



## Promoting a Lasting Partnership Between Azerbaijan and America

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### FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

#### **Azerbaijan has all the potential to be a significant regional player – US envoy**

*Since a lengthy war in the early 1990s that displaced over one million Azerbaijanis, Armenian armed forces have occupied over 20 percent of Azerbaijan's internationally recognized territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions.*

**Baku, Azerbaijan — August 27, 2013 —** Azerbaijan has all the potential to be a significant regional player, US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Richard Morningstar has said.

"It can become a major player if it can move towards a resolution on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict," Morningstar told in an interview to The Politic. "It will encourage more regional integration, and if it carries through on democratic and economic reforms, which is really necessary for its long-term stability," he stressed.

News. AZ reports, According to the US diplomat, with respect to regional stability, a lot of work needs to be done to once and for all bring a resolution to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. "It has been over twenty years, and that issue still had not been resolved. It is a very dangerous regional conflict that is right now at a low level but could become worse depending on circumstances."

The ambassador also pointed to democratic and economic reforms, which, according to him, is really necessary for long-term stability. The Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno Karabakh, instigated by Armenian separatists, broke out in 1988 with the groundless claims of separatists, who demanded to annex Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Republic (NKAO) of Azerbaijan SSR to Armenia SSR.

It occurred on par with the forced deportation of 200,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia (1987-1989). The war erupted in the result of Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan, growing into the bloody ethnopolitical conflict in the post-Soviet area. Some 40,000 people died and over a million of Azerbaijanis turned into refugees and displaced persons in period of the hot stage of the conflict in 1992-1994.

Some 20% of Azerbaijani lands: Nagorno Karabakh and seven adjacent regions were occupied.

Armenia still refuses to follow the four resolutions of the UN Security Council on liberation of occupied Nagorno Karabakh and adjacent areas. The parties reached the ceasefire regime in May 1994.

Negotiations between the parties continue under mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group and with co-chairmanship of France, USA and Russia.

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