth. Later he met the representatives of business circles of Scotland.

On the same day the President of Azerbaijan met the Azerbaijani living in Edinburgh. He underlined the importance of forming and strengthening the Azerbaijani diaspora, combining the efforts to inform the world community about Azerbaijan.

On July 24, Heydar Aliyev partook at the newly opened exhibition at the Cultural Center of Azerbaijan in London.

## **OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO GEORGIA (March 22-23, 2000)**

“...The Georgian-Azerbaijani relations are on high level. These relations have great history. This history connects us more closely. The two independent states established their relations on these solid historical basis and these relations develop rapidly...”

*From the statement of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev during the official visit of the President of Georgia Michael Saakashvili to Azerbaijan – May 20, 2009*

### **From the conversation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze at the private meeting**

Tbilisi, “Krsanisi” Governmental House, March 22, 2000

**Eduard Shevardnadze:** My dear friend and brother Heydar Aliyev, it is a great honor for me to meet you in the Georgian land. You are welcome. Your visit to Georgia is of great importance. I express my sincere gratitude for accepting my invitation and paying an official visit to Tbilisi. The visit opens qualitatively a new stage in the development of relations between our two independent countries.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I express my sincere gratitude for your invitation on to pay an official visit to Georgia, as well as for friendly and sincere attitude to me and the Azerbaijani delegation. I am pleased to meet my dear friend and brother once more. Today we shall hold extensive discussions on the development of relations between the independent countries of Azerbaijan and Georgia and exchange views on regional and international issues.

We should focus on the issues related to the development of oil fields and transportation of energy resources to the world markets, in particular to the implementation of the main Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan export pipeline which is one of the biggest and rare regional projects at the end of the twentieth century.

**Eduard Shevardnadze:** Signature of an agreement on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline has been realized thanks to the consistent and purposeful policy, firm position, persistence of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev who is the originator and author of the project. I highly appreciate your decision in the resolution of the issues concerning the tariffs and express my sincere gratitude.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Of course, in addition to all of these questions we should conduct a comprehensive exchange of views on important issue as the security in the Southern Caucasus and in the Caucasus in general. I consider it necessary to stress that deepening

and expanding the traditional, historical and friendly relations between our two countries in the period of independence is of greatest importance. I want to note once more the relevance of the “Peace in the Caucasus” initiative declared by us in 1996. It is very important to solve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh and the Abkhazian-Georgian conflict peacefully as soon as possible and to establish peace, security and stability in the region.

**Eduard Shevardnadze:** The Azerbaijani-Georgian relations that are based on sincere friendship, peaceful neighborhood and strategic partnership have broad opportunities and prospects.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the official reception hosted by the President of Georgia, Eduard  
Shevardnadze in honor of Heydar Aliyev**

March 22, 2000

Dear Eduard Amrosiyevich,

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen,

Once more I want to thank you all for your hospitality and warm feelings of friendship, for this wonderful welcome and for that wonderful holiday that you have given us on the Georgian land.

When in my youth, I arrived in Georgia it made me happy to be in Tbilisi. You know that I was born and grew up in Nakhchivan. Then, till the years of 1941 and 1942 there was no direct railway to Nakhchivan. In order to get to Baku we had to travel three days by train on the railway, which was laid by Tsar Nicholay in the beginning of this century from Baku through Tbilisi and Yerevan to Nakhchivan and then to Julfa which borders with Iran.

I was travelling by train, of course, first with my father and then alone. I had to get off the Nakhchivan-Tbilisi train in Tbilisi and then get on the Tbilisi-Baku train. There was a difference of 12 hours between the trains. When the train arrived in Tbilisi, I immediately got out of it, walked around Tbilisi and admired it. Because then I did not live in Baku, but in Nakhchivan, and the difference was great. I was delighted and glad.

Sometimes, when I could not get a ticket I had to spend the night at the Tbilisi railway station. This happened several times. I was sleeping on the station benches. Perhaps, others did it somewhere, but I had to do it only in Tbilisi.

But I enjoyed it. Then the Georgian language was not very familiar to me and I listened intently to the talks in this language. I liked it so much that I also wanted to speak the Georgian. That is, there has always been a great sense of warmth and even love of the Azerbaijanis for Georgia in the past centuries. This apparently is in the genes of our people.

You know that many outstanding Azerbaijanis lived in Tbilisi. Moreover, Tbilisi, Georgia were their homeland. It is true, some of them were born and grew up here and some came and carried out their activities here. Because then the capital of the Southern Caucasus was Tbilisi. The tsarist empire divided our country into provinces and districts, but the viceroy of the Tsar sat in Tbilisi. Therefore, not only because of it, Tbilisi attracts all and not only in the Caucasus but also in Russia. My fellow

countryman Jalil Mammadguluzade by the way, an outstanding man, a writer, essayist and philosopher, born in a village of Nakhchivan, after graduating seminary in Gori spent most of his life in Tbilisi. The magazine “Molla Nasreddin” popular at the beginning of the century all over the Muslim world, Azerbaijan, Iran, Turkey and Central Asia was published here.

Now, when you look at the magazine “Molla Nasreddin” you think, Oh my God, we are talking about democracy, freedom of speech and all that was there. What cartoons were there! By the way, a very famous Azerbaijani artist Azim Azim-zade drew them. He drew caricatures of such specific types of the Azerbaijani people that now you look and admire.

That is, I want to say that Georgia has always been our favorite city and Georgia our beloved country. Each of my visits to this country is a great joy for me and for those who accompany me. The atmosphere that surrounds us from the moment of arrival greatly increases this joy and admiration.

It is true that it is late. Usually doctors say that at this time one should drink kefir and sleep. However, we are now in such a wonderful event. That is, I was glad that when I arrived in Tbilisi 50 years ago and today as President of Azerbaijan I am still happy here in this beautiful land surrounded by friends and most importantly by friend and brother Eduard Shevardnadze.

We have done a great work here. I think we had a good meeting in the Opera Theatre named after Paliashvili. It is an evening of friendship of the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples and Shevardnadze and Aliyev. This evening once more confirms that we are eternal friends and as independent peoples and countries we shall continue to go on this path with confidence, supporting each other.

The content of our conversations today is based on mutual understanding, support and a deep respect for each other. I felt a deep respect for Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people here. Mr. Shevardnadze said many kind words about our country, our friendship and me. I am very grateful to you, for all the words you said. You probably exaggerated in some extent by disclosing your inner feelings to me personally. However, all this is of great importance for our peoples. Our people must see and understand the friendship of the two men that are not young, that are friends for years, for decades and we shall be friends for many more years.

In a word, we have passed a long life with Eduard Shevardnadze and we have a long road ahead, as history has given us the historical responsibility for the fate of the Georgian and Azerbaijani peoples. We, the people, who have a great experience understand and know what the responsibility is. We shall do everything in order to deserve this trust.

Mr. Shevardnadze, as I already said, has done a lot for Georgia, he is able to do much more for it than before. I believe in it.

You know your President and your leader. I also know him. Maybe I know him better than most of you, because we are very close to each other in nature, we both dedicated our lives to our peoples. Therefore, I know him. I know that he is an open-hearted and responsible person, I know how he works. I know that from his earliest years, his whole life was devoted to his people.

Thank you again for the warm welcome and friendship, I wish the Georgian people happy a future.

Mr. Shevardnadze said that, both the Georgian and Azerbaijani peoples have lost a lot in the past. These losses have gone down into history. We must look forward to the future. Despite all the difficulties which we are experiencing today the future of the Georgian and Azerbaijani peoples are bright and beautiful. The basis for this is our freedom, independence and the fact that we are the owners of our destiny. The Georgian people are the complete owner of their fate of course, are able to turn their country into a wonderful place. It will be so.

This will happen due to the efforts of my friend Eduard Shevardnadze. I am sure that having worked for many years he will raise Georgia to the highest level and will bring it to the road on which the country can move forward.

Mr. Shevardnadze, today I repeat it again. The elections are on April 9. Indeed, it is a great trial. But I am absolutely sure that the people are wise, they know and can appreciate. At the time of disorder, when Georgia was split, the people turned to you. But here, there were many politicians and the people turned to you as there was no one equal to you in Georgia, at least for the last 50 years. Therefore, the people turned to you, knowing that you will bring them out of chaos. You did it.

I know that your experience, your international reputation, your knowledge and most importantly your dedication to your country, your land and people let you implement this historic mission. You have done it. People should be grateful to you for this. I believe that this gratitude will be expressed in April 9 in the presidential elections in Georgia and Eduard Shevardnadze will be reelected. We shall all congratulate him and, of course, I shall come to the inauguration.

To your health, Mr. Eduard Shevardnadze!

Cheers, friends,

To the people of Georgia!

To the fraternal friendship of Georgian and Azerbaijani peoples!

Thank you!

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Georgia (March 22-23, 2000)**

### **Historical Reference**

Development of mutually beneficial relations with the Republic of Georgia in all the important fields is one of the priorities of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan. The intensive reciprocal visits of the heads of the states and governments have great significance in the improvement and development of the legal base of the interstate relations.

Among these visits it is necessary to emphasize the official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Georgia on 22-23 March, 2000

In the interview to the journalists while talking about the aim of the visit the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev stated: "This is an official visit. We shall make discussions and sign documents. The main document is the political document or political statement, in other words, this is the joint statement of the Azerbaijani and Georgian Presidents. Therein our similar opinions on the issues of our relations, the current situation in our states, in the Caucasus, and the processes in the world community will be reflected. There are also other different documents which shall cover the economic issues."

On March 22 there was a tete-a-tete meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and the Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze in "Krasanisi" Presidential Residence in Tbilisi. In the meeting the presidents exchanged views on the issues of security in the Caucasus, in general, and in the Southern Caucasus particularly, and they mentioned the importance of deepening and strengthening the historical and traditional friendly relations in the years of independence. After the meeting the negotiations were held between delegations of Azerbaijan and Georgia.

On the same day there was a joint statement of the Presidents after the signature ceremony and then a press conference was held. The parties declared that they would improve the cooperation between Azerbaijan and Georgia in all the fields. While highly appreciating the results of the visit and mentioning the productive character of the negotiations, they declared that they would do their best for the continuation of the cooperation.

On March 22 another meeting was held in Tbilisi State Opera and Ballet Theatre named after Z. Paliashvili between the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and the representatives of the Georgian public. Taking into consideration the gifts given to the establishment of friendship between the Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples and its durability through decades, and taking into consideration the works done in turning the relations into strategically partnership in the recent years, Eduard Shevardnadze was awarded with the order "Istiglal" Order, highest prize of the Republic of Azerbaijan, with the decree of the President Heydar Aliyev.

On the same day President of the Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev attended to the official reception organized on the behalf of the Georgian President Eduard Shevardnadze. On March 23 the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev made a statement in the meeting with the MPs

of Georgia: "After gaining independence the activities of the Georgian and Azerbaijani parliaments have great role in the rapid development of the Georgian-Azerbaijani relations. The relations between the two parliaments completely reflect the friendly and brotherly relations between our peoples and the presidents."

On the same day the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan gave an interview to the National Television of Georgia. In the interview the President expressed his satisfaction with the Georgian- Azerbaijani relations and hoped that the relations would extend in the future in all the fields.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA  
(July 3-6, 2000)**

“... The relations between Austria and Azerbaijan are on an excellent level. Political relations are becoming stronger and your visit to Azerbaijan is an obvious proof of it. Political consultations and cooperation on various levels are held. In a word, high level of political relations, of course, gives an impetus to the development of the relations in all other fields..”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of the Republic of Austria Heinz Fischer, May 13, 2013*

**The talk of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the meeting with Federal President of Austria Thomas Klestil**

Vienna, Presidential Office, July 4, 2000

**Thomas Klestil:** Mr. President, welcome to our country. I thank you for accepting our invitation and paying an official visit to Vienna. The bilateral mutual relations between Azerbaijan and Austria are very useful for both of us. Austria is very interested in the development of partnership in all spheres with Azerbaijan with a rich economic potential. I am confident that the negotiations, which will take place during your official visit and the documents which will be signed, will stimulate the further strengthen the relations between our countries.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. President, I express my gratitude to you, as the head of Austria for the sincere words and for the invitation to visit your country. I highly appreciate the work done in the field of continuous approach of relations between the two countries after Azerbaijan gained its independence.

The independent Republic of Azerbaijan, which has chosen the path of democratic development, measures and reforms for the construction of a legal, democratic and secular state are successfully implemented. As a result, we have achieved a great progress. Our republic builds its relations with the countries of the world on the basis of sovereignty and mutually beneficial partnership and attaches great importance to integrate its economy into the world community.

The most painful problem of our Republic faces is the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh. The Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan, which is going on for 12 years and the occupation of 20 percent of our country by the

Armenian forces, are contrary to all international norms. Have a look at a map, please. Over a million of our citizens were forcibly expelled from their homes live in tents in critical conditions for years. The cease-fire achieved in 1994 is an important step on the road to peace. To resolve this conflict peacefully the Minsk Group of OSCE was established in 1992. Perhaps you remember that at the OSCE Budapest Summit in 1994, Lisbon Summit in 1996 and Istanbul Summit in 1999 which we participated together. To resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict peacefully in Lisbon the summit adopted three principles and Austria supported the position of Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, Armenia ignores the resolutions, decisions of the UN, OSCE and other international organizations and the legal norms recognized by all the countries of the world. To annex the Mountainous Garabagh, part of the territory of Azerbaijan, or to create there a new Armenian state is unacceptable and we shall never agree with it. Our country wants peace. We want to resolve this conflict on the basis of the principles adopted at the summit in Lisbon by the heads of the governments of the 53 countries that are members of OSCE. We are ready to give to Garabagh the highest status of autonomy within Azerbaijan. To resolve the conflict within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE there were negotiations and the, co-chairs of the Minsk Group, Russia, U.S. and France have made efforts in this area in the recent years. I am confident that the Republic of Austria currently leading the OSCE will productively use its abilities to help to eliminate the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict peacefully.

**Thomas Klestil:** Mr. President, I highly appreciate the achievements of the independent Azerbaijan confidently stepping through democratic developments thanks to your far-sighted policy. I am sure that the conflict faced by your country will be resolved peacefully in accordance with international norms and Azerbaijan will be one of the most developed countries of the world.

My country is now the chairman of the OSCE. To resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh peacefully Austria will enhance its efforts and use all the opportunities. The delegation headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, the chairman of OSCE Benita Ferrero-Waldner will visit the region in the middle of July.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I know that you, Mr. President also highly appreciate the partnership that established and incessantly growing between Austria and Azerbaijan, the negotiations and meetings held in Baku and Vienna on various levels and the documents we signed. Strengthening these relations more, of course, would be extremely beneficial to both sides. Finally, I invite you to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

**Thomas Klestil:** Thank you. I am pleased to accept your invitation.

## **Statement of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev at the joint press conference with the President of Austria Thomas Klestil**

July 4, 2000

Mr. President!

Ladies and gentlemen!

Dear representatives of mass media!

I am pleased with my official visit at the invitation of the President of Austria in Vienna. Mr. President, I thank you for the invitation and very hospitable, kindly meeting. This is the main stage in the development of the relations established between Austria and Azerbaijan. We appreciate it highly.

Mr. President, as you marked during our meeting today a lot of questions were discussed tete-a-tete including, the situation in the Southern Caucasus and the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh (which has been going on already for 12 years).

Mr. President, you know this problem well. We met you at the summits of OSCE in Budapest 1994, in Lisbon 1996, in Istanbul 1999 and this question was on the agenda of these summits. I thank you for your support to Azerbaijan in the issue of the fair solution of this question in the summits of OSCE.

Today we have discussed this question in detail with you. I felt that you know this problem, it troubles you, too. As it is important for Austria, that in the Caucasian region, which is one of the important regions of the world, reign peace, stability. I told you that Azerbaijan made efforts in connection with this and took a lot of steps. In 1996 the Lisbon Summit of OSCE took a very important decision. We tried to realize it. However, as the result of the non-constructive position of Armenia could not do it.

The Minsk group of OSCE is engaged in this question since 1992. The Minsk Group is headed by the United States of America, Russia, and France. However, they did not produce necessary results, in 1999 we raised the question about the necessity of holding a number of tete-a-tete meetings face to face with the Armenian President Robert Kocharyan and the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev.

During these meetings we moved forward in some degree. Both presidents came to such a conclusion that to settle the question it is necessary to make mutual concessions. However, the progress achieved in this question in 1999, unfortunately, did not make forward. Nevertheless, we shall try to regulate this question peacefully in the future.

Mr. President, I informed you that as the result of this conflict the Armenian armed forces occupied 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory and these territories are under

the occupation of the Armenian armed forces. More than one million of Azerbaijanis have been forced to leave the occupied territories, they live in the country in tents, in severe conditions, like migrants. Six years ago, in 1994 Armenia and Azerbaijan signed an agreement on cease-fire in order to settle the question peacefully. Now there is no war, but peace was not achieved. This is a vital question for Azerbaijan, the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be reestablished, Armenian armed forces must leave the occupied territories. And Armenia must observe international legal regulations, principles of OSCE, over one millions Azerbaijanis must return home.

You must also know that everything has been destroyed in the occupied territories. People must return to their native lands. Much must be done here in order to live there, and it needs great finances. We think that if peace will be reached, certainly, in the forthcoming years with the mediation of the world community, Council of Europe, big donors, and then other questions can be solved.

This year Austria will chair the OSCE. In the nearest future the minister of foreign affairs Mrs. Ferrero-Valdner will arrive in our region, will be in Azerbaijan. We wait impatiently for you. We wish that in the second half of the year, during the chairmanship of Austria in OSCE a real result would be reached in this question.

Mr. President you are a very famous statesman in Europe and in the world, possessing great respect. I wish and asked you, using your own political opportunities, help us in the solution of this question peacefully. We cherish great hopes in Austria, its President, in the Minister of Foreign Affairs and in OSCE.

And finally, Mr. President, I want to inform you that the part of the Austrian soldiers fighting in the Second World War on the side of Germany and taken captive by the Soviet army was delivered to Azerbaijan, and they participated in the construction of a hydroelectric station. Forty-five men died and were buried in Azerbaijan. And until now their graves are kept. I want to give you the photos of these graves. And this is their tombstones. I give you information you about them. I think it would be better, if the press photographers take their photos and demonstrate.

## **Talk of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the meeting with the Federal Chancellor of Austria Wolfgang Schüssel**

Vienna, July 4, 2000

**Wolfgang Schüssel:** I welcome you on your official visit to Austria, Mr. President. I am very pleased to meet you. I visited Baku, in the July of 1999 as vice-chancellor and minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Austria. I always remember my meetings and our talks with pleasure.

Your official visit to Vienna will be an important step in the development of relations between our two countries. Of course, Austria is very interested in establishing mutually beneficial relations in all areas with the independent Republic of Azerbaijan which has rich natural resources and follow the road of democratic development.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I express my gratitude for the kind words and the invitation to pay an official visit to Vienna. Strengthening cooperation with Austria in future, which is one of the economically developed countries of Europe, has a special significance for Azerbaijan.

The independent Republic of Azerbaijan, which has chosen the path of market relations and democratic development and build a legal, democratic and secular state, is closely tied with the world and the European values. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopted a decision on the adoption of our country to the Council of Europe as a full member. Today, the most painful problem for our country is the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh that has been going on for 12 years. Please look at the map. 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territories has been occupied by the Armenian armed forces, over one million of our citizens have been expelled from their homes, now live in grave conditions in tents and our towns, villages and ancient monuments of culture located in the occupied territory have been devastated and destroyed.

Within the framework of the Minsk Group of OSCE direct negotiations are conducted for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Our country has always occupied and occupies a constructive position on this issue. Unfortunately, the Armenian side tries to prevent the conclusion of a peace agreement in every possible way and does not want to give up their aggressive intentions. The co-chairs of the Minsk Group, Russia, the U.S. and France make efforts to speed up the peace process. I am confident that Austria, which is now chairs OSCE, will effectively use all the opportunities for the immediate resolution of the conflict through peaceful means.

**Wolfgang Schüssel:** Mr. President, I also assure you that the Austrian side will support the position of Azerbaijan. The minister of Foreign Affairs of Austria, the current chairman of OSCE Benita Ferrero-Waldner will visit the region. I must say that my country is ready to provide any assistance to resolve this conflict peacefully.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Mr. Chancellor, I believe that the Azerbaijani-Austrian relations will develop in future. Measures and the policy we conduct in this area, of course, will produce positive results.

Mr. Chancellor, I thank you and invite you to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

**Wolfgang Schüssel:** Thank you. I am pleased to accept your invitation.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Austria (July 3-6, 2000)**

### **Historical Reference**

Austria is among the first countries which recognized the independence of Azerbaijan. The diplomatic relations between the two countries were established shortly after Azerbaijan restored its independence. The most productive period in the Azerbaijani-Austrian bilateral relations started after the first official of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to Austria on July 3-6, 2000.

In his interview to the reporters, Heydar Aliyev declared that Austria was in charge of chairmanship of the OSCE in 2000, while the Austrian Foreign Minister was the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office. Moreover, since the headquarters of a number of UN agencies, OSCE headquarters are in Vienna, the importance of meetings, negotiations with the chairs of those institutions for Azerbaijan was also underlined.

At the meeting held with the Austrian Federal President Thomas Klestil and the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev on July 4, the parties stressed the mutual benefit of the bilateral relations, the interest of Austria in thorough cooperation with Azerbaijan, a country with rich economic potential. The development of the Azerbaijani-Austrian relations, the ways of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict were discussed during the negotiations. A series of agreements between the governments of Azerbaijan and Austria was signed with the participation of the presidents.

In his meeting with Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the Austrian Foreign Minister, the OSCE Chairwoman, on the same day, President Heydar Aliyev expressed Azerbaijan's expectations in the OSCE activities in the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, especially during the period of chairmanship of Austria. Mrs. Ferrero-Waldner declared that Austria, as the incumbent chair of OSCE, would do its best to resolve the conflict peacefully.

On July 4, President Heydar Aliyev visited the Vienna city hall.

At the meeting with the Chairman of the Austrian Parliament Heinz Fischer on July 4, president Heydar Aliyev spoke of strengthening the relations between the parliaments of Azerbaijan and Austria and about number of issues of mutual interest.

Then Heydar Aliyev provided information on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh in his meeting with the Federal Chancellor of Austria Wolfgang Schüssel, the latter stated: "I assure you that Azerbaijan's position regarding the conflict will be supported by Austria." Another significant meeting on the same day was organized with the members of the Foreign Policy and International Relations Society at the Austrian Economic Chamber. The meeting was attended by Austria's prominent public and political figures, businesspeople, ambassadors of foreign countries and reporters. Heydar Aliyev made a speech on the topic "Azerbaijan on the threshold of the XXI century: problems and prospects".

On July 5 at the United Nations Office in Vienna, Heydar Aliyev met Pino Arlacchi, the Director-General of the Office, Under-Secretary-General of the UN. “A Memorandum on mutual understanding among Azerbaijan, Georgia, Iran and the UN drug control program on cooperation in the sphere of drug control and on activities against legalizing illegal drug money” was signed by President Heydar Aliyev and Pino Arlacchi.

During the visit Heydar Aliyev met Carlos Magarinos, Director General of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) on July 5. The sides signed “a Memorandum on cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the United Nations Industrial Development Organization in the field of industrial development”.

On the same day, at the Office of the United Nations in Vienna Heydar Aliyev met the delegation led by Wolfgang Hoffmann, Executive Secretary of the Preparatory Commission of the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty Organization in the Economic Chamber with representatives of the Austrian business circles, with the Azerbaijani community living in Vienna and surrounding towns.

Heydar Aliyev’s meeting with Mohammad al-Baradei, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency ended up with signing the “Additional protocol between Azerbaijan and the International Atomic Energy Agency on applying guarantees regarding the nuclear non-proliferation agreement”.

On July 6, the Azerbaijani President met the reporters of the Austrian mass media (newspapers “Courier”, “Die Presse”, “Standart”, APA Agency) and spoke to them about his impressions concerning the visit.

The visit not only strengthened the Azerbaijani-Austrian cooperation, but also accelerated Azerbaijan’s integration into the world community.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF FRANCE  
(January 23-27, 2001)**

“... The French-Azerbaijani relations has a beautiful history and I am sure that the future of these relations will be more beautiful. Yesterday's meeting with the President of France Fransua Hollande reconfirmed the strategic character of the relations...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the reception dedicated to the opening of the Center of Azerbaijani Culture in Paris - September 19, 2012*

**Statement of Heydar Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
following his meeting with Jacques Chirac, President of France**

January 24 , 2001

Thank you Mr. President. First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for the invitation of the President of France to pay an official visit to France.

President Heydar Aliyev talked in detail about the activities of the Minsk Group of OSCE and its co-chairs in order to peacefully resolve the conflict, highly appreciated the initiatives of France and Jacques Chirac on the resolution of conflict.

The Azerbaijani President talked about his direct negotiations with Robert Kocharyan, President of Armenia, and meanwhile, emphasized the need for increasing the initiatives to settle the conflict by the co-chairing countries of OSCE – US, Russia, France.

Jacques Chirac emphasized the importance of the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict for the establishment of peace, stability and security in the Southern Caucasian region, more rapid development of democracy in states of the region and the expansion of economic relations among them, meanwhile stated that regular meetings between President Heydar Aliyev and Robert Kocharyan have an essential importance in advancing initiatives to find a compromise to settle the conflict. Mr. Jacques Chirac surely stated that the meeting of the Azerbaijani and Armenian President, to be held in Paris on January 26, will give a special impetus to the acceleration of the peaceful resolution process. It is of great significance that France is a co-chair in the Minsk Group together with Russia and the United States of America for the resolution of the conflict peacefully.

I should say that France, personally President Mr. Chirac are actively involved in this issue and has forwarded new initiatives .Today we broadly discussed this problem.

I am satisfied with the results of our discussions and the position of France. I believe that with the endeavors of the President Jacques Chirac, we shall be able to resolve the conflict with peaceful means.

I invited Mr. Jacques Chirac to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

**Jacques Chirac:** I accepted this invitation with a great pleasure.

**Heydar Aliyev:** However this visit was planned in 1998, it failed because of some reasons. I hope that it will take place this time. Our meetings and negotiations will continue. I thank Mr. President Jacques Chirac for his intention to create conditions for me to meet Kocharyan, President of Armenia.

Mr. President, I thank you for your hospitality, sincerity toward us and our friendship with you.

Then the Presidents answered to the questions of reporters.

**Question: Have you touched upon the resolution of the Parliament concerning “genocide of the Armenians in Turkey”?**

**Jacques Chirac:** President Aliyev expressed his deep regret and said that the people of Azerbaijan exceedingly criticized the resolution of the parliament. I do understand this criticism and take it into consideration. But it will never harm the existing friendship and mutual relations between Azerbaijan and France.

**Question: Did you come to an agreement on the Karabakh conflict?**

**Heydar Aliyev:** We discussed various variants; however, we shall continue our relations and the discussions. I hope that we shall find a solution.

**Jacques Chirac:** Thank you.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of France (January 23-27, 2001)**

### **Historical Reference**

The Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev paid his third visit to France on the 23-27<sup>th</sup> of January, 2001.

On January 24 President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev, met the French President Jacque Chirak in Elisee Palace. In the meeting President Jacque Chirak appreciated the gradual development of the relations between France and Azerbaijan based on strong foundations, he expressed his confidence that the official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev would give an incentive to strengthening the beneficial mutual relations between the two countries.

President Heydar Aliyev spoke about the activities of the Minsk Group of OSCE and its co-chairs on the peaceful resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh and stated that he highly appreciated the efforts of France, and particularly of President Jacque Chirak, in the field of solution of the above mentioned conflict.

At the meeting the presidents discussed the situation in the international arena, in the region and other issues. President Heydar Aliyev expressed his disapproval of the documents on “the Armenian genocide” adopted in the French parliament, and criticized it. President Jacque Chirak interested in the complaints of the President Heydar Aliyev, and took them into consideration.

On the same day the French President hosted an official reception in honor of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev.

After the meeting and the official reception the Azerbaijani and French Presidents made statements to the journalists in the square in front of the Elisee Palace. Talking about the activities of Minsk Group of the OSCE and its co-chairs on the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh Heydar Aliyev stated that he highly appreciated the efforts done by the French government and President Jacque Chirak for the resolution of the ongoing conflict.

On the same day the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev met Serj Buadve, president of the French-Azerbaijani Chamber of Commerce, vice president of the Chamber Azer Merd and the former French ambassador to Baku Jan Perren. Later President Heydar Aliyev answered to the questions of the Turkish journalists from TRT, TGRT channels, and from the newspaper “SABAH”.

On January 25, he attended the ceremony of admission of Azerbaijan to the Council of Europe Heydar Aliyev stated: “We appreciate the admission of our republic to the Council of Europe not only as a result of the works or reforms done until now, but also as a support to our country and people. That's why we believe that a number of problems can be solved only within the European family.”

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev made a speech in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and expressed his gratitude on behalf of the Azerbaijani people to the members of the PACE and Council of Europe for their support in the admission process of Azerbaijan to this organization. Later he met the Secretary-General of the EC Walter Schwimmer. During the meeting they exchanged views on the perspectives of relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the European Council and on other issues the both sides interested.

On the same day the Azerbaijani President also met Lord Russell Johnston, chairman of PACE, Indulis Berzins, chairman of the Committee of the Ministers of the European Council and minister of Foreign Affairs of Latvia, Lucius Wildbacher, president of the European Court on Human Rights.

In Strasbourg, in the Europe Palace, chairman of PACE Lord Russell Johnston and chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the European Council Indulis Berzins hosted an official reception in honor of President Heydar Aliyev.

Later a joint press conference of the Azerbaijani and Armenian Presidents was held in the headquarters of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

On January 26, President Heydar Aliyev had a tete-a-tet meeting with the President of Armenia Robert Kocharyan in Paris. Talking about the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh the Presidents stressed importance of continuation of the dialogues on the ways for compromise.

While looking through the activities of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of the OSCE on the solution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict the Presidents emphasized the importance of acceleration of efforts in this direction and affirmed their unanimity on the continuation of direct negotiations within the framework of the Minsk Group.

On the same day a meeting was held among the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev, French President Jaque Shirak and the Armenian President Robert Kocharyan. They particularly discussed the peaceful solution of the conflict over Nagorno Karabakh and stressed the inevitability of the continuation of direct meetings between the Azerbaijani and Armenian Presidents.

In the interview to the journalists in Baku President Heydar Aliyev appreciated his official visit to France as a successful, important and historical for the Azerbaijani people.

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY  
(March 12-17, 2001)**

“... The relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan in all the fields are developing successfully. These relations are based on friendship and brotherhood. We have a rich common history and values. Today the relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan are founded on this strong basis. In the recent 20 years the relations between the two countries have been on a high level. Today these beautiful traditions are continuing and our cooperation in all the issues produces positive results...”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the joint press conference with the prime minister of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan – May 17, 2010*

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the end of the meeting with the President of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer**

March 12, 2001

Your Excellency, President of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer,

Dear friends, brothers,

I cordially greet all of you and convey to you the best wishes of the people of Azerbaijan.

Mr. President,

I thank you for inviting me to pay an official visit to Turkey and I think this visit is very important for the further development of the Azerbaijani-Turkish relations.

Mr. President, you have informed about the work that we shall carry out here. Thus, I have no intention of repeating it. But I want to point out that the relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey have always been friendly and fraternal to this day and this will continue. This and the cooperation in economic, commerce, scientific, cultural and other fields are the basis of our relations. All of them we can say are at a high level, but these relations should be continued and strengthened. Therefore, by visiting Turkey we show that the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship and brotherhood are of great importance for us once more. However, we want to take the necessary measures for the further development of our cooperation. The Program of my visit allows it. Thus, I am very pleased that we shall do our best to implement the tasks we face.

Mr. President, of course, all the theme you touched upon the construction of the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the export of the Azerbaijani gas to Turkey and the

economic and trade relations are very important to us. But the most important and most significant for us is ensuring peace and security in the Caucasus. This is important both for Turkey and Azerbaijan, as well as for all countries of the Caucasus. The significance of this for Azerbaijan is in the fact that over 12 years Azerbaijan has been in a military conflict with Armenia. As a result of this conflict, the Armenian armed forces for some reasons have occupied 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory and more than one million Azerbaijanis have forcibly been expelled from the occupied lands and become refugees. They now live in tents, in the heavy conditions.

Mr. President,

When you were in Baku you saw the situation of the displaced persons located in the capital of our country. But the place you saw was not the worst one. The situation of refugees living in tents is much worse. Therefore, the question of resolving the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is the main issue for us. Turkey and Azerbaijan cooperate closely in this area for many years. At this stage, we have a great need for negotiations and consultations with the Republic of Turkey and the government in order to determine the directions of the peaceful settlement of the conflict. I hope that this will take the main place in our meetings, negotiations are discussions. We shall receive the necessary support from Turkey to resolve the issue.

Mr. President, I once again express my gratitude for inviting me to pay an official visit to Turkey. I wish peace, stability and prosperity to all the brotherly and friendly people of Turkey. Thank you.

**Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar  
Aliyev for the reporters at the ceremony of signature of the  
Azerbaijani-Turkish documents**

Ankara, "Chankaya" Palace, March 12, 2001

Mr. President,

Dear friends,

Members of the press,

First part of my official visit to Turkey is coming to an end. Once again I express my gratitude to my dear friend, my brother, President of the Republic of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer for inviting me to visit Turkey and for the kind hospitality. This visit is of great importance. Since we have analyzed the relations between our two countries, the issues relating to our region and the processes occurring in the world, once again confirmed that our opinions are the same and made statements on joint activities in the development of the Turkish-Azerbaijani cooperation. It really gladdens me. Turkey for Azerbaijan is a strong, large and developed country living in democratic conditions. Turkey has always been an example for the young independent Azerbaijan and today it still is an example.

Mr. President has already informed you about the negotiations and the issues we discussed here. I do not want to take the time and repeat it. But I want to note that we share the same views in all matters. In particular, today, I once again felt the same attitude in both countries, Turkey and Azerbaijan, in the construction of the main export pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan. You can be confident that together we shall complete this work, which began in 1994, the Azerbaijani oil will flow through the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline to Turkey and the Mediterranean in the coming years.

There has emerged a very important issue in our relations with Turkey recently. This issue is the joint development of large natural gas fields explored in Azerbaijan together with Turkey. In "Shah Deniz" deposit we have large reserves of gas. Being aware of this, we have an agreement with the Turkish government on the development and export of the most part of the produced gas to Turkey. Today, with a feeling of great satisfaction I note that this agreement is implemented into life and an intergovernmental agreement is signed on the sale of the natural gas produced in Azerbaijan to Turkey, as well as the a sale and purchase agreement. This is very important. Since the gas has to pass through the territory of Georgia. We have a gas line in the past laid from Baku to Georgia and we need to restore it. Thus, we need to know where to export the gas. Secondly, now we have signed that 6 billion cubic meters of gas will be delivered. But

we can sell each year Turkey from 15 billion to 20 billion cubic meters of gas in future.

At the time, my dear friend, the ninth President Suleyman Demirel has repeatedly said that Turkey has a need to purchase 50 billion cubic meters of gas and more gas Azerbaijan will be producing, the more we shall buy. Now with the esteemed President Ahmet Necdet Sezer we laid a foundation. I think that it will be successful. Now we shall use the existing line, bringing the gas to the Turkish borders. Turkey should make necessary preparations in order to be able to get and use this gas in time.

But in future, we intend to create a new large pipeline for exporting gas to Turkey. Therefore, we have very wide horizons and perspectives. This will ensure the development of the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship and economic cooperation. At the same time, from a strategic point of view, it will make us closer to each other. We have built our relations with Turkey on the basis of strategic cooperation. We want to continue and develop these relations.

Once again, I want to express my satisfaction with the meetings we held and agreements signed today.

Mr. President, thank you again.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at  
the official reception hosted by the President of the Republic of Turkey  
in honor of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

Ankara, "Chankaya" Palace, March 12, 2001

President of the Republic of Turkey, my dear friend and brother Ahmet Necdet Sezer,

Dear friends, ladies and gentlemen,

I cordially welcome you on behalf of the Azerbaijani people, and I am happy to convey to you the best wishes of our nation.

Mr. President, thank you for inviting me to visit Turkey. I appreciate that this visit is very important for Azerbaijan and Turkey and for the Azerbaijani-Turkish relations at the same time. I would like to express my gratitude on my own behalf and on behalf of the representatives of my delegation arrived here, for the hospitality extended to us, for friendship and warmth. However, I believe that Turkey is not only yours, but also our homeland. Thus, I think that there could not be a bad reception. We live in a sense of boundless love for the Republic of Turkey and the Turkish people. This love has deep roots. This is our historic past. It is our language. This is our national, spiritual values and our religion. Most importantly, love of Azerbaijan for Turkey, existing in the past and in the present day. We watch great success of Turkey proudly. These successes are becoming more and more year by year. Its establishment was laid by the founder of the Turkish Republic and the great leader Mustafa Kemal Ataturk. That is why, I started my official visit to Turkey with a visit to the grave of the great Ataturk. Each time I visit the tomb of Ataturk, I remember the tremendous role played by him in the history of mankind again and again. However, I believe that if Mustafa Kemal Ataturk in his time, after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, had not created a republic and not set the further development of the republic, had not built the powerful Turkish army, not trained strong Turkish soldier, Turkey would have not got such a high development, despite its being in the circle of enemies. We are pleased that the next generation, following the path of the great Ataturk has developed Turkey. Today Turkey is one of the powerful countries of the world. It is an economically developed country living with the principles of democracy and market economy. All of this for us, for the people of Azerbaijan is, on the one hand, the pride and, on the other hand, the source of experience.

Azerbaijan is a young independent country. At the end of this year we shall celebrate the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. From

a historical point of view, 10 years are not a long period. However, if we consider the processes ongoing in the world, developments in the region the fact that Azerbaijan lives independently for 10 years is a great and historical event. Since we gained independence we felt the support and the help of Turkey.

Yes, my friend, Turkey is the first country to recognize the independence of Azerbaijan. Other countries also recognized our independence and made statements. Turkey, however, differs from them. By recognizing the independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan it has always provided it with a support to live and develop and has always been by the side of Azerbaijan as a brother. Just as in the past today it all closely connects us to Turkey. Thus, my every visit to Turkey gladdens me.

The delegation arrived here with me. There are many ministers and a group of parliamentarians. They all are very happy to be in Turkey. Maybe some of them may be surprised at such a large group of delegation. However, the reason for this is that we want to develop our relations in all the fields.

I feel a sense of boundless pride because I had to pay an official visit to Turkey at the beginning of XXI century and the third millennium. Talks held today with the esteemed President and Prime Minister covered all the spheres of the Azerbaijani-Turkish relations. This is extremely useful for Azerbaijan. In each problem is important to consult with Turkey. Therefore, if one part of our talks today is dedicated to the development of the Turkish-Azerbaijani economic and cultural relations, in a word, the development of relations in all fields, the other part is dedicated to the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh, the most painful problem of Azerbaijan. When Azerbaijan gained independence it became subject to the Armenian aggression. As you know, in 1988, Armenia made a territorial claim to the Azerbaijani land, the Mountainous Garabagh, which is an integral part of Azerbaijan and eventually it led to a military conflict and war. The war inflicted great losses. For various reasons, due to the assistance provided by some foreign countries to Armenia and because of some mistakes in the administration of Azerbaijan, Armenia occupied a part of the Azerbaijani lands. Armenia first occupied the Mountainous Garabagh and then seven major districts around it. Thus, 20 per cent of the Azerbaijani lands were occupied by the Armenian armed forces. For many years over one million Azerbaijanis driven from these lands live in tents as refugees.

Turkey played an important role in the peace negotiations in the period of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, in the period of war and the cease-fire. In 1992, the OSCE created the Minsk Group for the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. Turkey is a member of the Minsk Group and as a member of it, as a friend of Azerbaijan it has done a lot in the 30 years. Unfortunately, all of our efforts, including the measures taken in the recent years by the co-chairs of the Minsk

Group, Russia, the United States of America and France had no results. Armenia does not leave the occupied lands. The Azerbaijani refugees live in tents. All this cause both material and moral damages.

I am grateful to you, Mr. President. You have noted here that the principles of international law unfortunately, are violated by many countries. There are double standards in the world and Azerbaijan suffers from them. While Armenia occupied the Azerbaijani lands, the United States Congress imposed an embargo on assistance to Azerbaijan in 1992. At the same time, the aggressor Armenia receives 100 million dollars annually from the United States great help in as an assistance. We see these injustices, as you do. For example, we are worried about the injustice which has been recently seen in Turkey. As a result of the efforts of the Armenian diaspora a number of parliaments adopted decisions that Turkey committed genocide against the Armenians. We have always protested against such decisions and such thoughts.

When in 1998 this issue was raised in the USA Congress the parliament of Azerbaijan expressed its protest. The decision of the French Parliament recently enraged us. Our Parliament issued a special statement. As the head of country I condemned and demonstrated my will against such injustice. Even, during a meeting with French President Jacques Chirac in January in Paris, I asked him: Why do you allow such injustice? We protest it. This is unfair to the country like Turkey and the Turkish people, including all the Turkic peoples. Today we demonstrated our will as well. That is, these two facts demonstrate that there are double standards in the world that prevent the adoption of the necessary measures for the liberation of the occupied Azerbaijani lands.

I think that such large countries like Russia, the United States and France could have an impact on Armenia to have a constructive approach to negotiations and liberate the occupied lands. Then we can negotiate on the status of the Mountainous Garabagh. However, unfortunately, they did not do it. We made a detailed exchange of views and I am very pleased with it.

Mr. President, you spoke here about the current status of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline and the contract on the export of gas to Turkey which will be produced in the deposit "Shah Deniz" of Azerbaijan. I am very pleased. Since the implementation of the oil strategy of Azerbaijan in 1994 Azerbaijan and Turkey have worked together to build the Baku-Ceyhan oil pipeline. Now we need to promote this work, build and put into operation this pipeline. From the deposits of "Azeri", "Chirag" and "Guneshli" we can annually export 50-60 million tons of oil. However, Azerbaijan has signed 20 contracts with major oil companies of the world. Imagine the amount of oil and gas production from there. Thus, maybe in future the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline will not be enough and we shall have to create a second line. The same thing I can say about the

gas. We signed an agreement for the sale of 6 billion cubic meters of gas to Turkey. However, in future this number can be increased to 10, 15 and 20 billion and thereby to provide the needs of Turkey. This area is the center of the Turkish-Azerbaijani economic relations. However, our relations have been developed in all other areas and we shall try to develop them further.

Over the past ten years, Azerbaijan has covered a difficult path as an independent country. As you know, on the one hand, the aggression of Armenia, on the other hand, violation of political stability in Azerbaijan, the fight of some armed groups for power, repeated change of government and finally, the beginning of the civil war in 1993 caused a large damage to Azerbaijan.

I want to tell you that today in Azerbaijan there is a social and political stability. Despite the aggression of Armenia and existing over one million refugees living in hard conditions Azerbaijan develops every year from the economic point of view. Azerbaijan follows the path of democracy. We are young in everything. We are young as an independent state, as a country following the path of democracy and market economy. We are young everywhere. But we have a brother. Turkey passed this way for decades. Turkey has great experience. We use this experience as well as the world experience. We follow this way. Azerbaijan is in the process of building a democratic, secular country and it will pursue that goal in future, too. I am very pleased that Turkey has been on this way for a long time. It fulfills the wills of Ataturk and will always live as a legal, democratic and secular country. Since secularism is one of the main factors which unite Turkey with Europe and Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan was admitted to the Council of Europe. It is a historical event for us. You know that there were a lot of obstacles on the way of adoption. But Turkey was by our side in our four-year struggle. Turkey, its government and the representatives of Turkey in the Council of Europe helped us, we always feel their support and we finally were admitted to the Council of Europe due to your help. Now we are together in the new organization. This means that we can carry out our work together. It is not accidental that the representatives of Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe and MPs are also present here. They came and had meetings in the Grand National Assembly. They held negotiations with the representatives of Turkey and came to an agreement on joint activities.

Thus, the path covered by us for ten years is very successful. The Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship and brotherhood have developed. However, this is not the last. The world is developing. We have to keep pace with the world. Therefore, the using success and experience achieved by Turkey Azerbaijan will create and develop its own independent country.

For the countries of the former Soviet Union it was not difficult to become

independent because the Soviet Union collapsed. The reasons of its collapse are known. Naturally, the 15 Soviet republics declared their independence. This is a historic event for us that our 70-year old desire came true. However, to protect and preserve the independence for centuries are much harder than to gain it. You know the difficulties of Azerbaijan. I have repeatedly informed you about them. You can be sure that the independence of Azerbaijan is the meaning of our lives. It is the meaning of my life as the President of Azerbaijan. The independence of Azerbaijan will live, be strengthened and our independent country will never return to the past. In this way we have always been and will be together with Turkey. The Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship is eternal and indestructible. We shall remain true to this friendship. We shall further develop our cooperation and unity in all areas in order to maintain this friendship. I hope that during my official visit we shall work on the future of these issues. Thus, on the threshold of XXI century we shall do valuable work together in the name of future and the future generations. I want to express my pleasure of being in Turkey once more. It always brings me joy.

Mr. President, thank you again for the invitation. Once more, thank you for the care, attention and hospitality shown to the delegation of Azerbaijan. Please raise your glasses to Turkey.

Let us raise our glasses to Turkey of Ataturk, to the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship, to inviolability and eternity of this friendship!

To you, dear guests!

Mr. President, I raise this glass to you!

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey (March 12-17, 2001)**

### **Historical Reference**

On March 12 , the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid an official visit to the Republic of Turkey at the invitation of the President Ahmet Necdet Sezer.

The Presidents made statements after the welcoming ceremony in “Chankaya Palace”. President Heydar Aliyev said: “The relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey have always been on the level of friendship and brotherhood until now, and it will continue. It is the foundation of our relations, later cooperation in the fields of economy, trade, science, culture and it will continue hence. All of them now are on a high level. However, these relations should be increased more. We have come here to demonstrate that the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship and brotherhood is very important for us. ”

Later the presidents held a tete-a-tet meeting. While expressing their satisfaction from the speed of the development of the existing relations, the presidents discussed the role of Turkey in the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, and the opportunities of transport of gas from “Shahdeniz” deposit to Turkey.

On the same day broad negotiations were held with the participation of delegations. In the meeting they exchanged views about the positive changes in Azerbaijan in the recent years, the economic cooperation and the role of Turkey in the problems that Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic faced.

Later a ceremony of signature was held between Azerbaijan and Turkey. A joint statement of the Azerbaijani and Turkish Presidents and an agreement on transport of the Azerbaijani gas to Turkey were signed. Additionally, protocols on the cooperation of the ministries of justice, finance, and culture, agreements on cooperation in the field of tax, on trade of gas between Petroleum Pipeline Cooperation (BOTASH) and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR) and an agreement on the relations of fraternization of Sheki with Giresun, Ganca with Kars were signed.

After the ceremony Heydar Aliyev told the reporters that they came to an agreement in all the fields.

On the 12<sup>th</sup> of March Heydar Aliyev met Prime Minister of Turkey Bulent Ecevit in “Camli Palace”. The parties expressed their satisfaction from the development of cooperation in all the fields year by year.

On the same day President of the Turkish Republic gave an official reception in honor of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. Heydar Aliyev stated in the reception: “Independence of Azerbaijan is the meaning of our life. As the Azerbaijani President it is meaning of my life. Independence of Azerbaijan will strengthen, live and independent state will not return back to its previous situation. On this way we always were with Turkey, and will be always together. The Turkish-Azerbaijani friendship is immortal and strong. We are loyal to this friendship

and will preserve this loyalty. We shall improve our cooperation in all the fields. I hope that we are working for the future of these issues during my visit and will continue doing it.”

On the 13<sup>th</sup> of March Heydar Aliyev met chief of the General Staff of the Turkish Armed Forces, General of the Army Huseyin Kivrikoglu, deputy prime minister, chairman of the National Movement Party Devlet Bahcheli, deputy prime minister, chairman of Motherland Party Mesut Yilmaz, minister of foreign affairs Ismayil Cem, former president of Turkey Suleyman Demirel and discussed some aspects of the bilateral relations.

On the same day President Heydar Aliyev met chairman of the Turkish Parliament Omer Izgi and made a speech at the parliament. He spoke about the role of Turkey in the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh and transport of oil and gas from the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea.

On March 14, the Azerbaijani and Turkish presidents left for Istanbul on a special plane. The presidents visited the Complex of the Military Academy of the Republic of Turkey and attended the annual conference of the Commandery.

This visit of President Heydar Aliyev attracted the attention of mass media. On March 15, Heydar Aliyev gave interviews to the channels “CNN Turk”, TRT, NTV, “Samanyolu”, and on March 16, to “Sabah” newspaper.

On March 16, there was a ceremony in Ankara University where President Heydar Aliyev was awarded with the title of the Honorary Doctor. On the same day the President met MPs Ali Guner, Aslan Haydar , and Osman Gezeger.

On March 17, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan arrived in Baku and characterized the visit as a new stage in the development of the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendly and strategic relations.

**STATE VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE FEDERATION OF RUSSIA  
(January 24-26, 2002)**

“We see prosperity and improvement in our bilateral relations year after year in all the spheres. This is a serious ground for the economic and humanitarian relations. The foundation of them were laid by the joint efforts of Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin and Heydar Aliyev. Their mutual attitudes towards the consolidation of the relations, activity and mutual understanding and respect became an inevitable political base that the relations were established on that base in all the directions...”

*From the statement of the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev at the signature ceremony with the President of Russia Vladimir Putin – February 6, 2004*

**From tête-à-tête talk of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Russian President Vladimir Putin**

January 25, 2002

**Vladimir Putin:** Dear Heydar Aliyevitch.

I suppose that currently the bilateral relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation develop very successfully. It concerns the economic sphere as well. And the political coordination of our activity in the international arena has improved.

All this shows that the relations between the two states not only improve, but grow in quality.

However, in our meeting in my residence yesterday, we stressed that a lot has to be done. We hope, and I don't doubt even a little, that your visit will boost considerably our relations both in political and intergovernmental spheres. I think that the intergovernmental commission works enough hard and successfully. A meeting of the intergovernmental commission was planned to be held this March in Baku. But I would like to say with pleasure that our military agencies began to cooperate after long years. Our militaries started to meet, to discuss their problems and coordinate their efforts in the direction of mutual interests. From this point of view the achievement of mutual agreement on Gabala Radar Station is praise worthy. All this is a very good foundation for your visit to have such a great importance.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Thank you very much, for the invitation to pay a state visit to Russia, and your sincere meeting, hospitality, kind and interesting talks at your

residence yesterday. I think we discussed a lot of things there with you. I am very happy for the positive progress in the Russian-Azerbaijani relations, as you. But I must openly say that it happened after your election as a President. Our relations started to develop very intensively and we have met 16 times within a short period. It shows the importance of these meetings. Undoubtedly, all of them were interesting and meaningful, and we discussed a lot of issues in them.

I think that the current state of our relations is satisfactory. But at the same time, I think that it is the beginning of our active future cooperation in the spheres of economy, policy, in the international arena and military. I think that it is a great job that we could prepare an agreement on the Gabala Radar Station for signing. Ten years have passed after the collapse of the USSR, and in these ten years Russia has been using this station, but there was not an agreement. It shows that there is no need for any agreement, but it is better to have it.

**Vladimir Putin:** You frightened me.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Why did I frighten you?

**Vladimir Putin:** Maybe there is no need for an agreement... I think it is necessary Heydar Aliyevitch, currently we have changed the relations between the two states qualitatively that we could achieve these agreements. We can work for the benefit of each other in other issues, as well as the Caspian issue.

**Heydar Aliyev:** You are absolutely right, Vladimir Vladimirovitch. I want to say that our positions are very close in the issue of the Caspian. We signed an agreement on the principles of the division of the sea a year ago during your visit to Baku and talked about the future cooperation yesterday. I think that, Russia, Kazakhstan and Azerbaijan can cooperate in this issue and push forward the question of the status of the Caspian Sea.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
at the Russian-Azerbaijani negotiations with the participation of  
delegations of Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation**

Moscow, the Catherine Hall of Kremlin, January 25, 2002

**Heydar Aliyev:** Thank you, Vladimir Vladimirovich. First of all, I want to express my gratitude to you for your invitation, the warm welcome and hospitality. We had a comprehensive exchange of views with you on important issues, as you said, in your home yesterday. I am very pleased of this conversation, because yesterday we discussed the important aspects of the relations between Russia and Azerbaijan and today we did it in our tete-a-tete conversation again. I also think that a year ago, Vladimir Vladimirovich, after your official visit to Azerbaijan in fact, a new stage has opened in the mutual Russian-Azerbaijani relations. With pleasure I can say that this year has been very productive. We were able to intensify our relations, to fill them with specific content and even get the results. Thus, our meeting today and the documents that we are going to sign reflect the practical results of your visit to Azerbaijan last year and the hard work that we have done this year.

As to your words about our attention to the Russian language and so on, it is an ordinary case in our country, because we consider it as the norm. We shall continue to pursue this line and indeed, this issue will not be changed. We opened the monument of Pushkin of course, with a sense of deep respect for his work.

**Vladimir Putin:** Geydar Aliyevich, if everyone in Azerbaijan is able to speak Russian as the President, then everyone will be just happy.

**Heydar Aliyev:** We opened the monument with a sense of great respect for Pushkin, because we all grew up reading his works and learned them by heart. How it could happen that this monument has not been erected till this day. This was inattention, but we corrected it. I am grateful that there are often the Days of Azerbaijani culture and exhibitions held here in Moscow. The Days of Culture of Russia and the Days of Culture of Moscow are also held in Azerbaijan. In addition, a lot of artists of Russia visit our republic as dear and close friends. Our people also visit Moscow. All of this is very natural and I believe that they are important factors for the further strengthening and developing our relations.

I am very grateful to you for paying much attention to our meetings and my visit. Of course, I understand that this is the manifestation of your attitude towards the Russian-Azerbaijani relations to Azerbaijan and you can be assured that I, as President of Azerbaijan, our government and country have the same feelings.

## **Statement of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev and the Russian President Vladimir Putin at the meeting with the representatives of mass media**

January 25, 2002

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all I would like to express my profound gratitude to you, Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich, for the invitation to pay a state visit to Russia, to Moscow. I thank you for the attention, hospitality and care shown to me, to all our delegation personally by you, by your colleagues. Owing to all these, the visit passes quite successfully. I am satisfied with everything since the first minute and till now.

We have conducted very necessary, important, fruitful dialogues. For example, I highly appreciate the talks with Vladimir Vladimirovich in private in at his house last night. We have in essence exchanged views on many questions and found full coincidence of views concerning, first of all, intergovernmental relations and at the same time many other questions and the international life. And our talks today in private allowed us to continue the discussion of these questions. I am satisfied with all. And, finally, our meeting with the participation of members of delegations allowed us to determine the directions of our work on cooperation in future.

I quite agree with all the thoughts told by President Putin concerning those questions which we have discussed and on which we have agreed. Therefore, I will not repeat, but I would like to say that we have paid more attention to the question of the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous Garabagh. I am happy that the Russian Federation and personally President Putin pay more attention to it and take active measures. I cherish hope in the further active efforts of the Minsk Group of OSCE and its co-chairs - Russia is also a co-chair, and also in the further efforts of President Putin. We spoke about it, and I hope for it because the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict, naturally, is of vital importance for us.

However, this question is of great importance for all the Caucasus. And, hence, not only for the Caucasus, but also for all Europe. Russia, naturally, is the Caucasian country, and it concerns not only Russia, but all Europe. I think that our public holds the same opinion that Russia can play an important, perhaps, a decisive role here.

And consequently we hope that Russia will activate its efforts in this direction. As an important question, certainly, we exchanged views on the legal status of the Caspian Sea. I am satisfied that the positions of Russia and Azerbaijan are identical in this issue, we have the same position with Kazakhstan. I, for example, have learned with satisfaction that not only the principles, but also the coordinates of the median

line have already been determined between Russia and Kazakhstan. Today we have agreed on the same issue, and Vladimir Vladimirovich proposed to carry out the same work between Russia and Azerbaijan concerning the Caspian Sea, and I hope that our joint efforts and, certainly, as a whole, the vigorous activity of the Russian Federation will allow us to come to the solution of the question on the legal status to the Caspian Sea.

As to our relations in humanitarian sphere, they are good. I think that they satisfy both Russia and Azerbaijan. Communications between art workers, arts, sciences, holding the Days of the Russian culture in Azerbaijan, the Days of the Azerbaijani culture in Russia, in Moscow and in other regions of Russia, are certainly, great value. And we shall continue this practice. But our relations, cooperation, certainly, cover many other spheres in which we do not have any problems. During our talks we agreed on the activation of our efforts.

I think that our present meeting will occupy an important place in the history of the Russian-Azerbaijani relations. Its foundation was laid last year when the Russian President, Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin paid an official visit to Azerbaijan. This visit, I will speak openly, has a historical value for us. I think that it is also very important value for Russia, it has an exceptional importance for the Russian-Azerbaijani relations. In fact, this visit laid the foundation of the new stage of our mutual relations, a new stage for cooperation between Russia and Azerbaijan. In the past period, we have managed to intensify our relations, and these relations have led to the present meeting and signature of those important documents which we have just signed.

Like Vladimir Vladimirovich, I also attach great importance to the contract on long-term economic cooperation and to the agreement on legal status of Gabala Radiolocation Station among the documents. And I think that we have done a lot and created all legal conditions for the further activity of this radar station. We shall promote our future cooperation in this sphere, and in all other spheres concerning the defense and military activity.

Vladimir Vladimirovich, many thanks to you once more. I thank you for the invitation, for the documents signed today, for those proposals connected with the development of cooperation and for the attention which you paid to us and personally to me.

Thank you very much.

**Vladimir Putin:** I want to thank once more the President and all delegation. I would like to note a detail which characterizes, in my opinion, the character of our present relations. This, at first sight, is a fine detail, but, I repeat, it again that characterizes all the complex of our mutual relations. When we met Heydar Aliyev last time, we spoke about the expansion of cooperation in economic sphere, about the purchase of

our subway vans by Azerbaijan. In the budget of Russia for 2002 we have even credit resources for Azerbaijan for the sale subway vans. Today, during our negotiations I informed the President on it, he said: "We shall not buy them one credit, we have necessary sum in our budget to buy them in cash". I think that if we work like this in all the spheres, we shall move forward very actively on all the complex of our cooperation.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Vladimir Vladimirovich, I want to thank you especially for the invitation to the meeting in St.-Petersburg in summer for opening of the monument of the great Azerbaijan poet Nizami. At the meeting in Petersburg in the summer, we can open it together. As the remarkable monument to Alexander Sergeevich Pushkin which we have opened in Baku, it will certainly, promote the Russian-Azerbaijani friendship, friendship between our peoples.

Thank you very much.

**Speech of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev at the official reception hosted by the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin in honor of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

January 25, 2002

Mr. Vladimir Vladimirovich,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear friends,

We celebrated the tenth anniversary of the independence of our country recently. It is the 10th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan. All these years, we built the interstate relations between the sovereign Russia and sovereign Azerbaijan. But the road was not smooth; there were problems, difficulties and obstacles. However, this process went on and today it is going on in the ascending line. We signed an agreement on friendship, cooperation and mutual security between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan in 1997. We noted that the relations between Russia and Azerbaijan are of strategic partnership nature. Subsequently, a lot has been done. However, I have to say, unfortunately, we have not been able to implement all the potential of the agreement on friendship, cooperation and mutual security between the two countries.

Last January, the President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin paid an official visit to Azerbaijan. This was a historic event for us, because it was the first visit of the President of the Russian Federation to the sovereign Azerbaijan after Azerbaijan gained its independence. We appreciate it. This visit established the beginning of a new era of development of the Russian-Azerbaijani relations. Much has been done over the past year and now we indeed, completely reached the level of strategic partnership. All this has enabled us today to discuss many issues of international relations and sign very important documents. Therefore, the visit of Vladimir Putin to Azerbaijan was the basis for further development of our relations. Today we witness the practical results of our agreements and this visit. Vladimir Vladimirovich, thank you for inviting me to pay a state visit to Moscow, Russia. I express my gratitude to you for the warm and cordial meeting, for the hospitality you have shown to me and to our entire delegation. I thank you for our very fruitful tete-a-tete discussions that took place yesterday in your house and now. I believe that the negotiations held between our two delegations were successful. All of this is an event of great significance for us. Therefore, we feel among close friends here, in Russia.

The history of the Russian-Azerbaijani relations is long and rich. For many decades

we were together and lived in one country. It makes us closer to each other. Azerbaijan has gained a lot in these years. Russia has played a huge role in the socio-economic development of Azerbaijan, development of science, culture and education. Today, we have every reason to say that the friendly relations between Russia and Azerbaijan are based on such a strong foundation laid over many decades by our ancestors.

Vladimir Vladimirovich just had a speech about the main issues on which we exchanged views and the issues that are the basis for the further cooperation between Russia and Azerbaijan. I totally agree with you, Vladimir Vladimirovich. Thus, I shall not dwell on them. I only want to point out that the issue of peace, stability and security in the Caucasus, as we discussed with you yesterday and today, is of vital importance for us, for Russia and for Europe. In this regard, the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh is extremely important for us. As you know, the conflict has been going on for a long time. It started on the initiative of the Armenian side with the claims to the territory of Azerbaijan. This conflict led to the war. We stopped the war seven years ago. However, in the end, 20 percent of Azerbaijan was occupied by the Armenian forces and a million refugees from the occupied lands are already live in difficult conditions for many years and the majority of them live in tents.

All these years we are working with the Russian Federation on this issue. The Russian Federation is co-chair of the Minsk Group of OSCE and much has been done by Russia. After Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin was elected President of Russia he displayed and showed great interest in the subject. I am grateful to Vladimir Putin in this regard. But the issue is still not resolved. Vladimir Vladimirovich spoke about it as well. I gratefully accept your statement that Russia will continue to implement measures for the peaceful solution of the conflict. We stand on the positions of a peaceful settlement of the conflict, we want peace in the Caucasus and Transcaucasia, between Armenia and Azerbaijan and I think that it would be important for the cooperation of all the countries of the Southern Caucasus and Russia. Therefore, we look with hope to the future and I want to thank once more Vladimir Vladimirovich, on behalf of the community of our republic for inviting me today and I want to say that the relations with Russia have a special meaning for us. Russia is our northern neighbor. Russia is a great country. Russia is a country with great economic potentials and great international reputation. Great changes are taking place in Russia. Especially positive changes are taking place in the recent years. Statehood and the international reputation are strengthening and the economy of Russia is developing. All this gladdens us and we follow it as friends, because all that is going on in Russia is important for us. Election of Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin President of Russia is of great importance for all of this. It is his merits.

I want to congratulate you, Vladimir Vladimirovich, with these successes, wish you success in strengthening the Russian government, in the development of the Russian Federation and all the best for the development of the relations between Russia and Azerbaijan.

I raise the glass to the President of Russia Vladimir Putin, to the Russian Federation, to the Russian people and to the Russian-Azerbaijani friendship! To your health!

## **State Visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Russian Federation (January 24-26, 2002)**

### **Historical Reference**

The state visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan in 26<sup>th</sup> of January, 2002, is especially important for the improvement of bilateral relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

On the first day of the visit, on 25<sup>th</sup> of January, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met the Russian President Vladimir Putin in the private residence of Putin in Novo-Ograyova. During the meeting, while emphasizing the potential perspectives of the cooperation between the countries in the fields of economy, politics, and humanitarian spheres, the presidents talked with pleasure about the relations within the framework of international and regional organizations and of the reciprocal support.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January there was a tete-a-tet meeting between the Azerbaijani and the Russian Presidents. They broadly discussed the resolution of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh through peaceful negotiations. The Azerbaijani President stressed the crucial role of Russia in the solution of the conflict. The Russian President Vladimir Putin expressed his readiness to increase the efforts of his country in this field.

On the same day the negotiations were held with the participation of the Azerbaijani and Russian delegations. After the negotiations a ceremony of signature of the Azerbaijani-Russian documents was held. Presidents Heydar Aliyev and Vladimir Putin signed an agreement on a long term economic cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Russian Federation until 2010, an agreement on the status and the principles and conditions of the usage of Gabala Radar Station ("Deryal" RLS), and joint declaration of the Russian and Azerbaijani Presidents. The members of the Russian and Azerbaijani delegations signed agreements covering the main principles and directions of economic cooperation, agreements on cooperation of production, on cooperation in fight against the breach of tax legislation and exchange of information, on the activity of the border guards of the two countries.

After the signature of documents the Russian President Vladimir Putin appreciated the visit of the Azerbaijani President as an important stage in the development of the bilateral relations when he spoke to the representatives of mass media. The President of Azerbaijan emphasized that this meeting would take an important place in the Russian-Azerbaijani relations.

On the same day President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin hosted an official reception in the honor of Heydar Aliyev. The Azerbaijani President in the reception stated that the foundation of the friendly relations was established on strong basis created by their ancestors in decades.

On the same day the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan met the chairman of the Russian government Mikhail Kasyanov. During the meeting they stated that the intensification of the reciprocal beneficial relations between Azerbaijan and Russia is very significant for

both countries, they talked about the issues of cooperation between the countries on the joint consumption and transportation of hydrocarbon resources of Caspian Sea. It was mentioned that the intergovernmental Azerbaijani-Russian commission had a special role in the development of economic relations.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met the mayor of Moscow Yuri Lujkov. They talked about the work of the joint commission on economic, cultural and scientific-technical cooperation between Azerbaijan and Moscow with pleasure. The importance of expansion of the activities of this commission was touched upon.

On the 25<sup>th</sup> of January rector of Moscow State University named after M.Lomonosov V.Sadovnichi presented the diploma and medal of the honorary professor of Moscow University to Heydar Aliyev for his achievements in the development of cooperation in the field of science, education, and culture between Azerbaijan and Russia.

On the 26<sup>th</sup> of October President of Azerbaijan met the minister of foreign affairs of Russia Igor Ivanov. They expressed their satisfaction from closeness of the Azerbaijani-Russian positions in the issue of the legal status of the Caspian Sea. It was decided to continue the work in this direction by special working groups on the level of deputy foreign ministers. The importance of strengthening cooperation in the regional and international organizations, and improvement of the relations in humanitarian field were mentioned.

On the same day the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met representatives of mass media of the Russian Federation and ITAR-TASS agency. After the meeting the Azerbaijan State Telegraph Agency (AzerTac) and ITAR-TASS News Agency signed a memorandum on the cooperation in the international information service.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev towards the end of his visit stated in the opening ceremony of a branch of the International Bank of Azerbaijan in Moscow: "My successful visit to the Russian Federation has ended. I am very satisfied with this visit."

**OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN HEYDAR ALIYEV TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF  
IRAN (May 18-20, 2002)**

“...The relations between us are based on deep historical roots. Our mutual history, national and moral values, religion connected the peoples along the centuries. Our nations lived along the centuries together. These relations rose to a new stage after Azerbaijan gained its independence. If we look at the history of the past 15 years we can say that Iran and Azerbaijan protected each other in each historical period, supported each other’s positions, and defended the same positions in the international organisations. These kind friendly and brotherly relations still continue and are getting stronger....”

*From the speech of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev at the official reception in honor of the Iranian President Mahmud Ahmedinejad – August 21, 2007*

**Answers of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
and President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyyed Mohammad  
Khatami to the questions of reporters before their tete-a-tete meeting**

Tehran, May 18, 2002

***Question: Mr. Khatami, Iran calls for the defense of the Palestinians and to put an end to the relations with Israel. Can we expect a similar position on the issue of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh from Iran?***

**Answer:** Thank you for your question. But I expected that reporters will first ask a question to our distinguished guest, then me.

The position of Iran on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh is known. We condemned the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and declared it in various international organizations at the highest level. We believe that this conflict should be resolved through negotiations and by peaceful means.

Of course, we are concerned that the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over the Mountainous-Garabagh is still not resolved, but the events going on in Palestine are the unprecedented inhuman tragedy. It cannot be compared with other events. The occupation of land is the one issue, but the murder of women and children living on that land is a different question. The world community gives special attention to this event and apparently, this tragedy cannot be tolerated.

***Question: Mr. President Heydar Aliyev, what is the purpose of your visit to Iran?***

**Answer:** Thank you. The purpose of my official visit to Iran is to promote further development of the Azerbaijani-Iranian friendship and cooperation. We are neighboring countries, we have an ancient common history, our national and spiritual values are similar and all of this provided the friendship our two peoples in history.

After independence Azerbaijan has established friendly relations and cooperation with many countries and develops them. Relations between Azerbaijan and Iran were established ten years ago and passed a long way. However, we believe that these relations should further expand and develop. Thus, I came to Iran on an official visit for this purpose.

**Question: Mr. President Heydar Aliyev, your visit to Iran was postponed several times. What is the reason of your official visit to Tehran today?**

**My second question is to Mr. Khatami: Mr. Khatami, it would be better if the littoral countries of the Caspian Sea establish a joint structure for the immediate solution of the problems which emerge, would not it be?**

**Heydar Aliyev:** Yes, we have been preparing for an official visit to Iran several times, however, it was set aside. It had objective reasons. But during the past period I visited Iran. For example, in 2000, I took part in the summit of ECO in Iran. During my visit here we had very important meetings and negotiations with esteemed President Khatami. Then I met and held negotiations with the supreme religious leader of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei. That is, our communications are not interrupted. But today I have come to Iran on an official visit. It is very different from my previous visits to Iran. During the official visit we shall discuss many issues and sign a number of important documents related to the cooperation between our countries.

**Mohammad Khatami:** The Caspian Sea is a closed lake and belongs to the five littoral countries. The use of the Caspian Sea should be on the basis of an agreement among these countries. All we, the five countries believe that the Caspian Sea belongs to these five countries. On other issues, environment, shipping, fishing and others there should be cooperation in terms of mutual understanding. Certainly, after the collapse of the former Soviet Union the methods for using the Caspian Sea have changed. Therefore, there has emerged a new look at the cooperation in this field. Thus, this issue should be resolved peacefully and by mutual understanding.

The summit of the countries surrounding the Mazandaran lake was held in Ashgabat. It was a very important summit.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I did not understand the meaning of the Mazandaran lake.

**Mohammad Khatami:** You call the Caspian the Gazvin lake, but we call it the Mazandaran lake. But not to worry the neither side we shall call it the Caspian Sea.

**Heydar Aliyev:** It has been called the Caspian Sea for a long time. The name of the Caspian Sea cannot be changed.

**Mohammad Khatami:** Yes, in English it is called the Caspian Sea.

**Heydar Aliyev:** Yes, Caspian sea is Khazar.

**Mohammad Khatami:** Daryayi-Kaspi.

**Heydar Aliyev:** I hear the word Daryayi-Caspi for the first time.

**Mohammad Khatami:** Caspian means Qazvin. Let me answer the question. The Caspian Sea belongs to five countries. We hope that the Caspian countries will conduct a brotherly and friendly cooperation in all areas and solve these issues. The Ashgabat Summit was a very important meeting.

All the littoral countries should use the rich resources of the Caspian Sea.

## **Tete-a-tete meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the President of Iran Mohammad Khatami**

May 18, 2002

Tete-a-tete meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the President of Iran Mohammad Khatami was held in the residence of the Iranian President.

Welcoming the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with respect and honor, the Iranian President Mohammad Khatami expressed the appreciation to the head of our republic for accepting the invitation and arriving in Tehran on an official visit. Mr. Mohammad Khatami stated once more that he considered every meeting with the wise public figure Heydar Aliyev, who has a great political experience, very useful and valuable.

Stressing that the official visit of President Heydar Aliyev to Tehran opens new horizons in the Iranian-Azerbaijani cooperation, President Mohammad Khatami said that the visit is an important step in the development of mutually beneficial relations between our countries.

Expressing his gratitude for the kind words and for the invitation to pay an official visit to Iran, President Heydar Aliyev said that he was pleased of the hospitality shown to him and the Azerbaijani delegation in a friendly and neighboring country. Making broad discussions on the development of the Azerbaijani-Iranian bilateral relations, the Presidents stressed the need of further expansion and deepening of cooperation in all the areas.

Noting the importance of the participation of our countries in projects, are of great importance in the development of economic relations, the heads of the countries unanimously confirmed that the North-South transport corridor had broad perspectives. On the issue of the legal status of the Caspian Sea, the presidents stressed the importance of strengthening the cooperation of the littoral countries in all areas and expressed the hope that the Caspian Sea will remain as the corridor of peace, security and cooperation. The Presidents noted the need of further discussions on the definition of the legal status of the Caspian Sea on the expert level.

During the meeting, the presidents also broadly discussed the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, which is the most painful issue for our country. President Heydar Aliyev said that as a result of the aggression of the Armenian armed forces 20 percent of the Azerbaijani lands have been occupied and over a million Azerbaijanis live in tents in the critical conditions for many years.

Focusing on the process of negotiations held for the peaceful settlement of the conflict, President Heydar Aliyev stressed the importance of intensifying the efforts by the countries of the Minsk Group for the early resolution of the conflict.

Stressing that Iran condemns the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, as Iran openly states in international organizations, President Mohammad Khatami expressed concern of his country in connection with the conflict which has remained unsolved and expressed the confidence that the immediate solution of the conflict will play an important role in the restoration of peace and stability in the region.

Speaking about the current state of relations between the two neighboring and friendly countries with ancient historical traditions in the field of science, education, culture and other areas, the Presidents stressed the importance of further strengthening these relations.

During the meeting, the presidents exchanged their views on the situation in the region, as well as on other issues of mutual interest.

President Heydar Aliyev once more invited President Mohammad Khatami to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan. The invitation was accepted with gratitude.

## **Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Supreme Religious Leader of Iran Ayatollah Seyyed Ali Khamenei**

**May 19, 2002**

Kindly and friendly welcoming President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev, Ayatollah Seyed Ali Khamenei said that he was pleased of every meeting with President Heydar Aliyev and expressed his confidence that the official visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Iran would open a new era in the relations between the two friendly and neighboring countries.

Expressing his gratitude for the kind words and warm attitude, President Heydar Aliyev said that he was pleased with the official visit to Iran and with the meeting with the Supreme Religious leader of Iran Sayyed Ali Khamenei and expressed his satisfaction with the hospitality shown to the Azerbaijani delegation and with the meetings and negotiations held during the visit. Expressing the hope that the visit would have a significant impact on the development of the Azerbaijani-Iranian relations, the Azerbaijani President stressed that there were broad prospects for the development of cooperation with the friendly and neighboring Iran in all the areas.

They discussed the joint participation of the two countries in the project of the North-South transport corridor, which has great importance for the region, and the issues on cooperation in the Caspian Sea in details. It was noted that the Caspian Sea should be a sea of peace, friendship and good relations.

Stressing that the most painful problem for our country is the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh which has been going on for years, President Heydar Aliyev reminded that 20 percent of our lands was still under occupation and over a million people have been expelled from their native homes, live in tents in critical conditions, and then he focused on the process of negotiations held for the peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Highly appreciating the close historical, spiritual relations between Azerbaijan and Iran, Ayatollah Khamenei said that the visit of the President of Azerbaijan, Heydar Aliyev was important for the development of relations between the two countries in all the fields. Stressing that the conflicts in the Caucasus hampered the establishment of peace and security in the region, Ayatollah Khamenei said that his country condemned the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and emphasized the necessity of the immediate peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

During the meeting, which was held in a warm and friendly atmosphere, there was an extensive exchange of views on the perspectives of the Azerbaijani-Iranian relations, on the situation in the region and other issues of mutual interest.

## **Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Islamic Republic of Iran (May 18-20, 2002)**

### **Historical Reference**

On May 18-20, 2002, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev paid his second official visit to Iran. Before his visit in the meeting with the journalists he mentioned that it was necessary both for Iran and Azerbaijan to develop their relations in all the fields – economy, culture, science, education, sports and in the other fields, it is necessary to warm the relations between the two countries.

On May 18, there was a welcoming ceremony for the Azerbaijani President in the state residence of the Iranian President.

Before the meeting the presidents answered to the questions of journalists. They answered to the questions covering the topics like the aim of the visit of Heydar Aliyev to Iran, the Armenian- Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, and the legal status of the Caspian Sea.

Later a meeting was held between the Azerbaijani and Iranian Presidents. Seyid Mohammad Khatami thanked the Azerbaijani President for accepting his invitation and for coming to Tehran. Mohammad Khatami stressed that each meeting with such a wise statesman like Heydar Aliyev, who possesses great political experience, is very beneficial and valuable.

Talking about the legal status of the Caspian Sea the Presidents emphasized the importance of improving the relations of the littoral states in all the fields, and expressed the hopes that the Caspian would continue to be a sea of peace, security and cooperation. They mentioned the necessity of discussions on the determination of the legal status of the Caspian Sea on the level of experts.

After a tete-a-tete meeting, which lasted for more than two hours, the meeting was continued with the participation of the delegations. The Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev said that this official visit to Iran would open a new stage in the development of the relations between the two countries and would benefit the people of the both countries.

On May 18, an official reception was hosted in honor of President Heydar Aliyev on behalf of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Seyid Mohammad Khatami.

On May 19, the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev met the Supreme Religious Leader of Iran Seyyid Ali Khameni. He emphasized that the conflicts in the Caucasus hindered peace and security in the region, condemned the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, and stressed the necessity of the resolution of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh peacefully.

On the same day the Azerbaijani President met the chairman of the Islamic Consultative Assembly of Iran Mehdi Karrubi. President Heydar Aliyev and Mehdi Karrubi appreciated the role of the parliamentary friendship groups of the countries in strengthening the sincere and kind relations. They especially mentioned the importance of expanding of the activities of the

friendship groups.

President Heydar Aliyev met Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran Kamal Kharrazi in the framework of his visit. They discussed the current situation in the region, determination of the legal status of the Caspian Sea, peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, and other issues which interested the countries.

On May 19<sup>th</sup>, he met Ali Sufi, minister of cooperation of Iran and chairman of common commission on the issues of cooperation between the two countries. They emphasized the importance of development of economic-trade relations. The Azerbaijani President also met Ali Abdulalizade, minister of construction and town-building.

On May 20<sup>th</sup>, the Azerbaijani and Iranian presidents met again. Signature of joint documents was held after the meeting. Agreement on the principles of relations of friendship and cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran, agreement on the cooperation and mutual assistance on customs, agreement on the international motor transportation, agreement on the cooperation in the field of quarantine service of plants, an understanding memorandum on the cooperation in the field of veterinary, a memorandum on the cooperation in the field of education and research, a memorandum on the cultural cooperation, an agreement on the air transport, a memorandum on the cooperation in the field of standardization, certification, and metrology, and an agreement on the cooperation in the field of sport were signed.

## CURRENT FOREIGN POLICY OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

International situation in the 21st century requires to re-consider the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, its priorities and resources.

Of course, at all the times, the priority of the foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan was to protect the interests of the state and of its citizens at all the levels. The efforts within this process were mainly aimed at achieving the following goals:

Ensuring the security of the country, restoration of its territorial integrity and strengthening of its sovereignty are aimed at establishing and developing equally and mutually beneficial relations with all the countries, using these relations for strengthening the international positions of the Republic of Azerbaijan, for advancing the economy, science, culture of the country. The main principles of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan are respecting the intergovernmental relations, regulated by international law norms, the sovereign rights of all the states, resolving all the disputed issues through peaceful negotiations, establishing mutually beneficial economic, scientific and cultural cooperation, eliminating all the restraints which hinder interstate relations. As Azerbaijan has chosen the path of democracy and the rule of law, its foreign policy also reflects all the achievements of the international practice and norms.

The most sensitive aspects were taken into account when the priorities of the foreign policy were determined by the national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. The experience shows that the policy set by Heydar Aliyev meets the contemporary requirements and is extremely promising.

Based on these principles, the independent foreign policy of the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has strengthened the position and reputation of our country in the international arena.

Ilham Aliyev has defined the solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, the worldwide recognition of Khojaly genocide, strengthening the activities in the Non-Aligned Movement, benefitting from bilateral investments and credit policy given the foreign interests in Azerbaijan, assisting the birth of diaspora organizations as the main tasks of our foreign policy. He emphasized the importance of paying attention to bilateral relations in particular:

“...The bilateral format brings us great success. Especially considering the fact that the number of countries wishing to establish close relations with Azer-

baijan is growing, Our foreign diplomacy is very active. My numerous visits abroad, as well as the visits of my colleagues to Azerbaijan and negotiations boost bilateral relations. In other words, the main focus of our foreign policy is the bilateral relations. I can say that we have formed equal bilateral relations with all our partner countries.

It is very important and must be so, because equal relations are the only possible relations in the bilateral format. Our approach is based on goodwill policy aimed at deepening cooperation in all the fields. Naturally, these relations must be based on mutual respect, mutual interests and non-inference in each other's affairs. This is the basis of our relations..."

The foreign policy that meets the national interests is carried out on each of these directions. Much attention is paid to the regional policy in President Ilham Aliyev's foreign policy. Thanks to regional cooperation, Azerbaijan initiated large-scale joint projects together with Georgia and Turkey in the fields of energy, transport and communications. Ilham Aliyev's official visit to Turkey (2004, 2008, 2013) and his state visit to Georgia (2004) helped form the relations of strategic cooperation with those countries.

The Russian Federation is one of the strategic partners of Azerbaijan. The political relations between the two countries are at high level, while the economic relations are dynamically developing. The mutual relations are based on a solid legal and regulatory framework. Both sides possess significant potentials for the development of strategic cooperation, especially in the political, economic, military, humanitarian, energy fields. President Ilham Aliyev's official visit (2004) and other visits to Russia have deepened the cooperation between the two countries.

Azerbaijan attaches priority importance to the development of the strategic relations with the advanced Western countries such as the USA, France, Great Britain, Germany. During the official visits of President Ilham Aliyev to the United States (2006), France (2004, 2007, 2009), Great Britain (2004, 2009), Germany (2004, 2007), dozens of treaties, agreements, declarations, joint statements, have been signed they have paved the way for developing the bilateral relations.

President Ilham Aliyev pays much attention to the bilateral format and skillfully uses this course. The geographical extent of the official visits of Ilham Aliyev is very large. This range includes Europe (Romania, Italy, Vatican, Poland, Croatia, Bulgaria, Slovenia, Latvia, Lithuania, Hungary, Finland, Greece, Switzerland, Estonia, Serbia, Czech Republic, Montenegro, Austria), the CIS (Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Moldova, Belarus, Tajikistan, Turkmeni-

stan), the Muslim world (Qatar, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Kuwait, Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, Jordan), and South East Asia (China, Japan, Korea, Singapore).

Declaration on friendship and strategic partnership with Ukraine and Russia in 2008, joint declaration on the establishment of strategic partnership with Romania in 2009, agreement on the strategic partnership and mutual assistance with the Republic of Turkey in 2010, signature of joint declarations on friendship and strategic partnership with Serbia and Croatia in 2013 and other documents are the successes of the foreign policy of Ilham Aliyev.

Azerbaijan maintains cooperation with all the countries on the basis of equal rights. The developed countries also approve the fair position of Azerbaijan, which is the success of our foreign policy. Azerbaijan is the only South Caucasian country which pursues a successful balanced policy. The official Baku masterly balances the interests of the major powers in the region and earns geopolitical dividends which meet our national interests.

The integration process of Azerbaijan is directed to the West, nevertheless its traditional relations with the East, with the Muslim world and Turkic speaking countries are developing continuously.

The accurate, multi-vector foreign policy pursued by President Ilham Aliyev, who takes into account the national interests of the country, has turned Azerbaijan into a leading country in the region and won it a reliability in international arena.

On October 24, 2011, with the support of 155 countries, Azerbaijan won the elections for a non-permanent membership at the United Nations Security Council for 2012-2013; it was a sign of trust and confidence in our country. It was a great achievement for our country over the past 20 years thanks to the successful foreign policy of the Azerbaijani President.

As President Ilham Aliyev emphasized, “our election to the UN Security Council is a historic victory of political and diplomatic importance. This victory, which coincides with the 20th anniversary of our independence, demonstrates the successful development of our country. At the same time, it was a big blow to the Armenian lobby in their anti-Azerbaijani campaign. We could change it and 155 countries currently support Azerbaijan.”

Four resolutions were adopted during the presidency of Azerbaijan at the Security Council. They are Resolution #2119 on the extension of the mandate of the United Nations Stabilization Mission in Haiti, Resolution #2120 on the extension of the mandate of the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan, Resolution #2121 on the situation in the Central African Republic and

Resolution #2122 adopted at the end of the Council's open debate on "Women, Peace and Security". During the second term of its presidency for the first time with initiative of Azerbaijan a high-level meeting was held on "Strengthening Partnership between the United Nations and Organization of the Islamic Cooperation".

Skillfully and dynamically carrying out the foreign policy of the national leader Heydar Aliyev, President Ilham Aliyev has developed the relations of our country with the superpowers and international organizations on a new level. As a result, by hosting events of regional and global importance, Azerbaijan has obtained the ability to exert influence on the processes taking place in international arena.

## INFORMATION & INQUIRY MATERIALS

### *Explanations*

**Agip** – Italian company established in 1926. Agip has been actively participating in oil projects in Azerbaijan since 1995. It is involved in oil exploration, extraction and processing.

**Amoco Corporation** – Founded in 1889. Amoco has been taking in oil projects in Azerbaijan since 1994. Amoco merged with BP in 1998.

**CSCE Budapest Summit** – the 4th summit of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe was held in Budapest, Hungary on December 6-7, 1994. According to the results of the Budapest Summit, the CSCE turned into the OSCE, a self-governing, all-European institution which implements into life the principles of security and mutually beneficial cooperation of the member states, from January 1, 1995. At Budapest it was decided for the first time to establish peacekeeping forces for the European security measures and dispatch them to conflict zones within the OSCE framework. It was also agreed to dispatch the first multinational peacekeeping unit to Nagorno-Karabakh. As a result of the Budapest Summit, a resolution titled “Intensification of the OSCE activities in connection with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” was adopted.

**CSCE Istanbul Summit** – a CSCE summit held in Istanbul, Turkey on November 18-19, 1999. Important documents, such as the Charter of the European Security, the Istanbul Summit Declaration, the Vienna Document on Confidence and Security-Building Measures, and the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe were signed at the summit. Articles 20 and 21 of the Istanbul Declaration are devoted to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan and underlines the necessity of continuation of the peace process.

**OSCE Lisbon Summit** – the “Lisbon Declaration on a Common and Comprehensive Security Model for Europe for the Twenty-First Century” was adopted by the 54 participating nations at the OSCE Lisbon Summit on December 2-3, 1996. The declaration noted threats to the security of member countries, and emphasized the importance of cooperation to overcome these threats. The participating nations (except Armenia) agreed to the following principles regarding the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict:

1. Territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan; 2. The highest self-governing status for Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan; 3. Ensuring security of the entire population of Nagorno-Karabakh.

**OSCE Minsk Group** – established on March 24, 1992. In 1997, the Minsk Group included Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Germany, Italy, Russia, USA, France, Turkey, Denmark and

Sweden. By December 1994, Finland and Russia were the first co-chairs of the Minsk Group while this institution was being formulated. Since December 1996, the Minsk Group has been headed by a triple co-chairmanship. The main objective of the Group is the direct assistance to the peaceful solution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

**Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council** – founded in 1997 at Portugal session of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council. It has 44 member-countries, including Azerbaijan.

**European Bank for Reconstruction and Development** – a regional interstate bank (established in 1990), which provides long-term credits to the countries of the Western and Eastern Europe, as well as the CIS.

**Section 907 of Freedom Support Act** – Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act of 1992 (Freedom for Russia and Emerging Eurasian Democracies and Open Markets Support Act) adopted by the US Congress under the pressure of the Armenian lobby on October 24, 1992. The section prohibits the U.S. government aid to the Azerbaijani government. However, both Bill Clinton and George W. Bush re-affirmed that the section did not reflect the realities and advocated its repeal. In accordance with the Congress decision, the Bush administration stopped the legal force of the section in 2001.

**Azerbaijan International Operating Company (AIOC)** – established on February 12, 1995 in order to implement on behalf of the shareholders the terms of the “Contract on joint development and use of the oil deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea” signed between the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan and a number of big oil companies.

**Azerbaijan Democratic Republic** – an independent Azerbaijani state that became the first secular, democratic republic in the Muslim East. Established on May 28, 1918, it existed only 23 months. The military invasion of the Soviet Russia put an end to its existence on April 28, 1920.

**State Oil Company of Azerbaijan Republic (SOCAR)** – an institution which supervises the oil and gas exploration, extraction and processing in Azerbaijan. Established in 1991. The company concluded treaties and contracts with numerous foreign oil corporations on drilling and using of oil and gas wells, transporting oil and gas, etc.

**Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan main export oil pipeline** – the major export pipeline that transports the Azerbaijani oil from the Caspian Sea to the world market via the Mediterranean terminal at Ceyhan, Turkey. The total length is 1,768 km. The pipeline was inaugurated in 2006.

**BP, formerly British Petroleum** – one of the biggest oil companies of the world. It

has been involved in oil exploration, extraction, refining and trade since 1909. BP has been operating in Azerbaijan since 1994. It is currently the major operator of the AIOC.

**4 UN Security Council resolutions** – the UN Security Council adopted the resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in 1993. Each resolution was adopted as a result of occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and other territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the Armenian armed forces. The resolutions reaffirmed Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and demanded immediate cease-fire, cease of hostilities and withdrawal of occupying forces from the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The demands of the resolution have not yet been fulfilled by the Republic of Armenia .

**Julfa** – a district in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, Azerbaijan. Its administrative center is the town of Julfa.

**Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast** – a former autonomous province within the Republic of Azerbaijan. Established on July 7, 1923. In 1988, the Karabakh separatists and nationalists together with the armed forces of Armenia drove the Azerbaijani population of the region out of their native lands and occupied Nagorno-Karabakh. In September 1991, the Armenian separatists proclaimed the establishment of the so-called Nagorno Karabakh Republic. The Republic of Azerbaijan refused to recognize the NKR and abolished the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast on November 26.

**Dede Korkut** – a written epic of the Turkic and Azerbaijani folklore dating back to the seventh century. The two manuscripts written in the 15-16th centuries are maintained in Dresden and Vatican.

**Exxon Mobil Corporation** – one of the biggest industrial enterprises in the world. Headquartered in Dallas, Texas, USA. It currently operates in more than 90 countries, including Azerbaijan.

**Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh** – the conflict broke out as a result of the territorial claims of the Armenian SSR in 1988. The conflict turned into a war in 1991-1994. The hostilities were ended by a ceasefire agreement signed between Azerbaijan and Armenia in May 1994. The conflict resulted in 30,000 civilian losses from the Azerbaijani side and occupation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent districts of Azerbaijan by the Armenian armed forces.

**Contract of the Century** – a contract on “Joint development of the Azeri, Chirag, Gunashli oil deposits in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea and distribution of the extracted oil” was signed with 11 largest oil companies of the world in Gulustan Palace, Baku, on September 20, 1994. It was named the Contract of the Century due to its historic, political and international

importance. 12 oil companies (Amoco, BP, Unocal, SOCAR, Lukoil, Statoil, Exxon, Turkiye Petrollari, Pennzoil, Itochu, Ramco, Delta) of eight countries (Azerbaijan, USA, UK, Russia, Turkey, Norway, Japan, Saudi Arabia) took part in the Contract of the Century. The Contract was approved by the parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan and entered into force on December 12, 1994. Currently, the Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli project participants include BP (operator), ChevronTexaco, SOCAR, Inpex, Statoil, ExxonMobil, TPAO, Itochu, Delta Hess. The term of the contract is 30 years.

**Caspian Sea** – the largest enclosed water basin on the earth, located at the border of Europe and Asia. Its length is 1,200 km from north to south, the average width - 320 km, the shoreline length - 6,500 km.

**Great Silk Road** – a historic transit trade route and a transport corridor linking Europe and Asia. Operated from the end of II BC to XVI century, the route extended from China to North Africa and Spain and connected almost all the countries known then with its diverse branches. Thanks to its favorable geographical position and rich material resources, Azerbaijan has been occupying an important place in the economic and cultural relations between the countries since the ancient times. The idea of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev on the revival of the Great Silk Road proposed at the end of the twentieth century was approached with a significant interest by the world community, particularly by the countries located along the Great Silk Road. On September 7-8, 1998, an international conference on the Great Silk Road was held in Baku at the initiative of Heydar Aliyev. The conference was attended by delegations from 32 countries and 13 international organizations.

**Occupied territories** – the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent districts occupied (1991-1994) by the Armenian armed forces as a result of the Armenian-Azerbaijani War. (*Number of the population is given according to the information of the State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan dated January 1, 2013.*)

**Lachin** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (May 18, 1992). Area of 1,835 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 72,000 people.

**Kalbajar** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (April 12, 1993). Area of 1,936 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 85,000 people.

**Agdam** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (July 23, 1993). An area of 1,094 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 185,000 people.

**Jabrail** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (August 23, 1993). Area of 1,050 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 74,000 people.

**Fuzuli** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (August 23, 1993). Area of 1,386 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 122,000 people.

**Gubadli** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (August 31, 1993). Area of 802 km<sup>2</sup> and a population of 38,000 people.

**Zangilan** – an occupied district of Azerbaijan (October 29-30, 1993). Area of 707 km<sup>2</sup>, a population of 41,000 people.

**Itochu Corporation** – a Japanese corporation established in 1958. It has companies and firms in 176 countries. The corporation has been operating in Baku since August 1996.

**Black January** – On January 19-20, 1990, the Soviet Army committed a serious crime against the people who had raised with the purpose of creating a sovereign, democratic state. As a result of the aggression 147 civilians were killed, more than 370 people injured, while 321 people went missing in Baku. Among the killed there were representatives of five ethnicities and more than 20 women and children. After Heydar Aliyev's return to power in 1993, the causes and consequences of the Black January events were accurately investigated and the tragedy was given full political and legal appreciation as a military aggression and crime.

**Koroglu** – a heroic epic widely spread in Azerbaijan, Middle East and Central Asia. Koroglu and his brothers-in-arm are mentioned in accounts of XVII century historians.

**Kura River** – a river in the Caucasus. Starting from the glaciers in the northeastern Turkey, it enters Azerbaijan through Turkey and Georgia. Merged with the Araks River, its largest tributary, it flows into the Caspian Sea. The length of the river is 1515 km.

**Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization** – established at Istanbul Summit in 1992. The organization includes Albania, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Armenia, Georgia, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Serbia, Croatia, Turkey, Ukraine, and Greece. The organization focuses on economic cooperation. Its head office is located in Istanbul.

**Gabala radar station (Gabala RLS)** – Russia's anti-missile defense Daryal-type radar station. One of the nine stations of its kind built in the Soviet time. It is situated near the town of Gabala, Azerbaijan. Its construction started in 1976, and the operation in 1985. The working abilities of technical resources are efficient until 2012. The radar station was the most important element of anti-missile defense system of the southern regions of the USSR. Closed in 2012.

**LUKoil** – an oil company. Established by the government of the Russian Federation in 1993. Possessing giant industrial-financial complex, LUKoil is involved in oil exploration,

production, processing and trading in Russia, the CIS and other countries of the world. The company has been operating in Azerbaijan since 1993.

**McDermott** – an oil company established in 1923. It is one of the oldest contractors in developing offshore deposits situated in strategically oil and gas zones of the world.

**Mitsui Group** – a Japanese company. Founded in 1947. Represented in 79 countries. Mainly involved in oil-refining industry.

**“Molla Nasreddin”** – first Azerbaijani weekly illustrated magazine. The first edition was published in Tiflis on April 7, 1906. The magazine was printed in Tiflis in 1906-1918, in Tabriz in 1921, in Baku in 1922-1931. The editor and publisher was Jalil Mammadgulu-zade. Over 25 years, 748 editions of the journal were published.

**Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)** – created on December 8, 1991, as a new interstate union on the basis of an agreement signed by the heads of the states of Belarus, Russia and Ukraine following the breakup of the USSR. Azerbaijan joined the CIS in September 1993. The Commonwealth comprises 11 former Soviet republics - Azerbaijan, Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Uzbekistan, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine.

**Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic** (Nakhichevan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1920-1923, Nakhichevan Autonomous Province in 1923-1924, Nakhichevan Autonomous Soviet Socialist Republic in 1924-1990, Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic since 1990) – an autonomous republic within Azerbaijan. Its area covers 5,500 square km, while the population is 361,200 people.

**NATO “Partnership for Peace” Program** – a document on political and military cooperation between NATO and the Eastern European and the former Soviet countries proposed by the United States at the Brussels Summit of the heads of the states and government of the NATO Council members on January 10-11, 1994. Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev signed the document on joining the Partnership for Peace at NATO headquarters in Brussels on May 4, 1994. Heydar Aliyev submitted the presentation documents of Azerbaijan to NATO Secretary-General Javier Solana in April 1996. The document became a basis for preparing an individual partnership program between NATO and Azerbaijan.

**Port of Novorossiysk** – a port in Krasnodar Krai, Russia. The Baku-Novorossiysk oil pipeline is an important component of the Contract of Century signed in September 1994 between the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and foreign oil companies. Filling the pipeline with oil was launched in October 1996.

**Charter of Paris** – signed by the heads of states and governments of CSCE member

# 30 HISTORICAL VISITS

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Official and State Visits of the  
National Leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev

1993-2003

## PHOTO DOCUMENTS

**19-22.12.1993**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of France**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the President of the French Republic Francois Mitterand in the front of the Elysee Palace



Meeting between Francois Mitterand and Heydar Aliyev



Francois Mitterrand and Heydar Aliyev at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference

**08-11.02.1994**

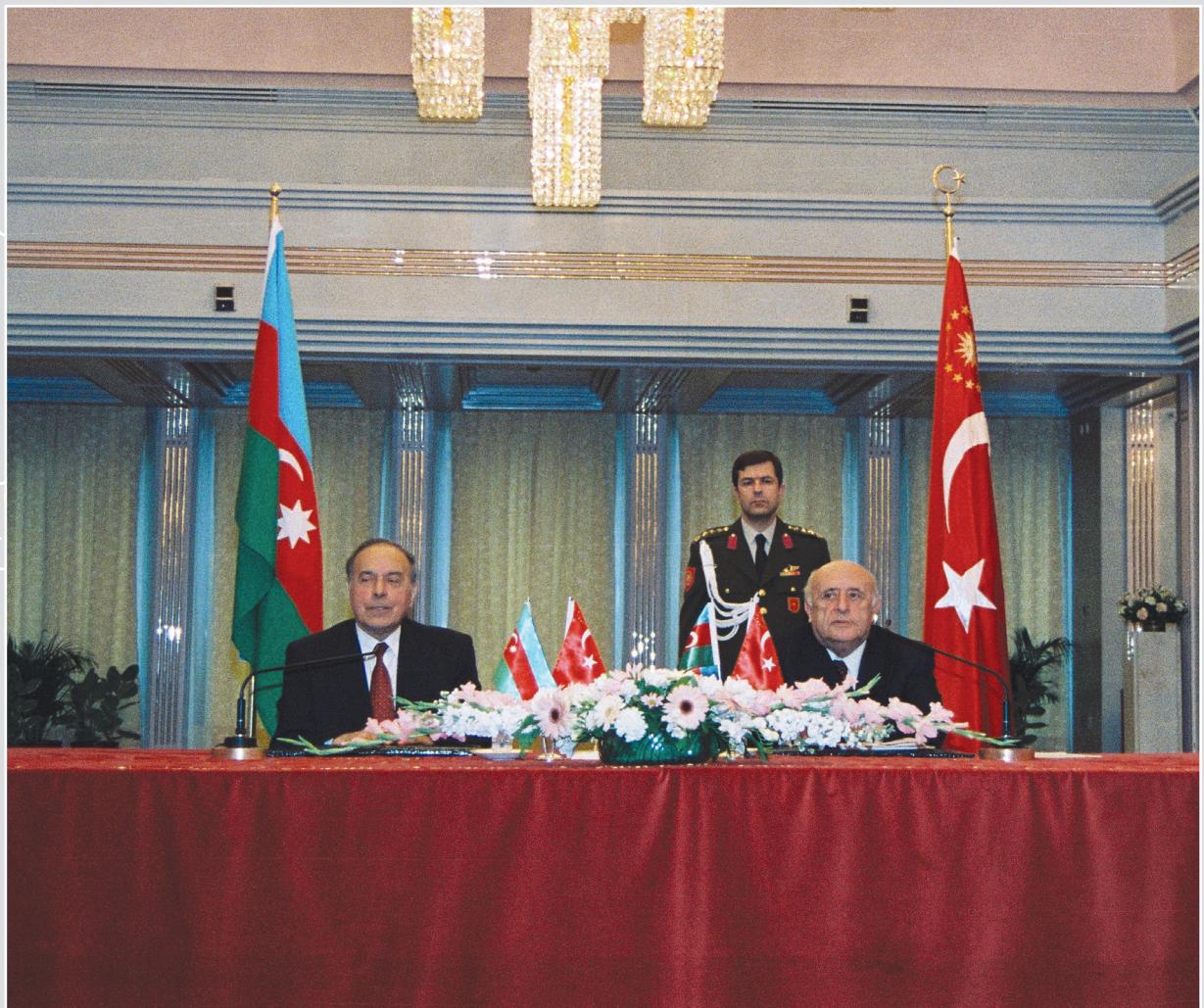
**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
to the Republic of Turkey**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the President of the Republic of Turkey Suleyman Demirel



Suleyman Demirel and Heydar Aliyev at the official reception in honor of the Azerbaijani President



Suleyman Demirel and Heydar Aliyev at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries

**22-25.02.1994**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted at the London airport



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom John Major



Heydar Aliyev at the Royal Institute for International Relations



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference dedicated to the results of his official visit to the United Kingdom

**07-10.03.1994**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
to the People's Republic of China**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the President of the People's Republic of China Jiang Zemin



Heydar Aliyev and Jiang Zemin at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



From the meeting of Heydar Aliyev with Li Peng, chairman of the Council of Ministers



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference in Beijing

**29.06.1994-02.07.1994**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to  
the Islamic Republic of Iran**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Hashimi Rafsanjani



Meeting between President Heydar Aliyev and the Supreme Religious Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayatollah Seyid Ali Khamenei



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference in Tehran

09-13.07.1994

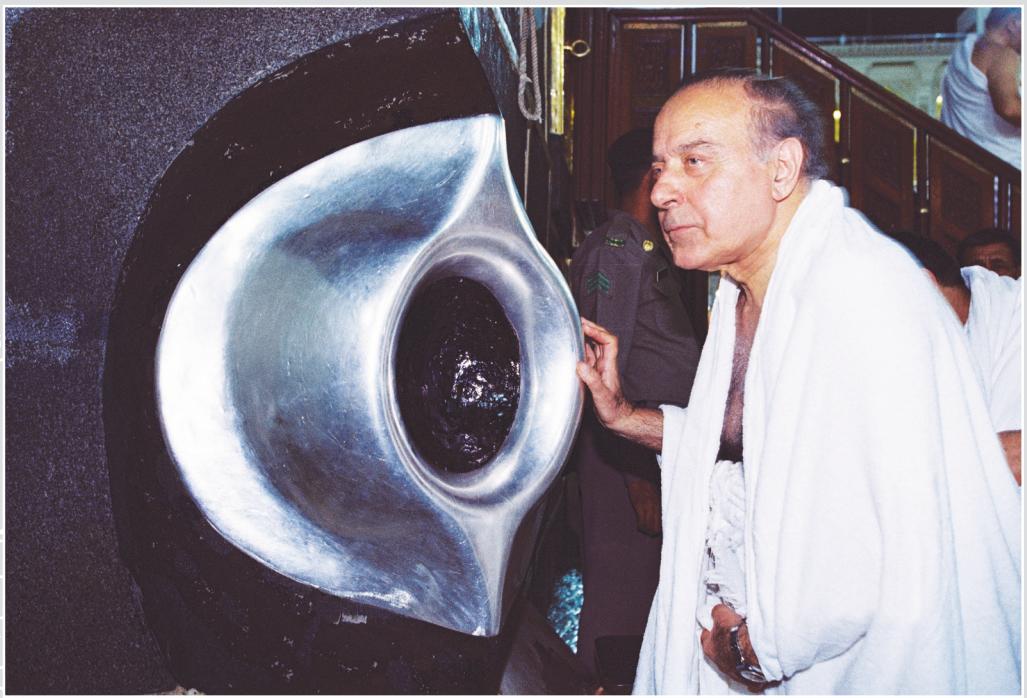
Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia



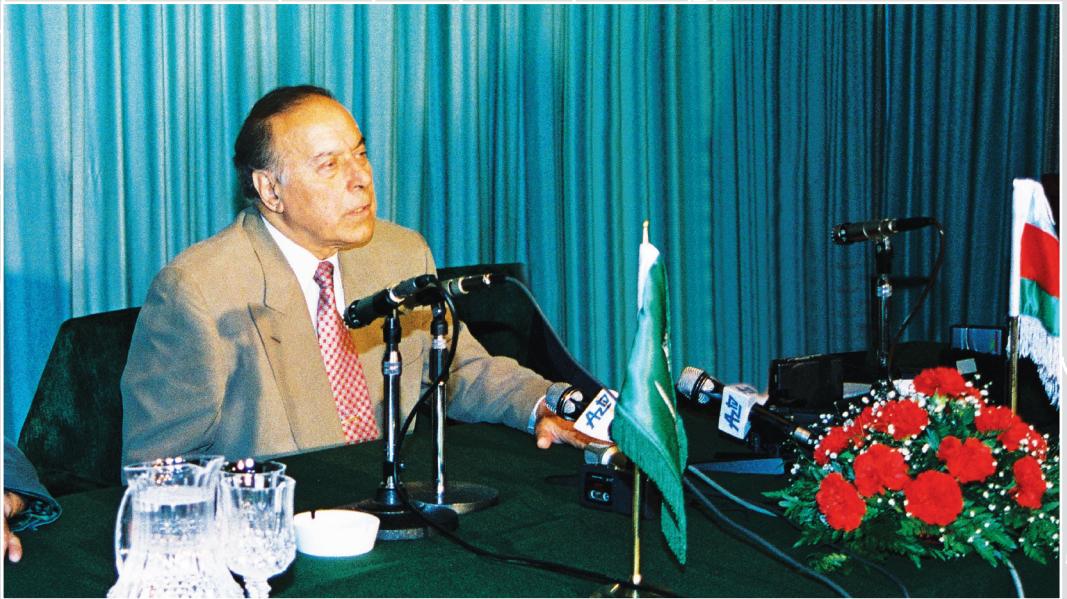
Official greeting ceremony of Heydar Aliyev



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the King of Saudi Arabia Fahd ibn Abdul Aziz al-Saud



Heydar Aliyev in Holy Kaaba



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia

**29-30.06.1995**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to  
the Republic of Bulgaria**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Bulgaria Zhelyu Zhelev



Heydar Aliyev and Zhelyu Zhelev at the joint press conference



Heydar Aliyev and Zhelyu Zhelev at the official reception in honor of the President of the Azerbaijani Republic

**01-02.07.1995**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Romania**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of Romania Ion Iliescu



Heydar Aliyev and Ion Iliescu at the official reception in honor of the Azerbaijani President



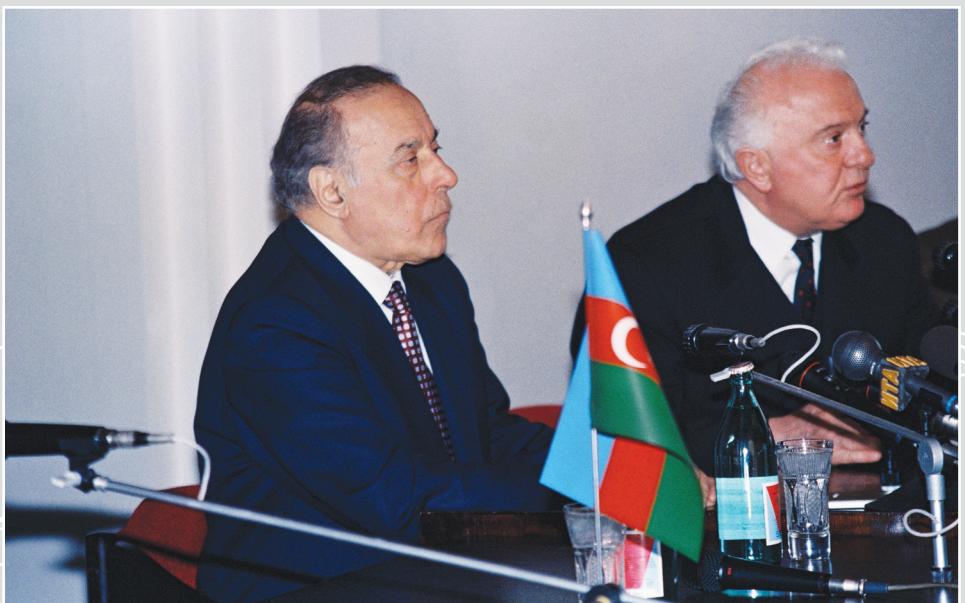
Heydar Aliyev and Ion Iliescu at the joint press conference

**08-10.03.1996**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Georgia**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze



Heydar Aliyev and Eduard Shevardnadze at the joint press conference



Heydar Aliyev and Eduard Shevardnadze at the official reception in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**09-11.04.1996**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to  
the Islamic Republic of Pakistan**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev and President of Pakistan  
Farrukh Ahmed Khan Leghari at the official reception in honor of the Azerbaijani  
President



Meeting of Heydar Aliyev with the Prime Minister of Pakistan Benazir Bhutto



Heydar Aliyev and Benazir Bhutto at the joint press conference after the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries

**24-27.04.1996**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev  
to the Kingdom of Norway**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the Norwegian Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland



Heydar Aliyev and Gro Harlem Brundtland at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



Heydar Aliyev and Gro Harlem Brundtland at the joint press conference



Heydar Aliyev and Gro Harlem Brundtland at the official reception in honor of the President of the Azerbaijani Republic

**01-04.07.1996**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Federal Republic of Germany**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Federal Republic of Germany Roman Herzog



Meeting of President Heydar Aliyev with the Federal Chancellor of Germany Helmut Kohl



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception organized on behalf of Roman Herzog in honor of the Azerbaijani President



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference dedicated to the results of his official visit to the Federal Republic of Germany

13-15.01.1997

Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to  
the Republic of France



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of France Jacques Chirac



Meeting between Heydar Aliyev and Jacques Chirac



Heydar Aliyev at the French Institute for International Relations



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception in honor of the Azerbaijani President at the National Assembly of France

**24-25.03.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Ukraine**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of Ukraine Leonid Kuchma



Meeting between Heydar Aliyev and Leonid Kuchma



Heydar Aliyev and Leonid Kuchma at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



Ceremony of awarding Heydar Aliyev with Yaroslav Mudry Order, supreme award of Ukraine



Heydar Aliyev and Leonid Kuchma at the official reception on behalf of the Ukrainian President in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**05-08.05.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Turkey Suleyman Demirel



Heydar Aliyev and Suleyman Demirel at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



Heydar Aliyev and Suleyman Demirel at the ceremony of awarding of the Azerbaijani President with the State Award of the Turkish Republic

**10-11.06.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Kazakhstan**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev



Heydar Aliyev and Nursultan Nazarbayev at the ceremony of signature of documents between the two countries



Heydar Aliyev and Nursultan Nazarbayev at the joint press conference



Heydar Aliyev and Nursultan Nazarbayev at the official reception on behalf of the President of Kazakhstan in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**18-19.06.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Uzbekistan**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan Islam Karimov



Heydar Aliyev and Islam Karimov at the joint press conference after the signature of the inter-state and intergovernmental documents between Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan



Heydar Aliyev and Islam Karimov at the official reception on behalf of the President of Uzbekistan in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**02-04.07.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Federation of Russia**



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev is being greeted by the President of the Federation of Russia Boris Yeltsin



Meeting between Heydar Aliyev and Boris Yeltsin



Heydar Aliyev and Boris Yeltsin at the ceremony of signature of bilateral documents



Heydar Aliyev at the press conference after the ceremony of signature of bilateral documents between Azerbaijan and Russia



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception organized on behalf of Boris Yeltsin in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**27.07.1997 – 06.08.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the United States of America**



Meeting of Heydar Aliyev with the prominent politicians, political figures and reporters of the United States of America



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with the President of the USA Bill Clinton



Meeting of the delegations of the governments of the USA and the Republic of Azerbaijan

**27.07.1997 – 06.08.1997**



Heydar Aliyev and Bill Clinton at the ceremony of signature of the joint statement on the US-Azerbaijani relations and the agreement on the mutual protection and promotion of investments between the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the government of the United States of America



Ilham Aliyev and President of Chevron Richard Matske are signing an oil contract



Ilham Aliyev and President of Exxon Terry Koonce are signing an oil contract



Speech of Heydar Aliyev at the signature ceremony of the oil contracts between the companies of the USA and SOCAR

**26-28.08.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Poland**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Poland Aleksander Kwasniewski



Meeting between Heydar Aliyev and Aleksander Kwasniewski



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception organized on behalf of Aleksander Kwasniewski in honor of the Azerbaijani President



Heydar Aliyev and Aleksander Kwasniewski at the ceremony of signature of documents related to various spheres of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland



Heydar Aliyev and Aleksander Kwasniewski at the joint press conference

**25-27.09.1997**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Italy**



Official greeting ceremony of Heydar Aliyev at the Rome airport



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Italy Oscar Luigi Scalfaro



Heydar Aliyev and the Italian Prime Minister Romano Prodi at the ceremony of signature of documents between Azerbaijan and Italy

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Vatican**



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the Pope of Rome John Paul II

**24-28.02.1998**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Japan**



Official greeting ceremony of Heydar Aliyev at the Tokyo airport



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan with the Japanese Emperor Akihito



Meeting of Heydar Aliyev with the Japanese Prime Minister Ryutaro Hashimoto



Heydar Aliyev and Ryutaro Hashimoto at the ceremony of signature of documents

**19-24.07.1998**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland**



Official greeting of Heydar Aliyev at the London airport



Meeting of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev with Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland



Meeting of President Heydar Aliyev with the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom Tony Blair



Heydar Aliyev and Tony Blair at the ceremony of signature of the joint declaration on friendly relations and partnership

**22-23.03.2000**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to Georgia**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of Georgia Eduard Shevardnadze



Meeting of Heydar Aliyev and Eduard Shevardnadze



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception organized on behalf of Eduard Shevardnadze in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**03-06.07.2000**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Austria**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the Federal President of Austria Thomas Klestil



Meeting of Heydar Aliyev and Thomas Klestil



Heydar Aliyev and Thomas Klestil at joint press conference



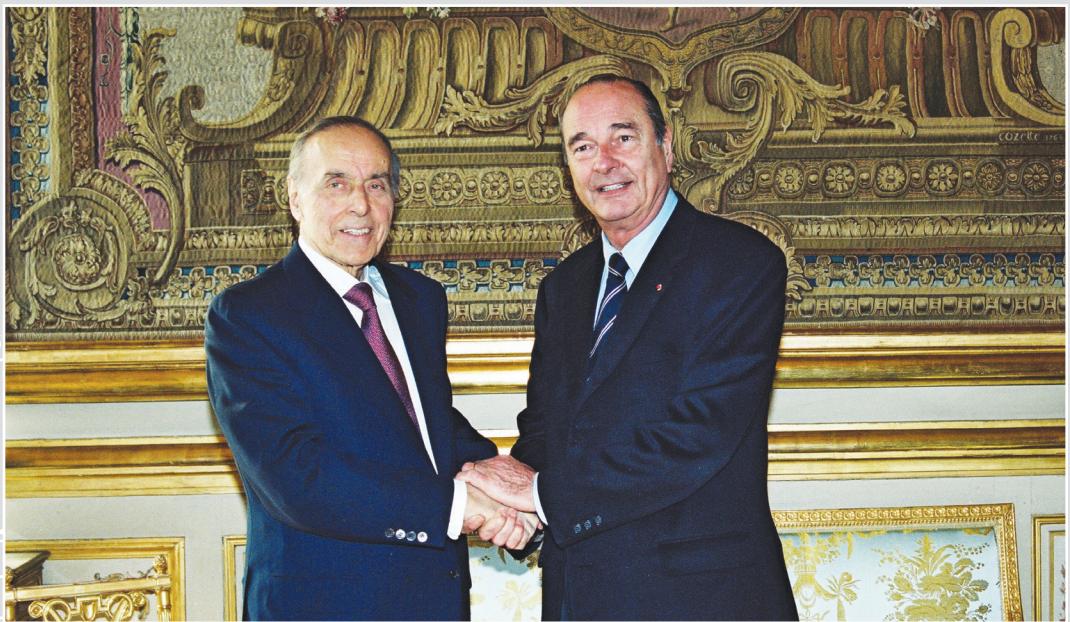
Meeting of Heydar Aliyev and the Austrian Federal Chancellor Wolfgang Schuessel

**23-27.01.2001**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of France**



Official greeting ceremony of President Heydar Aliyev at the Paris airport



Meeting of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev and French President Jacques Chirac



Heydar Aliyev and Jacques Chirac answering to the questions of reporters

**12-17.03.2001**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Republic of Turkey**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the President of the Republic of Turkey Ahmet Necdet Sezer



Heydar Aliyev and Ahmet Necdet Sezer are making a statement



Heydar Aliyev and Ahmet Necdet Sezer at the official reception organized on behalf of the Turkish President in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**24-26.01.2002**

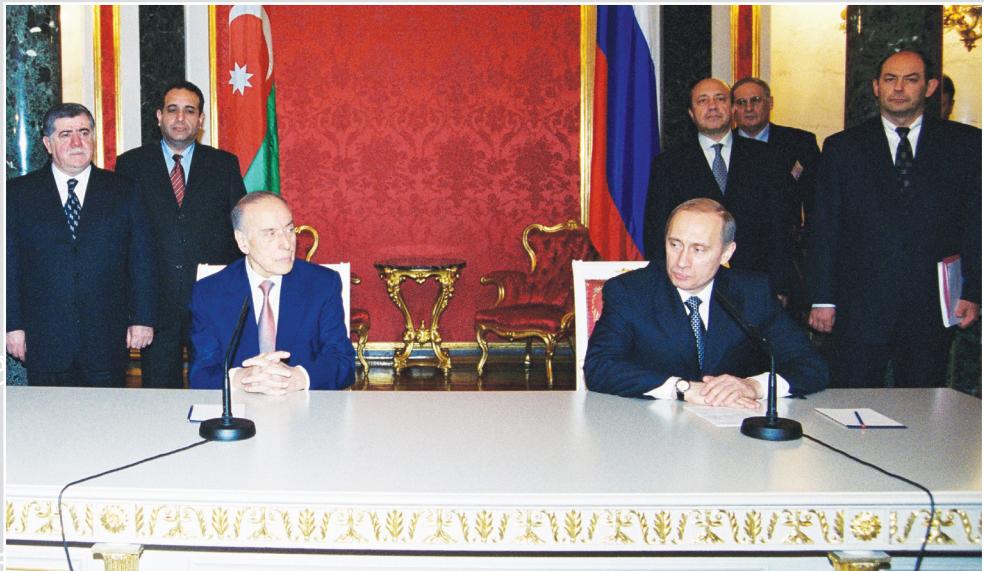
**State visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Federation of Russia**



Official greeting ceremony of Heydar Aliyev at the Moscow airport



Meeting of the Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev and the Russian President Vladimir Putin



Heydar Aliyev and Vladimir Putin are meeting the mass media



Heydar Aliyev at the official reception organized on behalf of the Russian President in honor of the Azerbaijani President

**18-20.05.2002**

**Official visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan  
Heydar Aliyev to the Islamic Republic of Iran**



Official greeting ceremony of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev by the Iranian President Mohammad Khatemi



Heydar Aliyev is answering to the questions of reporters



Meeting between President Heydar Aliyev and the Supreme Religious Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ayatollah Seyid Ali Khamenei

countries in Paris on November 21, 1990. For the first time, multilateral documents putting an ultimate end to the Cold War and marking the start of a new era were signed.

**Rosneft** – one of the big oil companies of the Russian Federation.

**Siemens** – a German company founded in 1847. Its office in Baku was opened in 1998. It is one of the leading companies of electrical products and devices worldwide.

**Statoil** – a Norwegian company operating since 1972. The company is the largest oil and gas producer in the Norwegian Sector of the North Sea. At present, Statoil is engaged in oil exploration, extraction and processing in 19 countries. It is actively involved in oil projects in Azerbaijan since 1994.

**Port of Supsa** – a Black Sea port. An international agreement on the construction of an oil pipeline from Baku to Supsa was signed on March 8, 1996. The Baku-Supsa export pipeline and the Supsa ground terminal were inaugurated on April 17, 1999.

**Shah Deniz** – an oil and gas deposit in the Azerbaijani Sector of the Caspian Sea. With gas reserves of 1 trillion cubic meters, it is one of the world's largest gas-condensate fields.

**Chevron** – one of the world's largest international energy and chemical companies. Headquartered in San Francisco, California. Operating in all spheres of oil and chemical industry, Chevron has 450 branches and joint ventures in about 100 countries.

**Alley of Martyrs** – a cemetery and memorial dedicated to those who perished fighting for the freedom, independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Some of those killed during the January 20 attack of the Soviet Army were buried in the western part of High Park. The memorial was again used for men who died while defending the Azerbaijani lands against the Armenian invaders. A 22-meter Eternal Flame was erected at the Alley in 1998.

**Shimal (North) combined-cycle power station** – as a result of the negotiations initiated by Heydar Aliyev, the Japanese government provided a loan for the construction of the Shimal-1 (North-1) power plant in 1998. The groundbreaking ceremony attended by the President was held in 2000, and the power plant was put into operation in 2002. The second combined-cycle power station of the Shimal power plant took place featuring President Ilham Aliyev on September 21, 2011.

**North-South International Transport Corridor Project** – the Agreement on the North-South International Transport Corridor was concluded by the Russian Federation, the Islamic Republic of Iran and India in St. Petersburg on September 12, 2000. The main purpose of the agreement is to increase the efficiency of all transport links in freight and passenger traffic.

The agreement entered into force on 21 May 2002. Later Belarus, Armenia, Kazakhstan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Oman and Syria joined the Agreement, too. In 2005, Azerbaijan received a positive response to its official note to join the agreement dated December 21, 2001. By the Law of the Republic of Azerbaijan No. 984-IIQ dated September 20, 2005, Azerbaijan joined the Agreement on the North-South International Transport Corridor.

**Shusha** – a town in Nagorno-Karabakh. Shusha was incorporated into the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast when it was established based on the 1923 decree of the Central Executive Committee of Azerbaijan. 90% of its population was made up by the Azerbaijanis. Occupied by the Armenians on May 8, 1992.

**Tengiz Field** – an oil-rich field in the western (Caspian) part of Kazakhstan.

**World Bank** – a specialized intergovernmental agency of the UN. Established in 1945 in the USA within the framework of the Bretton Woods system. Headquartered in Washington D.C. Its goal is to help the economic and social revival of developing countries. It is in the form of joint-stock company and its participants are only members of the International Monetary Fund. The Bank includes more than 130 countries. Azerbaijan has been a WB member since 1992.

**Volga-Don Shipping Canal** – a navigable canal connecting the Volga River and the Don River. The length is 101 km. The canal has over 50 hydraulic installations, including 13 gateways.

**UNOCAL** – The Union Oil Company of California founded in 1890, in Santa Paula, USA. It was among the first oil companies that started operating in Azerbaijan.

**Transcaucasia (South Caucasus)** – the southern part of the Caucasus. Situated south to the Major Caucasus range. The area includes the southern part of the Major Caucasus, the entire Minor Caucasus Mountain range, the Colchis Lowlands and Kura-Aras Lowlands, the Talysh Mountains, the Lenkoran Lowlands. Since the most of the territories Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia that are included in the Transcaucasian economic region are located north to the watershed range of the Major Caucasus, the area of the Transcaucasia is usually considered larger.

**Personalities**

**Abbasgulu agha Bakikhanov (penname Gudsi) (1794-1847)** – Azerbaijani scholar, poet, enlightener. Son of Mirza Muhammed II, khan of Baku. He took part in the Russian-Persian negotiations at Turkmenchay in 1828. “Golestan-e Eram” (Flower Garden) (1841) by Bakikhanov played a great role in the development of the Azerbaijani historiography.

**Akihito (1933)** – Emperor of Japan since 1989, son of Emperor Hirohito.

**Albert Gore (1948)** – American politician and statesman. Vice-president of the USA (1992-2000).

**Aleksander Kwaśniewski (1954)** – Polish politician and statesman. President of the Republic of Poland (1995-2005). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on October 27-29, 1999.

**Arif Jahangir oglu Melikov (1933)** – prominent Azerbaijani composer, professor, People's Artist of Azerbaijan and of the USSR, laureate of the state prize, associate member of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan. On September 13, 2013 he was awarded with the “Heydar Aliyev” order for his exceptional contributions to the development of the Azerbaijani culture

**Ayatollah Khamenei, Hosseini Khamenei Seyid Ali (1939)** – Iranian religious figure and statesman. President of Iran (1981-1989), Supreme religious leader of Iran since 1989.

**Benita Ferrero-Waldner (1948)** – Austrian politician and stateswoman. Under-secretary of State of Austria (1995-2000), foreign minister of Austria (2000-2004), European Commissioner for External Relations (2004-2009).

**Benazir Bhutto (1953-2007)** – Prime minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1988-1990 and 1993-1996). Assassinated in a terrorist attack on December 27, 2007.

**Bill Clinton - William Jefferson Blythe (1946)** – Prominent American politician and statesman. 42nd President of the United States. In his foreign policy Clinton attached a great importance to improving relations with the newly independent states, including Azerbaijan.

**Boris Nikolayevich Yeltsin (1931-2007)** – Russian politician and statesman. First President of the Russian Federation (1991-2000).

**Jalil Mammadgulu-zade, Mirza Jalil Huseyngulu oglu (penname Molla Nasraddin; 1866–1932)** – Azerbaijani satirist, writer, journalist, public figure. By launching *Molla Nas-*

*raddin* magazine, Jalil Mammadgulu-zade founded the satirical journalism in Azerbaijan and the Middle East.

**John Major (1943)** – Prominent British politician and statesman, prime minister of the United Kingdom (1990-1997).

**George Walker Bush (1946)** – 43<sup>rd</sup> President of the United States (2001-2009), republican.

**Eduard Ambrosievich Shevardnadze (1928)** – Georgian and Soviet politician and statesman. First secretary of the Central Committee of the Georgian Communist Party (1972-1985), minister of Foreign Affairs of the USSR, (1985-1990), president of the Republic of Georgia (1994-2003). Awarded with Istiglal Order of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Paid official visits to Azerbaijan on February 18-20, 1997 and on September 29, 2001.

**Emil Constantinescu (1939)** – President of Romania (1996-2000). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on June 29, 1998

**Ahmet Nejdet Sezer (1941)** – President of the Republic of Turkey (2000–2007). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on July 11-12, 2000.

**Askar Akayev (1944 )** – President of Kyrgyzstan (1990-2005). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on April 23, 1997

**Fahd bin Abdulaziz Al Saud (1921–2005)** – The Custodian of the two Holy cities, King of Saudi Arabia (1982–2005). Awarded with the order “Istiglal” of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

**Farooq Ahmad Khan Leghari (1940-2010)** – President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan (1993-1997). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on October 9-11, 1995.

**François Mitterrand (1916-1996)** – President of France (1981-1995).

**Fuzuli Muhammad Suleyman oglu (1494-1556)** – Great Azerbaijani poet and thinker. He authored many verses in Azerbaijani, Persian and Arabic. Best known as a lyrical poet for his romantic poems. His poem “Leyli and Majnun” is a masterpiece of the Azerbaijani, oriental and world poetry. Buried in Karbala, Iraq.

**Hashemi Rafsanjani, Ali Akbar Hashemi Rafsanjani (1934)** – President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1989-1997). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on October 26-28, 1993.

**Hashimoto Ryutaro (1937–2006)** – Japanese statesman. Prime minister of Japan (1996–1998).

**Helmut Kohl (1930)** – Prominent German politician and statesman. Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany (1982-1998). The greatest achievement of Kohl was the reunification of Germany.

**John Paul II, born Karol Józef Wojtyła (1920-2005)** – Doctor of theology. He contributed a lot to peace and detente. Elected as Pope of Rome in 1978. Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on May 22-23, 2002.

**Ion Iliescu (1930)** – Romanian politician and statesman. He led the National Salvation Front that took control of the country after ousting Nicolae Ceausescu in 1989. President of Romania (1992-1996 and 2000–2004). Paid official visits to Azerbaijan on March, 1996 and on October 29-30, 2002.

**Józef Kasperovich Płoszko (1867 -1931)** – Polish architect. He arrived in Baku in 1897 and authored a number of architectural projects in Baku.

**Islom Karimov, Islom Abduganiyevich Karimov (1938)** – Uzbek politician and statesman. President of the Republic of Uzbekistan since 1990. Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on May 26-27, 1996.

**Ismail bey Nasruallah Sultan oglu Gutgashenli (1806-1869)** – Azerbaijani writer, public and military figure. Having served in the Russian army for over 30 years, Gutgashenli reached the rank of major general. Member of the Caucasian department of Agricultural and Geographical societies of Russia.

**Jacques Chirac (1932)** – Prominent French politician and statesman. President of the Republic of France (1995-2007). Awarded with Heydar Aliyev order.

**Zhelyu Zhelev (1935)** – Bulgarian philosopher and politician. President of the Republic of Bulgaria (1990-1997).

**Queen Elizabeth II (1926)** – Queen of the United Kingdom. From Windsor Royal house. She ascended the throne upon the death of her father George VI in 1952.

**Gro Harlem Brundtland (1939)** – Norwegian public and political figure. Prime minister of Norway (February 4-October 14, 1981; May 9, 1986 - October 16, 1989; November 3, 1990 - October 25, 1996). Director-general of the World Health Organization (1998-2003). Special Envoy on Climate Change for the United Nations Secretary-General since May 1, 2007.

**Levon Ter-Petrosyan (1945)** – President of the Republic of Armenia (1991-1998), one of the leaders of the Karabakh separatist movement.

**Leonid Danilovich Kuchma (1938)** – Ukrainian politician and statesman. President of the Republic of Ukraine (1994-2005). Awarded with Istiglal order of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Paid official visits to Azerbaijan on July 27-28, 1995 and on March 16-17, 2000.

**Magsud Sheikh-zade (1908-1967)** – poet and writer. Arrested in the years of repression and exiled to Tashkent. Rehabilitated in 1954. His works were published in Uzbek.

**Mohammad Khatami (1943)** – Iranian politician, statesman and public figure. President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (1997-2005). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on August 5-7, 2004.

**Mammad Amin Rasul-zade (1884–1955)** – prominent Azerbaijani statesman and public figure. One of the founders of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan (1918-1920) and one of the leaders of the political public emigrants.

**Mikhail Sergeyevich Gorbachev (1931)** – General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (1985-1991), first and last president of the USSR (1990-1991). Supporting Armenian claims against Azerbaijan, M.Gorbachev was the organizer of the Black January that took place in Baku in 1990.

**Mustafa Kemal Atatürk, Gazi Mustafa Kemal (1881- 1938)** – Turkish statesman, politician and military figure. Founder and the first president of the Republic of Turkey (1923-1938).

**Mustafa bey Topchubashov (1895-1981)** – surgeon, public figure and statesman. Academician of the Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan and Medical Academy of Sciences of the USSR. The method of analgesia, which is widely used all over the world, was proposed by Topchubashov.

**Nizami Ganjavi, Ilyas Yusif oglu (1141-1209)** – great Azerbaijani poet and thinker. Best known for his Khamsa (Quintuple) consisting of long narrative poems. His works, which formed the peak of the early Oriental Renaissance, reflect the humanist, universal, social and moral ideas of his time.

**Nursultan Abishevich Nazarbayev (1940)** – Statesman and politician of Kazakhstan. Chairman of the Supreme Soviet of Kazakhstan (1984 -1989), chairman of the Soviet of Ministers (1984 -1989), first secretary of the Communist Party of Kazakhstan (1989-1991), president of the Republic of Kazakhstan since 1991. Paid official visits to Azerbaijan on September 16-17, 1996 and on April 7, 2000.

**Pawel Pototski (1879 - 1932)** – engineer. He was invited to Baku to conduct land rec-

lamation work in the bay of Bibi-Heybat. He devoted the last twenty years of his life to oil exploration in Bibi-Heybat and authored big projects.

**Petar Stoyanov (1952)** – Bulgarian politician. President of the Republic of Bulgaria (1997-2002). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on December 2-3, 1999.

**Prodi Romano (1939)** – Italian politician and statesman. Prodi held high public offices, as prime minister of Italy (1996-1998 and 2006-2008), president of the European Commission (1999-2000).

**Rasul Rza, Rasul Ibrahim oglu Rzayev (1910–1981)** – prominent Azerbaijani poet, public figure. People`s Poet of Azerbaijan (1960).

**Roman Herzog (1934)** – Federal President of Germany (1994-1999).

**Saparmurat Niyazov (1940-2006)** – President of Turkmenistan (1990-2006). Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on March 18-19, 1996.

**Samed Vurgun, Samed Yusif oglu Vekilov (1906- 1956)** – Azerbaijani poet, public figure. First People`s Poet of Azerbaijan (1956).

**Scalfaro Oscar Luigi (1918-2012)** – Italian politician and statesman. President of the Republic of Italy (1992-1999), a life senator.

**Suleyman Demirel (1924)** – Prominent Turkish politician, public figure and statesman. President of the Republic of Turkey (1993-2000). Suleyman Demirel was awarded with Is-tiglal order of the Republic of Azerbaijan for his efforts in strengthening the Turkish-Azerbaijani friendly relations. Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on December 7-9, 1995.

**Suleyman Rustam, Suleyman Aliabbas oglu Rustam-zade (1906-1989)** – prominent Azerbaijani poet, playwright, public figure. People`s Poet of Azerbaijan (1960).

**Thomas Klestil (1932-2004)** – Austrian diplomat and politician. President of the Republic of Austria (1992-2004).

**Tony Blair, Anthony Charles Lynton (1953)** – Prominent British politician and statesman. Prime minister of the United Kingdom (1997-2007).

**Jiang Zemin (1926)** – Chinese party figure and statesman. Secretary-General of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China (1989-2002), President of the People`s Republic of China (1993-2003).

**Uzun Hasan (1423/24-1478)** – Ak Koyunlu ruler (1468-78), prominent warlord and diplomat. Having defeated Jahanshah in 1467, Uzun Hasan effectively ended the existence of Kara Koyunlu state and established the state of Ak Koyunlu with Tabriz as its center.

**Uzeyir Hajibeyov (1885-1948)** – great Azerbaijani composer, musicologist, publicist, playwright, teacher and public figure. Founder of the modern Azerbaijani professional music and national opera.

**Vladimir Vladimirovich Putin (1952)** – Prime minister (from August 1999 to 2000), president of the Russian Federation (2000-2008). Re-elected president in May 2012. Paid an official visit to Azerbaijan on January 9-10, 2001.

**Wolfgang Schüssel (1945)** – Austrian politician. Federal Chancellor of Austria (2000–2007).

**Yusif Samedoglu, Yusif Samed oglu Vekilov (1935-1998)** – Azerbaijani writer and public figure. People's Writer of Azerbaijan.

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