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# PRESS RELEASE

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On July 11<sup>th</sup> Adam Sterling, the United States Chargé d’Affaires in Azerbaijan, hosted representatives of leading human rights groups, civil society, and the Azerbaijani government for a roundtable discussion about the recently released 2012 United States State Department Human Rights Report ([http://photos.state.gov/libraries/azerbaijan/749085/hajiyevsx/az\\_hrr\\_2011\\_aze.pdf](http://photos.state.gov/libraries/azerbaijan/749085/hajiyevsx/az_hrr_2011_aze.pdf)). The Human Rights Report is an annual survey of human rights worldwide, including in Azerbaijan. Participants at the roundtable discussed human rights in Azerbaijan, including press freedom, rule of law, property rights, and opportunities for government/civil society cooperation in human rights protection. In the words of Mr. Sterling, “Human rights is and will remain a foreign policy priority for the United States. A free press, active civil society, and the rule of law are integral parts of any democracy. We will continue to work with our partners in the Azerbaijani government, press and civil society to strengthen respect for human rights in Azerbaijan.”