

Energetic week

On Monday, July 15th, we had a [lively and fun reception](#) honoring Ambassador Capricia Penavic Marshall to thank her and her colleagues at the United States Office of Protocol for their outstanding work. We are grateful to all our friends who joined and made this event so special. Incidentally, the same week ended on Friday with a White House reception for the Diplomatic Corps hosted by President Obama and the First Lady Michelle Obama. Once again we saw Ambassador Marshall doing what she does so very smoothly- managing interactions between the President and the First Lady and Washington's dynamic Diplomatic Corps.

We also had a chance to thank our friends Mr. Justin Friedman, State Department Director of the Office of Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts, and Deputy Director Mr. Alan Purcell for their contribution to the U.S. – Azerbaijan partnership and wish them well in their future endeavors during a [farewell event](#) at the Embassy.

While our friends' positive personal energy helped us through the busy week, the discussions on Europe's energy security centered on another source of energy- the natural gas from Azerbaijan's mega-field Shah Deniz. The July 17th [briefing](#) on Capitol Hill co-hosted by the embassies of Albania, Azerbaijan, Greece and Italy brought together ambassadors Gilbert Galanxhi of Albania, Christos Panagopoulos of Greece, Counselor Lorenzo Galanti of Italy, as well as Mr. Elshad Nasirov, vice-president of SOCAR and Mr. Greg Saunders, Senior Director for International Affairs, BP, to discuss the [strategic importance](#) of the Southern Gas Corridor and the recent selection of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline as the route to deliver Azerbaijani gas to Europe. Thank you to all our colleagues for joining this important conversation!

Energy security and other aspects of the strategic U.S. – Azerbaijan partnership were also the focus of numerous and intensive meetings between the visiting members of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Azerbaijani Parliament, the Milli Meclis, and their counterparts in U.S. Congress. Chairman Samad Seyidov, Vice- Chair Sevinj Fatalliyeva and Member of Parliament Asim Mollazade had a busy and productive schedule in Washington, and we thank them for their work to strengthen the relationship between Azerbaijan and the United States.

Azerbaijani parliamentarians joined over 20 prominent members of U.S. Congress as well as noted experts, diplomats and a high-ranking SOCAR delegation to mark the importance of the Southern Gas Corridor at a congressional reception. We are grateful to all participants of the event, who spoke in support of joint efforts to ensure diversity of energy for European markets; and especially so to Congressman Michael Turner for his leadership on this issue and for succinctly highlighting the significance of the Southern Corridor in the Hill [oped](#) published the same day.

E.S.