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AZERBAIJAN'S REGIONAL POLICY: THE EURASIAN AND EUROPEAN DIMENSIONS

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Membership in regional organizations (RO) and other multilateral groupings has been a major but largely unexamined component of Azerbaijan's foreign policy since the restoration of the country's independence in 1991. As one analyst notes, Azerbaijan managed to become "a full member of the majority of international and regional organizations" (Musabayov 2009). This article aims to discuss the meaning this achievement has for Azerbaijan and the ways in which the country's engagement in a variety of regional organizations serves its perceived foreign policy objectives.

Immediately and shortly after becoming independent, Azerbaijan joined the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS), the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC), the Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and the Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC). Moreover, on Azerbaijan's initiative, what today is the Organization for Economic Development and Democracy—GUAM took shape in 1997. [1] Except for the OSCE, all of these organizations have a strong economic focus, while lacking a humanitarian, political and security dimension. An ultimate aim for most of them is the establishing of security communities through in-depth regional economic and soft-security integration. The geographic dimension of what is viewed as a "region" ranges from varying alliances of former Soviet republics and Black Sea neighbors (CIS, [2] BSEC, [3] GUAM) to Central and Western Asian States (ECO, [4] OIC) [5] and beyond (OSCE).

Azerbaijan's place in the landscape of regional and international organizations, however, did not assume final shape during that decade. In 2001 Azerbaijan joined the Council of Europe and in 2011 the Non-Alignment Movement. Since 2004, Azerbaijan has been a partner of the European Neighborhood Policy, which in 2009 launched what has come to be called the Eastern Partnership Program (EaP), a regional format bringing together former Soviet states: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. Although not formally organized as an RO, the EaP shares some of their features, based as it is on four loosely institutionalized platforms created for multilateral cooperation in democracy and good governance, people-to-people contacts, energy security and economic integration. [6] Apart from these regional groupings, Azerbaijan is also a member of the UN and is seeking WTO membership, with negotiations on the latter still pending in their 14th year.

This impressive list of memberships reflects Baku's interest in multilateral regional cooperation and integration, but evaluating the extent to which these serve Azerbaijan's goals is complicated by the fact that the activities of some of these organizations are in conflict with those of others. Indeed, to a certain extent, it appears that Azerbaijan's decision to join ROs is driven by a catch-all principle rather than a genuine commitment to the kind of integration many of these organizations call for.

For example, the OIC frames its cooperation agenda as linked to protection and support of the Islam, while the OSCE and EU promote an understanding of society, human rights and political organization based on values of the enlightenment. The notion of democracy and good governance is specifically important for Western driven RO's like OSCE and the EU, while the CIS, BSEC and GUAM lay much less stress on democracy as a core value. Yet another difference between the post-Soviet (Libman 2007) and European or Western models of regional cooperation (Mitrany 1975; Moravcsik 1993) concerns the way they are organized, top-down in the case of post-Soviet RO's as opposed to bottom-up in Western regional formats: unlike the OSCE, EU and EU-driven initiatives, the CIS, GUAM and BSEC only hesitantly involve non-state economic and societal actors in the development and implementation of regional projects.

Literature on regional cooperation suggests that multiple overlapping memberships may prevent in-depth cooperation and create integration competition (Bremmer and Bailes 1998; Sakwa 2007). Up to now, however, there is little indication of such integration competition in the case of Azerbaijan, almost certainly because Azerbaijan's interest in RO's follows a logic other than integration. Instead,

Azerbaijan uses these memberships to consolidate sovereignty and to restore the country's territorial integrity. As a result, most of its cooperation activities so far have been short-term in character, with only a limited structural impact.

Multilateral agreements like the free trade agreements in CIS and GUAM are weakly enforced (Godzimirski 2007; Tolstov 2008). This mode of cooperation, however, is highly valued by Azerbaijan. Projects directly and immediately benefiting Azerbaijan are welcomed, with little attention devoted to long-term structural integration projects and steps toward supranational structures. [7] Hence, a cooperation practice within the RO's is preferred which does not limit the sovereignty of Azerbaijan on any issue. Azerbaijan's approach is shared by the majority of post-Soviet republics as dynamics within CIS, BSEC and GUAM show. As a result, although cooperation practices often overlap in the different RO's, they hardly impede each other.

With the so called third wave of regionalism, core international actors like the UN increasingly promoted the emergence of RO's and positively sanctioned regional multilateral cooperation commitments of states (Fawcett 2008). From this perspective, Azerbaijan has viewed RO's in the first instance as platforms for raising international awareness of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan has had the most success in this regard with the OIC and GUAM, with both of these organizations issuing declarations in support of Azerbaijan's position. Azerbaijan has also used the CIS as a platform to raise this issue. To the extent that Azerbaijan views its international memberships in this way, having as many memberships as possible makes eminent sense.

Such use of ROs is far easier to reconcile with the post-Soviet model of regionalism than it is with the European approach. To be sure, both Azerbaijan and the European Union recognize the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as the secessionist conflicts on Georgian and Moldovan territory as serious obstacles to multilateral cooperation among the members of the Eastern Partnership. However, while Azerbaijan calls for conflict resolution before cooperation, the EU takes the opposite track.

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Notes

[1] GUAM was founded in 1996 as a loose alignment among Azerbaijan, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. In 1999, Uzbekistan joined the group, only to leave in 2005. In 2006, the first four initiators transformed GUAM into a regional organization.

[2] The CIS includes Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, and Uzbekistan as its members.

[3] BSEC member states are Armenia, Azerbaijan, Bulgaria, Moldova, Romania, Russia, Turkey, and Ukraine.

[4] The Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) includes Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Iran, Pakistan, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan as its members.

[5] Sometimes regarded as International Organization, the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) brings together as many as 56 geographically widely spread member states.

[6] For more information on the Eastern Partnership see http://www.eeas.europa.eu/eastern/index_en.htm (accessed 9 July 2011).

[7] Interviews of the author with state officials involved with the CIS and GUAM.

AZERBAIJAN'S PLACE IN NATO'S EVOLVING STRATEGIC CONCEPT

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NATO nations during the NATO Lisbon Summit held last November endorsed a new Strategic Concept for the Alliance, [1] one that has important implications not only for them but for countries like Azerbaijan which have partnership relations with it as well. That is the case even though from a strictly legal perspective, it remains unclear precisely where the document stands in the hierarchy of NATO documents. But its importance as an indication of alliance policy is clear if one compares it with the previous document of its kind adopted in 1999.

Perhaps the most notable shift between the two documents is that the latter expands both qualitatively and quantitatively the right of the Alliance to engage actively to defend/protect its member states. Thus, the document speaks of "attack" instead of "armed attack" as mentioned in Article 51 of the UN Charter from which the Alliance's Article 5 derives its legal support. Thus, by broadly interpreting the definition, the scope of "attack" would encompass also cyber attack (paragraph 12), attack on vital communication, transport and transit routes (paragraph 13), even climate change, water scarcity and other constraints and restraints of economic and environmental nature (paragraph 15). Paragraphs 4.a and 16 also note "attack," instead of "armed attack." The 1999 Strategic Concept spoke only of action in the case of a "threat of aggression." [2]

The phrase "defend one another...against new threats to the safety of our citizens" empowers the Alliance to react against anything it views as a threat. This is significant because although the document does not define threats in any detail, it specifies that the Alliance may deploy its military forces where and when required. As will be seen, the term "...where required" is harmonized in the document with the constraints set out in paragraph 1 of Article 52 of the UN Charter. [3] Although Paragraph 4 of the document enumerates the core tasks of the Alliance regarding deterrence and defense, a close reading of the document as a whole suggests that its authors are now focusing on the following threats and challenges in particular: the proliferation of weapons, terrorism, instability or conflicts beyond NATO borders that threaten Alliance security, including by extremism, terrorism, and trans-national illegal activities such as trafficking in arms, narcotics and people, as well as cyber attack and other attacks on vital infrastructures.

This represents a dramatic expansion of the terms of reference of the 1999 document, which allowed for intervention only in case of "threat of aggression" or "armed attack." In all other cases, that document only called for consultation among the allies as required under Article 4 of the Washington Treaty.

This is much close to the language of Article 51 of the UN Charter which does not allow invasion even in case of "threat." Indeed, it requires that the UN Security Council (UNSC) determine the existence of any threat to the peace, breach of the peace, or act of aggression [4] and authorizes intervention only if an armed attack occurs. [5] Put simply, a literal interpretation of the Article 51 rules out the right of "preemptive self-defence."

The new NATO Concept says that the Alliance will remain committed to the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and reaffirms the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security. But—and this may prove critical—the Concept does not specify whether Security Council

authorization is necessary for the Alliance's future operations, a shift in emphasis from the 1999 Concept. That earlier NATO document also recognized the primary responsibility of the Security Council for the maintenance of international peace and security, and it mentioned that the Security Council contributed to security and stability in the Euro-Atlantic area. The new NATO document envisages only working together with the United Nations to prevent crisis, manage conflicts and stabilize post-conflict situations while not sticking to any specific geographic dimension.

The document also specifies that crises and conflicts beyond NATO's borders can pose a direct threat to the security of Alliance, and it leaves to the Alliance itself to determine which represent such threats. Indeed, reading the document as a whole, the radius of "conflict" area could be interpreted to encompass any territory around the globe. Engaging in crisis management "when necessary" appears to equate with "where possible," an expansive reading of NATO's readiness to act out of area.

All of this has an impact on the relationship between NATO and its partners, including Azerbaijan, especially since the new Concept uses new terms like "*new partners*" and "*partners around the globe*," thereby opening the way for expansion without any limit geographically and involving ever more countries in NATO-led operations and their design. At the same time, however, "more consultations" and similar language do not provide an explicit role for partners in the decision making process. To that extent, the status of partners in NATO resembles that of observers in some international organizations.

That raises the question as to why partner countries should be interested in endorsing NATO's actions, especially since the Alliance retains its commitment to safeguard in the first instance the freedom and security only of its members. Moreover, NATO is not the responsible body for ensuring global peace and security and NATO does not guarantee the security of its partners. Though territorial integrity is one of the important principles of the 1994 PfP Framework Document, NATO has not done much to restore that of Azerbaijan even though Baku was one of the first of the partners to subscribe to the document.

** The ideas expressed here reflect the personal views of the author and do not necessarily represent the views of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan or the Mission of the Republic of Azerbaijan to NATO.*

Notes

[1] The full text is available at <http://www.nato.int/lisbon2010/strategic-concept-2010-eng.pdf> (accessed 11 July 2011).

[2] "...Alliance performs the following fundamental security tasks: Deterrence and Defence: To deter and defend against any threat of aggression against any NATO member state as provided for in Articles 5 and 6 of the Washington Treaty" (NATO's Strategic Concept, 24 April 1999, Part I, paragraph 10).

[3] "Nothing in the present Charter precludes the existence of regional arrangements or agencies for dealing with such matters relating to the maintenance of international peace and security as are appropriate for regional action provided that such arrangements or agencies and their activities are consistent with the Purposes and Principles of the United Nations" (UN Charter, Article 52, paragraph 1).

[4] UN Charter, Article 39, available at <http://www.un.org/en/documents/charter/chapter7.shtml> (accessed 11 July 2011).

[5] "Nothing in the present Charter shall impair the inherent right of individual or collective self-defence if an armed attack occurs against a Member of the United Nations, until the Security Council has taken measures necessary to maintain international peace and security. Measures taken by Members in the exercise of this right of self-defence shall be immediately reported to the Security Council and shall not in any way affect the authority and responsibility of the Security Council under the present Charter to take at any time such action as it deems necessary in order to maintain or restore international peace and security" (UN Charter, Article 51).

DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS SHIFT IN AZERBAIJAN'S FAVOR

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Two reports this month—one showing that more Azerbaijanis are moving to Azerbaijan than leaving it as was the case in the 1990s and a second highlighting the demographic collapse of Armenia—call attention to the fact that demographic trends in the South Caucasus are increasingly shifting in Azerbaijan's favor, a pattern certain to affect both the domestic politics and the international relations of all the countries there in the years ahead.

In an interview posted on the website of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, Salim Muslimov, the president of the State Foundation of Social Protection, reported that as Azerbaijan's economic well-being has increased, the relative balance of those leaving the country and those returning has changed in favor of the latter. [1] Between 1990 and 1994 when the Azerbaijani economy was in a state of crisis, he reported, "the number of those leaving Azerbaijan was 342,300, while the number arriving was 211,200. A decade later, between 2000 and 2004, when the economy had improved, "the number of people leaving the country was 28,100, while the number of people arriving was 13,100." In 2005-2009, 12,500 people left the country, Muslimov said, while 12,100 arrived. And he noted that in 2008-2009, "immigration exceeded emigration by 2,000 people."

This pattern shows, he suggested, that "migration processes are mainly connected with economic factors," but he added that "naturally, one must not deny the influence on migration processes of various regional conflicts, as well as national, religious and ethnic problems inside the country"—an obvious reference to the continuing impact of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Armenian occupation of 20 percent of the country.

The overarching trend Muslimov points to has three serious consequences for Azerbaijan and its neighbors. First, the return of those who left, along with the shift in populations generated by the Nagorno-Karabakh war, means that Azerbaijan is

more homogeneously Azerbaijani than at any previous point in the country's history, a pattern that is already affecting domestic political discourse and will have an impact on the re-absorption of areas now populated by ethnic Armenians such as Nagorno-Karabakh and the Lachin corridor.

Second, many of those now returning are Azerbaijanis who left in the 1990s to work in the Russian Federation in particular, and they may prove to be more nationalistic than those who never left, given the experiences that they have had, not all of them happy, in Russian cities during the intervening period. While such attitudes will not determine Azerbaijani state policy, they will affect it, at least at a rhetorical level.

And third, the return of those who left earlier will have a mixed economic impact on the country, possibly affecting rural areas more profoundly than urban ones. On the one hand, the return of those who had been working abroad will mean that the number of people sending remittances home will almost certainly decline, likely reducing the incomes of some villagers in particular. And on the other, the return of skilled people will help boost the Azerbaijani economy still further.

But the second report, released by the United Nations on World Population Day, may have even more immediate and deep-seated consequences for the South Caucasus. As an article in *Zerkalo* notes, that UN report shows that as a result of improvements in health and a reduction in poverty, Azerbaijan's population is increasing, while as a result of economic problems and ever more frequent use of abortion to choose the gender of children, Armenia's population is declining and in ways that are likely to exacerbate that trend. [2]

According to the UN, Azerbaijan's population has been growing at an annual rate of 1.2 percent a year since 2005 and now, as of July 1, stands at 9,165,000 people. Of these, 22.3 percent are children 14 and under, 72 percent people between the ages of 15 and 64, and six percent, 65 or more. Significantly, the Azerbaijani population is almost evenly divided between the sexes, with 49.6 percent being male and 50.4 percent female. The number of marriages has increased over the last year, far more than the number of divorces, and the number of those coming to Azerbaijan in the last year has exceeded the number of those leaving by almost a thousand. All these factors point to a continuing pattern of growth.

The situation in Armenia is very different. There, the UN reports, the population stands at just under three million, but is on track to decline to 2.5 million by mid-century. Because of Armenia's economic difficulties, families are not having enough children for replacement of the population, with the average now standing at 1.5 children per family rather than the 2.1 needed to maintain the existing population.

But as the UN experts note, Armenia faces even more serious problems ahead because of the increasing use of abortions and especially the use of abortions to choose the gender of the child. In the last year alone, the number of abortions in Armenia rose by 10 percent officially and by even more according to expert observers. And according to the National Statistical Service of Armenia, there were 23,000 boys as opposed to 20,900 girls born in the country, meaning that there were 114 newborn boys for every 100 newborn girls. Where abortion is not used in this way, there are normally 105 boys for every 100 girls. And Armenian officials are worried that the existing pattern in Armenia will entail serious problems because, in the words of one expert, there will be "a shortage of future mothers," something that

could push Armenia into a vicious cycle" from which it would be very difficult to escape.

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/economy/277013.html> (accessed 14 July 2011).

[2] See <http://news.day.az/society/278470.html> (accessed 14 July 2011).

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev tells a meeting of the council of ministers that "a change of the status quo requires the liberation of Azerbaijani lands from occupation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278213.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Baku is ready to begin work on a peace agreement on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/278395.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the opinion of the Armenian leadership that Nagorno-Karabakh will be given "an intermediate status" and that this status "will be recognized by the international community is completely absurd and illogical" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278380.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Gabriel Keller, French ambassador to Baku, says that it is "irresponsible" to move away from the Madrid Principles for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/278353.html>).

Göran Lindblad, the former chair of the political affairs committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Russia and the international community must intensify their pressure on Armenia so that Yerevan will pursue a more productive policy on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/277879.html>).

Nikolay Bordyuzha, secretary general of the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty, says in Yerevan that he "wants to repeat the words of the president of Russia that Armenia is a strategic ally of Russia with all the consequences that flow from that" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277130.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

July 15

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs (<http://news.day.az/politics/278725.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Tomash Ayan, the president of the International Federation of Heavy Athletics (<http://news.day.az/politics/278739.html>).

The Foreign Ministry calls the murder of an Azerbaijani child by the Armenian side an act of terror (<http://news.day.az/politics/278808.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that "the murder of [an Azerbaijan] child is an example of the wildness and cruelty of the Armenian side" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278684.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, says that the incident involving the murder by Armenians of a 13 year old Azerbaijani child is "yet another testament" to "the barbaric policy against the Azerbaijani state and people" by the Armenian authorities (<http://news.day.az/politics/278711.html>).

Oktay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union have risen to the level of mutually profitable cooperation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278819.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, receives a delegation of the European Parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/278773.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that international organizations should react sharply to "acts of vandalism" by Armenia such as the murder of a child (<http://news.day.az/politics/278718.html>).

Bakhtiyar Aliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the Armenian side constantly makes absurd declarations which it tries to impose on the world community" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278599.html>).

Audronius Azubalis, Lithuanian foreign minister and OSCE chairman-in-office, says that reaching a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is "achievable" and that "the sides must consider this their most important task" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278766.html>).

The Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy hosts a conference on "Natural Gas of the Caspian: Current Tendencies and Future Scenarios" (<http://news.day.az/economy/278813.html>).

Azerbaijanis in the United States call on Washington to put pressure on Armenia in order to reach a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/278744.html>).

The US embassy in Baku calls for a careful and transparent investigation of the murder of the 13-year-old girl in the Tovuz district of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/278685.html>).

Ross Wilson, former US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that it is clear that the summit meeting in Kazan was not a success and that the process of negotiations will continue (<http://news.day.az/politics/278724.html>).

July 14

President Ilham Aliyev says that "Azerbaijan is the most rapidly developing country in the world" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278616.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov says that the only goal of his ministry is "to defend the security of the Motherland and strengthen independence and statehood" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278453.html>).

The Foreign Ministry dismisses as inappropriate and wrong Armenia's discussion of Nagorno-Karabakh as if it had been a colony, something that it never was (<http://news.day.az/politics/278617.html>).

Faik Bagirov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Turkey, meets with Turkish businessmen in Samsun to promote economic cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/278250.html>).

Sultan Gasymov, the consul general of Azerbaijan in Yekaterinburg, protests Russian media coverage of the ethnic conflict in Sagra (<http://news.day.az/politics/278562.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "the international community recognizes the necessity of changing the status quo in the Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278552.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the increasingly frequent militant declarations of Yerevan are connected now with the fact that Armenia is not in the best of situations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/278410.html>).

Azerbaijani Public Television and *Euronews* sign a cooperation agreement (<http://news.day.az/society/278541.html>).

US President Barak Obama receives Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and discusses the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/278467.html>).

July 13

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Baku is ready to begin work on a peace agreement on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/278395.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan is working closely with Afghanistan officials to secure access to the place where the Azerbaijani plane crashed (<http://news.day.az/politics/278397.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the opinion of the Armenian leadership that Nagorno-Karabakh will be given "an intermediate status" and that this status "will

be recognized by the international community is completely absurd and illogical” (<http://news.day.az/politics/278380.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the international community must increase its pressure on Armenia to secure an agreement on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/278323.html>).

Gabriel Keller, French ambassador to Baku, says that it is “irresponsible” to move away from the Madrid Principles for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/278353.html>).

The Ukrainian foreign ministry responds to an Azerbaijani embassy protest note and says that an Armenian article in a Ukrainian publication does not reflect the views of Kyiv (<http://news.day.az/politics/278352.html>).

July 12

President Ilham Aliyev tells a meeting of the council of ministers that “a change of the status quo requires the liberation of Azerbaijani lands from occupation” (<http://news.day.az/politics/278213.html>). In other comments, he says that “Azerbaijan presents itself to the world as an island of stability and a space of development” (<http://news.day.az/politics/278213.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan’s recent statements are devoid of logic and facts and are directed entirely at a domestic Armenian audience (<http://news.day.az/politics/278139.html>).

Dashgyn Shikarov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Kabul, says that his mission has presented a second note to the Afghanistan foreign ministry requesting assistance in securing the return of the bodies of those who died from a crash of an Azerbaijani plane in that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/278159.html>).

Imamverdi Ismayilov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan’s occupation policies have brought Armenia to the edge of collapse (<http://news.day.az/politics/278205.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan’s approach to its own people is “leading Armenia toward a tragedy” (<http://news.day.az/politics/278003.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, the vice president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, announces the beginning of a new global youth ecological campaign, IDEA – “International Dialogue on Environmental Action” (<http://news.day.az/politics/278351.html>).

Audronius Azubalis, Lithuanian foreign minister and OSCE president-in-office, receives the three co-chairs of the Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/278301.html>).

July 11

The Foreign Ministry says that it was informed in advance of the visit of a Washington Post reporter to Nagorno-Karabakh, has no objections to the visit, and hopes that the American paper will provide an objective portrait of the situation there (<http://news.day.az/politics/277944.html>).

The Third Congress of Azerbaijanis of the World adopts appeals to President Ilham Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/278013.html>) and to the Azerbaijanis of the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/278027.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy and deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that he expects that the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs will be presenting "a serious document" to the leaders of the region during their visit (<http://news.day.az/politics/277892.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that it is surprising that Armenia is interested in the opening of its borders with Turkey but does not specify exactly what those borders are (<http://news.day.az/politics/277804.html>).

The Azerbaijani defense forces are purchasing new weapons systems from Turkey (<http://news.day.az/economy/277918.html>).

Azerbaijani and Chinese officials are discussing the possibility of creating joint free economic zones in the course of the first sessions of the working group on trade and economic cooperation between Azerbaijan and the Xinjiang-Uyghur Autonomous District (<http://news.day.az/economy/277877.html>).

Sattar Sevigin, the head of the Swedish Azerbaijani Federation, says that his group seeks representation in Sweden's parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/278028.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and his American counterpart Barak Obama discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh issue during a telephone call (<http://news.day.az/politics/278048.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/277928.html>).

Goran Lindblad, the former head of the political commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Russia and the international community must intensify their pressure on Armenia so that Yerevan will pursue a more productive policy on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/277879.html>).

July 10

Azerbaijan sends a diplomatic note to the Afghanistan government requesting Kabul's assistance in the return of the bodies of those killed in the crash of an Azerbaijani airplane in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/277811.html>).

July 9

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Baku is studying the most recent proposals made by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev concerning a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/277726.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Ali Bilge Cankorel, the head of the Baku office of the OSCE, on the latter's completion of his service in that post (<http://news.day.az/politics/277741.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Nadir Huseynov says that Baku now has diplomatic missions in 65 countries as well as with numerous international organizations and that all of them work together to promote Azerbaijan's interests and in the first instance an end to the occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/277708.html>).

Sattar Sevigin, president of the Swedish-Azerbaijan Federation, says that a union of Southern Azerbaijani writers living abroad will be established in the near future (<http://news.day.az/society/277759.html>).

Petros Efthymiou, the president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, announces the appointment of Joao Soares as his organization's special representative for the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/277810.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that Ankara will support the liberation of the occupied Azerbaijani lands (<http://news.day.az/politics/277699.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin discusses the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with James Collins, former US ambassador to the Russian Federation (<http://news.day.az/politics/277767.html>).

July 8

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov who presents him with President Dmitry Medvedev's latest proposals on a Nagorno-Karabakh settlement (<http://news.day.az/politics/277597.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Belorussian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich (<http://news.day.az/politics/277634.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives NATO Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges Gábor Iklódy (<http://news.day.az/politics/277632.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Raphaël Martinetti, the president of the International Federation of Associated Wrestling Styles (<http://news.day.az/politics/277629.html>).

Deputy Prime Minister Abid Sharifov says that Azerbaijan has highly professional sappers in its military (<http://news.day.az/politics/277506.html>).

Transportation Minister Ziya Mammadov receives Belorussian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikovich to discuss the possibility of opening a joint enterprise for the repair of Azerbaijani rolling stock (<http://news.day.az/economy/277589.html>).

Khazar Ibrahim, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to NATO, says that "NATO has provided all possible help to the Azerbaijani delegation in order that it can visit Afghanistan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277500.html>).

Ziyad Samadzade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the economy of Armenia is now in terrible shape" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277472.html>).

Azerbaijan lodges a protest note with the Ukrainian foreign ministry in connection with the publication of anti-Azerbaijani materials in the Ukrainian journal *Image* (<http://news.day.az/politics/277524.html>).

Azerbaijan's National Aviation Academy and the Anatolian University of Turkey have signed a cooperation agreement (<http://news.day.az/society/277575.html>).

Eleven permanent representatives to the United Nations meet with Azerbaijani parliamentarians during a visit to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/277626.html>).

The European Union office in Baku reaffirms that "Nagorno-Karabakh is part of Azerbaijan" and consequently the EU "does not discuss Nagorno-Karabakh as if it were some kind of separate region" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277614.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the US has done everything possible to ensure that Azerbaijan will gain access to the place where its plane crashed in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/277514.html>).

Aleksandr Mishchenko, Ukrainian ambassador to Baku, says that Kyiv "supports the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277473.html>).

Gábor Iklódy, assistant secretary general for emerging security challenges of NATO, says that Azerbaijan is "a reliable partner of NATO and that our ties will develop further in the future" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277490.html>).

July 7

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his French counterpart Alain Juppé in Paris to discuss the prospects for negotiations on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/277318.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov is told by his Italian counterpart Franco Frattini that "Italy supports the negotiation process on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277373.html>).

Energy Minister Natig Aliyev heads a high-level Azerbaijani delegation for participation in the second meeting of the Azerbaijani-Italian inter-governmental commission (<http://news.day.az/politics/277268.html>).

Finance Minister Samir Sharifov hosts the second international insurance forum in Baku (<http://news.day.az/economy/277306.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Azerbaijani authorities have "sufficient evidence" that "the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia are being used today for criminal goals" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277252.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, calls for the closure of the Metsamor atomic power station in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/277406.html>).

The State Committee for Work with Religious Structures says that the Apostolic Prefecture of the Roman Catholic Church has now been officially registered in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/society/277434.html>).

Belorussian Prime Minister Mikhail Myasnikov says that Minsk plans for the development of investment and innovation cooperation with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/277442.html>).

Catherine Ashton, the supreme representative of the European Union for international affairs and security policy, says that "the EU supports the mediating role of Russia and of President Dmitry Medvedev personally in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277260.html>).

Toyli Komekov, Turkmenistan's ambassador to Baku, says that "a new path of cooperation has been laid out between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277316.html>).

July 6

President Ilham Aliyev tells 11 permanent representatives to the United Nations visiting Baku that "Azerbaijan's representation at the UN is conducting active work for establishing better ties between peoples and countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277246.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells the Third Congress of Azerbaijanis of the World that "diaspora organizations and embassies should work as a single command" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276900.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Carolyn Brown, Britain's ambassador to Baku, on the occasion of the completion of her assignment to that post (<http://news.day.az/politics/277197.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Vatican officials and signs a protocol on the exchange of ratification documents concerning the legal status of the Catholic Church in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/276910.html>).

Education Minister Misir Mardanov is elected president of the Administrative Council of the Mathematics Society of the Turkic World (<http://news.day.az/society/277132.html>).

Sabir Rustamkhanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the International Migration Organization, is failing to consider appeals by Azerbaijanis living in Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/277180.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, chairman of the State Committee for Work with the Diaspora, calls for NGOs and the media to devote more attention to the problems of Azerbaijanis living in Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/277173.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, the chairman of the State Committee for Work with Religious Structures, says that the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus will establish offices in foreign countries (<http://news.day.az/society/277114.html>).

Representatives of the Azerbaijan diasporas in Baku for the Third Congress of Azerbaijanis of the World meet with officials of the Azerbaijani government (<http://news.day.az/politics/277205.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that President Dmitry Medvedev, "acting in agreement with and the support of the US and France has completed an analysis of the situation after the Kazan meeting and in the near future will take a decision about further steps" on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/277102.html>).

Audronius Azubalis, Lithuanian foreign minister and OSCE chairman-in-office, says that "the OSCE will continue its efforts for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277242.html>).

Nikolay Bordyuzha, secretary general of the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty, says in Yerevan that he "wants to repeat the words of the president of Russia that Armenia is a strategic ally of Russia with all the consequences that flow from that" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277130.html>).

July 5

President Ilham Aliyev receives Lithuanian Prime Minister Andrius Kubilius (<http://news.day.az/politics/277029.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives James Appathurai, the special representative of the NATO secretary general for the South Caucasus and Central Asia (<http://news.day.az/politics/277029.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Mikhail Formuzal, the head of the Gagauzia in the Republic of Moldova (<http://news.day.az/politics/277015.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Akhmatbek Keldibekov, the speaker of the Kyrgyzstan parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/276837.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev takes part in a defense ministerial of the CIS in Sochi (<http://news.day.az/politics/276953.html>).

The Defense Ministry receives a high-level delegation from Belarus to discuss expanding cooperation in military industry (<http://news.day.az/politics/276993.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, chairman of the State Committee for Work with the Diaspora, says that "the Azerbaijani diaspora has already been transformed into a force capable of influencing the political life of the countries in which it realizes its activity" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276868.html>).

Salim Muslimov, head of the State Foundation of Social Protection, says that figures show that the balance of immigration and emigration from Azerbaijan depend on economic factors and that as the economy has improved over the last two decades, more people have been moving to Azerbaijan than leaving (<http://news.day.az/economy/277013.html>).

The OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs release a statement saying that "despite the fact that in Kazan, the sides did not achieve a final agreement on 'basic principles,' definite progress was achieved" and should be exploited in the near term (<http://news.day.az/politics/276949.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that in the wake of Kazan, the negotiating process about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will continue (<http://news.day.az/politics/277021.html>).

James Appathurai, the special representative of the NATO secretary general for the South Caucasus and Central Asia, says that "NATO does not play a role in the process of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, but one thing is clear: a military resolution of the conflict cannot be and that the only path of resolution is a diplomatic one" (<http://news.day.az/politics/277009.html>).

James Appathurai, the special representative of the NATO secretary general for the South Caucasus and Central Asia, says that "Azerbaijan is one of the closest allies of NATO" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276987.html>).

Nikolay Patskevich, Belorussian ambassador to Baku, says that Minsk plans to build an embassy in the Azerbaijani capital this year (<http://news.day.az/politics/276948.html>).

Margit Steffel, an official of the German economics and technology ministry, says that Berlin and Baku are working to form a joint chamber of commerce (<http://news.day.az/economy/276889.html>).

Joseph Shagal, the president of the Israel-Azerbaijan Association, says there is no chance that the Israeli parliament will adopt a resolution recognizing the events of 1915 as an Armenian genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/276969.html>).

Sinan Ogan, a deputy of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says the Turkish-Armenian border will remain closed until Armenia ends its occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/276955.html>).

July 4

President Ilham Aliyev receives Akhmatbek Keldibekov, the speaker of the Kyrgyzstan parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/276788.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Galib Israfilov Azerbaijani ambassador to Vienna (<http://news.day.az/politics/276812.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Makhmoud Mammadguliyev takes part in the regular session of the UN Economic and Social Council (<http://news.day.az/politics/276813.html>).

Ambassador Khazar Ibrahim, permanent representative of Azerbaijan to NATO, says that "relations between Azerbaijan and NATO continue to develop in a positive direction" and that today Azerbaijan "is no longer an ordinary partner of NATO as it was in the 1990s but already is closely cooperating with the alliance" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276650.html>).

Bakhtiyar Aliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan's behavior shows that Armenia continues to pursue "a destructive policy" and seeks in every way to continue its occupation of Azerbaijani lands (<http://news.day.az/politics/276446.html>).

Rasim Musabayov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Armenia's economic policy is self-destructive" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276400.html>).

Ayдын Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia is living like "a besieged fortress" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276519.html>).

Asaf Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, is re-elected vice president of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/276815.html>).

Sergey Markov, a Russian Duma deputy, says that a military conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh would not work to Armenia's favor (<http://news.day.az/politics/276628.html>).

The Russian government has given its approval subject to Duma ratification of an agreement on security cooperation in the Caspian basin (<http://news.day.az/politics/276743.html>).

A Jordanian-Azerbaijani Inter-parliamentary Group is created in the Jordanian parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/276795.html>).

July 3

Ali Larijani, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, says that "Azerbaijan, as a Muslim country, can play a role in the resolution of important regional questions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/276583.html>).

July 2

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, sends a letter to the UN Security Council describing recent Armenian violations of the cease fire and the killing by Armenian forces of Azerbaijani citizens (<http://news.day.az/politics/276548.html>).

Ali Larijani, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, says that Tehran is prepared to serve as a mediator in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/276481.html>).

Ali Larijani, the speaker of the Iranian parliament, welcomes the creation of the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Caspian Littoral States (<http://news.day.az/politics/276480.html>).

July 1

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ali Larijani, the speaker of the Iranian parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/276353.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives a telephone call from his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov (<http://news.day.az/politics/276386.html>).

The Foreign Ministry puts Russian journalist Yury Snegirev on its black list because of his illegal visit to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/276375.html>).

Ambassador Shahin Abdullayev, the permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the African Union, takes part in the summit of that organization in Equatorial Guinea (<http://news.day.az/politics/277605.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says a failure to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict could lead to wider and more serious conflicts (<http://news.day.az/politics/276226.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the inaction of international structures has allowed Armenia to act as it does (<http://news.day.az/politics/276107.html>).

The Azerbaijan-Iran Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group meets in the Milli Majlis (<http://news.day.az/politics/276437.html>).

A session of the coordination council on the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway results in the signing of a credit agreement under the terms of which Azerbaijan loans Georgia 575 million US dollars (<http://news.day.az/economy/276281.html>).

Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich says that Ukraine will "devote the maximum effort" in order to help resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 2013 when Ukraine will have the OSCE chairmanship (<http://news.day.az/politics/276374.html>).

James Appathurai, the special representative of the NATO secretary general for the South Caucasus and Central Asia, says that everyone was "disappointed" that there was no agreement on basic principles at the Kazan summit (<http://news.day.az/politics/276269.html>).

Dan Burton, a US congressman, tells Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, that the United States "highly values" its partnership with Azerbaijan in the energy sphere and Baku's contribution to the struggle against terrorism (<http://news.day.az/economy/276257.html>).

Note to Readers

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