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LOOKING BACK AT BLACK JANUARY **20 YEARS ON**

A Most Painful Day

[By Elin Suleymanov, Consul General of Azerbaijan to Los Angeles, California]

January 20 was a very tragic and painful day. Despite that, it served as the basis for the construction of post-Soviet Azerbaijani identity and even the recovery of Azerbaijani identity. On that day, most Azerbaijanis lived through a personal transformation, changing from being Soviet citizens, however unhappy, into confident citizens of their own country. I was one of those Azerbaijanis. On that date, as a student in Russia, I witnessed how the Soviet security police attacked those who had gathered at Azerbaijan's mission in Moscow and how Heydar Aliyev joined the protesters. By speaking out against what Moscow was doing in Baku and denouncing the Communist Party for backing these steps, Heydar Aliyev, himself a veteran Soviet official, established himself as the new leader of the independent Azerbaijan that was emerging.

January 20 is symbolic for many reasons. We, Azerbaijanis, on that date, 20 years ago, felt and demonstrated an unprecedented level of unity and resolve in the face of the threat to our nation's existence. The tragedy itself represented the birth pangs of the emergence of Azerbaijan as an independent nation committed to independence. And the events of that day showed that this nation embraced far more people than many had thought: Indeed, one photograph that no Azerbaijani will ever forget from that time was a picture of a funeral service for the victims of the massacre with Christian, Jewish and Muslim religious leaders leading a joint prayer at the cemetery.

Twenty years ago, on that January night, we ceased being Soviet citizens and became Azerbaijanis. And now, almost a generation later, our country's independence and prosperity are the best tributes we can offer to the memory of those who lost their lives in the Soviet attack so long ago.

A Day of Meaning

[By Tabib Huseynov, Political Analyst]

What makes Black January so important now is that it serves as a reminder of the capacity of Azerbaijanis to stand up for their country and overcome tragedies, however great. As a result, the attacks of January 20 had exactly the opposite effect Moscow had hoped they would. They did not stop the drive toward independence; they accelerated it.

In the wake of the attacks, Moscow declared a curfew in Baku. But despite that order, more than a million Azerbaijanis, almost the entire adult population of Baku, took part in the funeral of the victims on 22 January. Their willingness to stand up for their people and to ignore Communist orders made this event one of the largest demonstrations of the power of the people in the course of the final years of the USSR. Moreover, in the days that followed, thousands of Azerbaijanis demonstratively burned their party cards and took part in a 40 day period of mourning for the victims. Never before had the Azerbaijani nation been as united as in those days.

Today, Azerbaijanis all over the world mark January 20th as a day of national mourning and dignity. Every year on this anniversary, hundreds of thousands visit the Alley of Martyrs, where the victims of the tragedy repose. The visitors slowly pass their graves and lay red carnations, a symbol of the tragedy, on the grave markers of the fallen. They come with sadness, but they leave with pride.

Black January, therefore, remains an important part of Azerbaijani national consciousness, a day not just of sorrow and pain but of the nation's commitment to the ideals of freedom and democracy.

**MOSCOW WAS TRYING TO SAVE ITS EMPIRE,
NOT ARMENIANS,
IN JANUARY 1990**

Vugar Seyidov
AzerTag, Berlin

Twenty years after the fact, the events of January 1990 remain a source of controversy especially since some groups are seeking to distort the record in order to promote their own narrow political agendas. This year, for example, the Armenian media have insisted with one voice that the killing of more than 130 Azerbaijani civilians in Baku by the Soviet Army was justified because only by taking that step could Moscow hope "to finally stop the massacres of Christian Armenians in [the] mostly Muslim capital" (e.g. Gharibyan 2010).

But if the Soviet forces truly had such a noble-sounding mission, how did it happen that this "humanitarian" effort ended with the deaths of so many and the saving of not even one life? And that question in turn leads to other and more significant ones: What was the real aim of those who introduced the Soviet military into Baku? Was it to save something or to kill? Or was the aim of Moscow "noble" but the actions of the generals "unprofessional" in that they killed more than a hundred peaceful people and did not engage in any search for those who supposedly needed help?

The answers to all these questions are provided by even the briefest review of what was taking place in Azerbaijan and in the Soviet capital in 1989. By the end of that year, political power in Baku had passed into the hands of the Popular Front because the Communist Party had completely lost the trust of the people. Party leaders controlled their own administrative offices and very little else. Moscow recognized that party secretary Abdulrahman Vazirov and his associates were losing control of the situation and that in elections scheduled for February 1990, the Popular Front would likely win almost all of the seats. In that event, the first act of the new parliament would be the declaration of Azerbaijan's independence from the Soviet Union.

If some in Moscow were prepared to tolerate the possible loss of the three small Baltic countries – and far from all of the senior officials in the Soviet capital were – no one in the Kremlin was prepared to accept the loss of strategically important and energy rich Azerbaijan. Indeed, people in Moscow concluded, that if Azerbaijan were to declare its independence, that step, far more than anything the Baltic nationalists might do, would trigger the destruction of the Soviet Union. Consequently, Moscow decided to teach Azerbaijan a lesson by the use of force and thus send a message to all the other Soviet republics.

We now know that hardliners in the KGB had begun planning a series of steps to prevent the Azerbaijani Popular Front from coming to power. They wanted the February elections to be postponed indefinitely if not cancelled altogether. But to do that, Moscow needed a pretext, and the KGB organized one: pogroms against the remaining Armenian residents in the Azerbaijani capital. Most Armenians had already left, but the KGB organized attacks on the remaining ones, sending undercover agents to provoke Azerbaijanis who had been forced from their homes by the Armenian advance and occupation.

Beginning on January 13 and continuing until January 15, KGB-led crowds attacked Armenians in Baku. By January 16, the Armenians who survived were evacuated to safer places not by Soviet officials but by Popular Front activists who could see that

the Moscow-inspired pogroms were a provocation intended to justify a move against the independence movement. Significantly, the 13,000 Soviet troops then stationed in the city did nothing to block the attacks against Armenians. One soldier at the time told me that he and his comrades "had been given orders not to intervene but rather let the violence continue."

So much for the notion that Moscow intervened to protect "the Christian Armenians" or anyone else! In any case, by January 16, the KGB-inspired violence had stopped. If Moscow was interested in protecting the Armenians, why did it wait until January 20 to send in troops? The reason is that Moscow dispatched these forces not to save Armenians but to save the totalitarian empire.

And that reality, one that some Armenians and others now prefer to forget, is confirmed by something else. When the Soviet forces came into Baku, they did not head to the neighborhoods where Armenians had lived. Instead, they focused their attention on taking over government buildings and the headquarters of the Popular Front, blowing up the television station and closing newspapers, and killing anyone who evinced any curiosity in what they were doing. None of this had anything to do with the Armenians. Instead, the Soviet army was sent to kill Soviet citizens, not to save them.

That is something that Armenians and others must remember, however much they would like to exploit a different paradigm to explain what happened. And it is something Azerbaijanis must remember as well, recognizing that the tragic events in Baku were something very different from the tragic events in Sumgayit earlier. The latter were spontaneous; the former were Moscow ordered and KGB-organized, a classic example of a failing empire trying to save itself by killing its own people and as a result hastening its own demise.

Reference

Gharibyan, Ivan (2010) "January 20: Azeri Mass Media Let Imagination Run Wild", *News.am*, 19 January, available at <http://news.am/en/news/12490.html> (accessed 22 January 2010).

BLACK JANUARY AS THE AZERBAIJANI FOURTH OF JULY

Thomas Goltz
Adjunct Professor of Political Science
Montana State University

On the night that I agreed to write my analysis about the events of January 19/20 1990 in Baku, then capital of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan (AzSSR), I left my new Senior Political Science project class at Montana State University, walked to my car and reflected on the real and true level of international-awareness among my fourth-year "Capstone" graduating students, and sighed.

January 19, 2010 was the first meeting of our first class, and although several of the students had previously subjected themselves to “Goltz’s Gulag”—meaning a crash course in the political geography of the post-Soviet space—the majority of those university seniors specializing in the discipline called ‘Political Science’ were largely clueless not only about the basic geopolitical space in question, but also the very geography of Eurasia.

Accordingly, as a professor of “arcane” international subjects, I have developed a thick skin. I no longer expect my students to know where Russia is (or what it is) on a map on the first day of class, much less the real “where” and “what” of Azerbaijan. But I know that by the end of my class sometime in early May, they will not only be able to whiz through an expanded map quiz of some 50 entities, but also be responsible for a vast amount of information that they were previously ignorant about for the very good reason that nobody had ever bothered to talk to them about the issues facing the post-Soviet states in general, and Azerbaijan in particular.

These were some of the thoughts running through my brain when I turned the key in the 1992 Cadillac given to me by Vahid, the Susha refugee/used car dealer in Billings (“for my services to Azerbaijan over the years”) and drove the 30 kilometers through a canyon and over an icy pass to my home outside Livingston, Montana (population around 7,000 souls) on the banks of the Yellowstone River, which has its headwaters in the world’s first national park by the same name.

What does any of this have to do with the concept of “Black January”?

Believe me, I will eventually get to the point.

As intuited, the class I was teaching on January 19 is a senior thesis seminar in the department of Political Science. Accordingly, the first order of business was for me to introduce myself and explain where my areas of self-perceived expertise lay, and where my self-perceived areas of weakness were/are.

Not surprisingly, I extolled my accumulated knowledge on the Muslim world with a special focus on Turkey, and then on the post-Soviet world, with a special focus on the Caucasus, and an even narrower focus on Azerbaijan.

And this was the personal story I told them:

I first showed up in the Azerbaijani part of the crumbling, moribund part of the then-USSR in the summer of 1991 on my way to then-Soviet Uzbekistan, and completely by accident, because sometimes things happen like that.

The word in English is called “serendipity,” or less elegantly, “fate.”

The main point of the extended personal story to my students was that I was then as they were now essentially clueless about whatever that entity called the AzSSR part of the USSR was all about, but that I was a quick study because I had to be because I had the dubious privilege of arriving at *exactly* the time of the collapse of Soviet authority in Azerbaijan and the ensuing independence period.

I continued the tale in the following vein:

The weekly mass-meetings on Lenin (now renamed Freedom) Square resulted in the periodic "exclusive" interviews with people and personalities that the western media had no interest in knowing about, chief among them being a certain Heydar ("Gaidar") Aliyev. Among the post-Soviet personalities that ranked as worthy of western attention at the time were then-Azerbaijani (post) Communist Party boss Ayaz Mutallibov and Sheikh ul-Islam Allahshukhur Pashazade (whom we quickly and accurately if not exactly deferentially started to call "Thank-God, Son-of-a-General").

All this was very long ago, relatively speaking, and all summed up very nicely in my book about the chaotic period of 1991-94 (and maybe '96), entitled *Azerbaijan Diary: A Rogue Reporter's Adventures in an Oil-Rich, War-Torn, Post-Soviet Republic*.

I never liked the title, although I stand by the book, I told my students.

(Weirdly, and while used by Azerbaijani diplomats as a "reality gift" item for their colleagues from Mexico to Vienna (and certainly London, Ottawa and Washington), it has yet to be published in Azerbaijani. The translation is done; the book is set. The best recommendation comes from my old friend, the Late Great Heydar Aliyev himself, who commanded that the book about the "difficult" rebirth of Azerbaijan be available in Azerbaijani almost a decade ago).

My point is this.

On the evening of January 19, 2010, when I surveyed my 25-odd students at Montana State University about what their general academic interests were and how we might find mutually interesting and challenging subjects for their respective "Capstones" (meaning senior thesis projects), the majority responded that they had selected me because they either had previously had classes with me or had heard about me through friends, and that they were all determined to experience what has deliciously been described as "Goltz's Gulag," meaning academic hell.

Nice.

That means they know me, student/academic-wise. That means they do not take my classes because they are easy. They take them because they want to learn, actually learn something.

Cool.

But what does any of this have to do with Black January?

Everything.

Everyone at my university knows that in addition to the fact that I am a demanding professor with low toleration for nonsense, and one of the few on staff who is consistently asked to travel and pontificate on a range of different subjects. But mainly, I am "Mister Azerbaijan."

In addition to my Montana classes, I have spoken on Azerbaijan-related subjects in London, DC, NYC, Brussels, Berkley and Ottawa (to name a few venues) and have invitations pending to Mexico, Prague, New Delhi and Tokyo.

You might say that I have been lionized by certain sections of Azerbaijani society; you might also conclude that as a result of my high-profile status in Baku, that I have also been demonized by those who disagree with whatever message I convey.

Usually and not surprisingly, my critics tend to be of the Armenian persuasion. Very specifically, they have declared me to be a stooge, a fraud, a paid-flunky for everyone from the CIA to Mossad and generally a pathological or at least well-trained liar.

The list is long.

As might be imagined, over the years I have developed a skin of steel about these nasty accusations and character-destroying fabrications.

Which brings me back to the point.

As a typical (!) American student in the late 1970s and early 1980s, if I had heard anything about Baku and Azerbaijan, almost all of it was negative.

Not only was Azerbaijan a part of generic "Russia," but in addition to being a bastion of communism, it apparently was the next place to embrace Islamic fundamentalism, and of the virulent Shiite Muslim variety.

Indeed. How could Mr. Glasnost and Perestroika Mikhail Gorbachev *not* send in government troops to subdue this Islamic (and most likely, Iranian/Ayatollah Khomeini-based!) sedition?

That, my friends, is the way that the events of January 19/20, 1990 were seen in most of the world—at least by greenhorns like me.

Perched in Ankara, Turkey at the time, I recall the words of the late Turkish President, Turgut Ozal, on state TV. This is a paraphrase, but it captures the essence: *Shiite Muslims gone mad! Put them down, now!*

Ouch!

Today, that knee-jerk response to the events of Black January seems utterly ridiculous, insulting to the victims of the brutal killings of that night, and an absolute disgrace to media reporting of the events and subsequent analysis of how and why January 19/20, 1990 occurred.

But at the time, it was normal: a Moscow-based, maybe lil'-bit Russian-speaking correspondent of the *New York Times* or *Washington Post*, rightly focused on Kremlin intrigue, gets a call from that pesky "stringer" in the Caucasus, detailing anti-Armenian acts of violence and brutality in Baku—and all described in "religious" terms: *Ancient Christians versus Insane Shiite Muslims*, etc.

I can only speculate about the motives of those first reporters relating data about the events of January 20, 1990, because I was not there at the time, and only showed up some 18 months later. But I do speculate about such things now, after some twenty years of reflection and on-the-ground-experience, because so much of the long-distance "western" reporting on Black January seems so totally skewed

(Shiites versus Christians) that one has to wonder not only about the accuracy of the original press reports, but also the neutrality of the reporters.

Veracity, in a word.

My suspicion is tha...Ah, well. We shall not go there.

(The last thing I need right now is a libel suite; I nearly got hit up by one last year by suggesting that some Armenian natives of Karabakh are famous for growing garlic (which I do, too). This was turned into my having made some ethno-national-“racist” slur, with concomitant demands that I apologize to the Armenian nation, etc.)

But back to the point.

What everyone seems to agree upon is that Black January was a seminal event in Azerbaijani history, and one that paved the way for the demand for Azerbaijani independence from the USSR upon its collapse/implosion some 18 months later.

Now, having danced around the point for several essay hours in this missive, allow me to go for the throat.

January 19/20, 1990, was a watershed for the AzSSR.

It created an independence movement that ultimately resulted in the collapse of the superstructure called the USSR itself, and thus the independence of the AzSSR. And if the collapse of the superstructure—the USSR—is regarded as an absolute desirable, then how can the events of January 19/20, 1990 not be regarded as an absolutely necessary part of that process of the independence of the (now former) AzSSR?

IE: No January 20; no Independent Azerbaijan.

Let me take a hard, theoretical line:

Mourning the event—not the victims!—means the mourner wants to return to *Day Zero*, in this case, January 18, 1990.

That was the day when everything (relatively speaking) was fine in the bad-old USSR, the Cold War was still on (relatively speaking) and nobody had ever heard of the chunk of turf called Azerbaijan (like me then, or my current students, now).

A return to Day Zero, January 18, 1990...Is that what the citizens of the proud, reborn Republic of Azerbaijan want?

Maybe—and that is up to you.

If you mourn the passing of the USSR, mourn January 19/20, 1990.

*If you celebrate Azerbaijani independence, then honor the martyrs of Black January not as victims, but as *leaders of a much larger cause.**

Thus, *if* the convoluted events of the late Soviet period culminating in Black January (with echoes in Georgia, Lithuania, etc) appear to have pre-determined the demise of the USSR, then *why not celebrate?*

Fourth-of-July American-style fireworks aside (I personally loath this aspect of celebrating American independence because I really, really hate war, and fireworks are an idiot's facsimile thereof), the bottom line is this:

Throughout history, those states/nations/transnational entities who have chosen to break from a distant, central power have most often done so at the price of local blood.

To reiterate: whether you like it or not, if there had been no traumatic late Soviet Azerbaijani experience, there would be little or no awareness in Montana (or elsewhere in core-USA) of anything academically related to post-Soviet Azerbaijan...

Hard truths, but true.

Lastly and very weirdly and horribly, I would like to return to the top of this missive: my driving home to my little community in the mountains of Montana in the relative middle of beautiful nowhere.

A certain Professor Goltz is doing so very specifically because in 1991, a relatively small chunk of "Russia" that no one had ever heard about that called itself "Azerbaijan" had just declared itself independent of the thing known generically as "Russia," meaning the USSR.

Then came war, confusion and chaos—but that small, eagle-shaped thing called "Azerbaijan" managed to put itself on the map.

No pain, no gain, as they cynically say.

Thus, while it behooves all friends of Azerbaijan to remember the victims of Black January, let us shift the focus from disconsolate mourning to sober celebration.

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

President Ilham Aliyev tells the Cabinet of Ministers that the military potential of Azerbaijan is "growing," that Azerbaijan's standing in the world is rising, and that progress is being made toward a resolution of the Karabakh conflict now that Armenia has recognized that the conflict must be resolved on the basis of the territorial integrity of states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190295.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells the *Wall Street Journal* that "Armenia will be able to freeze the negotiating process on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict if this question will be considered in isolation from the question of the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192050.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells *Bloomberg* news service in Davos that "many questions" still remain unanswered concerning the Nabucco project (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192048.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the London Conference on Aid to Afghanistan that Baku will "continue military assistance until there is stability in Afghanistan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192299.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, says that "the OIC will always support Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192007.html>).

Sergey Naryshkin, chief of the Presidential Administration of Russia, says that "in Russia, the strategic and mutually profitable relations with Azerbaijan are highly valued" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191223.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

31 January

A Polish foreign ministry spokesman says that the European Union intends to begin negotiations with Baku on the simplification of its visa regime with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192425.html>).

30 January

Azerbaijanis and American citizens of Azerbaijani origin sent a letter to US President Barack Obama and other senior American officials concerning the 18th anniversary of the Khojaly tragedy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192316.html>).

29 January

Vasif Talybov, chairman of the Supreme Majlis of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic receives Ambassador Bilge Cankorel of the Baku Office of the OSCE (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192407.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan discussed the latest proposals of the OSCE Minsk Group but that "it is impossible to speak about results" from their latest session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192235.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan has no plans at present to lift the visa requirement for Iranians visiting Azerbaijan even though Tehran has done so for Azerbaijanis. Visa issues are "not a bilateral issue," he says, noting that the imposition or lifting of a visia requirement is "the internal affair of each country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192297.html>).

Farhad Abdullayev, the head of the Constitutional Court, and Ramiz Rzayev, the head of the Supreme Court, meet with Jean-Paul Costa, the head of the European Court of Human Rights (<http://www.day.az/news/society/192128.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu meets with his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan and says that the Armenians "know well the goals and intentions of Ankara" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192277.html>).

Nizami Jafarov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that he does not believe that the preamble to any agreement between Baku and Yerevan over the Karabakh conflict is that important in and of itself but thinks that "if today Azerbaijan can dictate its position" on that, then it will be able to advance its position better on substantive points (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191968.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, calls on PACE "not to remain indifferent to the fate of Azerbaijani refugees and forced resettlers" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192121.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US special representative on energy issues in Eurasia, calls "disappointing" the absence of an agreement between Azerbaijan and Turkey on the shipping of gas from the Shah-Deniz field (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/192134.html>).

The National Academy of Sciences issues the first of a planned four-volume set on "The History of Azerbaijani Diplomacy and International Relations." This volume covers the period from 1639 to 1828, and the documents reproduced in it are given in both Azerbaijani and Russian (<http://www.day.az/news/society/192265.html>).

US Congressman Dean Heller, Republican of Nevada, in a response to a letter from the Azerbaijani diaspora about Black January, says that "the actions of the Soviet Union in January 1990 were an attempt to block the strivings of the Azerbaijani people to acquire independence from the USSR" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/192126.html>).

Turkmenistan has approached Azerbaijan for assistance in preparing cadres for its national fleet in the Caspian, *ABC.az* reports citing "informed sources" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/192250.html>).

28 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets King Abdullah II of Jordan at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192111.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets Polish President Lech Kaczynski at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192107.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets Latvian President Valdis Zatlers at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192018.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Doris Leuthard, President of Switzerland, at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192106.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets Prince Andrew of Great Britain at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192110.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev takes part in the Global Energy Panorama forum at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192013.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu in London on the sidelines of the Afghanistan assistance conference (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192112.html>).

Rafael Huseynov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, denounces the destruction of Albanian-period graves and monuments in Armenian-occupied parts of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192070.html>).

Musa Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Azerbaijan will never conduct negotiations with separatists," noting that "soon will we come to the finish line in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191835.html>).

A delegation of Milli Majlis deputies visiting Washington raises the issue of US assistance to the separatist regime in Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192045.html>). The deputies also take part in a US television program devoted to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191905.html>).

The US Department of State responds to Azerbaijan's protest note saying that the US does not recognize any structure by the name of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191986.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov discusses the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192064.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijan and Turkey have agreed on a document about the elimination of visa requirements (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191999.html>). In other comments, he says that if progress is made in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, then "the confirmation of the protocols signed with Armenia will become possible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191987.html>).

Movlud Chavushoglu, the new president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, receives Azerbaijan's delegation to that body (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192052.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe elects Swiss parliamentarian Dick Marty as the new head of the PACE committee monitoring the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/192044.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu discusses the Ankara-Yerevan protocols with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191963.html>).

The Georgian embassy in Baku releases a statement announcing the retirement of Tbilisi's ambassador in Baku, Ivane Noniashvili (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191919.html>).

27 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets Slovenian President Danilo Turk at Davos (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191899.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, tells that body that "in Azerbaijan, measures for the improvement of the situation in the media sector are being taken" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191909.html>).

A delegation of Milli Majlis deputies meet with Italian parliamentarians in Rome (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191884.html>).

Youth and Sports Ministry representative Farhad Gadzhiyev signs a cooperation agreement with Iran's National Youth Organization (<http://www.day.az/news/society/191834.html>).

Culture and Tourism Minister Abulfas Garayev says that possible visits by the missions of UNESCO and the Council of Europe to the occupied territories of Azerbaijan remain under discussion (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191745.html>).

Azay Guliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia's hopes to use the protocols Yerevan signed with Ankara as a means of avoiding a resolution of the Karabakh conflict "have not proved out" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191560.html>).

Kanat Saudabayev, Kazakhstan foreign minister and chairman-in-office of the OSCE, says that "the Nagorno-Karabakh problem can be resolved only through the combined efforts of all interested sides" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191874.html>).

Movlud Chavushoglu, the president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the lack of a resolution of the Karabakh conflict "is an obstacle for stability in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191701.html>).

Khalil Unlutepe, an opposition deputy in Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that the Turkish parliament "will not ratify the protocols which were signed with an occupier state" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191797.html>).

Azerbaijanis living in Latin America launch their own website (<http://www.day.az/news/society/191783.html>).

26 January

President Ilham Aliyev names Rashad Mammadov Azerbaijani consul general in Aktau, Kazakhstan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191907.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that media reports suggesting the Armenian community of Karabakh will be invited to take part in negotiations over the Karabakh conflict are baseless (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191679.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and vice president of that body, says that PACE's decision not to recognize the authority of the Armenian delegation "testified to the situation in this country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191681.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the Sochi meeting between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia contributed to progress in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191674.html>).

The US Department of State says that Washington supports the rapid ratification of the protocols between Armenia and Turkey directed toward the normalization of the bilateral relations of those countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191503.html>).

US Representative John Shadegg, Republican of Arizona, appeals to other members of Congress "not to forget about Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191712.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "the Madrid Principles are against the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191141.html>).

Debnath Shaw, India's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that India "supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191512.html>).

25 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan in Sochi at a meeting hosted by Russian President Dmitry Medvedev to discuss the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191335.html>).

Movlud Chavushoglu, the newly elected president of PACE, says his group "will do everything that depends on us for the resolution of the [Karabakh] conflict by peaceful means. War is not a path for the resolution of problems on our continent" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191428.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, Azerbaijan's ombudsman, says that Armenia reports that the European Institute of Ombudsman received representatives of the Karabakh occupation regime are untrue (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191405.html>).

Sergey Kuznetsov, an official of the Venetian Commission of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "in a short time, an action program" will be ready for Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191484.html>).

Lluís Maria de Puig, chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Council will continue to work with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191422.html>). In other comments, he says that the work of PACE's subcommittee on Karabakh must become more active to promote the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191403.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that the "main result" of the latest round of talks between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia was that the two sides agreed to propose specific formulations for those parts of the draft accord with which one or the other disagrees (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191420.html>).

Goran Lennmarker, special representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE for Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia, says that "an agreement on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict could be achieved in the spring of this year" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191410.html>).

Amr Moussa, the secretary general of the Arab League, says that his agency "has prepared research on the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191314.html>).

23 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Sergey Naryshkin, chief of the Presidential Administration of Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191217.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives Russian media representatives in her capacity as president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191150.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that a map on the site of the Armenian president showing Karabakh as independent reflects "the unconstructive approach of Armenia" to talks about resolving the conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191200.html>).

Ramiz Mehtiyev, chief of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan, says that "the Azerbaijani-Russian forum demonstrated how important it is to discuss important and immediate problems" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191228.html>).

Sergey Naryshkin, chief of the Presidential Administration of Russia, says that "the CIS needs reform" in order to make its activities more "concrete" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191239.html>). He adds that "in Russia, the strategic and mutually profitable relations with Azerbaijan are highly valued" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191223.html>).

Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos says that "all possible mechanisms" should be used to promote the resolution of the Karabakh conflicts

and other conflicts in the Caucasus
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191202.html>).

Amr Moussa, the secretary general of the Arab League, says that "cooperation from all sides is needed for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191214.html>).

Aynur Jamalgyzy, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan's proposed modifications to the Turkish-Armenian protocols are "absurd" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190918.html>).

22 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives the participants of the first Azerbaijani-Russian forum on humanitarian cooperation
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191148.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev decorates Russian journalist Mikhail Gusman with the Order of Friendship (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191137.html>).

Ramiz Mehtiyev, head of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan, says that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can be resolved only within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191014.html>).

Ramiz Mehtiyev, head of the Presidential Administration of Azerbaijan, says that "the Azerbaijani-Russian forum will make a major contribution to the development and strengthening of friendship between the peoples" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/191000.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that the decision of the Armenian Constitutional Court concerning the Ankara-Yerevan protocols confirms the correctness of President Ilham Aliyev's assessment of those protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191082.html>). In other comments, he expresses the hope that the upcoming meeting of the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents will lead to progress (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191047.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan's statement that he does not think there will be major progress in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict in 2010 "lacks logic and sense" given the upcoming meetings between the presidents of the two countries "under the patronage of Russian President Dmitry Medvedev" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191101.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku is sending 500,000 US dollars in assistance to earthquake-ravaged Haiti (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191016.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the visit of the president of the OSCE to the South Caucasus will promote "agreement on the principles of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191011.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that proposals concerning the joint Russian-American use of the Gabala radar site remain on the table but will not be

addressed until "after a joint definition of rocket threats"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191028.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that "Turkey is following the spirit of the protocols on the normalization of relations with Armenia"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191066.html>).

Onur Oymen, the deputy head of Turkey's *Republican Peoples Party*, says that "the Ankara-Yerevan protocols have lost all sense and should be annulled"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191123.html>).

Asad al-Asad, ambassador of the Palestinian Autonomy to Azerbaijan and Uzbekistan, says that Mahmoud Abbas, the president of the Autonomy, "with pleasure and satisfaction has accepted an invitation to visit Azerbaijan"
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191115.html>).

Gennady Burbulis, an advisor to the chairman of the Russian Federation Council, says that no one should pay any attention to Vladimir Zhirionovskiy's declaration that Moscow should recognize Karabakh if it declares its independence
(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191112.html>). In other comments, he says that the foundation has been laid to "move forward in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191100.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that unless Russia, the US and France put pressure on Armenia, Yerevan will be unlikely to change its "unconstructive position" on Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191043.html>).

Nikolae Ureche, Romania's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "Azerbaijan is important for NATO" especially because it "plays a significant role in the struggle with terrorism and in providing for international energy security, and it has an important geopolitical position" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191019.html>).

Ismet Beyukataman, deputy head of the Nationalist Movement Party of Turkey and a member of that country's Grand National Assembly, says that without a resolution of the Karabakh conflict, "the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border is impossible" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190686.html>).

Russian Culture Minister Aleksandr Avdeyev says that "our goal is the development of ties between the civil societies of Russia and Azerbaijan"
(<http://www.day.az/news/society/190991.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister says that Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev, like the presidents of all CIS countries, is being invited to the commemoration of the 65th anniversary of Victory Day in Moscow
(<http://www.day.az/news/society/191059.html>).

Mikhail Shvydkoy, special representative of the president of Russia for cultural cooperation with foreign countries, says that "a deficit of contacts between the peoples of Russia and Azerbaijan is felt" at the present time
(<http://www.day.az/news/society/190999.html>).

21 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/191027.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Vagif Sadykhov says that Azerbaijan is devoting "all its efforts for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190892.html>).

Faig Baguirov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Egypt, says that he has delivered a note to the Egyptian foreign ministry protesting the posting on an Egyptian website of a map showing the territories of Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhchivan as part of Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190912.html>).

Farid Shafiyev, Azerbaijani ambassador to Canada, meets with the leaders of that country's Jewish community (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190737.html>).

Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdimukhammadov tells incoming Azerbaijani Ambassador Elkhan Huseynov that relations between Ashgabat and Baku are at "a high level" and are developing rapidly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190762.html>).

The US Embassy in Baku organizes at the Baku media center a broadcast of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton's statement on Internet freedom in which she says that "countries which apply censorship to the Internet pursue political profit but at the same time lose in the economic sphere" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190929.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party and a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenia wants to have the protocols approved so that the border with Turkey can be opened (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190909.html>).

Mustafa Elitash, deputy head of the parliamentary faction of the ruling Turkish Party of Justice and Development, says that "until the resolution of the Karabakh problem there cannot be any question of opening the borders and establishing relations with Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190679.html>).

20 January

President Ilham Aliyev leads the Azerbaijani people in commemorating the 20th anniversary of Black January with a visit to the Alley of Martyrs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190590.html>) and at the opening of new memorial complex dedicated to the victims of the attack of Soviet forces on Azerbaijanis on January 20, 1990 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190622.html>).

Latif Seyfeddinogly, Azerbaijani ambassador to Kazakhstan, says that Astana's proposals for overcoming and resolving protracted conflicts "deserve attention" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190712.html>).

Romanian President Traian Basescu says that he intends to establish "privileged" relations with Azerbaijan and Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190841.html>).

19 January

President Ilham Aliyev tells *Euronews* about the state of negotiations on the Karabakh conflict and about Azerbaijan's relations with Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190540.html>).

Ali Hasanov, Vice Prime Minister of Azerbaijan, says that Mikhail Gorbachev should be brought to trial for his role in the events of January 20, 1990, and that his crimes should be assessed even if that happens after his death (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190443.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that "a legal assessment of the tragedy of January 20 [1990] must be given" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190434.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Russia, says that the Russian foreign ministry has not responded to the Azerbaijani note protesting Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's suggestion that Moscow should recognize Karabakh if Karabakh declared its independence (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190483.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Russia, tells students at Moscow State University that "'Bloody January' left a deep impression on the consciousness of the Azerbaijani people" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190481.html>).

Spanish Foreign Minister Miguel Angel Moratinos says that "the frequent meetings of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia have created a positive dynamic in the process of the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict which must not be violated" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190484.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that those who were the authors of "Bloody January" were punished by the collapse of the USSR. He says that the Soviet Union's problems began with the coming to power of Mikhail Gorbachev, and he pointed to several of the latter's policies, including the anti-alcohol campaign with its destruction of the wine industry in certain republics, "universal" glasnost, and the use of force against some republics, that Oruj says accelerated that country's demise (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190338.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the State Committee on Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, says that Azerbaijani protests caused the European Court to refrain from taking up cases brought by Armenia concerning refugee issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190468.html>).

Rejai Kutan, former speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that "the protocols signed between Ankara and Yerevan have no future" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190431.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry says that a decision by the Constitutional Court of Armenia concerning the Ankara-Yerevan protocols violates both the spirit and the letter of those agreements (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190424.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, Milli Majlis deputy, says that the paragraphs of the Madrid Principles having to do with a future referendum in Karabakh are a sticking point in the talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190155.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, ombudsman of Azerbaijan, says that "the former Soviet government conducted an unprecedented military aggression against Azerbaijan" on January 20, 1990 (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190551.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, expresses his country's sympathy to the Azerbaijani people on the eve of the 20th anniversary of the events of January 20, 1990 (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190471.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhhin, Russia's ambassador to Azerbaijan, is involved in a traffic accident but is not injured (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190406.html>).

18 January

President Ilham Aliyev tells the Cabinet of Ministers that the military potential of Azerbaijan is "growing," that Azerbaijan's standing in the world is rising, and that progress is being made toward a resolution of the Karabakh conflict now that Armenia has recognized that the conflict must be resolved on the basis of the territorial integrity of states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190295.html>).

The Library of the President of Azerbaijan for the first time puts online information about the events of January 20, 1991, at <http://www.preslib.az>.

Elmira Suleymanova, ombudsman of Azerbaijan, calls on the international community to support "the just demands of the Azerbaijani people for an international legal assessment" of the actions of those responsible for the events of January 20, 1990 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190320.html>). Deputies of the Milli Majlis equal this call for the punishment of those responsible for those events (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190312.html>).

Allahshukyur Pashazade, the Sheikh ul-Islam, says that Azerbaijan "has the right to bring to trial" Mikhail Gorbachev and others involved in the January 20, 1990 events (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190200.html>).

The General Procuracy of Azerbaijan says that Moscow has not returned "part of the materials concerning the criminal case" arising from the events of January 20, 1990 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190334.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Azerbaijan, expresses the sympathy of Iran in connection with the anniversary of the tragedy of January 20, 1990, and says that "the Islamic Republic of Iran will always support the independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190204.html>).

Tajikistan Foreign Minister Khamrokhon Zarifi says that Dushanbe's relations with Baku advanced significantly during 2009 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190360.html>).

Marvan al-Hmud, a member of the Jordanian senate and head of the Society of Jordanian-Azerbaijani Friendship in Amman, says that Jordanians are interested in broadening relations with Azerbaijan in all spheres (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190340.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Baku expects the new leadership of the Council of Europe to be objective in its assessment of events in the Caucasus and not to apply double standards (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190289.html>).

Robert Bradtke, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, meets with Karabakh separatist leader Bako Saakyan during the American diplomat's visit to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190170.html>).

17 January

Two Azerbaijani representatives to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and two in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Commonwealth of Independent States serve as election observers in Ukraine and report that they did not observe violations of the electoral law (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190146.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/190280.html>).

16 January

Azerbaijan's embassy in Moscow hands over a note to the Russian Foreign Ministry protesting Duma Deputy Speaker and LDPR Party head Vladimir Zhirinovskiy's declaration that "if Nagorno-Karabakh declares its independence, then Russia should recognize this" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190036.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Moscow is committed to a peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict and does not see any role for the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty to intervene even if the conflict were to turn violent (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190084.html>).

The Turkish Society for the Struggle against the Baseless Declarations of the Armenians collected a total of 4,000 signatures on its petition against the opening of the Turkish border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/190079.html>).

Gintaras Steponavičius, Lithuanian education and science minister, visits the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190100.html>).

The Azerbaijan Institution of Radiation Problems is preparing a cooperation agreement with its counterpart in South Korea (<http://www.day.az/news/society/190062.html>).

Note to Readers

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