

JOINT DECLARATION

on the further development of friendly relations and cooperation between the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Azerbaijan

The Government of the Kingdom of Norway and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan (hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”),

With reference to the official talks between Minister of Foreign Affairs of Norway Jonas Gahr Støre and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov in connection with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov's official visit to Norway on 4-5 December 2007, which led to a useful exchange of opinions on the status and future prospects of developing the bilateral relations and cooperation between Norway and Azerbaijan in fields of common interest, including cooperation on international issues,

underlining the importance of further expanding and developing their bilateral relations in the political, economic, cultural, environmental, humanitarian and other areas,

confirming their adherence to international law, including the UN Charter, and the political commitments of the Helsinki Final Act (OSCE),

confirming their desire to promote an atmosphere of trust and security, cooperation and mutual understanding in Europe and the world at large, as well as to prevent international conflicts and to promote respect for human rights and the rights of minorities,

confirming their support for peaceful settlement of disputes, based on the respect and observance of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of States in accordance with the UN Charter,

underlining the significance of building democratic institutions, strengthening civil society and promoting a sustainable market economy,

have declared their intention to:

1. In the field of political and security dialogue

- pursue their efforts to develop bilateral cooperation in accordance with the Joint Declaration between the Kingdom of Norway and the Republic of Azerbaijan, signed by Prime Minister Gro Harlem Brundtland and President Heydar Aliiev on 24 April 1996, as well as the Protocol on Cooperation between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Norway and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, signed on 23 February 2000,
- develop the political and security dialogue on regional and international issues,
- support bilateral and multilateral cooperation within the framework of the Council of Europe and the OSCE to promote democratic standards, good governance, human rights, pluralism and the rule of law,
- strengthen cooperation within the framework of the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and NATO's Partnership for Peace Program, with the aim to increase their cooperation within the NATO framework in areas such as peace operations, democratic control of the armed forces and security sector reform,
- support a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of respect for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognised borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan,
- coordinate their efforts, both bilaterally and through international and regional organisations, in the fight against international terrorism, the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organised crime, the trafficking of narcotics and human beings, and illegal immigration,
- coordinate their efforts in the fight against corruption, both bilaterally and through international organisations and processes, including the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), which promotes revenue transparency in the oil, gas and mining sectors, and seek ways of strengthening their bilateral cooperation within the EITI framework and cooperate to promote this initiative globally,
- increase their efforts aimed at expediting Azerbaijan's WTO accession negotiations,

2. In the field of bilateral trade and investment

- secure the best possible legal framework with a view to further expanding trade and investment and developing the economic ties between Norway and Azerbaijan,
- contribute to the establishment of adequate framework conditions for cooperation

in the fields of business and industry, in both the energy and non-energy sectors,

- support measures to enhance contacts and mutual understanding between the business communities in the two countries with the aim of increasing interest in trade and investments,
- share experience in areas such as economic reform, public administration, social security and innovation,

3. In the field of energy and environment

- encourage further dialogue and cooperation in the energy sector, particularly as regards industrial cooperation, exploration and production, technology development and legal frameworks,
- continue to exchange information on the management of the Norwegian Government's Pension Fund and Azerbaijan's State Oil Fund,
- expand cooperation on sustainable management of energy resources, environmental and climate issues,
- stress the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines for European energy security,

4. In the field of education, culture, science and civil society

- encourage the development of educational, cultural, technological and scientific ties through direct cooperation between institutions in these fields, as exemplified by the projects between the Universities of Agder and Oslo and the Azerbaijani University of Languages, between the BI Norwegian School of Management and Khazar University, and between the Norwegian University of Science and Technology and the Azerbaijani State Oil Academy,
- encourage student exchanges between Norway and Azerbaijan within the framework of the programme of project cooperation,
- bring to a successful conclusion the joint project on local government between the Azerbaijani authorities, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe and the Norwegian Association of Local and Regional Authorities,
- strengthen the role of civil society, with particular emphasis on free media and non-governmental organisations,
- facilitate the sharing of the expertise and experience acquired by the Norwegian

Refugee Council in order to alleviate the situation of refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan, with a view to contributing to contingency planning for a resettlement process,

- recognise the importance of the work carried out jointly by Norwegian and Azerbaijani archaeologists on rock carvings, and welcome the inclusion of the Gobustan Rock Art Cultural Landscape in the UNESCO List of World Cultural Heritage,

5. In the field of diplomatic training and partnership

- support the implementation of the Agreement on collaboration between the Royal Norwegian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan on the training of Azerbaijani diplomats, signed in Baku on 31 October 2007.

Concluded in Oslo on December 2007 in two original copies in the English language.

For the Government
of the Kingdom of Norway

For the Government
of the Republic of Azerbaijan

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