



NCSJ WEEKLY EVENTS HIGHLIGHTS
Washington, D.C. Friday, March 12, 2010

-----INDEX OF EVENTS-----

1. *NCSJ Videoconferences with Kyiv Hillel; NCSJ Attends Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Event; NCSJ Meets with Latvian Ambassador; NCSJ Conference Call with U.S. Embassy in Lithuania; NCSJ Meets with Kazakh Ambassador; NCSJ Attends "Lawfare" Conference Briefs, March 8-12, 2010*
2. *NCSJ Attends Forum on U.S. Caspian Policy Thursday, March 11, 2010*

#1a

NCSJ Videoconferences with Kyiv Hillel

NCSJ Director of Cultural Affairs and Community Services Lesley Weiss held a videoconference with Osik Akselrud, Darina Privalko and Alexandra Oleinykova from Kyiv Hillel to discuss the upcoming NCSJ Student Leadership Program from Stanford University to Kyiv.

#1b

NCSJ Attends Carnegie Endowment for International Peace Event

NCSJ Executive Director Mark Levin attended a discussion at Carnegie Endowment of International Peace titled "Developments in Russia," a discussion on developments since Dmitry Medvedev was elected president. Presenters included Russia journalist Masha Lipman, Carnegie Moscow Center scholar Nikolai Petrov, and former U.S. ambassador to the Russian Federation James F. Collins.

#1c

NCSJ Meets with Latvian Ambassador

NCSJ Executive Director Mark Levin met with Latvian Ambassador to the United States Andrejs Pildegovics.

#1d

NCSJ Conference Call with U.S. Embassy in Lithuania

NCSJ Executive Director Mark Levin and NCSJ Director of Community Services and Cultural Affairs Lesley Weiss had a conference call with the U.S. Embassy in Lithuania.

#1e

NCSJ Meets with Kazakh Ambassador

NCSJ Executive Director Mark Levin met with Kazakh Ambassador to the United States Erlan Idrissov.

#1f

NCSJ Attends “Lawfare” Conference

NCSJ Executive Director Mark Levin attended an all-day conference in New York City titled “Lawfare: The Use of Law as a Weapon of War.” The Lawfare Project is a not-for-profit organization that raises awareness about abuses legal systems and of the law (particularly human rights law).

#2

NCSJ Attends Forum on U.S. Caspian Policy

Thursday, March 11, 2010

NCSJ Program Assistant Alla Lipsky attended a forum at the Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at SAIS titled “Does the U.S. have a Caspian Policy?” featuring Ambassador C. Boyden Gray, former Ambassador to the European Union, and Alexandros Peterson, Senior Fellow at the Eurasia Center, Atlantic Council.

Peterson believes that the U.S. has individual strategies for Caspian region countries, but no strategy for the region as a whole. Many see the region, he said, as “peripheral to everything, central to nothing.” He discussed reasons why the U.S. should have an overarching regional strategy, such as the Northern Distribution Network which supplies forces in Afghanistan. He recommended the U.S. fill the ambassador positions in its Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan embassies, so as to have full and capable diplomatic representation. Peterson also suggested the U.S. could act as an outside problem-solver in the region on disputes such as the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, and a dispute over a gas field between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan. Peterson avoided the topic of energy resources, in order to highlight other U.S. long-term interests in and need for establishing a policy for the Caspian region.

Amb. Gray discussed energy in terms of Russia’s leverage in the region. He noted that there may be enough natural gas deposits in Eastern Europe to make the Caspian energy market irrelevant. Gray pointed out that Russia continues to oppose a southern transport route for gas, which would diminish its regional influence. He recommended addressing the lack of Caspian policy by creating an inter-agency platform, run out of the White House, to work in parallel with NATO on Caspian strategy.