



Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy
School of International Affairs and Business

**AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD
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**AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD:
REVISITING 2012 AND LOOKING FORWARD TO 2013**

An Interview with Dr. Aleksandr Karavayev
Deputy Director General
Information-Analytical Center, Moscow State University

AIW: Please list the main achievements of Azerbaijan's foreign policy in 2012.

Dr. Karavayev: The successes of 2012 were the result of the achievements made in 2011: membership in the UN Security Council, entrance into the Non-Aligned Movement, a further rapprochement with Israel, and the holding of the Eurovision competition, all of which were in fact achieved in the earlier year. However, it is possible to speak about two foreign policy victories over the last 12 months. The

first concerns the role of diplomacy in the return to Azerbaijan of Major Safarov. This was a purely diplomatic achievement that reflected the lengthy work of the foreign ministry and the efforts of the Azerbaijani president. It is also worth noting that the rapid amnesty of Safarov practically did not affect relations with Budapest or more broadly with Brussels, even though many feared that it might. The second victory of 2012 was the liberation of Azerbaijani writers from an Iranian prison. Considering that Teheran has not cut back its pressure on and propaganda against Baku, this beyond doubt must be considered a success.

AIW: Please enumerate the main shortcomings of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan in 2012.

Karavayev: The shortcomings are in fact the result of Azerbaijan's advantages. The domination of the presidential line in foreign policy not infrequently reduces the importance of the work of diplomats; they turn into mere bureaucrats. That is a problem of many countries; and Azerbaijan is not an exception in this regard. The Azerbaijani diplomats, then, often face the problem of having to consult, including during fast-paced events, not only with their ministry, but with the Presidential Administration. The official structures of the diaspora face a similar problem and, while looking to the Committee on the Affairs of Azerbaijanis Abroad, also have to consult the President's Office. Another problem is related to the weak support of the foreign economic activities of Azerbaijani companies. For example, up to the present, Azerbaijan lacks a chamber of commerce in Russia. As a result, the embassy has to fulfil what would be the latter's functions. By definition, the embassy cannot do this work as well as a specific trade representation would. There also exists a deficit in the number of Azerbaijani cultural centers abroad. The diaspora makes up for some of this, but this is exactly a sort of area which needs the attention of the government.

AIW: How do you assess the energy diplomacy of Azerbaijan in 2012 and what in your view are its prospects for the future?

Karavayev: Energy diplomacy is the most effective mechanism of Azerbaijani policy and has allowed Baku to achieve many of its goals. Among the most significant of these in the past year were the development by SOCAR of investments in Turkey and other European countries and the TANAP agreement, which in essence has given a second wind to the Nabucco project.

AIW: How do you assess the dynamics of the relationships of Azerbaijan with its nearest neighbors—Russia, Iran and Turkey—in 2012 and what in your view are the prospects for the further development of these relations in 2013?

Karavayev: The most complicated of these relationships is of course with Iran. In principle, this is a dead-end, which can be eliminated only after a change in the regime in Tehran. Iranian expectations from the end of the 1980s and the early 1990s that Azerbaijan would choose the Islamic path have not been met, nor yet overcome. The situation with regard to Moscow also is far from simple, although here one needs to note that Azerbaijan has a large range of channels—many of which do not intersect—through which it engages with Russia. Consequently, the freezing of talks on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem and the intensification of the struggle over foreign gas markets, which one can see extending into 2013, should not so strongly affect the economic and socio-cultural components of relations between Azerbaijan and Russia.

AIW: How do you assess the prospects for relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia in 2013?

Karavayev: I do not see any reason for decay, but the style will undoubtedly change. The opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, which is expected at the end of the year, will give these ties a new impulse. Of course, Baku will carefully attend to the development of relations between Yerevan and Tbilisi. The Azerbaijan-Georgian vector is chiefly defined in opposition to Georgian-Armenian relations. I hope there will be no major crisis in this respect. The intra-state dynamics in Georgia is also important. The information wars certain to attend the upcoming presidential elections in Georgia could engage, and ultimately affect, bilateral ties as well.

AIW: How do you assess the dynamic of relations between Azerbaijan and the United States in 2013?

Karavayev: Baku has already shown its ability to work with various interest groups in Washington and in individual states. I think that this practice should be promoted further and used to block the activities of the Armenian lobby. At the level of geopolitics, much will depend on the character of the American-Iranian standoff. In the summer and fall, on the eve of the presidential elections in Azerbaijan, one can expect an increase in pressure from American organizations concerning media freedom and human right. However, I do not think this will be critical.

AIW: How do you assess the activity of Azerbaijan in the public diplomacy area over the last year?

Karavayev: Several distinct Azerbaijani brands have emerged in this realm. For example, the Baku International Humanitarian Forum and the Gabala International Music Festival have acquired prominence. The holding of the Eurovision competition very much raised the prestige of Baku and might well have played a role in helping Azerbaijan to become the host of the European Olympic Games in 2015. Baku's efforts in this regard, including the *Justice for Khojaly* campaign initiated by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, helped convince the Organization for Islamic Cooperation to support the recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as genocide. All this became a result of work carried out within the context of public diplomacy.

AIW: What challenges in your view stand before Azerbaijani foreign policy in 2013, and what actions must Azerbaijan take in response to them?

Karavayev: I would not point to any completely new challenges. Rather, Baku needs to seek the further strengthening of its positions and improve its ability to use a broader spectrum of foreign policy instruments. An upgrade in the international standing of the Nagorno-Karabakh Community of Azerbaijan, propaganda about the economic projects for the restoration of Nagorno-Karabakh and the occupied territories, and a show of openness about talking with Armenian public organizations are all part of that. But I think Baku could do more in this direction. Other specific foreign policy tasks are likely to arise in the context of the presidential elections in Azerbaijan later this year.

BAKU EXPANDS PROGRAM FOR AZERBAIJANIS TO STUDY ABROAD

Paul Goble
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On February 1, Baku's education ministry announced the expansion of its highly successful program of supporting young Azerbaijanis who want to study in higher educational institutions abroad, a program that has helped the country overcome the legacy of the Soviet system in Azerbaijani schools, prompted Azerbaijani universities so that they can compete for the best students of the country, and allowed Baku to contribute to the formation of diaspora institutions that work to counter propaganda directed against Azerbaijan and to promote Azerbaijani interests abroad. [1]

The program, launched at the instigation of President Ilham Aliyev in 2007, has grown rapidly and now exceeds those of most of the other post-Soviet states. In 2007-2008, it supported 66 students, a number that grew to 134 in 2008-2009, 308 in 2009-2010, 275 in 2010-2011, and 433 in 2011-2012. In this year, 608 Azerbaijani students are being supported by this program. And ministry officials say that the number will only increase in the coming years.

The 1842 students who have been part of this program have studied in 27 different countries, with the largest number—419—in British higher educational institutions, followed by Turkey where 366 Azerbaijanis have studied and Germany where 355 have been enrolled in the universities and institutes of that country. This Azerbaijani program has expanded as a result of assistance from other countries. Poland, for example, has offered special stipends for Azerbaijani students for the 2013-2014 academic year.

Government stipends are given on the basis of a competitive review. Preferences are given to those who show what the ministry calls organizational work and the use of their experiences in various spheres of science or social life of Azerbaijan. That last provision is especially important. Unlike many government programs elsewhere, the Azerbaijani educational grants require that those who receive them agree to return to their homeland and work for its betterment. So far, all have done so.

Those who want to take part in this scholarship program must have a bachelor's or master's degree in one or another humanitarian field, be under the age of 35, and demonstrate their competence in the language of the country in whose universities they intend to enroll. Moreover, the program helps students who receive these grants to study the relevant language both before they depart for their studies and once they are there.

These students are already playing three important roles. First, they serve as cultural ambassadors for their country and often form the core of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations. Indeed, in Europe, students on this program are the leaders of the national and EU-wide Azerbaijani organizations. Without their active participation, these groups would not be playing the key role they now do in

defending Azerbaijan from the attacks of other diasporas and promoting a positive image of their country.

Second, upon their return, these students form a special cadre of highly trained people, with their own organization and networks. Many of them have received better schooling than they could have at home, and because employers know this, the leaders of Azerbaijan's educational institutions see them not as a threat, but as a challenge. Without this program, the process of transforming Soviet-era educational institutions into modern international centers would have taken far longer and been far less successful.

And third, these students provide in their persons a unique link between Azerbaijan and the countries where they have studied. The role of British, German and Turkish universities in contributing to that sense of common purpose among students has contributed to the expansion of ties between these and the 24 other countries where Azerbaijanis have studied over the past six years and Azerbaijan itself. That may be the most important contribution of what is one of the great success stories of Azerbaijani higher education.

Notes

[1] See <http://news.day.az/society/381356.html> (accessed 15 February 2013).

A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

I. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that Azerbaijan cooperates with international organizations like the Council of Europe and will continue to do so, but that "we do not want international organizations to crudely interfere in the internal problems of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/382727.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that, "because of the unconstructive position which Armenia has taken during the talks, there has not been any specific advance in the negotiations since 2010" (<http://news.day.az/politics/381655.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku will devote ever more efforts to secure the world's recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as an act of genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/384262.html>).

II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan

Mohsun Pakayin, Iran's ambassador to Baku, says that Azerbaijan has religious ties with Iran and therefore Tehran's relations with Baku are a priority matter. He adds that "there is no tension in the relations [between the two countries], but there are differences of opinion" (<http://news.day.az/politics/382330.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzhina Ivanishvili calls for the integration of ethnic Azerbaijanis in Georgia and says Tbilisi wants to develop relations with Azerbaijan, "its close neighbor and friend" (<http://news.day.az/politics/381984.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict threatens the stability of the region, harms both sides, and must be resolved in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/381773.html>).

III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

15 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Serik Primbetov, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Baku, on the occasion of the completion of his assignment in the Azerbaijani capital (<http://news.day.az/politics/384240.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Italian Deputy Foreign Minister Marta Dassau (<http://news.day.az/politics/384240.html>).

Taxation Minister Fazil Mammadov receives the ambassadors of the EU, the Netherlands, Austria and France to discuss cooperation (<http://news.day.az/economy/384211.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku will devote ever more efforts to secure the world's recognition of the Khojaly tragedy as an act of genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/384262.html>).

Ambassador Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, sends a letter to Secretary General Pan Gi-moon concerning Armenia's resettlement in the occupied territories of Armenians from Syria (<http://news.day.az/politics/384238.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Washington, speaks at the College of William and Mary on US-Azerbaijani relations (<http://news.day.az/politics/384107.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku views the latest statement by the EU representation in Azerbaijan concerning the detention of participants in the mass conflict in Ismayilly to be a form of unacceptable pressure on the government's actions (<http://news.day.az/politics/384272.html>).

Azerbaijan's embassy in Warsaw releases a statement saying that its website has been hacked by Armenians (<http://news.day.az/politics/384302.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenians are saying many things during the election campaign that can be safely ignored as "mere bluff" (<http://news.day.az/politics/384087.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Moscow opposes any action, including the possible opening of an airport on the occupied territories by

Armenia, that could destabilize the situation (<http://news.day.az/politics/384275.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, hosts a ceremony on the 70th anniversary of the Stalingrad battle (<http://news.day.az/society/384271.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of the EU representation office in Baku, says that the European Union wants the Metsamor atomic power station in Armenia to be shut down (<http://news.day.az/politics/384142.html>).

The US Department of State says that it has not yet selected a permanent US co-chair for the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/384083.html>).

14 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sabah Halid al-Gamid as-Sabah (<http://news.day.az/politics/384040.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that until Armenia completes its electoral cycle, "it is difficult to say when the next round of talks of the sides of the conflict will take place" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383968.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Washington's criticism of Baku regarding the treatment of novelist Akram Aylisli will not hurt the image of Azerbaijan, because Azerbaijan has always promoted freedom of speech (<http://news.day.az/politics/383974.html>).

Defense Industry Minister Yaver Jamalov receives Pakistani Ambassador Inayatulla Kakar to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation in the defense industry sector (<http://news.day.az/politics/383961.html>).

Tamerlan Garayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Timor, presents his credentials to Tauru Matanu Ruaku, president of the Democratic Republic of Timor-Leste (<http://news.day.az/politics/383963.html>).

Fuad Guliyev, director of the Azerbaijan State Administration for Civil Aviation, says that Yerevan's suggestions that flights will soon begin to a reopened Khojaly airport are "a provocation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383912.html>).

Bahar Muradova, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian statements about the opening of an airport in Khojaly in the occupied territories are "a challenge to Azerbaijan and the international community" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383826.html>).

Chris Harris, a Conservative member of parliament in the United Kingdom, says that the opening of the Khojaly airport by Armenia would undermine the possibility for progress in negotiations about a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/384002.html>).

Romanian parliamentarians condemn Armenia's occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory and call on Yerevan to withdraw its forces (<http://news.day.az/politics/384036.html>).

Kuwaiti Foreign Minister Sabah Halid al-Gamid as-Sabah says that his country supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/383982.html>).

The US Department of State says that Baku acted correctly when it detained a politician who offered a reward to anyone who would cut out the tongue of controversial writer Akram Aylisli (<http://news.day.az/politics/383820.html>).

13 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Siddhartha Cole, head of the SOS Kinderdorf International Organization (<http://news.day.az/politics/383693.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells a UN Security Council meeting that Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijan lands affects not only the peoples of the region, but everyone around the world (<http://news.day.az/politics/383686.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natig Aliyev tells former French Foreign Minister Dominique de Vilpen that Baku and Paris have had excellent working relations in the energy sector since 1993 (<http://news.day.az/economy/383756.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmoud Mammadgulyev in a speech in Tbilisi calls on the European Union to devote more attention to the resolution of conflicts in the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/383561.html>).

Farid Shafiyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Ottawa, visits Canada's oil industry in the province of Alberta (<http://news.day.az/politics/383562.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, the vice president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, says in London that, "Azerbaijan is a country where the West and East and antiquity and the contemporary world meet. It is a unique space where various cultures, traditions and religious intersect and that has given birth to a miracle" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383301.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan is pursuing a court that will lead to the destruction of the Armenian people (<http://news.day.az/politics/383657.html>).

Greek Foreign Minister Dimitris Avramopoulos says that TAP is superior to all competing projects and is bringing Athens and Baku closer together (<http://news.day.az/economy/383765.html>).

Gunther Ottinger, EU energy commissar, welcomes the signing of the trilateral agreement on TAP (<http://news.day.az/economy/383714.html>).

Georgian Energy and Natural Resources Minister Kakha Kaladze says that Georgian-Azerbaijani relations are based on the secure transit of energy resources (<http://news.day.az/economy/383567.html>).

Lord Laird, a member of the British House of Lords, says that any proposal to open the Khojaly airport without Baku's agreement must be considered "a provocation" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383695.html>).

12 February

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the law on Azerbaijan's accession to the convention on criminal responsibility for corruption (<http://news.day.az/politics/383477.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Vuk Jeremic, president of the 67th session of the UN Security Council (<http://news.day.az/politics/383327.html>).

Oktay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, meets with his Iranian counterpart Ali Larijani on the sidelines of a meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of Economic Cooperation in Islamabad (<http://news.day.az/politics/383339.html>).

Valeh Alaskarov, vice-speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that there are no risks for those who invest in the production of oil or its transit in Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/economy/383422.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party and a Milli Majlis deputy, says that today, "Azerbaijan has completely normal relations with the European Union and the Council of Europe" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383540.html>).

Samad Seyidov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the collection of 100,000 signatures on the petition to the White House site is a strong signal to the US about the feelings of the American and Azerbaijani peoples about Khojaly (<http://news.day.az/politics/383511.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Serzh Sargsyan will never give up his office as president of Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/383235.html>).

Štefan Füle, EU Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighbourhood Policy, says that the EU is interested in seeing the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolved and believes that the OSCE Minsk Group is the proper forum for doing so (<http://news.day.az/politics/383524.html>).

Mohsun Pakayin, Iran's ambassador to Baku, says that "Iran's relations with neighboring states cannot exert a negative influence on fraternal ties with Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383354.html>).

Mohsun Pakayin, Iran's ambassador to Baku, hosts a ceremony on the 34th anniversary of the Islamic revolution in his country (<http://news.day.az/politics/383309.html>).

Jiri Mashtalka, co-chair of the energy security committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of *Euronest*, says that, "the Minsk group is the mediator for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://news.day.az/politics/383526.html>).

Cemal Çicek, speaker of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that the international community should make stronger protests against Armenia's occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/383380.html>).

Nathalie Goulet, a member of the French Chamber of Deputies, says Yerevan's talk

about an airport in Khojaly is a provocation
(<http://news.day.az/politics/383431.html>).

11 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives former French prime minister Dominique de Vilpen
(<http://news.day.az/politics/383210.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives Antonius Bruk, incoming resident coordinator
for the United Nations in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/383307.html>).

The Azerbaijani army conducts large maneuvers near the line of the front
(<http://news.day.az/society/383155.html>).

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev names Amangeldy Zhumanbayev his
country's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/383293.html>).

Mark Field, a Conservative member of the British Parliament, says that the opening
of the Khojaly airport would have a negative impact on talks being carried out by the
OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/383213.html>).

The House of Representatives of the US State of Arkansas passes a resolution
describing the Khojaly tragedy as an act of genocide
(<http://news.day.az/politics/383081.html>).

10 February

The Foreign Ministry says that statements by EU officials concerning those detained
as a result of the Ismailly events represent a form of pressure and are an
unacceptable form of interference in the judicial process
(<http://news.day.az/politics/383041.html>).

9 February

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, speaks at a meeting for the
launch of Rudolf Ivanov's new book, *The Azerbaijani past, the Russian presence and
Persian motifs. Essays in the history of Azerbaijan in the 19th century*
(<http://news.day.az/society/382904.html>).

Elchin Amirbayov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Paris, speaks to a Strasbourg meeting
as part of the *Days of Azerbaijani Culture* in France program
(<http://news.day.az/culture/383094.html>).

Eynulla Madatli, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kyiv, meets with Vladimir Rybak, the
chairman of Ukraine's Supreme Verkhovna Rada
(<http://news.day.az/politics/382871.html>).

Hu Teng Bin, a member of the board of directors of the Measat Satellite Systems
Company, says that the launch of the first Azerbaijani telecommunications satellite is
the result of cooperation between Malaysia and Azerbaijan
(<http://news.day.az/economy/382950.html>).

The Youth Organization of the European Peoples Party says in a resolution that

Azerbaijan is a key player in providing for the energy security of Europe and condemns Armenia for occupying Azerbaijani territory (<http://news.day.az/politics/383669.html>).

8 February

President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva host a dinner for visiting Serbian President Tomislav Nikolic and his wife, Dragitsa Nikolic (<http://news.day.az/politics/382558.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva watch the launch of Azerbaijan's first telecommunications satellite, Azerspace-1 (<http://news.day.az/politics/382690.html>).

Emergency Situations Minister Kamaladdin Heydarov receives Afghanistan Deputy Foreign Minister Caved Ludi (<http://news.day.az/society/382808.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku is considering Pakistan's proposal that Azerbaijan join the OIC group on Jammu and Kashmir (<http://news.day.az/politics/382763.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the Organization for Islamic Cooperation has reaffirmed its support for Azerbaijan's just position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/382758.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says Yerevan's resettlement of Syrian Armenians on the occupied territories and its call for the opening of the Khojaly airport inflict serious harm on the process of resolving the conflict and bringing peace and stability to the region (<http://news.day.az/politics/382700.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that Russian Duma Speaker Sergey Naryshkin has committed a serious error by declaring that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will not be resolved in the near future (<http://news.day.az/politics/382723.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman and executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that Azerbaijan cooperates with international organizations like the Council of Europe and will continue to do so, but that "we do not want international organizations to crudely interfere in the internal problems of Azerbaijan" (<http://news.day.az/politics/382727.html>).

The State Oil Company of Azerbaijan completes the purchase of SOCAR Energy Ukraine (<http://news.day.az/economy/382774.html>).

The World Union of Azerbaijani Youth launches a campaign to obtain the necessary 100,000 signatures on a petition on the site of the White House concerning the Khojaly genocide (<http://news.day.az/politics/382804.html>).

The Colombian foreign ministry informs the Azerbaijani embassy in Mexico City that Colombia expresses its solidarity with the Azerbaijani people on the occasion of the anniversary of Black January (<http://news.day.az/politics/382849.html>).

Stefan Holborn, a member of the British Parliament, says that the resolution of the

Karabakh conflict by peaceful means will benefit not only Azerbaijan and Armenia, but the entire region (<http://news.day.az/politics/382800.html>).

Yerevan announces that the Armenian delegation scheduled to attend the *Euronest* Parliamentary Assembly session in Baku will not take part (<http://news.day.az/politics/382803.html>).

The European Commission does not have a preference concerning the choice of the first pipeline route in the Southern Gas Corridor, according to an EC source (<http://news.day.az/economy/382603.html>).

7 February

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the law on Azerbaijan's participation in the struggle against human trafficking program of the CIS (<http://news.day.az/politics/382531.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms legislation about a recent series of international agreements (<http://news.day.az/politics/382589.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms Azerbaijan's affiliation to the World Postal Convention (<http://news.day.az/politics/382559.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Maldives President Mohammed Hassan on the sidelines of the Cairo meeting of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation (<http://news.day.az/politics/382543.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Bilkasem Sahli, the head of the Algerian delegation, on the sidelines of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation meeting in Cairo (<http://news.day.az/politics/382543.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku considers the declaration of Muhammad Bokiri Harrozi, an ayatollah and candidate for Iranian president, that Azerbaijan is Iranian territory "laughable and absurd" and will not comment further (<http://news.day.az/politics/382466.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy and head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan is constantly lying and refuses to recognize reality (<http://news.day.az/politics/382377.html>).

Fuad Muradov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that every country, including Armenia, has the right to decide whether to take part in the Euronest Parliamentary Assembly (<http://news.day.az/politics/382381.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization for Islamic Cooperation, says that the OIC has always supported Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/382486.html>).

Bill Shuster, a US congressman, says that the US should condemn the genocide at Khojaly (<http://news.day.az/politics/382564.html>).

Marko Wanderwitz, a member of the German Bundestag, says that the opening of

the Khojaly airport without Baku's approval will lead to the escalation of the conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/382496.html>).

6 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Croatian Defense Minister Ante Kontromanovich (<http://news.day.az/politics/382275.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs an order on the sports cooperation memorandum between Azerbaijan and Iraq (<http://news.day.az/politics/382345.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the UN and especially the UN Security Council needs reform and renewal to be effective (<http://news.day.az/politics/382143.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives and signs a cooperation agreement with his Croatian counterpart Ante Kotromanovich (<http://news.day.az/politics/382241.html>).

Industry and Energy Minister Natig Aliyev, Education Minister Misir Mardanov, and Milli Majlis deputy Elkhan Suleymanov sign agreements with their Polish counterparts in Warsaw (<http://news.day.az/economy/382238.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku will continue to assist with the transit of NATO materials for its mission in Afghanistan (<http://news.day.az/politics/382149.html>).

Azay Gulliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that some NGOs in Azerbaijan that receive foreign grants act "not in the national interests of Azerbaijan, but in the interests of their foreign donors and carry out the orders of the latter" (<http://news.day.az/society/382309.html>).

Fazail Aghamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan came to power through bloody actions and rules in the same way (<http://news.day.az/politics/382056.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Moscow considers its cooperation with Azerbaijan to have great significance (<http://news.day.az/politics/382310.html>).

Bahram Khalilov, chairman of the Presidential Commission on State Service, receives Serik Primbetov, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/382281.html>).

Elmar Gasymov, rector of the Baku Higher Oil School, receives Peter Bateman, Britain's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/382244.html>).

The European-Azerbaijani Society in Brussels sends letters to senior European Commission members concerning Armenia's plans to open the Khojaly airport and asking the EC to speak out against such a step (<http://news.day.az/politics/382257.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that TANAP is proceeding on schedule now that the agreements about it have been ratified

(<http://news.day.az/economy/382322.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Moscow's military relationship with Armenia is transparent and fully in accord with United Nations rules (<http://news.day.az/politics/382261.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that Russian officials are currently preparing the Gabala radar station for return to Azerbaijan in the same state it was in when Russia began renting it (<http://news.day.az/politics/382242.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia's ambassador to Baku, says that bilateral trade between Russia and Azerbaijan is growing rapidly and reached a record of 3.3 billion US dollars in 2012 (<http://news.day.az/economy/382280.html>).

Christopher Pincher, a Conservative member of the British parliament, says that the Khojaly airport cannot operate legally unless Baku approves (<http://news.day.az/politics/382217.html>).

Gene Green, a US congressman, issues a statement commemorating Black January in Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/382137.html>).

Mohammed Bokiri Harrozi, an ayatollah who is running for president of Iran, says that, if elected, he would seek the return of land in Tajikistan, Armenia and Azerbaijan that belongs to Iran (<http://news.day.az/politics/382282.html>).

5 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Jan Kubis, the special representative of the UN secretary general (<http://news.day.az/politics/382051.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Philip Lefort, special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus (<http://news.day.az/politics/382051.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bojo Lubic, chairman of Bosnia's House of Representatives (<http://news.day.az/politics/382051.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister and rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy Hafiz Pashayev leads an ADA delegation to Seoul and Singapore (<http://news.day.az/society/381996.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Moscow, is awarded a special diploma by Russia's Scientific-Industrial Academy of Oil and Gas (<http://news.day.az/politics/381944.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan's statements blaming Azerbaijan for the conflict are just "the latest lie" from Armenia (<http://news.day.az/politics/381910.html>).

Asim Mollazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that recent statements emanating from Yerevan are part of a domestic political campaign, rather than serious comments about foreign relations (<http://news.day.az/politics/381882.html>).

Leyla Aliyeva, vice president of the Heydar Aliyev foundation, opens the *Fly to Baku* exhibition in Moscow (<http://news.day.az/politics/381838.html>).

The Azerbaijani community of Great Britain calls on British Prime Minister David Cameron to speak out against the opening of the Khojaly airport in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/382071.html>).

Georgian Prime Minister Bidzhina Ivanishvili calls for the integration of ethnic Azerbaijanis in Georgia and says Tbilisi wants to develop relations with Azerbaijan, "its close neighbor and friend" (<http://news.day.az/politics/381984.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict requires the withdrawal of Armenia from the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/381954.html>).

Ukrainian Foreign Minister Leonid Kozhar, chairman-in-office of the OSCE, discusses the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs (<http://news.day.az/politics/382098.html>).

Bojo Lubic, speaker of the Bosnian House of Representatives, calls for the continued development of economic ties between Azerbaijan and Bosnia-Herzegovina (<http://news.day.az/politics/381961.html>).

Zoran Vayovich, Serbia's ambassador to Baku, says that his country is "ready to take part in projects involving the transport of Azerbaijani gas to Europe" and that "Serbia itself needs Azerbaijani gas" (<http://news.day.az/economy/381947.html>).

Olav Gutting, a member of the German Bundestag, says that Berlin supports all resolutions of international organizations on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/382022.html>).

4 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Franz Schroeber, secretary general of the International Sports Shooting Federation (<http://news.day.az/politics/381722.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs a directive calling for the construction of an Azerbaijani embassy in Addis Ababa (<http://news.day.az/politics/381829.html>).

Defense Industry Minister Yaver Jamalov discusses cooperation with Turkish Machine Building and Chemical Industry Minister Izzet Artunc (<http://news.day.az/politics/381703.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that, "because of the unconstructive position which Armenia has taken during the talks, there has not been any specific advance in the negotiations since 2010" (<http://news.day.az/politics/381655.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku will not allow Armenia to conduct illegal flights over the occupied territories, but will not use military methods to do so (<http://news.day.az/politics/381659.html>).

Gursel Ismailzade, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Tokyo, speaks to a meeting on the 20th anniversary of the International Association of Cooperation in Japan's Maguro

prefecture (<http://news.day.az/society/381799.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Yerevan politicians are making empty declarations to cover the growing fear of Armenians about the military power of Azerbaijan (<http://news.day.az/politics/381619.html>).

Fuad Muradov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's scandalous statements are part and parcel of his form of rule (<http://news.day.az/politics/381400.html>).

Baku hosts the winter meeting of the NATO International School (<http://news.day.az/politics/381705.html>).

Fahd ibn Ali al-Dowsari, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Baku, says that bilateral trade between his country and Azerbaijan is easily double (<http://news.day.az/economy/381867.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US ambassador to Baku, says that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict threatens the stability of the region, harms both sides, and must be resolved in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://news.day.az/politics/381773.html>).

Kristina Uuland, a member of the European Parliament, condemns any steps toward the opening of the Khojaly airport in the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/381741.html>).

Michael Gloss, a member of the German Bundestag and a former economics minister, says that Armenian armed forces must withdraw from the occupied territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/381771.html>).

3 February

Azerbaijan's State Border Service prevents a criminal group from crossing into Azerbaijan from Iran (<http://news.day.az/society/382227.html>).

2 February

President Ilham Aliyev chairs the first meeting of the Organizing Committee for the European Games, which will take place in Baku in 2015 (<http://news.day.az/politics/381527.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the Munich Security Conference that, "Azerbaijan is playing an important geo-strategic role in the region, not least because of its energy resources" (<http://news.day.az/politics/381523.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Carlos Pascual, US special representative for energy issues, on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference (<http://news.day.az/politics/381490.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets his Brazilian counterpart Antoniu Patriot on the sidelines of the Munich Security Conference and says that Armenia is harming itself by continuing the occupation (<http://news.day.az/politics/381427.html>).

Elchin Amirbayov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Paris, speaks at the opening of an exhibit on Azerbaijan in the Alsace region (<http://news.day.az/society/381484.html>).

Russian Orthodox Patriarch Kirill says that all religious communities in Azerbaijan enjoy equal rights and live under conditions of tolerance (<http://news.day.az/society/381969.html>).

1 February

President Ilham Aliyev signs a law confirming his joint declaration with Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov in October 2012 (<http://news.day.az/politics/381351.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from Zokhir Saidov, the incoming Tajikistan ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/381284.html>).

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov receives Mohsun Pakayin, Iran's ambassador to Baku (<http://news.day.az/politics/381239.html>).

The Education Ministry announces the continuing expansion of Baku's program to send Azerbaijani students to universities abroad (<http://news.day.az/society/381356.html>).

The Milli Majlis confirms the agreement between Azerbaijan and Uruguay eliminating visas for persons from either country having diplomatic or official passports (<http://news.day.az/politics/381355.html>).

Musa Gasymlı, a Milli Majlis, says that Iran has no connections with the Blue Mosque in Yerevan, which in fact is a monument of Azerbaijan's material culture (<http://news.day.az/politics/381293.html>).

Govhar Bakhshaliyeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the Armenian leadership is living in a dream world and needs to return to reality (<http://news.day.az/politics/381190.html>).

Said ibn Ali al-Dusheri, Saudi Arabia's ambassador to Baku, says that Riyadh supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as do many Arab and Islamic countries (<http://news.day.az/politics/381256.html>).

Peter Bateman, Britain's ambassador to Baku, says that BP and Azerbaijan have been able to overcome their differences and that their partnership is now stronger than ever before (<http://news.day.az/economy/381299.html>).

Ian Kelly, acting US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the co-chairs of that group welcome the opportunity to meet with the foreign ministers of the countries involved in that conflict (<http://news.day.az/politics/381195.html>).

Axel Fischer, a member of the German Bundestag, condemns the continuing Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani territories (<http://news.day.az/politics/381346.html>).

The House of Representatives of the US State of New Mexico adopts a resolution on the Khojaly tragedy (<http://news.day.az/politics/381251.html>).

Note to Readers

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