

**U.S. Department of the Interior
Minerals Management Service
Office of Communications**

NEWS RELEASE

FOR RELEASE:

October 15, 1998

CONTACT: [Anne-Berry Wade](#)
(202) 208-3985

MMS PROVIDES TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE

FOR REGIONS IN THE CASPIAN BASIN

The Department of the Interior's Minerals Management Service announced today that the agency will be assisting the Republics of Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan through the Caspian Partnership for Regulatory Cooperation. Through this partnership, MMS will provide geologic, oceanographic, environmental, economic, engineering, and accounting assistance to these countries.

With \$425,000 in funding from the United States Agency of International Development for FY 1999 and 2000, the MMS will provide assistance to these areas as they begin to develop new regulatory institutions for the offshore mineral resources in the Caspian Sea. MMS will also provide some limited technical assistance to the Republic of Georgia.

"The experience and expertise of MMS in managing this Nation's oil and natural gas resources will be beneficial as the legislative and regulatory systems in Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan evolve," remarked MMS Director Cynthia Quarterman. "This partnership has been carefully designed to promote environmentally sound and safe development of the Caspian oil and gas resources while at the same time allowing companies to make stable business decisions."

The Caspian Basin is an important region of international and U.S. interest due to its vast oil and natural gas resources.

MMS is the federal agency that manages the Nation's natural gas, oil and other mineral resources on the Outer Continental Shelf; and collects, accounts for, and last year disbursed about \$6 billion in revenues year from federal offshore mineral leases and from onshore mineral leases on federal and Indian lands.

-MMS-

MMS Internet website address: <http://www.boem.gov>
24 hour Fax-on-Demand Service:(202) 219-1703