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PRESS RELEASE

United States Helps Azerbaijan Strengthen Border Security April 25, 2012

On April 25, U.S. Embassy Chargé d’Affaires Adam Sterling handed over to Azerbaijan State Customs Committee Chairman Aydin Aliyev two U.S.-built tool trucks that will increase the ability of the SCC to inspect cargo entering and leaving Azerbaijan. The trucks, valued at more than USD 300,000, are being provided by the United States Export Control and Related Border Security (EXBS) Program to help Azerbaijan strengthen its border security measures.

Speaking at the event, Chargé d’Affaires Sterling praised the outstanding cooperation between the State Customs Committee and EXBS. “Working together,” Sterling told attendees, “EXBS and the Customs Committee are making Azerbaijan more secure through the provision of these tool trucks. These units will enhance the ability of the SCC to conduct inspections from a self-contained mobile inspection station that can be taken to any number of locations. By continuing to partner together, we can provide more secure borders to our citizens” Sterling noted that, since 2000, EXBS has provided equipment and training valued at just over USD 24.5 million to its partners, the State Customs Committee and the State Border Service.

The idea for donating the tool trucks arose when SCC officials traveled to the U.S to attend an International Air Cargo Interdiction training offered by the U.S. Customs and Border Protection. Seeing the trucks in action and noting that they would expand the reach of Customs inspections beyond current capabilities , State Customs Committee officials expressed interest in obtaining such trucks. Working together, the EXBS Advisor in Baku Karen Chaisson and her colleagues at the SCC have made this idea a reality.

The Export Control and Related Border Security Assistance program is the U.S. Government's premier initiative to help member countries improve their export control systems, while shoring up their border defences. The EXBS program is led and funded by the Department of State's Bureau of Nonproliferation, Office of Export Control Cooperation, drawing on expertise from the Departments of State, Homeland Security, Commerce, Energy, Defense, and the private sector to provide a range of training and equipment. Through EXBS Program funding, initiatives focus on enabling the border control, and other law enforcement agencies in high-threat countries to detect, identify, and interdict contraband, and investigate the illegal transfer of materials used in the production of weapons of mass destruction, including chemical, biological, and nuclear materials, missile equipment and related technology.

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