



NEWSLETTER

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Joint Statement on Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict

The statement was adopted at the meeting on the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict held within the 17th meeting of the OSCE Ministerial Council in Athens. Azerbaijani and Armenian Foreign Ministers Elmar Mammadyarov and Edward Nalbandian, Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov, French Foreign Minister Bernard Kouchner, U.S. Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg, as well as Minsk Group co-chairs attended the meeting. In the statement released on Dec. 1, the five Heads of Delegation recalled the commitments in the November 2008 Moscow Declaration and the December 2008 Helsinki OSCE Ministerial Statement. They noted the positive dynamic in the talks, demonstrated through six meetings this year between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan. They agreed that the increasing frequency of these meetings has significantly contributed to an enhanced dialogue between the parties and to forwarding movement toward finalizing the Basic Principles for the Peaceful Settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, proposed in Madrid on November 29, 2007. Foreign Ministers Lavrov and Kouchner and Deputy Secretary Steinberg reiterated the commitment of their countries, as expressed in the Joint Statement on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict at the L'Aquila Summit of the Eight on July 10, issued by their three Presidents, to support the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan as they complete work on the Basic Principles and urged that the parties complete this work as soon as possible. They stressed that agreement on the Basic Principles would provide the framework for a comprehensive settlement to promote a future of peace, stability, and prosperity for the entire region. The Ministers reaffirmed their commitment to work intensively to resolve the remaining issues, to reach an agreement based, in particular, upon the principles of the Helsinki Final Act of Non-Use of Force or Threat of Force, Territorial Integrity, and the Equal Rights and Self-Determination of Peoples." Azerbaijani Foreign Minister emphasizing the dynamic of the talks, said

positions should be made closer to reach an agreement on the basic principles which would pave the way for signing of comprehensive peace agreement.

Tony Blair visits Azerbaijan

The former British Prime Minister Tony Blair was received by President Aliyev. During the meeting, Mr. Blair pointed out the fact leading British companies were operating in Azerbaijan, saying, he was well aware that the country enjoyed the most rapidly growing economy in the world. President Aliyev praised the bilateral relations as "rapidly developing". "We started our cooperation in the energy sphere and now it covers a wide range of fields," he said. Tony Blair travelled to Azerbaijan to attend a signing ceremony between the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and Azerbaijan Methanol Company, a locally-owned private company, for \$120 million financing package to finance the construction of a methanol plant.

Efforts to Create Alternative Energy Sources

President Ilham Aliyev said creating alternative energy sources was among key priorities for the country's government. Speaking to a ceremony to inaugurate a 525 MW-power station in Sumgait, the third largest city in Azerbaijan, the President said: "In the years ahead we must seriously consider creating alternative energy sources along with building traditional power stations, and efforts are already underway." According to Mr. President, the next year budget spending will be allocated and funds from the State Oil Fund will be involved to establishing alternative and renewable energy sources. President Aliyev also invited local and foreign companies to invest in what he described as very profitable and "extremely important" sector for Azerbaijan. The decision to establish State Agency on Renewable Sources was adopted in the summer of 2009. Experts estimate the use of alternative energy sources will help the country achieve a ten-percent increase in the annual energy production.