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**Permanent Mission of the
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PRESS RELEASE
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Marking the 82nd birthday of Heydar Aliyev

Today marks the 82nd birthday of Heydar Aliyev, the late President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the great national leader. The solemn opening ceremony of the 12-meter high bronze monument to the late President in front of the Heydar Aliyev Palace was held today. The ceremony was attended by government officials, members of the Parliament and representatives of diplomatic corps accredited in Azerbaijan. Hundreds of people have gathered to pay tribute to the person whose name was inseparably linked with the last thirty five years of the history of Azerbaijan. During these years, the revival of the nation in its political, economic and humanitarian spheres was made possible. He brought stability and peace to his country, enacted economic reforms and policies, which attracted massive foreign investment.

Heydar Aliyev was the man who embraced and survived the communist system, rose to power, left politics, then returned to write the next chapter of Azerbaijan's modern history. He was born in 1923 in the ancient city of Nakhchivan, Azerbaijan. His skillful leadership during 1970-80 made Azerbaijan one of the most developed republics of the Soviet Union and the world has recognized Azerbaijan as a country with great culture and ancient history. Since 1993, when the people of Azerbaijan had elected him president, he has built a new state based on respect for human rights, democratic governance and rule of law.

Heydar Aliyev's accomplishments include the establishment of mutually beneficial partnerships with international organizations, deepening of bilateral relations, the conclusion of the Contract of the Century with western oil companies and the initiation of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines projects, to name just a few. As a result of President Heydar Aliyev's oil strategy, Azerbaijan has become a strong, economically developed country.

The great role Heydar Aliyev had played in Azerbaijan's life for more than thirty years will never be forgotten. The outstanding politician and statesman, the pride of the Turkish world will forever live in our hearts and minds.

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