



NEWSLETTER

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March 7, 2008

№ 4

Armenia Breaches Cease-Fire

On March 4 Armenian armed forces attacked the Azerbaijani position on the line of contact in Terter region along with territories currently occupied by Armenia. Azerbaijani armed forces suppressed the attack suffering casualties and the deaths of three servicemen. Senior Azerbaijani officials raised serious concerns with Armenian authorities' use of a military provocation, seemingly to distract attention from the deepening post-election crisis in Armenia. Azerbaijan's Foreign Ministry spokesman Khazar Ibrahim told that the authorities in Yerevan devised the conflict in order to divert attention from domestic problems. The recent presidential elections in Armenia sparked bloody protests and violent clashes between government security forces and civilian protesters, resulting in nearly a dozen reported deaths in the streets of the Armenian capital, Yerevan on March 1. "This is a clear provocation by Armenia," Mr. Ibrahim said. "They [Armenian authorities] are trying to use the situation which is taking place in Yerevan after the elections and are trying to divert the attention of their citizens and population from the internal and domestic issues in order to seek an external enemy."

Poland Backs Azerbaijan's Drive to Join West

Poland backs Azerbaijan in its quest to boost ties with the West, Polish President Lech Kaczynski said during Azerbaijani President's visit to his country. Kaczynski, who was hosting his Azerbaijani counterpart, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, said Warsaw was a solid supporter of Baky's "integration with Euro-Atlantic structures, including the EU." Mr. Kaczynski and Mr. Aliyev signed a joint agreement regulating bilateral ties following talks. The agreement focused largely on potential future Polish imports of Azeri crude oil and natural gas.

Azerbaijani-Turkmen Negotiations

Azerbaijani and Turkmen officials have resolved a lingering obstacle to improved trade ties during the latest round of talks on issues that include cooperation to develop Caspian energy resources. Two countries delegations discussed the prospect of building trans-Caspian gas pipeline, a project backed by the European Union and United States.

First Scholarly Conference on Azerbaijan in Canada

The Centre for European, Russian, Eurasian Studies (CERES) at the Munk Centre for International Relations at the University of Toronto (UoT) in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Canada will host a scholarly conference exploring Azerbaijan on March 28, 2008 at Father Madden Hall, University of St Michael's College (100 St Joseph Street) at 12:00 PM. The Azerbaijan Conference will bring together scholars and practitioners to review modern developments in Azerbaijan, its role in the Caspian region and its policy objectives. Guest speakers include Professor Thomas Goltz, author of Azerbaijan Diary, a much-acclaimed account of Azerbaijan's immediate post-Soviet years, Mr. Yashar Aliyev, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the US, Mr. Tofiq Musayev, director of the Strategic Analysis Department at the Azerbaijan Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Dr Taras Kuzio, UoT Professor, and Aslan Amani, UoT. Speeches will be followed by commentaries by Dr. Robert Austin and Dr. Edward Schatz of CERES, an academic debate and a luncheon. For registration please contact: Aslan Amani at aslan.amani@utoronto.ca. Please send an email with the subject line "AZERBAIJAN CONFERENCE." In the message body include your full name and institutional affiliation.