



Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan

PRESS-RELEASE

March 15, 2010

No. 3

**Azerbaijan Initiates UN General Assembly Resolution on
International Day of Nowruz**

The General Assembly of UN in its 64th plenary session recognized the International Day of Nowruz, a spring festival of Zoroastrian origin, by the initiative put forward by Azerbaijan.

According to the preamble of the resolution on the International Day (document A/64/L.30/Rev.2), Nowruz, which means new day, is celebrated on 21 March, the day of the vernal equinox, by more than 300 million people worldwide as the beginning of the new year. It has been celebrated for over 3,000 years in the Balkans, the Black Sea Basin, the Caucasus, Central Asia, the Middle East and other regions.

The text was introduced by Azerbaijan's representative, who said that, as a holiday celebrated in many parts of the world with themes important to all humanity, Nowruz encouraged intercultural dialogue and understanding.

The Assembly called on Member States that celebrate the festival to study its history and traditions with a view to disseminating that knowledge among the international community and organizing annual commemoration events.

Welcoming the inclusion of Nowruz into the Representative List of the Intangible Cultural Heritage of Humanity by the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) on 30 September 2009, the text notes the festival's "affirmation of life in harmony with nature, the awareness of the inseparable link between constructive labour and natural cycles of renewal and the solicitous and respectful attitude towards natural sources of life".

Nowruz, originally a Zoroasterian festival, as a first day of spring is celebrated on the day of the astronomical vernal equinox, the moment when the Sun crosses the celestial equator and equalizes night and day.

The celebration of Nowruz is a cherished holiday of a New Year and spring and is one of the most oldest traditions of Azerbaijani people along with other peoples sharing this tradition.

The Canadian parliament by unanimous consent, also has passed a bill to add Nowruz to the national calendar of Canada, on March 30, 2009.