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AZERBAIJAN'S DIPLOMATIC SERVICE AT 90: ORIGINS, CONTINUITY AND CHANGE

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July 9th marked the 90th anniversary of the decree of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic that created Azerbaijan's foreign ministry and laid the foundations for its diplomatic service. Over the intervening decades, the foreign ministry and the diplomats who serve their country in it have undergone numerous changes reflecting changes in Azerbaijan's status and political position. At the same time, however, certain underlying continuities help explain Baku's diplomacy today and thus deserve special mention on this anniversary.

When the foreign ministry was created in 1919, it consisted of a council, a chancellery and a department with four subordinate sections – internal relations which maintained liaison with other offices of the government and society, external relations, cadres and economics, and an archive. Not surprisingly, the ministry devoted particular attention to cadres work, and it required those who hoped to serve as diplomats to have knowledge of French, the international language of the day, as well as familiarity with the basic principles of international law.

Despite the internal and external turbulence of those times, Azerbaijan was able to develop contacts with a large number of countries. Even before the foreign ministry was created, the government assigned – in 1918 – charges d'affaires in Germany, Ukraine, Persia and Armenia and a diplomatic representation in Crimea.

And by the end of 1919, Azerbaijan had diplomatic representatives accredited in Georgia (Farist-bek Vekilov), Armenia (Abdurakhman bek Akhverdov), Persia (A. Ziyadkhan), Turkey (Yusif bek Vezirov (Chemenzemenli)), and Ukraine (Jamal Sadykhov) as well as additional consular representations in Batumi, Crimea, Enzeli, Tabriz, and Meshkhed. During the same period, the following countries opened missions of various descriptions in Baku: Armenia, Belgium, Denmark, England, Finland, France, Georgia, Greece, Italy, Lithuania, Persia, Poland, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, and the United States.

The establishment of Soviet power in Baku and the overthrow of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic in 1920 marked the end of an independent Azerbaijani diplomatic service for seven decades, but it did not mean the complete extinction of the nation's diplomatic tradition or experience.

An important role was played in this connection by the plenipotentiary representation of the Azerbaijan Soviet Republic to the RSFSR, which formally served as a kind of mission for Baku in Moscow. This representation continued even after December 1922 when the Azerbaijan SSR joined the USSR and Azerbaijani diplomatic representations abroad were closed.

All the responsibilities of the Azerbaijani Commissariat for Foreign Affairs were initially transferred to the Trans-Caucasian Federation as a part of which Azerbaijan joined the USSR. But in the Soviet of Peoples Commissars of the Azerbaijan SSR was created a foreign department which dealt with visas and foreign passports, albeit in complete subordination to the Moscow Commissariat of Foreign Affairs. That central control was strengthened in July 1923, when the USSR Peoples Commissariat of Foreign Affairs created the system of plenipotentiary representatives to the republics, controlling agencies that lasted until 1946.

During this period, Azerbaijan's diplomatic activities were subject to extraordinary ideologization, a development that characterized all of Soviet life but one that had the unfortunate consequence in the diplomatic sphere of undermining the principles and practices that inform most countries and that informed the work of the foreign ministry of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic.

In 1944, Moscow restored the peoples commissariats in the republics as part of its drive to get all of them membership and votes in the United Nations. That effort fell through – only Ukraine and Belarus gained membership – but it had the consequence of leading to the restoration of what became in 1946 the ministry of foreign affairs of the Azerbaijan SSR. One measure of the activity of this organization is the number

of employees, one that rose from 12 at the start to 58 by the end of 1945. Its chief tasks included the preparation of reports on developments in neighboring countries, such as Iran, Turkey and Afghanistan, assisting with visits, and dealing with some consular matters.

One reason for its size and activity was the Azerbaijani population in Iran, a co-ethnic group that became more important to Moscow during World War II as a result of the Soviet occupation of northern Iran and the formation of an independent people's republic there at the end of that conflict. Baku provided both expertise about this population and assistance in dealing with the comings and goings of people working with that group.

But as a result of the withdrawal of Soviet forces from northern Iran and the collapse of the Azerbaijani state there, the amount of work the Azerbaijani foreign ministry was asked to do declined significantly, and by 1950, that institution had only 11 employees, more than the five to seven most other union republics had at that time but far less than the 58 of only a few years before.

One reason why the Azerbaijani foreign ministry was somewhat larger is that its consular service helped with the preparation of documents for Soviet citizens who were returning to the USSR for permanent residence. That campaign, which Moscow launched after the war in the hopes of replenishing some of the USSR's population losses, ran out of steam by the early 1950s, and, as of January 1958, the foreign ministry of the Azerbaijan SSR consisted of only three people – a minister, a deputy minister and a secretary.

Nonetheless, that small group played a role in drafting a statute on republic foreign ministries, although that document was never adopted in the Soviet period. Had it been, the Azerbaijani ministry would have had 12.5 people on staff and would have been responsible for preparing a press bulletin on international information for the Azerbaijani media. Despite that failure, the limited staff of the ministry was kept busy with organizing visits, helping to provide information on foreign markets to enterprises in Azerbaijan, assisting Moscow on consular issues, and perhaps most important dealing with the general consulates of Iran and Iraq and the Cuban representation in Baku. The ministry became especially active in its external outreach in the 1970s. And when events in Iran exploded in 1979, the ministry provided reports to Moscow on Azerbaijanis there.

Despite the extreme centralization of Soviet diplomacy, it is worth noting that within the limits of the existing social-political system, the Azerbaijan foreign ministry actively participated in consular tasks, was involved with processing and distributing information, and worked with journalists from abroad, all tasks that foreign ministries around the world normally carry out.

Moreover, and this too is an important part of the history of this institution, the leaders of the Azerbaijan foreign ministry at various times travelled abroad as members of Soviet delegations to the UN General Assembly, where they took an active part in the sessions and committees and met with the leaders of various countries and members of foreign delegations.

On October 18, 1991, Azerbaijan adopted its constitutional act on state independence, a measure that opened the way to the formation of a diplomatic service of an independent country. The first government which recognized

Azerbaijan's independence was Turkey (November 9, 1991), and its recognition was soon followed by the establishment of diplomatic ties between Ankara and Baku (January 14, 1992). Many other countries soon followed. Most of them began their relations with Azerbaijan through their embassies in Moscow, which now were jointly accredited to Baku, but very quickly, they opened embassies in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan has followed suit by opening missions in more than 40 capitals.

Over the last 18 years, the Azerbaijani foreign ministry has expanded rapidly not only in terms of the number of diplomats but also structurally with the full panoply of functional and territorial subdivisions that will be familiar to anyone with an interest in contemporary diplomacy. But there are some special details that merit mention. In 1993, to give but one example, an administration for the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijan conflict and conflict problems was set up within the ministry.

As it marks the 90th anniversary of its founding, Azerbaijan's diplomatic service and the foreign ministry of the country remain works in progress, shaped by the past and by the country's national leadership but also by a clear recognition that Azerbaijan will play an even larger role in the world and that its diplomats will have a key place in that demanding work.

CHALLENGES AHEAD FOR AZERBAIJAN'S DIPLOMATS

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Azerbaijan is one of only a few countries where diplomats have their own day. On July 9th, Azerbaijan celebrated National Diplomats Day to mark the 90th anniversary of the country's Foreign Affairs Ministry. Given its location, Azerbaijani diplomats face some tough challenges, including outside interest in oil, the conflict with Armenia, and problematic relations both with the Russian Federation, the center of its former imperial master, and with Iran, more than a third of whose population is ethnically Azerbaijani and whose government would like to export its Islamic revolution north to a country that is two-third Shiite Muslim.

In addition, its two other neighbors present challenges: Georgia is struggling with its own geopolitical problems, and the strong alliance Azerbaijan has with Turkey cannot obscure the reality that the two states share only an 11 kilometer border. As one Baku analyst puts it, "Azerbaijan has geographic ties with its enemies but not with its friends."

Given this situation, President Ilham Aliyev has adopted as his motto, "a diligent balance." As Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov has pointed out, "the diplomatic elasticity required by the difficulties of achieving a *modus vivendi* in this complex part of the world, would have to be balanced against the country's top foreign policy priority – re-establishing its territorial integrity."

That requirement of course both reflects and increases the challenges diplomats face, especially since many of them like their countrymen more generally share a deep distrust of Russia and Iran. For example, one senior Azerbaijani politician told us openly that Russia is the key to a peace deal with Armenia. Another Baku expert said he could not understand how Russia could pretend to be impartial as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group when it "continues to maintain a base inside Armenia."

Moreover, Azerbaijan has successfully attracted investment from Western sources, joined several European organizations, even though it has disclaimed interest in becoming a member of NATO, and has built strong partnerships with Ukraine and Georgia, two countries that are among those least liked in Moscow. This kind of balance suggests Baku hopes to have good relations with both Moscow and the West, something some in both places and in Baku find difficult to fully accept.

Underlying these geopolitical concerns are clashes of economic interests in and around Azerbaijan. Europe's dependence on Russian natural gas has led its member countries to seek the development of alternative pipeline routes that will bypass Russia, something Moscow does not want them to achieve lest it lose its largest and most powerful lever against them. But so important is this for the West that both the European Union and the United States have thrown their weight behind the Nabucco project, which – if it is completed – could bring some 10 billion cubic meters of gas to Europe from the developing Shah Deniz field.

Russia's latest countermove in this chess game was Russian President Dmitry Medvedev's lightning visit to Baku during which he secured Russia's right to purchase 500 million cubic meters of gas from Azerbaijan. Some viewed this as a setback for Nabucco, but others suggested it was part of Azerbaijan's balanced foreign policy, a step designed to appease Moscow without changing the fundamental dynamics of the situation.

Given Russia's new assertiveness in the region, it appears likely that Azerbaijan's diplomatic tasks will grow even heavier, especially if President Aliyev is now in a position to remind Moscow of Azerbaijan's strategic importance and thus achieve what Baku would like from Russia while not having to give up Azerbaijan's ties with the West. How long Baku will be able to pursue this "diligent balance" remains to be seen, but in the pursuit of that, Azerbaijan's diplomats will have a key role to play.

**MINSK CO-CHAIR PRESIDENTS
PRESS FOR KARABAKH SETTLEMENT**

Paul Goble
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On July 10, at the conclusion of the G-8 summit in Italy, the presidents of the three countries who occupy three co-chairmanships of the OSCE Minsk Group on Nagorno-Karabakh – US President Barak Obama, Russian Federation President Dmitry Medvedev, and French President Nicolas Sarkozy – delivered what many observers are calling an almost unprecedented “ultimatum” to the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia, “urging” them “to resolve the few remaining differences between them and finalize their agreement” on “a renewed version” of the November 2007 Madrid Principles, “which will outline a comprehensive settlement.”

Those principles, according to a fact sheet released by the White House, include:

- The return of territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control;
- An interim status for Nagorno-Karabakh providing guarantees for security and self-governance;
- A corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh;
- Future determination of the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh through a legally binding expression of will;
- The right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and
- International security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation.

Endorsement of these Basic Principles by Baku and Yerevan, the White House statement continued, “will allow the drafting of a comprehensive settlement to ensure a future of peace, stability, and prosperity for Armenia and Azerbaijan and the broader region” (White House 2009)

This unusual declaration raises many questions, three of which deserve immediate attention. First, why did the three powers decide to issue it now? Second, can the two presidents in fact agree on these principles given their statements and the attitudes of key constituencies? And third, given the internal contradictions contained within this set of principles, would any such agreement in fact point toward peace or alternatively to an armistice likely to be broken by one or another group in the future?

Why Now?

In what is far and away the most thoughtful exploration of this question, Sergey Markedonov, a leading specialist on ethnic issues at the Moscow Institute for Political and Military Analysis, says that in addition to a general weariness about this long, drawn out conflict and the general desire of great powers to solve “headaches” they cannot readily exploit, each of the three leaders involved in this declaration had his reasons (Markedonov 2009).

The new American President Barak Obama clearly wanted to demonstrate, Markedonov suggests, that Washington under his leadership will pursue a “realistic” and “pragmatic” course in foreign affairs, one that will be open to compromise rather than driven by a single ideological line. Russian President Dmitry Medvedev also had good reasons to sign on to this declaration. Not only could he thus demonstrate that Moscow is not a revisionist power as its actions in Georgia last year appeared to show, but he can boost his own standing at home and abroad by showing a willingness to seek agreement rather than conflict with others. And French President Nicolas Sarkozy, although definitely the third man in this action, certainly cherishes

the reputation he won last year in the Georgian war as “an honest broker,” a reputation that increases his clout not only within Europe but more generally.

And while Markedonov does not stress it, the “renewed” Madrid principles offer something for everyone as they attempt to square the circle by nodding both to the legitimacy of internationally recognized borders, something Azerbaijan and the Minsk Group has insisted upon, and the right of nations to self-determination, a principle that lies at the foundation of the Nagorno-Karabakh movement and Armenia’s approach to this conflict. Consequently, each of the three leaders, just like leaders in Baku and Yerevan, can point to various parts of the declaration and claim victory for his position.

Can Baku and Yerevan Agree?

For three reasons, it is entirely possible that President Ilham Aliyev and President Serzh Sargsyan will be able to agree on this renewed declaration at their upcoming Moscow meeting or soon thereafter. First, agreeing on this will please the great powers while committing them to little more than continuing to talk because neither side would have to take any action until a final agreement is worked out. Second, each side will interpret the principles in its own way, stressing the importance of one over the other or defining any particular step in ways that will maximize benefits to himself and his country. And third, there could be real costs to either or both by not agreeing now, whatever they plan to do in the future. If they were to turn this proposal down, international attention to the issue might decline, the Minsk Group could disintegrate, and the dangers of a new explosion of violence could increase.

But if there are powerful reasons for them to agree, there are also three reasons why they might not. First, both leaders have taken an increasingly hard line in recent months, specifying that they are prepared to wait until they get what their side wants or even use violence if that is the only way to achieve their goals. Any backing away could have serious consequences domestically, prompting those who are most committed to the respective national positions to assert themselves in one or another ways.

Second, while each leader certainly benefits from the political cover that international pressure can provide domestically, neither wants to be seen by his own people as anything but an independent actor on the world stage, one capable of defending and advancing the interests of his nation. And third, the two leaders in the room are not the only players in this game, even if they are the only ones with a seat at the table. On the Azerbaijani side, there is the Movement for the Liberation of Karabakh; and on the Armenian side, there are both opposition groups who hope to exploit any agreement even on principles and the powers that be in Nagorno-Karabakh itself who will almost certainly try to torpedo any accord, even a preliminary one, that they believe is not in their interest. [2]

As the leaders of outside powers have sometimes appeared to forget, for Azerbaijanis and Armenians, Nagorno-Karabakh is not a side issue. It is an existential struggle that defines who and what each of these nations are and even more what they have been and can become. That reality, one that as Markedonov says is “neither good nor bad” but just is, can play havoc with the careful calculations of diplomats who sometimes make too much of legal niceties and logic and ignore the powerful forces of historical memory and current emotions.

Will these Principles lead to an Agreement and Such an Agreement to Peace?

But however that may be, the most intriguing and beyond any doubt most important question is whether these “renewed” principles can lead to a final agreement, or whether this declaration and even its acceptance will be just another milestone on a road without any clear end.

Because these principles seek to offer something to both sides, they are internally inconsistent or extremely ambiguous and uncertain. The most obvious inconsistency is between the call by one principle for the return to Azerbaijani control of territories surround Nagorno-Karabakh and the call by another to create a corridor between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, something that did not exist before the conflict but that Armenia would not want under Azerbaijani control.

A second is between the call that Nagorno-Karabakh’s “final legal status” could be determined by “a legally binding expression of will” and the call for the right of all IDPs and refugees to return. On the one hand, if there is to be a vote, it is very much an open question as to who would take part. And on the other, if the vote called for Nagorno-Karabakh to be independent or part of Armenia, it seems unlikely that the right of those displaced could or would be respected.

And a third involves the big question of how Nagorno-Karabakh’s “interim status” would be defined, how its “security and self-governance” would be provided for, and who would make up the “peacekeeping operation” that the principles say would represent “international security guarantees.” Will the current rulers in Khankendi be allowed to police the interim arrangements, and will Russia be willing to allow any other country to provide peacekeepers – and will any other country be willing to do so?

Any of these questions could be deal breakers even if the two presidents agree to what the leaders of the three great powers have proposed, an indication of both the extraordinarily difficult task involved in solving a conflict like the one over Nagorno-Karabakh and of the extraordinary obstacles even the strongest powers have in imposing their will on those who have their own goals and agendas and are not willing to give up what they consider most important.

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A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev at the conclusion of his visit to the United Kingdom addresses the Royal Institute of International Relations on "Foreign Policy Challenges for Azerbaijan." He says that Nagorno-Karabakh will "never be recognized as an independent state. To expect that is absolute foolishness" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says Azerbaijan "does not intend to create any obstacles if Russia and America agree on questions of global security," including on the Gabala radar station (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163801.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan will never agree to making the question of the territorial integrity of the country into a subject for discussion." And he adds that "we do not see any other path for the resolution of the conflict besides the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return there of internally displaced persons, and the establishment of autonomy" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163471.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

US President Barak Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev as presidents of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group countries issue a joint statement at the G8 summit in Italy saying that their representatives will present to the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan "an updated variant of the Madrid document of 29 November 2007," as the basis for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164390.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "the signing of a framework agreement at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in Moscow is impossible." But he adds that he "hopes" for decisive progress at that session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164252.html>).

Israeli President Shimon Peres says that during his visit to Baku, he had not found "a drop of hatred toward Jews." And he continues that "Azerbaijan was one of the first countries which allowed women to vote, and this happened earlier than in Sweden and the US" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163782.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

15 July

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells a meeting of the NATO-Azerbaijan Council in Brussels that "Azerbaijan is satisfied with NATO's support of its territorial integrity" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164914.html>).

US Senator Richard Lugar, ranking minority member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, says that the US expects that Azerbaijan and Turkey will reach an agreement on Nabucco soon (<http://www.day.az/news/oilgas/164858.html>).

14 July

President Ilham Aliyev at the conclusion of his visit to the United Kingdom addresses the Royal Institute of International Relations on "Foreign Policy Challenges for Azerbaijan." He says that Nagorno-Karabakh will "never be recognized as an independent state. To expect that is absolute foolishness" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that "Turkish-Armenian and Armenian-Azerbaijan discussions influence one another" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164785.html>).

13 July

President Ilham Aliyev meets with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown during his visit to the United Kingdom and says that the UK is "a strategic partner" of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

The Permanent Council of the OSCE hears a report about the activities of the organization's Baku office over the last year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164609.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to China, says that approximately 50 Azerbaijani citizens have asked the embassy to assist in their return to Azerbaijan because of the violence in Urumchi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164588.html>).

12 July

President Ilham Aliyev departs Baku for London for the start of an official visit to the United Kingdom (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

11 July

Akshin Mekhtiyev, Azerbaijani permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Baku, "when it calls the attention of the United Nations to Karabakh is guided by its national interests and not by the attitude to it of the co-chairs [of the OSCE Minsk Group]" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164387.html>).

James Steinberg, US deputy secretary of state, says that American policy toward Azerbaijan is "a reflection of the declaration of US President Barak Obama about a qualitatively new level of relations with the Muslim world" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164478.html>), that "Azerbaijan and other countries of the region should have constructive relations with Russia"

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164470.html>), that the US is discussing with Azerbaijan a broad spectrum of questions "including the role of the media in the country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164466.html>), that Washington is considering the possibility of using the Gabala radar site (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164459.html>), and "Washington supports the efforts of the [Azerbaijani and Armenian] presidents to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164450.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that Moscow will "energetically support progress" in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and "positively assesses" the exchange of visits by Azerbaijani and Armenian intellectuals (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164506.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry greets the declaration of the presidents of the US, Russia and France concerning the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164500.html>).

The Organization for the Liberation of Karabakh expresses its dissatisfaction at the joint declaration of the presidents of the US, Russia and France concerning the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164499.html>).

10 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164436.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164411.html>).

US President Barak Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev as presidents of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group countries issue a joint statement at the G8 summit in Italy saying that their representatives will present to the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan "an updated variant of the Madrid document of 29 November 2007," as the basis for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164390.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the G8 summit says that "for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remain to be decided certain nuances," adding that these are not something that should take "decades" and consequently that there is a good chance for a resolution soon (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164410.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the upcoming Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will allow the two sides to come to "the finish line" in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164384.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "in the future peace agreement on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict must be observed a balance between two norms of international

law, the right of nations to self-determination and the right of a state to territorial integrity" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164421.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the upcoming Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will allow the two sides to come to "the finish line" in the resolution of the Karabakh dispute (www.day.az/news/politics/164384.html).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that "the position of Turkey on the Nagorno-Karabakh question is important to Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164368.html>).

US Congressman William Shuster (R-Pennsylvania) says that the distribution of money to the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia is "a mistake" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164336.html>).

9 July

President Ilham Aliyev in a speech to the Azerbaijan-Syrian Business Forum says that "Azerbaijan stands for the resolution of the question of Nagorno-Karabakh in correspondence with international legal norms" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164090.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Sheikh Abdallah Bin Zayid Al Nahyah, the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164290.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "the Moscow meeting will show whether movement forward on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict is possible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164226.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov opens a Museum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic service of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164229.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Maj. Gen. Miles Diring, chief of staff of the Oklahoma National Guard (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164240.html>).

Samad Seyidov, chairman of the international relations committee of the Milli Majlis, says that "thanks to the decisive position of Azerbaijan, the international community accepts our arguments" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164250.html>).

Sergey Prikhodko, an assistant to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that "the efforts of Russia as co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group and the results achieved earlier in Moscow have met what was required" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164257.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "the signing of a framework agreement at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in Moscow is impossible." But he adds

that he "hopes" for decisive progress at that session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164252.html>).

Kamil Khasiyev, Azerbaijan's representative to NATO, says that Azerbaijan's cooperation with NATO is "not directed against Russia or any third country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164217.html>).

Polad Bul-Bul oglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, says that "if Armenians do not take the hand extended to them, then [Azerbaijan] will be forced to use other means." He adds that "if the conflict is not resolved by peaceful means, [he] is prepared to take up arms and go to fight in Karabakh" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164214.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the Azerbaijani parliament now has working groups for ties with the legislatures of 73 countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164205.html>).

The government of the Netherlands announces that it will open an embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164178.html>).

8 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Syrian President Bashar al-Asad. The two oversee the signing of 14 inter-governmental agreements (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164090.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan cannot allow the preservation of the existing situation" on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164043.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that "Azerbaijan is going to the Moscow meeting of the presidents with no change in its position" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164061.html>).

Agshin Mekhtiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Baku may offer a new resolution to the UN General Assembly on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164049.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan "hopes for the resolution of the question of the delimitation of borders with the Russian Federation before the end of the year" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164076.html>). In other comments, he says that there has been no discussion of Iran's call for being given 20 percent of the area of the Caspian during talks in preparation for a Baku summit of the Caspian littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164071.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the United States, says that the US government may provide Azerbaijani refugees with 10 million US dollars in assistance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164078.html>).

US Senator Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) says that the US "must not take any steps which would disturb Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164053.html>).

Hikmet Cetin, former Turkish foreign minister, says that "Turkey will not open the borders with Armenia without a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164051.html>).

Muhammedbahir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Azerbaijan, returns to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164143.html>).

7 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Belarusian Prime Minister Sergey Sidorsky (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164012.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that US President Barak Obama has promised to seek the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, something that restricts the ability of the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and six other former Soviet states to join the World Trade Organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164002.html>).

Arkady Dvorkovich, an aide to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that "the Nagorno-Karabakh question will be discussed at the G8 summit in Italy" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163994.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense commission, announces that Baku has created a special group for the preparation of an Azerbaijan military doctrine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163963.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "the visits of the intelligentsia of Azerbaijan and Armenia can become one of the paths toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163985.html>).

Gulshan Pashayeva, the head of the foreign policy section of the Center for Strategic Research in the Office of the President of Azerbaijan, says that "for the successful realization of public diplomacy [between Azerbaijan and Armenia] are today needed concrete steps forward in the official negotiating process" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163945.html>).

Safar Mirzoyev, the chief of the apparatus of the Milli Majlis, announces that President Ilham Aliyev has agreed to have the permanent secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Language Countries be located in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163966.html>).

6 July

President Ilham Aliyev says Azerbaijan "does not intend to create any obstacles if Russia and America agree on questions of global security," including on the Gabala radar station (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163801.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "official Baku expects progress on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict from the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia" in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163827.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, the chairman of the Milli Majlis agriculture committee, says that Azerbaijan's delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly again raised the question about Armenian aggression and called on PACE to take a more active role in resolving the situation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163880.html>).

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state, says that "Washington hopes for progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163770.html>).

Israeli President Shimon Peres says that during his visit to Baku, he had not found "a drop of hatred toward Jews." And he continues that "Azerbaijan was one of the first countries which allowed women to vote, and this happened earlier than in Sweden and the US" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163782.html>).

The Foreign Ministry releases a book on "Crafting the Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan" on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the creation of the country's diplomatic service (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163846.html>).

5 July

Sports Minister Azad Rahimov calls for expanded contacts between Azerbaijani and Daghestani youth during a roundtable at the Days of Daghestani Youth in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/society/163721.html>).

4 July

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department for international ties in the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that there is "a chance for progress on the Karabakh question" at the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163703.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a deputy in the Milli Majlis, says that he wants the parliament to become more active in the peace process and to come up with its own proposals (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163653.html>).

Former US Defense Secretary William Cohen says that "American military officials are still considering a decision about the Gabala radar station" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163680.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that Ankara welcomes the visits by Azerbaijani intellectuals to Yerevan and Armenian intellectuals to Baku as yet another step toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163686.html>).

Fariborz Chadar, who served in the government of the shah, says that the latest developments in Iran "will not have a serious influence on Azerbaijan and [other] neighboring countries" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163675.html>).

3 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives a group of Armenian intellectuals who are visiting Baku as a group of Azerbaijan intellectuals are visiting Yerevan. These visits

follow the meeting in Hankendi of ambassadors to Russia of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Polad Bul-bul ogly and Armen Sumbatyan respectively (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163705.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the credit agreement between Baku and the Japanese Agency for International Cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/163634.html>).

A spokesman for Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the United States has not responded to Russia on the issue of the use of the Gabala radar site in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163521.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopts a program for Azerbaijan for 2009-2010. It includes 22 projects, many of which will be financed by the European Commission (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163550.html>).

2 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Polish President Lech Kaczynski. At the session, the two leaders sign an accord on the establishment of a consultative council between their two administrations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163418.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bokoyannis, whose country is chairman-in-office of the OSCE during her visit to the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163449.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan will never agree to making the question of the territorial integrity of the country into a subject for discussion." And he adds that "we do not see any other path for the resolution of the conflict besides the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return there of internally displaced persons, and the establishment of autonomy" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163471.html>).

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives his Greek counterpart Dora Bakoyannis, whose country is chairman in office of the OSCE. She tells him that "the OSCE recognizes only dialogue" as a means for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163363.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that "the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will take place in Moscow in the middle of July" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163360.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the visit of Dmitry Medvedev showed that the strategic partnership [of Russia] with Azerbaijan is a reality (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163402.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara "is not disturbed by the rapprochement between Russia and Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163318.html>).

A European Commission spokesperson says that "energy security is of first importance for the European Union and for Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/>

politics/163357.html). Meanwhile, the European Union announces the suspension of the next steps of the Eastern Partnership because of the economic crisis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163410.html>).

ISESCO and the Youth Forum of the Organization of the Islamic Conference sign an accord to participate as supporters of the international information campaign about "Justice for Khojaly." That effort has a website at <http://www.justiceforkhojaly.org> (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163532.html>).

1 July

Polish President Lech Kaczyński says in advance of his visit to Baku that "cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland is based on a mutual understanding of regional and global problems" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163269.html>).

The Iranian embassy in Baku presents a note to the Azerbaijani foreign ministry concerning the appointment of a replacement for incumbent ambassador Mohammed Baghir Bahrami, who left the Azerbaijani capital in advance of the visit there by Israeli President Shimon Peres (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163230.html>).

Gudsi Dursun ogly Osmanov, Azerbaijan's consul general in St. Petersburg, discusses expanding cooperation between Baku and Kaliningrad (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163306.html>).

Note to Readers

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