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AZERBAIJAN IN THE WORLD

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ARTICLES, INTERVIEWS, CHRONOLOGY

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Preface

As rector of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, I am pleased to present to all those interested in the development of my country's foreign policy the second annual volume of *Azerbaijan in the World*, which contains both articles and interviews about the most important events concerning that policy and a chronology of Azerbaijan's interaction with the world. I am confident that you will find it of use.

Anyone interested in the foreign affairs of another country knows that in order to understand the present and future, it is vital to understand the course of events that brought it to that point. This publication thus becomes more valuable over time because it provides exactly that kind of historical background.

Azerbaijan in the World is one of the activities of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, an institution that itself is playing an increasingly important role not only in training diplomats and other officials for our country but also in providing a model for educational development in Azerbaijan and in offering a place where Azerbaijanis and people from other countries can meet, exchange ideas and conduct research.

ADA's masters degree program in diplomacy and international affairs continues to expand and attract an ever broader range of students from around the world. And its newly introduced leadership development program, the first of its kind in Azerbaijan, is now a model for civil service

training not only here but in other countries as well.

ADA is also becoming an important intellectual center in other ways. It regularly hosts scholars and practitioners from around the world to speak. It is working to build the first substantial foreign language library in Azerbaijan. And it has begun the process of building a new campus near the center of Baku.

I and my colleagues look forward to welcoming you to ADA.

H.E. Hafiz Pashayev
Rector
Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy

Introduction

2009 was a full year for Azerbaijan in the world. As for most of the past 15 years, most international focus on Azerbaijan involved the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict where a breakthrough to peace did not happen because of Yerevan's resistance and Azerbaijan's increasingly important role as a supplier of energy to the world. But there were many other developments in Azerbaijan's relationship with the world which deserve attention. *Azerbaijan in the World* is an attempt to chronicle and explain them.

As the pages that follow show, Azerbaijan, led by President Ilham Aliyev and his balanced, multi-vector foreign policy, achieved an enormous number of successes, many of which are documented in this volume. Among the most important are the following: Azerbaijan expanded its diplomatic presence and activity throughout 2009. It hosted major international meetings on a variety of issues. It continued to work to diversify the pathways for the export of Caspian basin hydrocarbons. And perhaps most important, it continued to receive international support for its position vis-à-vis Armenia from a variety of governments and international organizations.

But the editors of *Azerbaijan in the World* believe that both the biweekly records it provides and the annual collections of which this volume is the second are most useful to those concerned about the international role of

Azerbaijan and who have specific questions. They are also convinced that the articles included here provide key insights into what Azerbaijan is doing and that the chronology, which is taken from the biweekly itself, is ever more valuable because it allows anyone interested to trace what Baku is doing and how others are reacting to it.

As always, the editors welcome critical comments about what they have done and also submissions of articles and ideas for future issues. This volume is the product of past cooperation, and the editors hope that they can count on others to help expand the circle of those concerned about Azerbaijani foreign policy.

Paul Goble & Murad Ismayilov

Co-Editors

Azerbaijan in the World

A SELECTION OF ESSAYS AND
ANALYTICAL ARTICLES

Volume II, 2009

Conflict, Security, and
Foreign Policy

Volume II, 2009

ANARCHY, HIERARCHY OR NEITHER: AN INDIGENOUS AZERBAIJANI CONCEPT OF NATIONAL SECURITY

Jason E. Strakes

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a country that is often said to occupy a precarious position in the international system. First, surrounded by three former imperial cores and major contemporary powers—Turkey, Iran and the Russian Federation—it is commonly viewed as being subject to multiple pressures of competition for strategic influence. Secondly, it experienced a seven-year civil and international conflict involving the neighboring Republic of Armenia, constituting an internal (1988-1991) and an interstate (1992-1994) phase resulting in approximately 30,000 deaths and 800,000 internally displaced—a level of violence matched in the former Soviet space only by the case of Tajikistan. Thirdly, the war resulted in the continued occupation of one-fifth of the national territory by the forces of Armenia and an unrecognized government that receive both overt and illicit military support from Moscow.

And yet, apart from its central emphasis on Armenian occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh, the National Security Concept promulgated in May 2007 is distinctive for its emphasis on linked domestic and external, non-traditional and transnational, rather than state-centric or conventional threats. First, despite popular rhetoric of support for the U.S. Global War on Terror, it does not specifically name Washington as an ally, instead presenting participation in post-9/11 security operations as a necessary aspect of responsible support for international counter-terrorism and peacekeeping initiatives (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, pp. 9-10). At the same time, unlike Georgia, whose doctrine directly intends membership in NATO and the European Union, Azerbaijan's partnership with these institutions constitutes cooperation for mutual benefit rather than full integration (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, pp. 8-9). In line with this definition, regional

militarization and armament policies, rather than bilateral tensions with historic imperial powers (and Armenia's patrons) such as Iran and Russia are identified as collective sources of potential insecurity (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, pp. 6-7).

As such, more prominent challenges are located in the “uncontrolled” territories and conflict zones comprising the self-proclaimed Nagorno-Karabakh Republic (NKR) and, by implication, the Caucasian *de facto* states of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. The longstanding priority of Azerbaijani leaderships to preserve territorial integrity and the inviolability of borders (Brown 2004) is well represented. Yet here, rather than the subversion of internal sovereignty by governments and armed forces which are unrecognized in international law and supported by foreign diplomatic and military intervention (as literally exemplified by the Russian counter-offensives in Georgia during August 2008), primary threats are said to emanate from havens for trans-border organized crime and illicit trade (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, pp. 5-6). The serious political instability of the early post-independence period, characterized by foreign-sponsored antigovernment actions and secessionist movements, also remains a major contingency (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, p. 5). Finally, the definition of threats is extended to explicitly non-military concerns: extremism, lack of human capital, overdependence on external aid, destabilization of the economy and environmental damage constitute as much of a danger to Azerbaijan’s national security as do opposing armies or terrorist groups (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, pp. 6-7).

Yet, the completion of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan (BTC) and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum (BTE) pipelines from 2005-2007 has virtually revolutionized international policy discourse on security issues in the Caucasus region. This has prioritized the classical tri-polar narrative of competing Russian, Iranian and Turkish interests, along with continual speculations regarding energy markets and great power (U.S./Russia/EU) access to oil and gas reserves and transshipment routes—the Caucasian counterpart of the Central Asian “New Great Game.” As a result, much public discussion of the foreign and national security policies of post-Soviet Azerbaijan is at worst atheoretical, or at best, dominated by realist geopolitical assumptions. One leading American analyst of small state foreign policies suggests that

the pursuit of Caspian oil has turned “otherwise weak nations such as Azerbaijan into international ‘players’” (Hudson 2006, p. 145). Thus, the emphasis is always on the reactions of Azerbaijani policymakers to external forces, rather than how they perceive the nature of the international environment in which they are situated.

Given the focus on imperial ambitions toward small states, it is curious that prevailing views of the region would assume anarchy (power seeking) rather than hierarchy (status seeking) as an explanatory framework. It has been suggested that the preoccupation of observers with the role of hegemonic influences in the Caucasus region is a byproduct of the varying reactions of regional and global powers to demands for external support by local leaderships in the post-Soviet period (e.g., Russia to Ter-Petrossian and Kocharyan in Armenia, the United States to Shevardnadze and Saakashvili in Georgia, and Turkey to Elçibey in Azerbaijan) (Jafalian 2004, p. 7). Yet, it is arguable that Azerbaijan’s origins as a modern nation-state are rooted in reaction to imposed hierarchy. The establishment of the two gubernias of Baku and Elizavetpol by the Russian Empire during the mid-19th century both established a defined Azerbaijani territory, and aided the founding of a bureaucratic elite united by a common language and religion (Çağla 2003, p. 119; Ismailov and Papava 2006, pp. 22-24). This provided a basis for a unified Azerbaijani bourgeoisie to seek to build a polity that could compete with other nations, advocate for the autonomy of the Transcaucasus, and pursue independence vis-à-vis Russia and Armenia (Çağla 2003, pp. 122-123).

Evidence can be also found within precedents of Azerbaijani national histories for a linkage between hierarchical perceptions of global power structures and national security. During the years from 1450 to 1600 AD, the Azeri proto-states established by the White Sheep Turkmen (Ağqoyunlu) and the Safavid dynasty pursued diplomatic relations with the kingdoms of Western Europe in response to the military and economic threat posed by the growing preponderance of Ottoman Turkey (Mahmudov 2006). Similarly, between 1918 and 1920, the leadership of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyəti) sought unsuccessfully to secure recognition of independence and military support from the United States in response to the territorial and ideological expansion of Soviet Russia (Hassanov 1993). Finally, reversing the policies

of previous post-Soviet leaders, in September 1993, President Heydar Aliyev extended a resolution for the reentry of Azerbaijan into the CIS to retain access to the security benefits of the status quo maintained by the Russian Federation, while simultaneously expelling Russian troops from the national soil (Library of Congress 1994; Alieva 2006, pp. 23-24).

Given this background, it is possible that the scholarly understanding of Azerbaijan's security policies would be advanced by the application of alternative theoretical frameworks which interrogate the conventional wisdom in Caucasus studies. In opposition to the anarchic condition assumed in realism, the theory of power preponderance suggests that the organizing principle of world politics is a multi-level hierarchy composed of great, lesser and minor powers (Tammen, et al. 2000). The relative positions of states within the hierarchy are defined by the domestic components of national development. The economic productivity, political capacity and population characteristics of the most powerful states enable them to project their political preferences throughout the international realm, thus minimizing their incentives to engage in conflict. This therefore assumes that the state system is led by a single power and its coalition of satisfied states, unified by acceptance of the status quo and highly integrated by fixed military alliances, trade, communications, currency exchange and technology transfers. The United States, NATO and EU at the global level, and the Russian Federation, Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in their respective sphere of influence presently exemplify this condition.

At the same time, the lower levels of each respective hierarchy are "conditionally anarchic," in that they are occupied by a certain number of dissatisfied states that abstain from or reject the conventions promoted by the leading power and its coalition. These actors are still concerned with the dangers posed by "relative gains," therefore often pursuing alternative diplomatic or military strategies (e.g., nonalignment, development of nuclear capability, support for insurgencies or terrorism) to oppose the status quo, although they do not possess the resources to directly challenge the preponderant power. These premises are also logically compatible with propositions regarding the international relations of small developing or formerly socialist states. The "subaltern realism" perspective posits that contrary to the assumptions of the Western realist tradition, the leaderships

of developing nations often perceive the international system as a hierarchy presided over by great powers, while at the same time the domestic political environment is regarded as a struggle to maintain control of the state against anarchic popular forces (Ayoob 1998; 2002). This places significant constraints on their ability to pursue autonomous national interests (Gleason et al. 2008). A similar condition has been identified as being prevalent in post-communist states, as the Soviet dissolution initially left governments in many former Republics with a weak tradition of national sovereignty and a lack of capable administrative structures, including competent and technically sufficient foreign ministries and diplomatic services (Skak 1996, p.p. 7-9, 21-30).

Thus, political leaders in these settings are often preoccupied with suppressing internal instability and maintaining control, while also pursuing those external policies that enhance their ability to manage tensions and remain in office. Azerbaijan has faced severe local insecurity since independence, experiencing a revolution, an internationalized civil war, ethnic secession and successful and attempted military coups (Fearon and Laitin 2006, pp. 12-16). Therefore, the foreign policy and security strategies of such states are designed in order to maintain autonomy and gain leverage against dominant powers within the international hierarchy, as well as through “omnibalancing,” or the selective use of external support (i.e., foreign or military aid, alliances or direct security assistance) by stronger states to defend themselves against domestic threats (David 1991).

The concept of a “multi-vector” foreign policy, in which states pursue a form of multi-polar balancing in order to preserve strategic independence while retaining the benefits of cooperation with more powerful states, has become common parlance in journalistic and academic discussions of post-Soviet international relations. It might be suggested that multi-vectorism constitutes a form of post-Cold War nonalignment that avoids formal alliance commitments, while deriving benefits from economic and military affiliations or partnerships with both the great powers and their strategic competitors. Within the past decade, it has been utilized in order to describe, as well as prescribe the diplomatic agendas and behavior of various countries, most prominently Kazakhstan (to which its origins are attributed), Ukraine, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Belarus, and, by extension, Putin-era Russia. However, it has at the same time rarely been articulated as

a theoretical construct, having been applied for varying and inconsistent purposes (Kirbassov 2008). Recent efforts to provide an analytically useful definition have identified the pursuit of multiple vectors as a pragmatic and non-ideological strategic activity engaged in by rational, self-interested actors (Hanks 2008, p. 7).

The Azerbaijani variant of multi-vectorism, the “balanced foreign policy” (*balanslaşdırılmış xarici siyaset*) doctrine, initially introduced by Heydar Aliyev, is identified as a cornerstone of the nation’s diplomatic relations (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2007, p.p. 3, 12). More significantly, it provides an observable example of how a strong, centralized leadership pursues an alternate (i.e., non-military) means of expressing dissatisfaction with the constraints imposed by hierarchical arrangements. Finally, its logic implies a fundamentally different view from that currently endorsed by Western policy advocates. This recognizes that rather than reinforcing independence and sovereignty, the strategy of using energy and transport assets (i.e., the East-West corridor) for complete integration into the U.S.-led political and security architecture via Turkey’s NATO membership would involve surrendering national autonomy and self-reliance (Gaudiano 2007, p.p. 4, 7). Through its promotion of multiple balancing, the present Azerbaijani leadership has in theory rejected the security policy formula of local “calls for empire” adopted by other Caucasus states—or, the linkage of national consolidation and survival to the aid and intervention of external powers (Jafalian 2004, p. 1).

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THE SOUTH CAUCASUS HAS CHANGED SINCE LAST YEAR, BUT AZERBAIJAN'S NATIONAL INTERESTS REMAIN THE SAME

Vafa Guluzade

What happened in Georgia last summer, Turkey's rapprochement with Armenia, and closer ties between Azerbaijan and Russia since that time have led many to conclude that there has been a complete redrawing of the geopolitical map of the South Caucasus and that Azerbaijan must recalibrate its approach. But less has changed than meets the eye, and Azerbaijan's national interests remain what they were, an underlying reality many more alarmist analysts have failed to recognize or to include in their analyses of what is likely to happen next.

The events of August 2008 cannot be understood apart from what is taking place in the world and in Russia itself now. At that time, Russia was very ambitious: the price of oil was high and Moscow expected it to remain that way. Now, the price of oil has fallen dramatically, and Russia is having to recalculate its position. In many ways, one can compare the impact of high oil prices on Russian thinking to the taking of a strong narcotic. Having tasted high oil prices, Russia fell into a kind of euphoria and lost its connection with reality.

A year ago, Moscow began to talk about reforming and rearming the Russian military by 2020, about the reformation of the country's nuclear arsenal and all the rest, despite the fact that some Russian analysts predicted that oil prices would fall, that Russia would have problems with food, that inflation would return and that the ruble would be devalued. Instead, the Russian elite listened to those who said demand from China and India would push prices up to 200, 300, or even 500 dollars a barrel. And that led Putin to deliver his anti-American speech in Munich and ultimately to send his military into Georgia.

Now oil prices have fallen, and the Russian government is not in a position to talk about renewing the arms race or about confrontation with

the West, since it understands that such links led once to the collapse of the USSR, although Moscow is still in a position to continue to talk about the return of the empire and of lost territories, and in this way, Russia has again converted itself in the eyes of others into a revisionist regional player, something that has had a most profound effect on the Europeans.

If before the Georgian war, Moscow had succeeded in using the gas weapon to split Europe and America, after it, the Russian government succeeded in eliminating its gains in that regard because the Europeans recognized that Russia might attack them and that they needed NATO and close ties with the American. Indeed, one can say that Moscow's attack on Georgia helped to promote the coming together of both NATO and the entire Free World, all of whose members understood as a result that although the Soviet Union had fallen apart, Russia nonetheless remains the heir of the Soviet Union.

Today's Russia does not seem to understand that Russia must not enter into a confrontation with the US and the West and that Russia must be concerned about how to re-establish its economy or more precisely create an economy, something that will be possible only if Moscow cooperates with the West and does not threaten it. Until Moscow understands that and acts accordingly, Russia won't get the Western assistance it needs.

Of course, Georgia also suffered as a result of the August war. Domestic forces there are using it against Saakashvili, although I personally believe that the Georgian president was absolutely right in what he did. Those opposing him are not pro-Russian, as some suppose, but rather are engaged in a struggle for power. It is possible that some new group will take power as a result of the street demonstrations, and for that reason, it is incorrect to consider that Georgia at present is a democratic country. It is not, and one must not try to be a democratic leader in an undemocratic country. A leader in such a country as Saakashvili heads must be an authoritarian leader and allow democracy only on a dose by dose basis in order to maintain stability.

Let us see how events will develop in Georgia. The Russian-Georgian conflict will be resolved. Abkhazia and South Ossetia will never gain international recognition either as part of Russia or as independent states. The economic crisis is limiting Russia's options and threatening the future of the country. And therefore, because of the weakness of today's Russia,

the events in Georgia will not be repeated anytime soon elsewhere. The balance has shifted, and Moscow was not able to get any of the three South Caucasus countries to refuse to participate in NATO exercises in Georgia in May.

The second event that needs to be considered is the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia. Turkey has its own national interests. It wants to become a member of the European Union, America supports Turkey in this—and without American support, Turkey cannot even dream about this as the major European countries are opposed to having Turkey in the EU. At the same time, the US very much wants to pay back the Armenian diaspora which played a not so small role in the election of the current president and to which Barak Obama promised to recognize the genocide.

That promise of course was made during an election campaign, and Obama wanted to get out of having to fulfill it in an intelligent way. Therefore, in my view, the entire peace process between Turkey and Armenia was calculated in order to give Obama an excuse not to recognize the genocide because he could point to progress in talks between Ankara and Yerevan. But despite this progress, the time for a real peace process has not yet been reached. That will happen when Armenia withdraws all its forces from our territory and then the border between Russia and Turkey will be opened.

Turkey has become a powerful state. It has grown both economically and demographically. And Turkey naturally is playing and will play in this region a still greater role. And as such, Turkey must have normal relations with all its neighbors, in particular with such difficult neighbors as the Armenians. Difficult because they have active diasporas in all the developed countries of the world. Consequently, Turkey needs to establish normal relations with Armenia. This move will give Turkey the opportunity to influence Armenia, and Armenia will serve as a market for its goods, an opportunity that will allow Turkey to drive Russia out of that market. For that reason as well as out of geopolitical concerns, Russia does not want to see a rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey or a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

It is in the context of these two developments that the recent steps Azerbaijan has taken in its relations with the Russian Federation. I look at

all of these as absolutely normal. The opening of centers of various kinds here and there does not mean much in strategic terms. On the other hand, Russia remains a country with a great culture and great intellectual potential. Consequently, in the future, cooperation with Russia in the areas of science, culture and language will bring only good to Azerbaijan.

In the recent exchanges, Azerbaijan has made a large number of good gestures, but on the basic questions, Azerbaijan has adopted a principled position. Azerbaijan has not given Russia all its gas, and the diversification of the export of energy is in our interests. More than that, diversification is necessary. And it is important to remember that Russia will not always be what it is today. It is completely possible that in the future, Russia will become a liberal state and will then have relations of a completely different nature with its neighbors, not imperial and not driven by a desire to re-establish its military presence in Azerbaijan.

As a result, I think that after the August events, nothing of principle changed here. The Russian position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, for example, remains the same and is well known to all—the preservation of a state of neither peace nor war. Consequently, Russia will not permit the conclusion of any agreement which will lead to the peaceful resolution of the conflict.

Indeed, I think it is fair to say that Russia has increased its imitation of activity in this regard, even as the US sincerely wants a resolution of this conflict. We must remember that Russia is trying to slow things down even as it talks about making progress. But at the same time, many in Russia know that destabilizing Azerbaijan would not be in Russia's interests. Until a resolution is achieved, Russia will be against us because that is the geopolitical logic of the region and of Russia's historical animosity to Turkey.

In this situation, Azerbaijan will keep on sticking to its independent, balanced foreign policy. We are and will remain an independent sovereign state.

THE SOUTH CAUCASUS REORDERED: NEW CHALLENGES TO BAKU'S FOREIGN POLICY ASSUMPTIONS

Paul Goble

Since Russia invaded Georgia the geopolitics of the South Caucasus has been transformed, with new players entering the scene and old ones changing their position on the board. And despite the often dizzying pace of the last six months, events over the last few weeks suggest that the pace of change may be on the increase, a trend that, if it continues, is certain to lead to some radical discontinuities in the policies and actions of all the governments involved in the region.

No country has been more profoundly affected by these most recent changes than Azerbaijan and no changes have been more striking than in three of the traditional players in the region. Thanks to enhanced Russian security assistance to Armenia, Azerbaijan's main adversary, and to expanding ties between Turkey, Azerbaijan's closest ally, on the one hand, and Russia and Armenia, on the other, many of the assumptions that have guided Baku's policies for more than a decade are now being called into question.

And such questioning which seems certain to spread from the pages of Baku's major news outlets to that country's parliament and foreign ministry could result in some equally dramatic discontinuities in Azerbaijani foreign policy, not only with regard to these three countries—that is almost a certainty—but also concerning other states with which Baku regularly interacts but who may assume that the transformation of the geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus will not affect them.

Russia has always been Armenia's chief ally and provider of military equipment, but Moscow has taken two steps in the last six weeks that raise the stakes in that relationship. On the one hand, in early January, evidence came to light that the Russian government has supplied 800 million US dollars of military equipment to Yerevan, a transfer that Moscow officials

have denied just as they have denied earlier supplies and just as unconvincingly. And on the other, on February 13, Nikolai Bordyuzha, the secretary general of the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organization announced that Russia and Armenia have agreed to establish “an integrated air defense network” on the model of the Russian-Belarus net.

Many in Moscow would argue that these steps simply restore the balance in the South Caucasus given Azerbaijan’s increasing expenditure on its military and occasional statements by Azerbaijani leaders that they are prepared to use force to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute if nothing else works. But in fact, a more balanced assessment suggests that Moscow, after its successful (in its eyes) intervention in Georgia, is prepared to use force either directly or indirectly to support those countries in the Commonwealth of Independent States which back Russian positions and to put pressure on all others in its “near abroad” which seek greater independence from Moscow.

This enhanced Russian security assistance to Armenia has both immediate and longer term consequences. In the short term, it reduces pressure on Armenia to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: After all, given Russian involvement, Azerbaijan would be unlikely to challenge Armenia because it would be challenging Russia as well. But in the longer term, it means that Baku will have ever greater difficulty in viewing Moscow as an honest broker concerning that conflict, and it means, as some in Azerbaijan have already suggested, that Baku should revisit its commitment to the OSCE Minsk Group, which is now the primary place for negotiations about Nagorno-Karabakh, or even its membership in the Russian-dominated CIS. Given the broader constellation of forces, neither of those steps is likely to occur soon, but the fact that questions of this kind are now being asked in Azerbaijan is a product of the changed geopolitical map of the South Caucasus.

The second major shift in this region in recent months has been Turkey’s rapprochement with Russia, a reflection of Ankara’s desire to play a larger role in the Caucasus and elsewhere as well but a development that is helping Moscow to expand its role in the region after the Georgian war. That new order of things was highlighted by the visit to Moscow February 12-13 by Turkish President Abdulla Gul during which he and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev signed what Kremlin press officers described

as “a strategic document” pointing to closer ties in the future.

Since last summer, Gul has been pushing the idea of a Platform for Security and Stability in the Caucasus, a program still in the process of definition but one that he has indicated will be open to all countries in the region, including Armenia and quite possibly Iran, and will give Russia a special role. On the one hand, Baku can only welcome Turkey’s new activism in the Caucasus, something Azerbaijanis have long counted on given their own view of Turkey as the country with which they have the closest cultural and even political ties.

But on the other, Turkey’s rapprochement with Russia raises questions about Ankara’s continued declarations of a special relationship with Azerbaijan. If Ankara wants to play an expanded regional role, its moves with regard to Russia raise questions about whether it will downgrade, at least relatively, the importance it attaches to Azerbaijan. And that at the very least is raising questions in the Azerbaijani media about what is going on. If Azerbaijan cannot count on Turkey being always in its corner, then Azerbaijan’s leadership will have to think long and hard about how it can pursue a balanced foreign policy between Ankara and the West and Moscow and the CIS.

That is all the more so because of the third tectonic shift in the region: Turkey’s exploration of closer ties with Armenia. Since the “football” diplomacy of last summer when President Gul visited Yerevan, contacts between Armenia and Turkey have expanded with a series of meetings in both countries and in international settings like Davos. Although Turkish officials continue to insist that their commitment to Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity remains unchanged and although Ankara has its own reasons for pursuing these ties – including not unimportantly the reduction of the influence of the Armenian diaspora’s push for international recognition of 1915 as genocide—Ankara’s actions are changing the geopolitical framework in the Caucasus as well.

On the one hand, if these contacts lead to a greater opening of the already partially porous Armenian-Turkish border, Armenia will be under significantly less pressure to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Not only will it have more opportunities for trade, but its geographic isolation will be reduced. (Some would say that this would reduce Armenia’s dependence on Russia as well, but it seems clear that Yerevan is unlikely to

downgrade that tie whatever happens in its relations with Turkey).

And on the other, to the extent that Turkey expands its ties with Yerevan, Ankara may feel less compelled to line up with Azerbaijan on all issues. At the very least, that means that Azerbaijan will feel less certain that it can count on Turkey and that very uncertainty will produce greater insecurity in the minds of many. Consequently, Turkey's rapprochement with Armenia will reinforce the view that Ankara's growing ties with Moscow undermine rather than help Azerbaijan.

One of the reasons for these rather dire conclusions is that the rhetoric coming out of Moscow about the Nabucco project in which Azerbaijan has invested so much effort is truly hyperbolic. At the end of January, Moscow's *Kommersant-Vlast* suggested that Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin is in fact considering provoking a war between Armenia and Azerbaijan not only to block the flow of Caspian Basin gas westward bypassing Russia but to increase Russian influence in the South Caucasus.

That report was reinforced by the remarks of Aleksandr Dugin, the Eurasian Party leader who is known to be close to the Russian leadership. He told *Novosti* on January 31 that Nabucco has to be wrecked at any cost because "we are talking about the geopolitics of gas." Consequently, if Russia needs to use military tools to do so, Dugin continued, Moscow "should [take that step] without any hesitation."

Such language is almost certainly intended less as a prediction of what Russia will do than as a way of putting additional pressure on regional actors like Azerbaijan. But given Moscow's intervention in Georgia last summer and the geopolitical shifts in the South Caucasus since that time, such words in and of themselves seem certain to cause more people in Baku to rethink Azerbaijan's approach to foreign policy and thus at the very least to spark a new debate about many things that most analysts had thought settled long ago.

THE POLITICS OF RELOCATION AND RESETTLEMENT: THE CASE OF IDPs AND NAGORNO-KARABAKH

Morgan R. Beach

The long-term displacement of internal populations is one of the most politically complex and intricate complications of protracted conflicts today. Internally displaced persons (IDPs) share most of the same legal troubles and logistical difficulties as refugee populations but are overlooked in many aspects of aid. IDPs suffer, particularly in longer-term situations, because it falls upon the already-troubled home state to care for a now almost entirely dependent sector of the public. IDPs, even though they never cross any international borders, often live as outsiders in local communities.

Some analysts suggest that it is often politically advantageous to keep these populations displaced: victims attract donors. But the longer a conflict continues, the more aid wanes and the captive population is more likely to suffer as political battles often wage on. But where does one draw the line and decide to resettle a population?

The case of Nagorno-Karabakh presents precisely this sort of paradoxical conflict. The Azerbaijani population that formerly inhabited the region of Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions now occupied by Armenians is currently scattered into various states of relocation and resettlement throughout Azerbaijan. I visited one such settlement in Mingachavir. Here, the residents live in long rows of corrugated steel-covered houses. These are set on a dirt lot with small ditches of water running down the side of each street. There are a total of four toilets and two showers to be shared by the entire settlement, and the only source of water is a set of nozzles sticking out of the ground. Across the main road from the camp, there are well built, if not well maintained, Soviet-style housing structures where local Mingachavir families live. There, the markets and shopping centers are busy, and the roads are paved. The contrast is striking.

One IDP woman named S., 47, and her friend V., 65, told me about their lives in the camp. S. has been here for 15 years, since she was forced

out of her home in Aghdam in the Nagorno-Karabakh region. After her husband was recruited by the Azerbaijani government to defend his hometown against the Armenian army, he was captured and beaten to death by the invading forces. Then on July 23, 1993, she and her three children left Aghdam and moved into this camp in Mingachavir. There are 88 other families here, mostly from the same region as Aghdam, cities like Shusha and Fizuli. She lives in a two-room unit, divided by curtains to create the closest possible thing to a living/dining area, and room for her son, and a shared room for her and her daughter that still lives in the house. Her eldest daughter is now married, lives in an apartment in Mingachavir and is a teacher at the local IDP school.

The settlement, S. said, was built by the Azerbaijani government with aid from several international organizations. “You have nothing, no money—you have no choice but to live outside,” S. said of why she has never resettled into another residence. Until last year, she was living on support from an international organization, until the organization decided to end its work in Azerbaijan. Now she lives on the AZN 100 (USD 120) monthly pension from the Azerbaijani government paid on behalf of her husband’s service to the country and whatever help she can get from friends in Mingachavir.

But despite these problems, she says, her life as an IDP has not been all bad. Both her daughters were able to graduate from university free of charge (the government subsidizes free education for IDPs), and the eldest is happily married. Her younger daughter, who studied journalism, now 25, however, has developed a “nervous” disorder and lives here because it has kept her from being able to maintain a job and support herself. Her 23-year-old son chose not to attend university and does whatever temporary work around Mingachavir he can find. But jobs here are scarce and wages low, and most boys who grow up in the camps only have the army as an alternative. Her own heart condition and fulfilling her role as the household caretaker prevent S. from finding employment outside the home. Moving away from the IDP settlement would mean giving up the small advantages of government subsidizing she does have.

Speaking of the times before the war, S. says that “Life was good. Everyone had jobs and was happy. We lived side by side with Armenians and some Azerbaijanis and Armenians even married each other in our town.

When I think of home, I think of family. But I will never have that back. It has all been destroyed." Now all she wants is clean housing—roofs that don't leak, and conditions that don't cause people to get sick. "Look at the houses," she says, "What can the health situation be like here?"

S. and V. are both pessimistic about the conflict being resolved in their lifetime. At present, they note, Armenians and Azerbaijanis cannot even sit down together to talk about a solution and larger countries seem to prefer keeping them apart.

Even though the IDPs remain an open wound for Azerbaijanis, there have been few serious analyses of their plight, a shortcoming especially troubling given that the coverage of the OSCE Minsk Group meetings and the declarations about other aspects of the Karabakh conflict by major powers, including the Russian Federation and the United States, suggest that there will not be a resolution of the conflict or of the IDP problem anytime soon. Indeed, as one report put it, the "lack of security prevents [the IDPs] from going home; [and] indecision prevents them from resettling" (Bacon & Lynch 2002/2003, p. 69).

In the years since the 1994 ceasefire, international attention and aid to the IDPs have declined, with assistance falling by more than half between 1993 and 2002 alone (Bacon & Lynch 2002/2003, p. 68). Given that violent conflicts, like the one between Georgia and Russia last year, attract so much attention, Azerbaijani IDPs not surprisingly think, as one put it, "Our situation does not attract attention because we wait for a peaceful solution and do not engage in violent acts. It just doesn't seem right" (Bacon & Lynch 2002/2003, p. 67).

While protracted conflicts are nothing new, IDP populations like those produced by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are a major contributor to the erosion of stability in the developing world. And the longer the IDPs remain displaced, the more seriously they add to the problems faced by the broader society of which they are a part.

Despite the lack of a political settlement, Azerbaijan has taken some promising steps to assist the IDPs. SOFAZ, the State Oil Fund of the Republic of Azerbaijan, has implemented large-scale social work projects to benefit the IDPs, something all the more important given the decline in assistance from abroad. In addition, working with the State Committee for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, the oil fund has funnelled more

than half a billion dollars into improving the infrastructure of refugee/IDP settlements. And the committee has overseen the construction of thousands of houses, health care facilities, schools, cultural and athletic centers, and other infrastructure (SOFAZ 2009).

These programs highlight Azerbaijan's commitment to its population, a commitment it has been able to undertake because of its unprecedented economic growth. Although conditions are improving, the living situation is still dramatically substandard and most IDPs still live as outsiders around the country. But Azerbaijan seems to be funnelling its resources in the right direction, and the lives of IDPs are largely improving.

However, even having the best IDP infrastructure in the world still implicates a certain degree of volatility and insecurity, and so, Azerbaijan remains stuck between a rock and a hard place. If it resettles IDPs permanently, that could be viewed as a weakening of its resolve to retake Nagorno-Karabakh.

Simultaneously, Baku should carefully evaluate how long having almost an eighth of its population displaced can go on without imposing more serious long-term damage to Azerbaijan's development. How long will these people remain in limbo, unsettled and unstable? Where and when should Azerbaijan finally draw the line?

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DELIVERING GAS TO EUROPE: RUSSIA OR THE CASPIAN?

Nazrin Mehdiev

Questions of Russia's reliability as a gas supplier to Europe have dominated headlines since the Russian-Ukrainian crisis of January 2009. The emphasis, however, has been by and large misplaced, as Russia is interested in ensuring continuous and unimpeded exports of gas to Europe, not least given the nature of long-term contracts that govern its gas relations with European customers.

By contrast, the volume of gas available for export is—and increasingly will be—subject to several constraints of political and economic nature. Among the notable examples are the Russian leadership's desire to serve its political goals by diversifying gas exports into the Asia-Pacific region, Gazprom's willingness to strengthen its positions in the LNG market and the difficulty in liberalising domestic gas prices in Russia. Aware of these competing demands, Gazprom has revised upwards its estimates of Russian production to 2030, but how realistic are they?

The pattern of exploiting the existing fields shows that when demand for gas picks up after the current recession, production could fail to keep up. The problem will almost certainly be exacerbated by the fact that demand will resume almost simultaneously in Europe—Gazprom's main and most profitable export market—and Russia, where Gazprom is selling some 70% of its gas production. It is notable that in the draft law on tariffs for state-controlled monopolies that is currently being considered by the Russian government, the liberalization of gas prices is by and large absent. It is equally notable that the company has asked the government to raise the controlled prices for the additional gas that companies purchase under five year take-or-pay contracts in Russia. The latter indicates that Gazprom expects domestic demand to recover and start growing by 2012, while the former sends a strong signal that the government is not prepared to face the social backlash from drastically increasing gas prices under the conditions of

economic hardship.

This situation creates a problem for Gazprom and Russia. The fact that the monopoly continues to make losses domestically has to be compensated for elsewhere—specifically, on the export market. However, the fall of the oil price from the record high level in 2007-08 and the indexation to oil that exists in all contracts that Gazprom signs with European consumers mean that Gazprom will collect over USD 20 billion less in export revenues in 2009 than it did last year. This will be inevitably reflected in reduced investment. The key question then becomes: investment for which projects is likely to be slashed first?

An examination of Russia's foreign policy—which is beyond the scope of the present article—shows that pipeline projects, such as Nord Stream, will remain priority. By contrast, some of the key investments in the upstream are likely to be postponed. Indeed, the past weeks have already seen the beginning of this process, with the delay of the production launch of the super-giant Bovanenkovo field on the Yamal peninsula from 2011 to 2012. Signals on another flagship project, Shtokman, have so far been contradictory, but evidence suggests that it is likely to be delayed by a couple of years, with technical difficulties possibly leading to further slips in the production schedule. In brief, under the conditions of a financial crisis, the current focus on pipelines will reduce investment in the fields, heightening the likelihood of gas shortages when recession is over and growth resumes.

The combination of these factors in Russia creates a “window of opportunity” for Nabucco, a project designed to transport Caspian gas to the European market. At the time of the project’s inception, it was envisaged that the pipeline would be filled primarily with Iranian gas. However, the complex geopolitical situation around Iran, coupled with the current under-investment in the Iranian hydrocarbons infrastructure that has turned this country with colossal reserves into a net importer of gas, has led to a shift of focus. Attention now centres far more on Azerbaijan; specifically, on its offshore field of Shah Deniz. Gas for Nabucco is expected to come from Phase II of the project, which could provide the base load for the pipeline.

The remaining gas would have to come from other sources, of which Turkmenistan has been hailed as the most likely. However, numerous

issues need to be addressed before a pipeline receives a chance of being built. These include rapid improvement in relations with Turkmenistan and an agreement over the still disputed fields in the Caspian offshore. Stable and predictable relations with Turkmenistan are key to implementing the trans-Caspian pipeline that would link with Nabucco. Without Ashgabat's commitment, the trans-Caspian line stands no chance of being built.

Meanwhile, securing such a commitment from Turkmenistan would raise Azerbaijan's profile not only as an important supplier state to Nabucco but also as a key transit state for gas en route to the European market. The role of the latter is currently being overshadowed by Azerbaijan's rising oil and gas production; however, ensuring the passage of Kazakh oil and Turkmen gas through the Azerbaijani territory would solidify Baku's role as an energy hub beyond the 2020 horizon when oil output is expected to plateau.

Nabucco is undeniably the most high-profile international pipeline intended to supply the EU bypassing Russia. The Nabucco pipeline consortium has existed since 2004, but many of its members are now also participants in a rival Russian project—South Stream. There will most likely be space for co-existence of the two projects if European demand is high or if the South Stream pipeline is used to transport volumes that are currently being delivered to Europe via Ukraine. However, if the European demand does not reach the projected high level and Russia successfully launches its vast fields on the Yamal peninsula, then the need for Nabucco will be greatly reduced. Under this scenario, the only way to justify Nabucco would be as a pipeline that would enhance Europe's security of supply. But Russia is keen on building new routes to bypass transit states, and it will use this argument to promote an image of a reliable supplier to Europe. The Caspian states need to show a genuine commitment to Nabucco today because delaying decisions risks eroding their bargaining positions in the future.

* This article draws on the author's findings presented in a 200-page study undertaken by Pöyry Energy Consulting. For more information on the report titled 'Russian Gas in Europe: Will there be enough to go around?', please consult <http://www.ilexenergy.com>.

NABUCCO AFTER BUDAPEST: OLD PROBLEMS, NEW CHALLENGES AND A CHANGED ROLE FOR AZERBAIJAN

Paul Goble

Held in the aftermath of the Russian invasion of Georgia, which revealed the vulnerabilities of all pipelines bypassing the Russian Federation, and of the gas war between Moscow and Kyiv, which underscored Moscow's commitment to using gas as a political weapon against its neighbors and Europe, the Nabucco Budapest summit on January 27, 2009, was organized in order to give new impetus to plans for yet another alternative gas pipeline from the Caspian Basin to Europe.

But instead of achieving that goal, the meeting highlighted the old problems which have dogged this project since the beginning, called attention to the new challenges that both the project's backers and other countries now face, and showcased the changed status of Azerbaijan within this project and more generally, a shift that was highlighted by one of the most important speeches President Ilham Aliyev has ever delivered.

Three old problems with this 10.1 billion US dollar, 3300 km project which have plagued it since the beginning were very much on public view in the Hungarian capital. First of all, the Nabucco pipeline flows through so many countries and affects so many of their neighbors that any final agreement is difficult if not impossible to obtain. That is particularly true because any one of the countries involved potentially has the ability to kill the project by holding out for its special needs or falling under the pressure of outsiders. At Budapest, there were not only the six original Nabucco partners—Austria, Bulgaria, Germany, Hungary, Romania, and Turkey—but also representatives from six other countries, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development, the European Investment Bank, and the European Union.

Second, and at least equally important, two significant players were not there: the Russian Federation and Iran. Nabucco, of course, has been promoted to avoid having gas flow through either of these countries lest

Moscow exercise too much influence over Europe through its control of gas supplies and lest Iran escape the international isolation that the United States has insisted upon for many years. But their exclusion had the unintended effect of causing Moscow to demonstrate its ability to affect the project by putting pressure on Central Asian suppliers and of highlighting the ways in which Iran is now playing an expanded role in the Caucasus after the August war in Georgia.

Third, the Budapest meeting called attention to tensions within and among suppliers, transit countries and consuming nations, tensions which may be inherent in any pipeline deal but which the organizers of Nabucco have done little or nothing to address. Moreover, the meeting showcased the change in status of one country—Azerbaijan—from being only a transit route to being that and a supplier as well, a reminder to all concerned that new discoveries and new technologies may fundamentally alter the landscape and hence the value of particular strategies of pipeline diversification.

Moreover, lying behind all of these is a harsh reality that few of Budapest's organizers wanted to acknowledge: Even if all these problems are overcome, Nabucco, if it becomes operational, would supply only 31 billion cubic meters of gas a year, only about six percent of Europe's current consumption. And that in turn means that others, the Russian Federation in particular, will play a far larger role in supplying Europe's natural gas at least in the next decade or two than the Nabucco countries ever could.

But perhaps more important for the future are three new challenges that the Budapest meeting highlighted. First, by calling attention to the competing interests between and among the participants, the Budapest summit pointed to precisely those weak links that the project's opponents could exploit. Many commentators suggested that the biggest problem with Nabucco is not the political geography through which its pipeline must pass but rather the question of whether there would be enough gas to make it worthwhile. Russia and Iran rank first and second in the world in terms of proved natural gas reserves, and neither will be sending gas this way. And partially as a result, Moscow has been able to pressure Uzbekistan to send gas to Europe via Russia, and Tehran has been working with Ashgabat to get Turkmenistan, the country with the third largest proved natural gas

reserves in the world, to dispatch its production via Iran.

Second, in the wake of Georgia and Ukraine, Budapest underscored just how much the rules of the game in the gas sector have changed in the last six months. None of the countries in the region can be sure of just how far Moscow may be prepared to go to advance its interests. Consequently, all of them are recalibrating their policies, seeking to avoid alienating the Russian authorities lest Moscow's power be directed at them. Nor can the Nabucco countries be sure of what the US and the EU might be willing to do to counter Russian actions—or even whether the new American administration may open a dialogue with Iran, an action that would make that country a far easier, less expensive and more attractive route out for Caspian Basin gas and one that would almost certainly postpone if not kill Nabucco.

And third, the meeting was held as the world financial crisis deepened, a development that not only makes the financing of this project more problematic but raises questions about the level of price and demand for gas in the future. Many consuming nations are cutting back, and in the face of high prices, they are seeking alternative sources of energy. While producers and transit countries seem confident that the consumer will not be able to make any fundamental shift away from gas and oil quickly, they cannot be sure. And that uncertainty has the effect of casting a shadow over the entire project.

But perhaps the most intriguing aspect of the meeting was the increased status of Azerbaijan, a rise that President Ilham Aliyev called attention to in his speech and one that is likely to play a major role not only in the plans of the backers of Nabucco but also in the calculations and actions of its opponents.

Aliyev began his speech by stating flatly that "Azerbaijan has always supported this project" and asserting that "we will continue our support" as part of Baku's general approach to oil and gas issues as laid out in the declaration of the Energy Summit there last fall. The Azerbaijani president then made three major points:

First, he said, Azerbaijan now has a new status in Nabucco. Originally, it was defined only as a transit country, a status that reflected the lack of awareness of the enormous natural gas reserves on its territory. "But today the situation is different," and Azerbaijan is not only a transit country but a

supplier in its own right, with some two trillion cubic meters of gas,” enough natural wealth to last “through the next decades and even century.” And that supply means that it wants to be heard in this dual capacity and not treated any longer “exclusively as a source of raw materials.”

Second, President Aliyev pointed out, Azerbaijan has always been committed to the diversification of pipeline routes. It has been a leader in the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyan oil pipeline and the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzerum gas pipeline, and it is a participant in five other pipeline projects, a reminder that from Azerbaijan’s point of view—and the point of view of many others even if not expressed—Nabucco is far from the only game in town.

And third, the Azerbaijani leader said that recent events had demonstrated that “the time has come to unite the interests of all participants—suppliers, transit countries and consumers” to resolve the issues of pipelines and prices so that gas will “unite peoples and countries” rather than divide them. But at the same time, he stressed that Azerbaijan is financially and politically independent and wants “a partnership” with others and clearly not a junior one.

Each of President Aliyev’s points represents a challenge to the Nabucco organizers even as he reaffirmed his commitment to the project, but they also suggest that Azerbaijan—which, as Aliyev has often said, is at “the energy crossroads” not only east-west but north-south—is likely to be subject to new pressures, not only directly but indirectly from Russia and Iran, who oppose Nabucco, and Europe and the United States, who want to see this pipeline built.

And to the extent that conclusion is correct, it will mean that Budapest has pushed Azerbaijan and perhaps the other Nabucco countries into a new and more complicated political game, however much the leaders of all these countries say that this gas pipeline project is all about economics.

ASHGABAT'S AZERBAIJAN DILEMMA

Fikrat Sadykhov

Ashgabat has officially expressed its intention to strengthen its military position in the Caspian. At an expanded session of the Turkmenistan Security Council, which took place on the occasion of the opening of the new building of the Police Academy in Ashgabat, President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov said that by 2015, Turkmenistan will build a naval base on the Caspian to defend the sea border of the country. That border, he noted, always must be ready to combat smugglers and terrorists, the goal of whom is the destabilization of the situation inside the country. In reporting this, Turkmenistan's state television said that "Turkmenistan does not have any territorial claims on any territory and does not consider any state as its enemy. Instead, it considers its borders frontiers of peace, friendship and good neighborly relations."

It is, however, necessary to recall that literally on the eve of the president's announcement, the Turkmenistan government accused Azerbaijan of exploiting oil fields which supposedly belong to Turkmenistan. In this connection, Ashgabat even declared that it was ready to turn to the International Arbitrage Court for a resolution of this dispute. The most interesting thing here is that the disputed issues and more precisely the pretensions of Turkmenistan to ownership of several oil and gas fields in the Caspian have existed between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan already for quite some time.

But Turkmenistan's striving to defend with its own forces its sea borders is something Ashgabat has begun talking about only now.

Turkmenistan has a sea border not only with Azerbaijan but also with Russia, Kazakhstan and Iran, each of which has its own naval flotillas. Ashgabat up to now had limited itself to the purchase of naval patrol vessels. The Turkmen leader explained the need to rearm the national army and the strengthening of the military strategic position on the sea by pointing to the increasing activity of international extremist and terrorist

groups that are interested in drug trafficking. On this basis, the Turkmenistan president said, the naval forces will be dislocated on a permanent basis, although he did not specify precisely where this naval facility would be located. Berdymukhammedov also declared that the border service of Turkmenistan would buy new patrol boats and that for the Turkmenistan fleet it would buy two contemporary ships armed with rockets. In addition, and in order to increase the effectiveness of the protection of its borders, he indicated that Turkmenistan plans to conduct regular large-scale naval exercises.

Beyond any doubt, the newly declared position of Turkmenistan concerning its plans to construct a naval base says that Turkmenistan is dissatisfied with the development of events on the Caspian and above all that despite its significant hydrocarbon reserves, Ashgabat has not been involved as actively as Azerbaijan in regional projects. Moreover, the Turkmenistan president's declaration suggests that he is dissatisfied with the way in which negotiations on the final status of the Caspian Sea have been proceeding.

With regard to the question of the division of the Caspian seabed, Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan do not have any pretensions toward one another. On this question, among our countries there exist both bilateral and trilateral accords. The sides have also come to a unified position on the definition of the coordinates of the dividing lines. The two other littoral states, Turkmenistan and Iran have not agreed to this, and as a result, despite many years of discussions, the status of the Caspian has not yet been defined.

It is of course difficult to imagine that because of the Caspian a serious military conflict between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan could begin. And although there were certain tensions between Baku and Ashgabat at the end of the 1990s, the most recent declaration of President Berdymukhammedov hardly can be considered a call to military action.

In Ashgabat, the government understands perfectly well what it is doing. Today is not the beginning and even not the end of the 1990s. Azerbaijan today is an important regional player with growing economic and military capacity, it is actively involved in large-scale oil and gas projects, and Baku cannot be frightened easily by the strengthening of naval forces in the region. That is all the more so in this case because according

to Ashgabat's official declaration, it is building up these forces to oppose terrorist and extremist organizations, a task that is entirely a good thing. The only question that arises is why it is necessary to wait until 2015?

As far as the declaration of the Turkmenistan side concerning an appeal to the International Arbitrage Court, then this is more likely than anything else an attempt to demonstrate to the regional community Turkmenistan's interests and readiness to defend them by all available means. But Azerbaijan has not violated the interests of anyone else and does not intend to be hostile to Turkmenistan. More than that, in the period when problems with Turkmenistan concerning the sea border did arise, Azerbaijan showed admirable restraint and declared that it was stopping all work in the area until the final resolution of the status of the Caspian Sea. What more could it have done?

It is more likely that the Turkmen declarations will stop at this. The tone of official Ashgabat since the president's statement has become distinctly softer. What's more, on the horizon is the development of the Nabucco program to which Turkmenistan is beginning to show direct interest. President Berdymukhammedov, *Interfax* reports, has said that "Turkmenistan, which supports the principles of the diversification of the export of its energy production to world markets, intends to use existing possibilities for participation in major international projects like, for example, Nabucco."

The Turkmenistan leader is a sufficiently pragmatic politician who well understands what is going on and is more than capable of evaluating the situation. And that, in the current circumstances, is far more important.

TURKMENISTAN'S "MIXED" SIGNALS

Kenyon S. Weaver

Over the two months, Turkmenistan has sent Azerbaijan and the world decidedly mixed signals. In August, President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammadov announced that Ashgabat would build a new naval base on the shores of the Caspian Sea in order to protect his country's borders and to protect it and its coastline "from evil-minded foreigners," but then in September, at the United Nations General Assembly session in New York, he called for "an international conference on disarmament issues in the region of Central Asia and the Caspian Basin," saying that his government "would also welcome constructive proposals of the international community and individual nations to promote disarmament processes."

The Turkmenistan president's first declaration came only weeks after he declared on July 24th that Ashgabat would go to the International Court of Arbitration to get a ruling on the ownership of disputed sections of the Caspian Sea, including Sardar/Kapaz and what Turkmenistan calls Oman and Osman. As of this writing, the Turkmenistan government has not yet filed this case, apparently because the country's foreign ministry has not yet succeeded in finding "the international experts" and "qualified lawyers" the president told his chief diplomat Rashid Meredov to assemble in order to examine documents dating back to Soviet times.

It is of course possible that this International Court would conclude that it lacks jurisdiction unless Azerbaijan were to voluntarily submit to that body's ruling. Ashgabat may face yet another problem: its own lack of clear-cut standing. But if Turkmenistan does follow through and files a brief, Baku almost certainly will have its own lawyers working just as hard to counter the Turkmenistan appeal.

What do all these moves mean for Baku? An answer to that question lies with Turkmenistan's policy of *bitaraphyk*, or "neutrality." That concept, which is repeated constantly, is an essential part of Turkmenistan's national

psychology, of its sense of what in fact the country is. It helps to explain why Ashgabat is so proud of its hosting of the UN Regional Center for Preventive Diplomacy in Central Asia, why it avoids both joining the Shanghai Cooperation Organization despite Russian pressure or having an American base, which some in the United States have proposed.

Given that set of attitudes, it appears likely that the Turkmenistan president's announcement of plans to set up a naval base was intended as a bargaining chip in negotiations over projects like the Nabucco pipeline. Some actually saw the decision to arbitrate as a progressive option. Ilham Shaban, for example, an Azerbaijan-based energy expert, has told RFE/RL that a court verdict—if “fair,” of course—would be a “natural step,” and that arbitral resolution could actually help relations between the two countries and could even stabilize the political ground for a project of the size and scope of Nabucco.

Another part of the explanation for this set of mixed messages reflects Ashgabat’s shift in its economic policies from the time of former president Saparmurat “Turkmenbashy” Niyazov. This December will mark the third anniversary of the death of Niyazov who kept the country isolated, and in that intervening period, his successors have shown themselves to be far more open to foreign investment than he was. Given that new openness, Turkmenistan clearly enjoys the interest it has attracted because of its resources and location.

Many countries, not least of which is the People’s Republic of China, have manifested an interest in developing Turkmenistan’s South Yolotan-Osman gas field, the full extent of which has only recently been announced. China has been involved in Turkmenistan for many years and now would like to expand its position and has built a new gas pipeline from Turkmenistan’s Eastern fields to China. That links Ashgabat to Beijing and helps to explain why Turkmenistan has resisted Russian pressure to join a new gas cartel. And together with the China pipeline, the Nabucco project, if it is realized, will also link Turkmenistan into a broader web of interrelationships than it has had at any time since 1991.

An accident last April not only opened a window of opportunity for the United States and Europe but also provided hints about Turkmenistan’s new pragmatism. The April 14th explosion ruptured Ashgabat’s main pipeline to Russia. That line is now close to being repaired, but the damage

done to Ashgabat's bottom line appears to have been far more significant and longer-lasting than many had expected. While the pipeline to Russia has been repaired, it is far from clear whether relations with Russia's Gazprom have been rebuilt as well.

Because it was not able to export gas for an extended period, Turkmenistan suffered significant losses, and those losses in turn have led Ashgabat to a new appreciation of the value of diversification of routes lest it suffer again. That pragmatism has little to do with any anti-Russian sentiment as some have thought but rather reflects a very sober calculation of the country's best interests as a gas exporter.

Indeed, Ashgabat continues to work with Russian firms like the independent Itera which in early September announced that it had reached agreement with Turkmenistan to develop an offshore block in the Caspian. Itera has a long history in the Turkmenistan and Russian petroleum markets, and the composition of its management team—technocrats and politicians from Soviet Turkmenistan—gives it advantages as a middleman for Turkmenistan in reaching Western markets via Russia.

At the same time and reflecting Turkmenistan's new pragmatism and appreciation of its own natural wealth, Ashgabat has reached out to other firms, including Germany's *Rheinisch-Westfälische Elektrizitätswerk* (RWE), to gain access to Western expertise and markets and guaranteeing that Turkmenistan will never again be dependent on a single route or a single firm. That approach helps to explain why some of Turkmenistan's statements and actions appear contradictory: In fact, together they suggest that for all the attention any one of them may receive, Ashgabat will pursue the very best deals it can for the development of its hydrocarbon reserves.

Toward Euro-Atlantic
Integration

NATO-AZERBAIJAN: ASSESSING THE PAST, LOOKING INTO THE FUTURE

Kamil Khasiyev, Amb.

This year NATO is celebrating the 60th Anniversary of its foundation, while Azerbaijan is marking the 15th Anniversary of its accession to the Partnership for Peace. On these significant occasions, it gives me a special pleasure to glance through past years and to assess the current level of partnership that we have achieved.

Let me first stress that the foundations of this mutually beneficial partnership were laid down by President Heydar Aliyev when he signed the Framework Document about accession to PFP during the official visit to NATO HQ on 4 May 1994.

Over the past 15 years Azerbaijan has made considerable progress by developing practical cooperation with NATO through available partnership mechanisms such as Individual Partnership Program (IPP), Planning and Review Process (PARP) and Individual Partnership Action Plan with NATO.

The Individual Partnership Program, annually adopted on the basis of Euro-Atlantic Partnership Work Programme (EAPWP) includes all joint activities and events to be attended by national military and civilian representatives. Every year Azerbaijan participates in more than 200 NATO/PFP activities and events, including training courses, conferences and military exercises.

The Planning and Review Process (PARP) is aimed at closely engaging Azerbaijan into NATO's Defence planning for operational readiness. Since 1997, based on two-year cycles Azerbaijani Armed forces have taken on the implementation of increasing number of the so-called Partnership Goals, which were focused on achieving military interoperability with NATO troops through introduction of NATO's military, training and technical standards. Starting from 2002, the PARP and Partnership Goals of Azerbaijan have been extended to broader security sector areas such as

Defence against terrorism, Border Security and reform of Internal Troops and their preparation for peace-keeping operations.

The Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) is an important instrument for strengthening cooperation with NATO in both short and a longer-term perspective. In May 2003, Azerbaijan formally applied for joining the Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) with NATO, adopted as a new PFP mechanism at the NATO/EAPC Prague Summit in 2002. In May 2004, President Ilham Aliyev officially submitted to the Alliance the IPAP Presentation Document, which included comprehensive information about democratic, political, judicial, social and economic developments as well as the current status of defence and security institutions of Azerbaijan.

On the basis of the Presentation Document Azerbaijan and NATO elaborated and approved the first Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP) of Azerbaijan in May 2005. The IPAP covers all major political, defence and security areas as well as security related economic, scientific and environmental issues. The IPAP is implemented and updated on the basis of two-year cycles. Final two-year implementation assessment reports are also considered at the meetings NATO PC and NAC in the format 28+Azerbaijan. Our country has successfully completed the first cycle of IPAP for 2005-2007, and is currently implementing the second cycle for 2008-2010.

Let me now elaborate on concrete achievements in our multi-faceted partnership with NATO:

First, in the past years Azerbaijan has enhanced political dialogue with the Alliance through frequent and high-level contacts. It is worth mentioning the recent visit of President Ilham Aliyev to NATO Headquarters on 29 April 2009. The visit has significantly contributed to further strengthening the substantial political dialogue and the practical cooperation between Azerbaijan and NATO.

This dialogue is being actively supported by Mr. R. Simmons, the NATO Secretary General's Special Representative to South Caucasus and Central Asia, who pays regular visits to our country. As to the substance of the dialogue, it is mainly focused on such important issues as regional security issues of mutual concern, including the Euro-Atlantic security, the situation in the South Caucasus and energy security.

In this context, I would also like to emphasize the continuous support

by the NATO member states for the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and peaceful resolution of the conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan founded on these principles. The recent NATO Strasburg/Kehl Summit declaration is a clear expression of that support.

Second, Azerbaijan continues to contribute to the Euro-Atlantic security by participating in NATO-led operations sanctioned by the UN SC resolutions. Between 1999 and 2008, Azerbaijan participated in the KFOR in Kosovo. Currently, the peacekeeping contingent of Azerbaijan, which was re-doubled in 2008, is participating in ISAF operation in Afghanistan. Moreover, our country conducts bilateral consultations with the Afghan Government on possibilities of contributing to the peace and stability in Afghanistan through engagement in other areas, including civilian reconstruction projects.

Third, our practical cooperation includes such broad and diverse areas as defence modernization and reform, democratic control of the armed forces, peace support operations, security sector reform, civil emergency planning, security related scientific, economic and environmental cooperation.

Azerbaijan made significant steps in the field of application of modern standards in the Armed Forces, increasing interoperability, in particular, through further development of the military education and training system.

Despite the on-going conflict the process of gradual transformation of the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan has been started. Structural changes are under way within Ministry of Defence (MOD), General staff and army units. The MOD has already launched a preparatory work for Strategic Defence Review that should consequently cover the whole security sector.

Considerable work has been done for gradual transformation of security sector to modern standards, including the reinforcement of technical capabilities and improvement of personnel management systems within the State Border Service and Internal Troops. Appropriate measures are being taken for gradual transformation of the State Border Service (SBS) from military structure into a law-enforcement type of organization.

Over the recent years, Azerbaijan has continued to improve national civil emergency planning capabilities and has made effective use of appropriate partnership mechanisms and NATO expertise assistance in that

area.

Other notable developments include Azerbaijan's contribution to energy security issues within the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council, successful initiatives in the public diplomacy and humanitarian fields, as well as training and education.

The NATO/PfP Saloglu Trust Fund Project, funded by the contributions of NATO member countries and Partners, is aimed at the full clearance of 600 hectares of land from the Unexploded Ordinances (artillery shells and other ammunition) in the Agstafa region of Azerbaijan and render it for the use of local population. The final third phase of the project should ultimately solve the UXO problem in the mentioned area.

Another large environmental project is the NATO-sponsored Melange (rocket fuel) pilot project which was completed in summer 2008. It disposed 1.400 tonnes of dangerous rocket fuel inherited from the stocks of the former Soviet Union stored in the territory of Azerbaijan.

In the sphere of education and training, NATO International School of Azerbaijan has proved itself as an important venue for constructive discussions on the topics of strategic importance for the Euro-Atlantic Partnership and NATO. In the meantime, NISA has greatly contributed to raising public awareness on Euro-Atlantic and NATO related security issues within Azerbaijan and in the broader Euro-Atlantic area.

Finally, it would be to the point here to note the increasing role of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy in our partnership with NATO on civilian education and training. Currently, the Diplomatic Academy is considering ways of extending its participation in the work of the PfP Consortium of Defence Academies and Security Studies Institutes.

May I conclude by stressing that both political dialogue and practical cooperation with NATO serve the strategic goal of the Republic of Azerbaijan to integrate into the European and Euro-Atlantic political, security, economic and other institutions, as indicated in the National Security Concept.

NATO'S POSSIBLE EXPANSION TO THE EAST: SOME UNEXPECTED IMPLICATIONS FOR AZERBAIJAN

Paul Goble

Russia's invasion of Georgia in August 2008 and Moscow's destabilization campaign in Ukraine since that time have prompted many in NATO capitals to ask ever more insistently whether either country let alone both should be invited to join the Western alliance anytime soon. And while such questions appear to have put on hold the chance that either will be taken in soon, they have also opened the broader debate about the expansion of the alliance in ways that are certain to have some profound implications for Azerbaijan.

On the one hand, any pause in the expansion of the alliance, especially after the efforts Washington made toward that end earlier, will affect not only those countries who have actively sought membership but may now have to wait or perhaps not get it at all and also for their neighbors who will have to recalibrate their security calculations in either case.

And on the other hand, this pause is leading at least some participants in these discussions to recognize that Ukraine and Georgia are not a natural pair but rather two countries whose radically different geopolitical and security situations suggest that they should be treated separately, however much the two have sought to boost themselves through references to their common "color" revolutions. Some argue that Ukraine should get in sooner than Georgia; a few argue the reverse.

These discussions, of course, not only focus on the candidate countries but also on their neighbors, with many in the alliance convinced that if NATO does not extend membership immediately, it will need to take other steps for both the current candidates and their neighbors. And these conversations in turn are even leading a few to consider that there is a better pairing of countries than Ukraine and Georgia and that is Georgia and Azerbaijan. While there is no indication NATO is ready to offer membership to this pair anytime soon or a certainty that Baku would accept

if it were, such discussions likely will have an impact on other sets of relations and thus help to define the environment within which Azerbaijan will now be operating.

There are five possible permutations to NATO's expansion eastward—Ukraine and Georgia are invited to join together and soon, neither is invited in, Ukraine gets in but Georgia does not, Georgia gets in but Ukraine does not, and Georgia and Azerbaijan eventually get in together, probably but not necessarily after Ukraine. Each of these has implications, some obvious and others not so obvious, for Baku and its foreign policy.

Option One: Ukraine and Georgia Become NATO Members. If the Atlantic alliance moves to take in both Ukraine and Georgia, three things are almost certain: First, Russia will move quickly to try to prevent any other former Soviet republics from getting in, using all the means at its disposal. Second, the inclusion of both and the actions of Moscow will lead other countries in the region to seek membership. And third, the alliance itself will expand its programs for the countries neighboring both Ukraine and Georgia, among them being in the latter case Azerbaijan.

A year ago, Kyiv and Tbilisi appeared on the brink of becoming members. Now, that is far less likely given Russian actions and the onset of the economic crisis which is causing many member states to rethink what they are willing and able to do. But if NATO did include the two at once, Azerbaijan almost certainly would find itself both under increased Russian pressure—both overt and covert—not to seek membership, offered additional support by NATO and its member states to promote its security in the changed neighborhood, and likely under increasing domestic pressure to seek membership lest it fall again under Russian domination.

That combination of circumstances again, almost certainly, would lead to some radical discontinuities in Azerbaijan's relations with other countries, both inside the alliance and outside, changes that would put to the test President Ilham Aliyev's hitherto successful prosecution of a balanced foreign policy.

Option Two: Neither Ukraine Nor Georgia Become NATO Members. If—as now seems more likely—NATO decides not to offer membership to either Ukraine or Georgia anytime soon, the consequences could prove equally dramatic and unsettling across the region. On the one hand, both Kyiv and Tbilisi would certainly feel that they had been misled; their neighbors would

assume that the alliance's expansion was at an end, at least for a long time to come, and Moscow would seek to exploit this situation by presenting itself as the obvious alternative to the West, an effort that might bear fruit.

On the other hand, many in the alliance would feel that they would have to do more short of membership to support Ukraine and Georgia and more for the neighbors of the two, albeit in ways that would not encourage the others to think that they could look forward to membership in the near term. That might reassure some but it would simultaneously reduce the pressure in all these countries to reform their military and political systems while perhaps provoking Moscow, many of whose officials would see such arrangements as a kind of covert expansion whatever Brussels and Washington might say.

In this situation, Azerbaijan would likely have to "reset" its policies, tilting more toward Moscow relative to the West diplomatically and considering how best to proceed with its internal military modernization program, one that has been moving the Azerbaijani military away from Soviet-style systems toward interoperable NATO ones. Again, such a situation could lead to serious discontinuities, with Baku forced to react quickly to changes in the actions of all outside actors.

Option Three: Ukraine Gets In but Georgia Does Not. Moscow's use of force in Georgia has led some analysts and policy makers within NATO governments to consider that perhaps the alliance should take in Ukraine but not Georgia. While the political situation in Kyiv is far from stable and clear, it is certainly more stable and clear than the one in Tbilisi. And by splitting the difference, both those committed to expansion and those opposed could claim a certain victory, confident in the one case that the alliance's proclaimed open door has not been slammed shut and in the other that NATO has not risked "a bridge too far."

In some ways, this option would pose the most serious challenge to Azerbaijan and its foreign policy. It would suggest whatever anyone said that the West has accepted a Russian *droit de regard* in the Caucasus, something that would give Russia a freer hand there. It would also indicate that no South Caucasus state is likely to get into Western institutions anytime soon and thus must make the best deal it can with Moscow. And it would mean that other, non-security arrangements including the transit to the West of Caspian Basin oil and gas would have to be revisited and

possibly sacrificed.

Option Four: Georgia Gets In but Ukraine Does Not. When Russia invaded Georgia, some in the West suggested that NATO should immediately offer membership to Georgia in order to stay Moscow's hand. That was never a real possibility, given differences within the alliance, and this option is even less likely now. Georgia has not stabilized, Russia has not backed down, and both Europe and the United States are seeking to deal with Moscow on a *status quo ante* basis that would be impossible were NATO to extend membership to Georgia alone. Indeed, Moscow would see this as a provocation of the purest kind.

But for analytic completeness, it is worth considering for the following reason: Suggestions that the alliance should proceed in this way have already had two consequences. On the one hand, they have pointed to a reality all too often forgotten: defense alliances are for defense. Those who are at risk are thus those who need them most. And on the other, by separating Georgia and Ukraine, those who made this argument—and their numbers were never large—have opened the door to the possibility that NATO needs to reconsider its current thinking about just what it is and explore other options and other possible members.

As the alliance does so, it almost certainly will devote more attention to Azerbaijan, a country which resembles Georgia in terms of its location, the geopolitical threats it faces as a result, and its role in the east-west flow of oil and gas and the west-east flow of geopolitical influence. That means that many in the alliance will want to do more for Azerbaijan even if NATO never extends membership to Tbilisi let alone Baku, and that in turn suggests that such discussions are certain to prompt Moscow to seek to forestall such a development.

Option Five: Georgia and Azerbaijan Become Members. If the Georgia alone option seems remote, the notion that Georgia and Azerbaijan, however much in common they may have, might join NATO together with or without Ukraine seems impossibly so. Azerbaijan has not sought membership, although it is an active participant in many NATO and EU programs, and it is far from clear whether Baku would accept inclusion were it to be offered. But the pause in expansion makes this option less unthinkable at some point in the future than it was only six months or a year ago.

Some experts and officials in the region are now talking about it, and such conversations, even if they seem unlikely to go anywhere anytime soon, have their own dynamic, one that will force some decisions on those now reluctant to make them and prompt others, opposed to those decisions to act in anticipation of them. Both these calculations will affect Baku and its foreign policy, complicating the life of its leaders and diplomats who will face new challenges on all sides. And that development in turn means that Azerbaijan must begin to think about the implications expected and even more unexpected of NATO expansion whether in fact the alliance grows eastward or not.

AZERBAIJAN-EU: PARTNERSHIP IN PROGRESS

Emin Eyyubov, Amb.

Integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions has been at the top of Azerbaijan's foreign policy agenda ever since our country regained its independence and state sovereignty in early 1990s. Azerbaijan views the European Union as a good model of a successful development in political, economic, social and humanitarian fields. The cooperation with the EU and its institutions is not an end in itself, but rather means to raise the living standards for the citizens of Azerbaijan, develop the economy, improve public administration and judiciary, and, in the words of President Ilham Aliyev, "to modernize all spheres of life in our country."

The legal foundation of relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union was laid by the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) signed on April 22, 1996. The agreement which entered into force on July 1, 1999, provides an appropriate framework for the political dialogue between the parties allowing the development of political relations, supports Azerbaijan's efforts to consolidate its democracy, to develop its economy and complete the transition into a market economy and promotes trade and investment, as well as harmonious economic, social, financial, scientific, technological and cultural cooperation.

The work of this and other Azerbaijani-European Union institutions was strengthened in June 2005 when President Ilham Aliyev issued a decree establishing the State Commission on European Integration of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This Commission serves as the main body of the Government, which provides coordination and oversight of activities of all governmental agencies in framework of relations with the EU, implementation of the Azerbaijan-EU ENP Action Plan, preparation of the National Progress Report of Azerbaijan and other relevant measures.

Among the most important of these partnership relationships are those involving the EU's special representative for the South Caucasus, the

TACIS program which promotes infrastructure development, private sector expansion and human resources growth, EU support of refugee and IDP programs, energy and transportation programs, the rehabilitation of areas that have been impacted by the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the European Neighborhood and Partnership Instrument (ENPI).

The ENPI, which replaced TACIS and which is scheduled to last through 2013, provides support to democratic development and good governance programs, socio-economic reforms, and reforms in other areas, including transportation, energy and the environment. And this program has been supplemented by “twinning” projects in which a current EU member state has been “twinned” with Azerbaijan in particular areas. Of particular importance to Azerbaijan have been the EU’s Rehabilitation Program which has helped to repair war-damaged infrastructure in the Fizuli, Agdam and Agjabedi districts and European support for the development of the TRACECA transportation corridor.

Azerbaijan has been an active participant in the European Neighborhood Policy since the Azerbaijan-EU ENP Action Plan was adopted on 14 November 2006. Baku has its own national action plan intended to help Azerbaijan make the kind of reforms that will allow it to more fully integrate into European institutions by promoting improved coordination within the established political dialogue formats and possible involvement of partner countries in aspects of Common Foreign and Security Policy and European Defense and Security Policy, the exchange of information, joint training and exercises and possible participation in the EU-led crisis management operations. This program also envisages the gradual opening of certain Community programs, based on mutual interests and available resources. Areas to be explored include education, training, education, youth, research, environment, as well as culture.

The Azerbaijan-EU Action Plan identifies ten priority areas for cooperation. These include joint efforts to:

Contribute to a peaceful solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and OSCE documents and decisions;

Strengthen democracy in the country, including through fair and transparent electoral process, in line with international requirements;

Strengthen the protection of human rights and of fundamental

freedoms and the rule of law, in compliance with international commitments of Azerbaijan (PCA, CoE, OSCE, UN);

Improve the business and investment climate, particularly by strengthening the fight against corruption;

Improve functioning of customs;

Support balanced and sustained economic development, with a particular focus on diversification of economic activities, development of rural areas, poverty reduction and social/territorial cohesion; promote sustainable development including the protection of the environment;

Bring into line economic legislation and administrative practices;

Strengthen EU-Azerbaijan energy bilateral cooperation and energy and transport regional cooperation, in order to achieve the objectives of the November 2004 Baku Ministerial Conferences;

Enhance cooperation in the field of Justice, Freedom and Security, including in the field of border management; and

Strengthen regional cooperation.

Azerbaijan is now an active partner in the Eastern Partnership initiative. This program, put forward by Poland and Sweden a year ago and approved by the European Council in March 2009, calls for the development of deeper bilateral relations between the EU, on the one hand, and Azerbaijan and five other countries in the region, on the other, through the conclusion of new association agreements, improved economic integration, and increased mobility via visa facilitation. President Ilham Aliyev attended the Eastern Partnership Summit held in Prague on May 7, 2009, where the Joint Declaration creating this partnership was adopted.

One measure of growing ties between Azerbaijan and the European Union is trade. At present, the EU is the main trading partner of Azerbaijan, responsible for 55 percent of its external trade, with Azerbaijan exporting oil and gas and the European Union exporting manufactured goods such as machinery and transportation equipment. Another measure is the growing cooperation between Azerbaijan and the EU at the parliamentary level, cooperation that has led to the creation of the Azerbaijan-EU Parliamentary Cooperation Committee.

But perhaps the most important evidence of cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union has been the latter's unwavering support for Azerbaijan's position on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Although the EU is not directly involved in the settlement process of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, it has frequently spoken in support of the principle of territorial integrity of states as being the foundation of any resolution.

Given these shared values and principles, Azerbaijan looks forward to growing integration with the European Union, confident that both the people of Azerbaijan and the peoples of the EU will benefit in the future just as they have in the past.

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: WHAT DOES IT OFFER AZERBAIJAN?

Tahir Taghizade, Amb.

Azerbaijan has sought to integrate itself into European structures since the recovery of its independence in 1991. Consequently, Baku has always been interested in EU efforts to reach out to countries to the east of the Union in the hopes that such efforts will ultimately lead to EU membership for Azerbaijan. Given that history, Azerbaijan is extremely interested in the possibilities the new EU Eastern Partnership offers, but Baku has many questions about the meaning of this new program.

Announced at the end of 2008, the Eastern Partnership has been declared to be a further step in the development of relations between the EU, on the one hand, and six former Soviet republics—Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia—on the other. But because the program is so new and so many aspects of it are as yet not precisely defined, there are mixed feelings about it in many capitals, including Baku, with some seeing it as a consolation prize offered to countries that will not ever be offered membership and others arguing that it represents a logical next step toward the inclusion of these countries in the EU.

That debate was also fuelled by the way in which discussions about this program have been taking place within the EU. Former Eastern European countries now in the European Union have been enthusiastic about the program and want to develop relations with all or some of the six as quickly as possible. But the older members of the EU, either because they are concerned about the impact of any further enlargement on their prerogatives or because they would prefer to see the Union move forward in other directions, including the Southern Dimension of the European Neighborhood Policy, are reluctant to move forward in this direction.

The EU and its member countries have also complicated the situation by being explicit that relations between them and each of the six will be nationally specific, something that inevitably reduces the importance of the

overall Eastern Partnership idea. But it is also the case that each of the six has pursued its own distinctive approach to the EU and to the Eastern Partnership.

Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine have been in varying degrees suspicious about this program, fearful that they are being offered a consolation prize in place of the membership they seek. Armenia and Belarus, in contrast, have viewed the Partnership idea as an opportunity to escape from regional isolation. And Azerbaijan, while continuing to want closer ties with the EU, put its participation in a multilateral component of the Eastern Partnership at risk by making it very clear that it would not engage in any cooperative measures with Armenia as long as Yerevan remains in occupation of Azerbaijani territory.

These various positions and tensions were not resolved before the EU and the six Eastern “partners” signed their joint declaration in Prague in May, and they have not been resolved since that time either. But several things have become clear over the last two months. Two of the Eastern Partnership countries, Georgia and Ukraine, were eager to move forward with EU ties as quickly as possible. Azerbaijan in contrast was more restrained because of the Armenian issue, and, consequently, Azerbaijan’s understanding of the Eastern Partnership can be said to include the following elements. First, the EP represents a continuation of the EU’s regional approach. Second, it reflects a repacking of existing programs rather than the development of something completely new. And third, it leaves open both the question of the way in which the six can interact with the EU—each has enormous discretion—and the possibilities that each of them has for eventually being invited to join the EU.

From Azerbaijan’s perspective, that means that Baku welcomes the country-specific thrust of the Eastern Partnership but won’t get involved in multilateral arrangements within it alongside Armenia, as long as the latter remains in occupation of Azerbaijan territory. Further, it means that Baku will seek to push the EP in the direction of addressing the political problems member states face. And last but not least, the Eastern Partnership offers Azerbaijan yet another opportunity to advance its own interests, political and economic, with important EU countries and to demonstrate that it too is a good and reliable partner for them.

THE EUROPEAN UNION'S EASTERN PARTNERSHIP: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES

Paul Goble

The Eastern Partnership between the European Union and six former Soviet republics—Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine—represents economic, political and cultural opportunities and challenges for the EU, the six countries who signed on to this accord in Prague on May 7th, and the Russian Federation.

Because some of these appear to be diffuse and uncertain, many commentators are dismissing this latest EU initiative either as, in the words of the *Wall Street Journal*, “not worth the paper it is printed on,” or as a cover for arranging for a pipeline system that bypasses Russia. But because both have the potential to produce radical changes in the countries of the region over time, others are viewing this latest eastward expansion of Europe as representing a far more serious challenge to the status quo than the inclusion of new members in NATO.

The former have the better argument if one considers this latest EU initiative in terms of the program’s immediate goals and the amount of resources the Europeans have committed to them. But the latter have the better argument if one evaluates the Partnership in terms of its declared goals over a longer period of time.

Initially proposed by Poland and Sweden, the Eastern Partnership has been modelled on the European Union’s Mediterranean Policy which has been in existence since 1995 to promote cooperation between Europe and the countries of North Africa and the Eastern Mediterranean. Like that program, the new accord, which is only seven pages long, is more a statement of intentions than an action plan. And what is perhaps more important is that it covers a highly variegated set of countries—three of the six signatories have indicated they hope to join the EU eventually while the other three have not—and calls not for a single policy toward all of them but rather individually crafted approaches with each, a reflection not only of

their differences but also of differences within the EU on how to deal with them.

That has two consequences. On the one hand, it makes this Partnership document extremely general, with calls to promote democracy, rule of law, respect for human rights and freedoms, and cooperation to expand free trade, the elimination of visas, and the resolution of conflicts less specific than many would like. Azerbaijani commentators, for example, have already been critical of the document for failing to specify that all conflicts will be resolved on the basis of the territorial integrity of states, a call that might have made it more difficult to obtain the signatures of other countries and that could have been seen as a challenge to the Russian Federation given its policy in Georgia.

And on the other hand, it makes this Eastern Partnership a less serious and united activity than many in the region might like or that many in Europe and in Russia would oppose. That conclusion is reinforced by the fact that the new organization will not have its own secretariat or budget but rather will be financed through the EU's existing Common Neighborhood Policy. And the amount of money allocated for the Partnership over the next few years will amount, according to European news reports but not the document itself, to only a billion Euros.

At the same time, however, there are three important reasons for thinking that this program, like the Common Neighborhood Policy which has played a larger role than many of its critics have thought, matters more than some may now think.

First, the partnership document was signed on a symbolically important day, the 64th anniversary of the end of World War II in Europe, and represents yet another effort to overcome the division of Europe that occurred after that conflict by involving countries that were part of the Soviet Union itself in European institutions.

Second, at the same summit, the European Union signed a joint declaration with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey and Egypt about the NABUCCO gas pipeline project, one that—if completed—will allow gas from the Caspian Basin to reach the West bypassing Russia. That has led some commentators to suggest that the Eastern Partnership is simply a cover for a broader effort to isolate Russia. But regardless of whether they are right, it shows the ways in which this new accord may be used to involve

these countries in more immediately serious economic and political activities even if they never become members of the EU.

And third, behind all the verbiage of the accord and commentaries about it is an important reality: the EU is seeking to create at least a penumbra of Europeanness around it, and these six countries—three in the former Soviet West and three in the Caucasus—are interested in becoming part of that culture or at least gaining access to it in order to balance the Eurasian influence of Moscow. Such a culture shift, one difficult to quantify, may be the most important consequence of this partnership for all concerned.

All this can be seen by considering the economic, political, and cultural opportunities and challenges of the Eastern Partnership for the EU, the six former Soviet republics that have joined it, and the Russian Federation.

For the EU, the Eastern Partnership represents an economic imperative, a political compromise, and a cultural opportunity. Economically, the countries of the European Union need the oil and gas that come from or transit through these countries and would like to add these countries as markets for its own products. Politically, the partnership represents a compromise between those, mostly the EU's newest members, who would like to see the Union expand to the east, and those, mostly the original core states, who believe the EU cannot afford and should not try to take in any more members now. And culturally, the Partnership plays to Europe's strengths as a soft power, as an attractive option for many, even if it also highlights the EU's difficulties in acting in a unified fashion as a strategic player.

For the six countries who have signed on to the Eastern Partnership, this accord represents an economic opportunity, a political necessity, and a cultural option. Economically, these countries need help from Europe if they are to deal with an increasingly aggressive Russia, which is using its economic power to retake its political positions in what some in Moscow still refer to as “the near abroad.” Politically and for the same reasons, these countries need any ties they can get with Europe either because they want to join Europe as Ukraine, Moldova, and Georgia have indicated or because they want to have links with the EU as part of a balanced foreign policy as Azerbaijan does explicitly and the others do more implicitly.

And for the Russian Federation, the Eastern Partnership represents

both challenges and opportunities in all three areas. Ten days before the accord was signed, Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov told *RIA Novosti* that “we have heard an announcement from Brussels that this is not an attempt to create a new sphere of influence and that it is not a process which is directed against Russia. We want to believe in this guarantee, but I won’t deny that some comments on the initiative made by the EU have concerned us.”

Lavrov’s remarks reflect the divisions in Moscow between those who see the Eastern Partnership as an immediate threat and those who see it as an opportunity. Those who see it as a threat focus on NABUCCO when they are stressing economics, on Brzezinski’s observation that Russia without Belarus or Ukraine is “a typical regional Asiatic power” when they are talking politically, and on the loss of Moscow’s privileged cultural status in this region when they are talking about culture.

But others in Moscow see this as an opportunity. As the EU has approached Russia’s borders, Brussels has worked hard to present its actions as anything but anti-Russian, and many in Moscow, including Lavrov, have been extremely successful in getting the Europeans to take Russia’s views into consideration in ways that end by helping rather than hurting Moscow’s interests. To be sure, the EU is perhaps less inclined to do that after Georgia and after the Ukrainian gas problems, but it is certain that Moscow has already prepared a list of desiderata that the EU will be inclined to grant to ensure that Russian opposition does not torpedo the Eastern Partnership.

All of that means that the Eastern Partnership, while not yet fully formed and certainly not the tight and fast-acting geopolitical policy some prefer, is likely to survive and prove both less and more than the establishment of a new European sphere of influence in the East, a sphere that will not be exclusive but will certainly be influential in the policies of the countries most directly involved as well as in those of the EU and the Russian Federation.

Turkish Geopolitics

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TURKEY ASSERTING ITSELF AS A REGIONAL POWER

Mitat Celikpala

In the wake of the conflict between the Russian Federation and Georgia, Turkey has moved to adopt a more independent approach to the region, a reflection of both the economic and political consequences of instability in the Caucasus and developments inside Turkey itself as well. But despite this shift in emphasis, Ankara is discovering that its options are more limited than it had hoped, although they do provide more scope for action than Turkey had felt it possessed in the past.

In recent months, Turkey has pursued what its leaders call “problem-free relations with its neighbors,” an approach that underscores Tayyip Erdogan’s statement at the Mediterranean Union summit that Turkey is “a country that offers solutions” to those living nearby and was reflected in his visits to Moscow and Tbilisi immediately after the Russian intervention in Georgia.

To understand just how serious a shift that represents, it is worth recalling what Turkey’s traditional approach to the Caucasus has been. On the one hand, it has supported the independence and territorial integrity of the states in the region, something that has not changed. And on the other, Ankara has generally fallen in line behind the policies of Western countries, waiting for them to decide on a common approach rather than striking out on its own, something it is now prepared to do.

Turkey in fact had been moving toward a more independent position for some time. It has not refrained from criticizing the West on issues like the Montreux Convention or supporting Russia, given Ankara’s expanding trade ties with Moscow. But the Georgian war provided an occasion for a more public and multi-dimensional shift, one clearly intended to suggest that Ankara will now seek to play its own role as an actor in the region and beyond.

Because Turkey is a Caucasus state or at least is a neighbor to that

region, the war between Russia and Georgia cannot help but adversely affect economic and political projects in which Turkey is closely involved, such as the BSEC, BTC pipeline and BTK railroad. And the increased tension after the conflict may have the effect of undermining Black Sea-centered initiatives such as the BLACKSEAFOR and Black Sea Harmony, in which Turkey had invested so much hope.

Not surprisingly, the United States reacted negatively to Turkey's moves seeing them as an indication that Ankara was reorienting itself away from Europe and NATO and toward closer ties with Russia. Turkish officials worked hard to correct this perception, but the fact that they had to reflect Ankara's relative inexperience of acting on its own, an approach that requires it explain itself more fully to traditional allies than many in the Turkish capital had assumed.

Ankara's new stance was also obvious in the evolution of its relationships with the three countries of the South Caucasus, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. Until the mid-1990s, Georgia did not play an important part in Turkish geopolitical thinking. But its role in various Turkish energy projects, such as BTC and BTK, and transportation links, such as the BTK railroad, has changed that. Since the Rose Revolution, Turkey has actively contributed to many civilian, military, social and economic projects to assist Georgia's development. Largely as a result, Turkey is now Georgia's most important trading partner and the largest country in terms of Turkish investment in the CIS countries. Consequently, instability in Georgia will damage Ankara's interests and policies more than almost anyone else, and a civil war in Georgia is more of a threat to Turkey than a Georgia without the two breakaway republics but without internal civil war.

If Georgia is important for Turkey's economic interests in the Caucasus, Azerbaijan remains a crucial element in Ankara's new calculations. Historically and culturally, Azerbaijan retains its undisputed priority in Turkish political thinking. Turkey remains one of the largest foreign investors in Azerbaijan and accounts for some 15 percent of foreign direct investment in the country. Ankara, at the same time, is the largest investor in Azerbaijan's non-energy sectors of economy. Despite the fears of some and the expectations of others, this is unlikely to change, especially given Azerbaijan's rising economic and political power and its status as a bastion

of stability in a troubled region.

Because Ankara's policies toward Tbilisi and Baku reflect continuing imperatives, its approach to Armenia has shown perhaps the greatest change. Turkey has been constrained in its dealings with Yerevan not only because of the latter's closeness to Moscow but also because of Armenia's occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjoining regions of Azerbaijan. But the Georgian war is changing the situation: Armenia has lost its most important trade route north, and Turkey wants as noted above to have better relations with all its neighbors, especially given the current instability in Georgia. Consequently, the two countries have been cautiously exploring a détente, via in the first instance "football" diplomacy. However, this relative opening towards Yerevan is rather a reflection of Ankara's expectations for Armenia to change its approach towards Azerbaijan and Turkey, than an indication of Turkish weakness.

Looming behind the three countries of the South Caucasus is the Russian Federation, with which Ankara is pursuing what it calls "an enhanced multi-dimensional partnership." Trade between the two countries is growing rapidly and is expected to reach 38 billion USD this year—an amount equal to Russia's trade turnover with Germany. And that reality, combined with changes in the Caucasus and inside Turkey itself, promises to move Ankara away from its traditional moorings toward a more independent role, something that will bear watching in the coming weeks and months.

IF TURKEY REOPENS ITS BORDER WITH ARMENIA: WHAT IT MIGHT MEAN AND WHAT IT WON'T

Paul Goble

Turkey's rapprochement with Armenia and especially the publication of the five-part "road map" for future relations between Ankara and Yerevan have sparked much anger in Baku with some people viewing this Turkish move, in the absence of significant progress on ending the Armenian occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan's territory as a betrayal and others predicting that it will force Azerbaijan to re-orient its foreign policy away from Turkey and the West and towards Moscow.

Such reactions, perhaps understandable under the circumstances, require at least three correctives: First, it is critically important to consider exactly what the road map means and how it is likely to be implemented given the statements of Turkish leaders underscoring their continued support for Azerbaijan. Second, it is equally important to recognize what this move by Turkey and Armenia does not change in the South Caucasus, however dramatic a reading some are inclined to give it. And third, it is worth calling attention to the fact that the changes this road map could lead to do not in every case work against the interests of Azerbaijan but may in fact create opportunities for Baku to achieve its goals.

Only by considering each of these three realities can Azerbaijan hope to find a way to navigate in a future which is neither entirely transformed nor completely the same and thus take advantage of the situation rather than being caught like a deer in the headlight and assuming that there is nothing to be done except to get angry or to radically change its relations with its key interlocutors in the region and beyond.

First of all, everyone concerned with evaluating the latest moves by Turkey and Armenia needs to remember the following: Neither Turkey nor Armenia signed the road map; they simply agreed to it as a text for future discussions, points repeatedly made by the president and prime minister of Turkey, both of whom have been at pains to say that nothing in it points to a change in Ankara's policy toward Azerbaijan. Moreover, Turkey and

Armenia had their own compelling reasons for moving in this direction, reasons that had little or nothing to do with Azerbaijan—however much Azerbaijanis may naturally have focused on the consequences of the road map for themselves.

Ankara, for example, clearly hoped to prevent the US Congress or President Barak Obama from officially declaring that the events of 1915 in Anatolia were “a genocide,” a hope that has been at least partially realized. And Yerevan was interested both in gaining another transportation and communication route to the world in order to improve its economic situation and also—and quite possibly more important from its perspective—in highlighting that Yerevan’s policies are not equivalent to or a direct manifestation of the views of the Armenian diaspora.

That has two important consequences that Azerbaijani and other analysts should attend to. On the one hand, announcing a road map does not mean that all of its provisions will be implemented or that any of them will be implemented soon. Instead, as other “road maps” around the world have shown, it creates a new forum for discussion, but it does not prevent any of the players in the region—including Azerbaijan—from pressing their case or mean that such players cannot block and or shape the path forward. And on the other hand—and this is the most important reality of all as far as Azerbaijan is concerned—the fact that Turkey and Armenia announced a road map rather than a treaty or other signed agreement almost certainly means that neither government is in a position to realize the declarative language of the road map. To the extent that is true—and evidence for this is certain to grow in the coming days—Azerbaijan and other countries will have enormous opportunities to press their respective cases, blocking some or all of the provisions of the road map or modifying them in ways that will work to their benefit.

Second, and equally important for Azerbaijan’s consideration of this road map, it is important to remember what this accord does not change. It does not change the constellation of forces in the South Caucasus, it does not change the international community’s support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan as the basis for a resolution of the conflict, and it does not open the way for Armenia to become an economic powerhouse and thus to be an even more independent actor in the South Caucasus than it has been up to now.

Thus, the conclusions of some Azerbaijani commentators that this action requires Baku to reorient its foreign policy seem at a minimum overstated and more likely simply wrong. President Ilham Aliyev has taken pride in pursuing what he calls “a balanced foreign policy,” one that sometimes nods in one direction and then in the other. Those who argue that what Turkey and Armenia have done requires a wholesale shift in Baku’s approach away from Turkey and the West toward the Russian Federation are thus not only ignoring the facts on the ground which suggest little is going to change in the short term but also calling into question their own government’s approach. Obviously, exploring relations with Moscow on a wide variety of issues is not wrong. It is both consistent with Baku’s past policies and is useful, as long as this effort is taken on the basis of a cool consideration of realities rather than as the result of an emotional response to a road map that may or may not lead anywhere anytime soon. The same approach should govern Baku’s relations with all other countries, including Turkey and even Armenia, however angry some in the Azerbaijani capital may be about past actions or future possibilities.

And third, in the longer term, it is important to think about what the road map, if it were fully implemented and if the border between Azerbaijan and Turkey were opened, would in fact mean for Azerbaijan—especially because while there are some aspects of the road map Baku will certainly oppose, successfully or not, there are others including the opening of the border that Azerbaijan could exploit to its benefit rather than viewing the entire notion of the road map as a kind of geopolitical defeat.

Azerbaijanis assume that the opening of the border between Armenia and Turkey would have only negative consequences for their country. On the one hand, they believe, it would reduce the pressure on Yerevan to settle the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and to withdraw from Azerbaijani territory. And on the other, some of them appear convinced, it would signal a serious rupture of the special relationship Azerbaijan has always assumed it has with Turkey, a relationship described in both countries as “one nation—two states.”

But it is worth asking whether the opening of the border by itself will have either of those effects. However much the opening of the border or the fulfilment of the other parts of the road map may help Armenia, it is important to reflect on three ways in which these actions could work to

Azerbaijan's benefit. First of all, a rapprochement between Armenia and Azerbaijan will destroy much of the linkage between Armenia and its diaspora. For Armenia, Turkey is a neighbor; for the diaspora, it is an existential question. If this linkage is severed or at least much reduced, the diaspora will not play the role in the US and Europe that it has played up to now, and Azerbaijan will be able to take advantage of that to increase its influence there.

Moreover, such a rapprochement will have the effect of reducing the influence of Moscow in Yerevan by giving the Armenian government another interlocutor who may be in a position to play an even greater role in its national future. While that could lead some in Yerevan to become more stubborn in negotiations on the occupied territories, it is likely to have just the opposite effect. On the one hand, Moscow not Yerevan has had the greater interest in opposing any resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Indeed, the Russian government has intervened whenever it appeared that Azerbaijan and Armenia might reach agreement to prevent that from happening, given that Moscow officials recognize that Russia's influence in the South Caucasus will decline if the conflict is resolved.

On the other hand, an Armenian rapprochement with Turkey works to Azerbaijan's benefit in yet another way. As Yerevan certainly understands, Ankara is not going to proceed very far down the path laid out in the road map if Armenia does not make concessions on the occupied territories in Azerbaijan. Given Armenia's interest in breaking out from its current geographic isolation, Yerevan will thus have an interest in doing just that and will be less constrained by Russia or its diaspora populations from taking the necessary steps.

And finally, there is another aspect to all this that some in Baku appear to have forgotten in their anger that Turkey has taken this partial and, for Azerbaijanis, unexpected step toward Armenia: The road map may actually have the effect of allowing Armenians to become more comfortable with Turks, something that, given the principle of "one nation, two states" that Baku is so interested in defending, could make them more comfortable with Azerbaijanis as well. To the extent that happens, the road map that Turkey and Armenia have agreed to but not yet signed or moved forward with could become a road map for Azerbaijan as well, however unpalatable the sudden shift in Ankara's position may now be for some in Baku.

TURKISH-ARMENIAN RAPPROCHEMENT AND THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT: THE ROLE OF COLLECTIVE MEMORY AND IDENTITY

Rauf Garagozov

The recent rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia and Turkey's agreement to open the borders with Armenia has generated serious concerns in Azerbaijan. For many in Baku, these events have raised the question as to how the improvement in Turkish-Armenian relations will affect the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Given that Armenian forces occupy 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan and significant progress toward their withdrawal has not been achieved, many in Azerbaijan have decided that this Turkish action will reduce the chances for a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, all the more so because the talks between Ankara and Yerevan were conducted in an atmosphere of secrecy.

Baku's negative reaction at first glance would seem completely justified. Indeed, how could one view the improvement of relations between Azerbaijan's closest ally and its opponent not lead to a weakening of Azerbaijan's position in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict? However, such a view of the situation, characteristic of those who view international affairs from the perspective of *Realpolitik*, is not entirely adequate for an understanding of the processes taking place here. Still worse, it can lead to premature or even mistaken conclusions.

In order to answer the question about how the improvement of Turkish-Armenian relations will affect the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, one should, I suggest, focus on the factors that have generated the negative views Turks and Armenians have of each other. As is nearly universally understood, the basic cause of the poor relations between Armenians and Turks arise from the historic memory of these peoples, from their different understanding and interpretation of events which took place in the Ottoman Empire at the beginning of the 20th century.

As a result of this, as some political scientists have stressed, the relations between these two people cannot be understood only from the point of view of political realism but require a different approach, such as for example, constructivism which allows for the consideration of additional dimensions of the situation, including collective memory and identity (Bulent and Karakas-Keles 2002). One should add that the factor of collective memory which gives birth to negative inter-national stereotypes, antagonistic views and competing historical interpretations is an important cause of the existence of negative relations not only between Armenians and Turks but also between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. To a well known degree, the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is the fruit of these ethnic stereotypes and fears (Garagozov 2006).

As our investigations have shown (Garagozov 2005), the pattern that could be designated as “a people surrounded and persecuted by enemies but remaining true to itself,” plays a major role for Armenian collective memory and identity. It consists of the following components:

1. An initial situation: the Armenian people exists in a glorious and wonderful time which is violated by the interventions of enemies, as a result of which
2. Antagonistic forces attack the Armenians;
3. The Armenians experience as a result enormous persecution and suffering;
4. If they remain true to their faith, then they overcome their enemies, but if they depart from their faith, then they suffer defeat.

These qualities of collective memory and identity make the Armenians especially susceptible to fears and concerns about their fate, to what in the conception of Lake and Rothchild (2000) are called “ethnic fears.”

Thus, if we consider the question posed above from a constructivist perspective, which considers the dimensions of collective memory and identity, then it is completely possible to come to conclusions which are very different from those reached on the basis of the position of political realism.

In that sense, the very things which seem the most effective means from the point of view of political realism, namely positions of strength and pressure, can not only not help resolve conflicts like the one over Nagorno-Karabakh but on the contrary, such actions, by increasing fears, distrust and

the antagonism of the sides, contribute to the still greater mobilization of Armenians for the continuation of the conflict. In any case, such are the particular features of Armenian collective memory and identity which must be considered in the course of an analysis of international relations. And drawing on this perspective, one can see that the improvement of Turkish-Armenian relations, which can ultimately lead to positive movements in how the sides view each other and without which it will be impossible to develop trust among the conflicting sides, can make a positive contribution to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Considering how powerful and conservative collective memory is in its impact on group concepts, thinking and behavior, it is only possible to guess about those large number of obstacles which can arise and are already arising on the path leading to the improvement of Turkish-Armenian and Armenian-Azerbaijani relations. This is in no way a surprise because any attempts toward the normalization of relations between the sides requires a definite transformation of one's identity, one's view of oneself and of "the other."

In this sense, the fact that the Turkish side initiated this process can show not its "weakness" and the impact of foreign pressure (from the US, the European Union, the Armenian lobby, and so on), as *Realpolitik* might suggest, but rather and above all the growing confidence of Turkish political elites in the ability of their own society to change without being stopped by fears that any change could threaten the fundamental components of national identity.

Considering the role which the theme of "genocide" plays in Armenian consciousness, collective memory and identity, the Armenian side faces a still more complicated and dramatic process of intellectual revision and transformation of its identity. The noble theme of "victimization" is so strongly intertwined with Armenian collective memory and identity and so profitably exploited by various external forces that enormous efforts from many sides will be required in order to push this transformation forward and allow the Armenians overcome their fears concerning the possible loss of their identity.

In fact, the Armenians and Turks must go an enormous distance in order to achieve a real rapprochement and begin a genuine dialogue. In this process, however strange it may seem, the Azerbaijani experience can be

helpful. That is because Azerbaijani-Armenian relations, despite the latest attempts to revise their treatment, during a significant part of Soviet history not to speak about the more distant past have been almost an example of a “symbiotic” coexistence of two peoples one of whom is conceived by the Armenians as “Turks.” There are Armenians and Azerbaijanis still alive who had a positive experience of living together and of the mutual enrichment of their cultures. This factor, if used with skill, can become an important instrument for helping to overcome conservative aspects of the memory of these peoples. In this connection, the Azerbaijani side could conduct a more active and even intermediary role in the rapprochement of Turkey and Armenia just starting out.

Of course, Azerbaijan will find it more difficult to begin such a dialogue with Armenia when part of its territory remains under the control of Armenian armed forces. In this situation, any attempts at resolving these identity issues may be conceived as a manifestation of “weakness” and a concession to the aggressor. That is why for Baku the demand for the return of its territory is so important as a first step toward this process.

And so, summing up, if we are agreed that for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the principles of political realism at the very least must be supplemented by the principles of constructivism, then it becomes clear that any efforts directed at removing “the cursed past” between these peoples is one of the important and possibly the most important element of policies directed at the resolution of this conflict.

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CAN TURKEY AND ARMENIA NORMALIZE THEIR RELATIONS?

Mitat Celikpala

Despite the attention Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan's clash with Israeli president over Gaza attracted in the media, a far more important event at the Davos session as far as Ankara was concerned was a successful exchange between the Turkish and Armenian foreign ministers which appears likely to set the stage for the two countries to move beyond the football diplomacy of last fall when Turkish President Abdullah Gül visited Yerevan.

Following their meeting in Davos, both Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan and his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan said "normalization in Armenian-Turkish relations is no longer a dream" and that "we have never come this much closer to normalization in bilateral relations." And Turkish commentators pointed to talks in Helsinki in December 2008 and Istanbul at the end of January this year as indicative of forward progress in the relationship as well as to the visit of Nalbandyan to Istanbul in his capacity as chairman-in-office of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation are examples at détente between the countries.

And at the people-to-people level, not only are more Armenians visiting Turkey as tourists but also more Armenians are working there, a trend to which Turkish officials are turning a blind eye. But despite all this, the glass is still half-empty rather than half-full, with many critical issues, including Azerbaijani-Armenian relations, Nagorno-Karabakh, the genocide issue, and the negative attitude of the Armenian diaspora toward Turkey still far from any resolution.

Given the enormity of these issues, the Turkish foreign ministry has found it extremely difficult to craft a policy for Armenia and the South Caucasus. And perhaps as a result, many people in Turkey and abroad have criticized Ankara for what it has not done. Here, I want to avoid that

approach and to consider somewhat different issues: what is or at least might be the reason Turkey is pursuing an opening with Armenia and where could that pursuit lead.

The Russian-Georgian war in August 2008 not only focused Turkish attention on the Caucasus, but prompted Ankara to elaborate a security proposal largely independent of its traditional alliances and thus open to a rapprochement with Armenia. Despite diaspora criticism, Armenia has responded positively to this. But other forces may be at work here as well.

Some have speculated that Ankara took this step not so much as an initiative of its own but rather as a way to block the US Congress from passing a resolution that would declare official American support for the idea that 1915 was a genocide. Those who make that argument point to comments made during the recent American electoral campaign by both now President Barack Obama and now Secretary of State Hillary Clinton.

Beyond any question, however, Armenia occupies a prominent place in Turkey's policy toward the Caucasus. Ankara's economic and strategic engagement with the region has developed in many cases with an eye to the relations of the various players, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Russia, toward Armenia. And its backing for the principle of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and many of its geopolitical and economic successes in the region show that it is possible for Turkey to pursue a successful regional policy without Armenia and sometimes despite Armenia.

That achievement gives Ankara important leverage in Yerevan, especially since an increasing number of Armenians recognize that their country must develop stable relations with neighboring countries like Turkey if Armenia is to prosper economically and succeed politically. But the two countries are far apart on key issues and so progress toward that state of affairs almost certainly will be slow, even though Turkey too would benefit from improved ties. And nowhere is progress likely to be slower than in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, where Turkey and Armenia occupy diametrically opposed positions.

The possibility of three party talks on that subject, including Turkey, Azerbaijan and Armenia, represents a step forward, but far from a conclusive one. Nonetheless, statements by Turkish and Armenian officials about "approaching normalization" do make sense and could lead to a thawing of this "frozen" conflict, especially if the talks take place and public

opinion is swayed as a result.

Another element in this emerging relationship between Ankara and Yerevan is Turkey's hope that it can use such ties to reduce the influence of the Armenian diaspora. If the Obama administration ends up supporting the diaspora position on 1915, that would not only increase tensions between Ankara and Washington but also reduce the significance of Armenia for Turkey, something officials in Ankara and Washington certainly know.

And consequently, just how important each of these factors is in Turkish and Armenian calculations will become clear very soon, although because there are so many at work, the impulse for normalization at one speed or another between Turkey and Armenia is likely to continue.

THE ARMENIAN-TURKISH RAPPROCHEMENT AND THE REORDERING OF GEOPOLITICS IN THE CAUCASUS

Paul Goble

Armenia and Turkey have announced that they plan to sign agreements within the next six weeks to re-establish diplomatic relations and open their common border. On the one hand, this announcement will certainly lead opponents of this development to step up their opposition to it and possibly derail or at least delay the signing of these accords. But on the other hand, the declaration itself already points to a reordering of the geopolitics of the Caucasus region, a development that will affect not only all the countries within the region but also major outside powers who have vital interests there.

Because of the uncertainties about the agreements themselves, including both their timing and specific content, and about what supporters and opponents will do, it is far too early to offer a definitive judgment on the way in which such accords will send shockwaves through the governments and societies of all the countries concerned. But some of the likely consequences are quite clear, and this essay is offered as a kind of checklist of what the restoration of diplomatic ties and the opening of the border between Armenia and Turkey will mean.

Armenia. Yerevan will certainly view these accords as a major victory. They will end its geographic isolation, cut the influence of the diaspora on Armenian politics, reduce Yerevan's dependence on Russia, the CIS and Iran, and give Armenia greater freedom of action as a result. The impact of the accord on the Karabakh conflict is uncertain. On the one hand, Turkey will be under enormous pressure domestically to arrange an Armenian withdrawal and Armenia will feel more secure and thus more willing to deal. But on the other, the Armenian government may decide to proceed more slowly lest it generate adverse domestic reaction by appearing to have "sold out" Karabakh to get an accord with Ankara.

Turkey. Turkey will also see these accords as a triumph. They will

provide content to its affirmation of a major role in regional politics, give Ankara greater influence throughout the Caucasus, and—perhaps most important—improve Turkey’s standing with the European Union and the United States on questions like the evaluation of 1915 and possible membership in the EU. And that in turn will give Turkey leverage on other issues including the status of the Kurds in Iraq and the security architecture of the greater Middle East. At the same time, however, these accords will complicate Turkey’s relationship with Baku and with other Turkic and Islamic states, and such complications are certain to resonate within Turkey itself, possibly powering challenges to the government.

Azerbaijan. Unless Turkey can deliver an accord on Karabakh at the same time as it signs the accords with Armenia, many in Azerbaijan are certain to view Ankara’s actions as a betrayal of common Turkishness. Indeed, it appears likely that Baku will never look at Ankara in quite the same way again if that course of events occurs. Such feelings will have an impact on a variety of east-west projects and may lead Azerbaijan to expand its links with the Russian Federation and Iran. And those shifts are even more likely if as seems probable Baku finds itself under pressure to reach a compromise with Yerevan. After all, some in the international community are certain to argue, if Turkey and Armenia can overcome their differences, so too should Baku and Yerevan. Such shifts suggest that the impact of the Armenian-Turkish accords may be greater in the public politics of Azerbaijan than anywhere else, even if these agreements do not necessarily result in major changes in Baku’s policies.

Georgia. These accords will have a contradictory impact on Georgia. On the one hand, they will reduce pressure on Georgia to allow transit of goods to Armenia: Yerevan now has another route. On the other hand, they will mean that Georgia potentially will have another route out, something that could either quiet or intensify the unsettled border region between Armenia and Georgia and lead to a shift in Tbilisi’s views on various pipeline and railway projects. But perhaps the biggest impact will come from the sense these accords are likely to generate in many quarters that sophisticated statesmen are able to solve even the most intractable problems while less capable leaders are now.

Iran. Tehran’s influence in Armenia will certainly decline, not only because the Zangazur bridges will become less important—Yerevan will

have some new and more attractive choices—but also because Turkey’s influence will go up. And consequently, Iran is likely to be one of the biggest losers from these agreements, one of the most unspoken explanations for why Turkey was interested in concluding them.

The Arab and Turkic Worlds. The Arab world is likely to view Turkey’s actions as a betrayal of Islam, thus reducing Turkey’s influence in some parts of the Middle East. And the Turkic world, especially in Central Asia, is likely to follow Azerbaijan in viewing what Ankara has done as a betrayal of Turkishness, especially given the willingness, even enthusiasm of most Turkic governments to defend Turkey on issues like 1915. But both of these worlds are likely to assume a pragmatic approach, possibly viewing Armenia as yet another channel for imports and exports to the larger region.

Israel. The Armenian-Turkish accords will almost certainly prompt Jerusalem to revisit its ties in the Caucasus and especially its Azerbaijan-centric approach. Some in Baku may view that as a downgrading, but it more likely to be only relative rather than absolute. Israel already has close ties with Turkey: those will increase, as will existing links with Armenia and Georgia.

The Russian Federation. Moscow and the CIS are the big losers as a result of the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement, however much the Russian government can be counted upon to praise the agreements. Armenians have long been sceptical of both Moscow’s role and the CIS but have felt they had no choice but to go along given their sense of being surrounded by enemies. That will change. If Moscow wants to maintain its influence in Yerevan, it will have to devote far more resources. That is unlikely. Instead, Moscow is likely to seek to expand its influence elsewhere, most likely in Baku. But the South Caucasus as a Russian preserve with Moscow having a droit de regard is a thing of the past.

The European Union. These agreements will reduce the pressure on European countries to adopt resolutions on 1915, something most of them will be pleased about, and it will boost the chances that the EU will look more positively on Turkey as an eventual member, although these accords by themselves will not overcome German and French insistence on going slow. The EU and its member countries will also be among the first looking for possible new routes east-west and north-south that will involve

Armenia.

The United States. Washington will be pleased as well. It will praise Turkey and step up its efforts to get Ankara into the EU. It will be pleased to be let off the hook on 1915 given the likely decline of influence of the Armenian diaspora and happy to have a land link with Armenia. But the US will also have to accept a much greater role for Turkey in the region and have to defer to Ankara on questions that the US had thought it was in complete control of.

Given the enormous number of likely or at least possible consequences, the way in which they will interact with each other means that not all of the outcomes sketched above will take place. But the number of likely outcomes also guarantees that fallout from the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement on the geopolitics of the South Caucasus will be one of the most important developments in international relations not only in 2010 but for many years to come.

ANKARA-YEREVAN ACCORDS POINT TOWARD ARMENIA'S WITHDRAWAL FROM THE OCCUPIED TERRITORIES

Gulnara Inandzh

The emotions, whipped up by commentaries which followed the signing on October 10 of the protocols between Turkey and Armenia, have prevented a logical analysis of the situation. In order to begin such an analysis, we need to recognize that at the roots of the signing of these accords lie a multi-sided game of significance far beyond the South Caucasus region.

If at the outset, the opening of the borders with Armenia was one of the conditions on Turkey's path toward joining the European Union, then at the present time, the rapprochement of the two countries depends on the geopolitical situation and Ankara's participation in these processes. Immediately after the signing of the Turkish-Armenian accords, as one should have expected, the EU put forward some new demands for Turkey, about which the latter could not have but known about in advance. This means that Turkey signed the agreements with Armenia not as part of its effort to join the EU, something that provides one of the points of departure for understanding why Turkey decided to reach an agreement with Armenia.

At the same time, we must not ignore the pressures on Turkey both direct and behind the scenes. And those came from more places than just the capitals of the countries which were represented at the signing ceremony. (Here, we intentionally are not touching on the role of Israel in all these complicated political games, the situation around Iran, the transportation routes for Iraqi oil and the Kurdish element in Iraq, as each of these represent a distinctive subject for discussion).

Turkey, who bear the genetic code of the Ottoman Empire as far as great power games are concerned, will not agree to play the role of a defeated country even under the pressure of world powers. Ankara is not

in such a weak geopolitical situation that it has to act in ways that harm its national interests. Not long ago, we should remember, Turkey felt itself strong enough to refuse the United States the right to use the military base at Incirlik for the supply of the anti-Saddam operations of the coalition forces in Iraq.

When pointing to the harm the protocols between Ankara and Yerevan create for Azerbaijan in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, one must not forget that the Armenian diaspora has terrorized Turkey with the issue of the so-called “Armenian genocide.” In its turn, Turkish diplomacy, which connects this question with the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict until recently took a position absolutely the same as Azerbaijan both because of their common Turkishness and because of Turkey’s own national interests. These two issues also served as a factor which united the Azerbaijani and Turkish diaspora, which resisted recognition of “the Armenian genocide” by pointing to the Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani lands.

Viewed from that perspective, it would seem that Turkey, which has little to gain economically and politically by reaching an accord with Armenia, signed the protocols in a way that both undercut its own interests and angered its fraternal and strategic relationship with Azerbaijan.

Of course, in contrast to the 1990s, Azerbaijan today is not the weak “younger brother” who needs support but an equal state that is confident in its own forces and demands respect on that basis. This cannot entirely please the current Turkish powers that be, but it is not the occasion for a break with a reliable partner. Differences in the question of the transportation of Azerbaijani gas to Turkey also cannot be the subject for speculation on such a strategic question as the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border.

During the entire period of talks with Armenia, official representatives of Turkey at various levels repeated that the relationship Ankara sought would not harm the interests of Azerbaijan and that the Turkish-Armenian borders will not be opened until the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Among those who have constantly said this are Turkish President Abdulla Gul, Prime Minister Erdogan, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, members of the parliament, opposition figures and others both before and after the signing of the protocols.

At the same time, every step of Armenian-Turkish negotiations was discussed with Baku, and talks about the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue continued in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group.

And in this context, the declaration of Turkish President Gul concerning the impact in “a short time” of the Armenian-Turkish accords on “the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” merits attention and should calm many of the concerns in Azerbaijan.

At the present time, when Azerbaijan has acquired major geopolitical importance, ignoring its interests on such an important issue is impossible. Consequently, the interests of Baku were taken into consideration. Note that immediately after the signing in Switzerland of the Armenian-Turkish agreement Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev arrived in Zurich where the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was discussed. Further, a short time after the signing of the agreement with the very same mission, Tina Kaidanow, the US Assistant Secretary of State for Europe and Eurasia arrived in Baku, and in the framework of the meetings of the foreign ministers of the Black Sea countries, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu met with President Ilham Aliyev and his foreign minister, Elmar Mammadyarov. And the visit to Baku of General Ishyk Koshaner, commander of Turkish ground forces, to meet with Azerbaijani Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev is yet another confirmation of this.

Taken together, it is clear that this cycle of visits was not a matter of chance.

And if there were any doubt about this, the reaction both within Armenian society and also in the diaspora to the accord which should allow Armenia to escape from the blockade has been negative. Evidently, Armenian society and politicians recognize that they will have to free the occupied territories, because otherwise no one intends to save Armenia. It is not accidental that after the signing of the Zurich agreement, all sides represented at the ceremony except for Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan did not hide their satisfaction with what had taken place.

In other words, everything shows that the Zurich agreement will have a positive consequence on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Judging by the presence at the signing ceremony of the representatives of the OSCE Minsk Group, it is possible to assert that all interested sides are

informed about this process and about its impact on the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

If under the pressure of the diaspora Armenia will not ratify the agreement, Azerbaijan and Turkey will return to where they were before. If the Turkish and Armenian parliaments all the same give legal force to the agreement, then Armenia will have to free Azerbaijani territories in order to secure the opening of the Turkish borders. Otherwise, Ankara, responding to public pressure in Azerbaijan and in Turkey will not be able to open the borders with Armenia. In that case, Azerbaijani and Turkish public opinion will be in a position to increase international pressure on Yerevan and the Armenian diaspora regarding the liberation of the occupied territories.

If Armenia does not follow through, then Turkey will always be in a position to find reasons to close the borders. In such a case, Azerbaijan will be left with only one choice – the liberation of the occupied territories by military means; and the countries involved in the division of spheres of influence in the region will have to agree with this. Otherwise Azerbaijan, using its status as “the most reliable country for the transportation of gas,” will have every reason for refusing to allow the Nabucco project to pass through its territory.

Every country has its own interests and priorities, and in this case, that means that there is no chance that Turkey will sacrifice its relations with Azerbaijan for new ties with Armenia.

STARTING OVER? TURKEY AND AZERBAIJAN AFTER THE PROTOCOLS

Nigar Goksel

The two protocols signed by Turkey and Armenia on October 10th are now awaiting action by the Turkish parliament's foreign affairs committee. Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev has frequently spoken against any rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia as long as the latter continues to occupy Azerbaijani territory. Baku's strategy to elicit popular concern in Turkey proved effective, since the Turkish government has often tried to defend its foreign policy decisions in terms of public opinion. The AKP government is receptive to public opinion and has by now reiterated at every level that the protocols will not be ratified until the "occupation of Azerbaijan ends," though it is not clear whether this refers to some—or all—occupied Azerbaijani regions around Karabakh, or also Karabakh itself. It is quite feasible in Turkey that protocols wait in the parliament for long stretches of time. In 2005, for example, Turkey signed an agreement extending its customs union with the EU to the new members of the Union, including Cyprus; this has still not been ratified. For now, from the Azerbaijani perspective, the immediate "risk" may thus be averted.

Despite the realignment of Ankara with Baku's red lines, the Turkish decision to sign the protocols in the first place and Azerbaijan's reaction to that have left bitterness on both sides, and the current status quo in relations therefore rests on fragile pillars. Even after the current tension fades, the potential for mutually inflamed emotions is on the horizon. As spring (i.e. April) nears, Ankara is going to be challenged with the resolution in the US Congress on 1915 and is likely to again play the card of "normalization of relations with Armenia." If a breakthrough on the Karabagh front is not witnessed by then, tensions will again rise. It is important at this juncture to take stock of the relationship, identify the weak links and the common interests, and invest in developing a more solid and multi-faceted understanding between the two countries.

Turkey currently struggles with deep divides and existential struggles between institutions, ideologies and interests. However, democracy has been progressing, albeit fitfully, for the past ten years. It is thus ever more important for those who want to influence the public opinion in Turkey and—as an extention—Ankara’s decision makers, to engage different interest groups in the country. The AKP itself is not monolithic and includes much diversity, like a coalition, precisely because no single axis is able to win popular support in the complex society Turkey has evolved into. Because of a deep polarization caused by other problems, the debate in Turkey about reconciliation with Armenia and its effects on Azerbaijan has been reduced to an unhealthy and overly-ideological ground. A glance at the positions of Turkey’s nationalist far right, the country’s liberals, and the increasingly active “moderate Muslim” groups sheds light on this reality.

A large number of Azerbaijan’s most vocal supporters are from among the ultranationalist right, a portion of the political spectrum which also opposes pursuing reforms needed for EU membership, advances conspiracy theories about the US and Israel, and regularly voices suspicion of “minority rights” in ways that border fascist rhetoric. Pan-Turkist dreams motivated the involvement of some such groups in Azerbaijan in the early 1990s. Though their solidarity over Karabakh was welcome in Azerbaijan, meddling in Azerbaijan’s domestic politics to promote Turkic ideologies was naturally more controversial.

Recently some names of such orientation have been charged of taking part in politically motivated assassinations and mafioso plots to overthrow the Turkish government. The fact that Azerbaijan’s case is raised most often by such circles does not bode well for the image of Azerbaijan in Turkey. Instead, it links Azerbaijan in the minds of many with one side of a domestic fight in Turkey, creating skepticism about shared values and visions with Azerbaijan among both the liberals and the conservative supporters of the government. The unfortunate reality is that those in Turkey who keep Azerbaijan on their radar screen are all too often ultra-right nationalists, so called moderate Muslims who see the potential for an Islamic awakening in Azerbaijan or liberals who argue Azerbaijan is hijacking Turkish foreign policy. While this is an unfortunate result of the shallow polarization in Turkish politics today, it is a reality that Azerbaijan should be aware of while judging the debate in Turkey.

This is not to say that the notion of “Turkic solidarity” should be eliminated from discourse, but it should be supplemented and “tamed.” Those who believe the bilateral relationship is paramount should take into account the trends in both societies and accordingly try to develop new links and exchanges between a range of actors. Azerbaijan is increasingly developing its relations with the US and Israel, and has the potential to contribute to Turkey’s EU vocation by boosting Ankara as a key link in energy supplies to the West. Azerbaijan can and should have a more diverse group of advocates in Turkey.

Among the Turks most enthusiastic about normalization with Armenia (without necessarily conditioning this on progress in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict) are liberal figures who have faced the brunt of years of state repression of free debate, including debate about the wrongs of the Ottoman regime in the events of 1915. They include, for example, former leftists imprisoned in the 1970s for their political thoughts, or individuals who “deconstructed nationalism” in their studies in the West in the 1980s. Their feelings about Turkishness and Turkic nationalism are thus very different than many in Baku because for them these ideas were something to escape in order to modernize rather than a means to modernization as they were for many Azerbaijanis at the time of breaking free from Soviet repression.

The perspective of liberal Turks is that 70 years of closed borders have aggravated dehumanization in Armenian and Turkish perceptions of each other. Even though few, if any, of the Turkish liberals feel any enmity toward Azerbaijan, most of them would prioritize the benefits to Turkey’s domestic maturity, for which normal relations with Armenia is needed. Moreover, many who think along these lines believe that the only way for Armenians to be able to open their eyes to the suffering they caused Azerbaijanis is if Turkey recognizes the suffering the Armenians were subjected to in Anatolia. For those who believe that the root of the problem between Turks/Azeris and Armenians is the 1915 tragedies, creating a more conducive environment in Turkey to addressing this issue takes precedence. Labeling such approaches as unpatriotic is not helpful. However a more tailored case can be made, that while historical reconciliation between Turks and Armenians is necessary, it should be independent from the geopolitical case against unconditional opening of the

borders.

Divergent mental frameworks sometimes lead to what might seem—from an Azerbaijani perspective—like contradictory actions. For example, much of the most articulate criticism of the ban on Azerbaijani flags in the football stadium on October 14th came from those who roughly fall into the “liberal” camp. Just as they would agree with the principle of Dashnaks protesting President Gul’s visit to Yerevan with signs such as “admit genocide, recognize your crime,” they insist that Turks should have the right to express their concern and dissent—as embodied in the Azerbaijan flag—during the football game which President Sargsyan attended in Bursa.

At the same time—and this is especially important—despite the internal divisions, the Turkish policies towards Russia, Iran or Israel that have puzzled Azerbaijanis are shared widely in Turkey, across lines of political party and state institution. The stylistic component is more particular to the government but the conviction that the global conjuncture necessitates these policies is common. For those in Azerbaijan who wish to make the case for the bilateral relationship, the most effective arguments thus must be based on geostrategic interests.

The intellectual elite of Turkey for many decades neglected the East, focusing their energy on integration with Europe and the US. The closed borders of the Cold War contributed to that, and since 1991, Turkey and Azerbaijan have not invested enough in the relationship, a shortcoming that has contributed to a shallow understanding of the trends in the two countries’ respective societies and policy considerations in their capitals today. Gradually, Turkish intellectuals have begun to explore other regions, including the Caucasus. However there is a lot of catching up to do. While Turkey aims to maximize its pivotal role in the region, it may inadvertently be tipping the regional power balances in the favor of Russia. Azerbaijan needs to become an active participant in this process of intellectual recovery, while Turkey needs to learn far more about Azerbaijan, including the latter’s society, sensitivities, and power structures. The patronizing “big brother” approach of the past is a deterrent and no longer justified in light of current realities. Instead, both sides need to recognize that it is time for a new beginning.

National Identity, History,
and Foreign Policy

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AZERBAIJAN RECLAIMS ITS NATIONAL PAST

Rauf Garagozov

Various factors help shape the way any human community perceives its past and hence defines itself. In many cases involving nations, one can even speak of a certain “politics of memory,” driven by competing forces including often most importantly nationalism and helping to define what is included and what is left out of narratives about the past. Having regained its independence only relatively recently, Azerbaijanis now face a number of challenges and dilemmas on their way towards the redefinition of their national identity, and I argue most of those have their roots in the Soviet past.

From the outset, the Soviet government strictly controlled historical accounts, not only modern but also ancient, out of a belief that only by controlling the past could it ensure its control over the present and future. With regard to academic history, the Scientific Council of the Presidium of the USSR Academy of Sciences set specific and oft-changing agendas for national scholars on the basis of instructions from the various departments of the CPSU (Communist Party of the Soviet Union) Central Committee. And nowhere was the influence of these groups on historical accounts and hence national definition greater than in the case of the Muslim communities which found themselves under Soviet rule.

Most of these peoples lacked a national historiographic tradition of their own and consequently were clean slates on which the Communist Party could impose its vision. The party did so through the Oriental studies system which Moscow held responsible for ensuring that the collective memories and national identities of these groups were consistent with Marxism-Leninism.

In the first years of Soviet power, Moscow viewed the Turkey of Mustafa Kemal and even the entire Muslim East through friendly eyes as about to awaken from centuries-old slumber and thus to join the Bolsheviks

in fighting against Western capitalism. But by the early 1930s, Moscow changed course and instead of pushing research stressing the links between Muslim peoples inside the USSR and Muslims abroad, the Soviet government and its Oriental studies arm did what they could to cut the one off from the other. Scholars working on Azerbaijan thus had to tread carefully lest they fall afoul of the party and be accused of pan-Islamism or Pan-Turkism. That they had to do so, of course, had a doleful impact on historical scholarship.

However, many Azerbaijani scholars succeeded in advancing the study of the past by carefully selecting, translating and providing commentaries on primary sources from the Arabic, Persian, and Turkish worlds. They embraced the chance to get involved in scholarly debates on issues where Moscow had not defined a specific line, such as the discussion of the legacy of Caucasian Albanians that took place between Azerbaijani and Armenian scholars from the 1970s on. And they also engaged in a variety of other informal communications and scholarly networks to advance their understanding of the national past.

With the rise of Gorbachev and the beginnings of glasnost and perestroika, Azerbaijani interest in and ability to study accurately the national past exploded, all the more so because the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict prompted Azerbaijani historians to look into the historical record for arguments explicitly proving that Nagorno-Karabakh was an inalienable part of Azerbaijan and not the Armenian outpost that Yerevan and its supporters claimed.

But Azerbaijani historical scholarship did not limit itself to this task. It also called into question long-standing but ultimately distorted Soviet understandings as the history of the Russian conquest of the Caucasus in the 19th century, the establishment of Soviet power in Azerbaijan, and the course of Armenian-Azerbaijani clashes in the first decades of the 20th century. Ziya Bunyatov, an Azerbaijani Orientalist, played a key role in publishing documents and studies on all these issues in the last years of Soviet power.

After Azerbaijan regained its independence, two kinds of nationalism – one based on ethnic attachments and the other based on citizenship – entered into intense political competition and had an impact on historical understanding and research. Ethnic nationalism reached its apogee under

President Abulfaz Elchibey, who was himself an Orientalist by profession. He regarded Azerbaijanis as Turks and their language as a dialect of Anatolian Turkish, and he was responsible for getting the parliament to change the name of the national language from Azerbaijani to Turkic. But after he was replaced by Heydar Aliyev, who was more committed to nationalism based on citizenship, much of this movement in the ethnic direction was reversed, including the official name of the language.

Like the national narrative of any people, Azerbaijanis have sought answers to the fundamental question: what does it mean to be a member of that community? That in turn requires deciding who is the “we” and who is the “other.” Given the conflict with Armenia, defining the major other has not been hard, but Azerbaijanis have had problems in articulating answers to the other questions, all the more so because of the lack of a venerable national historiography and the continuing impact of Soviet policies. Consequently, questions of how to write national history and whom to include in the list of “national heroes” remain unresolved.

The demands of the Communist ideology of the past could hardly satisfy the interests of contemporary Azerbaijanis. That was particularly the case with regard to Soviet efforts to “construct” Azerbaijani identity by consciously setting it in opposition to “pan-Islamism” and “pan-Turkism.” Moscow clearly expected that its model of the “Azerbaijani nation” would make it easier to integrate Azerbaijanis into the “Soviet people.” To that end, Soviet scholars created “a national history” and a list of “national heroes” to distance Azerbaijanis from other Turkic peoples. Among those included in this list were Javanshir, a seventh century Albanian Christian prince and commander, and Babak, a ninth century defender of Zoroastrianism and the leader of a rebellion against Islam. These individuals, connected to Azerbaijan only by their birthplace were, in the Soviet vision, to stand for an Azerbaijanism cleansed of Islamic and Turkic features.

Such a rendering of the past not surprisingly is of limited value to Azerbaijanis now in their quest to define their past as they seek to evolve as a nation state. Indeed, many Azerbaijani nationalists today argue that what the Soviet version represented was a history of “Azerbaijani territory” rather than a history of the “Azerbaijani people,” whose connections to the Turkic and Islamic world are ignored. As a result, contemporary Oriental studies

in Azerbaijan are driven by a nationalist ideology that seeks to link the nation to its Turkic and Islamic roots.

Thus, one can say that there are two main approaches to Azerbaijani nationhood, one that traces the history of Azerbaijan and another that considers the history of the Azerbaijani people. Serious debates are taking place between the two. Supporters of the former are convinced that the construction of national history should take place within the basic Soviet paradigm with the addition of data on the Turkic and Islamic features that had been neglected in the past. Those who support the latter approach believe that the Soviet paradigm of Azerbaijani history must be abandoned and that a new historical narrative must be composed. The future of nation building in Azerbaijan will to a certain extent be defined by the ways in which this debate is resolved.

THE NEW MEANING OF JANUARY 20TH IN AZERBAIJAN: A PERSONAL REFLECTION

Fariz Ismailzade

Editorial Note: January 20, 1990, was a turning point in the history of Azerbaijan and indeed in the fate of the entire USSR. On that date, Mikhail Gorbachev ordered 26,000 Soviet troops into Baku in order to try to save the communist order there. This attack, which left more than a hundred dead and many hundred more wounded had exactly the opposite effect. It destroyed whatever emotional links Azerbaijanis had to the Soviet system and paved the way for the restoration of their independence.

In its report on Black January, Human Rights Watch noted that the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19-20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. Since Soviet officials have stated publicly that the purpose of the intervention of Soviet troops was to prevent the ouster of the Communist-dominated opposition, the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other republics of the Soviet Union.

Some of the Azerbaijanis who died on that terrible night are buried in the Alley of Martyrs on a high hill overlooking Baku. Every year, Azerbaijani leaders and ordinary Azerbaijanis mark this date by putting flowers on their graves and recalling the contribution they made to the independence the Azerbaijani people now enjoy. Below is a reflection on what such commemorations mean by Fariz Ismailzade.

January 20th, the anniversary of the Soviet effort to block Azerbaijan's drive for independence, is one of the most significant days in the year for its people. This year, when I walked through the memorial to that event with 26 new recruits to Azerbaijan's diplomatic service, I experienced a strange mix of feelings.

On the one hand, the government's renovation of the Alley of Martyrs reinforced my conviction that my country is on the right course. But on the other, looking at the faces of those young people accompanying me and then at the faces on the memorials to those who died, I was struck that

these two groups have a lot in common, but if the latter sacrificed their lives for the cause of independence, the former are in a remarkable position to take full advantage of what those who gave so much would want them to do. For me, as for most of us, it is very difficult to understand the circumstances under which one might sacrifice his or her life. But it is clear to me now that the cause must lie in something bigger than one's own life. That is what the young people whose faces stare out at passers by from the plinths on the Alley of Martyrs possessed.

On January 20, 1990, Soviet troops sought to destroy the Popular Front and to terrify ordinary Azerbaijanis. They wanted a return to the repression of the past rather than allowing people to move forward toward freedom. And they killed at least 160 Azerbaijani men and women, people of all nationalities, races and religions. Hundreds more were wounded, including all too many children, women and the elderly who were unable to run from the guns quickly enough. The hospitals were full of victims, and the republic was descending into chaos.

In looking back now, we can see that January 20th was not only a political disaster for the Soviet regime but also a pathetic attempt to preserve the life of a collapsing empire, one that echoed earlier efforts by Moscow in Hungary in 1956, Prague in 1968, and so many other places. But on January 20th, this happened to my republic, destroying any hope that the Soviet regime could or would address the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict or provide Azerbaijanis with the freedom they now have.

Nineteen years have now passed since that day, a day universally condemned by people of good will around the world. The Soviet Union is no more. Its tanks have left. And Azerbaijan is independent.

Every year Azerbaijanis pause on this date to remember, but like my experience at the Alley of Martyrs this year, more and more of them have come to view that date not only as a national tragedy and thus day of mourning but also as a day of heroism on the part of the Azerbaijani people in the face of state terrorism. That is how it should be, I think. Americans found their heroes quickly after September 11, 2001. It has taken Azerbaijanis longer. But we have gotten there and now we too have found out heroes, the people who gave up their lives and those like my young colleagues who are living the dream those who sacrificed their own lives made possible.

STANDING UP FOR AZERBAIJAN: WHY A PRE-WORLD WAR I INTELLECTUAL REMAINS IMPORTANT FOR AZERBAIJAN TODAY

Rahman Badalov

“Hər kəsi çağırıram—gəlmir, göstərirəm—görmür, deyirəm—qanmır.”

Each nation defines itself by the heroes it identifies as important; Azerbaijan is no different. Its long history is filled with remarkable people, but few had lives more instructive for the present than Hasan-Bek Zardabi, who died just over a century ago. Indeed, for the author of these lines—and beyond any doubt for many others—Zardabi is a chief Azerbaijani, because he opened a window to Europe and thus began the processes of enlightenment and modernization of the nation, processes for which there is not and cannot be any reasonable alternative.

More than any other Azerbaijani before him, Zardabi identified the basic cause of progress in European countries as being the dominance in those lands of scientific education and spiritual freedom and insisted that these were the same tasks that Azerbaijanis themselves can and must confront if they are to become a modern nation. In 1877, he wrote in *Ekinci* that until the European peoples knew freedom, they were just as backward as anyone else, but once they did experience that freedom, they surpassed everyone else. The same course and the same possibilities, Zardabi insisted, are available to Azerbaijanis.

In the 1860s and 1870s, Zardabi almost on his own launched the first newspaper in Azerbaijani (*Ekinci*), the first secular school in Azerbaijan, the first aid society for poor Muslim students, the first theatre production in Azerbaijan and much else. He hoped that these institutions would “transform the worldview of Muslims.” In so doing, he was in no way a prophet but simply looked at what was taking place in other countries and considered that the same possibilities were available in Azerbaijan.

But because he was the first, Zardabi was like others in this position

condemned not to be understood and to follow what would have been an impossibly lonely world save for the understanding and support of his wife Ganifa Khanum. In saying this, of course, one needs to be clear that Zardabi was not fighting with windmills or acting without a clear sense of the times. He faced real opponents, but he recognized that Azerbaijan had reached a stage in its development—thanks to the spread of liberal ideas throughout the Russian Empire in the 1860s and the oil-driven industrial boom in Azerbaijan itself—in which the ideas he espoused had a real chance.

Thus, it is entirely fair to say that Zardabi played a key role in stimulating the search for national identity, for a genuine political and cultural Renaissance, the result of which was the appearance of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. In fact, it is possible to say that Azerbaijan experienced the first wave of Enlightenment and Modernization thanks to Zardabi, a development that anticipated the second wave of modernization after 1991 and the second wave of enlightenment which reflected both Soviet-era processes and post-Soviet developments.

Zardabi's misfortunate, if one may call it that, was that he arrived on the scene prematurely, perhaps ten to fifteen years earlier than when these processes took off. He was one of what many describe as “a premature man.” But already at the end of the 19th and beginning of the 20th centuries, a sufficiently broad stratum of the intelligentsia and emerging national bourgeoisie in Azerbaijan was seized by a similar enlightenment passion. And when, after 16 years away in the middle of his career, Zardabi himself was surprised by how far things had gone. But as the future showed, he remained ahead of his time and thus fated not to be understood then even if he can be very much understood and appreciated now.

His newspapers and journals were not successful in terms of numbers not only because of the negative attitudes of the Imperial authorities and many Azerbaijanis around him but also because of the general atmosphere that arose at the time of the Russian-Turkish war. His *Ekinci* was viewed by many as little more than an outlet for anti-Russian sentiments, and consequently, it folded after only 56 issues.

But for me and for many other Azerbaijanis, the work of Zardabi continues to stimulate our “Azerbaijaniness.” I will say more, in recent years, his ideas as expressed in *Ekinci* have set me apart from what is taking

place around me. Perhaps, I am becoming a cosmopolitan. But perhaps this is inevitable because Zardabi was more than just an Azerbaijani: he was an Azerbaijani who saw himself also in terms of a broader international enlightenment. And because of that, it is impossible to talk about him only within his own times as a historian might. One needs to think about him in terms of our times as well.

One aspect of his career that strikes me especially was his participation in the Baku City Duma. He was uncompromising in his defense of rights, national and all-human. Indeed, he behaved much as Andrey Sakharov did at the last sessions of the Congress of Peoples Deputies almost a century later, inspiring not just members of his own nationality (while offending some of them) but also inspiring a broader range of humanity.

Because that is so, many of the episodes in the life of Zardabi represent a challenge not only to traditionalists but to contemporary national patriots who are limited in understanding by their focus on ethnic visions alone. It is impossible to change them in this, it seems, because they lack the breadth and depth of spirit which allowed Zardabi to talk about the need for helping poor people regardless of whether they were Azerbaijanis or Armenians. Had others had his understanding of that, much of our national history might have been different—and still could be.

The history of Azerbaijan in the 19th century began with the Gulustan and Turkmenchay treaties and ended with the invasion of the XI Red Army. In the intervening period, Zardabi played the role of the first Azerbaijani intelligent, not only because of his attachment to the ideas of the Enlightenment but because of his willingness to look beyond what was to what could be. As such, Zardabi was dramatically and even tragically antinomian. Or to put it in another way, he had the courage to live and not simply to mimic those with power.

Zardabi's life provides yet another occasion for reflection: how many people have to change themselves in order for a society to change—or, more precisely, what percentage of Azerbaijan's seven/eight million people need to change for the values of the enlightenment to triumph. I began thinking that perhaps five percent would be necessary. But that is around 350,000 people, a fantastic figure. Then, I thought about one percent or 70,000 to 80,000. Finally, I thought about 0.01 percent or 700 to 800—which is about the percentage that Zardabi first attracted and then

transformed our nation as a result.

With even fewer readers than that, he was able to change practically everything in Azerbaijan, to help shift the people from a traditionalist to a post-traditionalist society, the largest transformation of a people that any can undergo but a continuing struggle even when victory appears to have been won. Zardabi understood this; his challenge to us is not only to recall it but to live it, something many find difficult but all of us must recognize as necessary.

A SELECTION OF INTERVIEWS

AZERBAIJAN: MOVING FROM 2008 TO 2009

The end of one year and the beginning of another are always occasions for reviewing what has taken place and projecting what is likely to occur in the future. What follows are several perspectives on Azerbaijan's foreign policy in 2008, and on the ways in which developments in 2008 were expected to affect those in 2009.

Azerbaijan in the World: In your view, what were Azerbaijan's major foreign policy achievements in the last year?

Khazar Ibrahim [spokesperson for Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: First, concerning the major foreign policy issue—the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict—two important documents were produced: the UN General Assembly March 14 resolution (A/RES/62/243) and the Moscow Declaration. The first called for the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces from all the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan and reaffirmed that no State shall recognize as lawful the situation resulting from the occupation of the territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining this situation. The second made it clear that the conflict must be resolved on the basis of fundamental principles of international law. Also, with signatures of Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia, the Declaration once again highlighted the interstate nature of the conflict, as well as the stage-by-stage roadmap for its resolution.

Moreover, many international organizations, including UN, the Council of Europe, NATO, and OIC, as well as many nations reiterated their full support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. The final communiqué of the

North Atlantic Council's December meeting at the level of Foreign Ministers reads: "We continue to support the territorial integrity, independence and sovereignty of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova. Peaceful conflict resolution founded on these principles has gained increased relevance for overall stability in the region."

As a country which is part of the Caspian, South Caucasus and Black Sea regions, Azerbaijan contributed to the development of cooperation in all of them. President Ilham Aliyev said that Azerbaijan's initiatives opened up opportunities for the neighbors, while also advancing Azerbaijan's national interests. Thanks to Azerbaijan's leading role, countries of Central Asia, as well as Caspian Sea, Black sea, and prospectively Baltic Sea regions work together in joint projects.

Euro-Atlantic and European integration agenda of our foreign policy has advanced. Azerbaijan continued its mutually beneficial cooperation with EU through Neighborhood Policy and welcomed plans for a new Eastern Partnership. NATO IPAP's implementation continued within its second phase.

Azerbaijan's contribution to international peace and stability multiplied with a sizable increase in number of troops in Afghanistan. Moreover, Azerbaijan assisted many nations during natural disasters and other calamities with expertise and financially. In recent years, Azerbaijan provided some 4 million USD in cash.

And the country continued to play an important role as an energy supplier. The energy summit, held in Baku, emphasized increased interest to the Caspian energy resources and underlined diversification as a core for Azerbaijan's energy policy. The Summit declaration specified that "the Caspian region is one of the largest centers of production of the hydrocarbon resources and transportation of energy to international markets and represents the significant element in the system of the Euro-Asian Oil Transport Corridor."

Hulusi Kalç [Ambassador of Turkey in Azerbaijan]: Although some might not call it a "foreign policy achievement," President Ilham Aliyev's re-election has significant international consequences, reassuring Azerbaijan's friends, including Turkey, of continuity in Baku's self-confident and stable approach to the world.

Vugar Seyidov [independent analyst]: In 2008, Azerbaijan retained its

leading role in the South Caucasus and continued its rise as a regional economic and political power. Azerbaijan managed to stay out of the military conflict in the western part of the South Caucasus and ensured the operation of the strategic energy supply pipelines.

In 2008, Azerbaijani diplomacy gained another success—the adoption of the UN Resolution on Nagorno-Karabakh, which once again called Armenia to liberate the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and re-affirmed Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan.

Later, the Moscow Declaration re-affirmed that there are two parties to the conflict—Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Finally, the Energy Summit that took place in Baku cemented Azerbaijan's key role in the East-West and South-North hydrocarbon transport corridor.

AIW: There have been many important changes in the international environment over the last 12 months that may prove crucial in defining Baku's future foreign policy. Among those are the August crisis in Georgia, the election of Obama as the US 44th president, and the global financial crisis and the radical slump in oil prices. What specific challenges do these events have for Azerbaijan and its foreign policy?

Amb. Kılıç: More than almost any other country in the region, Azerbaijan has to maintain a careful balance in its foreign policies. It is by all accounts a central country of the Caucasus but it is also a country with a larger geo-economic and geopolitical position. It is situated geographically and politically between East and West. It is a secular democracy but also a Muslim state. And consequently, its foreign policy must and does reflect all these often competing factors. In my view, this underlying situation continues to be far more important in determining Azerbaijan's foreign policy than any of the sometimes dramatic events of the last year.

Kb. İbrahim: Azerbaijan's foreign policy is shaped by national interests and by developments in the regional and international environment. The events you mentioned have influenced regional and international landscape and Azerbaijan takes them into due consideration in executing its policies.

Azerbaijan has strategic interests in Georgia, including the major pipelines delivering the Caspian energy resources to the world markets. So, Azerbaijan is a strong proponent of peaceful and stable Georgia and region.

We believe that there are too many conflicts in the South Caucasus and that they should be solved rather than exacerbated.

The election of Barack Obama as president of the United States will have a major impact globally and on the region because of widespread expectations that he will be more multilateralist than his predecessor has been and predicate his policies on the norms of international law.

The just resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict based on norms and principles of international law is long overdue. The United States as a co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Group has a key role to influence the resolution process and Barack Obama can bring this change. Another important issue of concern for Azerbaijan, which unjustly lasts almost two decades, is section 907 to Freedom Support Act. The section sanctions (it is waived annually by the US President) Azerbaijan, a victim of foreign military occupation, while rewarding Armenia, the aggressor. This moral issue, if solved, could in large measure contribute to the positive image of the United States in Azerbaijan.

V. Seyidov: The major events mentioned in the question indeed have implications for Azerbaijan. The country borders with Georgia, and the outbreak of a real war there cannot go unnoticed in our country. The election of the new president in the US—Azerbaijan's strategic partner—will certainly have a great deal of impact on the development of the bilateral relations between the two countries as well. And since oil is the main item of the Azerbaijani export, the dramatic fall in oil prices will have an impact on the economic policy of Azerbaijan.

AIW: Looking ahead, what do you see as Azerbaijan's major challenges and opportunities in the year of 2009?

Amb. Kılıç: Azerbaijan's most immediate challenge in 2009 will no doubt continue to be its conflict with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh. Baku has reaffirmed its commitment to resolve the issue within international law and via the Minsk Group process, and we are hopeful that some progress will be achieved in the year ahead. After the August crisis in Georgia, that is particularly important lest there be new violence in the Caucasus.

Azerbaijan also has a very significant interest in seeing a resolution of the Georgian crisis because of its interests in the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and

Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipelines and of its ties with the West both as an energy supplier and more generally. Azerbaijan is a key country for the diversification of the energy resources of the European Union countries, and the European Union should do more to achieve peace in the region.

Kb. İbrahim: Azerbaijan will continue to be a predictable international player; it will continue to contribute to a better and more stable region and the world while advancing its national interests.

In 2009, a just resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will remain a priority. Azerbaijan will also continue to participate in European and Euro-Atlantic integration projects, work to advance bilateral relations with neighbors and key partners, and to contribute to international peace and stability, as well as to energy security.

While it is hard to name specific challenges and opportunities we should expect in 2009 due to a constantly changing nature of the international system, whatever those challenges and opportunities are, the strategy of Azerbaijan will be founded on its national interests and international norms and principles.

V. Seyidov: In 2009, the main challenge for Azerbaijani foreign policy will be to find a peaceful solution to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Every effort must be made to make the process move forward. Restoration of the country's territorial integrity, outlined in the international documents as the basis for the conflict resolution, remains the ultimate goal of the Azerbaijani diplomacy.

AIIW: In your opinion, what are the prospects for a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict after the developments of the last year?

Amb. Kılıç: After the latest developments in the Caucasus, there are real prospects aroused for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Turkey, as a member of that group, is supporting the Minsk Process and we believe the Moscow declaration is a step in the right direction. The momentum achieved now should not be ruined by all the relevant parties.

With regard to the Turkish initiative of the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, I would like to give a brief explanation of Turkey's motives and policy aims.

The August events in Georgia underscore how dangerous the Caucasus remains and also how little the existing mechanisms of conflict resolution

have been able to achieve over the past 17 years. Turkey is convinced that all these conflicts can and must be solved by peaceful means with due respect to the territorial integrity of states, their independence, and national sovereignty. And consequently, we have launched this new initiative to give new impetus to the resolution of these conflicts.

We recognize that at present there is insufficient confidence among the countries of the region and that confidence building measures are needed if negotiations are to proceed in a productive way. The CSCP will thus work to strengthen regional peace, stability and security by encouraging regional political dialogue, enhancing economic cooperation, and developing good-neighborly relations in the region.

Our proposal is thus not an alternative to any institution, mechanism or any international organization which deals with the problems of the Caucasus. On the contrary, the CSCP is an additional platform to facilitate the communication among Turkey, Russia, Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia. The CSCP is a facilitator, not a competitor.

We believe that the CSCP will have a triggering effect on the previously existing but currently dormant processes. We believe that it is the only forward looking initiative now available to facilitate the formation of a common platform for countries of the region. Today, it is important to bring together Georgia and Russia as well as Azerbaijan and Armenia and Armenia and Turkey.

What are the next steps? First, we believe that maintaining the channels of dialogue among the regional countries is an absolute necessity under the current circumstances. Second, being a country in the region and of the region, we feel a special responsibility to promote that. And third, we are open to new ideas as this process goes forward.

The first meeting of the CSCP took place during the 16th Ministerial Council Meeting of the Organization for the Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in Helsinki, and all countries that participated in the meeting have agreed to go forward. We believe there will be positive developments regarding the platform in 2009.

V. Seyidov: The Moscow Declaration opened new opportunities for the resolution of the conflict. It reiterated that the conflict can and must be settled based on the norms of international law and adopted within its legal framework international documents. But prospects for the resolution of the

conflict largely depend on the ability of the international community not only to show the ways how to resolve the conflicts but also to enforce the realization of international conflict resolution mechanisms. Unless Armenia is compelled to comply with the norms of international law, the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh will remain frozen.

AZERBAIJAN AND JAPAN

An Interview with H.E. Mr. Masamutsi Oki
Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary
of Japan in Azerbaijan

January 22, 2009
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan in the World: What do you see as the main focus of relations between Japan and Azerbaijan?

Ambassador Masamutsi Oki: The relations between Japan and Azerbaijan are excellent in many fields, and we look forward to even closer ties in the future. The visit of President Ilham Aliyev to Japan in March 2006 gave an important boost to these excellent relations. In addition, our two countries have regular high-level visits in both directions. Every year, we hold a political dialogue at the Deputy Foreign Minister level and a Joint Economic Committee session involving businessmen and government officials to promote economic ties. All these things make a positive contribution to the development and growth of our bilateral relations. But of course there is still room for growth in cooperation in various fields.

AIW: How have relations between Azerbaijan and Japan evolved during the post-Soviet period? How do you rate the level of these relations at present? What directions in bilateral ties have been most successful and where is additional attention needed?

Amb. Oki: Japan recognized the independence of Azerbaijan in December 1991 and established diplomatic relations with Baku in

September 1992. In January 2000, Japan opened its embassy in Baku, and in October 2005, Azerbaijan established its embassy in Tokyo. Japan has allocated three soft loans to Azerbaijan, in 1997, 1999, and 2005 for various electric power generation projects all together amounting to 396 billion yen (440 million U.S dollars). We are also involved in grant projects which cover such fields as agriculture, education, health care, water supply, sports facilities, and other things. As of now, Japan's grants to Azerbaijan have reached 730 million US dollars.

In March 2006, as I have already mentioned, President Ilham Aliyev and his spouse visited Japan and met with Emperor Akihito, Prime Minister Junichiro Koizumi, Minister of Foreign Affairs (and the present Prime Minister) Taro Aso. The two sides issued a joint statement and signed an agreement on technical cooperation, and the Japan-Azerbaijan Joint Economic Committee restarted its activity as a result of this Presidential visit. In February 2008, the fifth meeting of that group took place in Tokyo.

Our two countries have also had meetings at a senior level within the framework of GUAM+Japan summit held in Baku in June 2007 and in Batumi in July 2008.

In the future, I would like to continue to promote our relations not only in political and economic fields but also in other spheres such as culture, sports, tourism and environment.

AIW: What are the main directions of cooperation between Japan and Azerbaijan?

Amb. Oki: As I have mentioned, the main areas of cooperation between Japan and Azerbaijan are in the fields of politics and economic cooperation, while we also have grant programs in agriculture, education and health. Such programs primarily aim at improving life standards of local people, which is why most of them have been implemented in rural areas of Azerbaijan. In the future, I hope we can cooperate more actively in environment and water supply projects. And we are eager to broaden the scope of relations in culture, sports, and tourism, etc.

AIW: Japan has always expressed its full support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Why then did it not vote in favor of the UN General Assembly Resolution 10693, passed in March 2008?

Amb. Oki: Japan considers that the final settlement of the Nagorno-

Karabakh conflict is essential for the peace and stability in the Caucasus region and that it is important to settle the conflict in a peaceful way based on a principle of the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan within the internationally recognized borders. The Government of Japan supports the mediation efforts by the Co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, but at the time of the vote, sufficient and substantial consultations between the Co-Chairs and Azerbaijan about the resolution had not taken place, and the Co-Chair countries all voted against the resolution. Therefore, the government of Japan abstained from voting.

AIW: What is the state of cooperation between Japan and GUAM within the “GUAM+Japan” format? Which are the main areas of cooperation? How does Japan view the future evolution of GUAM and the further evolution of Japan-GUAM cooperation? Are there any plans towards deepening this cooperation?

Amb. Oki: The GUAM+Japan dialogues at high levels have taken place four times during the last 18 months, following the first meeting in June 2007. In addition, in Tokyo, the periodic meetings take place between the Director-General of the European Affairs Bureau of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan and the Ambassadors of GUAM countries. It is expected that a National Coordinators meeting will be held in Tokyo early 2009.

During the first GUAM-Japan meeting, energy saving, environment protection, as well as investment and trade were agreed as the basis for cooperation at the initial stage. A workshop on energy saving technologies was held in Tokyo in September 2007. In February 2009, we plan a joint workshop on investment and trade, a meeting that will provide a good opportunity to showcase the attractiveness of the GUAM countries in Japanese business circles. As GUAM develops, we believe that it is promoting values like democracy, human rights, market economy and rule of law, and through that contributes to the peace and stability in the region. We look forward to more concrete steps in cooperation among the GUAM members, and we will keep working to further deepen our relationship with GUAM both through mutual visits and technical cooperation.

AIW: What is the essence of Japan’s initiative aimed at creating an “Arc of Freedom and Prosperity?” Are there any specific actions currently carried out or planned under the initiative?

Amb. Oki: Japan's "arc of freedom and prosperity" initiative is intended to assist efforts at developing freedom, democracy, market economy, rule of law and respect for human rights in the countries in north-eastern Asia, the Central Asia, the Caucasus region including Azerbaijan, Turkey, central and eastern Europe and Baltic countries. The promotion of those values in those countries will contribute to the peace and security of the Euro-Asian region.

It is under this initiative that Japan has launched the dialogue with GUAM within the "GUAM-Japan" framework.

AIW: What in your view ought to be the next steps in relations between Azerbaijan and Japan?

Amb. Oki: We are doing many things, but I must admit that the presence of Japanese private companies in Azerbaijan is limited. Azerbaijan has a big potential for development. We hope that Azerbaijan will continue its efforts to improve the investment environment and to ensure a competitive business climate in order to attract more foreign investors. At the same time, when there are more people-to-people contacts, the friendship between the two nations will become even more solid. For that purpose, we should have more cooperation in culture, sports, tourism, and other similar areas.

AIW: Given your own experience, what advice would you give young Azerbaijanis beginning their careers in diplomacy?

Amb. Oki: One of the major duties of a diplomat is to strengthen relations between two countries. That requires forming solid human relationships, and for that, there must be trust. That requires honesty, and diplomats must always be honest and trustworthy.

It also requires a deep understanding of the country you are posted in. For that, diplomats must study the culture, traditions, history, and preferably the language of that country. In my career, I have noticed that if you speak someone's language, he or she will open his/her heart to you more fully.

My third piece of advice is to respect diversity. Today, there are so many conflicts arising from ethnic and religious differences. Diversity enriches our life, gives us pleasure and is a source of strength. And most importantly, it is wrong to think one group is superior to another.

AZERBAIJAN AND LITHUANIA

A Conversation with H.E. Mr. Kestutis Kudzmanas
Ambassador of the Republic of Lithuania to Azerbaijan

February 25, 2009
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan and the World: What do you see as the central core of the relationship between Lithuania and Azerbaijan?

Ambassador Kudzmanas: It is difficult to separate out just one element of what is an evolving and multi-faceted relationship. All of our cooperative ties—cultural, political and economic—are interrelated and reinforce one another. I can say that over the last two years, cultural ties between our two peoples have grown particularly well, with regular exchanges of arts and artists in both directions. Culture is a universal language, and these exchanges help us to understand one another better. This year, we have another occasion to learn from each other: Lithuania marks its millennium as a country, with Vilnius serving as the cultural capital of Europe. And at the same time, Baku has become the cultural capital of Islam. That is an interesting parallel and one we should think more about.

Until very recently, both of our countries were focused more on their internal relations than on their external developments at least when it came to foreign affairs. Lithuania long had as its goal membership in the European Union and NATO, and now that we have achieved those goals, we are working to expand other ties. Lithuanian businessmen have found a common language with the businessmen of Azerbaijan, and I am sure they

will each learn to “speak” it better over time. Evidence of that is provided by new plans to build Lithuanian mini-factories in Azerbaijan for food processing and milk products, facilities for which Lithuania has gained fame in Europe.

Political relations between our countries have also grown over the last two years. Bilateral visits, including at the presidential level, have increased, and we have signed more than ten different inter-governmental agreements. Your officers are studying at our military academy, and your border guards are drawing on our experience. But this cooperation is going in both directions: our veterinary, customs, and standards officials are working together. And our experience of accelerated integration into the EU and NATO is something many in Azerbaijan are interested in even if you do not at the end of the day plan to join either of them.

In this way, these three component parts of our relationship—culture, economics and politics—are indivisible, and this combination thus forms the basis of our relations. Yet another part of our relationship that I should mention involves tourism. Ever more Azerbaijanis are visiting Lithuanian resort, and the lines for visas at our embassy show the sharp growth in the interest of Azerbaijanis in Lithuania.

AIW: How have relations between Azerbaijan and Lithuania evolved during the post-Soviet period? What directions in bilateral ties have been most important and successful and where is additional attention needed?

Amb. Kudzmanas: Although our relations have grown consistently throughout the post-Soviet period, they were marked by a leap forward when Lithuania opened its embassy in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan opened its mission in Lithuania. Before that, Lithuania covered Azerbaijan from Turkey, a reflection of our limited resources at the time. But as soon as our situation permitted it, Lithuania opened its embassy in Azerbaijan, a step dictated by the fact that Azerbaijan is the absolute leader in the region, thanks to the wise policy of the leadership of the country, you have been able to preserve stability in the country and kept Azerbaijan the most stable country in the Caucasus.

With the opening of the embassy, dealing with visas, information and other exchanges has become easier, and Lithuania is sharing its experience with Azerbaijan in various areas including integration with the WTO and EU. Now, that sharing has increased because Lithuania is a participant in

the EU's "twinning" program in which a member state is to share its experience with a "twin" to the east. Among our efforts in this area are the building of the support structures for a parliament and the fight against corruption. And we are also active in promoting programs in public health.

AIW: In the course of your survey of the areas in which our two countries cooperate, you did not mention the energy sector, despite Lithuania's involvement in promoting cooperation between the Caspian Basin states and Central and Eastern Europe. Could you say a few words about this process – not only where we are now but where we are headed?

Amb. Kudzmanas: I consciously avoided touching on this issue because it is so well known. And of course, in this area, Azerbaijan has the very greatest perspectives for the future. The first achievement which your president Heydar Aliyev made already at the beginning of the 1990s was that he turned the direction of pipelines from the Russian direction to a Western one by means of the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route. The second major step in this direction which Ilham Aliyev wants to make is the linking of the petroleum resources of Central Asia to Europe via Azerbaijan with the Nabucco project. If he is able to do this, it will be an enormous achievement. And of course Azerbaijan now as never before is connected with Europe because the interests of the two coincide.

As far as Lithuania is concerned, it completely supports the cooperation of the European Union and Azerbaijan because the more oil and gas that flows to Europe from Azerbaijan, the easier it will be for us and others to negotiate with Russia. And therefore we greet the fact that Azerbaijan supports Nabucco and that Azerbaijan will serve as both a supplier and a transit country for it. There have been a whole series of energy support, but the one in Vilnius in 2007 played a key role because of the agreements reached there. As a result of one of them, the Sarmatia Project, it will be possible for Azerbaijani oil to flow in the direction of Baku-Georgia-Ukraine and further to Poland, and from there to Lithuania and other countries of Europe.

AIW: You mentioned Nabucco. How do you evaluate the latest conference on Nabucco held in Budapest in January? And what do you think the prospects are for Nabucco to be realized?

Amb. Kudzmanas: There are two aspects to this. From the side of Azerbaijan, there is a very definite interest in this project, in becoming a

member of the consortium and a willingness to build a pipeline linking it with Turkmenistan. Thus from Baku's perspective the picture is perfectly clear. Unfortunately, from Europe's side, the picture is not entirely clear to the extent that political will, commercial risk and the interests of the companies involved are not always the same unlike in a command economy like Russia's where the government can impose a common approach. Indeed, one can even speak about a certain combination of Gazprom with the Kremlin and because of that I fear that the South Stream may be built before Nabucco. The existence of these two parallel projects has generated a lot of speculation, but ultimately Europe will need the supplies both can bring. Earlier, many people were concerned that there wouldn't be enough gas to fill Nabucco, but the discoveries at Southern Yoltan in Turkmenistan of an enormous gas field have largely alleviated those worried. But now a struggle has begun among Russia, Iran, Europe, China and even India and Pakistan over these reserves. In this situation, the European Union needs to display political will in order to push Nabucco forward, especially since at present, it stands last in line for Central Asian gas as a result of its inability to develop a common energy policy.

The time for talking is over, and now what is needed are some concrete steps toward the realization of Nabucco. As your president has said, if there is a pipeline, there will be gas. It is time to take the political decision to build it. I remember when the process of building Baku-Ceyhan began. At that time, critics said there was no point in building it because there wouldn't be enough oil. Now Iran and Russia are crying the same thing about gas in the hopes of blocking the construction of Nabucco. But their complaints show precisely why Nabucco is needed.

AIW: Lithuania is one of the few countries which earlier were part of the Soviet Union but now are members of the European Union. Many people have suggested that there are numerous parallels in the two organizations. Do you agree with such assessments?

Amb. Kudzmanas: It is always possible to find parallels, but the very structure of the European Union is very different from the structure of the Soviet Union. Indeed, the common word in the two titles is very deceptive. In the European Union, there is a free market which didn't exist in the Soviet Union. In the European Union, on many questions the countries have to reach a consensus; there is no diktat from one country as

there was in the Soviet Union. In the European Union, there are no repressive systems. The countries of Europe are proportionally represented in the European Parliament, in the Commission and in all other organs of the EU. The parallel thus can be seen only in that both—the one and the other—unified countries. But in the case of the European Union, this unification took place voluntarily while in the case of the Soviet Union that took place on a so-called “voluntarily forced” basis.

AIW: What do you think is the essence of the *Eastern Partnership* initiative advanced by Poland and Sweden within the EU and what future do you see for it?

Amb. Kudzmanas: There will be an Eastern Partnership summit in Prague in May of this year at which this initiative will be officially adopted. As far as my country is concerned, Lithuania very clearly sees its place in this initiative. Lithuania represents a living example of a country that left the Soviet space and quickly took all the steps necessary to become a member of the European Union. As a result, Lithuania is prepared to share within the framework of the Eastern Partnership initiative its experience with others. In a certain sense, Lithuania can serve for these countries as a kind of “expert” on the European Union, all the more so because since it was both in the Soviet Union and is now in the European Union, we find it easier to understand both worlds. Lithuania thus sees itself as a natural bridge between Europe and the post-Soviet space because our expertise is needed both in Brussels and in the countries of the post-Soviet space.

AIW: Lithuania has been an active supporter of GUAM and worked with it in the GUAM Plus format. What can you say about the current state of cooperation between Lithuania and GUAM? And how does Lithuania view the future evolution of GUAM and its own cooperation with that group?

Amb. Kudzmanas: If you look at a map, you can see that GUAM is a bridge between the post-Soviet space and the countries of the European Union. And Lithuania, just like Poland, sees itself as a natural extension of this bridge. That is because we are already in the European Union but we also are next door to you. This factor helps to explain our common interests in the transportation sphere. Between Klaipeda and Odessa is now running a high-speed train which we consider as a natural extension of the transportation corridor from Odessa to Baku and from Baku to the markets

of the trans-Caspian region along the TRACECA Silk Road. But our cooperation is not limited to this, and we are actively involved in helping the GUAM countries reach European standards.

AIW: Lithuania has always expressed its full support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Why then did it not vote in favor of UN General Assembly Resolution 10693, which was passed in March 2008?

Amb. Kudzmanas: We voted as we did because this reflected the common position of the European Union, but at the same time at all bilateral meetings, Lithuania has reiterated its unchanging support for the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. But it should be noted that even at the UN, Lithuania did not vote against the resolution. It abstained. And because it abstained, it was able to prevent several European countries where there is a strong Armenian lobby from voting against the resolution. This was a compromise decision reached within the European Union between those who intended to vote in favor of the resolution and those who were going to vote against.

AIW: But France voted against the resolution...

Amb. Kudzmanas: Yes, France somehow departed from this common position. I cannot speak for France. Perhaps the influence of the Armenian lobby played a role. And perhaps France viewed this resolution as a vote of no confidence in the Minsk Group, one of whose co-chairs France is. In that case, voting for it would have been a vote against France.

AIW: What in your view ought to be the next steps in relations between Azerbaijan and Lithuania?

Amb. Kudzmanas: At present, political relations and trust between the two countries are at a very high level. But on the other hand, I very much hope that there will be a big jump in investments both from Lithuania into Azerbaijan and from Azerbaijan into Lithuania. This will link us together even more closely. We in Lithuania are ready to provide special assistance of various kinds to Azerbaijanis who invest there. And Azerbaijanis have an interest in doing so because we are a gateway to the European Union.

AIW: Given your experience, what advice would you give young Azerbaijanis beginning their careers in diplomacy?

Amb. Kudzmanas: Above all, every diplomat represents his country and in this connection it is very important to be able to inform other countries about the best features of one's own. Azerbaijan has a large number of

such attractive features and should be working hard to attract more tourists. It is a unique country, one with a sea, mountains, sub-tropical zones and so on. And Azerbaijani embassies can be a kind of propagandist for the country's tourist industry. That is very important because it can exert a positive influence on many other areas.

On the other hand, Azerbaijan has a unique chance through its embassies to present on a regular basis films and mugham music. In that way, you can show your great cultural heritage to the world and thus increase the level of mutual understanding.

And embassies are natural points for expanding economic ties between countries. Our embassy, for example, is always open for Lithuanian entrepreneurs traveling to Azerbaijan. Having arrived here, they seek advice and we try to help them in every way possible.

AZERBAIJAN AND ROMANIA

An Interview with H.E. Mr. Nicolae Ureche
Ambassador of Romania to the Republic of Azerbaijan

March 10, 2009
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan in the World: What is the state of political dialogue between Romania and Azerbaijan?

Ambassador Ureche: Romania has had a strong interest in developing relations with Azerbaijan from the very beginning, having been the second country (after Turkey) to recognize the Republic of Azerbaijan. In the years since that time, our two countries from their president down have had frequent and fruitful contacts, and this dialogue has boosted our bilateral cooperation.

Given recent developments in the region, Romania is committed to consolidating its links with states in the Caucasus. As an EU and NATO member bordering the Black Sea, Romania seeks enhanced dialogue and cooperation with the states in this region. It is playing an active role in EU initiatives including the European Neighbourhood Policy, the Eastern Partnership, and Black Sea Synergy. Romania has been and will continue to be a reliable partner of Azerbaijan and to seek further development of our bilateral contacts and collaboration in multilateral settings.

AIW: What role do economic ties play in Romania's relationship with Azerbaijan?

Amb. Ureche: After political dialogue, which is at an excellent level,

economic cooperation is our most important interest. Bilateral economic ties continue to grow, with a total turnover of 162.9 million US dollars during the first 11 months of 2008, up from only nine million US dollars in 2004. But we believe that our two countries have a great potential for expanding beyond our current level.

Later this year, the fourth session of our bilateral Joint Economic Commission will meet in Baku, and we expect it to lead to the further growth of economic ties. Our embassy is actively promoting trade and investment in Romania, and representatives of several Romanian companies will visit Baku later this year to meet with their Azerbaijani counterparts.

Azerbaijani exports to Romania are much greater than Romanian exports to Azerbaijan, and we would like to eliminate that imbalance. That will be difficult given the export of oil and derivatives from Azerbaijan to Romania, but we would wish to boost our exports to Azerbaijan to the extent we can.

AIW: How do you see the current economic crisis affecting our two countries and their relations?

Amb. Ureche: The economic crisis is affecting the countries in similar ways with the stagnation in real estate markets and banking beginning to spread to other sectors, leading to layoffs in many areas and thus affecting all of us. To combat these effects, we need to adopt a mix of approaches and to expand cooperation with each other. Romania stands ready for mutually advantageous cooperation with Azerbaijan which would extend beyond the oil sector, and we believe we can work closely together in a number of directions within the non-oil sector of Azerbaijan's economy, such as furniture, textiles, industrial equipments, shipbuilding, etc.

AIW: How do you see the role of energy cooperation in our bilateral relations?

Amb. Ureche: Energy remains important for both Romania and Azerbaijan. During the official visit of President Traian Basescu to Azerbaijan in October 2006, the two countries discussed the creation of a strategic partnership in this field aimed at covering all aspects of this cooperation. That commitment has been reinforced by all subsequent bilateral visits at all levels. Although there has been somewhat slower progress in this direction that we had hoped, we remain optimistic that our cooperation in energy will grow.

AIW: What other areas is Romania interested in developing its cooperation with Azerbaijan?

Amb. Ureche: Romania is also interested in expanding transportation connections between our two countries in order to increase the transit of goods from Caucasus and Central Asia via the Black Sea and the Danube to the Western Europe. In this context, Azerbaijan could help transform the Romanian Port of Constanta into a main gateway. Moreover, we share an interest in supporting the existing TRACECA projects and revitalizing the Silk Road. In addition, there are other areas for possible cooperation including agriculture, the food industry, construction and textiles.

AIW: Why did Romania seek the position of NATO Contact Point Embassy in Azerbaijan?

Amb. Ureche: Romania sought this position because of its commitment to supporting Azerbaijan's efforts to strengthen and expand its cooperation with the Atlantic alliance. We are confident that our efforts will contribute to the successful implementation of IPAP II as well as to better coordination of efforts between NATO and Baku to stabilize the situation in Afghanistan. We also want to contribute to providing the Azerbaijani people with more information about the tasks and objectives of NATO and its member states. And we look forward to building on the successful effort Turkey made in this capacity over the past 16 years. In addition, we hope to expand NATO discussions on energy issues, something Azerbaijan is naturally very much interested in as well.

AIW: What precisely is a NATO Contact Point Embassy and what does it do?

Amb. Ureche: Most people are not aware that the alliance does not have any embassies abroad, but as NATO has evolved, it became obvious that the alliance needs to be represented in countries where NATO has an interest. As a result, NATO in 1992 created a network of Contact Point Embassies, to support the work at first of the North Atlantic Cooperation Council (NACC) and then that of that body's successor, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council (EAPC). Such embassies are not formal NATO diplomatic missions. Instead, they are one of several channels through which the alliance's policies are communicated to partner countries and, in the other direction, by means of which these countries can communicate with NATO Headquarters.

AIW: Could you describe some of the activities Romania is engaged in as a NATO Contact Point Embassy?

Amb. Ureche: Our major task is to help people understand the nature of NATO today. Disseminating information on that score is not easy, and I would like to take this opportunity to advertise the official website of NATO at www.nato.int and also to mention the existence of its Internet television channel at www.natochannel.tv. That task should make it obvious that we are concerned not just with the political elite but with journalists, students, academic specialists and the public. In addition to this information effort, we also provide logistical support to NATO officials visiting Azerbaijan, although the embassies of other NATO countries here in Baku also help out in that regard.

AIW: Could you mention other fields where cooperation between our two countries is taking place?

Amb. Ureche: We are cooperating in a wide variety of areas, including culture, science and education; ties that help us understand one another better. Here in Baku, we have a Romania-Azerbaijan Cultural Relations Association named after our poet Mihai Eminescu, a consultative council that brings cultural figures from the two countries together and helps every interested Azerbaijani understand Romania better. And there is a similar Azerbaijan-Romania Friendship Association in Bucharest which works to raise awareness among people in Romania of Azerbaijani culture and science, and has as one of achievements the translation of the Quran into Romanian.

Further, we are working with the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy and other Azerbaijani higher schools. Several Azerbaijani students are currently studying in Romanian Universities. More can be done in this regard, however, and I look forward to working with Azerbaijanis in the future.

AZERBAIJAN AND THE CZECH REPUBLIC

A Conversation with H.E. Mr. Radek Matula
Ambassador of the Czech Republic to Azerbaijan

March 30, 2009
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan and the World: What do you see as the most important spheres of cooperation between your country and Azerbaijan?

Ambassador Matula: The Czech Republic, since it considers Azerbaijan its strategic partner, is ready for the rapid and intensified development of political and economic relations with Baku and also for the development of ties in all other areas, including the scientific-technical sphere, culture, education, tourism, and so on. We do not want to put one of these sectors above the others. All have their importance in the system of bilateral relations, and they are mutually reinforcing.

AIW: Where do you see the greatest progress in bilateral relations? And where would you like to see more progress?

Amb. Matula: Relations between our countries have a long tradition. There were never controversial or seriously problematic issues between us. But we feel that there are great possibilities for further progress, and we have been thinking about how to develop our relations more fully. By our joint efforts, we have been able to do something in this direction already. I am not afraid to say that the last 18 months have represented an important turning point for relations between the Czech Republic and Azerbaijan.

We were able to achieve the historic first official visits of the foreign

ministers of the two countries and also the historic first visit of the Czech prime minister to Azerbaijan. In 2007, Azerbaijan opened its embassy in Prague, and Czech is preparing to do the same thing in Baku. We can observe a broadening of contacts between our individual ministries as well as among other government and private bodies. The interest of Czech and Azerbaijani companies and firms to cooperate is growing. It is especially pleasing to see the deepening of relations between our countries in the humanitarian area, between universities and students and between cultural figures. I am confident that relations between the Czech Republic and Azerbaijan have a good future. It is important that in Azerbaijan no one forget about the Czech Republic.

AIW: Could you say a few words about the Nabucco project and the Czech Republic's view on its future?

Amb. Matula: The Czech Republic considers Nabucco as a project which must become a constituent part of the broader efforts of the members of the European Union to diversify the sources and transport roots of energy supplies to Europe. We consider the region of the Caspian Sea a very important one in the context of the European energy security. As far as Azerbaijan is concerned, its importance consists not only in its large reserves of oil and natural gas but also in its very important geostrategic location.

Taking all that into account, the Czech Republic decided to organize during its European Union presidency a Southern Corridor Summit, which will take place on May 8th in Prague. Among the participants will be representatives of the European Union and both producer and transit countries, including Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, Georgia and Turkey. The Czech Republic considers the basic goal of the summit to be the creation of political conditions and the provision of political support for economically viable projects of particular firms. In addition, and for us this is very important, we want by means of cooperation in the energy area to achieve the development of relations with Azerbaijan in all other areas. We do not want people in Azerbaijan to have the feeling that we look at it only through the prism of oil and gas.

AIW: What is your view on the *Eastern Partnership* initiative brought forward recently by Poland and Sweden within the EU and what future do you see for it?

Amb. Matula: First of all, I should say that Eastern Europe is one of the priorities of Czech foreign policy and the Czech presidency in the European Union. Many certainly do not know that the Czech Republic has been behind this initiative from the very beginning. In the first half of 2008, the Czech Republic presented its initiative, "The European Neighborhood policy and the Eastern Neighborhood—a time to act." Poland and Sweden then developed our proposals under the title, "The Eastern Partnership."

The Czech Republic supports the further strengthening of relations between the European Union and its eastern partners in all areas, bilaterally and multilaterally, and this is the basis of this ambitious initiative. The bilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership will be developed in the framework of the European Neighborhood Policy, which anticipates a differentiated approach to each of the partners. Association agreements are foreseen, which might include deep and comprehensive free trade area.

The multilateral dimension should provide the framework for cooperation on common, joint challenges, like for example, democracy and stability, economic rapprochement with the European Union, energy security, and contacts between people. At its session on March 20th, the European Council adopted the concept of the Eastern Partnership, which is an important precondition for this initiative, after the negotiations with eastern partners, to officially enter into force. This should take place in Prague on May 7 at the summit of the Eastern Partnership at the level of chiefs of state or heads of government of the European 27 and the six partnership states.

AIW: The Czech Republic has always expressed its full support for Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Why then did it not vote in favour of the UN General Assembly Resolution 10693, which was passed in March 2008?

Amb. Matula: The Czech Republic carefully observes the development of the situation around the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and calls on the countries involved to seek a peaceful resolution, which will be based on the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. In voting on the UN resolution, we, following the jointly agreed position of the European Union, did not vote for the resolution, but we also did not speak out against it. And I believe that in the situation that developed around the resolution the fact that the Czech Republic abstained should be considered a position supportive of Azerbaijan. And I want to repeat that we have several times

stressed also after the voting on the resolution in New York that we support the peaceful resolution of the conflict on the basis of the principles adopted in the framework of the OSCE Minsk group, including sovereignty, territorial integrity, and respect for the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan.

AIW: What in your view ought to be the next steps in relations between Azerbaijan and the Czech Republic?

Amb. Matula: As I have mentioned, we have great opportunities in all areas of cooperation. There is a lot of work to be done. It is important that there is a mutual interest in doing it. We find in Azerbaijan attentive partners, and we want to be the same for them. Our task is to attract Czech entrepreneurs to Azerbaijan and to find partners for them for joint, mutually profitable work. And conversely. For this we need to provide them with accurate, undistorted information about Azerbaijan and the size of Azerbaijan markets, services and so on. We need to improve our treaty and legal arrangements in order to establish for entrepreneurs and not only for them reliable conditions for work. In the fall of this year, we plan to open a Czech embassy in Baku. This also is one of the important steps directed at the development of relations between the Czech Republic and Azerbaijan. Our presence here should make possible the establishment of new contacts in all areas and the deepening of those contacts which already exist.

AIW: Finally, what advice would you as an experienced diplomat offer to young Azerbaijanis beginning their careers in diplomacy?

Amb. Matula: First of all, a diplomat must love his own country and be ready to do for it everything in the best possible way. One must never forget that he is a representative of his country not only during working hours. Second, diplomacy requires someone who is ready to work whenever his country needs him, including evenings and weekends. Devote to one's work, unselfishness, and decisiveness are all important qualities. Third and no less important in the case of work abroad, one must strive to understand the country to which he or she is assigned, its history and the mentality of its people. If an individual is not prepared to do that, it would be better for him to seek another area of work.

On the basis of my personal experience with Azerbaijani diplomats, I can say that they have all these qualities. And I have no doubt that such

diplomats are being trained by the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy. I wish all the teachers and students of ADA success in their efforts on behalf of their beautiful country and happiness and well-being in their personal lives.

AZERBAIJAN AND HUNGARY

An Interview with Dr. Matyas Eorsi
Chairman, European Affairs Committee
Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe

May 19, 2009
Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan and the World: Azerbaijan's relations with many Eastern European countries, including Hungary, have been expanding rapidly in the recent years. What do you see as basis of the relationship between Hungary and Azerbaijan?

Dr. Eorsi: During my current visit to Baku, I have been emphasizing that we are not coming for gas and oil but rather for friendship. But it is also obviously true that for my country as for many in Eastern Europe highly dependent on Russian oil and gas, securing reliable supplies of energy via multiple routes is important. And Azerbaijan is viewed as the principal partner in this respect. But at the same time, I am certain we can go beyond these energy issues, and as I told you this visit is not just about energy. From my perspective, it is unfortunate that over the course of the last 20 years, we have not exploited fully the opportunities we have for cooperation. Now, especially with the adoption of the Eastern Partnership program in which Azerbaijan is playing a crucial role, I think we have the chance to expand our cooperation in a variety of ways.

AIW: At what point do you think relations between Azerbaijan and Hungary began to expand particularly rapidly?

Dr. Eorsi: While it is difficult to single out a particular date, it is clear to me that Hungary's decision to back the Nabucco project 100 percent was a crucial moment. But also important was the visit President Aliyev made to Budapest for the Nabucco conference and the speech he gave there. Our parliamentary speaker's visit here played a role, and I hope our current mission will further expand our cooperation and convince people both in Azerbaijan and Hungary that the two countries have many more opportunities to do something together compared with what they did in the past. But in diplomacy, each step builds on those made before it and so it is usually a mistake to say that this or that action was the turning point.

As an active member of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, I arrived here with a special feeling for President Aliyev who used to be my PACE colleague. That provides an especial basis for trust and for expanded opportunities for the discussion of new areas of cooperation.

AIW: Are Hungary's ties with Armenia and Georgia, the two other countries in the South Caucasus, developing at the same pace as they are with Azerbaijan?

Dr. Eorsi: With Armenia, certainly not. But with Georgia, we do have a very special relationship. I have been a rapporteur on Georgia for the Council of Europe for many years now, and I suspect I am better known there than in my home country. After the war between Russia and Georgia, we opened an embassy in Tbilisi. From my perspective, the future of Georgia and Azerbaijan are closely connected. Not only do both countries face similar challenges to their territorial integrity, but they each have passed through a very serious democratisation process. Moreover, both have made significant progress toward becoming full-fledged market economies.

AIW: The Lithuanian ambassador in Baku recently told *Azerbaijan in the World* that his country views itself as an intermediary between Azerbaijan and the European Union. Does Hungary view itself in the same way?

Dr. Eorsi: While I do not think it makes sense for any particular country to serve as a unique bridge or mediator, I do believe that we, the EU countries which have emerged from a communist past, have a special responsibility to help those countries which were part of the Soviet Union and to help them make the transition to European standards and come closer to the European Union.

AIW: Does Hungary see itself as playing a special role of any kind

within the European Union?

Dr. Eorsi: Like every country, Hungary seeks to defend its own national interests, but we pay attention to broader European interests as well. And in that regard, Hungary's somewhat better relationship with Russia—as compared with other post-Communist countries currently in the EU—gives us an opportunity to be exploited further while maintaining our commitment to the basic values propagated by the European Union and by NATO.

AIW: How do you assess the prospects for the Nabucco project?

Dr. Eorsi: Although no one can predict the future with full confidence, I very much hope that the Nabucco project will be realized. Of course, Russia is doing everything it can to block the Nabucco project, and Moscow is powerful. But for those of us who up to now have been totally dependent on Russian supplies, it is in our vital interests to diversify our energy supplies. If we fail to do so, our dependence on Russian energy supplies will continue. Consequently, we are doing everything we can to ensure that Nabucco will be built.

AIW: How do you see the Eastern Partnership program developing?

Dr. Eorsi: I believe the Eastern Partnership program represents a major step forward from the EU's Neighbourhood Policy, because it has a structure and is based on dialogue. Hungary has always been extremely supportive of this idea, and it accelerated after the Russian-Georgian war which showed that Moscow wants to maintain or increase its sphere of influence in the post-Soviet region, except of course for the Baltic countries. And Hungary, which was never a part of the Soviet Union but was certainly a part of the Soviet regime, when no important decision could be made without the agreement of Moscow, is very sensitive about this issue. This is why we strongly believe that everyone who wishes to maintain its independence should be provided with every possible assistance to be able to do so. And I believe that the Eastern Partnership program can help countries like Azerbaijan conduct independent economic and foreign policies. And consequently we reject the argument of those Russians who say the Eastern Partnership represents an EU effort to create its own sphere of influence in the region, since it is up to the countries in the region to decide on their future.

AIW: Is there a clear European vision on how the Eastern Partnership

will develop and whether it will lead to the expansion of the EU or not?

Dr. Eorsi: The European Union is not monolithic. It consists of a variety of countries with different views and interests. Some of its members believe that the countries to the East should be satisfied with what the EU has done up to now, while others believe that these countries should eventually become members. Personally, I never speak about the enlargement of the European Union but rather about the reunification of Europe because Azerbaijan, like Georgia and Armenia, is a European country. You don't have to become European; you simply have to meet the criteria for EU membership. Some in the EU would welcome you sooner; others, not so soon. But Europe is a work in progress, and things and perceptions change faster than we assume they should. So, I think there is every reason to believe that Azerbaijan, once it meets all the criteria, can and will become the member of the European Union.

AIW: Given your experience, what advice would you give young Azerbaijanis beginning their careers in diplomacy?

Dr. Eorsi: Every diplomat must protect the interests of their nation. But he or she must do so while recognizing that other diplomats representing other countries are doing the same. That requires an understanding of the interests of other countries. Without that, no one can be successful. Very often, those of us from the former Soviet bloc countries view relations as a zero-sum game: the more we win, the more others must lose. But that is not true. This zero-sum game culture must be dropped and replaced by a win-win culture: that a country may only be successful in its foreign policy, if everyone benefits. And if we understand the interests of others as well as our own, we can succeed in ways so that we will win and they will as well. That is the secret of success, in my opinion.

AZERBAIJAN IS A UNIQUE CULTURE

An Interview with Dr. Mohammed Ayoob

University Distinguished Professor of International Relations
Michigan State University

September 30, 2009

Baku, Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan in the World: This is your first time in Azerbaijan. What were your expectations about the country before you arrived? And have your experiences here changed them?

Professor Ayoob: Never having visited or even done research on this country, it was very difficult for me to come up with a realistic vision before I arrived. Happily, what my wife and I experienced was a positive surprise. Baku turned out to be a much more welcoming and altogether nicer city than we imagined.

AIW: As you know, there is a continuing debate on whether Azerbaijan is part of the Middle East or part of Europe. Now that you have spent some five weeks here, where do you put our country on this map?

Prof. Ayoob: For me, Azerbaijan is Azerbaijan, particularly in cultural terms. Despite a superficial overlay of Russian culture, Azerbaijan is situated between the Turkish cultural zone and the Iranian cultural zone and combines elements of both. This makes Azerbaijan unique in many ways. Consequently, Azerbaijan is not a part of Europe, given the Muslim identity which underlies much of what Azerbaijan is today. Moreover, linguistically, it is far closer to Turkey and Iran than to Europe and even has many words

in common with my native language of Urdu. But at the same time, it is not Middle Eastern in the sense that it is not Arab. If one speaks of a Greater Middle East, however, one that includes Iran and Turkey as well as the Arab world, then Azerbaijan is part of that.

AIW: Many report that Islam is increasingly popular among young people in Azerbaijan. Do you consider this a positive or negative trend?

Prof. Ayoob: I don't consider it positive or negative. It is entirely natural. Once the heavy hand of the Soviet empire was lifted, people began to redefine themselves and to look at those forces which had shaped their national cultures. Azerbaijanis are simply recapturing their identities. And consequently, Islam is bound to reassert itself. Whether this will prove to be a positive or negative development depends entirely on who is exploiting it and for what purposes. As I have often said, there is nothing inherently progressive or retrogressive about Islam: Rather, it is what Muslims make of it.

AIW: You have described the distribution of power in the current international system as "a unipolar concert." Could you comment on the implications of that notion and on how countries like Russia, China and Iran fit into such a conception?

Prof. Ayoob: I came up with the idea of a unipolar concert because I do not think that the words "unipolarity" and "unipolar hegemony" adequately describe the world as it is. The US position would not be as hegemonic and secure as it is were that country not supported by a consensus of the countries of Western Europe, the concert to which I refer. The US is economically prominent because it produces more than 20 percent of the world's GNP, but it is even more prominent in the security and military spheres. In a way, it is now the global gendarme of the concert, acting for the concert which is generally agreed on what should be done. States like Russia and China are on the periphery of the concert. But there are tensions within what these countries really want to do. In each case, they want on the one hand to become members of the concert while on the other hand working to oppose it. Iran and Turkey are more distant from the concert: Iran for its own domestic reasons and Turkey because it now recognizes that it is unlikely to become a member of the European Union for the simple reason that it is not Christian. As a result, Turkey is developing greater ties with the Muslim world. But these are nation states,

and while Iran and even Turkey are part of the global South, they have their own national interests and their relations with the concert are contingent on those as well.

AIW: How do non-state actors including trans-national terrorist groups fit into the unipolar concert? Are they the major challenge to the existing system?

Prof. Ayoob: Some may see Al Qaeda primarily as a challenge to the system, but they forget that it was in many ways a creation of the system. Moreover, they tend to blow its significance as a challenge to the system out of proportion to what it is capable of doing. Al Qaeda emerged as a force during the insurgency against the Soviet presence in Afghanistan, encouraged and even supported by the US, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan and so on. Moreover, it would not have emerged at all had the Afghan state not collapsed after Moscow's withdrawal. If you take Afghanistan out of the equation, there would be no Al Qaeda. I am convinced that 20 to 30 years from now, it will simply disappear.

AIW: How do you assess Iran's alleged nuclear ambitions and the international community's response to those ambitions?

Prof. Ayoob: I have always insisted that one cannot build a stable and legitimate security structure in the broader Middle East without having Iran as a part of that system. Tehran must be part of the solution. If you treat it only as a problem, you will not achieve that; instead, you will always have instability. Given that many countries in Iran's neighborhood have nuclear weapons, including Israel, Russia, and Pakistan and above all the United States in the Persian Gulf, Tehran wants to have them as well. But I don't think that if Iran goes nuclear, that by itself will push other states like Egypt and Saudi Arabia to go nuclear as well. That is a myth. When Israel went nuclear—and Israel was perceived as a much greater threat—nobody in the region went nuclear. And nobody talks about Israel's nuclear weapons when they talk about Iran. If you want to de-nuclearize the region, then you should de-nuclearize the region all the way from the borders of Pakistan and the borders of India for that matter to the western end of the Middle East.

AIW: Has US President Barak Obama succeeded in overcoming the negative view of the United States the Muslim world had of it during the Bush era? Was Obama's speech in Cairo as historic as some have said?

And are the latest US moves in the recent likely to be effective?

Prof. Ayoob: At a rhetorical level, Obama's speech in Cairo represented a significant break with the past. But at the policy level, I do not yet see much of a change. I actually wrote an article after his speech which implied that Muslims and Arabs are not fools. If you say something and don't follow it up, you are acting as if they are. I do not believe there is any expectation in the Middle East that Obama will make any radical changes in US policy in the region.

AIW: Is this because there is a lack of will on the part of the Obama Administration or are there structural constraints?

Prof. Ayoob: The will of the Obama Administration is not strong enough to overcome what you call structural constraints, including the Jewish lobby. But that is not the only constraint. The dominant paradigm—the conventional wisdom—that informs the American foreign policy must change, and openly so. The US needs to re-examine the entire history of the relationship between Israel and Palestine in order to understand who the victims are and who the oppressors are. And once that is done, there must be public recognition on behalf of the west of the catastrophe the Palestinians have gone through, just as there was recognition of the Holocaust, particularly by the Germans. These two moves would entirely change the terms of the current debate in the Middle East. But there is no sign that the US is going to do either of the two anytime soon.

AIW: Nonetheless, do you believe that some steps could be taken that would lead to peace in the Middle East at some time in the future?

Prof. Ayoob: Peace is a hollow term. What is the context of peace? On whose terms is it defined? In a way, there is peace in the Middle East now as well. But it is not what Arafat called "the peace of the brave." I don't think one should expect any radical change in the Middle East unless what I mentioned in my answer to the previous question happens or the internal dynamics within the Arab Middle East change, which means that the nature of Muslim regimes should change. That is yet another dimension, and I don't see that happening either. So, I don't see the kinds of changes happening either in the US or in the Muslim world that would open the way to a genuine and sustainable peace.

WHAT DOES TURKISH-ARMENIAN RAPPROCHEMENT MEAN FOR AZERBAIJAN?

The decision of Turkey and Armenia to restore diplomatic relations that Ankara broke off in 1993 to protest Armenia's actions in the Karabakh war and the possibility that the restoration of these ties will lead to a re-opening of the borders between the two countries have sparked intense discussions in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan in the World has surveyed a group of leading commentators about their reactions and expectations. Their answers are reproduced below.

Azerbaijan in the World: How do you evaluate what Turkey and Armenia have done?

Elkhan Polukhov [spokesperson for Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs]: Azerbaijan has repeatedly made clear that we believe the so-called rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey should proceed in parallel with the resolution of the Azerbaijan-Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We recognize that every country has the right to establish diplomatic relations with other countries. But in the current circumstances, such moves can cast a shadow on ties between Azerbaijan and Turkey that have deep historical roots. In assessing the possible signing of these protocols, we rely on the statements of Turkish officials, particularly Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, who has repeatedly said that Turkey will not take any step within this process that might harm Azerbaijan.

Asim Mollazade [Milli Majlis deputy and chairman of the Democratic Reforms Party]: The signing of the two protocols by Turkey and Armenia have damaged the interests of Azerbaijan and created problems in the Azerbaijan-Armenian negotiation process over Nagorno-Karabakh. After

securing the agreement with Turkey, Armenia has shown a particularly unconstructive approach in the talks, something that jeopardizes the peace process and raises questions as to whether the Turkish parliament will ratify the protocols. As a result, Turkey is losing politically, economically, and morally.

Vafa Güluçade [former national security advisor and now an independent analyst]: The signing of the Turkish-Armenian protocols is the beginning of a process of geopolitical change in the region. That is, Russia will be withdrawing from the South Caucasus, and the South Caucasus will pass entirely under the control of the United States. This process will consist of two stages: the first stage will occur with the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia, and the second stage will be the resolution of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. This process could have begun and ended in a possibly more just way, that is, it could have begun with the liberation of the occupied Azerbaijani lands and the consequent transformation of Armenia from an aggressor state into a normal one, and after this, one could then expect the opening of its borders with both Turkey and Azerbaijan. However, this variant is more complicated to the extent that the process of the resolution of this conflict will be more problematic both for Armenians and for Azerbaijanis. The United States, in my view, is pushing that variant which it has already prepared but which it has not yet made public. The gradual drawing away of Armenia from Russia and its parallel integration with Turkey are guaranteed: Three million-strong Armenia will easily integrate in the 72-million strong Turkey in a purely economic way. But after a certain time, after Russia and Armenia come to terms with the new situation, the second stage will begin, and we will then see a change in geopolitics and a broadening of the sphere of influence of the US, after which will inevitably follow the expansion of NATO. What happened on October 10 is the beginning of this process.

Rasim Musabayov [an independent political analyst]: On the whole, I evaluate what has happened in a positive way. In principle, we should welcome the normalization of relations and the renewal of cooperation among all countries of the region. The signing of the protocols marks an end of Armenia's baseless territorial pretensions against Turkey and makes Yerevan's conduct of an anti-Turkish approach more difficult.

AIW: What do you expect will happen next?

Mollazade: Ankara is likely to manoeuvre and delay the ratification of the protocols in the parliament. This will, however, only last until the US president's traditional April speech related to the 1915 events. Azerbaijan in turn who has so far been selling its gas to Turkey for the price of USD 120 per bcm will increase the price to bring it to match the international standards.

Guluzade: The next step will be the opening of the border and the beginning of economic cooperation. Turkey will take control of small and mid-sized business in Armenia, which Russia does not control now. Russia has already bought the Armenian energy system, as well as other major enterprises and firms, but even taken together, these do not form a large share of the Armenian economy. Therefore, I think that gradually, Russia will lose its positions and Moscow will have to play the role in the region of a junior partner to the United States. This has already begun. For example, Russia has promised not to veto a UN Security Council resolution on Iran's nuclear program and—as per the agreement with the US—is working with Iran, whose government has now promised not to enrich uranium on its own territory but to do this in Russia. Iran, in turn, seeing that it no longer can count on Russia's support, is beginning to work with the IAEA Sestet.

Musabayov: Neither Armenia nor Turkey is likely to ratify the protocols quickly. In Armenia, the dissatisfaction of many Armenian citizens and especially within the diaspora probably means that the deputies there will insist on modifications and reservations. And the Turkish parliament won't rush. There, many parliamentarians, not only among opposition parties but even within the ruling AKP, are opposed to the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border prior to the liberation of the occupied Azerbaijani lands. One also cannot exclude provocations by extremist groups who are prepared by any means to torpedo the protocols and their implementation.

AIW: What is your assessment of the likely impact of the accords on the security dynamics of the broader region and especially on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict?

Polukhov: Again, we rely on the promises we have received from Turkey that the ratification of the protocols in the Turkish parliament and all further steps will take place in parallel with the settlement of the Azerbaijan-

Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Any unilateral actions on this issue will call into question the entire security structure in the region and increase tensions across the board.

Mollazade: For Azerbaijan, the isolation of Armenia was the only non-violent way of pushing Armenia toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Turkey's rapprochement with Armenia will thus prompt Baku to begin searching for more active measures to secure the return of the occupied territories. And Turkey's decision may also lead some in Yerevan to try to exploit Armenian separatist views in Georgia in the Javakh region.

Guluzade: The process of the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border will not proceed in parallel with the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. First will be the opening of the borders and then as a separate question will be resolved the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. An American plan will be offered, and it is possible that it will be presented as a joint Russian-American plan in order not to offend Russia as much. In general, one should not deny that the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border can have a positive influence on the process of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Any new cooperation will have a positive influence on the situation in the region. Indeed, the antagonism between Turkey and Armenia in fact is part of American-Russian antagonism. Armenia as such does not represent a great deal. Its interests are not a matter of serious concern for the great powers except as pawns in a larger struggle. Armenia as a state in the region will have to cooperate with Azerbaijan and with Turkey because it cannot move to California, where the diaspora is.

Musabayov: Work on the protocols allowed the Turkish leadership to put pressure on the US, Russia and France to accelerate work on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Purely at a psychological level, many in Azerbaijan felt that Ankara was distancing itself from Azerbaijan by these actions, but the Turkish leadership reaffirmed its commitment not to open the borders without progress on Karabakh, thus killing off the hopes of those in Armenia who thought they could set Baku and Ankara at odds. Whatever the Armenians say, there is an opportunity to synchronize the process of the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border with the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Joint efforts of Ankara and Baku can make this happen.

CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY IN 2009

Key Government Statements on
Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy

DECEMBER

President Ilham Aliyev says that “the theme of Karabakh resolution has become one of the central ones on the international agenda,” adding that the course of talks between Baku and Yerevan has been “positive but less positive than it could be” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187079.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that 2009 was “a very fruitful one” for Azerbaijan, with numerous foreign visits abroad by President Ilham Aliyev and other Azerbaijani officials as well as visits to Baku by foreign officials, an intensification of discussions on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, and a growth in Azerbaijan’s international standing. As evidence of the latter, he points to Baku’s status having been capital of the Islamic world and to the Nakhchivan summit of the Turkic language states. At the same time, Mammadyarov says that some international organizations and countries have applied “double standards” in their judgments about Azerbaijan’s internal affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187518.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, the permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, says that Azerbaijan is a co-author of a UN resolution on the right of nations to self-determination because “Azerbaijan has not opposed the right of peoples to self-determination. We have always said that this right does not have any relationship to the Karabakh Armenians. Because [the status of] the Armenians is already determined” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186673.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories is “the key to the rapid resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” and that if that happens, “this will create the basis for normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and for providing for the self-administration of Nagorno-Karabakh within the borders of Azerbaijan.” Moreover, he continues, “this will give a firm and just basis for resolution [of the conflict] and essentially

reduce tension” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183855.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, head of the political research and analysis sector of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Russia is the only country which at the level of a president is actively taking part in the process of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185020.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev says that “the military path of resolving the Karabakh conflict is always real” and will be “inevitable” if “a peaceful path” for resolving it does not lead to the return of Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185298.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan expects real and essential results from the *Eastern Partnership*” especially in the areas of helping the South Caucasus to reach European standards in various sectors (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184796.html>).

NOVEMBER

President Ilham Aliyev says that “without the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, Turkish-Armenian relations cannot be normalized.” He also says that Baku is prepared to resolve the conflict by force if an agreement is not reached (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182156.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that at the meeting between President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan that Turkish media reports about specific agreements are inaccurate because “in the negotiation process, the principle ‘nothing has been agreed to until everything is agreed’ operates.” And on that basis, the two sides will continue to talk “until the final agreement on all questions” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183140.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Ulyanovsk where the two take part in a ceremony on the erection of a monument to former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev. Both sides characterize the relationship of their two countries as one of “strategic partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182761.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the destruction of an Azerbaijani cemetery in the occupied territories “is confirmation of the barbaric approach of Armenia toward spiritual and material values” there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181584.html>). Milli Majlis deputy Aydyn Mirzazade points out that “a cemetery does not have a nationality or a state,” something that makes this Armenian action especially horrifying (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181576.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the Presidential Administration’s Department of International Relations, says that the West has provided support for Armenia and thus given Yerevan the opportunity to behave in the way that it has (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182298.html>). In other comments, he says that Article 907 in the US is considered “unjust

not only in Azerbaijan but in the United States” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182181.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells an international conference in Baku on “Inter-religious Dialogue: From Mutual Understanding to Joint Cooperation” that “in Azerbaijan, all peoples and the representatives of all religions live as one family” (<http://www.day.az/news/society/180103.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Vagif Sadykhov says that the system of Azerbaijan’s representations abroad will be expanded and improved in 2010. He says that at present, Azerbaijan has 50 embassies, five missions at international organizations, eight consulates, three honorary consulates, and two representations of consulates, and that Baku will soon open embassies in five additional countries. As a result, he says, the ministry is seeking an increase in its staff and its budget from the Milli Majlis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179894.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, says that until the OSCE Minsk Group recognizes that Armenia is the aggressor in the Nagorno-Karabakh war, “we will not be able to achieve a just resolution of the conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179371.html>).

Aynur Jamalgyzy, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “Armenia in the near future may return five districts” to Azerbaijani control. She says that the situation regarding Lachin and Kalbajar is “more problematic” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179058.html>).

OCTOBER

President Ilham Aliyev says that “the growing role of Azerbaijan in the region and the world will never allow Armenia to escape from isolation” until Yerevan withdraws its forces from the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177086.html>). He adds that Azerbaijan “must be ready at any moment to liberate [Azerbaijan’s] native lands from the occupiers” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176849.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov during his meeting with Riyad al-Maliki, the foreign minister of the Palestinian Autonomy, announces that Baku favors the establishment of a Palestinian state (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178887.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the decision of Iran to end the visa regime with Azerbaijan is “unilateral” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178297.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells the 9th Summit of Chiefs of State of the Turkic Language Countries that “the establishment of a Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Language Countries is an enormously important event,” one that “testifies to the fact that ties among [these] countries are developing ever more dynamically.” In his concluding remarks, President Aliyev said that “all the Turkic language countries except Turkey are young as independent countries, and we are experiencing the youth of our independence. For any country, the formation and strengthening of independence is accompanied by great difficulties. Overcoming these obstacles requires great efforts, great political will, vision, and courage. Today, we with a feeling of great pride can say that the situation in all Turkic language countries is very positive, the political situation is stable, and the economic crisis has not had a major influence on us. The young independent lands have confirmed their independence” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175148.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says in Chisinau where he attends the CIS

summit that he is “absolutely convinced that the resolution of the Karabakh conflict and the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border must proceed in a parallel fashion.” He adds that “between these two processes there is no official link, but an unofficial one exists. This tie must be preserved and the two questions must be resolved in a parallel fashion and at the same time.” Otherwise, “the status quo in the region could change in a negative way” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176095.html>).

The Foreign Ministry releases a statement on the occasion of the signing of the two protocols by Turkey and Armenia saying that without contesting the right of any state to enter into such arrangements, the normalization of relations “between Turkey and Armenia before the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied Azerbaijani territories directly contradicts the national interests of Azerbaijan and overshadows the spirit of brotherly relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey built on deep historical roots.” Moreover, the statement continues, “the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border in a unilateral order will put into question the architecture of peace and security in the region” (http://mfa.gov.az/eng/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=580&Itemid=1).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Azerbaijan is “prepared for a compromise resolution” of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as long as the country’s territorial integrity is maintained. It is obvious, he says, that “the conflict does not allow for any 100 percent one-sided solution” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175521.html>).

SEPTEMBER

President Ilham Aliyev meets his Romanian counterpart Traian Basescu in Bucharest during his official visit to Romania and says that “from next year, Azerbaijani gas can be delivered to European Union markets” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174228.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku “is ready to observe the rights of the Armenians of Karabakh on the basis of the norms of international law” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174747.html>).

Oktay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Majlis, tells the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Language Countries that he “believes that a time will come when we will speak a common language.” He also notes that the secretariat of the Assembly will have its headquarters in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174301.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Azerbaijan intends to put forward its candidacy for non-permanent membership in the UN Security Council for the term 2012-2013 and also to seek the organization of the summit of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in 2014 in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174118.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says at the informal summit of four of the five Caspian littoral states, in Aktau (Kazakhstan), that he is “certain” that “the decisions of the Tehran summit are very important” and that all issues of the Caspian Sea basin “will be successfully resolved in a spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness.”

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says in reaction to the announcement that Turkey and Armenia have signed two protocols moving those countries closer to diplomatic relations and the opening of the border that “the main thing is that Turkey remain true to its promises” to Azerbaijan not to do anything that would undercut Baku’s position.

AUGUST

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that “there must be put an end to the delaying tactics [the Armenian side has employed] to the resolution of the Karabakh conflict.” He adds that any peacekeepers employed in the region in the future must as UN rules specify not come from one of the neighboring countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169640.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy head of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that threatening remarks by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan reflect his loss of authority and are directed “more at the internal market than at influencing the negotiating process” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170167.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that the Commonwealth of Independent States has not been able to demonstrate “its usefulness and effectiveness” and that within its framework, “everything is resolved on the basis of bilateral and more often the personal ties of the chiefs of state” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169418.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says “the status of the Caspian must first be defined” before Baku could consider Russian President Dmitry Medvedev’s proposal for the creation of an economic organization of the Caspian littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169121.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says in Nakhchivan that “today Azerbaijan has achieved such a level of development that we are capable of solving any task” (http://www.president.az/articles.php?item_id=20090805102508265&sec_id=11).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, reiterates Baku’s position that “the Armenians must step by step leave the territories they seized around

Karabakh and the IDPs should return to their homes.” After that, the Armenians must free the Lachin and Kalbajar regions and form a corridor between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia.” According to Mammadov, “all this may take from five to ten years.” During this period, the status of Karabakh can be worked out but “exclusively within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.” Restoring the pre-conflict infrastructure may take 15 to 20 years, he says. And Mammadov notes that Azerbaijan and Armenia are, as the Minsk Group co-chairs say, “close to an agreement” although there remain some matters to resolve including the composition of peace-keeping forces (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168607.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Baku throughout talks on the delimitation of the Caspian seabed has insisted on the international principle that the base lines should reflect the coastlines of the littoral state. Khalafov’s comments come in response to a declaration by the Turkmenistan foreign ministry that Ashgabat does not believe that Azerbaijan’s Absheron peninsula and Zhiloy island should be included in the calculation of the base lines (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167827.html>).

JULY

President Ilham Aliyev tells the Azerbaijani cabinet of ministers that “the position of Azerbaijan on the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is consistent and based on international law” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165769.html>).

Deputy Prime Minister Ali Hasanov says that “the government of Azerbaijan is prepared for processes which will follow the conclusion of a peace agreement” on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166450.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that “the occupied territories of Azerbaijan have been transformed into a nest of organized crime” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166449.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry reiterates that those who visit Nagorno-Karabakh without Baku’s permission will not be allowed on the territory of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166461.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev at the conclusion of his visit to the United Kingdom addresses the Royal Institute of International Relations on “Foreign Policy Challenges for Azerbaijan.” He says that Nagorno-Karabakh will “never be recognized as an independent state. To expect that is absolute foolishness” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says Azerbaijan “does not intend to create any obstacles if Russia and America agree on questions of global security,” including on the Gabala radar station (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163801.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan will never agree to making the question of the territorial integrity of the country into a subject for discussion.” And he adds that “we do not see any other path for the resolution of the conflict besides the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return there of internally displaced persons, and the establishment of autonomy.”

JUNE

President Ilham Aliyev, on the eve of Azerbaijan's Armed Forces Day, says that "today the Azerbaijan army is the strongest in the region" and that "if in the first years of [the country's] independence Heydar Aliyev had been the leader of Azerbaijan, then Azerbaijani lands would never have been subject to occupation." The president adds that he "does not doubt that the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan will be restored, that an end will be put to this injustice." Not only is "international law on our side," but both military force and economic potential are "on our side" as well. "We operate on the strength of the Azerbaijani people," he says. And he concludes by saying that "we live in conductions of war and therefore we must above all be involved in the building of the army. The war is still not at an end, its first stage has been completed, and at any moment we must be ready by armed force to liberate our native land from the enemy" (http://president.az/articles.php?item_id=20090625112703758&sec_id=11).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that "Azerbaijan does not plan to join NATO" but feels it is benefiting from its cooperation with the Western alliance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162106.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Azerbaijan is interested in the restoration of stability in Iran." Speaking in Tokyo, he adds that Iran has the right to develop its nuclear program for peaceful purposes if it cooperates with the IAEA (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161835.html>).

The Azerbaijan foreign ministry says, in response to a Turkish proposal to raise the Nagorno-Karabakh issue at the UN Security Council, that "Azerbaijan always has welcomed the discussion of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the international community" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161347.html>).

Polad Bul-Bul oglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the Russian Federation, says that in recent times, there has been "a positive dynamic in the coming

together” of Russia and Azerbaijan “not only in the political but in the economic sphere as well” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161940.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says at the opening of the *XVI International Caspian Oil, Gas, Oil Refining, Oil Chemistry Exhibition and Conference* that energy relations must be “transparent” (<http://www.ilham-aliyev.org/jsp/news/CNewsLine.jsp?lang=en>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Presidential Administration, says that “at a certain stage in the negotiations there will be the need for the participation of both Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Nagorno-Karabakh on a number of questions” but that “this time has not yet come” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160416.html>).

MAY

President Ilham Aliyev in a speech on the eve of the Day of the Republic says that “today on the negotiating table is the question of the return to Azerbaijan of all occupied lands and the question of the return of all who fled to their native hearths.” That these lands have not been returned to Azerbaijan so far, he continues, is the result of “a single cause—the unconstructive position of Armenia and its tactic of artificially dragging out the process of negotiations.” The president notes that “in a number of cases, the Armenian side attempts to present the principle of self-determination of peoples as being at the same level as the principle of territorial integrity,” despite all international agreements to the contrary, including the Helsinki Final Act (http://www.president.az/articles.php?item_id=20090528102842638&sec_id=11).

Fuad Akhundov, a senior official of the Administration of the President, says that “the first foreign visit of the new foreign minister of Turkey to Azerbaijan is an indicator of the strategic partnership of the two countries” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158851.html>). In other comments, he says that “Ankara should consider the interests of Azerbaijan in the course of normalizing relations with Yerevan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158855.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the external relations department of the Administration of the President, says that “there are shortcomings in the principles of the work of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group.” He says there was no progress at the Prague meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents and that the co-chairs have failed to provide a “just” proposal for the resolution of the conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157607.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and says after their meeting that “the question of the opening of the [Turkish] border was closed after the clear declarations of senior officials of Turkey.”

For his part, Prime Minister Erdogan says that the border between Turkey and Armenia will not be opened “until the complete de-occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156947.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department for foreign relations of the Administration of the President, in reaction to an interview that Matthew Bryza, the US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, gave, says that “perhaps, Matthew Bryza is giving [US Secretary of State] Hillary Clinton and [US President] Barak Obama false information [about talks between Azerbaijan and Armenia] for the purposes of advancing his career.” Mammadov adds that he is “surprised that the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group do not speak about the real situation,” suggesting that Armenia was being cooperative when in fact Yerevan “did not want to undertake a single step in the direction of resolving the conflict and yet again demonstrated its territorial pretensions toward Azerbaijan.” Mammadov stresses that “the President of Azerbaijan has more than once said that we recognize the right of peoples to self-determination but that this can be realized only in the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156785.html>).

APRIL

President Ilham Aliyev says after his meeting at the presidential residence just outside of Moscow with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that “definite progress supports our hope that the Karabakh conflict will be resolved quite quickly.” He also says that he expects Azerbaijani gas to flow through Russia as well as through other countries reflecting Baku’s interest in diversification of routes. And he says that “Russia is a friend of Azerbaijan, a neighbor, and a strategic partner, and on this basis we will develop our relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153911.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says during an interview on Moscow’s “Vesti” television channel that “relations between Russia and Azerbaijan are an important factor of stabilization in the region of the entire Caucasus.” He says that relations between Baku and Moscow and between himself and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev are “very close and friendly,” and he says that at their meetings, they have discussed a wide variety of issues, including Nagorno-Karabakh and gas, and reached a large measure of agreement (<http://www.day.az/print/news/politics/154077.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of a sector in the Administration of the President, says that the declaration of the president of the Russian Federation on the necessity of resolving the Karabakh conflict on the basis of the norms of international law and the decisions of the UN Security Council is “a just and honest position.” In response to journalists’ questions at the end of President Ilham Aliyev’s two-day visit to Moscow, Akhundov adds that there exists “both competition and cooperation” among the co-chair countries of the OSCE Minsk Group but that “it is obvious that all the remaining co-chairs and member countries of the Minsk Group must if, of course, they really want a breakthrough, support the efforts of the most active and successful intermediary which today is Russia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154073.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says in Brussels that Baku will not interfere in

Armenian-Turkish relations but would like to know what bearing the development of these relations has on the resolution of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Azerbaijan (<http://www.ia-centr.ru/publications/digest/4563/?print>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells a meeting of Azerbaijan's Security Council on April 6 that "Nagorno-Karabakh will never be offered independence." Because of the domestic stability it has achieved and its reliability as a partner, he continues, Azerbaijan is "successfully realizing the transnational energy, transportation and political initiatives" with which it is involved. Azerbaijan's approach, he says, on regional questions "always and on all occasions was very open and clear and brought positive results to all the countries of the region." President Aliyev stresses that Azerbaijan will "never interfere" in the internal affairs of other states or in bilateral relations between other states. And he concludes by expressing the hope "that Armenia finally will be forced to deal with the realities of the situation and that the Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will find its resolution" (http://www.president.az/articles.php?item_id=20090407111405340 &sec_id=11).

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry says that "the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has been recognized by all countries and is confirmed in numerous documents both of the United Nations and other international organizations." Consequently, the ministry says through its press secretary Elkhan Polukhov, the status of Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan cannot be subject to discussion. It "was and will remain part of the territory of Azerbaijan," he continues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153617.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says in Georgia that Baku and Tbilisi "must explain to our Armenian neighbors that peaceful resolution is the best way out of the existing situation. This will mean the restoration of transportation routes, the return of refugees, and development of infrastructure and so on." He says that the most important precondition for moving in that direction is the creation of "a space for successful dialogue" through the liberation of the 20 percent of Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151931.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that "speaking concretely, there is no negotiation process [about the occupied territories] at the

present time. There are meetings and diplomatic visits," but they are largely discussions about principles to be applied rather than about the conflict itself (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152897.html>).

MARCH

President Ilham Aliyev says that the popular support shown in the referendum “will allow for the continuation of the realization of democratic reforms in Azerbaijan” and that Baku will use all opportunities in order to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh question in the framework of justice and the practice of international law.” He adds that “we will try to resolve this question by peaceful means,” but he stresses that “Nagorno-Karabakh will never receive independence. For the resolution of this question, Azerbaijan will apply not only diplomatic but also economic means” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150949.html>).

The Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs releases a statement on the results of the election conducted on March 18. The statement says that “the referendum and its results reflected the will of the Azerbaijani people, yet again demonstrating the attachment of Azerbaijan to fundamental freedoms and democratic values, represents another important indicator of stability in the country and its development.” It notes that more than 47,000 local observers and 177 international monitors had concluded that the referendum was conducted freely and openly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150984.html>).

Azerbaijan’s Permanent Mission to the United Nations in New York sends to the UN Security Council and General Assembly two new documents on the situation in the occupied territories detailing what Armenian forces have done there since the March 2008 UN General Assembly resolution was adopted (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98233> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/149393.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of the social-political department of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “the developed and mutually profitable relations between Azerbaijan and Russia are important for Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149034.html>).

Mazahir Panahov, the head of Azerbaijan’s Central Election

Commission, says that “Azerbaijan is striving to become a full and worthy member of the democratic world” and that in its conduct of elections and referenda, Baku seeks to meet “the standards applied in the leading countries of the world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149009.html>).

FEBRUARY

During an interview broadcast on Russian television, President Ilham Aliyev says that “today it seems to us that it is possible to find a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” because “there are certain hopes that Armenia will approach the question with more constructive and realistic positions. There are definite signals” (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127541).

During a visit to Greece, President Ilham Aliyev reaffirms that if Armenia would observe international legal norms, including the recognition of the territorial integrity of existing states, it would be possible for the two sides to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict very quickly.

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says in Kyiv that Azerbaijan is actively preparing proposals for discussion in the framework of the European Union’s Eastern Partnership program ranging from questions of transit to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148544.html>).

Speaking at the Moscow embassy of Azerbaijan, Leyla Aliyeva, the head of the Russian representation of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, says that “the genocide of Azerbaijanis in Khojali is a tragedy forever written in the history of Azerbaijan as one of the most terrible and blackest pages.” She adds that it is “very terrible that such a tragedy took place at the end of the 20th century but up to now has not found a political-legal and even more a moral assessment by the international community” (<http://www.day.az/news/society/148531.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* that the upcoming referendum over constitutional amendments that would allow him to run for a third term is “a democratic procedure and reflects the expressed will of the people.” He adds that it fully corresponds to European standards. In other comments, President Aliyev says that Baku is fully within its rights to regulate the re-broadcasting of international radio and television stations on local outlets (<http://www.day.az/news/>

[politics/146088.html\).](http://www.day.az/news/politics/146088.html)

President Ilham Aliyev further says in an interview with the *Wall Street Journal* that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be resolved on the basis of the UN Security Council resolution which calls for the immediate withdrawal of Armenian forces from Azerbaijani territory. He notes that negotiations have been going on for 15 years since the ceasefire agreement but “the conflict all the same has still not been resolved.” The Azerbaijani leader adds that the co-chairs of the Minsk Group have reaffirmed even after the Georgian conflict that they will not recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146073.html>).

JANUARY

President Ilham Aliyev tells the Nabucco summit in Budapest that Azerbaijan has been a leader in promoting the diversification of pipelines out of the Caspian Basin, supports the Nabucco project, and because it has enormous natural gas reserves of its own which “will last for decades if not a hundred years,” is now participating not only as a transit state but as a supplier. Moreover, the Azerbaijani leader says, Baku is committed to the principle that “energy questions must not divide but unite peoples” and that that oil and gas must “not be used as instruments of political pressure” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/145529.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says the West is guilty of double standards in its criticism of the March referendum in Azerbaijan on proposed constitutional amendments that will allow presidents to serve more than two consecutive terms. In Europe, such arrangements are the norm, he adds. He also says that he considers Western criticism of the state of human rights in Azerbaijan as “without foundation” and highly selective, noting that the West “ignores crude violations of rights in countries where it has geopolitical interests” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145851.html>).

Azerbaijan distributes to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe a declaration on the 60th anniversary of the deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia. In addition to those of Azerbaijanis, the declaration includes the signatures of more than 20 deputies from Great Britain, Germany, Turkey, Latvia, Estonia, Bulgaria, Albania and other countries. The declaration says that more than 150,000 Azerbaijanis were expelled from Azerbaijan between 1948 and 1953 and that even more were forced to flee as a result of Armenia’s actions at the time of the Nagorno-Karabakh war. And it calls on the international community to pressure Yerevan to recognize the rights of Azerbaijanis who were deported by it “from their historic lands in 1948-53 and also in 1988”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145512.html>).

In his New Year's message to the Azerbaijani people, President Ilham Aliyev says that Baku will continue to devote all its efforts to the restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by ending Armenia's occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and adjoining regions. He says Azerbaijan currently enjoys broad international support for its position, as shown by the adoption of the UN General Assembly last March. And he notes Baku's "growing authority" around the world on energy transit and other issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142394.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry distributes a declaration condemning Russia for supplying arms to Armenia, an action which "will serve to strengthen the military potential [of a country] which occupies part of the territory of Azerbaijan." This action, the declaration continues, "violates UN Security Council resolutions and the UN General Assembly resolution of March 14, 2008. The ministry statement says that Baku is deeply concerned by this action given its friendship with Moscow and Moscow's involvement in the Minsk Group which is attempting to resolve the conflict (http://mfa.gov.az/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=633&Itemid=1).

In its report on Baku's foreign policy during 2008, the Azerbaijan foreign ministry says that the events in Georgia have led to an intensification of negotiations within the Minsk Group concerning Nagorno-Karabakh, that Azerbaijan achieved a notable victory with the adoption by the UN General Assembly of its resolution on the Nagorno-Karabakh question, and that the country had achieved successes in energy negotiations along both the East-West and North-South axes. In addition, the report calls attention to the OIC to declare Baku the capital of Islamic culture for 2009, the convention of a forum on broadening the role of women in international dialogue, and Baku's bilateral and multilateral negotiations with leaders of Europe and Eurasia. And finally, it notes the opening of an Azerbaijani embassy in Syria and an office in Afghanistan, as well as the opening of Tajik, Turkmen, Hungarian, and European Commission missions in Azerbaijan (http://mfa.gov.az/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=632&month=01&year=2009&day=15&Itemid=67).

Key Statements by Others
about Azerbaijan

DECEMBER

Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad says that “Iran and Azerbaijan can become a bridge of friendship between the countries of the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186608.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “the security of pipelines which will provide for the transport of Azerbaijani gas to Russia will be guaranteed just as it is on other pipeline routes.”

The European Court of Human Rights will consider a suit by Azerbaijanis who were forced to resettle as a result of Armenian occupation of the Lachin district (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186020.html>).

Marcelo Torres, Cuba’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that his country “knows well about the successes which Azerbaijan has achieved” and remembers in a positive way the fact that in 1993, Azerbaijan was the only country from the CIS which supported Cuba on the question of the blockade (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187395.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s ambassador in Baku, says “Russia is not playing in the Caucasus; we are realizing our interests.” He adds that “the so-called Georgian war changed not only the South Caucasus but the entire world.” It is obvious, he says, that “if one political charlatan can provoke an almost universal confrontation then something is not in order in the world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184483.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran’s ambassador to Baku, says that “the withdrawal of Armenian occupation forces from the territory of Azerbaijan will help Armenia itself.” No occupier, he continues, “can forever remain on occupied land. History testifies about this. You saw what was the fate of [Iraqi leader] Saddam Husein after his occupation of Iranian territories.” In other comments, the Iranian ambassador says that “the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group is not giving any results” because those who form it “do not want to achieve results. They are pursuing their own interests.”

NOVEMBER

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that there have been “positive steps forward in the process of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181888.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “there is no crisis in negotiations on the status of the Caspian Sea” and that work toward an agreement is “continuing” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181574.html>).

Former US Energy Secretary Federico Pena says that Article 907 is unjust and “should not be applied to such a strong ally and strategic partner of the United States as Azerbaijan.” Instead, it should be repealed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182153.html>).

Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov says that “relations between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan have acquired a qualitatively new content” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179691.html>).

Grigory Karasin, Russia’s deputy foreign minister, says that “Russia is prepared to support the process of the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations” so long as this does not harm any third party (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179637.html>).

Alaaddin Buukkaya, the head of the Turkish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that “Armenia unofficially has agreed to leave the occupied Azerbaijani territories.” He adds that Armenia would not oppose Turkey becoming a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180097.html>).

Suleyman Jafarzade, the chairman of the commission on social questions of the Majlis of the Islamic Council of Iran, tells Azerbaijani parliamentarians that “Iran supports the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.”

OCTOBER

The Turkish foreign ministry spokesman says that “a crisis in Turkish-Azerbaijan relations is theoretically impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178771.html>) and that Ankara’s “goal is the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178754.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “namely Turkey has enlivened the process of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177867.html>). In other comments, he says that “the flag of Azerbaijan is dear to Turkey and to the entire Turkish people” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177850.html>).

Rovshan Rzayev, deputy chairman of the legal policy and state building committee of the Milli Majlis and one of the deputies who met with Armenian parliamentarians in Moscow, says that the Armenians at the meeting proposed creating a free trade zone in the border regions between Armenia and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178399.html>).

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan says that Yerevan “distinguishes” between the normalization of relations with Turkey and the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177803.html>). He adds “the main thing for the Armenia side is that negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan proceed on the basis of the Madrid Principles” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177812.html>). The US State Department in its annual report on religious freedom says that “the government of Azerbaijan promotes religious tolerance” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178458.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that “in the process of normalization of relations with Armenia, Turkey will operate within the framework of [his] speech to the parliament of Azerbaijan” in which he repeated that Ankara will not take any step that will undermine the rights of Azerbaijan. And he suggests that “if the problems between Armenia and

Azerbaijan get resolved, the process of normalizing Turkish-Armenian relations will be simplified” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176521.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that “Armenia must escape from the pressure of the international Armenian lobby” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176188.html>). He reiterates that “Turkey will not take any steps which contradict the interests of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176140.html>).

SEPTEMBER

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that US President Barak Obama promised him during their meeting in New York to “speed up” the work of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174166.html>).

US Senator Richard Lugar says that “Azerbaijan is an important political ally of the US in the region,” particularly in the area of energy supplies (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174657.html>).

Natalya Timakova, press secretary of the Russian president, says that “Russia’s proposals on the Gabala radar site remain in force” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174757.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the signing of the Protocol on the Establishment of Diplomatic Relations and the Protocol on the Development of Bilateral Relations with Armenia does not mean that Ankara plans “the opening of the borders with Yerevan.” That will be an outcome of a process, he says, that will require other steps, including progress toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170524.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the existing situation in the Caucasus “is not profitable for Turkey, for Armenia or for Azerbaijan.” Many people think, he continues, that “Armenia has won from the occupation of the lands of Azerbaijan, but this is not so. Armenia is becoming poorer with each day and the people of Armenia are leaving the country.” If Yerevan continues the occupation, Armenia “will continue to grow poorer” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170578.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says in Georgia that there is “still a long way to go” before the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. On another matter, he says that he intends to visit Abkhazia in order to “try to regulate its relations with Georgia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171473.html>).

Zhang Yangnan, China’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Beijing

“considers Azerbaijan the main country in the Caucasus and devotes great importance to the development of relations with this country” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171039.html>).

AUGUST

Russian foreign minister Sergey Lavrov says any pipeline project crossing the Caspian must be approved by all five littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168828.html>). Meanwhile, Russia's regional development minister Viktor Basargin proposes the development of "a road map" for defining the status of the Caspian and its seabed in order to prevent the sea from becoming a center of conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168821.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that "Azerbaijan is a country with a high level of national and religious tolerance" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170209.html>).

Dalia Mogahed, advisor to US President Barak Obama on Muslim affairs, says that "Azerbaijan is proud of its heritage" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170184.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk group, says that Armenia "must return seven regions to Azerbaijan," five "immediately and two" over a period of up to five years. In addition, he says that "international peace-keeping forces must be put in the conflict zone" and that "the composition of [those forces] basically will be defined by the sides themselves." The Madrid Principles, he continues, must "guarantee the security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which will have "a temporary status until a referendum is conducted" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167904.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he "hopes" that in the near future, Baku and Yerevan will agree to the return of representatives of Karabakh to the talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167548.html>).

JULY

Yury Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says after the meeting between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Moscow that “we still cannot boast of anything concrete in the results of the discussions, but an essential rapprochement of the positions on the remaining questions took place.” He adds that the Minsk Group co-chairs believe that “the participation of the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh should be at a state when the basic principles of the resolution of the conflict have been approved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165262.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara wants to normalize relations with Yerevan but “at the same time it is important for [Turkey] to see a similar decisiveness on the part of the international community and especially Armenia concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166688.html>).

Jose Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission, says that his organization is prepared to “supplement” the work of the OSCE Minsk Group to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166044.html>).

US President Barak Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev as presidents of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group countries issue a joint statement at the G8 summit in Italy saying that their representatives will present to the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan “an updated variant of the Madrid document of 29 November 2007,” as the basis for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164390.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “the signing of a framework agreement at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in Moscow is impossible.” But he adds that he “hopes” for decisive progress at that

session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164252.html>).

Israeli President Shimon Peres says that during his visit to Baku, he had not found “a drop of hatred toward Jews.” And he continues that “Azerbaijan was one of the first countries which allowed women to vote, and this happened earlier than in Sweden and the US” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163782.html>).

JUNE

The Russian foreign ministry says that “Russia is prepared to be the guarantor of a Nagorno-Karabakh resolution” once the parties agree on one (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162586.html>). Dmitry Rogozin, Russia’s permanent representative at NATO, says that “Russian military forces are the guarantor of peace in the South Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162639.html>).

Russian Federation President Dmitry Medvedev says that his visit to Baku, albeit brief, reflects “the strategic character” of relations between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162951.html>).

In advance of his visit to Baku, Israeli President Shimon Peres says that “Azerbaijan is for [him] a special country which I can trust.” Like Israel, it is a small country which seeks to become “great” by using contemporary science and technology. The Israeli leader says he looks forward to expanding ties with Baku and at some point to the opening of an Azerbaijani embassy in Jerusalem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162588.html>).

During the second day of his visit to Azerbaijan, Israeli President Shimon Peres says in a speech at the Baku Language University that Israel supports the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and is grateful for Azerbaijan’s longstanding tolerance toward the Jewish community (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162866.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “the goal of Turkey is the liberation of Nagorno-Karabakh.” He adds that “the entire world has been convinced that Turkey will never ... open its borders with Armenia while [Azerbaijani] territory remains under occupation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161040.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, joined by Andjei Caspchik, the personal representative of the OSCE chairperson-in-office, do not

exclude the possibility that the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents might meet again already in July. In a declaration, the three said that “both presidents spoke out for the continuation of the conduct of diplomacy” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160189.html>).

MAY

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and American co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that “the signing of documents at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in St. Petersburg [on June 4] is not expected” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159159.html>).

The Organization of the Islamic Conference adopts Resolution No. 9/36-POL, which condemns Armenia’s aggression against Azerbaijan; ‘considers the actions perpetrated [by Armenians] against civilian Azerbaijani population in the occupied Azerbaijani territories as crimes against humanity’; ‘strongly condemns any looting and destruction of the archaeological, cultural and religious monuments in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan’ and ‘strongly demands the strict implementation of the United Nations Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 as well as the United Nations General Assembly resolution A/RES/62/243, and the immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied Azerbaijani territories including the Nagorno-Karabakh region and strongly urges Armenia to respect the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan’. It also ‘calls on the UN Security Council to recognize the existence of aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan; to take the necessary steps under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to ensure compliance with its resolutions; to condemn and reverse aggression against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.’ (<http://www.oic-oci.org/36cfm/w/en/res/36CFM-POL-RES-FINAL.pdf>).

The OIC expresses its support for the “Justice to Khojaly” campaign (www.day.az/news/politics/158639.html).

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that agreement on Karabakh “can be achieved only by the participant countries of the conflict.” But he adds that “both Turkey and Russia are interested that problems of this type will be resolved and will assist in doing so in every

possible way” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157500.html>).

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili tells President Ilham Aliyev during his official visit to Baku that Georgia is grateful for Azerbaijan’s commitment to supply it with natural gas for the next five years. He adds that President Aliyev and his government “do not simply promise; they always fulfil their promises. We have fraternal relations, and I always have said that we are creating in practice an informal confederation,” even though we are “two independent states” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157989.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group release a joint declaration on 11 May expressing the hope that the current leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia “will be able to overcome the complicated causes and difficult consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and create an atmosphere of security, trust, cooperation and fruitful exchange among the peoples of the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156736.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “Russia is not planning to recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent region.” The situation of Nagorno-Karabakh and that of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which Moscow did recognize, are “completely different,” he adds (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156412.html>).

Mohammed Baghir Bahrami, Iran’s incoming ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the current state of relations between Tehran and Baku does not “satisfy” him as there is still much room for further development (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156811.html>).

APRIL

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says on April 22 that the restoration of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia is a positive step for all the countries of the region “including Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154777.html>). And Turkish Prime minister Erdogan points out that “not a single document was signed with Armenia. There exists only an initialled text” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154741.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is absolutely neutral on the question of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is ready to support any resolution of the dispute that Baku and Yerevan find acceptable (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153701.html>). And Russian Ambassador to Baku Vladimir Dorokhin says on ATV that “Russia is the only country which has worked as an intermediary on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict at the level of presidents” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154465.html>).

US President Barak Obama telephones President Ilham Aliyev on April 8 to say that relations between Washington and Baku are strong and developing, that the US supports the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, and that Washington believes that the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia will contribute to stability in the Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152686.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev telephones President Ilham Aliyev on April 3 to describe the results of his meetings in London and to discuss the international situation under conditions of the economic crisis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152243.html>).

Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko says at the conclusion of his visit to Baku that relations between the two countries are developing rapidly and welcomes Azerbaijan’s support of the UN resolution on the Terror Famine in Ukraine in 1932-33 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153042.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that whatever arrangements Ankara and Turkey make, “Armenia will not be able to stop conducting negotiations” because “levers of pressure on it remain.” In other comments, he suggests it is “premature” to talk about a referendum on the status of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151964.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/151933.html>).

MARCH

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that Azerbaijan is “a close ally of Russia.” His remarks come during a meeting with Vladimir Dorokhin, Moscow’s newly appointed ambassador to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150704.html>).

Nikolay Bordyuzha, the executive secretary of the Organization of the Agreement on Collective Security, says that he “would very much like Azerbaijan to participate in the activities” of that organization more fully. At present, he notes, Azerbaijan is taking part in “certain measures” such as those involving interdiction of illegal drug flows (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150978.html>).

Leonid Slutsky, the first deputy chairman of the Russian Duma’s International Affairs Committee, says that the results of the referendum will give the republic the chance to continue its successful course of reforms. He stresses that “each country has its own path to democracy, and the Western European and American models are hardly applicable in the Caucasus region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150899.html>).

At the Azerbaijan-Armenian Forum in Vienna concerning the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, a meeting convened by the British NGO *International Alert*, Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the Minsk Group, notes that “even Armenia is not moving to recognize the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh.” Other speakers, including the co-chairs of the Minsk Group, express optimism about the future of the peace process (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151175.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he believes there has been “progress” in relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia as a result of meetings between the presidents of those two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150373.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that there is no basis for

Azerbaijan to be concerned about the establishment of rapid reaction forces by the Organization of the Treaty on Collective Security (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149755.html>). He adds that “the main responsibility for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem lies on the Azerbaijanis and Armenians” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149752.html>). In other comments, he adds that there are great opportunities for expanding humanitarian, cultural and other forms of cooperation between Moscow and Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149759.html>).

Outgoing Russian Ambassador Vasily Istratov says that “the basic contribution to the improvement of Azerbaijani-Russian relations belongs to the leaders of the two states” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150224.html>).

Anne Derse, the US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the new administration in the United States is interested in broadening and deepening the level of cooperation with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148831.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that “in its relations with Armenia, Ankara will not take any steps which contradict the interests of Azerbaijan. That is what has been the case up to now and thus it will be in the future” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149294.html>).

In its annual review of Moscow’s relations with the rest of the world, the Russian Foreign Ministry says that ties with Baku enjoyed “stable development” during 2008 and expresses the hope that they will develop further in a wide variety of areas in 2009 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149466.html>).

FEBRUARY

Sergey Naryshkin, head of the Presidential Administration of the Russian Federation, says during his visit to Baku that “Azerbaijan is our chief partner in the region both in economic and in political spheres. He adds that Moscow favors expanding cooperation in these areas as well as in humanitarian and military areas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148605.html>).

Ioannis Metaxas, the Greek ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that his government, which now chairs the OSCE, supports the Minsk Group’s efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and believes that the dispute must be resolved on the basis of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148399.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki says that his government “recognizes the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” and that Tehran wants to see “the development of trade and other economic ties with our neighbors.” Saying that the existing situation in the South Caucasus is not “acceptable,” he adds that Iran is ready to provide Azerbaijan “with all possible assistance” for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148386.html>).

Javier Solana, the EU official responsible for that organization’s foreign policy, says that “a military solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict does not exist,” something he says should be “evident after the Georgian crisis” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145987.html>).

Terry Davis, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, says that the Council “has always supported the territorial integrity of all member countries” and thus supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147131.html>). In other comments, he says that he expects a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute before the end of his term in office (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147088.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that he does “not expect any document to be signed in connection with Nagorno-Karabakh this summer” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147291.html>).

A NATO official speaking on condition of anonymity says that Azerbaijan has already created an army “capable of conducting military actions of an offensive character,” although he adds that it would be impossible for Azerbaijani forces to liberate the occupied territories as rapidly as Azerbaijani Milli Majlis deputy Baba Tagiyev had suggested. Tagiyev had said that Azerbaijan could liberate the region “in the course of 48 hours” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146284.html>).

JANUARY

US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Ann Derse says that “only the Azerbaijani people” can decide whether to change their constitution. The international community’s concerns, she adds, involve only the process by which these changes are made (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145153.html>).

Lluis Maria de Puig, president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that his organization is concerned about proposed changes in the number of terms an Azerbaijani president may serve and about Baku’s decision to end the re-broadcasting of foreign radio networks on Azerbaijani stations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145339.html>).

Benita Fererro-Waldner, the European Union’s commissioner for external affairs, says that Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov has told her that Baku is ready for dialogue on the question of the re-broadcasting of foreign radio networks on Azerbaijani stations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144457.html>).

Matthew Bryza, the U.S. deputy assistant secretary of state for the Caucasus, says that “Azerbaijan is capable of providing a resource base for Nabucco” and that Baku has “demonstrated that it is a reliable partner” in energy matters. He calls on all interested parties to support the project lest “a historic opportunity” be missed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145368.html>).

Prominent Russian analyst Sergey Markedonov says that Moscow will always have many ways of influencing Baku besides the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Consequently, those who think Russia is interested in keeping this conflict going in order to pressure Azerbaijan are making a mistake (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144083.html>).

Lawrence Sheets of the International Crisis Group says that “Azerbaijan cannot exclude Russia from talks [about Nagorno-Karabakh or other issues] because [Moscow] is a strong regional power with its own interests in the

Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144764.html>).

At the conclusion of his three-day visit to Baku, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves stresses that “Estonia is a country close to Azerbaijan and this is not simply a matter of words.” Tallinn has strongly supported Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe and considers itself an advocate of Baku in all European institutions. Ilves continues by saying that recent events around Ukraine have highlighted the growing importance of Azerbaijan as an energy supplier and transporter for the continent. And he says Estonia supports the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through peaceful negotiations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143577.html>). Earlier, in advance of his visit to Azerbaijan, Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves says that Tallinn is interested in “problem-free, professional, and non-bureaucratized cooperation of investors from Estonia with their Azerbaijani partners” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142956.html>).

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DECEMBER

31 December

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that his country “will do everything possible to reestablish the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187958.html>). His ministry expands on his point by saying that “without the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the establishment of stability in the Caucasus is impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187940.html>).

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Turkey, is chosen “ambassador of the year” by the Union of Workers and Leaders of Anatolia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187942.html>).

Azerbaijani diaspora communities in China, Pakistan and other countries mark the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World (<http://www.day.az/news/society/187965.html>, <http://www.day.az/news/society/187956.html>).

30 December

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva says that “2009 will remain in the history of our country as one of many important events and achievements” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187924.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, the first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that during 2009 Baku not only developed at home but expanded ties with other countries across the world (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187853.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that media reports about the participation of Azerbaijani firms in a joint regional project with Armenia are

“disinformation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187835.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it is considering requests by several neighboring countries to open consulates in Ganja (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187793.html>).

29 December

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the Russian Federation, says that he does not foresee any travel by representatives of the Azerbaijani community to Nagorno-Karabakh because the Armenian side has concluded that such visits do not work to its benefit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187614.html>).

Emin Eyyubov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Belgium, says that “the resolution of the Karabakh conflict corresponds to the interests of the European Union” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187222.html>).

Sultan Gasymov, consul general of Azerbaijan in Yekaterinburg, says that “relations between Azerbaijan and Sverdlovsk oblast have good prospects” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/187761.html>).

Donald Lyu, charge d'affaires at the US Embassy in Baku, says that Washington will answer the diplomatic note presented by Azerbaijan concerning American assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187736.html>).

28 December

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov sends a letter to his Qatar counterpart Hasan ibn Abdullah on developing legal cooperation between the two states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187466.html>).

Interior Minister Col. Gen. Ramil Usubov receives his Georgian counterpart Vano Merabishvili to discuss the joint struggle against organized crime (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187460.html>).

Gudrat Hasangulyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “in Armenia there exists a minority which understands the way in which their future depends on Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187250.html>).

The Azerbaijani community of Crimea lodges a protest with the Izyum city council of Kharkiv oblast over the decision of the latter to adopt a resolution speaking of “the Armenian genocide” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187557.html>).

Hungarian Foreign Minister Peter Balas says that Budapest “considers Azerbaijan a strategic partner in the South Caucasus region” and supports the resolution of the Karabakh conflict on the basis of the Madrid Principles (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186723.html>)

27 December

Hadji Rajabli, a member of the Milli Majlis election monitoring team, says the Uzbek voting he and his group observed took place in “a highly organized manner” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187367.html>).

26 December

President Ilham Aliyev says that “2009 was a very important year in terms of increasing the sports glory of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187273.html>).

25 December

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov completes a two-day official visit to Turkey during which he meets that country’s president, Abdulla Gul, prime minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan, foreign minister Ahmet Davutoglu, and other senior officials (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187116.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that as a result of “bureaucratic problems,” the protocol establishing visa free relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey was not signed on December 25 as had been announced (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187459.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “in 2009, the priorities in both domestic and foreign affairs were realized” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187248.html>).

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives Iranian Ambassador Mammadbaqir Bahrami to discuss bilateral military cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187158.html>).

Masamitsu Oki, Japan’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “renewable sources of energy are in prospect in [Tokyo’s] future relationship with Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/187200.html>).

The Milli Majlis adopts an appeal to the European Parliament stressing that Azerbaijan continues to be a democratic state which respects human

rights. The Azerbaijani parliament adopts that appeal after the European Parliament issues a report sharply criticizing Baku for shortcomings in those areas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187178.html>).

The Milli Majlis adopts on second reading a bill defining Azerbaijan's role in international peacekeeping operations. At present, 90 Azerbaijani officers and men are serving as peacekeepers in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187185.html>).

Milli Majlis deputy Jamil Hasanly proposes that the Azerbaijani parliament declare the Kurdish Workers Party (PKK) to be a terrorist organization, but the Milli Majlis speaker, Ogtay Asadov says that the Turkish parliament should do so first (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187180.html>).

Representatives of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party take part in the 10th congress of the People's Democratic Party of Tajikistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187198.html>).

Armenian Defense Minister Seyran Oganyan says that "it is time for Armenia to understand that the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty is not a panacea for all its problems with its neighbors" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187160.html>).

24 December

President Ilham Aliyev says on Russian television that Azerbaijan's success reflects its ongoing efforts "to diversify the economy and realize serious economic reforms" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187087.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev takes a call from his Turkish counterpart Abdulla Gul on the occasion of the Azerbaijani leader's 48th birthday (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187095.html>). Russian President Dmitry Medvedev is among the many foreign leaders who send birthday greetings to President Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187091.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev reaffirms that "the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be restored" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187113.html>).

Turkish television shows a film devoted to President Ilham Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187344.html>), and Russian television

carries a special program on the traditions and national values of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187337.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that ATV International will assist “the propaganda of Azerbaijan” to the world (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187047.html>).

Richard Morningstar, US special representative for energy policy in Eurasia, says that “Azerbaijan remains the basic ally of the United States in its energy policy in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/186977.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says he will be leaving that position in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187022.html>).

Pinkhas Avivi, head of the Israeli Foreign Ministry’s Department for Central Europe and Eurasia, says during a visit to Baku that Israel “hopes that the Armenian-Turkish rapprochement will positively influence the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186988.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, the first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that Azerbaijan may increase the size of its military contingent in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/187000.html>).

Boris Klimchuk, Ukraine’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “the position of the *Inter* television channel [on the Karabakh conflict] is not the position of Ukraine” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186981.html>).

Jamil Hasanly, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “Azerbaijan must reconsider the level of its strategic partnership with the United States” following the decision of the Congress to supply aid to Karabakh other than through Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186426.html>).

23 December

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the state agreements signed with Kazakhstan in October (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186914.html>) and with Turkey in November (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186909.html>).

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili says “the Karabakh conflict must be resolved on the basis of respect for the state sovereignty of

Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186879.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says at a press-conference in Brussels that the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations is connected with the resolution of the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh and that Ankara's goal is "peace and stability" for the entire Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186883.html>).

22 December

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of greetings to Azerbaijanis abroad in advance of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World on December 31 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186784.html>).

Italian Foreign Minister Franco Frattini says that "the contribution of Azerbaijan has decisive importance" on energy and regional security issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186554.html>).

Svetlana Orlova, Vice Speaker of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, says in Baku that the two countries will establish a joint commission on migration issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186702.html>). In other comments, she says that "Azerbaijan is the most important strategic partner of Russia in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186645.html>) and that she hopes for progress on Karabakh in the near future.

Azerbaijani police break up an effort by opposition parties to picket the US Embassy in Baku to protest the decision of the Congress to provide funds to Karabakh without going through the Azerbaijani government (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186736.html>).

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Washington explains that the US Department of State has been delayed in responding to the Azerbaijani protest note concerning funding for Karabakh because of snow and the upcoming holidays (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186675.html>).

Latif Gandidov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Kazakhstan, calls for the opening of a Diplomatic Club in Astana (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186649.html>).

Polad Bulbuloglu, Azerbaijan's ambassador to the Russian Federation, says that "it is still unknown when will take place the next meeting of deputies of Azerbaijan and Armenia." The only meeting so far occurred on October 22 in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186641.html>).

21 December

President Ilham Aliyev telephones his Georgian counterpart Mikheil Saakashvili to offer him birthday greetings (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186552.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “Azerbaijan is living up to its obligations before the Council of Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186493.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the European Union resolution on Azerbaijan reflects “double standards” in its criticism of the Azerbaijani political system (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186490.html>).

Representatives of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe arrive in Azerbaijan for meetings with officials, including in the Presidential Administration (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186470.html>).

Murat Ozkan, a member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, says that “Ankara will not agree to the opening of borders with Armenia” until there has been a resolution of the Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186356.html>).

Economic Development Minister Shahin Mustafayev takes part in the second meeting of the Azerbaijan-UAE intergovernmental commission on economic, trade, and technical cooperation in Abu Dhabi (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/186381.html>).

Bahram Khalilov, chairman of the Commission on Questions of State Service, and Mehmet Takinarslan, the head of the Turkish Administration of Government Cadres, sign a cooperation accord (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186500.html>).

Mikhail Margelov, head of the international affairs committee of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, says that the OSCE Minsk Group needs to do more to resolve the Karabakh conflict and that Moscow is ready to provide additional assistance toward that end (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186526.html>).

Joseph Shagal, president of the International Israel-Azerbaijan Association, says that “it is hardly likely that the Armenian-Turkish border will be opened” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186016.html>).

The European Congress of Azerbaijanis adopt an appeal to US President Barak Obama calling on him to oppose the Congressional

measure which calls for providing direct assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186504.html>).

20 December

The Azerbaijan Society in the UAE sends a protest letter to *Euronews* protesting the channel's reporting on Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186416.html>).

19 December

Etibar Mammadov, the head of the National Independence Party of Azerbaijan, says that the US Congress decision to provide funds directly to Karabakh bypassing Baku reflects the application by Washington of a policy of "double standards" to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186353.html>).

Etibar Mammadov, the head of the National Independence Party of Azerbaijan, says that the Armenian-Turkish protocols "do not correspond to the interests of Azerbaijan" and that Baku "must play one of the key roles in the new world political system" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186339.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "Turkish politicians will remain true to the promises they have given Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186324.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that the protest note the Foreign Ministry handed over to the US Department of State regarding the Congressional funding for Karabakh bypassing Baku, is "a correct step" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186172.html>).

Akif Aliyev, charge d'affaires at the Azerbaijani embassy in Tashkent, describes the history of relations between Baku and Tashkent at a conference on "Azerbaijan-Uzbekistan: Possibilities of Bilateral Cooperation" in the Uzbek capital (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186274.html>).

18 December

The Foreign Ministry says that the protest note the Azerbaijani embassy in Washington handed over to the US Department of State concerning the Congressional action providing for assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku

raises questions about US neutrality in negotiations on Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186215.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that people in Azerbaijan are “losing faith in the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186190.html>). In other comments, she says that US President Baraka Obama will show whether he was “worthy of the Nobel Peace Prize” by how he responds to the Congressional action providing assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186185.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “the note to Washington influences public opinion in Azerbaijan but will not have an impact at the political level” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186142.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “the construction of a new gas pipeline between Iran and Azerbaijan is necessary” to carry the additional gas Baku has agreed to export to Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/186243.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “concrete results are possible in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186143.html>).

Halil Akynji, Turkey’s ambassador in Moscow, says that “Ankara does not consider Moscow a competitor in the Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186249.html>).

17 December

Yevda Abramov, a Milli Majlis deputy, calls on the Jewish community of Azerbaijan to protest the decision of the US Congress to provide assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku and to appeal to Jewish organizations in the US to do the same (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/186049.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that the modifications of the Madrid Principles now being prepared may advance the solution of the Karabakh conflict. In response to questions, he says that there is no basis for transforming Azerbaijan into a federal state: it will remain a unitary one (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185993.html>).

16 December

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Adminstration, says the US should consider very seriously a Congressional plan to provide assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku and recognize that such actions will have an impact on relations between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185899.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Azerbaijan is “not conducting anti-American propaganda” when it criticizes the Congressional decision to provide assistance to Karabakh bypassing Baku. “We are not against providing help to the suffering,” but among those suffering in Karabakh are “representatives of the Azerbaijani community” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185802.html>).

Rabiyat Aslanova, head of the Milli Majlis human rights committee, says that “it is obvious that ‘Freedom House’ is approaching [its] end,” given the distorted account that organization has given of conditions in Azerbaijan and the divergence between its findings and those of other international monitoring groups (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185885.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it has not yet received a response from Ukraine to its note protesting a story on the Ukrainian *Inter* television channel about Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185907.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijan and Turkey will eliminate the visa requirement for visitors during the upcoming meetings in Ankara between Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and Turkish officials (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185792.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that if Armenia does not withdraw from the occupied territories, “the ratification of the protocols [between Ankara and Yerevan] will not be accelerated. This question is important for the entire Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185832.html>).

US Deputy Secretary of State Philip Gordon says that Washington hopes that there will be greater movement in the near future toward the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185803.html>).

Konstantin Markelov, vice governor of Russia's Astrakhan oblast, invites Azerbaijani businessmen to cooperate in economic development there (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/185911.html>).

15 December

Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad tells visiting Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov that the friendly and fraternal relations between the two countries will continue to intensify in all spheres. During Mammadyarov's visit to Tehran, the two countries agree to expand economic cooperation, including additional sales of Azerbaijani natural gas to Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185492.html>).

The Milli Majlis adopts an appeal to the President and Congress of the US protesting the decision of the Cognress to provide assistance to the separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185653.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says the decision of the US Congress to provide assistance to the Armenian community in Nagorno-Karabakh will have a negative impact on relations between the US and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185728.html>).

The Party of National Independence adopts a resolution criticizing the US Congress for providing assistance to the separatist regime in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, proposes declaring 2010 "the Year of Karabakh and Khojaly" during a speech in the Turkish city of Bursa (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185666.html>).

14 December

Iranian Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki tells visiting Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov that Tehran "is prepared to serve as a mediator in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185488.html>).

Igbal Agazade, the head of the *Umid* Party and a deputy in the Milli Majlis, says that "the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group is ineffective," that Azerbaijan does not and cannot agree with the Madrid Principles, and that "it is difficult to predict when the Karabakh conflict will be resolved – perhaps today or later" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185250.html>).

The US Embassy in Baku says that “the United States does not recognize ‘the government of Nagorno-Karabakh.’ This is our policy and it remains unchanged.” Embassy spokesman Terry Davidson says this response to Azerbaijani suggestions that the extension of US assistance to the region represents de facto recognition (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185511.html>).

12 December

Tofiq Abdullayev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador in Saudi Arabia, like Baku’s representatives in many other capitals, organizes a ceremony in memory of Heidar Aliyev on the occasion of the sixth anniversary of the former president’s death (<http://www.day.az/news/society/185359.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev says that “the military path of resolving the Karabakh conflict is always real” and will be “inevitable” if “a peaceful path” for resolving it does not lead to the return of Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185298.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that “Azerbaijan continues to maintain normal inter-state relations with Turkmenistan and that these relations are developing,” with “cooperation between the two countries continuing in all areas” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185346.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that “we do not intend to exert influence on Iran just as it does not intend to influence Azerbaijan.” Instead, the two countries remain “friends and neighbors” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185303.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Azerbaijan condemns the provision of financial help to Nagorno-Karabakh by the United States and calls on the US to preserve its neutral status and not give aid to the separatist regime” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185293.html>).

11 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185180.html>). They say they hope to “complete work on the basic principles of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict in 2010” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

185238.html).

President Ilham Aliyev expresses his sympathy to Turkish President Abdulla Gul concerning the mine disaster in Bursa in which numerous lives were lost (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185255.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that the US should provide financial assistance to internally displaced persons of Azerbaijan forced out of the country's occupied territories, similar to one Washington makes available to the people living in Azerbaijani areas under occupation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185247.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that "Azerbaijan does not understand" the decision of the US Congress to provide financial assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185251.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijani ambassador to the United States, says that a Congressional measure to provide assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh should have been coordinated with the government of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185176.html>).

Masamitsu Oki, Japan's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "Japan hopes for the most rapid resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185162.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it would consider a request from *Euronews* to film another story about Nagorno-Karabakh but that it has received no such request. The ministry statement follows a Baku protest about an earlier *Euronews* story on the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185155.html>).

Sheikh Mubarak bin Fahad Al-Thani, Qatar's ambassador to Baku, says his country's "ties with Azerbaijan are based on common spiritual, religious and cultural roots" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185118.html>).

The American University of Kuwait sets up a special permanent exhibit devoted to former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185112.html>).

10 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from the incoming ambassador of the Republic of Korea, Lee Jee-Kwang

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185099.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, head of the political research and analysis sector of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Russia is the only country which at the level of a president is actively taking part in the process of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185020.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that it expects “a broadening in cooperation between Baku and NATO” within the third stage of IPAP (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185025.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict should be resolved in the near future” lest the lack of resolution affect other relationships in the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184965.html>).

US Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Gordon says that the conflict over Karabakh is “important in its own right, independent of any other questions,” adding that Washington has “certain differences” with Ankara on its policies in the Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184962.html>).

The Russian Foreign Ministry says that the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group have prepared an updated variant of the Madrid principles and that Baku and Yerevan “will receive [this] new variant” in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185071.html>). At the same time, a Russian foreign ministry spokesman says that Moscow “has not received signals from Azerbaijan about dissatisfaction with the work of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185058.html>).

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU commissioner for foreign policy and European neighborhood policy, says that “the EU has put before itself the task about the elimination of a visa regime for citizens of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185040.html>).

Talat Aliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Ukraine, discusses with the Ukrainian foreign ministry the anti-Azerbaijan story carried by the Ukrainian television channel *Inter* (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185026.html>).

Anar Maharramov, counsellor at the Azerbaijani embassy in Madrid, says that relations between Azerbaijan and Spain will become more active in 2010 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184984.html>).

9 December

President Ilham Aliyev makes a one-day working visit to France during which he meets with his French counterpart Nicolas Sarkozy and stresses their rapidly developing bilateral economic and political ties (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184782.html>). In the course of the visit, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and his French counterpart Bernard Kushner sign agreements on diplomatic passports and the activities of cultural centers in the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/185090.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan expects real and essential results from the *Eastern Partnership*” especially in the areas of helping the South Caucasus to reach European standards in various sectors (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184796.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that “Russia will support further the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184880.html>).

Turkish State Minister Egemen Bakhyshev says that “the energy ministers of Azerbaijan and Turkey are in the process of tense negotiations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184895.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, head of the political research and analysis sector of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the Russian media should behave more responsibility and not suggest that Moscow profits from a drawing out of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184872.html>).

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt says that the OSCE Minsk Group is “the only format for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184826.html>).

Javanshir Akhundov, Azerbaijan’s incoming ambassador to Tehran, presents copies of his letters of credence, to Iranian Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki and discusses the upcoming visit to the Iranian capital of Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184821.html>).

Movlud Chavushoglu, head of the Turkish delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Council views the Nagorno-Karabakh problem “through a distorted prism” and that it “should devote more attention to the South Caucasus in general and the

Karabakh conflict in particular” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184818.html>).

8 December

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev says that a breakdown in talks on the Karabakh issue would “force Azerbaijan to turn to alternative methods” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184667.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that “the liberation of the seven regions of Azerbaijan would assist a rapprochement in Armenian-Turkish relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184635.html>). In other comments, he criticizes the OSCE Minsk Group for failing to make more progress given the existence of UN resolutions which “must be fulfilled” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184617.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry, in response to Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu following Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan’s meeting with US President Barak Obama during which they discussed the Karabakh conflict, says that Azerbaijan “welcomes any steps directed at the achieving of a just and peaceful resolution of the Azerbaijani-Armenian Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184649.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s ambassador to Baku, says that “relations between Russia and Azerbaijan are developing as a strategic partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184620.html>).

Roland Kobia, head of delegation of the European Union to Azerbaijan, says that “Azerbaijan is at the center of an important region from the point of view of the wealth of energy resources” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184775.html>).

Janan Arytman, a Turkish Grand National Assembly deputy from the opposition Republican Peoples Party, says that “Yerevan must show that it is sincerely ready for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” if it expects to improve ties with Ankara (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184702.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “the principled position of Turkey on the Nagorno-Karabakh question has already been known to all for a long time” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184659.html>).

General Rodger Brady, commander of US air forces in Europe

(USAFE), visits Baku for consultations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184518.html>).

Matthew Bryza, former US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he “wants to be ambassador to Azerbaijan” but that no decision has been taken about that in Washington (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184686.html>).

Mustafa Kabakçı, head of the Azerbaijani-Turkish Friendship Group of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, says that “the liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is a first-order question for Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184658.html>).

The Ukrainian foreign ministry is preparing a note in response to Azerbaijan’s protest about an anti-Azerbaijani program on Ukraine’s *Inter* television channel. The ministry’s spokesman says that *Inter* is a private company and that its programming does not reflect the views of the government of Ukraine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184657.html>).

Anar Mammadkhanov, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “it is perfectly obvious that the Armenians are beginning an information attack” against Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184622.html>).

7 December

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku believes that “in the course of his visit to the US, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan will seek from Washington serious steps in the direction of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184452.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov tells NATO officials that Azerbaijan’s defense ministry is undergoing “structural reforms” and that as a result, “the heads of a number of structures of the ministry will be headed by civilians” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184451.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku is considering the possibility of increasing the number of its peacekeepers in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184485.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the distorted story on Ukraine’s *Inter* television network about the South Caucasus “speaks not about the unprofessionalism of the journalists of the channel but about politics” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184474.html>). Meanwhile, the

Azerbaijani embassy in Kyiv hands over to the Ukrainian foreign ministry a protest note about the program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184475.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Vagif Sadykhov is in Delhi for a working visit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184583.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Baku, confirms that Tehran intends to eliminate, as of January 1, 2010, the visa requirement for Azerbaijanis travelling in Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184446.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Baku, says that "almost 70 percent of the questions on the definition of the status of the Caspian Sea have been agreed upon and that Iran hopes that in the nearest future, the sides will come to agreement on the remaining points as well" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184472.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Baku, says that "the withdrawal of Armenian occupation forces from the territory of Azerbaijan will help Armenia itself." No occupier, he continues, "can forever remain on occupied land. History testifies about this. You saw what was the fate of [Iraqi leader] Saddam Hussein after his occupation of Iranian territories." In other comments, the Iranian ambassador says that "the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group is not giving any results" because those who form it "do not want to achieve results. They are pursuing their own interests" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184456.html>).

Sadyk Yakut, deputy chairman of Turkey's Grand National Assembly, says that "without the resolution of the Karabakh problem, one cannot talk about the development of relations with Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184489.html>).

Elman Abdullayev, Azerbaijani consul in Los Angeles, says that the US Administration of President Barak Obama "should increase attention to the Caspian region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184453.html>).

A delegation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe visits Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184486.html>).

The European Committee on Standardization (CEN) gives Azerbaijan observer status as of January 1, 2010.

6 December

Oktay Atakhan, the head of the Humanist Party of Azerbaijan, says that Armenian religious leaders are taking “an active part” in the plan under development by “the special services of Armenia for the occupation of Javakhetia” in Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182889.html>).

5 December

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev over the loss of life in a nightclub fire in Perm (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184384.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “in the nearest future, we may become witnesses of movement forward in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183589.html>).

Vladimir Ivanovsky, Moscow’s ambassador in Ankara, says that his government favors Turkish-Armenian rapprochement and thus is “forced to find a path of resolution for the Karabakh problem. We have not other option” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184349.html>).

A Turkish newspaper reports that the European Court of Human Rights is investigating the possible involvement of Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in the genocide at Khojaly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184331.html>).

4 December

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Presidential Adminsitration, says that negotiations about Karabakh have achieved “a positive dynamic,” with six meetings between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia over the past year alone (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184250.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that “Armenia uses any mechanisms for disinforming the international public” about the situation around Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184201.html>).

A petition campaign in Turkey to ask “the forgiveness of the Azerbaijani Turks” for Ankara’s having signed the protocols with Yerevan has collected more than 70,000 signatures, its organizers say (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184246.html>).

Mustafa Kabakçi, head of the Azerbaijani-Turkish Friendship Group of

the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, says that only after Armenia withdraws its forces from Azerbaijani territory will the parliament ratify the accords with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184127.html>).

3 December

Ethan Goldrich, head of the US State Department's Office of Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts, meets with leaders of various parties in the Milli Majlis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184102.html>).

Mammadbaqir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador in Baku, meets with Azerbaijani human rights activists to discuss the status of Rashid Aliyev, an Azerbaijani scholar under arrest in Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184070.html>).

Fakhraddin Gurbanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador in London, meets with Rhodri Morgan, First Minister of the National Assembly for Wales, who tells him that Wales would like to expand its cooperation with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184066.html>).

Azerbaijani officials take part in the Hague Conference of the Organization for Banning Chemical Weapons (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184038.html>).

Suat Kynyklyoglu, deputy head for foreign relations of the ruling Turkish Party of Justice and Development, says that "ratification of the protocols" between Ankara and Yerevan is "a very delicate process" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183982.html>).

Rafael Jabrailov, a member of the Milli Majlis legal affairs and state-building committee, says that "Azerbaijani soldiers will decide the fate of the occupied territories" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183940.html>).

Yalchin Topchu, the head of the Turkish Party of Great Unity, says that "Turkey must keep the promises it made to Azerbaijan" regarding no opening of its borders with Armenia until Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183969.html>).

Zeinab Dagy, deputy chairman of the parliamentary fraction of the ruling Party of Justice and Development in Turkey, says that "the ratification of the Ankara-Yerevan protocols is not on the agenda" of the parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183276.html>).

Egemen Bakhsh, State Minister of Turkey and head of the Turkish delegation negotiating entry into the European Union, says that "it will be

complicated to normalize relations between Turkey and Armenia without a breakthrough on the Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183963.html>).

2 December

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories is “the key to the rapid resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” and that if that happens, “this will create the basis for normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and for providing for the self-administration of Nagorno-Karabakh within the borders of Azerbaijan.” Moreover, he continues, “this will give a firm and just basis for resolution [of the conflict] and essentially reduce tension” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183855.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki tells outgoing Azerbaijani Ambassador to Iran Abbasali Hasanov that Tehran would like to broaden cooperation with Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/184027.html>).

The government of Greece, which is the chairman in office of the OSCE, calls on Azerbaijan and Armenia to continue the “positive dynamic” of their negotiations on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183948.html>).

OSCE Secretary General Marc Perrin de Brichambaut says that negotiations on Karabakh must continue at their current level of intensity for an agreement to be found (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183893.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “Turkey supports the mediating efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183839.html>).

Lavon Lotem, Israel’s ambassador in Baku, says “Azerbaijan and Israel are fruitfully cooperate in many areas” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183829.html>)

Donald Lyu, US charge d’affaires in Baku, says that Azerbaijan “is playing a very important role” in guaranteeing security in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183944.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry announces that the discussion at the UN General Assembly of the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan has been postponed “for technical reasons” (<http://www>.

[day.az/news/politics/183929.html](http://www.day.az/news/politics/183929.html)).

The OSCE Bureau for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights says it is ready to work with Azerbaijan to improve electoral processes in the country (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183848.html>).

Aishe Turkmenoglu, a representative of the ruling Party of Justice and Development in the Turkish Grand National Assembly, says that there is “forward movement” expected in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183914.html>).

Milli Majlis deputies participate in the 33rd plenary session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the CIS in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183683.html>).

1 December

President Ilham Aliyev receives Prince Andrew of Great Britain (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183765.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Tony Blair, the former British prime minister (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183739.html>). Blair says that for the UK, relations with Azerbaijan are becoming “ever more important” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183733.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his counterparts from OSCE member states at a ministerial in Athens and holds consultations with his GUAM colleagues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183832.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan supports the proposal to hold an OSCE summit in Kazakhstan in 2010” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183876.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov makes a working visit to London.

Tofik Zulfugarov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Latvia and Estonia, says that Latvian entrepreneurs “are interested in establishing business contacts” with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183270.html>).

Fuad Iskandarov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the Netherlands, speaks to a conference on the 90th anniversary of the diplomatic service of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183781.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry sends a formal letter of protest to *Euronews* concerning its program on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.>

[day.az/ news/politics/183740.html](http://www.day.az/news/politics/183740.html)).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issue a statement calling on Azerbaijan and Armenia “to complete in the near future work on the basic principles” for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183635.html>).

Greek Prime Minister George Papandreou, whose country is chairman-in-office of the OSCE, praises the work of the Minsk Group and says it is necessary to make “greater efforts for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183711.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “it is necessary to work out a single set of principles” for the resolution of conflicts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183695.html>).

French Foreign Minister Bernard Kushner says that there are “weighty bases for achieving a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183692.html>).

Swedish Foreign Minister Carl Bildt says that “the Karabakh conflict must be resolved on the basis of ‘a suitable combination’ of principles of international law” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183718.html>).

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev says that Astana “considers Azerbaijan a key state in the Caucasus region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183617.html>).

US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg says that “Washington intends to promote the final resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183708.html>).

Azerbaijan supports Serbia at the International Criminal Court concerning the unilateral proclamation of independence by the Albanian powers in the Serbian region of Kosovo (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183680.html>).

Goran Lennmarker, special representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE for Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia, says that “the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is possible already in the next year” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183661.html>).

NATO publishes the program of Azerbaijani participation in the work of the alliance for next year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183650.html>).

Ahmet Tan, an independent deputy in the Grand National Assembly of

Turkey, says that “the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border is impossible before the liberation of occupied territories of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183361.html>).

NOVEMBER

30 November

Kazakhstan Foreign Minister Kanat Saudabayev, who will become the OSCE chairman-in-office in 2010, says that “we will actively participate in the negotiation process under the aegis of the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183530.html>).

28 November

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev concerning the Nevsky Express disaster (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183415.html>).

27 November

Lt. Gen. Zakir Hasanov, commander of Azerbaijan's internal troops, receives Lt. Gen. Tsu Tsin Lu, deputy commissar of the internal militia forces of China (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183327.html>).

26 November

President Ilham Aliyev greets the Azerbaijani people on the occasion of the Gurban Bayram holiday (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183258.html>).

US President Barak Obama sends a message of greetings to President Ilham Aliyev and the Azerbaijani people on the occasion of the Gurban Bayram holiday (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183269.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Polish National Defense Minister Bogdan Klich (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

183213.html). Klich is also received by Azerbaijani defense industry minister Yaver Jamalov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183194.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that at the meeting between President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan that Turkish media reports about specific agreements are inaccurate because “in the negotiation process, the principle ‘nothing has been agreed to until everything is agreed’ operates.” And on that basis, the two sides will continue to talk “until the final agreement on all questions” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183140.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies the Nakhchivan agreement on the creation of a cooperation council for the Turkic language countries. At the same time, it ratifies agreements between Azerbaijan and Romania in a variety of areas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183222.html>).

Milli Majlis deputies propose including representatives of Azerbaijan’s political parties in the negotiations on Nagorno-Karabakh and also call for the adoption of a law on the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183190.html>).

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, EU commissioner for foreign policy and European neighborhood policy, says on the occasion of the completion of her term that “the EU has always offered to make a contribution to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183215.html>).

Maj. Gen. Husein Zulfugari, commander of Iran’s border forces, says that Tehran is ready to conduct with Baku “a joint struggle against illegal drug trafficking” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183156.html>). Kamil Salimov, an Azerbaijani expert on drug trafficking, says that much of the flow is going through the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183080.html>).

The heads of the border services of the five Caspian littoral states agree on creating an automated information sharing center (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183151.html>).

The Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization may be considering creating a commission to study damage to the environment in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, according to Milli Majlis deputy Asef Hajiyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183148.html>).

25 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives Stelian Stoian, Romanian ambassador to the Council of Europe and head of the *Ago* monitoring group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183061.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Petri Salo, Finnish ambassador to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183066.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Ion Robu, outgoing Moldovan ambassador to Azerbaijan at the completion of his tour (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183019.html>).

Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives Polish National Defense Minister Bogdan Klich (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183064.html>).

Metin Yilmaz, a Turkish deputy of the ruling *Justice and Development* Party, says that Turkey's "main goal is the liberation of the occupied lands of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183063.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman and executive secretary of the *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, receives Nicolas Briec and Juan Magaz of the European People's Party (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/183034.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, the deputy head of Azerbaijan's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that in its 15 years of existence, the OSCE Minsk Group has "not been able to contribute anything to the resolution of the conflict," having occupied itself with "tourist visits" to the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182990.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "Russian-Azerbaijani ties are one of the more successful models of arranging relations" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182937.html>).

James Appathurai, NATO spokesman, says that "Azerbaijan is our long and very active partner in the frameworks of all measures of the North Atlantic Alliance, in particular, in programs like 'Partnership for Peace'" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182916.html>).

24 November

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev in Ulyanovsk where the two take part in a ceremony on the erection of a

monument to former Azerbaijani President Heydar Aliyev. Both sides characterize the relationship of their two countries as one of “strategic partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182761.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “Turkey is our strategic ally; consequently, it will find a worthy place in [Baku’s] military doctrine” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182710.html>).

Rabiyat Aslanova, chairman of the Milli Majlis committee on human rights, says that no one can put pressure on Azerbaijan now because it has fulfilled its obligations and can stand up for itself (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182824.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis committee on international relations, says that “Azerbaijan has fulfilled the majority of the obligations taken before the Council of Europe and today there is close cooperation between our country and this structure” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182774.html>).

US Congressman Michael McMahon says that “with the ratification of the protocols between Turkey and Armenia, the role of Azerbaijan in the region will grow” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182768.html>).

The UN General Assembly postpones the discussion of a draft resolution offered by Azerbaijan on the situation in the occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182689.html>).

23 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense Celeste Wallander. Earlier, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells her that “Azerbaijan is interested in a further broadening of cooperation with the United States.” She also meets with Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182660.html>; <http://www.day.az/news/politics/182668.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/182579.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that “at the meeting of Presidents Ilham Aliyev and Serzh Sargsyan in Munich forward movement was achieved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182673.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov speaks with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu by telephone (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182672.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that if Armenia continues to delay a resolution of the Karabakh conflict, then “Azerbaijan will be forced to liberate its occupied lands by military means” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182650.html>).

Azay Guliyev, chairman of the Council of State Support of NGOs, receives Andrey Adamcik, the European Union official who has prepared a report on the status of such groups in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182652.html>).

Milli Majlis speaker Ogtay Asadov meets with his Russian and Turkish counterparts, Boris Gryzlov and Mehmet Ali Shahin, during a Moscow session of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182649.html>).

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, tells the Congress of Azerbaijaniis in Europe and the Coordination Council of Azerbaijani-Turkish Diaspora Organizations that “now the question of solidarity of the Azerbaijani and Turkish governments has come into greater focus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182555.html>).

Nazim Ibrahimov, chairman of the Government Committee on Work with the Diaspora, says that “the opening of borders with Armenia can bring harm to the position of Turkey in the world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182546.html>).

Aydyn Mirzazade, a deputy of the Milli Majlis, says that “the process of negotiations [between Azerbaijan and Armenia] has lasted almost 17 years,” forcing one to ask “how much longer will it continue?” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182517.html>).

Mehmet Shandyr, the deputy chairman of the Nationalist Movement Party of Turkey, says that “the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border is impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182093.html>).

22 November

President Ilham Aliyev meets in Munich with his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan. Also in attendance at the session are the foreign ministers of the two countries, the three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, and the personal representative of the OSCE chairman-in-office (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182410.html>).

Bernard Fassier, French-co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that

“important progress” was made at the meeting between President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182469.html>).

21 November

President Ilham Aliyev says that “without the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, Turkish-Armenian relations cannot be normalized.” He also says that Baku is prepared to resolve the conflict by force if an agreement is not reached (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182156.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev departs for a working visit in Germany (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182410.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the Presidential Administration’s Department of Political Analysis and Information Support, says that “the position of the Armenian leaders bears a tactical character and is insincere.” In other comments, he says that “relations with countries of the South Caucasus built on double standards prevent a resolution of the conflicts” there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182402.html>).

Maj. Gen. Elbrus Orujev, military attaché at the Azerbaijani embassy in Tbilisi, says that “the Armenians of Javakhetia will strike Georgia in the back” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182380.html>).

20 November

Ogtay Asadov, Speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that criticism by international organizations regarding the so-called “bloggers” case represent an interference in the internal affairs of Azerbaijan by individuals and groups “who do not know” the reasons for the arrest of these two young people (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182232.html>).

Safa Mirzoyev, the head of the apparatus of the Milli Majlis, says that Baku needs to set up “a structure for integration into Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182287.html>).

Kazakhstani Deputy Foreign Minister Konstantin Zhigalov says that Astana is prepared to help with negotiations on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182254.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that PACE had

failed to adopt a report about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict even though Azerbaijan has pressed for this (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182170.html>).

Tahir Taghizade, Azerbaijan's ambassador in Prague, says that Azerbaijan and the Czech Republic will conduct negotiations on strategic partnership in a week's time (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182109.html>).

Swiss Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey says that Azerbaijan is a significant partner for [her] country (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182108.html>).

The government of Azerbaijan signs a credit agreement with the Saudi Development Foundation (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/182379.html>).

Rovnag Abdullayev, president of SOCAR, says that Baku will consider all routes for diversifying the export of gas from the Caspian basin toward both Europe and Asia (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/182306.html>).

19 November

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Elshan Gahramanov Azerbaijan's ambassador to the United Arab Emirates (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182095.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that "Azerbaijan is now at the middle of the bridge [in talks about Karabakh and the other occupied territories] and expects that Armenia will also move" to meet Baku half way (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181939.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry welcomes the proposal of US senators to support the Azerbaijani community of Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181979.html>). Milli Mejlis deputy Nasib Nasibli, a member of the Azerbaijan-US inter-parliamentary group, says the proposal merits "attention and support" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181942.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry declares the Turkish journalist who visited Armenian-occupied Nagorno-Karabakh without Baku's permission is *persona non grata* (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182005.html>).

Tahir Taghizade, Azerbaijani ambassador in Prague, announces that the Czech Embassy in Baku will begin operation in the first week of December

when Radek Matula, the Czech ambassador to Azerbaijan, is slated to arrive (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181997.html>).

Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Hulusi Kilic says there is no truth to media reports that Armenia is moving nuclear fuel for its reactor through Turkish territory. “The Turkish-Armenian border is closed,” he points out, and so such “transit is impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182017.html>).

Swiss Foreign Minister Micheline Calmy-Rey says that “the processes of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Turkish-Armenian rapprochement formally are not connected” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181952.html>).

Slovenian Foreign Minister Samuel Žbogar, on the occasion of his passing the presidency of the committee of ministers of the Council of Europe to Switzerland, says that “the European Union can do much to contribute to the development of an atmosphere of trust between Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181943.html>).

Onur Oymen, deputy head of the National Republican Party of Turkey, says members of his party will “continue to oppose ratification of the Ankara-Yerevan protocols” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181764.html>).

Ion Robu, Moldova’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, is recalled by Chisinau as part of a major reshuffling of that country’s representatives abroad (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/182018.html>).

18 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives a delegation of MEDEF, the Organization of Entrepreneurs of France (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181902.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Daniel Stein, senior advisor to special ambassador of the United States for Eurasian energy issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181880.html>).

Fuad Alaskarov, head of the Presidential Administration’s Department for Work with Law Enforcement Organs, says that Transparency International’s report on corruption in Azerbaijan fails to reflect the existence of corruption in all countries and the progress Azerbaijan has made in combating this evil (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

[181772.html](http://www.day.az/news/politics/181772.html)).

Ganira Pashayeva, a member of Azerbaijan's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "the fact of the destruction of an Azerbaijani cemetery on the occupied territories will be brought to the attention of PACE" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181670.html>).

The Azerbaijani government is providing offices for the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Language Countries in the new building of the Milli Majlis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181810.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that there have been "positive steps forward in the process of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181888.html>).

Richard Morningstar, Special Representative of the US State Department for Energy Policy in Eurasia, says that the Nabucco project and the southern corridor have "vital importance" for the energy security of Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/181883.html>).

Azay Guliyev, president of the Presidential Council for State Support for Non-Governmental Organizations in Azerbaijan, announces that his group will cooperate with the representation of the European Commission in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181855.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he and his colleagues have not yet made arrangements for their next visit to the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181808.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara "devotes great importance to the defense of the territory of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181778.html>).

British Foreign Minister David Miliband says that he hopes for a rapid solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181767.html>).

Joseph Debono Grech of Malta is named the new co-rapporteur of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe for Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181794.html>).

US Congressman Michael McMahon, says that "for decades, the question about ties of Turkey and Armenia was connected with the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181730.html>).

17 November

Azerbaijan marks its Day of National Rebirth (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181481.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs a decree on the establishment of a consulate general in Batumi, Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181683.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Richard Jones, the director of the executive committee of the International Energy Agency (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181616.html>). The IEA official says that “the best policy of Azerbaijan is the development of energy effectiveness” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/181642.html>).

The Foreign Ministry calls in representatives of the German and Norwegian embassies to protest comments by their diplomats concerning the so-called “blogger” case, saying that their remarks were not only uninformed but represented interference in Azerbaijan’s domestic affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181506.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that anyone who visits the occupied territory without official permission from Baku is violating Azerbaijani law. Its statement comes in response to a visit to Nagorno-Karabakh by a Turkish journalist (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181633.html>).

Parviz Shahbazov, Azerbaijani ambassador in Germany, jointly with the Institute of European Policy, organizes a conference on “The Ties of the European Union with Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181650.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, head of the Azerbaijani State Committee on Religious Affairs, is received by Temur Yakobashvili, the Georgian minister for reintegration, who presents to him Tbilisi’s strategy on national minorities (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181587.html>).

Deputy Justice Minister Vilayat Zakirov speaks to a conference in the Dutch city of Utrecht on local and regional democracy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181639.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be resolved in the format confirmed earlier” by the OSCE (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181567.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “there is no crisis in negotiations on the status of the Caspian Sea” and that work toward an

agreement is “continuing” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181574.html>).

Russian Foreign Ministry spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that “in the course of the negotiations on ties between Yerevan and Ankara, questions about Nagorno-Karabakh were also raised” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181664.html>). In other comments, Nesterenko says that the Nagorno-Karabakh problem “has a large number of sides” and that Moscow will do all that it can to resolve the issues they present (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181612.html>).

US Congressman Robert Wechsler says that “the normalization of ties between Turkey and Armenia will add impetus to the resolution of other problems of the region,” including the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181533.html>).

16 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives Peter Semneby, special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181470.html>). Earlier in his visit to Baku, Semneby says that the EU “must create all the conditions necessary for the supply of gas from the Caspian region to European consumers” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181447.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from incoming Kuwaiti Ambassador Hassan Abdulbari al-Zavavi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181463.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from incoming European Commission Ambassador Roland Cobia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181462.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, chairman of the State Committee of Azerbaijan, visits Tbilisi where he meets with Iliya II, the Catholicos-Patriarch of All Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181410.html>).

Zahid Oruj and Gudrat Gasanguliyev, two Milli Majlis deputies, tell a session of the Defense and Security Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO that the Western alliance should promote the implementation of the UN resolutions on Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181356.html>).

Jamil Hasanli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “Azerbaijan must set a

time limit on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181010.html>).

Ross Wilson, former US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the US “would like to see Azerbaijan and Armenia as peaceful neighbors” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181358.html>).

14 November

Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, says that “Turkish-Armenian rapprochement is a process which can have a positive influence on conflicts that exist in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181238.html>). In other comments, he says that the OSCE Minsk Group is the only process which will be able to resolve the Karabakh problem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181205.html>).

Egemen Bakysh, the Turkish state minister who is conducting negotiations with the European Union, says that “the Azerbaijani people can trust the prime minister of Turkey” when the latter says that Ankara will not do anything to harm the interests of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181232.html>).

13 November

President Ilham Aliyev visits Bulgaria and meets with that country’s president Georgy Pyrvanov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180999.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev at the conclusion of his two-day visit to Minsk says that “relations between Azerbaijan and Belarus are developing in an intense, dynamic and very effective manner” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180787.html>).

US Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon says in Ankara that Washington “doubts” that the Turkish parliament will ratify the Turkish-Armenian protocols unless there is progress on the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181147.html>).

John Holmes, UN Deputy Secretary General, says that the OSCE must keep its leading role in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/181006.html>).

12 November

During his visit to Minsk, President Ilham Aliyev signs a series of agreements with Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenka (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180787.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “the process of negotiations on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict has again intensified” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180793.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells Faisal al-Migdad, Syria’s deputy foreign minister, that “Azerbaijan is united with the Islamic world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180811.html>).

Milli Majlis Speaker Ogtay Asadov receives Hussein Anwari, the head of the *Imdad*, the International Humanitarian Committee of Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180903.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, tells an open discussion of the UN Security Council that “Armenia continues to crudely violate the norms of international humanitarian law” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180886.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that negotiations are proceeding with Turkey about the lifting of the visa regime between the two countries but that no agreement has been reached yet (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180835.html>).

Ismetulla Irgashev, Uzbekistani ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that for Tashkent, Baku is “a key partner in the South Caucasus region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180949.html>).

Zeyper Dagi, a member of Turkey’s Grand National Assembly, says that voting on the protocols with Ankara has not yet been scheduled (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180882.html>).

James Jeffrey, US ambassador to Turkey, says “the United States well understands the sensitivity of Azerbaijan and Turkey regarding the solution of the Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180871.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, says that “the OIC does not accept the actions of Armenia on the occupied territories” but expects that the conflict “will be resolved in a peaceful way” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180795.html>).

11 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180735.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish State Minister Hayati Yazydji (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180728.html>).

In advance of President Ilham Aliyev's arrival in Minsk, Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenka says that bilateral ties and economic cooperation are developing well but adds that "no one now or in the future can compete in Azerbaijan with the goods which we produce in Belarus" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180624.html>).

Iran's council of ministers approves a unilateral lifting of the visa requirement on Azerbaijanis travelling to Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180647.html>).

Thorbjørn Jagland, Secretary General of the Council of Europe, meets with the permanent representatives of the GUAM countries to the Council (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180749.html>).

10 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives outgoing Georgian Ambassador Nikoloz Natbiladze on the completion of the latter's appointment in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180580.html>).

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev attends the conference of CIS defense ministers in Dushanbe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180296.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov takes part in the ceremonial opening of the Azerbaijani embassy in Mexico City (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180464.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov presents Azerbaijan's report on the 43rd Session of the UN Commission Against Torture (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180686.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that "official Baku has already reached the limit of its concessions to Yerevan."

Peter Semneby, EU special representative for the South Caucasus, says that "Armenian-Turkish relations have reached the point at which there could be a breakthrough" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180457.html>).

9 November

President Ilham Aliyev tells visiting Slovenian President Danilo Turk that Azerbaijan is “playing an important role in the diversification of energy supplies” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180308.html>).

Suleyman Jafarzade, the chairman of the commission on social questions of the Majlis of the Islamic Council of Islam, tells Azerbaijani parliamentarians that “Iran supports the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180404.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that he will press President Barack Obama to push for a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict when the Turkish leader travels to Washington later this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180364.html>).

Uzbekistan President Islam Karimov confirms the agreement between Tashkent and Baku on military cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180319.html>).

7 November

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group say that the presidents of both Azerbaijan and Armenia are “prepared to continue to discuss” the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180188.html>).

6 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group along with the special representative of the OSCE chairman-in-office Andrzej Kasprzyk (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180108.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Kirill, Patriarch of Moscow and All Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180121.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180088.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Daghestani President Mukhu Aliyev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180051.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan’s statement in the Armenian parliament that the only thing

being discussed in talks about Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the status of that region is intended for domestic Armenian consumption and does not correspond to the facts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179993.html>).

Nikoloz Natbiladze, Georgian ambassador to Azerbaijan, completes his diplomatic tour in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180076.html>).

Birgen Kelesh, a member of the Turkish parliamentary delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that “Yerevan is doing nothing for the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/180007.html>).

Moscow Mayor Yuri Luzhkov gives an award to Mikhail Zabelin, the president of the Russian Community in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179988.html>).

Iranian Vice President Hamid Baghai visits Nakhchivan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179989.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, Azerbaijani consul general in Los Angeles, speaks to a seminar on Azerbaijan at the University of Southern California (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179961.html>).

5 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group along with the special representative of the OSCE president in office Andjei Kaspisika (www.day.az/news/politics/179920.html).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Metropolitan Filaret, the Patriarchal Exarches of All Belarus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179938.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the Azerbaijani participants in the bilateral commission on cooperation with Syria (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179778.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the Azerbaijani participants in the bilateral commission on cooperation with Lithuania (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179777.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations Agshin Mekhdiyev, and Azerbaijan Ambassador to the US Yashar Aliyev participate in a conference on Azerbaijan at Columbia University's Harriman Institute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179954.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that “the partnership

between Azerbaijan and the United States is very deep.” His comments come at the conclusion of bilateral consultations with Andrew Shapiro, US Assistant Secretary of State for Military-Political Relations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179851.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that “Baku is ready to answer Armenia at the United Nations” and that the foreign ministry is preparing a report to do just that (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179837.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that “if Russia and the US would like to jointly use the Gabala radar station, they will not be able to do so without the participation of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179815.html>).

Agshin Mehtiyev, the permanent representative of Azerbaijan to the United Nations, takes part in a discussion at the UN of the history and legal aspects of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179820.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “the fact that the occupied territories of Azerbaijan belong to Azerbaijan is not being subjected to doubt” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179779.html>).

Slovenian President Danilo Turk says that “Azerbaijan occupies a special place in the European Union’s Eastern Partnership Program” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179784.html>).

Slovenian Foreign Minister Samuel Žbogar says that “Azerbaijan is located in what is for the European Union a strategically important territory” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179925.html>). He adds that “the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey will contribute to security in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179913.html>).

Fazil Agamaly, a Milli Majlis deputy and head of the *Ana Vatan* Party, says that he has invited members of the Turkish opposition parties to visit Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179910.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador in Baku, says that “Russian-Azerbaijani relations can serve as an example for many countries” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179854.html>).

4 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iliya II, Patriarch-Catholicos of Georgia

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179768.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Hamadoun Touré, the Secretary General of the International Telecommunications Union (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179743.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Roland Kobia, the new head of the representation of the European Union in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179745.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says at a meeting in Ashgabat on the delimitation of the Caspian Sea that “the Caspian region remains an important region of energy security” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179714.html>).

Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammadov says that “relations between Turkmenistan and Azerbaijan have acquired a qualitatively new content” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179691.html>).

Anders Fogh Rasmussen, the secretary general of NATO, says that “Azerbaijan is a very close and active partner of the North Atlantic Alliance” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179633.html>).

Caroline Brown, the British ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that London is devoted to the task of “a peaceful and firm resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179730.html>).

3 November

President Ilham Aliyev receives Korean Ambassador Kwang-chul LEW on the completion of his diplomatic appointment in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179566.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the protocol on cooperation with GUAM (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179554.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms Azerbaijani accords with Georgia, the UN, Moldova, Poland, Latvia and Ukraine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179518.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Austrian Ambassador Marius Calligaris on the completion of his diplomatic assignment in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179591.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov receives Turkish General Ishyk

Koshaner, who tells him that Turkey will do whatever it can for the development of the armed forces of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179525.html>).

Bahram Khalilov, head of the Azerbaijani Presidential Commission on Questions of State Service, visits Seoul to discuss cooperation with Korea in this sphere (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179547.html>).

Alain Guidetti, Swiss ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Switzerland “has always supported the view that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be resolved by peaceful means” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179488.html>).

The US Embassy in Baku explains that the closure of the International Republic Institute office in Baku in no way represents a lessening of American support for democratic reforms and development in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179569.html>).

Ali Huseynov, chairman of the Milli Majlis legal policy and state construction committee, takes part in a Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe session in Paris on procedural rules, immunity and other legal issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179461.html>).

2 November

President Ilham Aliyev speaks by telephone with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179335.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Sergey Brayko, the mayor of Yalta (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179405.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives General Ishyk Koshaner, commander of Turkish ground forces (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179402.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Javanshir Akhundov as Azerbaijani ambassador to Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179408.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev signs an order on the establishment of Azerbaijani embassies in Estonia, Lebanon and Libya (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179399.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, says that until the OSCE Minsk Group recognizes that Armenia is the aggressor in the Karabakh war, “we will not be able to achieve a just resolution of the conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179371.html>).

Aynur Jamalgyzy, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that “Armenia in the near future may return five districts” to Azerbaijani control. She says that the situation regarding Lachin and Kalbajar is “more problematic” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179058.html>).

Peter Semneby, EU special representative for the South Caucasus, says that he expects the Turkish-Armenian protocols to be ratified by both countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179298.html>). In other comments, he says that he is “certain that the Armenian leadership recognizes that the status quo on Karabakh cannot continue forever” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179285.html>).

A delegation of Azerbaijani naval forces begins a four-day visit to Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179267.html>).

1 November

President Ilham Aliyev signs a directive providing for the operation of an Azerbaijani embassy in Thailand (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179228.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that Turks “consider the problems of our Azerbaijani brothers as our own” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179232.html>).

OCTOBER

31 October

Experts from Azerbaijan, Estonia, Finland, Germany, the US, Russia, Turkey, Georgia and the European Border Agency meet in Baku to discuss protection of water borders (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179196.html>).

The Belarusian embassy in Baku says that Armenian reports that Belarusian Foreign Minister Sergey Martynov has said that “Belarus does not consider Armenia an aggressor” are the result of “an attempt” by the Armenian media to “manipulate the words of [the Belarusian] minister” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179193.html>).

Mariya Biryukova, the deputy chairman of the working group of the Belarusian parliament on relations with the Milli Majlis, says that she “has the impression that [Belarus and Azerbaijan] have much in common” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178449.html>).

30 October

President Ilham Aliyev gives an interview to the National State Television and Radio Company of Belarus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179127.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Palestinian Autonomy Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179112.html>).

Ogtay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, receives Palestinian Foreign Minister Riyad al-Maliki (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178959.html>).

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov receives Korean Ambassador Kwang-chul Lew (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178960.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that in his opinion, “a meeting of the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Athens is inevitable” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179053.html>).

Mustafa Kabakci, the chairman of the Turkey-Azerbaijan Friendship Group of the Grand National Assembly, says that he does not expect the Ankara-Yerevan protocols to be ratified by the Turkish parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179022.html>).

Shenol Bal, a deputy in Turkey’s Grand National Assembly, says that the visa regime between Azerbaijan and Turkey should be eliminated (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179016.html>).

Halil Akynji, Turkey’s ambassador to Russia, says that “Turkey requires the withdrawal of the forces of Armenia from Nagorno-Karabakh” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178997.html>).

29 October

President Ilham Aliyev speaks by telephone with Turkish President Abdulla Gul (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178954.html>).

Vice Prime Minister Abid Sharifov leads Azerbaijani officials in a ceremony in Baku to mark the 86th anniversary of the foundation of the Republic of Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178951.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “the expansion of cooperation with the European Union is very important for Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178918.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Riyad al-Maliki, the foreign minister of the Palestinian Autonomy. Mammadyarov announces that Baku favors the establishment of a Palestinian state (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178887.html>), and Al-Maliki announces his plans to open a Palestinian embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178905.html>).

Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan’s visit to the occupied territories may become his “last” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178950.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Murat Merdzhanyan, the chairman of the committee on foreign relations of Turkey’s Grand National Assembly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178949.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov conducts political consultations with Polish officials in Warsaw (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178947.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Makhmudov visits Lithuania for consultations on security cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178934.html>).

Farid Shafiyev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Canada, meets with Peter Milliken, the speaker of the Canadian House of Commons (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/179154.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "the problem of Nagorno-Karabakh is also Turkey's problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178955.html>).

George Papandreou, the chairman-in-office of the OSCE, says he "will personally support the co-chairs [of the Minsk Group] in the pursuit of peace in the South Caucasus" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178933.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that it is "still unknown when the sides will be given the updated Madrid Principles" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178938.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Administration of the President, says that "the signing of the Turkish-Armenian protocols must be considered as a kind of overtures to Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178930.html>).

Murad Merdzhanyan, chairman of the foreign relations committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, says that "no other two countries have such relations as those which exist between Azerbaijan and Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178806.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry welcomes the return of Turkish flags to the Shahid memorial in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178794.html>).

Peter Semneby, the EU's special representative for the South Caucasus, tells Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan that the European Union welcomes progress in Armenian-Turkey relations and is ready to assist in their further normalization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178793.html>).

28 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives members of the foreign relations committee of the Turkish Grand National Assembly who assure him that Turkey will take no actions to the detriment of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178785.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of a department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Armenia is reducing to nothing [earlier] steps forward in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178705.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry spokesman says that “a crisis in Turkish-Azerbaijan relations is theoretically impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178771.html>) and that Ankara’s “goal is the normalization of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178754.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, calls on the members of that body to use “all means” to end the occupation of Azerbaijani territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178670.html>).

Representatives of the mass media of Azerbaijan and Armenia meet in Moscow in sessions arranged by the special representative of the Russian president and the ambassadors of the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178790.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that regular meetings with Turkish parliamentarians “have enormous importance” for both countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178780.html>).

Samad Seyidov, chairman of the Milli Majlis committee on foreign relations and inter-parliamentary ties, says that “Azerbaijan and Turkey will not have any more problems with [their national] flags” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178737.html>).

Senol Bal, a deputy of the Party of the National Movement in the Grand National Assembly, says that “it is necessary to unite [Turkish and Azerbaijani] forces in order not to allow the ratification of the protocols signed between Turkey and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178715.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador in Kazakhstan, says that “the opening of the Turkish-Armenian borders must take place in parallel with

the withdrawal of occupation forces” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178657.html>).

Atilla Gunay, Turkey’s ambassador to Kazakhstan, says that “the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has vitally great importance for Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178647.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a member of the Milli Majlis parliamentary group for Azerbaijan-Iranian friendship, says that “the closer the positions of Azerbaijan and Iran will be the better” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178431.html>).

Murat Merdzhani, a Turkish parliamentarian, says during a visit to Baku that “for us, Azerbaijan is a second motherland” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178606.html>).

27 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178452.html>). The co-chairs say the meeting took place “in a constructive spirit” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178455.html>).

The European Union announces plans to further expand its cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia as part of the Eastern Partnership program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178491.html>).

US Vice President Joseph Biden says that “the consequences of failure in the Caucasus region would touch everyone” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178515.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, expressed the gratitude of his country to Azerbaijan and its president for the decision to return the flag of Turkey to the Shahid memorial in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178605.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Mahmudov said during a visit to Bulgaria that “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict represents a serious threat not only to the South Caucasus but to all of Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178589.html>).

Turkish opposition parties launch a mass signature campaign calling on the Turkish government to apologise to Azerbaijan for signing the protocols with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178599.html>).

Vahdat Sultanzade of the Azerbaijani embassy in Ashgabad is decorated

by Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov for his contribution to the development of relations between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178591.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the international relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that “there is no alternative” to friendship between Azerbaijan and Turkey and that “forces attempting to sow discord” must be opposed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178556.html>).

Hidayat Orujov, the chairman of the Azerbaijani State Committee on Work with Religious Structures, receives Saudi Ambassador Fahd bin Ali al-Dusari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178537.html>).

Fazail Agamaly, the head of the Ana Veten Party and a member of the Milli Majlis, says that “if pressure is not put on Armenia, the return of the occupied territories will be impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178527.html>).

Murtuz Alaskarov, a Milli Majlis deputy and former Milli Majlis speaker, says that “one must not undermine friendship with Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178501.html>).

Jamil Hasanli, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that he “does not understand why Turkey cannot become a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178093.html>).

Oktay Bural, a member of the Turkish Grand National Assembly, says that “we will not allow the provisions of the Ankara-Yerevan protocols to be fulfilled” unless Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory.

26 October

The Foreign Ministry says that the decision of Iran to end the visa regime with Azerbaijan is “unilateral” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178297.html>).

Baku plans to increase the number of Azerbaijani peacekeepers in Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178377.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says in an interview to Al Jazeera that Ankara and Yerevan “are not conducting secret negotiations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178358.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “the occupation of Azerbaijani lands became a problem of Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/>)

[news/politics/178337.html](http://www.day.az/news/politics/178337.html)).

The Azerbaijan Permanent Mission to the United Nations says that information about the meeting of the UN Third Committee disseminated by the Armenian *PanArmenian.net* news agency does not correspond to the truth (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178321.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Manuchehr Mottaki says that “general agreement has been achieved concerning the status of the Caspian Sea and its bed” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178311.html>).

Sayad Aran, Azerbaijani consul general in Istanbul, says that the Turkish flags taken down from the memorial complex in Baku will be “restored to their former place” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178320.html>).

25 October

Fuad Ismaylov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Vienna, meets with Robert Bratke, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178225.html>).

24 October

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that he considers the meetings in Baku on Caspian security to have been “positive,” something particularly important because “security in the Caspian is one of the priority elements of cooperation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178179.html>).

23 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Assistant Secretary of State Tina Kaidanov. Earlier, she meets with Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov who tells her that “the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories is the main condition for the restoration of peace in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178068.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives letters of credence from the incoming ambassador of the Netherlands to Azerbaijan, Jan Lucas van Hoorn (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178110.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives letters of credence from the incoming ambassador of Italy to Azerbaijan, Mario Giorgio Stephano Baldi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178109.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Moldovan State Minister Victor Bodu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178103.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Egyptian Deputy Foreign Minister Mohammed al-Orabi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178037.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Greek Deputy Foreign Minister Spiridon Kuvelis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177983.html>).

Deputy foreign minister Khalaf Khalafov tells the Baku meeting of representatives of the Caspian Sea states that “security in the region requires the unification of the efforts” of all of them (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178095.html>).

The three co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group meet in Vienna (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178177.html>).

Belarusian President Alexander Lukashenka tells visiting Azerbaijan Deputy Prime Minister Yagub Eyubov that his country has “very profitably cooperating with Azerbaijan” and that there are “no closed issues” in the relationship (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/178057.html>).

Ambassador Ertogrul Apakan, Turkey’s permanent representative to the United Nations, says that “Ankara will be able to resolve the problems between Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177966.html>).

The Popular Socialist Party of Azerbaijan appeals to the Turkish opposition to show decisiveness in opposing the ratification of the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177993.html>).

US Congressman Robert Wechsler, who is co-chair of the Congressional fraction on American-Turkish relations, says that “discussion of the question of ‘genocide’ is not so important given negotiations on the Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177991.html>).

A delegation of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party visits Kyiv to take part in the congress of the Ukrainian Party of the Regions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177982.html>).

22 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177901.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bulgarian Foreign Minister Rumianu

Zhelev (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177885.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Rahman Mustafayev as Azerbaijani ambassador to Greece (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177915.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that “Azerbaijan expects the signing of an agreement with Turkmenistan on the status of the Caspian” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177785.html>). His remarks come at the start of a two-day conference in Baku of representatives of the Caspian littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177781.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “Azerbaijan is a fraternal country” and that Turkey and Azerbaijan “form one people.” Always and everywhere we demonstrate our solidarity” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177857.html>).

Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Arman Kirakosyan says that Yerevan has begun making arrangements for the Armenian parliament to consider the protocols with Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177814.html>).

Azerbaijani and Armenian parliamentarians meet in the Russian Duma (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177881.html>).

Etibar Mammadov, the head of the National Independence Party of Azerbaijan, says that “society must resist the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177821.html>).

The OSCE Permanent Council discusses the conflicts in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177913.html>).

Azerbaijan is one of only 22 countries which have completely paid their dues to the United Nations this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177733.html>).

21 October

President Ilham Aliyev speaks by telephone with his Turkish counterpart Abdulla Gul. The two presidents agree, their press spokesmen say, that “the appearance of the existence of problems in the relations of Turkey and Azerbaijan does not correspond to reality” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177652.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iranian Deputy Foreign Minister Mehdi Safari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177890.html>).

Deputy Prime Minister Ali Hasanov says that “official Ankara should

have immediately issued a declaration when the incident with the Azerbaijani flag arose in Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177658.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov presents his letters of credence as Azerbaijani ambassador to Mexico to Mexican President Felipe Calderon (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177965.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “there is not a healthy political situation in the Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177672.html>).

Former Turkish President Suleyman Demirel says that “Turkey will not begin tasking steps that would harm the interests of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177718.html>).

Former Turkish Prime Minister Mesut Yilmaz says that “the signing of the protocols between Turkey and Armenia is harmful for the state interests of Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177702.html>).

Omer Celik, a deputy of Turkey’s ruling Party of Justice and Development, says that “without the solution of the Karabakh conflict, there cannot be any discussion of the opening of the borders of Turkey and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177686.html>).

Shenol Bal, a deputy of the Turkish Party of the National Movement, says that “the signing of the protocols about the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia is the beginning of a split in the brotherhood between Turkey and Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177692.html>).

Opposition deputies in the Turkish parliament leave the chamber in protest when the government presents the protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177679.html>).

Turkey lodges an official complaint with the Foreign Ministry in connection with the removal of Turkish flags from a building attached to the Turkish embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177646.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey’s ambassador to Baku, says that those who are spreading rumors about a possible opening of the Turkish-Armenian border in the near term are seeking to “sow discord” between Turkey and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177604.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that “the opening of the

Turkish-Armenian borders would slow the liberation of the occupied territories” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177606.html>).

20 October

President Ilham Aliyev says in Switzerland that “economic cooperation between Azerbaijan and Switzerland is developed rapidly” and that there are particular opportunities in the future connected with the sphere of renewable and alternative sources of energy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177169.html>).

Spanish King Juan Carlos receives Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Spain Mammad Aliyev and expresses the wish that President and Mrs. Aliyev will visit his country and that he will have the opportunity to visit Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177421.html>).

Interior Minister Ramil Usubov receives Russia’s deputy interior minister Arkady Yedilev and signs a cooperation agreement (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177444.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, deputy head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that “the OSCE Minsk group was created in order to put pressure on Azerbaijan” and that “we also must not forget that the member countries of the Minsk Group last year voted in the UN General Assembly against Azerbaijan, although they should as a minimum have abstained” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177490.html>).

Deniz Baikal, head of the Turkish opposition Peoples Republican Party, says that “Turkey must take Azerbaijan into consideration” in all discussions about the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177508.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “as soon as the protocols are signed, the Armenians will flood into Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177472.html>). In another comment, he says that Azerbaijan “is interested in holding a meeting of the foreign ministers of the member countries of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177469.html>).

The leadership of the Milli Majlis says that “an anti-Turkish campaign is not being carried out in Azerbaijan,” despite media reporting to the contrary (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177459.html>).

Devlet Bakhcheli, the leader of the Turkish opposition Party of the National Movement, says that the protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan are demeaning to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177461.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that “the interests of Azerbaijan will be defended in the same way as the interests of Turkey” by his government (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177460.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the Turkish parliament will decide whether or not to confirm the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177428.html>).

Milli Majlis Vice Speaker Ziyafat Askarov says that he personally felt insulted by the way in which the Azerbaijan flag was treated at the Turkish-Armenian football match (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177451.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a *Yeni Azerbaijan* Milli Majlis deputy says that “the prime minister of Turkey considers it a matter of honor his personal declaration about the Karabakh question,” in which he said the Turkish-Armenian border will not be opened until Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177423.html>).

Sardar Jalaloglu, the president of the Democratic Party of Azerbaijan, says that “the opposition political parties of Azerbaijan and Turkey need to meet” to discuss the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177402.html>).

19 October

President Ilham Aliyev during the course of an official visit in Switzerland meets with Swiss Confederation President Hans-Rudolph Merz (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177169.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that there has been “forward movement” toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177235.html>).

Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev says that his country will devote its efforts to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177351.html>). He acknowledges that Baku has reason to be concerned by the recent accords between Turkey and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177236.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “even if the

heavens fall, [Ankara's] position will not change: Our government does not make a distinction between Turkish and Azerbaijani flags – both are Turkic and equally dear to us" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177321.html>).

Turkish opposition parties accuse the Turkish government of compromising relations with Azerbaijan by signing the protocols with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177282.html>).

18 October

Azerbaijan marks its State Independence Day (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177139.html>).

17 October

The United Nations expresses its gratitude to Azerbaijan for participating in international peacekeeping operations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177122.html>).

16 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "the actions of the Armenian side during the talks in Chisinau generated disappointment" because of their lack of "constructiveness" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177075.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty and NATO are very different institutions and that he does not think that "the former could fulfil the mission which NATO fulfils today" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176707.html>).

Turkey's deputy culture minister Kemal Fahir Genc says that any insult to the Azerbaijani flag in Turkey is impermissible because "the flag of Azerbaijan is the flag of Turkey" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177049.html>).

A group of Milli Majlis deputies demand that those who insulted the dignity of the Azerbaijani state flag in Turkey be punished (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177022.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Turkish prime minister has "assured Azerbaijani deputies that there is no basis for worry" in Baku

about the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/177016.html>).

A delegation of 11 Milli Majlis deputies meet with leaders of the Turkish opposition concerning the attitudes of the latter toward the Turkish-Armenian protocols and the possibility of the opening of Turkey's border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176923.html>).

15 October

President Ilham Aliyev is named Man of the Year by the Forum of Turkic Language Diasporas of Canada (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176799.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Qatar's Culture, Arts and Heritage Minister Hamid al-Qawari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176856.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Lithuania's deputy foreign minister, Evaldas Ignatavicius (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176894.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov hands over a formal protest to the Turkish embassy concerning the lack of respect shown to Azerbaijan's state flag at the Turkish-Armenian football match on October 14 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176893.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, the chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that any opening of the Turkish-Armenian border before the withdrawal of Armenia from the occupied territories would be "a knife in the back of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176876.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that "Turkey and Armenia are not writing history but making it" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176792.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that "Turkey will do everything possible for the resolution of the Karabakh problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176784.html>).

Bankers from the Caucasus, Central Europe and Central Asia create a Central-Eurasian Federation of Bank Association of Banks. Its headquarters is to be in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/176845.html>).

14 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives a copy of the letters of credence of the incoming Netherlands ambassador to Baku, Jan Lucas van Hoorn (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176723.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Moscow's ambassador in Baku, says that "the process of Armenian-Turkish rapprochement must not affect the solution of the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176729.html>).

The Party of the Left of Azerbaijan calls on the Milli Majlis to debate the Turkish-Armenian protocols (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176662.html>).

A demonstration takes place in front of the Turkish embassy in Baku to protest Ankara's signing of the protocols with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176702.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that no one can undermine relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176711.html>).

Azerbaijani diaspora organizations begin negotiations with Turkish diaspora groups in Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176709.html>).

Baku hosts the Second International Banking Conference of the CIS (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/176613.html>).

13 October

President Ilham Aliyev sends a letter of greeting to the Sixth Conference of Ministers of Culture of the Islamic Countries underscoring Baku's desire to continue to expand cooperation with them (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176463.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey's ambassador to Baku, says that "Turkey will always observe the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176460.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, deputy chairman of the ruling *Yeni Azerbaijan* Party, says that Baku "believes that Turkey will not take any step that contradicts the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176450.html>).

Deniz Baykal, leader of the Republican Peoples Party of Turkey, says that "if the countries which are co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group want

peace in the Caucasus, let them put an end to the Armenian occupation.” Had they done so earlier, he continues, “today the situation would be different” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176568.html>).

Mustafa Kabakchy, a Turkish parliamentarian who heads the Turkey-Azerbaijan Parliamentary Friendship Group, says that the protests in Baku about the signing of the protocols between Ankara and Yerevan are the kind of things that happens “in democratic countries.” But he says that Azerbaijanis should remember and trust the promises of Turkey’s leaders not to take any step that would undermine Azerbaijan’s national interests” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176573.html>).

12 October

President Ilham Aliyev and First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva visit Jordan where they are received by King Abdullah II and Queen Rani (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176280.html>).

Cemal Çiçek, deputy prime minister of Turkey, says that “Ankara will act according to the interests of Azerbaijan” on the question of opening the borders with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176422.html>). Meanwhile, the Turkish embassy in Baku releases a statement of regret about inaccurate Baku media reports that had suggested Ankara is about to open the border (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176401.html>).

Oktay Asadov, speaker of the Milli Majlis, is received by Belarusian President Aleksandr Lukashenka during his visit to Minsk (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176364.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says “Azerbaijan cannot remain silent and indifferent” to the consequences of the protocols Turkey has signed with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176340.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “resolving all Turkish-Armenian problems in one instant is impossible,” adding that “an enormous iceberg cannot thaw in a single moment. Difficulties are possible; however decisiveness and will will help resolve them” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176291.html>).

Azerbaijan opens an honorary consulate in Genoa (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176286.html>).

10 October

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov meets with Korean officials in Seoul for the second round of political consultations between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176181.html>).

Nabi Shensoy, Turkey's ambassador in Washington, says that one of Ankara's "main interests is the interests of fraternal Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176151.html>).

Asef Hajiyev, a Milli Majlis deputy, says after meetings in Brussels that "the European Peoples Party is interested in cooperating with Azerbaijan's PEA" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176150.html>).

9 October

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Ukrainian counterpart Viktor Yushchenko in Chisinau (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176117.html>).

Gabrielle Keller, French ambassador in Azerbaijan, says that in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict three principles must be observed: territorial integrity, the right to self-determination and the non-use of force (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176034.html>). The ambassador adds that Azerbaijan is "a very important partner for the European Union" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176020.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Azerbaijan's vote for Movlud Chavushoglu was "decisive" in his election as president of that body (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176094.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Moscow's ambassador to Baku, says that "in Azerbaijan have been created all conditions for believers," including those of the Russian Orthodox Church (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176084.html>).

Sheykh-ul-islam Haji Allahshukur Pashazade, Head of the Caucasus Muslims Spiritual Board, is presented with the medal of St. Bartholomew by Bishop Aleksandr of Baku and the Caspian Region of the Russian Orthodox Church (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/176072.html>).

8 October

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan in Chisinau, on the sidelines of the CIS Summit

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175984.html>). The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group say there was progress (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175972.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that the meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia should give results on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175962.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara “expects a great deal from the meeting of Ilham Aliyev and Serzh Sargsyan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175912.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “Turkey will do nothing which could harm the rights of Azerbaijan” as Ankara works to normalize relations with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175821.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry confirms Moscow’s willingness to operate the Gabala and Armavir radar sites together with the United States (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175948.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan’s statement to a UNESCO conference “at a minimum elicits surprise” because the Armenian diplomat failed to talk about the massive destruction of Azerbaijani cultural sites in the occupied territories but rather acted as if no such destruction had occurred (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175913.html>).

Fakhraddin Gurbanov, Baku’s ambassador to London, says that “Azerbaijan intends to increase its positions in the energy markets of Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175822.html>).

Agricultural Minister Ismat Abbasov receives South Korean agricultural official Kim Jung Zhin to discuss cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175910.html>).

7 October

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives incoming Italian Ambassador to Baku Mario Baldi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175802.html>).

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasian affairs, says that Washington hopes that the meeting of President Ilham

Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan in Chisinau on October 8 will be productive (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175676.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Baku, says that those attending the Turkey-Armenia football match on October 14 will be permitted to carry Azerbaijani flags, media reporting to the contrary notwithstanding (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175748.html>).

Zakir Hashimov, Baku's ambassador to Ankara, says that "Azerbaijan is certain in the seriousness of the declarations of the Turkish government" that Turkey will not take any steps "contradicting the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175719.html>).

Ilgar Mukhtarov, Baku's ambassador to Mexico, meets with Javier Ramirez, the speaker of the Mexican Chamber of Deputies (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175675.html>).

Baku hosts a session of the GUAM counter-terrorism subgroup (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175790.html>).

Bruno Pouezat, UN resident coordinator in Azerbaijan, says that 74.3 percent of Azerbaijanis moving abroad are going to Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175712.html>).

6 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ivetta Macejkova, the chairman of the Constitutional Court of Slovakia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175598.html>).

Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives Robert Bradtke, the new American co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175611.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Azerbaijan is "prepared for a compromise resolution" of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as long as the country's territorial integrity is maintained. He adds that "the conflict does not allow for any 100 percent one-sided solution" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175521.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group do not present any documents to the Azerbaijani or Armenian governments during their meeting in Chisinau (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175502.html>). The co-chairs do meet with Bayram Safarov, the head of the Azerbaijan

Community of Nagorno-Karabakh, during their visit to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175487.html>).

Farhad Badalbeyli, the rector of Baku's Music Academy, says that "negotiations between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Karabakh should take place on neutral territory" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175510.html>).

Mihaly Bayer, the special representative of Hungary for the Nabucco project, says that "Azerbaijan always will be a reliable supplier of gas for Europe." He adds that "in principle Nabucco could transport Iranian gas" (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175534.html>).

Boris Klimchuk, Kyiv's ambassador to Baku, says that the supply of Azerbaijani oil for processing in Ukraine will promote the development of the Odessa-Brody pipeline project (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175475.html>).

Rafael Ibrahimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Sweden, Norway and Finland, speaks to the Aleksanteri Institute of Finland on "Azerbaijan and Regional Dynamics" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175629.html>).

5 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175425.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Daniel Poneman, US deputy energy minister (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175426.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Gen. Tarik Majid, chairman of the Committee of the United Staffs of the Armed Forces of Pakistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175427.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan must be resolved in the shortest possible time for prolonged peace in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175442.html>).

Defense Minister Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives Andrew Weber, US Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Programs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175443.html>).

Murat Yalchyntash, head of the Istanbul chamber of commerce, calls for Qatar to be a participant in the Nabucco project (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175359.html>).

Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan officials from numerous ministries meet in Astana for consultations on a wide range of bilateral issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175400.html>).

Israel's largest defense industry company, Elbit Systems, opens a representative office in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175323.html>).

4 October

Alexander Vershbow, US assistant secretary of defense, says that “the United States is considering cooperation with the Russian Federation at the radar sites in Gabala and Armavir” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175265.html>).

Bernard Fassier, French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that talks between the co-chairs and Armenian officials in Yerevan were “constructive” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175258.html>).

3 October

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that “Turkey wants to establish friendly ties with [all] neighboring countries” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175222.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “Turkey is optimistic on the question of the normalization of relations with Armenia and the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175140.html>).

Tehran's economics ministry announces that it has signed economic cooperation accords with Azerbaijan, as well as with Russia, Tajikistan and Kazakhstan (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/175207.html>).

Seoul names Lee Jie Ha its new ambassador to Baku. Lee will take up his post in November (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175164.html>).

2 October

President Ilham Aliyev receives Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev and tells him that political and economic relations between their two countries are both “at a very high level” and growing. The two sign a series of bilateral cooperation agreements (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175005.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev arrives in Nakhchivan to host the 9th Summit of the Chiefs of State of the Turkic Language Countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175133.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Mahmudov receives Amangeldy ShabdARBAYEV, the chairman of Kazakhstan's National Security Committee, to discuss cooperation between their two agencies (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175126.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a deputy in the Milli Majlis, says that the declarations by Washington and Moscow about the use of the Gabala radar station are "a positive factor" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175078.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that reports Azerbaijan had voted to deprive Russia of its voting membership in that body are not true (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175056.html>).

The office of the chairman-in-office of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, at the insistence of the Azerbaijani delegation to that body, calls in the Armenian PACE delegation to tell its members that their distribution of a brochure and DVD about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is impermissible (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175076.html>).

Vahid Ahmadov, head of the Turkmenistan-Azerbaijan inter-parliamentary working group, says that Azerbaijan has already shown its willingness to compromise on the delimitation of the Caspian Sea (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/175032.html>).

SEPTEMBER

30 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Peter Semneby, EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174708.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that the signing of accords between Armenia and Turkey “without taking into account the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem contradicts the interests of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174711.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies the agreement on the delimitation of borders with the Russian Federation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174724.html>).

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state for Europe and Eurasian affairs, says that “the process of resolving the Karabakh conflict is moving forward” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174617.html>).

The Foreign Ministry lifts the accreditation of journalists of the Turkish NTV channel because their colleagues visited Armenian-occupied portions of Azerbaijan without the permission of Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174738.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “the Turkish-Armenian protocol will be signed prior to the visit of [Armenian President] Serzh Sargsyan to Turkey” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174700.html>).

Zahid Oruj, a deputy of the Milli Majlis, calls for a “black list” of persons who have illegally visited Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/>

news/politics/174678.html). He also calls for the signing of a “road map” with Turkey governing future bilateral relations given Ankara’s rapprochement with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174671.html>).

29 September

President Ilham Aliyev meets his Romanian counterpart Traian Basescu in Bucharest during his official visit to Romania and says that “from next year, Azerbaijani gas can be delivered to European Union markets” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174228.html>).

He completes his official visit with a stop at the Heydar Aliyev monument in Bucharest (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174549.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border today contradicts the national interests of Azerbaijan.” His comment comes after his meeting in New York with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174445.html>).

The meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic Language Countries completes its meeting in Baku with the adoption of a declaration on behalf of the member countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174473.html>).

Peter Semneby, the EU special representative for the South Caucasus, says that “agreements about association will advance the relations of the EU with the countries of the South Caucasus to a new level” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174574.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Baku “hopes that the new secretary general of the Council of Europe will be attentive to the voice of truth of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174577.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the Council of Europe must use its leverage against Armenia” to get it to comply with PACE resolutions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174511.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says PACE should not punish the Russian Federation without punishing Armenia. Otherwise, the

body is guilty of “double standards,” she says (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174513.html>).

Yury Merzlyakov, the Russian co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “an updated variant of the Madrid principles has been prepared” and will be discussed with Azerbaijan and Armenia in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174501.html>).

Bogdan Borusewicz, the speaker of the Polish Senate, says in Baku that he “highly evaluates” the level of inter-parliamentary relations between Azerbaijan and Poland (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174418.html>).

28 September

Asim Mollazade, a member of the Milli Majlis, says that “the opening of the border between Armenia and Turkey will not take place” immediately after the signing of the protocol between those two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174244.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that “Turkey will never betray Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174274.html>).

Rashad Dogru, the leader of the Turkish Party of the Nationalist Movement and a former state minister, says “the Turkish parliament will not ratify the Ankara-Yerevan protocol” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174369.html>).

Lluís Maria de Puig, the president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that the signing of a protocol between Armenia and Turkey is “a significant step” toward stability in the Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174330.html>).

Dzhahan Arytman, a deputy of the Republican Peoples Party of Turkey, says that “the development of ties with Armenia serves the interest not of Turkey and Azerbaijan but only of Armenia” and that the Turkish parliament will not confirm the protocol (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174296.html>).

27 September

The Turkish Foreign Ministry responds to Azerbaijan’s diplomatic note as says Ankara has made clear that it views the visit by journalists of Turkey’s NTV to Armenian-occupied territories in Azerbaijan as “illegal” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174178.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group issue an appeal to the sides in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to be constructive in their public statements. The declaration, which was placed on the OSCE website, followed the co-chairs' meeting with Armenian and Azerbaijani officials in New York (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174153.html>).

26 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Mehmet Ali Shahin, the speaker of the Turkish Parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174129.html>).

Mehmet Ali Shahin, the speaker of the Turkish parliament, says that “the borders will not be open until Armenia liberates the occupied territories of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174129.html>). He also says that the Turkish parliament will not take any decisions capable of harming Azerbaijani-Turkish friendship (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174140.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov in his address to the 64th session of the UN General Assembly says that “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a major threat to world and regional security” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174040.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his counterparts in GUAM, GUAM-US, and GUAM-Czech Republic during the UN General Assembly session in New York (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174106.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in New York, and she tells him that “the status quo in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is impermissible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174101.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group in New York (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/174093.html>).

25 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “cooperation with the Muslim umma is one of the priorities of the foreign policy” of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173886.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets his Libyan counterpart

Fawzi Salloukh in New York (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173892.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets his Swiss counterpart Micheline Calmy-Rey who tells him that in Switzerland's view, "Azerbaijan is playing an important role in providing energy to Europe" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173881.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that "the time has come to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and all other conflicts in the Caucasus taking into account territorial integrity of the states in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173866.html>).

The ruling parties of Azerbaijan, Turkey and Kazakhstan agree to expand their cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173982.html>).

Vahid Aliyev, advisor to the Azerbaijan president on military issues, says that the country's military doctrine will be completed before the beginning of 2010 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173981.html>).

The Milli Majlis establishes a department for European integration (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173973.html>).

Česlovas Stankevičius, the vice speaker of the Lithuanian parliament, says that Vilnius supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173944.html>).

The tenth meeting of the committee for EU-Azerbaijani cooperation takes place in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173929.html>).

The constituent meeting of the Azerbaijan-British Business Council takes place in London (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/173894.html>).

24 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Premysl Sobotka, the speaker of the Senate of the Czech Republic parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173843.html>). During his visit to Baku, Sobotka announces that Prague will open an embassy in Azerbaijan at the end of November. The diplomatic mission of the Czech Republic is already operating there under the leadership of Radek Matula (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173741.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the changes in the composition of the Azerbaijan membership in the Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan inter-governmental commission (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/173677.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu in New York (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173708.html>).

The Milli Majlis ratifies the agreement on the completion of the delimitation of the border with Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173781.html>).

The Milli Majlis announces plans to discuss the opening of Azerbaijani embassies in Serbia, Oman, Libya and Estonia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173781.html>).

Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov accuses Azerbaijan, along with Georgia, of being a source of arms for militants fighting his regime (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173775.html>).

Česlovas Stankevičius, the vice speaker of the Lithuanian parliament, says that Vilnius “is prepared for a new stage of cooperation with Azerbaijan in the parliamentary sphere” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173765.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Kazakhstan, receives the Golden Prometheus Prize during Kazakhstan’s energy week (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173678.html>).

23 September

Andreas Gross, the former rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on Azerbaijan, says that “Armenia knows that it is too weak to achieve victory by military means” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173645.html>).

Premysl Sobotka, the chairman of the Senate of the Czech Republic, says at the start of a visit to Baku that Prague backs “the strengthening of cooperation with Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173615.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that “regardless of who is chosen as secretary general, Azerbaijan’s relations with the Council of Europe will not change” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173613.html>).

Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin says that “the legal status of the Caspian must to the maximum extent possible take into

consideration the interests of all littoral states” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173609.html>). And Russian Ambassador to Baku, Vladimir Dorokhin, adds that “Caspian cooperation is a very important element of Russian-Azerbaijani relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173608.html>).

Steph Goris, honorary president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the West European Union, says that “Armenia is experiencing great economic and social problems” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173464.html>).

George Vlad Niculesco, NATO representative, says that the Western alliance is prepared to expand cooperation with Baku in responding to disasters (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173538.html>).

22 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan strives to be in good relations with its neighbors but Armenia needs to take steps in this direction” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173513.html>).

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev reaches an agreement in Moscow with his Russian counterpart Anatoly Serdyukov on bilateral military cooperation for 2010 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173428.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that “the question of the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations will be discussed at the 64th session of the UN General Assembly” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173471.html>).

21 September

Sultan Muhammad oglu Gasymov arrives in Yekaterinburg to take up his post as consul general of Azerbaijan. He is presented to local officials by Azerbaijani Ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbul oglu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173358.html>).

20 September

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “relations with Azerbaijan are one of the most important directions of the foreign policy of Turkey” and that Ankara would never take any step which would contradict the interests of Azerbaijan.

19 September

Milli Majlis speaker Oktay Asadov says that “the opening of the borders of Turkey with Armenia without the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will exert a heavy shock on the restoration of peace in the South Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173280.html>).

US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns tells a conference at Georgetown University that “relations with Azerbaijan mean a great deal for the United States” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173204.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku “expects that Yerevan will take a constructive position at the next rounds of talks” on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173235.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that the United States has not yet approached Azerbaijan concerning the placement of elements of an American anti-ballistic missile system on its territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173217.html>).

Turkish State Minister Egemen Bakys says that “if Azerbaijan puts forward its candidacy for membership in the European Union, it will receive the support of official Ankara” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173228.html>).

18 September

Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives newly appointed Israeli ambassador to Baku Lavon Lotem and departing Korean ambassador Kwang-chul Lew (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173152.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, sends a note of protest to UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon protesting the visit by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan to Armenian-occupied Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173111.html>). The Australian mission to the UN sends the Azerbaijani mission a note in support of Baku's view (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173039.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Azerbaijan is one of the important countries in the formation of a conception of regional security of Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173033.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the joint use by Russia and the United States would work to the benefit of all sides, although he says that he does not have “open information” on what stage the process of discussions of that possibility are at (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173055.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the future of Turkish-Armenian relations will “depend on processes in the region,” including the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173120.html>).

Camil Çiçek, deputy prime minister of Turkey, says that “the Turkish-Armenian border will not open on October 14” and that “the unjust occupation of Azerbaijani lands must end” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173094.html>).

Ahmet Davutoglu, Turkish foreign minister, says that “no one will be able to harm Turkish-Azerbaijani relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173095.html>).

Caroline Brown, British ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “one of the important decisions of the government of Azerbaijan was to orient the country toward Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173068.html>).

Giovanni Cremonini, the head of the directorate for the administration of the European Union’s Neighbourhood policy, says that “in the case of necessity, the EU is prepared to support the Nabucco gas pipeline project within the framework of the Eastern Partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173083.html>).

17 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Dussen Kasseinov, Director-General of TURKSOY (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172947.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, ombudsman of the Azerbaijan Republic, receives former Polish First Lady Jolanta Kvasnevska (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172996.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis, receives the Honorary President of the Senate of Belgium, Anne-Marie Lisin (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172995.html>).

The Foreign Ministry reaffirms that Baku “has accepted the Madrid Document as the basis for negotiations” on Nagorno-Karabakh

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172906.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Vagif Sadykhov completes a two-day working visit to London during which he spoke at a conference on Security in the South Caucasus at the Royal United Services Institute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/173221.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a Milli Majlis deputy, reminds that Russia's decision to close the land border between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation to Georgian citizens now that Tbilisi has left the CIS affects the ethnic Azerbaijani community of Georgia. He says that this decision, intended to put pressure on Georgia, is the latest example of Russia's unjust Caucasus policy (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172928.html>).

Andrey Nesterenko, a spokesman for the Russian Foreign Ministry, says that "any decisions on the Caspian issue must be taken within the framework of 'the Caspian Quintet.'"

15 September

President Ilham says that "the Contract of the Century [signed 15 years ago today] was an extraordinarily significant and decisive event in the life of independent Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/172632.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172593.html>).

Carl Bildt, the chairman in office of the European Commission, announces that the European Union intends to broaden its cooperation with Azerbaijan and to begin negotiations about association accords with Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172588.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, a Milli Majlis deputy, rejects as without any foundation a report by Russia's *Regnum* news agency that Azerbaijan and Armenia have had "secret contacts" and that they have agreed on the procedure for the return of five of the occupied regions of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172559.html>).

US Senator Carl Levin, Democrat of Michigan, says that the Gabala radar station is "a potential priority in American-Russian cooperation in the sphere of anti-missile defense" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172502.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, reaffirms that Ankara "will never take any steps which contradict the interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172534.html>).

Mammadbagir Bahrami, Iran's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "the problem of the status of the Caspian cannot be resolved without the participation of one or another littoral state" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172524.html>).

The Foreign Ministry announces that Azerbaijan has established diplomatic relations with Tuvaloo (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172515.html>).

14 September

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, who serves as president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, as a deputy in the Milli Majlis, and as a good will ambassador for both UNESCO and ISESCO, was decorated with the Cross of the Grand Commander of the Service Order of the Republic of Poland. The cross was presented by Krzysztof Krajewski, Poland's ambassador to Azerbaijan, on behalf of President Lech Kaczynski (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172438.html>).

Srgjan Kerim, president of the 62nd session of the UN General Assembly, says that "the fact that Azerbaijan has raised the question about Nagorno-Karabakh at the level of the General Assembly of the UN is a sign of the strengthening of international interests in events in this region." He adds that the success of Azerbaijan in pushing another resolution "depends on Azerbaijan itself, but lobbying in the UN plays a big role in such questions" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172317.html>).

Vahid Ahmadov, a member of the Milli Majlis economic policy committee, says that Turkmenistan "wants to more widely use those levers which it has" but "does not want to argue with Russia, with European countries or with the United States." He is commenting on Ashgabat's statement that it has enough gas to supply the Nabucco pipeline (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172323.html>).

Turkey announces the appointment of Aykhan Enginar as its new consul general in Nakhchivan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172425.html>).

12 September

President Ilham Aliyev says at the informal summit of four of the five Caspian littoral states that he is “certain” that “the President decisions of the Tehran summit are very important” and that all issues of the Caspian Sea basin “will be successfully resolved in a spirit of friendship and good neighbourliness” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172108.html>).

Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki lodges a formal protest with Azerbaijan and the three other Caspian littoral states for organizing the informal summit in Aktau at which regional affairs were discussed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172195.html>).

11 September

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu proposes having the Turkish parliament discuss the protocols Turkey and Armenia have signed on movement toward the restoration of diplomatic relations and the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172069.html>).

Ian Micallef, the president of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, says after meeting with Azerbaijan Deputy Justice Minister Vilayat Zakirov that his group is impressed by the work done in Azerbaijan for the development of municipal governance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172130.html>).

10 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov speaks via telephone with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu concerning the incident between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces on the line of the front (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/172086.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that “the incident on the line of the front was not an exchange of fire but a small battle,” adding that as a result, “today the Armenian side has yet again been shown that the Azerbaijani army is prepared” to respond to any challenge (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171913.html>).

Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Hulusi Kilic says that “Turkey does not want to see closed borders” in the Caucasus region. At the same time,

he says, that “no one will be able to say that [Ankara’s] negotiating process with Armenia can bring harm to Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171810.html>).

Hasan Sultanoglu, Azerbaijani consul in the Turkish city of Kars, says that he “does not believe that Turkey will make a step which will disappoint Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171961.html>).

Agnes Vadai, senior state secretary of the Hungarian defense ministry, tells Ziyafat Askarov, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, that Budapest wants to expand its cooperation with Baku in the area of military training (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171941.html>).

Miklos Harashti, the OSCE special representative on press freedom, visits Azerbaijan to present the Azerbaijani translation of the book, “The Self-Regulation of the Media.” In commenting on the results of his week-long visit, Harashti says that he “hopes” that the Azerbaijani government’s policy of amnestying journalists who have been convicted of crimes “will continue” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171871.html>).

The Netherlands announces the appointment of its first ambassador to Azerbaijan. He will be Jan-Lucas van Horn, and he will open a Dutch embassy in Azerbaijan in the middle of October. Azerbaijan established an embassy in the Hague in 2007 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171880.html>).

9 September

President Ilham Aliyev receives Italian Ambassador Gian Luigi Mascia on the completion of his assignment to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171780.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that Baku is “ready to open the borders with Armenia as soon as Yerevan liberates the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.” The statement by the ministry’s press spokesman Elkhan Polukhov comes in response to reports that Turkey and Europe are working on a project that would connect Azerbaijan with Europe via a highway passing across Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171670.html>).

Azerbaijan, Turkey and Israel are conducting talks about the joint production of armoured vehicles and expect to sign an accord in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/171679.html>).

8 September

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “Turkey will not take steps which could disappoint Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171577.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says in Georgia that there is “still a long way to go” before the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. On another matter, he says that he intends to visit Abkhazia in order to “try to regulate its relations with Georgia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171473.html>).

Mehmet Ali Shahin, the newly elected chairman of the Turkish parliament, tells Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Turkey, Zakir Hashimov, that he hopes for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict “in the nearest future” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171590.html>).

Samad Seyidov, PACE vice president and head of the Azerbaijani delegation to PACE, says that the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe will not discuss Azerbaijan as a separate issue at the upcoming fall meeting of the organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171519.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that it is ready to work with the newly appointed American co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, Ambassador Robert Bradtke. Bradtke succeeds Matthew Bryza in that post (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171489.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Kazakhstan, says that “questions of sub-regional cooperation will be discussed at the summit in Aktau” on September 11-13 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171479.html>).

Azerbaijan opens a representation office in Tbilisi of its Foundation for Exports and Investment (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/171455.html>).

7 September

Vahid Ahmadov, a member of the Milli Majlis economic policy committee, says that Azerbaijan will never agree to the inclusion of Armenia as part of the Nabucco project until “the Karabakh question and the issue of the return of Azerbaijani territories occupied by Armenians are resolved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171380.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that an upcoming visit by OSCE experts to the Lachin corridor “is a constituent part of the negotiations” within the framework of the Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171375.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu reportedly tells a Turkish journalist that Ankara has proposed building a road that would connect the Caucasus with Europe. The first stage of this highway would pass from Azerbaijan through Armenia to Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171329.html>).

US Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs William Burns and Assistant Secretary of State Tina Kaidanov visit Ankara to discuss the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171319.html>).

6 September

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Turkey, says that “the Turkish-Armenian borders will open only after the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.”

5 September

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the Azerbaijani parliament will take up legislation on peacekeeping forces at its fall session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171204.html>).

Ali Ahmadov, the deputy chairman of the Yeni Azerbaijan, says that his party is convinced that “Turkey will not take any steps which undermine the interests of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171184.html>).

Samad Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijan delegation to PACE, says “the obligations of Azerbaijan before the Council of Europe will be considered in the Monitoring Committee” of the Council.

Ziyafat Askarov, first vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “the Armenian project about the genocide of Armenians in Azerbaijan is without foundation.”

4 September

President Ilham Aliyev says that despite the international financial crisis, “the economy of Azerbaijan continues to move forward”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170864.html>).

The Defense Ministry says that Azerbaijan's military "is the strongest in the Caucasus by all measures" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171052.html>).

Husameddin Jindoruk, the leader of the Democratic Party of Turkey, says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan should not come to the football match in Turkey because such an action would offend Azerbaijan, 20 percent of whose territory Armenia occupies (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171027.html>).

Zhang Yangnan, China's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Beijing "considers Azerbaijan the main country in the Caucasus and devotes great importance to the development of relations with this country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171039.html>).

Rafael Huseynov, a member of the Azerbaijan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that PACE has accepted Baku's report on protecting the environment from noise and light problems (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171124.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Mahmudov attends a meeting of the CIS special services in Moscow at which Russian President Dmitry Medvedev says that "the special services of the CIS must cooperate to ensure security" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171129.html>).

Ismatulla Irgashev, Uzbekistan's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Tashkent supports "the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem" on the basis of the model "the Azerbaijan side has proposed" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171030.html>). In other comments, he says that relations between Uzbekistan and Azerbaijan are developing "intensively" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/171032.html>).

3 September

President Ilham Aliyev speaks by telephone with Turkmenistan President Gurbanguly Berdymukhammedov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170985.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Ankara "expects that Azerbaijan will believe Turkey" when it says that the protocols Turkey had signed with Armenia will be considered and confirmed by the Turkish parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170904.html>).

Deniz Baikal, the head of Turkey's Republic Peoples Party, says his group will not support the protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170856.html>).

Devlet Bahcheli, the leader of the National Movement Party of Turkey, says that his group "will use all its resources to oppose the protocols" Ankara has signed with Yerevan and will vote to reject them if they are presented to the parliament (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170951.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Mammadguliyev says that the ministerial meeting of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation set to take place September 16 has been rescheduled for November (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170920.html>). He also says that the next session of the Committee for Cooperation with the European Union will take place in October (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170938.html>).

Nikolay Bordyuzha, the secretary general of the Organization of the Treaty of Collective Security, says that there are no negotiations taking place at present concerning the possible inclusion of Azerbaijan in that organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170906.html>).

Mubariz Ahmadoglu, the director of the Center of Political Technologies, says that "the list of countries which will send their peacekeepers to Karabakh is almost set." The list will not include any from Iran, Turkey, Georgia, Russia, the US or France but rather will consist of forces from Hungary, Romania, Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170909.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that plans by Armenian diplomats to visit the occupied territories are "not a constructive step" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170880.html>).

The visit to Baku by Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced for September 30—October 1 will be delayed because of scheduling problems (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170860.html>).

2 September

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov speaks by telephone with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu about the two protocols Ankara has signed with Yerevan through the mediation of Switzerland

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170829.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, the head of the political analysis and information department of the Presidential Administration, says that a report by Russia's *Regnum* news agency that President Ilham Aliyev had convened a special council in response to the signing of protocols by Turkey and Armenia is "disinformation" and "a provocation." No such meeting occurred, Aslanov says (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170798.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kazakhstan, says that "the establishment of a naval base must not be considered to be the result of disagreements between Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170746.html>).

NATO Secretary General Anders Rasmussen says that he welcomes "the improvement in relations between Turkey and Armenia" and hopes that this will contribute to "stability and security in this part of Europe" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170810.html>).

Husameddin Jindoruk, the former speaker of the Turkish parliament, says that "the protocols agreed to with Armenia cannot be presented for discussion by parliament." He says that Turkey clearly took this step on the instructions of the United States (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170775.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says it is seeking an explanation from the United States as to why Azerbaijan's ambassador in Washington Yashar Aliyev was not invited to the White House for the *Iftar* dinner, especially since the ambassador was invited to the State Department commemoration of this holiday (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170819.html>).

1 September

The Foreign Ministry says that "the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border without the resolution of the Karabakh conflict contradicts the national interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170551.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that "the liberation of the territory of Azerbaijan and the reestablishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey must go in parallel" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170546.html>).

The US Department of State welcomes the rapprochement of Turkey and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170510.html>).

The Foreign Ministry calls for the demilitarization of the Caspian Sea region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170563.html>).

AUGUST

31 August

Deputy Prime Minister Ali Hasanov says that “Armenia is purchasing arms using money from the sale of narcotics grown on the occupied territories” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170390.html>).

Foreign Ministry spokesman Elkhan Polukhov says, in reaction to the announcement by Turkmenistan that it will build a naval base on the Caspian, that Baku is “for the establishment of the Caspian as a region of peace” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170387.html>).

30 August

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Baku, says that Turkey is “proud” that Azerbaijan has “the strongest army in the South Caucasus” and is pleased to be working with Azerbaijan to bring its military into conformity with NATO standards (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170356.html>).

29 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Feridun Siniroglu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170334.html>).

28 August

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the *Treaty on Cooperation of the CIS Countries on Youth Affairs* that Azerbaijan signed on November 25, 2005 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170256.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the agreements signed between Azerbaijan and Syria on July 8 establishing, among other things, a

commission for economic, scientific and cultural cooperation between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170264.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev takes a telephone call from Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan to discuss bilateral relations and the status of Turkey's negotiations with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170261.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the documents signed on August 10, 2009, by Azerbaijan and Latvia concerning expanding cooperation in youth, sports and other areas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170254.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Milli Majlis deputy who is also a senior official of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that Azerbaijan supports "only the peaceful use of nuclear energy" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170191.html>).

Serik Primbetov, Kazakhstan's ambassador to Baku, says that negotiations between Azerbaijan and Kazakh gas/oil companies are continuing "successfully" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170169.html>).

Bilge Cankorel, the head of the Baku office of the OSCE, says that "for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, there is no other international mechanism besides the Minsk Group" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170233.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkish ambassador to Baku, announces Ankara's plans to open a consulate in Khachmaz to service the increasing number of Turkish tourists in that region of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170156.html>).

27 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Richard Morningstar, US special representative for energy questions in Eurasia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170113.html>).

Eldar Sabiroglu, chief of the press-service of the Defense Ministry of Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijan prefers a peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict but is capable of resolving it militarily if Armenia refuses to negotiate seriously. The occupation, he says, "cannot continue indefinitely" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170038.html>).

Elkhan Polukhov, foreign ministry spokesman, says that Azerbaijan "cooperates with NATO in the framework of peacekeeping operations." He was responding to questions concerning Baku's decision not to permit a

flight carrying German military personnel to Afghanistan to use Azerbaijan's airspace (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170091.html>).

Elkhan Polukhov, foreign ministry spokesman, says that the issue of peacekeeping forces after the settlement of the Karabakh dispute, "at the present time is not on the agenda" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/170081.html>).

26 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Mikhael Lavon-Lotem on the occasion of his arrival to take up his post as Israel's new ambassador in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169963.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Alan Waddams on the completion of his posting as representative of the European Commission in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169961.html>).

First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva, who serves as president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, Milli Majlis deputy, and as a goodwill ambassador for both UNESCO and ISESCO, celebrates her birthday (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169811.html>).

Mubariz Gurbanly, a Yeni Azerbaijan deputy in the Milli Majlis, says that Transparency International's assessment of the level of corruption in Azerbaijan is "subjective" and fails to note Baku's progress in this area. In its most recent report, TI says that Azerbaijan is the second most corrupt country on its list (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169945.html>).

25 August

Samad Seyidov, the head of Azerbaijan's delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that "Armenia is ignoring the recommendations" of that body (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169724.html>) and that Baku is for "an objective assessment of the state of historical monuments in the occupied territories" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169726.html>).

Elkhan Polukhov, foreign ministry spokesman, says that recent comments by some Armenian officials show that they lack information about the details of the negotiating process between Baku and Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169821.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that relations

between Ankara and Yerevan are linked to the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169706.html>).

24 August

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the parliament's adoption of a military doctrine for the country scheduled for later this year will have "a positive influence" on the country's defense posture (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169657.html>).

Mark Grossman, former US undersecretary of state for political affairs, says in Baku that "Azerbaijan and Armenia must themselves resolve the Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169607.html>).

22 August

Azad Rahimov, minister of youth and sports, says that reporting about the supposed persecution of Azerbaijanis for having voted for the Armenian competitors in the Eurovision-2009 contest represents "the fruit of the imagination of certain unprofessional journalists." He singles out for particular criticism reporting by the Azerbaijani Service of Radio Liberty (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169481.html>).

21 August

Elkhan Polukhov, the spokesman for the Azerbaijan foreign minister, says that the status of the Caspian will be discussed by the five littoral states at the meeting in Ashkhabad in September. He adds that deputy foreign minister Khalaf Khalafov will represent Baku at the sessions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169388.html>).

20 August

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that a resolution on Nagorno-Karabakh will be considered by the 64th session of the UN General Assembly this fall (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169171.html>).

Turkey's energy and natural resources minister Taner Yildiz says that Ankara has sent Baku a new proposal on the purchase of Azerbaijani natural gas (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/169272.html>).

US Assembly Member Bob Blumenfield sends a letter to the Azerbaijan Consulate General in Los Angeles expressing his gratitude to the president and government of Azerbaijan for hosting Israeli President Shimon Peres on June 28-29 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169164.html>).

19 August

Elnur Aslanov, head of the political analysis and information support department in the Presidential Administration, says that the replacement of the current American and Russian co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group is “a rotation of cadres and nothing more than that” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/169040.html>).

18 August

The Georgian embassy in Baku says that relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia will be based on bilateral and multilateral accords now that Georgia has officially left the Commonwealth of Independent States (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168920.html>). Commenting upon that declaration, Elkhan Polukhov, spokesman for the Azerbaijan foreign ministry, says that Baku is studying Georgia’s proposals for future cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168877.html>).

17 August

The foreign ministry expands the list of countries to which it recommends Azerbaijanis not travel. That list now includes Indonesia, Nigeria, Honduras, and Somalia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168818.html>).

Ramil Hasanov, head of the youth organization of the Yeni Azerbaijan Party, announces that the Union of Turkic Youth of the World plan to form a Platform of Young Political Leaders of the Turkic World (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168772.html>).

Nine young people from Azerbaijan take part in a week-long meeting (August 17-23) with five Armenian young people in Finland to discuss how to overcome divisions between their two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168700.html>).

14 August

Diego Pinto, the secretary general of the International European Movement, says that the EU recognizes the need to respect the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and that it wants the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh to be resolved by peaceful means (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168516.html>).

12 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Gunther Oettinger, Minister President of the German state of Baden-Wurttemberg, who is in Baku to attend the Azerbaijan-German business forum (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168317.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, on the completion of his service in those two positions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168315.html>). Bryza says that “President Obama shares my opinion that Armenia must return the occupied lands of Azerbaijan just as do Presidents Sakozi and Medvedev.” He adds that the work of the Russian side has been “fruitful and constructive” and that “the Minsk Group has helped the two presidents bring their positions on questions closer together” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168341.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Alan Waddams, the head of the European Commission delegation to Azerbaijan, in connection with the completion of his service in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168337.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Mark Hereward, the newly appointed UNICEF representative in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168235.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan has presented two reports to the UN Committee on Racial Discrimination concerning Baku’s work to ensure the rights and freedoms of all its citizens (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168358.html>).

Ismetulla Irgashev, Uzbekistan’s ambassador in Azerbaijan, says that Tashkent supports the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168274.html>).

11 August

Aydin Mirzazade, the deputy chairman of the security and defense committee of the Milli Majlis, says that after a settlement of the Karabakh dispute it will be “possible to do without peacekeepers,” if the two sides agree (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168168.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, tells an Azerbaijani news agency that “those people who say that the new variant of the Madrid Principles in any way affects the interests of Armenia do not know what they are talking about” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168117.html>).

A German parliamentary delegation arrives in Baku to make arrangements to take part in the celebration of the 190th anniversary of the establishment of German settlements in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168201.html>).

10 August

President Ilham Aliyev tells visiting Latvian President Valdis Zatlers that relations between Baku and Riga “are developing very successfully and have a good future.” Zatlers for his part says Latvia favors the resolution of the Karabakh dispute on the basis of the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168019.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “the international community recognizes that the time has come for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168035.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that Armenian media distorted his words. He says he did “not say that the return of seven regions around Nagorno-Karabakh will guarantee the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.” Rather, he says, that “the return of the seven regions reflects the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/168000.html>).

Siyavush Novruzov, the deputy executive secretary of the ruling Yeni Azerbaijan Party, says that “close relations exist between NATO and Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167995.html>).

8 August

Novruz Mammadov, head of the foreign relations department of the Presidential Administration, says that “the leading countries of the world for their own interests want stability in the South Caucasus region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167959.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the United States “is not striving to push out anyone from the Caucasus.” Russia, he continues, always will be part of the Caucasus, the Caucasus mountains will always remain in the same place, and Russia always will be partially in the South Caucasus. It always will be a participant of any decisions both about energy and politics” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167905.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense committee, says that the report about Bryza’s remarks in Yerevan concerning the return of occupied territories to Azerbaijan was “extremely serious” and represents “a message” to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167948.html>).

7 August

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Admiral Noman Bashir, the commander of Pakistan’s naval forces, who says that his country supports the resolution of the Karabakh dispute on the basis of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167790.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk group, says that Armenia “must return seven regions to Azerbaijan,” five “immediately and two” over a period of up to five years. In addition, he says that “international peace-keeping forces must be put in the conflict zone” and that “the composition of which basically will be defined by the sides themselves.” The Madrid Principles, he continues, must “guarantee the security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh, which will have “a temporary status until a referendum is conducted” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167904.html>).

Javier Solana, the chief representative of the European Union for foreign policy and security, says in an interview published in Moscow’s *Gazeta* that the EU’s Eastern Partnership was not designed to resolve conflicts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167850.html>).

Russian prime-minister Vladimir Putin says in Turkey that “Russia does not want the presence of any conflict in the South Caucasus.” He adds that Moscow’s position on Nagorno-Karabakh has always remained unchanged (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167762.html>).

Nikolaz Natbiladze, Georgian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Georgia “will always be a partner of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167793.html>).

Onur Oymen, a Turkish parliamentarian, says that Ankara “does not exclude” the possibility that the development of relations between Russia and Turkey will have an impact on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167818.html>).

6 August

Nikolay Bordyuzha, the secretary general of the Organization of the Collective Security Agreement, of which Armenia but not Azerbaijan is a member, says that the events in the Caucasus last year show that “there is no alternative to the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167680.html>).

Yaver Jamalov, Azerbaijan’s defense industry minister, receives Pakistan naval commander Admiral Noman Bashirov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167735.html>).

Col. Gen. Osmar Eker, the chief of the inspection of the Supreme Command of the Gendarmerie of Turkey, visits Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167627.html>).

A Jordanian military delegation visits Azerbaijan to gain experience on de-mining. Officers from Jordan are scheduled to receive training at the basis of the Azerbaijan National Demining Agency this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167645.html>).

5 August

Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bakoyannis, president in office of the OSCE, telephones Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov to discuss the Karabakh talks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167594.html>).

Grigory Karasin, Russian deputy foreign minister, says that Moscow is “actively supporting the process of Nagorno-Karabakh resolution” and that in that effort, the Russian government operates on the basis of its

recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167575.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry recommends that Azerbaijani citizens refrain from trips to Tajikistan because of the deteriorating situation there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167540.html>).

4 August

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that international pressure on Armenia to resolve the Karabakh conflict has “grown strongly.” Azerbaijan’s position has remained consistent, he continues, where Armenia in order to delay any resolution has constantly shifted its demands (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167322.html>).

The Turkmenistan foreign ministry says that in the delimitation of the Caspian seabed, the littoral states “must not consider the Absheron peninsula and Zhiloy island” of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167371.html>).

The National Council of Youth Organization of the Azerbaijan Republic continue to protest against the blocking by Armenia of the site “Justice for Hojali” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167335.html>).

3 August

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev says that “if the Karabakh conflict will not be resolved by peaceful means, then it will not be possible to avoid a military confrontation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167159.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a member of the Azerbaijan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that criticism by the PACE co-rapporteur on Azerbaijan “does not reflect the real situation.” She says that Azerbaijan “is making successful steps in the development of democracy and that the work carried out in this direction must be approved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167238.html>).

1 August

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Defense Minister Anatoly Serdyukov to discuss the broadening of military and military-technical ties between Baku and Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

167067.html).

Azerbaijani military personnel, the Azerbaijan defense ministry announces, will part in a series of NATO exercises over the next year under the Partnership for Peace program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167045.html>). In addition, they will participate in bilateral activities with the United States military (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/167043.html>).

JULY

31 July

Kamil Khasiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative at NATO, says that Azerbaijan and NATO "do not have problems in their relationship," adding that Baku is not currently seeking membership in the alliance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166933.html>).

30 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Fehd Saad Said al-Meya, Kuwait's ambassador to Azerbaijan, on the occasion of the latter's completion of his diplomatic posting in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/polits/166806.html>).

Gultakin Hajibayli, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that PACE still demonstrates "a non-objective approach" to the situation in the South Caucasus, routinely criticizing Azerbaijan while ignoring problems in Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166802.html>).

The Azerbaijan Society of the Red Crescent completes the first stage of the compilation of information about the missing in action in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166757.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a deputy of the Milli Majlis, says that "it is not surprising that the [Iranian] province of Western Azerbaijan has concluded an agreement with Armenia" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166738.html>).

29 July

Azerbaijan and the United States conduct joint military consultations in

Washington (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166645.html>).

Rovzat Gasymov, the head of the international relations department of Azerbaijan's Central Election Commission, says that there have been no problems for Azerbaijani observers in the Moldovan parliamentary elections (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166634.html>).

Arif Mammadov, permanent representative of Azerbaijan in the Council of Europe, says that Nagorno-Karabakh has become "a dead zone" in which "Armenians do not want to live" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166465.html>).

Russia and Iran conduct joint naval manoeuvres in the southern Caspian (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166500.html>).

Two resolutions, one on conflicts in GUAM states and a second on the situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, will be discussed at the upcoming—64th—session of the UN General Assembly (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166557.html>).

28 July

Matthew Bryza, the US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the co-chairs are preparing for what they hope will be a meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia on the sidelines of the CIS summit in Chisinau in October (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166468.html>).

New rules for the registration of migrants in Azerbaijan go into effect, and Azerbaijani officials note that Russia has not responded to Baku's request for clarification on the status of ethnic Chechens now living in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166416.html>; <http://www.day.az/news/politics/166464.html>).

27 July

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group meet in Krakow to discuss modifications of the Madrid principles for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166255.html>).

26 July

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that "Azerbaijan will insist on its position on the question of the development of oil fields in the

Caucasus ... by all available means, including diplomatic" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166198.html>).

25 July

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to Iranian President Mahmud Ahmadinejad concerning the airplane crash at Meshed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166156.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev concerning the airplane crash in Rostov oblast.

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, tells Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty that he "would like to work in Azerbaijan" in the future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166143.html>).

24 July

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that Baku is continuing to focus on the question of the transfer of arms from Russia to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166056.html>).

The Azerbaijan-American Council calls the proposals of Armenian groups in the United States regarding Nagorno-Karabakh "counter-productive" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/166063.html>).

23 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Eduard Janota, the Czech finance minister (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165934.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the agreement signed by the defense ministers of Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan on the expansion of military training cooperation between the two countries.

Talat Aliyev, Azerbaijani ambassador in Ukraine, says that preliminary agreements have been reached about the establishment of fraternal ties between the cities of that country and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165919.html>).

21 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Arthur Lenk, Israel's ambassador to Azerbaijan, on the completion of his assignment in Baku (<http://www>.

[day.az/ news/society/165621.html](http://www.day.az/news/society/165621.html)).

The Russian Foreign Ministry says that “work on the basic principles for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will continue in the fall” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165617.html>).

The Azerbaijan Working Group in the US Congress calls for annulling Article 907 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165540.html>).

20 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ian Luder, the mayor of the city of London (<http://www.day.az/news/society/165488.html>).

Azerbaijan’s First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives the wife of the mayor of the city of London, Lynn Luder (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165509.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, head of the department of international ties of the Presidential Administration, says that “at the Moscow meeting of presidents, Azerbaijan was not able to achieve the results it had expected” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165482.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that there has been “progress” in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, adding that the Minsk Group co-chairs will visit the South Caucasus in September (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165429.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Peter Semneby, the European Union’s special representative for the South Caucasus; Paolo Barroso Simos, the representative of the secretariat of the EU Council; and Karel Kovanda and John Quier, the representatives of the European Commission (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165389.html>).

The European Union presidency welcomes the Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Moscow and calls on the two leaders to continue their negotiations on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165386.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “the current situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is not in the interests of Turkey or Azerbaijani-Armenian relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165508.html>).

18 July

President Ilham Aliyev meets with President Dmitry Medvedev of Russia and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan to discuss “the further paths of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165322.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev takes part in the informal meeting of CIS leaders at the President’s Cup Prize horse race in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165301.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev speaks with Kazakhstan President Nursultan Nazarbayev on the sidelines of the informal meeting of CIS leaders in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165339.html>).

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says after the meeting of the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents in Moscow that “the closer you come to a conclusion, the more difficult become certain problems,” adding that the co-chairs are continuing to work to secure the agreement of the two presidents to the Madrid Principles (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165259.html>).

Matthew Bryza, the US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia “helps the co-chairs to formulate new proposals” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165250.html>).

17 July

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in Moscow for 3.5 hours at which the two discuss the Madrid Principles. The meeting is preceded by the talks in a broader format which, apart from the two presidents, include their respective foreign ministers and the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs. This is the sixth such round of talks in this format this year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165178.html>).

The Organization of the Treaty on Collective Security announces that it does not intend to participate in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict or to provide peacekeeping units in support of any accord (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165243.html>).

16 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Marc Perrin de Brichambaut, the OSCE

Secretary General (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165070.html>). The latter says that he hopes that the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents will make progress during their talks in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164967.html>).

Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan says that he hopes the upcoming meeting between the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Moscow will allow the two to reduce the differences between the two countries on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165110.html>).

Volkan Vural, former Turkish ambassador to Russia, says that peace in the South Caucasus “must begin with the liberation of the territories occupied by Armenians.” He adds that Turkey “cannot open the border with Armenia until there is progress in the resolution of the conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164991.html>).

Richard Morningstar, special representative of the US State Department for energy issues in Eurasia, says that Washington sees Azerbaijan as having a major role in providing Europe with energy resources.

The Congress of Azerbaijanis of Ukraine calls on Baku to open consulates in Kharkov, Odessa, Donetsk and Lviv, with the first to be open sometime next year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/165016.html>).

15 July

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells a meeting of the NATO-Azerbaijan Council in Brussels that “Azerbaijan is satisfied with NATO’s support of its territorial integrity” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164914.html>).

US Senator Richard Lugar, ranking minority member on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, says that the US expects that Azerbaijan and Turkey will reach an agreement on Nabucco soon (<http://www.day.az/news/oilgas/164858.html>).

14 July

President Ilham Aliyev at the conclusion of his visit to the United Kingdom addresses the Royal Institute of International Relations on “Foreign Policy Challenges for Azerbaijan.” He says that Nagorno-Karabakh will “never be recognized as an independent state. To expect that

is absolute foolishness” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “Turkish-Armenian and Armenian-Azerbaijan discussions influence one another” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164785.html>).

13 July

President Ilham Aliyev meets with British Prime Minister Gordon Brown during his visit to the United Kingdom and says that the UK is “a strategic partner” of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

The Permanent Council of the OSCE hears a report about the activities of the organization’s Baku office over the last year (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164609.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to China, says that approximately 50 Azerbaijani citizens have asked the embassy to assist in their return to Azerbaijan because of the violence in Urumchi (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164588.html>).

12 July

President Ilham Aliyev departs Baku for London for the start of an official visit to the United Kingdom (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164513.html>).

11 July

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijani permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Baku, “when it calls the attention of the United Nations to Karabakh is guided by its national interests and not by the attitude to it of the co-chairs [of the OSCE Minsk Group]” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164387.html>).

James Steinberg, US deputy secretary of state, says that American policy toward Azerbaijan is “a reflection of the declaration of US President Barak Obama about a qualitatively new level of relations with the Muslim world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164478.html>), that “Azerbaijan and other countries of the region should have constructive relations with Russia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164470.html>), that the US is discussing with Azerbaijan a broad spectrum of questions “including the

role of the media in the country” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164466.html>), that Washington is considering the possibility of using the Gabala radar site (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164459.html>), and “Washington supports the efforts of the [Azerbaijani and Armenian] presidents to solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164450.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that Moscow will “energetically support progress” in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and “positively assesses” the exchange of visits by Azerbaijani and Armenian intellectuals (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164506.html>).

The Turkish foreign ministry greets the declaration of the presidents of the US, Russia and France concerning the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164500.html>).

The Organization for the Liberation of Karabakh expresses its dissatisfaction at the joint declaration of the presidents of the US, Russia and France concerning the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164499.html>).

10 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Deputy Secretary of State James Steinberg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164436.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164411.html>).

US President Barak Obama, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev as presidents of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group countries issue a joint statement at the G8 summit in Italy saying that their representatives will present to the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan “an updated variant of the Madrid document of 29 November 2007,” as the basis for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164390.html>).

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev at the G8 summit says that “for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remain to be decided certain nuances,” adding that these are not something that should take “decades” and consequently that there is a good chance for a resolution soon (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164410.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the upcoming

Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will allow the two sides to come to “the finish line” in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164384.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “in the future peace agreement on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict must be observed a balance between two norms of international law, the right of nations to self-determination and the right of a state to territorial integrity” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164421.html>).

Yuri Merzlyakov, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the upcoming Moscow meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will allow the two sides to come to “the finish line” in the resolution of the Karabakh dispute (www.day.az/news/politics/164384.html).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “the position of Turkey on the Nagorno-Karabakh question is important to Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164368.html>).

US Congressman William Shuster (R-Pennsylvania) says that the distribution of money to the territories of Azerbaijan occupied by Armenia is “a mistake” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164336.html>).

9 July

President Ilham Aliyev in a speech to the Azerbaijan-Syrian Business Forum says that “Azerbaijan stands for the resolution of the question of Nagorno-Karabakh in correspondence with international legal norms” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164090.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Sheikh Abdallah Bin Zayid Al Nahyah, the foreign minister of the United Arab Emirates (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164290.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “the Moscow meeting will show whether movement forward on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict is possible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164226.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov opens a Museum of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the establishment of the diplomatic service of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164229.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Maj. Gen. Miles Diring, chief of staff of the Oklahoma National Guard (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164240.html>).

Samad Seyidov, chairman of the international relations committee of the Milli Majlis, says that “thanks to the decisive position of Azerbaijan, the international community accepts our arguments” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164250.html>).

Sergey Prikhodko, an assistant to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that “the efforts of Russia as co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group and the results achieved earlier in Moscow have met what was required” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164257.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “the signing of a framework agreement at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in Moscow is impossible.” But he adds that he “hopes” for decisive progress at that session (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164252.html>).

Kamil Khasiyev, Azerbaijan’s representative to NATO, says that Azerbaijan’s cooperation with NATO is “not directed against Russia or any third country” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164217.html>).

Polad Bul-Bul oglu, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Moscow, says that “if Armenians do not take the hand extended to them, then [Azerbaijan] will be forced to use other means.” He adds that “if the conflict is not resolved by peaceful means, [he] is prepared to take up arms and go to fight in Karabakh” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164214.html>).

Bahar Muradova, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that the Azerbaijani parliament now has working groups for ties with the legislatures of 73 countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164205.html>).

The government of the Netherlands announces that it will open an embassy in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164178.html>).

8 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Syrian President Bashar al-Assad. The two oversee the signing of 14 inter-governmental agreements (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164090.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan cannot allow the preservation of the existing situation” on Nagorno-Karabakh

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164043.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “Azerbaijan is going to the Moscow meeting of the presidents with no change in its position” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164061.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan’s permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Baku may offer a new resolution to the UN General Assembly on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164049.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan “hopes for the resolution of the question of the delimitation of borders with the Russian Federation before the end of the year” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164076.html>). In other comments, he says that there has been no discussion of Iran’s call for being given 20 percent of the area of the Caspian during talks in preparation for a Baku summit of the Caspian littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164071.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the United States, says that the US government may provide Azerbaijani refugees with 10 million US dollars in assistance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164078.html>).

US Senator Sam Brownback (R-Kansas) says that the US “must not take any steps which would disturb Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164053.html>).

Hikmet Cetin, former Turkish foreign minister, says that “Turkey will not open the borders with Armenia without a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164051.html>).

Muhammedbahir Bahrami, Iran’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, returns to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164143.html>).

7 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Belarusian Prime Minister Sergey Sidorsky (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164012.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that US President Barak Obama has promised to seek the repeal of the Jackson-Vanik Amendment, something that restricts the ability of the Russian Federation, Azerbaijan and six other former Soviet states to join the World Trade Organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/164002.html>).

Arkady Dvorkovich, an aide to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that “the Nagorno-Karabakh question will be discussed at the G8 summit in Italy” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163994.html>).

Aydin Mirzazade, deputy chairman of the Milli Majlis security and defense commission, announces that Baku has created a special group for the preparation of an Azerbaijan military doctrine (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163963.html>).

Bahar Muradova, deputy speaker of the Milli Majlis, says that “the visits of the intelligentsia of Azerbaijan and Armenia can become one of the paths toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163985.html>).

Gulshan Pashayeva, the head of the foreign policy section of the Center for Strategic Research in the Office of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “for the successful realization of public diplomacy [between Azerbaijan and Armenia] are today needed concrete steps forward in the official negotiating process” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163945.html>).

Safar Mirzoyev, the chief of the apparatus of the Milli Majlis, announces that President Ilham Aliyev has agreed to have the permanent secretariat of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Turkic Language Countries be located in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163966.html>).

6 July

President Ilham Aliyev says Azerbaijan “does not intend to create any obstacles if Russia and America agree on questions of global security,” including on the Gabala radar station (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163801.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “official Baku expects progress on the resolution of the Karabakh conflict from the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia” in Moscow (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163827.html>).

Eldar Ibrahimov, the chairman of the Milli Majlis agriculture committee, says that Azerbaijan’s delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly again raised the question about Armenian aggression and called on PACE to take a more active role in resolving the situation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163880.html>).

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state, says that “Washington

hopes for progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163770.html>).

Israeli President Shimon Peres says that during his visit to Baku, he had not found “a drop of hatred toward Jews.” And he continues that “Azerbaijan was one of the first countries which allowed women to vote, and this happened earlier than in Sweden and the US” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163782.html>).

The Foreign Ministry releases a book on “Crafting the Foreign Policy of Azerbaijan” on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the creation of the country’s diplomatic service (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163846.html>).

5 July

Sports Minister Azad Rahimov calls for expanded contacts between Azerbaijani and Daghestani youth during a roundtable at the Days of Daghestani Youth in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/society/163721.html>).

4 July

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department for international ties in the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that there is “a chance for progress on the Karabakh question” at the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163703.html>).

Nasib Nasibli, a deputy in the Milli Majlis, says that he wants the parliament to become more active in the peace process and to come up with its own proposals (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163653.html>).

Former US Defense Secretary William Cohen says that “American military officials are still considering a decision about the Gabala radar station” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163680.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey’s ambassador to Baku, says that Ankara welcomes the visits by Azerbaijani intellectuals to Yerevan and Armenian intellectuals to Baku as yet another step toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163686.html>).

Fariborz Chadar, who served in the government of the shah, says that the latest developments in Iran “will not have a serious influence on

Azerbaijan and [other] neighboring countries” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163675.html>).

3 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives a group of Armenian intellectuals who are visiting Baku as a group of Azerbaijan intellectuals are visiting Yerevan. These visits follow the meeting in Hankendi of ambassadors to Russia of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Polad Bul-bul oglu and Armen Sumbatyan respectively (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163705.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms the credit agreement between Baku and the Japanese Agency for International Cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/163634.html>).

A spokesman for Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that the United States has not responded to Russia on the issue of the use of the Gabala radar site in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163521.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe adopts a program for Azerbaijan for 2009-2010. It includes 22 projects, many of which will be financed by the European Commission (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163550.html>).

2 July

President Ilham Aliyev receives Polish President Lech Kaczynski. At the session, the two leaders sign an accord on the establishment of a consultative council between their two administrations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163418.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Greek Foreign Minister Dora Bokayannis, whose country is chairman-in-office of the OSCE during her visit to the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163449.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan will never agree to making the question of the territorial integrity of the country into a subject for discussion.” And he adds that “we do not see any other path for the resolution of the conflict besides the withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the return there of internally displaced persons, and the establishment of autonomy”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163471.html>).

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives his Greek counterpart Dora Bakoyannis, whose country is chairman in office of the OSCE. She tells him that “the OSCE recognizes only dialogue” as a means for resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163363.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that “the next meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will take place in Moscow in the middle of July” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163360.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that the visit of Dmitry Medvedev showed that the strategic partnership [of Russia] with Azerbaijan is a reality (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163402.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that Ankara “is not disturbed by the rapprochement between Russia and Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163318.html>).

A European Commission spokesperson says that “energy security is of first importance for the European Union and for Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163357.html>). Meanwhile, the European Union announces the suspension of the next steps of the Eastern Partnership because of the economic crisis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163410.html>).

ISESCO and the Youth Forum of the Organization of the Islamic Conference sign an accord to participate as supporters of the international information campaign about “Justice for Khojaly.” That effort has a website at <http://www.justiceforkhojaly.org> (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163532.html>).

1 July

Polish President Lech Kaczyński says in advance of his visit to Baku that “cooperation between Azerbaijan and Poland is based on a mutual understanding of regional and global problems” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163269.html>).

The Iranian embassy in Baku presents a note to the Azerbaijani foreign ministry concerning the appointment of a replacement for incumbent ambassador Mohammed Baghir Bahrami, who left the Azerbaijani capital in

advance of the visit there by Israeli President Shimon Peres (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163230.html>).

Gudsi Dursun oglu Osmanov, Azerbaijan's consul general in St. Petersburg, discusses expanding cooperation between Baku and Kaliningrad (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163306.html>).

JUNE

30 June

Mikhail Zabelin, a member of the Milli Majlis and a member of the Azerbaijan-Russian Inter-parliamentary Group says that conversations between President Ilham Aliyev and Russian President Dmitry Medvedev on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict give “a new push toward its resolution” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163056.html>).

The French Foreign Ministry issues a statement saying that “France will devote all efforts for a just resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163045.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says in Corfu after meeting his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan that “Ankara has decided on the normalization of relations with Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163050.html>).

The Iranian embassy in Baku says that Ambassador Mohammed Baghir Behrami is in Tehran for consultations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163051.html>).

29 June

President Ilham Aliyev, at a joint press conference with visiting Russian Federation President Dmitry Medvedev, announces an agreement with Moscow on the export of Azerbaijani gas to Russia, a development he says opens “a new sphere in our relations.” President Aliyev says that this is a commercial rather than a political step, part of the diversification of the sale of Azerbaijan’s gas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162951.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Federation President Dmitry

Medvedev. The two meet one-on-one and sign joint declarations on the Caspian Sea and on the principles of completing the delimitation of the Azerbaijani-Russian border. President Medvedev says that his visit to Baku reflects “the strategic character” of relations between Azerbaijan and the Russian Federation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162951.html>).

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry says it has received no information from the Iranian embassy in Baku or the Iranian foreign ministry in Tehran that Iran has recalled its ambassador from the Azerbaijani capital to protest the visit of Israeli President Shimon Peres (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163014.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov meets Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu at the sidelines of a meeting of the OSCE in Greece (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162919.html>).

Samad Seyidov, the chief of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that “the processes taking place in the Council of Europe are weakening that organization,” and he points to the “unequal” approach of the council to Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/163001.html>).

28 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives Israeli President Shimon Peres. The two watch as inter-government agreements are signed in the fields of culture, education and science and information and communications technology. Afterwards, they have a one-on-one meeting (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162866.html>).

27 June

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that Turkey has made progress in its talks with its regional partners, including Azerbaijan, on the establishment of its proposed Platform of Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162835.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “the parallel consideration of the questions of the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia and the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem will guarantee peace in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162813.html>).

US Congressmen Salomon Ortiz, Bill Shuster and Eddie Johnson have called for the repeal of Article 907 saying that “we must in the first instance extend a hand to Azerbaijan, a true ally of the US in the sphere of energy security and against international terrorism, and strengthen relations with this country” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162817.html>).

26 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Armenian counterpart Edvard Nalbandyan in Paris to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and to prepare for a future meeting between their two presidents (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162819.html>). The Azerbaijan foreign ministry says the meeting was useful (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162846.html>), as does Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162827.html>).

25 June

President Ilham Aliyev tells a visiting Latvian delegation that he considers the development of relations between Baku and Riga to be “very important” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162690.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names Sultan Magomed oglu Gasymov to be Azerbaijani consul general in Yekaterinburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162706.html>).

The Russian foreign ministry says that “Russia is prepared to be the guarantor of a Nagorno-Karabakh resolution” once the parties involved agree on one (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162586.html>).

Turkish Deputy Foreign Minister Unal Çevikoz says that “Turkish public opinion will not agree to the establishment of diplomatic relations with Armenia” until there is a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162680.html>).

Yashar Aliyev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to the United States, says that Washington will suspend the operation of Article 907 this year and ultimately repeal it altogether (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162622.html>).

Nicolae Urescu, Romania’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, whose country serves as NATO coordinator with Baku, says that “NATO is a supporter of

the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162629.html>).

Dora Bakoyannis, Greek foreign minister and OSCE chairman in office, says that making the arguments around Nagorno-Karabakh “eternal” does not correspond to the interests of “anyone” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162594.html>).

Azerbaijani parliamentarians take part in an Astana seminar organized by the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO to discuss the state of civil society in Eurasia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162433.html>).

June 24

Samad Seyidov, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation to PACE, sharply criticizes the activities of that organization because it is applying double standards in its evaluation of Azerbaijan. His country, Seyidov says, is “the only country in which the Council of Europe demonstrates a different approach” to various issues, choosing to react to any reports of problems rather than investigating the facts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162544.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a Milli Majlis deputy who serves on Azerbaijan’s delegation to PACE, calls on that group to conduct “an active struggle against the crude violation of human rights in Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162506.html>).

US Major General Tracy Garrett, who commands American Marines in Europe and Africa, says in Baku that the US and Azerbaijan are now “ready” to work together to provide mutual assistance in guaranteeing security in the South Caucasus region and beyond (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162495.html>).

23 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives Serbian Foreign Minister Vuk Jeremic (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162354.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and his visiting Serbian counterpart Vuk Jeremic state that Azerbaijan and Serbia agree that the Kosovo and Nagorno-Karabakh conflicts must be resolved according to the principles of international law (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

162280.html).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “Azerbaijan would like to achieve a solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict before the end of the year” but he reminds that “this depends not only on us” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162282.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “the most rapid restoration of stability in Iran is important for Azerbaijan because it is a neighboring state” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162284.html>).

Serik Primbetov, Kazakhstan’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “Baku and Astana intend to strengthen their political dialogue” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162295.html>).

Canan Kalsyn, a Turkish parliamentarian who is a member of the ruling AKP Party, says that “the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border is not a question of the immediate future” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162220.html>).

22 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives US Ambassador Anne Derse on the completion of her service in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162184.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives incoming Brazilian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Paulo Antonio (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162141.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ahmet Unal Çevikoz, Turkey’s deputy foreign minister (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162139.html>).

The foreign ministry expresses surprise at a suggestion by the Armenian foreign ministry that the issue of refugees and internally displaced persons should be addressed only after a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute rather than as part of that settlement as international law requires (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162175.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov takes part in the OSCE Security Conference in Vienna (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162172.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku “does not expect movement on the question of the joint use of the Gabala radar station” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162123.html>). In other comments, he says that the US and Russia have “good chances for achieving progress”

toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162103.html>).

Haji Sabir Hasanly, deputy chairman of the Administration of Muslims of the Caucasus, says that the newly formed Consultative Council of Muslims of the CIS will make the Nagorno-Karabakh question “a priority” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162132.html>).

21 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Turkish counterpart Ahmet Davutoglu outside Istanbul for an informal meeting “under the device ‘one nation, two states’” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/162061.html>).

20 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mamedyarov completes his working visit to Japan. While there, he meets with Prime Minister Taro Aso, the heir to the thrown Naruhito, foreign minister Hirofumi Nakasone, and other officials. In addition, he gives numerous interviews to the media and addresses the Japanese foreign ministry’s Institute of International Relations on “Azerbaijan as a Bridge between East and West” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161991.html>).

Shahin Abdullayev, Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Kuwait, says that the two countries “intend to continue their constructive dialogue,” something he says will be accelerated as a result of the upcoming visit of the emir of Kuwait, Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmed as-Sabah, to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161948.html>).

19 June

Arthur Lenk, Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the upcoming visit of Israeli President Shimon Peres to Baku will “advance the national interests” of both countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161854.html>). In other remarks, he says that relations between the two countries “can be an example of relations of Israel with the Muslim world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161830.html>).

Arthur Lenk, Israeli ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “Iran’s nuclear program represents a threat not only to Israel” but to the region and the

world as well (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161879.html>).

Azerbaijan and Georgia are unable to agree on the demarcation of their border after two days of talks in Tbilisi where the Azerbaijani side was led by Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161911.html>).

Anne Derse, US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “the United States will make every effort for the achievement of the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161890.html>).

Yagub Mahmudov, a deputy in the Milli Majlis, calls for protesting to Iran and Georgia because institutions in those two countries have posted distorted maps on their Internet sites (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161873.html>).

Gudrat Hasanguliyev, a Milli Majlis deputy and head of the Party of the United Peoples Front of Azerbaijan, protests the intention of the US Congress to provide assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh bypassing Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161846.html>).

NATO’s international school begins a five-day training program in Baku on crisis management (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161838.html>).

Elkhan Huseynov, Azerbaijani ambassador to Turkmenistan, says that “Baku and Ashgabad intend to bring their positions into closer alignment on the question of the status of the Caspian Sea.” He indicates that Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov will discuss this issue with Turkmen officials in September (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161789.html>).

18 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says in Tokyo that “relations between Moscow and Baku are developing successfully, a pattern that corresponds to the national interests of the two countries” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161710.html>).

Ali Hasanov, deputy prime minister and chairman of the State Committee for Work with Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, expresses regret that a portion of these people have been excluded from the UNHCR’s refugee list. He notes that over the last 16 years, Baku has spent some two billion US dollars on the needs of these people

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161734.html>,
<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161742.html>).

The foreign ministry says that “providing any humanitarian assistance in the occupied territories should be agreed upon with the authorities of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161737.html>).

US Congressman Robert Wechsler (D-Fl) says that “the rapprochement between Turkey and Armenia should serve as a catalyst for the development of relations between Baku and Yerevan,” adding that Washington attaches “great significance” to both of these processes (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161621.html>).

Zbigniew Rybacki, the NATO Liaison Officer in the South Caucasus, says that Azerbaijan is not “required” to replace arms of Soviet origin as the country moves toward closer relations with the Western alliance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161442.html>).

Turkey’s ruling party says that media reports that some of its members visited a monument to the Armenian “genocide” in Yerevan are not true (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161759.html>).

17 June

Bahar Muradova, vice speaker of the Azerbaijani parliament and head of the Azerbaijan delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, says that Baku expects the Minsk Group to show greater activity in seeking the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. To promote that end, she calls for an assessment of the activities of the current co-chairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161555.html>).

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state, says that “Azerbaijan is an important strategic partner of the United States in the region,” in particular in the areas of energy supply and the struggle against terrorism (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161461.html>).

Alla Ampar, program specialist for social and humanitarian sciences for the UNESCO bureau in Moscow, says that “Azerbaijan is actively participating in UNESCO projects devoted to the participation of women in the political life of society” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161540.html>).

The UNDP and the Azerbaijan Council for State Support of NGOs which is part of the presidential administration agree to sign a

memorandum of understanding (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161524.html>).

A delegation from the Polish parliament visits the mass graves at Guba where some of the victims of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict were interred (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161588.html>).

16 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with Japanese Prime Minister Taro Aser at the start of his five-day visit to Tokyo and extends an invitation from President Ilham Aliyev to the Japanese leader to visit Baku sometime in the future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161401.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "peace in the South Caucasus is a priority in the foreign policy" of his country and that Ankara seeks "the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and in correspondence with the norms of international law." In other comments, the ambassador says that the adoption by Azerbaijan of a military doctrine is "an important step on the path toward NATO standards" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161337.html>, <http://www.day.az/news/politics/161318.html>).

Iosif Shagal, the president of the Israel-Azerbaijan Association and a former member of the Israeli parliament, says that he does not think that "the Knesset will seriously consider the question of the Armenian 'genocide' in the foreseeable future" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160462.html>).

Abbasali Hasanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Iran, says that "there are no citizens of Azerbaijan among those who have suffered at meetings" in Tehran. He adds that the post-election dispute is "an internal affair" of Iran in which Azerbaijan will "not interfere" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161304.html>).

Zbigniew Rybacki, the NATO Liaison Officer in the South Caucasus, says that "in Azerbaijan, civilized and democratic control over the armed forces is being realized," something that contributes to the "positive" development of Azerbaijan's cooperation with the Western alliance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161299.html>).

The US embassy in Baku puts out a statement indicating that the

Armenian National Committee of America has misstated the amount of US aid going to the three South Caucasus countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161282.html>).

15 June

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “Ankara supports a discussion of the Nagorno-Karabakh question at the UN Security Council” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161210.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he is “not planning to leave the OSCE Minsk Group in July. On the contrary,” he continues, he “plans for more fruitful work in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161218.html>).

13 June

Azerbaijani parliamentarians participate in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization in Bucharest (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161155.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is important for peace in the South Caucasus,” adding that “all sides should work in this direction” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161123.html>).

12 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives US Assistant Secretary of State Philip Gordon and thanks him for American support on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161006.html>).

Rahman Mustafayev, a department head at the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry, flies to Paris and hands over a note of protest concerning the visit to Armenian-occupied Karabakh by a French parliamentarian (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/161075.html>).

11 June

Philip Gordon, US assistant secretary of state, says in Baku that there has been “definite progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict,” adding that the two sides understand “the basic principles” for its resolution (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160889.html>).

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry rejects the statement of Armenian Foreign Minister Edvard Nalbandyan that “Azerbaijan used the negotiations not for the achievement of concrete results but for other goals” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160872.html>).

Caroline Brown, British ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Great Britain supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and supports the resolution of the conflict within the framework of the norms of international law (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160838.html>).

10 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Włodzimierz Cimoszewicz, a Polish senator who is a candidate for the post of secretary general of the Council of Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160690.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov telephones Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov to discuss bilateral and regional affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160682.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Azerbaijan has basically agreed to the proposals of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group, but that “there is no desired compromise... from Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160650.html>). In other comments, he notes that a change in the composition of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group is not currently on the agenda, as some Azerbaijani media have suggested (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160641.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “the possibility of a follow-up meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia is evidence of forward movement in the negotiations.” He says that the next meeting of the two could take place in Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160651.html>).

Anne Derse, US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the position of the United States on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue remains unchanged and is based on respect for the Madrid Principles (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160727.html>).

Azar Mursaliyev, the chief editor of Moscow’s *Kommersant* newspaper,

says that “Russia is the chief mediator for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict [today], but tomorrow the US and Europe could assume that role” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160631.html>).

Azerbaijani Ambassador to Italy Emil Kerimov says that Baku and Rome are “expanding their cooperation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160644.html>).

9 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Romanian State Secretary for Strategic Affairs Bogdan Aurescu, who says in Baku that “the doors of NATO are open for Azerbaijan” should it decide it wants to join the Western alliance (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160562.html>). He adds that his country is prepared to share its experience in European integration with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160557.html>). And the Romanian diplomat says that “national minorities do not have the right to set up a separate state” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160556.html>).

Fazil Mustafa, a Milli Majlis deputy, suggests that Azerbaijan should help set up radio and television broadcasting in Azerbaijani for ethnic Azerbaijanis living in Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160542.html>).

Malahat Hasanova, a Milli Majlis deputy, says that Baku should protest to international organizations, including IAEA, Armenia’s plans to build an atomic energy station on its territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160504.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister says that “Russia, Turkey, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia ought to build their own future together” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160464.html>).

Indian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Debnas Show says that the new government of his country has not changed its policy toward Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160483.html>).

8 June

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku “is not taking and does not intend to take steps directed against the interests of Iran”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160423.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the department of international relations of the Presidential Administration, says that “at a certain stage in the negotiations there will be the need for the participation of both Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Nagorno-Karabakh on a number of questions” but that “this time has not yet come” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160416.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he and the other co-chairs are satisfied with the progress achieved by the talks between the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160420.html>).

Orkhan Erdem, a Turkish parliamentarian of the ruling Party of Justice and Development, says that “in a short term, Turkey can become the fourth co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160172.html>).

Mohsen Rezai, an opposition presidential candidate in Iran, says that increased diplomatic activity by Iran could generate “a significant breakthrough” in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160333.html>).

US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Anne Derse says that “the Administration of Barak Obama is full of decisiveness to produce a rapid resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160325.html>).

7 June

Russian Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov says that “Azerbaijan is one of the very important and significant partners of Russia in the CIS” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160258.html>).

6 June

Andreas Herkel, special rapporteur of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that discussions at PACE concerning the situation in Azerbaijan have been “constructive” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160217.html>).

US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton says following a meeting with

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu that “the US believes that in a relatively short time great progress in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been achieved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160190.html>).

5 June

Emin Eyyubov, Azerbaijan ambassador in Belgium, says that the European Commission has signalled that it is prepared to go “very far” in easing the visa regime with countries which are part of the Eastern Partnership (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160163.html>).

Elnur Aslanov, the head of the department of political analysis and information support of the Presidential Administration, says that US President Barak Obama’s Cairo speech, while “addressed to the Islamic world, can be considered as a message to all other countries as well” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160133.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and the Foreign Ministry of Russia have coordinated their future actions” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160131.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijani ambassador in Kazakhstan, says that “cooperation between Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan has been defined for many years ahead” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160103.html>).

Elmira Suleymanova, the ombudsman of Azerbaijan, says that “international organizations have not demonstrated decisiveness on the question of the payment of compensation by Armenia to internally displaced persons and refugees in Azerbaijan,” even though international law is on the side of Azerbaijan and not Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160098.html>).

Aliakper Ojagnejad, the representative of the Supreme Leader of Iran in Azerbaijan, dismissed as false reports in the Azerbaijani media that he had been subjected to questioning by the Ministry of National Security (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160097.html>).

Arthur Lenk, Israel’s ambassador in Azerbaijan, says that the upcoming visit of the president of his country to Baku, “does not concern Iran” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160081.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s ambassador in Azerbaijan, says that “in

Moscow, they are certain that Azerbaijan will not threaten the national security of Russia.” That is because, he adds, “we have a high level of mutual understanding and mutual respect” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160057.html>).

Mehmet Jeylan, a Turkish parliamentary deputy from that country’s ruling Party of Justice and Development and a member of the Turkish delegation to NATO’s parliamentary assembly, says that “naturally, Turkey would like to become part of the OSCE Minsk Group” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160003.html>).

A resolution has been introduced in the US Congress that would lift the Jackson-Vanik amendment restrictions on Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/160031.html>).

4 June

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, then together with him with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and with the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group in St. Petersburg. The Azerbaijani and Armenian foreign ministers disagree with the upbeat assessment of the co-chairs, saying that there has been no breakthrough, although Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says there has been forward movement (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159879.html>).

Ali Hasanov, head of the social political department of the Presidential Administration, says that “Azerbaijan has never interfered in the internal politics of other countries and will not allow anyone to interfere” in its internal affairs. His comments came in response to Iran’s call for Baku to close the Israeli embassy there (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159881.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Presidential Administration, says that Baku expects “concrete steps” from the European countries concerning the regulation of Internet media (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159870.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that “Ankara wants the normalization of relations with Yerevan” and that “everyone must do everything possible for the establishment of peace in the Caucasus” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159905.html>).

Turkish Foreign Trade Minister Zafer Chaglayan says that Ankara does

not intend to open the country's borders with Armenia until the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is resolved (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159971.html>).

The press spokesman of the US embassy in Baku says that the embassy hopes that President Barak Obama will visit Azerbaijan in the near future (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159901.html>).

Sergey Prikhodko, an aide to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that the Kremlin does not expect a breakthrough on the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute during the course of meetings in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159878.html>).

3 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives Syrian Foreign Minister Walid al-Muallem, and the two note that the recent opening of an Azerbaijani embassy in Damascus has boosted bilateral ties (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159806.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyrov says he does not share the optimism of the Minsk Group co-chairs about the possibility of a rapid breakthrough on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. While he welcomes the positive assessments of the co-chairs, Mammadyarov says that on the basis of what he has heard "with [his] own ears" in Prague, the Armenian side continues to have "an unconstructive position" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159763.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that Baku is continuing to investigate reports about the illegal supply of arms by Russia to Armenia at the end of 2008 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159752.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says he is surprised by Iran's call for Baku to close the Israeli embassy in the Azerbaijan capital, all the more so because Iran maintains close ties with Armenia which is in occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159749.html>).

The Foreign Ministry, together with the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, arranges for a visit to Azerbaijan by a group of heads of diplomatic missions in Morocco. In the course of their stay, the 11 diplomats are received by Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159840.html>).

2 June

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that “official Baku stands for the most rapid movement forward in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159562.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Richard Morningstar, the US Special Representative for Eurasian Energy Issues, to discuss the shipment of Azerbaijan’s energy resources to Europe and also the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159640.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that Azerbaijan intends to invite Iran to take part in bilateral negotiations on the definition of the legal status of the Caspian, talks that will parallel those of the five littoral states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159673.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov participates in a Brussels conference on “European and Euro-Atlantic Integration of Azerbaijan” on the occasion of the 90th anniversary of the Azerbaijani diplomatic service (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159604.html>).

Peter Semneby, the EU Special Representative in the Caucasus and Central Asia, says that it gives him “great happiness” to say that negotiations on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict “have accelerated” in recent months (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159565.html>).

The Azerbaijan foreign ministry says that the words of Armenian foreign minister Edvard Nalbandyan “would correspond to reality if the Armenians had not conducted ethnic cleansing on the occupied territories.” The ministry was responding to Nalbandyan’s criticism of Baku for raising the Nagorno-Karabakh issue in the Organization of the Islamic Conference and thus giving a religious cast to the dispute.

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the Minsk Group, says in Baku that the meeting between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia will take place in the customary format, with a one-on-one session between the two leaders followed by a large session with the Minsk Group co-chairs and the foreign ministers (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159657.html>).

Turkish Defense Minister Vecdi Gonul says that “one of the main obstacles to the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations is the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/>

[159546.html](http://www.day.az/news/politics/159546.html)).

An Azerbaijani delegation takes part in the commemoration of the 20th anniversary of the death of Imam Khomeini in the Iranian cities of Qum and Meshkhed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159543.html>).

1 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives Georgian Prime Minister Nika Gilauri in advance of the latter's participation in the *XVI International Caspian Oil, Gas, Oil Refining, Oil Chemistry Exhibition and Conference* in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/159486.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Richard Morningstar, US Special Representative on Eurasian Energy Issues, who delivers a message from US President Barak Obama and tells the Azerbaijani leader that the US is "prepared to help" Azerbaijan get its oil and gas to world markets." He adds that this is important "not only for the energy security of America but for the energy security of every country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159461.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/economy/159468.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Brazilian Ambassador to Baku Paolo Antonio Pintu to discuss expanding bilateral cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159488.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the Minsk Group "awaits with optimism the meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia" in St. Petersburg on June 6. "Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev made very constructive steps at the last meeting in Prague, and we expect the same reaction from Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan," Bryza says (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159377.html>).

MAY

31 May

Vyacheslav Sinyugin, Russia's deputy minister of energy, says that Moscow is prepared to offer proposals to Azerbaijan for the construction of an atomic power station (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/159291.html>).

30 May

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that "President Aliyev was constructive in Prague, and we expect a similar reaction from [Armenian President] Sargsyan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159218.html>).

29 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and the special representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159140.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and American co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that "the signing of documents at the meeting of the presidents [of Azerbaijan and Armenia] in St. Petersburg [on June 4] is not expected" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159159.html>).

Arthur Lenk, Israeli ambassador in Baku, says that Israeli President Shimon Peres will visit Azerbaijan at the end of June (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159093.html>).

Martin Vukovich, Austria's ambassador to the Russian Federation, says that Vienna will open an embassy in Azerbaijan later this year

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159097.html>).

Hulusi Kilic, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that Ankara will open a consulate general in Ganja on September 15 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/159111.html>).

28 May

Elkhan Huseynov, Azerbaijani ambassador in Ashgabat, says that Baku is "ready for the rebirth of the entire spectrum of relations with Turkmenistan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158981.html>).

27 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives messages of greetings from world leaders, including the presidents of the US, the Russian Federation, China and France, in advance of the Day of the Republic (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158954.html>).

26 May

President Ilham Aliyev during a visit to Ganja says that Baku's "independent policy allows us to defend fully the national interests of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158581.html>).

Azerbaijani and Turkish foreign ministry officials complete two-day consultations in Baku on consular affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158773.html>).

25 May

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that "Armenia, unfortunately, has begun to exert a negative influence on the course of the peace process." In other comments, Mammadyarov says that he "does not see any problems which could arise with Azerbaijan in connection with participation in the EU's Eastern Partnership program" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158469.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says during the ministerial meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Damascus that "the interests of fraternal Azerbaijan always will be considered" by Ankara. "For us," he continues, "Azerbaijan always was and remains a fraternal country" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158551.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russian ambassador to Baku, says that “Azerbaijan is creating favorable opportunities for the development of the Russian language” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158541.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and American co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the co-chairs will visit the region before June 4 to prepare for the upcoming meeting in St. Petersburg of the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158533.html>).

Ekmeleddin Ihsanoglu, the secretary general of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, says that the OIC “is striving toward the development of a mechanism for the resolution of conflicts in Muslim countries,” including Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158507.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu tells the Organization of the Islamic Conference ministerial meeting in Damascus that “Turkey will continue its efforts” to end the “frozen status” of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158652.html>).

24 May

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells the foreign ministers’ meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference that “Azerbaijan will expand its assistance to Islamic countries which are in conflict zones” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158480.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov is received by Syrian President Bashar Asad (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158492.html>).

23 May

Azerbaijani commentators react strongly and negatively to the statements of the French and Russian co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group to the Turkish media that negotiations on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and negotiations between Ankara and Yerevan on the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations should not interfere with one another (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158415.html>).

22 May

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Farid Shafiyev to be Azerbaijan’s ambassador to Canada (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158375.html>).

The Turkish embassy in Baku says that media reporting suggesting that Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan had criticized Azerbaijani parliamentarians is false (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158348.html>).

21 May

President Ilham Aliyev tells Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili during the latter's official visit to Baku that relations between the two countries are "at a very high level," with "the two independent states having built their ties on a firm historical basis" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157989.html>).

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili tells President Ilham Aliyev during his official visit to Baku that Georgia is grateful for Azerbaijan's commitment to supply it with natural gas for the next five years. He adds that President Aliyev and his government "do not simply promise; they always fulfil their promises. We have fraternal relations, and I always have said that we are creating in practice an informal confederation," even though we are "two independent states" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157989.html>).

Vice Prime Minister Yagub Eyubov takes part in the Astana meeting of the council of the heads of governments of CIS member states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158208.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov takes part in the foreign ministers' meeting of the Organization of the Islamic Conference in Damascus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158128.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells visiting Gen. John Craddock, head of the US European Command, that "Azerbaijan is always ready to make its contribution to guaranteeing global stability and security" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158187.html>).

Nicholae Ureche, Romania's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that "for the integration of Azerbaijan into NATO, the support of society is needed." And he urges Baku to conduct "NATO propaganda in society and especially among the youth" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158161.html>).

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry says that "the transfer of arms by Russia to Armenia in the framework of the Organization of the Collective Security Treaty will lead to a forced arms race in the region"

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158158.html>).

Elchin Amirkayev, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Switzerland, says that Baku and Berne will outline a plan for the further development of political, economic and humanitarian relations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/158072.html>).

20 May

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Abdul Qayum Khan Jatoi, Pakistan's federal minister for defense production (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157953.html>).

19 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Matyas Eorsi, chairman of the Hungarian Parliament's committee on European affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157842.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157838.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157877.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan's permanent representative to the United Nations, says that Azerbaijan "is continuing to work with UN member states on the question of the occupied territories" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157777.html>).

18 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives the credentials of incoming Iranian ambassador to Baku Mamedbaghir Bahrami (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157668.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Arnold Ruutel, the former president of Estonia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157691.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov receives Michael Davenport, the director of the British Foreign Office Department for Russia, the South Caucasus and Central Asia, to discuss Azerbaijani-British relations and

resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157688.html>).

Alan Waddams, the head of the representation of the European Commission, says that “the resources of Azerbaijan are sufficient to begin Nabucco,” although he acknowledges that they are “insufficient” for the long-term operation of that pipeline project (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157489.html>).

Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus, says that “the Declaration about ‘the Eastern Partnership’ opens a new stage in relations between the EU and Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157694.html>).

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry criticizes the posting on Youtube.com of insulting pictures featuring the hymn and flag of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157628.html>).

17 May

Russian Prime Minister Vladimir Putin says that agreement on Nagorno-Karabakh “can be achieved only by the participant countries of the conflict.” But he adds that “both Turkey and Russia are interested that problems of this type will be resolved and will assist in doing so in every possible way” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157500.html>).

16 May

Bernard Fassier, French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the meeting of the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents in Prague was “not a failure as certain observers are saying.” He adds that “perhaps we do not have a breakthrough but there is movement” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157449.html>). In other comments, he says that he “hopes that the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem will not last as long as the conflict in the Middle East has” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157469.html>).

Goran Lennmarker, special representative of the Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE for Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia, says that “at the present moment there really exist good chances for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157452.html>).

A delegation of the Milli Majlis is received in Vilnius by Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus, Prime Minister Andrius Kublius and Seim chairman Arunas Valinkas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157470.html>).

15 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157296.html>).

The German parliament adopts, for the first time in its history, a resolution on the South Caucasus named ‘Security, Stability and Promoting Democracy in South Caucasus’ which calls for the observance of the principle of territorial integrity in the resolution of regional conflicts (<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/76970/><http://news.trend.az%22>; <http://www.day.az/news/politics/157379.html>).

Israeli Ambassador to Azerbaijan Arthur Lenk announces the name of his replacement, Mikhael Lavon-Lotem, who previously served as ambassador in Kazakhstan. Lavon-Lotem will take up his position in Baku in July (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157342.html>).

Bulgarian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Vasil Kalinov announces that the Azerbaijani and Bulgarian ministries for extraordinary situations will cooperate within the Eastern Partnership Program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157299.html>).

14 May

Russian foreign ministry spokesman Andrey Nesterenko says that “the area of disagreements of the sides of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is being significantly reduced and the level of mutual understanding is growing” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157225.html>).

13 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan and says after their meeting that “the question of the opening of the [Turkish] border was closed after the clear declarations of senior officials of Turkey.” For his part, Prime Minister Erdogan says that the border between Turkey and Armenia will not be opened “until the complete de-occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh.”

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Miltiadis Varvitsiotis, the deputy foreign minister of Greece (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157002.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the department for social-political questions of the Administration of the President, meets in Moscow with Sergey Naryshkin, the head of the Administration of the President of the Russian Federation, to discuss the development of the strategic partnership of the two countries. He also meets with Sergey Lebedev, the chief of the executive committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156989.html>).

12 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives the chairman of the Supreme Court of Turkey Hasan Gerçeker, who is in Baku for the occasion of the opening of the Azerbaijan Supreme Court's new building (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156945.html>). At the opening, President Aliyev gives a major speech on the domestic development of Azerbaijan over the last 15 years (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156952.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Stefan Harabi, the deputy prime minister of Slovakia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156936.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives members of the US Council on Foreign Relations. He tells them among other things that after 17 years of work, the OSCE Minsk Group has not succeeded in changing the situation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/157251.html>).

Today marks the 15th anniversary from the declaration of a ceasefire between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156771.html>).

Azerbaijan Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev tells representatives of the US Council on Foreign Affairs that bilateral cooperation between Azerbaijan and the United States is making "a major contribution to the realization of a number of important international economic projects" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156905.html>).

The French Ministry of Foreign Affairs and European Questions releases a statement calling on the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia to move toward a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute at their June meeting in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156908.html>).

11 May

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and American co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says on *Ekho Moskvy* that “Karabakh and the other territories will be returned to Azerbaijan, step by step.” The final resolution of the dispute, he says, will be “a balance among the principles of self-determination, territorial integrity and a ban on the use of force” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156749.html>). He adds that “a turning point in the negotiations on the Karabakh problem possibly will come during the meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in St. Petersburg (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156748.html>).

Dora Bakoyannis, the foreign minister of Greece and OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, greets the 15th anniversary of the adoption of the ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan and welcomes the “constructive discussions” between the presidents of those countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156750.html>).

9 May

President Ilham Aliyev leads the Azerbaijani nation in marking Victory Day (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156640.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that no breakthroughs were achieved at the Prague meeting between the Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents. “Alas,” he continues, “the Armenians this time as well did not demonstrate a constructive approach” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156648.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of a sector of the Administration of the President says that “Baku is satisfied by the results of the inaugural summit of Eastern Partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156665.html>).

Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus, says that the EU “expects serious moves forward in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156663.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that if the Armenians “free the occupied Azerbaijani territories, then we will open the border with Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156639.html>).

Rose Gottemoeller, the US deputy secretary of state for arms control, says that proposals for possible American use of the Gabala radar station in

Azerbaijan “deserve further consideration” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156630.html>).

8 May

Javier Solana, the EU commissar for foreign policy, says that “the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict will be achieved” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156444.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that “Moscow is optimistic about the chances for the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156451.html>).

Ali Hasanov, the head of the social-political department of the Administration of the President, says that “without a resolution of the Karabakh conflict there cannot be a lasting peace in the South Caucasus.” He says that Baku “recognizes the right of Armenians to live in Nagorno-Karabakh, but [it] considers unacceptable the separation of this territory from Azerbaijan and the formation here of a separatist government.” Commenting on the recent rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey, he notes that Baku “is not protesting against the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border. But the opening of a border without conditions will not promote the establishment of peace in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156575.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu says that the Prague meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia was “an important step toward Nagorno-Karabakh resolution” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156528.html>).

Oktay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Mejlis, says that the Armenian diaspora played a role in what US President Barak Obama said about 1915 but that its efforts should lead Azerbaijanis to become more active in presenting their case to the American people and its president (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156507.html>).

Members of the Milli Majlis say that the United States has “unjustly applied double standards” in its reporting about the status of media freedom in Azerbaijan. They are reacting to US President Barak Obama’s placement of Azerbaijan in one rank with Zimbabwe in terms of the persecution of journalists (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156487.html>).

While in Prague, President Ilham Aliyev meets with Czech President

Vaclav Klaus and tells him that “the aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan is creating serious obstacles for peace and stability in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156285.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “Concerning proposals on the resolution of the conflict, [Armenian] President Serzh Sargsyan reported that in [his country] are taking places negotiations with the political parties. In his turn,” Bryza continues, Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev two weeks ago also made an important declaration. For the first time, he began to speak about a security corridor, about the need in the framework of this corridor to guarantee the security of the population of Karabakh. This is a constructive step for development. These are attempts to influence the negotiating process” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156476.html>).

7 May

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Turkish President Abdulla Gul during his visit to Prague. Gul for his part rates as extremely important the meeting of President Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156449.html>, www.day.az/news/politics/156583.html).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in the Embassy of the United States in Prague. Also in attendance are the four co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156364.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev tells the summit of the European Union devoted to the signing of the accords on the Eastern Partnership that Azerbaijan “plays an important role in guaranteeing the energy security of Europe” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156452.html>).

During his visit to Prague, President Ilham Aliyev meets with French Prime Minister Francois Fillon and British Foreign Minister David Miliband who extends an invitation to the Azerbaijani leader to visit the United Kingdom, an invitation President Aliyev accepts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156459.html>).

Andrey Denisov, first deputy minister of foreign affairs of the Russian Federation, says that his ministry “does not consider that the European Union is attempting to exclude [Moscow] from the search for a resolution

of the Karabakh conflict.” He is reacting to media reports that the EU may seek to become the only mediator in talks about that dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156393.html>).

Elkhan Polukhov, spokesman for the Azerbaijani foreign ministry, says that Yerevan’s declarations about “the right of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh to self-determination contradict all norms of international law, and such a formulation is by itself untrue since there is no people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Instead, there are two major communities, the Azerbaijani and the Armenian, “and against the Azerbaijani community was carried out ethnic cleansing.” Only after that community is able to return and exist in peace there, can there be created conditions for the beginning of a discussion of the legal definition of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156316.html>).

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that in discussions about Nagorno-Karabakh, “we are preparing for a breakthrough but we have not yet achieved it” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156437.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and US co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that at their meeting in Prague at the American embassy “the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia achieved agreement on the basic principles of resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.” He says that he expects the two presidents to meet again in St. Petersburg in the next several weeks (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156405.html>).

Samad Seyidov, the Milli Majlis deputy who heads the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that Azerbaijan is fated to “bring together” important countries of the world by virtue of its energy supplied and transit routes (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156349.html>).

6 May

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Israeli Foreign Minister Avigdor Lieberman in Prague on the sidelines of the EU Eastern Partnership meeting (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156284.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, a sector head of the Administration of the President says that “Azerbaijan considers the Eastern Partnership project as a new

and important format directed at the strengthening of relations with the European Union” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156250.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton “has given her word that the US will even more seriously work on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” and notes that Clinton has reaffirmed US support for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan as a basic principle for the resolution of that dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156146.html>).

The US State Department website posts Secretary of State Hillary Clinton’s observation during her meeting with Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov that “Azerbaijan has a very strategic location that is one that is important not only to their country, but really, regionally and globally” and that the US intends to seek ways to “expand and deepen” its interrelationships with Baku (<http://www.state.gov/secretary/rm/2009a/05/122702.htm>).

Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that “the co-chairs expect progress from the Prague meeting of the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156125.html>).

A group of Greek parliamentarians visits Baku as part of the regular exchange of visits by the Greco-Azerbaijani inter-parliamentary contacts group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156222.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that the meetings between US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her Azerbaijani and Armenian counterparts “laid the foundation for discussions between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156149.html>).

5 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives Mary Warlick, advisor to the US Secretary of Defense for European and NATO policy, on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of Azerbaijan-NATO cooperation and to discuss the Partnership for Peace Program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156074.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton to discuss bilateral ties, relations between Armenia and

Turkey, the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, and other questions of security (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155992.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says after his meeting with the Turkish foreign minister that “Azerbaijan and Turkey must defend each other’s national interests” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155983.html>). He also says that the visits of the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia to Washington show that the new US administration is seeking to help the sides resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155954.html>).

Maj. Gen. Etibar Mirzoyev, deputy minister for emergency situations, says that Azerbaijan would like NATO to conduct some of its exercises on emergency planning in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156097.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the external affairs department of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “the forces which were interested in complicating Azerbaijani-Turkish relations will not achieve their goal.” Neither Turkey nor Azerbaijan was caught in the trap that these forces had set (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156045.html>).

Hikmet Cetin, the former foreign minister of Turkey, says that “Armenia is suffering most of all from the lack of a resolution to the Karabakh conflict.” In other comments, he says that the OSCE Minsk Group has not yet taken serious steps toward the resolution of the conflict and that the two countries directly involved will have to find a solution (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/156026.html>).

4 May

President Ilham Aliyev receives the head of the Baku office of the OSCE, Bilge Cankorel (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155923.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov is received by new Turkish Foreign Minister Akhmed Davutoglu (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155891.html>).

The Center for Research on the Heritage of Heydar Aliyev releases a book entitled “Azerbaijan-NATO: A Path which Begins with Cooperation” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155879.html>).

3 May

Nasir Hamidi Zare, former Iranian ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that

“it is impossible to harm relations between Baku and Teheran” and that they will continue to develop in the future as they have over the past five years (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155769.html>).

2 May

UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon releases a report stressing that the OSCE Minsk Group is committed to the principle of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155729.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that bilateral ties between Turkey and Azerbaijan throughout their history “have developed at the level of the intelligentsias” and will continue to do so (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155727.html>).

Ramiz Mehdiyev, the head of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that Azerbaijani scholars must devote more attention to developing a philosophical foundation for Azerbaijan’s role as an important player among and a bridge between Europe, the CIS, and the Turkic language states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155741.html>).

1 May

Azerbaijan proposed a plan for defining the status of Nagorno-Karabakh to the United Nations and that plan reiterates the UNGA resolution passed last year reaffirming the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and calling on Armenia to withdraw from all Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155562.html>).

Eldar Sabiroglu, press spokesman for the defense ministry, says that cooperation between NATO and Azerbaijan has been successfully continuing for 15 years. “In 1994,” he adds, “Azerbaijan joined NATO’s Partnership for Peace program” and since that time the country’s armed forces have made “remarkable gains” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155613.html>).

APRIL

30 April

Russian President Dmitry Medvedev leads world leaders in expressing his sympathy to President Ilham Aliyev and the Azerbaijani people on the occasion of the killings at Azerbaijan State Oil Academy in Baku (<http://www.anspress.com/nid112611.html>).

29 April

President Ilham Aliyev tells NATO Secretary General Jan de Hoop Scheffer that Baku is grateful to NATO that “on the question of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict the alliance occupies a decisive position which operates on the principles of territorial integrity.” The NATO official responds by saying that the alliance considers Azerbaijan a most important country in the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155439.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev says after his meeting with Belgian Prime Minister Herman van Rompuy that “the goal of Azerbaijan is to become one of the most developed states in the world” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155305.html>).

28 April

During a working visit to Brussels, President Ilham Aliyev meets with European Commission President Jose Manuel Barroso (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155172.html>).

Oktay Asadov, speaker of the Millis Majlis, says that “at the international level, Armenians have shown greater activity than have [Azerbaijanis]” and that for this “we have only ourselves to blame”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155196.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, rejects media reports that there will be changes in the number of co-chairs in that process (<http://www.day.az/news/armenia/155146.html>).

Elkhan Nuriyev, the director of the Center of Strategic Research in the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that “Azerbaijan does not need either an exclusively pro-American or pro-Russian policy” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155199.html>).

27 April

Gennady Zyuganov, the head of the Communist Party of the Russian Federation, says that “without the active policy of Russia in the Caucasus, there will never be peace or calm” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/155121.html>).

25 April

Azerbaijani Ambassador in Ankara Zakir Hashimov says that “there is no place for a crisis in relations” between Azerbaijan and Turkey. He was responding to media comments that the “road map” Turkey and Armenia have announced represents some kind of tilt by Turkey away from Azerbaijan. “Turkey and Azerbaijan are one nation with two states,” and that remains unchanged, Hashimov adds (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154850.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan tells visiting Azerbaijani Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev that “Turkey will not take any step which would contradict the interests of Azerbaijan or offend Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154719.html>).

24 April

President Ilham Aliyev takes a telephone call from Turkish President Abdulla Gul during which the two discuss the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154696.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group and the special representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kaspshik (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154799.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the first deputy director of the Russian

Federation Security Service (FSB), Gen. Vladimir Pronichev, who is in Baku to take part in a meeting with the border services of Azerbaijan, Russia and Iran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154828.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev names two honorary consuls, Margarita Costa in Genoa, Italy, and Jalal Gasymov in Slovakia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154835.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/154825.html>).

23 April

President Ilham Aliyev tells the council of ministers that thanks to economic and social progress over the last five years, “today Azerbaijan is a country with whose words and interests others reckon and a country which is playing a stabilizing role in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/154528.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of a sector of the Administration of the President, says after the release of the five-part “road map” for the development of relations between Turkey and Armenia, that there is no basis for suggesting that Turkey had imposed a blockade on Armenia or that relations between the two countries will develop fully without progress on the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154611.html>).

The Foreign Ministry says that “the process of the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations must take place in parallel with the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154557.html>).

Ambassador Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that there are reasons to expect progress given the recent activity of the intermediaries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154598.html>).

US Ambassador to Baku Anne Derse says that the attention of Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and President Barak Obama to the Nagorno-Karabakh peace process will help to promote long-lasting peace in the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154643.html>).

Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the EC’s commissioner for foreign relations and European policy, says that Azerbaijan is an important partner of the European Union and that the two sides “must continue their efforts to strengthen our joint work.”

22 April

Parliamentary Speaker Oktay Asadov receives outgoing Iranian Ambassador to Baku Nasir Hamidi Zare and tells him that “the development of multi-sided relations with Iran is one of the basic directions of the foreign policy of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154494.html>).

Justice Minister Fikrat Mammadov says that “the lack of a treaty about legal assistance among the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference” – including on questions like extradition – is restricting the development of relations among these countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154486.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov tells the Baku meeting of law enforcement officials of the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference that they and other members of the international community should step up “the struggle with separatism and extremism” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154467.html>).

The law enforcement officials of the Organization of the Islamic Conference adopt the Baku Declaration following a two-day meeting in the Azerbaijani capital that calls for expanding cooperation among the member states on a wide range of law enforcement issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154469.html>).

Russian Ambassador to Baku Vladimir Dorokhin says on ATV that “Russia is the only country which has worked as an intermediary on the resolution of the Karabakh dispute at the level of presidents” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154465.html>).

Azerbaijan’s Permanent Representative to the United Nations, Akshin Mehdiyev, tells the UN Security Council that Yerevan, by its actions in Nagorno-Karabakh and other occupied territories, is “openly demonstrating its lack of respect to the relevant resolutions of the Security Council and the General Assembly of the United Nations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154406.html>).

21 April

President Ilham Aliyev tells law enforcement officials of the countries of the Organization of the Islamic Conference that “the crimes which have been committed on the occupied territories represent a danger not only for Azerbaijan but for the entire region” and indeed for all Islamic civilization

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154274.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says that the Baku meeting of law enforcement officials from the member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference “lays the foundation for a new format of cooperation” among those states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154283.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says that “Turkey will never cast Azerbaijan aside” but rather will, as it has in the past, defend Azerbaijan even if that involves Ankara in arguments with others (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154326.html>). And Camil Çiçek, the vice prime minister of Turkey says that “the [Turkish] border with Armenia will be closed until the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154257.html>).

An OSCE conference on “Cooperation of the State and Society in the Struggle with Terrorism in Azerbaijan” is cancelled by the organizers without explanation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154254.html>).

Izzet Kamil Mufti, the deputy secretary general for political questions of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, says in Baku that the OIC supports “the just position of the Azerbaijan Republic on the Karabakh question” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154295.html>).

Ambassador Fahraddin Gurbanov, Azerbaijan’s representative in London, takes up his duties as Baku’s ambassador in Copenhagen and presents his credential to Queen Margaret II (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154287.html>).

20 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives outgoing Iranian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Nasir Hamidi Zare on the occasion of the latter’s departure from Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154200.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the international relations department of the Administration of the President, says that Baku does not exclude the possibility of the signing of a document in the near future between Azerbaijan and Armenia directed toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, but he adds there are many problems that must first be overcome (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154167.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Makhmudov receives Maj. Gen. Saad Jasim, the general director of the Main Administration of

General Security of Qatar's Ministry of Internal Affairs (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154204.html>).

Indian Ambassador to Baku Debnas Show tells Parliamentary Speaker Oktay Asadov that Delhi recognizes the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and supports the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154341.html>).

17 April

President Ilham Aliyev says after his meeting at the presidential residence just outside of Moscow with Russian President Dmitry Medvedev that "definite progress supports our hope that the Karabakh conflict will be resolved quite quickly." He also says that he expects Azerbaijani gas to flow through Russia as well as through other countries reflecting Baku's interest in diversification of routes. And he says that "Russia is a friend of Azerbaijan, a neighbor, and a strategic partner, and on this basis we will develop our relations" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153911.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev confirms five documents signed between Baku and Tehran concerning tourism, postal relations, cultural heritage, statistics, and educational cooperation and between Baku and Kuwait City on cooperation in various spheres (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153853.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov meets Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Sergey Ryabkov to discuss Caspian sea issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153856.html>).

Defense Minister, Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev receives the newly assigned ambassadors of Bulgaria, Iraq and Russia to discuss bilateral relations in the security area (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153980.html>).

The foreign ministry says that media reports about a planned visit by Turkish journalists to the occupied territories are the result of an Armenian falsification (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153943.html>).

16 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Latvian Foreign Minister Maris Riekstins who tells the Azerbaijani leader among other things that Riga recognizes and supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153740.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Ambassador Ali Bilge Cankorel, the new head of the OSCE office in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153824.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the Minsk Group, and tells him that “negotiations on the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are now being conducted with the taking into account of new factors that have arisen in the region” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153752.html>).

Leila Aliyeva, chief representative of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation in Russia, is elected president of the Azerbaijan Youth Organization of Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/154075.html>).

Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov says that Russia is absolutely neutral on the question of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and is ready to support any resolution of the dispute that Baku and Yerevan find acceptable (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153701.html>).

Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babajan says that Ankara wants “complete normalization” of its relations with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153704.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Mahmud Mammadguliyev reiterates Azerbaijan’s position that “the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations is possible only in the case of the resolution of the Karabakh conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153755.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Makhmud Mammadguliyev makes a one-day visit to Yerevan to attend the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Black Sea Economic Cooperation, where the chairmanship in office is passed from Armenia to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153455.html>).

The Russian embassy in Turkey issues a statement saying that “Moscow is not involved in undermining Turkish-Azerbaijani relations” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153847.html>).

The Foreign Ministry asks the Azerbaijani embassy in Turkey to look into reports that Turkish journalists have visited the Armenian-occupied territories (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153825.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul receives a group of Azerbaijani women who are taking part in a meeting in Ankara at the invitation of the Turkish

World Women's Organization (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153809.html>).

Azerbaijani and Turkish parliamentarians meet in Baku to discuss foreign policy priorities and say they agree on all major issues including the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153749.html>).

Russian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Vladimir Dorokhin says that the definition of the status of the Caspian is “a very important component of bilateral and multilateral cooperation for Russia” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153782.html>).

15 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from the incoming Saudi Arabian ambassador to Baku, Fahd bin Ali al-Dusari (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153655.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chairman of the Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153671.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Qahtan Abbas al-Jubouri, the Iraqi minister of tourism and antiquities, who expresses the hope that more Azerbaijanis will visit his country either as tourists or pilgrims (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153648.html>).

Azerbaijan Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev completes a three-day visit to Jordan during which he meets with his opposite number there Nader Dehabi to discuss military and security cooperation between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153625.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that US President Barak Obama is ready to do everything possible to promote the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and supports the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations as part of that process (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153551.html>).

14 April

President Ilham Aliyev appoints Ilgar Mukhtarov as Azerbaijani ambassador to Mexico (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153537.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov is in Moscow to take part in the 25th session of the working group on the definition of the legal status of the Caspian Sea and to hold bilateral talks with Russian officials. He says that Baku expects to complete the delimitation of the Azerbaijani-Russian border in 2009 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153398.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/153270.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says on Ankara television that “steps are being taken for the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia” but “together with the dialogue with Armenia, we are working on the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153510.html>).

13 April

Elkhan Polukhov, the press secretary of the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry, says that Azerbaijan and Turkey are “allies and strategic partners” and suggestions by some in Baku that Ankara’s discussions with Yerevan are harming these bilateral relations are simply “internal rhetoric.” “We are open and conduct a transparent foreign policy,” he continues. Azerbaijan always clearly expresses its views, he says, and Baku has made clear its view that the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia before the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute is resolved will heighten tensions in the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153278.html>).

10 April

Ambassador Robert Simmons, NATO’s special representative for the Caucasus and Central Asia, says that the Western alliance recognizes that “the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is the major obstacle on the path to peace and stability in the South Caucasus.” But he reaffirms that NATO does not play a leading role in its resolution, deferring to the OSCE’s Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153014.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Mahmudov receives Nikolai Malomuzh, the chief of the Foreign Intelligence Service of Ukraine, to discuss cooperation between their institutions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153118.html>).

In an interview in advance of his May 16-17 visit to Baku, Latvian Foreign Minister Maris Riekstins says that Riga is ready to share its

experiences as a member of the European Union and NATO with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/153056.html>).

9 April

President Ilham Aliyev says that he is “very satisfied with the results of the visit of Ukrainian President Viktor Yushchenko to Baku. President Aliyev’s comments come after the signing of a series of bilateral agreements expanding cooperation between the two countries. He adds that he and President Yushchenko had discussed a wide variety of issues of interest not only to their two countries and the region but to the larger world (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152985.html>).

Turkish President Abdulla Gul says that “the most serious problem in the Caucasus is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and [he] consider[s] that this problem will find its resolution before the end of 2009” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152899.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Jean Francois Bureau, assistant to the secretary general of NATO to discuss relations between Azerbaijan and the Western alliance. The Azerbaijani foreign minister says that Baku appreciates NATO’s April 6th declaration supporting the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152932.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov tells a conference in Baku on “NATO as an Alliance of Full Political Maturity” that Azerbaijan over the past 15 years has achieved “a qualitatively new stage” of ties with NATO and now among other things takes “an active part” in peacekeeping operations in Kosovo, Iraq and Afghanistan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152837.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov receives Povilas Malakauskas, head of the State Security Department of Lithuania, to discuss bilateral cooperation in the security area (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152973.html>).

US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Anne Derse says that President Barak Obama considers that the warming of relations between Ankara and Yerevan will promote stability in the region and that the American president is committed to the further development of bilateral ties with Azerbaijan and the rapid resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152922.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that there are many transportation links among Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan but that “unfortunately,” they pass through Armenian-occupied territories of Azerbaijan and cannot be used until that conflict is resolved. Consequently, he says, Turkey “would not gain much” from the opening of the border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152905.html>).

The Congress of Azerbaijanis of the World (KAM) sends a letter to Turkish President Gul and Prime Minister Erdogan expressing the group’s opposition to the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border until Armenia ends its occupation of Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152956.html>).

Allahshukur Pasha-zade, the sheikh ul-Islam for the Caucasus, says in a letter to Turkish Religious Affairs Minister Ali Bardakoglu that the Muslims of Azerbaijan are “deeply concerned” by reports that Turkey may open its border with Armenia and re-establish diplomatic ties with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152959.html>).

8 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152759.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Chinese Ambassador Cian Jan to discuss bilateral relations. The foreign minister expresses his gratitude for Beijing’s support of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and says that “a united and undivided China” is important for regional and international security (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152811.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives incoming Saudi Ambassador Fahd bin Ali al-Dusar to discuss bilateral relations. The ambassador says that until Armenia withdraws from Azerbaijani territory, Saudi Arabia will not establish diplomatic relations with Yerevan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152764.html>).

Elkhan Polukhov, press spokesman for the Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry, says that “the happiest stage in the history of the Karabakh resolution process will be the day when the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Nagorno-Karabakh within Azerbaijan will peacefully coexist on this

territory” and not when, as Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan has suggested, when Nagorno-Karabakh will be declared an independent state or alternatively be united to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152708.html>).

Lithuanian Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas says in Baku that “the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border would not guarantee Turkey’s admission to the European Union” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152906.html>).

7 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives Lithuanian Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas, during which meeting the latter notes that because this year Baku is the capital of Islamic culture and Vilnius is the capital of European culture, their experiences in these roles should promote an expansion of ties between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152605.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bernard Fassier, the French co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152576.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov signs a memorandum on deepening political dialogue between Baku and Vilnius with his Lithuanian counterpart Vygaudas Ušackas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152574.html>).

Oktay Asadov, the speaker of the Milli Majlis, tells visiting Lithuanian Foreign Minister Vygaudas Ušackas that Baku is interested in studying Lithuania’s experience in integrating with European institutions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152650.html>).

National Security Minister Lt. Gen. Eldar Makhmudov meets with Kirco Kirov, the director of the National Intelligence Service of Bulgaria, during latter’s visit to Baku to discuss bilateral security cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152658.html>).

The Federation of Azerbaijani-Turkish Social Organizations calls on Turkish President Abdulla Gul not to open the Turkish border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152638.html>).

6 April

Turkish President Abdulla Gul telephones President Ilham Aliyev to

calls on him to come to Turkey to participate in the Alliance of Civilizations summit. President Aliyev refuses. Then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton calls the Azerbaijani leader to make the same request but without any more success (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152453.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to Italian President Giorgio Napolitano after an earthquake in Italy claimed more than 250 victims (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152498.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Peter Semneby, the special representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus to discuss talks about the occupied territories and the EU's Eastern Partnership program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152493.html>).

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov receives Giorgio Piccirillo, the general director of Italy's Agency for Internal Information and Security, to discuss bilateral cooperation in those areas (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152481.html>).

The council of ministers of the United Arab Emirates approves the opening of an embassy in Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152456.html>).

5 April

National Security Minister Eldar Makhmudov receives Gen. Aleksandr Bortnikov, the director of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB), and Mikhail Fradkov, the director of Russia's Foreign Intelligence Services (SVR) to discuss bilateral cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152326.html>).

3 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives a telephone call from Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, who tells President Aliyev about the results of his meetings in London. The two discuss the international situation under conditions of the economic crisis (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152243.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the heads of various special services from abroad who are in Baku to attend meetings in connection with the 90th anniversary of Azerbaijan's Ministry of National Security (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152209.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152197.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Erdogan says that until Armenia drops its demands about 1915 and withdraws from the territories of Azerbaijan it has occupied, Ankara will never agree to the opening of the border with Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152171.html>).

2 April

President Ilham Aliyev receives German Foreign Minister Gernot Erler to discuss bilateral relations (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152077.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the transport ministers of the Caspian littoral states to discuss expanding cooperation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152082.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the incoming ambassadors of China, Morocco, and Bulgaria (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/152063.html>). He also receives the incoming ambassador of the Russian Federation.

1 April

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov visits Tbilisi during which he meets President Mikheil Saakashvili as well as that country's prime minister and foreign minister. He stresses Azerbaijan's support for the territorial integrity of Georgia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151959.html>).

Visiting German Foreign Minister Gernot Erler says that Germany does not have anything to do with structures which support ties with the separatists of Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151923.html>).

UK Ambassador to Azerbaijan Caroline Brown says that London "does not recognize a formation by the name of 'Nagorno-Karabakh'" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151871.html>).

Dennis Sammut, the head of LINKS, a British NGO, says that the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Turkey and the opening of the border between those two countries will contribute to the resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151896.html>).

MARCH

31 March

In commemoration of the Day of the Genocide of Azerbaijanis in 1918, Azerbaijanis in the republic and Azerbaijani embassies, consulates, and cultural centers abroad organized a variety of meetings to call attention to that human tragedy (<http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/69499/-azerbaijan-marks-day-of-azerbaijani-genocide.html>; <http://day.az/news/politics/151667.html>; <http://anspress.com/nid108551.html>; <http://www.day.az/news/politics/151736.html>).

Irakly Alasaniya, one of the leaders of the Georgian opposition, says that “relations between Georgia and Azerbaijan will remain strategic,” adding that “we will never forget how Azerbaijan supported us in difficult times.” He urges that the two countries work together to develop GUAM (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151722.html>).

30 March

Novruz Mammadov, the head of a department in the Presidential Administration, says that “the US president should send a special message to Armenia calling on it to end its occupation” of Azerbaijani territory (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151636.html>). He adds that Baku’s opposition to the operation of foreign military bases on its territory remains unchanged (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151617.html>).

Vitaly Churkin, the permanent representative of the Russian Federation to the United Nations, says that Moscow “supports the process of negotiations” on Nagorno-Karabakh “taking place under the aegis of the OSCE.” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151606.html>).

29 March

Sergey Prikhod'ko, an aide to Russian President Dmitry Medvedev, says that the Russian president will discuss the possible joint use of the Gabala radar station in Azerbaijan with US President Barak Obama in London (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151440.html>).

The Council on Gender Equality of the Belgian Senate begins a visit to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151450.html>).

28 March

Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev, Azerbaijan's defense minister, visits Qatar to sign an agreement on military cooperation with that country (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151426.html>).

27 March

Matthew Bryza, the US deputy assistant secretary of state who serves as a co-chair of the Minsk Group, says that "it is possible to expect serious moves forward in the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151302.html>).

The commanders of the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF) in Afghanistan express their satisfaction with the performance of the Azerbaijani soldiers serving there (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=99313>).

26 March

Lt. Gen. Safar Abiyev, Azerbaijan's defense minister, signs a military-technical cooperation accord with his visiting Uzbekistan counterpart Kabul Berdiyev. Berdiyev for his part says that Tashkent continues to support the position of Azerbaijan on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151286.html>; <http://anspress.com/nid108350.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Matthew Bryza, the US deputy assistant secretary of state who serves as co-chair of the Minsk Group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151282.html>).

25 March

Khalaf Khalafov, deputy foreign minister of Azerbaijan, says that by arming Armenia, Russia is not only "acquiring the reputation of a country which provides help to an aggressor state," but is also destabilizing the

situation in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151174.html>)

24 March

President Ilham Aliyev sends a letter of sympathy to US President Barack Obama after the plane crash in Butte, Montana (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151138.html>).

Araz Azimov, deputy foreign minister of Azerbaijan, says that “the goal of Azerbaijan is the re-establishment of territorial integrity and peace between the [Azerbaijani and Armenian] communities in the region of Nagorno-Karabakh” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151096.html>).

The Azerbaijan-Armenian Forum concerning the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict starts its work in Vienna (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/151175.html>)

20 March

Azerbaijani officials reject the draft conclusions of the Venice Commission on changes in the Constitution of the Azerbaijan Republic. The draft, which concludes that the measures approved by the constitutional referendum represent “a step backward on the road to the strengthening of democracy in Azerbaijan,” is “unbalanced” and “incomplete,” the officials say (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150969.html>).

19 March

The observers group of 20 representatives of European parliaments say that they have concluded that “the referendum reflects the will of the Azerbaijani people,” adding that it is essential that Azerbaijan continue “the process of the building of democratic institutions” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150835.html>).

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe recognizes the referendum as “legitimate,” “was transparent, well organised and held in a peaceful atmosphere,” according to Paul Wille, the chief of the PACE delegation which monitored the vote. The delegation “concludes that the result of the referendum shows the willingness of the people of Azerbaijan to have greater stability and elements for further democratisation, a better balance of power will nevertheless require further reforms in the future”

(<http://www.coe.az/Latest-News/147.html>).

The observer mission of the CIS says that the referendum in Azerbaijan was free and open and corresponds to the norms of the existing legislation in the country and to generally accepted approaches to the conduct of such voting. The mission continues that “the referendum was an important factor of the further democratization of social life of Azerbaijan, strengthened the basis of sovereignty, and is a reflection of the stable, step by step social-economic development of the state” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150823.html>).

Svetlana Orlova, the deputy speaker of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation, says that over the last years, “there have been serious positive changes” and that “the referendum in Azerbaijan took place openly.” She adds that “this is an absolutely objective assessment. The referendum is an important choice, and the people made its choice in favor of the existing authorities” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150826.html>).

Elin Suleymanov, the Consul General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles, speaks to the Jewish Community of America about the high level of tolerance in Azerbaijan and about the “active role of the Jewish community in the social-political life of Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150843.html>).

18 March

In a referendum, the Azerbaijani people overwhelmingly approve amendments to the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan that eliminate the restriction on anyone serving as president for more than two consecutive terms (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150800.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Svetlana Orlova, the deputy speaker of the Federation Council of the Russian Federation (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150779.html>).

Hulusi Kılıç, Turkey’s ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that “Turkey will not take any steps which will bring harm to the interests of Azerbaijan” in the course of its contacts with Armenia or otherwise (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150761.html>).

Vladimir Dorokhin, Russia’s incoming ambassador to Azerbaijan, arrives in Baku. Dorokhin, who was born in 1948, is a graduate of

MGIMO and speaks Hungarian, English and German (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150775.html>).

17 March

Hulusi Küçük, Turkey's ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia is "not a subject for discussion" at present and that bilateral talks between Ankara and Yerevan are only at an early stage (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150709.html>).

16 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives the former chairman of the French Senate, Christian Poncelet, who notes that he is "very glad to be a witness of the colossal processes of development in Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150541.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the members of the special committee of the Council of Europe's Parliamentary Assembly who are in Azerbaijan to observe the referendum (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150567.html>).

Achmet Ünal Çeviköz, the deputy foreign minister of Turkey who earlier served as Ankara's ambassador in Baku, says in an interview on the Voice of America that "the US and Turkey have many common goals, including in the Caucasus." His comments are in advance of President Barak Obama's visit to Ankara (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150466.html>).

Azerbaijani military personnel begin their participation in a series of NATO exercises in Turkey, the Czech Republic, and the US (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150453.html>).

15 March

Zakir Hashimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Turkey, says that media reports about the opening of the Turkish-Armenian border were intended to create "a sensation" rather than to describe a reality (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150414.html> and <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98871>; <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98796>).

14 March

Joao Soares, the president of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, says that there is no military solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and that diplomacy is the only way forward (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150346.html>).

Ogtay Asadov, the chairman of the Milli Majlis, receives a delegation of Kyrgyzstan parliamentarians (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150392.html>).

13 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives a delegation of Kyrgyzstan parliamentarians and praises Bishkek for its commemoration of the late writer Chingiz Aitmatov (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98834>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives outgoing Russian Ambassador Vasily Istratov on the completion of the latter's assignment in Baku (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98848>). Istratov both at that meeting and in interviews with the media stresses that "the basic contribution to the improvement of Azerbaijani-Russian relations belongs to the leaders of the two states" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150224.html>; <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98808>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of the social-political department of the Administration of the President, says that Baku has always given "enormous importance to the position of Moscow on the Nagorno-Karabakh problem" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150248.html>).

12 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov and expresses his appreciation of the strengthening of bilateral relations between their two countries (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98775>). Earlier, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov and Lavrov discuss a variety of bilateral issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150097.html>).

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan may meet in Prague during the European Union summit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150085.html>).

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state, says that

Washington at the present time “does not look positively” on the possibility of Iranian participation in the Nabucco project (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/150146.html>).

11 March

President Ilham Aliyev participates in the summit of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and says that this body will work for the good of all member states. During the session, he meets with his counterparts from Pakistan, Afghanistan, Turkey, Tajikistan, Iraq, Syria and Qatar (<http://www.day.az/news/economy/150003.html>).

10 March

President Ilham Aliyev signs seven inter-governmental agreements on economic, cultural, and scientific affairs with Iran during his visit to Tehran and meetings with the Iranian president (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149751.html>).

Samad Seyidov, the head of the Milli Majlis Committee on International Affairs, flies to Paris to take part in sessions of several executive bodies of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149758.html>).

9 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives Army General Atilla Ishik, the commander of the Turkish Republic gendarmerie (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149711.html>).

6 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives outgoing Chinese Ambassador Zhang Haizhou on the completion of his assignment in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149508.html>).

Defense Minister Safar Abiyev receives Mubarak bin Fahd Hasim al-Tani, Qatar's ambassador to Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149430.html>).

Abbasali Hasanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Iran, says in advance of President Ilham Aliyev's visit to Tehran that cooperation between the two countries is expanding and will increase after President Aliyev's visit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149420.html>).

Azerbaijani deputies participate in a meeting of their counterparts from other member states of the Organization of the Islamic Conference and devote particular attention to contacts with Iranian parliamentarians in advance of President Ilham Aliyev's upcoming visit to Tehran (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149401.html>).

The Milli Majlis creates an Azerbaijan-Ireland parliamentary group and expands the membership of the existing Azerbaijan-Israel one (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149518.html>).

5 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives an invitation from French President Nicolas Sarkozy to visit Paris. The date of the visit has not yet been set (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149287.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives the UN resident coordinator for Azerbaijan Bruno Pouezat (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149327.html>).

The co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group condemn the violation of the ceasefire between Azerbaijani and Armenian forces during the course of the February 26 visit of the OSCE's monitoring group (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149340.html>).

Debnat Show, India's ambassador to Baku, says during a visit to Ganja that his country supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and wants to develop greater economic ties with Azerbaijan and its regions (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149312.html>).

4 March

Vasily Kalinov, Bulgaria's incoming ambassador to Azerbaijan, arrives in Baku to take up his duties. He replaces Ivan Palchev who spent five years in Azerbaijan and who wrote a book in Bulgarian on "Azerbaijan – the Caucasus Tiger" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149319.html>).

Anne Derse, US ambassador to Azerbaijan, says that the issue of American participation in the operation of the Gabala radar station will be discussed with Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149211.html>). In other comments, she says that the question of "the so-called 'genocide of Armenians' in 1915" is an issue for historians and ought not to be the subject of actions by legislatures (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149215.html>).

Yulon Gagoshidze, the Georgian minister for diaspora questions, arrives in Baku for a four-day visit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148887.html>).

Members of the Norwegian parliament tell Rafael Ibragimov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Sweden, Norway and Finland, that Oslo supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149200.html>).

3 March

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, Matthew Bryza of the United States, Bernard Fassier of France, and Yury Merzlyakov of the Russian Federation (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98219>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Alfredo Mantica, the deputy foreign minister of Italy (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98220>). Prior to that meeting, Mantica meets with foreign ministry officials (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148882.html>).

Fuad Akhundov, the head of the social-political department of the Administration of the President of Azerbaijan, says that "the developed and mutually profitable relations between Azerbaijan and Russia are important for Europe" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149034.html>).

Mazahir Panahov, the head of Azerbaijan's Central Election Commission, says that "Azerbaijan is striving to become a full and worthy member of the democratic world" and that in its conduct of elections and referenda, Baku seeks to meet "the standards applied in the leading countries of the world" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/149009.html>).

Abbasali Hasanov, Azerbaijan's ambassador in Tehran, meets with Iranian foreign minister Manouchehr Mottaki to discuss arrangements for the seventh bilateral inter-governmental commission meeting now scheduled for February 2009 in Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148946.html>).

2 March

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov takes part in the International Donors Conference in Egypt to discuss assistance to Gaza (<http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98063>).

Azerbaijanis take part in staff courses in various NATO countries as part of the alliance's Partnership for Peace program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148870.html>).

Levan Varshalomidze, the head of the government of the Adjara Autonomous Republic of Georgia, visits Baku to meet President Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister Artur Rasizade (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148788.html> and <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=98056>).

1 March

The Azerbaijan-American Council, the Azerbaijan Society of America and the Federation of Turkish American Organizations organize a series of meetings devoted to the anniversary of the Khojali massacre (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148758.html>).

FEBRUARY

28 February

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says that the withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories would benefit the Armenian economy first of all, adding that in his view, Baku must continue to “explain and show Armenia” just how much it would benefit from the opening of transportation and communication links and the growth of trade as a result (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148670.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Grigory Karasin, who oversees the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict for Moscow. Karasin is in Baku as part of the Russian delegation led by Sergey Narshkin, the head of the Russian Presidential Administration (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148735.html>).

Latif Gandilov, Azerbaijan's ambassador to Kazakhstan, meets with that country's new deputy minister of foreign affairs, Konstantin Zhigalov, to discuss energy and transportation issues and expanding bilateral cooperation in advance of both the sixth session of the Azerbaijan-Kazakhstan intergovernmental commission on economic cooperation and the summit of Turkic-language states (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148712.html>).

27 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives the three co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group to discuss the latest moves toward the regulation of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Earlier, members of the group meet with Azerbaijan's foreign and defense ministers (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148621.html>).

Dennis Rehberg, a Republican from the US state of Montana, has joined the Congressional Working Group on Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148642.html>).

26 February

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with his Ukrainian counterpart Volodimir Ogryzko to discuss bilateral relationships and the future of GUAM. Mammadyarov is in Kyiv to take part in a GUAM ministerial (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148495.html>).

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry receives a Russian delegation for a round of consultations between the two diplomatic services. Among the topics they discuss are the status of Russian citizens in Azerbaijan and that of Azerbaijani citizens in the Russian Federation. This is the first such meeting of the two ministries since January 2007 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148442.html>).

Moscow appoints Vladimir Dorokhin as its new ambassador to Azerbaijan. The Russian diplomat had been working as an ambassador for special assignments and earlier headed the ministry's department for cultural ties and UNESCO affairs. He replaces Vasily Istratov (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148516.html>).

25 February

President Ilham Aliyev sends a message of sympathy to his Turkish counterpart Abdulla Gul after the Turkish airliner crash in Amsterdam (<http://www.anspress.com/index.php?nid=105219>).

24 February

In advance of the 17th anniversary of the Khojali tragedy, residents of that city sent an appeal to the UN, the Council of Europe and the OSCE calling for international recognition of that event as an Armenian-orchestrated genocide against the Azerbaijani people (<http://www.anspress.com/index.php?nid=105101>).

23 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Fridon Todua, the deputy chairman of the Georgian parliament (<http://ru.apa.az/news.php?id=128311>).

20 February

The Romanian embassy in Baku replaces the Turkish embassy as the point of contact between NATO and the government of Azerbaijan (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=128093).

Zbigniew Brzezinski, former US National Security Advisor, tells the Georgian media that the US “should be concerned lest Georgia, Ukraine and Azerbaijan become victims of Russian-American dialogue” and that it “must do everything for the defense of these countries” (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=128003).

19 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Iranian Foreign Minister Manouchehr Mottaki and the two express satisfaction at the level of relations between the two countries (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127957).

18 February

At the opening of ceremonies declaring Baku the “capital of the Islamic world” for 2009, President Ilham Aliyev says that relations with the Islamic world of which it is a part are an important component of Azerbaijan’s foreign policy. He calls on the Muslim countries of the world to expand their cooperation and support one another through the OIC and ISESCO. And he stresses that “Islam is a religion of brotherhood and tolerance” (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127786).

President Ilham Aliyev says that Baku is actively working to restore all historical monuments in Azerbaijan but “as a result of the occupation of Azerbaijani lands by Armenia, we cannot guarantee the complete preservation of our historical inheritance” (<http://ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127772>).

Atta al-Manane Bakkhit, the deputy general secretary of the Organization of the Islamic Conference, says that the Muslim world “stands behind Azerbaijan” with regard to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and will do everything it can to ensure that the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is respected (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127769).

The Baku office of the OSCE supports the idea of forums to discuss proposed changes in the Constitution of Azerbaijan. The forums are scheduled for the first two weeks in March and will take place in four cities.

17 February

During an interview broadcast on Russian television, President Ilham Aliyev says that “today it seems to us that it is possible to find a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict” because “there are certain hopes that Armenia will approach the question with more constructive and realistic positions. There are definite signals” (ru.apa.az/news.php?id=127541).

16 February

President Ilham Aliyev visits Greece where he meets with his Greek counterpart Karlos Papulias, signs a series of bilateral accords on energy transit and security issues, and declares that if Armenia would observe international legal norms, including the recognition of the territorial integrity of existing states, then the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would be solved quickly.

Turkish Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan says that Ankara will play an even greater role in the future in the development of Azerbaijani-Armenian and Russian-Georgian relations as it expands its foreign policy efforts in the Middle East and the European Union as well (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/148000.html>).

15 February

Turkish President Abdulla Gul expresses his sympathies to President Ilham Aliyev and the Azerbaijani people on the death of Azerbaijani poet Bakhtiyar Vahabzade, who Gul notes was extremely well-known in Turkey (<http://www.day.az/news/culture/147811.html>).

13 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek, who is currently serving as the president of the European Union. The two discuss Azerbaijan’s relationship with the EU and the role of the Czech Republic in the Nabucco project (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147752.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev in an interview with Russian media outlets says that “the only thing [Baku] has not been able to achieve is the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.” In all other spheres, including the economy, national security, and social welfare, the

Azerbaijani leader adds, Baku has been remarkably successful (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147659.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev receives Goran Lennmarker, the special representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly for the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Earlier, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with the OSCE official and reaffirms that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can be resolved only on the basis of the maintenance of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147731.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/147731.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov meets with British foreign office representatives to discuss the development of the European Union's Eastern Partnership program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147733.html>).

Pieter de Haep, the Director-General for Political Affairs of the Dutch foreign ministry, tells Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov that the Hague supports the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and that this principle must be the basis of any resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147706.html>).

12 February

Azerbaijan foreign ministry spokesman Khazar Ibrahim says that Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan is using terms to discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute that have no meaning, including such notions as "the people of Nagorno-Karabakh." There is "no such people," Khazar Ibrahim says, there are only Armenian and Azerbaijani communities in that part of the Republic of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147515.html>).

11 February

President Ilham Aliyev returns from a two-day visit to Kuwait where he met with Sheikh Sabah al-amed al-Jabir as Sabah and other senior officials to discuss relations between the two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147235.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/147336.html>).

Turkish Ambassador to Azerbaijan Hulusi Kylyc says that Ankara wants to do everything it can to "stimulate" moves toward the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute and urges both parties to work in the framework of the Platform of Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus

Turkey has proposed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147364.html>).

Azerbaijan foreign ministry spokesman Khazar Ibrahim says that information published in the Turkish newspaper *Hurriyet* about the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is “absurd” and should be ignored (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147382.html>).

US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Ann Derse says that the United States “will construct its policy in the Caucasus on the basis of intensive diplomacy.” She stresses that Azerbaijan is “a very important partner” of the United States and will remain so under the new US Administration (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147322.html>).

9 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babadjan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/147008.html>).

David Wilshire, the head of the newly created subcommittee of PACE on conflicts in the post-Soviet space, says that his group “must study and understand the specific features of ongoing and past frozen conflicts including

Nagorno-Karabakh”

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146979.html>).

French Ambassador to Azerbaijan Gabriel Keller says that any changes in the constitution of Azerbaijan are “an internal affair” of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146972.html>).

8 February

Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babadjan says that he hopes that “the negotiation process between Azerbaijan and Armenia will give positive results” and that his country is committed to the re-establishment of peace and stability in the South Caucasus (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146876.html>).

7 February

Khalaf Khalafov, Azerbaijani deputy foreign minister, presents Azerbaijan’s national report on human rights to a Geneva session of the UN Council on Human Rights (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146827.html>).

Austrian foreign ministry officials announce that Vienna will open an

embassy in Baku in the near future and looks forward to working more closely with Azerbaijan on Nabucco and the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146799.html>).

6 February

President Ilham Aliyev receives the letters of credence from the incoming ambassadors of Vietnam, Benin, Nigeria, Yemen, Angola, Estonia, the UAR, Sri-Lanka, Zimbabwe, and India (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146781.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/146767.html>).

5 February

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives copies of the letters of credence of the incoming ambassadors from Estonia (Aivo Orava) and Angola (Titu Armando) (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146508.html> and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/146553.html>).

4 February

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov tells visiting Polish Foreign Minister Andrei Kramer that “Armenia had remained outside of major regional projects because of its occupation of part of the territory of Azerbaijan.” Mammadyarov says that he believes that Poland has a special role to play in the development of the European Union’s Eastern Partnership program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146454.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the foreign relations department of the Executive Apparatus of President Ilham Aliyev, says that Baku looked forward to the development of the Eastern Partnership but that “unfortunately, our relations with the EU are not at the level that we would like,” a level based on “equal partnership” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146465.html>).

Novruz Mammadov, the head of the foreign relations department of the Executive Apparatus of President Ilham Aliyev, accuses Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan of cowardice. The Armenian leader, Mammadov says, “lacked the courage” to discuss many of the most important issues with Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev when the two were in Switzerland for the Davos meetings. The Azerbaijani advisor adds that as has happened

in the past, the Armenian side has gone back on its promises (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146389.html>).

Milli Majlis deputy Azay Gulyev, a member of the Azerbaijani delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, says that Baku intends to ask that organization at its meeting in Vienna February 17-21 to appoint a special rapporteur on the issue of Russia's transfer of 800 million US dollars in military equipment to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146367.html>).

3 February

A NATO official speaking on condition of anonymity says that Azerbaijan has already created an army "capable of conducting military actions of an offensive character" although he adds that it would be impossible for Azerbaijani forces to liberate the occupied territories as rapidly as Azerbaijani Milli Majlis deputy Baba Tagiyev had suggested. Tagiyev had said that Azerbaijan could liberate the region "in the course of 48 hours" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146284.html>).

2 February

Milli Majlis announces plans to send a group of deputies to Moscow to meet with members of the Russian Duma concerning the transfer of Russian arms to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146016.html>).

Milli Majlis deputy Samad Seyidov, the head of the Azerbaijani delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that if the Council does not stop applying double standards to Azerbaijan, then Baku will have to consider reviewing its relations with that organization. He points to the very different way the Council has treated Azerbaijan as compared to Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/146105.html>).

JANUARY

31 January

During a working visit to Moscow, Azerbaijan Defense Minister Col. Gen. Safar Abiyev meets with his Russian counterpart Anatoly Serdyukov to discuss cooperation between their two ministries. The Russian minister tells him that his country did not transfer to Armenia during 2008 arms “in the amounts and of the kind” that have been reported in the media (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145878.html>).

30 January

President Ilham Aliyev gives an interview to CNN in which he discusses the current economic crisis and energy issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145769.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Israeli President Shimon Peres, Latvian President Valdis Zatlers, and Lithuanian President Valdas Adamkus during his visit to Davos. He also meets with Albanian Prime Minister Sali Berisha and with a series of European bankers and international business leaders (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145827.html>, <http://www.day.az/news/politics/145708.html>, and <http://www.day.az/news/politics/145724.html>).

Azerbaijan Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov sends a letter to the US Congressional Helsinki Commission in response to its complaint concerning Baku’s decision to shut down the re-broadcast of international radio networks on domestic stations. Mammadyarov notes that a law adopted in 2002 required Baku to do so and points out that these international broadcasters can still reach their audiences via shortwave, the

Internet and cable channels (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145799.html>).

29 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets Prince Andrew of Great Britain and Polish Prime Minister Donald Tusk during the Davos conference. He also meets the director of Statoil-Hydro, Helge Lund (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145550.html>).

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan says in Davos that Turkey will always support Azerbaijan “on the question of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The resolution of this problem and Turkish-Armenian relations are interconnected” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145614.html>).

Following the meeting between President Ilham Aliyev and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan, the co-chairs of the Minsk Group release a statement in which they express the hope that “in the nearest future” agreement will be found “where disagreements exist” and that new meetings will take place among the parties (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145646.html>).

28 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets with his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan in Zurich first with only the two of them present and then with their foreign ministers, Elmar Mammadyarov and Edward Nalbandyan, and the Minsk Group co-chairs, to discuss the territorial dispute between the two countries (<http://day.az/news/politics/145486.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev gives an interview to “The Wall Street Journal,” in which he discusses the negotiations with Armenia on Nagorno-Karabakh, energy transit issues and the future of Nabucco, and the economic prospects of Azerbaijan and the region (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145528.html>).

27 January

President Ilham Aliyev meets in Budapest with Bulgarian Prime Minister Sergey Stanishev, Czech Prime Minister Mirek Topolanek, and Hungarian Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsany. He also meets with the

president of the European Investment Bank, Philippe Maystadt, and gives interviews to the Hungarian media and Bloomberg News (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145210.html>).

Azerbaijani Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says in Istanbul during talks about the proposed Platform for Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus that “without the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the realization of the platform which opens the path to cooperation with Armenia is impossible” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145331.html>).

Russian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Vasily Istratov says that the document purporting to show that Moscow transferred weapons to Armenia is “disinformation and a falsification,” and he expresses regret that so many people were giving it credence (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145283.html>).

Russian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Vasily Istratov says that Moscow has both political and humanitarian interests in the exhumation and reburial of the 26 Baku commissars in Azerbaijan’s capital. The individuals involved are very much part of his country’s political history, and there are relatives of those who died in 1920 still living in Russia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145303.html>).

Agshin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan’s permanent representative to the United Nations in New York, is jointly accredited as ambassador to Jamaica and presents his letters of credence to the governor general of that island nation, Kenneth Hall (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145509.html>).

26 January

US Ambassador to Azerbaijan Ann Derse says that Washington has proposed to Baku that the two countries reach agreement on an international accord that would allow the restoration of the re-broadcasting of foreign radio networks on Azerbaijani stations. She says that such a step “would be a positive signal for the new US administration” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145149.html>).

Romanian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Nicolae Ureche says that he has “no doubts” that the Nabucco summit will be a success (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/145112.html>).

With the support of the Azerbaijan foreign ministry, a six-day session of

the NATO International School opened in Baku. The sessions are for government officials and political analysts (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144979.html>).

24 January

Moscow's *Nezavisimaya gazeta* suggests that the reports about the transfer of Russian arms to Armenia originated in "radical parts of the Armenian establishment" who may have been interested in forcing Moscow to act (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144972.html>).

23 January

General Franciszek Gagor, the chief of the Polish general staff, tells Azerbaijan's defense minister Safar Abiyev that "the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict can be resolved only in the framework of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144829.html>).

Hungary plans to open an embassy in Baku in the near future, Azerbaijani media report, citing unnamed "diplomatic sources." Budapest reportedly has rented a building for this in the Old City of the Azerbaijan capital (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144868.html>).

22 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov during the latter's visit to Baku (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144653.html>). Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says the Bulgarian leader's visit concerned shipments of gas to his country (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144495.html>).

21 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives the EU Commissioner for external affairs Benita Ferrero-Waldner, who is in Baku to work out the details of Azerbaijan's inclusion in the EU's Eastern Partnership program (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144479.html> and (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144384.html>)).

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says after meeting Benita Ferrero-Waldner, the EU Commissioner for external affairs, that the Eastern Partnership program could help Azerbaijani citizens get Shengen

visas more easily, something they have had problems with up to now (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144492.html>).

20 January

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state, says that foreign radio broadcasts represent “a very important source of information” for Azerbaijanis and that he and his colleagues believe that “a way out of the current situation” in which Baku is blocking the re-broadcast of such foreign networks on radio stations in Azerbaijan can be found (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144310.html>).

19 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives the co-chairs of the Minsk Group to discuss the state of negotiations about the dispute between Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144260.html>).

Ziyafat Askarov, the vice speaker of the Milli Majlis and the head of Azerbaijan’s delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of NATO, says that Russia’s decision to arm Armenia will have serious consequences not only for stability in the region but for Azerbaijan’s relations with Moscow, which is a co-chair of the Minsk Group which is supposed to serve as a mediator between Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144263.html>).

Belgian Ambassador to Azerbaijan Philippe Jottar says that the document on military cooperation between Belgium and Azerbaijan is “ready for signing” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144201.html>).

17 January

Baku media, picking up from Iranian media, report that Iran and Armenia have agreed to build a hydroelectric station on the occupied territories of Azerbaijan (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144094.html>).

16 January

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov speaks by telephone with his Russian counterpart Sergey Lavrov about reports that Moscow has supplied Armenia with 800 million US dollars-worth of military equipment and weaponry. Lavrov says that the reports are not true

(<http://www.day.az/news/politics/144050.html> and
<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143987.html>).

15 January

The Azerbaijan Foreign Ministry distributes a declaration condemning Russia for supplying arms to Armenia, an action which “will serve to strengthen the military potential [of a country] which occupies part of the territory of Azerbaijan.” This action, the declaration continues, “violates UN Security Council resolutions and the UN General Assembly resolution of March 14, 2008. The ministry statement says that Baku is deeply concerned by this action given its friendship with Moscow and Moscow’s involvement in the Minsk Group which is attempting to resolve the conflict (http://mfa.gov.az/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=633&Itemid=1).

14 January

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives Russian Ambassador Vasily Istratov to query about Moscow’s provision of arms to Armenia. The ministry press service says that Azerbaijan was not satisfied by Istratov’s response and called on the Russian government to provide “a more precise answer” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143865.html>).

Ganira Pashayeva, a parliamentarian who serves on the Azerbaijan delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, says that her group will present documentation to the winter meeting of that body concerning the 60th anniversary of the deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia, as well as pertaining to the 90th anniversary of the genocide of Azerbaijanis perpetrated by Armenians after the 1917 Russian revolution (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143695.html>).

Azerbaijan takes part in a session of the executive committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization of the Islamic Conference (OIC) held in Istanbul and devoted to events in Gaza (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143388.html>).

13 January

President Ilham Aliyev receives Estonian President Toomas Hendrik Ilves and the two leaders sign a joint declaration on expanding cooperation

between their two countries (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143467.html>). President Ilham Aliyev says that the signing of the joint declaration with Estonia is yet another demonstration that Azerbaijan is “a reliable partner” for foreign governments and firms (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143567.html>). The same day, Azerbaijan’s First Lady Mehriban Aliyeva receives her Estonian counterpart, Evelina Ilves (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143486.html>).

12 January

The Azerbaijan foreign ministry calls in Russian Ambassador Vasily Istratov to ask for an explanation of Moscow’s transfer of arms to Armenia. Istratov says that he “found out” about the transfer only “from the mass media in Azerbaijan” (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143420.html>).

Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov receives new Indian Ambassador Debnath Shaw (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143311.html>).

11 January

Bulgarian President Georgi Parvanov names Vasil Kalinov as Sofia’s new ambassador in Baku, replacing Ivan Palchev, who completed his assignment in the Azerbaijani capital in July 2008 (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143233.html>).

9 January

Azerbaijan parliamentarians express outrage at reports that Moscow has supplied Armenia with 800 million US dollars worth of arms (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143037.html>).

Goran Lennmarker, the special representative of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly on the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, arrives in South Caucasus for a two-day visit (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/143124.html>).

8 January

Matthew Bryza, US deputy assistant secretary of state and co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, says that he hopes the upcoming visit of the co-

chairs of that group to the region will lay the foundation for the next meeting between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142950.html>).

6 January

The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe announces that it will not send observers to the March 18th referendum in Azerbaijan concerning amendments to that country's constitution (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142654.html>).

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry expresses its concern about the situation in Palestine and especially in Gaza, noting that "Azerbaijan supports the efforts of the Palestinian people to achieve peace and stability in the region, as well as the establishment of an independent Palestinian state" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142646.html>).

5 January

Ramzan Kadyrov, the president of Chechnya, expresses regret that relations between Grozny and Baku have not gone beyond shopping trips by Chechens in Azerbaijan and the presence of an Azerbaijani diaspora in Grozny. He recalls that in Soviet times, links between the oil industries of the two republics were very close (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142525.html>).

4 January

Parviz Shahbazov, Azerbaijan's ambassador in Berlin, says that "if the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is not re-established, then there will never be peace and stability in the region" (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/142448.html>).

Notes on Editors

Paul Goble is publications advisor at the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, where he also co-edits ADA's biweekly online publication *Azerbaijan in the World*. Earlier, he served as vice dean for the social sciences and humanities at Audentes University in Tallinn and a senior research associate at the EuroCollege of the University of Tartu in Estonia. While there, he launched the *Window on Eurasia* series, which he distributes both as a blog, at <http://www.windowoneurasia.blogspot.com> and via e-list. Prior to joining the faculty there in 2004, he served in various capacities in the U.S. State Department, the International Broadcasting Bureau, at the Voice of America and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, as well as other institutions. He writes frequently on ethnic and religious issues and has edited five volumes on ethnicity and religion in the former Soviet space. Trained at Miami University in Ohio and the University of Chicago, he has been decorated by the governments of Estonia, Latvia and Lithuania for his work in promoting Baltic independence and the withdrawal of Russian forces from those formerly occupied lands.

Murad Ismayilov holds an MSt in International Relations (2009) from the University of Cambridge and an MA in International Relations from the Baku State University (2004). In 2005, he completed a four-month NATO Senior Executive Program at the NATO Studies Center in Bucharest (Romania). He is Program Manager for Research & Publications at Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy (ADA). He is also the Editor of ADA's biweekly online publication *Azerbaijan in the World*. His research interests include international relations/political theory (with a focus on constructivist and post-structuralist approaches), energy security, national identity and state-society relations (with a regional focus on Azerbaijan and post-Soviet Eurasia), Euro-Atlantic security, as well as sociology and security of the Middle East. He has authored a number of academic articles and book chapters, including placements in refereed journals and edited volumes.

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For Notes

This volume constitutes a hard copy of the biweekly electronic newsletter, *Azerbaijan in the World*, issued by the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy over the year 2009. Like the Academy itself, the publication is guided and inspired by a multi-purpose mission. It is intended to provide training for the next generation of Azerbaijani foreign policy specialists. It is also committed to procreating Azerbaijani scholars capable of producing high quality research and policy-relevant analysis on issues pertinent to Azerbaijan's foreign policy. The publication is meant to provide a powerful platform upon which foreign policy ideas get generated, debated, and communicated further onto a practical realm. It offers a forum for, and looks to encourage, communication not only within the Azerbaijani foreign policy and academic community, but more broadly as well.

A special section of the book, *Chronology*, covers key developments in Azerbaijan's interaction with the world, including official, working and state visits, as well as public statements and milestone events. Such chronologies become more valuable overtime, and this volume is the second in a long series that will help practitioners and scholars in Azerbaijan and elsewhere keep track of Azerbaijan's foreign policy development.