



Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy  
School of International Affairs and Business

**AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD  
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**In this issue:**

- Azerbaijanis Look Back at 2012 and Forward to 2013
- Paul Goble, "2012 'Very Successful' for Azerbaijan and 2013 Will Be More So, President Aliyev Says"
- A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy
- Note to Readers

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**AZERBAIJANIS LOOK BACK AT 2012 AND FORWARD TO 2013**

*As in in the past, Azerbaijan in the World once again has surveyed officials and experts on the most important foreign policy developments of the past year. What follows are the reactions of Azerbaijanis. In the next issue, AIW will feature an article on the reactions of American, Georgian and Russian observers of the Azerbaijani scene.*

*Azerbaijan in the World:* What do you see as Azerbaijan's chief foreign policy achievements during 2012?

*Asim Mollazade [MP, Chairman of the Democratic Reforms Party]:* Over the last twelve months, Azerbaijan had significant successes in the development of its relations with the United States and the European Union. With regard to the US, Baku developed relations not only with the central government, but also with states and cities. With regard to the EU, Azerbaijan hosted the second session of the

*Euronest* Parliamentary Assembly and made progress toward the signing of an association agreement.

Baku was also successful in gaining international recognition of the Khojaly genocide. On January 31, Mexico's senate passed a resolution recognizing the Khojaly events in February 1992 as a genocide. The following day, Pakistan's Senate took a similar step, but went even further and condemned Armenia as an occupying power and called for the implementation of the resolutions the UNSC passed with regards to the occupation of Azerbaijani lands.

Finally, Azerbaijan achieved a signal success as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council.

*Rasim Musabayov*, Dr. [MP, member of the Milli Majlis international and inter-parliamentary relations committee]: Azerbaijan's place in the international arena expanded, something ever more countries acknowledged. Its network of diplomatic representations increased, as did the number of visits to Baku of presidents, prime ministers, foreign ministers and other senior officials, the latter number exceeding the equivalent number of visits combined for Georgia and Armenia. Its diplomats presided over the UN Security Council and used that position and its new membership in the Non-Aligned Movement to gain support for a just resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It signed an agreement with Ankara about the construction of TANAP, as well as on tariffs for its exported gas and its further transportation through Turkish territory. Finally, it negotiated the end of Russia's military use of the Gabala radar station.

*Vugar Seyidov*, Dr. [Political Analyst, AzerTAG]: The two key achievements of 2012 were Azerbaijan's election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council and the adoption by the European Parliament of a resolution (Res. 2011/2316[INI]) taking Azerbaijan's side in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

*AIW*: What were the major shortcomings of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in 2012 and what lessons were to be learnt?

*Mollazade*: Because of Armenian intransigence, we were not able to make any significant progress toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We need to find new ways to bring international pressure to bear on Yerevan.

*Musabayov*: The lack of progress toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was clearly the most disappointing thing in 2012. But the slow course of talks about Azerbaijani membership in the World Trade Organization and about an association agreement with the European Union were also unfortunate. Tensions increased with Iran, particularly in the first half of the year, and a certain alienation in relation with Russia was felt after Vladimir Putin returned to the presidency.

*Seyidov*: Azerbaijan sometimes appeared to fail to take into consideration the information war going on internationally. While the Safarov case was a brilliant diplomatic triumph, the information battles afterwards were a complete disaster. That needs to change. It is high time to establish undercover information agencies and other media resources abroad, as well as begin the penetration into those that already exist.

*AIW:* How do you assess progress made in the resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in 2012 and what do you see as the prospects for a settlement of the conflict in 2013?

*Mollazade:* No progress was made towards the resolution of Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict in 2012; indeed, a certain passiveness could be observed in the conflict resolution process. The only exception was the meeting the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia held in Sochi at the initiative of Russian President Dmitri Medvedev. The results of the presidential election in Russia, as well as the inactivity of the OSCE Minsk Group were among the factors leading to this slow-down. That foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia only met twice reflected this state of affairs. I think Azerbaijan should raise questions about where we go from here in all international organisations, starting with the United Nations.

*Musabayov:* There was no progress toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and even the pursuit of a resolution appeared to vastly slow down compared to earlier years. Even the Medvedev-sponsored January meeting of the Russian, Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents in Sochi did not lead to a breakthrough. The episodic contacts of the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia were similarly unproductive. And the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, despite several visits to the region, did not make any significant progress either. With the two sides adhering to radically opposing viewpoints on the key issues, the conflict resolution process is indeed in a deep stalemate.

2013 does not promise a lot in this area given that there will be presidential elections in both Armenia and Azerbaijan. Moreover, Washington and in particular Moscow are not showing a desire to push the talks forward more actively, and Paris is focused on the continuing crisis in the European Union, rather than on the Caucasus. Thus, there does not appear to be much chance of a resolution in the year ahead, especially since talks between the two presidents are unlikely. There a possibility, however, that the European Union might show an interest in join the conflict resolution process in one way or another.

*Fikrat Sadykhov* [Professor of Political Science, Western University, Baku & Political Analyst]: Unfortunately, progress toward the resolution of the conflict did not take place in 2012, but this does not mean that Azerbaijan did not do anything of importance in this area. Azerbaijan used every international tribunal to advance its positions and gain support. And this is a very important factor for strengthening the international position of our country. Our government has conducted itself patiently and tolerantly to Armenia, but must contend with the unceasing hostility of the Armenian diaspora and Islamophobic forces. The OSCE Minsk Group has conducted itself in a rather amorphous way, often taking far from objective positions. Azerbaijan has done a lot to expose all this and thus has laid down the preconditions for future progress.

*Seyidov:* There was zero progress on this issue in 2012, and I don't see any prospects for a resolution of the problem in 2013 either. When politicians say, "there is no military solution to the conflict," I usually respond by saying that, "there is no diplomatic solution" either.

*AIW:* How do you assess Azerbaijan's energy diplomacy in 2012, and what does the future hold for it?

*Mollazade:* I very positively assess Azerbaijan's energy diplomacy. At present, Azerbaijan is fully integrated into the energy system of both Europe and the world. It has got a considerable number of channels out and they boost the importance of Azerbaijan in the world. More specifically, the TANAP agreement Azerbaijan signed with Turkey is a most serious success. Given the important role TANAP is set to play in the energy security of Europe, Azerbaijan faced increased levels of pressure with regards to investments for bringing Caspian gas resources to Europe. Both the TANAP project and other international and regional projects represent major achievements.

*Musabayov:* On the whole, Azerbaijan has been successful in this area. Given everything that is involved, it would be more appropriate to speak about energy policy as a whole and not just diplomacy. I have already mentioned the TANAP project. Azerbaijan could also reach understanding with BP on problems associated with the Azeri-Chyirakh-Guneshli field. SOCAR has grown very active in the markets of Georgia, Turkey, Ukraine, and other states. Azerbaijan is becoming a significant player in the energy market of Europe.

*Sadykhov:* Baku's energy diplomacy in 2012 developed in a very positive way. The chief event in this regard was the TANAP agreement between Baku and Ankara on the construction of the pipeline that will carry a minimum of 16 billion cubic meter of gas every year beginning in 2017.

Moreover, Azerbaijan has moved in this direction without entering into any conflicts with the other regional producers. TANAP does not contradict international principles and norms and is not directed against the interests of neighboring states. The project will benefit everyone in the region, but in the first instance Azerbaijan. It will benefit as an exporter, a transit country, and as the owner of 80 percent of the shares of the project. And its success will only add to Azerbaijan's status as a regional leader.

*Seyidov:* It was quite good because of the TANAP agreement and the discovery of the Umid field. BP needed to be taught a lesson, and it was.

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

*Mollazade:* Azerbaijan's relations with Turkey are deepening day by day. The slogan "one nation—two states" is being realized in actual foreign policy as well, because in various international organisations, these two states speak with a single voice, something of huge importance. As was the case in the past, Azerbaijan sought to maintain good-neighbourly relations with Russia and Iran. However, the problems these states have both domestically and in their foreign policies had some negative effects on their relations with Azerbaijan.

*Musabayov:* No radical changes in Azerbaijan's relations with its neighbors took place in 2012. Ties with Turkey continued to strengthen. Tensions with Iran rose, but were reduced by joint efforts. As far as relations with Moscow are concerned,

there was a certain pause, the result of a change in the Russian presidency and the need for Putin's Moscow to clearly formulate its policy in the South Caucasus. But as in the past, Baku has clearly indicated that it does not intend to accept any paternalism on the part of any state and will develop relations with global and regional powers on the basis of mutual interests and in a pragmatic fashion.

*Sadykhov:* Beyond any question, one cannot expect relations between Azerbaijan and Russia in such a complex geopolitical atmosphere to be without any clouds. But despite periodic difficulties, relations continue to develop and remain friendly and those of partnership. Our republic has always spoken for broadening and improving bilateral relations. And we are doing everything necessary so that cooperation will develop in as many spheres as possible. In the negotiations about the Gabala radar station, Azerbaijan demonstrated its ability to defend its position and achieve the goals it set itself without provoking any conflict. That is something very important, because as a result relations between Baku and Moscow remain friendly and partnership-like.

As far as relations between Azerbaijan and Iran are concerned, they have not changed for many years. But in 2012, they reached a peak of particular tension. And the fault for that does not lie with Azerbaijan. We clearly see that certain circles in Iran, most likely for certain historical reasons, do not accept our country as an important regional player and an authoritative state which is playing a significant role in the world arena. But despite this, Azerbaijan supports good neighborly and friendly relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran. Azerbaijan has been very clear that it will not interfere in the internal affairs of that state, and has spoken out against the use of military force there by those concerned by Iran's nuclear program. Teheran knows this very well.

Azerbaijan's relations with Turkey continue to be those of full partnership. We take practically the same positions on many international problems and highly value the Turkish position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. At the same time, Turkey has begun to understand very well the importance Azerbaijan has for it as a key player in the region and a guarantor of Turkey's energy security.

*Seyidov:* Considering that Iran and Russia are not the best neighbors one could normally wish to his/her best friend, Baku should have acted extremely careful with them, and it indeed did so in 2012. Azerbaijan should continue pursuing the non-irritation policy towards them. With Turkey, everything was fine. But still Baku should, from time to time, remind Ankara that our position about keeping the Turkish-Armenian borders closed contingent upon the settlement of the NK problem is not going to change.

*AIW:* How do you assess the dynamics of Azerbaijan's relations with Georgia over the last year and what is likely to develop over the next twelve months, particularly in light of the change in government in the latter?

*Mollazade:* Azerbaijan managed to keep and further develop its relations with Georgia. The visit by Georgia's newly elected prime-minister to Baku showed that relations between the two states are not contingent on any third governments or state leaders and pointed to the importance of continuing cooperation.

*Musabayov:* Objectively, Azerbaijani-Georgian relations are developing along an ascending line. Trade is increasing as are Azerbaijani investments in Georgia and the number of business and tourist trips in both directions. Major regional projects in transportation and energy are being carried out. And intensive political dialogue is taking place at all levels. Although there was a change of government in Tbilisi, it is indicative that the new prime minister Bidzina Ivanishvili made his first bilateral visit to Baku (he had visited Brussels earlier than that but only as the centre of the EU). He may lack some political experience, but like other Georgians, he has come to fully understand the importance of strengthening relations with Baku. I predict that the strategic partnership of Baku and Tbilisi will strengthen further. The attempts of the Georgian government to extract more from that cooperation than it has will not disturb the general trend. As a businessman who has made a multi-billion dollar fortune, Prime Minister Ivanishvili should recognize that without mutual cooperation there will not be a successful and long-term partnership and that in order to receive something, it is necessary to offer something significant in exchange.

*Seyidov:* Baku should insist that the railroad in Abkhazia remain closed.

*AIW:* How do you assess the evolving dynamics of Azerbaijan's relations with the United States in 2012 and what does the year 2013 promise for the bilateral relations?

*Mollazade:* Azerbaijan's relations with the United States did indeed develop during the course of the last year. A decision was made to continue developing these relations on the level of the fifty US states. In this regard, I very positively assess work carried out towards creating fraternal ties between certain cities and towns in Baku and cities and city councils in the US. A number of governors, senators and congressmen cooperate with Azerbaijan. During the Eurovision song contest, some 200 US congressmen paid a guest visit to Azerbaijan, something that was a reflection of the attention they pay to relations with Azerbaijan. I expect that relations with both the newly elected US administration and the Congress will further develop in 2013.

*Musabayov:* Bilateral relations became more pragmatic. Out of Washington have come fewer instructions and instead the US has focused on the resolution of practical questions, such as securing the transit of material for Afghanistan across Azerbaijani territory, energy projects, cooperation in the UN Security Council, the struggle with international terrorism, and cooperation on the control over proliferation of nuclear materials and rocket technology. Bilateral trade turnover is also increasing. However, there are also problems. The discriminatory provisions of the 907 law and also the meaningless impact of Jackson-Vannik retain their negative influence on our relations. The US continues to co-chair the OSCE Minsk Group, but American activity in that direction has declined significantly. It is necessary in 2013 to work actively on all these issues with the White House and the Congress. The well-known pro-Armenian attitudes of the future head of the State Department, Senator Kerry, must not lead to any break with the US.

*Seyidov:* There were not many changes in 2012, but in 2013 we expect several pro-Armenian personalities to assume key positions in Washington—John Kerry as a secretary of state, and Bob Menendez as the head of the Senate foreign relations committee. Azerbaijani diplomacy needs to send a clear message that this shall not

affect bilateral relations. Moreover, Baku should seek the complete repeal of S-907 as its number one priority.

*AIW:* How do you assess Azerbaijan's activities in the public diplomacy sector in 2012?

*Mollazade:* There were some positive developments in the public diplomacy sector as well. One could point to Azerbaijan's cooperation with the European Union within the Eastern Partnership program, as well as to Azerbaijan's active participation in the EU's NGO forum. In its efforts to develop civil society in the country, Azerbaijan has now begun to cooperate in this direction with a number of European states. Cooperation is under way with a number of European NGOs. A new European Movement was established in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani NGOs also actively participate in international institutions and projects.

*Musabayov:* Several important steps were taken. Notably, Russia rather than the Western countries was the main initiator of meetings of Azerbaijanis and Armenians in the public diplomacy context during the last year. Moscow hosted a meeting of the media leaders, experts, NGOs, and parliamentarians for that purpose. And our parliamentarians actively participated in various international meetings and this should be mentioned in particular. The Azerbaijani Karabakh community contributed mightily with its efforts to organize dialogue with the Armenians. Baku supported this both morally and financially as it did several other efforts in public diplomacy.

*Seyidov:* There have not been many visible achievements in this direction.

*AIW:* What specific challenges do you think Azerbaijan's foreign policy faces as the country moves to the year 2013 and what needs to be done to address those challenges?

*Mollazade:* The key challenges of 2013 relate to Azerbaijan's conflict with Armenia and to Azerbaijan's efforts to bring the problems generated by Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani lands to the attention of the world and the world's influential political centers and by virtue of that submit Armenia to peace. A new direction has also opened in our foreign policy. That is cooperation with Latin American countries. Parliaments in a number of Latin American states have seen Azerbaijan friendship groups established and some relevant documents have been passed. Azerbaijan has now established cooperation, both in economic and political fields, with Argentina, Brasil, Mexico, Columbia and other countries in the region. Activities in this direction should be further strengthened.

*Musabayov:* The most dangerous challenges for Azerbaijan and the region involve the situation around the nuclear program of Iran. It is important to ensure that a cooling of relations with Russia does not lead to a growth in tensions in bilateral relations. At the same time, in order to overcome the stagnation in the process of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, it is necessary to conduct intensive dialogue with our partners and grow more active within international institutional settings. Talks about joining the WTO and about an association agreement with the European Union need to be accelerated. I believe that the multi-vector and balanced character of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan should be preserved and that Baku should proceed cautiously at this dangerous time.

*Seyidov*: In 2012, there has been a complete failure in the information area abroad. It is long past time to move from buying properties and real estates to opening news agencies, newspapers, media resources where Azerbaijani ownership and presence are not obvious. We need to remember that politicians read newspapers and watch television channels. And consequently, we need to ensure that at least some of them are watching or reading outlets we have an influence on.

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## **2012 'VERY SUCCESSFUL' FOR AZERBAIJAN AND 2013 WILL BE MORE SO, PRESIDENT ALIYEV SAYS**

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In his message to the Azerbaijani people on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World and of the arrival of the New Year, President Ilham Aliyev said that 2012 "had been very successful" for Azerbaijan at home and abroad and that all signs point to an even more successful one in the year ahead. [1]

Azerbaijan's undoubted successes in foreign policy, the president argued, rested on two things: a strong economic performance which boosted its international standing as an energy supplier to Europe, and the country's continuing "balanced approach" to international relations which has allowed the country to play an expanded role not only in international forums like the UN Security Council, but also in bilateral ties with an increasing number of countries around the world.

As he has in all such addresses, President Aliyev focused in particular on the interrelationship of domestic developments and foreign policy goals, particularly with regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. He pointed out that during the last twelve months, Baku has "done a very great deal" for the resolution of the problems of those forced to leave their homes by the Armenian occupation. Some 20,000 of them were given new apartments, and he promised that even more will be provided with such improvements in 2013.

But the Azerbaijani president stressed that this humanitarian measure did not mean that Baku would not insist on the end of the occupation and the return of these people to their homelands. When that happens, he said, Azerbaijan "will build new buildings, settlements and cities in order to provide good conditions for our citizens."

President Aliyev said that he is "certain" that "Azerbaijan will restore its territorial integrity. Our strength is growing both in the economic and the military sphere, and our international positions are strengthening as well."

Azerbaijan did not achieve its primary goal of ending Armenia's occupation of 20 percent of the country's territory in 2012, but the president says he has hopes that what was achieved over the last twelve months will open the way for that outcome sometime in the next twelve. Among the positive developments in 2012 in this regard was the declaration of the heads of government of the Minsk Group co-chairs

that the status quo is unacceptable and cannot continue. "The change of the status quo means," President Aliyev said, "an end to the occupation."

In addition, the president said, Azerbaijan continued in 2012 to gain the support of international organizations and individual countries. Among the international groups backing its position, he pointed out, were the Non-Aligned Movement, which Azerbaijan joined this past year, and NATO with which Baku continues close cooperation and which specified that the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict must be resolved "on the basis of the territorial integrity" of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan, its president said, "will never permit the establishment on its immemorial lands of a second invented Armenian state. Present-day Armenia," he pointed out, "arose on historically Azerbaijani lands," and "the establishment on Azerbaijani lands of a second Armenian state never will be possible." Thus, "Nagorno-Karabakh will never be offered independence," and the Azerbaijani flag will again fly over "all the cities, which today are under [Armenian] occupation."

President Aliyev expressed the hope that mediators like the OSCE Minsk Group will "advance more concrete proposals" in 2012 for the withdrawal of Armenian forces and thus the resolution of the conflict. And he suggested that they should be mindful of the fact, "which is not a secret for anyone" that Azerbaijan is "seriously involved in the process of building up its armed forces."

Already today, the Baku leader pointed out, "the Azerbaijani army is the most powerful force in the South Caucasus. In 2012, it added "a large quantity" of military equipment to its arsenal, and "in 2013, [Baku] will strengthen [its] army even more." Already, Azerbaijan's expenditure on its military exceeds the budget of Armenia by 50 percent, and that is creating a situation in which everyone, including the Armenians and their backers, will be forced to recognize that Azerbaijan can restore its territorial integrity by force if there is no progress towards that end by diplomatic means.

Turning to other issues, President Aliyev stressed that the signing of the TANAP pipeline project in 2012 and progress on the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway open the way for Azerbaijan to become an even more important player in the European and Eurasian petroleum marketplace. Moreover, the holding of international meetings in Baku during 2012, including the Eurovision competition and the Second International Humanitarian Forum, attracted ever more attention to the country. And the decision of the International Olympic Committee at the end of 2012 to select Baku as the venue for the European Games in 2015 represents yet another "big victory" for the Azerbaijani people.

Other senior Azerbaijani officials supplemented the president's words. Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov pointed to the importance of Azerbaijan's support in the United Nations for the Trans-Eurasian High Speed Information Channel as a supplement to the country's rail and pipeline projects and also to Baku's expanding "strategic" ties both with its traditional partner, Turkey, and with the Russian Federation. [2]

Echoing President Aliyev, Mammadyarov said that Azerbaijan has become "the leading state of the region," a status that has allowed it to transform itself "from a country in which others invest into a country which invests in other states." That shift has given it new influence in the region and more generally.

And also, like the Azerbaijani president, the foreign minister stressed that Azerbaijan's successes mean that time is working on its side rather than Armenia's when it comes to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As long as the occupation continues, he said, Armenia will not be able to participate in regional projects, a limitation that will restrict its ability to rebuild its domestic situation.

Mammadyarov suggested that among Azerbaijan's greatest diplomatic "successes" in 2012 were its work in the UN Security Council and its participation in the G-20 ministerial in Mexico. Both of those reflected "the heightened interest of the developed countries of the world in Azerbaijan and are an indicator of the leadership of the country in the region."

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, also highlighted Azerbaijan's ability in 2012 to weather the economic storms, to "liquidate on its own emergency situations," and to provide the Azerbaijani military "with contemporary technology and military equipment." [3]

He said that the Eurovision competition had been "a major success," but noted that "unfortunately" some of the additional attention Azerbaijan gained as a result was openly hostile and sought to falsely portray Azerbaijan as a country in which "the rights of citizens to property and freedom of expression" are regularly violated.

"The basic goal" of this campaign, he said, was "to undermine the reputation of Azerbaijan and create a negative view among world public opinion about [the country]." But ultimately this hostile effort failed, Hasanov continued, because "democracy as a system of fundamental values" underlies "the state system of administration" in Azerbaijan and has become "the norm of social life and civil society" there.

At the present time, he said, there are 55 registered political parties, "more than 2700 NGOs, and about 4800 media outlets, both print and electronic. The Seventh World Forum on Internet Freedom held in Baku in November, the presidential aide said, called attention to this, but unfortunately, it did not succeed in keeping certain groups like Freedom House, Article XIX, Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and Reports without Borders from continuing to take part in that "campaign against Azerbaijan."

Azerbaijan's real standing in the world, he suggested, is shown by the 155 countries that voted to elect Azerbaijan to the UN Security Council, the support it received as chairman of that body last spring, and the praise world leaders gave Baku at the UN Security Council special session in Istanbul at the end of May.

The senior aide said that all of this reflects the policies of President Aliyev, his commitment to balanced diplomacy, and his commitment to using "energy diplomacy" and cultural diplomacy to advance Azerbaijan's goals. Hasanov said that a signal indication of the latter was the launch of the Azerbaijani Cultural Center in Paris by First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, the president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

Hasanov pointed to another case of Azerbaijani diplomacy, which attracted international attention and some unfavorable comments. Baku succeeded in having Hungary extradite an Azerbaijani officer who had been convicted of murdering an Armenian there and had served part of his sentence. On Ramil Safarov's return to

his homeland, the presidential aide notes, he received a pardon, something that pleased most Azerbaijanis who felt he had been punished enough, but angered some in the international community.

Looking ahead to 2013, Hasanov said the most important event for Azerbaijan will be the presidential elections and Baku's drive to reach a settlement to end the occupation of its territories by Armenia.

Another Aliyev aide, Novruz Mammadov, who heads the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, focused on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. He said that, "despite the lack of progress on the resolution of [that] conflict in 2012, Azerbaijan does not consider that year lost" and looks to the future with confidence. [4]

Mammadov said that "however much the Armenian side attempts to drag out talks ... it will not be able to achieve" its goals of continued occupation. "The status quo must be changed, and it will be changed." International law requires this, and there should be a peaceful resolution of the conflict, but if there isn't, Azerbaijan is fully justified in using force to reclaim its territories. "No one should have any doubts about that."

Fikrat Sadykhov, a leading Azerbaijani political scientist, explained why Azerbaijan feels so good about its prospects as the year turns from 2012 to 2013. He suggested that Baku had been successful in dispelling "the myths" promoted by Armenia and in convincing the international community that Armenia is not quite what it attempts to present itself as being. That, he says, is the "chief measure" of the success of Azerbaijani diplomacy over the past twelve months. [5]

And another political scientist, Milli Majlis deputy Rasim Musabayov, talked about why Baku's patience with the Minsk Group, the co-chair countries, and the international community more generally is running out as the latter "turned out not to be in a position to give a positive dynamic and a constructive approach to the talks. Instead, they limited themselves to local initiatives, such as pulling snipers back from the line of the front or having a dialogue between civilian groups" on either side of the line. Even if these steps are successfully carried through, there is little chance that they will succeed in promoting a rapprochement of the sides on "the main problems of the conflict," Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani lands and its policies in those territories.

According to Musabayov, talks about the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are at "a dead-end." But that is not the end of the matter. Armenia is growing ever weaker at home, the Armenian diaspora is losing influence, and Azerbaijan is gaining strength both diplomatically and militarily. The Minsk Group needs to take that into consideration, he continues, because "as long as the Armenians are not given a clear and harsh signal from all the capitals of the three co-chair countries and especially from Moscow, there will not be any reason to expect them" to move in a positive direction.

One diplomatic way forward, he argued, is for the Group to work on a final agreement on those issues that have been agreed to, but so far, Armenia has succeeded in blocking that constructive approach insisting that there cannot be any movement in that direction until everything is agreed upon. If Yerevan is able to continue to block this path, then Azerbaijan will have to explore other venues and other means to recover its lawful territories. Thus, thanks to the Armenians, he said,

the entire process is “fraught with growing risks for the world and for regional security” in 2013.

#### Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/politics/375729.html> (accessed 05 January 2013).

[2] See <http://news.day.az/politics/375650.html> (accessed 05 January 2013).

[3] See <http://news.day.az/politics/375468.html> (accessed 05 January 2013).

[4] See <http://news.day.az/politics/374777.html> (accessed 05 January 2013).

[5] See <http://news.day.az/politics/375562.html> (accessed 05 January 2013).

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

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

President Ilham Aliyev says that, “the time is coming when Azerbaijan by any means will restore its territorial integrity” (<http://news.day.az/politics/374464.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the EU is “one of the actors in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” and therefore has special responsibilities to promote a settlement (<http://news.day.az/politics/373172.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Mejlis deputy, says that Armenia will not gain anything from the re-election of Serzh Sargsyan as that country’s president (<http://news.day.az/politics/372994.html>).

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

Mohammad Baqir Jurranshad, an advisor to the Iranian president, says that Iran, having dealt with the problems of occupation of its territory, could help resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and that it could be far more effective as a mediator than the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/375364.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili says in Baku that his earlier remarks concerning Georgia’s use of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway were hasty and that “in reality there are no problems” (<http://news.day.az/politics/375049.html>).

Herman Van Rompuy, president of the European Council, says that the EU’s cooperation with Russia will help promote a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/374131.html>).

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

15 January

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Eris Herryanto, secretary general of the Indonesian defense ministry (<http://news.day.az/politics/377849.html>).

Fazail Aghamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian candidates may say many things during the current election campaign, but that after the vote everything will go on as before (<http://news.day.az/politics/377635.html>).

The Georgian embassy in Baku says that, "Georgia continues to support the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and [that] the two countries have always supported one another in the UN and in other international organizations" (<http://news.day.az/politics/377781.html>).

14 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide (<http://news.day.az/politics/377616.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that any operation of the Khojaly airport before the complete withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories is a violation of international law (<http://news.day.az/politics/377563.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says the resettlement of Armenians from Syria into the occupied territories would be illegal and that Baku has more than once expressed its view on that to the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/377573.html>).

Javanshir Akhundov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tehran, says that Baku welcomes Iran's offer to be a mediator in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, but that Armenia has refused to accept that idea (<http://news.day.az/politics/377567.html>).

Tamerlan Garayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Manila, presents his letters of credence to Philippine President Benigno Aquino (<http://news.day.az/politics/377485.html>).

Norwegian Foreign Minister Espen Barth Eide says that Oslo has told Yerevan that opening the Khojaly airport would be a provocation (<http://news.day.az/politics/377566.html>).

Vasif Talybov, chairman of the Supreme Majlis of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, receives Mohsun Pakayin, Iranian ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/377640.html>).

Zsolt Csutora, Hungarian ambassador to Baku, says that his country backs Azerbaijan's position on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/377537.html>).

11 January

Ziyafat Askarov, first deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis, receives Henry Roberto Cuellar, a US congressman from Texas (<http://news.day.az/politics/377161.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that it is in the self-interest of Armenians to change the government in Yerevan (<http://news.day.az/politics/377116.html>).

Elnur Sultanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Brasil, meets with officials of the Brazilian finance ministry (<http://news.day.az/economy/377135.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, meets in Washington with officials of USAN, WCAS and USAAC (<http://news.day.az/politics/377284.html>).

Mohsun Pakayin, Iranian ambassador to Baku, says that Iran has the potential to increase its export of engineering and technical services to Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/377241.html>).

Bart Staes and Ulrich Lunacek, deputies of the European Parliament, send a letter to the European Commission expressing concern about the security of the Metsamor atomic power station in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/377243.html>).

10 January

Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev tells Kazakhstan Deputy Prime Minister Karymbek Kusherbayev that Baku is ready to take part in the construction of a logistics center in Western Kazakhstan (<http://news.day.az/economy/377076.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "today, Armenia is not a system chosen by and serving the people, but a system implemented from the outside in order to keep the country under control" (<http://news.day.az/politics/376830.html>).

Rafael Harpaz, Israel's ambassador to Baku, says that bilateral cooperation is increasing particularly in information technology, agriculture, military industry and medicine (<http://news.day.az/politics/376958.html>).

9 January

Prime Minister Arthur Rasi-zade, receives Kazakhstan Deputy Prime Minister Karymbek Kusherbayev (<http://news.day.az/politics/376750.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, says that Baku has good relations with all of its neighbors except for Armenia because of the latter's continuing occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/377129.html>).

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Astana, says that bilateral trade between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan continues to expand (<http://news.day.az/economy/376761.html>).

Fuad Iskandarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Brussels and head of the Azerbaijani representation to the European Union, meets with Herman van Rompuy, president of the EU Council, who tells him that the EU considers the status quo in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to be unacceptable (<http://news.day.az/politics/376764.html>).

Hasan Mammadzade, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Vilnius, meets with Lithuanian Interior Minister Dailius Alfonsas Barakauskas (<http://news.day.az/politics/376869.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Ankara has not changed its position about the opening of the Turkish border with Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/376785.html>).

Fuad Muradov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia will face new problems after the elections there (<http://news.day.az/politics/376692.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia must change course on the occupied territories, if it hopes to get out of its current problems (<http://news.day.az/politics/376654.html>).

The State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan is considering the acquisition of property in Turkey, Singapore, Indonesia and Malaysia (<http://news.day.az/economy/376787.html>).

Orkhan Akbarov, an official of the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region organization, says that his group does not believe in the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border until Yerevan withdraws from the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/376837.html>).

The Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus says that a meeting between Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the AMC, and Garegin II, the catholicos of all Armenians is possible, but not in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/376825.html>).

The Turkish-Azerbaijani diaspora in the US appeals to the US Congress to honor the memory of the victims of Black January in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/376685.html>).

8 January

The Iranian foreign ministry says that Tehran is prepared to serve as a mediator for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/376604.html>).

7 January

Huseyn Rzagulu ogly Guliyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tashkent, presents copies of his letters of credence to the Uzbekistan foreign ministry (<http://news.day.az/politics/376417.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the status quo of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict does not satisfy many in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/376181.html>).

Igbal Aghazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia, not Turkey or Azerbaijan, is responsible for the fact that the Armenian-Turkish agreements have not been implemented (<http://news.day.az/politics/376057.html>).

An EU delegation visiting Baku welcomes President Ilham Aliyev's decision to pardon

87 prisoners including civil society activists, representatives of opposition parties, and journalists (<http://news.day.az/politics/376461.html>).

4 January

The Foreign Ministry says that Yerevan must stop engaging in absurdities and focus on reality, rather than "falling into paranoia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/376068.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that Armenian forces continue to engage in provocations along the ceasefire line (<http://news.day.az/politics/375979.html>).

Ayдын Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that conditions in Armenia are so bad that up to 300,000 Armenians now work in Turkey and that "if the borders were open, [Armenians] would fill up Azerbaijan as well" (<http://news.day.az/politics/376053.html>).

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev confirms the ratification of an agreement with Baku on diplomatic property (<http://news.day.az/politics/376080.html>).

Tajikistan President Emomali Rakhmon appoints Zokhir Saidov as Tajikistan ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/375987.html>).

Former Ukrainian President Leonid Kravchuk says that Azerbaijan and Ukraine should increase their contacts in the private sector (<http://news.day.az/economy/376034.html>).

3 January

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian military is not capable of opposing Azerbaijan as a whole and the Azerbaijani army in particular (<http://news.day.az/politics/375581.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili says the results of his recent visit to Baku were "positive" (<http://news.day.az/politics/375941.html>).

Turkey's Grand National Assembly ratifies three agreements with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/376005.html>).

Iliya II, patriarch of All Georgia, says that the visit to Tbilisi by Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, is "a manifestation of the friendship of the Georgian and Azerbaijani peoples" (<http://news.day.az/society/375891.html>).

2 January

The Foreign Ministry says that Yerevan tries to hide its own failures by denouncing Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/375831.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Baku's greatest political achievement in 2012 is the part Azerbaijan has played in the construction of a new strategic system in the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/375552.html>).

1 January

President Ilham Aliyev says that 2012 has been “a very good year” for Azerbaijan and that 2013 will be even better (<http://news.day.az/politics/375729.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan can move “confidently” into the future (<http://news.day.az/politics/375583.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan achieved many “great successes” in 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/375595.html>).

Ukrainian officials say that Kyiv will devote particular attention to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict while it is chairman-in-office of the OSCE over the next year (<http://news.day.az/politics/375735.html>).

30 December

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Armenian actions and statements have had a “negative” impact on the process of creating trust between Yerevan and Baku and on moving toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/375643.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan remains committed to the establishment of peace in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/375650.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan does not want to see the emergence of new conflicts in the region (<http://news.day.az/politics/375650.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that TANAP will become a reliable source for the energy security of Europe (<http://news.day.az/economy/375644.html>).

29 December

Parviz Islmailzade, Azerbaijani consul general in Dubai, hosts a reception in honor of the Day of Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/politics/375624.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Belgrad hosts a reception in honor of the Day of Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/politics/375569.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia’s greatest achievement in 2012 was “the lowering of its rankings in the social, economic and political spheres” (<http://news.day.az/politics/375461.html>).

Social organizations of Azerbaijan protest the US State Department’s inclusion of Azerbaijan in the list of dangerous and risky countries like Afghanistan, Sudan and Libya (<http://news.day.az/politics/375614.html>).

Nemat Nagdaliyev, head of the apparatus of the All-Russian Azerbaijani Congress, says that 2012 was a very successful year for his group and its activities in Russia (<http://news.day.az/politics/375600.html>).

28 December

Emergency Situations Minister Kamaladdin Heydarov meets with Russian officials in Moscow to discuss expanding cooperation (<http://news.day.az/society/375286.html>).

Hasan Mammadzade, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Vilnius, speaks on the occasion of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Lithuania and Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/society/375381.html>).

Elchin Amirkhanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Paris, hosts a reception in honor of the Day of Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/politics/375473.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that she hopes that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will be resolved in 2013 (<http://news.day.az/politics/375340.html>).

Parvin Ismayilzade, Azerbaijan's consul general in Dubai, is received by Sheikh Rashid bin Saud al-Mualla, the UAE crown prince (<http://news.day.az/politics/375317.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies a series of international agreements and conventions (<http://news.day.az/politics/375396.html>).

The Milli Majlis approves a measure to establish an embassy in Addis Ababa (<http://news.day.az/politics/375363.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Azerbaijan considers as the basic document the report prepared by the co-rapporteurs of the PACE on Azerbaijan, rather than the report of the PACE rapporteur on political prisoners in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/375377.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia is "at the edge of collapse" (<http://news.day.az/politics/375246.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenians are thinking about survival, rather than about elections there (<http://news.day.az/politics/375347.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, chairman of the State Committee for Work with the Diaspora, says that over the coming year, there will be closer relations between the diaspora and the Azerbaijani government (<http://news.day.az/society/375443.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, chairman of the State Committee for Work with the Diaspora, says that he opposes the creation of a Union of Russian-Azerbaijani Organizations in Moscow (<http://news.day.az/politics/375387.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and head of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, condemns the murder of Irbek Dudarov, a Muslim official in North Ossetia-Alania (<http://news.day.az/politics/375448.html>).

Bayram Safarov, the head of the Social Union of the Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, says that, "the Armenian community should agree with the

status offered" by Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/375360.html>).

Georgian Energy and Natural Resources Minister Kakha Kaladze arrives in Baku to discuss cooperation in the energy sphere (<http://news.day.az/economy/375413.html>).

Ismail Alper Cosgun, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, greets the Azerbaijani people on the Day of the Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/politics/375429.html>).

Camil Cicek, speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani lands is "one of the issues which disturbs Turkey" (<http://news.day.az/politics/375428.html>).

Fedor Negoy, a deputy of Ukraine's *Verkhovna Rada*, again apologizes to Azerbaijanis and Caucasians for his recent statements (<http://news.day.az/politics/375417.html>).

27 December

President Ilham Aliyev says that, "by using all our possibilities, we will restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/375276.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Hidayat Orujev Azerbaijan's ambassador to Bishkek (<http://news.day.az/politics/375274.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs an order changing the name of the State Commission on the Demarcation and Delimitation of the State Border between Azerbaijan and Russia to the State Commission on the Demarcation of the State Border between Azerbaijan and Russia (<http://news.day.az/politics/375280.html>).

Shahin Abdullayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Cairo, announces the creation of the Azerbaijan-Egypt Friendship Society (<http://news.day.az/politics/375243.html>).

Mir-Hamza Efendiyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the Hague, hosts a banquet in honor of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/society/375302.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, speaks to a meeting devoted to the Day of Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World and the New Year (<http://news.day.az/society/375335.html>).

Elman Zeynalov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Riga, hosts a reception in honor of the Day of Solidarity of the Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://news.day.az/politics/375125.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with Aydyn Sezgin, Turkey's ambassador to Moscow (<http://news.day.az/politics/375179.html>).

26 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili

(<http://news.day.az/politics/375001.html>).

Energy Minister Natig Aliyev says that the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline will carry up to 25 billion cubic meters a year after 2017, adding that, "Azerbaijan and Georgia have already realized several projects of international importance" (<http://news.day.az/economy/375050.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the strategic partnership between Azerbaijan and Georgia will continue (<http://news.day.az/politics/374908.html>).

Wu Honbo, deputy secretary general of the United Nations, thanks President Ilham Aliyev for the successful holding of the Forum on Internet Governance (<http://news.day.az/politics/375035.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili says in Baku that his earlier remarks concerning Georgia's use of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway were hasty and that "in reality there are no problems" (<http://news.day.az/politics/375049.html>).

Omur Orkhun, special representative of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, says that the OIC's position on Nagorno-Karabakh has always been "clear and open: the occupied territories must be freed and returned to Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374889.html>).

Georgian Regional Development and Infrastructure Minister David Narmania says that the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad will not stop and that even suspending its construction has never been considered (<http://news.day.az/economy/375030.html>).

Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz says that Turkey will continue to support Nabucco and that it, along with TANAP, is intended to diversify gas flows into Europe (<http://news.day.az/economy/374866.html>).

Vinod Kumar, India's ambassador to Baku, says that relations between Azerbaijan and India are friendly, but can develop further (<http://news.day.az/politics/374879.html>).

25 December

President Ilham Aliyev says that, "the time is coming when Azerbaijan by any means will restore its territorial integrity" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374464.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says that Yerevan's antagonism to Azerbaijan and its continuing occupation of Azerbaijani territory is "dangerous" for Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/374236.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that recent statements by Armenian officials are marked by "schizophrenic illusions" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374736.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku has achieved a great deal in its foreign relations despite the absence of progress toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/374777.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that incumbent Armenian president does not intend to give up office and is only conducting the elections as a kind of show (<http://news.day.az/politics/374590.html>).

Marina Kovtun, the governor of Russia's Murmansk Oblast, sends a message of greetings to the all-Russian Azerbaijani Congress (<http://news.day.az/politics/374737.html>).

24 December

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/374424.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the change of the American co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group will not have an impact on the negotiating process (<http://news.day.az/politics/374369.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, takes part in a television presentation on former Baku residents who now work in Russia (<http://news.day.az/society/374552.html>).

Tural Rzayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kuwait, meets with Ali Fahd al-Rashid, the speaker of the Kuwaiti Parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/374477.html>).

Shahin Abdullayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Sudan, speaks on Al-Shurug television (<http://news.day.az/politics/374472.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group "cannot be considered positive" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374474.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that despite Yerevan's bold comments, "both the leadership and the citizenry of Armenia fear the growing power of the Azerbaijani army" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374489.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that she agrees with the statement of the Turkish foreign ministry that "the composition of the Minsk Group really must be changed" with the introduction of "new and interested powers of the region" in order to achieve genuine progress (<http://news.day.az/politics/374367.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that if Armenia is forced to choose between Moscow and Europe, "it will chose Moscow" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374229.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili says that, "no one intends to stop the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. On the contrary, we intend to assist in its construction" (<http://news.day.az/politics/374403.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzina Ivanishvili says that Georgia's relations with Azerbaijan are "strategic" and that "no one intends to sacrifice them" for any reason (<http://news.day.az/economy/374441.html>).

Turkish Transportation Minister Binali Yildir says that building the Marmara tunnel would add to the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway (<http://news.day.az/economy/374515.html>).

The European Commission announces a new program for cooperation on police work between the EU and Eastern Partnership countries like Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/374502.html>).

Alberto Alonzo Villaverde, charge d'affaires at the Brazilian embassy in Baku, says that bilateral trade relations are developing and deepening (<http://news.day.az/politics/374413.html>).

23 December

The Transportation Ministry says that, "beyond any doubt, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway is a project of regional and worldwide importance" (<http://news.day.az/economy/374313.html>).

The Azerbaijan Youth Union of Russia hosts a gathering on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World and the New Year (<http://news.day.az/politics/374511.html>).

Ambassador John Kelly replaces Robert Bradtke as the temporary US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/374323.html>).

22 December

Bayram Safarov, head of the Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan, says that his group has made significant progress in 2012 even though no agreement on the withdrawal of Armenian forces has been achieved (<http://news.day.az/politics/374247.html>).

SOCAR announces that it will cooperate with the British Petroleum Company to develop a natural gas terminal in Benin (<http://news.day.az/economy/374216.html>).

21 December

President Ilham Aliyev telephones Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili (<http://news.day.az/politics/374053.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms 11 bilateral accords and agreements (<http://news.day.az/politics/373921.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Fatih Celani (<http://news.day.az/politics/374081.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's recent statements bear an obviously "populist" character (<http://news.day.az/politics/374105.html>).

SOCAR Vice President Khalik Mammadov meets with leaders of the US city of Houston (<http://news.day.az/economy/374202.html>).

Herman van Rompuy, president of the European Council, says that the EU's cooperation with Russia will help promote a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/374131.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that bilateral trade between Azerbaijan and Russia may reach three billion US dollars in 2012 (<http://news.day.az/economy/374086.html>).

Mohammad Baqir Hurremshad, an advisor to the president of Iran and chairman of the Organization for Islamic Culture and Ties, says that Tehran supports the creation of an Azerbaijani Cultural Center in the Iranian capital (<http://news.day.az/society/374051.html>).

The report of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on "The Fulfillment by Azerbaijan of Its Obligations" is published and concludes that Baku has made progress on the development of its legal system with regard to the development of democratic institutions (<http://news.day.az/politics/374101.html>).

20 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives Irman Gusman, chairman of Indonesia's Council of Regional Representatives (<http://news.day.az/politics/373818.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that recent statements by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan are intended to misinform the international community (<http://news.day.az/politics/373748.html>).

The Foreign Ministry's website wins the national internet prize, Milli Net-2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/373911.html>).

The Communications and Information Technologies Ministry says that any foreign telecommunications company currently attempting to provide services to the occupied territories is engaged in an illegal activity (<http://news.day.az/politics/373834.html>).

Deputy Economic Development Minister Niyaz Safarov attends the Belorussian-Azerbaijani Business Forum in Minsk (<http://news.day.az/economy/373703.html>).

Azerbaijan is elected one of the three vice presidents of the UNESCO committee on the defense of cultural monuments during armed conflicts (<http://news.day.az/politics/373895.html>).

Fuad Muradov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that as long as the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh continues, there will not be any improvement in Turkish-Armenian relations (<http://news.day.az/politics/373752.html>).

The First International Baku Forum on the State and Religion adopts the Baku Platform, which declares that Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani territory is a threat to all humanity (<http://news.day.az/politics/373875.html>).

Valery Chechelashvili, the secretary general of GUAM, says that his organization is open to having new members (<http://news.day.az/politics/373839.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of GUAM says that it is disturbed by the lack of progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and other conflicts in the region (<http://news.day.az/politics/373729.html>).

Luc Troyen, Belgian ambassador to Baku, calls the situation in and around Nagorno-Karabakh "tragic" and says that the EU needs to become more active in promoting a resolution of the conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/373753.html>).

19 December

President Ilham Aliyev says that "historically in Azerbaijan there has never been discrimination or conflicts on an ethnic or religious basis," but rather "progressive" ties "based on mutual trust and respect" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373639.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Aleksandr Zhilkin, governor of Russia's Astrakhan oblast (<http://news.day.az/politics/373596.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Bogdan Klich, chairman of the military committee of the Polish Senate (<http://news.day.az/politics/373627.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Mexico City, speaks to a ceremony on the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the functioning in Mexico of the International Foundation for Humanitarian Assistance and Social Development (<http://news.day.az/politics/373667.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, hosts an event of Azerbaijani culture (<http://news.day.az/politics/373546.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the international community and international law support Baku regarding the possible development of communications infrastructure by *Rostelekom* in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/373494.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the OSCE Minsk Group has not taken a clear and unambiguous position regarding the possible opening of the Khojaly airport in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/373548.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Philippe Lefort, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus, must explain the purpose of his planned visit to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/373569.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that GUAM in the near future will become one of the most influential organizations in the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/373475.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan has not done anything good for his people while he has been in office (<http://news.day.az/politics/373454.html>).

The National Academy of Aviation hosts the third session of the Council on Space Issues that is attended by both senior Azerbaijan and Russian officials (<http://news.day.az/politics/373658.html>).

Allahshukur Pashazade, sheikh-ul-Islam and chairman of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, says that many international organizations have a distorted image of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/society/373553.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that, "Azerbaijan could become a center of world trade" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373598.html>).

Raymond Veijonis, vice president of the Baltic Assembly, says that the Minsk Group "has not been able to achieve a positive dynamic" and that it must "increase its efforts for the most rapid possible resolution of the conflict by peaceful means" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373619.html>).

Jacques Biskup, president of the Benelux Parliamentary Assembly, says that his body attaches great importance to cooperation with GUAM on migration (<http://news.day.az/politics/373619.html>).

Cezary Grabarczyk, deputy chairman of the Polish Seim, says that Poland intends to cooperate with GUAM in all possible ways (<http://news.day.az/politics/373619.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that the United States is not interested in using the Gabala radar site (<http://news.day.az/politics/373585.html>).

US Senator Richard Lugar says that the Southern Corridor is now achievable (<http://news.day.az/politics/373520.html>).

Zurab Abashidze, vice speaker of the Georgian Parliament, says that relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia "will only deepen" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373473.html>).

Valery Chechelashvili, GUAM secretary general, says that Azerbaijan's presidency of the organization was "very successful" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373466.html>).

Peter Mikhalos, secretary general of the Greek organization for international economic relations and development, says that Greece is interested in cooperating with Azerbaijan in many spheres (<http://news.day.az/economy/373612.html>).

UAE Economics Minister Sultan ben Said al-Mansuri says that the UAE is interested in strengthening its economic cooperation with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/373476.html>).

Turkish Religious Affairs Minister Mehmet Gormez visits Baku (<http://news.day.az/society/373489.html>).

18 December

President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva take part in a meeting of the Azerbaijan National Olympic Committee (<http://news.day.az/politics/373425.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Roald Sagdeyev, a Russian academician and advisor to the Azerbaijani space program (<http://news.day.az/politics/373379.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Robert Dudley, the executive director of BP

(<http://news.day.az/politics/373379.html>).

Transportation Minister Ziyia Mammadov says that the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway has already acquired international importance (<http://news.day.az/economy/373430.html>).

Tahir Taghizade, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Prague, presents a special diploma of the President of the Azerbaijan Republic to Jan Hamacek, head of the Czech Interparliamentary Czech-Azerbaijani Friendship Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/373292.html>).

Hasan Mammadzade, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Vilnius, meets with Lithuanian Prime Minister Algirdas Butkavicius (<http://news.day.az/politics/373302.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov participates in a meeting in Ashgabat on drawing up a convention on the legal status of the Caspian Sea (<http://news.day.az/politics/373222.html>).

Khady Radzhabli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia "is not a normal state" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373260.html>).

Farhad Mammadov, director of the Center for Strategic Research of the Presidential Administration, says that the Armenian electoral campaign suffer from a variety of shortcomings (<http://news.day.az/politics/373300.html>).

Nargiz Gurbanova, a senior official at the Azerbaijani embassy in Washington, says that Azerbaijan "has achieved great successes on the path to stability and economic development" (<http://news.day.az/politics/373223.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, meets with the leaders of the Azerbaijani opposition (<http://news.day.az/politics/373397.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry says that the time has come to change the composition of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/373266.html>).

Daniel Ciobanu, Romania's ambassador to Baku, says her embassy will continue to function as the coordinator for NATO's relations with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/373218.html>).

17 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives Georgy Pirvanov, former president of Bulgaria (<http://news.day.az/politics/373121.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bai Li-Chen, deputy chairman of the All-China Committee of the Political Consultative Council (<http://news.day.az/politics/373121.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Nick de Bois, a member of the British Parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/373121.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov takes part in an EU-Azerbaijan Council for Cooperation discussion in Brussels of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

(<http://news.day.az/politics/373104.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the EU is “one of the actors in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” and therefore has special responsibilities to promote a settlement (<http://news.day.az/politics/373172.html>).

Tax Minister Fazil Mammadov signs a cooperation agreement with Riccardo Ecegaray, the head of the Argentinian Administration for State Revenues (<http://news.day.az/economy/373088.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, head of a sector of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenia’s efforts to promote itself as a multi-cultural society represent an obvious attempt to deceive the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/373076.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, receives Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/373149.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the international community should impose sanctions on Armenia rather than the other way around (<http://news.day.az/politics/373030.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia will not gain anything from the re-election of Serzh Sargsyan as that country’s president (<http://news.day.az/politics/372994.html>).

Stefan Füle, European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood, says that talks between EU and Azerbaijan on visa liberalization will intensify next year (<http://news.day.az/politics/373184.html>).

Bai Li-Chen, deputy chairman of the All-China Committee of the Political Consultative Council, says that there is great potential for the development of bilateral economic relations between China and Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/373181.html>).

16 December

President Ilham Aliyev says that he has no doubts that “Azerbaijan will restore its territorial integrity” (<http://news.day.az/politics/372789.html>).

### **Note to Readers**

The editors of “Azerbaijan in the World” hope that you find it useful and encourage you to submit your comments and articles via email ([adabiweekly@ada.edu.az](mailto:adabiweekly@ada.edu.az)). The materials it contains reflect the personal views of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.