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CONSULATE GENERAL OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

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Vice President Cheney Visits Azerbaijan

September 8, 2008 – Last Wednesday, U.S. Vice President Richard Cheney arrived in Baku, Azerbaijan on the first leg of his regional tour, which also included Georgia, Ukraine and Italy. Marking an important milestone in the bilateral relations, Mr. Cheney became the highest-ranking American official to date to visit the nation. Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev welcomed Mr. Cheney by describing the strong U.S.-Azerbaijani partnership as "a real success story," which plays "a decisive role" in development of vitally important regional cooperation projects.

Vice President Cheney, in turn, highlighted the common vision Azerbaijan and the United States share for the region's future. "We both seek greater stability, security and cooperation in the vital region of the world. We share the goal of energy security for ourselves and for the international community," said Mr. Cheney. "And we are both devoted to the cause of peace. One of the basic foundations of security and peace is respect for national borders." He also stated the U.S. position on the still-unresolved Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict: "America strongly supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. We are committed to achieving a negotiated solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict -- a solution that starts with the principle of territorial integrity, and takes into account other international principles."

Mr. Cheney concluded his remarks by thanking the people of Azerbaijan. "I want to express my country's appreciation for the brave contributions that Azerbaijan is making to the fight against the global terrorism problem," he said. "And we support the people of Azerbaijan in their efforts, often in the face of great challenges, to strengthen democracy, the rule of law, and respect for human rights, and to build a prosperous, modern, independent country that can serve as a pillar of moderation and stability in this critical part of the world."

The discussion on advancing the U.S.- Azerbaijani relationship continued at the official dinner hosted by President Aliyev in honor of Vice President Cheney.

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