



# NEWSLETTER

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## President Ilham Aliyev Met with EU and NATO Officials on a Working Visit to Belgium

On the first day of his visit, Azerbaijani President met with Mr. Jose Manuel Barroso, President of European Commission. According to Mr. Barroso, European Union has become Azerbaijan's main trade partner with nearly 30 percent of Azerbaijan's overall external trade. The two sides intend to expand the cooperation within the new Eastern Partnership program which is going to be launched in several days in Prague. Stressing Azerbaijan's role as a key partner in energy field, EC President also pointed to EU's willingness to work with Azerbaijan in many spheres, including Nabucco gas project. President Aliyev said that Azerbaijan was initiator and participant of most regional projects and was ready to contribute to European security. President also met with Mr. Jaap de Hoop Scheffer, NATO Secretary General. The Secretary General said that NATO attaches great importance to Azerbaijan as a country that plays a key role for NATO in the region. On Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict, he said "NATO is not directly involved in the settlement of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, but supports solution of Nagorno-Karabakh problem and situation in Georgia on the basis of territorial integrity". 28 NATO member countries defended the solution to Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict on these principles. Azerbaijan actively participated in NATO events and programs and was involved in 200 events of the Alliance last year. Along with the implementation of Individual Partnership Action Plan, Azerbaijani contingents are part of the peacekeeping operation of NATO in Afghanistan. President Aliyev also met with Mr. Javier Solana EU High Representative for CFSP, Mr. H.V.Rompuy, Belgian Premier, permanent representatives of the NATO member states.

## US Support Armenia-Azerbaijan Settlement

The United States intends to intensify its efforts to settle the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict peacefully, U.S.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton said. "We assured the Azerbaijani government that we will strengthen our efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and other disputes existing between Azerbaijan and Armenia," she noted during US House Committee of Foreign Affairs hearing on "Foreign Policy Priorities in the Obama Administration". According to her, the United States will take an active part in the OSCE Minsk Group's work. Ms. Clinton underlined "we hope a decision will be adopted next month." During Minsk group co-chairs' visit to the region last week, the co-chairs also expressed their expectation of nearest solution to the conflict. "The main issue is the using of all diplomatic ways to sign the framework agreement and this depends on the presidents' will and the negotiations" US ambassador Matthew Bryza told to the journalists. Azerbaijani president said "Both our proposal and that of the Minsk Group Co-chairs have the combination of principles including restoring territorial integrity, ensuring security, returning all refugees and IDPs and solving the status of Nagorno-Karabakh that could satisfy both sides". He also added that Azerbaijan will not participate in processes suggesting the mechanism of Nagorno-Karabakh's legal secession from Azerbaijan. Co-chairs also consider that the normalization of Turkey-Armenia relations will have positive impact on settlement of Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. "US, France and Russia have always considered that the normalization of the relations between Turkey and Armenia will be useful for the development of the region," American co-chair of OSCE Minsk Group Matthew Bryza said. President Aliyev clarifying Azerbaijan's position on Turkey-Armenia rapprochement, stressed Azerbaijan's firm stance of non-interference in the internal affairs of other countries, and stated that in view of the fact that the borders were closed due to the occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia, and occupation still ongoing, Azerbaijan keeps the right to adjust its policy according to new regional developments.

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