



School of International Affairs
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD
ADA Biweekly Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 16
August 15, 2009

adabiweekly@ada.edu.az

In this issue:

- Paul Goble, "Azerbaijan's armed forces: a key player in Baku's foreign policy"
- Asim Mollazade, "Toward a Union of the Silk Road"
- Gulnara Inandzh, "Looking beyond the Golan Heights: Baku as a possible mediator in the Middle East"
- A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy
- Note to Readers

AZERBAIJAN'S ARMED FORCES:
A KEY PLAYER IN BAKU'S FOREIGN POLICY

Paul Goble
Publications Advisor
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

As in almost all countries, the military in Azerbaijan plays a key role as a symbol of the state, as an integrative institution tying the citizenry to the government, and as an expression of the ultimate basis of national power. But in Azerbaijan, the armed forces perform an even more important role not only because of the difficulties of the transition Soviet times but also because 20 percent of the country is under foreign occupation and a tense ceasefire line snakes across the map and must be guarded.

Most of the time, few foreign leaders focus on this institution not only because Azerbaijan has voiced its commitment to the peaceful resolution of its conflict with

Armenia but also because Baku has indicated that while it is prepared to cooperation with other countries and organizations, including NATO, it currently unlike some of its neighbors has no wish to join them. But recent statements by President Ilham Aliyev and his government that Azerbaijan is ready and able to use force to gain the return of the occupied territories if negotiations fail and the scheduled adoption by the Milli Majlis of a national military doctrine this fall are attracting increased attention to this central national institution.

The Azerbaijan armed forces were created on the basis of an October 1991 law that defines as their basic tasks "the armed defense of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and interests of Azerbaijan, the warding off of armed aggression against the state, and if aggression does occur, its repulse." As in the case of the 11 other former Soviet republics (but not the three occupied Baltic countries), Azerbaijan established its military by using both existing Soviet units and officers and new principles of recruitment, organization, command and control. This process was complicated, of course, by the war with Armenia in which both regular military units and armed civilian detachments took part.

At the present time, the armed forces of Azerbaijan consist of 150,000 uniformed personnel, including 103,000 in the infantry, 8,000 in the air force, 3,000 in the navy, 12,000 in the internal forces, 2,500 in the Presidential guard, 16,000 in the border guards, and 3,000 in other military structures. The military which is based on a draft has the possibility to mobilize to a size of 600,000 in the event of a draft. And as can be seen by its structure, the Azerbaijani armed forces reflect Soviet-era divisions. [1]

That Soviet heritage is reflected as well in the composition of the senior officer corps, almost all of whom rose through the ranks in Soviet times but who are gradually being replaced by personnel trained at Heydar Aliyev Higher Military School and at Western military academies; in the small number of civilians in most senior positions in the defense ministry, and a continuing reputation among Western experts for the lack of a professional sergeant corps – one of the major differences between the forces of the former Warsaw Pact and NATO – problems with the feeding and housing of enlisted personnel, and the absence of the kind of transparency the Soviet military did not have but that is a hallmark of defense structures in democratic countries and a requirement for effective civilian control. [2]

The land forces are divided into five army corps, three along the Karabakh war ceasefire line, one in the capital and one in Nakhchivan. These forces have 530 tanks, 1200 armored personnel carriers, more than 400 heavy weapons, and large reserves of light arms and heavy weapons. Air force units, which have 120 planes and 46 helicopters, almost all of Soviet or Russian manufacture, are based at Kurdamir, Zeinalabdin-Nasosny, Dallar, Ganja, Nala, Lankaran, and Salyan. There are also seven anti-aircraft units and two major radar sites, including one now rented to the Russian Federation.

Over the last several years and using the money from its sale of hydrocarbons abroad, Azerbaijan has both significantly improved the quality of life of draftees, although some complaints remain, and increased its purchase of non-Russian military equipment, including from former East bloc countries, Turkey, Israel and the United States. Azerbaijan is now spending two billion manat a year (2.5 billion US dollars) on defense, up from 175 million US dollars in 2004, thus adding credibility to the statements of President Ilham Aliyev and other Azerbaijani officials that the

country's armed forces are now fully capable of retaking the occupied territories if negotiations do not succeed.

Although Azerbaijan has indicated that its balanced foreign policy precludes joining NATO, Baku and its military forces have had an active program of cooperation since the signing of a framework accord between NATO and Azerbaijan in 1996. Azerbaijan is a participant in the Partnership for Peace program and its forces regularly take part in NATO exercises and peacekeeping operations. In the course of this cooperation, Azerbaijan has responded positively to NATO's call for the modernization and Westernization of its forces, and consequently, today, after 18 years of what has often been a difficult transition, Azerbaijan's forces are not only capable of defending the country against any attack but also prepared to retake the occupied territories if President Aliyev gives the order.

The fact that he and they could take those steps provides critical support for Baku's negotiators in the OSCE Minsk Group process by serving as a constant reminder to all parties in the region that Azerbaijan has the capacity to act unilaterally if others are unwilling to respect its sovereignty and territorial integrity.

References

CRIA (2009) "The Military balance in Nagorno-Karabakh", *Caucasus Update*, Issue 18, 19 January, available at: http://cria-online.org/CU - file - article - sid - _19.html (accessed 14 August 2009).

Pataraiia, T. and Makhatadze, T. (2008) "Defence Institution Building in Azerbaijan", in Fluri, P. and V. Cibotaru, eds. *Defence Institution Building: Country Profiles and Needs Assessments for Armenia, Azerbaidjan, Georgia and Moldova* (Geneva: Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces), pp. 30-48.

Notes

[1] See "Military forces of Azerbaijan" [in Russian], available at: <http://www.warweb.ru/GetMaterial.asp?Page=105082009> (accessed 12 August 2009).

[2] See, among others, CRIA (2009); Pataraiia & Makhatadze (2008).

TOWARD A UNION OF THE SILK ROAD

Asim Mollazade, MP
Chairman
Democratic Reforms Party

Historically, the South Caucasus has long been a battlefield of the Great Game, with centuries' long fights for influence among outside empires turning the peoples of the region into victims. In most cases, it was a zero-sum game. And because geography did not change, the struggle repeated itself with the same result. But at

the end of the 20th century, because of changes in the broader world and the appearance of independent states in Transcaucasia, the situation has begun to change.

These countries began to work together in a cooperative fashion, and they attracted outside attention to their ambitious investment projects. This process took off with the signing of the so-called "contract of the century," and it accelerated with the launch of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline and will increase still further with the construction of a gas pipeline via Turkey, Greece, and Italy. In addition, there is the Nabucco project and the Odessa-Brody route, all of which will allow Azerbaijan to sell its energy resources to Eastern Europe and beyond.

In addition to pipelines, there has been an expansion of transportation infrastructure linking Europe and Asia. The launch of the Baku-Tbilisi-Akhalkalaik-Kars railroad symbolizes this. Now Kazakhstan and China have expressed their interest in getting involved. And further development of this network will link the largest seaports of Europe and Asia by the shortest land route as well. In these projects too, the South Caucasus is rapidly becoming an importer bridge builder between two larger regions. The expansion of commodity exchange between East and West will place Azerbaijan and Georgia in a completely new place on the vector of worldwide economic development. That makes their cooperation in GUAM even more important, not only as an integrator of the two countries but as a means to participate in these broader processes. GUAM is important not because it is directed against someone else but because it helps its members work together and with others.

With a headquarters in Kyiv, GUAM will soon have a parliamentary assembly based in Baku. The grouping will be the basis for a customs union. Its own anti-terrorist center has been established, and the grouping stands ready to take part in peacekeeping both on its own territory and more generally, in cooperation with the countries of the Balkans, the Baltic region and Eastern Europe.

Azerbaijan is committed to pursue balanced development and plans to avoid the Dutch Disease by redistributing the flow of petrodollars into allied countries to promote development and reduce inflation. So far, Armenia has been a stumbling block toward regional development, given its occupation of a fifth of Azerbaijani territory. But if that situation changes, there are no obstacles to its inclusion in this broader integrative process. On the contrary, the participation of Armenia would both promote regional security and economic development.

For the GUAM countries, integration with Europe is a major focus, even though they recognize that they are unlikely to be in a position to join the European Union in this generation. Partnership with NATO is a more immediate prospect, especially given Turkey's role. Looking further afield, the members of GUAM see Kazakhstan as being drawn into this cooperative set of arrangements, a development that would lead to a completely new system that could be called the Union of the Silk Road.

Such a Union would involve extensive transportation and communication corridors as well as security arrangements and provide another means for linking the countries within it to Europe. At the same time, the integration of these countries into Europe and the promotion of stability will be impossible without the creation and the development of democracy and the support of human rights in all of its members. Moreover, these countries still face serious problems with corruption, and some of

them face religious-based extremism, something that must be fought through the promotion of secular models of state development.

**LOOKING BEYOND THE GOLAN HEIGHTS:
BAKU AS A POSSIBLE MEDIATOR IN THE MIDDLE EAST**

Gulnara Inandzh
Director

International Online Information Analytic Center *Ethnoglobus*

Syrian President Bashar Asad's visit to Baku, which took place immediately after Israeli President Shimon Peres visited Azerbaijan and which Asad said bore a strategic character, points to a possible mediating role for Azerbaijan in negotiations between Syria and Israel. [1] That is all the more the case because over the last several years, both Israel and the United States have pushed for the strengthening of the position of Azerbaijan in the Middle East in order to have another partner there alongside Turkey.

Indeed, now a suitable time has arisen as a result of that effort, and consequently, Tel Aviv and Washington have offered Azerbaijan a mediating mission in the Middle East and the role of a gas transit route to Europe bypassing Russia. For the first role, Azerbaijan is a key to American and Israeli efforts to reduce Russian influence in Iran and Syria and more precisely to cut the tie among the members of this triangle. And consequently, Israel and the US have offered concessions and attractive proposals.

In the dialogue between Damascus and Jerusalem, the primary focus is on the return to Syria of the Golan Heights which have been under Israeli occupation since the Six day war in 1967. During his visit to Baku, President Peres said that "Syrian President Bashar Asad must understand that he cannot receive on a silver platter the Golan Heights if he continues his ties with Iran and his support of Hezbollah. [2] At the same time, he sent a message to Tehran with whom a discussion on the Syrian question appears to be in the offing.

If it is able to achieve its goals, Israel may return the Golan Heights, but having given up these territories, Tel Aviv must receive a security guarantee for Israel. However, Damascus cannot completely break its ties with Teheran and its satellite Hezbollah and give a full guarantee that after the return of the strategically important Heights, Iran will not terrorize Israel. Only Tehran can give a guarantee of non-aggression against Israel whether or not the Golan Heights are returned. [3]

The Golan Heights are only the visible part of a game behind which stand the economic security of the Middle East and the West. After Peres and Asad visited Baku, US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg arrived, along with Philip Gordon, the assistant secretary for Europe and Eurasia. During the visit, they discussed with Azerbaijan's leadership the issue of US support for the diversification of energy supplies. Stressing that the US is not seeking to exclude Russia from this process, he pointed to a variety of energy plans that would involve Azerbaijan with Syria and Iran. At the same time, with this set of talks, conversations about the

Nabucco gas pipeline, which would reduce Europe's dependence on Russian gas, took off.

And at the same time, US President Barak Obama decided to reopen the American embassy in Damascus which had been closed four years ago.

All these statements and actions help explain why Damascus has now declared its readiness to be part of the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline and to purchase oil from Iraq.

Of course, the US and Israel, by attracting Syria to their side, intend to isolate Iran, but since all the major Iranian gas fields remain beyond the control of the West, it is hardly possible to gain the complete isolation of Iran. Therefore, for the US and Israel, it is important to involve Iran in a dialogue through one or another third country, including among them Azerbaijan. But the most important link in this chain is the freeing of Iran from Russian manipulation. For that, Iran must become involved in one of the Western gas projects, otherwise the Iranian-Armenian gas pipeline through Georgia will become tied to Russia and Iranian gas will be under the control of the Kremlin.

In addition to this, the time has come for the development of new gas fields in the Caspian, part of which are in disputed areas. And here too it is necessary to free Iran from Russian influence since official Iranian circles consider that not Tehran but rather Russia is preventing the resolution of the status of the Caspian. Therefore, a mediating role for Azerbaijan among the US, Israel and Syria will require the intensification of negotiations between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Iran.

Notes

[1] "Azerbaijan will reconcile Syria with Israel" [in Russian], 11 July, available at: http://news.bakililar.az/news_azerbayjan_pomirit_siriyu_23479.html (accessed 3 August 2009).

[2] RosBalt (2009) "Israel: Syria will not be able to both get the Golan Heights and continue its friendship with Iran" [in Russian], *RosBalt*, 6 July, available at: <http://www.rosbalt.ru/2009/07/06/652677.html> (accessed 3 August 2009).

[3] IzRus (2009) "Azerbaijan is ready to mediate in reconciling Israel with Syria and Iran", 19 July, available at: <http://izrus.co.il/dvuhstoronka/article/2009-07-19/5372.html> (accessed 3 August 2009).

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev says in Nakhchivan that "today Azerbaijan has achieved such a level of development that we are capable of solving any task" (http://www.president.az/articles.php?item_id=20090805102508265&sec_id=11).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, reiterates Baku's position that "the Armenians must step by step leave the territories they seized around Karabakh and the IDPs should return to their homes." After that, the Armenians must free the Lachin and Kalbajar regions and form a corridor between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia." According to Mammadov, "all this may take from five to ten years." During this period, the status of Karabakh can be worked out but "exclusively within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan." Restoring the pre-conflict infrastructure may take 15 to 20 years, he says. And Mammadov notes that Azerbaijan and Armenia are, as the Minsk Group co-chairs say, "close to an agreement" although there remain some matters to resolve including the composition of peace-keeping forces (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168607.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Baku throughout talks on the delimitation of the Caspian seabed has insisted on the international principle that the base lines should reflect the coastlines of the littoral state. Khalafov's comments come in response to a declaration by the Turkmenistan foreign ministry that Ashgabat does not believe that Azerbaijan's Absheron peninsula and Zhiloy island should be included in the calculation of the base lines (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167827.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk group, says that Armenia "must return seven regions to Azerbaijan," five "immediately and two" over a period of up to five years. In addition, he says that "international peace-keeping forces must be put in the conflict zone" and that "the composition of [those forces] basically will be defined by the sides themselves." The Madrid Principles, he continues, must "guarantee the security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which will have "a temporary status until a referendum is conducted" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167904.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he "hopes" that in the near future, Baku and Yerevan will agree to the return of representatives of Karabakh to the talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167548.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

14 August

Diego Pinto, the secretary general of the International European Movement, says that the EU recognizes the need to respect the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and that it wants the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh to be resolved by peaceful means (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168516.html>).

12 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Gunther Oettinger, Minister President of the German state of Baden-Wurttemberg, who is in Baku to attend the Azerbaijan-German business forum (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168317.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, on the completion of his service in those two positions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168315.html>). Bryza says that "President Obama shares my opinion that Armenia must return the occupied lands of Azerbaijan just as do Presidents Sakozi and Medvedev." He adds that the work of the Russian side has been "fruitful and constructive" and that "the Minsk Group has helped the two presidents bring their positions on questions closer together" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168341.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Alan Waddams, the head of the European Commission delegation to Azerbaijan, in connection with the completion of his service in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168337.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Mark Hereward, the newly appointed UNICEF representative in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168235.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan has presented two reports to the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination concerning Baku's work to ensure the rights and freedoms of all its citizens (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168358.html>).

Ismetulla Irgashev, Uzbekistan's ambassador in Azerbaijan, says that Tashkent supports the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168274.html>).

11 August

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the security and defense committee of the Milli Majlis, says that after a settlement of the Karabakh dispute it will be "possible to do without peacekeepers," if the two sides agree (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168168.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, tells an Azerbaijani news agency that "those people who say that the new variant of the Madrid Principles in any way affects the interests of Armenia do not know what they are talking about" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168117.html>).

A German parliamentary delegation arrives in Baku to make arrangements to take part in the celebration of the 190th anniversary of the establishment of German settlements in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168201.html>).

10 August

President Ilham Aliyev tells visiting Latvian President Valdis Zatlers that relations between Baku and Riga "are developing very successfully and have a good future." Zatlers for his part says Latvia favors the resolution of the Karabakh dispute on the basis of the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168019.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "the international community recognizes that the time has come for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168035.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that Armenian media distorted his words. He says he did "not say that the return of seven regions around Nagorno-Karabakh will guarantee the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan." Rather, he says, that "the return of the seven regions reflects the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168000.html>).

Siyavush Novruzov, the deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that "close relations exist between NATO and Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167995.html>).

8 August

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that "the leading countries of the world for their own interests want stability in the South Caucasus region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167959.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the United States "is not striving to push out anyone from the Caucasus." Russia, he continues, always will be part of the Caucasus, the Caucasus mountains will always remain in the same place, and Russia always will be partially in the South Caucasus. It always will be a participant of any decisions both about energy and politics" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167905.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the report about Bryza's remarks in Yerevan concerning the return of occupied territories to Azerbaijan was "extremely serious" and represents "a message" to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167948.html>).

7 August

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Admiral Noman Bashir, the commander of Pakistan's naval forces, who says that his country supports the resolution of the Karabakh dispute on the basis of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167790.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk group, says that Armenia "must return seven regions to Azerbaijan," five "immediately and two" over a period of up to five years. In addition, he says that "international peace-keeping forces must be put in the conflict zone" and that "the composition of which basically will be defined by the sides themselves." The Madrid Principles, he continues, must "guarantee the security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which will have "a temporary status until a referendum is conducted" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167904.html>).

Javier Solana, the chief representative of the European Union for foreign policy and security, says in an interview published in Moscow's *Gazeta* that the EU's Eastern Partnership was not designed to resolve conflicts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167850.html>).

Russian prime-minister Vladimir Putin says in Turkey that "Russia does not want the presence of any conflict in the South Caucasus." He adds that Moscow's position on Nagorno-Karabakh has always remained unchanged (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167762.html>).

Nikolaz Natbiladze, Georgian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Georgia "will always be a partner of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167793.html>).

Onur Oymen, a Turkish parliamentarian, says that Ankara "does not exclude" the possibility that the development of relations between Russia and Turkey will have an impact on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167818.html>).

6 August

Nikolay Bordyuzha, the secretary general of the Organization of the Collective Security Agreement, of which Armenia but not Azerbaijan is a member, says that the events in the Caucasus last year show that "there is no alternative to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167680.html>).

Yaver Dhzamalov, Azerbaijan's defense industry minister, receives Pakistan naval commander Admiral Noman Bashirov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167735.html>).

Col. Gen. Osmar Eker, the chief of the inspection of the Supreme Command of the Gendarmerie of Turkey, visits Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167627.html>).

A Jordanian military delegation visits Azerbaijan to gain experience on de-mining. Officers from Jordan are scheduled to receive training at the basis of the Azerbaijan National Demining Agency this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167645.html>).

5 August

Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, president in office of the OSCE, telephones Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov to discuss the Karabakh talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167594.html>).

Grigory Karasin, Russian deputy foreign minister, says that Moscow is "actively supporting the process of Nagorno-Karabakh resolution" and that in that effort, the Russian government operates on the basis of its recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167575.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry recommends that Azerbaijani citizens refrain from trips to Tajikistan because of the deteriorating situation there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167540.html>).

4 August

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that international pressure on Armenia to resolve the Karabakh conflict has "grown strongly." Azerbaijan's position has remained consistent, he continues, where Armenia in order to delay any resolution has constantly shifted its demands (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167322.html>).

The Turkmenistan foreign ministry says that in the delimitation of the Caspian seabed, the littoral states "must not consider the Absheron peninsula and Zhiloy island" of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167371.html>).

The National Council of Youth Organization of the Azerbaijan Republic continue to protest against the blocking by Armenia of the site "Justice for Hojali" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167335.html>).

3 August

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev says that "if the Karabakh conflict will not be resolved by peaceful means, then it will not be possible to avoid a military confrontation" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167159.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a member of the Azerbaijan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that criticism by the PACE co-rapporteur on Azerbaijan "does not reflect the real situation." She says that Azerbaijan "is making successful steps in the development of democracy and that the work carried out in this direction must be approved" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167238.html>).

1 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov to discuss the broadening of military and military-technical ties between Baku and Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167067.html>).

Azerbaijani military personnel, the Azerbaijan defense ministry announces, will part in a series of NATO exercises over the next year under the Partnership for Peace program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167045.html>). In addition, they will participate in bilateral activities with the United States military (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167043.html>).

Note to Readers

The editors of "Azerbaijan in the World" hope that you find it useful and encourage you to submit your comments and articles via email (adabiweekly@ada.edu.az). The materials it contains reflect the personal views of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.