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THE PUBLIC AFFAIRS SECTION / EMBASSY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

## **UNITED STATES AND AZERBAIJAN GOVERNMENTS TO SIGN AGREEMENT PERVENTING WEAPONS OF MASS DESTRUCTION**

Baku, January 2, 2004

The governments of the United States of America and the Republic of Azerbaijan will sign an agreement "Concerning Cooperation in Preventing the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction" today at 4pm, at the Ministry of Defense. It will be signed by Minister of Defense Safar Abiyev on behalf of the Azerbaijani Cabinet of Ministers and U.S. Ambassador Reno Harnish on behalf of the U.S. Department of Defense.

Through this agreement, the U.S. Government will provide Azerbaijan up to \$10 million in technical assistance in the form of equipment, supplies, materials, technology, and training. This will include the development of infrastructure and/or capabilities to enhance border surveillance and security operations, refurbishment of selected vessels and upgrade of vessel radar and communications systems, and establishment of an interagency command and control capability.

The U.S. Department of Defense has established a Weapons of Mass Destruction initiative under the Cooperative Threat Reduction program to assist countries in developing the capacity to detect, deter, prevent and interdict illicit trafficking in weapons of mass destruction and related materials.