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# MÜNDƏRİCAT - CONTENTS - СОДЕРЖАНИЕ

## RƏSMİ XRONİKA - OFFICIAL CHRONICLE - ОФИЦИАЛЬНАЯ ХРОНИКА

Diplomatic activity of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan,  
H.E. Mr. I.Aliyev in second quarter of 2014 .....4

Diplomatic activity of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan,  
H.E. Mr. E.Mammadyarov in second quarter of 2014 .....45

## XƏBƏRLƏR – NEWS – НОВОСТИ

The Working Visit of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey  
to the Republic of Azerbaijan.....65

The Second Global Shared Societies Forum.....71

The Official Visit of the President of the French Republic  
to the Republic of Azerbaijan.....77

The Official Visit of the President of the Swiss Confederation  
to the Republic of Azerbaijan.....85

The Official Visit of the President of the European Commission  
to the Republic of Azerbaijan.....89

The 23rd Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly  
entitled "Helsinki +40: Towards Human Security for All"..... 94

Baku Statement of the First Trilateral Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs  
of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan.....100

NATO International School of Azerbaijan,  
Summer Session – "International Economic Security", 29 June - 5 July 2014, Baku.....102

## YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ

A.Ş.Mehdiyevin Azərbaycan Respublikasının Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatı yanında daimi  
nümayəndəsi, eyni zamanda Azərbaycan Respublikasının Kuba Respublikasında,  
Yamaykada, Nikaraqua Respublikasında, Venesuela Bolivar Respublikasında  
fövqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri vəzifələrindən geri çağırılması haqqında  
Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı .....106

K.Balzanın Azərbaycan Respublikasının Malta Respublikasında fəxri  
konsulu təyin edilməsi haqqında  
Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....106

Y.T.Əliyevin Azərbaycan Respublikasının Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatı yanında  
daimi nümayəndəsi təyin edilməsi haqqında  
Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....107

A.Q.Kərimova ikinci dərəcəli fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli elçi diplomatik rütbəsi verilməsi haqqında  
Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....107

A.Q.Kərimovun Azərbaycan Respublikasının YUNESKO yanında daimi nümayəndəsi təyin edilməsi haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....	108
Ə.F.Salmanovun Azərbaycan Respublikasının Ukraynanın Xarkov şəhərində fəxri konsulu təyin edilməsi haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....	108
R.K.Teymurova ikinci dərəcəli fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli elçi diplomatik rütbəsi verilməsi haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....	109
R.K.Teymurovun Azərbaycan Respublikasının Koreya Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri təyin edilməsi haqqında Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin Sərəncamı.....	109

### **REDAKSİYANIN QONAĞI – EDITORIAL GUEST – ГОСТЬ РЕДАКЦИИ**

Giampaolo Cutillo, Ambassador of Italy in Baku.....	110
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### **ARXIV SƏNƏDLƏR – ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS – АРХИВНЫЕ ДОКУМЕНТЫ**

XV Türk Ordu Korpusunun Baş Qərargahının komandanı, General-Mayor Kazim Karabekir Paşa və Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti Hökumətinin Hərbi Nümayəndəsi Əliağa Şixlinski arasında bağlanmış Hərbi Konvensiyanın surəti.....	113
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### **MƏQALƏLƏR - ARTICLES – СТАТЬИ**

Anis Bajrektarevic The Caspian 5 and Arctic 5 – Critical Similarities.....	121
Rovshan Ibrahimov EU foreign policy Instruments towards the New Independent States and their perception by Azerbaijan.....	128
Noemí Rabbia Russian position toward the implementation of the Responsibility to Protect Doctrine in Libya and Syria.....	138
Fuad Aliyev, Jahandar Gadirov The role of ICT sector in building Azerbaijan's national competitiveness.....	145

### **YENİ NƏŞRLƏR – NEW PUBLICATIONS – НОВЫЕ ИЗДАНИЯ**

Fiona Mclachlan and Ien Port "Khojaly Witness of a war crime – Armenia in the Dock".....	151
Фуад Ахундов «Разрушители фальсификаций».....	152
Наджиба Мустафаева «Принципы международного права и Нагорно-Карабахский конфликт».....	153



**DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY  
OF PRESIDENT OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN,  
H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV  
IN SECOND QUARTER OF 2014**

**VISITS BY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**  
**H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV**

**09.04.2014**                      **Official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran**

List of meetings held during the official visit:

- Meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani in an expanded format
- Meeting with Minister of Communications and Information Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran, co-chairman of the intergovernmental commission Mahmoud Vaezi
- Meeting with Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Sayyid Ali Khameneyi

List of documents signed during the official visit:

- Memorandum of mutual understanding between the Ministry of Youth and Sport of the Azerbaijani Republic and the Ministry of Sport and Youth Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran on cooperation in the field of youth and sport
- Memorandum of mutual understanding between the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Azerbaijani Republic and the Interior Ministry of the Islamic Republic of Iran on cooperation in the field of the administration of emergency situations
- Memorandum of mutual understanding between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Azerbaijani Republic and the Ministry of Roads and Urban Development of the Islamic Republic of Iran on meteorology and related issues
- Agreement between the Government of the Azerbaijani Republic and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran on the construction and operation of the Ordubad and Marazad hydro-electric power stations

## PRESS CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND PRESIDENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN HASSAN ROUHANI

### *Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

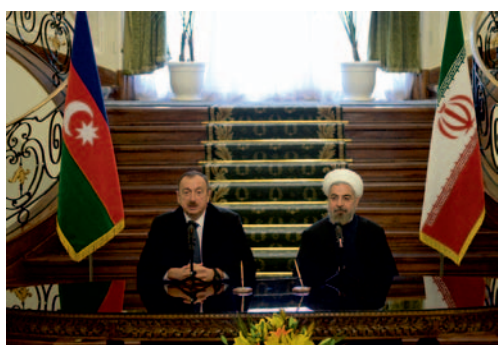
Esteemed Mr. President,

First of all, I would like to express my deep gratitude to you for the invitation and the hospitality shown to me and my delegation.

I am very happy to be on fraternal Iranian soil. I am sure that my visit will be an important step in the development of Iranian-Azerbaijani relations. I would like to take this opportunity to invite you, Mr President, to make an official visit to Azerbaijan at a time convenient to you. I must also point out that this is my third official visit to Iran. The number of visits in itself is significant. We wish our relations to develop successfully in all spheres and there are excellent opportunities for this right now.

President Rouhani and I met at the beginning of the year in Davos. And today our political dialogue is continuing in Iran. Today we had a broad and frank discussion of various aspects of our bilateral relations.

We have been doing very successful work in international organizations. Our work at the UN, the Islamic Cooperation Organization, the OEC and the Non-Aligned Movement has been very successful. Iran's support in resolving our most troublesome problem – the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict over Nagornyy Karabakh – is very important. This conflict must be resolved on the basis of the four resolutions of the UN Security Council. Azerbaijan's territorial integrity must be restored. The position held by the Islamic Republic of Iran on this conflict is based on justice and international law, and we thank them for taking this position.



As you know, the Azerbaijani territories recognized by the international community have been under occupation for many years. As a result of this occupation more than a million Azerbaijanis have found themselves in the situation of refugees and forced migrants in their own land. A policy of ethnic cleansing has been carried out against our people. The Armenians committed the Xocali genocide against Azerbaijanis. All our historical and religious monuments have now been destroyed by

the Armenians on the occupied lands. The early settlement of the conflict bases on international law would be of great benefit to the region.

Today we have had an exchange of opinions on cooperation in other spheres. There are excellent opportunities in the economic sphere and in investment. Cooperation in the energy sphere has been successful and the agreement signed today on the construction of the Ordubad and Marazad hydro-electric power stations will strengthen this cooperation even more. There are excellent opportunities for cooperation in the oil and gas sphere. At the same time we shall seek additional ways to strengthen cooperation in the military sphere. Today our opinions regarding possible cooperation in the sphere of high technology and information-communication technology are identical and coincide.

Of course, cooperation in the humanitarian and cultural spheres also has a special meaning. Our history, culture and historical heritage are precious for our peoples. Our peoples have lived and worked together for centuries. Our peoples are linked by deep historical and cultural roots. Today Iranian-Azerbaijani relations are built on a solid base. I am confident that we shall achieve all the goals we have set and with joint efforts we shall elevate Iranian-Azerbaijani relations to an even higher level.

Thank you very much for your attention.

***Statement by President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani***

In the name of God the Compassionate and the Merciful,

I would like to express my gratitude to the President of the Azerbaijani Republic, His Excellency Mr Ilham Aliyev, for his visit and that of his delegation to Iran.

My first meeting with Mr President was held within the context of the Davos forum. As part of this meeting we adopted very important decisions for the future of our relations. At the meetings that took place today in extended format and one-to-one we had exhaustive discussions covering all spheres linked with relations between our countries. Today I would like to say to the dear Iranian people that there are no obstacles to the development of relations between our friendly countries at all levels. The Azerbaijani Republic and the Islamic Republic of Iran are two close neighbours and friendly, fraternal countries worshipping one religion. The good relations between our countries are to the benefit of our peoples.

These relations between our countries are also for the benefit of peace, tranquility and security in the region.

We are of the same opinion in relation to the further development of relations between our two countries in the sphere of oil, petrochemistry, power engineering, water supply and other spheres. As well as the documents signed today, as a result of today's meeting and the talks we have had, we have laid a broad foundation for a further deepening of the all-round development of our relations.

For the development of cultural relations between the peoples of our two countries we have agreed that the necessary steps should be taken to further improve relations between our peoples. We also have identical views on Islam and religion. We are both hostile to the use of Islam as a means for radical actions. In order to preserve stability in our region we have no other way than moderation and the struggle against terrorism. We also exchanged opinions on the negotiations conducted by our countries to determine the legal status of the Caspian Sea and cooperation in this sphere. Both sides believe that the path to adopting a final solution to this question is a short one.

We have identical views on cooperation on an international platform. The esteemed President of the Azerbaijani Republic spoke during the negotiations of his support for the right of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the use of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes. We are in favour of all conflicts in the region, including the Karabakh conflict, being resolved within the context of the decisions adopted at international level and on the principles of justice. Our position is that the alteration of geographical borders in the region is unacceptable. We need to pool our efforts to ensure that such issues are resolved by peaceful means and by way of negotiation.

I accept with immense pleasure Mr President's invitation to visit the Azerbaijani Republic. I am confident that I will pay a visit to the friendly and fraternal Azerbaijani Republic within a short convenient time.

I wish both the Iranian and the Azerbaijani people development, happiness and progress.

Thank you.

#### **23-25.04.2014            Working visit to the Czech Republic**

##### List of meetings held during the working visit:

Meeting with Chairman of Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Republic, head of Czech Republic-Azerbaijan interparliamentary friendship group Jan Hamacek

Meeting with President of the Republic of Moldova Nicolae Timofti

Meeting with President of the Republic of Poland Bronislaw Komorowski

Meeting with President of the Republic of Georgia Giorgi Margvelashvili

Meeting with President of the Czech Republic Milos Zeman

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV ADDRESSED THE SUMMIT DEDICATED TO THE FIFTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EUROPEAN UNION'S "EASTERN PARTNERSHIP" PROGRAM***Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Thank you, Mr. President.

First of all, I would like to thank President Zeman for the invitation, for the organization of this important event and for the hospitality. I am very pleased to come to beautiful Prague again and to continue our dialogue. I would like to note that we regard the last five years as a very significant period from the point of view of the establishment of a closer relationship with European institutions. In the past five years our country has conducted reforms in political, economic and other spheres. Our relations with member-states of the European Union have been very broad and constructive. The essence of these relations, of course, has changed for the better.

We attach great importance to economic reforms and consider our cooperation with the European Union very important from this standpoint. Democratic development, protection of human rights, rule of law and fundamental freedoms are our top priorities. We are modernizing our country. The modern economic system should be complemented by a modern political system. From this standpoint, the European Union is a great example.

We have done a lot in the economic sphere. I can tell you that largely thanks to the economic reforms Azerbaijan has been the fastest growing economy of the world in the past 10 years. It has grown more than three times. We have managed to get rid of poverty and unemployment. Poverty is at 5 per cent in Azerbaijan. Our external debt accounts for only 8 per cent of the gross domestic product.

According to the Davos World Economic Forum, the Azerbaijani economy is ranked 39th in the world for competitiveness. Our cooperation with European institutions is broad. It covers political, economic and trade issues, political reforms and, of course, the issue of energy security. 2011 was a very significant year from this point of view. In 2011, President Barroso and I signed a memorandum on strategic energy partnership in Baku, which paved the way for close cooperation. We have achieved a great success over this short period of time. In particular, a month after the Vilnius summit, we signed Europe's biggest infrastructure project worth \$45 billion, which is regarded as the agreement of the 21st century. Most of the investment will be made by Azerbaijan and other partners. The development of the gigantic gas field of Shah Deniz and the construction of Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic gas pipelines will redraw the European energy map. Thus, Europe will obtain a new source of gas supplies in the next four to five years. I believe that this strong partnership between Europe and Azerbaijan should be continued, so that we could implement important and mutually beneficial projects.



Unfortunately, the Armenian President has taken advantage of the opportunity to launch another attack on Turkey. It is easy to do so because there are no Turkish representatives around this table. But I am here and I can tell you why the Turkish-Armenian border remains closed. The Turkish border with Armenia was closed after the occupation of Azerbaijan's Kalbajar District in April 1993. Prior to that, all the Azerbaijanis were driven out of Nagorno-Karabakh. The Azerbaijanis accounted for 30 per cent of the Karabakh population. Before Kalbajar, the Armenians occupied Shusha and Lachin. Then they occupied Agdam, Fizuli, Zangilan, Gubadli, Jabrayil, which are outside the administrative borders of Nagorno-Karabakh – a total of seven Azerbaijani districts which constitute 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's internationally recognized territory. Our population has been exposed to ethnic cleansing.

The occupation continues to this day despite four resolutions of the UN Security Council, resolutions of the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe. Armenia flouts these resolutions and continues the occupation of a territory that does not belong to it both from a historical perspective and from the standpoint of international law.



At the same time, they carry on accusing Azerbaijan of taking an unconstructive position. Our lands are under occupation. The principles of territorial integrity and self-determination are explicitly reflected in the Helsinki Final Act. The right to self-determination cannot be achieved at the expense of the territorial integrity of a country. In addition, the Armenians have already completed the process of self-determination, as there is an independent Armenian state. Just imagine

what may happen if the Armenians continue pursuing self-determination wherever they live. They may display the same approach here in the Czech Republic, in Georgia, in Russia, in America and wherever they live. But they already have a state of their own and have already completed the process of self-determination.

Azerbaijan is interested in the speediest settlement of the conflict. I am sure that so are the Armenian people. This is also in the interests of cooperation in the South Caucasus.

As far as Turkish-Armenian relations are concerned, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made a statement several years ago, suggesting that the Armenian leadership open all the archives and historians review the historical aspects of the relations between the two nations again. However, this suggestion was not properly received. Yesterday, Prime Minister Erdogan extended his condolences to people of Armenian origin, but unfortunately the Armenian side did not issue a relevant reaction to that either. Although, as I know, the United States and the European Union have praised the position of the Turkish Prime Minister, it appears that this is not enough for the Armenian government. This clearly shows who it is that doesn't want peace in the region.

We want peace. We want our lands to be returned. Armenia must start withdrawing its troops from Azerbaijan's occupied lands. It is very easy to do that. It only requires political will from the Armenian side.

And finally, the last issue. The Azerbaijani people are asking one question: why isn't Armenia faced with sanctions? Why isn't the Armenian delegation deprived of the right to vote and to address the Council of Europe? They have occupied the territory of another country and are flagrantly violating the rules of international law and four resolutions of the UN Security Council, but are not faced with any sanctions and punishment. The fictitious representatives of the illegal and criminal regime in Nagorno-Karabakh receive visas to European capitals. This is unacceptable and must be stopped.

#### **06.05.2014                      Working visit to the Republic of Georgia**

List of meetings held during the working visit:

Meeting with President of the Republic of Turkey Abdullah Gul

Meeting with President of the Republic of Georgia Giorgi Margvelashvili

Meeting with Prime Minister of the Republic of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili

#### **PRESS CONFERENCE OF TRILATERAL SUMMIT OF THE PRESIDENTS OF AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA AND TURKEY**

*Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear President Margvelashvili,

Dear President Gul,

Dear representatives of the media, ladies and gentlemen!

First of all, Mr. President, I want to thank you for the hospitality shown to me and my delegation. I am very pleased to be visiting fraternal Georgia again. I am sure that today's summit will be very important for the further development of our trilateral cooperation. Azerbaijan is linked to Georgia and Turkey through history, historical ties, culture, friendship and brotherhood between our peoples. Our bilateral relations are also built on a solid foundation. They have already passed the test of time. Azerbaijan has a relationship built on a very close friendship and brotherhood with both Georgia and Turkey.



I am very glad that the trilateral format is already asserting itself. Tripartite meetings were also held in the past. Naturally, summits have been held due to the implementation of international projects. Today's summit has been important as we analyzed the work done in previous years. At the same time, and I think this is the most important, we held a very broad and frank exchange of views on future cooperation today.

Today, the ministers introduced various projects to us. We had an exchange of views on the forthcoming work again. But I think that the main result of this summit is that Georgia, Turkey and Azerbaijan have reaffirmed this trilateral format, our friendly and partnership relations. This is very important because the projects that unite us are significant for both our countries, peoples, neighbors, and for the continent as a whole.

Oil and gas, transportation projects and projects related to investment that were successfully implemented in the past have brought our countries even closer together. I can say that this trilateral format is of great interest not only in the region but also globally. In fact, it is a unique format as three independent states have built an equal relationship – a modern and cultural relationship serving the interests of our peoples and based on mutual interest and respect. I believe that this experience can be attractive for other countries.

Our relations are based on cooperation. This is the most important factor. As a result of this cooperation, each country derives a great benefit. Our joint projects serve the interests of three countries. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars projects have already gone beyond regional boundaries and become international. In particular, issues related to energy security are seen worldwide as being the most important. It would be safe to say that they are top of the global agenda. Three countries have fully ensured their energy security. This is a wonderful result of our cooperation. In the future, our three countries will ensure the energy security of Europe.

The talks and discussions held here today are of great importance for the world and Europe. At the end of last year, the Shah Deniz-2 project was launched in Baku. Shah Deniz-2, the Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic pipelines are number one projects, the largest infrastructure projects of Europe. The amount of funds to be invested in these projects will constitute at least \$45 billion. We invest these funds in order to protect our interests and contribute to the energy security of Europe. As a result of these projects, tens of thousands of new jobs and business opportunities will be created.

Today we had an exchange of views about this, so that our business entities could also actively participate in these projects and we could be ready for that. Our investment opportunities will expand even more. In other words, our countries will be even more important for foreign investment. And this is in the interests of any country. Even developed countries want to attract investment from abroad. Azerbaijan, in turn, invests the most in Turkey and Georgia. It is also a manifestation of our unity.

Underlying all our initiatives are the determination of our people and a strong political will. This is the basic condition. We build our relations on this foundation. We are enriching this relationship with specific projects. The unity exhibited here in Tbilisi today is unique in the world.

I want to express my appreciation to my colleagues for their friendship and cooperation. Today, during the exchange of views, we decided to hold such summits on a regular basis. If there are no objections, the next summit could be held in Azerbaijan. We will continue to successfully develop this good cooperation.

Thank you.

### **18-19.05.2014 State visit to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam**

#### List of meetings held during the state visit:

- Meeting with President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Truong Tan Sang in a limited format
- Meeting with President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Truong Tan Sang in an expanded format
- Meeting with Chairman of the National Assembly of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Nguyen Sinh Hung
- Meeting with General Secretary of the Communist Party of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Nguyen Phu Trong
- Meeting with Prime Minister of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam, Nguyen Tan Dung

#### List of documents signed during the state visit:

- Agreement on trade, economic, scientific and technological cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Convention on the elimination of double taxation of incomes and property and prevention of tax evasion between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

### **PRESS CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TRUONG TAN SANG**

#### *Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear Mr. President,

First of all, I want to thank you for the hospitality extended to me and members of the Azerbaijani delegation. I am confident that my visit will give a new impetus to the relations between our countries. I want to take this opportunity to invite you, Mr. President, to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan at your

convenience. Today, we have extensively discussed the various aspects of Vietnamese-Azerbaijani relations.

We attach particular importance to these relations. Last year, the Embassy of Azerbaijan opened in Vietnam. It plays a positive role in the development of our bilateral relations. We support each other in international organizations. Today, during our discussions, we decided that we would continue to support each other in all international organizations we are members of.



I have informed Mr. President about the events taking place in the region. In particular, I set out my position in relation to the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which poses the biggest threat to regional security. For more than 20 years Armenia has been occupying Nagorno-Karabakh, historical Azerbaijani land, and seven adjacent regions. As a result of this occupation, one million Azerbaijanis have

become refugees and IDPs in their native land. The UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions in connection with the settlement of the conflict. These resolutions call for an unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories. Despite this, Armenia flouts the resolutions and continues to hold our lands under occupation. This conflict poses the greatest threat to the security of the region and should be resolved only within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Today, we also paid great attention and spent time on our bilateral economic ties. The trade turnover between our two countries has reached \$400 million. The business forum to be held today will be joined by leaders of more than 50 companies from Azerbaijan. I am sure that during the forum they will also discuss contracts, which will result in a growth of bilateral trade.

Of course, there has also been an exchange of views on possible cooperation in the oil and gas sector. Azerbaijani oil is exported to Vietnam. We will take additional measures to increase these exports. We have exchanged views on mutual investments in the oil and gas and other sectors. I am sure that there will be good results.

There are excellent prospects for the deepening of our cooperation in the humanitarian sphere. In particular, there are excellent opportunities for cooperation in the fields of education, culture and tourism. In short, our bilateral agenda is quite extensive and covers various areas. I have no doubt that the results of the visit will be very positive and our friendship and cooperation will continue to develop successfully.

Once again, thank you, Mr. President.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV MET IN HANOI WITH VIETNAMESE STUDENTS EDUCATED IN AZERBAIJAN***Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear friends, first of all I would like to express to you, everyone whose fate was linked with Azerbaijan, a deep sense of respect on behalf of the people of Azerbaijan, salute you and convey greetings from your friends in Azerbaijan. I am very happy to visit your beautiful country. Today's meeting with the President, the negotiations held, as well as the upcoming meetings, will promote the development of friendly relations between our countries. We attach great importance to these relations. And they are developing very successfully. The foundation of this relationship was laid by you – those who studied in Azerbaijan, lived in our country and still keeps the memories of those wonderful days of youth, friendship and cooperation. And today, when we build our interstate relations on the basis of mutual respect, friendship and cooperation, we have a solid foundation, of course. The foundation is the relationship between people. The foundation is this mutual sympathy between our peoples. And this foundation was laid by you because your work and your active position on the development of our bilateral relations strengthens the positive trends in our relations.

You know very well how much love and affection the Azerbaijanis have for your country and people. In the most difficult times for your country the people of Azerbaijan always showed solidarity with Vietnam. We always stood by you in your struggle for liberation. And these feelings of friendship, cooperation and mutual support today determine the nature and form of our bilateral relations.

My visit to Vietnam is the first visit of the President of Azerbaijan to the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. However, here in the lobby there is a photo exhibition: 31 years ago nationwide leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev visited your country as part of a government delegation of the Soviet Union. In 1959, great son of the Vietnamese people, President Ho Chi Minh visited Azerbaijan. These historical facts strengthen our relationship. These facts form the basis on which we are moving forward. There is no present and future without history.

The history of our relations, the relations between our two peoples is a history of friendship and brotherhood. And we need to develop and strengthen our relationship today in the 21st century, already as two independent and dynamic states. So I am sure that my visit will be an important step in the development of our relations. It will give a big boost to our relations in the political sphere, in the economic sphere and in the humanitarian sphere.

Today we discussed prospects for our cooperation at a high level. The trade between our countries is not very large, around 400 million dollars, but it has good prospects for growth. A Vietnamese-Azerbaijani business forum will be held this afternoon. More than 50 representatives from various Azerbaijani companies are here with me to participate in the business forum. I am sure that the results

will be positive and allow us the opportunity to increase the turnover.

We have good prospects in the petroleum sector, and this was also discussed today. Many of the Vietnamese who studied in Azerbaijan went to the Institute of Oil and Chemistry, so they are well aware of Azerbaijan's oil and gas traditions and the fact that Azerbaijan is the country where the world's first oil was produced industrially. Also, the world's first oil from offshore fields was also produced in Azerbaijan.



Today we are also developing cooperation in the humanitarian sphere, in education, and we want to restore these traditions because they were interrupted after the collapse of the Soviet Union. But today, I think, we should take a new look at cooperation in education. Now we are sending our students to study abroad, so we would like to take advantage of your opportunities on the specialties that are important to us. We are also

ready to provide suitable conditions for Vietnamese students to come to Azerbaijan, study and restore these traditions. After all, your generation and our generation live with these memories. But it is also necessary for the younger generation, and I see a lot of young people here in the audience, to also know each other, communicate, respect, support and collaborate.

In the fields of tourism and culture we must make full use of the cooperation potential. Vietnam is a friendly country for us, a country with which our people share a great history – a history of friendship and mutual sympathy. We must strengthen our relations. Today, as an independent state, Azerbaijan reaffirms its position in the world, we enjoy a great authority on a global scale, and in the last two years we were members of the UN Security Council. We were elected to this structure with the support of 155 countries. Of course, it was not easy to win the support of the vast number of countries around the world in 20 odd years. But the main reason why we have been supported is the fact that we always conduct an independent course, an independent foreign policy and a very active regional policy. Our position is based on the principles of international law and the principles of justice. If these two main driving elements of progress and development are always observed in the world, there will be no wars, no occupation and no injustice. Therefore, while in the UN Security Council we firmly upheld the principles of international law, compliance with the resolutions of international organizations, as well as the principles of justice.

When you studied in our country, I am sure that you also witnessed the fact that Azerbaijani society is very tolerant. Our people are very hospitable. Azerbaijan is a multi-ethnic country. It was the case in the Soviet era and it remains the case to this day. We have never had conflicts motivated by ethnic or religious incompatibilities or contradictions. Conversely, Azerbaijan was and especially now as an independent state is a territory and country where all peoples and representatives of different religions

live in peace, cooperation, respect for each other. They understand each other and contribute to the development of a multi-ethnic Azerbaijan. So, I am sure that when you heard about a treacherous attack on Azerbaijan by Armenia, you were surprised because there were no preconditions for that. The Armenians, just like other representatives of different peoples living in Azerbaijan, enjoyed all the benefits. Unfortunately, the nationalist forces that got the upper hand in Armenia unleashed a treacherous and cowardly war against our country and displayed an exceptional sense of ingratitude to the Azerbaijani people whose bread they had been eating for decades. As a result of this war, our territories came under occupation. Our citizens were forced to leave their homes. Azerbaijanis were driven out of their native territories, of our historical lands. Now these territories are under occupation. Twenty per cent of our territory has been occupied by Armenian armed forces for more than 20 years. This occupation continues despite the decisions and resolutions of international organizations. So when I say that all the decisions of international organizations should be executed regardless of who has to fulfil them, I mean precisely the respect for international law. And what happens? In some cases the resolutions of the Security Council are executed in a matter of one day. In our case they have not been executed for 22 years.

The UN Security Council is the supreme body of the international community. It has adopted four resolutions demanding a withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from Azerbaijani territories, but they are not executed. But no sanctions are imposed on Armenia. Armenia is not subjected to international condemnation either. This is the main reason why the conflict remains unresolved. Other international organizations have also expressed their principled positions based on international law, but apparently this is not enough. But Azerbaijan will continue to enhance its potential – economic, military and political.

We, of course, will return to our ancestral territory – to Karabakh, Shusha, Khankandi. We will live there. As before, we will rebuild what has been destroyed and provide a decent future for our country. I must say that this conflict has, of course, caused a huge damage to the economy of Azerbaijan. But despite this, by conducting an independent policy and relying on our own resources, we have been able to develop the economy in a short time to such an extent that it has become the world's fastest growing economy in the last 10 years. The main reason has been the consolidation of society around the national idea, namely the idea of independence. We have also pursued a consistent policy on improving the living standards of the population. Over the past 10 years our wages have increased more than five times and pensions almost 10 times. A lot of social programs have been implemented. Of course, there have been economic reforms without which we could not achieve the current level of development. We have actively attracted foreign investment, supported Azerbaijani companies at state level, established an active international cooperation and carried out reforms aimed at improving the economic environment, the business landscape and the reforms that were necessary for our country and people. When looking at the history of Azerbaijan, one becomes further convinced that only when national interests are placed above everything else can countries achieve success and development. And your country is a perfect example of that. You, too, have gone



through aggression and occupation, through the suffering of tens of thousands of people, through irreparable loss, but you have recovered and created a strong state. And you are the masters of your own destiny. Therefore, I think that the example of countries such as Vietnam and Azerbaijan, where an independent foreign policy based on national interests is carried out, where there is cooperation and openness to the world, is quite indicative. It should be an example for all who seek to progress, for anyone who wants to build a stronger country and create a better life for the people.

A lot of issues are addressed in the field of education in Azerbaijan. Of course, it is one of the top priorities for us. The construction of schools and universities is powering ahead. Of course, we are also working on improving the quality of education, and the process is always the focus of our government.

Our country has made great strides on a regional scale in recent years. Today Mr. President and I discussed issues of the oil and gas cooperation. I must say that the oil and gas projects we have implemented in Azerbaijan have completely redrawn the energy map of the region. For the first time ever, we have linked the Caspian region to the region of the Black Sea and the Mediterranean through a network of oil and gas pipelines which allow us and our neighbors the opportunity to use this infrastructure for the realization of our oil and gas resources. In the future, we will carry out even more ambitious projects which are ranked among largest in the world. And this is all thanks to the fact that there is a lot of confidence in our development both domestically and abroad. We are conducting our policy on the basis of national development priorities and the strengthening of our independence.

When you lived and studied in our country, Azerbaijan was not an independent state. But even then you must have seen the development and openness of our society to friends and guests. Over the years of independence the positive trends in the development of Azerbaijani society have only intensified. We have become masters of our own destiny. We determine our own priorities ourselves. We define our own future, and there is no bigger happiness in the world than that. At the same time, our position is based on cooperation at the regional level and on a larger scale. Cooperation with your region is one of the priorities for us and with Vietnam one of our top priorities. It is no coincidence that the first Azerbaijani Embassy in your region has been opened in Vietnam. There has been an Azerbaijani Embassy here for a year now. It is a sign of our respect. This also reflects the importance of your country to us. I am sure that Azerbaijan will also be the main political and economic partner for Vietnam in our region.

Today's visit, of course, will go down in history because it is the first state visit of the President of Azerbaijan to Vietnam. I am sure that this visit will be followed by others. Today I invited the President of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan and the invitation was accepted. We will intensify our relations, strengthen political ties, support each other in all international organizations, actively invest in each other's economies, develop cultural and humanitarian cooperation. In other words, a full-scale cooperation between our two countries is

becoming a reality. And, of course, this cooperation has plenty of room for you, for those who know Azerbaijan, who remember Azerbaijan and I hope have warm memories of youth. So you must be the main driving force in the development of our relations.

I am very glad that I have the opportunity to meet with you today. More than 2,000 students from Vietnam have been trained and studied in our universities at different times and, of course, we would like to see all of you in Baku. I want to take this opportunity to invite you to visit our country. I think that we must implement this idea, maybe hold a forum on Azerbaijani-Vietnamese friendship in Baku and on the sidelines of this forum hold a forum of Vietnamese graduates of Azerbaijani institutions. I want to tell the Minister of Education of Azerbaijan and our Ambassador to Vietnam right here, so that no-one forgets, to work with the Vietnamese side to prepare this forum and conduct it in the near future so that we could meet with you in Baku once again. Thank you for your attention.

#### **20-21.05.2014                      Working visit to the People’s Republic of China**

List of meetings held during the working visit:

Meeting with Chairman of the People’s Republic of China Xi Jinping

#### **PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV ADDRESSED THE 4<sup>TH</sup> SUMMIT OF THE CONFERENCE ON INTERACTION AND CONFIDENCE BUILDING MEASURES IN ASIA**

*Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear Chairman of the People’s Republic of China Xi Jinping!

Dear heads of delegations!

Ladies and gentlemen!

First of all, I want to express my gratitude to Turkey for its successful presidency in the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia and to the Chairman of the People’s Republic of China for the warm hospitality and the high level of organization of the Summit. Due to its activities, the Conference on Interaction and Confidence Building Measures in Asia has become an authoritative international forum to promote peace, stability and cooperation. I heartily congratulate the People’s Republic of China on the transition of presidency in the CICMA to Chinese side. I am sure that the two-year chairmanship of China will contribute to the further strengthening of peace and security in Asia.

Today, the development of Azerbaijani-Chinese relations in the political, economic, humanitarian and other spheres is gratifying. At the same time, we are successfully cooperating within the framework of international organizations. Over the last two years we have worked together in the Security Council of the United Nations.

I want to take this opportunity to thank all the states that supported Azerbaijan in its election as a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council. During its presidency in the Security Council, Azerbaijan, as a member of this structure, tabled important issues related to international peace and security and put forward the initiative of strengthening cooperation in the fight against international terrorism.

Security measures in Asia are part of global security. We are in favor of a comprehensive approach to security. Issues such as the fight against terrorism, regional, energy, transport and information security, the settlement of “frozen” conflicts are closely linked with each other and necessitate a common position for the security of mankind.



Azerbaijan supports the consolidation of efforts in the fight against international terrorism. Azerbaijan has been a victim of terror itself. Only in the years of independence Armenian terrorist organization under the leadership of state bodies of Armenia carried out more than 30 terrorist attacks against Azerbaijan, in which more than 2,000 people were killed.

These acts of terror are part of Armenia’s aggressive policy against Azerbaijan. As a result of this policy, 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territories, Nagorno-Karabakh, which is our historical land, and seven adjacent districts have been occupied by Armenia. A policy of ethnic cleansing has been carried out on these lands, more than 1 million people in the country have become refugees and IDPs. In February 1992, Armenian armed forces committed an act of genocide against the civilian population of Khojaly. As a result of this genocide, 613 innocent people were killed. Today, over 10 countries have officially recognized the Khojaly massacre as an act of genocide.

The international community and international organizations recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and advocate for a just settlement of the conflict in accordance with international law. In connection with the conflict there are four UN Security Council resolutions, relevant decisions and resolutions of the Non-Aligned Movement, the OSCE, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and other international organizations. I also want to thank CICMA member-states for their support of the peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of norms and principles of international law.

The talks held with the mediation of the OSCE Minsk Group have yet to make headway. Armenia is not interested in resolving the conflict. Our firm position is that the conflict should be resolved only in accordance with international law and within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. Despite being in conflict, Azerbaijan has been undergoing a period of rapid development in recent years. Our economy has grown more than three times, the unemployment rate has dropped to 5 per cent and poverty to 5.3 per cent. This development has been achieved thanks to the stability available in Azerbaijan. At the same time, these achievements further reinforce our stability.

Various international projects in which Azerbaijan acts as a participant and initiator today have already laid a solid foundation for greater regional cooperation. In particular, I want to point to projects related to energy security. By completely redrawing the energy map of the South Caucasus and the broader region, these projects have become a very important example of cooperation benefiting all participants. Our partners in Asia account for approximately 28 per cent of the country's oil exports.

Thus, Azerbaijan contributes to the energy security of Asian countries. I think that this cooperation still has great prospects.

Having already become a transit country linking Asia with Europe, Azerbaijan is beginning to play an important role in the transport security between the two continents. In recent years, Azerbaijan has invested heavily in upgrading its transport infrastructure. In 2003-2014, about 21 million dollars were invested in the transport sector of the country, including 13.6 billion dollars in the road transport sector, 1.3 billion dollars in the maritime transport and 2.7 billion dollars in air transport.

Azerbaijan is building the largest port on the Caspian Sea. The International Trade Seaport under construction in Alat near Baku will increase the volume of cargo at the first stage to 10 million tons and to 20 million tons at the second. In April of this year, a new terminal was opened at Heydar Aliyev International Airport in Baku.

We are also making a contribution to the revival of the historic Silk Road. At the beginning of next year the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway will be commissioned, where Azerbaijan has undertaken most of the financial load. This will be the most comfortable and shortest route linking Asia with Europe.

The telecommunications satellite Azerbaijan has put into orbit, the Trans-Eurasian Information Super Highway project initiated by our country, the transit optic lines that pass through Azerbaijan and connect Europe with Asia – these are our country's contributions to information security.

In conclusion, I want to express my gratitude to the organizer, Mr. Xi Jinping, once again for the genuine hospitality, and wish the Summit success.

Thank you for your attention.

**15-17.06.2014 State visit to the Hellenic Republic**List of meetings held during the state visit:

Meeting with President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias in an one-on-one meeting

Meeting with President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias in an expanded meeting

Meeting with Prime Minister of the Hellenic Republic Antonis Samaras

Meeting with Speaker of the Parliament of the Hellenic Republic Vangelis Meimarakis

Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic Evangelos Venizelos

Meeting with Leader of the Opposition and Leader of the Coalition of the Radical Left, the major opposition at the Parliament of the Hellenic Republic Alexis Tsipras

List of documents signed during the state visit:

Agreement on cooperation in the field of agriculture between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Hellenic Republic

Memorandum on cooperation for the European Union issues of the Republic of Azerbaijan between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Hellenic Republic

Memorandum on cooperation in the field of youth between the Ministry of Youth and Sports of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Education and Religious Affairs of the Hellenic Republic

**PRESS CONFERENCE OF PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND PRESIDENT OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC KAROLOS PAPOULIAS***Statement by President of the Hellenic Republic Karolos Papoulias*

- I am sincerely glad to welcome President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev to Athens. Today's visit is a new sign of the excellent relations between Greece and Azerbaijan and opens up new paths and horizons for our cooperation.

President Aliyev and I have had the opportunity to review all aspects of our bilateral agenda. This refers to our ties in political, energy, economic, trade and cultural spheres. We have also had the opportunity to exchange views on major international and regional issues.

Political relations between our countries are developing. This is evident from the very important visits of state and political levels carried out between our two countries. Our cultural relations have also markedly intensified. This, in particular, refers to the opening of a center of modern Greek language and civilization at the University. In addition, Greek is taught at Baku Slavic University.

Indicating that economic cooperation between the two countries was deepening, President Karolos

Papoulias touched upon the importance of the TAP gas pipeline which will carry natural gas from Azerbaijan to Europe via Greece. Hailing the acquisition on the part of the State Oil Company of the Republic of Azerbaijan of most of the shares of Greek company DESFA as a positive development, the President of Greece said:

- Today we have signed three documents opening up new opportunities for the expansion of bilateral relations between our countries - a memorandum between Greece and Azerbaijan on issues of the European Union, an agreement on cooperation in the field of agriculture and a memorandum on cooperation in youth affairs.

At the same time, we have examined the relationship between the European Union and Azerbaijan. These relations are part of the European Neighborhood Policy. During our presidency in the Council of the European Union, we paid special attention to such issues. Over the past six months we have actively encouraged such issues.

President Karolos Papoulias emphasized that negotiations on the status of Cyprus had entered into an important phase. The President of Greece concluded his statement with the following words:

- In conclusion, I would like to express my gratitude to the President of Azerbaijan for the very fruitful and multifaceted negotiations and wish a successful visit to Greece.

***Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev***

- Thank you, dear Mr. President.

First of all, I want to thank you for the invitation and the hospitality extended to me and the delegation.

This is my second official visit to Greece. President Papoulias also paid an official visit to Azerbaijan three years ago. These visits show that Greek-Azerbaijani relations are at a high level, and I am confident that my visit will give them a further impetus.

As President Papoulias has noted, our political relations are strengthening with every day, and I am sure that they will become even stronger in the future. We cooperate successfully within international organizations. In particular, our delegations to the Council of Europe have established a very active cooperation. Last month Azerbaijan took over chairmanship in the Council of Europe and will act in this capacity until the end of the year. During its presidency of the European Union Greece has made a great contribution to the development of relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union. The relations between the European Union and Azerbaijan are at a very high level and have acquired a strategic character. The successful visit of European Commission President Barroso to Azerbaijan two days ago has reaffirmed the strategic nature of these relationships.



President Papoulias and I have also widely discussed regional security. The greatest threat to regional security is posed by the unresolved status of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. For more than 20 years Armenia has held 20 per cent of Azerbaijan's internationally recognized territory under occupation. A speedy settlement of the conflict would bring peace and cooperation to the region. The UN

Security Council has adopted four resolutions in connection with the conflict. They demand an unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories. I do hope that a settlement of this conflict will be possible in the near future, which, as I said, will open up new opportunities for cooperation in the region.

An important part of our relationship is associated with energy security. Greek-Azerbaijani relations are of strategic importance here. The TAP project is not only a project of energy security. At the same time, it has raised the friendly ties between our two countries to an even higher level. The Shah Deniz, TANAP and TAP projects initiated by Azerbaijan are currently the largest infrastructure projects in Europe. As a result of these projects, Azerbaijan will export its natural gas to European markets for decades to come.

Today, we have also discussed issues of mutual investment and exchanged views on cooperation in the field of culture. In other words, our relations are very broad, and I am sure that they will develop even more rapidly in the future.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for your hospitality again. I am confident that the results of the visit will bring our countries even closer together. Thank you.

## **PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND PRIME MINISTER OF THE HELLENIC REPUBLIC ANTONIS SAMARAS MET WITH TOP BUSINESS PEOPLE IN ATHENS**

### *Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Distinguished Prime Minister, Dear friends!

First of all, I would like to thank the Prime Minister for the hospitality extended to me and my delegation. I am very glad to be visiting this beautiful country again. This is my second official visit to Greece, which demonstrates the high level of cooperation between our countries. This cooperation is at a very high level. Over a short period of time we have managed to establish a true partnership based on friendship, mutual trust, support, understanding and mutual benefit. We appreciate the level of cooperation between our countries and strive to broaden and deepen this relationship.

At today's meeting with the Prime Minister we discussed in detail the broad economic cooperation and the prospects for energy and non-energy issues. I think there is great potential for cooperation. Our delegation includes people representing the energy and non-energy sectors of our economy.

The Azerbaijani economy is developing fast. The past 10 years have seen a more than three-fold growth. This has allowed us the opportunity to implement a number of infrastructure projects and modernize our country. Of course, we will continue the policy towards diversification, investment in infrastructure and non-energy sector of our economy in the coming years, as it is the only path to sustainable development.



Azerbaijan has ample energy reserves – enough to last us more than 100 years. But we need to think about the subsequent period. We need to ensure sustainable economic development for the coming years and reduce our economy's dependence on the energy sector. The fact that the non-energy sector forms the bulk of the gross domestic product makes us proud. Over time, the non-oil sector will play an even more dominant role in Azerbaijan's economy.

There are good opportunities for increasing trade and investment between our countries. Azerbaijan has started to invest abroad, and, as Prime Minister has said, one of our major investment projects in Europe is the acquisition of a stake in DESFA. We are also investing in other countries of the region. We plan to cooperate more with Greece in the field of mutual investments. I am told that a meeting of the Greece-Azerbaijan joint economic commission will be held in the near future. It will probably evaluate investment opportunities, so that we can identify new areas of cooperation. Of course, this will be done in close cooperation with the government and business people.

I think that Azerbaijan is an attractive country for foreign investment. Over the last year our country has received investment worth \$28 billion, of which 30 per cent is made up of foreign investment. Foreign investment is securely protected. We have a very good investment environment. So we would like to see Greek companies as investors and contractors. We have discussed this issue, i.e. the issue of inviting Greek companies to participation in projects that will be implemented in Azerbaijan in the fields of construction, creation of a modern infrastructure, agriculture, information and communication technology, and other fields.

Of course, tourism, pharmaceuticals, banking – all these sectors must develop in Azerbaijan in the coming years. We have ambitious modernization plans. We have adopted the “Azerbaijan 2020” program. This program will allow us the opportunity to implement all major infrastructure projects in our country by 2020. So I want to take this opportunity to personally urge Greek companies to be active, work and do business in Azerbaijan.



Of course, our economic relations will be dominated by the energy sector. And this is natural, because this sector is important to Azerbaijan, Greece and Europe. This is a project which will benefit all parties. Azerbaijan needs major markets for its vast gas reserves. And Europe needs new gas sources and routes. The “Shah Deniz”, TANAP and TAP projects which we have started to realize are truly diversification projects, as they provide not only a new route for gas supplies to Europe, but also, most importantly, a new source of gas. It is a source of large volumes of gas.

Azerbaijan’s proven gas reserves exceed 2.5 trillion cubic meters. This will give us the opportunity to export gas to various markets for at least 100 years. Of course, our energy strategy is underpinned by the important selection of the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline. I am very pleased that the TAP project has been selected. This project will further strengthen the relations between Azerbaijan, Greece, Italy and Albania. We will create a new format for broad regional cooperation of the Caspian Sea, the Caucasus and Europe. It will benefit all of us.

The TAP project will generate a lot of work. Thousands of new jobs will be created. This will enable Azerbaijan to fully implement the strategic goal of establishing a new route of energy supplies to the European market. Today, the second stage in the development of the “Shah Deniz” gas field, TANAP and TAP are the largest infrastructure projects in Europe. Of course, in cooperation with our Greek partners we will do everything possible to ensure timely implementation of these projects. In order to implement these projects in a timely manner and with high efficiency, we will need to regularly, perhaps on a daily and weekly basis, do the coordination work. I am sure that we will achieve this goal, as the work is on schedule.

In addition, I want to bring to your attention the opportunities in the field of transport in Azerbaijan. At the moment we are implementing a very important railway project which, passing through Georgia and Turkey, will link Azerbaijan to Europe. It will be a new Silk Road. This route will be shorter than any of the existing transport routes. We are building a new seaport in Baku, implementing other infrastructure projects related to railway and transport. This will also play an important role in developing trade relations between Azerbaijan and Europe.

I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to Prime Minister and the government of Greece for supporting the relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union. These ties are developing very well. We view Greece as our main partner and friend in the European Union. In other words, there are great opportunities for boosting economic cooperation in many areas. Underlying this are strong political ties between our countries. This is the foundation. This is a sincere relationship based on mutual respect and mutual interests. The task of building up new business opportunities on this solid foundation with the support of the government of Greece rests with the business community.

As I said, our delegation represents various sectors of the economy. The same holds true for the Greek delegation. I am sure that after this meeting the delegations will work even more closely together and may reach results immediately. Once again, thank you for this opportunity. Thank you.

23-24.06.2014

**Working visit to the French Republic**List of meetings held during the working visit:

Meeting with President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE)  
Anne Brasseur

Meeting with Secretary General of the Council of Europe Thorbjørn Jagland

Meeting with President of the European Court of Human Rights Dean Spielmann

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV ADDRESSED THE SUMMER SESSION OF THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE***Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Madam President, ladies and gentlemen, first, I thank the President for the invitation. It is a great honour and pleasure to come back to Strasbourg. I am also very grateful to the President for quoting my speech, which I delivered here 10 years ago.

I can only confirm that what I said then is our position with respect to reforms. The successful development of Azerbaijan during the years of independence shows that economic and political reforms, if implemented in parallel, lead to success.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** May I interrupt? First, I ask the press to leave the Chamber because our members cannot see the president making his address. I also remind people who have come to listen to the president that they are not allowed to express any act of approval or disapproval. I also ask the press not to obstruct the view of our parliamentarians. I think there is still one problem with a camera, which should be dealt with. Excuse me for interrupting you but, as the President of this Assembly, I have to make sure that everything is developing as it should. You have the floor again.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** You have quoted me twice, so you may interrupt me twice, at least. I am ready for that.

The reforms in Azerbaijan show that when implemented in parallel they can lead to substantial progress. The years of Azerbaijan's membership of the Council of Europe have been years of very rapid economic and political transformation.

Reforms in Azerbaijan started in the mid-1990s, some years after the restoration of our independence. The first years of independence were marked by enormous complications and tragedy for our people. There was social unrest, economic complications and difficulties, political, economic and military crises, and inefficient government from the previous leadership of Azerbaijan. That all led to a very

serious situation, with even our statehood being put in question. As a result of that situation, we had civil war in Azerbaijan in 1993, which was the most tragic part of our modern history.

The reforms started in the mid-1990s. The new democratic constitution of Azerbaijan was adopted. The economic and political reforms have been conducted in parallel, which has led to the substantial progress that our country has achieved since independence.

Joining the Council of Europe was a conscious choice. We wanted to be a member of this institution and to deepen our reforms. We knew that joining the Council of Europe entailed commitments. We were ready to make those commitments. We have implemented our commitments and obligations. As Madam President said, we have joined almost 60 conventions. We have upgraded our legislation. The reforms that we have implemented have created a very positive atmosphere in our society.

All the fundamental freedoms are provided in Azerbaijan. We have freedom of political activity. There are hundreds of political institutions and parties. We have freedom of expression and media freedom. There are more than 40 daily and almost 200 weekly or monthly newspapers. There are nine countrywide TV channels, 14 regional channels and 14 cable TV channels. We have free Internet and more than 70% of people in Azerbaijan use it. The government is implementing a project to bring broadband Internet to every city and village, which demands large investment.

As we have free Internet and no censorship, we cannot restrict media freedom. On the contrary, we are in favour of media freedom because it means democracy – it helps the government to concentrate on shortcomings and creates a necessary link between the government and society. Media freedom is one of the biggest assets of modern Azerbaijan, and we are proud of that. I say once again that media freedom is fully provided.

Freedom of association and assembly is also fully provided in Azerbaijan. The political institutions take advantage of that and, from time to time, hold rallies in a peaceful atmosphere. That shows our commitment to reform.

The implementation of the reforms is a priority for us not because we need to implement commitments or get a positive assessment from international institutions, but because we are modernising our country. As I said 10 years ago, without strong democratic institutions, our economic success will not be sustainable. The economic and political reforms that are running in parallel and the democratisation of our society have created a positive atmosphere in our society.

Religious freedom is another of our country's biggest assets. We are a multi-ethnic and multi-religious society. For centuries, the representatives of different nationalities and religions have lived in peace and dignity in Azerbaijan. Concentrating on the values of multiculturalism will be one of the priorities of our chairmanship.

Azerbaijan initiated the Baku process, which started in 2008. We invited the ministers of culture from the countries of the Council of Europe to meet the ministers of culture from the countries of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation in Baku. It was the first time in history that representatives of those two important international institutions had got together. Vice versa, in 2009, we invited ministers from the countries of the Council of Europe to participate in an Islamic conference summit in Baku.

Multiculturalism is therefore one of our big advantages and one of our big assets. We will definitely concentrate on it during our chairmanship, because there is a great need for it. Unfortunately, we are seeing tendencies in our neighbourhood, in the Middle East and in Europe that are of concern – the tendencies of alienation, separation and sometimes even hatred. We need to address that issue because we live in this world and must contribute to making it a better world for everyone – for people of all religions. People must be able to live in dignity and peace, regardless of their standard of living. Therefore, tensions that are based on religious sentiments are very dangerous for every country, including societies that have a multinational component.

Another priority will be to concentrate on the implementation of the resolutions and decisions of international organisations.

As far as we are concerned, several important resolutions and decisions have been adopted by the United Nations Security Council, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the European Parliament and the OSCE with regard to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, but none of them have been implemented. There should be a mechanism for the implementation of resolutions that are adopted by prominent international institutions. That mechanism must be followed by all of us, otherwise the resolutions will lose their substance.

We will advocate strongly for the superiority of the norms and principles of international law. I am very grateful to Madam President for the comments that she made in her introductory remarks about the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. That is a fundamental principle of international law and the main principle that must be observed in resolving the protracted conflicts.

Our Foreign Minister elaborated on our other priorities when he addressed the Assembly yesterday, so I will not go into much detail, but will just name them. The fight against corruption will be one priority. Azerbaijan has unique experience in that area.

Unfortunately, all the former republics of the Soviet Union have the same problem: the legacy of corruption seriously damages the successful development of our countries. Azerbaijan has implemented numerous measures, including administrative and institutional reforms, to combat corruption and we have had great success. One such measure is the relatively newly established public services programme, which has existed for one and a half years. Already, almost 2 million people have applied to these centres and received the necessary documents. That has seriously reduced the level of corruption in

Azerbaijan. During his visit to Azerbaijan, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe visited one of the centres. It will be interesting for other member states to hear about that experience.

Youth and education are a top priority in our domestic policy. We have a young, dynamic and educated society. The level of literacy in Azerbaijan is close to 100%. We understand that an educated society is the only guarantee of successful development, and that it can be a guarantee against radicalism and fundamentalism. Education is therefore one of the top priorities for our government. Over the past 10 years, more than 300 schools have been built in Azerbaijan and the quality of education is improving. At the same time, we have implemented numerous programmes in collaboration with the leading universities of the world. We are sending our young students to train abroad so that our intellectual potential is in line with our economic potential. Those are the main priorities that we will concentrate on during our chairmanship.

Our chairmanship is an important milestone in the history of our membership of the Council of Europe. Of course, the chairmanship is based on the principle of rotation and it is just that our turn has come. At the same time, it is a good chance for us to present our country and to address important issues of concern in different European countries, such as those to do with democracy, the rule of law and sometimes selective policy approaches to similar situations in different countries.

During our chairmanship, we will definitely be raising the sometimes differentiated approach to countries in the same region.

Refusal of such principles of double standards will therefore be a great contribution, if we succeed in our chairmanship.

As far as the general development of Azerbaijan is concerned, our country is young, but with great history and traditions and much dynamism. It has an active foreign policy and plays a stabilising role in the region. The potential of Azerbaijan is growing and our initiatives in regional co-operation are supported by our neighbours. Furthermore, our neighbourhood is growing, so initiatives that we launch now cover many more countries.

We have strong support from the international community and a positive reputation in international institutions. Our greatest diplomatic success was the election of Azerbaijan as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. For a young country which still needs to present itself to the world, that was the biggest achievement; we are proud of that. We are also proud that 155 countries supported our candidacy – an absolute majority of the international community therefore trusts and supports Azerbaijan and considers it a reliable partner. In the two years of our membership, we twice chaired the Security Council. Our chairmanship and membership were overwhelmingly assessed as very successful. We contributed significantly to peace, security, stability and predictability in the world. Membership of the Security Council was a unique experience for our country, which we will of course use in future initiatives.

We have established constructive relationships with an absolute majority of the international community and our bilateral ties with European countries are developing successfully. Europe is our main trading partner, with historic links between Azerbaijan and Europe strengthened during the years of independence. At the same time, Azerbaijan is a Muslim country and an active member of the Organisation of Islamic Co-operation. We play an important role not only geographically, but as a cultural and political bridge in our region. The more successful we are, the more active role we can play in the interaction between civilisations, as shown by the International Forum on the Dialogue among Civilisations in Baku. Azerbaijan is a world centre of multiculturalism, and an international centre of multiculturalism will soon be created in our country.

The biggest of the problems that we face is the violation of our internationally recognised territory – the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan puts the whole region in danger. It is called a “frozen” or “protracted” conflict, but neither is it frozen nor can it be frozen, because it must be resolved. Nagorno-Karabakh is an historic part of Azerbaijan; Azerbaijanis lived in Nagorno-Karabakh for centuries and Armenians settled in the area less than 200 years ago, but historic monuments and our heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh have now unfortunately been destroyed by the occupying Armenian army. The conflict resulted in the occupation of 20% of the internationally recognised territory of Azerbaijan.



Azerbaijanis were the subject of ethnic cleansing by Armenian gangs and the Armenian army and one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced persons in Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh and seven districts around it have been under occupation for more than 20 years. That is the biggest injustice.

As I said, Nagorno-Karabakh is an historic part of Azerbaijan. Even the word “Karabakh” is of Azerbaijani origin and, in fact, all the geographic toponyms of that area belong to our people. According to the norms of international law, Nagorno-Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan. The whole world recognises Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan and no one, including Armenia, recognises Nagorno-Karabakh and its illegal regime as an independent entity. The United Nations Security Council, the world’s highest international body, has adopted four resolutions demanding unconditional and immediate withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories. As I said, those resolutions unfortunately have not been implemented.

Again, we have a policy of double standards. Some UN resolutions are implemented within hours, but in our case it has been more than 20 years. There is no mechanism to deal with the situation and Armenia simply does not want to liberate any territories. It does not want to leave occupied

territory; it wants everything unchanged and to keep the status quo. That is in total contradiction to the efforts of the international mediators, the OSCE Minsk Group and its co-chairs. The Presidents of the United States, Russia and France, three permanent members of the UN Security Council, have on a couple of occasions made clear statements that the status quo is not acceptable, which means that Armenia should start withdrawing its occupying forces from occupied territory. The Armenians, however, simply ignore international law, statements from leading countries of the world and the resolution of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, which was adopted in 2005. A corresponding resolution has been adopted by the European Parliament, and it and the decisions of the OSCE all demand de-occupation and the withdrawal of Armenian troops from occupied territories. Unfortunately, however, the conflict has not been resolved. Azerbaijan behaves very constructively. For more than 20 years, we have been committed to the negotiation process. Everyone, including the Armenians, should understand, however, that something might happen, so the sooner that the Armenian leadership recognises that it is unacceptable in the 21st century to occupy the territory of other countries, the better. Unfortunately, the approach of the Armenian leadership is not adequate.

The previous President of Armenia, speaking here in this home of democracy, said that there is a national incompatibility between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. His successor, the current leader of Armenia, describes the conflict as a religious one.

That approach is absolutely unacceptable. Azerbaijanis have no incompatibility with any nation – Armenians might do so, but not only with us, because their country is now mono-ethnic, with 99.9% of the population of Armenia being Armenians. All the minorities, including Azerbaijanis, were forced to leave. That racist approach cannot prevail in negotiation. We need to address the issue and to restore justice and the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Unfortunately, as a result of the occupation, our historic monuments are destroyed, our mosques have been levelled to the ground, our cemeteries destroyed, and today's occupied territory is a land totally destroyed. The OSCE twice sent missions – fact-finding and field assistance missions – to the occupied territories. Its report clearly shows that everything is destroyed.

That is a result of Armenian vandalism in the occupied territories. Territorial integrity is a basic principle of international law.

Self-determination, to which the Armenian side always refers, should not violate the territorial integrity of countries. The Armenian leadership should read the Helsinki Final Act carefully. They would see the clear definition. In addition, Armenians are self-determined. They have an Armenian state, which was created on historically Azerbaijani lands. Perhaps many members of the Assembly do not know – the Armenian delegation knows – that one of the first decrees of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, which was created as a result of the collapse of the Russian Empire in 1918, made Yerevan the capital of the Armenian state. Armenians already have a state. How many

Armenian states do they want? Do they want to create another state everywhere they live? Why should there be another Armenian state in Azerbaijan? One is enough. Self-determination should not violate territorial integrity, and the conflict must be resolved as soon as possible for the benefit of all of us, including Armenian people, who suffer from today's Armenian Government, which leads the country towards total collapse and catastrophe.

Despite the conflict, Azerbaijan's economy is growing. In the past 10 years, Azerbaijan has been the fastest-growing economy in the world. No other country increased its economic potential as much as Azerbaijan did. Our gross domestic product multiplied by 3.4. We managed to diversify the economy. As a result, the non-energy sector is 55% of our GDP. The international and financial institutions highly value our reforms. During the years of financial crisis, the main ratings agencies – Standard and Poor's, Moody's and Fitch – upgraded Azerbaijan's credit rating. The Davos World Economic Forum ranks Azerbaijan's economy No. 39 in the global competitiveness index. That means that we have managed to transform our planned economy into a market economy to the maximum degree, creating a competitive economy. Some 1.2 million jobs were created in Azerbaijan. The fair distribution of national wealth is one of our country's main achievements. As a result, the level of poverty dropped in the past 10 years from 49% to 5.3%; unemployment is 5%; the budget deficit is at the limits accepted by European Union countries; and foreign debt is 8% of GDP. The financial situation is stable and social programmes are being implemented. The political situation is stable. As I have said, Azerbaijan is an active member of the international community and the country is modernising. We look to the future with great optimism.

I do not want to take all our time for myself – I want to leave time for questions. As you can imagine, I could talk about our country for several hours, but I do not want to use all the time for my presentation. Chairing the Committee of Ministers is a big challenge and a big responsibility. We are ready for it. We will do our utmost to contribute to the common values of democracy, the rule of law and freedom.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** Thank you very much for your speech, President Aliyev. A number of members want to ask questions. I remind you that you have 30 seconds to ask your questions and not to make statements. We will first have the speakers on behalf of the political groups. The first question is by Mr McNamara on behalf of the Socialist Group.

**Mr McNamara:** Amnesty International states that there are 19 prisoners of conscience in your jails, President Aliyev. Others say there are more. The European Court of Human Rights has said that the pre-trial detention of one Ilgar Mammadov was unlawful and motivated by electoral considerations. Another, Anar Mammadli, exposed flaws in the recent presidential elections, which you won. Activists of NIDA have been jailed for merely expressing an opinion and calling for peaceful demonstration. This body has adopted a definition of political prisoner, but the rapporteur was denied access to Azerbaijan. Do you believe that that diminishes your legitimacy to chair this body, and will you release those prisoners?



**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** Thank you. I kindly remind people attending our meeting today – I thank them for coming – not to applaud.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** First of all, there are no political prisoners in Azerbaijan. All of what Mr McNamara has said is based on false information or his biased approach to our country. Not for the first time, he is trying to insult Azerbaijan, but without any visible success. I am sure that his initiative yesterday will have the same outcome of the initiative of Mr Strasser a couple of years ago, which resulted in the fiasco of January 2013. Unfortunately, Azerbaijan is subject to deliberate provocations. We know the source and we know the reason. It has nothing to do with human rights and democracy. It is political. The question Mr McNamara read from his piece of paper was probably given to him by someone who is interested in attacking Azerbaijan.

**Mr McNamara:** I write my own speeches and questions.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** I understand. If you want an open discussion, we can find another place for it. There are no political prisoners in Azerbaijan. The report of Mr Strasser failed here in this room because it was based on false information, slander and rumours. Mr McNamara is trying to do the same thing. He is trying to mislead the opinion of the Assembly by repeating that false information. There are no political prisoners. Azerbaijan is a member of the European Court of Human Rights. All issues relating to prisoners can be addressed there. We respect the decisions of the European Court of Human Rights. Therefore, once again, the attempts to attack our country are absolutely groundless. They will have no result.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** Thank you. Ms Bakoyannis has the floor, on behalf of the Group of the European People's Party.

**Ms Bakoyannis:** On behalf of the Group of the European People's Party, I welcome you, President Aliyev. I would like to go back to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. There have been many initiatives in the last few years. The Minsk Group is active in the region, as is the OSCE. Do you think there is room for the Council of Europe to try to take the initiative on Nagorno-Karabakh? How do you assess the situation in the last months? Do you think there is momentum you could use?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** We have always strongly supported addressing the Nagorno-Karabakh issue here in the Council of Europe. That has happened from the beginning of our membership. As I said in my speech, the Council of Europe adopted a resolution in 2005 that clearly stated that it was necessary to put an end to the occupation. Later, an ad hoc committee was created here, but due to the unconstructive behaviour of the Armenian delegation, which boycotted the committee, it is no longer meeting. The more international institutions pay attention to the issue, the sooner we can find a solution. As I have said, Armenia wants to keep everything unchanged.

It wants the international community to forget about the conflict. Therefore, they believe that the Minsk Group format is best for them.

We understand that there can currently be no alternative to the Minsk Group for mediation, but it has not produced any results. The Council of Europe should address this issue more actively. The restoration of the activity of the ad hoc committee would be an important step.

As far as the prospects for negotiation are concerned, unfortunately we do not have much optimism. The Armenians are trying to do everything they can to keep the status unchanged. From time to time, we have bilateral meetings with the Armenian President, most recently in November in Vienna. That produced some optimism and we even elaborated on that publicly, but the old tactics of making a minor step forward and then delaying the process have continued. Without the active involvement of the international community, Armenia would try to continue what they have done so far.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** I call the Earl of Dundee, on behalf of the European Democrat Group.

**Earl of Dundee:** On human rights improvement and reform, apart from the current agreed and public action plan with the Council of Europe, which particular measures will you and your country now adopt to achieve specific targets?

**President İlham Aliyev:** The action plan was agreed during Mr Secretary General's visit to Azerbaijan. It is a comprehensive document and a road map for future co-operation between Azerbaijan and the Council of Europe. Human rights, democratic reforms and the rule of law are our priorities. As I said, a lot has been done but there is still a lot more to do. We are open to criticism when it is based on facts. We are not perfect of course, perhaps like other members of the Parliamentary Assembly.

Sometimes criticism is based on a biased approach and is just an attempt to damage the reputation of Azerbaijan. The years of Azerbaijan's membership of the Council of Europe have been years of rapid political reforms. It was the right choice for our government and the right choice for the Council of Europe to adopt us into its family. I am sure that future collaboration, including the months of our chairmanship, will produce new good results with respect to democratic reforms in our country.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** I call Mr Xuclà to ask a question on behalf of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe.

**Mr Xuclà:** In 2006, the Republic of Azerbaijan adopted the Council of Europe's convention on the fight against corruption, which is very important in terms of our standards. We have very clear guidelines. What measures have your government taken since then to implement the convention, and on the law on access to information and transparency concerning funds and properties?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** As I said, corruption is one of the main areas that we will concentrate on during our chairmanship of the Council of Europe. Corruption is a disease that needs to be cured. Our compatriots from the former Soviet Union – all of us – were in a difficult situation because of deep-rooted corruption in our societies. Elimination of this evil is one of our government's targets. Without that, our success cannot be sustainable. Signing up to the convention and using the positive experience of European Union member states in particular is an extremely important part of our country's co-operation with the EU. As I said, implementing institutional measures gives much better results than administrative measures or punishment. The issue, unfortunately, cannot be resolved by changing the people, so we have found a mechanism. As I said, the public services system makes corruption impossible. I fully agree with what you said on transparency. We have a good record on that. Azerbaijan was one of the first countries to join the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative of the then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, Mr Blair. Azerbaijan became the first full member of this initiative and there is now 100% transparency in the extractive industries in Azerbaijan. We need to have the same percentage of transparency in our financial and public services sectors, and we are working on that.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** The final speaker on behalf of the political groups is Mr Kox, who speaks on behalf of the Group of the Unified European Left.

**Mr Kox:** Thank you very much for your most interesting speech, in which you gave quite a positive analysis of your country's human rights track record. As you are aware, not everybody agrees with this positive analysis – I met one of them when I was in Baku and I will meet others today. The Assembly will of course look at it in January. In this respect, would you be prepared to consider organising in your country a round table structure through which you could engage in transparent dialogue with those who think that Azerbaijan could and should substantially improve its human rights track record? I am sure that the Assembly would be willing to assist you in organising it if necessary. I look forward to your answer.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** Definitely. Not only are we ready, but we are willing to organise such a session. We addressed this issue in our interactions with our partners during the visit of Madam President and Mr Secretary General in May. We have had substantive discussions on the matter. We disagree on some issues, but at the same time there is a constructive dialogue.

As I said, we do not consider the situation in Azerbaijan with respect to human rights and democracy to be perfect, but there has been great progress. We are ready to react, and we do react, to constructive criticism. In my comments, I concentrated on a positive example of our reforms because this audience usually concentrates on the negative. To create even the slightest balance I wanted to take my time, but I left some time for interactions. It would be a good idea to have open and sincere discussions on the substance. Sometimes when we discuss this issue I hear different perceptions from my partners and colleagues. Who creates this perception? Sometimes perceptions are created artificially to

damage the reputation of Azerbaijan. Let us look at the substance. On respect for freedoms, I said in my comments that we have media freedom. We have free Internet. How can we restrict media freedom when we have free Internet and no censorship, and when 70% of people are Internet users? There were opposition rallies before and after the presidential elections in October, and they faced no restrictions. Today, if anyone wants to have a rally in three days' time, with the proper notifications they will have a place in the centre of Azerbaijan. Only 840 people came to the last opposition rally after the elections – 840 people who did not approve of the presidential elections. The fact that opposition is weak in Azerbaijan does not mean that we are doing anything harmful. What I said about economic and social development cannot be ignored. Anyone who comes to Azerbaijan and sees the development will understand that such enormous economic growth cannot be ignored by our society. People support what we are doing. They support our government. Our government is strong not because we suppress anyone, but because we do things properly.

Another point to make is that those who are in opposition today are the people who were in government in 1992-93. They created chaos and were responsible for the occupation and the loss of territories. They provoked the civil war and then they ran away. Some of the young generation in that group are sitting in the gallery. They do not understand, because they do not know what happened in 1992 and 1993. It is not their fault, but they have just been misled. We are therefore ready to engage in such round table discussions with your participation.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** I propose that we take a group of three questions to be answered together. I call Ms Christoffersen.

**Ms Christoffersen:** The fight against violations of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender rights all over Europe is a high priority for this Assembly. Do you recognise LGBT rights as a part of fundamental human rights? If so, what will the Republic of Azerbaijan do to secure such rights and the freedom of organisation?

**Mr Rochebloine:** Do you think that the arbitrary ill treatment inflicted upon Leyla Yunus, an outstanding personality involved in defending human rights in Azerbaijan, is of such a nature to convince the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe that Azerbaijan is respecting the internationally recognised fundamental freedoms enshrined in the European Convention on Human Rights?

**Ms Fiala:** The number of violent incidents on Azerbaijan's borders has increased significantly in recent times. We read almost every day of casualties and injuries, with civilians among them. Do you agree that we should encourage the parties to adhere strictly to the cease-fire and implement the security measures proposed by the Minsk Group of co-chairs as soon as possible, with the withdrawal of snipers and independent investigation of incidents?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** The rights of all groups of people are provided for in Azerbaijan; there are no restrictions. As I said, the situation with freedoms is no different from that in your country.

With respect to the so-called mistreatment of Leyla Yunus, I disagree because there was no mistreatment of her. In fact, there was probably mistreatment on her behalf towards the policeman who she verbally and physically attacked. She was trying to escape when she was asked to give evidence for a criminal investigation. She was stopped and invited to give evidence as a witness, but unfortunately she has refused for several weeks and ignores the legitimate request to present any information she may have.

On incidents on the border, the issue raised is one that I always hear from the Minsk Group co-chairs about security and confidence-building measures. Sometimes the distance between Armenian and Azerbaijani soldiers is 50 metres, so you do not need a sniper to do something harmful. The best way to establish confidence-building measures is for the occupying Armenian troops to start withdrawing from Azerbaijani territories. The casualties referred to are in the occupied Azerbaijani territories – they do not happen in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is also an Azerbaijani territory. Most of the soldiers are recruited in Armenia – what are they doing in the occupied territories? The removal of our forces is therefore not acceptable – how then would we protect our land from further attacks? The Armenian leadership needs to realise that its policy on Nagorno-Karabakh failed; it lost the battle with Azerbaijan. According to Armenian statistics, the level of poverty in Armenia is more than 40% and in the first quarter of the year 40,000 citizens left Armenia for ever – they will never come back. That is as a result of the occupation policy, and now the Armenian leadership complains wherever it can that Azerbaijan poses a threat. However, we are the country with occupied territories: it poses a threat to us and to the whole region. The sooner it realises that Azerbaijan will never agree to the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh, the sooner the conflict will be resolved and the sooner Armenian people will start to have better lives.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** We will have the next three questions. First is from Mr Flynn.

**Mr Flynn:** Politicians and journalists have been falsely accused and imprisoned in Azerbaijan and elections have been rigged: I have spoken to the people involved. Can we look forward to a year in which Azerbaijan raises its standards to Council of Europe levels, or will we have a year in which the deplorable example of Azerbaijan encourages other nations to degrade their own human rights standards?

**Mr Díaz Tejera:** You have many neighbours in your region and you play a key role in energy and stability just as Israel does in the Middle East. What are the energy and stability risks for the immediate future?

**Ms Loklindt:** You explained that all freedoms are respected in Azerbaijan. However, we know from the international media that many thousands of people are still internally displaced. How are you dealing with that challenge?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** In the first short question, you lied twice and I will prove it. Listen to me: journalists are not imprisoned in Azerbaijan. Since 2009, no one has been in prison because of defamation. The second lie is that elections are rigged. The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe sent a delegation to observe the elections. You are probably not aware of its report. If so, check with your colleagues, because they were positive in their assessment of the Azerbaijan elections.

There were more than 1,000 international observers and several exit polls were held by international organisations that all supported, or did not differ from, the official results.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe's delegation provided a positive report that was approved here. The European Parliament also sent a delegation and its report was positive. The Parliamentary Assembly of the OSCE also sent a delegation that was positive about the result. Why are you lying? The elections were free and fair and these institutions prove that.

On energy security, Azerbaijan is playing its role in contributing to energy security. I did not raise this issue today because I wanted to allow more time for discussions, but it is something that we take seriously. We have already achieved full energy security for Azerbaijan because we have diversified supply routes for our oil and gas. We are now working to help provide some European countries with their energy security. Today some of the member states of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe get about 40% of their oil from Azerbaijan. Now we have launched a huge gas distribution project, which will allow Azerbaijan to be a gas exporter to Europe. As you correctly mentioned in your question, energy security and political stability and security must be addressed as a package. Therefore the new gas infrastructure project, which will be the biggest infrastructure project in Europe, is being implemented now, with a total investment of at least €45 billion. That is the biggest contribution that Azerbaijan will make to the energy security of Europe.

The questioner from Denmark touched on the issue of internally displaced persons. If I understand correctly, you mean the persons who suffered from the Armenian occupation?

**Ms Loklindt:** There are many kinds of displaced people.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** We have more than one million refugees and internally displaced people, including 250,000 Azerbaijanis who were expelled from Armenia, 700,000 Azerbaijanis who were expelled from Nagorno-Karabakh and seven districts of Azerbaijan, and refugees from wars in other countries. We are trying to do our best to improve the living standards of these people, but it takes a lot of time and funds. Every year, we resettle more than 20,000 IDPs, we have built 82 settlements and 40,000 families have been provided with flats or houses. But we will need additional time and money to satisfy the needs of all of them.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** Will you agree to answer three more questions, Mr President? The next question is from Mr Japaridze.

**Mr Japaridze:** I wish Azerbaijan a successful and productive chairmanship. You talked about conflicts and, as you know, Georgia is plagued with the same kind of problems. You also talked about economic developments and my question is about regional co-operation. Azerbaijan is one of the driving forces of these projects along with Turkey and Georgia.

**Mr Biedroń:** I was strongly surprised by your men-only delegation. For the sake of equality of men and women, I must ask this question. Azerbaijan is 99th out of 136 countries on the global gender gap index – a terrible position. What is your government doing to implement the full equality of men and women and when will you sign and ratify the Istanbul Convention?

**Mr Ariev:** First, I want to ask about the reinforcement of the GUAM organisation, because all four members of that organisation have suffered territorially from the Russian invasion. Secondly, Azerbaijan has the chairmanship of the Council of Europe, and our colleague Mustapha Dzhemilev, the leader of the Crimean Tatars, cannot come back to his home in Crimea because of a ban by Russia. Could you assist him to get back home?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** On the issue raised by Mr Japaridze, I can say that trilateral co-operation on energy, and now on transportation, between Georgia, Turkey and Azerbaijan has already resulted in serious geopolitical change in our region, because our three countries last month had their first ever summit at heads of state level in Tbilisi. Political, economic and energy co-operation between the three countries is important not only for us, but for the region. Together we play a stabilising role, especially with respect to energy security issues.

The first geopolitical change was the construction of the oil pipeline Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, which connected the Caspian with the Mediterranean for the first time. Now we are implementing other projects, the Trans-Anatolian pipeline, the South Caucasus pipeline and the Trans-Adriatic pipeline, from Baku through Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Albania, Italy and Bulgaria.

They will also cover many other countries. We are also implementing an important railway project, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars, which will connect Asia and Europe. Stability in our countries is the main prerequisite for the successful development of the situation in the region. Therefore, we highly value our bilateral relations with Georgia and Turkey, and we will continue to develop that co-operation actively.

It is strange to hear Azerbaijan accused over gender inequality. Our country has great traditions, and when the first Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was established in 1918, one of the first decrees gave women the right to vote. It was probably much earlier than when that happened in your country. Women in Azerbaijan today enjoy the same rights and privileges, and they participate actively in political life. You should not look only at these men here as the members of our delegation. Other representatives from Azerbaijan include prominent women parliamentarians – they are here today.

There are no restrictions, and indeed I did not look at my team from the point of view of how many men or women it had, because they enjoy equal rights. Azerbaijan already has a law on gender equality and a family code, and we are now reviewing the Istanbul Convention to which we do not have any objections. If you visit Baku, you will see for yourselves that women enjoy the same rights, and we are glad about that.

GUAM's activity or non-activity largely depends on the position of the Ukrainians. In my experience of that format for co-operation, we have had times when the Ukrainian Government has been very pro-GUAM and times when it has been very anti-GUAM. Therefore it is very difficult for us – and, I am sure, our Georgian and Moldovan colleagues – to plan a long-term strategy for the development of the organisation. We will therefore wait for positive signals from Ukraine in order for GUAM to become active again, as it was before.

**PACE President Anne Brasseur:** Thank you, Mr President, for your speech and for your answers to the questions from colleagues.



**MEETINGS OF PRESIDENT OF AZERBAIJAN H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV**

- 02.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of Turkmenistan, Rashid Meredov
- 02.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Turkey, Necdet Ozel
- 02.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Second President of the Austrian Parliament, Karlheinz Kopf
- 02.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the OSCE Project Coordinator in Baku, Alexis Chahtahtinsky
- 03.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Sirodzhiddin Aslov
- 03.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Secretary General of the World Tourism Organization, Taleb Rifai
- 03.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the President of the European Olympic Committee, Patrick Hickey
- 10.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Zimbabwe, Simbarashe Mumbengegwi
- 10.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the newly appointed NATO Assistant Secretary General, Sorin Ducaru
- 14.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Governor of the Ulyanovsk Region of the Russian Federation, Sergey Morozov
- 14.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Lithuania's Interior Minister, Dailis Alfonsas Barakauskas
- 14.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former Foreign Minister of France, Hubert Vedrine
- 16.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Speaker of the Montenegrin Parliament, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Ranko Krivokapic
- 17.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, Halil Akinci
- 17.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received new head of the Council of Europe's Office in Baku, Dragana Filipovic
- 18.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by General Director of Border Guard of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Zamim Al-Sawwat
- 19.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the U.S.

- 21.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Cambodia, Hun Sen
- 21.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister of Defense of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Serik Akhmetov
- 23.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of the Kingdom of Spain, Jose Manuel Garcia-Margallo
- 23.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Member of the Senate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Rene van der Linden
- 26.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Latvia, Ms. Vaira Vike-Freiberga
- 26.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former Prime Minister of the Principality of Andorra, Oscar Ribas Reig
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Serbia, Boris Tadic
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Croatia, Stjepan Mesic
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former Prime Minister of the State of Israel, Ehud Barak
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Finland, Tarja Halonen
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Bulgaria, Petar Stoyanov
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Moldova, Petru Lucinschi
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of Romania, Emil Constantinescu
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Latvia, Valdis Zatlers
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Estonia, Arnold Ruutel
- 27.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of Ukraine, Viktor Yushchenko
- 28.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili
- 28.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received co-chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, director of Egypt's Bibliotheca Alexandrina, Ismail Serageldin

- 28.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received former Prime Minister of the Kingdom of Belgium, Yves Leterme
- 28.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Director General of the Office for the Promotion of the Tokyo 2020 Olympic and Paralympic Games under Japan`s Cabinet of Ministers, Special Adviser to the Prime Minister for healthcare and sport affairs, Takeo Hirata
- 29.04.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Foreign Affairs Minister of the State of Israel, Avigdor Lieberman
- 07.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Honduras, Mireya Agüero de Corrales
- 08.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Commissioner of the President of the Russian Federation for Children`s Rights, Pavel Astakhov
- 14.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Minister of Internal Affairs of the Republic of Georgia, Alexander Chikaidze
- 14.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Director General of the World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO), Francis Gurry
- 22.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjørn Jagland
- 22.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Anne Brasseur
- 26.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Ahmet Davutoğlu
- 26.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan, Rasit Meredov
- 26.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Minister of Internal Affairs of Turkey, Efkân Ala
- 29.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by a member of the House of Commons of the British Parliament and chairman of the UK–Azerbaijan parliamentary friendship group, Christopher Pincher
- 31.05.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group Igor Popov (Russia), James Warlick (USA), Jacques Faure (France), Pierre Andrieu, the co-chairman from France who is about to start his activities, as well as the special representative of the OSCE chairman-in-office, Andrzej Kasprzyk
- 02.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, Aleksey Ulyukayev
- 03.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by a member of the British Parliament and Prime Ministerial Trade Envoy to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan, Charles Hendry

- 03.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received the Chief Executive Officer of bp, Robert Dudley
- 03.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Czech Republic, Lubomir Zaoralek
- 13.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the chairman of the Jogorku Kenesh (Parliament) of Kyrgyzstan, Asilbek Jeenbekov
- 13.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the chairman of Mazhilis of the Parliament of the Republic of Kazakhstan, Kabybulla Jakupov
- 13.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of the Republic of Turkey, Cemil Cicek
- 18.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received President of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe, Herwig van Staa
- 18.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Russian Foreign Minister, Sergei Lavrov
- 19.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Rogozin
- 27.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister for European Union Affairs of the Republic of Turkey, Mevlut Cavusoglu
- 27.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by chairman of the Russian State Duma, Sergey Naryshkin
- 28.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Speaker of the Parliament of the Republic of Montenegro, President of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Ranko Krivokapic
- 28.06.2014 President Ilham Aliyev received a US delegation led by Republican Senator from Mississippi Roger Wicker and Republican Congressman from New Jersey, Christopher Smith



**DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY  
OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN,  
H.E. Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
IN SECOND QUARTER OF 2014**

**VISITS BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN,  
H.E. Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV**

**22.04.2014**                      **Working visit to the Russian Federation**

**ВЫСТУПЛЕНИЕ МИНИСТРА ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСКОЙ  
РЕСПУБЛИКИ ЭЛЬМАРА МАМЕДЪЯРОВА НА КОНФЕРЕНЦИИ МИНИСТРОВ  
ИНОСТРАННЫХ ДЕЛ ПРИКАСПИЙСКИХ ГОСУДАРСТВ**

Уважаемый господин Председатель,

Уважаемые коллеги,

Уважаемые участники Конференции,

Дамы и господа,

Прежде всего, позвольте приветствовать всех уважаемых участников Конференции и выразить глубокую признательность правительству Российской Федерации за организацию этого мероприятия, имеющее очень важное значения для дальнейшего конструктивного обмена мнениями по вопросам всеобъемлющего урегулирования вопросов правового статуса Каспия.

С момента проведения саммита глав прикаспийских государств в Баку прошло уже 4 года и назрела необходимость организации очередной встречи на высшем уровне для определения дальнейших направлений сотрудничества.

Подготовка полноценной повестки и принятие итоговых документов саммита глав прикаспийских государств намеченного на осень в Астрахани будет способствовать существенному продвижению по согласованию основополагающих принципов Каспийской проблематики и укрепит существующую базу для сотрудничества прикаспийских государств.

В этой связи, особо хочу отметить работу Специальной рабочей группы по разработке Конвенции о правовом статусе Каспийского моря на уровне заместителей министров иностранных дел, а также ее усилия по согласованию итогового документа Астраханского саммита глав государств.

Уважаемый господин Председатель,

Уважаемые участники Конференции,

В целях укрепления правовой базы для сотрудничества государств Каспийского региона проделана значительная работа. В настоящее время согласовано и готово к подписанию Соглашение о сотрудничестве в сфере гидрометеорологии Каспийского моря. Вместе с тем согласовано Соглашение о сотрудничестве в сфере предупреждения и ликвидации чрезвычайных ситуаций в Каспийском море.

Продолжается также работа экспертов над окончательным согласованием Соглашения о сохранении и рациональном использовании биологических ресурсов Каспийского моря. Несомненно, объявление моратория на вылов осетровых видов рыб создаст условия для сохранения и передачи уникальных ценностей Каспия будущим поколениям.

Завершение всеми прикаспийскими государствами ратификации Соглашения о сотрудничестве в сфере безопасности на Каспийском море, подписанного 18 ноября 2010 года в городе Баку, придаст новый импульс тесному сотрудничеству сторон в этой сфере.

Уважаемый господин Председатель,

Уважаемые участники Конференции,

Азербайджанская Республика разделяет общую обеспокоенность прибрежных государств сегодняшним состоянием окружающей среды Каспия и их заинтересованность в расширении сотрудничества для решения экологических проблем Каспийского моря.

Высоко оцениваем работу, проделанную в рамках Рамочной Конвенции по защите морской окружающей среды Каспийского моря и ее Протоколов. Азербайджан, как первая из Сторон принимающая у себя Секретариат с января 2015 года, готов предоставить все необходимые условия для его дальнейшей успешной работы.

С удовлетворением также отмечаем, что положения в проекте Конвенции о правовом статусе Каспийского моря касающиеся защиты окружающей среды были полностью согласованы.

Остаются приоритетными для прибрежных государств вопросы укрепления международного сотрудничества, улучшения инвестиционного климата по освоению и транспортировке энергетических ресурсов на международные рынки, создания надежных и безопасных коммуникаций и привлечения высокорентабельных и экологически чистых технологий.

Будучи важной составляющей в транспортных коридорах, Каспийское море является связующим звеном во многих международных и региональных проектах. Успешность проектов, связывающих Каспийское море с Черным и Средиземным морями, в частности таких как нефтепровод Баку – Супса, Баку – Тбилиси – Джейхан, а также реализация проектов по газопроводу Баку-Тбилиси-Эрзурум и железнодорожного сообщения Баку-Тбилиси-Карс служат экономическому развитию и благосостоянию стран Каспийского региона и мировой энергетической безопасности.

Уважаемый господин Председатель,

Уважаемые участники Конференции,

Особо подчеркиваем важность взаимного доверия между сторонами, в частности, в вопросах региональной стабильности, безопасности, экономической и научно-исследовательской деятельности на Каспии.

Исходим из того понимания, что присутствие вооруженных сил сторон и военная деятельность на Каспийском море должны осуществляться на основе принципа обеспечения равных условий безопасности для всех прикаспийских государств. Это может послужить укреплению взаимного доверия между государствами региона и превращения Каспийского моря в зону дружбы, сотрудничества и добрососедства.

Отмечаем важность свободы транзита для внутриконтинентальных прикаспийских государств из Каспийского моря к другим морям и Мировому океану.

Надеемся, что все вопросы связанные с режимом для торгового мореплавания, правом мирного прохода судов сторон через зоны под национальным суверенитетом других сторон, прокладкой кабелей и трубопроводов по дну Каспийского моря, а также проведением морских научных исследований будут решаться в рамках переговорного процесса в соответствии с нормами международного морского права.

Мы придаем важное значение Соглашениям, подписанным между Азербайджанской Республикой, Республикой Казахстан и Российской Федерацией о разграничении дна Каспийского моря, которые являются неотъемлемой частью правового статуса Каспийского моря и основой для достижения общих договоренностей.

Нет никаких сомнений в том, что общая заинтересованность стран региона в улучшении инвестиционного климата, освоении энергетических ресурсов, создании надежных и безопасных коммуникаций, а также обеспечении безопасности и стабильности в регионе Каспийского моря требует от нас дополнительных усилий для достижения согласия по всем открытым вопросам. Вместе с тем, убеждены, что консенсус в вопросе установления исходных линий с применением международной практики будет содействовать достижению общих договоренностей.

Азербайджан вновь подтверждает свою приверженность решению вопросов, касающихся всех сфер сотрудничества, в том числе и правового статуса Каспийского моря в духе уважения суверенных прав прикаспийских государств, взаимовыгодного партнерства, мирными средствами и путем переговоров.

В заключении позвольте еще раз выразить благодарность российской стороне за организацию Конференции, которая несомненно будет способствовать успешному проведению Астраханского Саммита и дальнейшему сближению позиций прикаспийских государств для окончательного решения стоящих перед нами важных задач.

Благодарю за внимание.

**06-07.05.2014                      Working visit to the Republic of Austria**

**SPEECH BY MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AT THE 124TH SESSION OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to congratulate H.E. Mr Sebastian Kurz and his team, both in Vienna and Strasbourg, for successful Austrian Chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers and for the excellent organization of this Ministerial in the beautiful city of Vienna.

The Secretary General's report on the "State of human rights, rule of law and democracy in Europe" contains general assessment of current situation, an approach that we support, and offers possible means for rectifying shortcomings. Nevertheless, I find myself obliged to underline one important issue which we considered to be watched very very carefully: the report suggests the necessity of



engagement of monitoring mechanisms of the Council of Europe in unresolved conflict zones through visits to those territories with subsequent reporting procedures. We understand the importance of ensuring full application of human rights standards throughout Europe and necessity of protection of population in conflict zones. However, this provision is susceptible to be easily misused and manipulated in defiance of territorial integrity of the Member States concerned. Therefore we should be extremely cautious in dealing with such delicate issues having the potential to further complicate the difficult settlement process.

As a country, who suffered from ongoing aggression of neighboring Armenia with occupation and notorious ethnic cleansing on the internationally recognized territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan we are of strong and firm position that any visits of the representatives of the Council of Europe and its monitoring mechanisms to the conflict zones shall be carried only on the explicit agreement of the government concerned. Otherwise, these visits will contradict to the norms of international law and can be assessed as illegal.

Mr. President,

By successfully implementing wide range of consistent democratic reforms, Azerbaijan has fulfilled the commitments and obligations undertaken in the process of accession to the Council of Europe. We are certain that the recently adopted Council of Europe - Azerbaijan Action Plan for 2014-2016 which will be launched very soon, during the visit of the Secretary General to Baku, will be another important tool for successful cooperation between the Council of Europe and Azerbaijan in the years to come.

Last but not least, Azerbaijan will be privileged to take the lead at the Committee of Ministers over the next 6 months. During the whole period of our chairmanship, we will spare no efforts to further advance the objectives the Council of Europe has been pursuing since its inception. To this end, we have taken full account of the challenges encountered by the Member States and current political agenda of the Organization while identifying our chairmanship priorities, which I will present this afternoon in more detail.

Thank you for your attention.

**PRESENTATION OF THE PRIORITIES OF THE CHAIRMANSHIP OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE BY MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV**

Mr. President,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to once again congratulate my distinguished colleague, Minister Sebastian Kurz and his excellent team for successful and productive Chairmanship during rather busy and testing 6 months period.

It is indeed a great privilege for the Republic of Azerbaijan to assume, for the first time since becoming a member of the Council of Europe in January 2001, the chairmanship of the Committee of Ministers. The chairmanship of Azerbaijan comes at a historic moment when the Organization celebrates its 65th anniversary. This is truly an important milestone for the Council of Europe which has long been considered as a reference point with its strong and unique set of standards.

Over the next six months, my country will render its strong support and invest its efforts around three key pillars of the Council of Europe - human rights, rule of law and democracy. Upholding and promoting core values of the Council of Europe will be at the center of all our activities and undertakings during this period.

The key priorities of the Azerbaijani chairmanship have been identified by taking full account of topical and pressing issues persisting on the agenda of the Council of Europe, as well as Azerbaijan's positive record and comparative advantages.

We will obviously pay close attention to existing challenges to democracy, security and stability in Europe to ensure prompt and resolute response by Member States. In doing so, the Chairmanship of Azerbaijan will seek consensual decisions in the spirit of compromise, through reinforced dialogue, mutual respect and understanding.

Enhanced co-operation in combating corruption will be one of the key priorities of Azerbaijani chairmanship. We will contribute to the efforts of the Council of Europe, which has also declared combating corruption as one of its priority tasks, by organizing a dedicated high-level conference in Baku in cooperation with the International Anti-Corruption Academy. This conference will provide an opportunity to exchange views on national experiences and best practices through highlighting the implementation of anti-corruption laws and ensuring preventive measures.

The Chairmanship of Azerbaijan will also keep close tabs on the possible adoption of the Council of Europe Convention on the manipulation of sport competitions and we will extend our support also to soonest opening of this Convention to signature. As you are aware, Baku will host the first ever European Games in 2015 and this is another solid reason why we are promoting the adoption of this Convention during its chairmanship.

Managing cultural diversity in constantly growing societies has become one of the central topics in today's Europe. Azerbaijan has historically been a place for the peaceful co-existence of followers of different religions and the issue of promotion of religious and cultural diversity has always been high on our agenda. During its Chairmanship Azerbaijan will contribute to combating discrimination and intolerance in Europe not least through highlighting the role of intercultural dialogue. We will be privileged to organize the 2014 Council of Europe annual exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue. We hope this meeting will reiterate the value and importance of the consolidation of culturally diverse societies based on mutual respect and understanding.

The Chairmanship of Azerbaijan considers social cohesion and social sustainability as an important element of any stable and prosperous society. Our efforts in this direction will seek to complement the Council of Europe's undertakings in ensuring everyone's access to social rights without any discrimination, with a special emphasis on vulnerable groups. Experiencing itself large-scale displacement due to Armenian occupation, Azerbaijan will undoubtedly pay close attention to the protection of human rights of internally displaced persons, a vulnerable segment of the population, within relevant activities of the Chairmanship. We are persuaded that this matter deserves to be vested a constant attention within the Council of Europe in the future, since millions of people in Europe of XXI century still suffer from this very very unfortunate phenomenon.

Our work will also focus on youth and education, two integral elements for building prosperous and stable societies. We will place particular emphasis on the importance of nurturing a generation of educated and responsible youth which, we all agree, comes through ensuring enhanced access of youth to their rights. Baku will host two important events under this priority line of action, namely the 4th regional ministerial meeting on the implementation of the European Higher Education Area and UN Global Forum on Youth Policy. UN Forum will benefit from the strong institutional support of the Council of Europe.

Enhancing the effectiveness of the Convention system remains one of the key priorities of the Council of Europe. The Chairmanship of Azerbaijan will strive to contribute to the efforts of the Council of Europe in this field, through extending its support to the follow-up to the Declarations adopted in Interlaken, Izmir and Brighton. Special attention will be given to the effective implementation of the Convention at national level and to this end, a high-level conference on the role of national judges in enhancing the domestic application of the Convention will be held in Baku.

Upon the initiative of the Secretary General, the Council of Europe has embarked on ambitious political reforms which will receive our strong and unequivocal support during this tenure. The Chairmanship of Azerbaijan will also support the further strengthening of co-operation with other international organizations, most notably the European Union, the OSCE and the United Nations.

Azerbaijan has been following closely the progress of the Council of Europe policy towards neighbouring regions. Since it was launched in Istanbul in 2011, considerable progress has been achieved in deepening of engagement with several countries of the neighboring regions through strengthened political dialogue and agreements over cooperation priorities. As a country located at the crossroads of the continents and enjoying historic ties and strong bilateral relations with these countries, Azerbaijan will continue paying close attention to the development of this policy. The Chairmanship of Azerbaijan intends to support the Council of Europe's efforts in this area through organizing high-level Ministerial conference devoted to the neighborhood policy of the Council of Europe in Baku in September 2014. The conference could provide a valuable forum for exploring the avenues for possible long term engagement of the Council of Europe, taking full account of the recent debates within the Committee of Ministers on possibilities of more institutionalized ties with some countries of the neighborhood. Last but not least, the event could look at the possibilities whether the intercultural dialogue related activities could bring an added value to overall objectives pursued by the policy.

During our chairmanship we will act in close and regular contacts with forthcoming Belgium and Bosnia and Herzegovina chairmanships, with the goal of ensuring continuity and coherence of our activities through advancement of shared priorities in a coordinated fashion.

Throughout this important period the Azerbaijani Chairmanship will work in close coordination with the Secretary General, the Parliamentary Assembly, the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities and other institutions to ensure smooth and productive running of the Chairmanship.

We will strive to display maximum level of openness and willingness to reach our common goals and objectives and we will count on your strong support in this important and vital endeavor. 18 events will be held in Azerbaijan over the next 6 months and I extend our kind invitation to you and your colleagues to visit our country during this period.

Thank you for your attention.

13.05.2014

**Working visit to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia****STATEMENT BY MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AT THE FIRST SESSION OF THE ARAB COOPERATION AND ECONOMIC FORUM WITH CENTRAL ASIA AND THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

Your Royal Highness,

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Dear Colleagues,

At the outset, I would like to extend our profound appreciation to the leadership and the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the initiative to establish “League of Arab States -Central Asia-the Republic of Azerbaijan Cooperation and Economic Forum” and excellent arrangement of the Forum’s inauguration meeting and for the warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation.

I also wish to convey our thanks to the Secretary General of Arab League Dr. Nabil Al-Arabi, and General Secretariat for their continuous efforts towards realization of this initiative.

Mr. Chairman,

Being closely linked with the Arab States through historical, religious and cultural bonds, the Republic of Azerbaijan has always paid particular importance to developing relations with each Member State of the Arab League, supported by strong political, economic and commercial pillars. Friendly ties Azerbaijan enjoys with the Arab States have also paved way for long-term and meaningful cooperation under the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the League of Arab States and Gulf Cooperation Council.

It is therefore logical that Azerbaijan, since its inception, has hailed the initiative of Arab League-Central Asia-Azerbaijan Cooperation Forum and actively participated in its advancement. It is our firm belief that this mechanism will be instrumental in furthering our political, economic and humanitarian cooperation to a qualitatively new level and fostering greater mutual understanding, respect and support.

Mr. Chairman,

Azerbaijan has always been in solidarity with the Islamic Ummah in sharing of its problems and grievances. Our support was particularly evident and helpful during Azerbaijan’s membership to the United Nations Security Council in 2012-2013. As I mentioned in my letter to the Arab League

Secretary General Dr. Nabil Al-Araby, Azerbaijan at the UN SC has been faithful to the just cause of Islamic Ummah and demonstrated an active position when Palestine, Syrian crisis, Sudan, Iraq and Yemen issues were subject of series discussions at the UN SC. Furthermore, at the initiative of Azerbaijan on October 28th 2013 under our Presidency the first ever special meeting of the United Nations Security Council and Organization of Islamic Cooperation on the topic “Strengthening partnership synergy between the UN and OIC” have been convened. As an outcome of this historical meeting it was also agreed to convene such a meeting biannually under the presidency of any OIC Member State who has the seat at the UN SC as a non-permanent member.

With this view in mind, we reiterate our support to the brotherly people of Palestine and their efforts to achieve peace, stability and establishment of a sovereign and independent Palestinian state. We are pleased to witness some positive developments and encouraging improvements such as the admission of the State of Palestine to UNESCO and the decision of the United Nations General Assembly to accord to Palestine non-member observer State status in the UN.

Azerbaijan is also deeply concerned over the escalating violence in Syria that claimed so many innocent lives and endangers regional and international security. We support the efforts of the UN and the League of Arab States to find a peaceful solution to the Syrian crisis.

To our deepest regret, we continue to face persistence of such challenges as defamation of religions, incitement to religious hatred and Islamophobia. This Forum can also be helpful to fostering dialogue among civilizations and preventing prejudices and stereotypes.

Mr. Chairman,

As you are well aware, Armenia continues to use force to sustain military occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and to prevent one million Azerbaijani refugees and IDP’s from returning to their homes. No single Azerbaijani historic and cultural monument was left undamaged and no mosque and other sacred site escaped desecration both in the occupied territories, as well as in Armenia itself.

It is a matter of yet another serious concern that Armenia expands settlement of Syrian Armenians into the occupied territories of Azerbaijan to change the demography on the ground and consolidate its occupation. Such activity is illegal under international law and must be stopped immediately.

We reiterate our sincere gratitude to the Islamic Ummah for long standing position in condemnation of the Armenian aggression and occupation of 20% of Azerbaijan’s territories with notorious ethnic cleansing on the seized lands. We are particularly grateful to Islamic Ummah for the unanimous call for immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from all our occupied territories, as it is demanded by the relevant resolutions and decisions of the UN Security Council, OIC and other international organizations. We believe that this position with regards to

Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict will also be reflected in the attitude of all brotherly Arab League Member States.

Mr. Chairman,

The Forum can also provide a lever to step up the economic ties and consolidate the economic foundation of our relationship. Deepened investment and trade relations will contribute to broader economic engagement delivering mutual economic benefits. Active employment of public-private partnership models is also needed both from resource both mobilization and policy support standpoint.

While preparing cooperation agenda, we should be practical and pursue step-by-step approach targeting specific areas of common interest be it bilateral or broader format. In this vein, we would like to share our views on suggested Plan of Action:

1. Trade and investment promotion measures: organization of visits of trade missions, chamber of commerce and exhibitions on a regular basis; encourage use of business portals. In this respect, we welcome the results of the joint meeting of the chambers of commerce held in Riyadh, on 29 April 2014.
2. Cooperation in the transport sector: transit and economic integration potential of our regions largely remains untapped. Once finalized the railway link Baku-Tbilisi-Kars connecting Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey will further diversify routes within the regional transport corridor and can facilitate flow of goods from China to Arab States. In the view that Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway network can also be potentially connected with the prospective GCC railroad system.
3. We all know that the best investments are the investments into the education. Azerbaijan stands ready to extend its full support to set up special academic exchange programs to put further impetus to educational cooperation.
4. Learning experiences and innovation applied in development of industry and fuel-energy sectors is also of great interest to us.
5. Some Arab League Member States are either traditional or emerging popular tourism destination. We are very keen in exchanging of experiences on how to develop tourism economies and become destination driver as business, cultural and entertainment spots.
6. Cooperation among media with a view to facilitating information, news exchange and public relations overall.

We look forward to further discussions on the areas of involvement as well as structures and modalities of working mechanism of the Forum.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to express my sincere belief that this Forum will strengthen our solidarity and collaboration to the benefit of our people and will open up new opportunities for closer cooperation among our countries.

Thank you.

**28-29.05.2014 Working visit to the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria**

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AT THE 17TH MID-TERM MINISTERIAL MEETING OF THE NON-ALIGNED MOVEMENT UNDER THE THEME “STRENGTHENING SOLIDARITY FOR PEACE AND PROSPERITY”**

Mr. Chairman,

Ministers,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen

I am honored to deliver the opening statement on behalf of the European Group.

At the outset, I would like to thank the People’s Democratic Republic of Algeria and particularly His Excellency Mr. Ramtane Lamamra, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Algeria, for hospitality and wish every success in convening the Ministerial Meeting.

We believe that the meeting will be a great step forward in our common endeavor of building a world of justice, prosperity, peace and security based on international norms and principles. To that end, the European Group is going to make contributions to the work of the meeting.

We are confident that our meeting here and the Final Document which we will adopt at its conclusion reflect quite a comprehensive agenda in support of the principles and purposes of the Movement. There is no doubt that aftermath it is going to be implemented in the spirit of solidarity by the Member-states.



The European Group will continue actively interact within the Movement towards broadening and deepening political consultations and practical cooperation in support of the principles and purposes of NAM which we are sure that can do much to enhance international peace and security throughout the world.

Thank you.

**23.06.2014**                      **Working visit to the French Republic**

**COMMUNICATION BY MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER FOR FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF AZERBAIJAN AND CHAIRMAN OF THE COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS TO THE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY**

Distinguished President,

Secretary General,

Members of the Parliamentary Assembly,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is a great pleasure to address this Assembly after my first encounter with some of you in Baku last month on the occasion of the meeting of the Standing Committee where we had a frank and open exchange of views on a number of issues ranging from Azerbaijan – Council of Europe cooperation to international and regional developments. I am looking forward to having another interesting debate with you on the matters of mutual interest and concern today.

I would like to inform you about the key priorities of the Azerbaijani chairmanship and what has been done since we assumed this honourable task last month, as well as about developments that have taken place in the Committee of Ministers since your last Session.

The key priorities of our chairmanship have been chosen in the field of human rights, democracy and the rule of law. They were identified taking into account some of the most pressing issues on the agenda of the Council of Europe as well as the contribution that Azerbaijan might make in the light of its specific experience and strengths.

Combating corruption will constitute our priority tasks. As a country having made considerable strides at the national level, we intend to contribute to the efforts of the Organisation in this area, notably by organising at the end of this month a high-level Conference in Baku in co-operation with the Group of States against Corruption – GRECO and the International Anti-Corruption Academy.

The Conference will provide a unique opportunity to exchange views on national experiences and best practices on the implementation of anti-corruption laws and preventive measures.

The manipulation of sports competitions, including of football matches, constitutes an emerging challenge and a striking aspect of the corruption phenomenon. In this respect, I am very pleased that last month the Assembly gave its green light and provided comments on the current draft Convention on the manipulation of sport competitions through Opinion 287 (2014) adopted in the Baku meeting of the Standing Committee acting on behalf of the Assembly. The ball is now on the side of the Committee of Ministers, which is examining these texts in the light of the above-mentioned Opinion.

The Azerbaijani chairmanship will do its utmost to secure the adoption of the Convention as soon as possible. For us, which will host the first European Games in 2015, the adoption of the Convention during its chairmanship would constitute a source of great satisfaction, privilege and honor.

Furthermore, my Government will support this priority line by allocating financial support to the Council of Europe Enlarged Partial Agreement on Sport - EPAS.

As a country with a centuries-long tradition of peaceful coexistence between different ethnic and religious communities, Azerbaijan has made the promotion of intercultural and interreligious dialogue one of its foreign policy priorities. In recent years, Azerbaijan was at the origin of numerous international initiatives and events such as the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue and Baku Humanitarian Forum. The recent establishment of the Baku International Multiculturalism Center is intended to further streamline my Government's contribution to the international endeavours in this field. Moreover we are planning to host the high-level event - the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations VII Global Forum in 2016.

Proceeding from that, during its chairmanship Azerbaijan will work towards the consolidation of culturally diverse societies based on mutual respect and understanding. In this regard, we are looking forward to hosting the 2014 Council of Europe annual exchange on the religious dimension of intercultural dialogue, which will take place on 1-2 September in Baku. This meeting will provide an opportunity for debate involving leading religious and non-religious figures. It will focus on tolerance of religion and non-religious convictions in culturally diverse societies, their contribution to combating all forms of discrimination, intolerance and violence, as well as on the contribution of cultural heritage of a religious nature to intercultural dialogue.

I hope that representatives of Assembly will be able to attend and to play an active role in this important event.

Under this priority line of action, the Azerbaijani Chairmanship will host several other events relating to culture, including a Platform Exchange on Culture and Digitisation at the beginning of July, the

2014 Cultural Routes Advisory Forum and an event related to the Heritage Days, both due to be held in Baku during October, as well as the Youth Forum of the No Hate Speech Movement, to be held in Gabala in October.

Azerbaijan strongly believes that social cohesion is a fundamental precondition to the development and sustainability of stable, prosperous and diverse societies. Our chairmanship will therefore seek to complement the Council of Europe's undertakings to ensure everyone's access to social rights without discrimination. Vulnerable groups in particular should fully enjoy the rights provided for in the various Council of Europe instruments. Experiencing itself large-scale displacement due to foreign occupation, Azerbaijan will undoubtedly pay close attention to the protection of human rights of internally displaced persons, a vulnerable segment of the population, within relevant activities of the Chairmanship.

The enhanced access of young people to their social rights deserves to be paid higher attention as well. In this respect, my Government has decided to financially support the Enter 2 project aiming at the development of youth policy responses to exclusion, discrimination and violence affecting young people.

Women rights can not be neglected under any circumstances. In this context, the role that the national human rights institutions can play in ensuring women rights was extensively debated in the Conference of European Ombudspersons held just a few days ago in Baku.

Under our chairmanship priority dealing with social cohesion, we will organise in Baku next September a Conference to review the Council of Europe Social Cohesion Strategy and Action Plan.

Moreover, as a logical continuation of Azerbaijan's efforts to further deepen its interaction with the Council of Europe in this particular field, we have expressed our intention to host the next Council of Europe Conference of Ministers responsible for Social Cohesion in Baku.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We will also focus our attention on youth and education by placing a particular emphasis on the need to nurturing a generation of educated and responsible youth. At the national level, the policy pursued by the Azerbaijani Government is strongly youth-oriented with special focus on their education. The share of public spending for education in GDP increases constantly and this is certainly being translated into the quality of education and its closer integration into the European education system. At the same time, the number of Azerbaijani state-funded students studying in leading foreign, mainly European universities will reach 5,000 by 2015.

The first event that we hosted in Baku under the Azerbaijani chairmanship was exactly the one

dealing with the education, namely meeting of coordinators for the Council of Europe Charter of Education for Democratic Citizenship and Human Rights held in May. The meeting was dedicated to the importance of making changes in the lives of children in vulnerable situations through citizenship and human rights education.

The promotion of well-educated youth was largely debated in another chairmanship event - the International Conference on “Local democracy and Youth” organized jointly with the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of Europe last week in Baku. During the discussions, special emphasis was placed on youth education, their active participation in decision making and implementation of those decisions at all levels of the governance. This gathering allowed for meaningful exchange of best practices of the member states in this area.

Next October, we will host two important events - the 4th regional ministerial meeting on the implementation of the European Higher Education Area and the UN Global Forum on Youth Policy.

Concluding my remarks on our chairmanship activities, I have to say how we are satisfied to see many of our priorities to be shared by the upcoming Belgium and Bosnia and Herzegovina Chairmanships of the Committee of Ministers. All the three countries committed themselves to strive together to foster co-operation and synergy between their respective activities in a number of fields related to the three key pillars of the Organisation, and with other international organisations such as the European Union and the OSCE.

Ladies and gentlemen,

At this stage of my presentation, I would like to refer to the 124th Session of the Committee of Ministers held in Vienna on May 6. I would like to express my gratitude to the Austrian outgoing chairmanship for its hospitality and to pay tribute for the perfect organisation of this important meeting. I should add that the Minutes of the Session can be accessed by anyone as, for the sake of transparency, the Committee of Ministers decided to declassify them.

In Vienna, the Ministers took a number of decisions in areas to which the Azerbaijani chairmanship attaches particular importance, such as the policy of the Council of Europe towards neighbouring states and regions. The Ministers expressed their determination to continue developing this policy on the basis of Council of Europe values. As a country located at the crossroads of two continents, which enjoys strong historical relations with Euro-Asian states, Azerbaijan intends to support the Organisation’s efforts in this field. To this end, we will organise a high-level Ministerial Conference on the neighbourhood policy of the Council of Europe in Baku next September. The Conference will provide a valuable forum for exploring the avenues for a long term engagement of the Council of Europe in the countries covered by the neighbourhood policy, taking fully into account the on-going debate within the Committee of Ministers on how to strengthen political dialogue with these countries.

At the Vienna Ministerial Session, the Ministers also examined a report on co-operation with the European Union and expressed their satisfaction regarding the development of such co-operation. The Azerbaijani chairmanship will seek to strengthen this co-operation, also with other international organizations such as the OSCE and the United Nations.

Two items were particularly high on the agenda of the Session of the Committee of Ministers and will remain a priority for the months ahead: firstly, the situation in Ukraine and secondly, the Secretary General's report on the state of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe which was the first such report ever examined at the Ministerial level. Based on the findings of the Council of Europe monitoring bodies, the Secretary General's report has identified a number of important challenges faced by member States. The report also includes very useful proposals for action that will now be considered by the Ministers' Deputies. In two weeks' time, the Deputies will have a thematic debate that should lead to the adoption of decisions giving appropriate follow-up.

Regarding the situation in Ukraine, all participants in Vienna called for a de-escalation and a peaceful resolution of the crisis through dialogue and direct negotiations. Many colleagues reiterated firm commitment to the respect for the territorial integrity, unity, sovereignty and independence of Ukraine. The Ministers also welcomed the assistance provided by the Council of Europe to Ukraine, particularly regarding the preparation of the elections, constitutional and judiciary reforms, as well as the work of the International Advisory Panel set up to oversee the investigations into the violent incidents which took place in Ukraine since the beginning of the crisis. With regard to elections, one can only be satisfied that last month's Presidential elections were held with a high level of participation in a peaceful atmosphere in line with international commitments. In this regard, the contribution of Assembly, including through sending of a delegation to observe the elections, was most appreciated.

The Committee of Ministers will continue to provide all the assistance requested by the Ukrainian authorities with a view to consolidating democratic progress of the country. It will also continue to monitor developments in the region.

Beyond Ukraine, other developments in member States have been discussed by the Ministers' Deputies since the last Session. Last April, they examined a new report of the Secretary General on the conflict in Georgia. In the light of the report, they expressed their concern at continued human rights violations of those residing within the zones affected by the conflict and reiterated their unequivocal support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Georgia within its internationally recognised borders.

Also in April, the Committee of Ministers reaffirmed its absolute opposition to the death penalty and reiterated the objective to create a death penalty free zone in Europe. In a Declaration adopted on 28 May, the Committee of Ministers deeply regretted the most recent execution in Belarus, and

appealed to the authorities to commute the sentencing of the two remaining persons sentenced to death in 2013.

Finally, in early June, the Committee of Ministers agreed by vote to Kosovo's request for membership in the Venice Commission. As you know, member States remain divided on the subject of the status of Kosovo in international law. In this respect, the Committee of Ministers recalled that membership in the Venice Commission is without prejudice to the positions of individual Council of Europe member States on the status of Kosovo. The Council of Europe will continue to implement its activities in a status-neutral way in compliance with UN Security Council Resolution 1244.

These are, Madam President, distinguished Ladies and Gentlemen, the developments on which I wanted to inform you. I should add that I attach high importance to the Committee of Ministers maintaining a frank and constructive dialogue with the Assembly. I will now respond with pleasure and dignity to the questions that the distinguished members of the Assembly may wish to ask.

Thank you.

**MEETINGS OF MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, H.E. Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV**

- 02.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Second President of the National Assembly of the Republic of Austria, Karlheinz Kopf
- 03.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Foreign Minister of Tajikistan, Sirojiddin Aslov
- 03.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Secretary-General of the United Nation's World Tourism Organization, Taleb Rifai
- 10.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Assistant Secretary General for Emerging Security Challenges, Sorin Ducaru
- 10.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Foreign Minister of Zimbabwe, Simbarashe Mumbengegvi
- 14.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the Former Foreign Minister of France, Hubert Vedrine
- 15.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the Head of the Council of Europe's Office in Baku, Dragana Filipovic
- 16.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Head of the committee on European Affairs of the Senate of Czech Republic, Miroslav Krejca
- 16.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Chairman of Parliamentary Assembly of OSCE, Ranko Krivokapich
- 17.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the Secretary General of the Turkic Council, Halil Akinci
- 23.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Cooperation of Spain, José Manuel García-Margallo
- 28.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Deputy Foreign Minister of Japan on Parliamentary Affairs, Takao Makino
- 28.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the Foreign Minister of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Zlatko Lagumdžija
- 30.04.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Israel, Avigdor Liberman
- 01.05.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Deputy Foreign Minister of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Yousef Terad Al-Saadon

- 08.05.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Foreign and International Cooperation Minister of the Republic of Honduras, Mireya Aquero de Corrales
- 16.05.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Ambassador, the Secretary of State for International Affairs of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Angola, Manuel Domingos Augusto
- 22.05.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Secretary General of the Council of Europe, Thorbjorn Jagland
- 23.05.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the President of Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, Anne Brasseur
- 02.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the President and Foreign Minister of Swiss Confederation, Didier Burkhalter
- 02.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the participants of the Baku conference of News Agencies World Council in Baku
- 06.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Foreign Minister of Malaysia, Anifah Aman
- 10.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the UNICEF representative in Azerbaijan, Mark Hereward
- 19.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the First Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Belarus, Aleksandr Mikhnevich
- 27.06.2014 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the delegation headed by the Minister of European Union Affairs, Movlud Cavushoglu



## XƏBƏRLƏR – NEWS – HOBOCTH

### THE WORKING VISIT OF THE PRIME MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

4 April 2014, Baku



On 4 April 2014, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met with Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan.

The sides expressed satisfaction with the successful development of friendly and brotherly relations between the two countries in political, economic, energy and transport sectors and in all other areas. They highlighted the importance of the visit in terms of the further expansion of bilateral relations between our countries. They expressed confidence that relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey will continue to expand.

After the face-to-face meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan had a joint dinner.

On the same day President Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan had a meeting in an expanded format with the participation of delegations.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Mr Prime Minister, dear brother and dear guests. Once again, I sincerely welcome you. Welcome to Azerbaijan. Taking this opportunity, I cordially congratulate you on the victory of your party in the municipal elections. This is a great victory. It is a great evaluation of the work carried out by you.

I am very glad that we are meeting today. We have already had an extensive exchange of views. We discussed many issues. Again we see that Turkish-Azerbaijani relations are built on a very solid foundation, friendship and brotherhood and have risen to the level of strategic partnership. There are many projects that connect us. They are all being successfully implemented. I am sure that your visit will be very useful for the further development of our relations.

Once again I welcome you and say: Welcome!

Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan said:

- I also thank the distinguished President for this reception. As you know, looking at our traditional past, we see that after each election, the first country we visit is Azerbaijan. This is the case, of course, after this election. Of course, another meaning of this election for us was trust. We held this election with a very great success. To continue our tradition, we wanted to pay this visit to brotherly Azerbaijan.

We had a very fruitful meeting. We had the opportunity to evaluate both our bilateral and regional relations and processes. I believe that by continuing this relationship in the future, we will further strengthen Turkish-Azerbaijani solidarity.

On my own behalf and on behalf of my delegation, I express my deep gratitude for this reception. Thank you!

President Ilham Aliyev: Thank you very much!

After the enlarged meeting, President Ilham Aliyev and Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan held a joint press conference. Initially, President Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan made statements to the press.

*Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear Mr Prime Minister, dear brother. Distinguished guests.

First of all, my dear brother, I once again warmly welcome you in Azerbaijan. Welcome to Azerbaijan. This is your first visit after the municipal elections. We are very pleased that your first visit is to Azerbaijan. I also remember that I paid my first foreign visit after the presidential election last year to fraternal Turkey. This tradition lives, will live and shows the high level of Turkish-Azerbaijani relations again.

Taking this opportunity, I sincerely congratulate your party on its big victory in the municipal elections. This victory is another high evaluation of your work by the Turkish people. Under your leadership, Turkey has gone a long and glorious way in recent years. The economic, political and industrial potential of Turkey has grown considerably. Today, Turkey is a member of G20. The financial and economic crisis that gripped the world a few years ago has had no effect on Turkey, because Turkey has a leader like you. There is a wise leader who loves and is attached to his people, and he leads Turkey on this way.

We perceive Turkey's successes as own successes. We are proud of all successes and are very pleased that today Turkish-Azerbaijani relations are experiencing a period of dynamic development. We, as friends and brothers, are working together in all areas. The talks and conversations we conducted

during today's visit reaffirm our unity. We are allies in the political sphere. Today in the world there are no other countries that are as close to each other as Turkey and Azerbaijan. We implement major projects in the economic sphere. Mutual investments are being made successfully, and Azerbaijani investments are being made in Turkey and Turkish in Azerbaijan. This process continues successfully. In the next 7-8 years, about 20 billion dollars of Azerbaijani investments will be made in the Turkish economy. This is the largest investment we have made abroad.

There are energy projects that connect us. We are implementing these projects together. Turkey and Azerbaijan are demonstrating their leading role in the implementation of these projects. These projects have already gone beyond the regional framework and become worldwide projects. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum and TANAP projects have changed the world's energy map.

Joint activities are being carried out in other areas. The transport and energy corridors that bind us together will greatly benefit our people and neighbours.

At the same time, today we had an exchange of views on cooperation in the military sphere. In this area, there are also very good opportunities, prospects and results. Naturally, today we discussed the issue of settling the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We are grateful to the Turkish government for its constant attention to us and for always supporting us in the right cause of Azerbaijan. As you know, the internationally-recognized territorial integrity of our country has been broken by Armenia for many years, and our lands are under occupation. This occupation and injustice are continuing. This must end. The territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be restored and our compatriots affected by the occupation must return to their native land. I am sure that it will be so. To do this, we must and will become even stronger.

In short, today's visit is another excellent step for the development of our bilateral relations.

I am very glad to meet with my friend and brother again. Once again I wish you and the Turkish people happiness and new successes. Welcome once again.

***Statement by Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan***

- Thank you, Mr President, distinguished representatives of the media, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, I express my satisfaction that after the 30 March municipal elections, I traditionally pay my first visit to Azerbaijan. We paid this visit with our friends - ministers and deputies, and today we had the opportunity to discuss bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey and regional issues. As a result of these very meaningful discussions, the foundation of the future views of the two countries, the foreign trade turnover of which is approaching 15 billion dollars, are getting stronger

day by day. As Mr President noted earlier, the goals of Azerbaijani investments in Turkey are really huge. The most significant among them is, of course, the TANAP project. In connection with the work that began on the design of this project, a decision of the Cabinet of Ministers was adopted. In the coming months, God willing, steps will be taken, and I believe that when we achieve our goals related to TANAP in 2018, this international project will strengthen our brotherhood by many times.

Along with this, as Mr President noted, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad and the Shah Deniz-Erzurum project - all these are really the most important investments that show how strong the bonds between Azerbaijan and Turkey are.

Unity and solidarity between us in the political, military, cultural, economic and trade fields - in all these fields - are a perfect example showing the high level of our brotherhood. I believe that in the future we will be making very serious investments together. In particular, the investments, which we are making and will be making in the gas sector, the process that began earlier in Petkim in this regard and new investments in Petkim reflect the importance of these steps.

Our solidarity and our brotherhood will continue thereafter with the same determination. The parties have no concern on this issue. At the one-on-one meeting, we had the opportunity to discuss it. At the meeting with the participation of delegations, we also had the opportunity to appreciate it.

Our ministers discussed among themselves what they can do together in areas like energy and defence industries. If you noticed, recently the number of high-level visits between Turkey and Azerbaijan has begun to grow. The number of meetings between the presidents, the prime ministers and ministers continues to grow every day. All this will certainly continue in the future. We, as always, are decisive in this matter.

Of course, today we had the opportunity to discuss the Karabakh issue once again. We discussed it again. We will continue to demonstrate the same strong position on the Nagorno-Karabakh issue as we have done so far. Concessions here cannot be a subject of discussion. Once again, I want those who watch us sitting in front of TV screens to know about it. I am saying this from this point of view.

I express my deep appreciation for the hospitality extended to us, in particular to representatives of the media. Thank you.

Then they answered questions from reporters.

*A leading correspondent of Al Jazeera Turk TV, Didem Ozel Tumer: Mr Prime Minister, earlier it was stated that the TANAP groundbreaking ceremony would take place in 2014. Were you able to determine any date at this meeting? Another question for you: Did you have any wish to Mr Aliyev in connection with the activities of Turkish schools in Azerbaijan known as "jamaat schools"? Mr*

*Aliyev, what you think about these schools? In addition, in connection with the activities of the “Gulen jamaat” in Azerbaijan, the Turkish press reported dismissals of some senior bureaucrats. What do you think about the activities of the “jamaat”?*

**Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan:** First of all, the most important reason for my visit here is that according to tradition, after each election we pay our first visit to Azerbaijan. Our current visit is a step taken by us in accordance with tradition. We discussed our bilateral relations. Of course, if there are some difficulties in our countries and these difficulties really worry our country, we separately discuss them together.

Regarding the issue of TANAP, the process of registration has now started by the decision of the Cabinet of Ministers. If we can complete this process, we will be able to lay the foundation of the pipeline before the end of this year. We do not worry about this issue. Our main goal is to ensure that bulldozers start working after a while and the TANAP route is laid in a short time. Naturally, all this exists in the form of projects and plans. But as soon as pipes begin to be laid, the whole world will have to watch this. Thank you.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** I would like to say a few words about the TANAP project. It is our joint project. Turkey and Azerbaijan are the authors and leaders of the project. The will and determination of the Turkish and Azerbaijani leadership played the biggest role in the implementation of this project. As a result of this project, our countries will be even more closely related to each other, and our economic and political opportunities will increase considerably. We will try to implement this project in a timely manner. In any case, according to the information provided to us, everything is going according to schedule. I hope that in 2018, I will be celebrating the opening of this project together with my dear brother.

As for the other part of the question, as my dear brother said, our meetings are traditional. We meet several times a year. We last met four months ago, and we are meeting now. Our meeting could take place next month. We will be meeting in June. This is natural. We are allies, we are friends and we are brothers. Conversations between us, of course, cover a very broad scope. There is no issue that we have not discussed frankly, like friends and brothers. The main thing is that here the Turkish and Azerbaijani parties are like-minded like in all other areas. We do not accept, do not allow and will not allow any step that could cause even the slightest damage to our relations. We are friends and brothers, the leaders are brothers and the peoples are brothers. So it should be. For our future successful development and for strengthening our position in the world, Turkish-Azerbaijani unity will continue to go on and must go on. It is an order generated by the people’s will and the belief of the leaderships of Turkey and Azerbaijan. We are always close to each other, we will protect each other and we should always be together - both on good and not so good days. Brothers should be like that, we are such brothers.

*A correspondent of Azerbaijani Public Television, Mehriban Mammadova: Mr Prime Minister, in some countries the media are talking about the connection of your party with Nurists. Currently there is a struggle against trends of Nurism in Turkey. I would like to know your attitude to this situation. Thank you very much.*

**Recep Tayyip Erdogan:** It seemed very strange to me. We, of course, have no such links. Our only connection is with the nation. Since we have a very good connection with the nation, we gained 46 per cent of the vote. As you know, this election, as they say, became a justification of trust and we managed to do it. We will not tolerate any discrimination among our people. We are absolutely against discrimination. Look, we are now the only party whose members were elected as chairmen of municipalities, we can say, in all provinces of Turkey. Along with this, we have seven regions, and in six of these seven regions, we are the first party, and in the other, we have equal positions. We also have this feature.

Where does it come from? We cover the whole nation. Others cannot cover it. Some demonstrate racism and others - regionalism. We do not have this. We are a party of 77 million. We are a party of 780 thousand square kilometers. I always say: We have four basic principles - one nation, one flag, one motherland and one state. This reinforces our people's positive attitude towards us. Thank you.

## THE SECOND GLOBAL SHARED SOCIETIES FORUM

28 April 2014, Baku



On 8 April 2014, the Second Global Shared Societies Forum on “Post 2015 Sustainable Development Agenda” was held in Baku.

President Ilham Aliyev and his wife Mehriban Aliyeva attended the opening ceremony.

Opening remarks at the forum were made by Ismail Serageldin, the Founding Director of The Bibliotheca Alexandrina (BA) and the co-chairman of the International Center of Nizami Ganjavi.

The President of Azerbaijan delivered a speech at the opening ceremony.

### *Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Dear ladies and gentlemen, Dear guests!

Let me welcome all of you to Azerbaijan. I want to express hope that the days of your stay in our country will remain in your memory for a long time. There are people here who have come to Azerbaijan for the first time. I do hope that you have good impressions about our country, history and culture. I want to extend a special welcome to my colleagues – the former heads of state and government. Among our guests there are more than 30 former heads of state and government. This, of course, demonstrates the value of our event.

I also want to express my appreciation to the Club of Madrid – they are good partners of our country. Our cooperation was established a few years ago and is very fruitful and active. I am also very pleased that the International Center of Nizami Ganjavi, as an organization established relatively recently, has become a fairly influential international institution in a very short time and is already organizing such important forums in conjunction with the Club of Madrid. We are extremely grateful to our friends who support the International Center of Nizami Ganjavi for their activities. This center is named after Azerbaijani poet Nizami Ganjavi, who is the symbol of wisdom and talent of the Azerbaijani people.

The forum agenda is very broad and covers all important aspects of our lives. Of course, the sessions to be held today and tomorrow will result in important statement being made about the past and future work in order to provide equal opportunities and necessary living standards for everyone. A shared society is a society whose members feel comfortable, lead a decent life, have jobs and are confident of the future of their children.

We have our own experience. Our independence is relatively young. Although we gained independence only 22 years ago, we have managed to resolve various issues in such a short period of history. In the beginning, we were faced with many problems, political and economic difficulties. Now, at a time when Azerbaijan is one of the fastest growing economies in the world, these changes are beyond doubt. And we are glad to have been part of this process and to actively participate in the transformation of Azerbaijan into a modern state. Our people have beautiful historical customs, traditions and culture, but our independence is still quite young. We were independent in the early 20th century, but it happened after the collapse of the Russian Empire and the Bolshevik Revolution and did not last long, only two years. At that time, the revolution had slogans such as “factories to workers”, “land to farmers”, “freedom to all the peoples of the Russian Empire”.

But none of these promises become a reality. So two years later we lost our independence. Azerbaijan became a part of another country. Of course, it was part of our life and history. Therefore, I think that the people who lived in the former Soviet Union value their independence more highly. They appreciate their independent choice, the right to be free and to have a state of their own. And they are proud of their states. Azerbaijan’s experience shows that when our future and our destiny are in our own hands, we can do much more than in previous times. The short period of our independence shows that despite all the difficulties, economic and political crises and civil war in the early 1990s, we have been able to cope with these difficulties. Today, while planning our future, we think of how we can further improve our way of life and become even stronger.

With regard to one of the main reasons for these changes, i.e. the initial conditions, it boils down to the policy of reform because we had to change all aspects of our lives, learn to be free and independent, have our own state and move from one political system to another. It was not easy to do that but it happened. Today, our state rests on a solid foundation.

We carried out broad political and economic reforms which have modernized our country. We have achieved democratic development, provided the fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of assembly, the freedom of the media, the freedom of the Internet, which are an integral part of our present life.

Twenty-two years ago we could only dream about that. At the same time, we clearly understand that without strong economic fundamentals there can’t be complete independence. Therefore, political reforms are carried out in parallel with economic reforms. It should be noted that one of the key contributors to our success was the attraction of foreign investment. As for the countries which were faced with the same difficulties as we encountered 20 years ago, our experience can serve as a good example of how to change a country and provide a better life for citizens.

We have managed to attract foreign investment. We have channeled this investment into the industries we wanted to develop which were also attractive to investors. We have created a favorable investment



environment and worked very hard to create numerous jobs even with the limited resources we had 15 years ago. Today we are moving forward in the right direction. We are well aware that the way forward lies through the strengthening of our independence, making it eternal and irreversible. It consists in the fact that we need to be economically free, independent and strong. And now I can say that after years of reforms, which are still under way, Azerbaijan can be viewed as a country that has a very bright future. Over the past 10 years we have been one of the fastest growing economies in the world. We see sustainable development as planning for the future. We have a development concept called “Azerbaijan 2020: vision for the future”.

This document has been adopted as a fundamental instrument, as guidelines. Our financial situation is stable. The level of our external debt is very low and accounts for only 8 per cent of the gross domestic product. This means that we can make plans for working more closely with international financial institutions.

At the same time, it is necessary to diversify the economy for development, because oil and gas, which are considered natural resources, were the leading criterion of our success, of course. At the present time, diversification is our top priority because you can't create a large number of jobs in the oil and gas sector. Therefore, diversification of the economy and investment in the social infrastructure provide the necessary standard of living even in remote areas. It helps create access to broadband internet in every town. The construction of 3,000 secondary schools, 500 hospitals and other factors have allowed our society to create an entirely new environment. As a first step, we have stopped migration abroad, i.e. the outflow of people from Azerbaijan to other countries.

It was subsequently replaced with migration within the country, or the influx of people from small rural places to Baku. Our current goal to stop this migration too. This issue is also addressed every year.

Economic development is underpinned by very strong social programs. As you know, in some cases radical economic reforms may create difficulties in everyday life. Therefore, social issues have always been a priority for our government.

The improvement of living standards, the creation of jobs and the reduction of unemployment – this shows that all of this can be done. First of all, we simply need stability because nothing is possible without stability. Secondly, we have a very clear domestic policy which is supported by the majority of our population. So we need to achieve results, keep the promises we have given and meet our goals. Here we touch upon a very important issue – the responsibility of politicians. These individuals are at the top of this work. Some of our colleagues tend to make populist promises to win more support and votes. However, when the promises are not kept, people get disappointed. The responsibility of politicians is extremely important also for themselves, as it increases their credibility and further strengthens society. Therefore, the achievement of results was our main goal.

These results are reflected in economic and statistical indicators. Currently, the poverty rate is at about 5 per cent, while 10 years ago it was 49 per cent.

The rapid economic development creates a very good international atmosphere around Azerbaijan, as our country is becoming increasingly recognizable. A lot more people know about Azerbaijan today.

We are currently enjoying the support of international institutions as never before in history. This is evidenced by the fact that 155 countries have voted for us during the election of nonpermanent members of the UN Security Council. This means that we were supported by the vast majority of the international community.

We were supported even by countries with which our bilateral relations were not very active. They showed confidence in us because they knew that we would keep our promises. Our main agenda as a member of the UN Security Council was to protect the supremacy of law and justice. I think these are two major elements of the present-day world. Unfortunately, both are grossly violated and there is no reaction to this violation.

There are four UN Security Council resolutions calling for an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from our territories. None of these resolutions has been executed. The occupation continues. We have been exposed to ethnic cleansing. For more than 20 years Nagorno-Karabakh, a historical part of our country, as well as seven adjacent districts, have been under occupation. Of course, international organizations have adopted resolutions. Other international organizations, including the OSCE, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe and, of course, the UN General Assembly and Security Council, have adopted decisions in connection with this. However, none of them has been executed. Apparently, there are no enforcement mechanisms.

In my opinion, what happened in the early 1990s showed that in order to be free and independent, we had to make great sacrifices. But all members of our society were completely sure that this situation cannot last long. We will return to our native lands. We will restore our territorial integrity. The Azerbaijani people, one million refugees and displaced persons will restore their right to live on their native lands captured by occupiers now. In the early 1990s, the Armenians held an illegal referendum in Nagorno-Karabakh. Prior to that, ethnic Azerbaijanis, who constitute a third of the Nagorno-Karabakh population, were driven out of there. This was followed by an illegal referendum. Therefore, no country in the world recognizes this “referendum” and the self-proclaimed “Nagorno-Karabakh republic”. In other words, international law, justice and history support our position. However, we clearly realize that this is not enough for the restoration of justice and international law. To do this, we need to become even stronger. Unfortunately, we are seeing that might makes right in international relations. In this case, what are countries of our region, countries like ours supposed to do? I am sure that this issue will be discussed at this forum. There are different scenarios. However, one thing is clear: you have to be in charge of your own destiny. You must become stronger. You must

work hard to mobilize society for the main priorities. For us the top priority is to restore our territorial integrity, strengthen our independence and provide our people with the best standards of living. All of these elements are interconnected. If people are seeing the results of the Government's work, if their living standards improve every day and if they are proud of their country, then society becomes stronger and does not break up. Society rallies around the main objectives. As I noted earlier, it rallies around the goals of independence and sovereignty. Of course, our society had different opinions about development, the shortcomings and problems of Azerbaijan. We always appreciate these discussions within our society. But as for the strategic aspect of our life, we are united and unanimous. This unity makes us stronger in the international arena, allows us the opportunity to talk openly about the problems facing the world today, defend our position and international law. This is the case.

Today, Azerbaijan is a country with an explicit position. It rests on justice and international law. But at the same time, we need to look 10, 20, 30 years ahead and plan our policy accordingly to achieve sustainable development. Sustainable development is one of the top priorities for any country today. Even the most developed countries have problems of their own. They are facing economic problems, migration issues. They need more manpower. But at the same time, it creates certain tensions in society. We have other problems. I think that this is not a problem but actually an advantage. We have a growing, young and dynamic population. This means that our economy must always be ahead of the population growth rate. Otherwise, we may one day encounter difficulties with unemployment. Therefore, our priorities include accelerated economic development, creation of jobs, attraction of investment and investment of the revenues generated from energy operations into the most important sectors of our economy. This is how we can achieve sustainable development.

One of the most important components of public and political solidarity in our society is multiculturalism. We have conducted several international events where we spoke on the subject of dialogue between civilizations. We have organized international humanitarian forums to address these important issues. I think that such issues are not discussed so openly in various international institutions because there are different approaches to this situation. Some people believe that this idea has not been materialized. But I believe that there are good examples and they should be considered in detail to rule out pessimism. If multiculturalism is perceived as an abyss, another way of life in this world does not exist. Otherwise, people will feel isolated. This is impossible from economic and political points of view.

Therefore, in my opinion there are positive examples based on historical traditions of Azerbaijan and indeed other countries. They should be carefully examined. We should bolster these values. It is also one of our important elements.

But sometimes it is not enough to encourage a positive experience. However, I think that in order to preserve values and strengthen positive trends in global politics, we should pay attention to the positive experience and distribute it.

There is no other way. Countries should cooperate with each other in the future.

I am sure that many interesting discussions will be held during the forum and the governments will be provided with recommendations related to future development. The advantage of such sessions is that well-known politicians, former heads of state and government can openly share their personal experiences, knowledge and expertise. After all, the difference between incumbent and former presidents and prime ministers is that the current heads of state have certain constraints and limited opportunities. In some cases you want to say more than you do. But former politicians are free to express their views on any issue. And their word is important to achieve this progress. Therefore, I am sure that the main goal of our forum is to provide recommendations, analyze and discuss what is happening. This goal will enable us to continue doing our work in peace, live in dignity and carry out extensive international cooperation.

Dear friends, I want to welcome you to Azerbaijan once again! I wish the forum success. Thank you.

## THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE FRENCH REPUBLIC TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

11 – 12 May 2014, Baku



On 12 May 2014, President Ilham Aliyev held a one-on-one meeting with President of the French Republic Francois Hollande, who was paying an official visit to Azerbaijan.

The sides noted the successful development of bilateral relations between the two countries in political, economic, energy and other fields. The heads of state emphasized the importance of the official visit of President of France Francois Hollande to Azerbaijan for the expansion of bilateral relations, and expressed their confidence of a further development of these relations.

The parties also exchanged views on bilateral relations, international affairs and issues of mutual interest.

After the one-on-one meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the French Republic Francois Hollande held a meeting in an expanded format with the participation of delegations.

Welcoming the guests, President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Dear Mr. President, I sincerely salute you again. Welcome to our country!

Yesterday and today we had a broad exchange of views and talks on the development of French-Azerbaijani friendly relations.

Today we continue these talks with the participation of delegations. Our bilateral agenda is very broad and covers many issues. There is mutual understanding and mutual support on every direction.

I sincerely salute you again. I am sure that your visit will have excellent results.

President of the French Republic Francois Hollande said:

- Mr. President, thank you very much for receiving us. Azerbaijan has been showing confidence in France for many years.

France is well aware of Azerbaijan's extensive development. We saw yesterday that this development is observed in all spheres. Therefore, this visit is not just a courtesy visit and goes beyond the relations between senior officials and two presidents. This visit should produce results and contribute to an increase of economic exchanges and our investment.

After the meeting of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the French Republic Francois Hollande in an expanded format with the participation of delegations, the signing ceremony of Azerbaijani-French documents was held.

“The Joint Statement of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and President of the French Republic” was signed by Presidents Ilham Aliyev and Francois Hollande.

“The Agreement on scientific cooperation between the Scientific Development Fund under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the National Center for Scientific Research of the French Republic” was signed by the executive director of the Scientific Development Fund under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Elchin Babayev, and the director of the Moscow Office of the National Center for Scientific Research of the French Republic, Michel Tararine.

“The Agreement on cooperation between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agriculture, Agrifood and Forestry of the French Republic” was signed by the Minister of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Heydar Asadov, and the Ambassador of the French Republic to Azerbaijan, Pascal Meunier.

“The Memorandum of Understanding between the Transport Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy of the French Republic” was signed by the Minister of Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ziya Mammadov, and the Ambassador of the French Republic to Azerbaijan, Pascal Meunier.

“The Memorandum of Understanding between the Energy Ministry of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Ecology, Sustainable Development and Energy of the French Republic” was signed by the Minister of Energy of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Natig Aliyev, and the Ambassador of the French Republic to Azerbaijan, Pascal Meunier.

“The Administrative Understanding on bilateral cooperation between the State Committee on Family, Woman and Child Problems of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Women's Rights, City, Youth and Sport of the French Republic” was signed by the chairperson of the State Committee on Family, Woman and Child Problems of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Hijran Huseynova, and the Minister of Women's Rights, City, Youth and Sport of the French Republic, Najat Vallaud-Belkacem.

“The Letter of Intent on university cooperation between the Ministry of Education of the Republic

of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Higher Education and Research of the French Republic” was signed by the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Mikayil Jabbarov, and the State Secretary of the French Republic for Higher Education and Research, Genevieve Fioraso.

After the signing ceremony of Azerbaijani-French documents, a press conference of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the French Republic Francois Hollande was held.

First, the heads of state made statements for the press.

***Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev***

- Dear Mr. President, Distinguished guests, Ladies and gentlemen.

Dear Mr. President, I sincerely welcome you to Azerbaijan once again. Welcome to our country! We attach great importance to your visit. I am sure that this visit will play a positive role in the development of French-Azerbaijani relations of friendship and our friendship will be continued. The documents signed today determine our future cooperation in many areas . Among these documents, of course, a special place belongs to a joint statement. This document reflects the basic contours of our future political ties.

Our political relations are at a high level. This is confirmed again by the official visit of the President of France to Azerbaijan. I have repeatedly been to France and held regular consultations. The negotiations and consultations on many international issues, of course, further reinforce our political ties.

Over the last two years, France and Azerbaijan participated in the UN Security Council together. We have established a very successful cooperation in the most authoritative global structure. So our positions on international issues overlap on many issues. Of course, France as the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair is making effort to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Today, of course, we had a very wide-ranging exchange of views on this issue. We do hope that with the help of mediators this conflict will soon be resolved and peace will come to the region.

As you know, the Azerbaijani lands have been under occupation for many years. Nagorno-Karabakh and seven districts located around it are under Armenian occupation, which has been ongoing for more than 20 years. All influential international organizations have expressed their position on this issue. In particular, the UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions which provide for an unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from the occupied territories. The European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organizations keep this issue in the spotlight and have adopted decisions and resolutions. But unfortunately, this

issue remains unresolved. The occupation continues. The OSCE fact-finding missions have been seconded to the occupied lands twice and their reports indicate that everything there is destroyed, our historical and religious monuments have been razed to the ground. This conflict must be brought to an end soon. This conflict must be resolved on the basis of norms and principles of international law and the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. As for the principle of self-determination of peoples, we respect it but this right must not violate the internationally recognized borders of countries. Besides, the Armenian people have already gained independence once – there is an independent Armenian state. Azerbaijan will never tolerate a second Armenian state on its soil.

The resolution of this conflict can benefit all countries of the region. I hope that France and other co-chairs will continue their efforts on this issue and we can soon place our citizens in the occupied lands.

There is a very successful cooperation in the economic sphere between us. Documents will be signed at the upcoming business forum today. The turnover is approaching \$2 billion. More than 50 French companies operate in Azerbaijan.

The contracts to be signed are worth \$2-2.5 billion. I am sure that new projects will be implemented in this area after the visit. There are excellent prospects, opportunities in the fields of transport, telecommunications, information technology, tourism, construction and other fields. The opening of the French lyceum yesterday is a great event in itself. This indicates that both countries are paying great attention to education. By the end of the year the French lyceum in Baku will continue its activities in a new beautiful building.

Of course, today we also had an exchange of views on energy security. We work closely with France in the field. Azerbaijan is making effort for energy security of Europe. The documents signed late last year will facilitate the supply of Azerbaijani gas to Europe, and I am sure that the implementation of this project will make our relations with Europe even closer. The “Shah Deniz”, Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic pipeline projects are the largest infrastructure projects in Europe. The volume of investment is planned at the level of nearly \$45 billion. As a result of this project, all parties – Azerbaijan, transit countries and European consumers – will see a benefit because it is a project that serves the interests of each party.

Azerbaijan continues to play the role of a leader in Caspian energy supplies to world markets, including Europe. Of course, issues of energy security have become matters of national security for each country, and Azerbaijan’s ample oil and gas resources, the existing and new transport infrastructure being created have significantly changed the energy map of Europe.

Our agenda is very broad. It is impossible to cover all of it in a press conference. But I think that the important thing is that both sides have a very strong political will and interest to continue mutual contacts. The relations between our peoples are also in development and at a high level. I am sure



that this visit will give a new impetus to our relations.  
Once again, Mr. President, welcome to Azerbaijan!

During the press conference the French President Francois Hollande delivered the speech and noted the following: “I have arrived in Azerbaijan in a specific context. Ukraine events are going on. France supports the territorial integrity of countries and resolution of conflicts within the territorial integrity”.

Recalling that he will visit Armenia this evening, Hollande noted that no progress has been made in resolution of the conflict over the past 20 years. “As an OSCE Minsk Group co-chair France also has a great responsibility. We will continue these negotiations in Armenia. France is making efforts to resolve the conflict stage by stage, which show the existence of confidence. “You have shown the status that you are intending to grant Nagorno-Karabakh”.

French President drew attention to the Eastern Partnership program: “Azerbaijan and France have similar positions on energy partnership. Today Azerbaijan is the largest gas supplier. A number of French oil and gas companies want to join oil and gas projects of Azerbaijan. We discussed creation of better conditions for French companies in Azerbaijan. We intend to cooperate in waste incineration, agriculture and other areas. French companies are willing to share their experiences in this field. We are also ready to cooperate with Azerbaijan in organization of European Olympic Games, Formula 1 and other international competitions and events”, the President said.

On the same day President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the French Republic Francois Hollande took part in Azerbaijani-French Business Forum at the Heydar Aliyev Center in Baku.

***Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev***

- Dear Mr. President, Distinguished guests, ladies and gentlemen.

Mr. President, I sincerely welcome you and all members of your delegation to Azerbaijan.

I particularly welcome the participants of the business forum. I know that the business people of France and Azerbaijan are meeting at the business forum this morning to conduct negotiations and exchange views. Joint activities of business entities and the development of trade relations will, of course, be a great support to our overall development.

Your visit began with the opening of the French lyceum yesterday and will end with the business forum today. The negotiations, exchanges and sincere conversations conducted during this time give us further confidence that French-Azerbaijani relations will continue to flourish and our political and economic ties will become even stronger.

There is no doubt that the official visit of the President of France to Azerbaijan is a very significant event in bilateral relations. This visit will give a powerful impetus to the development of our relations. Yesterday and today we had an extensive exchange of views and consultations on various topics. We have also given specific instructions related to the development of our future relations. The documents that were and will be signed today will serve the development of various aspects of our cooperation.

Our political relations are at a very high level. And the business community, of course, is well aware of that. Business circles feel quite safe in countries with a high level of political connections. Appropriate steps will continue to be taken to develop our political relations.

In other words, our relations are multifaceted and cover many sectors. There are specific programs and signed documents for each field. This will allow us the opportunity to develop French-Azerbaijani relations in a diversified manner. This creates new opportunities for our bilateral relations and opens up new horizons for regional cooperation.

At the same time, French-Azerbaijani relations are playing a very important role in the development of EU-Azerbaijan relations because France is the leading country of Europe which, of course, holds a special place in the development of relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union.

As for the economic sector, I am very glad that Azerbaijan is the first trading partner of France in the South Caucasus. Our turnover is approaching \$2 billion. As a result of the agreements reached and the contracts to be signed, this figure will further increase. Naturally, we must not be complacent with this progress. I believe that the current volume of trade is a good start. We have specific opportunities and mutual political will to increase it.

More than 50 French companies operate in Azerbaijan as investors and contractors. I believe that we will develop in this direction in the coming years. We invite French companies to invest in Azerbaijan and participate in our projects as contractors. So far, French companies have been actively involved in several very important projects for our country and showed high professionalism. They have a great reputation. The projects they have completed serve to diversify the economy of Azerbaijan.

I do hope that as a result of the business forum the relations between our business people will rise to an even higher level. There is still a lot to be done in Azerbaijan. Infrastructure projects are a priority for us. At the same time, our country has an excellent investment climate. Azerbaijan ranks first in the former Soviet Union in terms of direct foreign investment. Over the past 10 years, investment worth \$150 billion was made in the country's economy. Investment in excess of \$25 billion was made last year alone and 30 per cent of that was foreign investment.

It is gratifying that foreign companies are investing not only in the oil and gas sector, but also in the

non-oil economy. In other words, there is a lot of confidence in the long-term successful development of Azerbaijan. This confidence is not unfounded because the steps taken in the economic sphere and in connection with the development of the country as a whole in recent years have led to specific results. The citizens of Azerbaijan, our people see the benefits of independence in their daily lives.

Azerbaijan's economy is developing very fast. I can say that over the last 10 years Azerbaijan was the fastest growing economy in the world. The gross domestic product increased more than three times. Along with this, social issues have been resolved, unemployment eliminated – it is only at 5 per cent now. External public debt is very low and accounts for 8 per cent of the gross domestic product. This allows us the opportunity to attract any resources from foreign financial markets to the country's economy. But we treat this area with great caution because we have our own financial capabilities. We use them in the first place.

Increasing competitiveness of the economy of Azerbaijan. At last count, the World Economic Forum in Davos, the economy takes 39th place in global competitiveness. Which is very high for an economy that just over 20 years working on the principles of market economy. Should also be noted that at the time of independence, the private sector share in our gross domestic product is equal to zero. At the moment it exceeds 80 percent. That is, private sector development, attracting foreign investment, as well as the direction of public investment in the country's priority spheres created these excellent facilities.

The competitiveness of the Azerbaijani economy is increasing. According to the latest calculations of the World Economic Forum in Davos, Azerbaijan is ranked in 39th place in the world for competitiveness. This is a very high indicator for a country which has been governed by the principles of a market economy for just over 20 years. I should also note that when we gained independence, the share of the private sector in our gross domestic product was equal to zero. At the moment it exceeds 80 per cent. So private sector development, the attraction of foreign investment and the channelling of state investment into the country's priority spheres have created these excellent conditions.

In the coming years, our main priority will be the development of the non-oil sector, and specific steps are taken in this direction. The experience of French companies and their contribution are very important to us. They are of great importance. I am confident that we will work together successfully in various fields in the coming years.

Among the priorities I want to mention the transport sector. I know that there are plans to sign new contracts in the transport sector. The French world-class experience in this case is known to all. Our priority is the development of the information and communication sector. We cooperate and will continue to do so in the future.

Azerbaijan is currently engaged in the development of space industry. Last year the first Azerbaijani

satellite “Azerspace-1” was put into orbit, and this joy was given to us by “Arianespace”. We will work together in the space industry in the coming years too. I think that France should become Azerbaijan’s number one partner in this field.

French companies are involved in various projects in the construction sector. Agriculture, tourism, in particular, the recovery of viticulture – these are issues on the agenda, and it would be wrong to look for a better partner than France, of course.

In other words, we invite French companies to even more extensive work in Azerbaijan in two directions – both as investors and as contractors. So I am sure that our relations will rise to an even higher level in the coming years.

I want to say a few words about the energy sector. This sector is also highly important. The work under way in this area has already gone beyond our region and is more global in nature. Azerbaijan has initiated the construction of all oil and gas pipelines from the Caspian Sea to the West and is the leader in the implementation of these projects.

Last year the contract of the 21st century was signed. It consists of three components: production, transportation and marketing. The value of relations between the European Union and Azerbaijan is in the foreground. This project is the largest infrastructure project in Europe. The volume of investment to be made in it will be approximately \$45 billion . We certainly invite French companies to participate in these projects. I am sure that our cooperation in this area will serve our collective interests and create excellent business opportunities. So French-Azerbaijani friendship will continue to develop successfully.

Mr. President, I salute you cordially once again. Thank you again for accepting my invitation to visit Azerbaijan. I wish all our guests and the friendly people of France development, progress and peace.

Thank you.

## THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SWISS CONFEDERATION TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

2 June 2014, Baku



On 2 June 2014, an official welcoming ceremony of President of the Swiss Confederation, Didier Burkhalter, who came to the Republic of Azerbaijan on an official visit, was held. A guard of honor was arranged in a square decorated with the state flags of the two countries in honor of the distinguished guest.

After the official welcoming ceremony, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev held a one-on-one meeting with President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter.

The sides expressed their satisfaction with the successful development of bilateral relations in the political, economic and other fields. The Presidents stressed the importance of reciprocal visits and meetings and pointed to the availability of good opportunities for the expansion of economic cooperation and mutual investment between the two countries.

The parties also emphasized the importance of the official visit of President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter to for the expansion of bilateral relations.

After the one-on-one meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter met in an expanded format with the participation of delegations.

President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Mr. President, distinguished guests, welcome to Azerbaijan. I am pleased to see you. This visit is very important. It is a good opportunity for reexamining our successfully developing bilateral ties, which cover many areas. I am confident that in the coming years our bilateral ties will become even stronger, because there is a strong political desire to develop them. The value our partnership is increasing, as it covers many areas – political, economic, investment and cultural. Therefore, I am convinced that in the coming years we will continue the strong partnerships that have been developing rapidly over the past few years. Today we have discussed the good prospects for the expansion of our relations, in particular our cooperation in the areas of mutual investment and joint ventures, including the already started cooperation in the energy sector which promises to be very effective. You are visiting our country also as chairman of the OSCE.

We do hope that your visit to the region will be very fruitful and will contribute to the development of positive trends in our region, especially in terms of conflict settlement, and will promote the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Once again – you are welcome! We hope that your visit will be a success.

President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter said:

- Mr. President and members of the delegation, thank you. First of all, I want to thank you for the very warm and cordial welcome. This reception is cordial in all senses of the word – both in terms of the country and from the standpoint of the scenic landscape. Thank you very much. This is my first visit to your country. I did not have enough time to thoroughly familiarize myself with your country. This will not be a visit of detailed familiarization.

I am sure that we will come here again and have more time to better study the region, your country, the city of Baku which made a deep impression on us last night, when I arrived, and this morning. Thank you for your welcome. This is a special time for our two countries. First of all, we have very good friendly relations which we can intensify. I am confident that we have a broad potential for private investment. Swiss companies are interested in investing in your country.

After the meeting in an expanded format, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter made statements for the press.

***Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev***

- Dear Mr. President.

Distinguished guests. Welcome to Azerbaijan once again. I am pleased to see you. I am sure that your visit will strengthen the successfully developing bilateral relations between our countries. I would like to note that over the past six years, this is the third official visit of the President of Switzerland to Azerbaijan. I have also paid an official visit to Switzerland. This shows that our relations are at a high level.

The political relations between our countries are developing successfully. This also has a positive impact on our relations in various fields. A meeting of the joint economic commission and the Swiss-Azerbaijani business forum have been held in Bern recently. Thus, the business communities of our countries have an interest in establishing cooperation.

Our economic relations are also developing fast. I am confident that in the coming years we will establish a stronger partnership. We are also very pleased that the investment made by Switzerland in

Azerbaijan and by Azerbaijan in Switzerland strengthens our ties, and this investment is channelled into priority sectors of the economy. Thus, Switzerland invests in the development of industry, in particular in the construction sector, while Azerbaijan invests in the energy sector. I am confident that in the coming years we will be able to consider additional forms of joint investment in our countries, perhaps in the region, i.e. in third countries.

Energy security is part of our agenda. I can say that our work in this area is at a very high level. Azerbaijan is represented on the energy market of Switzerland and has a share there.

The developments occurring in the area of gas transportation lately will strengthen our bilateral relations. As you know, at the end of last year we signed such ambitious projects as “Shah Deniz-2”, Trans-Anatolian and Trans-Adriatic pipelines. Together they are the largest infrastructure project in Europe. This will allow Azerbaijan the opportunity to fully realize its energy resources in different markets.

I am pleased that Switzerland is our partner. Of course, our long-term energy partnership will further strengthen our relationship in the future. Therefore, as far as bilateral relations are concerned, we are satisfied with the current level of cooperation and it continue it.

At the same time, we have discussed regional security issues, because Switzerland is the country chairing the OSCE.

Certainly, in the course of our discussions today we focused on the most important issue for regional security – the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I informed Mr. President about the current state, prospects of the negotiations and the history of the conflict. Nagorno-Karabakh is a historical and integral part of Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh is recognized by the international community as an integral part of Azerbaijan and will remain an integral part of Azerbaijan. From a historical point of view, Nagorno-Karabakh has always been the territory of Azerbaijan. From a legal point of view this is our territory, and the UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions demanding an unconditional and immediate withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories. The occupation has continued for more than 20 years. Not only Nagorno-Karabakh but also seven of our districts located around Nagorno-Karabakh are occupied by Armenia.

Twenty per cent of the internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan has been occupied. Our people have been exposed to a policy of ethnic cleansing pursued by Armenia. This applies to the Khojaly genocide, which resulted in the killing of more than 600 people, including more than 100 women and 60 children. It is a war crime committed by the Armenian state. The OSCE has adopted resolutions and decisions related to the settlement of the conflict. The OSCE has sent two fact-finding and evaluation missions to the occupied territories. All of their reports clearly indicate that everything is destroyed: our historical buildings, mosques, monuments, graves of our ancestors are

all destroyed. Therefore, it is necessary to achieve a settlement of the conflict as soon as possible. This is the biggest threat to regional security. To do this, it is necessary to comply with international law, UN Security Council resolutions, decisions of the OSCE and other international organizations.

Unfortunately, Armenia ignores these resolutions and continues the policy of artificially delaying the negotiating process. They do not want a settlement to the conflict and peace and are trying to keep the situation as it is.

They are trying to maintain the status quo although the presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair countries have repeatedly spoken about the unacceptability of the status quo. To change the status quo, Armenia must start the process of withdrawing its troops. I do hope that the international community and the OSCE will be more active in this regard so that international law and historical justice are restored and Azerbaijan could start the process of reconstruction after the liberation of occupied territories.

Mr. President, I want to thank you once again for coming to Azerbaijan. We have held extensive discussions on regional issues, conflict resolution and bilateral relations. I am sure that your visit will make a good contribution to our future relations.

On the same day an official dinner reception has been hosted on behalf of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev in honor of President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter.

President Ilham Aliyev once again welcomed President of the Swiss Confederation Didier Burkhalter to our country, noting that many important issues concerning bilateral relations were discussed during the visit. Expressing his confidence that the presidency of Switzerland in the OSCE would be successful and that it would take an active part in the negotiations on the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the President said: “The development of our bilateral relations is reassuring. We have established active contacts in a short time.”

President Ilham Aliyev noted the development of investment and business relations between the two countries and pointed to the important role played by the joint economic commission in this field. Touching upon the importance of political connections and joint consultations, the President said that all of this formed the basis of the bilateral agenda.

Swiss President Didier Burkhalter said that the development of Baku had made a deep impression on him. He pointed out that it was very important for Switzerland to establish relations with dynamically developing countries, and the development of economic relations between Switzerland and Azerbaijan was one of the important directions. Didier Burkhalter thanked President Ilham Aliyev for this opportunity and for the contribution to the creation of an atmosphere of reliable partnership between the two countries.



## THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE EUROPEAN COMMISSION TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

14 June 2014, Baku



On 14 June 2014, an official welcoming ceremony of President of the European Commission, Jose Manuel Barroso, who came to the Republic of Azerbaijan on an official visit, was held.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso have held a one-on-one meeting.

During the meeting, the sides noted that relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union had been developing successfully in the fields of politics and economy.

The parties said there were good prospects for the expansion of the energy cooperation even further. The sides stressed the importance of Jose Manuel Barroso`s visit in terms of Azerbaijan-European Union ties. During the meeting, the parties exchanged views on the current state and prospects of relations between Azerbaijan and the European Union.

After the one-on-one meeting, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso held a meeting in an expanded format with the participation of delegations.

President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Mr. President, welcome again! I am very pleased to welcome you to Azerbaijan again. We have had a very good discussion regarding our plans and the work done. Relations with the European Union are a priority for us. I am very glad that these relations are developing successfully. With your help we have made a lot of headway. Our relations cover a number of fields – political, economic, energy, security. We work very actively as good partners. We held meetings in the past too – in Baku, Brussels and other places. I am very pleased with the level of our cooperation. I am hopeful that this cooperation will expand further after your visit, will cover even more areas and continue to develop. You are welcome to Azerbaijan again!

President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso said:

- Mr. President, thank you for the kind words and the warm welcome. I am very pleased to come here again after the visit in 2011. I have very good recollections of my previous visit when the Joint

Declaration on the Southern Gas Corridor was signed. This project is well under way now. I was honored to welcome you to Brussels in July of last year. We also met at the Eastern Partnership summit in Vilnius. I am pleased that our meetings have become frequent.

When I arrived here last night, I witnessed the extent of change Baku has been going through. There are many changes for the better since 2011. I congratulate you on that. Mr. President, I can see the effort you, the Azerbaijani Government and people are making to create a more modern, stable and developed country. I would also like to congratulate you not only on the diplomatic, but also on other important international successes, including the Eurovision song contest and the victory of a Spanish team supported by your country in the Spanish championship.

After the meeting of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso in an expanded format with the participation of delegations, Protocol to the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement between the European Communities and their Member States, of the one part, and the Republic of Azerbaijan, of the other part, on a Framework Agreement between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan on the general principles for the participation of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Union programmes was signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the European Union.

The document was signed by head of the Delegation of the European Union to the Republic of Azerbaijan Malena Mard, on behalf of Greek Presidency of the Council of the European Union, Ambassador of the Hellenic Republic to the Republic of Azerbaijan Dimitrios Tsoungas, and head of the delegation of Azerbaijan to the European Union Fuad Isgandarov.

After the meeting in an expanded format, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso made statements for the press.

***Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev***

- Dear Mr. President, Dear friends!

Welcome to Azerbaijan! Today we have discussed the developing relations between Azerbaijan and the European Commission. I remember that a signing ceremony and a press conference were held in this same hall three years ago, signaling the start of active cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union in the field of energy security.

Another document was also signed today, paving the way for the future development of our cooperation. I am confident that our active cooperation will continue to develop in the coming years.

Our partnership is very positive and covers various areas. This is the second visit of the President of

the European Commission to Azerbaijan. I have visited the European Commission five times. We have an ongoing dialogue. We openly and amicably discuss all aspects of our cooperation.

Our political relations are very strong and positive and have a bright future. The “Eastern Partnership” Agreement has raised them to an even higher level.

I do hope that in the coming months we will be actively working on a new format for our cooperation. Today we have had a detailed discussion of this potential cooperation format. As I noted at the press conference in Brussels last year, Azerbaijan wants to be as close as possible to the European Union, and today I want to reiterate that. It is a matter of strategic importance for us, and these relations have a great potential in the future.

The work done to date is an example of positive cooperation, as our relations cover various areas. We have discussed the situation related to political reforms and the process of democratization in Azerbaijan. Provision of fundamental freedoms is one of the main priorities of our government because we associate modernization of our country with the modernization of all spheres of life. Today all fundamental freedoms are guaranteed in Azerbaijan. There are free media and free internet. As I have informed Mr. President, 70 per cent of Azerbaijan’s population are active users of the Internet. The freedom of assembly is fully guaranteed in our country. The freedom of religion is also fully provided in our country.

Azerbaijan is a multicultural country and society. One of our biggest assets is the fact that our country is home to representatives of different nations and religions who live here in peace and harmony.

The European Union is our major trading partner. If we talk about exports, the European Union accounts for 80 per cent of our exports. Our economic cooperation has a great potential. In particular, various important agreements worth billions of dollars have recently been signed with European manufacturers, covering energy and non-energy sectors. This is exactly why I think that even greater activity will be observed in the economic sphere in the near future.

We have also discussed the process of negotiations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Unfortunately, despite the fact that negotiations have been under way for 20 years, no progress has been achieved. The main reason for that is Armenia’s reluctance to achieve peace with Azerbaijan. In other words, they do not want to change the status quo.

Despite the fact that the heads of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chair countries have made several statements on the unacceptability of the status quo, Armenia ignores all this and does everything to freeze the situation and maintain the status quo. Our lands are under occupation. Twenty per cent of our internationally recognized territory is under Armenian control. Four UN Security Council resolutions calling for an unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani lands

have yet to be implemented. Similar resolutions and decisions have been adopted by the European Parliament, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and other international organizations, but none of them has been executed.

Thus, the speediest settlement of the conflict within the norms and principles of international law and the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan is an important issue for our region. The resolution of this conflict will create a new environment in the South Caucasus region, an atmosphere of peace and cooperation.

Of course, we have also discussed issues of energy cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union today.

Three years ago, President Barroso and I signed a historic declaration on energy cooperation here. It can already be called a historic document because the successful implementation of this document has already been started.

In 2012, we signed an agreement on the Trans-Anatolian pipeline with Turkey. In 2013, an agreement on the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline was signed and finally, at the end of the same year, the final investment decision on “Shah Deniz-2” was signed. These agreements will pave the way for the exports of Azerbaijani gas to European markets.

The process has already begun. We intend to implement these ambitious projects in a timely manner. “Shah Deniz-2”, TANAP and TAP are the largest infrastructure projects in Europe today. They are worth at least \$45 billion. We have the financial and technical capacity to implement them. We cooperate with all our partners, as well as transit countries and consumers. Of course, the participation of the European Commission in the coordination of future activities among all sides and participants is a very important issue for us, and we appreciate that.

If energy security means diversification of supply routes for us, for Europe it means energy security and the diversification of sources. Azerbaijan is not only a new route for Europe, but also a new source of natural gas. We have ample reserves, and the existing infrastructure will be supplemented with new facilities. We intend to implement this historic project on time.

Our relations cover various areas. Mr. President and I have had a very frank and open discussion. I would like to express my gratitude for that.

This is the way it should be because we have to determine the directions of our future work and take further steps which will bring us together. I would also like to add that we have an excellent relationship with the majority of the European Union member-states. This also contributes to the overall positive environment of our cooperation.

Mr. President, once again welcome to Azerbaijan!

During the press conference President of the European Commission Jose Manuel Barroso delivered the speech and noted the following:

“We held a very successful meeting with President Ilham Aliyev, and made important decisions, one of which was to hasten the completion of a new agreement between Azerbaijan and the EU. That is the agreement on the Cooperation of Strategic Modernization”.

“We are already cooperating in the area of energy; We, alongside President Ilham Aliyev, have started to work on the project of the Southern Gas Corridor three years ago. This is an important project not only in terms of policy, but also energy security. Another thing that we are seeing is all European programs are open for Azerbaijan. And this, in turn, is the fruition of agreements that we have reached. A number of projects in the areas of education, health, etc. are expected to be implemented”.

Barroso noted that there are many areas in which Azerbaijan and the EU can work together: “The EU is one of biggest trade partners of Azerbaijan. 42 percent of Azerbaijan’s trade turnover is from the EU. Our cooperation with Azerbaijan covers not only the energy area, but also many other areas”.

“Three years ago, we started working on the Southern Gas Corridor project together with President Ilham Aliyev. It is a very important project both in terms of policy and energy security,” European Commission president noted.

According to Barroso, Azerbaijan is also playing a constructive role in global political dialogue: “Azerbaijan is expanding its cooperation with other countries of the EU, and we are praising that”.

Barroso also stressed that his visit to Azerbaijan has been quite successful: “I hope the sides will soon finish working on the new document, and I will be able to meet Ilham Aliyev in Brussels, and we’ll sign crucial agreement”.

## THE 23<sup>rd</sup> ANNUAL SESSION OF THE OSCE PARLIAMENTARY ASSEMBLY ENTITLED “HELSINKI +40: TOWARDS HUMAN SECURITY FOR ALL”

28 June 2014, Baku



On 28 June 2014, the opening of the Plenary Session of the 23rd Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly entitled “Helsinki +40: Towards Human Security for All” was held in Baku.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attended the event. The head of state first viewed photos reflecting the activities of the OSCE in 2011-2014. The photos particularly highlighted Azerbaijan’s activities in the organization.

Then the opening of the Plenary Session of the 23rd Annual Session of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly took place. President of the OSCE PA Ranko Krivokapic declared the Plenary Session open. He thanked Azerbaijan and President Ilham Aliyev for high-level organization of this important event.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev addressed the Plenary Session.

### *Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev*

- Mr. President of the Parliamentary Assembly, Mr. President of Switzerland,

Dear friends and guests,

First of all I’d like to welcome you to Azerbaijan. I hope you will enjoy your stay in our country. We are very honored to have an opportunity to host this important event.

The Session of the Parliamentary Assembly for the first time is being held in Azerbaijan. I’m grateful to all of those who made it possible for us to organize this event and to present our country, present our achievements and also talk about challenges and our plans.

I know that most of our guests are visiting Azerbaijan for the first time. Therefore it will be a good opportunity to know our country better, see some historic sites, historic monuments.

Some of them are protected by UNESCO as monuments of world cultural heritage. Azerbaijan is an ancient land, a country with great history, culture, but young as an independent state. It’s only

less than 23 years that we live as an independent country. And, of course, these years were critical for our statehood, our development, our future. We had to build an independent state, lay down the foundation of our statehood, at the same time, create new political system.

Actually, before we did not have any political system. Therefore the creation of democratic institutions, implementation of political reforms were the basis of our successful development.

And implementing political and economic reforms at the same time allowed us to avoid major complications, create a stable country, and achieve sustainable development. With respect to political dimension, I'd like to say that Azerbaijan is a country with the functioning democratic institutions. We put a lot of efforts to develop democracy, rule of law, provide fundamental freedoms. And I think we achieved great success. All fundamental freedoms are provided in Azerbaijan – freedom of assembly, association, freedom of expression, media freedom. We have thousands of media outlets in Azerbaijan. We have free internet. And more 70% of our population are internet users.

This is the main prerequisite for successful development because implementing only economic reforms will not allow us to achieve our goal, which is modernization. We've built modern, self-sufficient county in a very short period of time.

And we have a lot of plans for the future. Political reforms will be one of the top priorities on our agenda for the coming years. We need to do more, to implement more reforms. And I'm sure that our commitment and cooperation with international institutions such as the OSCE and others will allow us to implement everything that we planned.

Political reforms, of course, create a very positive atmosphere in our society. Political situation is stable, predictable. And this allows us to plan our future in a way that we can achieve modernization and transform Azerbaijan into developed country of the world.

Of course, our international contacts play an important role from the point of view of international interaction. At the same time, it allows us to defend, more successfully, our national interests. Therefore Azerbaijan is a country with a very active foreign policy and with very straightforward foreign policy priorities. Our words never differ from our actions. Therefore Azerbaijan is now recognized as a reliable partner, which our friendly countries, partners can trust. This is very important because trust is something, which you have to build every day. And only one mistake, wrong step can ruin this trust. Therefore active bilateral relations with most of the members of the international community, particularly European countries, are one of our priorities. This is also applied to our relations with countries of other continents.

Azerbaijan is a member of numerous important international institutions. And we consider this membership as an opportunity to establish better connections in the world. We are members of Non-

Alignment Movement, the Council of Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and many other international institutions.

One of our biggest foreign policy achievements happened two and a half years ago when Azerbaijan with great support of 155 countries was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council. This was the highest possible diplomatic and political achievement on the international arena. And we are proud that despite being young and not yet very well-known globally, we managed to present our case, and our friends showed great trust in what we were doing. And for two years Azerbaijan had been an active member of the UN Security Council, advocated for peace, security, stability, justice and implementation of international law norms. Actually, this is one of our priorities now as the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe. We assumed this chairmanship relatively recently. And just recently I was in Strasbourg addressing the Assembly and identifying our priorities. I don't want to concentrate on all of them, but one of them was elaboration of the mechanisms that will allow international law norms to be established globally. And this is the mechanism of implementation of international organizations' decisions and resolutions.

Unfortunately, we have faced selective approach. And this is the issue which is of great concern of the Azerbaijani people. We see that some resolutions of the United Nations Security Council are implemented within hours, while some resolutions remain on paper for 20 years as in the case with Azerbaijan. Therefore elaboration of unified criteria and mechanisms of implementation of international organizations' decisions is one of the main priorities for us as the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe and, I think, for the international community. Otherwise, the decisions of these important organizations will remain on paper and the credibility of these organizations will suffer.

Azerbaijan is suffering from this situation because for more than 20 years we have been suffering from Armenian aggression and occupation. Nagorno-Karabakh is a historic part of Azerbaijan, an ancient Azerbaijani land, which is occupied by Armenia for more than 20 years. Twenty percent of our internationally recognized territories is under occupation, one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs on their own land. We were subjected to ethnic cleansing. Armenians committed genocide against Azerbaijanis in the city of Khojaly, genocide which is recognized already by ten countries of the world. International law norms are violated. The UN Security Council adopted four resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces from the occupied territories.

These resolutions remain unimplemented, remain on paper. OSCE decisions, particularly decisions of Lisbon Summit, which clearly identify what steps should be taken in order to resolve this conflict, also remain on paper. The European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Non-Alignment Movement and other organizations adopted decisions and resolutions. But Armenia simply ignores them. They do not want to liberate the



territory, which does not belong to them. They want to keep everything unchanged. They ignore even statements of presidents of the OSCE Minsk Group's co-chair countries. The presidents of the US, Russia and France made it very clear that the status-quo is not acceptable, and this means that the status-quo must be changed. In order to change the status-quo Armenia should start withdrawing its troops from our lands, but Armenia ignores these statements. Therefore implementation of resolutions of international organizations, restoration of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and resolution of the conflict based on the principles of territorial integrity of countries is the main prerequisite for successful resolution of the conflict.

As far as the principle of self-determination is concerned, if we look carefully at the Helsinki final Act, we will see that self-determination should not undermine territorial integrity of countries, and, plus, Armenians already have their independent state. They already self-determined themselves and there are no reasons why they should have another Armenian state on historic Azerbaijani territories taking into account that the existing Armenian state was created on Azerbaijani lands.

The OSCE sent two missions to occupied territories: a fact finding mission and a field assessment mission. Both of them reported total devastation on the occupied territories. It is a dead zone. Our cities were levelled to ground, our historic buildings, our mosques and cemeteries were destroyed by Armenia. This is the evidence of the fact finding and field assessment missions. We are grateful to the OSCE for these initiatives, but unfortunately these reports again play no role in the resolution of the conflict. We need resolution of the conflict. That is what our country, our people, our refugees and the region needs. The Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is the major source of threat to the region. And the best way to reduce tensions and build confidence-building mechanisms and strengthen confidence-building measures will be the beginning of withdrawal of Armenian troops from the territories of Azerbaijan.

Despite the conflict Azerbaijan has demonstrated rapid economic growth. We have been the fastest growing economy in the world in the last 10 years and the socio-economic reforms have led to prosperity, reduction of unemployment and poverty. I think this is one of the biggest achievements of our government that the rapid economic growth was supported by strong social policy. Our economy grew more than three times during the last 10 years. This is the fastest growth rate in the world. At the same time poverty dropped almost 10 times. Now it is at the level of 5 percent. We basically resolved the issue of unemployment. It is also around 5 percent. We have very stable financial system. Our foreign debt is only 8 percent of GDP, which is one of the best parameters in the world, and our currency reserves are more than 70% of GDP, which allows us to invest and borrow on international markets. Our credit ratings have been upgraded by major rating agencies like S&P, Moody's and Fitch. Azerbaijan has a very good reputation as a country, which protects investments properly. During last 10 years 170 billion dollars were invested in Azerbaijan. Last year it was 28 billion, of which 70% were local and 30 % were foreign investments. Economic prospects for the future are very positive. We are working actively on the issues related to the diversification of our economy.

Azerbaijan today is a country with space industry, with a satellite, with developed ICT system. One of our priorities as the chair of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe is education. We invest largely in education because we need educated people, we need good specialists. At the same time educated people will never be subject of manipulation, any kind of external influence or interference. Education is the main guarantee against extremism, radicalism, nationalism, xenophobia. These issues also will be addressed during the work of the Assembly.

I can tell you that Azerbaijan`s experience can be examined because in our society multiculturalism is one of the elements of our success. We are multinational, multireligious country and this is one of the biggest assets of Azerbaijan that all the citizens of our country regardless of their religion or ethnic origin enjoy the same rights and privileges. We live like one family, representatives of different religions celebrate holidays together. This is really a unique experience, which is highly appreciated globally. In today`s world we sometimes see very dangerous trends of alienation, selectiveness whether it is in Europe or in Asia or in Middle East, in our neighbourhood. We need to address these issues, and raise them. We need to talk about that and see positive signs of success. Otherwise, if we just pretend that these issues do not exist or we would not raise them on international forums, I think situation can only aggravate because the tendencies unfortunately move not in the right direction.

National security of countries today cannot be separated from the energy security. The OSCE is the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Azerbaijan contributes to security and cooperation and through energy diplomacy we already established regional cooperation and we are expanding it. Today our plans go beyond our region and along with traditional partners and allies in energy policy we invite our European partners to be part of our initiatives.

Azerbaijan is the first country in the world, which connected Caspian, Black and Mediterranean seas with the diversified network of pipelines, and that allowed us to diversify our supply routes. So, we do not depend on any supply route and that is important for us as producers. And also we help our partners to diversify and get traditional energy resources from our structures, from our oil and gas fields, which contributes to the energy security of Europe. EU-Azerbaijan relations also partly are based on energy cooperation. In a memorandum, which was signed between the President of the European Commission and myself three years ago, Azerbaijan was identified as one of the main supporters and enablers of the Southern Gas Corridor. The Southern Gas Corridor is a historic project initiated by Azerbaijan. We have taken the biggest financial burden, the biggest responsibility and we are implementing this project. Today the Southern Gas Corridor consists of three important elements: production from one of the biggest gas fields in the world, Shah Deniz, its transportation and diversification. Transportation of gas will be realized through three pipelines, which, actually, when construction is completed, will make one big pipeline from Baku to Europe, particularly to Italy. This is Trans Anatolian pipeline, South Caucasus pipeline and Trans Adriatic pipeline. This is the biggest infrastructure project of Europe implemented now.

Azerbaijan took leadership in delivering this project, historic one, which will change the energy map of the region and Europe, and which will be to the benefit of us – producers, transitors and consumers. In energy policy, energy security and energy diplomacy, the balance of interests between these three components is the main prerequisite of success. I am glad that we achieved this and in the coming years together with our partners we will implement this historic project.

As you can imagine I can talk a lot about our country and cover many other important aspects of our life. But, I think, for us, one of big advantages today is that we have so many guests here in Baku. So, for several days you will be able to know more about Azerbaijan, see the country, meet people, have your own judgment, your own impression. And I am sure that many of you will come back in the future to continue our partnership and dialogue. Once again I am very grateful to all of you for being together with us today, grateful to the President of the Assembly and hope that we will have successful meetings during these days. Thank you very much.

**BAKU STATEMENT OF THE FIRST TRILATERAL MEETING OF THE MINISTERS OF  
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN,  
THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY AND TURKMENISTAN**

26 May 2014, Baku

At the invitation of H.E. Mr.Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and with the participation of H.E. Mr.Ahmet Davutoğlu, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and H.E. Mr.Rashid Meredov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan (hereinafter referred to as the “Parties”), the First Trilateral Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs was held on May 26, 2014 in Baku.

The Parties,

Underlined the key role of friendly relations based on shared cultural heritage, historical roots and traditional moral values, in realization of common goals in overcoming existing threats and challenges;

Based on the respect and support for independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity of each others states;

Expressing satisfaction with the development of relations among the three countries, stressed the importance of further enhancing of cooperation in political, security, economic, trade, energy, transport and humanitarian fields, including culture, science, healthcare, education, tourism and sports;

Agreed to continue consultations on regional and global issues of significant common interests among the Ministries of Foreign Affairs, also within the framework of the United Nations, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and other international and regional organizations;

Confirmed their readiness to support each other’s candidacies within the United Nations and other international organizations;

Underlined that the cooperation among the three countries contributes to regional and international peace, security, stability, economic development and prosperity;

Especially stressed that they will strengthen their cooperation in the fight against terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations, transnational organized crime and narcotic drugs and arms trafficking as well as human trafficking and migrant smuggling.

Confirmed their commitment to further development of relations in various fields, particularly in energy, trade, transport, culture, tourism, education and environmental protection through joint projects and cooperation initiatives.

Stressing the importance of energy and transport projects in the Republic of Azerbaijan, Republic of Turkey and Turkmenistan, underlined the importance of expansion of relations in mentioned spheres and participation in joint large-scale projects with the aim of ensuring the energy security and energy diversification.

Expressed their will to continue cooperation in the field of protection of historical and cultural heritage.

Agreed to hold regular meetings in this trilateral format with the aim to further their political dialogue, coordination and cooperation on regional and global issues;

Next meeting will take place on the second half of 2014 in Ashgabat.



### SUMMER SESSION – “INTERNATIONAL ECONOMIC SECURITY”

29 June – 5 July 2014, Baku

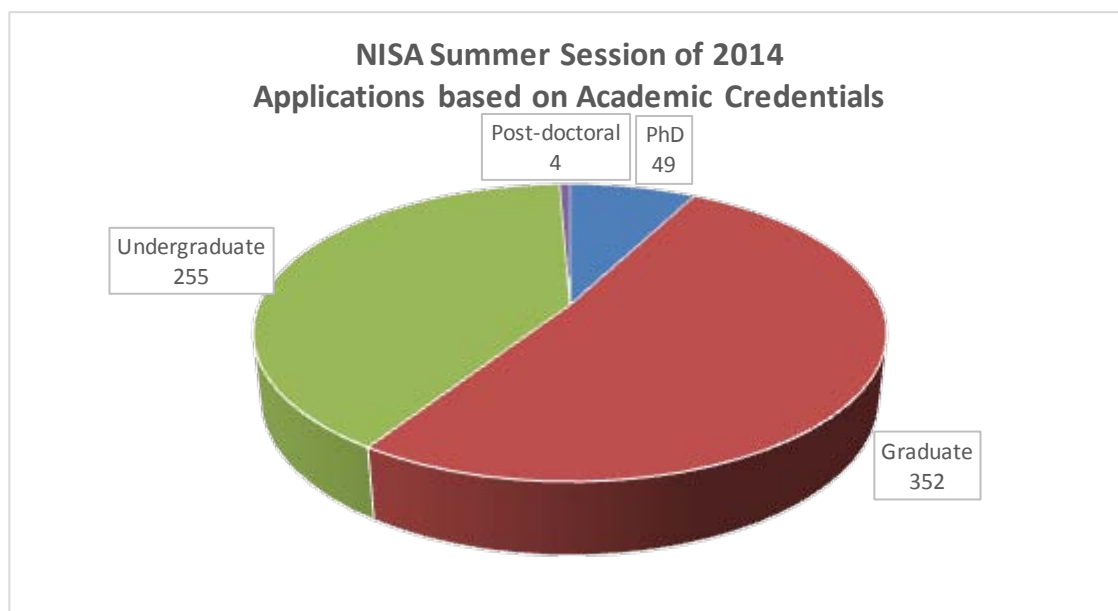
#### Statistics

**Venue:** Ramada Hotel, Baku, Azerbaijan

**Participants:** 38 participants from 18 countries

**Experts:** 12 experts from 10 countries

Due to the growing interest to NISA biannual sessions, NISA received 660 applications from 79 countries worldwide. A vivid illustration of overall applications is provided below.



The Summer Session of NATO International School of Azerbaijan (herewith NISA) commenced with Welcome Dinner, bringing together participants from 18 countries and speakers of sound expertise from 10 countries worldwide. The diverse background of participants was a great asset to the Session throughout the week-long active discussion and engagement.

Prior to the Welcome Dinner, NISA executive director Mr. Tural Ahmadov made a concise presentation on Azerbaijan, NISA activities and wrapped up with admin remarks on the days to come. The entire Session was held at Ramada Hotel with a clear view of Baku through the Caspian Sea.

The Summer Session was organized around four different topics each of which specifically analyzed every facet of global economic order, financial and energy security and economic consequences of a crisis and responses of the international community. Apart from academic discourse, the Session was enriched with focus group discussions, cultural night and a city tour.

The Official Opening Ceremony of the NISA Summer Session was set up on June 30<sup>th</sup> with the participation of distinguished guests. The Ambassadors and diplomats accredited in Azerbaijan also took part in the Opening Ceremony. After a brief introduction by the NISA executive director at the presence of media, H.E. Mr. Araz Azimov, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, made a keynote speech.

H.E. Mr. Araz Azimov outlined the regional developments with an emphasis that far-reaching political and economic implications are under way in the wider region. Providing a thorough overview of the crisis in Ukraine, Mr. Azimov spelled out its ramification beyond the region. Upon elaboration, Mr. Azimov received numerous questions from the diverse audience on many facets of foreign policy and decision-making.

The first day of the Summer Session was devoted to the discussion of “International Economic Order.” H.E. Mr. Bozkurt Aran, Director of the TEPAV Center for Multilateral Trade Studies, Turkey, made a presentation on trade as an economic instrument in defining relations between countries. He highlighted the fact that international organizations such as WTO plays a pivotal role in encouraging countries to get involved in more free trade, open up barriers in free trade, ease interaction between countries.

Upon providing EU’s economic development model, Dr. Razvan Buzatu, Associate Professor at National Defense College and Director of Advanced Strategies Center, Romania, elaborated how vital close and good relationship with neighboring countries is in order to boost economy. Afterwards he specifically talked about economic challenges that persist in some EU countries and assessed status of those states within different levels, e.g. political, economic, social, cultural and environmental levels.

The second day of the Session, however, focused on a critical component of economic security “Financial Security” that brought together Dr. Martin Kreutner, Executive Director and Dean of the International Anti-Corruption Academy, and Dr. Fuad Aliyev, Head of the International Cooperation Department of the Financial Monitoring Service under the Central Bank of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Dr. Kreutner spelled out underlying issues in corruption with overwhelming implications on welfare

of people around the globe. Apart from that, he disseminated data vis-à-vis global corruption and highlighted methods to combatting against it. He also emphasized that despite taken measures and anti-corruption institutions existing in all countries there is no single country where corruption is not a case.

As value-added, Dr. Aliyev provided an in-depth analysis on main requirements of global standards, national legislation and controlling mechanisms of money laundering and terrorism financing. Alongside, he drew attention to how these things work within the border of Azerbaijan and globally. He also explicitly described how banks implement defense strategy for unusual and suspicious transactions and how credit institutions and government authorities cooperate to eradicate the phenomenon.

The third day commenced with “Energy Security” that brought together distinguished speakers from Bulgaria and Turkey. Prof. Nursin Guney is engaged in a scholarly discourse on energy and security and is the Head of the International Relations Department of Yildiz Technical University, Turkey. Whereas Mr. Neykov served as the first Director of Energy Community Secretariat based in Vienna and has been immensely involved in energy issues. Both speakers had extensive scholarly and practitioner perspective to contribute to the topic.

Prof. Guney provided a sound geopolitical overview of current energy mapping, and highlighted critical and growing significance of energy security globally. Prof. Guney gave a thorough analysis on the role of geopolitics and diversification of energy resources and routes, physical protection of pipelines in energy security and provided succinct historical facts related to this issue from both consumer and exporter countries perspectives.

In his turn, Mr. Neykov specifically focused on new pipelines endorsed by many countries that will most likely mitigate European energy challenge. Having referred to specific examples, Mr. Neykov mentioned necessity of finding a balance between energy producers and consumers. In the meantime, he provided intriguing examples comparing and contrasting energy concept retrospectively and currently. Subsequently he spelled out technical issues and infrastructural facets of energy security, and eventually policy matter of being energy secure.

After the lectures of two notable speakers on energy security, NISA set up VTC with NATO Headquarters. Mr. Julijus Grubliauskas from Energy Security Section of NATO Emerging Security Challenges Division contributed to the assigned discussion. Mr. Grubliauskas followed up the earlier discussions, but specifically talked about energy development.

After reviewing critical elements of economic security, the fourth day of the Session heavily focused on the broader implications of the crisis in Ukraine and on reactions of the international community. The discussion was enriched with the lecture of three speakers, each of whom elaborated key components of the ongoing crisis. The discussion commenced with H.E. Mr. Paul Vandoren,



who served as the Head of the EU Delegation to the Republic of Croatia. He shared his extensive experience and provided a thorough overview of the EU's economic development.

In her turn, Dr. Biserka Jevtimijevic, served as an advisor to the President of Serbia for economic affairs, focused on economic consequences of a political crisis and talked namely about the use of sanctions vis-à-vis the Serbian case.

The third speaker was Dr. Petr Havlik, former Deputy Director of the Vienna Institute for International Studies, who provided comprehensive data on the current developments. Dr. Havlik analyzed economic consequences of the crisis with a vivid illustration of diagrams and charts. He started with the current situation of Russia's economy and detailed impact of sanctions on Russia in the short and long run.

After Dr. Havlik's insights, Mr. Saverex, Head of the NATO's Defense Capabilities Section, contributed to the discussion on responses of the international community. Mr. Saverex provided an overview of Smart Defense and elaborated how partners interact with Smart Defense.

Along with discussions throughout the week-long Session, participants were asked to join the focus group which was exclusively designed to brainstorm possible scenarios and come up with policy recommendations for governments. The rationale behind the focus group was essentially an academic exchange of views and also better engagement of participants in a global and cultural setting. Each day within the respective groups, the teams presented their own presentations vis-à-vis financial and energy issues.

Traditionally NISA incorporates Cultural Night to its week-long program and thus aims to bring diverse cultures to a unique setting where individuals get familiar with distinct traditions, languages and cuisine.

On the last day of the Summer Session, NISA set up a city tour for Summer Session participants. The tour commenced with the Baku's bird view of Mountainous Park, which marks rising modern Baku and ended up in the Old City with the tour to Shirvanshahlar Palace and Maiden Tower, which engraves history on every stone and enshrines culture on every corner of the city.

**YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ**

**A.Ş.MEHDİYEVİN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ BİRLƏŞMİŞ MİLLƏTLƏR  
TƏŞKİLATI YANINDA DAİMİ NÜMAYƏNDƏSİ, EYNI ZAMANDA AZƏRBAYCAN  
RESPUBLİKASININ KUBA RESPUBLİKASINDA, YAMAYKADA, NİKARAQUA  
RESPUBLİKASINDA, VENESUELA BOLİVAR RESPUBLİKASINDA FÖVQƏLADƏ  
VƏ SƏLAHIYYƏTLİ SƏFİRİ VƏZİFƏLƏRİNDƏN GERİ ÇAĞIRILMASI HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 15-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Aqşin Şəfaət oğlu Mehdiyev Azərbaycan Respublikasının Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatı yanında daimi nümayəndəsi, eyni zamanda Azərbaycan Respublikasının Kuba Respublikasında, Yamaykada, Nikaraqua Respublikasında, Venesuela Bolivar Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri vəzifələrindən geri çağırılsın.

**İlham Əliyev**  
**Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti**

**Bakı şəhəri, 11 aprel 2014-cü il.**

**K.BALZANIN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ MALTA RESPUBLİKASINDA  
FƏXRİ KONSULU TƏYİN EDİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 32-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

1. Kristian Balzan Azərbaycan Respublikasının Malta Respublikasında fəxri konsulu təyin edilsin.
2. Azərbaycan Respublikasının Xarici İşlər Nazirliyi bu Sərəncamdan irəli gələn məsələləri həll etsin.

**İlham Əliyev**  
**Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti**

**Bakı şəhəri, 11 aprel 2014-cü il.**

**Y.T.ƏLİYEVİN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ BİRLƏŞMİŞ MİLLƏTLƏR  
TƏŞKİLATI YANINDA DAİMİ NÜMAYƏNDƏSİ TƏYİN EDİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 15-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Yaşar Teymur oğlu Əliyev Azərbaycan Respublikasının Birləşmiş Millətlər Təşkilatı yanında daimi nümayəndəsi təyin edilsin.

**İlham Əliyev**  
Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti

**Bakı şəhəri, 11 aprel 2014-cü il.**

**A.Q.KƏRİMOVA İKİNCİ DƏRƏCƏLİ FÖVQƏLADƏ VƏ  
SƏLAHIYYƏTLİ ELÇİ DİPLOMATİK RÜTBƏSİ VERİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 24-cü bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Anar Qabil oğlu Kərimova ikinci dərəcəli fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli elçi diplomatik rütbəsi verilsin.

**İlham Əliyev**  
Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti

**Bakı şəhəri, 23 may 2014-cü il.**

**A.Q.KƏRİMOVUN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ  
YUNESKO YANINDA DAİMİ NÜMAYƏNDƏSİ TƏYİN EDİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 15-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Anar Qabil oğlu Kərimov Azərbaycan Respublikasının YUNESKO yanında daimi nümayəndəsi təyin edilsin.

**İlham Əliyev**

**Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti**

**Bakı şəhəri, 23 may 2014-cü il.**

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ

**Ə.F.SALMANOVUN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ UKRAYNANIN  
XARKOV ŞƏHƏRİNDƏ FƏXRİ KONSULU TƏYİN EDİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 32-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

1. Əfqan Fəqan oğlu Salmanov Azərbaycan Respublikasının Ukraynanın Xarkov şəhərində fəxri konsulu təyin edilsin.

2. Azərbaycan Respublikasının Xarici İşlər Nazirliyi bu Sərəncamdan irəli gələn məsələləri həll etsin.

**İlham Əliyev**

**Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti**

**Bakı şəhəri, 27 iyun 2014-cü il.**

**R.K.TEYMUROVA İKİNCİ DƏRƏCƏLİ FÖVQƏLADƏ VƏ  
SƏLAHIYYƏTLİ ELÇİ DİPLOMATİK RÜTBƏSİ VERİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 24-cü bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Rəmzi Kazım oğlu Teymurova ikinci dərəcəli fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli elçi diplomatik rütbəsi verilsin.

**İlham Əliyev**  
Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti

**Bakı şəhəri, 27 iyun 2014-cü il.**

**R.K.TEYMUROVUN AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASININ  
KOREYA RESPUBLİKASINDA FÖVQƏLADƏ VƏ  
SƏLAHIYYƏTLİ SƏFİRİ TƏYİN EDİLMƏSİ HAQQINDA  
AZƏRBAYCAN RESPUBLİKASI PREZİDENTİNİN SƏRƏNCAMI**

Azərbaycan Respublikası Konstitusiyasının 109-cu maddəsinin 15-ci bəndini rəhbər tutaraq qərara alıram:

Rəmzi Kazım oğlu Teymurov Azərbaycan Respublikasının Koreya Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri təyin edilsin.

**İlham Əliyev**  
Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti

**Bakı şəhəri, 27 iyun 2014-cü il.**

REDAKSİYANIN QONAĞI – EDITORIAL GUEST – ГОСТЬ РЕДАКЦИИ

**GIAMPAOLO CUTILLO**

***Ambassador of Italy in Baku***



Born in Naples on September 8, 1970

July 1992: Graduated in Economics at the University of Naples “Federico II”

March 1994: Joined the Foreign Service

March/December 1994: Vocational training at the Diplomatic Institute

January 1995/February 1998: Served at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome, Directorate General for Emigration and Social Affairs

February 1998/September 2001: Consul in Caracas (Venezuela)

October 2001/November 2005: Commercial Counselor, Embassy of Italy, Islamabad (Pakistan)

December 2005/ January 2009: Director South Asia, Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Rome

February 2009/July 2013: Consul General of Italy, Mumbai (India)

August 2013: Ambassador of Italy in Azerbaijan

Knight of the Order of Merit of the Republic of Italy, since 2006

Married, one daughter

On 2<sup>nd</sup> of June Italian Republic commemorated its National Holiday, Republic Day. With that occasion, “World of Diplomacy” decided to dedicate a heading on Azerbaijan-Italy relations and requested an interview with Italian Ambassador Giampaolo Cutillo that His Excellency so kindly accepted. “World of Diplomacy” is honored to present the interview.

***Distinguished Ambassador Giampaolo Cutillo, first of all, on behalf of the “World of Diplomacy” journal and its editorial council, we would like to congratulate you with the occasion of the Republic Day of Italy. How do you commemorate this significant date in the history of Italian Republic here in Azerbaijan?***

The Republic Day of the Italy was commemorated on 2<sup>nd</sup> of June, in “Art Garden” located in the Old City of Baku. The event was attended by more than 350 guests, including state authorities such as Energy Minister of Azerbaijan Mr. Natiq Aliyev and Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Ambassador Mahmud Mammad-Guliyev, members of the Italian community and the Azerbaijani community. The Republic Day was dedicated this year to the Universal Exhibition of Milan in 2015 that is meant to become a showcase for our country and an opportunity to develop relationships with many countries, including Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is indeed one of the first countries that have joined the Milan EXPO and that have requested a large exhibition space. During the Republic Day, a video of filmmaker Zeffirelli was displayed. Furthermore, the Choir of the “Aztv” performed national anthems while one of the most famous Azerbaijani tenor Samir Safarov performed music pieces from the Italian classic repertoire.

While addressing his speech, Mr. Natiq Aliyev expressed his desire for strengthening bilateral relations between Italy and Azerbaijan, mentioned the important steps carried out in the previous year, including important high level visits, Joint Economic Commission’s meeting and final decision over the transportation of natural gas from Caspian Basin to Europe. The Trans-Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) will physically connect Baku to Rome via gas pipeline.

In my speech, I gave an overview of the major events that have marked the previous year, recalling the strengthening of bilateral relations as a result of the visit of Premier Enrico Letta in August 2013 and mentioning the official visit to Rome of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev in July. I also focused on the organization of EXPO 2015 in Milan, expressing my hope for a strong success of the event, inviting the public to visit the Azerbaijani pavilion at the Universal Exhibition in Milan and hoping that the Azerbaijani pavilion can help Italian people to have a better knowledge of the country.

*We are aware that Italy and Azerbaijan traditionally enjoy close relations nearly in all fields. However it would be interesting to hear about bilateral relations from the perspective of Your Excellency?*

Italy and Azerbaijan enjoy excellent political relations at the bilateral level and in the context of multilateral framework with reference to the United Nations, the Council of Europe, the OSCE and the European Union. As regards to the bilateral political dialogue, it has been strengthened in recent years with the historic visit of Prime Minister Enrico Letta to Baku in August 2013, reciprocated in July 2014 by the visit of President H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev to Rome. During his visit President H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev met with the highest Italian authorities, including President of the Italian Republic H.E. Mr. Giorgio Napolitano, Prime Minister Matteo Renzi, President of the Senate Peter Grasso and Mayor of Rome Ignazio Marino.

During the visit of Prime Minister Enrico Letta in 2013, a joint declaration on energy cooperation was adopted. This statement was followed by the adoption of the Declaration on the bilateral Strategic Partnership by Prime Minister H.E. Mr. Matteo Renzi and President H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev in July 2014 and the signing of agreements in the field of maritime transport, economic cooperation between the ministries of economic development, culture and sport.

Furthermore, frequent exchanges of high-level visits occur among Italy and Azerbaijan, such as those of the Minister of Foreign Affairs Emma Bonino, who was visiting the Azerbaijani capital in

December 2013, the former Deputy Foreign Minister Marta Dassu that has visited three times Baku between 2012 and 2013, and Deputy Minister of Economic Development Carlo Calenda who visited Baku during trade mission Confindustria-ANCE-Federprogetti in November 2013.

With regards to the inter-parliamentary dialogue, the visit of President of the Defense Commission of the Italian Senate Nicola Latorre and three visits of parliamentary delegations of the Italian Council of Europe, of NATO Parliamentary Assembly and of the OSCE Italian delegation to Baku took place in May-June 2014.

*In spite of the fact that Italy has no border with Azerbaijan, it is among the first trade partners of Azerbaijan. Trade turnover is reflected in significant figures. Would Your Excellency be kind enough to elaborate more on that issue?*

From the point of view of the trade turnover, Italy is the leading customer for the last six years in Azerbaijan, with trade amounting to 7.2 billion in 2013 - absorbing 23% of Azerbaijani exports (to a value of 6.7 billion euro) - and represent its ninth supplier, exports of Italian goods amounted to EUR 516 million in 2013, an increase of 28% over the previous year. Italy is confirmed as the first trading partner for the country, compared to the high value of our imports of energy products, which make Azerbaijan our third largest supplier of oil. The attractiveness of Italy as a synonym of quality of life and luxury for Azerbaijani customers is certainly an asset for the purposes of expansion and market penetration of the domestic market of Azerbaijan. The fields that can further develop economic relations are manifold, such as in the construction industry, civil engineering, infrastructure, machinery, agriculture and food, textiles and clothing, food, furniture and tourism.

Joint Economic Commission takes place on a regular basis - set up by the Joint Declaration signed between Italy and Azerbaijan in 2004- whose third last session took place in Baku in December 2013.

*Distinguished Ambassador Giampaolo Cutillo we would like to express the gratitude for responding our questions, “World of Diplomacy” wishes you every success in your future diplomatic activity. We are absolutely sure that your efforts as an ambassador will only contribute to further development of relations between our countries.*

Thank you very much. I also wish success to “World of Diplomacy” and its editorial team.



**ARXIV SƏNƏDLƏR – ARCHIVE DOCUMENTS – АРХИВНЫЕ ДОКУМЕНТЫ****XV TÜRK ORDU KORPUSUNUN BAŞ QƏRARGAHININ KOMANDANI, GENERAL-MAYOR KAZIM KARABEKİR PAŞA VƏ AZƏRBAYCAN CÜMHURİYYƏTİ HÖKUMƏTİNİN HƏRBİ NÜMAYƏNDƏSİ ƏLİAĞA ŞIXLİNSKİ ARASINDA BAĞLANMIŞ HƏRBİ KONVENSIYANIN SURƏTİ\*****15 Aprel 1918-ci il, Ərzurum**

Aşağıdakı hərbi konvensiya Ərzurumdakı 15 aprel 1336-ci il tarixdə, XV Türk Ordu Korpusunun baş qərargahında hazırkı Konvensiyada imzaları təqdim olunan XV Ordu Korpusunun Ərzurumdakı komandanı Kazım Karabekir Paşa və Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti Hökumətinin Müdafiə Naziri Mehmandarovu təmsil edən Müdafiə Nazirinin Dövlət Katibinin müavini Əliağa Şıxlinski arasında bağlanmış və dəyişdirilmişdir.

**Maddə 1**

Osmanlı İmperiyasının paytaxtında Osmanlı Hökumətinin Müdafiə Nazirliyində baş qərargahın Komandanı Cevad və Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti Hökumətinin hərbi nümayəndəsi Kərimov arasında bağlanmış və 1336-cı ilin noyabr ayında qüvvəyə minmiş və bu ilin may ayında müddəti bitəcək hərbi konvensiyanın icra müddəti kimi altı ay müəyyən edilmişdir və yuxarıda göstərilən Konvensiya həmin aydan yenidən nəzərdən keçiriləcəkdir.

**Maddə 2**

Azərbaycanın hüduqları daxilində ordunun və onun administrasiyasının təşkili və yaradılması ilə bağlı əvvəli konvensiyanın maddələri və bu məsələ ilə bağlı qismən yerinə yetirilmiş və artıq qismən tətbiq edilmiş digər maddələr heç bir dəyişiklik edilmədən icra ediləcəkdir. Yalnız bu Konvensiyanın aşağıdakı məsələlərə aidiyyəti olan müddəaları yenidən nəzərdən keçirilmiş hesab olunacaqdır.

**Maddə 3**

Hazırkı konvensiyanın imzalanmasına baxmayaraq, orijinal konvensiya orada göstərilən müddət başa çatmayanadək qüvvədə qalacaqdır.

**Maddə 4**

Aşağıdakı maddələr malik olduqları səlahiyyətə müvafiq olaraq hər iki tərəfin nümayəndələri tərəfindən qəbul edilmişdir:

- a) Əvvəla konvensiyada göstərilən qarşılıqlı razılıq əsasında hərbi yardım aşağıdakı qaydada qəbul edilir.

\* İstinad: Admiral De Robekin Depəşasına əlavə 2, 16 iyun 1920-ci il. Azərbaycan Xalq Cümhuriyyətinin xarici siyasəti. Sənədlər məcmuəsi. Azərbaycan Respublikasının Xarici İşlər Nazirliyi, Bakı, 2009-cu il, s.272-279

- b) Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti Hökumətinə qonşu dövlətlər tərəfindən faktiki hücum olduğu zaman Antalya və Rumelidəki Osmanlı hüquqlarının müdafiəsi üzrə Cəmiyyətin Nümayəndəliyi yuxarıda adı çəkilən Cümhuriyyətə tutarlı hərbi yardım göstərməyə söz verir.
- c) Cümhuriyyət Hökuməti təcili zərurət olduğu zaman Osmanlı qüvvələrinə səmərəli hərbi yardım göstərməyi öz öhdəsinə götürür və bundan başqa, belə etmək barədə müraciət olduğu zaman Azərbaycan ərazisinə heç bir qadağa olmadan daxil olmaq və keçmək icazəsini dərhal verəcəyi ilə razılaşıır.

#### Maddə 5

Cümhuriyyət Hökuməti Sovetlər Hökuməti və Antalya və Rumelidəki Osmanlı hüquqlarını müdafiə Cəmiyyəti arasında hərbi yaxınlaşmanın yaradılması məqsədi üçün əlindən gələni edəcəyini və lazım gəldiyi təqdirdə yaxınlaşmanın tərəfi olacağını öhdəsinə götürür.

#### Maddə 6

Antaliya və Rumelidəki Osmanlı hüquqlarını müdafiə Cəmiyyəti Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti hökumətinə iki tərəf arasında meydana çıxma bilən hərbi, maliyyə və digər məsələləri müzakirə etmək və onlar üzrə qərar vermək üçün tam səlahiyyətə malik olacaq nümayəndəni göndərəcəkdir.

#### Maddə 7

Ermənistanın Azərbaycana hücum etməsi halında, yaxud şərq əyalətlər qəsdən və ədalətsiz şəkildə Ermənistana birləşdirildiyi halda, hər iki tərəf vahid ordu kimi bütün qüvvələrindən istifadə edərək bir-birlərini müdafiə etməyə razılıq verirlər.

#### Maddə 8

Xristianlığa qarşı öz mövcudluğunu müdafiə etmək üçün İslamı birləşdirmək məqsədilə və bu birliyə bütün digər müsəlman dövlətlərini və İslam dininə sitayiş edən millətləri cəlb etmək (dəvət etmək) üçün qəbul edilməli olan tədbirləri və onların yerinə yetirilməsini müzakirə edəcək komitə hər iki tərəfin nümayəndələrindən ibarət olmaqla Ərzurumda təsis ediləcəkdir. Bütün qonşu İslam millətlərinin nümayəndələri bu komitəyə qoşulmağa dəvət olunacaqlar.

#### Maddə 9

Nümayəndəlik müftilərin və İslam Cəmiyyətinin təşkil edilməsi məqsədilə Uləmalardan ibarət olan missiyanı Azərbaycana göndərmək, eləcə də iki ölkə arasında mövcud olan sıx əlaqələri gücləndirmək öhdəliyini üzərinə götürür.

#### Maddə 10

Cümhuriyyət hökuməti 6-cı maddədə göstərilən Türk nümayəndəsinin malik olduğu eyni səlahiyyətlərə malik olan və eyni vəzifələr həvalə edilmiş nümayəndəsini Nümayəndəliyə göndərəcəkdir.

## Maddə 11

Əvvəli maddələrdə göstərilən qarşılıqlı razılaşdırılmış hərbi yardımın lazım gərəkdiyi zaman, mümkün olduğu qədər böyük sayda zabit və serjant rütbəli hərbi qulluqçu Azərbaycanın Müdafiə Nazirliyinin sərəncamına veriləcəkdir.

## Maddə 12

Cümhuriyyət Hökuməti indi Rusiyada əsirlikdə olan və vətənlərinə dönmən və ya dönə biləcək sayda zabit və serjant rütbəli hərbi qulluqçuları Nuri Paşanın ordusuna qoşulmaları üçün lazımi addımlar atmağa razılıq verir.

## Maddə 13

Azərbaycan Müdafiə Nazirliyinin sərəncamına verilən, yaxud verilə biləcək zabitlərin məvaciblərinin və müəvənatlarının ödənişi ilə bağlı keçmiş Konvensiyanın maddələri aşağıdakı kimi dəyişdiriləcəkdir:

- a) Azərbaycan Hökuməti bu zabitləri öz xidmətinə onların Osmanlı ordusunda tutduqları rütbəyə uyğun qəbul etməyə razılıq verir və onlara Osmanlı Ordusunda aldıkları məvacibin üç misli həcmində bərabər olan məvacib verəcəkdir.
- b) Bu zabitlərin Azərbaycan ordusunda xidmət göstərəcəkləri müddət onların Osmanlı ordusunda rütbə üzrə göstərdikləri xidmət üzrə hesablanaraq ikiye vurulacaqdır.
- c) Onların hazırda Osmanlı ordusunda aldıkları məvacib onların ailələrinə ödəniləcəkdir.

## Maddə 14

Antalyanın Türk Hökuməti və Azərbaycan Hökuməti adından hazırkı konvensiyanın imzalanmış hərbi nümayəndələr bu hərbi konvensiyaya ediləcək iki əlavəni yaradacaq siyasi və iqtisadi konvensiyaların tərtib edilməsi qərarına gəlmişlər. Bu cür əlavələr Antalyanın Türk Hökuməti və Azərbaycan Cümhuriyyəti Hökuməti arasında mövcud olacaq münasibətləri müəyyən edəcəkdir. Bu konvensiyaların bənd və maddələri başqa nümayəndə heyəti tərəfindən hazırlanacaqdır.

## Maddə 15

Azərbaycan ərazisinə qadağan edilməyən daxil olmaya və keçməyə icazə ilə bağlı hazırkı konvensiyanın 4 (c) maddəsində qəbul edilmiş qərar türk hərbi nümayəndəsinin xahişi ilə təfərrüatlı şəkildə A əlavəsində göstəriləcəkdir.

(5)

Copy of the Military Convention concluded between ~~26~~  
KIAZIM KARABEKIR Pasha, commanding XV Army Corps at ERZERUM,  
Major General, General Staff, and ALI AGHA SHEIKLINSKI,  
Military Delegate of AZERBAIJAN.  
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The following military convention has been concluded and exchanged at ERZERUM at the headquarters of the XV Army Corps on the 15th April, 1336, between KIAZIM KARABEKIR Pasha, commanding the XV Army Corps at ERZ ERUM, and ALI AGHA SHEIKHLINSKI, under-Secretary of State at the Ministry of War, representing MIHMANDAROFF, minister of War of the republican Government of AZERBAIJAN, whose signatures are attached to this convention.

Article 1.

The six months designated as the period of execution of the military convention concluded at the capital of the Ottoman Empire between JEVAD, Chief of the General Staff at the Ministry of War of the Ottoman Government, and KERIMOFF, military delegate of the republican Government of AZERBAIJAN, which came into force in the month of November 1335, terminating in the Month of May of the present year, the above convention will be revised as from that month.

Article 2.

The articles of the former convention dealing with the organisation and the formation of the army and its administration in the interior of AZERBAIJAN, and other articles dealing with this subject having been partially carried out and being already partially applied, will be executed without modification of any kind. Only those portions of this convention which deal with matters mentioned below will be considered as revised.

Article....

(6)

Article 3.~~37~~

Notwithstanding the signature of the present convention, the original convention will remain in force until the expiry of the period therein mentioned.

Article 4.

The following articles have been accepted by the representatives of both parties in virtue of the authority which they possess:

- (a) The reciprocal military assistance mentioned in the previous convention is defined in the following manner.
- (b) In the event of the republican Government of AZERBAIJAN being actually attacked by the neighbouring states, the Representative Council of the Society for the Defence of Ottoman Rights in ANATOLIA and RUMELIA promises to render to the aforementioned Republic effective military assistance.
- (c) The republican Government undertakes to afford effective military assistance to the Ottoman forces in the case of urgent necessity, and further agrees that on being requested to do so, it will immediately permit unrestricted movements in and passage through AZERBAIJAN territory.

Article 5.

The republican Government undertakes to continue its endeavours for the purpose of establishing a military rapprochement between the Government of the Soviets and the Association for the Defence of Ottoman Rights in ANATOLIA and RUMELIA, and in case of necessity will become a party to the rapprochement.

Article 6.

The Association for the Defence of Ottoman Rights in ANATOLIA and RUMELIA will send a representative to the republican Government of AZERBAIJAN who will have full powers to discuss and decide on military, financial and other

questions which may arise between the two parties. -28

Article 7.

In the event of ARMENIA attacking AZERBAIJAN or in the event of the eastern provinces being intentionally and unjustifiably annexed to ARMENIA, the two parties agree to defend each other with all their forces which will act as a single army.

Article 8.

In order to unite Islam for the defence of its existence against Christianity and to attract (and invite) to this union all other Moslem states and nations which groan under the yoke of Islam (sic), a committee will be formed at ERZERUM to be composed of delegates of the two parties which will deliberate on the measures to be adopted and on their execution. Representatives of all the neighbouring Islamic nations will be invited to join this committee.

Article 9.

The Representative Council undertakes to send to AZERBAIJAN a mission composed of Ulama for the purpose of organising the Muftis and the Islamic Association as well as to strengthen the close relations existing between the two countries.

Article 10.

The republican Government will send to the Representative Council a delegate possessing the same powers and entrusted with the same duties as the Turkish delegate mentioned in article 6.

Article 11.

In the event of the reciprocal military assistance mentioned in the preceding articles becoming necessary, as large a number as possible of officers and non-commissioned officers will be placed at the disposal of the AZERBAIJAN

Ministry of War.

~~39~~

Article 12.

The republican Government agrees to take the necessary steps to enrol in the army of NURI Pasha officers and non-commissioned officers now prisoners in Russia who are returning or may return to their country.

Article 13.

The clauses of the former convention dealing with the payment of salaries and allowances to officers who are or may be placed at the disposal of the Azerbaijan Ministry of War will be modified as follows:-

- (a). The Azerbaijan Government agrees to receive these officers into its service in a rank superior to that which they held in the Ottoman army, and will pay them a salary equivalent to three times that which they are receiving in the Ottoman army.
- (b). The period for which these officers may serve in the Azerbaijan army will be doubled in reckoning their service for promotion in the Ottoman army.
- (c). The salary which they are at present receiving in the Ottoman army will be paid to their families.

Article 14.

The military delegates who have signed this convention in the names of the Turkish Government of Anatolia and of the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan have decided that political and economic conventions...

-9-

156

~~40~~

conventions which will form two annexes to the present military convention will be drawn up. Such annexes will settle the relations to exist between the Turkish government of Anatolia and the Republican Government of Azerbaijan. The bases and articles of these conventions will be prepared by another delegation.

Article 15.

The decision arrived at in article 4 (c) of the present convention concerning the permission for unrestricted movements and passage in the territory of Azerbaijan will at the request of the Turkish military delegate be set forth in detail in annexe A.



## MƏQALƏLƏR - ARTICLES – СТАТЬИ

### THE CASPIAN 5 AND ARCTIC 5 – CRITICAL SIMILARITIES

Anis Bajrektarevic\*

#### Between Inner Lake and Open Sea

As the rapid melting of the Polar caps has unexpectedly turned distanced and dim economic possibilities into viable geo-economic and geopolitical probabilities, so it was with the unexpected and fast meltdown of Russia's historic empire – the Soviet Union. Once considered as the Russian inner lake, the Caspian has presented itself as an open/high sea of opportunities literally overnight – not only for the (new, increased number of) riparian states, but also for the belt of (new and old) neighbouring, and other interested (overseas) states.

Interest of external players ranges from the symbolic or rather rhetorical, to the global geopolitical; from an antagonizing political conditionality and constrain to the pragmatic trade-off between (inflicting pain of) political influence and energy supply gain. Big consumers such as China, India or the European Union (EU) are additionally driven by its own energy imperative: to improve the energy security (including the reduction of external dependencies) as well as to diversify its supplies, modes and forms on a long run.

On a promise of allegedly vast oil and natural gas resources (most of which untapped), the Caspian is witnessing the “New Grand Game” – struggle for the domination and influence over the region and its resources as well as transportation routes. Notably, the Caspian is a large landlocked water plateau without any connection with the outer water systems. Moreover, 3 out of 5 riparian states are land-locking Caspian, but are themselves landlocked too. (Former Soviet republics of) Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan have no direct access to any international waters. That means that pipelines remain the only mode of transportation and delivery of carbonic fuels, thus creating yet another segment for competition, and source of regional tension as the 3 riparian states do depend on their neighbours for export routes.

Finally, due to both the unsolved legal status of the Basin as well as the number of political and territorial disputes in Caucasus and on the Caspian, numerous new pipeline constructions and expansion projects have been proposed, but so far not operationalized. For the EU, the most important being the Nabucco pipeline, which, although not fully guaranteed, serves as the hope for reduced dependence on Russia.

The following lines will therefore consider the geopolitical, legal and economic (including the energy security for the final end-user, supplier and transiting countries) features of the Caspian theatre, complex interplays and possible future outlook.

To explain the long lasting Russian presence at Caspian and still prone interested in the region, two factors are at interplay: geopolitical and geo-economic.

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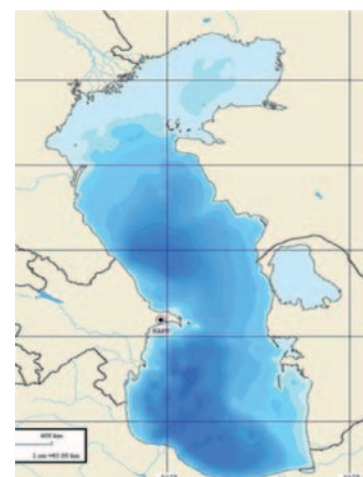
Ever since Peter the Great, Russian geopolitical imperative is to extend the strategic depth. It naturally necessitated ensuring the security for its southwest and southern flanks of the Empire. Such a security imperative brought about bitter struggles for Russia over the domination of huge theatre: Eastern and Central Balkans, Black Sea, Caucasus and Caspian basin. Russia was there contested by the Habsburg empire, by the Ottomans, Iran (and after collapse of the Ottomans by the Britons) all throughout the pre-modern and modern times.

Just a quick glance on the map of western and southwest Russia will be self-explanatory showing the geostrategic imperative; low lying areas of Russia were unprotectable without dominating the mountain chains at Caucasus, Carpathian – Black Sea – Caucasus – Caspian – Kopet Dag. Historically, the main fight of Russia was with the Ottomans over this line. When the Ottomans were eliminated from the historic scene, it was Britain on the Indian subcontinent and in Iran as a main contender – the fact that eventually led to effective splitting the basin into two spheres of influence – British and Russian.

### The Caspian water plateau – a unique basin

The Caspian (Azerbaijani: *Xəzər dənizi*, Persian: ناردن زام یا یرد or رزخ یا یرد, Russian: Каспийское море, Kazakh: Каспий теңізі, Turkmen: Hazar deňzi) is the world's largest enclosed or landlocked body of (salty) water – approximately of the size of Germany and the Netherlands combined. Geographical literature refers to this water plateau as the sea, or world's largest lake that covers an area of 386,400 km<sup>2</sup> (a total length of 1,200 km from north to south, and a width ranging from a minimum of 196 km to a maximum of 435 km), with the mean depth of about 170 meters (maximum southern depth is at 1025 m). At present, the Caspian water line is some 28 meters below sea level (median measure of the first decade of 21<sup>st</sup> century)<sup>1</sup>. The total Caspian coastline measures to nearly 7,000 km, being shared by five riparian (or littoral) states.

Figure 1: The Caspian Sea and its hydrogeology



Sources: WorldAtlas (n.d.a.), n.p.a.; EVS (2011), n.p.a

<sup>1</sup> P The Caspian basin records gradual and cyclical water level variations that are basically synchronized with the volume discharge of the Volga river system and co-related to the complex North Atlantic oscillations (amount of North Atlantic depressions that reaches the Eurasian land mass interior).

The very legal status of this unique body of water is still unsolved: Sea or lake? As international law defers lakes from seas, the Caspian should be referred as the water plateau or the Caspian basin. Interestingly enough, the Caspian is indeed both sea and lake: northern portions of the Caspian display characteristics of a freshwater lake (e.g. due to influx of the largest European river – Volga, river Ural and other relatively smaller river systems from Russia's north), and in the southern portions where waters are considerably deeper but without major river inflows, salinity of waters is evident and the Caspian appears as a sea. (Median salinity of the Caspian is approximately 1/3 relative to the oceanic waters average). The geomorphology of the Caspian is unique and many authors have referred to the formation similarities of the Black Sea–Caspian–Aral and their interconnectivity back to Pleistocene. Most probably, some 5,5 million years ago two factors landlocked the Caspian: the tectonic uplift of the basin and the dramatic fall of the earth's oceanic levels which literally trapped the Caspian to the present shores. Due to its unique formation and present water composition variations, the Caspian hosts rare biodiversity and many endemic species of flora and fauna (presently, threatened by rising exploration and exploitation of vast oil and gas reserves).

### The Inner Circle – Similarities

The so-called “Inner Circle” of the Caspian Basin consists of the five littoral (riparian) states, namely Russia, Iran, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Turkmenistan, sharing the common coastline.

As much as the geographically distant as well as different by their distinctive geomorphology and hydrology, the Arctic and Caspian – when contrasted and compared – however resemble several critical similarities.

Both theaters are grand bodies of water surrounded by 5 riparian/littoral states. (Meaning both are water surrounded by landmass, while Antarctica represents landmass surrounded by water.) Both of them are of huge and largely unexplored natural resources and marine biota. Both the Arctic and Caspian have numerous territorial disputes and are of absolute geopolitical importance for their respective littoral states, and well beyond. Finally, both theaters are also of unsolved legal status – drifting between an external quest for creation of special international regime and the existing Law of Sea Convention system (UNCLOS).

Ergo, in both theaters, the dynamic of the littoral states displays the following:

1. **Dismissive:** Erode the efforts of international community/external interested parties for creation of the Antarctica-like treaty (by keeping the UNCLOS referential);
2. **Assertive:** Maximize the shares of the spoils of partition – extend the EEZ and continental shelf as to divide most if not the entire body of water only among the Five;
3. **Reconciliatory:** Prevent any direct confrontation among the riparian states over the spoils – resolve the claims without arbitration of the III parties. (preferably CLCS).

One of the most important differentiating elements of the two theatres is the composition of littoral states. The constellation of the Arctic Five, we can consider as being symmetric – each of the Five has an open sea access (as the Arctic itself has wide connection with the oceanic systems of Atlantic and Pacific). On contrary, the Caspian Five are of asymmetric constellation. The Caspian Five could be roughly divided on the old/traditional two (Russia and Iran), and the three newcomers (Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan). This division corresponds also with the following characteristic: only Iran and Russia have an open sea access, other three countries are landlocked – as the Caspian itself is a landlocked body of water.

Like no other country, the Persian proper is uniquely situated by connecting the Euro-Med/MENA with Central and South, well to the East Asia landmass. Additionally, it solely bridges the two key Euro-Asian energy plateaus: the Gulf and Caspian. This gives Iran an absolutely pivotal geopolitical and geo-economic posture over the larger region – an opportunity but also an exposure! No wonder that Teheran needs Moscow for its own regime survival, as the impressive US physical presence in the Gulf represents a double threat to Iran – geopolitically and geo-economically.

Besides the fact that the two poles are permafrost encircling the geographic and magnetic poles of the planet, nearly everything else is different with the two polar regions; morphological, climatic, anthropo-biological, political and legal standing. The Southern pole-Antarctica is the region governed by a treaty, which is fully accepted by the entire international community (that includes all of the neighbouring and interested states), however, of a limited timeline (50 years). In the North-Arctic, on the contrary, the setup of the special legal framework is still under discussion. Due to the current global warming, vast perennial ice sheets are melting – a clear environmental threat but also an economic opportunity (like: the alternative shipping routes as well as the large biota and mineral deposits at hand). A question would arise when the absence of a definite legal setting in the Arctic and the increased focus on national (geoeconomic and geopolitical) interests of the circumpolar states might trigger border tensions, domestic unrest, an open armed conflict and hence, endanger the global security. Among the Five there is a lot: two are P-5 members and both of them (former) superpowers, four are the NATO members facing Russia on the other edge, three European versus two American, one in the EU, three of the G-8, and all of them the OSCE members. Is it a change or is it the maintenance of the Arctic and Antarctic status quo to preserve the power balance? The following lines are a brief geopolitical overview on the Arctic and Antarctica, including their characteristics and environmental factors.

The Arctic is one of the world's regions most affected by climate change: average temperatures are rising as twice as fast as at any other spot of the planet. 2 The perennial ice sheets are melting with an unexpected speed coupled with the ever-shorter winter snow season. With the shrinking snow-cover area (deglaciation), less sunlight is refracted back to the atmosphere – a pattern that further accelerates a temperature rise (due to increased sun-radiation, the absorption by the less refractile and more absorptive, dark-coloured ocean). The WMO/IPCC expect an increase of about 6 to 7°C in the course of this century (surely with some microclimatic variances). Although there is no scientific

consensus on the cause/s, the effects are undisputed – the Arctic (being more vulnerable than any other region on earth) is responding rather fast to the climate change.

The thinned and holed ozone layer will further accelerate warming in this area. In addition to the fact that the polar caps are the main stabilizers and regulators of the planet's climate (with all weather patterns), there are also the biggest reserves of fresh water. Through the rapid de-glaciation of Greenland and Antarctic, and the melting of the Arctic ice sheets, a spill of fresh water is released, seriously affecting: oceanic volumes (a sea level rise), their temperatures density and salinity which finally through the oceanic conveyor belt affects the oceans' circulation system and consequently the climate all over the world. It remains unclear what (sort, severity and frequency of) consequences this might have to Europe's climate and general weather conditions. The future scenarios are ranging from a substantial warming (coupled with severe droughts and extreme weather conditions), up to a subsequent cooling.

Another consequence affecting the Arctic is the thawing of permafrost (permanently frozen land). Through the thawing of the soil, methane that was trapped for centuries is released into the atmosphere, which further contributes to the greenhouse gas effect. In addition to a dangerous methane release, the very defrosting of permafrost will cause the destruction of buildings, communicational infrastructure such as roads and airports, as well as deviations of industrial facilities and oil/gas pipelines within the Arctic Circle. Flora and fauna will definitely undergo significant changes. Oceanic and terrestrial species will move further north, some of them already under stress of extinction as their natural habitats of vegetation zones are affected too. The Arctic region is experiencing a profound change and has to face severe challenges, which are to be felt far beyond its polar parameters. Climate change in polar regions and the subsequent geopolitical adjustments to meet them, are expected to be among the largest and most rapid of any region on the Earth. They will undeniably cause major physical, ecological, socio-economic (incl. transportation-distribution channels), and politico-military shifts, especially in the Arctic theatre.

The Arctic (on the contrary to Antarctica and same as Caspian) is not a subject to any specific international legal provisions. The only exception is the island of Svalbard which has (though imperfect) the clearly defined, restraining (semi-ATS like) legal framework. The Five littoral, circumpolar states of Arctic have a desire and legal opportunity (thought the UNCLOS stipulated CLCS machinery) to lodge the territorial claims over the Arctic. That is something that none of the Five would like to see changed for a new restraining international instrument whose scope would be negotiated by large number of states beyond the polar parameter.

Out of the twelve original parties to the Antarctica treaty, three are among the Arctic Five (Norway, Russia/SU and the US). Out of the Arctic Five, we can consider only three as real polar states. Irrespectively of the size, might and the degree of technological advancement, no country can close a specific polar-knowledge gap within few decades. It took Denmark, Norway and Russia several centuries to master the ice.

Although the US portrays itself as a “fish of high seas” – a supreme ruler of the world oceans, it is primarily a “fish” of warm seas. The US suffers from territorial discontinuity with its Alaska proper. After all, the Alaska gives relatively modest share of the Arctic theatre. The US presence in the Antarctica is less substantive and more symbolic – to confirm the prestige and to observe the activities of others. Likewise, the main Arctic concern for the US is to deter Russia – for the time being there is no indication of the bolder Arctic presence. Finally, by not ratifying the UNCLOS, the U.S. cannot lodge the claim, but also (equally, if not more importantly) cannot decide on claims of others.

Canada, on its own end, is neither a typical polar state nor considerable naval power. Its, second longest, Arctic border so far is more of a burden than of an advantage for the government in Ottawa. Canada is one of the most disproportionate states: huge territory with the tiny population centred at the far south of the country – of the exposed, unexplored and literally empty central and northern territory. Long green and blue borders as well as the lack of substantive Arctic expertise will keep the US close to Canada in their security and geoeconomic considerations, still not without frictions.

If the US is a “fish of warm seas” than Denmark and Norway are the “fish of cold seas” and Russia is a “polar bear” of permafrost. Russia clearly has very strong position as it owns not only the longest Arctic coastline but it also holds a long history of Arctic presence. Traditionally, the High North has been a constant geopolitical imperative since the Peter the Great times. Parallel and well-established geoeconomic drive is getting a new vigour with the Putin and Medvedev’s administrations. The bold (sometimes noisy) Russian Arctic policy is another signal that the Federation is not going to disappear into the second row of the global politics and economy, but will increase its (non-territorial leverage and geopolitical) projection as a major energy supplier of the world throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is hard to imagine any relevant Arctic issue to be resolved (even discussed) without an explicit Russian consent.

Norway, the small state with the large pool of historical knowledge and advanced technologies is a loner in the political environment, a nation between the EU and the Russian Federation, and the key northern flank NATO member. It takes a friendly but firm position in international relations and Arctic matters. Close proximity coupled with unresolved Arctic territorial disputes and lucrative economic prospects of joint ventures will keep Russia and Norway out of open confrontational course.

Canada’s neighbour Greenland connects the EU to the Arctic. The largest world’s island and its tiny population will be contested with the environmental, economic and political challenges in the up- coming decades. Greenland’s road-map is gradual but decisive independence, less home grown and more Danish induced. However, at the moment Greenland is still highly dependent on Danish subsidies, including diplomatic one. It is still Danish signature that holds the biggest NATO Arctic base on the very Greenland’s soil.

Clearly, no instrument comparable to the Antarctic Treaty System will be established in the Arctic, even if there are several advocates demanding it. Each and every of the Arctic Five will continue to keep any external party far away from substantive participation in the polar matters. However, it is not a guaranty for the frictionless relations among the Five: the North Pole was the most militarized region of the world at the peaks of Cold War (and still holds huge military arsenal), while at the same time the South Pole was (and still is) the only demilitarized continent of the planet. In the Antarctica, a sudden change of the current legal regime is very unlikely. The Arctic and Caspian region will try to preserve *de facto* regime – without mayor external interferences, as long as their fragile equilibrium remains. Further on, the Southern Pole is far from the prime centres of the world gravity: the US, the EU, Russia and Japan – all four of them are situated well on the northern hemisphere – closer to Arctic, and some even connected by pipelines with Caspian.

The Polar Regions, although inhabitable, of harsh and hostile weather conditions, and distant from any prominent centre of human activity, will certainly have major influence on a climatic and environmental, socio-economic, politico-military and overall security matters throughout the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and therefore require a closer consideration as well as the careful and constant observation.

## EU FOREIGN POLICY INSTRUMENTS TOWARDS THE NEW INDEPENDENT STATES AND THEIR PERCEPTION BY AZERBAIJAN

Rovshan Ibrahimov\*

Azerbaijan gained independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union. In order to create new economic and political contacts, Azerbaijan immediately began looking for ways to build relationships in the international arena. This state, given the complex geopolitical situation in the South Caucasus region, is progressing with a balanced policy. One of the Azerbaijan's priority interests is to enter into the process of integration and developing relationships with European and Euro-Atlantic institutions such as European Union (EU).

The EC officially recognized the independence of Azerbaijan together with the other former Soviet Union states on 31 December 1991. But at the beginning the EU limited itself only to the provision of humanitarian assistance to the former Soviet Union countries including Azerbaijan<sup>1</sup>. The reason for this was the obligation to make a rapid decision on response towards emergency developments in the CEEC and the Balkans. Developments in these areas could affect the European communities and cause the instability. After the collapse of the Soviet Union, there was a brief period of uncertainty and the European Community and then EU continued to pursue a Russia-based policy towards the relations with the countries of the region and the NIS. Even assistance to these countries within the framework of the TACIS had to be delivered through a cumbersome mechanism across territory of Russia. Humanitarian aid was provided to these states primarily within the framework of the ECHO and Food Aid Operation programs. For example, after 1991 Azerbaijan received 399 million Euros in assistance<sup>2</sup>.

Eventually, the EU believing that aid would remain insufficient to solve the problems of the NIS region. Thus, for the development of new relations between the parties, a new program, TACIS, was established. In its initial stages, the TACIS<sup>3</sup> Program was seen as the most basic and the most important tool for the development of relations between the EC and the NIS. This program was conceived with the main objective of assisting the NIS which were passing through a very difficult period following the collapse of the Soviet Union, in the transition phase to democratic government and the market economy. At the Rome and Dublin Summits in 1990 it had been decided to establish the technical assistance program to the Soviet Union to support economic development<sup>4</sup>.

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<sup>1</sup> EU Cooperation with Georgia, [http://www.delgeo.ec.europa.eu/en/eu\\_and\\_georgia/cooperation.html](http://www.delgeo.ec.europa.eu/en/eu_and_georgia/cooperation.html).

<sup>2</sup> EU-Relations with Azerbaijan, [http://ec.europa.eu/external\\_relations/azerbaijan/intro/index.htm](http://ec.europa.eu/external_relations/azerbaijan/intro/index.htm).

<sup>3</sup> Technical Assistance to the Commonwealth of the Independent States.

<sup>4</sup> Ali Faik Demir, «AB'nin Güney Kafkasya Politikaları», in Beril Dedeoğlu (ed), *Dünden Bugüne Avrupa Birliği*, (Istanbul: Boyut Yayınları, 2003), pp. 378–379.



The TACIS program encouraged cooperation on inter-regional, interstate and cross-border issues between the EU, Central and Eastern European states, and NIS. Two initiatives, the TRACECA and INOGATE programs, are of great importance to this subject within the framework of the TACIS program. The TRACECA<sup>5</sup> Program was one of the programs within the framework of TACIS and it was an inter-state regional improvement program initiated by the EU in 1992 and projected towards CIS states to facilitate economic restructuring and transition to a market economy.

The major objective of this program was the formation of an international network which would create infrastructure, develop common standards and facilitate the application process in the areas covered by the program and which could be done at minimal cost. The TRACECA objectives included the development of an east-west transport corridor from Europe via the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Caspian Sea up to Central Asia, connecting to the Trans-European network available in the EU<sup>6</sup>.

The importance of this corridor is that a flow of trade was established with, on the one hand, Western and Central Europe, and on the other, Central and South-East Asia, passing through the South Caucasus region<sup>7</sup>. The TRACECA corridor stretches from the west, starting in Varna (Bulgaria), passing through Odessa (Ukraine) and Costanta (Romania) and continuing on through the Black Sea to the ports of Poti and Batumi, and into the transport network of the Southern Caucasus. The route then heads up the Caspian Sea by boat (Baku-Turkmenbashi, Baku-Aktau) to reach the railway networks of the Central Asian states.

The INOGATE<sup>8</sup> Program<sup>9</sup> is one of the long-standing initiatives of the EU towards raising the level of welfare of the NIS region's states and improving the effectiveness of oil and gas operations in the Caspian Sea region. It is energy cooperation program between the EU and partner countries from the Black Sea, the South Caucasus and Central Asian regions. The main objective of the program is to identify alternative routes for a regional gas transportation system and the restructuring of transport systems for petroleum products, modernizing and increasing the efficiency of the transport of oil and gas from the Caspian Sea and Central Asia regions<sup>10</sup>. The program is aimed to develop energy markets based on the principles of the EU internal energy market, taking into account the particularities of the involved countries<sup>11</sup>.

TACIS has become a key tool in shaping relations between the EU and Azerbaijan. In September of 1997, Azerbaijani President Aliyev and Georgian President Shevardnadze, who understood the opportunities of the TRACECA Project and desired to develop their relations with the EU, at a

<sup>5</sup> Transit Corridor Central Europe-Caucasus-Central Asia.

<sup>6</sup> Avrupa Komisyonu: TACIS Programı, 1997 yılı Raporu, 1998, p. 43.

<sup>7</sup> TRACECA, see <<http://www.traceca-org.org/en/traceca/>.

<sup>8</sup> Interstate Oil and Gas Transport To Europe.

<sup>9</sup> About INOGATE, [www.inogate.org/en/](http://www.inogate.org/en/).

<sup>10</sup> What is INOGATE?, <http://www.inogate.com/russ/rdefault.htm>.

<sup>11</sup> Rovshan Ibrahimov, «Link in the Chain: South Caucasus as a Transport and Logistics Hub between Region», Interregional Cooperation In Eurasia Transport and Logistics Projects as an Accelerator of Integration within and Between the Black Sea Region, the South Caucasus and the Central Asia, (Baku: SAM, 2013), p. 63.

conference in the Caucasus filed a joint proposal to the EU within the framework of the TRACECA for signing the “Multilateral Transportation Treaty” in 1998. The EU received this offer in a positive way and as a result, with the support of TRACECA, a conference on the “Revitalization of the Silk Road” was held in Baku on 8 September 1998. The Presidents of the nine states, EU Commission representatives, heads of government, ministers of transportation and 32 state experts participated in this conference. At the end of the conference, “Transport Corridor Europe-Caucasus-Asia for the Development of International Multilateral Treaty”, was signed<sup>12</sup>. According to this agreement the parties were identified as the main objectives developing economic relations, trade, and transportation activities in Europe, the Black Sea region, the Caucasus, the Caspian Sea region, and Asia<sup>13</sup>.

Formation of TRACECA corridor allowed Azerbaijan to increase transportation of freights through its territory. The volume of cargo carried in 2012 on the territory of Azerbaijan increased up to 56.9 million tons. Freight transported by railway comprised 37.5 percent of the total, road 44.3 percent and sea transport 18.2 percent<sup>14</sup>. Revenues from cargo totaled 443.2 million manats. In the first half of 2013 alone, cargo transportation on the territory of Azerbaijan, increased over the same period in the previous year by 3.1 percent – up by 29 million tons. 45.7 percent of freight was transported via road, 36.3 percent by rail, and 18 percent by sea. Additionally, 25.8 percent, or 7.5 million tons, of cargo transported along the corridor consisted of transit freight<sup>15</sup>. It should be mentioned that transportation of goods through Azerbaijan’s territory is increasing by, on average, 6 percent per year. One-third of this consists of transit goods, mainly oil and oil products from Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan. In addition, the TRACECA route is used to deliver freight to Central Asian states and Afghanistan via Baku<sup>16</sup>.

In 1992, the European Council had decided to sign a new agreement with NIS as the result of the formation of a new political and economic situation. This treaty was named the Partnership and Cooperation Agreement (PCA) and replaced the Trade and Cooperation Agreement. PCA is a framework that allows for the possibility of development of relations between the EU and partner states. Developing cooperation in accordance with PCAs includes TACIS Program. PCAs help to enable the development of trade relations and political dialogue and to prevent discrimination between partner states the EU and the U.S<sup>17</sup>.

According to the agreement, parties mutually recognize most-favored-nation trading status. All quotas which can prevent trade relations with one another have been removed. In addition, the parties have committed themselves to include in the economic mainstream issues of environmental protection,

<sup>12</sup> Azərbaycan Respublikasının TRASEKA Layihəsində İştirakı, [http://www.mfa.gov.az/az/foreign\\_policy/inter\\_affairs/econom/regional/11.shtml](http://www.mfa.gov.az/az/foreign_policy/inter_affairs/econom/regional/11.shtml),

<sup>13</sup> TRACECA Project, <http://www.azembassy.com/traceca/browse.htm>.

<sup>14</sup> Грузоперевозки через Азербайджан в Рамках TRACECA в 2012 Году Увеличились на 5,5%, 21.02.2013, <http://interfax.az/view/566940>

<sup>15</sup> Грузоперевозки через Азербайджан в Рамках TRACECA в I Полугодии Увеличились на 3%, 14.08.2013,

<sup>16</sup> Rovshan Ibrahimov, «Link in the Chain: South Caucasus as a Transport and Logistics Hub between Regions», *ibid.*, p. 65.

<sup>17</sup> Proposal for a Council Regulation Concerning the Provision of Assistance to Economic Reform and Recovery in the New Independent States and Mongolia, Brussels, European Commission, 08.01.1999, p. 5.

higher and vocational education, the fight against crime, illegal immigration and public issues the for the development of cooperation<sup>18</sup>.

PCA, which will confer a new impetus on the development of relations, were signed between the EU and Azerbaijan on 22 April 1996<sup>19</sup>. The necessity to develop such kind of a tool has arisen due to the fact that the EU was in the process of integration with Central and Eastern Europe. As a result of this process, the South Caucasus countries would become neighbors of the enlarged EU. For this reason, the organization had to review its relationship with these countries, to which end the necessary steps were taken in December 1995 in Brussels to determine the strategy of the European Commission towards the South Caucasus states. The Commission issued the statement that acknowledged the ongoing tension between the three states of the region because of the continuing disputes over Nagorno-Karabakh and Abkhazia, in spite of the ceasefire agreements signed between the parties in 1994.

The same notification emphasized that the region has an important geopolitical position. Here, the proposed strategy of the EU towards the region states, acknowledged as facing extremely severe economic problems and potentially murderous threats to stability and security, focused especially on interests in the energy sector.

Another tool of foreign policy developed by the EU is the New Neighbourhood Policy (NNP), which has been introduced in order to establish the stability, security, and welfare of the surrounding areas of the EU. The enlargement process cannot continue forever, therefore the EU, which aims to complete its political alliance in the future, was in need a new vehicle to support political and economic reforms in order to develop prosperity, stability, and security in the neighboring countries<sup>20</sup>. The NNP has been developed as such a tool for the EU.

The EU's expanded "New Neighbourhood Policy" was formally approved by the Council in June 2003. The aim of this new initiative is the creation by the EU of a "zone of development and good neighborliness", which includes Russia, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia, and the states located on the southern shores of the Mediterranean Sea.

Successful implementation of the NNP will provide similar status for participants as for the member of the European Economic Area with the aim of full realization of economic integration with neighboring countries without the prospect of political integration<sup>21</sup>. The basis of this initiative lies in a differentiated and step-by-step approach. Accordingly, a proposed individual action plan will be developed with each of the neighboring states and this plan will aim at the realization of the common criteria determined in the process of integration into the EU common market. The main difference of

<sup>18</sup> Avrupa Komisyonu: TACIS Programı, 1997 yılı Raporu, 1998, p. 57.

<sup>19</sup> Annotated Summary of Agreements Linking with Non-member Countries, 2000.

<sup>20</sup> Benita Ferrero-Waldner, "The European Neighbourhood Policy: The EU's Newest Foreign Policy Instrument", European Foreign Affairs Review, Volume 11, No 2, Holland, Kluwer Law International, Summer, 2006, pp. 139-140.

<sup>21</sup> Robert Aliboni, "The Geopolitical Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy", European Foreign Affairs Review, Volume 10, No 1, Holland, Kluwer Law International, Summer, 2006, p. 3.

the EU initiatives is that apart from the CEEC, at the finishing point the result for the Neighboring States will be only deepened integration<sup>22</sup>.

The EU's "New Neighbourhood" initiative can be also evaluated as a continuation of the uncertain policies of this organization towards the CIS states in Europe. It is extremely difficult to talk about the possibility of the beginning of a new enlargement process on the European Continent when, on the one hand, differences in opinion between member-states on different foreign policy issues, such as the Iraq problem, have been evaluated as a new negation for the formation of an EU Common Foreign and Security Policy, and on the other hand, because of the problems that arose due to the rejection of the EU Constitution draft in referendums in France and Denmark<sup>23</sup>. At the same time, the preparation process of the ten candidate Central and Eastern European states, which were in the process of the largest enlargement in the history of the EU, has led to a great effort of the Union.

Meanwhile, the EU authorities understand that insufficient activities towards the New Neighbourhood countries could be very costly for them in the future. In fact, this initiative has been recognized as an intermediate formula. In other words, the program allows these states to feel part of the process of European integration and to receive advantages from this, as well as the process being seen as some kind of preparation for full membership which is not currently foreseen.

In addition, this initiative holds out the possibility of full membership for the former Soviet Union states which are situated in Europe. Indeed, the President of the European Commission, Romano Prodi, stated that, despite what is or may be the future EU enlargement policy, any European state which meets the Copenhagen criteria cannot be excluded from prospective full membership. However, it should be noted that the EU Neighbourhood Policy envisages coherent and comprehensive partnership and increases the inter-dependence between the states involved in the program and EU institutions in accordance with the requirements of the new order on the European continent.

In June 2004, Azerbaijan was included in to the framework of the NNP initiative. With this, the EU was working to bring a new impetus to relations between the sides. Talks between EU and Azerbaijan in the framework of the NNP were completed with the signing of National Action Plans in Brussels on 14 November 2006. This Plan was signed on behalf of the EU by External Relations and European Neighbourhood Policy Commissioner Benita Ferrero-Waldner and the Azerbaijan Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov<sup>24</sup>. The National Program, which was signed for a period of five years and requires consolidation of the rapprochement between the EU and partner state and determine the adaptation process of norms and standards. Azerbaijan Action Plan included measures to strengthen cooperation between the parties in the field of energy and transport<sup>25</sup>.

<sup>22</sup> Достижения и Иллюзии Концепции Расширенной Европы, <http://dialogs.org.ua/ru/print/material/5/322>.

<sup>23</sup> Roland Dankreuther, "Developing the Alternative to Enlargement: The European Neighbourhood Policy", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Volume 11, No 2, Holland, Kluwer Law International, Summer, 2006, pp. 186-187.

<sup>24</sup> Евросоюз Подпишет Соглашения с Тремя Государствами Закавказья, 14.11.2006, <http://www.day.az/news/politics/63732.html>.

<sup>25</sup> EU/Azerbaijan Action Plan

With the development of relations under the framework of the Neighbourhood Policy, the EU made it clearly understood that the countries of the former Soviet Union which are located in Europe and are theoretically eligible for membership in the organization should have quite different mechanisms for the formation of cooperation than those from Africa and Asia that were also participating in the NNP. Since the EU was not ready to begin the process of integration with these countries, it was necessary to create a framework of relations at a level superior to that of all earlier proposed programs, while not offering to these states membership in the organization.

Additionally, offering this kind of initiative was, in some ways, a reaction to international developments, and in some countries the post-Soviet void. In particular, there have been the “Color Revolutions” in Ukraine and Georgia, not without the support of the West, which resulted in each of these countries publicly stating their desire to integrate into the Euro-Atlantic structures. Moreover, after a “five days war” between Russia and Georgia, when the West did not react in any way to support its ally, it was necessary to develop a mechanism that would, at least partially, compensate for this passivity<sup>26</sup>.

As a result of all of these developments, the new Eastern Partnership (EP) program was proposed by Poland with the support of Sweden at the Prague Summit in May 2009. The EP is an upgraded form of the NNP. Despite the fact that the practical main goal of this program, as in the case of the NNP, is the export of EU rules and regulations to these countries, this program aimed to reach its goals without offering the prospect of full membership. This fact is very important because a number of states associated with the EU within the framework of the partnership have expectations regarding their full membership in the organization. In addition, countries such as Ukraine and Georgia are considering cooperation within the EP as one of the stages towards EU membership. As a consequence, countries included in the Partnership have seriously criticized this policy, due to the lack of new proposals and the prospect of membership. Ukraine, Georgia, and Moldova were not satisfied using the terms “neighbor” or “partner”, considering them excessively neutral and not implying the prospect of integration<sup>27</sup>.

In order to achieve the objectives of deepening relations between the parties, the EU offered policy instruments, a new Association Agreement, and far-reaching integration into the EU economy by forming the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) with partner states. In addition, this program intends to encourage mobility of partner states’ citizens, and to this effect the EP initiative offers in its first stage visa facilitation and readmission agreements, to be followed later by a visa-free regime. It is worth noting that every partner state conducts negotiations regarding the context of Association Agreements, which should succeed PCA, on a bilateral basis, defining its priorities in accordance with the national interests. So it allows countries having the greatest desire for closer

<sup>26</sup> Tomislava Penkova, «EU Eastern Partnership Policy: a Second Chance for the EU Transformative Power?», in Carlo Frappi, Gulshan Pashayeva (eds.), *The EU Eastern Partnership: Common Framework or Wider Opportunity?*, (ISPI, SAM, 2012), p.25.

<sup>27</sup> Tomislava Penkova, *ibid.*, p. 26.

cooperation with the EU to implement it, which does not depend on the situation with other partners. Besides this, the initiative looks for opportunities to develop more in-depth cooperation in energy security and to increase financial aid to support economic and social policies, in order to reduce disparities<sup>28</sup>. As a result, it is expected that the partner country, after successful implementation of the conditions, should achieve political association and economic integration with the EU.

By the time of the third summit of the Eastern Partnership in Vilnius, the six countries of the former Soviet Union had advanced different distances in their relationships with the EU. This is due to the fact that the expectations and desires of these countries were very different from each other. In more than twenty years since independence, these countries have progressed quite a long way, which eventually led to distinguishing features to appear between them. Herein lies the error of the EU, which is still trying to fit relations with these countries into a regional view based on a now inaccurate perception.

Such was the situation on the eve of the Vilnius Summit, which was held from November 28<sup>th</sup> to 29<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Without a doubt, the state of affairs and the perceptions of the partner countries affected the work undertaken and results achieved by this program. Summit results for partner countries were not identical and each partner country defined its own roadmap in relations with the EU.

As a result, only Georgia and Moldova signed Association Agreements, including DCFTAs, with the EU. Two other countries, Armenia and Ukraine, which originally intended to sign the agreement, refused to do so literally on the threshold of the summit. Armenia's rejection was announced during the visit of President Serzh Sargsyan to Russia on 3 September 2013, where he made a statement about his country's readiness to join the Eurasian Customs Union, an organization initiated by Russia. Being politically and economically dependent on Russia, Armenia was forced as soon as possible to drastically change the direction of its foreign policy. Ukraine also refused to sign the agreement, but unlike Armenia, this state expressed its opinion a few days before the Summit. Hence, the Ukrainian government temporarily suspended the process of preparation for signature of the Association Agreement and DCFTA<sup>29</sup>. At this stage Ukraine limited itself to initialing an agreement on air services.

With regard to Belarus, it was known from the outset that this country would not sign any agreements with the EU, due to the fact that Belarus has close integration with Russia and is a member of the Customs Union with Russia and Kazakhstan. This precluded the possibility of participation in the two opposing integration processes simultaneously. Belarus in this case has made its choice, and in relations with the EU, Belarus is interested primarily in enhancing economic cooperation and obtaining financial aid from the West<sup>30</sup>.

<sup>28</sup> Tomislava Penkova, *ibid.*, pp. 29-30.

<sup>29</sup> Eastern Partnership: the way ahead, 02. 12.2013, <http://www.eu2013.lt/en/news/statements/-joint-declaration-of-the-eastern-partnership-summit-vilnius-28-29-november-2013>

<sup>30</sup> Belarus, 23.01.2014, <http://www.easternpartnership.org/partner-states/belarus>

The most pragmatic approach in its relations with the EU position was taken by Azerbaijan. This country, in pursuing a balanced foreign policy, tried to negotiate appropriate deals without overestimating their values and opportunities. Taking into account the potential geopolitical problems that may arise from signing the agreement with the EU, Azerbaijan agreed to limited cooperation that suits its national interests. The EU and Azerbaijan signed an agreement on visa facilitation at the Vilnius Summit<sup>31</sup>, and shortly thereafter, on 3 February 2013, the Azerbaijani parliament ratified the agreement<sup>32</sup>.

As can be seen, this is the first time the EU – within the framework of NNP – has tried to implement direct initiatives for the solution of conflicts in the region, and its inclination is to perform this by means of economic instruments. However, no major changes occurred after the adoption of the EP. The EU, instead of making attempts to reach directly for a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, prefers to support the initiatives of the OSCE Minsk Group<sup>33</sup>. Without taking direct responsibility for termination of regional conflicts and resolving disputes, the EU cannot provide a significant contribution and it is unlikely that this structure could provide the desired stability and security in this region.

As a result, one of the NNP and EP conditions of achieving regional cooperation is hampered by existing conflicts and possible tensions. However, of all the initiatives of the EU, most been directed not to conflict resolution, but to fostering positive conditions in the post-conflict period.

On the other hand, this gap in the EU's policy can be filled with the most effective acceptable foreign policy tool – conditional full membership, which is not implied in the programs of NNP and the EP<sup>34</sup>. The EU's NNP and EP may at first sight be viewed as continuations of the enlargement process, but, despite the application of similar tools and mechanisms, are different in terms of political purpose. The main difference is that the NP and EP do not foresee full membership.

However, in the absence of prospects for full membership, it cannot be expected that all partner states will be willing to follow the requirements of these programs correctly. The formula "All, but not institutions"<sup>35</sup> is not a favorable perspective for the partner states. Even though they will participate with the EU in DCFTA, these states will remain outside the decision-making process, even though from the beginning they are expected to accept the legal arrangements of the EU member-states. But this is a situation which not all states may readily accept. In this case, the adoption by the neighbor states of a large part of the EU's *acquis communautaire* while still remaining under "neighbor"

<sup>31</sup> Strategic Eastern Partnership agreements signed in Vilnius, 29.11.2013, <http://www.eu2013.lt/en/news/pressreleases/strategic-eastern-partnership-agreements-signed-in-vilnius>

<sup>32</sup> Azərbaycan rəsmi olaraq razılaşdırıb Sərhəddən keçməyə əsasən razılaşdırılan sənədlərin icrasını təmin etməyə hazırdır, 03.02.2013, <http://news.day.az/politics/463521.html>

<sup>33</sup> Mevlüt Katık, «Avrupa Komşuluk Politikası'na» Güveni Az, 8.10.06, Sofia, Brussels, <http://www.voanews.com/turkish/archive/2006-10/2006-10-08-voa5.cfm>

<sup>34</sup> Katık, *ibid.*, 2006.

<sup>35</sup> Robert Aliboni, «The Geopolitical Implications of the European Neighbourhood Policy», *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Volume 10, No 1, Holland, Kluwer Law International, Summer, 2006, p. 3.

status may create the impression that this is the maximum that can be expected from the EU. This perception is likely, in the best case, to be a reason for deceleration of reforms in the region.

As can be seen, all the tools and mechanisms adopted by the EU towards the South Caucasus region are insufficient to achieve its objectives. As in other parts of the European continent where no conditional integration process has been proposed, this approach is insufficient to address the main problems existing in the region. Despite this, the EU, suffering due to the lack of the necessary tools, is attempting to resolve these issues with the help of the other actors which are actively involved in the region.

In the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh problem settlement, the EU relied on the OSCE initiatives, as well as declaring that NATO may play a complementary role in its regional initiatives<sup>36</sup>. In fact, the EU hopes to receive support from these institutions in the South Caucasus region, where the EU's policy is inadequate.

It should be noted that the EU's approach in establishing relationships in the eastward direction was initially based on a multilateral approach, in which relationships would develop with a distinct region. Even after the EU developed the NNP and EP, this trend has not changed. Regarding the NIS, the six countries of the former Soviet Union which are located in the Europe – Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Armenia – are viewed as a whole, and the programs offered in relation to them are almost identical. At the same time, despite the similarity of the used tools, the foreign policy goals that the EU wants to achieve may be different.

The same approach has been applied to Azerbaijan. The main priorities of EU foreign policy were to maintain stability and to create favorable conditions for the implementation of transport and energy projects. At the same time, in order to achieve these goals, a regional approach was again used; that is, programs were prepared in the context of the perception of the South Caucasus as an integral region.

Such a regional approach is one of the reasons that the EU has been unable to achieve its goals towards Azerbaijan. First of all, due to the presence of conflicts, the South Caucasus does not form a cohesive political or economic region. In this case, in order to apply a regional approach, the EU should first actively participate in the resolution of those conflicts. However, the EU chose to step aside from active conflict resolution, preferring to support the initiatives and actions of other mediators.

As for the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the main condition for the restoration of relations between the two countries is the liberation of the occupied territories. However, the occupation continues to this day, and expecting the development of regional relations in the South Caucasus in such circumstances to is entirely misguided.

<sup>36</sup> Katık, *ibid.*, 2006.



As a result, Azerbaijan saw this program as insufficient to achieve its own interests. Azerbaijan's desire for participation in the integration processes is directly related to the appropriateness of any delegation of political and economic sovereignty in accordance with its national interests. The EP does not offer such a format, whereby the interests of Azerbaijan may be achieved within the realities of the geopolitical situation in which this country is situated. This is why Azerbaijan prefers multilateral programs to bilateral development of relations, defining the scope of its involvement according to areas in which the EU and Azerbaijan have mutual interests. Through the development and strengthening of relations in technical fields, in the long term there is a possibility of a spillover effect into cooperation in other areas of activity between the parties.

In general, it is worth declaring that political and economic realities in the South Caucasus region must be acknowledged, forcing the EU to review its holistic approach in its foreign policy and move instead to a bilateral format with Azerbaijan. This will deepen relations through showing willingness to develop more effective levers of policy implementation and readiness to participate more actively as a regional actor in the events taking place in the South Caucasus.

## RUSSIAN POSITION TOWARD THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE RESPONSIBILITY TO PROTECT DOCTRINE IN LIBYA AND SYRIA

Noemí Rabbia\*

Since the United Nations (UN) security system has been said to be old-fashioned and unsuccessful to deal with new issues like terrorism, massive human rights violations, failed states crisis among other problems, new “norms” and contributions to the system have been developed and promoted during the last decades, mainly by the Western powers. The Responsibility to Protect Doctrine (R2PD) and the Duty to Prevent Principle (DPP) are clever examples of that process. According to some Western analysts and academics like Lee Feinstein and Anne-Marie Slaughter<sup>1</sup> the R2PD and the DPP have been developed to mitigate the weaknesses within the UN’ system.

In 2005, the global community endorsed the R2PD during the World Summit<sup>2</sup> – at a plenary meeting of the UN General Assembly. This was a Canadian-sponsored initiative that claimed that sovereignty is not a right, but entails responsibilities for States that provide protection and security for their populations. The initiative focused on some specific issues like preventing crimes of genocide, war crimes, crimes against humanity and ethnic cleansing.

On the other hand, the DPP was set as a collective duty to prevent threats against international security and was assumed as a complementary principle of the R2PD. Even today, this principle is considered a corollary of the R2PD.

Those principles played a key role in the international affairs during the last years, especially since they were revived and invoked in the intervention in Libya in 2011 and they were reflected in declarations like the G8’s Deauville Declaration<sup>3</sup>. The opposite situation can be observed in the case of Syria, where the massive violations of rights and the deaths consequence of the fight between the government and the opposition’s forces, did not find any precise initiative from the international community represented in the UN under the R2PD umbrella.

Given this situation, since in the case of Libya humanitarian reasons were stated, the first question

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<sup>1</sup> Feinstein, Lee and Slaughter, Anne-Marie. “A Duty to Prevent”. *Foreign Affairs*, Vol. 83, No. 1 (Jan. - Feb., 2004), pp. 136-150. Published by: Council on Foreign Relations. Stable URL: <http://www.jstor.org/stable/20033835>. Accessed: 27/06/2014.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations General Assembly. 2005 World Summit Outcome. 15 September 2005. <http://responsibilitytoprotect.org/world%20summit%20outcome%20doc%202005%281%29.pdf> Accessed: 20/07/2014.

<sup>3</sup> In May 2011, the Declaration stated: “Gadhafi and the Libyan government have failed to fulfil their responsibility to protect the Libyan population and have lost all legitimacy. He has no future in a free, democratic Libya. He must go”. G8 Summit. Deauville Declaration. May 26th, 2011. Deauville, France. P.18.

that arrives is why those principles were suitable to support and to pursue the intervention in Libya but did not apply in the case of Syria. In previous articles<sup>4</sup>, we have analyzed the role and arguments of western countries regarding to both cases. However, we need to question the role of Russia and its position regarding to these two cases with apparently similar connotations. Russia remains the main national actor opposing Western initiatives and its actions within the international system, being widely sensitive to the West involvement in strategic areas like Syria.

What is Russian position on the R2PD? It seems that the competing views on the R2PD application remains manifesting the former dynamics of power between Western powers and Russia. Despite the fact that United States (US) involvement in Libya was not as deep as in former decades and previous similar crisis, the struggle to balance power within the world between Russia and their counterparts resemble the logic of the Cold War.

The aim of this article is to analyze and explore the possible explanations for the Russian behavior regarding to the R2PD and its implementation in different, but similar, scenarios. We will base our analysis in several specialized articles, official statements and the Russian position within the UN regarding to the R2PD development and application in Libya and Syria.

As we know, sometimes States' behavior can not be explained in a rational way. In this sense, as Romanova<sup>5</sup> says: neoclassical realism poses the question why states with similar parameters and acting under the same external conditions display different conduct in the international arena.

And here we must mention not only Libya and Syria but also Russian intervention in Crimea which exposed a different approach toward the R2PD. In the end, Russia applied the same double standard that has always criticized in Western powers.

Tatiana Romanova work offers an interesting analysis about Russian foreign policy in terms of Neoclassical Realism, which seemed to be suitable for the main questions in this paper. Romanova's work is based on Gideon Rose<sup>6</sup> ideas, which highlight that “the behavior of national governments on the international stage is not a mere reaction caused by external events, but we also need to take into account internal circumstances and the interests of national players”<sup>7</sup>.

In that sense, we assume that Russian behavior can be explained mainly because of two elements:

<sup>4</sup> Rabbia, Noemí S. “A Responsibility to Protect or an Excuse to Intervene?” Contexto Internacional. N° 38. Año 14. Enero-Abril 2014. ISSN N° 1851-7900. Funif. Rosario. Argentina. [http://www.fundamentar.com/index.php?option=com\\_k2&view=item&id=3813:contexto-internacional-n-38](http://www.fundamentar.com/index.php?option=com_k2&view=item&id=3813:contexto-internacional-n-38); Lechini, Gladys; Rabbia, Noemi S. “Arab spring incidents in the end of the “Green Era” in Libya: Questions on the right to intervene and the duty to interfere”. February 2012. Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations | e-ISSN 2238-6912 | ISSN 2238-6262| v.2, n.3, Jan-Jun 2013 | p.145-165.

<sup>5</sup> Romanova, Tatiana. “Neoclassical Realism and Today's Russia”. Russia in Global Affairs. 7th October 2012. <http://eng.globalaffairs.ru/number/Neoclassical-Realism-and-Todays-Russia-15681>. Accessed: 01.05.2014.

<sup>6</sup> Gideon, Rose. “Neoclassical Realism and theories of foreign policy”. World Politics. Vol. 51, n.1, October 1998. Pp.144-172.

<sup>7</sup> Romanova. Idem. P.1.

Russian policy seems to be a reaction to external events, for instance the consequences of the intervention in Libya, not only in the final outcome but also in its impact over Russian interests. Secondly, there is a component of leadership and internal dynamic of competing visions of the world, with differing interest in national players which would explain the opposition to the intervention in Syria and the invoking of such principles in Crimea.

### **The Arab revolts as a challenge to the R2PD**

It is often said that the Charter of UN states high ideals, seeking to promote Human Rights, humanitarian assistance, the need to avoid inter States conflict and the use of force as the last resort. However, despite the fact that the UN intended to unite “peace-loving states” to protect international peace and security, during the Cold War did not succeed to do it. Moreover, this perception seems to be kept. UN security system has not created the feeling of a more secure world. As a consequence of that, initiatives like the R2PD are seen as threats and Western tools to seek goals of hegemony. Russia is one clear example of the mistrust regarding toward those doctrines and Western policies.

The beginning of the Arab Revolts in 2010 and its spread to Libya constituted the first time that the R2PD was invoked and applied and that situation was not free of controversy during and after the intervention in Libya. The negative outcomes of its application confirmed Russian perceptions about Western intentions beyond humanitarian reasons<sup>8</sup>. In March 2011 France started military operations in Libya for humanitarian reasons and with the United Nations Security Council’s (UNSC) authorization under Resolution 1973 with the abstention of Russia and China. It was expected from this intervention to mitigate the consequences of the internal crisis without creating more problems. In general, this is the aim of the UNSC (United Nations Security Council): to solve conflicts, meanly when peaceful measures have failed to do it so.

However, in the case of Libya what started as the creation of a “non-fly zone” in order to help protect civilians” (UNSC, 2011b. p.3) derived in a ground intervention being followed by the closure of the peaceful channels of negotiation<sup>9</sup>. UNSC Resolution 1973 was central part of the process of justification of the war against Gaddafi. It had the “virtue” of being enough broad to allow almost everything to remove Gaddafi from power.

As a consequence of that, by June 2011 the conflict had not ended and the problems had visibly increased. Some critics stated that NATO had exceeded not only the spirit of the Resolution (which in turn was enough broad to set unclear limits) but also the R2PD’s one. Not only the peaceful means were completely ignored during the process, but NATO assisted rebel forces<sup>10</sup>.

<sup>8</sup> Despite the fact that the intervention would not pursue a regime change, the Deauville Declaration itself expressed the opposite purpose, expressing an intention of going beyond the spirit of the R2PD.

<sup>9</sup> BRICS came up with a peaceful solution for the Libyan conflict backing African Union’s initiatives and leader by Jacob Zuma and the G7 did not pay attention to that option.

<sup>10</sup> The R2PD states that it applies in cases of genocide, war crimes, ethnic cleansing and crimes against humanity (UNGA, 2005, p.31) and should be authorized “on a case-by-case basis” when peaceful means are inadequate or national authorities manifestly failed to protect their populations.

By the same period of time of the intervention in Libya, and as a consequence of the domino effect of the Arab Revolts, Syrian uprising started and after unfruitful attempts to negotiate, two months later the Army tanks enter Deera, Banyas, Homs and suburbs of Damascus to stop anti regime protests. Since then the situation deteriorated and Western countries worked on a similar Resolution for Syria, but China and Russia blocked their attempts. The most they got was a non binding peace plan in March 2012 drafted by UN envoy Kofi Annan (UNSC, 2012). And as a consequence of the failed intentions of repeating this model of intervention in Syria, some analysts said that while the R2PD was revived in Libya, just a couple of months later was buried in Syria.

Since the beginning of the uprising in Syria until now, it is said that at least 160.000 have been killed. But no R2PD has been invoked or UNSC resolution has been approved. The arguments stated in Libya did not find equal measures or agreement in the case of Syria. On this sense, Russian abstention in Resolution 1973 and its veto to obtain a similar resolution in the case of Syria were key elements.

### **Russia and the R2PD**

Since the elaboration of the 2005 World Summit outcome document, Russian position on the R2PD in intra States conflicts has been clear: it must not be used to change regimes by providing support to one of the opposing sides. Despite the fact that this idea is on the spirit of the document, Russia has warned the international community that Western countries intervention in Libya violated such ideal and their actions ended up fostering violence and precipitating the civil war<sup>11</sup>.

If this Russian fear on Western intentions on strategic countries is true, why Russia didn't veto Resolution 1973 which authorized the intervention in Libya? The answer is the dispute of views between the former President and Prime Minister of Russia. It is said that even when Dimitri Medvedev was in power (May 2008-May 2012), when Putin caught a cold, Dimitri sneezed. And for sure one of the main (if not the most important) reasons for Resolution 1973 approval is that Medvedev was in power instead of Putin. And he might not be pleased with Medvedev awkward "control" of the situation in Libya.

Was the situation in Syria different? Was Syria more important than Libya? In fact, there were other factors which deepened the need of preventing the repetition of the Libyan model in Syria. In material and economic terms, Syria has been always strategic for Russia. First of all, because Tartun (Syria) hosts the only remaining Russian naval base on the Mediterranean<sup>12</sup>. Secondly, because the investments of Russian companies in the Syrian energy sector are a thousand millions' business, and Damascus is one of the main clients of the defense industry of the Russian Federation. In security terms, there are also implications for the Russian Federation itself. As Syria sponsored anti-Western

<sup>11</sup> Permanent Mission of the Russian Federation to the United Nations. Statement by Mikhail Margelov. July 2009. [http://www.google.com.ar/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.globalr2p.org%2Fmedia%2Ffiles%2Frussia-2009-r2p-debate.pdf&ei=Xi5vU5vVPKXN7AbGtoHIAw&usq=AFQjCNFRIdmN6koSvS\\_0XZgcaU8qRXIpnw](http://www.google.com.ar/url?sa=t&rct=j&q=&esrc=s&source=web&cd=1&ved=0CCoQFjAA&url=http%3A%2F%2Fwww.globalr2p.org%2Fmedia%2Ffiles%2Frussia-2009-r2p-debate.pdf&ei=Xi5vU5vVPKXN7AbGtoHIAw&usq=AFQjCNFRIdmN6koSvS_0XZgcaU8qRXIpnw) Accessed: 01.05.2014.

<sup>12</sup> Despite the fact that before the intervention in Libya Russia had barely used Tartun base and the trade relation with Syria remained far from being significant in Russian national accounts, after that event this situation was changed as a consequence in the scenario's transformation.

terrorism during the Cold War, and today maintains strong links with organizations that attack Israel (as Hezbollah in Lebanon or Hamas in Palestine), terrorism hitting Russia in the North Caucasus has received support from radicalism originated in Sunni countries; the emergence of an Islamist government relatively close to the Caucasus is perceived as a potential threat for Russia.

Any potential intervention to pursue a change regime within Syria is for Russia, but especially in Putin's view, a sensitive issue to Russian interests. Since the end of the Cold War, Russia (especially during Putin's administrations) has kept its opposition toward the West intended rule in the world, especially in sensitive areas of interests, for instance Syria or Iran. This has very much to do with Putin's security paranoia and his antipathy to "Western countries' moralizing".

His influence within the State and even over Dimitri Medvedev is widely known (or at least suspected) as well as his mistrust in Western powers<sup>13</sup>, which increased after the intervention in Libya and their efforts to apply the R2PD in Syria. His perception of the world seems to resemble the Cold War logic in the confrontation between Russia and the West. According to some analysts the Russian veto has been a clear revenge for what happened in 2011 in Libya and against the R2PD and Putin could have something to do in such change in Medvedev's behavior<sup>14</sup>. Putin pressure over Medvedev was evidenced in the contradictory statements of both of them when Medvedev was still in power<sup>15</sup>.

Moreover, Putin run for election and upper echelons of Russian Politburo support on his view may have been essential in the new veto policy. It is believed that Putin holds a romantic idea of restoring some of the USSR prestige and such idea seems to be increased by the perception of external threat from Western policies and behaviors and the perception of a "weak" administration.

Putin's role far from creating internal opposition has been backed not only by the upper echelons of the Russian State but by the public opinion. According to the Pew Research Center his public support has increased in the last years. And the use of propaganda has been essential in this subject.

"Roughly eight-in-ten Russians (83%) say they have confidence in President Putin to do the right thing in world affairs, up from 69% in 2012, the last time this question was asked. Fully 52% say they have a lot of confidence in the Russian leader, compared with 37% two years ago"<sup>16</sup>. Regarding to

<sup>13</sup> In several articles he has supported this belief: "It is important for the United Nations and its Security Council to effectively counter the dictates of some countries and their arbitrary actions in the world arena. Nobody has the right to usurp the prerogatives and powers of the UN, particularly the use of force with regard to sovereign nations. [...]It seems that NATO members, especially the United States, have developed a peculiar interpretation of security that is different from ours. The Americans have become obsessed with the idea of becoming absolutely invulnerable. This utopian concept is unfeasible both technologically and geopolitically, but it is the root of the problem".

<sup>14</sup> After the intervention in Libya, Russia vetoed three different drafts regarding to the situation in Syria: on October, 4, 2011 (draft S/2011/612), on July, 9, 2012 (draft S/2012/538) and on February, 4, 2012 (draft S/2012/77). China followed the same steps.

<sup>15</sup> For further information you can read: "Putin and Medvedev spar over Libya". <http://edition.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/europe/03/21/russia.leaders.libya/>

<sup>16</sup> Pew Research Global Attitudes Project. Chapter 3. Russia: Public Backs Putin, Crimea's Secession. May 8, 2014. <http://www.pewglobal.org/2014/05/08/chapter-3-russia-public-backs-putin-crimeas-secession/>. Accessed: 10.05.2014.

the situation in Crimea, the same research states that: “Russian President Vladimir Putin’s handling of the crisis in Ukraine has met with considerable opposition in Western nations and much of the international community, as well as in Ukraine itself, but Russians have largely rallied around their leader. Putin is overwhelmingly popular, and Russian national pride appears to be on the rise. In fact, a plurality thinks Putin’s handling of the crisis has improved Russia’s international stature. Meanwhile, tensions with the West have led to a dramatic spike in negative views about the U.S. and the European Union. Similarly, both U.S. President Barack Obama and German Chancellor Angela Merkel are held in low regard”<sup>17</sup>.

This is an important factor, since as Romanova says, “a model facing constant challenges from domestic forces not only undermines a country’s foreign policy, but also makes it a less convincing power [...] in the world”. In other words, such support to Putin has allowed him to mobilize (extract) resources and direct them to the attempts of “increase the control over the environment”<sup>18</sup>.

Romanova points out that foreign policy in Russia “has been always regarded as some kind of “royal cause”<sup>19</sup> and in current times that can be interpreted as the Russian foreign policy falling mainly (if not only) into the President’s competence. Far from creating a greater gap between society and State, in Russia this has derived in a greater confidence of people in Vladimir Putin as a leader. Moreover, since Russian upper strata disagreed<sup>20</sup> over the country’s position in the UNSC regarding the enforcement of a non-fly zone in Libya, Putin’s position has been reinforced.

### Closing remarks

After this analysis of the Russian position regarding to Western intervention in Libya and its veto to a possible intervention in Syria, we can conclude that there were material, economic and security reasons to the increasing interest of Russia on both cases. This situation was deepened by Putin’s perception about Western countries’ intentions and their interpretation of the R2PD<sup>21</sup>.

Russia’s selective responses in Libya and Syria crisis have been the consequence of the internal grievances within Medvedev’s policy toward the Libyan crisis<sup>22</sup>, and Putin’s perceptions about the West’s intentions. Far from being rejected, Putin’s position had an increasing support not only from the public opinion but also other institutions within Russia.

<sup>17</sup> Idem.

<sup>18</sup> Gideon, R. Op. Cit. p. 155.

<sup>19</sup> Romanova, T. Op. cit. p. 4.

<sup>20</sup> For further information on this topic we recommend: Makarychev, Andrey. “Russia’s “Libya Debate”. Political meanings and repercussions”. Ponars Eurasia Memo No. 178. September 2011.

<sup>21</sup> Read more about this specific issue on: Putin, Vladimir. “Vladimir Putin on foreign policy: Russia and the changing world”. English version. 27.02.2012. <http://valdaiclub.com/politics/39300.html> Accessed: 14.07.2014.

<sup>22</sup> While Vladimir Putin compared the military operation against Gaddafi to a colonial military invasion, Medvedev affirmed that the Arab revolutions were caused by authoritarian rule and mismanagement, and were not provoked from outside.

The negative outcome of the intervention in Libya reinforced the mistrust in the international security system mainly represented in UN and some tools like the R2PD. Despite the fact that can be argued that Russian intervention in Crimea and its support to Assad's regime are short of international legitimacy, Western powers also lack of legitimacy and as a consequence of that have been cautious about taking unilateral courses of action against Russia. Their governments are still suffering from internal opposition since they continue facing the consequences of the last international financial crisis among other issues.

In this context, despite the fact that Russia has also suffered from internal grievances, Putin's public image has been consolidated and the romantic idea of a new era for the Russian leadership in the world (mainly expressed in the confrontation with the West) has gained in some cases followers and in others an acquiescence functional to the Russian double standard and current foreign policy. This "support" has allowed to the Russian machinery of State (with Putin as main actor) "allocate national resources" (Rose, 1998, p.147) to foreign policy which has contributed to shape the foreign policy beyond the systemic pressures and incentives and the relative material power of Russia within the international arena.



## THE ROLE OF ICT SECTOR IN BUILDING AZERBAIJAN'S NATIONAL COMPETITIVENESS

**Fuad Aliyev\*, Jahandar Gadirov\*\***

As the world experience shows, the role and benefits of innovation and science are irreplaceable for the economic development. From this point of view significance of information technologies is considered to be more inevitable. So at the expense of both the creation of new services and widening of current services' volume in ICT sector, which is accompanied with permanent technology innovation and increasing demand in daily public life, the increase of value added and share of this sector in economy is observed during these years<sup>1</sup>.

According to the INSEAD Report finding, when firms have strong key business enablers and invest more in new technologies, the probability of becoming competitive can double<sup>2</sup>. However, when firms with so-called 'weak key business enablers' significantly invest in new technologies, they do not increase the likelihood of better performance and essentially risk wasting their investments<sup>3</sup>.

So what are these business enablers?<sup>4</sup>:

1. Business involvement in technology investment and management decisions;
2. Access to technology-focused talent;
3. Access to management-focused talent;
4. Digitized platforms – the extent to which the technology, business process and data components are standardized, shared and integrated. We called this “digital maturity”.

This list of four business enablers and their empirically proved role in the success of investing in ICT, demonstrates the huge part belonging to the relevant infrastructure – both physical and business. Only by having the required infrastructure in place, ICT sector and private investments can really make a big difference. The role of governments, especially in developing countries and emerging markets can't be underestimated. This is something that Azerbaijan has been up to during the last decade.

### **Azerbaijan's story**

As in many areas of Azerbaijan's economy, the success in the ICT sector and purposeful reforms implemented in the country are evident in recent years. Ranking in international ratings is the best example of the development of the ICT sector in Azerbaijan.

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<sup>1</sup> Improving Competitiveness and Increasing Economic Diversification in the Caribbean: The Role of ICT. The World Bank Report April 2005 <http://www.infodev.org/articles/improving-competitiveness-and-increasing-economic-diversification-caribbean> Accessed July 2014.

<sup>2</sup> Building Competitiveness and Business Performance with ICT. INSEAD eLab ICT Report. 2013 <http://ec.europa.eu/digital-agenda/en/news/building-competitiveness-and-business-performance-ict> Accessed in July 2014

<sup>3</sup> Ibid.

<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

Certainly, for Azerbaijan it is not so easy to gain a rating in comparison with developed countries, but it is the result of successful work actually done. And those results directly serve to increase the country's international reputation.

In recent years, ICT development in the country was the focus of many reports of influential international organizations. Thus, in the final reports of the International Telecommunication Union, Azerbaijan is among the countries with the most rapid development of ICT for the past 10 years.

According to "Global Information Technologies Report 2014" on "Network Readiness Index" reflecting the development in the field of information technologies, prepared by the World Economic Forum, Azerbaijan moved 7 steps forward compared to the last year's 49th place among the world's 148 countries.

Note that, this index is prepared on the basis of measurement of application of ICT among individuals and business, as well as, government level and its impact that characterizes the development of information technology of the country.

On this index, Azerbaijan surpassed Russia and took 2<sup>nd</sup> place after Kazakhstan among CIS countries on the level of technological readiness<sup>5</sup>.

Top CIS	Countries	2013-2014 (148)	2012-2013 (144)	Change
1	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	38	43	+5
2	<i>Azerbaijan</i>	<b>49</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>+7</b>
3	<i>Russia</i>	50	54	+4
4	<i>Ukraine</i>	81	73	-8
5	<i>Moldova</i>	77	77	0
6	<i>Georgia</i>	60	65	+5
7	<i>Armenia</i>	65	82	+17
8	<i>Tajikistan</i>	-	112	-
9	<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	118	118	+1

Azerbaijan, which always held high positions among CIS countries according the reports of the World Economic Forum, surpassed many leading countries as well. Thus, according to the report, Azerbaijan is ahead of the European countries such as Italy (58<sup>th</sup> place), Poland (54<sup>th</sup> place), Slovakia (59<sup>th</sup> place), Romania (75<sup>th</sup> place) and Montenegro (52<sup>nd</sup> place).

In addition, according to the "Network Readiness Index" Azerbaijan passed ahead of the "BRICS" countries (Brazil, Russia, India, China, South Africa) in the development of ICT.

<sup>5</sup> Source: WEF 2013-2014.

One of the striking aspects of the report is, in comparison with upper middle-income countries Azerbaijan gained a better result than the average level, moreover, the government's approach to the future of the ICT sector is at the 6<sup>th</sup> place. Being leader in the CIS, our country for the government's success in the promotion of the ICT sector takes 8<sup>th</sup>, and on the use of ICT in the effectiveness of government services takes 11<sup>th</sup> place.

Position of Azerbaijan on four main sub-index and sub-components of the “Network Readiness Index” in comparison with the previous report<sup>6</sup>:

	<b>2013-2014</b> <i>(148 countries)</i>	<b>2012-2013</b> <i>(142 countries)</i>	<b>Change</b>
<b>Networked Readiness Index</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>56</b>	<b>+7</b>
<b>A Environment sub-index</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>77</b>	<b>+7</b>
1 <sup>st</sup> Political and regulatory environment	66	66	<b>0</b>
2 <sup>nd</sup> Business and innovation	77	86	<b>+9</b>
<b>B. Readiness sub-index</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>+2</b>
3 <sup>rd</sup> Infrastructure and digital content	55	75	<b>20</b>
4 <sup>th</sup> Affordability	40	20	<b>-20</b>
5 <sup>th</sup> Skills	66	57	<b>-9</b>
<b>C. Usage sub-index</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>52</b>	<b>+8</b>
6 <sup>th</sup> Individual usage	61	64	<b>+3</b>
7 <sup>th</sup> Business usage	52	58	<b>+6</b>
8 <sup>th</sup> Government usage	34	34	<b>0</b>
<b>D. Impact sub-index</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>59</b>	<b>+13</b>
9 <sup>th</sup> Economic impacts	42	59	<b>+17</b>
10 <sup>th</sup> Social impacts	46	57	<b>+11</b>

At the same time, Azerbaijan is number 59 among 148 countries by the number of internet users per 100 people, maintaining its leading position in CIS. This is one of the main components of ICT which affects the formation of “Network Readiness Index”.

Simultaneously, in terms of the number of broadband subscribers Azerbaijan took the 46<sup>th</sup> place, in addition, as to the innovation capacity of companies our country took the highest place in the CIS and the 35<sup>th</sup> place in the world.

<sup>6</sup> Source: WEF 2013-2014

All achievements obtained as a result of public policy in ICT sector and important measures carried out for development of sector can be observed in assessments of international organizations.

In conditions of rapid expansion of application of modern technologies in all areas of the global economy, the application of innovations in economic and social spheres in Azerbaijan is contributing to the overall progress of country. The application of ICT in all sectors of the economy and penetration of technological innovation into people's daily life has increased demand for ICT products and services in the economy.

In the "E-Government Survey 2014" report (report traditionally published by the UN every two years) according to "E-government development index" Azerbaijan moved up by 28 points and got the 68<sup>th</sup> place, out of 193. Note that in the report, countries by E-Government Development Index are classified in 4 groups according to the total score (Very High, High, Middle, Low), and Azerbaijan in this index was included in the group of countries with "High E-Government Development Index".

In order to achieve the objectives of the development of the ICT sector, the government continues implementing local and regional projects. This progress will heavily contribute to technological transformation of Azerbaijan.

In general, the rise in ratings increases competitiveness and diversification of the economy. In particular, the robust development of the ICT sector, which has got extreme impact on the reform of the country's entire infrastructure, will lead to higher ratings in other spheres in the long-run. It implies that in near future, Azerbaijan will further strengthen its position among top 50 countries in international rankings. Moreover, every obtained point will bring many more dividends into the country in terms of regional leadership and international reputation.

In a report "Measuring the Information Society 2013" published by the International Telecommunication Union, the two key indicators of ICT development in the world - ICT Development Index (IDI) and the ICT Price Basket Index – have been assessed and the ratings of countries have been determined.

The ICT Development Index has been prepared by the ITU based on the proposal of member countries to show the level of ICT development. The latest report on the ICT development index expanded by addition of 2 countries and covered 157 countries. If we look at the basic methodology of the index, the index includes 3 sub-components (ICT-Access, ICT-Use, ICT-Skills) and combines 11 indicators:

Thus, according the ICT Development Index, in regional rating table Azerbaijan takes the 4<sup>th</sup> position among the CIS countries. So, Russia (40-th place), Belarus (41-th place), Kazakhstan (48-th place) takes first 3 places in CIS. Note that last year Azerbaijan by the IDI index among the CIS countries took the 6<sup>th</sup> place<sup>7</sup>.

<sup>7</sup> ITU "Measuring the Information Society 2013" Report

<i>Economy</i>	<b>Regional rank</b>	<b>Global rank</b>	<b>IDI score 2012</b>	<b>Global rank change 2011-2012</b>
Russia	1	40	6.19	-2
Belarus	2	41	6.11	5
Kazakhstan	3	48	5.74	1
Azerbaijan	4	61	5.01	-1
Moldova	5	65	4.74	2
Ukraine	6	68	4.64	1
Georgia	7	71	4.59	2
Armenia	8	74	4.45	1
Uzbekistan	9	104	3.12	0
CIS Average	-	-	4.95	-

By “IDI” index our country exceeds the World average (World average IDI value of 4.35) by 15.2% and the average of developing countries (Developing Athletic IDI value 3.44) by about 46%.

At the same time, when calculating ICT Price Basket the share of expenditures on a number of ICT services per capita, national income in this country is taken into account. There are three major sub-components of the price index basket.

In accordance with ICT Price Basket Index in 2012 Azerbaijan was ranked 58<sup>th</sup> among 161 countries. Note that in previous year report Azerbaijan took the 52<sup>nd</sup> place<sup>8</sup>.

<b>ICT Price Basket Index</b>		<b>2013 (rank among 161 countries)</b>	<b>2012 (rank among 161 countries)</b>
1	<i>Russia</i>	23	31
2	<i>Kazakhstan</i>	41	57
3	<i>Belarus</i>	47	53
4	<i>Azerbaijan</i>	58	52
5	<i>Ukraine</i>	65	62
6	<i>Georgia</i>	74	76
7	<i>Armenia</i>	75	95
8	<i>Uzbekistan</i>	94	140
9	<i>Moldova</i>	110	105
10	<i>Kyrgyzstan</i>	117	146

According to the ICT Price Basket Azerbaijan is ahead of neighboring countries, e.g. Iran (59<sup>th</sup> place) and Turkey (61<sup>st</sup> place).

<sup>8</sup> ITU “Measuring the Information Society 2013” Report

Note that according to ITU statistics report the number of Internet users in Azerbaijan is 54.2/100 and by this indication Azerbaijan is ahead of World average by about 40%. At the same time in 2012 Azerbaijan kept its leading position among the CIS countries.

In summary, the advance in ratings as well as the increase of reforms enhances competitiveness and contributes to the diversification of the economy. In particular, the robust development of the ICT sector influencing on the reform of the country's entire infrastructure will lead to higher ratings in other spheres in the long perspective. It means that Azerbaijan in the near future strengthen its position in top 50 countries in international rankings. Moreover, every obtained point will bring to the country much more dividends in terms of regional leadership and international reputation.

### **Conclusion**

Deepening the social-economic reforms in Azerbaijan, has vastly promoted the sustainable social-economic development.

As a result of the ICT penetration into social-economic life of the country, in the context of rapid development based on economic diversification during last years, the importance of this sector has increased and this sector has been put into foreground by government. During these years serious steps were taken towards the creation of information-oriented society.

ICT sector of Azerbaijan expands 2 times every 3 years, average annual growth rate of the sector is 20-25%. For the ICT sector of the country favorable investment and business environment is established and development of private sector is supported. Thanks to strong competitive environment established in the ICT market, new companies enter the sector.

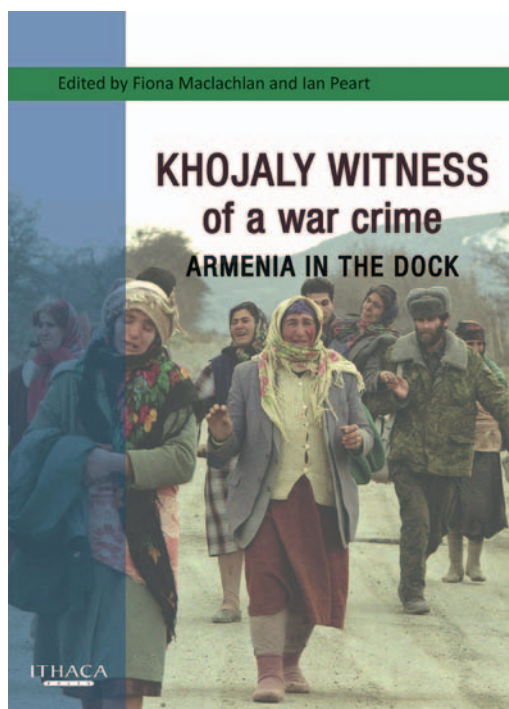
At the government level one can also observe the great progress. Effective regulation mechanism, telecommunications and e-government infrastructure was formed in the country, implementation of e-signature has begun. The government structures now widely render electronic services.

All these achievements were assessed by such influential global organizations as the World Economic Forum and the International Telecommunication Union being reflected in their ratings. Thus, ratings and indicators of these organizations on the ICT in Azerbaijan during the recent years have showed very positive trends. As a result, Azerbaijan turned out to be one of the leading countries in the region and among the CIS countries in the realm of ICT. As a result of current trends and policy implemented in the country, in near future Azerbaijan is expected to be more competitive as compared to other developing countries. Therefore, in short-run Azerbaijan's strong position in the ICT field and its transformation into the regional center of ICT is rather real. This creates new opportunities for more efficient investment in this sector and thus, growing of the overall national competitiveness as already proved by various empirical studies.

## YENİ NƏŞRLƏR – NEW PUBLICATIONS - НОВЫЕ ИЗДАНИЯ

## “KHOJALY WITNESS OF A WAR CRIME – ARMENIA IN THE DOCK”

Edited by Fiona Mclachlan and Ien Port



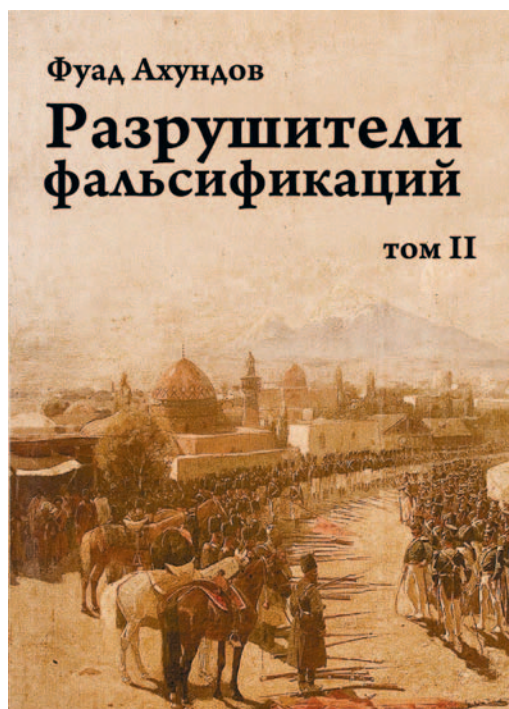
The “Khojaly Witness of a war crime – Armenia in the Dock” book published in Garnet Publishing (decorators: Ien Port and Fiona Mclachlan) is the first edition documenting 26th February 1992 Khojaly events based on the initial sources and published in English in the West. This edition is the first collection of testimonies of witnesses interviewed by western authors from the persons escaped from Khojaly genocide. The book was published by the European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS).

The book includes articles, as well as scientific researches published in the western and Russian media. Other book will be source for studying and recognition of history of Karabakh. These books will also be translated into other European languages.

The book also includes rare photos of foreign photo correspondents (Victoria Ivleva, Friedrich Lengaign, David Brauchly, Klaus Reisinger, Lin Hengsheng and Georgie de Karl). The materials included in the collection from international media (The Washington Post, Le Monde, The Times, Труд, Комсомольская Правда) have been acquired through exclusive understanding and published for the first time.

## «РАЗРУШИТЕЛИ ФАЛЬСИФИКАЦИЙ – ТОМ II»

Фуад Ахундов



Вышел в свет второй том книги Фуада Ахундова «Разрушители фальсификаций». Во втором томе собраны тезисы 150 ученых, зарубежных писателей, политологов, общественных деятелей, военачальников, священнослужителей, журналистов и др. Из США, разных стран Европы, Канады, России, Грузии, Турции, Ирана. Среди них есть имена даже истых армянофилов, служащих британской разведке, которые, тем не менее, не могли удержаться от объективной оценки деятельности армянских четников против турок. Уникальность книги в том, что в ней разоблачителями фальсификаций выступают армянские ученые дореволюционного, советского и постсоветского периода. Если в первом томе были представлены 10 армян, то во второй вошли тезисы 50 лиц армянской национальности, среди

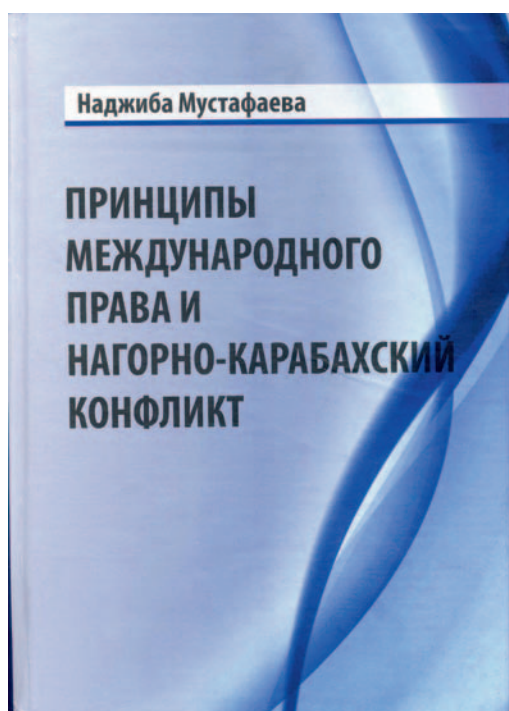
которых 40 ученых Армении, 6- России, 4 – США.

Второй том существенно отличается от множества ранее изданных книг на антиармянскую тему тем, что в него в виде приложения вошел качественно новый информационный продукт. Это «Хроника истинных событий до и после переселения армян на Южный Кавказ», в которой схематично и лаконично изложены события с XV по XX.вв. Это перенесение престола Армянской церкви из Киликии на Южный Кавказ, Появление армянских меликов в Карабахе, Армянский экспансионизм в России и Европе в XVII-XVIII вв. Первый этап заселения армян на завоеванных Россией прикаспийских территориях Южного Кавказа в XVIII в., массовое переселение армян в Эриванское, Нахчыванское, Карабахское ханства в XIX в., Армянский террор против российской государственности в XIX и XX вв., этнические чистки азербайджанцев в Армении, появление Армении на азербайджанских землях, Создание Нагорно Карабахской автономной области (НКАО), Депортация азербайджанцев из Армянской ССР, Марага-150, начало нагорно-карабахского конфликта, Третья волна геноцида азербайджанцев в Армении.



## «ПРИНЦИПЫ МЕЖДУНАРОДНОГО ПРАВА И НАГОРНО-КАРАБАХСКИЙ КОНФЛИКТ»

Наджиба Мустафаева



В монографии автором проводится научный анализ правовых проблем армяно-азербайджанского, нагорно-карабахского конфликта в контексте общепризнанных принципов международного права.

Рассматриваются международные документы, а также решения международных организаций, принятых по карабахскому вопросу и последствия их неисполнения армянской стороной, а также возможные пути разрешения конфликта.

Книга адресована как студентам, аспирантам и преподавателям юридических вузов, так и широкому кругу читателей, интересующихся армяно-азербайджанским, нагорно-карабахским конфликтом.