



## School of International Affairs

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### Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

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#### **AZERBAIJAN AND INDIA**

An Interview with H.E. Mr. Debnath Shaw  
Ambassador of India to the Republic of Azerbaijan

February 25, 2010  
Baku, Azerbaijan

*Azerbaijan in the World:* What do you see as the central core of relations between India and Azerbaijan?

*Ambassador Shaw:* Relations between India and Azerbaijan are time-tested and multi-faceted. The basis for relations between the two countries is the historical, cultural and trade relations between the people of India and Azerbaijan. In the contemporary era, we have established friendly and all-round relations with the

Republic of Azerbaijan soon after its independence in 1991 and opened India's resident diplomatic mission in Baku in 1999.

*A/W:* How have Azerbaijani-Indian relations evolved in the post-Soviet era and how would you describe their current status?

*Amb. Shaw:* In the almost two decades since Azerbaijan's re-emergence as an independent, vibrant, modernizing and fast developing nation our bilateral ties have been concentrated on establishing direct relations in various fields, in contrast to the indirect relations New Delhi had with Baku, mainly through Moscow, in the Soviet era. Perhaps, this is the reason that our ties are below the potential that exists. Both sides need to make greater efforts in this direction. I am quite clear in my mind that my primary task as Ambassador of India is to work relentlessly for direct contact and dialogue between the two governments and peoples in various sectors and at various levels. There is huge gap in perceptions and information about each other, which has to be fulfilled as a first step. We must learn and understand each other's aspirations and concerns directly and not through third eyes. The role of think tanks and research institutes in both countries is crucial in this regard. In this area, the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy and similar institutions could certainly play a vital role.

*A/W:* What is the state of energy cooperation between Azerbaijan and India?

*Amb. Shaw:* Energy security is an important element of the Indian government strategy as our USD 1.1 trillion economy is on a high growth trajectory and the country does not have sufficient hydrocarbon energy resources of its own to sustain GDP growth rates of 9 per cent per annum and beyond, to meet the challenges of poverty alleviation and all-round and inclusive social and economic development of our over 1.1 billion people. Azerbaijan's oil and natural gas are naturally of interest to India. Currently, Indian oil refining companies are making spot purchases of Azerbaijani light crude, shipped primarily through the BTC pipeline. Indian refiners would like to establish mutually beneficial long-term business relations with SOCAR. If Azerbaijan's excess energy resources can be used to manufacture products such as fertilizers, of which we are a major global consumer, we would certainly be interested to examine jointly the feasibility of such a project. Thanks to the assistance of oil industry engineers from Azerbaijan in the 1950s and 60s, such as Eyyub Taghiyev, the Indian oil exploration and production industry has today evolved into a global player. There is potential for cooperation in the E&P sector in Azerbaijan as well.

*A/W:* What are the main components of trade and areas of cooperation between Azerbaijan and India, apart from energy?

*Amb. Shaw:* Our primary trade consists of Azerbaijani crude oil exports to India. From India, Azerbaijan is buying synthetic textiles, garments, pharmaceutical products, tea, meat, machinery and industrial equipment. Like Azerbaijan, India, too, is investing heavily in its knowledge-based economy and other vibrant non-oil sectors. Promising areas of economic cooperation and collaboration exist in IT, telecommunications, designing and engineering consultancy, erection and establishment of infrastructure projects, especially in the power and renewable energy sectors, and also some areas of agriculture, such as tea growing and processing, and education, including in the burgeoning IT education sector. Azerbaijan's historical role as the crossroads of several silk road routes, including

one from India, can be revived if some infrastructure projects, including a railway link to Bandar Abbas in the Persian Gulf, which serves as the main enter port for India's trade with the Caucasus region and south eastern Europe, are contemplated.

*AIW:* What is the state of bilateral cultural and social cooperation?

*Amb. Shaw:* The social and cultural exchanges between the two countries are mainly people driven. The two governments are currently discussing cooperation agreements in the fields of culture, education, tourism, environmental conservation, among others. Meanwhile, in recent years a few performing artists from India and Azerbaijan have staged performances in Baku and Delhi respectively. More are necessary and will take place once the cultural agreement is signed. Tourism promotion work will result in larger numbers of residents of each country visiting the other. This is very important for the growth of our knowledge and understanding of each other, which we consider vital for the growth of a mature relationship. The Azerbaijan University of Languages in Baku is preparing to establish an India Centre with a Hindi language teaching unit. This will be major development. There are a few centers in India doing research work on the Caucasus region, including Azerbaijan, and we wish to support their effort. We also hope to get some cultural events such as a photographic exhibition and perhaps a music/dance performance from India to Azerbaijan. The Indian community in Azerbaijan of about 400+ persons, organized as the Indian Association, organizes outreach activities with the local community through social/cultural celebration events with music, dance and Indian food, usually held in conjunction with major India festivals.

*AIW:* Do you see any hurdles that India and Azerbaijan will have to overcome in order to improve their relationship?

*Amb. Shaw:* Both sides have to overcome lack of knowledge, understanding and trust in order to catapult the relationship to an even higher level. Direct flights and establishment of shipping and banking facilities will help the process.

*AIW:* India has always expressed its full support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Why then did it vote against UN General Assembly Resolution 10693, which was passed in March 2008?

*Amb. Shaw:* India's policy on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue has always been transparent and consistent. India supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, and we hope that the dispute can be resolved peacefully through dialogue. This will continue to be our position.

*AIW:* Some analysts have suggested that 2009 was dominated by an effort of all countries in the region to adjust to the new conditions created by the August 2008 war between Russia and Georgia. How well do you think Baku has done in this regard?

*Amb. Shaw:* Azerbaijan's foreign policy strategy of friendship and good ties in all directions, has served it well both with regard to the geo-strategic situation in the region and its own effort to deal with the global economic downturn. Thus, we see that Baku has fared very well on both counts. Its diplomatic space has expanded in 2009 with the opening of a number of new diplomatic missions and visits of major leaders to Baku. Economically, the *manat* held its ground and Azerbaijan's economic growth was the highest in the region and among the highest in the world.

*A/W:* Given your own experience, what advice would you give young Azerbaijanis beginning their careers in diplomacy?

*Amb. Shaw:* Work hard. Be a good listener and practice your public speaking skills. Not everyone is a born extempore speaker. Do not hesitate to prepare in advance what you want to say or write in a public forum. Learn to go out and enjoy public events. Writing good reports and analysis is important. It is also important in diplomacy to be seen and heard in the public domain. Do not hesitate to attend as many events, including media events, as possible. Place yourself as a salesman selling a product or service. In this instance, the product/service is your own country. How well you convince your interlocutor about your country and its viewpoint will, to a great extent, depend on your "selling" skills.

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### **THE KHOJALY TRAGEDY AS A COLLECTIVE TRAUMA AND FACTOR OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY**

Rauf Garagozov, Dr.  
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The Khojaly tragedy has many aspects. Here I would like to consider three psychological and socio-cultural ones: that event as a collective trauma, the various ways in which Azerbaijanis could relate to the trauma, and how we may be able to overcome it.

To begin, I would like my readers to try to remember where they were and what they were doing when they first heard about Khojaly. I am sure that for the majority of Azerbaijanis 30 years old or older, that moment remains very much fixed in their minds even 18 years later. Psychologists call such recollections flashbulb memories. They arise in response to events that shock us, and the destruction of the Azerbaijani city of Khojaly and its civilian residents by Armenian militants is exactly that kind of event.

In that regard, I want to stress in particular that this event was not only a psychic trauma for those who were the participants or victims of force but a trauma for the entire population, including even those who were not subjected to violence or immediate witnesses of such acts. Specialists refer to such experiences as collective or cultural trauma, which arises because people feel a threat to their collective identity. After the events of Black January in 1990, this was the second collective trauma of Azerbaijanis of this dimension.

A society, subjected to collective trauma, experiences various changes in its perception of the surrounding world, its emotional situation, and its behavior. For example, when it experiences a shock, society can lose its customary confidence in its security and trust in its political leaders. Another result of collective trauma can be the spread of panic and fear among the population for a certain time. Indeed, at that time, we experienced a deep political crisis and panic seized part of the Azerbaijani population in the region that had come into contact with the Armenians.

It appears that the particular cruelty of the Armenians in relation to the defenseless civilian population of Khojaly was intended to sow panic and fear among the local population. Serzh Sargsyan, who at that time was one of the field commanders who attacked Khojaly and who is now president of Armenia, has said: "Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that it would be possible to joke with us, they thought that the Armenians were not capable of raising their arms against the civilian population. We were able to destroy this [stereotype]. That is what happened" (Waal 2005, pp. 134-135).

That statement makes a mockery of Sargsyan's recent statement at the British Royal Institute of International Relations that "We Armenians as a people who experienced a Genocide have a moral duty before humanity and history to prevent genocides. We have done and will do everything for the further realization of the Genocide Convention. Genocide must not agitate only one people, because it is a crime against humanity." [1]

Coming from the lips of a former field commander, these words sound like the apotheosis of hypocrisy but not only that. In general, it is symbolic that precisely someone involved in carrying about a genocide should speak about "the moral duty in preventing genocide." Not only is this a classical example of a wolf in sheep's clothing, but it is testimony to the weakness and shortcomings of international institutions which in one part of Europe condemn Radovan Karadzic, the former president of the so-called republic of the Bosnian Serbs and in another offer a tribune for speeches of this kind to a similar field commander and current president of Armenia Sargsyan.

Why is this happening? Why is the West prepared to be so unprincipled or, more precisely, to apply its principles in one place but not another. These are complicated questions and a response to them requires the consideration of many aspects. Here I will take up only those moments which are connected with collective memory and identity.

In the history of each people, one can encounter events which give rise to collective trauma. However, peoples vary in their relationship to collective trauma. For example, some societies for whatever reasons "forget" about the trauma they have experienced. Thus, in Soviet times, the majority of Azerbaijanis "forgot" about the destruction of the Azerbaijani population of Baku, Shemakha, Karabakh, and Zangazur by Armenian bands in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Memory about these bloody days was preserved only in the stories of the older generation who had witnessed the events. It is interesting that many of them later were afraid to speak about these events to their children and grandchildren. They were afraid because these reminiscences contradicted the official history which was taught in our schools. They did not see their memories as fitting into what sociologists refer to as "social frameworks."

The Soviet policy of memory, which was carried out under the slogans of the struggle with "Pan-Turkism" and "Pan-Islamism" was especially pitiless in relation to the cultural memory and historical inheritance of the Azerbaijanis. As a result, the explosion of Armenian nationalism and separatism and the violence it entailed at the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was something unexpected for many of us. Militant Armenian nationalism, which led to the rise of the Karabakh conflict and military aggression against Azerbaijan forced us to focus ourselves on Armenia-Azerbaijan

conflicts more generally. In that, the Khojaly tragedy was and is one of those traumatizing events which in a special way played a part in the formation of Azerbaijani collective memory.

But if one can be sure that memories about Khojaly will be preserved, the question of how and in what form they will be formed requires special consideration. A response to this question is important because to a large extent it defines the perspectives of the development of Azerbaijani national identity and also the relationship of the international community to this tragedy.

Dealing with traumatizing events, psychologists tell us, take two forms, "acting out" and "working through" the experience. In the first case, the trauma is not forgotten. On the contrary, what occurs is a process of cultivating and continually recollecting the traumatic event. But at the same time, the society avoids or is prohibited from a free discussion of the causes, factors and consequences of that traumatizing event. Indeed, that event is converted into a means for the achievement of some political goal or another. Making sense and reevaluating the traumatic events in a full and genuine way is blocked. As a result, the community which has not made the correct assessments risks experiencing similar traumas in the future.

Having analyzed the particular features of Armenian collective memory, I can with full conviction assert that it is caught in precisely that form of response to the collective trauma. Historically, the social framework for Armenian collective identity was at one time given by the Armenian Church, the clergy of which composed the first historical stories of that nation. I do not have the opportunity here to focus on these stories, something I have done elsewhere, but I can say that the basic idea of these stories can be expressed as follows: "the Armenians are surrounded and persecuted by enemies" (Garagozov 2008). As a result, the forms of Armenian collective identity serve not so much as a means of the productive overcoming of collective trauma as a source for the preservation, cultivation or even in a certain way a continuing attachment to its invented or real sufferings.

As a result of these qualities of collective memory, which put an accent on hatred to members of other peoples and confessions, these stories led to the flourishing of Turkophobia among the Armenians which led to tragic consequences. Over time, having established an entire industry for the production of various stories about Armenian sacrifice and suffering, Armenian organizations have learned to play with skill on traditional stereotypes, prejudices and fears of the Western audience, to exploit the natural human feelings toward suffering and sympathy to the victims in order to achieve their political goals.

Western public opinion, which is not acquainted with historical details, often becomes the victim of the Armenian manipulation of facts and images. As an example, it is sufficient to look at two reports from the American media, from the March 3, 1992, issue of the *New York Times* and the March 16, 1992, issue of *Time* magazine, in which, in the course of brief reports about the Khojaly tragedy, the authors talk about it as a conflict between "Christian Armenia" and "Muslim Azerbaijan" rather than as a violation of the universal laws of humanity (The New York Times 1992; Smolowe & Zarakovich 1992). In other media reports, the reporters suggested that the Armenians could hardly have committed the crimes of which they were accused because of their own national history.

The image of the victim is a winning image. And consequently, Armenian writers do what they can to maintain it and to counter or at least minimize any suggestion that Armenians are the victimizers. It is thus no accident that the crimes of Armenian militants committed in Khojaly are not admitted by the Armenian side. Instead, the Armenians are trying to come up with different justifying stories, with some of them even insisting that the Azerbaijanis themselves committed the murders in Khojaly. I do not think that this is the way the security that the Armenians seek can be achieved. In fact, having committed these crimes, the Armenians have generated anger and hatred not only among the Azerbaijanis but also among all residents of the Caucasus, thus setting the stage for possible actions of revenge.

There is also another way of dealing with trauma – working through it. In this case, again, the trauma is not forgotten but rather fixed by collective acts of memory. The most important aspect of this way, however, is that society is able to show an ability and readiness to rework its understanding of the traumatizing events. That requires broad and all-sided discussion of the traumatic events, in order to make sense of their causes, factors, and consequences and the definition of moral and legal responsibility for what took place. As a result of this process, society obtains the opportunity to make sense and to draw lessons from its own experience in order to be in a position to avoid the repetition of such events in the future. This approach thus represents a productive reworking of the trauma, its conversion into lessons for the future rather than simply a permanent pain.

If we want to overcome productively our collective trauma, we must have a broad and free public discussion of the Khojaly events, which will create the conditions for the appearance of new and more thoughtful interpretations and also for sincere and convincing histories focusing on individual human beings, their sufferings, emotions, and feelings and that will be capable of “awakening” the conscience of others. Until now, the treatment of the Khojaly events, in the main, has been expressed in two forms: the formal and the emotional. Rarely do texts contain both, but precisely such forms of presentation are the most effective, and on us lies responsibility to expose the wolves in sheep’s clothing that operate under the banner of Armenian nationalism.

International organizations need to display greater skepticism to the stereotypes, prejudices, and geopolitical and economic calculations which often form the basis for judgments about crimes. No geopolitical system can replace or diminish the moral obligations and laws of human conscience. Crimes must be punished and criminals must be judged. Otherwise, shameful situations may arise when such people will have the chance to speak again from the tribunes of authoritative organizations.

#### Note

[1] For the text of the speech (in Russian), see <http://517design.livejournal.com/375395.html> (accessed 25 February 2010).

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## **ENDGAME OR GAME END? THE OSCE MINSK GROUP AND THE RESOLUTION OF THE KARABAKH CONFLICT**

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Never in the period of its existence has the OSCE Minsk Group been subjected to as much criticism as it has been in the last several months, a development that has led some to conclude that this structure, set up to find a resolution of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Karabakh and the other occupied territories, has had its day, should be replaced by some other entity, or, because of its failure to achieve its goals, has opened the way to new military action.

Any of those directions is of course possible, but an examination of current complaints about the Minsk Group and their sources suggests that what may be going on instead is not the end of this game but an endgame, with various players positioning themselves to deal with the likelihood that a new constellation of geopolitical forces may actually allow for the resolution of the Azerbaijani-Armenian conflict on something very much like the revised Madrid Principles that the Minsk Group is now pushing.

There are three distinct categories of criticism, each of which should be considered in terms of whether it reflects a commitment to push forward with the Minsk process or to dispense with it and try a different approach. First, and perhaps paradoxically, are the three co-chair countries, Russia, France, and the United States. While all publicly declare their support for the Minsk Group, each over the last few months has sought to present itself as uniquely positioned to promote a settlement.

Russia's President Dmitry Medvedev has intervened to organize bilateral talks between the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia, and Russian diplomats and commentators have pointed out that only Russia has chosen to have its president actively involved in the negotiations, statements that either represent an effort by Moscow to position itself to arrange a settlement or to take credit for one that the Minsk Group may achieve. At the same time, given Moscow's historical links to

Yerevan, Medvedev's actions are clearly intended to signal to the Armenians that Russia will not support any outcome in which their interests would be sacrificed.

At the same time, and again while professing support for the Minsk Group process, France has signed a military agreement with Armenia and offered to sign one with Azerbaijan, something that could possibly give Paris unique leverage in the South Caucasus and also put it in place either to take credit for a Minsk Group-brokered outcome or to promote one of its own. Finally, the United States has repeatedly stressed its support for the Minsk Group but also indicated that President Barak Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are committed to resolving the conflict, again positioning Washington to take credit for what may happen.

The second source of criticism is more direct. It comes from two countries that believe they should be allowed to play a bigger role in the process. On the one hand, Turkey has been seeking to become a co-chair of the Minsk Group, a move that Armenia would certainly oppose. And on the other, Iran has pressed its case for playing a bigger role in the South Caucasus, declaring its support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity despite Tehran's longstanding ties with Yerevan. In each case, the criticism of the current Minsk Group looks more like positioning for a post-settlement world than an attack on the modified Madrid principles.

And the third source is from Azerbaijan where officials from President Ilham Aliyev on down have argued that if the conflict is not resolved soon, there will be no choice but to use military force to reclaim the occupied territories. Because any such use of force would destabilize the entire South Caucasus and threaten the flow of hydrocarbons out of the Caspian Basin, these threats have received a great deal of attention in the West, with many seeing them as a rejection by Baku of any compromise brokered by the Minsk Group.

But that reading almost certainly is incorrect. Baku's declarations in this regard are certainly intended to put pressure on the Minsk Group and on Armenia to settle the conflict on the basis of the recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, something the modified Madrid Principles already require. And thus what may appear to some as a rejection of Minsk Group in reality should be seen as part of an endgame, as an effort to reach an accord on a conflict that has lasted two decades.

The reasons behind this more optimistic reading are three: First, as a result of the Georgian war, Armenia lost its land route out. That has forced it to seek a rapprochement with Turkey, something that Ankara has made completely clear will be possible if and only if there is real progress on the occupied territories. Second, having destabilized the Caucasus by its military action in Georgia, Russia has an interest in presenting itself as a peacemaker rather than a troublemaker in the Caucasus. Moreover, for Moscow now as in the past, as one wise Azerbaijani put it, "Georgia is the way, Armenia is the tool, and Azerbaijan is the prize," something that a settlement on the basis of the Madrid Principles might put Russia in a position to claim.

And third, no one, not the three Minsk Group co-chairs nor Azerbaijan nor Armenia nor any of the region's neighbors, wants to see the conflict reignited. Were that to happen, there would be a very great danger that what started as a limited military effort by Azerbaijan to reclaim the Armenian-occupied territories would grow into a war that would have the most negative consequences on far more countries than those just immediately involved.

Consequently, there are good reasons to think that the Minsk Group and its proposals may succeed, but perhaps equally good reasons to fear that it has only a limited window of opportunity, one that if it shuts could transform the current endgame into something else, the end of the current game and the beginning of a much larger and inherently more dangerous one.

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## **A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY**

### **I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy**

President Ilham Aliyev says that "Nagorno-Karabakh is Azerbaijani territory from immemorial times. Everyone knows that Armenians were resettled on these lands in the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Karabakh is an indivisible part of Azerbaijan. This is confirmed by historical truth and the norms of international law. Never will there be created on Azerbaijani territory a second Armenian state. Nagorno-Karabakh will never be independent. The whole world knows about this, and the sooner Armenia recognizes this truth, the sooner the issue will find its resolution. And after the problem is resolved, a broadscale peace can be established since the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the largest problem of the region. Without its resolution, no other problem can be solved" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196327.html>).

Bayram Safarov, the head of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that "there is no need for the participation of the Azerbaijani community in the process of talks on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196979.html>).

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation, under the direction of its President Mehriban Aliyeva, notes that in this year, meetings and demonstrations on the anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy are taking place in more than 100 places around the world (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196868.html>).

### **II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan**

US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns says that "US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are personally interested in the successes of the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group, considering them to be part of a guarantee of regional security" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195823.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that "cooperation between Azerbaijan and Russia in the military sphere is mutually profitable" to both countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196523.html>).

Seyyid Kazim Mousavi, the head of the Iran-Azerbaijan inter-parliamentary group friendship, says that "any country which attacks Azerbaijan will be considered as a country that has declared war on Iran as well" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196590.html>).

### III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

28 February

Milli Majlis deputies participate as observers in the parliamentary elections in Tajikistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196544.html>).

27 February

Representatives of the Azerbaijani State Committee for Work with the Diaspora take part in the creation in Isantbul of a new organization for work with Turkic language peoples (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196819.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that "Russia must adequately know and evaluate its close partner, Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197114.html>).

26 February

President Ilham Aliyev leads his nation in marking the 18<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy by opening a monument and by delivering speech on the continuing importance of a correct assessment of that 1992 event for the life of Azerbaijanis now and in the future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196929.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bruno Pouezat, the UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197010.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis, calls on US President Barack Obama to recognize that the discussion of a Congressional resolution on "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" is harming the image of the US in the world (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197035.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Baku, says that "Ankara condemns the crimes of Armenians in Khojaly" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197022.html>).

Moscow announces that the current Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, Yury Merzlyakov, will leave that position to become Russian ambassador to Estonia later this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196980.html>).

25 February

President Ilham Aliyev is named *Person of the Year* by a Russian organization that annually recognizes those who have served their societies and governments over the previous year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197021.html>).

Prime Minister Arthur Rasizade arrives in Kyiv to attend the inauguration of Viktor Yanukovich as president of Ukraine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196535.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Bruno Pouezet, the UN Resident Coordinator in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196855.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev tells French Ambassador Gabriel Keller that "if Armenia does not liberate the Azerbaijani lands it has occupied, then the beginning of a war in the South Caucasus is inevitable" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196757.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the tragedy of the Azerbaijani people is the result of the policy of Armenia over the course of more than 100 years" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196882.html>).

The co-chairmen of the US Congressional Working Group for Azerbaijan call on the international community to recognize Khojaly events as a crime against humanity (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/197072.html>).

Alaaddin Buyukkaya, head of the Turkish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, says that "the question of changes in the Minsk Group must be resolved in the OSCE Committee of Ministers" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196742.html>).

#### 24 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Peter Semneby, the EU special representative for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196598.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenia's creation of a website providing false information about Khojaly shows that Yerevan is not willing to face up to its responsibilities and is seeking to deceive the international community (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196647.html>).

A Milli Majlis delegation takes part in a meeting of the Vyshegrad Group in Hungary (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196541.html>).

Vahdat Sultan-zade, Azerbaijan's new ambassador to Turkmenistan, presents his letters of credence to Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammadov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196532.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, tells visiting Jake Johns, the director for Azerbaijan of the US International Republican Institute, that Baku is "satisfied" with the cooperation it has with that organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196614.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that "cooperation between Azerbaijan and Russia in the military sphere is mutually profitable" to both countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196523.html>).

"Azerbaijan could play a certain role in the resolution of the Palestinian problem," according to the Palestinian ambassador Asad al-Asad, who is resident in Tashkent but jointly accredited to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196488.html>).

#### 23 February

Ogtay Asadov, Milli Majlis speaker, says on his return from a visit to Iran that "Azerbaijani-Iranian relations must constantly be developed" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196346.html>).

Akshin Mehtiyev, Azerbaijan's Permanent Representative to the United States, sends a letter to the UN Secretary General in connection with the anniversary of the Khojaly genocide (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196427.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, calls on the international community to give a legal assessment of the Khojaly massacre and "other crimes of the Armenians in the course of the occupation of Azerbaijani lands" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196345.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party and a Milli Majlis deputy, calls on the parliament to send a protest to the US Congress in connection with the latter body's taking up of a resolution on the events of 1915 regarding the fate of the Armenian population (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196363.html>). His call is seconded by Milli Majlis deputy Ganira Pashayeva (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196397.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies a bilateral accord with Slovenia which will allow Azerbaijanis with diplomatic passports to travel to that country without visas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196369.html>).

Sources in the Russian Foreign Ministry say that Igor Popov, the Russian ambassador to Mozambique, will become the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group later this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196353.html>).

Brent Scowcroft, who earlier served as national security advisor to President George H.W. Bush, says that the US is actively involved in the resolution of "frozen conflicts" in the Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196293.html>).

22 February

Ogtay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Majlis, visits Iran (20-22 February), including the Iranian province of Eastern Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195949.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says it is checking on Armenian reports that the separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh has been represented at an international exhibition in Milan. If true, the ministry says, Baku will take due measures (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196184.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that Turkey calls on the OSCE Minsk Group to "accelerate the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196162.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, the ombudsman of Azerbaijan, says that "the Khojaly tragedy is an example of ethnic cleansing and genocide carried out by Armenian nationalists" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196148.html>).

Fifty demonstrators picket the Iranian embassy in Baku calling on Tehran to end relations with Armenia and support the rights of Azerbaijanis living in Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196121.html>).

Hassan Yosif al-Zawawi, Kuwaiti ambassador to Baku, says that "the building of strong economic ties is one of the priority directions of Azerbaijan and Kuwait" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/196042.html>).

21 February

Mohammed Reza Bahonar, the vice speaker of the Iranian parliament, says that "Tehran does not see differences between its own interests and the interests of Azerbaijan" and that it "supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195991.html>).

Faruq Logoglu, the former Turkish ambassador to the United States, says that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must have been included in the protocols" concluded between Armenia and Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195987.html>).

20 February

Eduard Lintner, the state secretary of the German Parliament, distributes to members of that body an appeal on the Khojaly tragedy and the fate of more than a million refugees in the course of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war of 1992-93 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195948.html>).

The Environmental Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe receives a report prepared by Milli Majlis deputy, Rafael Huseynov, on threats to the environment from sound and light sources (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195873.html>).

19 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195852.html>). The American official says that "US President Barack Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton are personally interested in the successes of the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group, considering them to be part of a guarantee of regional security" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195823.html>).

French President Nicolas Sarkozy sends a congratulatory letter to Azerbaijani First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva on the occasion of her being decorated as an Officer of the French Order of the Legion of Honour (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195821.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells visiting Polish Bureau of National Security Chief Alexander Szczyglo that "Azerbaijan and Poland have broad opportunities for deepening relations within the framework of the European Union Eastern Partnership program" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195702.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that "the military leadership of Armenia is trying to conceal from society its failures at the front" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195830.html>).

Mohammed Husein Ferengi, a member of the Iranian parliament, says that "Iran is always on the side of Azerbaijan on the Karabakh problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195858.html>).

Jean-Paul Costa, the president of the European Court of Human Rights, says that "Azerbaijan has made great strides in recent times" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195854.html>).

A group of Milli Majlis deputies meet with Joao Soares, the president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, and with Goran Lennmarker, special representative of the OSCE PA for Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195807.html>).

Elman Mammadov, a Milli Majlis deputy, calls for the application of international sanctions to Armenia for systematically violating the ceasefire regime (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195788.html>). Meanwhile, Zahid Oruj, another Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan should give "a harsh reaction" to Armenian violations of the ceasefire (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195671.html>).

Dunyamin Khalilov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the Armenian-Turkish borders were closed in 1993 as a result of the occupation of the Kalbajar district of Azerbaijan" and that Yerevan must recognize that the re-opening of those borders depends on the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195638.html>).

Former French Foreign Minister Roland Dumas says that "Europe could speak with a single voice on the Nagorno-Karabakh question" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195680.html>).

18 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Alexander Szczyglo, the head of the Polish Bureau of National Security, who conveys to the Azerbaijani leader greetings from Polish President Lech Kaczynski (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195608.html>).

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev, OSCE chairperson-in-office, says that Astana is working to prepare "a road map" for the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195628.html>). He adds that his country is committed to devoting whatever resources it has to that end (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195614.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, sends a congratulatory message to Viktor Yanukovich on the latter's election as president of Ukraine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195572.html>).

Javanshir Akhundov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Tehran, says that "relations with Iran occupy a special place in the foreign policy of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195483.html>).

Azhdar Tagizade, a member of the council of the Congress of Azerbaijanis of the World, says that "no one in Iran intends to do anything for the defense of the rights of Azerbaijanis" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195547.html>).

Roland Kobia, the head of the European Union's delegation to Azerbaijan, says that "the Eastern Partnership is an ambitious initiative both for the European Union and for Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195540.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "if the position of Armenia does not change, then it is senseless to speak about the Madrid or any other principles" and that "the negotiations on the Karabakh conflict will have to begin from square one" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195316.html>).

Gudrat Hasanguliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the renewal of military operations will become the only correct decision of Baku" if Armenia does not accept the "step by step" resolution of the conflict as laid out in the Madrid Principles (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195282.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis, and Rabiyyat Aslanova, the chairman of the Milli Majlis Human Rights Committee, meet with Czech parliamentarians in Prague (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195479.html>).

Adil Aliyev and Fazail Agamaly, deputies of the Milli Majlis, take part in the Interparliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195459.html>).

## 17 February

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives GUAM Secretary General Valery Chechelashvili (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195329.html>).

The Foreign Ministry replies to the statement by Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan that parts of Azerbaijan are under Azerbaijani occupation. "If the head of the Foreign Ministry of Armenia could produce even a single international legal act in which there is reference to a country occupying its own territory, this would be surprising," the Azerbaijani ministry says (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195327.html>).

The French Embassy in Baku says that the February 10 military accord Paris signed with Yerevan is designed to expand cooperation in the South Caucasus and that the French government is prepared to sign a similar agreement with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195336.html>).

The Italian Senate adopts a resolution *On the situation in the South Caucasus* saying that the conflicts in the region must be resolved on the basis of the principle of territorial integrity (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195339.html>).

Lebanese Foreign Minister Ali Husein al-Shami says that "Beirut is allied with Azerbaijan and supports its sovereignty and territorial integrity" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195285.html>).

US Senator Mark Udall of Colorado says that he intends to defend the interests of Azerbaijan in the US Congress (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195296.html>).

Joseph Shagal, the president of the International Israel-Azerbaijan Association, says that "in Israel, there is not a single high-ranking political figure who has

expressed a desire to meet with the prime minister of Armenia”  
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195002.html>).

16 February

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev has prepared a package of measures on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for Kanat Saudabayev, Kazakhstan foreign minister and the OSCE chairperson-in-office, to present to President Ilham Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195107.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, consul general of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles, speaks at a variety of venues in Northern California (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195168.html>).

Said Kazim Musavi, the leader of the inter-parliamentary group of Iranian-Azerbaijani friendship, says he welcomes the upcoming visit to Iran of Milli Majlis speaker Ogtay Asadov because this will give a new impulse to the development of bilateral relations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195221.html>).

Afshar Suleymani, former ambassador of Iran to Baku, says that “the construction of relations between Azerbaijan and Israel cannot be directed against Tehran” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195192.html>).

Nikolae Ureche, Romanian ambassador to Baku, says that “Azerbaijan is a reliable and true partner of NATO.” The Romanian embassy in the Azerbaijani capital serves as the NATO coordinator for work with the Azerbaijani authorities (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195145.html>).

Valery Chechelashvili, the secretary general of GUAM, says that his organization is committed to the resolution of prolonged conflicts on the territory of its member states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/195105.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](mailto: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.