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School of International Affairs

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FOREIGN MINISTRY EXPANDS TO MEET AZERBAIJAN'S GROWING INTERNATIONAL TIES

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The basic tasks of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs are defined by the Constitution, the President and the Government of Azerbaijan and include in the first instance, the protection of the sovereignty, security, and inviolability of the territorial integrity and borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well as the rights and the interests of Azerbaijanis abroad, the promotion via diplomatic means of the interests of Azerbaijan, international peace and security, and the broadening of bilateral and multilateral contacts.

In recent years and under the direction of President Ilham Aliyev, the foreign ministry has expanded its operations in all of these areas. It continues to open ever more embassies and consulates. Over the last year alone, it has established embassies in Argentina, Estonia, Croatia, Serbia, and Libya, a consulate in Batumi, and in the coming year, it will open additional diplomatic missions in South Africa, Brazil, Iraq and Vietnam.

To staff these new posts and to carry out its responsibilities, the foreign ministry has had to recruit and train new diplomats. Since 2005, it has recruited new ones on the basis of examinations which are administered to those who have training in international relations and international law. It has established special educational programs for junior diplomats and constantly sends them to special courses to increase their skills in languages, negotiations, diplomatic correspondence, and other diplomatic requirements. And it has given them time to study both in Azerbaijani and foreign higher educational institutions.

Particularly important in this regard is the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy. Headed by Deputy Foreign Minister Hafiz Pashayev, ADA currently prepares diplomats for the foreign ministry as well as for other government institutions which play a role in international affairs. At the present time, all new hires at the foreign ministry are sent to ADA for a six month course which introduces them to diplomatic work. After the successful completion of this course, the young diplomats are sent for a month-long internship at an embassy or consulate abroad.

One increasingly important part of the foreign ministry's work concerns consular issues, particularly the protection of the rights and freedoms of Azerbaijanis abroad and the preparation or improving of the regulations for visitors to Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, there are a number of problems in this area which have not yet been overcome. Among these are the difficulties Azerbaijani embassies face in registering all Azerbaijanis living abroad, the lack of diplomatic missions in countries where Azerbaijanis are visitors or resident, and the existence of a certain number of Azerbaijanis who for one reason or another are living in another country illegally.

In order to try to overcome these and other problems and to improve the protection of the rights and interests of Azerbaijanis abroad, the foreign ministry is now conducting biennial conferences of the heads of consular staffs in embassies and consulates in general to discuss how best to proceed and to share best practices.

Consular services involve another set of issues as well. The foreign ministry routinely intervenes when citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan confront difficulties in embassies or consulates of foreign countries accredited in Azerbaijan in getting the necessary visas to travel abroad. And the foreign ministry is responsible for the granting of visas to foreigners who want to visit Azerbaijan for tourism, work, and other purposes.

This last task has become especially important after President Ilham Aliyev's decision to declare 2011 the Year of Tourism in our country. In order to boost the number of tourists, the Republic of Azerbaijan has simplified the visa application process so that no one will have to wait more than 15 days after applying and is allowing almost all applicants to apply electronically. Moreover, under the rules set by President Ilham Aliyev on September 13, 2010, some foreigners—falling under a category specified in

the rules—arriving at Heydar Aliyev International Airport can apply directly for a visa at the consular office which the foreign ministry maintains there.

Given the variety of these tasks, it should not surprise anyone that the foreign ministry which almost did not exist at the end of Soviet times is now a large and growing enterprise working on behalf of Azerbaijanis and the Azerbaijani state. Given the increasing interconnectedness of the world and the growing role of Azerbaijan in international affairs of all kinds, the foreign ministry will continue to grow in the years to come.

AZERBAIJAN HAS REALIZED ITS NATIONAL IDEA

Paul Goble
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In the June 9 *Bakinsky Rabochiy*, Ramiz Mehdiyev, the head of the Presidential Administration, argues that contemporary Azerbaijan reflects the successful realization of the country's national idea, an achievement that sets it apart not only from other post-Soviet states, but also from many other countries around the world and one that means Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people have been able and will continue to be able to avoid many of the problems that countries blessed with enormous energy resources or cursed with still unresolved problems cannot. [1]

The creation of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic in 1918, Mehdiyev writes, became "the objective completion of the process of the self-consciousness of the Azerbaijani people." The Azerbaijani national idea and "Azerbaijaniness" as a consolidating ideology had "acquired more or less complete content" for the times, and both played a key role not only in developing the national spirit, but also saving the Azerbaijani people from being pushed out of its historical territory.

Because Azerbaijanis viewed what they were doing at that time as the logical continuation of the process of national formation, the presidential advisor says, they had a very different view of what 1918 meant that did many of the other peoples of Eurasia, a pattern that was to be repeated in 1991 and even more recently. Other nations, including the Russians, "could not liberate themselves from the idea" that 1917-1918 represented a "break of historical tradition" and thus could not see the kind of continuities that Azerbaijanis have been able to feel.

In the case of both 1917 and then 1991, many other peoples feel compelled either to view the past as "cursed" from which there is nothing worth taking or as an "ideal" that their countries should work to restore. According to Mehdiyev, "contemporary Azerbaijan became practically the only country on the space of the former USSR in which people were able to avoid 'the complexes' both of the first and the second type and, thanks to the appearance of the responsible leadership first of Heydar Aliyev and then of Ilham Aliyev to establish in the consciousness of the ruling elite and the population an adequate balance between continuity and renewal, between respect for historical national traditions and a striving for the future and not to the past."

"The Azerbaijani national idea has passed a long path of defining priorities in the course of which at the initial state appeared a religious component, which in the future gradually was transformed into a cultural-historical paradigm of national self-consciousness or Turkism." As a result, he writes, "the evolution of social thought in Azerbaijan in the 19th and 20th centuries" followed the pattern of "Turkization, Islamization, and Europeanization," a course that is reflected and retained in the three colors of the Azerbaijani flag.

This sense of continuity among Azerbaijanis, along with a focus on the future, sets the country apart from Russia even with regard to more recent events. "In Russia, it is now acceptable simply to denounce 'the accursed 1990s,' and to erect 'an iron curtain' between them and the contemporary period." However, according to a Russian analyst Oleg Tziganov, this approach means that Russians are not in a position to learn from their own mistakes, something that Azerbaijan's very different attitude toward the past has allowed it to take advantage of.

The present leadership of Azerbaijan, Mehdiyev writes, fully recognizes the pluses and the minuses that "the first years of the restoration of independence" after 1991 brought Azerbaijan. After a series of problems that threatened the existence of the country, Heydar Aliyev returned to power, to the great good fortune of Azerbaijan. "The course of negative social-political processes clearly dictated that only a person of truly historic scale" would be capable of rescuing the country and doing so by incorporating its national idea.

What Heydar Aliyev did, Tziganov says, can be clearly seen if one draws the comparison between him and Russia's Vladimir Putin. "Comparing him and Heydar Aliyev, one can conclude that this is a comparison between a technocrat, effective, active, energetic and popular, and the leader of a nation who was able to arm himself with a national idea. Putin," Tziganov argues, "was able to restore statehood, build a power vertical, and struggle with selfish oligarchs [but] Heydar Aliyev rose to the heights not only of political but also of spiritual leadership."

The national idea that Heydar Aliyev made use of and advanced was "an inspired integrative conception of national self-consciousness which expressed the fate of the people, its calling, and mobilized national energy for the realization of fateful tasks." Clearly, "in a multi-national state, the national idea, in order to preserve territorial integrity must consider the interests of the entire population of the country independent of language, ethnic or confessional differences."

"In this sense, one must recognize the following," Tziganov continues. "If the Russian multi-national people under the leadership of Putin still could not recognize itself and acquire a national idea [that would conform to its idea of itself, its past and its future], the Azerbaijani people during the period of the rule of Heydar Aliyev already acquired its national idea." That has allowed Azerbaijan to escape many of the problems that Russia continues to face.

But Mehdiyev notes that "the political development of the last 20 years has shown that Azerbaijani society would not have been able to get by with a national idea alone, that the country needed a new and contemporary political ideology based on national interests. Namely for this reason the definition of the ideological construction of contemporary Azerbaijan is extremely important." That definition of course is about "Azerbaijaniness," and one can say that unlike Russia, Azerbaijan has over the last 18 years defined that in a way that satisfies the people of Azerbaijan.

At the same time, Tziganov points out, Russia has not been able "to overcome the psychology" of a raw materials supplier even as Azerbaijan "guided by the ideology of Azerbaijaniness has proceeded along the path of integration of its unique land into a number of information-cognitive civilizations, that is, of societies which are based on knowledge." The leadership of the country first under Heydar Aliyev and now under Ilham Aliyev, Mehdiyev says, have recognized and resolved "the problem of the mobilization of the socially active strata of society" and spread these ideas to the entire population. These ideas are reflected in the 1995 Constitution and accepted by the Azerbaijani people as their own.

Mehdiyev concludes that "the main constituent elements of the Azerbaijan national idea in the 21st century" are the following: "the preservation of the state, territorial integrity and independence, the all-around development of the economy, the well-being of citizens, contemporary standards of education, spiritual development, democracy and security" with all the ramifications of each. Because there is agreement on these and because they are seen as part of a continuum rather than of a fragmented history, Azerbaijanis, the presidential advisor suggests, can look to the future with confidence.

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/272168.html>, accessed 14 June 2011.

MAY I INTRODUCE AZERBAIJAN? THE KARABAKH FOUNDATION'S INDIVIDUAL APPROACH TO CULTURAL DIPLOMACY

Diana Cohen Altman
Executive Director
Karabakh Foundation

In the competition for the hearts and minds of Americans, the Karabakh Foundation recognizes the power of personality. Few Americans can describe Azerbaijan. And yet anywhere in the United States where *mugham* is played or a magnificent Azerbaijani carpet is unveiled, Americans stand ready to welcome the "newcomer." Enter the Karabakh Foundation.

The Karabakh Foundation launched in 2010 as a 501(c)(3) U.S. cultural charity foundation. The foundation's mission is to "increase awareness and understanding in the United States of the cultural heritage and traditions of the country of Azerbaijan, the Caucasus area, and the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan."

The foundation's outreach approach embraces the range of factors that influence anyone's decision to embark on a friendship with a newcomer. *Mugham* and carpets serve as outstanding calling cards, no doubt. But it is experiences and not products of culture that bond peoples. The "exotic" fascinates, and the familiar endears.

In just a year, the Karabakh Foundation has captured a loyal following that defies classification by age, gender, or other background. The foundation has accomplished this not simply by hosting world-class concerts for hundreds and thousands of individuals (such as Natig Rhythm Ensemble and the Rast Group), presenting dance performances at one of Washington's premiere cultural festivals, mounting professional exhibits of art by Azerbaijani artists, presenting the record-breaking Azerbaijani Radio Hour, or by publishing a thoughtful publication series entitled *Karabakh: Looking Back, Looking Forward*, among other outreach programs. Rather, the Karabakh Foundation has engaged Americans in a relationship that each participant designs according to tastes and interests.

Rather than demand full attention, particularly in this age of information overload, the foundation's outreach allows for varying degrees of commitment. Staff designs each program to reach specific audiences without trying to appeal to everyone. For those who sustain a deep interest in the topic, the foundation is ready to suggest follow-up, from reading materials on www.KarabakhFoundation.org to becoming a foundation's "cultural ambassador" by participating in substantive program initiatives. The intended outcome of all activities remains Azerbaijan's presence in U.S. consciousness.

The Azerbaijani Radio Hour is somewhat emblematic of the foundation's "cafeteria-style" approach to sharing Azerbaijani culture. Each week's one-hour show focuses on musical accomplishments, cultural themes, and/or personalities that translate Azerbaijani culture for U.S. audiences. Estimates suggest that some 1,000 individuals listen to or download the show each week—many more listen to the show on the Web. The friendly, somewhat informal, presentation style highlights the foundation's conversational approach to outreach.

The 2011-12 iteration of the Azerbaijani Radio Hour will feature more short segments and more unexpected themes and pairings. Entertainment and education, as always, will complement one another in the show. Plans include special features on U.S.-Azerbaijan friendships over the years, a conversation about the foundation's initiative in digital mapping of Azerbaijani historic sites, some musical performances gearing up for next year's Eurovision, and more.

The foundation's focus on easily accessible programs has not meant sacrificing the interests of serious dilettantes or of scholars. The organization's *Azerbaijani Rug Initiative* embodies the foundation's "layered" approach to programming. Rug programming began with a talk in the showroom of longtime Washington, D.C., carpet dealer David Zahirpour. Several participants expressed amazement at the extensive role of Azerbaijan in the design and production of "Oriental carpets." The foundation followed up with the celebrations at the Textile Museum, including a modest display about Azerbaijan's role in the world of oriental carpets. The foundation now is publicizing an invitation for individuals to become part of the *Azerbaijani Rug Initiative*, which is planned to be a virtual and in-person forum.

A diverse corps of volunteers plays a vital role in the foundation's cultural diplomacy. Via the individual passions and expertise of each volunteer—who have come from Azerbaijan, from other countries, from across the United States—the foundation again engages the human dynamic. These cultural ambassadors are helping to build, among other things, an online exhibition entitled *Azerbaijan Artifacts* that will allow others to explore their own interests. This exhibition focuses on material

artifacts showcasing Azerbaijani culture. From musical instruments to coins to postage stamps, the story emerges of a country with much to tell.

The foundation's cultural diplomacy will be enriched as the foundation continues to build its Board of Advisors. Content experts have made outstanding contributions to many of the foundation's activities to date. Culinary historian Amy Riolo led the development of the foundation's soon-to-be-published Karabakh cookbook. The book is a compendium of food and culture that is guaranteed to expand world consciousness of Azerbaijan's ancient and modern legacy.

The foundation is fortunate to have several "big personalities" to draw on in engaging Americans. The enthusiasm of Azerbaijan's youth, manifested recently in the post-Eurovision exuberance of Azeri students in the United States, permeates many foundation activities. The foundation recently sponsored outdoor performances of Azerbaijani music and dance at the Celebration of Textiles at the Textile Museum in Washington, D.C. The videotape of this event reveals a mostly young Azeri demographic eager to share the beauty and sophistication of their culture. The foundation has launched a *Young Professional* division that emphasizes "bring an American friend" to the group's casual get-togethers and other programs.

Just as foundation staff and volunteers seek to engage stakeholders in a dynamic relationship, we each derive inspiration from personalities who inhabit our world. Several of us Americans have become enamored of Azerbaijani musical icon Uzeyir Hajibayov. Breathtaking musical compositions aside, Hajibayov seems to us a first-class practitioner of cultural diplomacy. He did not stop at preserving and furthering Azerbaijani musical tradition; he recognized the need to keep culture flowing for his contemporaries. Had Hajibayov worried simply about posterity, who would have experienced the culture firsthand in order to pass it along to future generations?

As the foundation takes stock of our impact on Americans, we have in mind a historic-personality construct. That is, we envision an Azerbaijani born in 1917, who would have experienced the Russian Empire, the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic, the Soviet Union, and the Republic of Azerbaijan. This person also would carry a sense of Azerbaijan's ancient legacy, and, ideally, the country's modern persona. How convenient would that be—to introduce such a person to fellow Americans. In the meantime, the Karabakh Foundation has endless material with which to celebrate Azerbaijan here in the United States.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev says that "the status quo must be changed and the occupation forces of Armenia must leave the lands they have seized" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272335.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "there has been "definite progress" in the course of talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem with agreement on some issues and a reduction in differences on others, but "the main principle" of Azerbaijan

remains "the achievement of a result and not the process of the talks"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/272892.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration says that "Baku had been bitterly disappointed by international mediation efforts" on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict
(<http://www.nytimes.com/2011/06/01/world/asia/01azerbaijan.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "the main thing which we have been able to achieve is not to allow a new war." His US counterpart Robert Bradtke adds that the Minsk Group has "shown itself to be effective" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273396.html>).

US President Barak Obama in a message to President Ilham Aliyev says that "thanks to the far-sighted" policies of Heydar Aliyev were "laid the foundation of the East-West energy corridor" and cooperation on energy matters between Azerbaijan and Western countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/271725.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the United States is beginning "a new phase of cooperation with Azerbaijan in the security area in order to help better defend the energy structure of the country in the Caspian"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/272704.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

June 15

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that June 15, 1993, has entered the history of Azerbaijan as the Day of National Salvation (<http://news.day.az/politics/273273.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that his organization is "satisfied" by the fact that the Party of Justice and Development will continue in power in Turkey (<http://news.day.az/politics/273315.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that as a result of the return to power of Heydar Aliyev on June 15, 1993, Azerbaijan "avoided a civil war, the loss of its national statehood and the loss of those achievements which the country had achieved as a result of the restoration of its independence"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/273191.html>).

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt says that "we are at the beginning of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/273383.html>).

Peter Semneby, the former special representative of the European Union in the South Caucasus, says that the appointment of a new special representative in his

place at the start of September would help promote the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/273404.html>).

Miroslav Lajčák, the head of the European Service of Foreign Affairs for Questions of Russia, Eastern Partnership, and Western Balkans, says the European Union is ready to participate in negotiations on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/273401.html>).

Thomas Melia, U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor, begins a visit to Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/273359.html>).

A roundtable at Baku on the issue of "NATO: A Political and Military Alliance of the 21st Century" includes speeches by Nicolae Urechi, Romanian ambassador to Azerbaijan and the alliance's representative in Baku, and Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/273358.html>).

June 14

Prime Minister Arthur Rasizade receives Uzbekistan Defense Minister Major General Kabul Berdiyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/273214.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri to discuss the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway (<http://news.day.az/economy/273160.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili in Tbilisi (<http://news.day.az/politics/273173.html>).

Bahar Muradova, Milli Majlis vice speaker, says that "the real independence of Azerbaijan began on June 15, 1993," a date when Heydar Aliyev assumed power for the second time and which is now marked as the Day of National Salvation (<http://news.day.az/politics/273076.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that if after the summit meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia hope for a peaceful settlement is lost, then "Azerbaijan could liberate its lands from occupation by military means" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273261.html>).

Agiya Nakhchivanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the national idea of Azerbaijan has a life affirming force and continues to inspire the people" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273247.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that he does not consider "serious" suggestions that Armenian field commanders would resist Yerevan in the event of progress on the Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/273032.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, the head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, welcomes the continuation in office of Turkey's Party of Justice and Development in a message to Turkish religious affairs minister, Mehmet Gormez (<http://news.day.az/politics/273125.html>).

Azerbaijani and Georgian experts complete the delimitation of 300 of the 480 kilometers of the border between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/273194.html>).

Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan says that Yerevan is counting on progress toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict during the summit meeting of the presidents of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia in Kazan later in June (<http://news.day.az/politics/273145.html>).

Roland Kobia, European Union representative in Azerbaijan, says that negotiations to ease the visa regime between Azerbaijan and the EU will begin in the near future (<http://news.day.az/politics/273098.html>).

Lenka Andrisova, a member of the Czech parliament, says that she sees "a growing potential in Azerbaijani-Czech relations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273056.html>).

Mustafa Kabakci, a deputy of the ruling Party of Justice and Development Party in Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that "Turkey always will occupy a position in common with Azerbaijan on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273022.html>).

June 13

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says following a meeting with his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze that there has been "definite progress" in the course of talks on the Karabakh problem with agreement on some issues and a reduction in differences on others, but "the main principle" of Azerbaijan remains "the achievement of a result and not the process of the talks" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272892.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan is interested in a strong and independent Georgia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/273012.html>), while his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze says that the two countries are "strategic partners" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272986.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives his Swedish counterpart Carl Bildt (<http://news.day.az/politics/272945.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives his Uzbekistan counterpart Kabul Berdiyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/272963.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential administration, says that the possibility of achieving definite progress at the Kazan summit "depends not only on Azerbaijan, but also on Armenia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272876.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential administration, says that Azerbaijan is ready to adopt a law on defamation equal to those throughout Europe but not more far-reaching than in any European country (<http://news.day.az/politics/272920.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential administration, says that Baku respects the choice of the Turkish people and is

pleased that the strategic partnership between the two countries will continue (<http://news.day.az/politics/272915.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that states "which do not recognize international law in the end lose their independence," something he says threatens to happen to Armenia if it continues on its current course in Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/272686.html>).

Malahat Ibrahimgizi, an Azerbaijani delegate to the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO, says that that body is discussing a document on the Karabakh issue (<http://news.day.az/politics/272987.html>).

Sinan Ogan, a member of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Turkey and head of the Turkish-Azerbaijani Circle, is elected to Turkey's Grand National Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/272936.html>).

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt says that "the European model can be applied to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272890.html>).

June 12

President Ilham Aliyev telephones Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272850.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, meets with Turkish President Abdulla Gul while she is in Turkey as an election observer for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (<http://news.day.az/politics/272820.html>).

June 11

President Ilham Aliyev says that "the status quo must be changed and the occupation forces of Armenia must leave the lands they have seized" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272335.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in Moscow with his Russian and Armenian counterparts, Sergey Lavrov and Edvard Nalbandyan, to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/272735.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that Azerbaijan is ready to cooperate with any Turkish government formed after the elections there (<http://news.day.az/politics/272729.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the United States is beginning "a new phase of cooperation with Azerbaijan in the security area in order to help better defend the energy structure of the country in the Caspian" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272704.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, opens the American-Azerbaijani Education Center in Baku (<http://news.day.az/society/272657.html>).

June 10

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Slovenian counterpart Danilo Turk in Ljubljana (<http://news.day.az/politics/272597.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev takes part in a NATO conference of those states which, although not members of the alliance, are supporting the international forces in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272490.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfaz Garayev receives Iraq's ambassador to Baku Heydar al-Barrak (<http://news.day.az/economy/272582.html>).

Ramiz Mehdiyev, head of the Presidential Administration, meets with his Russian counterpart Sergey Naryshkin to discuss preparations for the Baku International Humanitarian Forum (<http://news.day.az/politics/272471.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, speaks at various venues in Berlin on Azerbaijani affairs (<http://news.day.az/politics/272578.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, says that "relations between Azerbaijan and Russia are proceeding to a qualitatively new level" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272594.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that recent statements by Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, the deputy chairman of the Russian Duma, represent an effort to interfere in the internal affairs of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272587.html>).

Aynur Sofiyeva, the deputy chairman of the State Committee on Problems of the Family, Women and Children, says that Baku is preparing a fourth report for the United Nations on the status of the rights of the child in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272575.html>).

Matthew Bryza, the US ambassador to Baku, says that the issue of the joint use of the Gabal radar station by Russia and the US is not being discussed, adding that it would "not be a bad idea" if the Russian and NATO radar systems could "cooperate" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272593.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Armenia wants to establish a false image of its armed forces" and is thus "setting up its ally Russia" to support Yerevan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272314.html>).

Arjen Uijterlinde, the Netherlands' ambassador to Baku, says that there are good opportunities for cooperation between Dutch and Azerbaijani firms (<http://news.day.az/economy/272525.html>).

June 9

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Serbian counterpart Boris Tadić in Belgrade (<http://news.day.az/politics/271938.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirmed changes in the law "on the legal defense of models of Azerbaijani folklore" that have been copyrighted (<http://news.day.az/politics/272231.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku may increase the rent for the Gabala radar station (<http://news.day.az/politics/272259.html>).

Deputy Ecology and Natural Resources Minister Rauf Hajiyev takes part in a Tehran meeting of the Organization of Economic Cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/272109.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, meets with Macedonian Foreign Minister Antonio Miloski in Skopje (<http://news.day.az/politics/272306.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that claims by Armenian parliamentarians that Azerbaijan is conducting "a destructive policy toward Armenia in international institutions" do not correspond to reality (<http://news.day.az/politics/272147.html>).

Nariman Agayev, president of the Baku Center for Research on Stable Development, says that Azerbaijan has "no particular need" to join the World Trade Organization in the next two decades (<http://news.day.az/economy/272142.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issue a joint statement on their visit to the region (<http://news.day.az/politics/272352.html>).

James Appathurai, NATO special representative for the South Caucasus, says that joint military operations in Afghanistan and the experience Azerbaijan has gained from them help to promote the modernization of the Azerbaijani armed forces" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272219.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry issues a statement saying that delaying the process of agreeing on the concrete principles of Karabakh peace-making would be "counter-productive" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272290.html>).

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisyan says that the Minsk Group is "close to success" and that "Armenia is interested" in regularizing relations with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/272182.html>).

Ali Bilge Cankorel, the head of the OSCE Baku office, says that Azerbaijan has made visible progress in improving relations between the police and the population (<http://news.day.az/politics/272172.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of the European Union office in Baku, says that European demand for gas means that there should be joint efforts not only to develop new routes to carry it but also new fields as well (<http://news.day.az/economy/272164.html>).

June 8

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Richard Morningstar, special representative of the US secretary of state for energy issues in Eurasia, and tells

him that Azerbaijan is interested in supplying Europe with energy (<http://news.day.az/economy/271971.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Miroslav Lajcak, managing director of the European External Action Service for Russia, Eastern Neighbourhood, and Western Balkans (<http://news.day.az/politics/272002.html>).

Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev participates in the Seventh World Islamic Economic Forum in Astana (<http://news.day.az/economy/272111.html>).

Ali Hasanov, chairman of the State Committee on Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, receives a delegation of the World Affairs Councils of America (<http://news.day.az/politics/272095.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku continues to give "great attention" to the joint declaration of the three OSCE Minsk Group co-chair country presidents at Deauville (<http://news.day.az/politics/271980.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, says that "Russia is devoting a great deal of effort for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272084.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, president of AMOR, says that Eurovision 2012 will be "a marvelous opportunity to talk about our country, culture, traditions and history" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271993.html>).

The State Committee on Work with Religious Structures calls the European Commission report on religious freedom in Azerbaijan "superficial" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272116.html>).

The Supreme Court of Azerbaijan and the Supreme Administrative Court of Baden-Wurtemberg in Germany agree to cooperate (<http://news.day.az/politics/271977.html>).

Nabucco Gas Pipeline International signs in Turkey cooperation agreements with the Nabucco transit countries (<http://news.day.az/economy/272052.html>).

The Russian embassy in Azerbaijan introduces online forms for applications for passports and receipt of Russian citizenship (<http://news.day.az/politics/272093.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that "Azerbaijan and Russia plan to break a record in trade" (<http://news.day.az/politics/272048.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation are working carefully to resolve the problems of residents of two border villages where the majority of residents are Russian citizens (<http://news.day.az/politics/272030.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that "today negotiators on the Karabakh conflict have a period of hope" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271988.html>).

Günther Oettinger, EU commissioner for energy, says that "the decision about the supply of Azerbaijani gas to Europe will be historic" (<http://news.day.az/economy/271962.html>).

June 7

President Ilham Aliyev receives Norwegian Crown Prince Haakon (<http://news.day.az/politics/271666.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs a directive on the composition of the Azerbaijani side of the International Commission on Economics and Trade between Azerbaijan and Serbia (<http://news.day.az/politics/271915.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Richard Morningstar, special representative of the US secretary of state for energy issues in Eurasia (<http://news.day.az/politics/271861.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that agreement has been reached on the composition of peacekeeping forces for Karabakh and that the resolution of Karabakh conflict must be dealt with step by step (<http://news.day.az/politics/271744.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Miroslav Lajcak, managing director of the European External Action Service for Russia, Eastern Neighbourhood, and Western Balkans (<http://news.day.az/politics/271780.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that "certain positive steps" have now been made in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict as evidenced by the Deauville declaration of the three Minsk Group co-chair country presidents (<http://news.day.az/politics/271688.html>).

Ramil Gurbanov and Orkhan Rustamly of the Azerbaijani consulate general in Los Angeles take part in the annual reception organized by the State of California in Sacramento (<http://news.day.az/politics/271697.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenians know well that remaining in a state of war with Azerbaijan can put Armenia in a still worse position than it is at present (<http://news.day.az/politics/271644.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the political leadership of Armenia must think about the future of their own country" and thus recognize that they will benefit from an agreement with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/271643.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that "in Azerbaijan much is being done for the development of the Russian language" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271755.html>).

US President Barak Obama in a message to President Ilham Aliyev says that "thanks to the far-sighted" policies of Heydar Aliyev were "laid the foundation of

the East-West energy corridor" and cooperation on energy matters between Azerbaijan and Western countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/271725.html>).

Georgian Energy Minister Aleksandr Khetaguri says that the AGRI project can be realized "much sooner" than other pipeline projects carrying gas to Europe (<http://news.day.az/economy/271771.html>).

The three Minsk Group co-chairs visit Khankendi (<http://news.day.az/politics/271862.html>).

Andre Kasprzik, personal representative of the OSCE chairman-in-office for the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, says that "the Karabakh conflict still has not been resolved" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271788.html>).

Sergey Kuznetsov, the representative of the Venetian Commission of the Council of Europe, says that his group hopes to work "constructively" with Azerbaijan on revisions in the law on political parties (<http://news.day.az/politics/271781.html>).

Igor Popov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "the process around Nagorno-Karabakh has become more active and it is possible to expect results soon" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271777.html>).

Ali Bilge Cankorel, head of the OSCE Baku office, says that his representative considers the adoption of a new law on political parties to be an important condition for the development of democracy and pluralism in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/271768.html>).

June 6

President Ilham Aliyev receives Miroslav Lajcak, managing director of the European External Action Service for Russia, Eastern Neighbourhood, and Western Balkans (<http://news.day.az/politics/271645.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Günther Oettinger, EU commissioner for energy (<http://news.day.az/politics/271633.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/271555.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, president of AMOR, meets with Valentina Matvienko, the governor of St. Petersburg (<http://news.day.az/politics/271785.html>).

Ecology and Natural Resources Minister Huseynulu Bagirov says that political reasons are behind the continued operation of Armenia's Metsamor atomic power station (<http://news.day.az/society/271538.html>).

Ecology and Natural Resources Minister Huseynulu Bagirov says that Azerbaijan is "realizing a multitude of ecology projects" (<http://news.day.az/economy/271505.html>).

The Justice Ministry de-registers the Iranian Imdad Committee of Imam Khomeini (<http://news.day.az/society/271607.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the situation on the line of the Karabakh front is dangerously explosive" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271512.html>).

Richard Morningstar, special representative of the US secretary of state for energy issues in Eurasia, says that it is "very important" that Azerbaijan have a variety of markets for its gas production (<http://news.day.az/economy/271561.html>).

June 5

President Ilham Aliyev receives FIFA President Sepp Blatter and UEFA President Michele Platini (<http://news.day.az/politics/271440.html>).

Finance Minister Samir Sharifov takes part in a Kyiv meeting of the CIS Finance Ministers Council (<http://news.day.az/economy/271374.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, president of AMOR, takes part in the dedication of Nizami Gandzhavi Square in St. Petersburg (<http://news.day.az/politics/271438.html>).

June 4

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in Washington with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to discuss the strategic partnership of the two countries and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/271235.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, president of AMOR, opens the Third Conference of the Azerbaijani Youth Organizations of Russia in St. Petersburg (<http://news.day.az/politics/271276.html>).

Adil Garibov, the director of the Institute of Radiation Problems of Azerbaijan's National Academy of Sciences, says that Azerbaijan and Germany will cooperate on nuclear research (<http://news.day.az/economy/271299.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that relations between Turkey and Armenia will not be restored until the Karabakh conflict is resolved and that it is unclear what the OSCE Minsk Group can do to resolve it given that it has not done "anything over the past 20 years" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271349.html>).

Congressman Adam Kinzinger joins the Azerbaijan Working Group of the US House of Representatives (<http://news.day.az/politics/271337.html>).

June 3

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Italian counterpart Giorgio Napolitano (<http://news.day.az/politics/271229.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev takes part in ceremonies marking the 150th anniversary of the unification of Italy (<http://news.day.az/politics/270766.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva takes part in the official opening of the Azerbaijani Pavilion at the Venetian Biennale (<http://news.day.az/politics/271004.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Robert Bradtke, the US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/271037.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Ukrainian ambassador to Baku Aleksandr Mishchenko (<http://news.day.az/politics/271180.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that today the Azerbaijani army is the strongest army in the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/271190.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the Azerbaijani army is prepared for military actions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271189.html>).

Gular Ahmadova, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group is without results" (<http://news.day.az/politics/271176.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, meets with Reuven Rivlin, chairman of the Israeli Knesset, on the sidelines of an international conference of women leaders (<http://news.day.az/politics/271145.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the next round of security talks between Azerbaijan and the US will take place in July (<http://news.day.az/politics/271096.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that he "shares the hope of President Obama that the meeting in Kazan will help achieve agreement on the basic principles" of a Karabakh resolution (<http://news.day.az/politics/271083.html>).

Turkey's ROKETSAN begins to fulfill orders from the Azerbaijani armed forces (<http://news.day.az/politics/271098.html>).

June 2

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with US-based news agencies in New York (<http://news.day.az/politics/270846.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov receives Adel Mohammed al-Adaileh, Jordanian ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/270994.html>).

The Center for Strategic Research under the President of Azerbaijan issues a report saying that Azerbaijan's real GDP increased by three times between 2003 and 2010 and its strategic currency reserves increased by 19 times over the same period (<http://news.day.az/economy/270975.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the member countries of the OSCE Minsk Group recognize that the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is inviolable" and that "this principle is supported by practically all the countries of the world" (<http://news.day.az/politics/270785.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that "the Kazan summit of the presidents of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia should be successful and lead to positive results" (<http://news.day.az/politics/270913.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that Moscow will do "everything possible to achieve progress in talks on the resolution of the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh" (<http://news.day.az/politics/270835.html>).

Desire Petrus, a Swedish parliamentarian, says that the decision of her assembly to recognize "the so-called 'Armenian genocide' is a historic mistake" (<http://news.day.az/politics/270907.html>).

June 1

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva is awarded the *Service to the Turkic World* prize by the association of writers and artists of the Turkic world (<http://news.day.az/politics/270830.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov participates in a meeting of the representatives of the Organization of the Islamic Council at the United Nations in New York and seeks support for Azerbaijan's efforts to become a member of the Security Council for 2012-2013 (<http://news.day.az/politics/270601.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister and rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy Hafiz Pashayev visits Saudi Arabia to discuss cooperation with educational institutions there (<http://news.day.az/politics/270638.html>).

Tahir Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan "cannot consider the war over" (<http://news.day.az/politics/270323.html>).

Adil Garibov, the director of the Institute of Radiation Problems of Azerbaijan's National Academy of Sciences, says that Azerbaijan demands from Armenia guarantees that the Metsamor nuclear power station is secure (<http://news.day.az/politics/270721.html>).

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-Moon tells Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov that he expects results from the Nagorno-Karabakh talks (<http://news.day.az/politics/270609.html>).

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich creates a working group on the development of new routes for the passage of Azerbaijani oil and gas through Ukraine (<http://news.day.az/economy/270621.html>).

Fidel Castro Dias-Balart, the son of the leader of the Cuban revolution, visits Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/270751.html>).

After an Azerbaijani protest, Vodafone Egypt has stopped cooperating with the mobile system in Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/270639.html>).

Note to Readers

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