

Texas Global Exchange Program

Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, Baku -- August 12-15, 2013

TUSCON, Istanbul -- August 16, 2013

This month, professionals and graduate students from Texas participated in an executive education program organized through the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (ADA). This opportunity was sponsored by the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR), the Texas Oil & Gas Association (TXOGA), the Turquoise Council of Americans & Eurasians, and the Turkish Confederation of Businessmen & Industrialists (TUSKON). The program provided participants with the opportunity to travel abroad, attend lectures on business, energy, geopolitical issues and public and international affairs, interact with local students, and meet with local companies and non-profit organizations. Attendees cultivated contacts in the area, gained cultural experience, and learned about business and international affairs in Eurasia.

Three Vice Presidents from TXOGA and students from the University of Texas (Austin and Dallas), the University of Houston, C.T. Bauer College of Business, Texas State University and Texas A&M University spent four days in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku and three days in Istanbul, Turkey. While in Baku, participants met with Azerbaijani government officials, scholars and business leaders. These interactions provided participants with newfound knowledge about Azerbaijan's culture, history and economic plans for the future, along with the dynamics of the nation's relationships with neighboring countries and the United States with a special emphasis on the energy industry. Presentations spanned a breadth of topics from summarizing Azerbaijani history to speculating on the future of the energy industry. Taken together, these presentations increased attendees' awareness and understanding of their position within an ever-changing global economy and community.

Presentation organized through ADA:

"Overview of Azerbaijani History"

- Dr. Anar Valiyev, Dean, School of Public and International Affairs, ADA

Dr. Valiyev's presentation on Azerbaijani history provided attendees with a brief overview of Azerbaijan's geopolitical development from ancient times to present. Today's Azerbaijan has been through many transformations all beginning with Caucasian Albania, the Persian Empire, the Turks and the Arabs. The first Azerbaijani state was created by the Safavi empire, but Russian occupation lasting for more than 100 years forestalled Azerbaijani independence until 1918. However, Azerbaijan fell under Soviet rule again in 1920, lasting for more than 70 years. Since then, a sovereign Azerbaijan has experienced fast economic development and modernization.

"Telling Azerbaijan Story: Economic Transformation and Development Strategy"

- Mr. Emin Huseynov, Vice Rector for Strategy and Development, ADA

Emin Huseynov's presentation informed attendees about Azerbaijan's economic development toward a competitive, sustainable, diversified and inclusive economy. The presentation began with a brief history of Azerbaijan's economic development. Second, Huseynov discussed the past and present economic challenges that Azerbaijan has had to face. Lastly, Huseynov shared Azerbaijan's future economic development strategy.

"Political System and Public Administration in Azerbaijan"

- Dr. Anar Valiyev, Dean, School of Public and International Affairs, ADA

Dr. Valiyev's second presentation informed attendees about Azerbaijan's political systems. The Azerbaijani constitution was adopted in 1995. A referendum in 2002 brought on many changes such as moving from a mixed election system to a plurality system, presidential elections became a simple majority, and the transference of head of state duties to the prime minister. A second referendum in 2009 brought on more changes such as the suspension of election in times of war and a rejection of the two-term limit for the president. Today's Azerbaijani democracy consists of fifty-nine local executives appointed by the president to 2,763 municipalities which are governed by 22,000 elected officials.

"Geopolitics of the Region and Foreign Policy Priorities of Azerbaijan"

- Mr. Fariz Ismayilzade, Executive Vice-Rector, ADA

"Armenia-Azerbaijan Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh"

- Dr. Kavus Abushov, Assistant Professor, ADA

In their presentations, Fariz Ismayilzade and Kavus Abushov explained the factors affecting foreign policy options and Azerbaijan's foreign policy priorities. Attendees learned about the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict as well as Azerbaijan's global processes, their strategic geographic location, their natural resources, their contemporary security threats and what makes Azerbaijan unique. Next, Ismayilzade outlined Azerbaijan's foreign policy priorities, namely: preservation of independence, restoration of territorial integrity, promotion of international peace and stability, promotion of an effective multilateral international system, development of mutually advantageous bilateral relations, integration into Euroatlantic and European structures, and sustainable development of the Eurasian energy and transport corridors.

"Euro Atlantic Integration"

- Mr. Asim Mollazade, Member of Parliament



TXOGA Vice Presidents together with Asim Mollazade, Member of Parliament

"Energy Security Issues: Energy Policy of Azerbaijan"

- Mr. Fariz Ismayilzade, Executive Vice-Rector

"Embracing Tomorrow"

- Mr. Movlan Pashayev

Mr. Movlan Pashayev's presentation, "Embracing Tomorrow," provided attendees with insights into Azerbaijan's cultural, industrial and economic future. Mr. Pashayev's presentation focused on three central questions: first, where does Azerbaijan stand now: competitiveness, growth and development; second, what lies ahead: innovation and emerging industries; and lastly, how does Azerbaijan get there: state owned enterprises (SOE) as vehicles for transformation.



Participants with Khalik Mammadov, vice-president of HR, IT and regulations, SOCAR

In addition to the program's technical, business and cultural presentations, participants were led on site-seeing tours of Historical Old Baku, the Azerbaijani History Museum, Qafkaz University, and the Sanagachal Oil Terminal. However, for attendees, this trip's most valuable opportunity will prove to be the networking afforded by this program with several Turkish and Azerbaijani businesses associated with TUSKON. Participants were able to discuss the energy industries of Turkey, Azerbaijan and the United States with some of the industry's highest level personnel.

Meetings and discussions from the trip:

Roundtable discussion with Emin Huseynov, Vice Rector of Strategy and Development, ADA

Roundtable discussion with Khalik Mammadov, vice-president of HR, IT and regulations, SOCAR

Roundtable: "ADA Partnership with Corporate Sector and its Role in Education in Azerbaijan"

- Mr. Natig Hajiyev, President, ADA Foundation

Roundtable: "Business Environment in Azerbaijan"

- Mr. Movlan Pashayev, Country Managing Partner, PwC and Mr. Bakhtiyar Aslanbayli, BP

In addition to these guided roundtable discussions, attendees were also encouraged to pursue

personal interactions with some of the industry's leading officials in the region:

Professor Yadullah Babayev

- Dean of Engineering Faculty, Qafqaz University

Meeting with Oil Companies in Baku

- Chevron
 - Eric M. Walker, Country Manager
- SOCAR
 - Khalik R. Mammadov, Vice-president
- Total
 - Christian Giudicelli, General Manager



Participants with Christian Giudicelli, General Manager, TOTAL E&P AZERBAIJAN



Participants at BP Caspian Energy Center



Debbra Hastings, Executive Vice President of Texas Oil and Gas Association, with Dean of Engineering at Kafkas University

Leaving Baku, attendees went to Istanbul where further meetings continued to enrich and inform participants understanding of the region and its relationship to the energy industry.

Hosts in Istanbul, Turkey

Dr. Ulvi F. Ilhan

- CEO, Enerco Enerji

Mehmet Orhun

- Executive Board Member, AKFEL Group
- Chairman, Vistula University



Participants are with AKFEL executives in Istanbul



Participants are with Ali Kibar, Executive Vice Chairman, CEO, Kibar Holding A.S.

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M. Ata Ceylan

- Board Member, Istanbul Chamber of Industry

Bekir Sami Acar

- Managing Director, EWE Turkey Holding A.S.

EgeGaz

- Haydar N. Colakoglu, Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors
- Deniz Karakoc, Project Manager
- Aykut Ozman, Assistant Managing Director

2013 Program Participants

Tony Casarez

Texas A&M University, Masters of Education

Bentley Fink

Texas State University, Masters of Science in Interdisciplinary Studies

Josh Graham

University of Texas, McCombs School of Business, Master of Science in Technology Commercialization

Debbra Hastings

Texas Oil and Gas Association, Executive Vice President

Shane Patience

University of Texas, McCombs School of Business, Master of Science in Technology Commercialization

Cory Pomeroy

Texas Oil and Gas Association, VP & General Counsel

Hernando Ramirez

University of Houston, C.T. Bauer College of Business, Master of Business Administration

Mari Ruckel

Texas Oil and Gas Association, VP Government & Regulatory Affairs

Sarah Stevens

University of Texas, Dallas

Dr. Alex Voice

University of Texas, Austin, Ph.D. Chemical Engineering

Dr. Yetkin Yildirim

University of Texas, Austin