



Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

School of International Affairs

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AZERBAIJANIS REVISIT 2011 AND GAZE AHEAD INTO 2012

Editorial Note: As it has in the past, Azerbaijan in the World has surveyed officials and experts on the most important foreign policy developments of the past year. Below is a brief survey of different perspectives for 2011.

Azerbaijan in the World: What do you see as Azerbaijan's chief foreign policy achievements during 2011?

Tedo Japaridze, Amb. [Foreign Policy Adviser, *Georgian Dream* public movement]: Azerbaijan's major success in the last year was that it did not figure in news stories about the negative developments that affected so much of the world: the debt crisis, commodity fluctuations, regime change, and the like. Instead, Azerbaijan has succeeded in avoiding these problems and when it does attract attention, it is for its growing role in the European energy-security architecture, Baku's rise as a logistics hub, and its impressive domestic growth rates. In short, Azerbaijan presents itself

to the world as a sober and competent strategic actor and, therefore, a reliable partner and sound investment destination. Few countries can make such a claim, especially in the troubled South Caucasus.

Making the news for the right reasons takes a lot of work, often unseen, unspoken and uncelebrated. This is the work of a state-of-the-art diplomatic core, equipped with patience, proficiency, professionalism and foresight. Such human resources explain why Azerbaijan can now count on diplomatic successes in the UN Security Council. In sum, the country's fate is in good hands.

Rasim Musabayov, Dr. [MP, member of the Milli Majlis international and inter-parliamentary relations committee]: The greatest achievement was the election of Azerbaijan to the UN Security Council. Second in importance was the signing of an agreement with Turkey about gas, both supply and transit, and also about the construction of the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline. The intense activity of visits by President Ilham Aliyev and visits to Baku by leaders of other countries was critically important too, as was the broadening of the network of diplomatic missions of Azerbaijan abroad and the strengthening of ties with the Azerbaijani diaspora.

Adil Baguirov, Dr. [Managing Director, United States Azeris Network, USAN]: Beyond any doubt, winning a two-year term on the UN Security Council, thus becoming one among only ten nations that enjoy the non-permanent seat and only the second ex-USSR state to do this, puts all other accomplishments, however important in their own right, in the shade.

AIW: What were the major shortcomings of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in 2011?

Japaridze: If I answered such questions I would not be a diplomat. Shortcomings are in any event hard to define in international relations, because the effects of one decision or another take long to "sink-in." The fact is that every decision made, by definition, limits future options. This is the curse a diplomat has to live with.

However, I would humbly advise my Azerbaijani colleagues not to consider age as the sole mark of wisdom and, therefore, to exploit as much as possible the world-class human resource capacity they have at their disposal, especially in the promotion of economic, energy and trade policy objectives. This is not a gamble, it is a safe bet. And, by the way, shortcomings or drawback are essential parts of development, as we should learn on our mistakes and not to repeat them day in and day out.

Also, I would very much like to see deeper and more productive cooperation between Georgia and Azerbaijan developing, as it used to be during Shevardnadze and Heydar Aliyev. As I noticed during a couple of months I stayed in Baku with ADA, although neighbors, we do not know much about our history, culture and even current politics. That's one thing to say that we are "strategic partners" (and we should be!), but we need to fill-in that partnership with some solid essence besides solid and trade interest—"material interests."

Musabayov: Among the negatives, one should mention the extreme slowness in talks about entering the World Trade Organization. Here we are clearly falling behind. I would also suggest that cooperation with the European Union must not be limited to energy issues alone, but must be considered in a strategic context and develop at

many levels. Moreover, it is still the case that Azerbaijan responds to events in a reactive rather than planned way, something that limits its influence and effectiveness.

Baguirov: Azerbaijan did everything it could reasonably be expected to do in terms of trying to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over the Armenia-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan. As a result, there is no reason to accept the notion that Baku bears responsibilities for the lack of an agreement. But there are some shortcomings for which Azerbaijan is clearly responsible: inefficient work in some embassies and consulates, the latter being especially clear if and once compared with some of Azerbaijan's other exemplary diplomatic representations abroad; the decision to end in-airport same-day visas for US, Canadian and European visitors, which—while perhaps fair diplomatically—hurts Azerbaijan's ties as it hinders tourism, academic exchanges, business ties, as well as diasporic visits, all of the latter being crucial in terms of Azerbaijan's further development and modernization; and the more general problems of the regular visa process, which USAN was assured to improve soon. For a country like Azerbaijan, these superficially small issues can present major problems and should therefore be treated as major components of foreign policy. Clearly, despite 20 years of independence, Azerbaijan's voice regarding the illegal occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and the regions around it is not heard as loud and as often as it should be.

AIW: How do you assess progress made in the resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 2011? And what do you see as the prospects for a settlement of the conflict in 2012?

Japaridze: There is hardly any state in this tormented region of ours that does not have unsettled territorial disputes. Wisely, in my opinion, Azerbaijan has taken the diplomatic route in addressing this issue and, as I am well aware, this was a choice.

Time in diplomacy can be a friend or an enemy. And, as we speak, time works for Azerbaijan. As the country proves to be a success story, its negotiating position is enhanced. Moreover, time gives the opportunity for ground work, for no settlement or treaty can miraculously heal the wounds and pain of those who have been thrown out from their houses, lost husbands and sons and are deprived of their right to live in peace, in their own land. No diplomatic settlement can undo what has been done; but, time is needed to prepare the ground for the future. If I were to raise expectations for 2012, I would be making time an enemy of Azerbaijan, something I do not want to do. But I will say that every month and year brings us closer to a sound, pragmatic and realistic settlement, which will restore Azerbaijan's territorial integrity.

Musabayov: Unfortunately, there is no basis for speaking about progress on this issue. As before, negotiations remain at a standstill. After the failed Armenian-Azerbaijani meeting of presidents last summer in Kazan, the talks have in essence stopped. From the point of view of any forward progress, 2012 does not promise any change in that regard. The election cycle beginning in Armenia limits the chances for compromises by either Serzh Sargsyan or Bako Saakyan. Moreover, there are presidential votes in the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair countries, and they will not be focusing on our problems. Therefore, I do not expect progress on this issue in 2012.

Baguirov: Azerbaijan did pretty much everything it could for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. And it will certainly continue to do so in 2012 for several obvious reasons, such as the inherent wish to live and develop in peace. However, Armenia's intransigence and national strategy will prevent a peaceful resolution of the conflict and cessation of the Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani lands in 2012. Thus, it is more important to already look beyond 2012, since the status quo is unacceptable, as we all know and as even the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs have declared more than once.

AIW: How do you assess Azerbaijan's energy diplomacy in 2011 and what does the future hold for it?

Japaridze: As I noted already, Azerbaijan's energy diplomacy has been a source of some fascinating surprises for the world. I think there is still more room for a greater thrust in Azerbaijan's position-building in this respect, something that would require more concerted and unified action between the Presidential Administration, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, the Ministry of Energy and SOCAR. Working together, these four elements represent a mechanism for effective work. I would also like to note that the newly established Center for Energy and Environment at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy has the resources and structure to provide strategic guidance for this group.

Musabayov: Positively. Despite the negative predictions of some, Azerbaijan did achieve a mutually profitable agreement with Turkey on prices and amount of gas to be supplied, as well as on its transit through Turkey to European markets. Documents were also signed both on the use for transportation of Caspian gas of the existing pipelines and the construction of a new Trans-Anatolian pipeline. The strengthening of energy cooperation with the European Union and the Russian Federation is very important as well. Over the next twelve months, it is important to increase dialogue on energy issues with Turkmenistan. I submit that a stress on the profits to both sides from such cooperation will allow existing disagreements to be overcome and to move forward toward an agreement on the demarcation of interests in the Caspian.

Baguirov: Azerbaijan's purchasing of several foreign energy mega-assets in countries like Turkey, Georgia and Switzerland, along with signing of the gas transit agreements with Turkey, are all very positive accomplishments. I am convinced that this outward expansion strategy will continue and will be to the mutual benefit of Azerbaijan and its people, as well as the countries into which Azerbaijan will invest.

AIW: How do you assess the evolving dynamics of Azerbaijan's relations with its immediate neighbors—Russia, Iran, and Turkey—over the last year and what is likely to develop over the next twelve months?

Japaridze: I have nothing but esteem and professional appreciation for Azerbaijan's balanced, pragmatic and realistic policy towards these big regional actors. We do not live in "easy" neighborhood, and the job of a diplomat never begins from a blank slate. There are traditions, culturally entrenched strategic vectors, history and prejudice, which limit the scope of our action. Azerbaijan is in this respect a refreshingly forward-looking actor, promoting its national interests with a sense of rare sobriety. Not all regional actors have managed to cross this "contextual"

minefield as successfully as Azerbaijan has.

Navigating along difficult choices is not easy, especially since the actors you mentioned do not always present their neighbors with easy choices. However, if Azerbaijan could make it through 2011 without making the news for the wrong reasons, there is no reason to doubt that 2012 will be as successful.

Musabayov: One can assess the dynamic of relations with Turkey and Russia positively. Economic turnover with these countries has risen significantly. Azerbaijan is investing in major projects in Turkey. Russia has been transformed into an important purchaser of Azerbaijani gas. And an intensive political dialogue with these countries continues, although it is true that on certain issues, there is not a complete correspondence of views. Fortunately, in both Moscow and Ankara there is an understanding of the special situation in which Azerbaijan finds itself.

Relations with Iran are somewhat worse. But Tehran's relations with any other country, excluding perhaps Syria, Northern Korea, Armenia, and some unimportant Latin American countries, are no better.

I submit that in 2012 the situation regarding these powers will not change fundamentally.

Baguirov: Relations with both Turkey and Russia are developing very well, although, of course, there is plenty of room for deepening and improving them further, particularly in the media, academic and security spheres. With regard to Iran, Azerbaijan has been trying to be on good terms, all the more so because Iran has a significant population of ethnic Azerbaijani Turks (up to 30% of the population) and because Azerbaijan wants peace and stability on its borders. Moreover, Azerbaijanis have centuries of friendship with all the people of Iran.

Unfortunately, Iranian TV and illegal radio broadcasts continue into Azerbaijan spreading pseudo-religious and pan-Iranian propaganda. Moreover, Tehran continues to make threats and various unfriendly gestures towards Azerbaijan, including refusing Azerbaijani requests to meet about border incidents. It is also hard to develop friendly relations with Iran continuously making unhealthy claims about different of Azerbaijan's famous public figures and poets (e.g. Nizami Ganjavi, Mirza Fathali Akhundov) being of Persian origin.

AIW: How do you assess the evolving dynamics of Azerbaijan's relations with the United States in 2011 and what does the year 2012 promise for the bilateral relations?

Japaridze: The United States has been a partner with all regional stake-holders in the South Caucasus. After all, the USA cannot afford not to be engaged in the region, given its global role in the energy market and its historical role as a European security partner. Moreover, in recent years, the US has stressed its involvement in Central Asia and Afghanistan. These factors all dictate more rather than less engagement in the region.

There is little doubt that US engagement in the region has been largely beneficial for us. Despite the fact that all states in the region are toddlers when it comes to state and capacity-building, our allies are increasingly becoming more aware of the fact

that all of us in this region form an impressive mosaic of unique and ancient civilizations, each with our own historical and cultural baggage. It now gradually becomes clear that the initial thrust of the post-1989 democracy-promotion project, which at times was haunted by mechanistic visions of top-down grand reform strategies, was rather misleading. As a result, the US is becoming more realistic and responsive to realities on the ground. In this sense, I expect year-to-year better understanding of realities from both sides and improvement of relations with the USA.

Musabayov: Relations with the US have been contradictory. On the one hand, Washington demonstrates great interest to Azerbaijan, through the visits of senior officials from the Pentagon and the State Department. Moreover, the US has expressed interest in ties with Azerbaijan in the energy sector and on specific issues of a military-strategic character. However, the US has not been prepared to support Azerbaijan in the first instance on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. The unwillingness of the Obama Administration to oppose in a decisive manner Armenian lobbyists in the Senate during the confirmation fight over Matthew Bryza does not inspire optimism regarding positive changes in Azerbaijani-American relations in the next year. Even more, this fall there will be an election in the US and thus Washington will pay less attention to foreign affairs, including its relations with Azerbaijan.

Tkacik: [Professor of Political Science, Stephen F. Austin State University, TX, USA]: It was my hope that the Obama administration would do a better job of recognizing the strategic significance of Azerbaijan and the potential for mutually beneficial engagement. However, it seems clear that the Obama administration has chosen to emphasize human rights issues over strategic engagement. There are at least four factors involved here. First, there is a default to human rights rhetoric in the Clinton-led State Department. Second, the Obama administration is entering an election year and cannot afford to open a strategic dialogue with Azerbaijan, which would generate additional vocal domestic opposition in the US. Third, the US may view the Nagorno-Karabakh issue as intractable (like Kashmir) and decide to avoid entanglement in an issue the US cannot resolve satisfactorily. Fourth, Azerbaijan has not responded effectively to the challenges presented by US foreign policy. Though the US has on occasion singled Azerbaijan out for human rights criticism, Azerbaijan has responded defensively, which confirms for many in the US the view of a restrictive polity in Baku.

Instead, Azerbaijan ought to actively engage US criticisms. This could be done in two ways. First, changes in Azerbaijan's domestic policy (even small changes) have the potential to elicit larger changes in US policy. For example, greater freedom within civil society, or a real crackdown on corruption, or the release of regime critics, when combined (second) with support for the US on some key policy, ought to lead to incremental changes in US behaviour. This does not mean that Nagorno-Karabakh would be resolved. But it could mean a significant reduction in criticism of Azerbaijan and perhaps US support on other key issues. Diplomacy is a matter of small steps and small compromises building over time into favourable policy. To link all endeavours to resolving Nagorno-Karabakh in Azerbaijan's favour is both counterproductive and unrealistic. But a long-term foreign policy *vis-a-vis* the United States could create an environment in which the unfavourable resolution of Nagorno-Karabakh would become unthinkable. Such a situation would make compromise on Armenia's behalf more likely. Finally, in addition to these "carrots," there are more effective "sticks" that Azerbaijan has used to this point.

Baguirov: There is a lot to do in 2012. The latest setback to bilateral relations was the inability of the U.S. Administration to secure confirmation for its nominee to Baku, Ambassador Bryza, and the lack of a US ambassador in Baku since December 2011. Both nations will be hurt from this, but for U.S. this represents far greater loss in terms of prestige and trust. However, the recent approval of the 3rd phase of NATO IPAP, the expanded dialogue and links between the two nations, an increase in trade (including the first Azerbaijani satellite, which is being produced now and will be launched this year), and a new Azerbaijan Ambassador to the United States, are all very positive developments, which will undoubtedly make 2012 very productive.

I want to also note the special role that the Azerbaijani-Americans (Azerbaijani Diaspora) and such American organizations as the U.S. Azeris Network (USAN) and the Karabakh Foundation, as well as other organizations all across the United States, in states like Maine, Florida, New York, and Texas, play in this bridge-building. Thanks to the diaspora and its organizations, Azerbaijan and all Azerbaijanis are today better known in the United States and more tangible achievements are registered, from greater media (USAN alone has published 57 articles in the U.S. press in 2011) and academic exposure (dozens of conferences and seminars were organized and attended).

AIW: How do you assess Azerbaijan's activities in the public diplomacy sector in 2011?

Japaridze: Public diplomacy or "Track Two Diplomacy" is an essential part of contemporary policy making in world politics. The EU has long been regarded as a normative superpower; Turkey is demonstrating an enormous capacity in this field as well, and there are those who would argue that "soft-power" there has been "Track One" diplomacy for some time, that is, a factor that highly correlates with Turkey's current ascending position.

The Obama administration, too, has reinvigorated such diplomacy. Consequently, in a complex world or "global village," we must keep an open mind for diplomatic orientation that is more "contextually responsive," rather than merely focusing on traditional actor-based analysis.

Naturally, Azerbaijan should be more innovative and creative in this regard. I would suggest that Azerbaijan has plenty of still unused soft-power capacity to exploit, especially if its young, up-and-coming, globally-trained-and-minded generation is given the chance to test its worth. In this sense, Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy is the "brain-hub" of the Azerbaijani future. As I noted earlier, investing in your youth is not a gamble; it is a safe bet.

Musabayov: There has been an attempt to increase public diplomacy actions. While earlier, Armenians had the field almost to themselves on many issues of concern to us, now we are the initiators of many activities. For example, there were the efforts of the Azerbaijani Karabakh community in Berlin and Paris to tell the world about Azerbaijan's side. There were also presentations of books in London and Moscow, and one should also note the activities of the Karabakh Council for Promoting Armenian-Azerbaijani dialogue. However, there should not be any illusions about the independent possibilities of public diplomacy. This is a necessary, but no more than a secondary instrument in the resolution of existing conflicts and must be considered primarily as a supplement to the efforts of official diplomacy.

Baguirov, Dr.: Clearly, Azerbaijan has started to do more in this respect, and that is a welcome sign. However, despite some progress, far more needs to be done, for Azerbaijan remains significantly behind other regional nations, such as Armenia, in its public diplomacy, a situation that may easily change if Baku continues to invest greater effort in this direction.

AIW: What specific challenges do you think Azerbaijan's foreign policy faces as the country moves to the year 2012 and what needs to be done to address those challenges?

Japaridze: Sustaining your course in the midst of a global crisis and political upheaval is no easy task; it was difficult enough in 2011 and it will get no easier in 2012. However, let me note this: just before leaving Baku in December, I watched President Aliyev's live interview on TV with an *Itar-Tass* correspondent, in which he provided a solid strategic overview of your country's foreign policy direction. Reading between the lines, he provides a clear indication that he is thinking about the future and has a clear idea of what he wants Baku to do. In fact, in my view, Azerbaijan is one of only a small club of nations whose main foreign policy vectors reflect such long-term thinking. As a result, I'm more than confident that Azerbaijan will reach its strategic objectives. You are running a marathon, not a sprint. That is a diplomatic approach that other countries in the South Caucasus would do well to emulate.

Musabayov: I would suggest the first, and most important, such challenge concerns the situation around Iran. The intensification of sanctions and, even more, a direct military clash will put before the Azerbaijani government and its diplomacy some very difficult and complicated tasks. Therefore it is important to assess all the possible variants of the development of the situation and mark out the steps, which could minimize the risks for us.

A second challenge is to get out of the current dead end in the talks on Nagorno-Karabakh. Clearly, the time has come for the mobilization of pressure on Armenia and the use of UN mechanisms, including the General Assembly and Security Council, to do that. Without such tough pressure, Armenia will continue the occupation.

A third challenge is to politely refuse—without negatively affecting bilateral ties—to be drawn in by Moscow into the chimerical project of a Eurasian Union. We need to intensify our efforts in talks about joining the WTO, expanding cooperation with the European Union, and give new content to strategic cooperation with Turkey and Georgia.

In addition, we must continue to focus on Caspian issues and on such traditional directions of our diplomacy as GUAM and the CIS.

Baguirov: Ending the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent regions is always challenge *numero uno*. Everything else is formulated around it.

ARMENIAN DIASPORA INCREASINGLY HURTING ARMENIA

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Azerbaijanis have always paid a great deal of attention to the Armenian diaspora, viewing it as an influential force that Yerevan can and does deploy against Baku. However, two recent commentaries suggest not only that there is now "a split" between the diaspora and Armenia, but that the diaspora's obsession with the past, the basis for its own definition and survival, may in fact be depriving Armenia itself of a better future. As a result, an increasing number of Azerbaijanis no longer see the "Armenian lobby" as an irresistible force, but rather as one factor among many in the international arena and, moreover, as one that may be self-defeating and even countered by the growing activism of Azerbaijanis living abroad.

In an essay published on January 11, Nurani points out that "the Armenian community is not simply distinguished by a phenomenal politicization," but "in the 'motherland-diaspora' relationship in the Armenian milieu, the 'center of gravity'" now resides with the diaspora, rather than the motherland, with activists of the former telling the latter "what to do and how to live." [1]

According to the Baku commentator, diaspora activists don't bother to conceal that "they don't like the current foreign policy of Armenia, they don't like its basic political orientation, and they don't like its friends." Consequently, they argue, "Yerevan must change its policy" to one the diaspora approves of. Even more, the Azerbaijani writer says, leaders of the diaspora are "not prepared to listen to a long line of arguments that the best potential friend for Armenia is the country whose passport the author of this advice carries in his pocket."

But in addition, Nurani notes, the diaspora weakens both itself and Armenia because "all the enormous lobbying potential of [its] politicized hierarchs is directed unfortunately at the past," at securing official declarations about events of almost a century ago, rather than thinking about what those declarations cost and the ways, in which they will be ignored in the very nearest future.

Despite what the Armenian diaspora leaders and their political friends may think, "the events of 1915 and their description should better be left to historians or at least those who are objective, dispassionate and neutral," rather than handing them over "to parliaments, the members of whom could not find Turkey and Armenia on a map quickly," let alone decide what happened in Van, Bitlis, Erzurum, and Istanbul a century ago or "who was guilty" of what took place.

Moreover, Nurani writes, European political leaders are not making "promises" to form "'Western Armenia' on Turkish lands." Instead, what is heard are "the promises of Armenian politicians to remind the Europeans about their promises" in the past," reminders that are not likely to lead European governments to take any steps, but that will serve as "the main 'cementing force' of the Armenian diaspora and the Armenian lobby," which may in the end be why those of its members are so interested in promoting self-defeating actions as they do now in the French Senate.

But the question needs to be asked, Nurani suggests, "just how much the lobbying campaigns if they are successful as in present-day France correspond to the interests of Armenia as a state," not in the sense of "moral satisfaction, but in terms of its genuine national interests as a state and society? Unfortunately, many Armenian leaders celebrated what is taking place in Paris as "a national triumph," ignoring the reality that such actions by the "Armenian lobby" inevitably lead Yerevan to turn "its back to its own future and even to its present," something that is likely to become an ever bitter result of "political geometry."

The impact of the Armenian diaspora's obsession with the past, Nurani says, is already obvious: "Today, after the passage of two decades of new independence," Armenians and the Armenian diaspora should have had enough time to "realize in Armenia something tangible and lasting, to fulfill finally the hysterical declarations that 'Azerbaijan has oil, but we have the diaspora.'" Tragically, that has not happened. And indeed, it is time to recognize that Yerevan "has not been able to build productive relations with its own foreign compatriots," a reality that even Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan on occasion has acknowledged and one that stands in sharp contrast with the success of Azerbaijan in organizing its diaspora as an article in the next issue of *Azerbaijan in the World* will demonstrate.

As a result, the Azerbaijani commentator says, "today by spreading pseudo-patriotic hysteria, the leaders of the diaspora are again pushing Armenia toward a continuation of its former policies, to taking a hard line in the negotiations, and to the renewal of the war," one that if it comes, members of the diaspora will not be participating in even if it is their logic that provokes it.

Mammadov, M., another Azerbaijani commentator, expands on these points regarding what is taking place in Paris in an article entitled "The diaspora has left Armenia without a future." In it, he argues that both the Armenian diaspora and the Armenian government has forgotten a "simple truth" that Europeans have learned at a great price over the last centuries: "it is impossible to build a common future with one's neighbors" if one first insists that they accept as uniquely true one's own version of history. [2]

Immediately after the New Year's holiday, Mammadov notes, French President Nicolas Sarkozy "approved the decision of the French National Assembly concerning the criminalization of the denial of 'the Armenian genocide' and sent it to the Senate for confirmation." The Armenian diaspora "celebrated" this believing that they had achieved a great deal, but what they have in fact achieved, even assuming the French Senate concurs, is likely to be less than they hope and just the opposite of what they assume.

Sarkozy is clearly looking for votes from ethnic Armenians who are French citizens, but "even leading members of the French government" do not share his point of view. French Foreign Minister Alain Juppe, for example, has said that the proposed law "is not useful and counterproductive" and will have "serious consequences for bilateral relations with Turkey." Moreover, even if it is passed, "who will be the winner? No one except Nicolas Sarkozy and Serzh Sargsyan. The first will receive votes of citizens of France of Armenian ethnicity, and the second, in the course of the upcoming electoral campaign will be able to manipulate the national feelings" of Armenians in Armenia.

"Put in simplest terms," Mammadov says, "the presidents of both France and Armenia are attempting to use Armenian nationalism for their personal interests even as they harm the national-state interests" of their respective countries." Thus, the commentator says, this provides yet another confirmation of the truth of Mikhail Zadornov's observation that "nationalism is a business based on the betrayal of one's own people."

What are the real interests of France and Armenia? French Foreign Minister Juppe's comments provide insight, Mammadov continues. The chief French diplomat "is speaking out against the adoption of the law about the criminalization of the denial of 'the Armenian genocide' not because he sympathizes with the Turks or even does not recognize the tragic events of 1915 as 'genocide.' [Instead], he openly declares that the adoption of this law contradicts the national-state interests of France." According to the Azerbaijani writer, "a few Armenians think the same way" and "prefer not to lay the accent on attention to tragic events a century old."

Even more, should the Armenian lobby win such "a victory" in Paris, it will—beyond any doubt—prove short-lived. The first person convicted under the law will appeal to the European Court for Human Rights, "and almost with 100 percent certainty, one can predict that the European Court will set aside the verdict of French justice as crudely violating the right of citizens to free expression." Thus, "sooner or later France will have to repeal this law."

At the same time, such a law will lead to the deterioration of French relations with Turkey "in all spheres" and "the effectiveness of the foreign policy of the European Union in general and France in particular in the Middle East and the South Caucasus will be sharply reduced."

But "Armenia will find itself in a much worse situation." First of all, Mammadov says, the adoption of such a French law will make the process of normalizing relations between Yerevan and Ankara far more difficult and will lead to an increase in "the economic isolation of Armenia," especially if the Turkish government decides to choke off the large and growing unofficial trade between the two countries. "Turkey's regional allies also will have to consider the position and interests of official Ankara." Azerbaijan will certainly do so, but so too will Georgia and some other countries. As a result, "the isolation of Armenia will increase to the point of leading the country into a dead end."

Second, Mammadov argues, the adoption of such a French law "will have a negative impact on the position of Armenia in peace talks about the resolution of the Karabakh conflict." France's tilt toward Armenia "is not a secret for anyone," but now "Azerbaijan will have the complete right to demand the expulsion of France as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group" or even the discussion of the issue in other international forums such as the UN Security Council, a step Armenia may find it harder to block. Alternatively, perhaps, Paris may have to bend over backwards in the Minsk Group to prove its objectivity and neutrality.

Thus, Armenia is likely to suffer regardless of how things develop. The diaspora in pursuit of its own interests about the past through the French parliament "is depriving Armenia and the Armenian people of a future. Why?! Everything here is simple. The extreme nationalist approach to the past allows this diaspora with the smallest of 'expenditures' to preserve its national self-identity," but such an

approach does nothing good for Armenia, something Armenians and their neighbors are likely to recognize sooner or later.

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/308810.html> (accessed 14 January 2012).

[2] See <http://news.day.az/politics/308110.html> (accessed 14 January 2012).

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

PART I (A). Halil-Pasha's Program: A "Monroe Doctrine" for Asia

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Recently a large number of articles devoted to Russian-Turkish relations and their connection with events in the South Caucasus in the 1920s have appeared in the Russian media. Often they have sacrificed historical truth in attempts to link the events of those years to what is taking place now, and as a result, for me as an Azerbaijani historian and for others as well, they have created the impression that truth always turns out to be with the Armenians, an impression supported by outright falsification or the selective use of documents. But no one should forget that historical truth lives its own life in the archives, and one only need seek this truth.

Following the Sovietization of Azerbaijan, one of the main directions of the foreign policy of the new Bolshevik government of Russia was the issue of relations with Turkey. The Ottoman Empire which is viewed as having played an essential role in the proclamation of the independence of Azerbaijan in May 1918 and which had played a particularly decisive role in the liberation of Baku from its enemies had now fallen; its senior political and military figures had dispersed throughout the world, their search for reliable allies for the struggle against England having led to a series of incorrect steps. Former Military Minister Enver-Pasha who had played an important role in the fate of Azerbaijan now attempted—together with the Russian Bolsheviks—to organize a common front against England. This policy was balanced between yesterday's hostility and today's alliance and was more suitable for the irony of fate than for reality.

On the eve of the occupation of Azerbaijan in April 1920, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) twice, on April 20 and April 23, discussed the appeal of Enver-Pasha concerning the publication in Moscow of two Turkish-language newspapers; and its second session featured a decision to provide him and his supporters material help. On this occasion, G. Chicherin wrote to the Central

Committee of the RKP(b) that "in view of the disagreements between Enver and the Kemalists, he cannot publish his newspapers anywhere except Russia. For us, it is very important to support anyone who does not belong to the ruling group of Kemalists in order to have the opportunity to exert greater pressure on them. Enver has already given us great service in our relations with the Kemalists. This is an extraordinarily shrewd politician, who has looked into things carefully and who understands that he needs us. We propose to permit the publication of his two newspapers and to provide him full support, but at the same time to assign a communist who knows Turkish to keep track of the publication of these newspapers and regularly report on it to us. In his report, Enver speaks only about the necessary formalities for the launch of these two newspapers; about subsidies, however, at least for the present, he says nothing. Consequently, only a decision in principle is needed." [1]

It is worth noting that along with the leaders of the old Turkey who sought salvation with Russia, the patriots of the new Turkey who were involved in a mortal struggle with the Entente were forced toward cooperation with Bolshevik Russia as well. Already in the fall of 1919, the main task of Halil-Pasha and other Turkish emissaries working in Azerbaijan was to achieve by the spring of 1920 the extension of "Soviet influence to the borders of Turkey." In his memoirs, Halil-Pasha wrote that, "the shifting of Soviet borders to Turkey clearly meant the surrender of Azerbaijan to the Russians. I considered the handing over of Azerbaijan under the administration of Russians regardless of their political coloration to be a betrayal. I considered Azerbaijan part of my motherland, for the independence and sovereignty of which we had made so much of an effort. At that time, as we were fighting for independence in Anatolia, such a concession was for me and other Turkish pashas nothing other than moral suicide."

In the political conditions of spring 1920, the leaders of the Turkish national movement considered the recognition of the independence of Azerbaijan at the Paris Peace Conference as an attempt by the Entente to interfere with the union of Turkey and Soviet Russia and hence as a step directed against the Anatolian national movement. On April 26, 1920, Kazim Karabekir-Pasha received news about the decision taken by the newly established Ankara-based Grand National Assembly of Turkey (the first parliament of the new Turkey) to act jointly with the Bolsheviks. To that end, he was ordered to organize, instruct and send to Baku a special mission.

At the same time, Mustafa Kemal-Pasha sent a letter to the Soviet government in the name of the Grand National Assembly. Among other things, the letter read: "First, we take on ourselves an obligation to combine all our work and all our military operations with the Russian Bolsheviks who have as their goal the struggle with imperialist governments and the liberation of all oppressed peoples from under their power. Second, if Soviet forces propose opening military operations against Georgia or by a diplomatic path seek to use their influence to force Georgia to enter into a union and undertake the expulsion of the English from the territory of the Caucasus, the Turkish Government will commit itself to military operations against imperialist Armenia and to force the Azerbaijani Republic to enter the circle of Soviet states. Third, in order first of all to expel imperialist forces which occupy our territory, the latter populated by our people, and secondly in order to strengthen our internal forces for the continuation of our common struggle against imperialism, we ask Soviet Russia in the form of immediate help to give us five million Turkish lira in gold, arms, and military supplies in a quantity which must be defined by negotiations, and in addition, certain military-technical means and medical materials,

as well as food for our forces, which—according to the demand of Soviet power—should operate in the East.” [2]

Although various interpretations have been given to this letter, in actual fact, it did not play any particularly important role in the Bolshevik occupation of Azerbaijan. The letter reached Moscow on June 3 only, that is, somewhat after the completion of the arrival in Azerbaijan of the 11th Red Army. Nevertheless, this message in the name of the Turkish Revolutionary Government was very warmly received in Moscow. Chicherin immediately reported about its contents to V. Lenin, the chairman of the *Sovnarkom*. On the very same day, a response was prepared, which—over the signature of G. Chicherin—was sent to Ankara by courier on June 4.

At this time, the leadership of Soviet Russia already possessed certain necessary information concerning the Anatolian movement from the first Turkish representatives who had arrived in Moscow earlier. Following the completion of the occupation of Baku at the end of April 1920, Halil-Pasha and one of the distinguished representatives of the Turkish Communist Party, Dr. Fuad Sabit-bey were dispatched for talks in Moscow. On April 30, the Russian Telegraph Agency (RTA) reported from Patigorsk that Turkish representatives were being sent for talks in Moscow at the direction of the Anatolian government of Mustafa Kemal-Pasha. In a conversation with a RTA correspondent, Hallil-Pasha noted that after the Mudross agreement, Turkey had fallen into a difficult situation. Now the allies and primarily the English were running things in Istanbul. The entire Asian half of Turkey had been divided among the victors. Greece had received all the coastline near Izmir, and France had seized Syria. According to Hallil-Pasha, recently, the population of Lesser Asia, which at that time exceeded ten million, had begun to shift to the side of the Soviet system. RTA reported to Moscow that “the Soviet system of administration of the country is considered by the Turks of Lesser Asia as completely acceptable ... The new government is experiencing shortages in arms and military equipment. That explains the trip to Moscow of Halil-Pasha and his colleague Dr. Fuad. Their goal is to obtain in one way or another a defensive alliance against the Entente.” [3]

By the middle of May, Halil-Pasha and Dr. Fuad Sabit-bey were already in the Russian capital. On May 15, the Politburo of the RKP(b) discussed the question “On Halil-Pasha” and approved Chichern’s proposal for negotiations, which were set for the next day. The Politburo took a decision to officially seek the opinion of G. Ordzhonikidze and, if G. Chicherin considered it necessary, to arrange a meeting of Halil-Pasha with Lenin.

On May 16, a meeting between the Turkish delegates and G. Chicherin took place in the Peoples Commissariat of Foreign Affairs of Russia. The talks lasted more than three hours. Chicherin reported about the discussions to V. Lenin: “We must never be led astray by too broad prospects and begin adventures which exceed our strength, but with this qualification, I must say that rapprochement with the Turkish National Center [having in mind the Grand National Assembly of Turkey] could lead to an enormous strengthening of our policy in the East. The National Center still has not divided up in parties and the program of its domestic policies has not been worked out. In any case, Turkey will be a republic. They explained that the Turkish masses consist of peasantry and the petty bourgeoisie. Their oppressors were the bureaucracy, high-ranking pashas, and speculators; their capital was owned by the West; the upper bourgeoisie consisted of Armenians and Greeks. In lesser Asia, major land holdings were destroyed already by Mahmoud II; since then, they have been restored in part, but there are very few land owners and they will probably be

pushed out. There is no basis for communism, but bolshevism is extremely popular with hatred against western capital and the domestic oppressors being enormous. Halil, having clarified our attitude wants to return to Sivas and then get back to us. He asks that we sent together with him our representatives, as well as Armenian comrades, in view of the complicated relations with Armenia. He not only permits, but insistently asks that we establish with them our own permanent representation, typographies, libraries, and a publishing house for books and journals. They ask that there be both Muslims and fully ethnic Russian comrades in this representation. We will have the fullest freedom of propaganda. The introduction there of a Soviet Republic is possible, but this will not be our Soviets, for every peasant loves his parcel of land and only step by step could communism be popularized in the countryside. I personally do not see any use from such anything but genuine Sovietism, which will only confuse minds. In military affairs, Halil asks for ammunition and money. They completely recognize the right of self-determination of all nationalities and are ready for separations and autonomy."

"The program of Halil-Pasha," Chicherin continued, "is a Monroe Doctrine for Asia, the struggle of all Asian peoples against European imperialism. He recognizes Soviet Russia as the only friend of the Asiatic peoples and understands that without us they will fail. In Persia, he is ready to assist our work by the dispatch of Turkish partisans, because the struggle will be against the Shah and the feudals, as well as for an agrarian revolution, which still does not affect the urban bourgeoisie. His agents will also support our policy in Afghanistan and India. In this way, the center of gravity of our near eastern policy will shift to Turkey. The need for immediate contact with Turkey means that we must use the rail lines of Armenia, and for this we must conclude a treaty with Armenia. We will need to threaten Georgia for it not to allow the English detachment to seize points needed for our contact with Turkey. Arms can be sent under Azerbaijan's company name. In the next few days, all the practical military side of this matter will be clarified by our military men in conversation with Halil." [4]

* *The article originally appeared, in Russian, in Russia's Regnum News Agency at <http://regnum.ru>.*

Notes

[1] Chicherin, G. to the Central Committee, RKP(b), April 1920, *Russian State Archive of Social-Political History* (hereafter RSASPH), f. 5, op. 2, d. 315, l. 38.

[2] Letter of Mustafa Kemal-Pasha to the Soviet government, 26 April 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 5, op. 2, d. 315, l. 38.

[3] Report of the Russian Telegraph Agency, 3 May 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 4, op. 51, p. 321a, d. 54868, l. 2.

[4] Report of G. Chicherin to V. Lenin on negotiations with Halil-Pasha, 16 May 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 4, op. 51, p. 321a, d. 54868, l. 3-4.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev in his New Years' message to the Azerbaijani peoples says that "the international community and the sides directly involved" in talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have not been willing to "speak openly and with one voice" about the fact that Armenia is "the guilty party" in terms of the occupation and of the delay in reaching a settlement in terms of international law (<http://news.day.az/politics/307426.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan plans to broaden its ties with the Commission of the African Union and with the countries of Africa" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309387.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "any confrontation in Iran will generate a wave of refugees" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308053.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Alirza Bigdeli, Iranian deputy foreign minister and former ambassador to Baku, says that "one of the strategic directions of the policy of Iran is the development of relations with Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308093.html>).

Wilfried Martens, president of the European People's Party, says that "Azerbaijan is an example of tolerance" to the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/307921.html>).

A group of Turkish citizens begins a campaign to have the Grand National Assembly adopt a law recognizing the Hojaly genocide and making it a criminal offense to recognize "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" (<http://news.day.az/politics/307944.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

15 January

Jean-Pierre Bel, the president of the French Senate, said he was concerned that consideration of legislation by the Senate that would impose criminal penalties on anyone who denies "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" would have an adverse impact on relations between Turkey and France (<http://news.day.az/politics/309546.html>).

14 January

Dashgyn Shikarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Islamabad, says that Pakistan seeks Azerbaijani investment (<http://news.day.az/economy/309465.html>).

Officials of the culture and tourism ministry take part in an international tourism

exhibition in Stuttgart (<http://news.day.az/economy/309473.html>).

Iran's Kish Airlines begins direct flights between Baku and Tabriz (<http://news.day.az/economy/309441.html>).

13 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Park Hee-tae, speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea (<http://news.day.az/politics/309284.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan plans to broaden its ties with the Commission of the African Union and with the countries of Africa" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309387.html>).

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov says that Azerbaijan's judicial reforms "have become an example for all of Europe" (<http://news.day.az/society/309358.html>).

Oktay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict seriously affects the development not only of Azerbaijan, but also of the entire region" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309369.html>).

Fazail Ibrahimli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that it would be "suicidal" for Armenia to agree to join the international sanctions regime against Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/309291.html>).

Austrian President Heinz Fischer says that he is "satisfied with the level of relations between Vienna and Baku" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309470.html>).

Park Hee-tae, speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Korea, says that the Hojaly genocide must receive international legal assessment (<http://news.day.az/politics/309278.html>).

Roland Kobia, the European Union's representative in Baku, says that the British Council with EU financing has presented a new project in Azerbaijan to promote inter-communal dialogue (<http://news.day.az/politics/309269.html>).

Roland Kobia, the European Union's representative in Baku, says that the EU and Azerbaijan in early February will begin talks on simplification of the visa regime between the two (<http://news.day.az/politics/309253.html>).

Nathalie Goulet, a French senator, says that France, being a co-chair country of the OSCE Minsk Group, must maintain neutrality and not support any of the sides of the conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/309246.html>).

Aleksey Ostrovsky, a deputy in the Russian State Duma, says that any proposal for a multi-national state like the Russian Federation to adopt a law calling for imposing criminal sanctions for denial of the so-called "Armenian genocide" is a provocation (<http://news.day.az/politics/309325.html>).

12 January

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the UN Security Council that "Azerbaijan well recognizes the threats from countries with unresolved conflicts" and will work

toward settlements of all of them (<http://news.day.az/politics/308989.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mammadguliyev says that the first round of talks between Azerbaijan and the European Union on the simplification of the visa regime will take place on February 7 (<http://news.day.az/politics/309148.html>).

Rufat Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "neither the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development nor any other financial institution will save Armenia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309082.html>).

Officials of the culture and tourism ministry take part in the international tourist exhibition *Ferien Messe 2012* in Vienna (<http://news.day.az/economy/309156.html>).

Eamon Gilmore, the vice prime minister of Ireland, says that the OSCE "must make a concrete contribution to the resolution of regional conflicts," such as the ones in the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/309093.html>).

11 January

Elkhan Polukhov takes up his duties as Azerbaijan's ambassador to Pretoria (<http://news.day.az/politics/308953.html>).

Adil Garibov, director of the Institute of Radiation Problems at the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, says that Baku has repeatedly asked Moscow to clarify the ecological impact of the Gabala radar station, a clarification the Russian side has refused to make citing secrecy (<http://news.day.az/society/308968.html>).

A group of Azerbaijani journalists who became internally displaced persons because of the Armenian occupation state they are going to lodge a case against Yerevan in the European Human Rights Court in Strasbourg (<http://news.day.az/politics/308914.html>).

The Bulgarian parliament refuses to discuss the recognition of "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308938.html>).

US Senator Frank Lautenberg tells the Pax Turcica organization that President Barak Obama should re-nominate Matthew Bryza to be ambassador to Baku if the Senate is to consider approving his appointment (<http://news.day.az/politics/308803.html>).

10 January

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov receives Ilkka Kanerva, head of the Finnish delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/308754.html>).

Elchin Guliyev, head of the Azerbaijan border service, provides details on the death of an Iranian soldier on the Iranian-Azerbaijani border (<http://news.day.az/politics/308701.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "the future president of PACE will carry out his work by representing the interests of all 47 member states, and not just of France" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308674.html>).

Adil Garibov, director of the Institute of Radiation Problems of the National Academy of Sciences of Azerbaijan, says that Baku and the International Agency for Atomic Energy are beginning a new joint project (<http://news.day.az/society/308732.html>).

Participants at a meeting of the European Advisory Council decided to issue a warning to Britain's BBC about its negative coverage of Azerbaijan's preparation for Eurovision 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/308723.html>).

9 January

Elchin Amirbayov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the Vatican, says that Pope Benedict XVI "considers relations between the Vatican and Azerbaijan to be a good example for other countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308526.html>).

The Azerbaijan-Bosnia-Herzegovina Association is registered in Sarajevo (<http://news.day.az/economy/308446.html>).

The Supreme Chamber of the European Human Rights Court issued its first decision concerning a suit against Armenia by Azerbaijan IDPs saying that Azerbaijani claims were justified (<http://news.day.az/politics/308555.html>).

7 January

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, sends a 12-page letter to the UN Security Council and the UN secretary general pointing out that "the government of Armenia will be forced to back away from its aggressive policy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308264.html>).

Sabine Ulmann Shaban, Switzerland's ambassador to Baku, is involved in an automobile accident in the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/society/308206.html>).

The Belorussian military industrial firm *Tetraedr* establishes a branch in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/308247.html>).

Members of the Argentinian Chamber of Deputies say that Armenian suggestions that Bako Saakyan, head of the Armenian separatist regime in the occupied territories, was received by two members of that parliament do not correspond to reality (<http://news.day.az/politics/308172.html>).

6 January

Ibrahim Hajiyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Delhi, meets with Farooq Abdullah, Indian minister for new and renewable energy (<http://news.day.az/politics/308088.html>).

Rasim Musabayov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "in the parliament of Armenia there are not simply oligarchs, but criminal oligarchs" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308091.html>).

Elkhan Suleymanov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Azerbaijan-Belgian Inter-Parliamentary Group is working on a resolution to submit to the Belgian parliament

on the Hojaly genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/308082.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "any confrontation in Iran will generate a wave of refugees" (<http://news.day.az/politics/308053.html>).

5 January

Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Chisinau, is named "ambassador of the year" in the Moldovan capital and declared to be one of the 50 most influential people in Moldova for 2011 (<http://news.day.az/politics/307925.html>).

The Foreign Ministry announces that Azerbaijan will preside in the UN Security Council in May of this year (<http://news.day.az/politics/307895.html>).

A group of Turkish citizens begins a campaign to have the Grand National Assembly adopt a law recognizing the Hojaly genocide and making it a criminal offense to recognize "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" (<http://news.day.az/politics/307944.html>).

The secretariat of the defense industry of Turkey says it is planning to open an office in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/307914.html>).

Philippe Blancharde, head of the Belgian-Azerbaijan Friendship Group, meets with Milli Majlis deputies in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/307907.html>).

The Czech Republic introduces a simplified visa procedure for Azerbaijanis who plan to spend extended time there (<http://news.day.az/politics/307860.html>).

4 January

Azerbaijan takes its seat on the UN Security Council for the first time (<http://news.day.az/politics/307565.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that "Azerbaijan has its own position on many issues for the UN Security Council" (<http://news.day.az/politics/307666.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Yerevan "continues to demonstrate a destructive approach" in talks on the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/307703.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the measures taken around State Flag Square "do not have any relation" to the upcoming *Eurovision-2012* competition (<http://news.day.az/politics/307735.html>).

Ayдын Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Azerbaijan has its own position on Syria" (<http://news.day.az/politics/307719.html>).

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan visits the occupied territories and meets with Bako Saakyan, head of the separatist regime of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/307649.html>).

1 January

President Ilham Aliyev in his New Years' message to the Azerbaijani peoples says that "the international community and the sides directly involved" in talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have not been willing to "speak openly and with one voice" about the fact that Armenia is "the guilty party" in terms of the occupation and of the delay in reaching a settlement in terms of international law (<http://news.day.az/politics/307426.html>).

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