



# Azerbaijan's mentions of fossil fuels and the Paris Agreement in official statements

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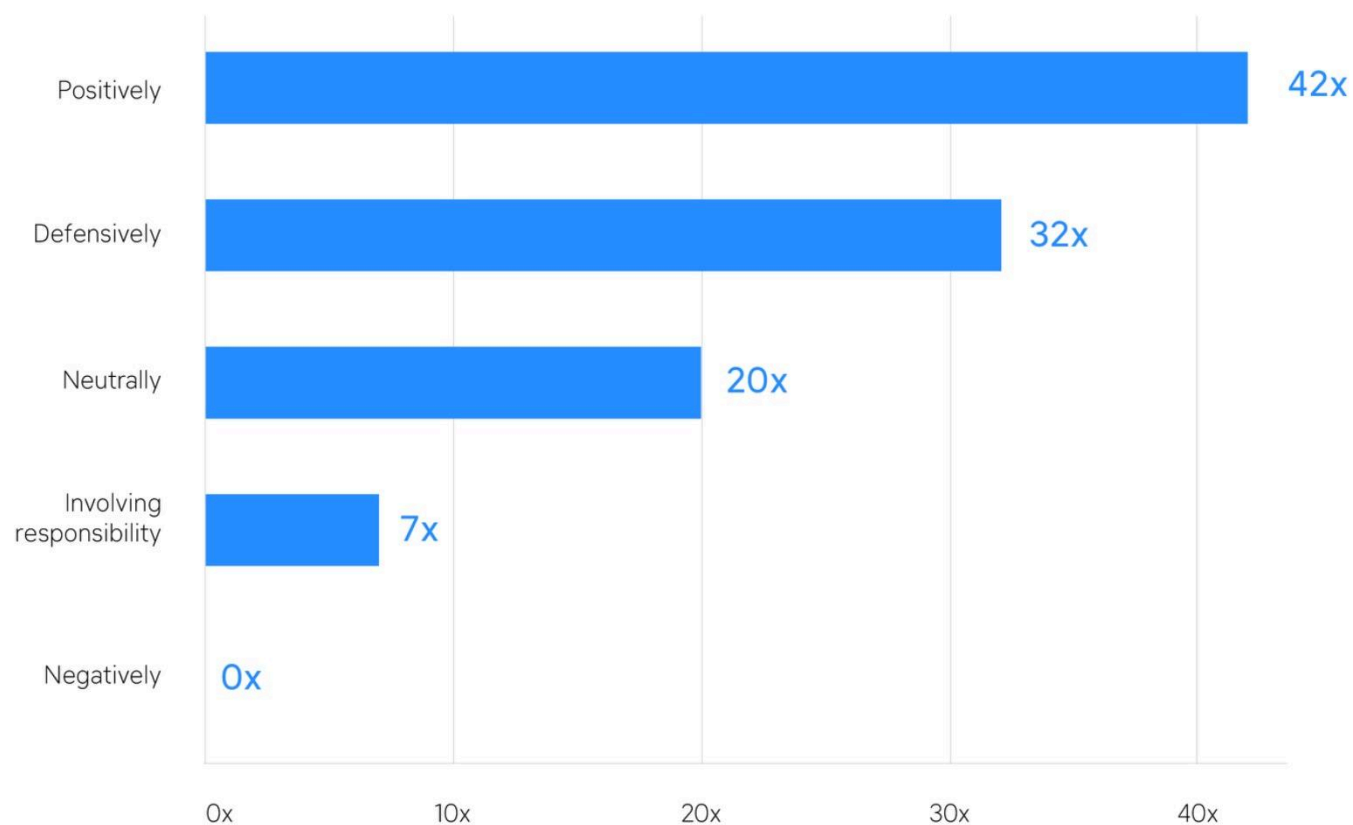
## Summary

Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev says he [wants COP29 to be successful in tackling climate change](#). However, an analysis of statements made by the leader since the country was awarded the COP29 Presidency finds that instead, he has been using his platform to promote his country's fossil fuel interests.

Ten speeches and statements made by President Ilham Aliyev since the COP28 in Dubai were analysed. They show that:

- None of the statements or speeches mentioned the Paris Agreement.
  - Only four statements or speeches out of 10 mentioned the term "fossil fuels".
  - Aliyev mentioned "fossil fuels" 16 times out of 12,942 words.
  - The president failed to frame "fossil fuels" negatively in any of the speeches or statements, and none of the mentions of fossil fuels implied a reduction of their use nor their contribution to the climate crisis.
- Not one mention of oil or gas implied a phase-out of production at any point in the future.
  - The president framed "fossil fuels" in a defensive or positive way 74% of the time. Aliyev says across the speeches that fossil fuels are [necessary for development](#), a [gift of God](#), and a production and investment opportunity that [needs to be defended](#). The IPCC has been clear that in order to limit global temperature rises to 1.5°C, [fossil fuels need to be phased out rapidly](#).
  - Only in 7% of the cases has the president said that fossil fuels imply some kind of responsibility - i.e. recognising that fossil fuel producers should pay more climate financing or that developing countries should be supported. Those statements however did not include concrete measures and even showed a [limited willingness to provide financial means](#) to developing countries: i.e. "We cannot establish a fund for all developing countries."

In climate and energy statements and speeches over the past year, president Aliyev framed fossil fuels...



Source:  
Speeches and statements

Terms used for analysis:  
Fossil fuel(s), oil, gas

## Methodology

The speeches and statements were selected if they were related to climate change, COP29 or energy and were made by the Azerbaijani president Ilham Alyiev. The entirety of the speeches and statements were analysed, except for an interview, where solely climate or energy-related sections were analysed. The sections included in the analysis are made available below (Section "Analysed sections of the Interview of the Global Media Forum (8th Interview)").

The timeframe for the speeches and statements lies between COP28 in Dubai (15th of December 2023) and the 5th of November 2024, before COP29 in Baku.

The speeches and statements were analysed to see if they included the terms "fossil fuels", "oil", "gas" and "Paris Agreement" and in which context the term was used. The context and tone of the terms "Paris Agreement", "oil", "gas" and "fossil fuel" were assessed and attributed to five categories: The terms were framed...

- a) negatively (e.g. "fossil fuels" is mentioned in the context of climate impacts or mentioned as an energy source that needs to be phased down or out)
- b) carrying responsibility (e.g. "[...] countries with fossil fuels, as I have already mentioned, should be among those demonstrating solidarity with respect to issues related to climate change.")
- c) neutrally
- d) defensively (e.g. "Azerbaijan also invests revenues from OIL and gas productions in green energy. This clearly demonstrates that being rich in FOSSIL FUELS does not prevent us from our strides towards promoting green agenda.")
- e) positively (e.g. "[...] without FOSSIL FUEL, the world cannot develop, at least in the foreseeable future.")

Where sentences included more than one term, the tone was assessed only once in case the tone did not vary between terms.

## Speeches of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev

### See here for

#### 2024 10 Statements by Aliyev, mentions of fossil fuels

Here are the sentences of the speeches and statements of President Aliyev where the terms “fossil fuels”, “oil”, “gas” or “Paris Agreement” were mentioned. The term “fossil fuels”, “oil” and “gas” were highlighted according to the context in which the terms were used, following the colour code of the aforementioned categories:

- a) Negatively
- b) Responsibility
- c) Neutrally
- d) Defensively
- e) Positively

#### 1. [Speech by Ilham Aliyev at the meeting regarding hosting of COP29 in Azerbaijan next year](#)

Date: 15/12/2023

##### Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:

- “Concurrently, Azerbaijan will underscore its standing as an OIL and GAS nation, emphasizing

to the global community our commitment to green energy initiatives.”

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

#### 2. [To the participants of the International Baku Forum on “Climate Change and Human Rights](#)

Date: 02/10/2024

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:** None

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

#### 3. [10th Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council Ministerial Meeting and 2nd Green Energy Advisory Council Ministerial Meeting was held in Baku](#)

Date: 01/03/2024

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

##### Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:

- “The Azerbaijani GAS is a new source. So here, in this format, and in the project, which we initiated, we see full implementation of energy diversification issues.”
- “One of the important events during the last year period was the beginning of commercial NATURAL GAS

production from the Absheron GAS and condensate field in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea. This was the second largest discovery of huge GAS deposits after Shahdeniz. Actually, the Absheron GAS and condensate field will be also a resource base for our future energy diversification projects.”

- “Another important achievement, I would say, is that Azerbaijan started supplying NATURAL GAS to two more countries last year, namely Hungary and Serbia, thus expanding the geography of our supplies in Europe. Today, Azerbaijan is supplying NATURAL GAS to eight countries with six of them being European countries.”
- “The demand for the Azerbaijani GAS is here. We have the resources, and transportation routes exist. By the way, through the active communication with our Turkish friends during the last year, we agreed on using the Trans-Balkan GAS pipeline system through Türkiye.”
- “With respect to our future plans, of course, today it will be discussed broadly. I just want to mention some of them. First of all, we expect the beginning of the NATURAL GAS production in the first quarter of the next year from the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli deep GAS project. This is a very promising structure with a very large deposit. For many years, the Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli has been the main source of our OIL exports. And now, with these huge GAS deposits, which we already agreed with our partners to explore, it will be an additional

contribution. In the beginning, the production is planned at around half a billion cubic meters, but it will grow maybe three-four, maybe, five times within several years, being an additional source to GAS supply along with the Shahdeniz and Absheron.”

- “We also have plans to develop the second phase of the Umid GAS condensate field, which potentially can bring additional 2-3 bcm within 3-4 years.”
- “So, all kinds of rumors, which have been circulating for many years that “there is no enough GAS in Azerbaijan” to supply the growing needs of European consumers once again show that they are absolutely groundless.”
- “So, these are the plans, and of course, the more renewable sources we have, the more NATURAL GAS we will save, which now we use for electricity.”
- “(...) we see energy and FOSSIL FUELS as instruments and means to build partnership and cooperation.”
- “And the last point on FOSSIL FUELS issues. We now see kind of a trend that FOSSIL FUEL is something which brings only problems. “We also need to be fair with the countries rich with OIL AND GAS. It is not the fault of these countries that they have OIL AND GAS. They must not be blamed for that and discriminated. I think that the performance of countries with FOSSIL FUELS must be judged by how they address the issue of environmental protection and green transition.”

- “Otherwise, we will see a kind of dividing lines between **OIL AND GAS** producers and those who do not have these resources.”
- “Taking into account that we have representatives of the leading financial institutions of the world here, at this table, the financing of the expansion of the Southern Gas Corridor and any other project related to **NATURAL GAS** must be done in such a way that our main target is not undermined. There was and there is a big demand from Europe for Azerbaijani **GAS**. We have been approached by many countries. As I said, six are already recipients of our **NATURAL GAS**. There are several more with which we have negotiations. The **GAS** is needed and we have the resources and infrastructure.”
- “(...) financing of this [gas] project from European financial institutions must be done [...] and should not be overshadowed by general anti-**FOSSIL FUEL** trends.”
- Azerbaijan has an honor of being the host country for COP29. As soon as the decision was made last December, immediately, we were attacked by different NGOs, media, etc., only for one reason - because we have **OIL** and that was considered to be our biggest fault. Though, as I say, it's not a fault, it's a gift from the God. But we've been attacked that “how can a **FOSSIL FUEL**-rich country be a host of COP?” And let's look at it from a different angle. Yes, we have enough **OIL AND GAS**. We can live without renewables for coming 100

years. All our reserves are proven. Everybody knows that. But the fact that we wanted to host this global event on climate change demonstrates our will.”

- “[...] without **FOSSIL FUEL**, the world cannot develop, at least in the foreseeable future.”

#### 4. [Speech by Ilham Aliyev in the High Level Segment of the 15th Petersberg Climate Dialogue](#)

Date: 26/04/2024

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:**

- “As a country rich in **FOSSIL FUELS**, Azerbaijan is a member of the OPEC+ platform. I think that this is also an additional advantage. “Because we think that a country rich in natural resources, particularly **OIL AND GAS**, should be at the forefront of those addressing the issues of climate change. So, these different layers, I think, will create a good spirit of solidarity and will allow us to reach our goals. (...) I have always said that having **OIL AND GAS** deposits is not our fault. It's a gift from God. We must not be judged by that. We must be judged based on how we use these reserves for the development of the country, to

reduce poverty and unemployment, and on what our targets are with respect to the green agenda.”

- “Our **OIL AND GAS** will be needed for many more years, including in European markets. In 2022, the EU and Azerbaijan signed the Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Partnership in the field of energy, and our **NATURAL GAS** supplies to the European Union are growing. This was the request of the European Commission. We responded positively to that. Currently, half of our **NATURAL GAS** exports, specifically 12 billion cubic meters, are going to the European Union market. Based on the mentioned Memorandum, our exports to the EU should reach 20 billion cubic meters by 2027. We all understand that this is a sign of responsibility of Azerbaijan in this geopolitical situation. Because we are largely investing in increasing our **GAS** production. Because Europe needs more **GAS** from new sources. At the same time, our green agenda started to materialize prior to being awarded COP29.”
- “Using this potential, we will largely substitute our **GAS** consumption for electricity production. As for the volumes, I think that at least an additional five billion cubic meters of **GAS** will be exported to Europe. So, it's actually a win-win situation. We

have created a very good investment climate. All these green energy projects I mentioned are financed by foreign investors. Azerbaijan just provides its infrastructure and a very friendly investment climate. We will save a lot of **NATURAL GAS**, which Europe needs.”

- “As the head of a country rich in **FOSSIL FUELS**, of course, we will defend the right of these countries to continue investments and production because the world needs it. But at the same time, countries with **FOSSIL FUELS**, as I have already mentioned, should be among those demonstrating solidarity with respect to issues related to climate change.”

##### 5. [Joint press statements of Azerbaijani President and Chancellor of Germany](#)

Date: 26/04/2024

##### **Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:**

- “We are now working hard to export green energy to Europe, and I believe that Azerbaijan, which is currently a supplier of **NATURAL GAS**, will also be a supplier of green energy to Europe.”
- “With regard to **NATURAL GAS**, the Energy Commission of the European Union considers Azerbaijan as a pan-European **GAS** supplier. Our



**GAS** supply to Europe is carried out on the basis of strategic partnership. In 2022, the European Union and Azerbaijan adopted a corresponding memorandum. By 2027, we are determined to increase the volume of **GAS** we will export to Europe to 20 billion cubic meters. The demand for **NATURAL GAS**- **GAS** from new sources – is growing in Europe. Whereas in 2021 we supplied 8 billion cubic meters of **GAS** to countries of the European Union, this year the figure has already reached 12 billion.”

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

6. [Speech by Ilham Aliyev at the opening of the 6th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Baku](#)

Date: 01/05/2024

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:**

- “I recently spoke at one of the important climate conference where I emphasized that there should be no discrimination against oil-producing countries. I want to reiterate that it's not our fault that we have **OIL AND GAS**. Some countries have other natural resources. Of course, every country has the right to use its natural resources for the benefit of the country and not only your own

country. As far as Azerbaijan is concerned, we ensure energy security by supplying **NATURAL GAS** to eight countries. If you look at our **OIL** supply geography, it maybe be several times more.”

- “So, this is what we do with **OIL AND GAS** revenues. We create a very good investment climate, attracting investors. At the same time, we invest in renewable sources ourselves. This is a factor by which we must be judged by the international community - not for the **OIL** we have, but because we did something wrong. We haven't done anything wrong, and Azerbaijan's performance in issues related to climate change can be considered exemplary.”

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

7. [To the participants of the 29th High-Level Meeting themed “Pathway to COP29: Sustainable and Resilient Future” organized by the Nizami Ganjavi International Center](#)

Date: 19/06/2024

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:** None

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

## 8. [Meeting of the President Ilham Aliyev with the participants of the 2nd Shusha Global Media Forum](#)

Date: 20/07/2024

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

**Fossil fuel mentions:**

- “We could not predict what the topics of accusation would be, but we were sure there would be enough. But we started being accused of being a country rich with **OIL AND GAS**. (...) We, of course, tried to explain that it is not our fault that we have **OIL AND GAS**. You should not judge us by that. You should judge us by how we use the revenues, how we diversify our economy, how we tackle unemployment and poverty. All those figures today are at the level of developed countries, maybe sometimes even below.”
- “5% poverty is something many countries would wish to have, and that's because of a fair distribution of the wealth generated from **FOSSIL FUEL** sales, transparent and absolutely accountable.”
- “But you know, the funny thing is that before the UAE, it was Egypt, another **FOSSIL FUEL**-producing country, hosted COP, and after us, it will be Brazil.

So the same. But this demonstrates that these countries, which are absolutely on the safe side with respect to energy security, want to demonstrate their responsibility.”

- “Coming back to what we just discussed about this unjust coverage and double standards, we all know that one of the COPs was held in Glasgow, in an OIL-producing part of the United Kingdom. No one accused the United Kingdom of its **OIL AND GAS**. So this is just one illustration of what we were talking about.”
- “We work actively with **OIL**-producing countries and have already proposals how **OIL**-producing countries can play a more instrumental role in accumulating finance.
- “We did our best to produce the first **OIL** in the shortest possible time. If you look at the history of **OIL** contracts of the world, you will see that it was not possible to produce **OIL** from such a huge **OIL** field in just three years, in such a short period of time. The 1994 contract was signed in September. I think it was ratified by the parliament after three to four months, it came into force as a law, and in November 1997, the first **OIL** was produced from the “Chirag-1” platform.”
- “As for complaints, you know, at that time they had other complaints about us. You probably

remember that too. They were saying that there was no OIL in Azerbaijan, that OIL pipelines should not be built, that Azerbaijan was bluffing, it does not have OIL, and that it is spreading false information. Production from Azeri-Chirag continues to this day. When the Shah Deniz contract was signed, they were spreading a myth that there was no GAS in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan itself is buying GAS elsewhere and can never transport GAS to any country. There are already eight countries, and production this year is expected at 50 billion cubic meters. Some of it will be re-injected into the reservoir to further increase OIL production, some will be directed to domestic consumption, and 25 billion will go to world markets. This is not only about profit. This is of geopolitical importance, everyone knows this perfectly well, i.e. those closely familiar with this field – today the GAS factor is the number one factor of energy security.”

- “On the other hand, they do not finance it. That was one of the topics of my discussions with European colleagues. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has totally stopped financing FOSSIL FUEL projects. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has almost totally stopped financing these projects.

The Southern Gas Corridor [...] is fully packed. It works at 100% capacity. There is a lot of demand from European countries for additional gas. We just signed [...] an agreement with a company from Slovenia, which will probably be the 9th partner of Azerbaijan, I mean consumer. But European financial institutions—they stopped financing. They want us to expand the Southern Gas Corridor from 16 to 32 billion cubic meters – TANAP and Trans Adriatic pipeline from 10 to 20 – to invest billions of dollars. By the way, I can tell you that we have not recovered the costs of the Southern Gas Corridor so far. And we are still recovering. All that we earn from gas sales goes to finance, I mean, to pay the debts. They want us to put in additional billions, while at the same time, they in the EU say that in 10 years or maybe less they will no longer need gas. So, we must be crazy to invest billions for something, which they will not need, and then they look into our eyes and say, “Where is our gas? So, my message is, stop this game, you know, without FOSSIL FUELS, it's not possible to live.”

- “As a country that is a member of OPEC+, we started our homework with OIL-producing countries to establish an additional mechanism for financing. Those countries that earned from

fossil fuel should pay more; that is absolutely true.”

- “Those countries that earned from **FOSSIL FUEL** should pay more; that is absolutely true. Those countries that pollute and produce more carbon emissions, and who have money, should pay more. [...] but trillions, will be needed, and where these trillions will come from is an open question. Developing countries need to be supported, and as I said, what we can do? We established a fund for the Small Island Developing Countries. We cannot establish a fund for all developing countries. We are not as rich. We do what we think is right and what is within our potential to demonstrate solidarity and to activate others who have been a little bit passive to follow our example. So, this is how we see our role. We want COP29 in Azerbaijan to be a solidarity event.”

9. [To the participants of the Pre-COP29](#)

Date: 10/10/2024

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:**

- “Azerbaijan also invests revenues from **OIL AND GAS** productions in green energy. This clearly demonstrates that being rich in **FOSSIL FUELS** does not prevent us from our strides towards promoting green agenda.”

10. [To the participants of the Global Summit of Religious Leaders under the slogan “World Religions for a Green Planet,” held as part of the 29th session of the Conference of the Parties \(COP29\) to the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change](#)

Date: 05/11/2024

**Paris Agreement mentions:** None

**Fossil fuel, oil or gas mentions:** None

## Analysed sections of the Interview of the Global Media Forum (8th Interview)

### Meeting of the President Ilham Aliyev with the participants of the 2nd Shusha Global Media Forum

Date: 20/07/2024

Text considered in analysis:

It was expected. Many people with whom I discussed Azerbaijan's presidency, I mean, among my colleagues, heads of state and government, were warning me that it would be a big headache. But we clearly realized that we would be the subject of attack. We could not predict what the topics of accusation would be, but we were sure there would be enough. But we started being accused of being a country rich with OIL and gas. That was very strange because, by the way, the UAE COP28 President was also the subject of the same attacks, but unfortunately, it was such a broad, coordinated media process against us. At first, we were not prepared for that. We, of course, tried to explain that it is not our fault that we have OIL and gas. You should not judge us by that. You should judge us by how we use the revenues, how we diversify our economy, how we tackle unemployment and poverty. All those figures today are at the level of developed countries, maybe sometimes even below. I mean, 5% poverty is something many countries would wish to have, and that's because of a fair

distribution of the wealth generated from fossil fuel sales, transparent and absolutely accountable. But nevertheless, this trend continues. I can tell you that as time passes, there are less and less attacks on us. Our COP Team is working very efficiently and is actually spending most of their time at different meetings abroad. And our COP agenda is very clear, very predictable, and result-oriented. So, I would say that after six months have passed, since even more than that, since the decision was made, we are now less under fire. But we understand that the closer to the event, the fire level will grow.

Coming back to what we just discussed about this unjust coverage and double standards, we all know that one of the COPs was held in Glasgow, in an oil-producing part of the United Kingdom. No one accused the United Kingdom of its OIL and gas. So this is just one illustration of what we were talking about. But you know, the advantage of this event many times prevails this, if I may use this word, the disadvantages because this is a main event on a global scale. This is the number one conference on the international arena. For the first time, it is going to be held in the area of the former Soviet Union and the region, and it is a unique chance for us to step into a higher league. Because we are not only organizing, we

do a lot on the substance. We launch initiatives. We now actively work with developing countries in order to build bridges between the Global South and the Global North. Our advantage is that we've chaired the Non-Aligned Movement for four years—institution with 120 countries. We've been selected unanimously, and our chairmanship was prolonged for one more year unanimously. So a lot of credit we got there because we did a lot as the chair. I don't want to go into much detail.

At the same time, Azerbaijan is one of the few countries, possibly the only in our part of the world and the former Soviet Union, which has signed or adopted strategic partnership declarations and agreements with 10 members of EU. The members of EU are officially Azerbaijan's strategic partners. We are members of the Islamic Cooperation Organization. We are members of the OPEC+ format. We work actively with oil-producing countries and have already proposals how oil-producing countries can play a more instrumental role in accumulating finance. We actively communicate with European institutions. I just returned yesterday from London, where I attended the European Political Community summit, which I participated in for the third time. So, this is our advantage. We can build bridges because, frankly speaking, I was not deeply involved in the climatic agenda before. But now I realize there is a big mistrust between developed and developing countries. There are mutual blames and accusations about who did more damage to the planet and who is more responsible, and how to

bring those responsible to justice or punishment. We want to put down all of that, because it will lead us nowhere.

We are now launching a program to support Small Island Developing States. Our President of COP29 will spend a week in the UK, meeting with Commonwealth officials. We have announced that we will establish a joint fund with the Commonwealth to support Small Island Developing States. For them, this is an existential threat. So, we are doing a lot on that track. I think that using a very positive legacy of the UAE as COP28 President, we can build on that. But you know, the funny thing is that before the UAE, it was Egypt, another fossil fuel-producing country, hosted COP, and after us, it will be Brazil. So the same. But this demonstrates that these countries, which are absolutely on the safe side with respect to energy security, want to demonstrate their responsibility. They want to make contribution to invest in green technologies, green transition. As Madam Rebecca said, one of the topics will be green solidarity. Yes, the year 2024 has been officially announced as the Green World Solidarity Year in Azerbaijan. I hope we will have a good event and achieve good results. And, of course, we invite all our friends to be with us in November.

Thank you. If my message can be articulated in a short sentence, it would be: "Put down hypocrisy." That's the short message. But in order to disclose a little bit, I just want to say that since we last met, Azerbaijan has made substantial

progress in renewables. We inaugurated the first solar power station of 230 megawatts. Now, the construction of a wind power station of 240 megawatts is underway. Soon, we will enjoy the groundbreaking ceremony for the third solar power station of 240 megawatts. The first was done by Masdar, the second, which is now under construction, is ACWA Power, and the third, which we expect to start with BP - the leading energy companies of the world. Above that, last month in Baku, we had the groundbreaking ceremony for three solar and wind power stations with a total capacity of one gigawatt. So, we are doing a lot of that. We have great potential—both technical and economic. The technical potential of offshore wind power in Azerbaijan is 157 gigawatts based on IFC, which is part of the World Bank institution. The economic potential of onshore solar and wind is 27 gigawatts, which clearly indicates how much we can generate. It's enormous.

Plus we are now in the final stage of feasibility studies on a green energy cable from Caspian offshore wind farms to Romania under the Black Sea. The potential of that cable will be four gigawatts. We signed an agreement with ACWA Power company to build storage because one of the problems with renewables is the lack of storages. Now, with new technologies, you can have storage and accumulate energy. The first storage with this kind of battery will be for 200 gigawatts. We do all that by attracting foreign investments and investing our own money. Additionally, it will save us a lot of natural gas, which

Europe needs so badly now. When I said that the message is to put down hypocrisy, it's because, on one hand, they ask us to increase the production of gas and deliver it to Europe because they are now in shortage. On the other hand, they do not finance it. That was one of the topics of my discussions with European colleagues. The European Investment Bank (EIB) has totally stopped financing fossil fuel projects. The European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) has almost totally stopped financing these projects. The Southern Gas Corridor, which is an integrated 3,500-kilometer pipeline system, is fully packed. It works at 100% capacity. There is a lot of demand from European countries for additional gas. We just signed, just a couple of days ago, an agreement with a company from Slovenia, which will probably be the 9th partner of Azerbaijan, I mean consumer. But European financial institutions—they stopped financing. They want us to expand the Southern Gas Corridor from 16 to 32 billion cubic meters – TANAP and Trans Adriatic pipeline from 10 to 20 – to invest billions of dollars. By the way, I can tell you that we have not recovered the costs of the Southern Gas Corridor so far. And we are still recovering. All that we earn from gas sales goes to finance, I mean, to pay the debts. They want us to put in additional billions, while at the same time, they in the EU say that in 10 years or maybe less they will no longer need gas. So, we must be crazy to invest billions for something, which they will not need, and then they look into our eyes and say, "Where

is our gas?" So, my message is, stop this game, you know, without fossil fuels, it's not possible to live. This is first.

Second, I know how much European companies invest in renewables, and I applaud them for that. They do a great job, but international analysis demonstrates that no matter how much they invest, they will still face shortages. They will still need additional energy, which is why we are working on the cable I just said. Not only that, but just a couple of months ago, we signed an MOU with Uzbekistan and Kazakhstan to evaluate the possibility of an undersea cable in the Caspian because these two countries also have great renewable potential and some projects are being implemented. So, if everything goes according to our plan, we could have a green energy cable from Uzbekistan, Kazakhstan, Caspian, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Türkiye, and then Romania. This would be a project even bigger than the Southern Gas Corridor, but we need cooperation. And we need coordination. Every February, already, I think for the 10th or 9th time, we host the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor in Baku with participation from dozens of countries, co-chaired by the European Commission and Azerbaijan, and one of the subjects is exactly green energy. We are in favor of synergy because if you do one thing and not the other, it will not work. Synergy, a reasonable approach, and of course, a balance of interests between producers, transitors, and consumers.

(...)

On the green energy zone, yes, it was announced. Karabakh, East Zangezur, and also Nakhchivan, which is geographically more or less the same region, have been announced as a green energy zone. There is great potential for solar energy. The solar plant, I referred to, to be built by bp, is situated in Jabrayil, not very far away from here. There are big plans for Nakhchivan, including a solar plant with a capacity of 500 megawatts. Since the end of the Second Karabakh War, we have actively invested in hydro energy with 270 megawatts of hydro power stations already operational within three and a half years. The ultimate number will be, so far, 500 megawatts. This potential will completely cover the region. Additionally, with the construction of fully integrated electric lines, electricity from Karabakh will be transported to other parts of Azerbaijan. This is really a very ambitious agenda.

Our main investors are foreign companies. Azerbaijan participates as a minority shareholder. This means that the business climate, investment opportunities, and internal rate of return on investments are acceptable. Otherwise, no one would have spent any dollar here. This is a multi-billion-dollar investment project. As I said, almost two gigawatts have already been agreed upon, and in total, 10 gigawatts are covered by agreements or MOUs. Next year, I'm sure, if you visit, you will see the transformation of the region to green energy completely.

(...)



As for complaints, you know, at that time they had other complaints about us. You probably remember that too. They were saying that there was no OIL in Azerbaijan, that OIL pipelines should not be built, that Azerbaijan was bluffing, it does not have oil, and that it is spreading false information. Production from Azeri-Chirag continues to this day. When the Shah Deniz contract was signed, they were spreading a myth that there was no gas in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan itself is buying gas elsewhere and can never transport gas to any country. There are already eight countries, and production this year is expected at 50 billion cubic meters. Some of it will be re-injected into the reservoir to further increase OIL production, some will be directed to domestic consumption, and 25 billion will go to world markets. This is not only about profit. This is of geopolitical importance, everyone knows this perfectly well, i.e. those closely familiar with this field – today the gas factor is the number one factor of energy security. I do not rule out that, you may be right – the day may come when they will criticize us for green energy. Because there are many things that are now coming to light about green energy that are making people and decision makers think again. How will those materials be disposed? What will be the fate of batteries and accumulators? That is, a ticking bomb has already been placed underneath it, so that it can explode on someone's head when it is necessary. But let me say again that all the steps and initiatives we take have the main goal – to strengthen our

country, increase our economic strength, further strengthen our economic and political independence and enable Azerbaijan to access the top league.

COP29 will be a very important step in this direction. Some people may not have understood this when we had this desire. Even today, there are some who frown on this, wondering why it is necessary, let's live comfortably. It will be yet another again, there will be more visitors. We are already seeing the results. The geopolitical importance of Azerbaijan has significantly increased. Bilateral relations with the countries we are in contact with at the international level are developing in a completely different way. In addition to traditional topics, this topic and other related topics are also included.

As I have already mentioned, there are more than 50 small developing island states. We are establishing a special fund for them, and we will invest significantly in that fund. We will help them. Of course, they will become our natural allies, and I am not listing other countries. By taking these steps, we are strengthening our country to a great extent, and our COP representatives and teams are here today. They are also working very hard. I said to them that you should work hard abroad, in foreign countries, you should travel around the world so that you can convey Azerbaijan's position and agenda to all parties.

From an organizational point of view, I honestly do not see any difficulties. Because we have extensive experience. It is difficult to say from the beginning what the ultimate result will be. Moreover, it no longer depends on us. We will do our best, build bridges, strengthen contacts between the Global South and the Global North. But, of course, the main say in this climate issue does not belong to countries the size of Azerbaijan. They are big countries we are now making efforts to bring together.

(...)

We initiated the creation of the Troika of the previous, current, and future presidents of COP - UAE 28, Azerbaijan, and Brazil COP30. Before this, such arrangements never existed. This was our initiative, supported by our friends from the UAE and Brazil. This creates a teamwork approach because COP is not only about the week or two weeks during the conference, it is a continuous process before and after. The legacy you leave must be tangible. Words are enough but there so many words, actions. Coordination is here, as I said, within the Troika, and I'm sure that after us the Troika mechanism will continue in the future.

With respect to who contributed more to killing the planet, I think it will be counterproductive if we concentrate on that. Of course, we know who did more. Who is the biggest producer of carbon gases, everybody knows. But we need to establish such

a platform that those who have more financial resources contribute more because, in the end, it will affect everyone. I'm not a specialist. As I said, I have only been trying to understand the situation for six months. And for me, very frankly, it is not yet clear, because what I hear is not exactly the truth. I'm not sure either. Yes, we all understand that a 1.5 Celsius increase will be a disaster. But at the same time, many uncertainties still exist. As a country that is a member of OPEC+, we started our homework with oil-producing countries to establish an additional mechanism for financing. Those countries that earned from fossil fuel should pay more; that is absolutely true. Those countries that pollute and produce more carbon emissions, and who have money, should pay more. But international assessments of the situation show that not billions, but trillions, will be needed, and where these trillions will come from is an open question. Developing countries need to be supported, and as I said, what we can do? We established a fund for the Small Island Developing Countries. We cannot establish a fund for all developing countries. We are not as rich. We do what we think is right and what is within our potential to demonstrate solidarity and to activate others who have been a little bit passive to follow our example. So, this is how we see our role. We want COP29 in Azerbaijan to be a solidarity event. That's why we called the year as the Green Solidarity Year. That's what we need. Hopefully, we will come closer. I will not say we will achieve the goal, but we will come closer to it."