



NEWSLETTER

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Peaceful Negotiations over Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict Intensified

Following the presidents of United States, Russia and France statement at the G8 summit in L'Aquila, Italy affirming their commitment and support for the efforts by Armenia and Azerbaijan on finalizing basic principles of the agreement on the settlement of the conflict, a trilateral meeting between Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, including the co-chairs of Minsk group of OSCE has been held on July 18. Mr. Medvedev once again confirmed Russia's readiness to intensify the efforts for mutually acceptable solution to the conflict. Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan said there is certain progress in solving Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict during his press-conference after the meeting. "The co-chairs will arrive in the region to prepare possible meeting of presidents in Moscow in September. I think there is certain progress in settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. Some hopes appeared after presidents met in Moscow," the minister said. The OSCE MG co-chairs, instructed by their presidents in G8 summit are going to hold a working session in late July to prepare updated version of the Madrid Document on basic principles of the settlement issued during OSCE Ministerial Council meeting in 2007. President Ilham Aliyev during his meeting with Cabinet of Ministers of Azerbaijan, also touched upon the continuing peaceful negotiations, saying Azerbaijan's position on this issue is unequivocal and based on international law. Along with the activation in political circles, Track II diplomacy is also in action. On the initiative of the Embassies of Azerbaijan and Armenia to Russia and support of the OSCE, a group of Azerbaijani and Armenian intellectuals has visited Khankendi and Shusha of Nagorno-Karabakh region (still under occupation), also met with the Presidents of both countries. Azerbaijani Ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbuloglu said: "The people living in Nagorno-Karabakh are the citizens of Azerbaijan. We need to share their problems so that to

know how we will live together with them tomorrow. Azerbaijanis and Armenians will live together sooner or later. We have to work for peaceful end of the conflict and that the society will be ready for that". Bayram Safarov, the leader of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh also expressed the readiness of the community to meet with their Armenian counterparts. "All countries recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh is our native land. We must use each chance to return to our native lands. We should take the necessary measures to solve the conflict," he said.

Socio-Economic Statistics in Financial Crisis Period

On July 22, President Ilham Aliyev presided over the Cabinet of Ministers meeting on country's socio-economic development in the first half of 2009. According to the statistics, in the first half of the year, gross domestic product (GDP) has grown 3.6 percent and non-oil GDP - 4.1 percent, which indicates that the future of the country is less dependent on the oil factor. Rate of inflation has decreased and amounted 3.7 percent over six months. President noted that thanks to the taken measures and the ongoing reforms in recent years, the impact of financial crisis in Azerbaijan has been minimized. The incomes of the population increased 19 percent and average monthly salary 15 percent. During the period, the second stage of the State Program on Socio-Economic Development of Regions has been launched and the main projects were implemented in the transport sector.

Azerbaijani Film To Be Screened at World Film Festival

The film "Gala" (The Fortress) directed by Shamil Najafzade will be shown at the 33rd World Film Festival in Montreal, August 27 – September 7. The movie was produced by Azerbaijanfilm and United Multimedia Projects. Last year, the movie was also nominated for Oscar.

Embassy's Newsletter is compiled from various sources