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OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT



7 February 2003

Mr James Wolfensohn
President
The World Bank Group
1818 H Street, NW
20433 Washington DC, USA

Dear Mr Wolfensohn

Re: Support Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan

I am writing to express our backing for the construction of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline (BTC). Vatan Society had raised thousands of petitions in Britain, Europe as well as the three countries through territories of which the pipeline will run.

This major international, infrastructural project is a key development in Southern Caucasus, facilitating democratic transition in the former Soviet republics of Azerbaijan and Georgia, integrating them in the global economy. Turkey also stands to benefit from BTC. Economic and social development in the entire region, in the eyes of many observers, depends on success of Baku-Ceyhan. This project is of an enormous public benefit and deserves global support.

Soviet-era oil development in the Caspian had left the region in dire ecological state. Involvement of Western corporations and application of international standards in pipeline construction represents a major shift toward upmarket environmentalism in regional energy policy and should be welcomed. Environment will also benefit from the decision to put the line to the port of Ceyhan, thus avoiding the waters already used extensively for oil transportation.

The pipeline also offers opportunities for peace as it creates an intricate system of regional interdependency, removing causes of conflict and encouraging international cooperation.

I hope that BTC project receives the backing it needs, thus providing the nations of the Caspian region support and encouragement *they* need in order to make the most of the opportunities offered by globalisation.

Yours sincerely



Murad Gassanly
Chairperson

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