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 **Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan**

 **in the Republic of Bulgaria**

 6, Charles Darvin str., Sofia, Bulgaria; Tel.: (3592)8170070; Fax: (3592) 817 00 77

 E-mail: sofia@mission.mfa.gov.az; Web site: [www.azembassy.bg](http://www.azembassy.bg/)

**July 26, 2015**

**Weekly News-Letter**

**1. Official chronicle**

**Official welcoming ceremony for the President of the European Council was held**

Baku, July 22 [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).An official welcoming ceremony for President of the European Council Donald Tusk has been held.A guard of honor was arranged for the distinguished guest in the square decorated with the flags of Azerbaijan and the European Union.The chief of the guard of honor reported to President Ilham Aliyev.President Ilham Aliyev welcomed President of the European Council Donald Tusk.The chief of the guard of honor reported to the President of the European Council.The anthems of Azerbaijan and the European Union were played.The presidents reviewed the guard of honor.The President of the European Council saluted Azerbaijani soldiers.State and government officials of Azerbaijan were introduced to President Donald Tusk, and members of the delegation of the European Union were introduced to President Ilham Aliyev.The guard of honor marched in front of the presidents to the accompaniment of a military march.The presidents posed for official photos.

**President Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Council Donald Tusk had an expanded meeting**

Baku, July 22, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).After the official welcoming ceremony, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Council Donald Tusk have had an expanded meeting with participation of delegations.President Ilham Aliyev said: Mr President, welcome to Azerbaijan.I am very glad to see you again. I also welcome your delegation. Your visit is an important step towards the development of European Union-Azerbaijan relations. We are very much satisfied with the development of our relationship. We have achieved a lot, and, of course, there are plans for the future.We will discuss prospects for our cooperation today. As regards our position, we are very pleased with the fact that there is a very broad agenda, which covers many areas that are of great importance to Azerbaijan, Europe and regional security.Therefore we are concentrating on traditional areas, which are political dialogue, economic cooperation, trade relationship, energy security and other areas. I hope that during your visit we will have a good chance to discuss what has been done and also what we are planning to do. Definitely relations between EU and Azerbaijan will be elevated and will enter the new stage which will be mutually beneficial and which reflect the interests of Europe, interests of Azerbaijan, regional security issues and regional development. Welcome once again.

Donald Tusk said: Thank you, Mr. President especially for the invitation and the hospitality. I remember well my first visit to Baku. It was five years ago. This is my first visit in my role as President of the European Council. Thank you for patience as you know I had to postpone my visit because of some European problems. Thanks for understanding. I am here now.President Ilham Aliyev: Fortunately all the difficult times are already in the past.Donald Tusk: I am not as optimistic as you, Mr President. But I hope we will tackle this big problems related to Greece.Thank you very much again. For me it was very important to be here not only because of our friendship, but, first of all, because of the importance of our relationship in those areas that you mentioned. For me personally our relations are important because of the idea of so-called Energy Union that is related to our cooperation. As Europe for us our cooperation in this field is not only business. This is a strategic choice and strategic chance to diversify our roots of energy resources.

**President Ilham Aliyev, President of the European Council Donald Tusk met in private**

Baku, July 22, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).After the expanded meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Council Donald Tusk have had a one-on-one meeting.

**President Ilham Aliyev, President of the European Council Donald Tusk made press statements**

Baku, July 22, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).After the one-on-one meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Council Donald Tusk have made statements for the press.Statement by President Ilham Aliyev:

Dear Mr President,Dear guests,Welcome to Azerbaijan. Your visit is of great importance in terms of relations between European Union and Azerbaijan. We want to develop this partnership in the future and we are very satisfied that we have already a big asset - many years of active cooperation between EU and Azerbaijan.Today we discussed a broad range of issues of bilateral relations, regional issues. We see positive developments in EU-Azerbaijan partnership. Your visit, Mr. President, is a good indicator of the importance of these relations. We have close political ties and want to develop them in the future.We discussed today the issues of regional security, particularly Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and ways how to resolve this conflict. I informed Mr. President of the current situation on the negotiation table and the history of the conflict. The conflict lasts for more than two decades. Internationally recognized part of Azerbaijan - Nagorno-Karabakh and seven other districts - are under Armenian occupation for more than twenty years. United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from our territories. But they are not implemented. Armenia occupies Nagorno-Karabakh and seven other districts of Azerbaijan, millions of Azerbaijanis are victims of this aggression. They became IDPs and refugees and our people were subject to ethnic cleansing from Armenia. The soonest resolution of the conflict, based on the international law norms and relevant UN Security Council resolutions, will be to the benefit of all the people of the region of South Caucasus. We hope that international community will put more pressure on aggressor to start de-occupation of Azerbaijani lands and as soon as the de-occupation starts, I think the process of normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia can also start. Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has the same value as the territorial integrity of any other country and the conflict must be resolved on this basis.We discussed our economic cooperation and we are very glad that Europe is our main trading partner. Almost half of our foreign trade is with member states of European Union. And European Union countries are our main investors - also about fifty percent of foreign investments come from European Union. There is good potential to develop this economic cooperation through investments, other forms of economic activity.One of the elements of potential cooperation is transportation. We are now together with our neighbors in the phase of completion of the railroad, which connects Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey and thus connects Europe and Asia. This will be new a silk route, which will increase mutual trade volumes between Europe and Asia and Azerbaijan as a transit country will play its important role.Also, of course, we discussed today issues related to the energy security. We are good partners with Europe. The Southern Gas Corridor project, which was launched last September in Baku already is in the active phase of implementation. Azerbaijan initiated this project and is actively working together with partners, neighboring countries and the investors to implement the project on time. We have huge gas reserves. Proven reserves are about 2.6 trillion cubic meters. Shahdeniz gas field, which is so far the only resource base for the Southern Gas Corridor, contains more than one trillion cubic meters of gas. So our reserves will be enough to supply European consumers with natural gas for decades ahead. Southern Gas Corridor is a project, which unites countries and which is to the benefit of the producers, transitors and consumers. I think we found the right balance between these three segments of this energy project, which was reflected in the declaration adopted here in Baku in February at the first meeting of the consultative board of Southern Gas Corridor.This March TANAP, which is part of Southern Gas Corridor, also started to be constructed. So we are on time. This is a project of energy security. Today energy security cannot be separated from the national security of the countries. This is a project of energy diversification, because Southern Gas Corridor is not only diversification of routes, but most importantly, it is diversification of supply sources. Azerbaijan with its resources, infrastructure and with the experience of implementing these mega energy projects, of course, is playing its role and we are very glad that the role of Azerbaijan in this area was reflected in the recently adopted documents of EU.We discussed also the regional security issues in the broad region of Caspian, Middle East, Central Asia. Also we have a good potential of cooperation in the area of culture, in the humanitarian area. The issues related to religious tolerance, interreligious dialogue are very actively addressed here in Azerbaijan. Actually, Azerbaijan is known already as one of the international centers of multiculturalism. I think this also could be part of the future format of cooperation between EU and Azerbaijan. We have very active relations with most of the member states of European Union in political, economic and other areas. So this shows that the picture is very positive. Of course, the visit of Mr. President is a good sign of our partnership and it opens the way for future active and productive cooperation.Mr. President welcome once again.

**President Ilham Aliyev received OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs**

Baku, July 23, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has received OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs James Warlick of the United States, Igor Popov of Russia, and Pierre Andrieu of France, as well as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk.The sides discussed the current state and prospects of the peace talks to settle the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

**2.Economy**

**Some 20.9 million tons of oil and 10.2 bn cm of gas produced in Azerbaijan in first half of 2015**

Baku, July 22, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).According to the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan, some 20.9 million tons of oil and 10.2 bn cm of gas have been produced in the country in the first six months of the year.

**"Southern gas corridor is the project connecting the countries, bringing benefit to producers, transit parties and consumers", President of Azerbaijan**

Baku, July 23, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank)."We are good partners with Europe, and the project of the Southern gas corridor the implementation of which was given start in September of the last year in Baku is actively realized now. Azerbaijan became the initiator of this project and actively works with partners, neighboring countries and investors for timely implementation of the project. We have huge reserves of gas. Our confirmed reserves of gas make about 2,6 trillion cubic meters. Gas reserves on the Shahdeniz field which is the only resource for the Southern gas corridor make more than 1 trillion cubic meters. Thus, our resources will be enough for equipment of the European consumers with natural gas for decades. The Southern gas corridor is the project connecting the countries, bringing benefit to producers, the transit parties and consumers. I consider that we managed to find the correct balance between three segments of this energy project".This was stated at the press conference by the President Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev he held jointly with the President of the European Council Donald Tusk in Baku on July 22.The Head of State also spoke of the energy security issues. He said: "In March of this year, started construction of the TANAP project which is part of the project of the Southern gas corridor. The works go according to the schedule. It is the project of energy security. Today, energy security can't be separated from national security of the countries. It is the project of power diversification as the Southern gas corridor is not only diversification of the routes of supply, but also that it is more important, it is diversification of the sources of supply. Azerbaijan plays its role thanks to the resources, infrastructure and experience of realization of such mega-energy projects. We are very glad that the role of Azerbaijan in this area found reflection in the documents accepted recently by the European Union".

**3.Culture**

**"Aypara" mugham trio performs at Astana Turkic Music Festival**

Baku, July 22, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).Azerbaijani “Aypara" mugham trio has performed at Astana Turkic Music Festival as part of the 43rd World Conference of the International Council for Traditional Music.Organized by TURKSOY, the annual festival highlighted traditional music and dances of Azerbaijani, Turkish, Uzbek and Uighur people.“Aypara" includes Ayten Maharramova, the winner of the second Mugham Contest, and Adalet Behbudov (tar) and Parviz Farhadov (violin).The event was attended by 800 experts from 70 countries, prominent figures of culture and arts from Turkic-speaking countries, and foreign guests.

**Gabala 7th International Music Festival features first concert**

Gabala, July 25, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).Gabala 7th International Music Festival has featured the first concert performed by Austrian Weiner Academy Chamber Orchestra.The orchestra was conducted by Martin Hoselbok. It performed works by Mozart, Sammartini and Vivaldi.

**4.Sport**

**Azerbaijani Paralympic swimmers claim 5 medals at Glasgow Championships**

 Baku, July 21 [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).Azerbaijani Paralympic athletes have won a clutch of 5 medals at the IPC Swimming World Championships in Glasgow, Scotland.Roman Saley grabbed silver medal in the 50-meter freestyle swimming event, while Dmitry Saley scooped bronze medal in the 100-meter butterfly event and 50-meter freestyle swimming event.Both athletes secured the Paralympic berths for the Rio 2016 Summer Games.

**Azerbaijani athletics team name squad for 2015 European Youth Summer Olympic Festival**

Baku, July 23, [AZERTAC](http://azertag.az/en%22%20%5Ct%20%22_blank).The Azerbaijani national athletics team have decided their lineup for the 2015 European Youth Summer Olympic Festival.The squad includes Vagif Baghirov, Alex Akhundov, Rustam Shukurov, Yadulla Ibrahimov, Nurahmad Babayev, Gadir Ahmadov, Kamran Safarov, Farhad Asadov, Heybat Salayev and Aynur Asadzada.The team will be led by coaches Elvin Aliyev, Nazim Israfilov and Arif Akhundov.

 **Information source: State Telegraph Agency of the Republic of Azerbaijan (**[**www.azertag.com**](http://www.azertag.com)**)**