



# NEWSLETTER

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## US Congressmen Call Their Colleagues to Commemorate Khojaly Victims

Several members of the Congressional Azerbaijani Caucus at the US Congress have extended their remarks in commemoration of Khojaly Massacre. On February 18, 2011 Congresswoman Eddie Bernice Johnson from Texas called her colleagues to recognize the estimated civilians who on February 26, 1992 were indiscriminately scalped, tortured, and killed in the town of Khojaly, an Azerbaijani-populated town in Nagorno-Karabakh. "Many of us know that post-Soviet conflicts in Eastern Europe and Central Asia led to brutal ethnic cleansing, but few have heard of the people of Khojaly, who were massacred by Armenian militants. The ethnic cleansing was successful, and the town no longer exists. Although the tragedy received widespread media coverage, since then it has largely been forgotten. I hope that now and every year after this atrocity, we can pray for the victims", she said. "I hope that Azerbaijan and Armenia can come to a peaceful resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh, and I hope that the civilians suffering right now will soon see an end to ethnic cleansing. The memories of the women, men, and children of Khojaly should propel us to condemn such practices", Congresswoman added. Congressman Bill Shuster from Pennsylvania, who is the Co-Chairman of the House Azerbaijan Caucus, also rose to bring attention to the tragedy in Khojaly. "Sadly, today there is little attention or interest paid to the plight of Khojaly outside of Azerbaijan. However, one of our greatest strengths as elected officials is the opportunity to bring to light truths that are little known and command recognition. As a friend of Azerbaijan, I am proud to remind my colleagues that we must never forget the tragedy that took place in Khojaly", he stressed. "Azerbaijan has been a strong strategic partner and friend of the United States. The tragedy of Khojaly was a crime against humanity and I urge my colleagues to join me in standing with Azerbaijanis as they commemorate this tragedy", Mr. Shuster mentioned. Congressman Steve Cohen from Tennessee, taking the initiative, reminded that the extent of the cruelty of this massacre against women, children and the elderly was unfathomable. "I ask my colleagues to join me and our Azerbaijani friends in commemorating the tragedy that occurred in the town of Khojaly", he

said. A North Californian Congresswoman Virginia Foxx also reminded that according to Human Rights Watch, Memorial Human Rights Center, and other international observers, the Khojaly tragedy was committed by the ethnic Armenian armed forces, reportedly with the assistance of the Russian 366th Motor Rifle Regiment. "Largely condemned by the international community, in 2001 at least 30 members of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe stated in Written Declaration No. 324 that the "Armenians massacred the whole population of Khojaly and fully destroyed the town," she mentioned.

## Canada's Leading University Marks 19<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Khojaly Genocide

The University of Toronto hosted a presentation commemorating the 19th anniversary of the Khojaly genocide on February 24, 2011. The event, organized by the Azerbaijani Student Association at the University of Toronto (AzSA) and the Azerbaijani-American Council (AAC), was attended by students, representatives of the Azerbaijani and Turkish communities in Canada. AzSA representatives Togrul Ibrahimli and Isgender Gadirzade delivered keynote addresses at the presentation. They informed the audience about the facts and figures of the massacre of Azerbaijanis by Armenian armed forces when occupying Khojaly. Speaking at the event, General Director of the Azerbaijani-American Council Dr. Javid Huseynov drew parallels between the Khojaly genocide (February 1992) and Srebrenica (July 1995). Dr. Huseynov noted that in 2007 the International Tribunal in Hague recognized the massacre of 8,000 Bosnian Muslims in Srebrenica as genocide, while the genocide in Khojaly remained outside the focus of the Western public. In March 2010, the Serbian parliament showed goodwill by formally recognizing and asking for a pardon for the crime committed by the Serbian forces. Meanwhile, the leadership of Armenia has shamelessly and brutally refuted the crime. The Eurasian Research Institute documentary on mass extermination of Azerbaijanis in Guba by the Dashnak forces in March 1918 was also screened at the event.

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