



MISSION OF AZERBAIJAN TO THE UNITED NATIONS

Press release - Special issue

26 May 2006

ANNIVERSARY OF THE REPUBLIC DAY

May 28th marks the anniversary of a great date in the history of Azerbaijan, when, back in 1918, it became the first democratic republic in the Orient. It was the starting point for the short-lived but glorious history of the Republic.

88 years ago on that day, the newly established *Milli Shura* (the National Council) of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan issued the Declaration of Independence, which stated that the Republic of Azerbaijan was endeavoring to establish good-neighborly relations with all members of the international community; that it guaranteed within its territories civil and political rights to all citizens regardless of their nationality, religion, social status and sex, and to all ethnic groups populating its territory; and that it would provide every opportunity for the free development of the individual.

From 1918 to 1920, Azerbaijan maintained diplomatic relations with many countries. An outstanding achievement of Azerbaijani diplomacy was the conspicuous participation of the national delegation in the work of the post-war Paris Peace Conference and the recognition of the independence of Azerbaijan by the Supreme Council of the Allied Powers (*Entente*) on 11 January 1920.

The Republic of Azerbaijan was engaged in establishment of its statehood under very difficult circumstances, when the external forces were trying to put an end to the independent development of Azerbaijan. In April 1920, the independence of Azerbaijan was interrupted after the invasion of the Bolshevik Red Army.

The Republic of Azerbaijan regained its independence in 1991, and according to the Constitution of 1995, was the Successor State to the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan of 1918 – 1920. It was the second birth of Azerbaijan as an independent state in the XX century.

Since the restoration of its independence, Azerbaijan has been making steady progress as a result of political, economic and social reforms. Internationally, Azerbaijan has maintained mutually-beneficial relations with many countries, strengthening its political, economic, commercial and humanitarian ties. Azerbaijan is a member of many prominent international organizations, including the United Nations, Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe, Council of Europe and Organization of Islamic Conference. The country actively cooperates with the European Union, NATO, International Monetary Fund, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and other organizations. Azerbaijan is a State Party to most multilateral treaties, including those on human rights, economic cooperation, transport, energy, communications, as well as disarmament and arms control, counter-terrorism and organized crime.

Azerbaijan is vastly endowed with natural resources, including oil and gas reserves of global importance. The country fully explores its potential to the benefit of the region, primarily through Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum main export oil and gas pipelines. Azerbaijan contributes to the energy security of the region and to the diversification of energy supplies to global markets. Being an important transit link in transport corridor Europe-the Caucasus-Asia (TRACECA), Azerbaijan also contributes to the development of regional trade, facilitation of transit transport cooperation and, hence, to achieving sustainable regional growth and prosperity.

* * * * *