

OPENING REMARKS OF SAM DEPUTY DIRECTOR DR. GULSHAN PASHAYEVA

Round Table Discussion entitled "Energy Cooperation and Environmental Protection in the wider Black Sea area"

November 29, 2011

Good morning, ladies and gentlemen,

I am very happy to be here today and welcome you on behalf of the Center for Strategic Studies (CSS), Azerbaijan's first government funded and academically independent think tank, established in 2007 and headquartered in Baku.

I would like also to express my sincere gratitude to International Centre for Black Sea Studies and particularly its Director General Dr. Zefi Dimadama for her excellent leadership in driving this "Hellenic-Azerbaijani Green Energy Forum" agenda forward within the framework of which it was planned to organize two Roundtables by our respective organizations in Baku and Athens in 2011. The first Roundtable discussion entitled "Climate Change and Renewable energy resources in the wider Black Sea Area" was held in July 8, 2011 in Baku. And today we are participating at the second Roundtable entitled "Energy Cooperation and Environmental Protection in the wider Black Sea area" in Athens.

The topics of both roundtables are very important, because it is obvious that we all have a role to play in building secure and clean energy future for our planet. As all of you are aware, there is still a need for greater input into environmental protection nowadays, because the increase of green house gas emissions causes an increase of an average temperature which leads to the global climate change. The increase of the average temperature does not just mean that we will have warmer winter; actually, it means the existing ecosystem will change and as a result of this transformation the sea level will increase, the number of floods will rise, and the desert area will expand. Therefore particularly in the context of climate change, our energy agenda has been given an increasing important role. Energy sector development in general and energy regional cooperation in particular should be given more attention. It depends first of all to the fact that energy is a critical and necessary component for economic growth and at the same time it becomes an emerging issue when addressing climate change.

Therefore we need to increase environmental awareness, investment, improve the legal system for the environment, reduce emissions of pollutants and find ways how to accelerate the adoption of environmental friendly policies and clean energy models in the wider Black Sea area that

will slow significantly the global climate change. For realization of this agenda the international and regional cooperation are required.

I strongly believe that this roundtable will make special contribution to the development of the cooperation in the environmental protection among the wider Black Sea area countries.

Thank you very much, and I look forward to the discussions.