



Promoting a Lasting Partnership Between Azerbaijan and America

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Across America, Events and Advertisements Commemorate 20th Anniversary of Khojaly Tragedy

Awareness growing through public education

WASHINGTON, Feb. 23, 2012 -- /PRNewswire-USNewswire/ -- Commemorative events are raising the awareness of the American people about a tragedy that will be marked by a national day of mourning in Azerbaijan on February 26th: the killings of 613 innocent women, children and men in the village of Khojaly in Nagorno Karabakh twenty years ago. They were killed during a war between Armenia and Azerbaijan that was initiated by Armenia and Armenian separatists in Nagorno Karabakh, a region of western Azerbaijan that has been occupied along with other Azerbaijani territory by Armenia since 1992.

A small sample of the events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy includes a lecture by author Thomas Goltz hosted by the Azerbaijan Society of America at the Turkish Center in New York City on February 25th; a commemorative event at the Florida Turkish Center in Fort Lauderdale, Florida on February 25th; a commemoration at the Turkish Community Center in Troy, Michigan on February 26th; and an educational event at the Columbia University School of Social Work in New York City on March 1st.

In addition, the Azerbaijan America Alliance has launched a massive public education campaign on Khojaly and the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Full-page advertisements headlined "Khojaly: A Human Tragedy Against Azerbaijan" are appearing in the national editions of the New York Times on February 24th and the Washington Post on Saturday, February 25th. Advertisements are also being displayed in Washington Metro stations, buses, bus shelters and other transportation venues in Washington DC and New York City, as well as on-line outlets. (See ad at <http://www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org/>).

The ads and extensive media outreach efforts are directing Americans to the Alliance's website (www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org), where they will be urged to "Help America by Helping Azerbaijan" and "Honor the victims of the Khojaly massacre" by taking two steps: ask Congress to rescind its prohibition on direct aid to the government of Azerbaijan (Section 907 of the 1992

Freedom Support Act); and ask President Obama to be more actively engaged in diplomatic efforts to resolve the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

Also under the auspices of the Azerbaijan America Alliance, Congressional representatives are participating in an educational video that will explain the importance of Azerbaijan to America's security and economic well-being and tell the story of Khojaly. The video will show how Azerbaijan is a key ally in the war on terror and in Afghanistan and a key source of oil and gas to the West. Participants include Representatives Joe Wilson (R-SC), Corrine Brown (D-Florida), Randy Hultgren (R-IL), Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), Ted Poe (R-TX), members of the Illinois State legislature, members of the Mississippi State legislature, and Azerbaijan Ambassador to the United States Elin Suleymanov.

The Azerbaijan America Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization providing information broadly about the people, culture, society, industry, history and current events of the Azeri people. Its mission is to foster an atmosphere of mutual understanding and respect between the people of Azerbaijan and America. Through academic discussion, cultural programming, and political discourse, the Alliance aims to become the premier organization dedicated to promoting a lasting partnership between Azerbaijan and America.

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