

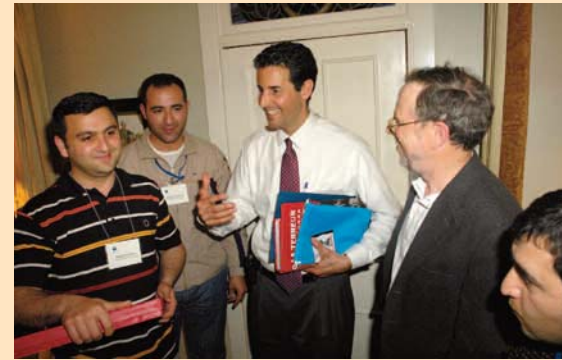
This strategically located, oil-rich, predominantly Muslim South Caucasus nation began participating in Open World in May 2007. Open World's Azerbaijan programming focuses on two areas—accountable governance and the rule of law—and is aimed at promoting transparency, judicial and legislative independence, and civil and media rights.



Bashir Suleymanli, field director of the nongovernmental Election Monitoring Center in Baku, designed a brochure for recruiting citizen election monitors based on a form for enlisting campaign volunteers that he obtained from Maryland Rep. John Sarbanes during an April Open World visit to Baltimore. This interchange came during an election house party that Suleymanli's host family held for

Election Monitor Multiplies Maryland Experience Back Home

Rep. Sarbanes (pictured at right). Suleymanli and his fellow delegates, along with local citizens who attended, also discussed campaign issues and constituent relations with the congressman. Suleymanli's NGO used the form he developed to involve citizens in monitoring Azerbaijan's October 2008 presidential election. The League of Women Voters of Baltimore County hosted Suleymanli and his fellow delegates. National grantee: League of Women Voters



Bashir Suleymanli (far right), other Azerbaijani participants, and Executive Director John O'Keefe (second from right) confer with Maryland Rep. John Sarbanes (center).

Grantee-Organization Official Meets with Alumni in Baku



During a spring 2008 working visit to Azerbaijan, League of Women Voters Deputy Executive Director Zaida Arguedas (pictured, center) paid a visit to the Central Election Commission in Baku with alumni Nurida Turabova (left) and Ramin Nuraliyev (right). Like Bashir Suleymanli (profiled above), Turabova and Nuraliyev had just taken part in a mid-April accountable governance exchange

hosted by the League of Women Voters of Baltimore County. Arguedas reported to Open World that both Turabova, a political-party official, and Nuraliyev, an adviser at the Central Election Commission, were eager to show her the Commission building and to explain some of the issues and projects they were engaged in.

Delegates with Disabilities Discover an Open World in New York

Four delegates with disabilities, including two wheelchair users, spent early November in Syracuse, N.Y., studying services, programs, and laws that help Americans with disabilities participate fully in community life. The delegation—believed to be the first of its kind to travel to the United States from Azerbaijan—visited inclusive schools, a restaurant with staff with disabilities, social-services and employment agencies, and the Onondaga County Board of Elections. After returning home,



Azerbaijani participants headed for Syracuse, N.Y., take in the White House during their Washington, D.C. orientation.

delegate Parviz Heydarov (pictured, third from left) published three articles describing his experience and advocating for greater rights for Azerbaijanis with disabilities. He also plans to write a book based on his Open World visit. Delegate Kamran Aliyev (pictured, far left) began implementing an Open Society Institute-funded project to provide disability-awareness training for children with disabilities and their parents. National grantee: World Services of La Crosse, Inc.