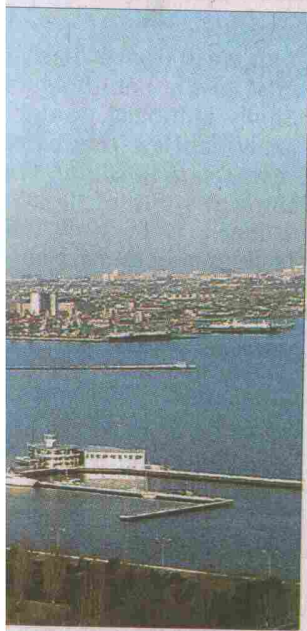


## Europe



Courtesy of Embassy of Azerbaijan

# Korea Close Partner of Azerbaijan in Asia

Ambassador Rovshan Jamshidov of Azerbaijan to Korea contributed the following article on the occasion of Azerbaijan's Republic Day, which falls today. - ED.

On May 28, the Republic of Azerbaijan celebrates the 91st anniversary of Republic Day.

Ninety-one years ago, Azerbaijan asserted its independence as the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic, which was one of the first democratic republics in the whole Muslim world.

The republic freely elected its Parliament that represented all citizens of Azerbaijan, established diplomatic relations with a number of states, and built its own armed forces.

Koreans might be surprised to know that even then — 91 years ago — women in Azerbaijan had the right to vote, something I feel proud to note as an ambassador.

Unfortunately, the life of the young republic lasted only two years until April 28, 1920.

Brave Azeri sons and daughters have lost their lives fighting for our independence.

Until 1991, Azerbaijan entered under the Soviet rule and as I mentioned only in 1991, did the country restore its real independence.

Today, we are proud of our past and are the builders of the present in making a modern and prosperous Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan and Korea share so many common interests and traditions.

Both countries belong to the Altaic language group and possess similarities in traditions.

We have a common interest in peace and stability, including a denuclearized Korean Peninsula and stability in our region — the South Caucasus.



Ambassador Rovshan Jamshidov of Azerbaijan

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and traditions.**

As you know, 20 percent of the Azeri territory still remains under the occupation of armed forces of Armenia. Our goal is to bring and insure the peace to our nations.

Presidents of both Korea and Azerbaijan shared visits in 2006 and 2007 respectively, which surely boosted our relationships rapidly.

Beside that, a number of delegations, including of parliamentary, economic, cultural, youth and others from each country are still paying visits on a continuing basis.

From the practical point of view, each country has established a task force on economic cooperation in order to systematically pursue economic cooperation projects of mutual interest.

The first and the second meetings of the task force were held in Baku from Aug. 27 to Sept. 2, 2006 and from Aug. 26 to Aug. 29, 2007, respectively, and the third meeting is to be held this year in Seoul.

Consequently, a number of cooperation projects have been founded and are currently being implemented between Azerbaijan and Korea.

Trade volume between Azerbaijan and Korea has increased 53 fold from 16 million in 2003 reaching 859 million USD in 2008, and the goods traded have become more diversified and bigger in numbers.

In addition to opening representations of KOTRA and KOICA in Baku, various Korean companies such as SK C&C, STX, ULTRA Construction, Pyeongwha Engineering, Samsung Electronics, Daewoo International, Kolon Construction, Korea Land Corp., Ecovise Transportation and Kukdong Construction have established branches in Azerbaijan.

As friendly countries and partners, we continue to work closely to strengthen our abilities for cooperation.