



Azerbaijan America Alliance Hosts Gala Dinner with White House, Diplomatic, Congressional Leaders

House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia
Chairman Dan Burton describes growing relationship
in keynote remarks

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Media Contact:
John Procter
703-587-9967
jprocter@gibraltar-llc.com

Washington, D.C -- The Azerbaijan America Alliance, a non-partisan, non-profit organization providing information broadly about the culture, society, industry and history of the Azeri people, hosted a gala dinner this evening in Washington, D.C. for nearly 700 invited guests from the Obama Administration, Capitol Hill, the Diplomatic Corps and the think tank and academic communities. The event highlighted the growing relationship between the United States and Azerbaijan, while celebrating the ancient and rich culture of this key ally in the South Caucasus region.

Themed "A Night in Washington with Friends from Baku," the gala was held under the honorary patronage of H.E. Ambassador Elin Suleymanov. The evening included Azerbaijani music and dance as well as a dinner featuring a traditional Azerbaijani menu.

Rep. Dan Burton, the Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Europe and Eurasia, delivered keynote remarks. He was joined by other Congressional leaders including Senator Saxby Chambliss, Senator Richard Burr and House Speaker John Boehner. Other dignitaries included Ambassadors and other senior diplomatic representatives from 40 embassies in Washington.

In his remarks to attendees, Chairman Burton praised Azerbaijan and its people, noting that the country made a wonderful first impression and adding that "Baku is one of the most beautiful

cities in the world." He urged his colleagues in Congress and attendees at the gala to visit Baku and get to know Azerbaijan. Chairman Burton also noted that "it is extremely important that we expand our relationship with Azerbaijan" and lauded the value of the Alliance's work to build new ties.

"This evening was a fantastic example of how music, food and cultural exchange can build bridges of friendship, mutual respect and understanding between two peoples from across the globe," said Alliance Founder Anar Mammadov. "It was incredible to see the excitement on our guests' faces when they saw the beauty and felt the intensity and energy of some of Azerbaijan's most talented performers tonight. I look forward to many similar exchanges in the interest of mutual understanding and partnership as we move ahead," he added.

Entertainment included live musical performances by Eurovision Song Contest 2011 winners Ell & Nikki, the Natig Rhythm Group drum corps, traditional Azerbaijani singer Mensum Ibrahimov and many others.

Event photos and additional information about the gala and other Alliance activities can be found on the Alliance's website at www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org

About the Alliance

The Azerbaijan America Alliance is a non-partisan, non-profit organization, with an educational mission 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 is dedicated to promoting a lasting partnership between Azerbaijan and America.

For more information, please visit the Alliance website at www.azerbaijanamericaalliance.org