



School of International Affairs
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD
ADA Biweekly Newsletter

Vol. 2, No. 21
November 1, 2009

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TOWARD A WORLD WITHOUT BORDERS:
AZERBAIJAN AND THE INFORMATION REVOLUTION

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The information revolution has brought with it the digital divide (Arachchige 2003, p. 1), but the growth of information technology has opened the way for new

approaches toward information technology at the global, regional and national levels. Sometimes this technology is used as a tool by individuals, groups and states to promote narrow interests, and sometimes it is being employed to encourage broader integration rather than narrow self-interest. This latter idea governs Azerbaijan's approach to information and communication technologies (ICT), an approach intended to make these new communication resources cheaper, more flexible and more powerful for the people of Azerbaijan as they interact with the rest of the world.

One of the reasons Azerbaijan has been so interested in ICT is that it changes the position of small countries. In the past, smaller countries were typically at a disadvantage to larger ones. But the information revolution by creating hubs and satellite hubs in smaller states has changed that, and there is every opportunity for Azerbaijan to use ICT to overcome what some describe as the "small country effect." And that in turn gives Azerbaijan advantages beyond those outlined by Harvard's Jeffrey Sachs. [1]

Because this possibility is so new, individuals and governments still find themselves facing difficulties in attempting to integrate the information revolution in their national policies, to overcome the existing digital divide between countries that launched the new technologies and those who have joined it later and to exploit the new system to promote cultural change and exchange. Today in Azerbaijan, we are working on new approaches to trans-national ICT infrastructure with all these issues in mind.

But there is a bigger challenge: those who were the initial winners in ICT, the Western countries, have sought to maintain their dominance, even as they have been confronted by the possibilities of globalization. Given that, Azerbaijan and other countries who seek to develop an ICT strategy must work together to promote the globalization of production, internationalization of trade, and taking full advantages of economies of scale, the permeability of national borders, the development of systems intended to render traditional definitions of time, space and distance irrelevant and meaningless, and the geo-politicization of public-private relationships, and the universalization of values, like rule of law and world governance.

Power no longer comes from above; it comes from middle level institutions like the multinational corporations. That is leading to the collapse of public sector dominance and the emergence of new rules for engagement across borders, trends that open a new window of opportunity for countries like Azerbaijan to participate in a world without borders.

Unfortunately, because this process is so new, there are few universally accepted ideas as to what this process should look like and few opportunities to discuss it in terms of traditional economic measures like GDP. But there are some good first efforts in this direction like those of Harvard University's Michael Porter that involve multi-modeling principles such as those used in the Global IT Report compiled by the World Economic Forum teams (Dutta & Mia 2009).

We believe that Azerbaijan is in a position to make a contribution to this discussion: For example, in our work, ICT infrastructures (let's call them "global-IT-facilitators" (GITF)) are viewed as essential for achieving sustainable development in the Virtual Network World (VNW). GITF via ICT holds the promise of generating the additional

economic efficiencies needed to attract both local and foreign investments. And we believe that nation-states should "sell" themselves not more cheaply but at a higher price, thus opening yet another window of opportunity for global information corporations via the GITF.

Our analysis shows that the most important challenges faced by countries in transition involve lags in the development of GITF and also that GITF could realistically facilitate the development of the political, economic, financial and technical structures of those countries. Not every country is positioned to take advantage of this opportunity, but Azerbaijan is by virtue of its location, resources, people and leadership. And that is an advantage we want to exploit.

Given its location amidst a much larger marketplace and its existing advantages, Azerbaijan needs to define its strategy so as to become a genuine "hub" for the West, as well as the rest of the world, and thus transform its image as an oil-driven economy in a secular Muslim country into a new one which would show Azerbaijan as an emerging hub in the knowledge-based world. Such a strategy on the part of the government could ensure Azerbaijan's long-term dominance in the region and provide enormous benefits for its people.

The technologies, products and services that permit our effective participation in the global knowledge society already exist, but GITF remains a disadvantage. President Ilham Aliyev's slogan -- "let's convert black gold into human" -- provides the conceptual basis for this transformation and informed the drafting of the Baku Declaration on Transnational Eurasian Information Super Highway of November 11, 2009. [2]

But that declaration is only the beginning. To realize this framework, we must craft a set of plans and missions, to set priorities for ICT and to gain an access to GITF in order to move toward a "borderless world." In this process, the immediate neighbors of Azerbaijan, its "peripheries," if you will, could be our primary assets as potential markets for "Made in Azerbaijan" products and information services. And because of the enormous prospects that presents for Azerbaijan, we strongly argue that the government should move in this direction by working to eliminate all restrictions that stifle competition and promote Regional Innovation Zones as part of Azerbaijan's move to become an ever more important country in the future.

Notes

[1] According to Jeffrey Sachs, Professor of International Political Economy at Harvard University, "International economies are constantly and gradually being fulfilled through four basic ways: through trade, financial flows, production and a certain web of conditions and institutions" (Sachs 2000).

[2] For details, consult <http://unpan1.un.org/intradoc/groups/public/documents/GAID/UNPAN033008.pdf> (accessed 19 September 2009).

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RAILROADS AGAIN A KEY FACTOR IN GEOPOLITICS OF THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

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The participation of Arif Asgarov, the chairman of Azerbaijani Railways, in the 51st session of the CIS and Baltic Countries Railway Transport Council which took place in Tashkent at the end of October, not only calls attention to one of the most remarkable institutions to have survived the demise of the USSR but also to the growing importance of railways in Eurasia and especially in the geopolitics of the South Caucasus.

While the Baltic countries in 1992 and Georgia last year have severed many of their links with the former Soviet republics, they continue to participate in the railway transport council because of the special gage tracks used in all these countries. And while the issues of oil and gas pipelines have overshadowed railways at least in public discussions, all these countries and not least of all Azerbaijan have a vested interest in promoting rail traffic both for economic and geopolitical reasons.

Armenia's occupation of western portions of Azerbaijan has blocked the rail route that had connected Baku with Yerevan, but that blockage has highlighted both the increased importance of the railways connecting Azerbaijan with Georgia and the Russian Federation and the possibility of developing railways connecting Azerbaijan and Iran even as Tehran explores the development of a railway that would link Iran and Armenia. (Iran has insisted that the two projects are not competitive, but most commentators in Azerbaijan see them as precisely that).

Over the last several years, Azerbaijan has invested more than two billion US dollars in its rail system, but that amount is likely to increase especially if the rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey and a withdrawal of Armenian forces from the 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory they now occupy opens the way for an expanded use of railroads to promote the development of the Azerbaijani economy.

On the one hand, an expansion of railroad ties with other countries will help Azerbaijan diversify its economy, something President Ilham Aliyev has made a centrepiece of his national policy. But on the other, the geopolitical consequences of the rise of railroads in the South Caucasus likely guarantees that their development

will be just as internationally controversial as the routing of pipelines has been and remains.

What makes all this so intriguing is that it represents yet another example of the ways in which phenomena of the past – such as piracy and religious wars – are making a comeback in the first years of the 21st century. A century ago, the field of geopolitics was dominated by discussions of railroads, especially those crossing Russia and others extending from Europe into the Middle East. Now, there is at least a chance that in the next few years, analysts and officials who speak about that subject in Azerbaijan and surrounding countries will be focusing on the rails once again.

**STANDING UP FOR AZERBAIJAN:
WHY A PRE-WORLD WAR I INTELLECTUAL
REMAINS IMPORTANT FOR AZERBAIJAN TODAY**

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“Hər kəsi çağırıram – gəlmiş, göstərirəm – görmür, deyirəm – qanmır.”

Each nation defines itself by the heroes it identifies as important; Azerbaijan is no different. Its long history is filled with remarkable people, but few had lives more instructive for the present than Hasan-Bek Zardabi, who died just over a century ago. Indeed, for the author of these lines – and beyond any doubt for many others, Zardabi is a chief Azerbaijani, because he opened a window to Europe and thus began the processes of enlightenment and modernization of the nation, processes for which there is not and cannot be any reasonable alternative.

More than any other Azerbaijani before him, Zardabi identified the basic cause of progress in European countries as being the dominance in those lands of scientific education and spiritual freedom and insisted that these were the same tasks that Azerbaijanis themselves can and must confront if they are to become a modern nation. In 1877, he wrote in *Ekinci* that until the European peoples knew freedom, they were just as backward as anyone else, but once they did experience that freedom, they surpassed everyone else. The same course and the same possibilities, Zardabi insisted, are available to Azerbaijanis.

In the 1860s and 1870s, Zardabi almost on his own launched the first newspaper in Azerbaijani (*Ekinci*), the first secular school in Azerbaijan, the first aid society for poor Muslim students, the first theatre production in Azerbaijan and much else. He hoped that these institutions would “transform the worldview of Muslims.” In so doing, he was in no way a prophet but simply looked at what was taking place in other countries and considered that the same possibilities were available in Azerbaijan.

But because he was the first, Zardabi was like others in this position condemned not to be understood and to follow what would have been an impossibly lonely world save for the understanding and support of his wife Ganifa Khanum. In saying this, of

course, one needs to be clear that Zardabi was not fighting with windmills or acting without a clear sense of the times. He faced real opponents, but he recognized that Azerbaijan had reached a stage in its development – thanks to the spread of liberal ideas throughout the Russian Empire in the 1860s and the oil-driven industrial boom in Azerbaijan itself – in which the ideas he espoused had a real chance.

Thus, it is entirely fair to say that Zardabi played a key role in stimulating the search for national identity, for a genuine political and cultural Renaissance, the result of which was the appearance of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. In fact, it is possible to say that Azerbaijan experienced the first wave of Enlightenment and Modernization thanks to Zardabi, a development that anticipated the second wave of modernization after 1991 and the second wave of enlightenment which reflected both Soviet-era processes and post-Soviet developments.

Zardabi's misfortune, if one may call it that, was that he arrived on the scene prematurely, perhaps ten to fifteen years earlier than when these processes took off. He was one of what many describe as "a premature man." But already at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, a sufficiently broad stratum of the intelligentsia and emerging national bourgeoisie in Azerbaijan was seized by a similar enlightenment passion. And when, after 16 years away in the middle of his career, Zardabi himself was surprised by how far things had gone. But as the future showed, he remained ahead of his time and thus fated not to be understood then even if he can be very much understood and appreciated now.

His newspapers and journals were not successful in terms of numbers not only because of the negative attitudes of the Imperial authorities and many Azerbaijanis around him but also because of the general atmosphere that arose at the time of the Russian-Turkish war. His *Ekinci* was viewed by many as little more than an outlet for anti-Russian sentiments, and consequently, it folded after only 56 issues.

But for me and for many other Azerbaijanis, the work of Zardabi continues to stimulate our "Azerbaijaniness." I will say more, in recent years, his ideas as expressed in *Ekinci* have set me apart from what is taking place around me. Perhaps, I am becoming a cosmopolitan. But perhaps this is inevitable because Zardabi was more than just an Azerbaijani: he was an Azerbaijani who saw himself also in terms of a broader international enlightenment. And because of that, it is impossible to talk about him only within his own times as a historian might. One needs to think about him in terms of our times as well.

One aspect of his career that strikes me especially was his participation in the Baku City Duma. He was uncompromising in his defense of rights, national and all-human. Indeed, he behaved much as Andrey Sakharov did at the last sessions of the Congress of Peoples Deputies almost a century later, inspiring not just members of his own nationality (while offending some of them) but also inspiring a broader range of humanity.

Because that is so, many of the episodes in the life of Zardabi represent a challenge not only to traditionalists but to contemporary national patriots who are limited in understanding by their focus on ethnic visions alone. It is impossible to change them in this, it seems, because they lack the breadth and depth of spirit which allowed Zardabi to talk about the need for helping poor people regardless of whether they were Azerbaijanis or Armenians. Had others had his understanding of that, much of our national history might have been different – and still could be.

The history of Azerbaijan in the 19th century began with the Gulustan and Turkmenchay treaties and ended with the invasion of the XI Red Army. In the intervening period, Zardabi played the role of the first Azerbaijani intelligent, not only because of his attachment to the ideas of the Enlightenment but because of his willingness to look beyond what was to what could be. As such, Zardabi was dramatically and even tragically antinomian. Or to put it in another way, he had the courage to live and not simply to mimic those with power.

Zardabi's life provides yet another occasion for reflection: how many people have to change themselves in order for a society to change – or, more precisely, what percentage of Azerbaijan's seven/eight million people need to change for the values of the enlightenment to triumph. I began thinking that perhaps five percent would be necessary. But that is around 350,000 people, a fantastic figure. Then, I thought about one percent or 70,000 to 80,000. Finally, I thought about 0.01 percent or 700 to 800 – which is about the percentage that Zardabi first attracted and then transformed our nation as a result.

With even fewer readers than that, he was able to change practically everything in Azerbaijan, to help shift the people from a traditionalist to a post-traditionalist society, the largest transformation of a people that any can undergo but a continuing struggle even when victory appears to have been won. Zardabi understood this; his challenge to us is not only to recall it but to live it, something many find difficult but all of us must recognize as necessary.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev says that "the growing role of Azerbaijan in the region and the world will never allow Armenia to escape from isolation" until Yerevan withdraws its forces from the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177086.html>). He adds that Azerbaijan "must be ready at any moment to liberate [Azerbaijan's] native lands from the occupiers" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176849.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov during his meeting with Riyad al-Maliki, the foreign minister of the Palestinian Autonomy, announces that Baku favors the establishment of a Palestinian state (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178887.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the decision of Iran to end the visa regime with Azerbaijan is "unilateral" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178297.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

The Turkish foreign ministry spokesman says that "a crisis in Turkish-Azerbaijan relations is theoretically impossible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178771.html>) and that Ankara's "goal is the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178754.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "namely Turkey has enlivened the process of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177867.html>). In other comments, he says that "the flag of Azerbaijan is dear to Turkey and to the entire Turkish people" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177850.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, deputy chairman of the legal policy and state building committee of the Milli Majlis and one of the deputies who met with Armenian parliamentarians in Moscow, says that the Armenians at the meeting proposed creating a free trade zone in the border regions between Armenia and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178399.html>).

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan says that Yerevan "distinguishes" between the normalization of relations with Turkey and the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177803.html>). He adds "the main thing for the Armenia side is that negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan proceed on the basis of the Madrid Principles" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177812.html>).

The US State Department in its annual report on religious freedom says that "the government of Azerbaijan promotes religious tolerance" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178458.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

31 October

Experts from Azerbaijan, Estonia, Finland, Germany, the US, Russia, Turkey, Georgia and the European Border Agency meet in Baku to discuss protection of water borders (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179196.html>).

The Belarusian embassy in Baku says that Armenian reports that Belarusian Foreign Minister Sergey Martynov has said that "Belarus does not consider Armenia an aggressor" are the result of "an attempt" by the Armenian media to "manipulate the words of [the Belarusian] minister" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179193.html>).

Mariya Biryukova, the deputy chairman of the working group of the Belarusian parliament on relations with the Milli Majlis, says that she "has the impression that [Belarus and Azerbaijan] have much in common" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178449.html>).

30 October

President Ilham Aliyev gives an interview to the National State Television and Radio Company of Belarus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179127.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Palestinian Autonomy Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179112.html>).

Ogtay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, receives Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178959.html>).

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov receives Korean Ambassador Kwang-chul Lew (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178960.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that in his opinion, "a meeting of the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Athens is inevitable" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179053.html>).

Mustafa Kabakci, the chairman of the Turkey-Azerbaijan Friendship Group of the Grand National Assembly, says that he does not expect the Ankara-Yerevan protocols to be ratified by the Turkish parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179022.html>).

Shenol Bal, a deputy in Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that the visa regime between Azerbaijan and Turkey should be eliminated (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179016.html>).

Halil Akynji, Turkey's ambassador to Russia, says that "Turkey requires the withdrawal of the forces of Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178997.html>).

29 October

President Ilham Aliyev speaks by telephone with Turkish President Abdulla Gul (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178954.html>).

Vice Prime Minister Abid Sharifov leads Azerbaijani officials in a ceremony in Baku to mark the 86th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178951.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "the expansion of cooperation with the European Union is very important for Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178918.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Riyad al-Maliki, the foreign minister of the Palestinian Autonomy. Mammadyarov announces that Baku favors the establishment of a Palestinian state (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178887.html>), and Al-Maliki announces his plans to open a Palestinian embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178905.html>).

Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's visit to the occupied territories may become his "last" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178950.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Murat Merdzhan, the chairman of the committee on foreign relations of Turkey's Grand National Assembly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178949.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov conducts political consultations with Polish officials in Warsaw (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178947.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Makhmudov visits Lithuania for consultations on security cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178934.html>).

Farid Shafiyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Canada, meets with Peter Milliken, the speaker of the Canadian House of Commons (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179154.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is also Turkey's problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178955.html>).

George Papandreou, the chairman-in-office of the OSCE, says he "will personally support the co-chairs [of the Minsk Group] in the pursuit of peace in the South Caucasus" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178933.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that it is "still unknown when the sides will be given the updated Madrid Principles" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178938.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Administration of the President, says that "the signing of the Turkish-Armenian protocols must be considered as a kind of overtures to Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178930.html>).

Murad Merdzhan, chairman of the foreign relations committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, says that "no other two countries have such relations as those which exist between Azerbaijan and Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178806.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry welcomes the return of Turkish flags to the Shahid memorial in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178794.html>).

Peter Semneby, the EU's special representative for the South Caucasus, tells Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan that the European Union welcomes progress in Armenian-Turkey relations and is ready to assist in their further normalization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178793.html>).

28 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives members of the foreign relations committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly who assure him that Turkey will take no actions to the detriment of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178785.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of a department of the Presidential Administration, says that "Armenia is reducing to nothing [earlier] steps forward in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178705.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry spokesman says that "a crisis in Turkish-Azerbaijan relations is theoretically impossible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178771.html>) and that Ankara's "goal is the

normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia”
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178754.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, calls on the members of that body to use “all means” to end the occupation of Azerbaijani territories
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178670.html>).

Representatives of the mass media of Azerbaijan and Armenia meet in Moscow in sessions arranged by the special representative of the Russian president and the ambassadors of the two countries
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178790.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that regular meetings with Turkish parliamentarians “have enormous importance” for both countries
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178780.html>).

Samad Seyidov, chairman of the Milli Majlis committee on foreign relations and inter-parliamentary ties, says that “Azerbaijan and Turkey will not have any more problems with [their national] flags”
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178737.html>).

Senol Bal, a deputy of the Party of the National Movement in the Grand National Assembly, says that “it is necessary to unite [Turkish and Azerbaijani] forces in order not to allow the ratification of the protocols signed between Turkey and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178715.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador in Kazakhstan, says that “the opening of the Turkish-Armenian borders must take place in parallel with the withdrawal of occupation forces” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178657.html>).

Atila Gunay, Turkey’s ambassador to Kazakhstan, says that “the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has vitally great importance for Turkey”
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178647.html>).

Asef Gadzhiyev, a member of the Milli Majlis parliamentary group for Azerbaijan-Iranian friendship, says that “the closer the positions of Azerbaijan and Iran will be the better” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178431.html>).

Murat Merdzhan, a Turkish parliamentarian, says during a visit to Baku that “for us, Azerbaijan is a second motherland”
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178606.html>).

27 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178452.html>). The co-chairs say the meeting took place “in a constructive spirit”
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178455.html>).

The European Union announces plans to further expand its cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia as part of the Eastern Partnership program
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178491.html>).

US Vice President Joseph Biden says that "the consequences of failure in the Caucasus region would touch everyone" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178515.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, expressed the gratitude of his country to Azerbaijan and its president for the decision to return the flag of Turkey to the Shahid memorial in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178605.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Makhmudov said during a visit to Bulgaria that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict represents a serious threat not only to the South Caucasus but to all of Europe" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178589.html>).

Turkish opposition parties launch a mass signature campaign calling on the Turkish government to apologise to Azerbaijan for signing the protocols with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178599.html>).

Vakhdet Sultanzade of the Azerbaijani embassy in Ashgabat is decorated by Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammadov for his contribution to the development of relations between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178591.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that "there is no alternative" to friendship between Azerbaijan and Turkey and that "forces attempting to sow discord" must be opposed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178556.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, the chairman of the Azerbaijani State Committee on Work with Religious Structures, receives Saudi Ambassador Fahd bin Ali al-Dusari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178537.html>).

Fazail Agamaly, the head of the Ana Veten Party and a member of the Milli Majlis, says that "if pressure is not put on Armenia, the return of the occupied territories will be impossible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178527.html>).

Murtuz Alaskarov, a Milli Majlis deputy and former Milli Majlis speaker, says that "one must not undermine friendship with Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178501.html>).

Jamil Hasanli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that he "does not understand why Turkey cannot become a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178093.html>).

Oktay Bural, a member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, says that "we will not allow the provisions of the Ankara-Yerevan protocols to be fulfilled" unless Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory.

26 October

The Foreign Ministry says that the decision of Iran to end the visa regime with Azerbaijan is "unilateral" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178297.html>).

Baku plans to increase the number of Azerbaijani peacekeepers in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178377.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says in an interview to Al Jazeera that Ankara and Yerevan "are not conducting secret negotiations" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178358.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "the occupation of Azerbaijani lands became a problem of Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178337.html>).

The Azerbaijan Permanent Mission to the United Nations says that information about the meeting of the UN Third Committee disseminated by the Armenian *PanArmenian.net* news agency does not correspond to the truth (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178321.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki says that "general agreement has been achieved concerning the status of the Caspian Sea and its bed" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178311.html>).

Sayad Aran, Azerbaijani consul general in Istanbul, says that the Turkish flags taken down from the memorial complex in Baku will be "restored to their former place" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178320.html>).

25 October

Fuad Ismaylov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Vienna, meets with Robert Bratke, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178225.html>).

24 October

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that he considers the meetings in Baku on Caspian security to have been "positive," something particularly important because "security in the Caspian is one of the priority elements of cooperation" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178179.html>).

23 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Assistant Secretary of State Tina Kaidanov. Earlier, she meets with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov who tells her that "the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories is the main condition for the restoration of peace in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178068.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives letters of credence from the incoming ambassador of the Netherlands to Azerbaijan, Jan Lucas van Hoorn (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178110.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives letters of credence from the incoming ambassador of Italy to Azerbaijan, Mario Giorgio Stephano Baldi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178109.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Moldovan State Minister Victor Bodu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178103.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Egyptian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Orabi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178037.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Spiridon Kuvelis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177983.html>).

Deputy foreign minister Khalaf Khalafov tells the Baku meeting of representatives of the Caspian Sea states that "security in the region requires the unification of the efforts" of all of them (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178095.html>).

The three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group meet in Vienna (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178177.html>).

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenka tells visiting Azerbaijan Deputy Prime Minister Yagub Eyubov that his country has "very profitably cooperating with Azerbaijan" and that there are "no closed issues" in the relationship (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178057.html>).

Ambassador Ertogrul Apakan, Turkey's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that "Ankara will be able to resolve the problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177966.html>).

The Popular Socialist Party of Azerbaijan appeals to the Turkish opposition to show decisiveness in opposing the ratification of the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177993.html>).

US Congressman Robert Wechsler, who is co-chair of the Congressional fraction on American-Turkish relations, says that "discussion of the question of 'genocide' is not so important given negotiations on the Caucasus" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177991.html>).

A delegation of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party visits Kyiv to take part in the congress of the Ukrainian Party of the Regions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177982.html>).

22 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177901.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bulgarian Foreign Minister Rumianu Zhelev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177885.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Rahman Mustafayev as Azerbaijani ambassador to Greece (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177915.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that "Azerbaijan expects the signing of an agreement with Turkmenistan on the status of the Caspian" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177785.html>). His remarks come at the start of

a two-day conference in Baku of representatives of the Caspian littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177781.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that "Azerbaijan is a fraternal country" and that Turkey and Azerbaijan "form one people." Always and everywhere we demonstrate our solidarity" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177857.html>).

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan says that Yerevan has begun making arrangements for the Armenian parliament to consider the protocols with Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177814.html>).

Azerbaijani and Armenian parliamentarians meet in the Russian Duma (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177881.html>).

Etibar Mammadov, the head of the National Independence Party of Azerbaijan, says that "society must resist the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177821.html>).

The OSCE Permanent Council discusses the conflicts in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177913.html>).

Azerbaijan is one of only 22 countries which have completely paid their dues to the United Nations this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177733.html>).

21 October

President Ilham Alliyev speaks by telephone with his Turkish counterpart Abdulla Gul. The two presidents agree, their press spokesmen say, that "the appearance of the existence of problems in the relations of Turkey and Azerbaijan does not correspond to reality" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177652.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mehdi Safari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177890.html>).

Deputy Prime Minister Ali Hasanov says that "official Ankara should have immediately issued a declaration when the incident with the Azerbaijani flag arose in Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177658.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov presents his letters of credence as Azerbaijani ambassador to Mexico to Mexican President Felipe Calderon (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177965.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "there is not a healthy political situation in the Caucasus" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177672.html>).

Former Turkish President Suleyman Demirel says that "Turkey will not begin tasking steps that would harm the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177718.html>).

Former Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz says that "the signing of the protocols between Turkey and Armenia is harmful for the state interests of Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177702.html>).

Omer Celik, a deputy of Turkey's ruling Party of Justice and Development, says that "without the solution of the Karabakh conflict, there cannot be any discussion of the opening of the borders of Turkey and Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177686.html>).

Shenol Bal, a deputy of the Turkish Party of the National Movement, says that "the signing of the protocols about the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia is the beginning of a split in the brotherhood between Turkey and Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177692.html>).

Opposition deputies in the Turkish parliament leave the chamber in protest when the government presents the protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177679.html>).

Turkey lodges an official complaint with the Foreign Ministry in connection with the removal of Turkish flags from a building attached to the Turkish embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177646.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that those who are spreading rumors about a possible opening of the Turkish-Armenian border in the near term are seeking to "sow discord" between Turkey and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177604.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that "the opening of the Turkish-Armenian borders would slow the liberation of the occupied territories" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177606.html>).

20 October

President Ilham Aliyev says in Switzerland that "economic cooperation between Azerbaijan and Switzerland is developed rapidly" and that there are particular opportunities in the future connected with the sphere of renewable and alternative sources of energy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177169.html>).

Spanish King Juan Carlos receives Azerbaijan's ambassador to Spain Mammad Aliyev and expresses the wish that President and Mrs. Aliyev will visit his country and that he will have the opportunity to visit Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177421.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov receives Russia's deputy interior minister Arkady Yedilev and signs a cooperation agreement (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177444.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, deputy head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "the OSCE Minsk group was created in order to put pressure on Azerbaijan" and that "we also must not forget that the member countries of the Minsk Group last year voted in the UN General Assembly against Azerbaijan, although they should as a minimum have abstained" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177490.html>).

Deniz Baikal, head of the Turkish opposition Peoples Republican Party, says that "Turkey must take Azerbaijan into consideration" in all discussions about the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177508.html>).

Ziyafet Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "as soon as the protocols are signed, the Armenians will flood into Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177472.html>). In another comment, he says that Azerbaijan "is interested in holding a meeting of the foreign ministers of the member countries of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177469.html>).

The leadership of the Milli Majlis says that "an anti-Turkish campaign is not being carried out in Azerbaijan," despite media reporting to the contrary (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177459.html>).

Devlet Bakhcheli, the leader of the Turkish opposition Party of the National Movement, says that the protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan are demeaning to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177461.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that "the interests of Azerbaijan will be defended in the same way as the interests of Turkey" by his government (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177460.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the Turkish parliament will decide whether or not to confirm the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177428.html>).

Milli Majlis Vice Speaker Ziyafat Askarov says that he personally felt insulted by the way in which the Azerbaijan flag was treated at the Turkish-Armenian football match (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177451.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a *Yeni Azerbaijan* Milli Majlis deputy says that "the prime minister of Turkey considers it a matter of honor his personal declaration about the Karabakh question," in which he said the Turkish-Armenian border will not be opened until Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177423.html>).

Sardar Jalaloglu, the president of the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, says that "the opposition political parties of Azerbaijan and Turkey need to meet" to discuss the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177402.html>).

19 October

President Ilham Aliyev during the course of an official visit in Switzerland meets with Swiss Confederation President Hans-Rudolph Merz (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177169.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that there has been "forward movement" toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177235.html>).

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev says that his country will devote its efforts to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177351.html>). He acknowledges that Baku has reason to be concerned by the recent accords between Turkey and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177236.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "even if the heavens fall, [Ankara's] position will not change: Our government does not make a distinction between Turkish and Azerbaijani flags – both are Turkic and equally dear to us" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177321.html>).

Turkish opposition parties accuse the Turkish government of compromising relations with Azerbaijan by signing the protocols with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177282.html>).

18 October

Azerbaijan marks its State Independence Day (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177139.html>).

17 October

The United Nations expresses its gratitude to Azerbaijan for participating in international peacekeeping operations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177122.html>).

16 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "the actions of the Armenian side during the talks in Chisinau generated disappointment" because of their lack of "constructiveness" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177075.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty and NATO are very different institutions and that he does not think that "the former could fulfil the mission which NATO fulfils today" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176707.html>).

Turkey's deputy culture minister Kemal Fahir Genc says that any insult to the Azerbaijani flag in Turkey is impermissible because "the flag of Azerbaijan is the flag of Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177049.html>).

A group of Milli Majlis deputies demand that those who insulted the dignity of the Azerbaijani state flag in Turkey be punished (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177022.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Turkish prime minister has "assured Azerbaijani deputies that there is no basis for worry" in Baku about the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177016.html>).

A delegation of 11 Milli Majlis deputies meet with leaders of the Turkish opposition concerning the attitudes of the latter toward the Turkish-Armenian protocols and the possibility of the opening of Turkey's border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176923.html>).

Note to Readers

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