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In this issue:

- Rauf Garagozov, "Psychological Dimensions of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict"
- Zaur Shiriyev, "Armenian Diaspora: Influence on Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict"
- Paul Goble, "Between Moscow and Baku: The Azerbaijani Diaspora in Russia"
- A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy
- Note to Readers

PSYCHOLOGICAL DIMENSIONS OF THE ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

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Once, when talking about the Karabakh conflict, a philosopher acquaintance of mine noticed that "periodically representatives of Azerbaijan and Armenia meet. That means, they can interact and there is something to talk about." At the time, his assertion seemed logical and did not prompt any questions. However, subsequently, my doubts about that began to increase, not about whether they can interact but whether such interaction is productive. Are the two sides in fact prepared for dialogue, not simply to present their respective positions to but listen to one another.

Reports about these negotiations in the media over more than 15 years do not inspire optimism on that point.

Clearly, bargaining involving many actors is going on and therefore the conflicting sides cannot come to an agreement even on what would seem to be generally accepted fundamental principles of international law. If these principles are not defined or remain subject to discussion as in our case, then negotiations are accompanied with enormous difficulties. In this sense, international mediators in the form of the OSCE Minsk Group, which have taken upon themselves the mission of resolving the conflict, really have encountered a difficult task, one that involves the squaring of a circle and thus a process which has not only a legal or political dimension but no less important a psychological one.

Unfortunately, experts who are entirely involved with a discussion of the legal or political aspects of the conflict in the best of circumstances mention the existence of the psychological "component" of the conflict which they, as a rule, see as representing the presence of negative stereotypes, hostile attitudes, negative opinions and feelings which enflame the attitudes of each side toward the other. But in our view, the psychological dimension of the conflict requires greater attention especially if one considers several recent attempts to "enliven" the negotiating process. Indeed, it is possible that the consideration of the problem from a psychological perspective will help make our vision of the conflict more all-embracing and open new and hitherto unnoticed perspectives for its resolution.

In this essay, I would like to specially focus on the influence of collective memory on the process of resolving the Karabakh conflict, all the more so because I have analyzed in other works the important role collective images about the past played in touching off the conflict (Garagozov 2008). Here, I will start from two postulates which have been confirmed by the investigations of social psychologists (Lambert 2009). The first of these holds that collective ideas about historical events can generate definite emotional states which in their turn are capable of influencing current social approaches. For example, Armenian collective memory, which is focused on the theme of "the Armenian genocide," can give birth to a specific type of emotional state which can be designated as "ethnic fears" (Lake 2000). At one time, these emotional stages conditioned the appearance of confrontational attitudes among the Armenian population, which in the final analysis contributed to the outbreak of the Karabakh conflict (Garagozov 2006).

The second of these postulates holds that not only collective memory about the historical past influences current social positions, but that under definite conditions, current social conditions can influence the view people have of the past and the way that they assess it. For example, the process of Turkish-Armenian rapprochement, initiated by the Zurich agreements of October 2009, if they develop successfully, can potentially influence the reassessment of the Armenian events of 1915-1918 in the Ottoman Empire (see Garagozov 2009).

Taking this as a starting point, it becomes clear that memory about the events connected with the Karabakh conflict is capable of giving rise to various emotional states among the conflicting sides. Some one million Azerbaijanis who as the result of the conflict were expelled from their lands, deprived of their homes and property, and certain of them even of their relatives, it is obvious, experience entirely different emotions than those who seized their lands and stole their property. Put in simpler

terms, Azerbaijanis experience anger and this is completely logical. When what people believe is just is violated, they feel anger.

As for the Armenian side, it is obvious that one can observe somewhat different feelings. On the one hand, these include an unconcealed feeling of satisfaction as revealed in statements of Armenian propagandists such as "we, for the first time in our history, have defeated the Turks." But on the other, one can see continuing feelings of concern because the Armenians at the same time recognize that they have generated anger among Azerbaijanis and other nearby peoples toward themselves by their actions (Garagozov 2010). One cannot fail to be concerned if one is surrounded by neighbors who are angry at you. This sense is undoubtedly reinforced by continuing discussion of "the Armenian genocide." As a result, these various modes of feelings lead to varied social attitudes. Anger leads to a growth of aggressiveness and fear to heightened worries, a vicious circle which observers and investigators of the region have often noted (Scott 2009).

How can this understanding provide with guidance toward new paths of resolving the conflict? From what has been said arise several results which have a direct relationship to the development of a common schema of the resolution of the conflict. Above all, the necessity of achieving a common political agreement which resolves the conflict in principle is obvious. For example, quite often one can hear from international mediators about the need for establishing direct dialogue between Azerbaijanis and Armenians and about how important it is to achieve mutual trust between the sides. In these calls, there is nothing bad. The sides should meet, exchange opinions, and discuss problems.

But it is important to recognize the limited nature of such contacts. It is impossible to achieve full discussion and dialogue when the sides have the feeling and attitudes described above. In order to have a full dialogue begin, a number of conditions, which would make such a dialogue possible, must be fulfilled. With that goal in mind, a package of agreements should be developed which are intended, on the one hand, to achieve the restoration among the Azerbaijanis of their violated sense of justice, and on the other, to provide a guarantee of the security of the Armenian population, which takes into account their fears and concerns. The role of the mediators consists in the achievement of this condition.

After that has been achieved, the next stage of the process can begin, one that will move beyond the conflict and include within itself measures for the restoration of trust and the laying down of conditions for dialogue between the sides. Simultaneously, the process of Turkish-Armenian rapprochement will experience new impulses for development. And as a result, the changing political circumstances and the shift of social attitudes can really make possible the reassessment of many tragic pages of the history of the interrelationship of the Armenians and the Turks. All that is a requirement for lasting peace in the region.

In the light of this schema, several recent initiatives connected with the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement and with the recognition of "the Armenian genocide" appear premature. From this it follows that the Zurich accord on the opening of borders between Turkey and Armenia regardless of what happens in the Karabakh conflict and the support by parliaments of several countries of the Armenian version of the events of 1915 hardly will make possible the achievement of genuine dialogue among the interested sides and the establishment of peace in the region.

Turkey closed the border with Armenia in 1993 after Armenia occupied Azerbaijani territories. The opening of that border now when Armenia has not liberated the territories it seized will regardless of the intention of the sides represent support for aggression. And parliamentary resolutions about "the Armenian genocide" will exacerbate rather than reduce the negative feelings Armenians have toward their neighbors and lead the Azerbaijanis to demand recognition of "the Azerbaijani genocide" or "the Turkish genocide," a development that will only make future talks more difficult.

One must recognize that the histories of all these peoples of the region are full of extremely tragic events, and if one likes, it is possible to 'recall' many episodes from the past and treat them as "genocide." Here, each people and even each ethnic group has its own truth, one that it sees as equally or more valid than the others. This is something many investigators who have studied the history of the region know but unfortunately, politicians who are responsible for taking decisions often do not recognize. Therefore, it is unwise to support the truth of only one side just because that truth is more widely known than the truth of the other, and it is self-deceiving to think that one can find some universal truth that all will accept.

Summing up, we can say: In this case, it would be just and wise to refrain from a settling of "historical scores" and to move to a new level of interrelations between peoples and governments of the region. Not the past but a projected future must become the decisive argument in the construction of relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis just as between Armenians and Turks. This, it seems to me, must become an imperative in the taking of political decisions.

As is widely recognized, squaring a circle is beyond our capacity, however much we would like to believe otherwise. But with imagination it is possible to project a desired future for which should be found new instruments capable of untying the Karabakh knot. This is a difficult task, but with the assistance of all forces interested in the security of the region, one can try to continue the search in this direction with some hope.

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ARMENIAN DIASPORA: INFLUENCE ON NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT

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In recent weeks, Armenian parliamentarians and political analysts have called on Armenian diaspora organizations to press for international recognition of the Armenian regime in Karabakh (Hayrumyan 2010). Yerevan clearly places great hopes in this appeal given the experience and success Armenian diaspora groups have had in working with the legislatures and governments around the world. And the Armenian diaspora in turn is closely related to the Armenian government and its approach to the Karabakh conflict.

Members of the Armenian diaspora have played a significant role in Yerevan since 1991. During the early stages of talks about Karabakh, Gerard Libaridian, a US citizen, was the key architect of Yerevan's approach. Moreover, Raffi Hovanissian, the first foreign minister of Armenia, and Vartan Oskanian, who followed him in that post, were also members of the diaspora. Such people played a role both in Armenia and in the countries from which they came.

A key example of the latter is the role the Armenian diaspora in the United States played in getting the Congress to pass Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which banned all US government assistance to the Azerbaijani government, even though Armenia was receiving more assistance per capita than any other post-Soviet country. While the diaspora sent few of its members to fight in the war against Azerbaijan, it did help provide aid to refugees and stepped up its lobbying effort on behalf of Yerevan's positions (Koinova 2009, p. 6). And the conflict itself helped unite diaspora organizations that had been at odds for other reasons.

The first president of Armenia, Levon Ter-Petrossian, was concerned that the involvement of radical Armenian diaspora in Yerevan's policies might cause

problems, but even he was not opposed to having the diaspora work for Armenia abroad. Because of his concerns, the 1995 Constitution banned dual citizenship, but because of the diaspora's power, his administration created a special passport for diaspora Armenians giving them all rights and privileges of a citizen except the right to vote, to be elected to office, or to serve in the armed services. Some in the diaspora denounced this approach as one designed to "milk" the diaspora for assistance without being willing to take its advice (Libaridian 1999, p. 103).

Ter-Petrosian's policy toward the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, however, did not satisfy many in the diaspora, and it was their opposition to his approach that limited his ability to make concessions toward an accord, something he hoped to achieve because of his recognition that only through a settlement could Armenia hope to achieve economic growth (Ter-Petrosyan 1997). Diaspora anger at his pragmatism in this regard is one of the reasons that he was driven from office, replaced by the more radical Robert Kocharian, who, coming from Karabakh, took a harder line on that conflict. The new president also convened conferences with the diaspora and pushed the diaspora's anti-Turkish line in his own statements. Kocharian's government attempted to use the diaspora to attract investment to Armenia, and some diaspora-based companies did come in. But the result of this was that the Armenian government lost ever more control over the country, effectively ceding it to the diaspora groups.

Since the Russia-Georgia war of August 2008, the situation has changed in the South Caucasus. It forced Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan to turn to Turkey in an effort to find a path to the world given that Georgia was no longer a bridge but a wall as far as Armenia was concerned. But his steps in this direction infuriated many in the diaspora who view any ties with Turkey as anathema and who gave him a chilly reception when he sought to sell the protocols as necessary for Armenia's survival and growth. And many diaspora groups have sought to torpedo these accords by raising the issue of Karabakh independence and the events of 1915.

Throughout the post-1991 period, the actions of the Armenian diaspora show that Yerevan does not control its foreign policy but rather is limited in its actions not only by the power of other states but also by the actions of people who are ethnically Armenian but not citizens of Armenia. Nowhere is that clearer than in the economic sector where Armenia continues to suffer because it is not able to take part in regional pipeline and other projects. Some in Armenia are beginning to recognize this and to take a more moderate position on Karabakh, but until Armenia can act like a country rather than as a branch office of the diaspora, the people of Armenia will suffer.

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BETWEEN MOSCOW AND BAKU: THE AZERBAIJANI DIASPORA IN RUSSIA

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Two events last week highlighted the increasing importance of the more than 1.5 million Azerbaijanis who now live and work in the Russian Federation, the largest Azerbaijani diaspora community in the world and one that represents both an important link and a frequent source of tension between the two.

On the one hand, Azerbaijan opened a new consulate general in Yekaterinburg, a reflection of the growing size of the Azerbaijani workforce in Siberia and the Russian Far East. And on the other, Azerbaijanis clashed with Russian veterans in the Baltic city of Kronstadt, an indication of the often tense relationship between *Gastarbeiters* from the South Caucasus and Central Asia and the indigenous ethnic Russian population.

During Soviet times, Moscow encouraged non-Russians like the Azerbaijanis to move to the RSFSR not only to promote Russian-language knowledge but to advance acculturation and assimilation goals, just as the central government supported the movement of ethnic Russians and Russian-speakers to non-Russian republics such as Azerbaijan. But the numbers of Azerbaijanis who chose to remain in the Russian Republic remained relatively small until the very end of the Soviet period.

Then, as a result of the loosening of controls such as the *propiska*-registration system and the economic and political dislocations arising from the collapse of the Soviet economy and conflicts such as the Nagorno-Karabakh war, massive numbers of Azerbaijanis, just like residents of other former Soviet republics, left their homeland in search of work or higher incomes in the Russian Federation, often sending remittances home that have played a key role in supporting their families.

Most of the Azerbaijanis are concentrated in the major cities. There may be as many as 750,000 in Moscow alone, for example. That pattern means that their presence is more notable not only because such concentrations mean that they have changed the ethnic (Russian-non-Russian) and religious (Sunni-Shia) balance often generating a response from surrounding groups and the Russian government but also because it has allowed them and Baku to oversee the creation of a remarkable network of institutional arrangements designed to protect and promote both Azerbaijani identity and good relations between Azerbaijanis and ethnic Russians.

To support ties with the Azerbaijanis of other countries, Baku five years ago created a State Committee for Work with Azerbaijanis Living Abroad. (The government of Azerbaijan adopted that somewhat expansive locution to deal with the complex origins of these communities, some of whom like in the Russian Federation are true diasporas while others like the enormous one in Iran are not diasporas but rather autochthonian communities.) That body has sought to develop relations with the Azerbaijani communities themselves as well as to work with host governments to ensure that Azerbaijanis living there register with the authorities and are treated well.

The organizations of the Azerbaijani diaspora in the Russian Federation are of three types. First, there are those which represent a response to Russian legislation. These include such things as the organization in various cities and regions of Azerbaijani cultural autonomy institutions, which work with the authorities to advance the language and cultural interests of the local groups. Second, there are those which the Azerbaijani community has developed on its own, including newspapers, websites, cultural centers and the like. And third, there are Azerbaijani government institutions, like the embassy and the new consulate general which work with citizens of Azerbaijan living in the Russian Federation and which provide a framework for contacts between Baku and Moscow by the State Committee.

The two biggest challenges all these bodies have had is to secure registration for Azerbaijanis living and working in the Russian Federation and to protect the rights of these individuals from arbitrary action by Russian employers or Russian government officials. Because such a relatively small percentage of the Azerbaijanis in the Russian Federation are registered—it may be fewer than 50 percent—this is a serious problem. Many unregistered workers are subject to truly oppressive situations and are at constant risk of losing their jobs, their apartments or even their continued ability to live in Russia. At various points, Russian nationalist groups and the Russian government have stepped up their pressure on Azerbaijanis, pressure that affects not only the diaspora but the family members of the diaspora still in Azerbaijan. If all Azerbaijanis were registered, this problem would be much reduced, but to date, Russian officials have been unwilling or unable to register all those who have come.

But these problems, which often attract most of the media attention—the clashes in Kronstadt received far more coverage than the opening of the consulate general in Yekaterinburg, to give but one example—do not constitute the entire picture. Azerbaijanis living in Moscow and other Russian cities are not only a source of tension but also an increasingly significant link between Azerbaijan and Russia. Cultural activities, publications of books, intermarriage and similar phenomena all suggest that these communities are an increasingly important if far too seldom discussed tie between the two nations.

That is something that the authorities in Baku recognize, and that recognition informs the work of the State Committee. If the Russian powers that be move more quickly to ensure that all Azerbaijanis living in the Russian Federation either gain registration immediately or are given the chance to begin the process of receiving that status, the relationship between the Azerbaijani diaspora and the Russian nation almost certainly will grow stronger. But if nationalist, xenophobic and anti-immigrant voices are heeded and Moscow's immigration policies become even more restrictive, then the Azerbaijani diaspora is likely to become one of the chief sources of discord between the two peoples and their two governments, however much each side may want to cooperate with the other.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

Khanhuseyn Kazymly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "if the Russian plan for the return of occupied Azerbaijani territories is calculated to take a number of years, then this does not correspond to our interests" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209003.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the number of co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group could be increased to four (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209035.html>).

Aydin Aliyev, head of the State Customs Committee, says "Armenia is using the occupied territories of Azerbaijan for the transit of narcotics" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209165.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow and Baku will sign a treaty on the state border before the end of 2010 but that it is premature to set an exact date (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208926.html>).

Iranian Interior Minister Mustafa Muhammad Najjar says that "no forces will be able to destroy the good relations between Baku and Teheran" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207171.html>).

Afghanistan's Deputy Defense Minister, Gen. Zakir Azimi, says that Kabul is interested in an expansion of the Azerbaijani mission in his country (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208574.html>).

Gianfranco Fini, the president of the Chamber of Deputies of Italy, tells visiting Milli Majlis speaker Ogtay Asadov that "Azerbaijan has encountered a double injustice:" its land is occupied, and the international community is not supporting a just resolution of the problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207953.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

15 May

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that "the elections conducted by the separatist regime [in Karabakh] cannot have any official status" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209336.html>).

Adel Mohammad Adaileh, Jordanian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that relations between Amman and Baku are "in the full sense of the word a model" of their kind (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209270.html>).

14 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic Jan Kohout (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209215.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives Steven Allen, the UNICEF regional director for the Countries of Central and Eastern Europe and the CIS (<http://www.day.az/news/society/209234.html>).

The Foreign Ministry releases a statement denouncing Armenian-organized elections in the occupied territories due May 23 as lacking any legitimacy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209245.html>).

Education Minister Misir Mardanov receives Abdullah Jasbi, the rector of the Free Islamic University of Iran, to discuss cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/society/209115.html>).

Aydin Aliyev, head of the State Customs Committee, says "Armenia is using the occupied territories of Azerbaijan for the transit of narcotics" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209165.html>).

Arif Mammadov, the permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the Council of Europe, says that "Europeans were disappointed by the tone of the speech of [Armenian Foreign Minister] Edvard Nalbandyan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209000.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "despite their political weight," the Minsk Group co-chair countries defer to Armenia's desires (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209156.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu calls on the OSCE Minsk Group to take a more active approach to the Karabakh issue (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209071.html>).

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill says that "the Orthodox Community of Azerbaijan is growing and strengthening with each passing day" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/209228.html>).

13 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Serbian President Boris Tadic and tells him that "Azerbaijan and Serbia support one another at the international level" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208899.html>).

The fourth volume of the collected speeches and writings of President Ilham Aliyev – "Our Goal is Development" – is released, (<http://www.day.az/news/society/208820.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives her Georgian counterpart Sandra Elisabeth Roelofs (<http://www.day.az/news/society/208912.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the number of co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group could be increased to four (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209035.html>).

Agricultural Minister Ismat Abbasov answers questions from Armenian journalists (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208888.html>).

The Azerbaijan consulate general opens in the Russian city of Yekaterinburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208738.html>).

The embassy of the Czech Republic opens in Baku. Attending the opening is Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic Jan Kohout (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/209040.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow and Baku will sign a treaty on the state border before the end of 2010 but that it is premature to set an exact date (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208926.html>).

Halug Ipek, a member of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that "Russia is beginning to show a realistic approach toward the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208867.html>).

Aynur Jamalgyzy, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the recent Turkish-Russian conversations are unlikely to have an impact on the Karabakh talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208861.html>).

Azerbaijan and Jordan reach agreement on the organization of joint military production (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/208934.html>).

UNICEF says that "Azerbaijan has achieved progress in lowering the level of infant mortality" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/208889.html>).

12 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Tina Kaidanow, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208752.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan release a joint statement on the Karabakh conflict, reaffirming their commitment to its resolution (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208718.html>).

Roland Kobia, the representative of the European Union to Azerbaijan, says that "negotiations between Azerbaijan and the European Union about association will begin soon" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208804.html>).

Turkish Defense Minister Veçdi Konul says that military-to-military ties between Turkey and Azerbaijan are expanding (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208743.html>).

Azerbaijan, Georgia and Romania sign an agreement on the creation of a gas transportation consortium to supply Europe
(<http://www.day.az/news/economy/208721.html>).

11 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdukov
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208540.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Los Angeles County Sheriff Leroy D. Baca
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208541.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Christine Egerszegi-Obrist, head of the Switzerland-Azerbaijan Friendship Group of the Swiss Parliament
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208570.html>).

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev says that "the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group toward resolving the conflict have not produced results"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208462.html>).

Oktay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Majlis, tells a delegation of Swiss parliamentarians that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a serious threat to the security both of the region and of Europe as a whole"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208589.html>).

The Milli Majlis adopts a new law on Azerbaijani participation in peacekeeping operations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208576.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Azerbaijan and Turkey should sign an agreement on the Nagorno-Karabakh question"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208536.html>).

Movlud Chavushoglu, the president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that he sees "positive forward movement" on the question of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208619.html>).

Afghanistan's Deputy Defense Minister, Gen. Zakir Azimi, says that Kabul is interested in an expansion of the Azerbaijani mission in his country
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208574.html>).

10 May

The Azerbaijan-American Council distributes a statement on the 18th anniversary of the occupation of Shusha by Armenia
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208356.html>).

9 May

President Ilham Aliyev takes part in the Victory Day commemoration in Moscow
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208218.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Croatian President Ivo Josipović while the two are in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208280.html>).

8 May

The Foreign Ministry says that despite news reports to the contrary, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov will not be travelling to Strasbourg or Brussels in the next week to meet with the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208179.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijani ambassador to Moscow, says that Baku "must be prepared for war over Karabakh" given Armenian delays in reaching an agreement (<http://www.day.az/news/society/208203.html>).

Hafiz Pashayev, deputy foreign minister and rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, discusses cooperation with the Oman Diplomatic Academy's director general, Ahmed bin Salim Baomar (<http://www.day.az/news/society/208198.html>).

7 May

A spokesman for President Ilham Aliyev says that the Azerbaijani leader will not take part in the informal CIS summit at the time of the Victory Day commemorations in Moscow because Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan will be there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208068.html>).

Agshin Mehtiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York, speaks to a plenary session of that organization at a commemoration of the 65th anniversary of Victory Day (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207925.html>).

Garib Mammadov, the head of the State Committee on Land and Cartography, says that Azerbaijan and Russia have "completely" agreed on the delimitation of their common border (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207999.html>).

Kamil Khasiyev, Azerbaijan's representative at NATO, meets with the Alliance's secretary general Anders Fogh Rasmussen to discuss the future of cooperation between Azerbaijan and NATO (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207976.html>).

Jan Kohout, deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs of the Czech Republic, says that "Azerbaijan is a very important partner of [his country] in the South Caucasus and a priority state in foreign affairs" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208062.html>). In other comments, he says that Prague views compromise as the key to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/208059.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan "must change not the mediators on the Karabakh conflict but their positions." Changing the countries involved by itself "will give us nothing," he adds (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207762.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "it is necessary to conduct negotiations not with Yerevan but with those who stand behind [Armenia]" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207776.html>).

6 May

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov meets with his Israeli counterpart Dani Ayalon in Jerusalem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207865.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the visa regime between Turkey and Azerbaijan will be ended in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207787.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, the head of the State Committee on Work with the Diaspora of Azerbaijan, meets with Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207941.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "Ankara, Baku and Yerevan for several months will conduct 'quiet' diplomacy" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207801.html>).

Igor Popov formally assumes the position of Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group at a meeting of that body in Vienna (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207745.html>).

5 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Andrey Kobakov, the deputy prime minister of Belarus and co-chair of the Azerbaijan-Belarus inter-governmental commission on trade (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207681.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Agasalim Shukurov Azerbaijani ambassador to Libya (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207706.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that "time has run out" for a resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207608.html>).

Kamaladdin Heydarov, emergency situations minister, meets with senior Saudi officials in Riyadh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207583.html>).

Natik Aliyev, industry and energy minister, says that "negotiations on gas between Azerbaijan and Turkey have been completed" (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/207732.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, head of the State Committee of Azerbaijan for work with the Diaspora, meets with Israeli tourism minister Stas Misezhnikov (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/207699.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "good sense will triumph in Yerevan already in the future years" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207435.html>).

4 May

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Aykhan Suleymanov Azerbaijan's consul general in Kars (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207517.html>).

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives Mustafa Muhammad Najar, the Iranian minister of internal affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207504.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov receives Mustafa Muhammad Najar, the Iranian minister of internal affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207502.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that it is necessary to include Turkey as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207421.html>).

Nikolae Ureche, Romanian ambassador to Baku, says that "Romania is seeking to bring Azerbaijan and NATO closer together" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207388.html>).

Jon Ramberg, Norwegian ambassador to Baku, says that "the question of Azerbaijani membership in NATO depends on the will of the country itself" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207378.html>).

Robert Ilatov, the head of the inter-parliamentary Israel-Azerbaijan association, says that Knesset deputies are only seeking to promote their image by discussing "the genocide of the Armenians" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207369.html>).

The Azerbaijani consulate general in Los Angeles presents California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger with an Azerbaijani rub bearing his likeness (<http://www.day.az/news/society/207377.html>).

3 May

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Hasan Zeynalov as Azerbaijan's consul general in Istanbul (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207314.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iranian Interior Minister Mustafa Muhammad Najar (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207279.html>). Najar says that "no forces will be able to destroy the good relations between Baku and Teheran" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207171.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov signs a cooperation agreement with his Iranian counterpart, Mustafa Muhammad Najar (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207306.html>).

Lt. Gen. Zakir Hasanov, commander of internal forces of Azerbaijan, makes an official visit to Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207281.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, the consul general of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles, says that Baku is dissatisfied with the policy of the United States in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207175.html>).

Various Baku government and private institutions begin the commemoration of the 87th birthday of former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207174.html>).

Lebanese Prime Minister Saad al-Hariri tells Mahir Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Beirut and Damascus, that the Lebanese government devotes a great deal of importance to the development of bilateral ties (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207254.html>).

2 May

Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh-ul-islam, says that "during the time of his visit to Baku, the Armenian catholicos [Garegin II] visited the Alley of Shahids" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/207051.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmed Davutoglu says that "without the resolution of the problems between Baku and Yerevan there will not be stability in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207070.html>).

1 May

President Ilham Aliyev says that "Azerbaijan is a country which in the course of the last five or six years has developed at the highest rates in the world" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/206631.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that "the participation of the Turkish Republic in a process which would harm Azerbaijan is impossible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/207014.html>). In other comments, he says that "until the problem between Azerbaijan and Armenia has been resolved, the process of Armenian-Turkish normalization will experience difficulties" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/206934.html>).

The Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences hosts an international conference on "Azerbaijan-Dagestan: The History of Fraternal Relations, The Contemporary Situation, and Perspectives for the Future" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/207019.html>).

Note to Readers

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