



United States Mission to the OSCE

Statement on Pardons of Prisoners in Azerbaijan

As delivered by Deputy Representative Douglas Davidson
to the Permanent Council, Vienna
May 13, 2004

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

The United States welcomes Azerbaijan's May 10 presidential decree pardoning 363 prisoners, including eight individuals identified as political prisoners by the Council of Europe, and the two persons -- Janmirza Mirzoyev and Faina Kungurova -- who have been mentioned in our annual Human Rights Report.

We congratulate Azerbaijan for this positive step in redressing several cases of long-standing concern to the international community. We see this as a promising sign that the Azerbaijani Government is committed to correcting its human rights record, and we look forward to additional progress in this area, including on the post-election detainees.

Thank you very much.