



# Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

## School of International Affairs

### **AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD** **ADA Biweekly Newsletter**

Vol. 3, No. 15  
August 1, 2010

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#### **AFTER ALMATY: THE FUTURE OF KARABAKH NEGOTIATIONS**

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Rarely in the past have expectations that a meeting between Azerbaijani and Armenian officials would produce a breakthrough been higher than before the ministerial bilateral at the sidelines of the OSCE meeting in Almaty. All the signs seemed to point in a positive direction, and the Minsk Group, senior officials in Azerbaijan and Turkey, and commentators there and around the world expressed the hope that the two sides would accept the revised Madrid Principles and begin the process of ending the Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

All the stars seemed to be aligned. The meeting of Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov with his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan would take

place not only in the company of the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, all of whom expressed optimism, but at a session hosted by Kazakhstan foreign minister and OSCE chairman-in-office Kanat Saudabayev who had expressed the hope that resolution of the Karabakh conflict would be a high point of his service in that position. Moreover, the intensity of contacts between the two sides and officials from the Russian Federation, the United States, and the European Union had been at an all-time high. And Azerbaijan had been very clear in stating that Baku accepts the revised Madrid Principles with a five-year timetable for complete Armenian withdrawal.

But when the meeting took place, the two sides could not even agree on a joint statement for the press, and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Mammadyarov said that the two had not made any progress and that the meeting had thus been “without result.” Almost immediately, all those who had displayed such optimism only the day before now expressed their pessimism that there would be any progress anytime soon. And some Azerbaijani parliamentarians and commentators not only lashed out at the Minsk Group, the Russians and the Americans for failing to deliver an accord but also suggested that now Baku would have no choice but to use military force to recover the territories Armenia now occupies.

That course of events raises three serious questions: Why were expectations so high especially given the difficulties the two sides have had in reaching any agreement at all over nearly 20 years? Why did the talks in fact collapse in the way that they did? And what, if any, are the likely consequences of this collapse in the negotiations both immediately and over the longer term?

### *Unreasonable Expectations*

In addition to the reasons mentioned above, there were three sources of the unreasonable expectations that animated discussions in the media and in government circles before Almaty, all of which were certainly knowable in advance but none of which was acknowledged in the wave of optimism that seemed to sweep through many quarters.

The first of these is rooted in the nature of diplomacy itself. Diplomats, it has often been observed, must be professional optimists in order to continue to do their work. That is because they are typically involved in issues where there is no easy solution: if there were an easy solution, the diplomats wouldn't be necessary. Their optimism is not a bad thing: it keeps them working. But there is a real danger when they are involved on any one issue for a long period of time, and that is the tendency of their long-standing interlocutors to take the optimistic statements of the diplomats as meaning more than they could possibly mean.

That is what appears to have happened here. The Minsk Group co-chairs and at least in public all their countries hoped for a solution, the Turkish government expected one, and many Azerbaijanis and their friends assumed the fix was in. As a result, Azerbaijanis were swept away by an unwarranted optimism that somehow all the problems that have plagued the talks over the last 16 years could suddenly be resolved by the *deus ex machine* of the major governments.

The second of these reasons involves the nature of negotiations. Those engaged in them assume that all sides want a settlement and in the course of talks will ultimately want to find one. That is a comforting and reassuring thought.

Unfortunately, it is wrong. Some parties benefit from not reaching a settlement, especially if they believe that they are better off where they are than they will be with any accord that is on offer.

In the current situation, at least two parties to this dispute did not want a settlement or at least did not want one that was the product of the OSCE alone. On the one hand, Armenia, as its foreign minister demonstrated once again at this meeting, clearly believes it is better off without a settlement than with anything now available to it. Yerevan has not been convinced that it will benefit from an accord, something that reflects both its own limitations and the failure of the international community to show the Armenian powers that be just how much they and their countrymen would benefit from withdrawing from the occupied territories.

And on the other, the Russian Federation, even though it is one of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and even though it is on record as supporting the renewed Madrid Principles that were supposed to be the basis of a settlement at Almaty, has shown especially in recent months that it prefers to go it alone, tabling new ideas for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict and most recently dramatically expanding its military commitment to Armenia. Consequently, the last thing Moscow would have wanted would have been a settlement it had not arranged and that would have left its relative position in the South Caucasus weaker than it is at present.

And the third reason for the unwarranted optimism lies in the new media environment. In the constant flux of news, journalists seek either a convincing story line or even better a radical break with the past that will attract attention to what they write. Consequently, they are more than ready to focus on any suggestions that there will be “breakthroughs” to “a settlement” that will represent “a radical break with the past.” They thus serve, unwittingly in most cases and apparently quite wittingly in others, as megaphones for what the diplomats are saying. As a result, ever more people assume that there is something inevitable about what they report, even though there have been so many occasions in the past when they, like the diplomats and political leaders, have been wrong.

### *A Problematic Venue*

The unreasonableness of the expectations that dominated public discourse in the lead up to Almaty was so great that it made failure almost inevitable, not only by leading those who want an accord to assume that it would occur regardless of what they did but also by encouraging those who do not to dig in their heels and make even more demands in the hope or even expectation that the side that wants an agreement will make the final concessions in order to get one. When that doesn't happen—and it rarely does in international negotiations—talks collapse, as they did between Azerbaijan and Armenia in Almaty.

But above and beyond that, there were two other factors that made the Kazakhstan city a less than likely venue for an accord. On the one hand, neither Azerbaijan nor Armenia wanted it to appear that third parties were playing the dominant role in reaching an agreement, however much they may at the same time assume that such parties will be playing precisely that role. Thus, the presence of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs and especially the OSCE chairman-in-office at and around the talks had the effect of making any accord far more difficult for either the Azerbaijani or Armenian representative to make progress toward.

And on the other, there was the basic problem that this venue, like the Minsk Group, was all about the OSCE. Many in Moscow clearly do not want the OSCE to play an expanded role in the post-Soviet space. Consequently, the Russian government would have little or no reason to welcome an agreement at that venue. And at the same time, the reason the Minsk Group was created in the first place, as many have pointed out over the years, is that it was the only international organization that involved all the parties to the conflict and in the region except one—and that one—Iran—was a player that the US and many other countries wanted to exclude.

However, excluding Iran in this way has always meant that Tehran has a vested interest in torpedoing anything that the OSCE and the Minsk Group might do, either by making threats, often to Azerbaijan, or making promises, typically to Armenia, that will make it more difficult for the parties to negotiate with each other. And even if Iran is not playing that role in fact, the possibility that it could provides a useful excuse for those who do not want an accord and the certainty that any agreement, precisely because it excluded one of the regional powers would be more difficult to achieve and maintain.

### *Short Term Problems, Long Term Possibilities*

Not surprisingly, the first reaction in Baku to the collapse of talks was anger, in the first instance at Armenia but then also at the Minsk Group co-chair countries, particularly the Russian Federation and the United States. Several parliamentarians and commentators suggested that Moscow and Washington had in fact undermined the talks, the first for geopolitical and the second for domestic political calculations. Curiously, few people in Baku went on the record against the third co-chair, France, something that may matter in the future.

The second reaction was to suggest that now that the Minsk Group-brokered talks had failed, Azerbaijan could no longer count on a negotiated settlement and must be prepared to resolve the conflict by force. That has always been a theme in Azerbaijani discourse, of course, but over the last two weeks, it has become increasingly dominant as a glance at the *Azerbaijan in the World* chronology will show.

And the third reaction among Azerbaijanis, albeit less widely voiced than the other two, was that Azerbaijan was going to have to go it alone, to revise its views on which foreign partners, including Turkey, it could rely, and even consider, the most radical possibility of all, that, as Vafa Guluzade put it, for Azerbaijanis now, the main enemy is not Armenia, even though it is in occupation of 20 percent of their country's territory, but rather Russia, because without Moscow, Armenia cannot possibly continue to act in the way that it has.

Such reactions are likely to predominate over the next months, making any real progress toward a settlement extraordinarily unlikely over that period. But there may be a silver lining in what is a very dark cloud. This anger could lead to a serious reassessment of how to conduct talks with Yerevan and possibly open the way to new venues involving new players. Those with a vested interest in the current arrangements will argue that such a step will throw any discussions back to square one, but in fact, that is where the current arrangements have landed Baku.

Consequently, the failure of expectations for Almaty may ultimately lead to a new approach, one that will take into consideration all the failings of the past. Moving in

that direction will not be easy, but the alternatives—continued stalemate, continued disappointment or military action—are not steps that will be easy for Azerbaijan either. As a result, it is quite possible that there will be a breakthrough soon, not to a final settlement—that now appears further off than it did only a few weeks ago—but toward a new recognition that Azerbaijan and Armenia are going to have to address this problem directly rather than assuming that any international organization or strategic partner is going to be able to do it for them.

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**CHILD PROTECTION IN POST-SOVIET AZERBAIJAN:  
OBSTACLES TO THE IMPLEMENTATION OF STATE POLICY ON DE-  
INSTITUTIONALIZATION AND ALTERNATIVE CARE**

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Targeting children and youth in human capital development and creating employment opportunities for this vast segment of Azerbaijani population will help the country make use of one of their most important resources for equitable development and economic growth. And there is ample evidence that even limited investments promote better health and education outcomes for children, bringing considerable future benefits to society as a whole. One dollar spent on children immunization save 10 USD in later medical care, 1 USD on comprehensive parental care for women saves 3.38 USD in later health costs and 1 USD for quality preschool education saves 4.75 USD in later special education, crime, welfare and other costs.

Finding effective strategies to reform child protection is on the agenda for many countries of the former Soviet bloc. Azerbaijan is one of them and has begun moves in this area by working to reduce the number of children held in residential child care institutions. At present, there are approximately 10,000 such children in institutions averaging 200 to 350 children each. Given that children under 18 form 35 percent of Azerbaijan's population, such a high rate of orphaned and vulnerable children in such institutions is a particular cause for concern. In Azerbaijan like in all post-Soviet countries, care for orphaned, abandoned children and children with disabilities was traditionally provided exclusively by the state, and the national child welfare system was characterized by large residential child care institutions (Gross, 2009).

Those children placed in institutional care are often deprived of basic care and support and are exposed to harsh living conditions and disciplining practices (Burke, 1995). That in turn often leads to severe developmental setbacks and poor health outcomes. The situation in Azerbaijan in this regard is all the more worrying because like other post-Soviet countries, it has not been able to improve conditions to the level international organizations recommend. Many of its orphanages do not yet have individual care and development plans for each child and do not conduct periodic review of their placement, family status and general wellbeing of a child in institution. Moreover, many of the children in residential care have fewer opportunities for education and development. And at present, the residential care

system is not monitored systematically in order to ensure that the children's rights are protected (Schmidt, 2009).

But the picture is not without hope. Azerbaijan has launched a series of reforms in this area, although many of them are constrained by economic and political conditions. Despite these challenges, the Azerbaijani authorities have clearly recognized the detrimental effects of institutionalization on children, and are taking steps to reform its institutional care system. In 2006, for example, the Government of the Azerbaijan Republic endorsed the State Program on De-Institutionalization and Alternative Care for 2006-2015 that is aimed at the reintegration of children residing currently in various state institutions with biological or foster families and at creation of alternative care services to support the de-institutionalization process.

The adoption of this State Program was a milestone in the child welfare reform process. Its major focus is to reduce the number of children in institutional care and to establish a sustainable system of alternative child and family support. At present, the state institutions are the only place where the children from vulnerable families are placed. The main stakeholders in the reform process are the Ministry of Education, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, Ministry of Health, the Commission on Minors Rights Protection, the Committee on Family, Women and Children Affairs, as well as UNICEF. In addition, national and international civil society organizations such as Hilfswerk Austria International, Save the Children, United Aid for Azerbaijan, SOS Kinderdorf International, Center for Innovation in Education, Mental Health Initiative, and the National NGO Alliance for Child Rights also play a role.

To date, de-institutionalization has been slow in part because of several obstacles that were not foreseen when the Program was adopted and that continue to represent serious challenges to meeting program goals. According to the international standards of UNICEF on child protection reform, generally areas such as economic and development policies, education policies, health policies, child-care policies, social welfare policies, criminal law, trade provisions, labor organization, media regulation, emergency legislation in conflict situations, immigration and taxation have potential concern with regard to child protection. In Azerbaijan, all these areas require significant change.

The key problem, which lies behind all of the others, involves the culture of childcare provision and child raising in Azerbaijan. Many Azerbaijanis still believe that "children [are] the property of their parents, whose duty is to ensure their survival, and are not entitled to any rights" (Ducci, 2003). A study conducted by the Hilfswerk Austria International in Azerbaijan among 226 adults in 2010 found that few know about the rights of children beyond the right to education (66.2%), and 72.7 percent identified "beating" as the only kind of violence against children they needed to be concerned about (Hilfswerk Austria International, 2010). Such attitudes lead many Azerbaijanis to view placement of children in residential child care institutions as entirely normal, despite international legal norms (United Nations, 1989). And at the same time, the Azerbaijani political and administrative elite tend to view children as objects for protection rather than as people who have rights, yet another legacy of the communist period. And many in the elite do not yet grasp the whole concept of de-institutionalization process (Sotiropoulou and Sotiropoulos, 2007).

A study conducted by UNICEF and Azerbaijani Ministry of Education in 2008 in 55 state run residential child care institutions found out that 47.1 percent of children in them come there because of poverty, with 24.2 percent more institutionalized because of poor living conditions at home and 19 percent due to unemployment of parents due to diseases (19.6%) (Ministry of Education, 2009). Thus, nearly three out of four of the institutionalized children were there not for the reasons typically found elsewhere but because of poverty. Clearly, these figures suggest that Azerbaijan needs immediate supplemental social welfare policies such as nutrition, housing, school support, medical aid and income generation.

The absence of such solid social policies restricts the support that government provides to families and especially children. However, many in Azerbaijan view such social welfare programs as charity. In 2004, a World Bank report described the current social-protection system as inappropriate for the market-oriented economy toward which Azerbaijan is striving. Among the major shortcomings are the absence of any coverage for large groups of people and the inadequate level of benefits in some regions; a growing disparity between a shrinking wage base and the demands placed on the system; and the failure to target the neediest recipients. The system's inefficiency is exacerbated by its fragmentation. As in the Soviet period, allowances and benefits are only social services that exist and are administered and financed by diverse agencies, including four extra-budgetary funds, several ministries, centralized, bureaucratic and the lower levels of government (Lewis, et al., 2004).

A second difficulty in the process of de-institutionalization is the absence of educational and development programs for children with disabilities who constitute big percentage of institutionalized children. At present, 30.1% of children in institutions are there because of special education needs (Ministry of Education, 2009). Even though there are 52,000 children registered with disabilities, most do not attend school as regular schools are simply incapable of accommodating them. The main obstacle here is also lack of understanding of the concept of inclusive education among civil servants and the general population. This exclusionary system does not provide for socialization and the most of schools do not have special classes, equipment, skilled teachers and teacher assistants. In addition to lack of educational opportunity for children with disabilities, there are also few services such as rehabilitation and day care centers, support for parents or main caregivers of children with disabilities.

A third set of problems which prevents the Program on de-institutionalization from smooth implementation is lack of universal child care policies and programs, as well as absence of child care services, especially community-based services such as day care centers, rehabilitation centers, family support centers, and similar facilities. Indeed, programs which promote parenting/parenthood which is crucial for the country like Azerbaijan, do not exist at all. Mostly due to the absence of these kind of important child care services families place their children to institutions during crisis.

In order to assure an effective implementation of the de-institutionalization process, the government of the Azerbaijan Republic should take immediate steps to establish new services and improve existing services. Most importantly, awareness on children rights and child development should be raised and more attention should be paid to the world of children and adolescents. Powers and instruments should be developed and refined, enthusiastic and professional educators should be trained and society's vision of "planet childhood" should be changed completely.

Since poverty is a leading issue for institutionalization of children and separation from their biological families, the government should aim at reintegrating institutionalized "social orphans" with their impoverished families and should provide these children and their families or caregivers with economic and employment opportunities. In addition, some immediate social welfare measures such as national supplemental nutrition assistance, school lunch, social housing and medical assistance programs should be developed and introduced which may enable families (biological or extended) to take children back from institutions and prevent further institutionalization.

The government should also put more efforts on realization of inclusive education program and raise awareness at all levels on the importance of inclusive education. In addition, the government jointly with national and international agencies should advocate for changes in infrastructure such as schools, public buildings, public transportations and work places in order to make them friendly use and accessible for children with disabilities and make them visible in the society. And child care services and programs should be developed immediately in order to prevent institutionalization of children and support families when they are in crises.

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

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

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the meeting in Almaty between himself and his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan was "without result" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219714.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the OSCE, says that the Armenian side at the ministerial bilateral in Almaty "once again demonstrated its unconstructive position" on the Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/219916.html>).

Nazim Mammadov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Kazakhstan, which currently holds the OSCE Chairmanship, has done a great deal to promote a settlement between Azerbaijan and Armenia but that the United States and the Russian Federation, each for its own reasons, have blocked progress (<http://news.day.az/politics/220049.html>).

Elman Mammadov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the recent deaths of Armenian military personnel in the occupied territories reflect conflicts among the three groups which make up Yerevan's forces there: Armenians from Armenia, Armenians from Nagorno-Karabakh and "mercenary criminals from many countries" (<http://news.day.az/politics/221455.html>).

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

Florian Peter, political counselor of the German embassy in Baku, says that "international laws connected with the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are on the side of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220992.html>).

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that there are "no parallels" between Nagorno-Karabakh and Kosovo and therefore the International Court's decision on the latter has no bearing on the former (<http://news.day.az/politics/220695.html>).

UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova says that "Azerbaijan is a model of inter-cultural dialogue" (<http://news.day.az/society/221392.html>). She adds that she is concerned by Armenia's destruction of the cultural-historical heritage of Azerbaijan in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/221497.html>).

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

30 July

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives UNESCO's Gold Mozart Medal from Irina Bokova, the secretary general of that organization. Among her other duties, the Azerbaijani first lady is a good will ambassador for UNESCO (<http://news.day.az/society/221556.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of NATO says it will not avoid discussions of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict despite calls for it to do so from the Armenian parliament (<http://news.day.az/politics/221525.html>).

## 29 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives UNESCO Director General Irina Bokova, who says that "Azerbaijan is a model of inter-cultural dialogue" (<http://news.day.az/politics/221300.html> and <http://news.day.az/society/221392.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Luis Ayala, the secretary general of the Socialist International (<http://news.day.az/politics/221303.html>).

Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov receives a delegation of deputies of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (<http://news.day.az/politics/221355.html>).

Turkish Foreign Trade Minister Zafer Chaglayan says that "Turkey supports and will support the return of the Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia" (<http://news.day.az/politics/221268.html>).

Russian arms export officials say that media reports saying that Moscow has sold Azerbaijan C-300 air defense systems are not true (<http://news.day.az/politics/221227.html>).

## 28 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Foreign Trade Minister Zafer Chaglayan (<http://news.day.az/politics/221173.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov receives the incoming UN Coordinator for Azerbaijan, Fikret Akchura (<http://news.day.az/politics/221151.html>).

The Foreign Ministry sends notes of protest to the embassies of Spain, Great Britain and Ireland whose nationals took part in an archeological expedition in Karabakh without Baku's permission (<http://news.day.az/politics/221197.html>).

The Emir of Kuwait says that his government devotes "enormous importance to its relations with Azerbaijan" and that he personally looks forward to visiting Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/221118.html>).

Günther Oettinger, the EU commissioner on energy, says that "Azerbaijan is a major energy player in the region and major partner of the European Union" (<http://news.day.az/economy/221189.html>).

## 27 July

Elnur Aslanov, the head of the political analysis and information department of the Presidential Administration, says that Armenia has taken "an irrational and unconstructive position" in the talks on the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/society/220971.html>).

Georgian President Mikhail Saakashvili says that Tbilisi intends to simplify border crossing procedures with Azerbaijan as well as with Armenia (<http://news.day.az/society/221027.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri says that the Azerbaijan-Georgian transport corridor will soon become a real competitor to the Russian and Iranian corridors (<http://news.day.az/economy/220973.html>).

#### 26 July

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border is not a subject of discussion" with regard to the NATO exercises in Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/220816.html>).

Peter Semneby, the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus, says that the European Union "considers premature the conduct of any referenda on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220817.html>).

#### 24 July

Vasif Talybov, chairman of the Supreme Majlis of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic, receives Geno Boros, Hungarian ambassador to Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/220506.html>).

#### 23 July

President Ilham Aliyev says that "after the restoration of independence, the free press in Azerbaijan rapidly developed" (<http://news.day.az/topnews/220218.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Azerbaijan does not accept the International Court's decision on Kosovo or believe that it is applicable to Karabakh (<http://news.day.az/politics/220432.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE, says that he is "not satisfied" with the work of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/220427.html>).

Azerbaijan and Georgia establish a joint commission to promote trade (<http://news.day.az/economy/220481.html>).

US Senator Richard Lugar says that "the absence of a US representative in Azerbaijan can be an obstacle to the guaranteeing of the interests of Washington" there (<http://news.day.az/politics/220494.html>).

#### 22 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives TOTAL President Yves-Louis Darricarrère (<http://news.day.az/economy/220250.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that "if Armenia does not liberate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, then a very complicated situation will arise in the region, and Armenia will be responsible for this" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220323.html>).

21 July

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, on behalf of President Ilham Aliyev, decorates seven members of the Azerbaijani diplomatic service for their contributions (<http://news.day.az/society/220141.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that "Armenia will not be able to develop in the region without Turkey and Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220149.html>).

Milli Majlis speaker Ogtay Asadov speaks at the Third World conference of Parliamentary speakers in Geneva (<http://news.day.az/politics/220147.html>).

The Azerbaijani embassy in Paris lodges a complaint with ARTE TV for its showing of an anti-Azerbaijani film, "Haut Karabagh: Gomchassar" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220041.html>).

Aykhan Suleymanov, Azerbaijani consul general in Kars, meets with Kars Governor Ahmet Kar (<http://news.day.az/politics/220063.html>).

Laure Borgomano, counselor at the French permanent representation to NATO, says that "the process of the integration of [Azerbaijan] in the world community is just as important as the result" (<http://news.day.az/politics/220052.html>).

Tair Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says "the only way out" of the current impasse on Karabakh is "the force variant" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219872.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a member of the Defense and Security Committee of the Milli Majlis, says that Azerbaijan agreed not to use force to resolve the Karabakh conflict while talks were going on, "but for "about 20 years, Armenia has used one and the same tactic" in order to prevent progress, thus making the question of the use of force again topical (<http://news.day.az/politics/220016.html>).

20 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Supachai Panitchpakdi, the Secretary-General of the UN Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) (<http://news.day.az/politics/219919.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives ENI chief executive officer Paolo Scaroni (<http://news.day.az/politics/219920.html>).

Milli Majlis Speaker Oktay Asadov meets with Kazakhstan Senate Chairman Kasym-Zhomart Tokayev at the Geneva Conference of Parliamentary Speakers (<http://news.day.az/politics/219873.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the OSCE, says that the Armenian side at the ministerial bilateral in Almaty "once again demonstrated its unconstructive position" on the Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/219916.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that "Armenia is openly declaring that Russia and the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty give it confidence" to push Yerevan's line in its conflict with Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/219949.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin receives the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/219939.html>).

The outgoing ambassador of the Netherlands Jan Lucas van Hoorn says "the signing of the association agreement with the European Union brings Azerbaijan closer to Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219863.html>).

Lavon Lotem, Israel's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Israel is very interested in the elimination of the visa regime for holders of diplomatic passports and has made proposals to Baku in that regard (<http://news.day.az/politics/219852.html>).

Rabbi Marc Dworkin, the director of the American Jewish Committee, says that Azerbaijan can play "an important role" in the establishment of Jewish-Islamic dialogue and cooperation in the Middle East (<http://news.day.az/politics/219832.html>).

19 July

President Ilham Aliyev says in Tbilisi that "Azerbaijani companies are very interested in Georgia" (<http://news.day.az/topnews/219579.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ukrainian Foreign Minister Konstantin Grishchenko (<http://news.day.az/politics/219753.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the meeting in Almaty between himself and his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan was "without result" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219714.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Romanian counterpart Teodor Baconschi on the sidelines of the OSCE ministerial in Almaty (<http://news.day.az/politics/219820.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natic Aliyev says that "Azerbaijan and Georgia will be able to supply electrical energy to Turkey and Iran" (<http://news.day.az/economy/219641.html>).

Deputy Economic Development Minister Niyazi Safarov says that "economic relations between Germany and Azerbaijan are built at a high level" (<http://news.day.az/economy/219718.html>).

Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov meets with his Armenian counterpart Ovik Abramyan in Geneva on the sidelines of the Third World Conference of Parliamentary Speakers (<http://news.day.az/politics/219794.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Almaty meeting between the Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers "demonstrated that the sides of the Karabakh conflict are still very far from an agreement," whatever the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs say (<http://news.day.az/politics/219659.html>).

Fazail Agamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Azerbaijan is confronted by "an anti-Azerbaijani coalition of Armenia and the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219668.html>).

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Konstantin Grishchenko says that "relations with Azerbaijan have great importance for Ukraine" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219731.html>).

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Konstantin Grishchenko calls for increasing the economic cooperation within the framework of GUAM (<http://news.day.az/politics/219720.html>).

#### 18 July

President Ilham Aliyev visits Georgia and meets with his Georgian counterpart Mikhail Saakashvili (<http://news.day.az/politics/219579.html>).

Javanshir Akhundov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Iran, predicts growth in trade between the two countries (<http://news.day.az/economy/219633.html>).

#### 17 July

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan in Almaty together with the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, but they do not release a joint statement (<http://news.day.az/politics/219489.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his counterparts from Poland, Macedonia, Israel and Turkey as well as with Robert Simmons, the special representative of the NATO secretary general for the South Caucasus and Central Asia on the sidelines of the OSCE ministerial in Almaty (<http://news.day.az/politics/219544.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu expresses disappointment over the results of the meetings of the Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers concerning the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. "We had expected results from this meeting," Davutoglu says, but "unfortunately nothing was achieved" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219551.html>).

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev says that "Kazakhstan supports the efforts of the president of Russia for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/219478.html>).

16 July

President Ilham Aliyev says that «there are between Azerbaijan and Mauritania mutual interests for the resolution of political and economic issues” (<http://news.day.az/topnews/219210.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Makhmud Mammadgulyev says that the European Union says that Azerbaijan needs to become a member of the World Trade Organization if it wants to join the EU. At the same time, he reports, the EU favors easing but not eliminating the visa regime between Azerbaijan and the EU (<http://news.day.az/politics/219430.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Makhmud Mammadgulyev says “the resolution of the Karabakh conflict is one of the directions of the agreement on the association of the European Union and Azerbaijan” (<http://news.day.az/politics/219393.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it is “very difficult to work with Armenian diplomacy” when Yerevan’s leaders say one thing in private talks and a diametrically opposite thing in public (<http://news.day.az/politics/219336.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, the first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, asks visiting Mauritanian President Mohamed Ould Abdel Aziz to support Baku as a sit for a future meeting of the presidents of the OIC countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/219399.html>).

Aynur Jamalgyzy, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “the activity of the present co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group may seem passive because when Matthew Bryza served in that capacity, he frequently gave baselessly optimistic declarations about the course of Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations. But after a certain time, he himself distanced himself from his own words” (<http://news.day.az/politics/219316.html>).

French Minister for European Affairs Pierre Lellouche says that “Azerbaijan is a country with powerful economic potential” (<http://news.day.az/politics/219391.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara has not raised the possibility of placing Turkish peacekeepers in Nagorno-Karabakh with either Azerbaijan or Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/219364.html>).

OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut says that the meeting of the Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers on the sidelines of the OSCE ministerial is “very important” for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/219404.html>).

Catherine Ashton, the high representative of the European Union for foreign affairs and security policy, says that “negotiations on an association agreement demonstrate the commitment of the EU to deepening relations with Azerbaijan” (<http://news.day.az/politics/219329.html>).

The European Court for Human Rights has agreed to hear on September 15 a case brought by a group of internally displaced persons (IDPs) in Azerbaijan against Armenia.

### **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.