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RUSSIA AND AZERBAIJAN

An Interview with H.E. Mr. Vladimir Dorokhin
Ambassador of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan

September 28, 2011
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan in the World: What is the central core of relations between Azerbaijan and Russia and how has it evolved over the last 20 years?

Ambassador Vladimir Dorokhin: Over and in the course of the last 20 years, we have managed to build the most optimal model of relations, one based on the unconditional respect for the sovereignty and independence of each other. After a rather complex path in the course of which we had some difficult moments, we have now reached an understanding that we should accept each other the way we are. At present, we do not want anything beyond what Azerbaijan can give Russia; and

Azerbaijan only wants from Russia what we can give within the system of our own international obligations.

On all issues, Azerbaijan conducts itself without consultation with Russia. Indeed, we neither expect nor want nor demand this. At the same time, Russia follows its own course, one which we believe Azerbaijan takes as our sovereign right. This may seem a very trivial point, but it took us some time to get to this point. And in fact, Russia does not have this "clean" model of relations with every country. Why that is the case is a separate question. There may be objective reasons, including that Azerbaijan is developing in a way that makes it a force to be reckoned with. But there are also subjective reasons, including not unimportantly that the Azerbaijani government clearly knows how to speak with Moscow and with the Russian government. This has affected Moscow's response to Baku. Putin started to develop relations with Azerbaijan in this way, and Medvedev followed. As a result, I think we have developed a good philosophy and a good balance in our bilateral ties. Now, on the basis of that, I think we can move further forward in our relations being very confident that there will not be any unpleasant surprises on our southern frontiers with our very stable neighbour, Azerbaijan.

AIW: What is your assessment of the current status of bilateral relations? Which direction of bilateral relations do you consider most successful; which directions need additional attention?

Amb. Dorokhin: Our relations are developing in a very harmonious manner. In the political realm, if one counts the number of bilateral meetings, including those at the high and highest level, as well as inter-parliamentary relations and ministerial visits, Azerbaijan probably does not have as high a set of statistics with any other country—except perhaps only with Turkey—as it does with Russia. Russia is the most important trade and economic partner of Azerbaijan in the non-oil sector. Indeed, today Russia provides the biggest market for Azerbaijani goods from the non-oil sector and is at the same time the biggest source of non-oil products that Azerbaijan imports. We had a record turnover of 2.4 billion US dollars in 2008, and despite a decline during the economic crisis, this year we can see a rise to 2,7/2.8 billion. Economic developments are always the key factor, and because the Russian market is so large, the potential for growth in this sector is limitless.

Second, we have recently begun to encourage Russian Federation regions to become more involved in foreign ties and especially foreign economic ones. Azerbaijan has not opposed this, and we have found out that in this special sphere, there is also a huge potential. At the level of regions one can solve issues that are harder to address at the state-to-state level.

Third, we of course have very special cultural ties, links based on the fact that we lived together in one state and had experiences in common. Although we have now gone our separate ways—which is entirely normal and should not be dramatized—we retain mutual sympathy and respect for one another. I say this in absolute confidence, for I have the experience of working with other countries as well. And it is not with every country, post-Soviet or otherwise, that this positive element in relations can and has been kept. With some countries, for example, we have longstanding debates about our past, something that luckily we don't have in the case of Azerbaijan. And this is a huge resource that we should fully make use of in the national interests of each.

Not surprisingly, the carriers of this positive element are found primarily among the middle-aged and older generations. Thus, our task is to pass these positive views on to the younger generation, something that—if we do—will have a positive impact on our relations. To achieve this, we need programs at the state level as well, and history tells us that countries pay considerable attention to such issues.

The regions of the two countries can indeed achieve a lot in this direction, I mean youth exchange. Informal linkages are needed, and we should encourage and support them. As the ambassador of my country, I view such work as among our most important tasks. Some progress has been made. This month, for example, a Russian-Azerbaijani youth forum has been launched, attracting 70 people from each side. Such cooperation and inter-linkage projects may indeed take many other forms as well—even including a Russian-Azerbaijani discotheque. The emotions such events have the potential to generate can have very definite political consequences.

AIW: Now that you touched upon the cultural aspect of our relations, are there any other concrete projects carried out in this direction?

Amb. Dorokhin: There is huge and I would say naturally evolving work going on even without the involvement of governmental bodies like the Ministry of Culture. Russian artists, for example, are constantly being invited by your theatres and other cultural institutes to give master classes to Azerbaijani artists. There are many other analogous contacts in other parts of the cultural realm. And such cultural representatives find each other on their own, without the involvement of any government. This work and these connections often do not attract much attention, all the more so because those involved don't do it for propaganda purposes. Instead, this is a natural process, and its very naturalness is the major characteristic of the cultural ties of our two states.

AIW: Speaking about cultural affinity, in what way do you think the Russian language contributes to the current state of relations between our countries, especially as compared to the role of language in Russia's relations with other states in the post-Soviet space?

Amb. Dorokhin: It is hard for me to judge on the situation in Central Asia, because I haven't served there, but I was indeed involved with Ukraine and know the situation there. And I should say that we have deep political problems with Ukraine because of the Russian language. Indeed, one of the questions which separate Russia and Ukraine is the question of the Russian language. We do not have a similar dispute with Azerbaijan. The Russian language has found its own place in Azerbaijan. And what I value most is that it is not in pursuit of the Kremlin's favour that the Azerbaijani government works to create conditions for the development of the Russian language in the country. Instead, it is because the Azerbaijani government understands—in a very pragmatic way—that this bilingualism arising from the past is good for Azerbaijan and for its future development. Today, nobody in Azerbaijan, forces anyone to learn the Russian language, but no one prevents anyone from doing so either. There are favourable conditions created in the country both for those who want to read Azerbaijani-language newspapers, for example, and also for those who want to read the newspapers in Russian. The situation in schools and universities is similar. While this situation has evolved in a natural way, it definitely adds to the current status of bilateral relations between our countries and creates a favourable environment for their further development. And Russia values this normal attitude towards the Russian language. Nobody is afraid of it here; people take it as given.

And it is Azerbaijan itself, as well as Azerbaijani-Russian relations, which win from this development.

AIW: What is your assessment of Russia's evolving role in the settlement process of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict?

Amb. Dorokhin: There is a lot to say about this issue. There was a time when Russia was the only mediator in the process, with Kazimirov as its official representative. Then the situation evolved in such a way that the Minsk Group was formed within the OSCE, with Russia—along with the United States and France—becoming a co-chair of this group. The most characteristic feature of the latest period has been that the Russian mediation has reached an unprecedented level, with the Russian president personally involved in resolution of the conflict. As you may know, there have been 10 meetings so far between the presidents of the two countries. But again, even when the Russian president was leading the negotiations process, it was being done in coordination with the Minsk Group. Both the United States and France were kept informed throughout. The latest of those meetings, one held in Kazan earlier this year, did not meet the expectations of many. At this point, we now need some time to assess the developments so far.

As far as Russia's real willingness and ability to resolve the conflict is concerned, one hears many different views expressed in the pages of Azerbaijani newspapers. Russia's position is, in our view, fair and correct and reflects both moral considerations, as well as purely political ones. First, the moral considerations—the ones that I believe prompted our president to get directly involved—derive from the fact that Russia stood at the roots of the conflict which emerged in the country in which we all lived.

Second, the political causes arise from the fact that the conflict restricts our relations with Azerbaijan, as well as with Armenia. The conflict also has a negative impact on cooperation within the CIS. These three relationships—with Azerbaijan, with Armenia and with the CIS—are priorities for Russia, and thus resolving the conflict is simply a matter of pragmatism.

And third, the north Caucasus is currently one of the most troublesome of the country's regions. We in Russia understand that peace in the Caucasus can be achieved only if it is a comprehensive one. Consequently, as we seek to resolve the problems in the North Caucasus, achieving peace in the South Caucasus will certainly have an additional positive impact.

Given this, we believe that we have genuine and objective goals in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and that charges against us of playing at peacemaking rather than seeking a real settlement are without foundation. Regardless of what anyone may say, Russia has a definite position on the conflict, one that it has been seeking to promote at various levels over many years.

AIW: In one of your recent speeches, you mentioned that "now we can quite openly say that the leadership of the Soviet Union with Gorbachev at the head made a mistake [in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict]. It simply incorrectly evaluated this conflict and took incorrect measures." What did you have in mind?

Amb. Dorokhin: You know, I was surprised by how much reaction this statement generated, for it seems so obvious. There is a great deal one can say about this,

because the history of the conflict is very interesting. At the time the conflict broke out, I was working as the adviser on Hungary, Romania, and Czech Republic in the International Department of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and thus was more or less close to politics. The biggest mistake I was referring to in my recent statement is that the leadership in Moscow failed to recognise the level of the threat the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict represented. Although the conflict in fact unleashed the process that eventually led to the dissolution of the Soviet Union, no one could see that outcome at the time. Indeed, this possibility would have never even occurred to anyone at that time.

I remember when the first news arrived about instability in the Nagorno-Karabakh, *Pravda* reported it only two days later, in three lines, and on the second page, a very evasive report akin to *The Central Committee has discussed the issue and shall work on it further*. Hence, *Politburo* really believed at the time that these three lines could resolve the conflict. Then the situation deteriorated further, with different advisors advising different moves and strategies. As you know, Gorbachev could not even pronounce the word *Azerbaijan* correctly. Hence, for him this was a case of the 15th or 20th degree of importance, and most of the decisions taken at that time were *ad hoc* and hurried without any strategic reflections. But again, what is most important is that they misperceived the potential danger of the conflict in its inception.

AIW: What is the current state of energy cooperation between Azerbaijan and Russia and how the new gas discovery in "Absheron" has affected, or can potentially affect, this cooperation?

Amb. Dorokhin: The reality is that Russia is by no means a serious and big player in Azerbaijan's energy market. In the Contract of the Century, Russia's *Lukoil* had only a 10% share, which for some reason it subsequently sold. As a result, Russia in the form of the private Russian company *Lukoil* currently has only a 10% share in Azerbaijan's Shahdeniz gas project. And such a share is incomparable with the stake western companies as BP, Total, or Statoil have. Of course, the 10% that *Lukoil* has do give it some influence over the energy policy through the voting in the shareholders' meetings, but the key role in defining the country's energy policy is played by SOCAR, that is, by the Azerbaijani government, and Russia does not play a defining role in this respect. Why the situation developed in this way is a separate and a very interesting question, one worth a separate study.

The second direction in which our energy cooperation develops concerns the start of Azerbaijani gas flows to Russia since January 2009. Last year, Azerbaijan exported a billion cubic meters of gas to Russia; this year, we expect two billion. Let us see how much gas will be exported in this direction next year. You are willing to sell, we are willing to buy; and we have a contract through 2015 that allows us to do so. And there is on the table a proposal by Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller that Gazprom in principle can buy as much Azerbaijani gas as Azerbaijan is willing to sell, even including all Azerbaijani gas. To date, Azerbaijan has not responded to this, a situation we view as quite normal. It is Azerbaijani gas and it is therefore up to Azerbaijan to decide such questions. In addition, of course, there are consultations between our two countries on energy issues, but they are of an applied and practical nature and do not represent a strategically defining element in Azerbaijani-Russian relations.

Given all this, one cannot say that the energy sector is the one in which our two countries enjoy strategic cooperation. In a certain sense and to a certain degree, we

are even competitors, for both of us export fossil fuel internationally. But one should not exaggerate the degree of this competition, for the amount of gas exported by one and the other is incomparable: Russia sells hundreds of billions cubic meters of gas and hundreds of millions tons of oil, while Azerbaijan certainly exports less. Hence, no conflict can result from this.

As far as the Absheron gas deposit is concerned, I don't know how it will be used in future or whether its development might involve outside investors or alternatively whether all subsequent moves will be realised within the framework of the agreement with Total. Moreover, even if there are opportunities for others, I don't know whether Russian oil and gas companies—who are independent in their decision-making—will show an interest in getting involved in the project.

AIW: Would you then suggest that energy cooperation between Russia and Azerbaijan is completely depoliticized?

Amb. Dorokhin: Certainly, Yes. What kind of politics can one speak of when Russia currently holds only a ten percent share in Azerbaijan's Shahdeniz project?

AIW: What is your attitude to and assessment of the Nabucco and trans-Caspian gas projects?

Amb. Dorokhin: First of all, my attitude towards these projects is irrelevant, for these are not my projects; these are not our projects. There is much speculation in press about this, of course. The reality, however, is that if and when Europe returns to the normal pattern of economic development, all gas flowing through the currently existing pipelines and gas expected to flow through Nabucco and the South Stream will not be enough. Given that reality, Russia and Azerbaijan will not be competitors in this respect. And no one in Russia these days makes political statements regarding such a competition except for some journalists and independent experts. Never over the course of two and a half years of my tenure as the Russian ambassador to Azerbaijan have I received the instructions from Moscow to go to Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs or any other relevant body and deliver the message that Russia does not view positively Azerbaijan's support for Nabucco. Never. And I am certain that my president has never said anything to this effect either. And by the way, your president has confirmed this in an interview he gave to *Euronews*.

The trans-Caspian gas pipeline, however, is a different matter. There is one very unpleasant aspect of that project. We are currently involved in negotiations about the legal status of the Caspian. There are still some five or six questions left open including the width of the territorial waters, the issue of the free passage of military ships, demilitarization, and the like. There is also an article in the draft agreement which concerns the ways in which a trans-Caspian gas pipeline could be built. There are two brackets in that article, one reflecting the position of three countries involved (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan) and the other reflecting the position of two countries (Russia and Iran).

The latter two argue that a trans-Caspian pipeline can be built only if all five littoral states agree that such a project will not have negative ecological consequences. The former three, however, insist that a trans-Caspian pipeline can be built if the two states the pipeline is going to connect agree to do so. The European Union knew perfectly well that this disagreement exists. But despite that, the EU virtually asked

Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan to ignore Russia and Iran and to proceed. Russia considers this position incorrect and not well thought-out, which is why Russia made a statement it made when the EU announced that it was going to enter into negotiations with Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan about a trans-Caspian gas pipeline. If the EU really needs the Turkmen gas, let us sit down and discuss this. Perhaps, before starting the discussions about the actual pipeline, we should agree on the ecological issues and make a joint examination thereof. For example, in the case of the Russia-sponsored North Stream project, the ecological question was one of the most important ones. And Russia agreed on the toughest kinds of ecological standards and paid enormous amounts of money for different kinds of environmental examination carried out to that effect. In this case, however, the EU doesn't mention the need to consider the ecological issue. This seems politically incorrect to us. Again, whether this project will materialise or not is not our business. We don't want to start guessing about it; but again, even if it does materialise, it will not considerably undermine Russia's position as a gas exporter to the international markets.

AIW: Would you then suggest that Russia is not conceptually against the trans-Caspian gas pipeline?

Amb. Dorokhin: If the pipeline is going to be built in a way that will allow all five littoral states to agree, then Russia certainly has nothing against it. When we were building the North Stream pipeline, we were required to take into account the opinions of every single country in the region, including Poland, for example.

AIW: What is your assessment of the current status of cooperation within and prospects for the North-South corridor?

Amb. Dorokhin: Everybody says this is a very important project, referring to the huge amount of goods one could ship through this corridor. And Russia believes in the potential of this project, too. There are two directions in which the North-South corridor is supposed to go: one through Turkmenistan along the Caspian's eastern coast, and the other through Azerbaijan along the Caspian's western shores. The pathway through Azerbaijan is shorter and thus economically more viable, but the work on the passage through Turkmenistan is going on faster. The point is that the project we have is trilateral; that is, there are three states involved: Russia, Azerbaijan, and Iran. And the most complicated part of work falls on Iran's shoulders. That is, while there are only some eight kilometres of rail line that need to be built on the Azerbaijani part and Russia has little to do to make this project work, Iran must build some 150 kilometres of rail line through mountainous regions. It is not clear whether they actually are building it. On some occasions, Iran suggests that the railroad is going to be completed within some two months, but at others, it becomes clear that very little work has been done at all. Things have been dragging on like that for some six to seven years. So, much depends on the Iranian side and on whether it will complete its part of the work. There is probably a financial aspect to it as well.

AIW: What is your assessment of the current role the CIS plays and its future prospects?

Amb. Dorokhin: The most correct thing one could say about the CIS is that it is a dynamically developing area. In what direction it is developing and what state it is going to end up in, however, is difficult to say, for there are different processes going

on within the CIS, something we call multi-speed integration. We think that is entirely normal. You also know there is a customs union within the CIS, one uniting Russia, Kazakhstan, and Belorussia; and there are also more ambitious plans to establish a common economic area among these three states, a sort of mini-EU within the CIS. Several Central Asian states show an interest in the Customs union as well. How that process will go and how the customs union—which began operations on July 1 this year—will function is yet to be seen.

In addition, we have an ambitious plan to establish a common state with Belorussia. We already have a constitution and some joint documents. The process is not an easy one, but nobody has taken this issue off the agenda. Then, we have EurAsEs in the economic dimension of the CIS, which involves other forms of integration. Hence, everything within the CIS is in motion; everything is in process. No one can predict what is going to happen in five or ten years.

In any case, however, two things are clear about Russia's position: On the one hand, Russia views the CIS as a priority. If at some points some in Russia thought that Moscow no longer needed the post-Soviet states and should start looking towards the West and the US, now we have come to realize that we need to be friends with our near abroad. And on the other, we have developed in recent times a tolerant attitude toward our partners in the former Soviet space and are not trying to impose our will on anyone. That being the case, I believe that the CIS will be a positive zone, especially if we manage to resolve the conflicts on its territory, including the one between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

AIW: Do you then think the CIS has lived up to expectations people had originally?

Amb. Dorokhin: There were times when people viewed the CIS as the facilitator of a civilised divorce. There were also those who viewed it as a new form of cooperation and integration among the former Soviet states. Deng Xiaoping was once asked his opinion about the impact of the French Revolution. He responded by asking when the revolution had taken place. Told it was 1789, he responded saying that that was only 200 years ago and therefore it was too soon to judge. Viewed in this way, I think it is too soon to make a judgment about the CIS. Personally, I did not expect that we would drift apart as far as we have. I assumed that we would at least retain a common military. But despite the dashing of those hopes, the CIS has created the conditions for a civilized divorce, although now we see that some states have chosen to get back into a marriage and a family once again. Some are even building a common state. Whether this will in fact work out or not remains to be seen.

AIW: What, in your opinion, should be the next steps in relations between Azerbaijan and Russia?

Amb. Dorokhin: There are currently no issues in bilateral relations that demand urgent attention. Our relations are developing on a stable basis. Last year, we resolved the important question of our state borders. It is not accidental that it took us very long to arrive at this point: the negotiations lasted for 15 years. For to come to this understanding, we needed to accumulate experience, including the positive experience of bilateral relations, and to generate trust in relations with each other. This is therefore a very important historical moment, one difficult to overestimate especially in terms of the formation of Azerbaijani statehood. And Russia is the only neighboring country with which Azerbaijan actually has this kind of agreement.

Now, our relations develop on a stable basis. With so many Azerbaijanis living and working in Russia and so many families connected in other ways, our relations touch upon and reflect the interests of specific concrete people.

AIW: Given your diplomatic experience, what would you advise young Azerbaijani diplomats as they begin their diplomatic careers?

Amb. Dorokhin: Azerbaijanis have already shown themselves prepared to stand up for their national interests. They never feel embarrassed with anyone or about anything. This is a very good quality. There is thus only one thing I could recommend, which is universally applicable to diplomats from any nation; that is, while a diplomat certainly has many things on his mind, he must recognize that he serves the interests of his nation and state. And the more fully a diplomat recognizes that and recognizes the direction these interests require, the better it will be for him and for his country.

MOSCOW AND THE DELIMITATION OF KARABAKH IN THE 1920S Part II (2)

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Editorial Note: As a contribution to the unveiling of the history of Soviet policy toward Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan in the World offers what is the final half of the second of a three part article on the origins of Soviet policy on this region that was prepared by distinguished Azerbaijani historian Jamil Hasanly. It originally appeared in Russia's Regnum News Agency at <http://regnum.ru/news/fd-abroad/armenia/1429237.html>. The previous sections of Professor Hasanly's account were published in the preceding issues of Azerbaijan in the World. The remaining sections will be published in the following issues of the journal.

In reality, it was immediately after the Moscow Treaty of 1921 that the government of Armenia made the first step toward annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh. At the time, the government circles prepared a six-point document called "The Basic Provisions on the Annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh to the Republic of Armenia."

The document noted that Nagorno-Karabakh was separated from lowland Karabakh by a natural border in the form of a low mount ridge. As one would certainly expect, the Armenians took care of this mountain ridge as well and substantiated its attachment to Nagorno-Karabakh by two arguments. First of all, the document said, this zone supposedly is used by the Armenian population, and second, there is not so much land in the mountainous zone which is suitable for sowing. The most interesting portion of the document is its fifth paragraph, which says that, "with the transfer of Nagorno-Karabakh to the Republic of Armenia, so-called Kurdistan which occupies a narrow point band between Karabakh and Zangazur should naturally be transferred to it as well. However, because of the specific situation of this district and the continued existence of nationalistic tendencies in the population, certain complexities were possible. To mitigate the latter problems, decisions must be taken

according to the following guidelines. This region is located above the northern Shusha-Gerusin highway and consists of six rural communities, with a total of 27,000 residents. A special canton under the administration of the Republic of Armenia or, in the extreme case, under the protectorate of Azerbaijan could be established out of this district." The sixth, concluding, paragraph of the document clearly reveals the intention of the Armenian government. It notes that, "to the south of Kurdistan along the valley of the Akkara are situated the Kaladaras and Jamilla societies, a large portion of the population of which consists of Armenians. This is the zone through which the highway passes, and Nagorno-Karabakh can only be united with Zangazur—and a single administrative unit and a single administration could therefore only be created—by and through this path. There is no sense of annexing Nagorno-Karabakh to the Republic of Armenia without this unit." [1]

Based on these considerations and without any legal foundation, the Armenian government in May 1921 unilaterally took a decision about the unification of Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia. On May 23, 1921, the Plenum of the Central Committee of the KP(b) of Armenia appointed Akop Ioanisyan the plenipotentiary of Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh. Following the hearing of Pirumov's report about the declaration of the Zangazur Commission, that body adopted the following decision: "To hold off from presenting a note to Azerbaijan until the question of Nagorno-Karabakh will be clarified at the upcoming plenum of the Caucasus Bureau of the RKP(b)." [2] As we see, already in May, Armenia had begun to take practical steps toward the annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh to itself and concerning this, it was informed about the upcoming discussion of the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh at the June plenum of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b).

What were the reasons behind such rapid and illegal actions toward the transfer of Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and what was the subtext of the actions of the Armenian leadership and the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) in May-June 1921? The point is that a meeting of the commission on the regulation of border issues among the Caucasus republics was scheduled to take place in Tiflis on June 15. To clarify the internal borders of the Caucasus republics, a designated commission consisting of representatives of the three republics and headed by S. Kirov was created at a plenum of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), on May 2, 1921. [3] Thus, the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) by its decision of June 3 and the Armenian government by its decree of June 12 about the inclusion of Nagorno-Karabakh within Armenia wanted to put before Azerbaijan a *fait accompli* in advance of the Tiflis discussions.

At its June 26 session, the Azerbaijan Council of Peoples Commissars discussed the report of A. Karayev about his trip to Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhchivan. It was recognized as useful to study the claims of Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh and to prepare a detailed report for the Council of Peoples Commissars. A group of three people—Shakhtakhtinsky, Vazirov, and Aliyev—was created to that end. They agreed that they ought to end the plenipotentiary powers given to Mravyan by the Armenian government until the work of this group was completed and to inform about this G. Ordzhonikidze; Masnikov, the president of the Armenian Revolutionary Committee; Karayev, the naval commissar of Azerbaijan; and Mravyan himself. [4] Following this decision, on June 27, N. Narimanov sent a telegram to Ordzhonikidze and Masnikov that the Council of Peoples Commissars of Azerbaijan unanimously considered the unilateral resolution of the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh by the Armenian revolutionary Committee and the appearance in Nagorno-Karabakh of

Mravyan as the extraordinary representative of Armenia an outrageous political and tactical mistake. At the same time, it requested the immediate withdrawal of Mravyan. [5]

On June 27, a joint session of the Political and Organizational Bureaus of the Central Committee of the AKP(b) took place. Following the discussion of the question "On the Borders Between Azerbaijan and Armenia," the *Politburo* and *Orgburo* considered improper the way in which the question about Nagorno-Karabakh was put by A. Bekzadyan, given the indisputable economic linkage of Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijan; the proposal about the division of places of settlement of the Armenian and Azerbaijan population between Armenia and Azerbaijan, correspondingly, cannot be accepted from the point of view of administrative and economic considerations; the only plausible resolution of the issue is seen, as was mentioned in Narimanov's declaration, in the involvement of the Armenian and Muslim population in the villages in wide-ranging Soviet construction; the further discussion of this question must remain open until information is received from Tiflis. N. Narimanov directed to inform Tiflis about this decision taken by the *Politburo* and *Orgburo*. [6]

This session was still continuing, when A. Shirvani already reported this decision to M.D. Huseynov in Tiflis, adding as well that, "the Council of Peoples Commissars also joins this decision. Comrade Narimanov asks to report that the question must be resolved only in this vein, otherwise the Council of Peoples Commissars will disavow responsibility; for if Soviet Armenia by this act wants to make an impression on the Dashnaks and the non-party masses of Armenia, one must not forget the fact that by acting this way we are boosting in Azerbaijan other anti-Soviet groups of the Dashnak kind." At this time, Narimanov came to the telephone and continued the conversation with M.D. Huseynov: "Say that this is the opinion of the *Politburo* and *Orgburo*. If they refer to my declaration, then the declaration literally reads as follows: 'Nagorno-Karabakh is offered the right of free self-determination.'" Following this, N. Narimanov reported that "today a telegram addressed to your name was sent, with copies to Sergo, Masnikov and Karayev, about the recall from Karabakh of Comrade Mravyan." N. Narimanov asked M.D. Huseynov to tell Ordzhonikidze that "our comrade Armenians think exclusively in terms of territory, but not about the well-being of the poorest population of Armenians and Muslims and about the solidification of the revolution." [7]

Who then gave the Armenians the occasion to refer to the Azerbaijan political leadership? The subsequent course of events showed that the "anonymous" agreement in the name of Azerbaijan was given to the Armenians by people who concentrated in their hands real power in the Caucasus—G. Ordzhonikidze and S. Kirov. They were looking for a path of transferring Karabakh to the Armenians and, in their June 26 telegram to N. Narimanov, presented the idea promoted by A. Bekzadyan about the division of Karabakh on a national-ethnic line: "If you are interested in our opinion, then it is as follows. In the interests of the final resolution of all tensions and the establishment of truly friendly relations following the resolution of the question about mountainous Karabakh, one should be guided by the following principle: not one Armenian village must be joined to Azerbaijan, just as not one Muslim village must be joined to Armenia." [8]

Having received the directive of N. Narimanov, M.D. Huseynov on the very same day, June 27, presented the question for the discussion of the Caucasus Bureau, which decided: "To convene an extraordinary Plenum of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP and to send to comrades Narimanov and Masnikov the

following telegram: 'The Presidium of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP proposes that, on receipt of this message, you immediately come to an extraordinary session of the Caucasus Bureau. The session will focus on the delimitation of the republics. There are six members of the Caucasus Bureau in Tiflis. In the case of Your non-appearance, the six members of the Caucasus Bureau now in Tiflis will be considered sufficient. Therefore, we insist on Your immediate appearance.'" [9]

On June 28, a new session of the Council of Peoples Commissars under the chairmanship of N. Narimanov took place. The declaration of A. Masnikov that proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh to be part of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic was discussed and rejected. At the same session, the issue of the recall of the extraordinary representative of Armenia in Nagorno-Karabakh A. Mravyan was finally resolved. Following this decision, N. Narimanov left for Tiflis for the plenum of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), which was set for July 4, 1921.

Notes

[1] Basic Propositions on the Annexation of Nagorno-Karabakh into the Republic of Armenia, 1921, *Russian State Archive of Social-Political History* (hereafter RSASPH), f. 64, op. 1, d. 137, l. 7-7ob.

[2] Protocol No. 4 of the session of the Central Committee of the KP Armenia, 23 May 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 105, l. 5 ob.

[3] Protocol No. 2 of the session of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), 2 May 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 1, l. 57.

[4] Protocol of the Session of the Council of Peoples' Commissars of Azerbaijan, 26 June 1921, *State Archive of Azerbaijan Republic* (hereafter SA AR), f. 411, op. 1, d. 12, l. 1.

[5] Telegram of N. Narimanov to G. Ordzhonikidze and A. Masnikov (copies to A. Mravyan and A. Karayev), 28 June 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 13, d. 98.

[6] Protocol No. 20 of the session of the *Politburo* and *Orgburo* of the Central Committee of the AKP(b), 27 June 1921, *Political Documents Archive under the President of Azerbaijan Republic* (hereafter PDA PAR), f. 1, op. 74, d. 1231, l. 64.

[7] Conversation of A.G. Shirvani and N. Narimanov by direct line with M.D. Huseynov, 27 June 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 215, l. 14.

[8] Telegram of G. Ordzhonikidze and S. Kirov to N. Narimanov, 26 June 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 18, d. 229, l. 1-2.

[9] Protocol No. 5 of the session of the Presidium of the Caucasus Bureau of the Central Committee of the RKP, 27 June 1921, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d.2, l. 73.

WATER AS A FOREIGN POLICY CHALLENGE FOR AZERBAIJAN

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Azerbaijan does not face the kind of potable water crisis that confronts many of the countries of Central Asia, but each of the three water problems it does have to deal with have a foreign policy dimension. First, there is the problem of pollution in rivers that rise in Armenia, Georgia and other neighboring countries and then flow into Azerbaijan. Second, there is the challenge of agreeing on how to share the water of rivers flowing along its borders with states on the other side. And third, there is the difficulty of coping with decisions of other states that have led to the drying up on their territories of lakes whose demise will not only affect the population of those countries, but that of Azerbaijan as well. Each of these problems is intensifying and has been the subject of increased attention in Baku during the past month.

Upstream pollution flowing into Azerbaijan has long attracted Azerbaijani attention, in no small part because a large proportion of this problem is being created largely but not exclusively by Armenia whose forces occupy 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory. Indeed, Armenian contamination of rivers that flow into or through Azerbaijani territory is now being called by some Azerbaijanis "an ecological threat" to the future of their country and of the region as a whole.

London's *Institute of War and Peace Reporting* recently released a study on the ways in which pollution in Armenia is driving Armenians off the land and out of the country, but that report did not focus on the ways in which these problems are now casting a shadow over Azerbaijan. Matanat Avazova, the deputy director of the national environmental monitoring department of the Azerbaijani Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, has filled that gap. In a comment to Baku's *Ekho* newspaper, Avazova said that Armenia's Razdan River, into which much of the pollution goes, "connects with the Araz River, "which then descends into the territory of Azerbaijan, and as a rule, all the effluents of the enterprises in Yerevan and other major districts of Armenia flow into the river." [1]

"We are not in a position to say what the share of Armenia and Georgia is in the contamination of the Kura and Araz rivers," Avazova said. "We can only offer information on the basis of monitoring which we conduct at the border. And according to this monitoring, the Kura and Araz are being contaminated from Armenia, Georgia and Iran, and all this eventually passes into the Caspian Sea." She noted that Azerbaijan is monitoring the water at the border with Georgia, where contamination is quite high. But as it passes through the territory of Azerbaijan, the Kura at least "cleanses itself." This process, Avazova continued, reflects the absence of "any sources of pollution" inside Azerbaijan along this portion of the river.

Unfortunately, as soon as the Kura joins the Araz in the Saatly District, pollution goes way up, approximately to the level at which "it is at the border with Georgia," the result of Armenian contamination of its flow upstream. And even more unfortunately, Avazova notes, Azerbaijan "now has no mechanisms" to affect the way Armenia uses its upstream flows or the way it contaminates these trans-national rivers. "That is possible only at an international level, but [the Armenians] up to now have not joined the convention on the preservation and use of trans-border water

flows and international lakes. They understand that if they acceded to this convention, they would have to take on themselves definite obligations.”

Azerbaijan, the ecology ministry official argued, is trying to cope with this situation by setting up water purification facilities, “the number of which now exceeds 200” and which serve “more than 500,000 citizens of Azerbaijan,” an enormous task that will only increase if pollution levels continue to rise.

Telman Zeynalov, the president of Azerbaijan’s National Center of Ecological Forecasting, added that “while it is difficult to say exactly how polluted rivers in Armenia now are,” one can assert that “all the discharge of enterprises, combines, and organizations go into the rivers, which pass through the territory of Armenia” and then “pass into the territory of Azerbaijan. And residents of Azerbaijan who live on the shores of the Araz drink this water,” sometimes processed but sometimes not. He noted that Armenian pollution of the rivers is having an impact on Iran which is located on the other bank of the Araz from Azerbaijan. [2]

The second of Azerbaijan’s water problems concerns the sharing of the flow of the two rivers, which form most of its northern and southern borders, the Samur and the Araz respectively. In the past, Azerbaijan largely controlled the use of water from the Samur, but as part of the bilateral agreement with the Russian Federation, ratified earlier this summer, the two countries agreed to deal with this issue jointly. That has ended most of the problems there. Indeed, as the Russian ambassador to Baku points out in the interview published in this issue of *Azerbaijan in the World*, that represents a major triumph for the diplomacy of the two countries.

However, that does not mean that all the problems have disappeared. On the one hand, there is the question of bridges linking the two sides of the watershed together. And on the other, there is the question of managing the flow both during droughts and flood times so that farmers and industry in each country get what they need without harming those in the neighboring country. The experience of recent months has shown that the two governments are quite prepared to work together, most recently on a decision to build a new bridge. [3]

The situation along Azerbaijan’s other riparian border is more difficult, because the flow of the Araz affects far larger populations on both sides. That river provides much of the drinking water for Nakhchivan, the non-contiguous autonomous republic, and for the southern portions of Azerbaijan, on the one hand, and for much of northwestern Iran, a region that is populated predominantly by ethnic Azerbaijanis and thus of particular concern to Baku.

In Soviet times, Moscow and Tehran cooperated on managing the flow of this river to the point of building a reservoir to better manage water use, but more recently, in part because of problems within Iran and with its Azerbaijani minority and in part because of a decline in the size of the flow of the river itself, dealing with these problems has become more difficult. Azerbaijani and Iranian officials have met frequently to discuss the river, but as yet there is no agreement of the kind that appears to have resolved the problems along the Samur in the north.

This situation is further complicated by the most prominent example of the third kind of foreign policy water problem that Azerbaijan faces. Because of drought brought on by global warming, the water level of Lake Urmia has fallen by more than six meters in recent years, reducing the amount of potable water available to the ethnic

Azerbaijanis of northwestern Iran and raising the specter that wind-carried rare earth minerals from the former lake bed will have serious consequences not only for Iran's population, but for Azerbaijan's as well.

At its session on September 30, the Azerbaijani parliament appealed to members of its Iranian counterpart to do something to save Lake Urmia on whose waters, the Milli Majlis deputies said, the future of "millions of people" now depend. [4] One deputy, Ganira Pashayeva pointed out that the falling water levels of that lake "have an influence not only on this territory but also on surround regions" including those in Azerbaijan itself. And she noted that the Iranian authorities, instead of responding this need, were "repressing" the Azerbaijanis in Iran who were protesting about the demise of Lake Urmia.

Another deputy, Fazail Aghamaly, added that the decline in the water level of Lake Urmia "after two or three years" will mean that Azerbaijan itself will begin to drown in dust, with this tragedy hitting Nakhchivan first. Indeed, the lake is now nearly twice as saline as it was only a few years ago, a trend that makes water processing both more necessary and more expensive. He called on the Milli Majlis to formally ask the Iranian parliament to do something and suggested that "if necessary, Azerbaijan could extend the hand of help to Iran" to save Lake Urmia.

Yet another Azerbaijani parliamentarian suggested some of the ways that this water problem in Iran could become something more politically significant. Siyavush Novruzov said that the 30 million Azerbaijanis living in Iran could put pressure on Tehran. "At a minimum," he said, "they could block the road to cars and trucks going to Nagorno-Karabakh from the Iranian province of Western Azerbaijan."

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/society/288810.html> (accessed 28 September 2011).

[2] See <http://news.day.az/society/288810.html> (accessed 28 September 2011).

[3] See <http://news.day.az/politics/290680.html> (accessed 30 September 2011).

[4] See <http://news.day.az/politics/291027.html> (accessed 30 September 2011).

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev says that "all problems concerning energy security in Azerbaijan have already found their solutions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289444.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation at a meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly that "Azerbaijan remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict in correspondence with international principles and norms and on the basis of corresponding decisions and resolution” by various international bodies (<http://news.day.az/politics/290194.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “the oil and gas fields of the Caspian are capable of supporting Europe for 100 years” (<http://news.day.az/politics/289817.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that if anyone attempts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by force, Russia is “ready to take all necessary measures for the restoration of peace in the region” (<http://news.day.az/politics/290527.html>).

Leon Cook, a representative of the The European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS), told a conference in London hosted by Azerbaijani Ambassador Fakhraddin Gurbanov and British parliamentarians Lord Hermann and Stephen Gilbert that “25 percent of the supplies for the coalition forces in Afghanistan are delivered through Azerbaijan” (<http://news.day.az/politics/289516.html>).

Iranian Defense Minister Ahmad Vahidi says that Azerbaijan and Iran have “great potential” for the development of relations in various spheres including cultural, religious and historical” (<http://news.day.az/politics/288680.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan’s Foreign Policy

September 30

President Ilham Aliyev takes part in the Eastern Partnership summit in Warsaw (<http://news.day.az/politics/290875.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Maltese Prime Minister Lawrence Gonzi in Warsaw (<http://news.day.az/politics/290875.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov takes part in the 15th session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the GUAM countries on the sidelines of the Eastern Partnership summit in Warsaw (<http://news.day.az/politics/290994.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Koray Targay, the new head of the Baku Office of the OSCE (<http://news.day.az/politics/290996.html>).

The Foreign Ministry expresses its surprise at “the short-sighted and cynical” approach of Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan who conflates nationality, language and religion into one thing (<http://news.day.az/politics/291028.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies accords with Ukraine, Belarus, Greece, Romania, the Arab Emirates, Spain, the Czech Republic, Serbia and other states (<http://news.day.az/politics/291037.html>).

Deputies of the Milli Majlis appeal to the Iranian parliament concerning the fate of Lake Urmia, on whose waters the future of "millions of people" depend (<http://news.day.az/politics/291027.html>).

Khanhuseyn Kazymly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian government is suffering the consequences of trying to "build its state through the use of the lands of others by conquest and occupation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290953.html>). In other comments, he says that the situation in Armenia is now so dire that "Armenians do not trust even their own church" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290953.html>).

Reinhold Mitterlehner, Austrian economics minister, says that "plans for the construction of the Nabucco pipeline must not be transformed into 'an eternal history'" but instead must take final shape soon (<http://news.day.az/economy/291003.html>).

September 29

President Ilham Aliyev meets with the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group in Warsaw (<http://news.day.az/politics/290929.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva tells a Berlin conference on the 20th anniversary of the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence that "Azerbaijan, having built an absolutely new political and economic system, is rapidly developing" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290988.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natic Aliyev meets with his Kazakhstan counterpart Sauat Mynbayev at the eighth session of the bilateral inter-governmental commission on economic cooperation (<http://news.day.az/economy/290810.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that "after acquiring independence, Azerbaijan more than other countries felt on its own skin the results of ethnic and religious separatism" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290774.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Hafiz Pashayev, rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, participates in the International Forum of Diplomatic Schools meeting in the United States and secures the agreement of that body to have its next meeting in Baku in 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/290773.html>).

Azerbaijan purchases several Mi-17 helicopters from the Russian Federation (<http://news.day.az/politics/290833.html>).

Mahmoud Karimov, president of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences, says that representatives of Azerbaijan must participate in the checking of the Metsamor Atomic Power Station in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/290801.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, head of the State Committee for Work with Religious Structures, says that "the peoples living in the Caucasus alongside the resolution of their own religious problems, must also devote all their efforts to blocking the dissemination of the ideology of terrorism in the region and defend their neighbors who have been subject to aggression" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290799.html>).

The Azerbaijani emergency situations ministry takes part in joint exercises with its Russian and Kazakhstan counterparts on the Caspian Sea (<http://news.day.az/politics/290309.html>).

Ali Huseynli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that international NGOs have a "pro-Armenian policy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290850.html>).

Gudrat Hasanguliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that foreigners who come to live in Azerbaijan on a permanent basis must take an examination concerning their knowledge of the state language (<http://news.day.az/politics/290816.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Armenia does not have the resources to carry out a war" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290778.html>).

Tahir Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the position of the United States is directed against the search of peaceful ways of resolving the Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290746.html>).

Elman Mammadov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia, because of the policy of its government, is experiencing negative growth (<http://news.day.az/politics/290736.html>).

Nick Clegg, Britain's vice prime minister, says that London "wants to help Azerbaijan and Armenia resolve the conflict and restore territorial integrity" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290921.html>).

Azerbaijani and Russian religious leaders and theologians assemble in Baku to mark the 20th anniversary of the independence of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/290809.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, says that "certain forces want to spread separatism in the Caucasus by exploiting the great ethnic and religious diversity" which exists there (<http://news.day.az/politics/290766.html>).

Charles Hendry, British minister of state for the department of energy and climate change, says that Europe and the United Kingdom in particular are interested in the security of all pipeline routes. He adds that "Azerbaijan is a country with a promising future" (<http://news.day.az/economy/290897.html>).

Taner Yildiz, Turkey's energy minister, says that the unstable situation in Syria may interfere with the supply of Azerbaijani gas via the Pan-Arab pipeline (<http://news.day.az/economy/290845.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the United States and Azerbaijan are conducting joint work to guarantee the security of the energy infrastructure of the Caspian against a wide range of threats (<http://news.day.az/economy/290864.html>).

Michael Green, head of the USAID mission in Azerbaijan, and Koray Targay, head of the Baku Office of the OSCE, sign a cooperation agreement (<http://news.day.az/politics/290803.html>).

Vsevolod Chaplin, head of the Synod Department for Relations of Church and Society of the Moscow Patriarchate, says that "Azerbaijan represents a model of inter-national and inter-religious relations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290777.html>).

September 28

President Ilham Aliyev receives Charles Hendry, British minister of state for the department of energy and climate change (<http://news.day.az/politics/290676.html>).

Vice Prime Minister Elchin Efendiyev and Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev open the Second Baku International Book Exhibition (<http://news.day.az/society/290607.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the external relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan is guilty of hypocrisy (<http://news.day.az/politics/290639.html>).

Deputy Finance Minister Azar Bayramov says that his ministry and the European Union are cooperating in a training project on ways to increase financial control (<http://news.day.az/economy/290637.html>).

The transportation ministry reaches an agreement with its Russian counterpart on the construction of a bridge over the Samur River which marks the border between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/290680.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that he cannot explain the motivations behind reports that the Turkish government plans to renew efforts to secure the ratification of the Zurich Protocols Ankara signed with Yerevan (<http://news.day.az/politics/290588.html>).

The Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy hosts an Argentina Day (<http://news.day.az/society/290591.html>).

Catherine Ashton, the EU supreme representative for foreign affairs and security policy, says that "the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh question remains among the priorities of the European Union" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290712.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that the US Department of State does not confirm the reliability of reports published on the Wikileaks site (<http://news.day.az/politics/290631.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that "the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by a military path is impossible" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290605.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan "should independently define the forms of cooperation with Europe in the energy sphere" (<http://news.day.az/economy/290664.html>).

Participants in the international youth forum "A New Generation: Responsibility without Borders" visit the Heydar Aliyev Foundation (<http://news.day.az/politics/290711.html>).

Lech Walesa, former president of Poland, says that at present the European Union is "not considering" adding new members from the South Caucasus to its ranks, "but this does not mean that we do not want this" to happen (<http://news.day.az/politics/290565.html>).

European experts arrive in Azerbaijan to promote education in the agricultural sector (<http://news.day.az/economy/290651.html>).

Pavel Adamovich, mayor of the Polish city of Gdansk, says that the completion of the Odessa-Brody-Gdansk pipeline for Azerbaijani oil "would be good business for Poland and also for Ukraine" (<http://news.day.az/economy/290563.html>).

September 27

President Ilham Aliyev receives three Nobel laureates, Eric McKinney of Harvard, Finn Erling Kidland from Carnegie-Mellon, and Christopher Pissarides of the London School of Economics (<http://news.day.az/politics/290519.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the UN General Assembly that "the unconstructive actions of the Armenian side" are blocking the achievement of an accord on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/290725.html> and <http://news.day.az/politics/290641.html>). In other comments, he says that "the resolution of the [Nagorno-Karabakh] conflict must begin with the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290525.html>), that the election of Azerbaijan to the UN Security Council would eliminate the current shortage of representatives on that body of small developing countries and make this UN organ "more balanced" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290531.html>), that "the time has come for Palestine to be fully represented in the United Nations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290529.html>), and that Baku is considering whether to devote additional funds to international efforts in the Horn of Africa (<http://news.day.az/politics/290526.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in New York with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu (<http://news.day.az/politics/290342.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that the Argentinian parliamentarians visiting Baku hope for the rapid resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/290469.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov tells California legislator Joseph Simitian that "the position of Armenia has condemned the negotiations to failure" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290467.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information department of the Presidential Administration, says there is "no need" to deal seriously with the materials on the Wikileaks site because they are based on "the personal reflections of particular people" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290397.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijani ambassador to Moscow, says that no visit of representatives of the Azerbaijani intelligentsia to Nagorno-Karabakh is planned for the near future because of the latest declarations of Armenian leaders (<http://news.day.az/politics/290409.html>).

Oktay Asadov, Milli Majlis speaker, tells Roberto Mario Mouilleron, head of the Argentinian parliamentary Azerbaijani friendship group, that Baku is interested in the further development of relations with the parliament of Argentina (<http://news.day.az/politics/290518.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that outmigration from Armenia has been accelerating as people cannot find work there (<http://news.day.az/politics/290350.html>).

The defense ministry announces that the drones being produced in Azerbaijan correspond to NATO standards (<http://news.day.az/economy/290404.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, says that "Azerbaijan has become a space where all religions and cultures can co-exist" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290500.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that if anyone attempts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by force, Russia is "ready to take all necessary measures for the restoration of peace in the region" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290527.html>).

Roberto Mario Mouilleron, head of the inter-parliamentary Argentinian-Azerbaijani friendship group, says that Argentina intends to open an embassy in Baku in the near future (<http://news.day.az/politics/290422.html>).

Federico Pinedo, a member of the Argentinian parliament's friendship group with Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijan has made "a great economic leap forward" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290483.html>).

September 26

President Ilham Aliyev receives Joseph Simitian, a California state legislator (<http://news.day.az/politics/290254.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva is the subject of a chapter in a new book by German writer Kerstin Plevon on the 60 most successful women of the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/290226.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the foreign ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation at a meeting on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly that "Azerbaijan remains committed to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in correspondence with international principles and norms and on the basis of corresponding decisions and resolution" by various international bodies (<http://news.day.az/politics/290194.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan supports the development of Turkic language countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290200.html>).

The Ministry of Culture and Tourism says that beginning next year, tourist visitors to Azerbaijan will be given electronic visas (<http://news.day.az/society/290295.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, head of the interparliamentary Azerbaijan-Tajikistan friendship group, meets with Zokir Vazirov, the ambassador of Tajikistan to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/290291.html>).

Zhalya Aliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the words of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan "yet again show that he completely ignores international law and that in general he is an enemy of the truth" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290191.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva says that the magazine *Baku*, which has been published in Russian since 2007, will now be issued in English as well (<http://news.day.az/politics/290237.html>).

Polish Foreign Minister Radoslaw Sikorski says that "the establishment of a visa-free regime between the European Union and the countries of the Eastern Partnership Program is not a distant prospect" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290253.html>).

Georgian Deputy Foreign Minister David Jalagania says that Baku and Tbilisi have made no progress since the start of the year in demarcating 160 kilometers of the 450-kilometer border between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/290278.html>).

Naser Abdel Karim, Palestinian ambassador to Baku, says that Palestine "supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290014.html>).

Joseph Simitian, a Californian state legislator, says that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will be resolved in the near future on the basis of international norms (<http://news.day.az/politics/290321.html>).

The Polish foreign ministry says that "Azerbaijan is a key energy partner for the European Union" (<http://news.day.az/economy/290246.html>).

September 25

President Ilham Aliyev opens the world boxing championship in Baku and receives Chin-Kuo Woo, the president of the International Boxing Association (<http://news.day.az/politics/290142.html> and <http://news.day.az/politics/290141.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says that "the current successful development of Azerbaijan is highly rated by public opinion around the world" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290041.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets his Georgian counterpart Grigol Vashadze on the sidelines of the 66th session of the UN General Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/290100.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, host a reception in New York on the 20th anniversary of the independence of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/290075.html>).

The Azerbaijani Community of St. Petersburg formally organizes in Russia's northern capital (<http://news.day.az/society/290113.html>).

Moldovan Prime Minister Vladimir Filat says that Chisinau is interested in joining the AGRI pipeline project which calls for the flow of Azerbaijani gas through Georgia to Romania (<http://news.day.az/economy/290078.html>).

September 24

President Ilham Aliyev says that Baku is "striving to bring the criteria of the development of Azerbaijan up to the standards of European states" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289778.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in New York with his Albanian counterpart Edmond Haxhinasto, with his Congolese counterpart Alexis Thambwe, with Liberian counterpart Toga Gayewea McIntosh, with William Burns, U.S. deputy secretary of state, and with Richard Morningstar, the US secretary of state's special envoy for Eurasian energy (<http://news.day.az/politics/290065.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in New York with the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/289956.html>).

Finance Minister Samir Sharifov says that the upcoming visit of French President Nicolas Sarkozy to Baku will be "a stimulus for the development of relations between the two countries" (<http://news.day.az/economy/290064.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's comments about "the independence" of Nagorno-Karabakh are "completely without foundation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290056.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the number of Azerbaijani embassies abroad must be increased from the current 71 (<http://news.day.az/politics/290046.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's statement that "Nagorno-Karabakh will never be returned to Azerbaijan" highlights the weakening of Yerevan's position in the talks about the resolution of that conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/290045.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara is ready to be a mediator in the Karabakh conflict if Azerbaijan so desires (<http://news.day.az/politics/289951.html>).

The 12th session of the EU's Azerbaijan Cooperation Committee takes place in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/290011.html>).

September 23

Foreign Minister Elmar Mamedyarov meets in New York with Dervish Eroglu, president of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Tuvalu Prime Minister Willy Telavi, British Minister of State for Foreign and Commonwealth Affairs Lord Howell, Bulgarian Foreign Minister Nikolay Mladenov, as well as Philippe Lefort, the EU special representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia, and Nabil al-Arabi, the secretary general of the Arab League (<http://news.day.az/politics/289837.html>). He also meets with his counterparts from Russia, Israel, Botswana, Ukraine, Georgia, Luxemburg, Fiji, Palestine, Jordan and Algeria (<http://news.day.az/politics/289769.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that "the oil and gas fields of the Caspian are capable for supporting Europe for 100 years" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289817.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the participation of Russian military personnel in the Yerevan military parade is "their internal affair" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289840.html>). In other comments, he says that "Turkey and Azerbaijan are friendly and fraternal states and the present policy of these countries corresponds to the interests of Turkic states and peoples" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289827.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "Azerbaijan will always be allied with Turkey" whatever happens in relations between Turkey and Israel (<http://news.day.az/politics/289884.html>). In other comments, he says that the military parade in Yerevan was "a marionette show" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289883.html>), and that "the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan has become the greatest obstacle on the path of the development of the South Caucasus and its integration into Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289846.html>).

Vilyat Guliyev, Azerbaijani ambassador to Budapest, hosts a presentation of a new translation into Hungarian of a book by Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Chisinau, on "International Law and the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/290421.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the 12th congress of Russia's ruling party *United Russia* is an historical turning point for that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/290305.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the declarations of representatives of the Armenian diaspora in Western countries about the need to launch a new propaganda policy clearly testifies to the fiasco" of its past efforts (<http://news.day.az/politics/289779.html>).

Sabir Rustamkhanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the Armenian nuclear power station continues to hang like the sword of Damocles over the Caucasus" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289772.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that "the illegal occupation of Azerbaijani territories which has lasted for years must be ended" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289764.html>).

French Transport Minister Thierry Mariani says that "Azerbaijan is a tolerant state" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289924.html>).

Norik Nikolay, vice president of the subcommittee of the European Parliament on defense and security, says that "Azerbaijan is important for the European Union from the point of view of stability in the region" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289853.html>).

Mustafa Kabakci, a deputy in Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that Ankara's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is "clear and constant support" for Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/289844.html>).

The Georgian foreign ministry says that Tbilisi does not recognize the so-called elections in Nagorno-Karabakh as legitimate (<http://news.day.az/politics/289800.html>).

September 22

Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev says that as of September 1, the strategic hard currency reserve of Azerbaijan exceeds 40 billion US dollars, eight times more than its foreign debt (<http://news.day.az/economy/289596.html>).

Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev tells a session of the Azerbaijani-Bulgarian business forum that trade between the two countries is expanding extraordinarily rapidly in recent months (<http://news.day.az/economy/289626.html>).

Energy and Industry Minister Natik Aliyev receives Luiz Fragan, a Spanish senator, to discuss alternative energy systems (<http://news.day.az/economy/289757.html>). Aliyev also receives Bulgarian Minister of Economy, Energy, and Tourism Traicho Traikov (<http://news.day.az/economy/289753.html>).

Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov meets in Istanbul with Turkish President Abdulla Gul (<http://news.day.az/politics/289765.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that victorious countries "usually are not transformed into someone's advance post," as has happened with Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/289582.html>).

Makhmoud Karimov, president of the Azerbaijani Academy of Sciences, criticizes Armenia at the 55th session of the International Atomic Energy Agency in Vienna (<http://news.day.az/politics/289679.html>).

Azerbaijan and the World Bank have signed an agreement on promoting the modernization of the capital market in Baku (<http://news.day.az/economy/289608.html>).

The Organization for the Liberation of Karabakh sends a letter to Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, concerning the falsification by Armenia of Yerevan's violation of the ceasefire (<http://news.day.az/politics/289685.html>).

Inayattullah Kakar, Pakistani ambassador to Baku, appeals to Azerbaijan for assistance in overcoming the consequences of flooding in his country (<http://news.day.az/politics/289676.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that Moscow "does not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289641.html>).

Günther H. Oettinger, the EU commissioner for energy and Štefan Füle, the EU commissioner for enlargement and neighbourhood policies, say that "countries neighboring the European Union are acquiring ever growing significance in the supply of energy resources to the EU countries" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289747.html>).

September 21

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bulgarian Economics, Energy, and Tourism Minister Traicho Traikov (<http://news.day.az/politics/289458.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Robert Walter, the chairman of the Group of Democrats in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (<http://news.day.az/politics/289458.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says that "all problems concerning energy security in Azerbaijan have already found their solutions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289444.html>).

Vice Prime Minister Ali Hasanov says that Azerbaijan has achieved food security (<http://news.day.az/economy/289405.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets in New York with his Uruguayan counterpart Luis Almagro, his Trinidad and Tobago counterpart Surujrattan Rambachan, and his Columbian counterpart Maria Angela Holguin (<http://news.day.az/politics/289554.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party and a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the discussion at the UN of the situation in the occupied territories is a success of Azerbaijani diplomacy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289548.html>).

Milli Majlis speaker Oktay Asadov meets Cemil Çiçek, the speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/289552.html>).

Azerbaijan and Argentina agree to cooperation in the area of certification of agricultural and consumer products (<http://news.day.az/economy/289460.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, takes part in a Saudi conference of "the phenomenon of the factor of taqfir" (<http://news.day.az/society/289767.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says the military parade in Yerevan on that country's independence day was "laughable" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289544.html>).

Romanian President Traian Basescu names Daniil Kristian Cobanu as his country's new ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/289459.html>).

Günther H. Oettinger, EU commissioner for energy, tells a Baku conference that "Azerbaijan is playing a key role in the realization of the South Gas Corridor project" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289403.html>). His office adds that the EU "would like to import gas from Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan directly" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289425.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of the EU representation in Azerbaijan, says that "the construction of a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline does not pose any legal or ecological risks" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289414.html>).

September 20

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfaz Garayev says that "tourist services in Azerbaijan must achieve international standards" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289252.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov receives Lorenzo Basso, Argentinian deputy agriculture, livestock and fisheries minister (<http://news.day.az/politics/289366.html>).

Belorussian President Aleksandr Lukashenko says that Belarus and Azerbaijan "need one another" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289301.html>).

The European Commission proposes beginning talks with Azerbaijan on the easing of bilateral visa requirements (<http://news.day.az/politics/289307.html>).

Renate Brauner, vice-mayor and vice-governor of Vienna, says that "in the future, the capital of Azerbaijan can become one of the touristic centers of the world" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289282.html>).

September 19

President Ilham Aliyev says that "our music is our national treasure"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/289063.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natic Aliyev receives his Ukrainian counterpart Yuri Boyko (<http://news.day.az/economy/289181.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that declarations by Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan "not only demonstrate the lack of seriousness" in Yerevan's approach to talks about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict," but also "involve the deception of his own citizens, society and the international community with the goal of concealing the failure of Armenian diplomacy"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/289164.html>).

Aydyn Aliyev, head of the State Customs Committee, says that the new customs code, which will go into force in January 2012, "is one of the first documents in Azerbaijan which corresponds not only to European, but to international standards"
(<http://news.day.az/economy/289029.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice-speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that recent statements by US congressmen on Nagorno-Karabakh "do not reflect the official position of the United States" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289172.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says visits by foreigners to the occupied territories are being done intentionally to make a settlement of the conflict more difficult to achieve (<http://news.day.az/politics/289030.html>).

Azerbaijani and Russian forces participate in a joint training exercise along the border of their countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/289182.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, says that "at times, the US State Department interferes with our activity on site." His comment came in reaction to Azerbaijani criticism of a US government report on the state of religious freedom in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/289155.html>).

The Arab League decides to support Azerbaijan's candidacy for a seat on the UN Security Council for 2012-2013 (<http://news.day.az/politics/289140.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of the EU office in Baku, says that "an important part of the cooperation plan between Azerbaijan and the European Union is connected with the struggle against corruption" (<http://news.day.az/politics/289078.html>).

The Asian Development Bank says that "Azerbaijan occupies one of the leading places among the countries participating in the Central Asian Regional Economic Cooperation program (CARES)" (<http://news.day.az/economy/289073.html>).

Sylvia Meier-Kajbic, Austria's ambassador to Baku, says that she expects a rapid increase in bilateral trade between the two countries this year
(<http://news.day.az/economy/289044.html>).

September 18

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that his delegation has again raised the issue of the fictional "elections" to "local organs of self-administration in the occupied Azerbaijani region of Nagorno-Karabakh" with UN member states (<http://news.day.az/politics/290038.html>).

Kish Air declares the opening of direct flights between Baku and Tabriz, but later puts off the start of this new service indefinitely (<http://news.day.az/economy/288951.html>).

September 17

Štefan Füle, the European Union commissioner for enlargement and European neighborhood policy, says that the EU will "step by step increase its role in the resolution of regional conflicts like that in Nagorno-Karabakh" (<http://news.day.az/politics/288877.html>).

September 16

In the name of President Ilham Aliyev, a reception in honor of visiting Montenegrin President Filip Vujanović is held in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/288569.html>). Prime Minister Arthur Rasizade then receives him officially (<http://news.day.az/politics/288742.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva says in Paris that "Azerbaijan has guaranteed its energy security and at present is making a contribution to the energy security of its partner countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/288598.html>).

Azerbaijan and Bulgaria form an inter-parliamentary friendship group (<http://news.day.az/politics/288779.html>).

Ombudsman Elmira Suleymanova receives Matthew Bryza, US ambassador to Baku, at his request (<http://news.day.az/politics/288743.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that "Nagorno-Karabakh is part of the territory of Azerbaijan and elections can take place there only according to the laws of the Azerbaijani Republic" (<http://news.day.az/politics/288734.html>).

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation opens new schools in Azerbaijani-populated districts of Georgia (<http://news.day.az/politics/288730.html>).

Polish President Bronislaw Komorowski says that he is preparing to take a final decision on the Odessa-Brody-Plotsk pipeline project after the October elections in his country (<http://news.day.az/economy/288727.html>).

Iranian Defense Minister Ahmad Vahidi says that Azerbaijan and Iran have "great potential" for the development of relations in various spheres including cultural, religious and historical (<http://news.day.az/politics/288680.html>).

Iranian Transportation Minister Ali Nikzad says that an existing highway in the northern part of Iran will be extended in order to link Azerbaijan with its non-

contiguous Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic
(<http://news.day.az/economy/288654.html>).

US officials tell a Washington conference devoted to the 20th anniversary of the independence of the countries of the South Caucasus that the US "intends to support peace, security, economic development and democratic institutions" in that region (<http://news.day.az/politics/288653.html>).

Jennifer Walsh, director for Russia, Ukraine and Eurasia of the US Defense Department, says, "Russia will play a certain role in the South Caucasus, but no one country must have the right of privileged influence" there (<http://news.day.az/politics/288611.html>).

Justin Friedman, director of the Office for Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts of the US Department of State, says that Washington "will continue to work through the medium of the co-chairmanship in the OSCE Minsk Group for the achievement of agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan" about Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/288601.html>).

Note to Readers

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