



Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy  
School of International Affairs and Business

**AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD  
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[adabiweekly@ada.edu.az](mailto:adabiweekly@ada.edu.az)

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**TALKING AZERBAIJANI CULTURE:  
A CONVERSATION WITH SEVDA ALEKPERZADEH**

*Below is an interview with Sevda Alekperzadeh, a distinguished performing artist based in Baku, the fourth in the interviews Azerbaijan in the World has recently conducted with leading figures of Azerbaijani culture. Mrs. Alekperzadeh's official web page is at [www.sevda.info/eng/](http://www.sevda.info/eng/).*

*Azerbaijan in the World:* How is it that you became an artist? Was this a conscious choice or rather something more contingent?

*Sevda Alekperzadeh:* I think one is born an artist. One cannot fake it; one cannot suddenly decide to become a musician. It is thus genetically conditioned: one must have passion and a talent for it as inherent part of one's Self. That is, music has

certainly been inherent in me genetically. Even though I was born into a family of writers—both my grandfather and my father were well-known writers—all my family members including and especially my father also had a very fine voice. As a result, I have had the love for music since I was a kid and in the fifth grade, I made a firm decision to choose music as my occupation in life and to become a singer. At the age of 14, I joined the *Aypara* music band led by Vagif Garayzadeh. During my year with them, I also began studying mugham under the guidance of Alim Gasimov, as well as taking voice lessons on the side and listening intensely to jazz music at home. During the same year, I began to perform professionally on stage and took part in AzTV's New Year program, for example. A year later, I left *Aypara* and began to perform solo and met Rafiq Babayev who invited me to join and take part in the *Baky Payizy* (Baku's Fall) competition. When I was 16, another music band—RAST (formed out of those who left *Aypara*)—invited me to join them, an invitation I accepted. In the same year, I entered the Azerbaijan University of Arts to study music comedy. After eight years with RAST, I began the solo career that I have pursued ever since.

*AIW:* How has the subject matter of your music evolved, particularly in light of your exposure to the diversity of music genres in your adolescence?

*Alekperzadeh:* One always feels the potential one has: In my childhood and adolescence, I was regularly listening to folk music and mugham—my dad brilliantly performed mugham—as well as to jazz and contemporary pop music. I tried all of those genres out, including professionally and as part of my academic training (I studied professionally our folk songs). In the process, I came to feel I had an aptitude for all them, and it is this feeling that has guided me along my way. As I have grown into a rather versatile musician, my artistic efforts would always—without me trying to prompt any particular outcome—result in an amalgam of sorts: I could naturally not stint myself within narrow limits of a single genre only. However, I have passed a long way to reach the point where I stand today.

*AIW:* In what ways do you think you are different from other Azerbaijani artists, like Aziza Mustafa Zadeh, for example, who seek to follow a fine line among several genres? Is there anything new you feel you have introduced, or would like to introduce, to the realm of music in Azerbaijan and beyond?

*Alekperzadeh:* First and foremost, I don't think those who specifically aim to create something new will ever succeed, for any cultural product must be a result of a self-guided process and should come out naturally. As for myself, I don't think there is any other Azerbaijani artist who has attempted the kind of fusion of Azerbaijani folk songs and other genres, including jazz and mugham, in vocal performances. There have certainly been others—such as Aziza Mustafa Zadeh, Vagif Mustafa Zadeh, and Rafiq Babayev—who have attempted similar fusion in instrumental music, but I think I was the first to have tried it in vocal performances. And today, there are some others who are emerging and trying to follow suit.

*AIW:* Could you name any individual musicians, in Azerbaijan or indeed beyond, who have had an influence on your music?

*Alekperzadeh:* I would rather say that the music I perform these days has grown as a result of a natural, self-guided process by which many different exposures in music I have gone through have gradually merged to create something many see as my distinct style. While I certainly did listen to and greatly enjoyed work of many

individual musicians, including Whitney Houston, Steve Wonder, Ella Fitzgerald, and Rachelle Ferrell, none had a stand-alone individual impact on what is my performance today. Instead, each added an element to what has emerged as an amalgam of influences I have gone through over my lifetime.

*AIW:* You perform both inside and outside Azerbaijan frequently. Which segment is more important to you?

*Alekperzadeh:* I don't divide my audience into categories, for these all are people who come to listen to me, who love the kind of music I perform, and who love me. Hence, they all are dear to me, whether they reside in or outside of Azerbaijan. The only difference is that while performing abroad to the audience purely composed of foreigners, I feel a double responsibility, for I then represent not only myself and my music, but also my country and its culture.

*AIW:* There is a considerable number of Azerbaijani artists who have chosen to reside outside Azerbaijan at one or another point in life. Have you ever contemplated an idea of basing yourself outside your homeland?

*Alekperzadeh:* I have indeed received a number of invitations and suggestions, but have never seriously considered this option. To be outside-of-Azerbaijan is alien to me.

*AIW:* There has been much attention by the Azerbaijani government to promoting different strands of culture and arts, such as mugham, as part of an effort to mold a post-Soviet model of Azerbaijani identity. Is there a way in which you believe jazz could or indeed should play a similar role?

*Alekperzadeh:* It could only do so if it were ethno-jazz. Jazz in its pure form is not our music and no one in Azerbaijan could perform it better than Rachelle Ferrell or Ella Fitzgerald, for this is their music, not ours. For similar reasons, no one there could perform mugham better than our renowned performers thereof. Hence, we should rather go for mixed music, ethno-jazz. From my personal experience, I can say that the audience—domestic and international alike—is far more receptive to and welcoming of ethno-jazz rather than jazz in its pure form.

*AIW:* Have there been instances of, or are there plans for, collaboration between yourself and other artists from Azerbaijan or indeed elsewhere?

*Alekperzadeh:* Indeed, I often receive invitations from foreign artists. I just came back from Israel, for example, where I was invited to perform with Israeli musician Mark Piris Eliyahu.

*AIW:* Have your international performances been a result of direct contact between yourself and foreign agents, or were they rather organized through Azerbaijan's Ministry of Culture?

*Alekperzadeh:* There are certainly instances when I perform internationally as part of a program organized by our Ministry of Culture, but most often my performances abroad have been the result of a direct interaction between myself and a foreign artist or a relevant cultural agency/company.

*AIW:* What is your assessment of the current state of the music scene in Azerbaijan? What should be done to prompt, and contribute to, its further evolution?

*Alekperzadeh:* There are many talented musicians in Azerbaijan, but each of them must decide on and establish his or her own priorities. Thus, it is not the government's task on its own to foster the development of the country's musical scene. There should normally be private agencies and agents that would work to promote particular kinds of music or artists. We do not have anything of the sort in Azerbaijan, and that is why the government has assumed some part of responsibility to this effect, even though it should not normally be expected to do so.

*AIW:* Azerbaijani government has invested a great deal in promoting mugham within the country and internationally. Are there other potentially promising strands of music that should receive more attention?

*Alekperzadeh:* Mugham is among our major assets worth bringing to international attention. Hence, I think it was a right choice to make. Indeed, to my mind, our greatest wealth consists of oil and mugham.

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### **AZERBAIJAN—A CAUCASIAN DUBAI?**

Alum Bati  
Independent expert

There has been much loose talk over the past decade about turning Azerbaijan into the "next Dubai." Can that happen? And if so, how can it be achieved and at what cost?

As part of the government's emphasis on developing tourism, as well as an unsuccessful bid to win the Olympics, new hotels and sports complexes have been opening or are under construction. In 2010, intensive construction got underway at the Shahdag tourism complex in Gusar. In 2011, a few new hotels opened in the regions, with one in Naftalan, the Ramada Plaza Hotel in Ganja and the Qashalti Sanatorium complex. But the center of attraction and investment has been Baku. In anticipation of the Eurovision Song Contest earlier this year, Baku hotel and infrastructure construction received added impetus. In and around Baku, several new five-star hotels came into operation and more will open soon. Without doubt, downtown Baku is looking splendid, especially at night. Visitors are impressed by the glitz, but does it have the glamour?

No doubt, over time and given considerable investment, the tourism industry will develop in Azerbaijan. Dubai has proved, if proof were necessary, that almost any location can be turned into a shopping and recreational paradise given the right incentives.

But at the same time, Azerbaijan lacks some of Dubai's obvious advantages—territorial cohesion for one: Nakhchivan is out on a limb and Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territories are still occupied by foreign forces. Dubai also had free land at the time, yet another asset Azerbaijan no longer has. In Dubai, the ruler basically

owned the land and could do with it what he willed. That, together with cheap foreign labor, naturally makes a considerable difference to the capital cost of any project. Even more, the land that was available in Dubai was generally not polluted by Soviet industrial mismanagement. Another Dubai success factor, which Azerbaijan lacks, is being surrounded by repressed, conservative but wealthy societies. The exception is Iran, but what are the chances of encouraging mass Iranian tourism?

Such geographical, economic and structural issues aside, Dubai's leaders understood early on what attracts visitors in droves: "freedom." There are always limits, but Dubai knew where its visitors would come from: neighboring Arab countries, which still provide a considerable share of its tourist dollars. Dubai was the alternative to Lebanon, the Arab playground that has shot itself to pieces in civil wars.

So what sort of freedom does Dubai present? Open skies, allowing airlines of any country to have passenger rights, cheap alcohol and dazzling night spots. Moreover, in an attempt to develop into a financial center, Dubai introduced English law and English judges into its arbitration courts so that foreigners could feel comfortable doing business in Dubai. The city-state has made it easy for inward investment and the hiring of cheap foreign migrant workers. Is Azerbaijan ready for that level of openness?

Dubai has shown that any country or city can become a tourism hub, but at what cost? Could the huge sums now being sunk into tourism in Azerbaijan have been spent more wisely elsewhere for a better return?

As the decision to make tourism a priority has already been taken, there seems little point griping about the sense of it. But has it been carefully planned? What thought is going into making it a success? To answer these questions, we should look at the five "Ws:" Who, What, When, Why, and Where.

Who are the visitors that Azerbaijan wants to attract? Azerbaijan is especially attractive for the Russian-speaking world, but how well does this mesh with the legacy of President Heydar Aliyev in building a definable Azerbaijani identity? How will the potential of the Russian language once again dominating life in Azerbaijan be dealt with? Of course, tourism cannot rely entirely on Russian-speaking visitors. Wealthy Americans, Japanese, Chinese and Europeans are a natural target, but with so many competing destinations, why would they come to Azerbaijan? Any coordinated plan for the development of tourism would surely have first asked who are the tourists we want? It seems a decision has been taken not to cater for the mass-market, hence the burgeoning of five-star hotels with relatively few lower grade establishments. If, then, wealthier individuals are being targeted, why would they choose Azerbaijan?

If we have established the "who," the "why" is much less certain. What does the average wealthy American know about Azerbaijan? Why would he travel to Azerbaijan rather than, say, Turkey? Such travellers do their research before visiting an off-beat destination. Slick advertising on international news networks highlighted 2011 as Azerbaijan's Year of Tourism, but that and a few glossy brochures are hardly sufficient. An educated tourist wants to read something serious about the history of the country—something more than a Wikipedia page. However, there is no serious history of Azerbaijan in print. It is an unfortunate fact of life that no country in the world is taken seriously without an academic history of it written by Westerners in

English. Any judicious tourist would turn to such a history, if not to read it in its entirety, then at least to recognize that the place is worth a visit.

Next we turn to the “what.” What attractions will keep our hypothetical tourist busy and tease money from his/her wallet? This, of course, is closely related to the “why” and the “where.” Well, it is not going to be the shopping. We have all the luxury shops one could imagine, but no one is going to come to Baku and pay 50 per cent more for the same item available in shops in Europe, America, or Dubai. So, will the attraction be sun and sea? Baku gets enough sun but what about the sand (not to mention the wind)?

Azerbaijan lacks good beaches and a clean sea, and consequently, at least in the near-term and absent events like the Eurovision Song Contest, tourism has limited potential. A necessary consideration if tourism is to succeed will be environmental clean-up programs, more high-profile cultural events, the creation of unique resorts and special interest attractions, such as high-quality museums, aimed at wealthier tourists. Though some piecemeal work has already started in this area, including the Shahdag ski resort and the Baku Museum of Modern Art, the quality of what is on offer to tourists is generally inadequate. The Tagiyev History Museum in Baku is much improved, but where are the new archaeological discoveries? Where are the special exhibitions? Azerbaijan is a long way to travel for Americans and the Japanese, so if they are going to come, the cultural possibilities have to be greatly expanded. For the Middle Eastern visitor, Azerbaijan is nearer, but, contrary to expectations, is in some ways culturally alien—for instance, it is hard to find halal food for Muslim tourists or any special events for Ramadan. If Arab visitors are to be encouraged, then the catering and food processing industry has to take such matters more seriously.

Next we come to the “where.” Obviously, Baku occupies center-stage. With the Eurovision Song Contest being held in Baku in 2012, tourism received a much-needed boost, but, despite the hype, the number of visitors was much less than expected and there are few tourists to be seen in Baku. The city can also now host large conferences, especially off-season, but that means large groups of people arriving simultaneously for a short duration. Currently, the country is simply not ready for this. Without a more liberal visa regime, easier and cheaper flight connections, better and safer public transport connections between downtown Baku and its airport and so on, the conference business is not going to develop (other than by government inducement).

Finally, a brief comment about the “when.” Naturally, hotels want to be full all year round. That will be a neat trick in the height of summer or the depths of winter. Conferences have already been mentioned as an off-season possibility. Azerbaijan as a wedding/honeymoon destination is another, though that will require the law on marriage to be reviewed. Encouraging more internal tourism is another potential area for development.

But, of course, there is more to Azerbaijan than Baku. There is tremendous natural beauty—national parks that could be developed for hunting fauna with binoculars rather than with guns. One might have thought that this had a more obvious potential for tourism development than ski resorts or golf courses.

Care must, however, be taken not to waste resources in developing industries which lack the basic infrastructure to support them. There needs to be a well-developed

plan to ensure the infrastructure is first in place. Perhaps this is the case with tourism, but if there is a detailed plan, it has not yet been publicized. The impression given to date is one illustrative of an overall trend with some other macro-projects of the sort: a seeming lack of a coordinated plan, ending in piecemeal initiatives championed by one ministry or another, but without the constructive support of the rest of the government. Let us hope this will change.

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## **FAILURE OF "NEUTRALIZATION" OF NAKHCHIVAN IN 1919 RECALLED**

Paul Goble  
Publications Advisor  
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

Even before the 1920 Treaty of Kars institutionalized Turkey's role in the maintenance of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, various outside powers attempted to play a role in defining the borders of Nakhchivan, the non-contiguous portion of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Most of these moves have been long forgotten outside the South Caucasus. However, they remain important in the thinking of both Azerbaijani and Armenian elites, the former because of the risks potentially involved in the actions of such outsiders in this region and the latter precisely because the use of such outside actors represents the only way to achieve their desires to modify the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan.

In the latest installment of his "Historical Prism" series on the *Day.az* news website, Azerbaijani historian I. Niftaliyev outlines the complicated developments in the turbulent years of 1918 and 1919. [1]

Niftaliyev begins by observing that after the collapse of the Russian empire in the 1917 revolutions, the South Caucasus was divided among "three young national states" and their borders "initially and to a decisive degree were defined by outside geopolitical and military forces." Russia and Turkey were the first of these, but they were soon joined by Britain and even, in what is now an almost forgotten episode, the United States.

Each of the countries in the region, the Azerbaijani writer continues, developed its own principles as far as the definition of state borders was concerned. The Azerbaijani Republic, he notes, "used the principle of historical, ethno-confessional settlement as the chief criteria which legitimated the inclusion of this or that district into the republic." Unfortunately, he continued, the Armenian government ignored those principles and sought "by means of the use of military force" to establish control even over portions of the South Caucasus "where Armenians formed a significant minority relative to the Muslim population." This clash of approaches took its sharpest form in Nakhchivan, which had been part of Irevan *guberniya* in imperial times.

In 1918, 61 percent of the population of what became the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic within Azerbaijan consisted of Azerbaijani Turks; ethnic Armenians formed almost all of the remainder. The region itself was completely integrated in terms of

irrigation, agriculture, and transportation into Karabakh. Indeed, Niftaliyev suggests, Nakhchivan was "indivisible" from Karabakh economically.

Despite these obvious links between Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan proper, Bolshevik leader Stepan Shaumyan gave the go-ahead to Armenian general Andranik and his units to move into the region in the summer of 1918 and establish Soviet control. Andranik did, but only at the price of widespread repression against the indigenous Azerbaijani Turkic population, more than 2500 of whom were killed.

The situation for the Azerbaijani Turkic population would have been even worse, had it not been for the intervention by Turkish forces under the command of Kazim Karabeyov in August. The presence of this force blocked Andranik's men, but as Niftaliyev points out, "the presence of Turkish forces in Nakhchivan did not last very long." Under the terms of the Mudros Treaty of October 30, 1918, Karabekir pasha withdrew his forces, creating an immediate power vacuum in that region even as British forces assumed a dominant position in the South Caucasus as a whole.

A few weeks after the Turkish withdrawal, the Muslim Turkic population in the southern districts of Irevan gubernia (Nakhchivan, Sharur-Daralagez, Ordubad, Vedibasar, Zangibasar, and Kamarli) proclaimed the Araz Republic with a capital at Nakhchivan and with strong ties to the Azerbaijani Republic. During its brief existence (December 1918-March 1919), the Araz Republic, together with some Turkish irregulars who remained behind, as Niftaliyev notes, "was able to resist Armenian aggression in the southwestern sections of the country."

In March 1919, however, the English command, "liquidated the government of the Araz Republic," viewing that regime and its territory as a covert Turkish advance into the region. Two months later, "the English transferred the Nakhchivan district to the administration of Armenia, having established there a governor-generalship, something like that which existed in Karabakh." But unlike in Karabakh, in Nakhchivan at that time, Muslim Turks formed an overwhelming majority of the population. The Azerbaijani government protested this British decision, but the British military mission in Nakhchivan "required that all the Muslim population subordinate itself to the power of the Armenian government."

On May 3, the British commander in the name of the allies declared that it considered the Armenian governance of Nakhchivan as provisional, something that was to be decided at the Paris Peace Conference. The Armenian commanders on the scene in exchange said that Armenia "took upon itself to protect the security of the Muslim population of the *kray* and to allow the return of refugees."

But the local Muslim Turkic population refused to go along. Their resistance to Armenian rule prompted Armenian commanders to engage in further repressions with, as Niftali points out, "the full support and approval of the British administration." The Muslim Turkic resistance was successful and at the end of July 1919, Armenian regular army forces began to leave Nakhchivan just as British forces had. In this situation, Baku assigned Samed Bek Jamilinsky governor general of Nakhchivan. In response, the allies dispatched to the Azerbaijani capital Colonel William Gaskell as the supreme commissar of the allies in the South Caucasus, who proposed that the southern portion of Irevan gubernia, including Nakhchivan, should become a special "neutral" zone.



Gaskell subsequently proposed that Baku send an official representative with him to Nakhchivan in order to "show the population of that region that the Azerbaijani government had agreed to the establishment of an administration of [such a] neutral zone by the Americans." But the government of the Azerbaijan Republic refused, saying that it would not mislead the local Muslim Turkic population and would agree to a neutralization of the region only if "the population itself agreed" to that arrangement, something that the latter was unlikely to do.

Azerbaijan's opposition did not stop the allies. One of Gaskell's assistants travelled to Nakhchivan, declared its "neutralization" and named US Colonel Edmund L. Daily governor of this zone. Further, allied command called for the creation of a central council which was to "consist of Armenians and Azerbaijanis proportionally to the number of each nationality within the zone" and the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia to withdraw their forces from Nakhchivan. But these appeals did not have any effect, because the local population indicated that it wanted their area to be under the control of Azerbaijan.

This outcome, Niftaliyev notes, "strongly disappointed the government of Armenia, which considered the proposal for the establishment of an American governor-generalship in Nakhchivan as the next opportunity to extract the *kray* from under the control of Azerbaijan" and which viewed the rejection of this American plan as "the final resolution of the Karabakh and Zangazur issues in favor of the Azerbaijan government."

The American mission remained in Nakhchivan until January 1920 when the council of the Paris Peace Conference gave *de facto* recognition of the independence of Azerbaijan. Despite this, Armenian forces continued to invade Nakhchivan, efforts that ceased only after the introduction of Turkish forces in June 1920 and the sovietization of the region in July of that year. Those two powers decided the borders of Nakhchivan and confirmed it as being part of the Azerbaijan Republic.

## Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/353636.html> (accessed 14 September 2012).

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

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

President Ilham Aliyev tells the ambassadors of the OSCE countries that, "the process of the liberation of [Azerbaijani] territory from occupation must begin as soon as possible. As soon as it does, [Baku] will be ready to consider the issues of normalizing relations and a sharp reduction of tensions. But first of all this process must begin. This is in the interests of all countries, in our interests, and certainly in the interests of Armenia. All peoples must live in conditions of peace and quiet and the norms of international law must be restored as soon as possible" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354018.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, says that, "Azerbaijan, representing a secular model of a Muslim state, needs support in the West, including that of the United States" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354748.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that no one in Baku approves what Ramil Safarov did, but that the Azerbaijani officer had served a sufficient sentence in Hungary for his crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/353561.html>).

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

Iranian Vice President Seid Hasan Musawi says that "relations between Iran and Azerbaijan always were at a good level and they will develop in the future" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353254.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that Iran is "one of the main security problems of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353997.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that September 15, the anniversary of the liberation of Baku from the Armenian Dashnaks in 1918, should be marked as an official holiday (<http://news.day.az/politics/354784.html>).

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

15 September

Ziyafat Askarov, deputy speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the comments of Vladimir Zhirinovskiy of the Russian Duma about Azerbaijan are the kind of outrageous remark typical of that Liberal Democratic Russian politician and should be ignored (<http://news.day.az/politics/355068.html>).

Yagub Mahmoudov, director of the Institute of History of the Azerbaijani National Academy of Sciences, says that September 15, the day in which in 1918 Baku was liberated from the Armenian Dashnaks should be a major holiday (<http://news.day.az/politics/355039.html>).

Representatives of the Azerbaijani intelligentsia meet with Azerbaijanis in the Russian capital of Moscow (<http://news.day.az/society/354983.html>).

14 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Hasan Abdulbari Al-Zawavi, Kuwaiti ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/354936.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, on the occasion of the completion of the latter's appointment in the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/354683.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Philippe Lefort, the European Union special representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia (<http://news.day.az/politics/354683.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives his Ukrainian counterpart Dmitry Salamatin (<http://news.day.az/politics/354898.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that strategic ties between Azerbaijan and Turkey are at an ever-increasing level (<http://news.day.az/politics/354682.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the European Parliament's resolution on Baku's pardoning of Ramil Safarov is "a politicized step" and does not reflect the realities of the case (<http://news.day.az/politics/354809.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that if there are protests outside the Azerbaijani embassy in Paris, Baku will increase security at that facility (<http://news.day.az/politics/354824.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, says that bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Israel are based on the historical friendship of the two peoples (<http://news.day.az/politics/354748.html>).

Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Chisinau, meets with Moldovan Interior Ministry Dorin Recan who tells him that Moldova is interested in expanding its cooperation with Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/354845.html>).

Fazail Aghamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the crisis of democracy and society in Armenia is leading that country to "an unavoidable end" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354734.html>).

The ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party expresses concern and regret about the European Parliament's resolution on Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/354879.html>).

The Hungarian foreign ministry says that Budapest's decision to extradite Ramil Safarov to Azerbaijan was taken by the Hungarian government as a whole (<http://news.day.az/politics/354868.html>).

Dutch Deputy Prime Minister Maxime Verhagen says that the Hague "highly values the role of Azerbaijan" in the international community and that bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and the Netherlands are broadening and deepening (<http://news.day.az/politics/354807.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that September 15, the anniversary of the liberation of Baku from the Armenian Dashnaks in 1918, should be marked as an official holiday (<http://news.day.az/politics/354784.html>).

13 September

President Ilham Aliyev tells visiting Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan that "Turkish-Azerbaijani relations are developing in all areas and involve all spheres" of activity (<http://news.day.az/politics/354252.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, on the occasion of the completion of the latter's appointment in the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/354649.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Dutch Deputy Prime Minister Maxime Verhagen (<http://news.day.az/politics/354649.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives George Friedman, executive director of the Stratfor Analytic Center (<http://news.day.az/politics/354649.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Philippe Lefort, the European Union special representative for the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/354649.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence of incoming Korean ambassador to Baku Choi Suk-In (<http://news.day.az/politics/354649.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that documents from the Armenian nationalist organization ASALA show that Armenians have again shown a preference for terrorist methods against Azerbaijan and Turkey (<http://news.day.az/politics/354561.html>).

Hafiz Pashayev, deputy foreign minister and rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, signs a memorandum of cooperation with Wim A. Naude, dean of the Maastricht School of Management (<http://news.day.az/politics/354585.html>).

The Ministry of National Security says that Baku is taking adequate measures to defend against threats from the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA (<http://news.day.az/politics/354648.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the planning of terrorist actions against Azerbaijan is "the policy not only of Armenian terrorist organizations, but also the state policy of Armenia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354673.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that at the present time, Azerbaijani-Iranian relations are normalized (<http://news.day.az/politics/354675.html>).

Elman Agayev, head of the strategic planning staff of the Foreign Ministry, takes part in Kyiv in a meeting of the GUAM secretariat (<http://news.day.az/politics/355015.html>).

Chingiz Ganizade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that elections in Armenia continue to be conducted in an undemocratic manner (<http://news.day.az/politics/354451.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, vice president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, says that there are now more than 60 branches of the Azerbaijani Youth Organization in Russia (<http://news.day.az/politics/354367.html>).

Mammad Aliyev, president of the All-Russian Azerbaijani Congress, sends a letter to Moscow Mayor Sergey Sobyanin asking that the latter prohibit the Association of Armenian Youth of Moscow from conducting a demonstration in the Russian capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/354633.html>).

Members of the Social Movement "Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh" begin a visit to the United States (<http://news.day.az/politics/354549.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, condemns the violent demonstrations in Libya and Egypt (<http://news.day.az/society/354668.html>).

Japanese Foreign Minister Koichiro Gamba says that relations between Tokyo and Baku are good and developing further (<http://news.day.az/politics/354568.html>).

Taner Yildiz, Turkey's energy and natural resources minister, says that Azerbaijan is a strategic partner of Turkey on energy questions (<http://news.day.az/economy/354481.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan and the US must continue to work together to establish stability and security not only in the region, but in the world and adds that the US continues to support the strengthening of the energy sector of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/354677.html>).

Sabina Ulman-Shaban, Switzerland's ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan is "a priority country" for Bern (<http://news.day.az/economy/354515.html>).

Mustafa Kabakci, a deputy of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that September 15 should become an official Day of Turkish-Azerbaijani Friendship (<http://news.day.az/politics/354651.html>).

Michael Gloss, a deputy of the German Bundestag, says that Armenia is threatening talks about Nagorno-Karabakh by its propaganda campaign against the extradition and pardon of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/354596.html>).

12 September

The Foreign Ministry says that the letter of ASALA is "a direct threat to Azerbaijani diplomats and this must be seriously condemned by the international community" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354446.html>).

Ogtay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that integration into Europe is "one of the basic priorities of the foreign policy" of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/354354.html>).

Sevinj Fataliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan is "an inalienable part of the Islamic world and Islamic values are dear to Baku" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354302.html>).

Bahram Khalilov, chairman of the State Service Commission, signs a cooperation agreement with his Turkish counterpart Mehmet Ali Kumbuoglu (<http://news.day.az/politics/354360.html>).

Hungarian Prime Minister Victor Urban said that Budapest knew in advance that its decision to extradite Ramil Safarov to Azerbaijan would generate a negative reaction among Armenian officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/354416.html>).

Jerry Sutcliff, former British penal affairs minister, says that Armenia's reaction to the pardoning of Ramil Safarov threatens not only Azerbaijani diplomats, but peace in the region (<http://news.day.az/politics/354437.html>).

11 September

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva meets in Galaba with Emine Erdogan, the wife of the Turkish prime minister (<http://news.day.az/politics/354258.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that if Turkey were included in discussions on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Ankara could make a real contribution and that because that is so, Armenia opposes Turkey's inclusion in the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/354125.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that Azerbaijan devotes great importance to cooperation with democratic organizations like the OSCE (<http://news.day.az/politics/354188.html>).

Azer Huseyn, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tbilisi, takes part in the opening of an Azerbaijani youth center in Marneuli. Also attending is SOCAR President Rovnag Abdullayev and Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili (<http://news.day.az/society/354147.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan, says that international organizations use double standards when talking about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/354201.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi says that Tehran approached the issue of the release of two Azerbaijani poets from the position of humanism and that "Tehran is always interested in good relations with Baku" (<http://news.day.az/politics/354118.html>).

Bilal Shimshir, a former Turkish diplomat, says that Armenians will remain prisoners of their terrorist background as long as they celebrate Armenian terrorists of the past as heroes (<http://news.day.az/politics/354110.html>).

The Georgian government says that Azerbaijan is the third largest foreign investor in Georgia (<http://news.day.az/economy/354073.html>).

Rovnag Abdullayev, president of SOCAR, is decorated by Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili (<http://news.day.az/economy/354037.html>).

10 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Aydzhigit Buramov, Kyrgyzstan's incoming charge d'affaires in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/354038.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives the 19 OSCE country ambassadors accredited to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/354028.html>).

Finance Minister Samir Sharifov meets with Switzerland President Eveline Widmer-Schlumpf to discuss bilateral cooperation (<http://news.day.az/economy/354010.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party and

a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA acts with the financial support of the Armenian lobby (<http://news.day.az/politics/354013.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy and chairman of the Council for State Support of NGOs, says that several non-governmental organizations now functioning in the occupied territories have asked for assistance and that Baku is prepared to provide it (<http://news.day.az/politics/354027.html>).

Moldovan President Nicolae Timofti presents the Ordinul de Onoare to Feyruz Isayev, director of Lukoil-Moldova (<http://news.day.az/politics/354005.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that Iran is "one of the main security problems of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353997.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that bilateral relations between Baku and Washington are "very strong" and that the two countries work together on many questions (<http://news.day.az/politics/353980.html>).

9 September

Eldar Salimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Qatar, is presented with an award by Qatar Emir Hamad bin Hallifa al-Tani for his services in promoting bilateral relations (<http://news.day.az/politics/353795.html>).

8 September

President Ilham Aliyev tells NATO Secretary General Anders Fog Rasmussen that, "the decision to pardon Ramil Safarov was taken in correspondence with the norms and rules of international law" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353596.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Representative Dana Rohrabacher (<http://news.day.az/politics/353735.html>).

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, secretary general of NATO, says that the alliance is grateful to Azerbaijan for its contribution to the ISAF mission in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/353718.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict at their meeting in Vladivostok (<http://news.day.az/politics/353711.html>).

Sergio Arruda, Brazil's ambassador to Baku, says that ties between Azerbaijan and Brazil have significantly grown since the establishment of diplomatic relations in 1993 (<http://news.day.az/economy/353627.html>).

Turkey opens an honorary consulate in Lenkoran. Attending the opening are Allahshukur Pashazade, the sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of the Caucasus, Natig Aliyev, industry and energy minister, and Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/353736.html>).

7 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives the participants of the Council of Interior Ministers of the CIS Countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/353619.html>).

Prime Minister Arthur Rasizade tells the Baku meeting of of the Council of Ministers of Internal Affairs of the CIS that "one of the priority directions" of fighting crime and promoting security is improving cooperation among states (<http://news.day.az/politics/353435.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov becomes chairman in office of the Council of Ministers of Internal Affairs of the CIS (<http://news.day.az/politics/353432.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev attends a reception at the Swiss embassy on the occasion of Switzerland's national day (<http://news.day.az/politics/353624.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev receives Samina KhalidKhurki, Pakistan's national heritage and integration minister (<http://news.day.az/society/353530.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan was disingenuous in his comments to the OSCE country ambassadors about security in the Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/353566.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that no one in Baku approves what Ramil Safarov did, but that the Azerbaijani officer had served a sufficient sentence in Hungary for his crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/353561.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan "gave the order to attack people on the basis of their nationality" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353523.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov tells Shusuke Watanabe, Japan's ambassador to Baku, that Azerbaijan is satisfied with the level of its relations with Tokyo (<http://news.day.az/politics/353575.html>).

Deputy Labor and Social Security Minister Natig Mammadov signs a cooperation agreement with his Turkish counterpart Namik Ata (<http://news.day.az/economy/353595.html>).

The Economic Development Ministry says that Azerbaijan has significantly improved its ranking in terms of business competitiveness and now ranks in the top 50 countries worldwide (<http://news.day.az/economy/353457.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis, says that, "the unsatisfactory character of the activities of the OSCE Minsk Group always disturbed and continues to disturb Azerbaijani society" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353515.html>).

Rafael Huseynov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Armenian charges against Baku concerning the pardoning of Ramil Safarov are baseless (<http://news.day.az/politics/353430.html>).



Olaf Gutting, a deputy in the German Bundestag, criticizes Yerevan for Armenian attacks on the pardoning of Ramil Safarov in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/353513.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that Ankara is a supporter of opening archives for the investigation of the events of 1915 (<http://news.day.az/politics/353509.html>).

Sergey Lebedev, executive secretary of the CIS, tells a Baku meeting of the CIS interior ministers that "over the last 20 years the CIS has developed a clear and balanced program of joint actions directed at guaranteeing national, regional and international security" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353464.html>).

6 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Taleb Rifai, secretary general of the World Tourism Organization (<http://news.day.az/politics/353372.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Lithuanian Interior Minister Artūras Melianas (<http://news.day.az/politics/353372.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "by its actions the Armenian state has shown its terrorist character" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353408.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev says that Armenia's decision to suspend diplomatic ties with Hungary over the extradition of Ramil Safarov shows that Yerevan is at a dead end (<http://news.day.az/politics/353220.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev receives Taleb Rifai, secretary general of the World Tourism Organization (<http://news.day.az/economy/353237.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku and Budapest have exchanged diplomatic notes concerning the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/353369.html>).

Vilayat Guliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Budapest, says that two Hungarian parliamentarians, Marton Dyondoshi and Tamas Heqedus, have told him that their colleagues support the pardoning of Ramil Safarov after the latter was extradited to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/353292.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, receives Seid Hasan Musawi, vice president of Iran and head of the Organization for Cultural Inheritance and Culture of Iran, who says that, "Iran and Azerbaijan are brothers and no one can get them angry at each other" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353349.html>).

Iranian Vice President Seid Hasan Musawi says that, "relations between Iran and Azerbaijan always were at a good level and they will develop in the future" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353254.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that underlying the issue of the

repatriation and pardoning of Ramil Safarov is the Nagorno-Karabakh problem and that this problem must be resolved (<http://news.day.az/politics/353390.html>).

Konstantin Kosachev, head of Russia's *Rosstrudnichestva*, says that the Baku International Humanitarian Forum is extraordinarily positive and powerful (<http://news.day.az/politics/353382.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry says that it was not involved in the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov whatever Yerevan may say (<http://news.day.az/politics/353257.html>).

5 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iranian Vice President Seid Hasan Musawi (<http://news.day.az/politics/353191.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from incoming Israeli ambassador to Baku Rafael Harpaza (<http://news.day.az/politics/353203.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Rasim Rzayev Azerbaijani ambassador to Riyad (<http://news.day.az/politics/353190.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Tarik Aliyev Azerbaijani ambassador to Rabat (<http://news.day.az/politics/353190.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Rafik Abdullayev Azerbaijani ambassador to Qatar (<http://news.day.az/politics/353190.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the release of two Azerbaijanis held in Iran is the result of the attention of the Azerbaijani government and President Ilham Aliyev personally to the citizens of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/353153.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that he does not think the Armenian parliament will extend diplomatic recognition to the illegal regime in Nagorno-Karabakh, because that would be "a death sentence" to the OSCE Minsk Group talks and that "it is difficult to believe that Russia and France would agree to this" (<http://news.day.az/politics/353154.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, receives Saddaminn Topukcu, the new head of the representation in Baku of the Republic of Northern Cyprus (<http://news.day.az/politics/353148.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that all of Azerbaijan's efforts are promoting "step by step" resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/353076.html>).

The Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy launches a European Union course of study within the framework of the Jean Monnet program of the European Commission (<http://news.day.az/society/353122.html>).

Officials of the Defense Ministry attend the fifth annual conference on international law in Riga (<http://news.day.az/politics/353165.html>).

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis says that Vilnius is interested in stability in the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/353134.html>).

Turkey's European Affairs Minister Egemen Bakis says that France must become more active in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/353129.html>).

The Hungarian Foreign Ministry dismisses as absurd reports that Budapest is considering suspending diplomatic relations with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/353074.html>).

The Christian Democratic Party of the Netherlands hosts members of the Congress of Azerbaijanis of the Benelux Countries at a reception in Amsterdam (<http://news.day.az/politics/353494.html>).

Huseyn Bidarmegz, director of the Iranian National Gas Exporting Company, says that TANAP does not represent a threat to the export of Iranian gas (<http://news.day.az/economy/353098.html>).

4 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Representative Dan Berton and several of his colleagues (<http://news.day.az/politics/352969.html>).

The Foreign Ministry confirms that Iran has released the two Azerbaijani poets it had detained (<http://news.day.az/politics/353010.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that it has sufficient resources to be able to defend against any Armenian challenge in the wake of the pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/352964.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku is responding to Armenian attacks on Azerbaijani websites and data bases (<http://news.day.az/politics/352905.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov was in complete correspondence to international law and the Azerbaijani constitution (<http://news.day.az/politics/353011.html>).

Ogtay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, tells a visiting US Congressional delegation that, "President Ilham Aliyev devotes great importance to the development of ties with the United States" (<http://news.day.az/politics/352968.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Budapest releases a letter sent to it by the Armenian terrorist organization ASALA saying that that group intends to target Azerbaijani diplomats, students abroad, businessmen, and diaspora organizations (<http://news.day.az/politics/352995.html>).

Sabir Aghabayov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Amman, hands over his letters of credence to Jordanian King Abdulla II (<http://news.day.az/politics/352828.html>).

Azerbaijan's Strategic Studies Center and the Union of Businessmen of Azerbaijan and Turkey publish in Turkey a collection of essays under the title "Azerbaijan-

Turkey: Friendship, Brotherhood and Strategic Partnership”  
(<http://news.day.az/politics/352881.html>).

Taner Yildiz, Turkey’s energy and natural resources minister, says that the quadripartite talks in Turkmenistan on TANAP were fruitful  
(<http://news.day.az/economy/352922.html>).

Sherzod Fayziyev, Uzbekistan’s ambassador to Baku, says that developing ties with Azerbaijan is one of Uzbekistan’s foreign policy priorities  
(<http://news.day.az/politics/353007.html>).

Aleksandr Mishchenko, Ukraine’s ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan is “an important strategic partner” of Ukraine (<http://news.day.az/politics/352854.html>).

Inayatulla Kakar, Pakistan’s ambassador to Baku, organizes a bilateral business forum in the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/economy/352965.html>).

US Representative Dan Berton says that Azerbaijan is “an important country both for the US and for the entire region” and that “the US sees in Azerbaijan an ally and partner” (<http://news.day.az/politics/352986.html>).

3 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from incoming US ambassador to Baku, Richard Morningstar  
(<http://news.day.az/politics/352729.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs and tells them that they must work to secure the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/352817.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns that Baku does not understand US reaction to the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/352819.html>).

The Foreign Ministry asks foreign governments to which Azerbaijani diplomats are accredited to increase security at Azerbaijani facilities given “the aggressive calls of the leadership of Armenia and the danger they present for citizens of Azerbaijan” (<http://news.day.az/politics/352820.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov was an important event for Azerbaijan and was done within the rules of international law (<http://news.day.az/politics/352722.html>).

Vilayat Guliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Budapest and Peter Sijarto, a senior official of the Hungarian prime minister’s office, discuss the Ramil Safarov case and agree that all aspects of it were handled according to international law  
(<http://news.day.az/politics/352691.html>).

Fuad Iskandarov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the Hague, marks the National Day of Azerbaijan at Floriade 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/352669.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy speaker of the Milli Majlis, says reaction to the freeing of Ramil Safarov reflects the existence of double standards in the international community (<http://news.day.az/politics/352697.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, guides a European Parliament delegation through the Agdam district, more than 75 percent of which is occupied by Armenian forces (<http://news.day.az/politics/352737.html>).

The European Union asks Azerbaijan and Armenia not to allow the escalation of tensions as a result of the extradition of Ramil Safarov from Hungary (<http://news.day.az/politics/352760.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry expresses "deep concern" about the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/352760.html>).

Incoming US Ambassador to Baku Richard Morningstar visits the memorial to Heydar Aliyev in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/352797.html>).

Armenia's interior minister refuses to take part in the Baku session of the Council of Interior Ministers of the CIS in order to protest the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/352693.html>).

Zokir Vazirov, Tajikistan's ambassador to Baku, dies (<http://news.day.az/politics/352640.html>).

2 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Gunther Ottinger, European Union commissioner for energy issues (<http://news.day.az/politics/352577.html>).

1 September

President Ilham Aliyev says that, "Azerbaijan in the real sense of the word is a sports power" (<http://news.day.az/politics/352423.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan adheres to the letter and spirit of the goals and principles of the Non-Aligned Movement (<http://news.day.az/politics/352481.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the extradition of Ramil Safarov by Hungary to Azerbaijan is a bilateral matter and does not violate the norms and principles of international law (<http://news.day.az/politics/352533.html>).

Fuad Alaskarov, head of the law enforcement department of the Presidential Administration, says in response to criticism by the US Department of State that the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov was in complete correspondence with international law and the Azerbaijani constitution (<http://news.day.az/politics/352497.html>).

SOCAR receives a delegation of European parliamentarians (<http://news.day.az/economy/352491.html>).

US President Barak Obama expresses his "deep concern" about the pardoning of

Azerbaijani officer Ramil Safarov who earlier was found guilty of murdering an Armenian officer in Hungary (<http://news.day.az/politics/352458.html>).

The US Azerbaijani Network calls on its members to react to the criticism of the White House of the extradition and pardoning of Ramil Safarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/352519.html>).

The Non-Aligned Movement calls for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/352524.html>).

### **Note to Readers**

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