



**COUNCIL OF
THE EUROPEAN UNION**



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**EU-AZERBAIJAN COOPERATION COUNCIL
SEVENTH MEETING, BRUSSELS, 14 NOVEMBER 2006**

Press Release

The Cooperation Council between the European Union (EU) and the Republic of Azerbaijan held its seventh meeting on Tuesday 14 November 2006. The meeting was chaired by Ms Paula Lehtomäki, Minister for Foreign Trade and Development of Finland. The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, Ambassador Peter Semneby also took part in the meeting. Mr Fokion Fotiadis, Deputy Director-General of the External Relations Directorate-General, represented the Commission and Mr Günter Gloser, State Minister for Europe, represented the incoming German Presidency. The Azerbaijani delegation was led by Mr Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs.

P R E S S

On the occasion of the Cooperation Council, the two Parties signed a formal document launching the implementation of the previously agreed European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) Action Plan. Both sides reaffirmed their willingness to work together to fully exploit the new opportunities presented by the ENP Action Plan.

President Aliyev's recent visit to Brussels (7-8 November 2006) marked the continuing good political dialogue between the EU and Azerbaijan.

The Cooperation Council provided a timely opportunity to take stock of developments in the South Caucasus, as well as political and economic reforms in Azerbaijan. The Cooperation Council also discussed energy issues, including EU's interest in strengthening its cooperation with Azerbaijan on energy issues, following the signature by Presidents Barroso and Aliyev of a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at establishing an energy partnership between the European Union and Azerbaijan.

The EU took the opportunity to stress that the protection of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as further steps to strengthen democracy in the country are essential elements in the bilateral dialogue.

The previous evening, Monday 13 November, a joint ministerial working dinner was held between the EU and Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia to discuss matters of regional interest, as well as conflicts in the South Caucasus. Mr Erkki Tuomioja, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Finland represented the EU Presidency. He was accompanied by Mr Javier Solana, High Representative for CFSP, and Ms Benita Ferrero-Waldner, Commissioner for External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy.