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School of International Affairs and Business

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**HOW BLACK JANUARY UNITED AZERBAIJAN,
CHANGED THE WEST, AND DESTROYED THE USSR**

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Moscow's brutal application of force against the Azerbaijani people on January 19-20, 1990, an event Azerbaijanis commemorate each year as Black January, not only united Azerbaijanis around the conviction that they were not part of "the Soviet people" but must have an independent existence, but also changed the way the international community viewed the Soviet system and thus played a key role in destroying a regime, which had sought to keep itself in power by force alone.

More than any other action by the Soviet regime under Mikhail Gorbachev, Moscow's Baku operation was truly an indiscriminate use of force. More than 60,000 rounds of ammunition were fired by ill-trained and poorly controlled Russian troops who killed more than 130 and wounded more than 1,000 Azerbaijanis, the vast majority of whom up to that point had little to do with the dissident or independence movements. However, this action backfired, not least convincing Azerbaijanis that from Moscow's perspective, they were all opponents of the Soviet regime, and that in fact Moscow by such actions had made them precisely that.

Even more, the Azerbaijanis, other nations within the borders of the USSR, and the West saw that the Soviet system for all its protestations to the contrary was based on an ethnic hierarchy and was prepared to play the ethnic card to keep itself in operation. On the one hand, Moscow's claims that it had to use force because Azerbaijanis were dismantling border posts with Iran that separated them from their co-ethnics to the south and to defend Soviet military installations in and around Baku are undercut by the Soviet government's failure to make use of the more than 12,000 interior ministry troops in the Azerbaijani capital. The reason was clear: Moscow wasn't willing to take the risk that Azerbaijanis among those troops would refuse to fire on their own people.

And on the other hand, Moscow simultaneously brought in predominantly ethnic Russian troops from the RSFSR for the operation and sought to portray them as standing between the ethnic Azerbaijanis and ethnic Armenians. This latter effort was transparently false, although it has garnered some success among Russian nationalists, some Armenian nationalists and some in the West as well. All these groups should remember that former Armenian President Levon Ter-Petrosyan has said that there was no basis for Moscow's charges and that any conflicts between the two nations in the South Caucasus at that time were Soviet provocations.

Another aspect of Black January that continues to resonate 22 years after the events is that Moscow's claims notwithstanding, this Soviet police action in Baku was not a spasmodic response to events, but rather a carefully planned and cold blooded—if horrifically carried out—operation. Obviously, governments sometimes respond to unexpected events in ugly ways that they have not fully considered. But the Russian "Shield" military rights group has documented that the Soviet authorities planned their moves into Baku not in the days immediately preceding the application of force, but rather at least five months earlier—in August 1989! Gorbachev's efforts to suggest otherwise at the time simply are not credible.

Still, perhaps the most important event in the tragedy of Black January was one that took place not in Baku, but in Moscow. On the day after the Soviet forces moved into the Azerbaijani capital, Heydar Aliyev, who had been communist party secretary in Azerbaijan, a member of the Soviet Politburo, and a senior security official, went to the offices of the permanent representation of the Azerbaijan SSR in the Soviet capital to cast his lot with the Azerbaijani people and thus against the Soviet regime of which he had until then been a part. That action had three major consequences.

First, it lent legitimacy to the decision of many Communist Party members in Azerbaijan to tear up their party cards, an action that—however much some of them may have taken in the heat of the moment—represented a crossing of the Rubicon as far as Azerbaijani nationalism is concerned.

Second, Heydar Aliyev's declaration at the time of Black January served as the basis both for his assumption of the presidency of an independent Azerbaijan several years later and for his defining role in the Azerbaijani political system to this day. By putting himself on the side of the people rather than the police, he showed himself to be a true Azerbaijani and showed the way for many others to follow.

And third, Heydar Aliyev's statement, coming as Moscow continued its brutal crackdown in Baku, had a profound impact on Western governments and Western public opinion. Many in the West up to that point had maintained in their own minds a clear distinction between the situation in Eastern Europe and the three Baltic states, on the one hand, and the 12 republics of the Soviet Union, on the other. Such observers in government and out by that time viewed the regimes in Eastern Europe and the Baltic countries as illegitimate, as kept in power only by the threat or application of Soviet force, but most of them viewed the rest of the USSR as somehow a single country, one that they hoped Mikhail Gorbachev would reform.

Black January demonstrated that this distinction was no longer valid, if indeed it had ever been, and as a result, more and more officials and citizens in the West recognized that what former President Ronald Reagan had called "the evil empire" was exactly that—both evil and an empire. That shift in understanding opened the way for greater Western support of the Russian and the non-Russian peoples against the Soviet powers that be and thus opened the way to the demise of the USSR just under two years later.

Thus, Black January in Azerbaijan, a year before the much more widely publicized events in Vilnius, led people in the USSR and in the West to realize that the Soviet system was finished. (Later the events in Baku compelled Mikhail Gorbachev to acknowledge that his use of military force in Azerbaijan was "the worst mistake" of his career, a confession and an indictment not only of the former Soviet president, but of the system and country he tried to save but ended by destroying.)

This January as they have every year since 1990, Azerbaijanis around the world have commemorated Black January, some of them like current President Ilham Aliyev visiting the Martyrs Lane in the center of Baku, and others assembling in Azerbaijani embassies around the world. But there is no doubt that all of them would agree with the assessment Polad Bulbuloglu, Baku's ambassador in Moscow, made in the Russian capital this year. He noted that "of all the peoples of the former Soviet Union, the Azerbaijanis paid the very highest price for their freedom." [1]

** Remarks to a commemoration of Black January at the Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Washington, D.C., January 20, 2012.*

Note

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/310675.html> (accessed 25 January 2012).

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

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

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Approximately a month later, on June 22, G. Chicherin noted in his report to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) that, "we must finally speed up the realization of our plans in Turkey." [1] And when B. Mdivani, the Soviet representative in the Caucasus, reported a week later about the appearance of Turkish units in Nakhchivan, the Russian Peoples Commissariat of International Affairs felt compelled to become more active in relation to the Kemalists. On the one hand, in Moscow, this was taken as "a turning point of the entire policy of the lesser Asian Turkish nationalists," and on the other, they assessed it as "an act of a specific detachment conducting its own policy" under the influence of Musavatists who were struggling against the Soviets. [2]

It is indicative that in this indefinite situation, G. Chicherin attempted with all his efforts to ward off the advance of the Red Army which had seized Azerbaijan into Armenia and thus wrote to V. Lenin: "The advance of the Turks forces us to refrain from the further advance of this plan [the plan of attack on Armenia]. The Revolutionary Council of the Republic categorically insists that we limit ourselves to what we already have, namely the defense of Baku." [3] G. Chicherin advised to delay the handing over of arms to the Kemalists until Moscow had received a report from Eliava from Ankara. And only after this would the Soviet promise of arms to the Turks be fulfilled. G. Chicherin was concerned that those arms could—directly or indirectly—be used against the Soviets.

In the summer of 1920 after his brief arrest in Lithuania, Enver-Pasha returned to Moscow. In those very same days, Cemal-Pasha with several Ittihadists also arrived in Russia from Berlin. What did Enver-Pasha want from Moscow? In the first place, Enver-Pasha had followed very attentively the processes taking place in Anatolia and—in the course of his Moscow conversations—did not conceal that if the Ankara government of Mustafa Kemal-Pasha "does something like the Sevres Treaty, and for example hands over Izmir to the Greeks, then [Enver's] sword, dagger, pistol, name, and leadership would be directed against this government." If the allies had been able by various means to push Turkey against Moscow, then, in their turn, the Russians would have been ready with Enver-Pasha's help to destroy the new Turkey.

And it was in this that the value of Enver-Pasha for Russian foreign policy consisted. Enver-Pasha was a strong means in the hands of Moscow for forcing the Kemalists to join in an alliance with the Bolsheviks. Russian diplomacy intended to use Turkey in the person of Enver-Pasha and the Young Turks against the Entente. The Bolshevik leaders thought that they would be able to navigate cleverly between the green and red banners of the Turks [the colors of the Ottoman Empire and Kemalistan Turkey].

However, Enver-Pasha recognized perfectly well that the ideals of Turanism, which were grounded in Islam, hardly squared with the ideals of "the proletarian revolution," something which made the Bolshevik's approach into a purely Russian policy, and indeed, it is difficult to imagine that these ideals could co-exist for long. When he was unexpectedly asked in Moscow whether "it was accidental that he was not an imperialist," Enver-Pasha, who had chosen Soviet Russia as an ally, with a sad face noted that, "he was in fact an imperialist; the only question was in the dimensions of the empire." [4]

The Ottoman leaders were perfectly well informed about the attitudes of the Russians toward Azerbaijan, regardless of their political coloration. They remembered all too well that already in 1918 when Talat-Pasha spoke at the Berlin talks about the recognition of the independence of the Caucasian republics, Russian Ambassador Adolf Ioffe declared that in relation to Georgia and Armenia this would involve no problems, but the independence of Azerbaijan could only be recognized conditioned on the preservation of the Baku district in Russian hands. [5] At the time of talks in Berlin with the prime minister of Turkey, the Russian ambassador noted that the Soviet government—out of a love of peace—could tolerate the violation by the Ottoman Empire of the conditions of the Brest Treaty or Istanbul's recognition of the independence of the Caucasus republics not recognized by Russia, but Moscow could not sit still for the seizure of Baku because that would create "a shift in the attitudes of the Russian people which understood very well all the importance of Baku for Russian industry and trade." [6]

The second interesting moment connected with the arrival of Enver-Pasha was related to Germany who also very much wanted to use his unofficial mediating services. Berlin hoped to enlist the Bolsheviks' support in the restoration of the 1914 borders. General Hans von Zekt, one of the influential German commanders, sent via Enver-Pasha a proposal to the Bolshevik government of Russia: If the Russians could help the Germans restore the borders of 1914, then Germany would unofficially transfer arms to the Bolsheviks and support in the interests of the Russians an anti-Polish uprising. On this account, G. Chicherin wrote to V. Lenin: "Enver says that the Entente already now is promising Germany the borders of 1914 if they provide help to the Poles against us. This appears to us to be a diplomatic lie. As to the acquisition of arms from Germany, we have already begun negotiations without any compensation, but Enver suggests that this agreement does not mean anything if von Zekt does not agree. In my opinion," Chicherin continued, "we cannot support the simple return of Polish localities to German control. We also do not intend to conquer Poland. We can only do one thing. In the case of a European conference, we can by diplomatic means support the holding of a plebiscite in the disputed territories of the former eastern parts of Germany. Enver awaits an answer."

In addition, Enver-Pasha advised G. Chicherin that the national-revolutionary parties of all Muslim countries including Egypt, Tunisia and Algeria had agreed to form a single center in Berlin and that they wanted to conclude a mutual assistance treaty with Soviet Russia in order to support the policy of the Bolsheviks in the East. Further G. Chicherin wrote that "they want to receive help from us in terms of money and other means, including for example the opening in Moscow of a school for future terrorists, and the like. I indicated to him that our common principle is the support of national-revolutionary movements, but that the concrete form and object of assistance must be considered separately in each particular case. Enver therefore called here three or four representatives of these parties." [7]

Playing a double game, the Bolshevik leaders who had met with Enver-Pasha in Moscow in the first days of June 1920 also responded to the letter from Mustafa Kemal-Pasha of April 26. In his response of June 4, Peoples Commissar G. Chicherin reported that the letter of Mustafa Kemal with its proposal to take part in the struggle against international imperialism which threatens both countries had been received by the Soviet government, which viewed with satisfaction this information about the basic principles of the foreign policy of the new Turkish government headed by the Grand National Assembly of Turkey in Ankara. The Soviet government expressed the hope that diplomatic negotiations would allow the Grand National Assembly on the one hand and Armenia and Persia on the other to establish precise borders on the basis of justice and the self-determination of peoples.

At the same time, G. Chicherin clearly indicated that the Soviet government at any moment was ready to respond to a call from the interested parties to take upon itself the role of mediator in disputes. And finally, the peoples commissar of international affairs of Soviet Russia proposed to immediately establish diplomatic and consular representations for the development of fraternal relations between Turkey and Russia. As we see, a large part of the issues enumerated in G. Chicherin's letter were not mentioned in the April 26 letter of Mustafa Kemal-Pasha. Everything was simple: by such a diplomatic means, the government of the Bolsheviks made an attempt to return to the provisions of the decree "On Turkish Armenia" of January 11, 1918.

Without waiting for a response from Turkey, Soviet Russia on June 8, 1920 named its diplomatic representative to Ankara. In connection with this, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) agreed to satisfy the request of the Peoples Commissariat of Foreign Affairs about the dispatch of Comrade Eliava as the diplomatic and military representative to the Turkish National Government of Kemal-Pasha. At the same time, the Politburo took a decision to provide military and financial assistance to the government of Mustafa Kemal. On June 28, G. Chicherin reported to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) that the provision of military and financial assistance to the government of Mustafa Kemal, the dispatch of an ambassador to Turkey, and the decisions of the Politburo about providing assistance to Iran and Afghanistan show that "our policy in the east is defined if not by the direct assistance with armed forces against the Entente, then in any case with the help of arms and gold. On the basis of these decisions, the Central Committee has made corresponding declarations and promises which must be carried out."

Further, G. Chicherin wrote: "It is necessary to give Turkey immediately the military assistance we have promised, for any delay after such promises will force Mustafa Kemal to look at us as babblers and deceivers and what is more essential, this could undermine revolutionary Turkey. Although such help is relatively small even in light of our limited resources, it will have both practical and moral importance. However, despite the decisions taken by the Politburo, we cannot obtain arms. The policy that takes a decision today but fails to fulfill its promises on the day to follow, which today promises help but fails to provide it tomorrow discredits us and undermines our enormous authority and influence in the East." [8]

Given the seriousness of this document, the Politburo—on June 29—assigned the deputy chairman of the Revolutionary Military Council and member of the Council of Labor and Defense Ye. Sklyansky and Deputy Commissar for Foreign Affairs L. Karakhan to come to an agreement—literally on the next day—on the issues of

Turkey and Afghanistan. On June 30, the Politburo directed G. Chicherin to issue an order that "Russian military units will not advance further into Armenia in order to avoid provoking a Turkish attack." [9]

In reality, this question was resolved after the occupation of Azerbaijan, when L. Karakhan in a telegram dispatched on May 11, 1920 warned Ordzhonikidze that V. Lenin had given an order not to hurry with the spreading of Soviet power beyond the borders of Azerbaijan. He wrote at that time, "First, in order to strengthen Azerbaijan, but from the other point of view, as a result of immediate necessity, it is better to put things off in view of the serious tasks on the Western front and the necessity of taking care when considering our international situation. In fact, Armenia does not represent an immediate interest for us, while it can bring along with it many uncertainties. One should not cross the borders established with it by old Azerbaijan or occupy disputed territories by ultimatum, but rather resolve disputed issues by peaceful means, for example, by a mixed commission of both states under our chairmanship. You are close to the situation and know the complexity of relations in the region and the possibility of Turkish involvement. If the result of our advance were new tensions, this would seriously harm us in England and America and therefore we propose to limit ourselves to Azerbaijan. [10]

On July 2, 1920, G. Chicherin communicated to Sergo Ordzhonikidze that a shortage of forces did not allow the seizure of more territories than had been occupied as of that day. He wrote that "our forces occupy Shusha and Jabrail and we have to refuse to occupy Nakhchivan and Julfa. Tell the Azerbaijani government that we are forced by circumstances to limit ourselves to the occupation of Shusha and Jabrail and do not have in fact the opportunity to move our forces further. This has been indisputably established by the Revolutionary Military Council of the Republic. Please, communicate to the Baku government about the impossibility for us at present to occupy Nakhchivan and Julfa and point to the objective causes which have forced us to limit ourselves to the military status quo." [11]

In another telegram sent to G. Ordzhonikidze on the same day, G. Chicherin reported that he had begun talks with the Turkish national center and noted that "we need a territorial contact and must conclude an agreement with Armenia to that effect, so that—through it—we have an opportunity to realize this contact ... We consider an accord with it the sole means to guarantee us the possibility of influence on Asia Minor affairs." [12]

As can be seen, G. Chicherin wanted to resolve all problems through negotiations concerning the transfer of Nakhchivan to Armenia. Following the above mentioned actions, the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) confirmed the Instruction to the members of the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasus Front and the diplomatic representatives in Georgia, Armenia and Turkey, the project of which G. Chicherin had prepared. This document declared that Turkey promised not to block free communist propaganda; in light of general political situation and in view both of the arrangement of power in the world and the military position of Russia, [Moscow's representatives] are to explain to military units in Georgia, Armenia and Turkey that at the present time, they must not try to overthrow the governments existing there. [13]

At the same time, on July 2, 1920, Peoples Commissar of International Affairs G. Chicherin, taking advantage of the fact that the Soviets' "respected friend and trusted man" Halil-Pasha was returning to Turkey, sent a letter via him to Mustafa

Kemal-Pasha, in which he expressed the respect of Soviet Russia for the revolutionary government of Turkey after having noted that on a series of questions the interests of the Soviet and Turkish governments correspond. In fact, this letter was not so much an expression of sympathy to the government of Turkey as an indication of "trust" to Halil-Pasha. Mustafa Kemal-Pasha responded to this letter only on November 29, and at that time, he expressed his firm certainty that the day was coming when Western workers on the one hand and the enslaved peoples of Asia and Africa on the other would unite against international capital.

* *The article originally appeared, in Russian, in Russia's Regnum News Agency at <http://www.regnum.ru/news/1438182.html#ixzz1Xevx11D3>.*

Notes

[1] Communication of G. Chicherin to the Central Committee of the RKP(b), 22 June 1920, from the collection of documents of the *Political Documents Archive under the President of Azerbaijan Republic* (hereafter PDA PAR).

[2] Letter of G. Chicherin to V. Lenin, 29 June 1920, from the collection of documents of the PDA PAR.

[3] Letter of G. Chicherin to V. Lenin, 29 June 1920, from the collection of documents of the PDA PAR.

[4] Arthur Ransome, Meeting with Enver-Pasha in Moscow, 25 July 1921, from the collection of documents of the *Russian State Archive of Social-Political History* (hereafter RSASPH).

[5] Telegram of A. Ioffe to V. Lenin and G. Chicherin, 21 September 1918, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[6] Report by A. Ioffe to V. Lenin and G. Chicherin, 22 September 1918, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[7] Report of G. Chicherin to V. Lenin, 16 August 1920, from the collection of documents of the *Foreign Policy Archive of Russian Federation* (hereafter FPA RF).

[8] G. Chicherin to the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), 28 June 1920, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[9] Protocol No. 24 of the session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), 30 June 1920, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[10] Telegram of L. Karakhan to G. Ordzhonikidze, before 11 May 1920, from the collection of documents of the RSASPH.

[11] Telegram of G. Chicherin to G. Ordzhonikidze, 2 July 1920, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[12] Telegram of G. Chicherin to G. Ordzhonikidze, 2 July 1920, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

[13] G. Chicherin to N. Krestinsky, Instruction to the Revolutionary Military Council of the Caucasus Front. Copies to Narimanov, Kirov, Legran, and Eliava, 4 July 1920, from the collection of documents of RSASPH.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Russian and Armenian counterparts, Dmitry Medvedev and Serzh Sargsyan, in Sochi and tells them that, "Azerbaijan is interested in the most rapid resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict possible" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310917.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, says that "of all the peoples of the former Soviet Union, the Azerbaijanis paid the very highest price for their freedom" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310675.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, says that the OSCE Minsk Group should be given a fixed date to reach an agreement so that it can be effective. Absent such a date, he continues, "at times the impression arises that the Minsk Group was created not for the resolution of the conflict, but to drag it out" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311308.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara supports the exclusion of France from the three co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/312132.html>).

David Lidington, British Member of Parliament, says that he does not believe that Britain is in a position to "direct the activity of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group" and remains convinced that "the authorities of Azerbaijan and Armenia must come to an agreement on this question" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311280.html>).

Richard Morningstar, special representative of the US Department of State, says that the complete realization of the Nabucco gas pipeline is becoming "ever less probable" with each passing year (<http://news.day.az/economy/310449.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

31 January

The Council of Ministers increases the number of positions at Azerbaijani missions abroad to 446 and in the central office of the foreign ministry to 418 (<http://news.day.az/politics/312523.html>).

Zakir Garalov, procurator general, receives Joseph Debono Grech and Pedro Agramunt, the co-rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) for the monitoring of obligations and commitments by Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/312729.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, chairman of the State Committee on Work with Religious Structures, says that "Azerbaijan can export to other countries not only oil, but also an example of national-religious tolerance" (<http://news.day.az/society/312725.html>).

Fuad Muradov, Azerbaijani deputy to the Parliamentary Assembly of *Euronest*, says that the European Union should replace France as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/312684.html>).

Tahir Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that efforts to harm Turkish-Azerbaijani relations originate from the Armenian side (<http://news.day.az/politics/312549.html>).

Ayдын Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "one cannot call the Armenian fighters an army by any standards whatsoever" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312163.html>).

Azerbaijani students in Tbilisi stage a protest in front of the French embassy to Georgia to protest the adoption by the French parliament of a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312717.html>).

Members of the *Canadian Network of Azerbaijani Young People* stage a demonstration in front of the French consulate general in Toronto to protest the adoption by the French parliament of a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312623.html>).

The Parliamentary Union of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation issues a call to its member states to commemorate the anniversary of the Hojaly genocide on every February 26th (<http://news.day.az/politics/312540.html>).

Cemil Cicek, speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that international pressure on Armenia is required to end Yerevan's occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/312512.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that "Azerbaijan plays an important role in the energy security of Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312508.html>).

Seventy French senators sign a petition to that country's Constitutional Court calling for the annulment of the law calling for the imposition of criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312625.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the French senators seeking the annulment of the law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" are defending "the historic values of their country" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312638.html>).

Joseph Debono Grech, co-rapporteurs of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) for the monitoring of obligations and commitments by Azerbaijan,

meets with leaders of Azerbaijan's opposition parties
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312571.html>).

The Australian embassy in Turkey sends a note to the embassy of Azerbaijan in Turkey saying that the visit by the New South Wales member of its parliament to the occupied territories in no way affects Australia's support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/312574.html>).

The International Academy of Science for Research on the Turkic World names Eldar Guliyev, a member of the Milli Majlis, deputy of the year of the Turkic World
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312699.html>).

Reporters without Borders condemns the French parliament's decision to adopt a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312533.html>).

30 January

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "Azerbaijan will always stand with Turkey" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312388.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy and deputy executive secretary of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, says that Baku has supported Turkey throughout the discussion about the French law criminalizing any denial of "the so-called 'Armenian genocide'" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312475.html>).

Bakhtiyar Sadykhov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says the French law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" is "not compatible with contemporary realities and democracy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312422.html>).

Members of the Milli Majlis denounce the efforts of those who are trying to undermine the close ties between Azerbaijan and Turkey
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312479.html>).

Azerbaijanis and Turks in Houston organize a demonstration in front of the French consulate to protest France's adoption of a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312416.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that France should cease to be one of the co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312470.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that "people with ill intentions want to harm Turkish-Azerbaijani relations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312476.html>).

Egemen Bagis, Turkey's minister for European Union Affairs, says that this year in Davos, Azerbaijan showed its very best side
(<http://news.day.az/politics/312428.html>).

29 January

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan in its opposition to the French law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" is "fighting for itself and for Turkey" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312267.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says "the position of society and the media of Azerbaijan completely coincides with the position of Turkey regarding the French law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/312263.html>).

28 January

Elkhan Suleymanov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Christoph Strässer of the Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, should be replaced as the author of a report on Azerbaijan because of his clearly-expressed bias against the country (<http://news.day.az/politics/312134.html>).

Azerbaijanis living in Latvia organize a demonstration in front of the French embassy in Riga to protest the French law making the denial of "the Armenian genocide" a crime (<http://news.day.az/society/312130.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara supports the exclusion of France from the three co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/312132.html>).

Rashid Mustafa, deputy representative of UNICEF in Baku, says that "Azerbaijan has achieved success in many spheres" (<http://news.day.az/society/312156.html>).

Jean-Claude Mignon, newly elected president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, signs an appeal to the French Constitutional Court calling for the annulment of the law making denial of "the Armenian genocide" a crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/312214.html>).

Turkmenistan media say that Ashkhabat intends to intensify talks on the delimitation of the Caspian Sea (<http://news.day.az/economy/312168.html>).

27 January

President Ilham Aliyev attends the international economics session in Davos and says that "our highest goal is to transform Azerbaijan into a developed country" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311398.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev and Ukrainian President Viktor Yanukovich meet in Davos (<http://news.day.az/economy/311898.html>).

Emergency Situations Minister Kamaladdin Heydarov visits Russia's Kamaz automotive factory (<http://news.day.az/society/312009.html>).

Labor and Social Security Minister Fizuli Alakparov says that Baku and the European Union are conducting a twinning project on promoting health and security of employees (<http://news.day.az/society/311977.html>).

Vasif Talybov, chairman of the Supreme Majlis of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, and Levan Varshalomidze, the head of Adjara, meet in Batumi and agree on a program of cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/311904.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a representative of Azerbaijan to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, distributes a report on the 20th anniversary of the Hojaly genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/311990.html>).

Officials of the Culture and Tourism Ministry participate in the *Los Angeles Times Travel Show 2012* (<http://news.day.az/society/311916.html>).

The Book Center of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy launches an Internet page, <http://www.adabook.az> (<http://news.day.az/society/312075.html>).

Jean-Claude Mignon, newly elected president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that his organization will discuss the work of its subcommittee on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/311995.html>).

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis tells his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan that Vilnius supports the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/311962.html>).

Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz says that the growth of energy resources has promoted "an increase in the role of Azerbaijan for Turkey" (<http://news.day.az/economy/312011.html>).

A meeting of the GUAM secretariat in Kyiv hosts a seminar on combating corruption (<http://news.day.az/politics/312043.html>).

Yevgeny Bazhanov, the rector of the Diplomatic Academy of the Russian Foreign Ministry, says that "Azerbaijan is a partner whom it is necessary to respect" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311976.html>).

The UN representation in Baku marks the International Day in Memory of the Holocaust (<http://news.day.az/society/312045.html>).

26 January

Energy Minister Natic Aliyev and his Ukrainian counterpart Yuri Boyko sign agreements in Davos on the supply of gas to Ukraine (<http://news.day.az/economy/311808.html>).

Farhad Abdullayev, the chairman of the Constitutional Court, and Ramiz Rzayev, the chairman of the Supreme Court, attend a seminar on legal systems and human rights in Strasbourg (<http://news.day.az/society/311779.html>).

Vilayat Guliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Budapest, holds a press conference on the preparations for the 28th regional conference of the UN Food and Agriculture Organization which will take place in Baku in April 2012 (<http://news.day.az/economy/311807.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Council of Europe's "lack of objectivity" regarding Azerbaijan can have "great" harm for relations between Baku and Brussels (<http://news.day.az/politics/311856.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that Russia is working "actively" as an OSCE Minsk Group co-chair and that evidence of this is contained in the joint declaration of the presidents of Azerbaijan, Russia and Armenia in Sochi (<http://news.day.az/politics/311795.html>).

Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yildiz says that the construction of the Azerbaijani-Turkish Trans-Anatolian Pipeline requires the review of the routes and tariffs of the South Gas Corridor, including those of Nabucco, TAP, and ITGI (<http://news.day.az/economy/311812.html>).

Turkish Culture and Tourism Minister Erugrul Gunay presents a special award to Baku's Trend News Agency for its work in promoting contacts among the Turkic peoples of the world (<http://news.day.az/society/311858.html>).

Pádraig Murphy, Special Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office for the South Caucasus, and Andrzej Kasprzyk, the Personal Representative of the Chairperson-in-Office on the conflict dealt with by the OSCE Minsk Conference, discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Azerbaijani officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/311836.html>).

Toyli Komekov, Turkmenistan's ambassador to Baku, discusses the organization of voting for Turkmens living in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/311804.html>).

Thomas Hammarberg, Council of Europe commissioner for human rights, says that the French law imposing criminal penalties for any denial of "the Armenian genocide" can negatively affect freedom of speech in that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/311799.html>).

Mohammed Mehdi Akhundzade, the special representative of the Iranian president on Caspian issues, says that Tehran will insist on the principle of justice on the issue of the delimitation of the Caspian Sea (<http://news.day.az/politics/311752.html>).

A group of former senior Soviet officials says that Moscow should erect a monument to former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev who was "a great friend of the Russian people and Russia" and who laid the foundation for relations between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/311777.html>).

25 January

Emergency Situations Minister Kamaladdin Heydarov receives Koray Targay, head of the Baku office of the OSCE (<http://news.day.az/politics/311574.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, tells the UN Security Council that "Azerbaijan welcomes the talks between Israel and Palestine and expresses the hope that they will lead to a just and long-lasting peace" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311497.html>).

Rafael Huseynov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, is named co-rapporteur on the reformed PACE committee on migration, refugees and internally displaced persons (<http://news.day.az/politics/311638.html>).

Rauf Aliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says the French decision to adopt a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny the existence of "the Armenian genocide" is "a major mistake" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311528.html>).

The Center for Strategic Research of the Presidential Administration and the Union of Azerbaijani and Turkish Entrepreneurs issue a book on "Azerbaijani-Turkish Relations of the Last 20 Years: Successes and Possibilities" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311468.html>).

The Baku Center for Education of Youth ends cooperation with French NGOs in protest against France's adoption of a law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny the existence of "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311544.html>).

The Union of Parliamentary Journalists of Azerbaijan appeals to French journalists to oppose the French law imposing criminal penalties on those who deny "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311609.html>).

Irina Bokova, director general of UNESCO, says that Azerbaijan is playing an important role in promoting intercultural dialogue and singles out First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva for special praise in this regard (<http://news.day.az/politics/311520.html>).

British Prime Minister David Cameron says that London supports the activities of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/311641.html>).

GUAM and Japan discuss energy security cooperation at a meeting in Tokyo (<http://news.day.az/politics/311598.html>).

Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze says that Tbilisi welcomes the opportunity to speak out on behalf of Azerbaijan in international forums including the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (<http://news.day.az/politics/311586.html>).

Gabriel Keller, France's ambassador to Baku, says that, "if the law adopted by the Senate of France on January 23 has disturbed Turkish or Azerbaijani citizens, the French authorities regret this. This does not correspond at all to the spirit of the adopted law. The problems of memory are always difficult and generate sharp discussions throughout the world" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311554.html>).

The Russian government considers signing an agreement with Baku on cooperation in the sphere of labor migration (<http://news.day.az/society/311573.html>).

24 January

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that France's adoption of a law imposing criminal sanctions for

the denial of "the Armenian genocide" is "a black mark" on the history of that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/311197.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that attempts to put pressure on Azerbaijan by means of cyber attacks are for naught (<http://news.day.az/politics/311265.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that France's adoption of a law imposing criminal sanctions for the denial of "the Armenian genocide" contradicts that country's republican traditions and is a cause for regret (<http://news.day.az/politics/311202.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Azerbaijan "deeply regrets" the French Senate's approval of a law imposing criminal sanctions on anyone who denies "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311204.html>).

The Defense Ministry hosts Azerbaijani-German military staff talks (<http://news.day.az/politics/311236.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Tehran's close relations with Armenia reflect both Armenia's efforts to find a route out for its exports and Iran's desire to show that any sanctions against Tehran will not work (<http://news.day.az/politics/311201.html>).

The *Ireli* Social Union organizes a demonstration in front of the French embassy in Baku to protest the French Senate's approval of a law imposing criminal sanctions on anyone who denies "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311337.html>).

Azerbaijanis living in Georgia demand that the *Imedi* television channel there issue a public apology for falsely suggesting that Kurban Said's novel *Ali and Nino* was "an Iranian-Georgian work" (<http://news.day.az/society/311283.html>).

Azerbaijanis living in Paris organize a demonstration in front of the French Senate building demanding that the European Union reconsider France's membership in the EU (<http://news.day.az/society/311196.html>).

Thorbjørn Jagland, secretary general of the Council of Europe, sends a letter to President Ilham Aliyev in which he welcomes the Azerbaijani leader's pardoning of Mehman Mammadov, Cabbar Savalan, Nizami Shahmuradov and others (<http://news.day.az/politics/311225.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, secretary general of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, says that the adoption of a law imposing criminal sanctions for the denial of "the Armenian genocide" is "one of the signs of Islamophobia in France" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311232.html>).

23 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Russian and Armenian counterparts, Dmitry Medvedev and Serzh Sargsyan, in Sochi to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/310874.html>).

The Ministry of Economic Development says that it may use the experience of Great Britain in the area of internal control (<http://news.day.az/economy/310984.html>).

The Ministry of Youth and Sports and the Youth Action Program of the European Commission open an international course in Ganja devoted to "the role of youth in inter-religious and inter-cultural dialogue" (<http://news.day.az/society/311081.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, an Azerbaijani representative to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the French law criminalizing the denial of "the Armenian genocide" "completely contradicts the values and traditions of the Council of Europe and PACE" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311103.html>).

Fazail Agamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the hostile attitude of Iran toward Azerbaijan is a matter of regret" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311095.html>).

Leading members of the Azerbaijani diaspora in the Russian Federation say they plan to seek the indictment of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev for his role in the Bloody January events in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/311093.html>).

Thorbjørn Jagland, secretary general of the Council of Europe, says that "questions of history should be left to historians" rather than be addressed by politicians (<http://news.day.az/politics/311101.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia at their meeting with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Sochi "recognized the necessity of pulling back from extreme positions" and called for "the continuation of efforts for the rapprochement of their positions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311033.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin met with his Turkish counterpart Firudin Sinirlioglu to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/311079.html>).

Movlud Cavusoglu, outgoing president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "the opinion of Armenian colleagues that the activity of the PACE subcommittee on Nagorno-Karabakh has been unsuccessful does not correspond to reality" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311024.html>).

Movlud Cavusoglu, outgoing president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that France has taken up "an unconstitutional bill, which will harm freedom of expression" by criminalizing the denial of "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311042.html>).

Jean-Claude Mignon, the incoming president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict "must be resolved" and adds that "writing history is a task not for deputies, but for historians" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311058.html> and <http://news.day.az/politics/311052.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkish ambassador to Baku, says that "peace and stability in France

could come to an end" as a result of the adoption of a law criminalizing the denial of "the invented 'Armenian genocide'" (<http://news.day.az/politics/311048.html>).

22 January

Elkhan Suleymanov, a Milli Majlis deputy, leads the Azerbaijani delegation to the session of the *Euronest* Parliamentary Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/310806.html>).

US Representative Bill Shuster, the co-chair of the Azerbaijan Working Group in the US Congress, speaks on the anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310849.html>).

Rahim Humbatov, president of the Crimean Azerbaijani Society, hosts a meeting devoted to the memory of the victims of January 20, 1990 (<http://news.day.az/society/310856.html>).

21 January

Communication and Information Technology Minister Ali Abbasov says that "the hacker attack on the Internet resources of Azerbaijan was carried out from Iran and the Netherlands" (<http://news.day.az/hitech/310719.html>).

Namik Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Chisinau, hosts a session at which are laid flowers on the bust of Heydar Aliyev on the occasion of the 22nd anniversary of Black January in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/310780.html>).

The Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Batumi organizes a Day of Memory of the Victims of the Tragedy of January 20, 1990 (<http://news.day.az/politics/310781.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, proposes creating a museum in memory of the victims of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310714.html>).

Azerbaijanis stage a protest in front of the French embassy in Baku to protest consideration of legislation by the French Senate that would make denial of "the Armenian genocide" a crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/310809.html>).

Romanian President Traian Băsescu says that relations between Romania and the countries of the Caucasus and Central Asia, and especially with Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan, and Kazakhstan, have an enormous potential for economic cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/310778.html>).

20 January

President Ilham Aliyev leads the Azerbaijani people in commemorating the anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310511.html>).

Azerbaijani embassies and communities around the world mark the anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310696.html>, <http://news.day.az/politics/310699.html>, <http://news.day.az/politics/310656.html>, <http://news.day.az/politics/310659.html>, <http://news.day.az/politics/310655.html>,

<http://news.day.az/society/310679.html>, <http://news.day.az/politics/310538.html>, and <http://news.day.az/politics/310766.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, addresses the UN Security Council about the rights of internally displaced persons (<http://news.day.az/politics/310596.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, says that "of all the peoples of the former Soviet Union, the Azerbaijanis paid the very highest price for their freedom" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310675.html>).

Zhalya Aliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Yerevan media have made "unjust" comments about Azerbaijan with regard to Armenian participation in *Eurovision 2012* (<http://news.day.az/politics/310648.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the events of January 20 [1990] showed that the Azerbaijani people was capable of consolidating itself" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310545.html>).

The Times of London includes President Ilham Aliyev on its list of the 100 most influential people of the world for 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/310628.html>).

Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz says that "Nabucco will be realized" (<http://news.day.az/economy/310625.html>).

Hammam Hammudi, chairman of the international relations committee of the Iraqi parliament, says that Iraq can become "the window of Azerbaijan into the Arab world," through which Arabs can learn the truth about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/310600.html>).

Ukraine's council of ministers approves a directive on the signing of an agreement with Azerbaijan about the supply of Azerbaijani gas to Ukrainian markets (<http://news.day.az/economy/310638.html>).

19 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Hammam Hamudi, chairman of the international relations committee of the Iraqi parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/310465.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Russian counterpart, Sergey Lavrov, in Moscow (<http://news.day.az/politics/310468.html>).

Elman Arasly, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Amman, hosts a memorial session on the 22nd anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310433.html>).

Dashgyn Shikarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Islamabad, speaks to a seminar on *Black January* at Preston University (<http://news.day.az/politics/310428.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the upcoming meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia under the mediation of the Russian president is "a positive development" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310443.html>).

Azerbaijanis take part in a Moscow meeting calling for the bringing to justice of former Soviet President Mikhail Gorbachev for his role in Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310421.html>).

Gabriel Keller, France's ambassador to Baku, is summoned to the Foreign Ministry where she says that Paris supports the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/310477.html>).

Eric Rubin, US deputy assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasia, says that the US embassy in Baku will continue to operate under charge d'affaires Adam Sterling pending the appointment and confirmation of a new US ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/310454.html>).

Necdet Unuvar, co-chairman of the Turkey-Azerbaijan Friendship Group, says that the Azerbaijanis of France and other countries have appealed to the French parliament not to adopt legislation making the denial of "the Armenian genocide" a crime (<http://news.day.az/politics/310472.html>).

Sinan Ogan, a deputy of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that the Turkish parliament will take up the issue of recognizing the Hojaly genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/310476.html>).

Sinan Ogan, a deputy of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that that body will create a special commission to investigate the operations of the Metsamor Atomic Power Station in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/310456.html>).

The Iranian embassy in Baku says that Tehran "does not have any relation to the hacker attacks on the government and social structures in Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310393.html>).

The International Monetary Fund calls on Baku to extend greater opportunities to small and mid-sized businesses (<http://news.day.az/economy/310291.html>).

18 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Moldovan Prime Minister Vladimir Filat (<http://news.day.az/politics/310153.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Eric Rubin, US deputy assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasia (<http://news.day.az/politics/310153.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Necdet Unuvar, co-chairman of the Turkey-Azerbaijan Friendship Group in Turkey's Grand National Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/310153.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives his Moldovan counterpart Iurie Leanca (<http://news.day.az/politics/310260.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells Hammam Hammudi, chairman of the international relations committee of the Iraqi parliament, that Azerbaijani-Iraqi relations are successfully developing (<http://news.day.az/politics/310151.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Eric Rubin, US deputy assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasia, who says that "the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is in the interests of the United States" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310248.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Radek Matula, the Czech Republic's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/310251.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natic Aliyev proposes to create a nuclear free zone in the South Caucasus during a meeting with visiting Georgian Vice Speaker Fridon Todua (<http://news.day.az/politics/310214.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the highly professional Azerbaijani army is "the strongest factor both of statehood and the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310157.html>).

Akif Aliyev, charge d'affaires at the Azerbaijani embassy in Tashkent, speaks to a meeting devoted to the 22nd anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/310278.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that Azerbaijan could support a referendum there "under one condition—the guaranteed return of Azerbaijanis of Nagorno-Karabakh to their homes" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310253.html>).

Rovnag Abdullayev, head of Azerbaijan's State Oil Company, tells Kyrgyzstan Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov that Azerbaijan is interested in investing in the construction of an oil processing factor in Kyrgyzstan (<http://news.day.az/economy/310230.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of the Muslims of the Caucasus, says that "unfortunately, the tragedy of January 20 [1990] has not been given international assessment" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310272.html>).

The UK-Azerbaijan Society holds its annual review meeting (<http://news.day.az/politics/310478.html>).

The Constitutional Commission of the French Senate adopts a decision against consideration of the bill that would criminalize the denial of "the Armenian genocide" (<http://news.day.az/world/310200.html>).

17 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Fridon Todua, vice speaker of the Georgian parliament and president of the Georgia-Azerbaijan friendship group (<http://news.day.az/politics/309943.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva opens the *Flight to Baku* exhibit in London (<http://news.day.az/politics/310032.html>).

Elmir Valizade, deputy communications and information technology minister, says that the hacker attack against Azerbaijani sites is under investigation and that a response will be taken (<http://news.day.az/hitech/309953.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the development of Azerbaijan is "a major support" for the resolution of all problems, "including the chief one, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/310009.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the French adoption of a law criminalizing the denial of "the Armenian genocide" would have "a negative influence on the French parliament and on France as a whole" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309971.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan is prepared to cooperate with the Council of Europe on the issue of political prisoners, an issue that should be investigated "not only in Azerbaijan, but also in countries in the Council of Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309963.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy and member of the Azerbaijan-Iran inter-parliamentary working group, says that Azerbaijan as a member of the UN Security Council follows a consistent position toward issues involving Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/309916.html>).

Vahid Ahmadov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan's gas reserves are attracting "great attention and interest to the country as one of the main sources for energy security of other countries" (<http://news.day.az/economy/309992.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/310025.html>).

Fridon Todua, the vice speaker of the Georgian parliament, says that "Georgia and Azerbaijan are not only strategic partners, but also close friends" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309957.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Gennady Gatilov says that Azerbaijan's election to the UN Security Council is "recognition of its role in the international arena" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309927.html>).

Hommam Hammudi, chairman of the international relations of the Iraqi parliament, says that Baghdad has proposed cooperation with Azerbaijan regarding religious tourism (<http://news.day.az/society/309914.html>).

16 January

President Ilham Aliyev says that "the political weight and economic power of Azerbaijan will grow in 2012" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309754.html>).

Transportation Minister Ziya Mammadov receives Nikolay Patskevich, Belorussian ambassador to Baku, to discuss bilateral cooperation (<http://news.day.az/economy/309696.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Azerbaijan has the chance to block foreign hacker aggression" (<http://news.day.az/politics/309766.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that hacker attacks against Azerbaijan have been launched by its opponents (<http://news.day.az/politics/309760.html>).

Note to Readers

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