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School of International Affairs and Business

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AZERBAIJAN AND OSCE:
20 YEARS OF COOPERATION

Ambassador Koray Targay
Head of the OSCE Office in Baku

The year of 2012 marks the 20th anniversary of Azerbaijan's membership in the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), Baku having joined the OSCE on January 30, 1992.

The history of OSCE

Our organization traces its origins to the détente period of the early 1970s, when the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) was created to serve as a multilateral forum for dialogue and negotiation between East and West. After meetings lasting more than two years in Helsinki and Geneva, the CSCE reached agreement on the Helsinki Final Act, which was signed on 1 August 1975. This document contained a number of key commitments on politico-military, economic and environmental and human rights issues that became central to the so-called *Helsinki Process*. It also established ten fundamental principles (the *Decalogue*) governing the behavior of States toward their citizens, as well as toward each other.

Until 1990, the CSCE functioned mainly as a series of meetings and conferences that built on and extended the participating States' commitments, while periodically reviewing their implementation. However, with the end of the Cold War, the Paris Summit of November 1990 set the CSCE on a new course. In the Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the CSCE was called upon to play its part in managing the historic change taking place in Europe and responding to the new challenges of the post-Cold War period, which led to its acquiring permanent institutions and operational capabilities.

As part of this institutionalization process, the name of the organization was changed from the CSCE to the OSCE by a decision of the Budapest Summit of Heads of State or Government in December 1994.

Azerbaijan as an important actor

Azerbaijan is a young democracy, which restored its independence on 18 October 1991. Since then, six presidential, four parliamentary and three municipal elections have been held in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan has achieved remarkable political stability and high economic growth, developing the energy sector, and generating high revenues from oil and gas exports. Azerbaijan reduced the poverty rate from 49% in 2001 to 11% in 2009, scored a record 35% GDP growth in 2007, followed by a consistent growth trend henceforth. These developments have naturally heightened Azerbaijan's international commitments also adding substantially to the challenges in the local environment involving the work of OSCE.

Establishment of the OSCE Office in Baku

Almost 12 years have passed since July 2000, when the OSCE Office in Baku (the Office) began operations in Azerbaijan, based on OSCE Permanent Council Decision No. 318 dated 16 November 1999. During this decade, Azerbaijan has experienced significant political, social and economic developments, and the Office has implemented its mandate in all three OSCE dimensions of security and stability in response to emerging local needs and requirements. Specifically, the Office promotes the implementation of all OSCE principles and commitments; co-operates with the Government of Azerbaijan; co-ordinates activities with the Chairman-in-Office and other OSCE institutions; establishes and maintains contacts with local authorities, political parties, other international actors, non-governmental organizations, mass media, universities and research institutes.

What we do

The Office possesses a broad mandate, which covers major areas of concern in all OSCE dimensions including the human, political, economic and environmental

aspects of security and stability. The OSCE Office in Baku must not be identified with the "Minsk Group" Office, which represents the OSCE Chairman-in-Office in issues related to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The political projects under the first dimension support the Government's reforms of law enforcement, including community policing, border control and public assembly management, and major update and revision of basic police training; as well as combating terrorism, organized crime, corruption and trafficking in human beings. The Office implemented a five-year project to assist in the modernization of police training, which culminated in adoption of the new curriculum extending basic police training from three months to six. Likewise, the Office supports the Azerbaijani Police with training on modern crowd control methods since six years.

In the Economic and Environmental dimension, fast economic development has shifted the focus to supporting initiatives by the Government and the international community for strengthening good governance, promoting transparency and fostering Small- and Medium-sized Enterprise (SME) development. The Office has also succeeded in highlighting the major environmental concerns in Azerbaijan including water management, access to environmental information, environmental education, as well as energy policy dialogue, including renewable energy.

The Office's Human Dimension activities have demonstrated particular dynamism, encompassing achievements in both the Rule of Law and Democratization. The Rule of Law and Human Rights programme supports legal and judicial reforms throughout the Country. This includes conducting trial and detention monitoring, capacity building for legal professionals, authorities and civil society, as well as increasing awareness about mechanisms to ensure full exercise of human rights.

Since it was established in 2006, the Democratization program has made strides in the environments of media freedom, election administration and democratic governance. It has established close, productive working relationships with major Government partners, including the Presidential Administration, Parliament and the Central Election Commission, while expanding the capacities of civil society and media, especially the public broadcaster ITV. Furthermore, it has been a key developer of crucial pending and adopted legislation, such as the Law on the Prevention of Domestic Violence, amendments to the Election Code, the Law on Access to Information and the decriminalization of defamation.

During the past decade, in response to the growing national requirements and successful co-operation with the Government and the civil society, the Office expanded multi-fold, generating a budget growth from €595,500 to €2,826,000 per year; the number of international staff from five to twelve presently, representing eight different OSCE participating States, and relying on the fine work of 27 national staff members, up from five in 2000. I am the sixth Head of the OSCE Office in Baku, succeeding previous Ambassadors from Turkey, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and the Netherlands.

In conclusion

The National Security Concept of Azerbaijan identified democratic development of the country and its integration into the Euro-Atlantic area as the strategic choice. I am convinced this is the path that Azerbaijan does and will pursue. Our duty is to support this Country in its democratization efforts through the capacity building

activities, supporting legislative reforms, bringing best practises from other participating States and so on. I am sure that Azerbaijan has all the intellectual human resources to make serious achievements in the nearest future. Our aim is to assist and stand by the Azerbaijani nation to shorten the way it needs for reaching the set targets.

**SECULAR STATE IS 'AZERBAIJANI'S CHOICE,'
BAKU MUSLIM ADMINISTRATION TELLS IRAN**

Paul Goble
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The Scientific-Religious Council of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus has expressed concern about the appearance of statements and articles by Iranian religious leaders criticizing Azerbaijan, pointed to the rebirth of Islam in Azerbaijan since the end of Soviet times, but reaffirmed that "a secular state is the choice of [the Azerbaijani] people," and insisted that Azerbaijan wants to live in peace and harmony with its neighbors and expects them to support rather than block Baku's efforts to end Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

In a 900-word declaration issued on May 12, the Council noted that "the Azerbaijani people, having joined itself 14 centuries ago to the Islamic world, has always been proud of its holy religious values and has operated on these values in forming itself into a nation" and pointed out that, "with the moment of acquiring independence," Azerbaijan's attachment to Islam has found expression in the country's national flag and in the actions of both former President Heydar Aliyev and current President Ilham Aliyev. [1]

Under their leadership, the declaration continues, Azerbaijan has achieved great success in all spheres of life, an "undoubted reflection" of the great role that "the preservation of [Azerbaijan's] national-spiritual traditions and respectful relation to [its] religious values, which stand on the basis of these traditions and to those of representatives of all religions."

If in Soviet times, the Council notes, there were only 18 mosques, today there are "about 2,000" of them. More than 400 of these have been restored with assistance from the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, and that foundation, the Muslim group notes, have helped restore mosques abroad, including most recently in Serbia. "This process is continuing," the declaration continues, "thanks to the personal attention and concern of the chief of state," something that "very much gratifies the Azerbaijani people."

But "the choice of [that people] is a secular state," the group says. "The basic law of the contemporary Azerbaijani state strengthens the legal, democratic and secular state system and defends our freedom of belief. As citizens of a state, which is devoted to our national-spiritual heritage, we, the leaders of science and religion of the Azerbaijani Republic, cannot remain indifferent to the denial of the services before our people and statehood of respected President Ilham Aliyev, who has been

chosen by the people having won the trust of millions of people” and who has defended our national-spiritual values.”

Consequently, the declaration goes on, Azerbaijanis cannot accept the kind of criticism of President Aliyev and the Azerbaijani state, which some religious leaders of Iran have lodged or the employment of ultimatums against our people and state or other threats to “our independent policy.” Indeed, it says, “we consider this interference in our internal affairs.”

“The true cause of the provocations directed against our people and state,” the Baku Muslim Council says, “consists not so much in religious concern, Islamic solidarity, or the demonstration of brotherhood or concern about the feelings of our people, as such statements imply, but rather through the misuse of the Islamic religion an effort to harm our stability and to create conflicts within society.”

Given that President Ilham Aliyev and all Azerbaijani officials have made it clear that “no aggression of any kind will be allowed against neighboring Iran from the territory of Azerbaijan,” such Iranian statements are especially unfortunate. “Our goal,” the Baku Muslim scholars say, “is to live in our region and in the world with all nations and states on the basis of peaceful relations and mutual cooperation. As an independent state, we hope that our friends will be pleased by our successes, and that which we want for ourselves, we want for others.”

Moreover, the Council says, regarding the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan through the ending of the Armenian occupation, “we hope for the just position of the world community and the support of fraternal and friendly countries.” Unfortunately, it adds, “the bitter truth is that when we really need a demonstration of Islamic solidarity and religious concern, we do not feel this support.”

“When in Soviet times, our religious values were under threat and when Armenian extremists committed acts of aggression against our people, the steps that should have been taken were not, but now it is impossible to understand the appearance of such unnecessary declarations” as those the Iranian Muslim leaders have made. “We regret that we do not see fatwas of influential religious leaders of Iran in response to the occupation of the lands of Azerbaijan, the destruction of mosques in Shusha, Aghdam, and hundreds of other Islamic prayer places, the driving out of a million Azerbaijani Muslims from their native hearths. On the contrary, we have become witnesses of the consistent material and moral support [by Iran] of Armenia, which is an aggressor country.”

The Council concludes that, “with Allah’s help, the Azerbaijani people will never fall from provocations and shameful rumors and will overcome all obstacles on the path of the independence of our country.” And “we call upon the religious leaders of neighboring Iran to put an end to the baseless slander and criticism and not to be subject to inventions, which show a lack of respect to our Islamic morality and national spiritual values.”

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/332157.html> (accessed 14 May 2012).

**RUSSIAN-TURKISH RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIETIZATION OF
AZERBAIJAN
AND THE SOVIETIZATION OF ARMENIA**

**Part V (A).
Azerbaijan's Territorial Gifts to Armenia**

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The Revolutionary committee (*Revkom*) established with the direct participation of Turkey declared in Gumri, on November 28, 1920, about the victory of Soviet power in Armenia, while a day later, the *Revkom* formed by the Bolsheviks in the district city of Kazakh in the west of Azerbaijan also proclaimed Soviet power in Armenia. However, in order to give the new structure a legitimate character and to avoid the possible dissatisfaction of the Turks, the Soviet-organized *Revkom* listed as its place of formation the Armenian city of Dilizhan. The *Revkom* itself reached Dilizhan only a day later, on November 30. [1] It should be noted that at that time only one member of the *Revkom* was in Dilizhan, while Sarkis Kasyan, the chairman of this new organ, hurried to join him. The arrival of the remaining members of the committee was expected on December 3. [2]

An intense struggle for the right to be the first to enter Erivan, to seize power throughout the entire republic and thereby obtain legalization at an all-Armenian level broke out between the two revolutionary committees. In order to give political weight to the so-called Dilizhan *Revkom* which was under Russian control and in a celebratory manner send it on to Erivan, according to a directive from Moscow on November 30, N. Narimanov, the chairman of the *Azrevkom*, and M.D. Huseynov, the peoples commissar of international affairs, sent the Armenian communists in Dilizhan a telegram of greetings concerning the results of the session of the Political and Organizational Bureaus of the Central Committee of the AKP(b) in which the participants were G. Ordzhonikidze, S. Ter-Danelyan (Sarkis), Ye. Stasova, G. Kaminsky, N. Narimanov, A. Karayev, M.D. Huseynov, and others. At the session of the bureaus, the following decision was adopted: from now on, no borders exist between Soviet Azerbaijan and Soviet Armenia; Zangazur and Nakhchivan pass to the jurisdiction of Armenia. [3]

On December 1, 1920, a celebratory session of the Baku Soviet devoted to the proclamation of Soviet power in Armenia took place in Baku. At this session, N. Narimanov, the chairman of the *Azrevkom*, spoke and publicized the Declaration adopted earlier by the Political and Organizational Bureaus: "Soviet Azerbaijan, having seen the struggle of the fraternal Armenian toiling people against the power of the Dashnaks, who have shed and continue to shed the innocent blood of our best Communist comrades within Armenia and Zangazur, declares that from now on no territorial issues can be the cause of mutual bloodletting of two immemorial neighboring peoples, the Armenians and the Muslims, and that the territory of Zangazur and Nakhchivan districts are an inalienable part of Soviet Armenia." [4] In the most complex situation when Armenia, having suffered defeat at the hands of Turkey, had practically broken into pieces and the *Revkoms* proclaimed at Dilizhan

and Gumri could not resolve to appear in Erivan, this declaration turned out to be something unexpected even for the Armenians themselves. When on November 30, G. Ordzhonikidze by direct line declared to A. Nazaretyan this surprising news, the latter involuntarily responded: "Bravo, Azerbaijanis!" [5]

It is worth noting that the concession of part of the territory of Azerbaijan to Armenia at the end of 1920 was not the first and not the only such a case in the history of the two republics. The first time this issue arose was on May 26, 1918, after the Georgian fraction left the Transcaucasus Seim and proclaimed the independence of Georgia. Confronted with a *fait accompli*, the Azerbaijani and Armenian fractions of the Transcaucasus Seim began active talks about defining the borders of their future states. On this issue, Armenia turned out to be in a complicated situation. That was made more difficult because the Armenians could not agree on what city should be the capital of their republic. Aleksandropol (Gumri) remained under the control of the Turks, and more than half of the population of Erivan was made up of Azerbaijanis; they had their own deputies in the Transcaucasus Seim, and a Muslim National Council had been running the city since the Russian revolution of 1917. The Muslim deputies of Erivan *gubernia* voted for the declaration of independence of Azerbaijan in the borders of the territory of Baku, Yelizavetpol and part of Erivan *gubernias*. In order to resolve this important issue, the leaders of the Azerbaijani and Armenian fractions met already on the eve of the proclamation of the independence of their republics. On the basis of those meetings, they agreed that Azerbaijan would not oppose the declaration of Erivan as the capital of Armenia, while Armenia—in response to this gesture of good will—would withdraw its demands for part of Yelizavetpol *gubernia*, that is, to the mountainous part of Karabakh. [6]

On May 29, 1918, F. Kh. Khoyskiy advised the Azerbaijan National Council about negotiations with the Armenian National Council and, in explaining the situation, indicated in particular that the Armenian federation needs a political center. Since Aleksandropol had been seized by the Turks, Erivan could be such a center and therefore he advanced the proposal of conceding this city to the Armenians. Kh. Khasmammadov, M. Yu. Jafarov, A. Sheikhulislamov, and M. Maharramov, who spoke after him, called the concession of Erivan to the Armenians an inevitable evil. Fifteen delegates of the 28 members of the National Council voted in favor of making this concession to the Armenians, one voted against, and three abstained. [7] However, two days later, the members of the National Council who represented Erivan gubernia—Mir Hidayat Seyidov, Bagir Rzayev, and Nariman-bey Narimanbeyov—protested the concession of Erivan to the Armenians. The Azerbaijani National Council at its session of June 1, 1918, rejected the demands of these Erivan deputies. [8] Bagir Rzayev, who spoke at the next session of the Muslim National Council, said the following prophetic words: "I am certain that none of you will go to Erivan gubernia where we *Erivantsy* will be going, but we ask you one thing: Having formed your own independent Azerbaijan, do not forget those of us who are left on the territory of the Armenian Republic." [9] The National Council sent M. Seyidov, B. Rzayev, and M. Jafarov to Erivan for resolving the issues arising in connection with the transfer of Erivan to the Armenian National Council.

The Azerbaijani and Armenian delegations in Batumi also discussed border issues and reached an agreement that Azerbaijan agreed with the organization of an Armenian canton within the borders of Aleksandropol gubernia and that Erivan would be handed over to Armenia only on the condition that they would drop claims on portions of Yelizavetpol *gubernia*, having in mind Karabakh. [10] The Azerbaijani delegates promised also to assist in the conclusion of a treaty between Turkey and

Armenia. The Batumi talks were completed on June 4 with the signing by all three republics of a treaty "of peace and friendship."

At the conclusion of the Batumi conference, Turkey on June 4, 1918, signed treaties with Georgia and, as a result of the mediation of the Azerbaijani delegates, with Armenia, recognizing their independence. Armenia in turn, in its treaty with Turkey, recognized the Brest-Litovsk Treaty, Echmiadzin and Aleksandropol were handed over to Turkey, which also obtained the right to use the Aleksandropol-Julfa road. The border of Armenia passed near Erivan and there were only six kilometers of railway left under its control. According to the Batumi treaty, the territory of the Armenian Republic in the Transcaucasus amounted to about 10,000 square kilometers. [11] R. Kachaznuni, A. Khatisyan and M. Papadzhanov signed for Armenia. The Batumi treaty required that Armenia would guarantee the security and free development of Muslims living on its territories and would create conditions for their education in native language and the celebration of religious rites. The existence of such agreements among the sides is also confirmed in the book of the member of the Georgian delegation to the Paris Peace Conference, Z. Avalov. [12]

Then-Azerbaijani Prime Minister F. Kh. Khoyskiy also mentioned the concession of Erivan to Armenia in his instructions to M.E. Rasulzade, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation in Istanbul: "I am sending you the maps you asked for in one copy with the designation of the borders of Azerbaijan, which you should insist on as strongly as possible; if the Armenians make demands on Karabakh, then you should withdraw the concession to them of Erivan and part of Kazakh district, if the Armenians remain where they are on the basis of the existing oral agreement, then it would be possible to concede to them that portion of Erivan district which is marked on the map by points." [13] This fact was made public on October 8, 1918, in Tiflis during the negotiations of M. Yu. Jafarov and the Armenian diplomatic representative A. Dzhamalyan, who reported to the Armenian foreign ministry that, "Today, Mr. Jafarov came to me ... The conversation rapidly passed onto the question about Karabakh. He recalled the good attitude that Azerbaijanis showed to us during the Batumi conference, that by their efforts, the independence of Armenia was recognized and that Erivan was ceded to us in exchange for our promising not to raise the issue about Karabakh." [14] Two years after these events, Zangazur experienced the tragic fate of Erivan as a result of its unconscionable concession to Armenia by the *Azrevkom*, which generated disappointment and anger in the Turkish command.

According to the testimony of B. Shakhtakhtinsky who was in Gumri at the moment of the publication by N. Narimanov of the Declaration of December 1, 1920, this unexpected step of the *Azrevkom* generated deep regret and anger in Turkish commander Kazym Karabekir-pasha who noted the victory over Dashnak Armenia and the proclamation at the same time of Soviet power in Dilizhan. In a conversation with B. Shakhtakhtinsky, he said: "For tactical considerations, the *Azrevkom* must not have hurried with the resolution of this issue, at least until the completion of the conference since this action is ascribed to the influence of Russia." [15] In turn, B. Shakhtakhtinsky following his conversation with Kazym Karabekir-pasha, could only see a way out of the situation generated by such a rapid and unthoughtful step of the *Azrevkom* in declaring the independence of Nakhchivan under the protection of Russia. He wrote that, "this most important in strategic terms place must not be handed over to the protection of the Turks. The independence of this *kray* under the protection of Russia should satisfy the Turks. It is possible that in a not distant future, circumstances will force us in the name of an

independent Nakhchivan *kray* to make a move toward Persian Azerbaijan, but this must never be done from Turkey or in the name of Armenia." [16]

It is worth stressing that Moscow did not oppose the possible transfer of Nakhchivan to the Turks, but only under the condition that Turkey take upon itself the heavy mission of advancing the revolutionary movement in the Muslim East. B. Legran in connection with this wrote to G. Chicherin that, "if it turns out that the Turks are capable of putting revolutionary pressure on the neighboring Muslim countries and that they would be able to raise the revolutionary movement in the East, this would be wonderful; then they would have to be given independence of action, given Nakhchivan, and the size of Soviet Armenia would be reduced, and the like. However, we should test the Turks first." [17]

* *The article originally appeared, in Russian, in Russia's Regnum News Agency at <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1438182.html#ixzz1Xevxl1D3>.*

Notes

[1] Conversation by direct line of G. Ordzhonikidze with A. Nazaretyan, 30 November 1920, *Russian State Archive of Social-Political History* (hereafter RSASPH), f.85, op.14, d.37, l.1.

[2] Letter of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 22 December 1920, *RSASPH*, f.5, op.1, d.2127, l.2.

[3] Protocol of the session of the Political and Organizational Bureau of the Central Committee of the AKP(b), *Political Documents Archive under the President of Azerbaijan Republic* (hereafter PDA PAR), f.1, op.1, d.24, l.51-52.

[4] *Kommunist*, 2 December 1920.

[5] Conversation by direct line between G. Ordzhonikidze and A. Nazaretyan, 30 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f.85, op.14, d.37, l.1 op.

[6] See Avalov, Z. (1924) *Georgia's Independence in International Politics (1918-1921)*, Paris, p. 57.

[7] Protocol Number 3 of the Muslim National Council, 29 May 1918, *SAAR*, f.970, op. 1, d. 1, l. 51-52.

[8] Protocol Number 4 of the session of the Muslim National Council, 1 June 1918, *SAAR*, f.970, op.1, d.1, l.53-54.

[9] Protocol Number 5 of the session of the Muslim National Council, 7 June 1918, *SAAR*, f.970, op.1, d.1, l.56.

[10] See *PDA PAR*, f.276, op.9, d.1, l.47.

[11] See Suny, R. G. (1993) *Looking toward Ararat: Armenia in Modern History* (Indiana University Press), p. 126.

[12] See Avalov, Z. (1924) *Georgia's Independence in International Politics (1918-1921)* (Paris), p. 57.

[13] Dispatch of the Chairman of the Council of Ministers F. Kh. Khoyskiy to the head of the Azerbaijani delegation in Istanbul M.E. Rasulzade, 31 July 1918, *PDA PAR*, f.277, op.2, d.7, l.37.

[14] Letter of A. Dzhamilyan to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, 8 October 1918, *PDA PAR*, f.276, op.9, d.65, l.18.

[15] Letter of B. Shakhtakhtinsky to G. Ordzhonikidze, November 1920, *RSASPH*, f.85, op. C /Turkey/, d.31, l.1.

[16] Letter of B. Shakhtakhtinsky to G. Ordzhonikidze, November 1920, *RSASPH*, f.85, op. C /Turkey/, d.31, l.2.

[17] Letter of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 22 December 1920, *RSASPH*, f.5. op.1, d.2127, l.5.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev tells UN Secretary General Pan Gi-Moon that "Armenia has committed dozens of terrorist acts against the civilian population and infrastructure of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330311.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the Non-Aligned Movement ministerial in Sharm-el-Sheikh that, "the international community will not be satisfied with the results of Armenian aggression" and that "the main task of Azerbaijan was and remains the support of justice and equality in international relations for securing the observation of the norms and principles of international law and the right of freedom of sovereign states" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331674.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "the situation in Azerbaijan regarding freedom of speech and of the press and of human rights is no worse than in any of the European countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330840.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijani-Russian relations will continue to develop under incoming Russian President Vladimir Putin (<http://news.day.az/politics/331098.html>).

Alexander Vershbow, deputy secretary general of NATO, says that the Western alliance has not rejected Russia's idea about joint use of the Gabala radar station (<http://news.day.az/politics/330498.html>).

Pierre Morel, special representative of the European Union for Central Asia, says that the EU is prepared to make major investments in the construction of a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline (<http://news.day.az/economy/332428.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

15 May

President Ilham Aliyev goes to Moscow for an informal summit of CIS member countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/332519.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says physical attacks on journalists by Armenian officials should surprise no one (<http://news.day.az/politics/332544.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says visitors to Eurovision will be surprised by the difference between what Baku is like and what Western media have suggested (<http://news.day.az/politics/332576.html>).

The State Committee for Work with Religious Structures criticizes articles in the Iranian media attacking Azerbaijan, pointing out that Azerbaijan is a secular state that seeks to have good relations with its neighbors (<http://news.day.az/politics/332634.html>).

The Organization of Islamic Cooperation calls for creating conditions for the return of Azerbaijani refugees and internally displaced persons (<http://news.day.az/politics/332472.html>).

Eric Rubin, US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia, says that, "the support of Azerbaijan in international efforts, including in international transit to Afghanistan is very important" (<http://news.day.az/politics/332639.html>).

14 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Tsetska Tsacheva-Dangovska, chairman of the Bulgarian National Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/332365.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/332365.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenia "does not take into consideration" the growing calls of the international community to abide by the principle of the non-use of force and to respect the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/332415.html>).

Vilayat Guliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Budapest, organizes a meeting on the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/politics/332409.html>).

Agaselim Shukurov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tripoli, tells Libyan Oil and Gas Minister Abdul-Rahman Ben Yazza that Baku is ready to construct an oil processing plant in Libya (<http://news.day.az/economy/332291.html>).

Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles opens its own pages on Facebook and Twitter (<http://news.day.az/politics/332320.html>).

Christina Lamos, charge d'affaires of the diplomatic representation of Venezuela in Baku, announces the opening of that institution (<http://news.day.az/politics/332403.html>).

Members of the Milli Majlis receive Orit Zuares and Faina Kirshenbaum, members of the Israeli Knesset (<http://news.day.az/politics/332427.html>).

The Milli Majlis, in cooperation with USAID discusses the development of a legal framework for the fight against corruption (<http://news.day.az/politics/332344.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that if Armenia does not change course, it will lose its statehood (<http://news.day.az/politics/332205.html>).

Tsetska Tsacheva-Dangovska, chairman of the Bulgarian National Assembly, says that Bulgaria can help Azerbaijan get closer to the European Union (<http://news.day.az/politics/332313.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group during a Baku visit call for speeding up the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/332375.html>).

Igor Popov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that Moscow was and remains committed to a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/332384.html>).

Pierre Morel, special representative of the European Union for Central Asia, says that the EU is prepared to make major investments in the construction of a Trans-Caspian gas pipeline (<http://news.day.az/economy/332428.html>).

13 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Patrick McQuaid, president of the International Cycling Union (<http://news.day.az/politics/332226.html>).

Azerbaijan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations says that Armenian media have distorted the UN Security Council's declaration under the chairmanship of Azerbaijan against terrorism (<http://news.day.az/politics/332184.html>).

12 May

President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva take part in the opening of the Heydar Aliyev Center on the occasion of the 89th anniversary of the birth of Heydar Aliyev and the eighth anniversary of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation (<http://news.day.az/politics/331795.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that the protest by Azerbaijani young people in front of the Iranian embassy in Baku is a response to "the interference of Iran in the

internal affairs of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/332141.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, presents the first annual Heydar Aliyev Prizes to three Russian academic leaders (<http://news.day.az/politics/331766.html>).

Vagif Sadykhov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Rome, speaks on bilateral business development in the Italian city of Santa Marinella (<http://news.day.az/economy/332462.html>).

The Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus says that certain religious leaders of the Islamic Republic of Iran have distorted the religious situation in Azerbaijan, pointing out both that the number of mosques in Azerbaijan has risen from 18 in 1991 to "about 2000" now and that "a secular state is the choice of our people" (<http://news.day.az/politics/332157.html>).

11 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ali Ahmed Karti, Sudan's foreign minister (<http://news.day.az/politics/331979.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Debnath Shaw, India's ambassador to Baku, on the occasion of the latter's completion of his appointment in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/331979.html>).

Azerbaijan is elected a member of the executive committee of the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR) (<http://news.day.az/politics/332032.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the decision of the foreign ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement to support Baku on the Karabakh conflict is "an important new victory for Azerbaijani diplomacy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331818.html>).

Azer Huseyn, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tbilisi, takes part in a ceremony in the Georgian capital honoring the member of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/332031.html>).

Parviz Shahbazov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Berlin, hosts a meeting marking the 89th anniversary of the birth of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331985.html>).

Elman Zeynalov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Riga, speaks to a meeting held in honor of the 89th anniversary of the birth of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/society/331914.html>).

Huseyn Najafov, Azerbaijan's consul general in Batumi, and Mikheil Makharadze, chairman of the Supreme Council of the Ajar Autonomous Republic, jointly host a meeting on the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331796.html>).

Sultan Gasymov, Azerbaijan's consul general in Yekaterinburg, opens an exhibition in honor of the 89th anniversary of the birth of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/society/331919.html>).

Fuad Muradov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the decision by the foreign Ministers of the Non-Aligned Movement to support the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is both "logical" and "important" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331884.html>).

Six hundred young Azerbaijanis take part in a Baku demonstration calling on the leadership of Iran to end its support for Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/331992.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that "Armenians gave birth to terrorism" in the modern world (<http://news.day.az/politics/331940.html>).

Ali Ahmed Karti, the foreign minister of Sudan, says that his country supports Azerbaijan's position on the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/331982.html>).

Mikhail Gusman, director general of Russia's ITAR-Tass news agency, says that it would seem that, "the entire UN is situated precisely on Baku's street" (<http://news.day.az/society/331622.html>).

Akira Amari, co-chair of the Azerbaijan-Japan Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group, says that Heydar Aliyev was "an outstanding state figure, a great politician and a powerful personality" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331834.html>).

Muscovites take part in ceremonies devoted to the memory of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331917.html>).

Students and faculty at Vinnitsa Technical University in Ukraine mark the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331762.html>).

10 May

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "the parliamentary elections which have taken place in Armenia cannot have any influence on the process of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331612.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natic Aliyev says that Azerbaijan's geopolitical and geostrategic position allows Baku the opportunity to become "the main transit link for energy supplies" between Europe and Central Asia (<http://news.day.az/economy/331611.html>).

Transportation Minister Ziya Mammadov, says that Azerbaijan's participation in the TRACECA transportation corridor has "strategic importance" for the country and will broaden its economic ties with European countries (<http://news.day.az/economy/331701.html>).

Eynulla Madatli, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kyiv, hosts a meeting to mark the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331782.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Mexico City, speaks to a conference at the Iberoamerican University on Azerbaijan

(<http://news.day.az/politics/331711.html>).

Akif Aliyev, Azerbaijan's charge d'affaires in Tashkent, hosts a meeting commemorating the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/politics/331666.html>).

Zhalya Aliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the parliamentary elections in Armenia have not "led to anything good" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331555.html>).

Musa Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says no one can expect the European Union to make an objective assessment of the numerous violations in the Armenian parliamentary election (<http://news.day.az/politics/331556.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that at present, certain forces are interested not in promoting democracy in Armenia, but in using that country as "a weapon for destabilizing the region" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331745.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of the EU representation in Baku, says that Azerbaijani citizens will find it easier to visit Europe (<http://news.day.az/politics/331575.html>).

Roman Aliyev, head of Latvia's Consultative Council of National Minority Affairs, hosts a session on the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/politics/331688.html>).

US Representative Gerald Connolly joins the Congressional Azerbaijani Working Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/331566.html>).

9 May

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that, "integration in European and Euro-Atlantic structures remains one of the strategic goals of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331525.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov takes part in the Sharm-el-Sheikh ministerial of the Non-Aligned Movement (<http://news.day.az/politics/331346.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov tells Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi that, "Azerbaijan will not ask anyone's permission on issues involving its ties with Iran" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331394.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, surpasses a number of European countries with regard to pluralism and religious tolerance (<http://news.day.az/politics/331534.html>).

Faig Bagirov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Ankara, speaks to a conference in Bursa on "energy security and the problems of the Caucasus region" (<http://news.day.az/economy/330017.html>).

Rasim Musabayov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says Azerbaijan's membership in the Non-Aligned Movement played a positive role in the country's election to the UN Security Council (<http://news.day.az/politics/331541.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian government is in such bad shape that it is resorting to all kinds of election violations including counting "dead souls" and bribing living voters (<http://news.day.az/politics/331378.html>).

Aytan Mustafayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia's current shameful situation is "the result of the unsuccessful game of 'ideologues' who have so often played a poor role in the fate of the Armenian people" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331376.html>).

The ministerial of the Non-Aligned Movement taking place in Sharm-el-Sheikh adopts a declaration reaffirming the importance of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/331577.html>).

The Congress of Azerbaijanis of Sweden sends a special letter to the Swedish parliament on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/politics/331397.html>).

The Congress of Azerbaijanis of Sweden takes part in a parliamentary discussion in Stockholm on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/330317.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Moscow yet again has confirmed its intention to continue its mediating role in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/331481.html>).

8 May

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Sherzod Fayziyev, incoming Uzbekistan ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/331335.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "all the attention of the world is [now] concentrated on Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331345.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "Armenia still represents a threat to peace and stability in the South Caucasus" as a result of its occupation of Azerbaijani territories" and that to day talks with Yerevan have proved "ineffective" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331369.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that "Armenia is not an independent country; it is a vassal state; and it is impossible to talk about the holding in such a country of democratic elections" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331309.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that newly elected French President Francois Hollande may display "greater activity in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331300.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that

Armenian propaganda is now working against Armenia
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331283.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, sends a letter to UN Secretary General Pan Gi-Moon concerning Armenia's conduct of "so-called 'presidential elections' in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331195.html>).

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Astana, speaks to a meeting in the Kazakhstan capital marking the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331381.html>).

Faig Bagirov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Ankara, and Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, speak to a special meeting in the Turkish capital on the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331196.html>).

Tural Rzayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kuwait, organizes various events there to mark the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331200.html>).

Gudsi Osmanov, Azerbaijan's consul general in St. Petersburg, speaks to a conference in Russia's northern capital on the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/society/331390.html>).

Vilayat Guliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Budapest, speaks to a meeting marking the 89th birthday of Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/society/331292.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Tashkent hosts a meeting devoted to the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331380.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Kyiv hosts a meeting devoted to the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/politics/331379.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that there is no basis for talking about "a democratic Armenia," because it is "a country in which laws do not work"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331199.html>).

Chingiz Ganizade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian authorities "are very far from democratic principles" (<http://news.day.az/politics/331194.html>).

Elman Rustamov, president of the Central Bank of Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijan has now reached the level of East European countries in terms of the population's access to banking services (<http://news.day.az/economy/331383.html>).

Otto Hauser, Azerbaijan's honorary consul in Stuttgart, says that several recent articles in the German media have been unjust to Azerbaijan
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331198.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that Azerbaijan will achieve the return of Shusha "by any means necessary"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331259.html>).

Sinan Ogan, a deputy in Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that Shusha is "one of the most important cities of Azerbaijan"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331265.html>).

7 May

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijan's service as president of the UN Security Council "will strengthen the position of Azerbaijan" in the world
(<http://news.day.az/politics/330983.html>).

Ali Hasanov, chairman of the State Committee on Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, says that Azerbaijan is calling on the European Court not to consider issues involving the temporary placement of displaced persons into private homes (<http://news.day.az/society/331162.html>).

Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Chisinau, speaks at the opening of a Shahid Alley at the Memorial for the Fallen in the Moldovan capital
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331173.html>).

Elman Arasly, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Amman, meets with Abdurrauf Ravabde, first deputy chairman of the Jordanian Senate, who says that his government supports Baku's position on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict
(<http://news.day.az/politics/330966.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that Azerbaijani military personnel are taking part in supply exercises in Germany according to a bilateral agreement
(<http://news.day.az/politics/329944.html>).

Asim Mollazade, and Elmira Akhundova, Milli Majlis deputies, participate in a discussion on prospects for Azerbaijani-Russian relations at the Russian Information-Cultural Center in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/331164.html>).

Elmira Akhundova, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that there will not be significant progress on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict until the format of the OSCE Minsk Group is changed (<http://news.day.az/politics/330827.html>).

Gular Ahmadova, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that ongoing parliamentary elections in Armenia are filled with falsifications (<http://news.day.az/politics/331036.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijani-Russian relations will continue to develop under incoming Russian President Vladimir Putin
(<http://news.day.az/politics/331098.html>).

5 May

Ramiz Mehdiyev, head of the Presidential Administration, says that, "Azerbaijan is viewed as a reliable partner in bilateral and multilateral relationships"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/330885.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that chairing the UN Security Council gives Azerbaijan

“additional opportunities” to raise questions about Armenia’s failure to end the occupation of Azerbaijani territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/330847.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijan has always regarded the US article 907 as unjust, but that that provision of American law has “lost all importance for Azerbaijan” (<http://news.day.az/politics/330843.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it is studying a declaration by Uruguayan Foreign Minister Luis Almagro that his country supports the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination (<http://news.day.az/politics/330828.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that the presidency of Azerbaijan in the UN Security Council shows that Azerbaijan is able “to take on itself an international mission” (<http://news.day.az/politics/330815.html>).

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Astana, meets with Kayrat Mami, chairman of the Kazakhstan Senate (<http://news.day.az/politics/330860.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the latest visit of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group “could become a stimulus” to progress on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/330806.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, Azay Guliyev and Fazil Mustafa, Milli Majlis deputies, observe the parliamentary elections in Serbia (<http://news.day.az/politics/330245.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, visits Belgrad and meets with Serbian officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/330859.html>).

4 May

Deputy Prime Minister Elchin Efendiyev, Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and chairman of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, and Bishop Aleksandr of Baku and Azerbaijan, meet with Boris Tadic, candidate for Serbian president (<http://news.day.az/politics/330608.html>).

Finance Minister Samir Sharifov, takes part in the 45th annual conference in Manila of the Asian Bank of Development (<http://news.day.az/economy/329931.html>).

Oktay Asadov, Milli Majlis speaker, visits Saudi Arabia (<http://news.day.az/politics/330431.html>).

Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Chisinau, meets with Moldovan President Nicolae Timofti (<http://news.day.az/politics/331143.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan’s permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Azerbaijan is “an active participant in the anti-terrorist coalition” (<http://news.day.az/politics/330546.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan’s permanent representative to the United

Nations, gives a press briefing on the upcoming work of the UN Security Council under Azerbaijan's chairmanship (<http://news.day.az/politics/330549.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, Azerbaijan's ombudsman, sends a letter to various international organizations on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha (<http://news.day.az/politics/330601.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says unemployment and poverty are driving Armenians out of Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/330526.html>).

The Kazakhstan embassy in Baku says that military cooperation with Azerbaijan is "an important aspect" of Astana's foreign policy (<http://news.day.az/politics/330739.html>).

3 May

Azerbaijan chairs the UN Security Council for the first time (<http://news.day.az/politics/330314.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov meets with Belorussian First Vice Prime Minister Vladimir Semashko, Belorussian Foreign Minister Sergey Martynov, and Belorussian Deputy Foreign Minister Igor Petreshenko (<http://news.day.az/politics/330173.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Cairo is functioning normally, despite the disorders in the Egyptian capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/330460.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that, "if Armenia does not free the occupied Azerbaijani territories, then the Azerbaijani people and state have sufficient forces, possibilities, and will in order to free [those] lands and restore historic justice" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330385.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that the German ambassador to Baku has taken "an incorrect position" regarding the coverage of Azerbaijan in the German media (<http://news.day.az/politics/330381.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the Armenian lobby is behind the dissemination of anti-Azerbaijani articles in the German media (<http://news.day.az/politics/330424.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that, "it is not excluded" that the Armenian government will use force against its own people after the elections there (<http://news.day.az/politics/330288.html>).

Fazail Aghamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that, "tens of thousands of Armenians" work in various positions in Turkey despite Armenia's hostility to that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/330315.html>).

Ali Hasanov, chairman of the State Committee for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, says that in 2012, Baku will build 4,178 apartments for such people (<http://news.day.az/society/330373.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that Armenians "should know that Shusha residents will recover their lands either by peaceful or by military means" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330398.html>).

Ingrid Deltenre, director general of the European Broadcasting Union, says that calls by some German parliamentarians to boycott the Eurovision competition in Baku are "harmful" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330356.html>).

2 May

President Ilham Aliyev is given a gold medal by ISESCO on the occasion of that organization's 30th anniversary (<http://news.day.az/politics/330537.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku since recovering its independence has taken consistent steps to guarantee freedom of speech and information (<http://news.day.az/politics/330297.html>).

Fuad Alaskarov, head of the law enforcement department of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijan is ready to host the Eurovision competition despite efforts by outsiders to disrupt it (<http://news.day.az/politics/330216.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that statements by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan cannot be characterized as anything but "empty populism" (<http://news.day.az/politics/330271.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, speaks at a conference on the South Caucasus at Washington University in St. Louis (<http://news.day.az/politics/330144.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Western organizations like Freedom House use double standards in their assessment of media freedom in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/330224.html>).

Khanhuseyn Kazimly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that over the course of centuries, Armenians have left their country because of its difficult social and economic situation (<http://news.day.az/politics/330077.html>).

The European Broadcasting Union fines Armenia for refusing to take part in the Eurovision competition in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/330305.html>).

The procurator generals of the member states of the Organization of Economic Cooperation of which Azerbaijan is a member issue a statement noting the need for broadening legal and judicial cooperation in the struggle against organized crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/330161.html>).

Nadeem Ilahi, deputy director of the IMF's Near East and Central Asia Department, says that Azerbaijan's economy is stable and won't be profoundly affected by the economic crisis in Europe (<http://news.day.az/economy/330162.html>).

1 May

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential

Administration, says that, "Azerbaijan could review its pro-Western position and enter a 'new block' if it does not receive broader support, especially regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Armenia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/329991.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that Azerbaijan will take part in two international weapons expositions in May (<http://news.day.az/politics/329920.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that the priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy remain unchanged (<http://news.day.az/politics/329891.html>).

Oktay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, accuses Christoph Strasser, the German PACE co-rapporteur on Azerbaijan, of lacking objectivity about Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/329947.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the Azerbaijani parliament is calling on various international organizations to take note of the 20th anniversary of the Armenian occupation of Shusha and the crimes that have been committed by the occupiers (<http://news.day.az/politics/329996.html> and <http://news.day.az/politics/329976.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, is among the Azerbaijani parliamentarians who have complained about the appearance of "unobjective information" about Azerbaijan in the German media (<http://news.day.az/politics/329973.html>).

Ayдын Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Columbian Senate's decision to declare the Khojaly tragedy genocide is the latest victory of Azerbaijani diplomacy (<http://news.day.az/politics/330008.html>).

Fazail Aghamaly, and Zahid Orudzh, Milli Majlis deputies, suggest that Shusha should be declared "the second capital" of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/330010.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan does everything it can to block objective information about the Nagorno-Karabakh war from reaching its citizens (<http://news.day.az/politics/329855.html>).

Khady Rajabli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan is no longer able to conceal the deteriorating demographic situation in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/329820.html>).

The National Council of Youth Organizations of the Azerbaijani Republic host a meeting of their counterparts from Sweden, Latvia, Italy, Georgia and Russia (<http://news.day.az/society/330000.html>).

Austrian officials organize a meeting in memory of former Azerbaijani ambassador to Vienna, Fuad Ismayilov. Among the speakers is his successor, Galib Israfilov (<http://news.day.az/society/330080.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that Ankara respects the decision of Azerbaijan to end broadcasting of foreign television serials (<http://news.day.az/society/330049.html>).

The World Bank says it is increasing the extent of its analytic work in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/329910.html>).

Note to Readers

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