WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE STATE OF THE WORLD

Regional Agenda

World Economic Forum Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the South Caucasus and Central Asia

Meeting Overview

Baku, Azerbaijan 7-8 April 2013

The South Caucasus and Central Asia region has witnessed significant economic growth and development over the past decade. Individual countries have been at the forefront of this growth: Azerbaijan's economy grew at double-digit rates over the past decade while Kazakhstan, along with other countries in the region, has made great strides in business capacity. Yet as a whole, the region has significant untapped potential given its natural resources and strategic location at the crossroads of Europe, Asia and the Middle East.

The region boasts some of the largest untapped reserves of oil and gas globally and serves as a critical continental transit route, both of which underpin its importance to foreign partners. To fully realize this growth and development potential, however, the region's key actors need to build resilient economies for the long term and put the region on a sustainable growth path. Doing so will require the region to anticipate and facilitate fast-evolving trends in the global economy.

As economic integration grows around the world and regional economic blocs become increasingly prominent in the global economy, the prospects for regional economic integration in the South Caucasus and Central Asia are ever more promising and timely. Many visions exist for future regional economic development, with proposals ranging from a New Silk Road to a Eurasian Union, all of which have yet to be fully defined and attain regional consensus. While some countries have oriented themselves more closely towards their European, Russian or Chinese neighbours, most agree on the importance of balancing these ties to derive the greatest benefit from differing but compatible aspirations. The South Caucasus and Central Asia truly sit at the confluence of a changing global trade picture, which could contribute to its redesign.

The Strategic Dialogue on the Future of the South Caucasus and Central Asia in Baku will serve as an unprecedented opportunity for the region's current and potential stakeholders to define, assess and take forward some of the promising visions for its future. Particular attention will be devoted to such industry sectors as natural resources, transport, infrastructure, agriculture, mining, finance and telecommunications. Over the course of 7-8 April 2013, the World Economic Forum will offer a secure and collaborative multistakeholder platform for regional and foreign players to appraise the region's key challenges and opportunities, as well as future pathways.

“

Since their independence, Central Asian countries have moved from the periphery of the European neighbourhood to the centre of a new global architecture.

”

Heinz Fischer
President of Austria

FAQs

Where will the meeting take place?
The meeting will take place at the JW Marriott Hotel Absheron, in Baku, Azerbaijan.

Where will I stay?
A block reservation has been made at the JW Marriott Hotel Absheron. You will receive a hotel booking form upon confirmation of your registration.

What does registration include?
There is no participation fee for the meeting. Participants must cover the costs of their travel and accommodation.

What is the working language of the meeting?
All sessions will be held in English. Interpretation in Azeri and Russian will be provided.

By when do I need to register?
We encourage you to register as soon as possible, but no later than Thursday 14 March.

Do I need a visa?
The Government of Azerbaijan will facilitate the entry of participants into the country as follows:
Upon confirmation of your registration to the Strategic Dialogue, the Government of Azerbaijan will provide an official letter of invitation. Please be sure to have this letter with you together with your passport upon arrival at immigration in Azerbaijan. Your passport will be stamped.
To obtain the letter of invitation, please provide your passport details on the registration form.

Where do I find additional information about the programme?
Information on the programme can be found on the Forum website at http://wef.ch/baku2013. Upon registration, you will receive your personal access to the private area of the Forum’s website concerning the meeting.

Who do I contact for more information?
Magali Ribes
Senior Business Engagement Associate
Tel.: +41 (0)22 869 1279
Fax: +41 (0)22 594 8119
E-mail: CentralAsia@weforum.org

Programme at a Glance

Sunday 7 April 2013

16.00 -19.00	Registration Opens
20.00 - 22.00	**Cultural Soirée** Hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan

Monday 8 April 2013

09.00 - 10.30	Opening Session **Visions for the South Caucasus and Central Asia**
11.00 - 12.30	Interactive Sessions **Future regional economic integration: How might it resolve major challenges to economic development in the South Caucasus and Central Asia** — Entrepreneurship and Human Capital: Can the Region Become a Hub for Innovation and Technological Development? — Finance and Long-term Investing: How Can the Region Turn Short-term Gains into Long Term Benefits? — Natural Resources: How Can the Region Make the Most of its Potential? — Trade and Supply Chains: Will the Region Become the Heart of Eurasian Trade?
13.00 - 14.30	Interactive Lunch **Vision for Azerbaijan** *With government leaders*
15.00 - 16:30	Workshops in Parallel **How can different industries support and benefit from economic integration to become drivers of growth for the region?** — Entrepreneurship and Human Capital — Finance and Long-term Investing — Natural Resources — Trade and Supply Chains
17.00 - 18.00	Workshops Plenary **Report Back: Collecting Insights**
19.00 - 21.00	Closing Dinner **Delivering on Change**

WORLD ECONOMIC FORUM

COMMITTED TO IMPROVING THE STATE OF THE WORLD

The World Economic Forum is an independent international organization committed to improving the state of the world by engaging business, political, academic and other leaders of society to shape global, regional and industry agendas.

Incorporated as a not-for-profit foundation in 1971 and headquartered in Geneva, Switzerland, the Forum is tied to no political, partisan or national interests.

World Economic Forum
91–93 route de la Capite
CH-1223 Cologny/Geneva
Switzerland

Tel.: +41 (0) 22 869 1212
Fax: +41 (0) 22 786 2744

contact@weforum.org
www.weforum.org

REF200312