



PRESS RELEASE

Athens, 30 November 2011

"Energy Cooperation and Environmental Protection in the wider Black Sea area"

On Tuesday, 29 November 2011, the **International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)**, in cooperation with the **Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CSS)**, successfully organised a Round Table Discussion on **"Energy Cooperation and Environmental Protection in the wider Black Sea area"**. The event was organised within the framework of the **"Hellenic- Azerbaijani Green Energy Forum"**, an initiative of Dr. Gulshan Pashayeva, Deputy Director of CSS and Dr. Zefi Dimadama, ICBSS Director General.

Opening the event, Dr. Zefi Dimadama thanked the audience for their attendance and presented briefly the role and contribution of ICBSS in the wider Black Sea area; noting that the energy sector constitutes the backbone of economy of the countries of the region. *"Through this initiative, our primary objective is to exchange valuable information and good practices as an effort to raise awareness and to mobilise all relative parties with a view to promoting regional cooperation so as to establish a clean energy model; an eco-friendly system for the wider Black Sea area"* underlined Ms. Dimadama.

On her part, Dr. Gulshan Pashayeva highlighted the importance of a lucrative cooperation between the Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CSS) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies focusing on the crucial role of energy in the worldwide economy.

Welcome notes were delivered by the Secretary General of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Konstantinos Papadopoulos, the Director of B2 Directorate of International Economic Relations with the Balkans, Russia and the CIS of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Ambassador Dimitrios Tsoungas, as well as by the Counselor and Deputy Head of Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Hellenic Republic, Mr. Anar Huseynov.

The Round Table Discussion was structured in two panels that consisted of representatives from scientific, economic and academic communities. The first panel was centred around **"Renewable Energy Sources: new perspectives and challenges"** while the Second focused on **"Energy Cooperation at regional and international level"**.

The Center for Strategic Studies was represented by Dr. Vusal Gasimli, Leading Research Fellow, Economic Analysis and Global Affairs Department, Ms. Gulmire Rzayeva, Research fellow,

Economic Analysis and Global Affairs Department and Mr. Ramiz Rahmanov, Research fellow, Economic Analysis and Global Affairs Department.

Mr. Spyros Kouvelis, Former Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Dimitris Papastefanakis, Head of Development Programs Department of CRES, Mr. Harry Sachinis, Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of the Public Gas Corporation, Mr. Charalambos Pippas, Director of Public Relations & International Affairs, Ministry for Environment, Energy & Climate Change and Dr. Theodore Tsakiris, Senior Analyst, Iran & Caspian Sea, Middle East Economic Survey actively participated in the Discussion as members of the two panels.

Upon successful conclusion of the event, Dr. Pashayeva and Dr. Dimadama signed a **Cooperation, Research and Academic Exchange Agreement** that signals the beginning of cooperation between the **Center for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (CSS) and the International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS)** aiming to promote the Hellenic-Azerbaijani relations in the fields of *inter alia* economic cooperation, environmental policies, trade, investment and energy security.

The event took place under the auspices of the Hellenic Ministry of Foreign Affairs with the support of the Public Gas Corporation SA, in partnership with the Research Institute for European and American Studies (RIEAS) and Repo(we)r Greece.

The Round Table was supported by Media Sponsors EurActiv.gr and the Institute Hellenic State Aid Institute.

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About the ICBSS: The International Centre for Black Sea Studies (ICBSS) was founded in 1998 as a non-profit organisation. It has since fulfilled a dual function. On the one hand, it is an independent research and training institution focusing on the wider Black Sea region. On the other hand, it is a related body of the Organisation of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) and serves as its acknowledged think-tank. Thus, the ICBSS pursues applied, policy-oriented research, promotes knowledge on the Black Sea region both within and outside its boundaries, and offers policy advice with the aim to foster multilateral cooperation among the BSEC member states as well as with their international partners.

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