



## Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States of America

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CONTACT: Ramil Huseynli  
[r\\_huseynli@azembassy.us](mailto:r_huseynli@azembassy.us)  
(202) 337-3500, ext.17

### **With High Election Turnout and Praise for Transparent Process, Exit Poll Shows Azerbaijan's President Aliyev Headed for a Win**

**October 15, 2008** - Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev appears to be headed to win a five-year term after a high voter turnout in a national election on Wednesday, according to independent exit poll results.

President Aliyev "won 86 percent of the votes cast, according to the poll conducted by a group of nongovernmental organizations," Bloomberg News reported.

Despite a call by some political opponents to boycott the elections, more than 76 percent of Azerbaijan's 4.8 million eligible voters turned out at the polls, Voice of America reported. More than 1,250 international observers monitored the vote alongside 30,000 local election monitors.

With polling stations now closed in Azerbaijan, the country's political process is winning accolades from both local and international observers for the election.

Detta O'Cathain, a member the U.K. House of Lords and a member of an international monitoring group, said the Azerbaijani authorities made a "commitment to conduct a free and fair election, and I have no doubt that this commitment was met. I see major improvement," O'Cathain told reporters in Baku after the polls closed.

"I express my deep regret that the opposition boycotted this election... I think every political party should have taken advantage and participated," O'Cathain said.

Wednesday's election had six other candidates. The final vote tally is expected on Thursday.

Azerbaijani citizens living in the U.S. also had an opportunity to vote at their Embassy in Washington, D.C. and their Consulate General in Los Angeles. In Washington, D.C., 88 percent of registered Azerbaijani voters living in the United States arrived at the Embassy to cast their ballots.