



Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan

PRESS-RELEASE

May 26, 2006

No. 06

28 May Independence Day

On May 28 the people of Azerbaijan celebrates the 88th anniversary of the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR).

Despite being created in a period of political turmoil and ethnic conflicts, which followed the fall of the Russian Empire at the end of the World War I, the ADR left an inerascable trace in the history of the Azerbaijani people.

In the ADR every citizen, without discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, language, religion or social origin, had right to vote and to take part in government. All the nationalities and ethnic groups living in Azerbaijan were represented in the Parliament - the highest state organ. For the first time, women had right to vote too. Azerbaijanis became the first Muslim nation to choose secular democratic republic system as a form of government. The ADR was officially recognized on de-facto level in the Versailles Peace Conference. Unfortunately, the Bolshevik invasion hampered recognition on de-jure level. The ADR existed only 23 months and was occupied by the Bolshevik XI Red Army on April 28, 1920.

The Republic of Azerbaijan, the successor of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic has restored its independence in 1991 and now continues the path of development of the Azerbaijan's statehood.

Azerbaijanis around the globe celebrates this holiday. Ottawa Mayor Bob Chiarelli proclaimed May 28, 2006 as Republic of Azerbaijan day in the City of Ottawa. In the proclamation it is stated that every year Azerbaijanis around the world observe their National Day "in remembrance of their forefathers' contribution to the spread of democracy in the Caucasus, Caspian and the greater region".