

Larry King and the First Ladies, Live from Baku

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Larry King was in Azerbaijan today to talk about a subject with which he is quite familiar -- women. At a Baku event staged by the Crans Montana Forum, a Swiss organization in search of "a more humane and impartial world," the legendary American talk-show host, known for his revolving-door love life, addressed [the rights and the role of women "in tomorrow's world."](#)

To get down to brass tacks on the topic, King, 78, was joined by First Ladies from as far afield as Niger and as nearby as Georgia. Mehriban Aliyeva, wife of Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev, chaired the gathering, [part of a larger hobnobbing about "Which Energy for Which World?"](#)

King, a seven-time husband, was meant to share his ideas about how the First Ladies can help promote women's "dignity" in their countries, but, as of press time, those insights were not available.

Whether or not Aliyeva, who is reported to have vast business interests in Azerbaijan, shared her own tips for success is also not known.

Or, for that matter, whether or not participants discussed the overall status of women's rights in Azerbaijan itself, which scored in the bottom half of [the World Economic Forum's 135-country Global Gender Gap index](#) for 2011.

As [Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty](#) subtly pointed out: "while it's clear that women related to the [Azerbaijani] president have done quite well in Azerbaijan, the state of ordinary women's rights in the country, especially in the countryside, is less clear."

In particular, the rights of women who report about the business doings of Aliyeva and her family, such as Khadija Ismayilova, a journalist for RFE/RL and EurasiaNet.org, who has faced a [blackmail attempt](#) by unknown individuals eager to stop her work.

"I've never learned anything while I was talking," King is reputed once to have said. How much he learned in Baku while he was listening, however, remains to be seen.