



Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy
School of International Affairs and Business

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**IRAN'S CALL FOR CASPIAN SEA-PERSIAN GULF CANAL 'UNREALISTIC,'
EXPERTS SAY**

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Iranian Energy Minister Majid Namjou, drawing on ideas that have been circulating for more than a century, announced at the beginning of April that Tehran plans to begin construction of a canal from the Caspian Sea to the Indian Ocean. However, both because of the technical difficulties involved and because of the enormous geo-economic and geopolitical consequences such a canal would have for all Caspian littoral states, experts say that there is little likelihood that the latest Iranian effort will be realized. [1]

As outlined by Namjou, construction of the canal would cost approximately seven billion US dollars and would benefit Iran's central regions, which have been suffering from a severe drought. However, the Iranian official did not indicate how the proposed canal could be built given that the Caspian Sea is 29 meters lower than the level of the ocean and that there are both mountain ranges and lowland deserts along the route such a canal would follow. At the very least, those topographical problems would require an enormous amount of energy both before and after any construction.

Ismail Kahrom, an Iranian ecologist, told Azerbaijani news agencies that these plans were only "a dream" and that Namjou's proposal could not be realized. He called attention to the fact, neglected by the minister, that "every liter of water of the Caspian Sea contains 13 grams of salt" and consequently, any use of such water for irrigation would be counterproductive. Moreover, Kahrom said, the land along the proposed route is not suitable for agriculture, even if water were to become available.

Chingiz Ismailov, a geographer who heads Baku's Caspian Scientific Research and Information Center, agreed, saying that he "does not believe" such a canal will ever be built. "For the realization of such a megaproject, the agreement of the Caspian littoral states would be needed. In addition to the obstacles in the north in the form of a mountain range, these regions are heavily populated and for construction work there would have to be the evacuation of the population and the payment of compensation." Moreover, such a canal, which would extend some 2,000 kilometers, could cause flooding because it could not possibly be lined along its entire route with concrete.

There are, however, two more serious obstacles, Ismailov added. On the one hand, there is the frequency of earthquakes along the entire route. "The northern regions of Iran are considered seismically dangerous," and saturation of the ground as a result of a new canal could make the consequences of any earthquake even more serious. And on the other hand, such a canal would drain "at a minimum" ten percent of the water of the Volga. Because that river currently provides 85 percent of the inflow into the Caspian, such a plan would have enormous consequences for the littoral countries and the oil and gas rich seabed.

Unfortunately, the Azerbaijani geographer and Iranian sources pointed out, the Iranian government has given the Corps of Defenders of the Islamic Revolution, the group that has been involved in terrorist actions against Azerbaijan, some two million US dollars to begin the canal project, yet another indication that the announcement of this plan may be more about politics than about anything else.

Kahrom said that given Iran's failure up to now to shift more water into Lake Urmia, a plan that Azerbaijani officials have said threatens the size of the flow of the river that forms the border between the two countries, the newly announced plan to

construct "a Caspian-Persian Gulf canal bears a purely political character and is nothing other than empty words." That would be completely in the Iranian tradition on this issue, he said, noting that former Iranian President Hashemi Rafsanjani also wanted to build such a canal, but never achieved anything in that regard.

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/326058.html> (accessed 14 April 2012).

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

Part IV (A).

"In Our Struggle with Entente Armenia Would Always Stab Us In the Back"

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Not having been able to withstand the attack of the Turkish forces, the Armenian government on November 15, 1920, advised Kazim Karabekir-pasha that it agreed with the conditions of the Ankara government of November 8 and that it was only for technical reasons that it had not been able to fulfill part of these demands. On the night of November 17-18, the Armenian government received news about the agreement of the Turks to an armistice, and on November 18, all military actions ceased. According to B. Legran's information, unlike the armistice of November 8, the Armenians were ready to fulfill the conditions of the armistice of November 15 and had already moved in that direction. The front line between the sides now passed through Surmali, the Araz station, and the Alagez mountain. The Armenian army was ordered to leave Karakilse.

As a result of this defeat, a serious division of opinions arose among the dashnaks. According to B. Legran, they "recognized the mistakenness of their propaganda of the seizure of Turkish Armenia and their orientation to the Sevres Treaty." [1] After the Turks seized Gumri, the Armenian communists of the city published an appeal in which they welcomed the revolutionary Turkish army which had come to free the Armenian people from the dashnak yoke. B. Legran informed Moscow that "victorious Kemalization threatened to drown first Armenia and then perhaps Georgia. Even Comrade Mdivani, despite his short stay among the Kemalists trusted their plans for the sovietization of Armenia and proposes today to use "the Revkom of Soviet Army" that has been formed by the Turks. [2]

Concerned by the advance of the Turks into Gumri, G. Ordzhonikidze pushed for the realization of the long-thought idea of transferring Zangazur to Armenia in order to strengthen the position of the Armenian communists, on one hand, and to block the direct land connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan, on the other. The triumph of Kazim Karabekir-pasha on the Turkish-Armenian front created for the Bolsheviks the

danger of a repetition of the events of September 1918, when the Caucasus Islamic Army headed by Nuri-pasha entered Baku. Under these conditions, Sergo Ordzhonikidze proposed to I. Stalin who had come to Baku for the discussion of the critical situation in the Transcaucasus to hand over Zangazur to Armenia and in this way close Turkey's direct access to Azerbaijan. In order to hide the role of Bolshevik Russia in this, Ordzhonikidze thought that this Zangazur initiative should come from N. Narimanov, the first person of Sovietized Azerbaijan.

One should note that already during the summer of 1920, before the signing of a peace treaty between Soviet Russia and Armenia, G. Ordzhonikidze under pressure from G. Chicherin, made the first attempt to force N. Narimanov to withdraw from Nakhchivan, Ordubad, and Sharur-Daralagez district in favor of Armenia. On June 20, 1920, G. Chicherin, the peoples commissar for international affairs of Russia, by direct line, gave the following directive to Sergo Ordzhonikidze who was then in Vladikavkaz: "Comrade Narimanov has misunderstood my telegram. To unite Zangazur and Karabakh. Under no circumstances should Nakhchivan, Ordubad and Dzhulfa be linked either to Azerbaijan or Armenia. These places must be occupied by Russian units, rather than by Azerbaijani or Armenian ones. There must be Russian occupation powers in them, not Azerbaijani or Armenia. Soviet power in these localities must be subordinate to the Russian occupation powers." [3] Having received G. Chicherin's directive, Sergo Ordzhonikidze immediately told N. Narimanov: "Just now I spoke with Chicherin about Karabakh and Zangazur. I proposed the immediate and unqualified uniting of these districts with Azerbaijan. You are required to drop any demands for other *oblasts* [Nakhchivan, Ordubad, Dzhulfa and Sharur-Daralagez district] and to give autonomy to Nagorno-Karabakh and Zangazur. At the same time, the latter must not in any case be included in the peace treaty [between the RSFSR and Armenia] and must originate exclusively from you." [4]

In November 1920, the emerging political situation forced the Bolsheviks to cleverly maneuver with respect to the interests of Azerbaijan, which had already been sovietized by that time. "The territorial game" which G. Chicherin and G. Ordzhonikidze had laid out in June underwent significant changes after the defeat of dashnak Armenia at the hands of Kazim Karabekir-pasha's army in the fall of 1920. Seeking to somehow keep Armenia in their sphere of interests, the Bolsheviks were prepared to use Azerbaijani lands as the coin of the realm. If in the summer they forced Baku to yield Nakhchivan, Ordubad, and Sharur-Daralagez district while preserving within its borders Zangazur and Karabakh, four months later, concerned by the successes of the Turkish army, Moscow undertook decisive measures in order to cut Turkey's direct access to Baku by "the voluntary concession" of Zangazur in favor of Armenia. These territorial shifts helped ease the Bolshevik occupation of Armenia.

In this context, the conversations by direct line between I. Stalin who had returned from Baku and V. Lenin who was also very much concerned by the successes of the Turks at the front are interesting to note. Already on the way, on November 23, 1920, Stalin sought to introduce clarity on the following issues:

"1. The information received from Mdivani in Erivan says the following: the Armenians do not have any forces, the Turks if they want can occupy all Armenia without difficulty. The representative of Kemal in Turkey, Kazym-bey is conducting himself in a more than suspicious way, so that Mdivani thinks that the occupation of

Armenia is happening not without a certain agreement between the Kemalists and Georgia and perhaps with the agreement of the Entente as well.

2. According to Ordzhonikidze's report, the Turks have already sought to establish ties with dissatisfied elements in Azerbaijan, are accepting petitions from the latter and seeking to have a common border with Azerbaijan, something that is especially dangerous now.

3. The note of the Turkish Government responding to our note about mediation, which has been sent to you, speaks about the presence of the more than ambivalent position of the Turks.

4. According to a report of the same Ordzhonikidze, several thousand English troops in Persia are concentrating against Enzeli and Resht and conducting major preparatory work in the direction of solidifying the position of the English in Persia so that the Anglophile cabinet replaces the Anglophobic one in Persia.

5. Generalizing, Ordzhonikidze thinks that we are standing before a new major war in the south of the Caucasus, organized by the Entente with the mediation of Georgia and perhaps with the neutralization of Turkey in the best case, or in the worst in an alliance with Turkey against us and above all against Bolshevik Azerbaijan. On this point, I completely agree with Ordzhonikidze.

6. As a practical step, Ordzhonikidze proposes right now to drive a wedge between Turkey and Azerbaijan." [5]

Having heard Stalin's arguments, V. Lenin responded that without a meeting of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b), there was nothing he could suggest, and advised I. Stalin, "either to make a concrete proposal to the Politburo or to act in exact correspondence to his existing plenipotentiary powers or to advance his arrival in Moscow for the resolution of the entire Caucasus issue as a whole. I. Stalin reported that on that very night he would arrive in Moscow and himself gave an order to Ordzhonikidze to conduct preparatory work and wait for orders from Moscow. [6] On the basis of the results of this conversation, a week later, on December 1, 1920, at a celebratory session of the Baku Soviet devoted to the proclamation of Soviet power in Armenia, N. Narimanov, the president of the *Azrevkom*, acting strictly according to the order of Moscow, made a declaration about the transfer of Nakhchivan and Zangazur to Armenia.

In order not to lose the initiative in the negotiations, the Soviet delegates hurried to Gumri. The Turks, having defeated the Armenians, attempted to avoid Russian mediation, while the dashnaks, on the contrary, in the name of preserving their power wanted to independently conclude a treaty with the Turks. The dashnaks sought to get out of the crisis situation through the formation of a coalition government with the pro-Russian Socialist Revolutionaries and Mensheviks. To that end, A. Terteryan and Dro (D. Kanayan) were coopted into the cabinet. On November 21, 1920, B. Legran and Budu Mdivani reported to I. Stalin and Sergo Ordzhonikidze that, "the dashnaks are forming up groups amongst themselves that are prepared to accept the Sovietization of Armenia. Dro is in charge of one of them. With a view to seizing power, work on the unification of these groups is being conducted. With the formation of a Soviet government, the dashnaks will have to be given many more places than has been planned in Baku. According to the plan adopted in Baku, as soon as the new Soviet government asks for help, we will guarantee the rapid introduction of the Red Army into Armenia." [7] A day later, B. Legran, in a telegram to G. Chicherin and G. Ordzhonikidze, was already interested in the number of armed forces in Kazakh [a city on Azerbaijan's western border with Armenia] and the level of their readiness for introduction into Armenia. [8] From another immediate telegram of B. Legran, it is clearly evident that Kazim Karabekir-

pasha did not feel the need for Mdivani's mediation and this reduced the trust of Soviet Russia toward Turkey. Now, the trust of the Soviet representatives in the Turks' promise not to seize Batumi depended on how the latter would conduct themselves on the Armenian question. [9]

On November 24, 1920, B. Mdivani arrived in Gumri and on the same day met with Kazim Karabekir-pasha who reported to him that the Armenians had accepted all conditions and that the Ankara government therefore considered the mediation of Soviet Russia to be unnecessary. He also added that he had received an instruction from Ankara to conduct talks only with the Armenians. At the same time, Kazim Karabekir-pasha alongside the Armenian-Turkish talks without the Russians did not rule out Russian-Turkish negotiations of "friends seeking a common goal" without the Armenians. In the talks, Kazim Karabekir-pasha recalled that, "Moscow promised the Turkish command that Soviet army would simultaneously advance into Armenia from Azerbaijan, something that unfortunately had not happened." [10]

On the very same day, a second meeting took place between B. Mdivani and Kazim Karabekir-pasha, at which the Turkish representative insisted that the Red Army immediately begin an advance from Azerbaijan and occupy Tiflis. He promised that if the English tried to attack through Batumi, he with his army would block their path to Tiflis. [11] On November 26, two influential members of Turkey's Grand National Assembly headed by Kazim-pasha conducted negotiations with Mdivani. They insisted that a treaty should be concluded, even if formal, between the two states. On this occasion, Budu Mdivani wrote to I. Stalin and G. Ordzhonikidze that, "they only demand assistance in the form of arms. They undertake to conduct an unceasing struggle against the English and to advance our policy in the East. Based on their proposals about a treaty, about the introduction of our units into Armenia and Georgia with their support for preventing an English strike against Batumi, I consider that there is still no agreement between them and England." [12]

When the Turks rejected Russian mediation and the dashnaks preferred to act independently, the Soviet delegation immediately began to come up with new plans for retaining Armenia under its influence. B. Legran informed the Center that the Turks, having refused Russian mediation, had created a situation, which required immediate decisions. "We need a program of independent actions in the Caucasus which the Turks will be forced to reckon with." The Bolsheviks planned to carry out this program of actions with the help of Dro, who had been included in the new government. B. Legran wrote that the government of A. Ogandzhanyan and the groups defending him, which were trying to conclude independently, behind the back of Soviet Russia, a treaty with Turkey had suffered defeat. Dro in turn has declared himself a supporter of federation with Russia and of the creation of a soviet system in Armenia. "Dro seeks agreement with us, and [asks] whether we could guarantee in the case of need armed force and the demands of the Armenians for territories." [13] In a report from Erivan, it was noted that Dro was not afraid if Armenia were to lose its independence, because he considered that only in the status of a federative unit of Soviet Russia could Armenia preserve its existence. [14]

On November 25, 1920, a new government of Armenia was formed under the chairmanship of S. Vratsyan. In that cabinet, Dro had the post of military minister and A. Teteryan that of ministry of charity. On November 26, B. Legran reported to G. Chicherin and G. Ordzhonikidze that, "the government crisis has been resolved on the basis of a compromise, supporters of a Russian orientation, including Terteryan and Dro have been included in the cabinet. From the report of Mdivani, it is clear

that as a result of the refusal of the Turks from mediation, he in general does not consider necessary the provision to the Turks of any particular conditions relative to Armenia. I consider this a mistake; it is necessary to immediately give Mdivani orders concerning the acceptable conditions of peace with Armenia." [15] The Soviet representatives tried to clarify the conditions under which the Turks and Armenians intended to conclude a peace treaty. They did not want to be passive observers as the Turks drew Armenia into their sphere of influence. B. Legran reported to B. Mdivani in Gumri, to G. Ordzhonikidze in Baku and to G. Chicherin in Moscow that, "the Turks have freed for themselves Nakhchivan" and as if they had stopped their attack on Armenia on the order of the Entente, but the Musavatist power remains under the control of Kazim Karabekir-pasha. B. Legran wrote that, "Dro has declared that in the course of the next few days, he will force the government to take a decision about the introduction of Soviet forces into Armenia. I raised the question about the liberation of communists and the return of our prisoners currently held in Armenia. There is a basis for expecting a favorable result. Measures have been taken to establish telegraph links with Baku through Dilizhan and Kazakh." [16] In another radiogram sent to G. Ordzhonikidze on the same day, B. Legran confirmed the fact of the seizure by the Turks of Nakhchivan and considered extremely unfavorable the participation of a Soviet detachment in this joint attack. B. Legran reported to G. Chicherin that, "the misfortune in this is that our command is giving in to the nationalistically inclined circles of Azerbaijan, and the army at the same time lacks a good commissar staff." [17]

The appearance of Turks in the Caucasus and the deep crisis in Armenia this caused, as well as the shift of the Armenian-Turkish conflict into a sharp stage, generated serious concern in the Politburo of the Central Committee of the RKP(b) about the possibility of a repetition of the events of September 1918. Therefore, having discussed the situation in the South Caucasus, the Politburo decided that the first order task at the present moment was the strengthening of the defense of Azerbaijan and the establishment of control over the waters of the Caspian Sea. [18]

Notes

[1] Telegram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 28 November 1920, *Russian State Archive of Social-Political History* (hereafter RSASPH), f.64, op.1, d.21, l.252.

[2] Telegram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 28 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f.64, op.1, d.21, l.253-254.

[3] Conversation of G. Chicherin with G. Ordzhonikidze by direct line, 20 June 1920, from the collection of documents of the *RSASPH*.

[4] Conversation of G. Ordzhonikidze with N. Narimanov by direct line, 20 June 1920, from the collection of documents of the *RSASPH*.

[5] Telephone conversation of I. Stalin with V. Lenin, 23 November 1920, *Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation* (hereafter FPA RF), f. 04, op. 39, p. 232, d. 52987, l. 47.

[6] Telephone conversation of I. Stalin with V. Lenin, 23 November 1920, *Foreign Policy Archive of the Russian Federation* (hereafter FPA RF), f. 04, op. 39, p. 232, d. 52987, l. 47.

- [7] Code cable of B. Legran and B. Mdivani to I. Stalin and G. Ordzhonikidze, 21 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 243.
- [8] Code cable of B. Legran to G. Chicherin and G. Ordzhonikidze, 22 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 244.
- [9] Code cable of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, I. Stalin, and G. Ordzhonikidze, 21 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 14, d. 17, l. 19.
- [10] Radiogram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin and I. Stalin, 24 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 14, d. 17, l. 24.
- [11] Code telegram of B. Mdivani to I. Stalin and G. Ordzhonikidze, 25 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 246.
- [12] Code cable of Mdivani to I. Stalin and G. Ordzhonikidze, 29 November 1920, *FPA RF*, f. 04, op. 39, p. 232, d. 52987, l. 52.
- [13] Radiogram of B. Legran to G. Ordzhonikidze, 28 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 14, d. 17, l. 25.
- [14] Telegram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 28 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 253.
- [15] Telegram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin and G. Ordzhonikidze, 26 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 249.
- [16] Radiogram of B. Legran to P. Mdivani, G. Chicherin, and G. Ordzhonikidze, 29 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 14, d. 17, l. 31-31 ob.
- [17] Telegram of B. Legran to G. Chicherin, 28 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 64, op. 1, d. 21, l. 253.
- [18] Telegram of N. Krestinsky to G. Ordzhonikidze, 28 November 1920, *RSASPH*, f. 85, op. 18, d. 29, l. 1.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev says that "Azerbaijan is actively participating in the realization of trans-national projects, the deepening of economic cooperation and the guaranteeing of energy security of Europe"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/326284.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that, "Azerbaijan will never support initiatives and proposals which can harm its relations with Iran"
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324590.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenia is conducting "a militarist policy creating conflict situations with other countries in the region and threatening the security of the South Caucasus, Eurasia and the entire world" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324874.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow is deeply concerned about "the conflict between our two longtime neighbors [Azerbaijan and Armenia] which has led to the loss of many lives, including those of entirely innocent people" and that "from the very beginning, Russia has striven to help find a resolution of this conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324864.html>).

Fikret Akcura, the UN resident coordinator in Azerbaijan, says that Baku as a member of the UN Security Council has the right to raise the Nagorno-Karabakh issue there at any time (<http://news.day.az/politics/326774.html>).

Adam Sterling, charge d'affaires at the US embassy in Baku, says that "the United States has always supported and in the future will do everything in its powers for support of the development of Azerbaijan as an independent democratic, peace-loving and flourishing state" and "Azerbaijan is playing an important role in the sphere of international security and the struggle with terrorism" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325098.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

14 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives former Lithuanian President Vytautas Landsbergis (<http://news.day.az/politics/326805.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva is named an honorary professor of the First Moscow State Medical University (<http://news.day.az/politics/326687.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva says that, "Azerbaijan wants to hold the 2020 Olympic games in Baku and that 95 percent of the population of the country supports this initiative" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326866.html>).

Turkish Vice Prime Minister Bülent Arınç says that Turkey is not opening its borders with Armenia because of Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani lands (<http://news.day.az/politics/326797.html>).

Koray Torgay, head of the OSCE office in Baku, says that his organization is working on up to 90 new projects in Azerbaijan every year (<http://news.day.az/politics/326771.html>).

The Administration of the International Democratic Youth Movement adopts a resolution in Beirut calling for the European Union to replace France as the co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/326825.html>).

13 April

President Ilham Aliyev visits the 11th Azerbaijani International Exposition on Tourism and Travel (<http://news.day.az/politics/326608.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Kunio Mikuriya, the secretary general of the World Customs Organization (<http://news.day.az/politics/326615.html>).

The Foreign Ministry recommends that Azerbaijanis refrain from trips to portions of Georgia not controlled by Tbilisi without special permission from Georgian officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/326604.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, the permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, speaks to a briefing at the UN on conflicts in the GUAM region on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/326541.html>).

Major General Ramiz Majafov, head of the military cooperation department of the Defense Ministry, expresses the hope that the Chicago summit of NATO will take a position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/326587.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, receives Ismail Safi, head of the Turkish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Black Sea Economic Cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/326689.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the construction of an oil pipeline between Iran and Armenia is "the latest indication that Iran does not have a friendly position toward Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326495.html>).

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region, says that the Armenian community in his home region has been "avoiding dialogue" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326635.html>).

Daniel Christian Chobanu, Romanian ambassador to Baku and coordinator of cooperation between Azerbaijan and NATO, says that, "Azerbaijan can make a significant contribution to guaranteeing peace on earth" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326544.html>).

Samson Uridia, head of the international department of Georgia's Customs Service, says that Tbilisi plans to sign an agreement with Azerbaijan simplifying bilateral tariff procedures (<http://news.day.az/economy/326533.html>).

The Institute for Research on Central Asia and the Caucasus at Johns Hopkins University holds a conference on "Iranian Azerbaijanis: Their Situation, Status and Future." Among the speakers is Huseyn Panahov, an Azerbaijani cadet at West Point (<http://news.day.az/politics/326746.html>).

The Smolny University in St. Petersburg hosts a showing of a new Russian film on Heydar Aliyev (<http://news.day.az/society/326663.html>).

12 April

President Ilham Aliyev, as part of his country's campaign against human trafficking, directs the holding of special sessions on this problem in the country's various regions (<http://news.day.az/society/326500.html>).

The office of President Ilham Aliyev announces that those coming to Baku for Eurovision 2012 will be able to obtain visas at the airport (<http://news.day.az/economy/326397.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva opens the *Flying to Baku* exhibit in Paris and meets with French Culture and Communication Minister Frédéric Mitterrand (<http://news.day.az/politics/326340.html>).

The National Security Ministry announces that its agents have seized a major shipment of illegal arms and weapons as smugglers were attempting to bring it from Iran (<http://news.day.az/society/326437.html>).

The Defense Ministry hosts a visit by members of the European Command of the US Armed Forces to discuss cooperation in 2013 (<http://news.day.az/politics/326482.html>).

Deputy Prime Minister Abid Sharifov says that Azerbaijan's State Customs Committee has made a major contribution to Azerbaijan's economic success (<http://news.day.az/economy/326343.html>).

Aydin Aliyev, chairman of the State Customs Committee, signs a cooperation agreement with the Macedonian government (<http://news.day.az/economy/326322.html>).

Valeh Alaskarov, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that European leaders need to take specific steps to ensure that the Nabucco project will be completed (<http://news.day.az/economy/326369.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenians living in France will not be participating in the Armenian elections because they are so disturbed by their homeland's direction (<http://news.day.az/politics/326407.html>).

Mikhail Gusman, director general of ITAR-Tass, says that the hosting of Eurovision is "yet another important element of the propaganda of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326458.html>).

Representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Sweden meet with the members of that country's government (<http://news.day.az/politics/326305.html>).

Roland Kobia, chief representative of the European Union in Baku, says that Azerbaijan has the opportunity to develop alternative and renewable sources of energy (<http://news.day.az/economy/326389.html>).

Serik Primbetov, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Baku, says that his country will be increasing the shipment of oil via Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/326384.html>).

Kunio Mikuriya, secretary general of the World Customs Organization, says that his group has a very positive view of Azerbaijan's State Customs Committee

(<http://news.day.az/economy/326366.html>).

Representatives of Japan's International Cooperation Agency arrive in Baku to supervise a project on the redevelopment of Azerbaijan's water and sewage systems (<http://news.day.az/society/326501.html>).

Mustafa Halacoglu, the representative of the Nationalist Movement of Turkey Party in Adana, calls for the erection of a memorial to the victims of the Khojaly genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/326297.html>).

Haki Yalcin, head of the Turkish community of Germany, requests that country's president to support the rapid resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/326441.html>).

11 April

President Ilham Aliyev says, in a statement read out to the 15th European Economic Summit in Istanbul by Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, that "Azerbaijan is actively participating in the realization of trans-national projects, the deepening of economic cooperation and the guaranteeing of energy security of Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326284.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says that, "Azerbaijan has been recognized internationally as a reliable supplier of energy" (<http://news.day.az/politics/326025.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from Sergio de Souza Fontes Arrudana, the incoming ambassador of Brazil to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/326147.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov receives Myrat Atadzhanov, head of Turkmenistan's Enterprise for Questions of the Caspian Sea, to discuss delimitation of the sea and its floor (<http://news.day.az/economy/326279.html>).

Deputy Industry and Energy Minister Gulmammad Javadov meets with Austrian Federal Transportation, Innovation and Technology Deputy Minister Andreas Reihart to establish a joint working group to explore expanding cooperation (<http://news.day.az/economy/326250.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the emigration of people from Armenia reflects the deteriorating situation in that country (<http://news.day.az/politics/326172.html>).

The GUAM working group on emergencies meets in Kyiv (<http://news.day.az/politics/326148.html>).

Roland Kobia, chief representative of the European Union in Baku, discusses the structure and functions of the EU at a meeting of the Association of Azerbaijani Graduates of US Educational Institutions (<http://news.day.az/politics/326027.html>).

10 April

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva is given a prize for her humanitarian work by the CIS

(<http://news.day.az/politics/325912.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, vice president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, is given an award for her work in environmental protection by the *Inepo-Avrasiya* organization (<http://news.day.az/politics/325984.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Azerbaijan does not consider legitimate "the so-called 'presidential elections' in South Osetia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325931.html>).

Rufat Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia could not survive without the subventions of its diaspora (<http://news.day.az/politics/325806.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Turkey's efforts to resolve conflicts in the region must be respected (<http://news.day.az/politics/325771.html>).

Zahid Orudzh, a Milli Majlis deputy, proposes the adoption of a special law governing the status of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/325965.html>).

9 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Valentina Matvienko, head of Russia's Federation Council (<http://news.day.az/politics/325765.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Gabriel Keller, outgoing French ambassador to Baku, on the completion of the latter's posting to the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/325653.html>).

Elkhan Suleymanov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest, says that "Armenian deputies are using dirty means of struggle" against Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/325762.html>).

Valentina Matvienko, head of Russia's Federation Council, says that "the signing of [a bilateral Azerbaijani-Russian] agreement on mutual protection of capital investments will allow an increase in investment activity and will be a very serious support for business" (<http://news.day.az/economy/325704.html>).

7 April

Youth and Sports Minister Azad Rahimov meets in Budapest with Miklós Soltész, state minister for social, family and youth affairs in Hungary (<http://news.day.az/society/325418.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, hosts a ceremony on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation (<http://news.day.az/politics/325408.html>).

Viktor Sadovnichiy, rector of Moscow State University, says that "the peak of Russian-Azerbaijani relations" was the establishment of MGU's Baku branch, "a pearl of Moscow State University" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325422.html>).

6 April

President Ilham Aliyev during a state visit to Prague says that, "Azerbaijan is ready

to continue making its contribution to guaranteeing the energy security of Europe” (<http://news.day.az/politics/324852.html>).

Youth and Sports Minister Azad Rahimov speaks to the “I am a Young Ambassador” forum in Budapest (<http://news.day.az/politics/325356.html>).

The National Security Ministry says that it has detained 17 members of armed groups planning to undermine social order and sow panic in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/society/325150.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that “many questions” remain and must be answered before the legal status of the delimitation of the Caspian can be defined (<http://news.day.az/politics/325288.html>).

Khazar Ibrahim, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to NATO, gives a briefing to the American Club in Brussels on “Azerbaijan as a bridge between West and East” (<http://news.day.az/politics/325224.html>).

The Center for Strategic Research attached to the President of Azerbaijan holds an international roundtable on “Think Tanks: Cooperation in the Interests of Development” (<http://news.day.az/politics/325244.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that, “the struggle will continue until the complete liberation of Nagorno-Karabakh” (<http://news.day.az/politics/325333.html>).

The Milli Majlis adopts on first reading a law calling for the return of Azerbaijani cultural objects held abroad (<http://news.day.az/society/325320.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies the credit agreement concluded between Azerbaijan and Serbia in February 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/325223.html>).

Elkhan Suleymanov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of *Euronest*, says that recent Armenian statements are offensive to truth and to members of that group (<http://news.day.az/politics/325293.html>).

Azerbaijani and Russian officials meeting in Baku agree on the establishment of expert groups for the reconstruction of an existing bridge and the building of a new one over the Samur River which forms part of the border between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/economy/325269.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “Turkey has historical fraternal and family ties with the peoples of the Caucasus, living in the Caucasus, the Balkans, the Near Caucasus and Central Asia” and is thus concerned about their fates (<http://news.day.az/politics/325262.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that Turkey, like Azerbaijan, is devoting all possible efforts to build the TAP gas pipeline (<http://news.day.az/economy/325132.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “the position of Russia on issues of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is unchanged” and that “the issue

must be resolved by peaceful means" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325280.html>).

Latvian Foreign Minister Edgars Rinkevichs says that, "Azerbaijani is developing at cosmic rates" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325296.html>).

The Argentine government, at the initiative of the Azerbaijani embassy in Buenos Aires, is establishing a department of Azerbaijani studies at La Plata State University (<http://news.day.az/society/325286.html>).

5 April

Deputy Foreign Minister and rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy Hafiz Pashayev, who served as Azerbaijan's first ambassador to Washington, says that "despite all obstacles and temporary difficulties," US-Azerbaijani relations have developed in a positive direction over the last 20 years (<http://news.day.az/politics/325098.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Yerevan is worried about the possibilities that membership in the UN Security Council gives Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/325041.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian deputies participating in the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest said that they are prepared for a meeting between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/324996.html>).

The Center for Strategic Research attached to the President of Azerbaijan holds a roundtable featuring the foreign policy aides of US representatives and senators on "Civil Society: Current Reality and Future Prospects" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324990.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that Russia "stands on its position of recognition and respect for Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325095.html>).

Adam Sterling, charge d'affaires at the US embassy in Baku, says that "the United States has always supported and in the future will do everything in its powers for support of the development of Azerbaijan as an independent democratic, peace-loving and flourishing state" and "Azerbaijan is playing an important role in the sphere of international security and the struggle with terrorism" (<http://news.day.az/politics/325098.html>).

Matthew Bryza, former US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that he hopes for a breakthrough in talks on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/325105.html>).

4 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ukrainian Prime Minister Nikolay Azarov (<http://news.day.az/politics/324781.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that, "the policy of ethnic cleansing and occupation cannot be accepted by the contemporary international community"

(<http://news.day.az/politics/324810.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijan will decide to whom and at what price it rents the Gabala radar station according to its national interests (<http://news.day.az/politics/324876.html>).

Deputy Economic Development Minister Niyazi Safarov says that, "Azerbaijan is intensively developing relations not only with the Russian Federation as a whole, but also with its individual subjects," such as Chechnya (<http://news.day.az/economy/324792.html>).

The Milli Majlis approves a measure to create an Azerbaijani embassy in the Australian capital of Canberra (<http://news.day.az/politics/324822.html>).

Faradzh Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says the European Union must "take the initiative in the resolution of conflicts in the South Caucasus" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324745.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and chairman of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, visits Saudi Arabia to make arrangements for Azerbaijani hajis this year (<http://news.day.az/society/324694.html>).

The Foundation for Government Support of the Media attached to the President reaches agreement with the Baku representative of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Zaki Gazyoglu, on the exchange of visits by journalists in the two countries (<http://news.day.az/society/324869.html>).

Queen Beatrix of the Netherlands visits the Azerbaijani pavilion at the Floriada 2012 exhibition in Venlo (<http://news.day.az/economy/324881.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov meets with Nargiz Pashayeva, rector of the Baku Branch of Moscow State University (<http://news.day.az/politics/324809.html>).

Ukrainian Deputy Foreign Minister Viktor Mayko says that his country intends to increase its imports of Azerbaijani fruits and vegetables (<http://news.day.az/economy/324828.html>).

Chechen Deputy Prime Minister Ali Isayev says that Grozny is prepared to cooperate with Azerbaijan in the development of oil extraction and processing (<http://news.day.az/economy/324802.html>).

Li Ji Ha, Korean ambassador to Baku, hosts a presentation of a new book by Azerbaijani scholars on Korea on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/society/324879.html>).

3 April

President Ilham Aliyev says that, "Azerbaijan has become an important partner at the international level" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324536.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov (<http://news.day.az/politics/324672.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that, "Azerbaijan will never support initiatives and proposals, which can harm its relations with Iran" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324590.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that recent Yerevan statements suggest that it does not "seriously relate to decisions taken by such important organizations as the UN Security Council" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324621.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "Azerbaijan must not become a place des armes of conflicts of military blocks in the South Caucasus" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324615.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Quito resident in Mexico City, discusses bilateral relations with Columbian officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/324611.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Washington says that there is no truth in the claims published in *Foreign Policy* that Azerbaijan has offered Israel the use of its air bases near the border of Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/324454.html>).

Fuad Muradov, an Azerbaijani representative to the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest, says that Armenian representatives there have protested criticism of Yerevan's policies in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/324636.html>).

The Heydar Aliyev Foundation and UNICEF support a series of events in Azerbaijan on the International Autism Day (<http://news.day.az/politics/324476.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that, "Russia is interested in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and on this issue starts from the interests of people living in the region. Moscow is ready to continue with the agreement of Baku and to help further in the talks" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324632.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Moscow is not opposed to the joint use of the Gabala radar station by the United States in addition to Russia (<http://news.day.az/politics/324641.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that, "Russia and Azerbaijan are strategic partners" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324533.html>).

Eric Boswell, US assistant secretary for diplomatic security, visits Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/324548.html>).

Victoria Nuland, spokesperson for the US State Department, says that Washington does not have any indication that Israel has obtained the right to use military airbases in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/324479.html>).

Nurika Nikolay, a member of the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest, says that the holding of the second session of that body in Baku is "an indicator of the dynamic

development of Azerbaijan and of its integration in Europe”
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324526.html>).

Marik Shivets, a representative of the Social Democratic Party in the European Parliament, says that, “we are witnesses of the dynamic development of Azerbaijan”
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324522.html>).

2 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Finnish Foreign Minister Erkki Tuomioja
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324304.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Lithuanian Foreign Minister Audronius Ažubalis
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324304.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Stefan Füle, EU commissioner for enlargement and European neighborhood (<http://news.day.az/politics/324304.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Christian Vigenin, co-chair of the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/324304.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Transportation Minister Igor Levitin
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324304.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the time has come to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/324297.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan supports the Kofi Annan plan for the resolution of the Syrian problem
(<http://news.day.az/politics/324430.html>).

Education Minister Misir Mardanov says that, “propaganda of friendly relations to Armenia and Armenians in the educational institutions and textbooks [of Azerbaijani schools] is impossible” (<http://news.day.az/politics/324421.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that there is no truth to media reports that Azerbaijan has asked for Israel’s MOSSAD to provide security during the Eurovision 2012 competition (<http://news.day.az/politics/324267.html>).

Deputy Economic Development Minister Sevinj Hasanova says that eight training projects have been completed as part of Azerbaijan’s cooperation with the European Union (<http://ews.day.az/economy/324302.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijani students abroad are “becoming propagandists” for their country (<http://news.day.az/politics/324446.html>).

Ali Huseynli, an Azerbaijani deputy to the committee on political questions, human rights, and democracy of the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest says that, “for countries of the Eastern Partnership, the most important issues are the development of European values and human rights” (<http://news.day.az/politics/324418.html>).

Rufat Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan is not able to address the fundamental problems of the Armenian economic and political system (<http://news.day.az/politics/324092.html>).

The Azerbaijani Diplomatic Academy and the Embassy of the Netherlands in Baku together with the Klingendal Institute jointly host a conference on the role of bilateral relations in a changing world (<http://news.day.az/politics/324439.html>).

The Azerbaijani Youth Organization of Russia and the Azerbaijani Club of the Russian State Humanitarian University hold a roundtable on the genocide of Azerbaijanis in March 1918 (<http://news.day.az/politics/324276.html>).

Ukrainian Prime Minister Nikolay Azarov says that, "the position of Ukraine on the Karabakh issue is firm and unchanged" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324202.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that, "Russia considers unacceptable the adoption of a decision on the status of the Caspian without the opinions of the Caspian states being taken into account" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324443.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that mediators in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict "are fulfilling their functions honestly by not departing from the principles of the Helsinki Final Act," including the non-use of force or the threat of force, territorial integrity and the right of peoples of self-determination (<http://news.day.az/politics/324422.html>).

Hong Juyin, China's ambassador to Baku, says on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between China and Azerbaijan that relations between the two countries "are full of mutual trust and are developing in various spheres" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324436.html>).

Yunus-Bek Yevkurov, the head of Ingushetia, meets with representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora of his republic (<http://news.day.az/politics/324442.html>).

Vaan Ovanesyan, an Armenian deputy to the Parliamentary Assembly of Euronest, says in Baku that, "in order to achieve a compromise, the sides will need only a few weeks" after they agree on a framework (<http://news.day.az/politics/324305.html>).

1 April

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov attends the Second Congress of the Friends of Syria in Istanbul (<http://news.day.az/politics/324109.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, a sector head in the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that, "it is ever more difficult for Armenian propaganda to deceive world public opinion" (<http://news.day.az/politics/324136>).

Elkhan Zeynalov, Azerbaijani consul in Aktau, hosts a meeting on the Day of the Genocide of Azerbaijanis (<http://news.day.az/politics/324168.html>).

Gudsi Osmanov, Azerbaijani consul in St. Petersburg, speaks to a conference there on the genocide committed against the Azerbaijanis in 1918-1920 (<http://news.day.az/politics/324139.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Tbilisi hosts a meeting on the Day of the Genocide of Azerbaijanis (<http://news.day.az/politics/324170.html>).

Note to Readers

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