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Postal address: Analysis and Strategic Studies Department,  
Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Sh.Gurbanov Str. 50, Baku AZ 1009  
Tel.: 596-91-03; 596-91-31 e-mail: mxsp1@mfa.gov.az

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## RƏSMİ XRONİKA – OFFICIAL CHRONICLE – ОФИЦИАЛЬНАЯ ХРОНИКА



### **DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2015**

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

##### **STATE VISIT TO THE KINGDOM OF SAUDI ARABIA**

5 – 7 April 2015

List of meetings held during the state visit:

- Meeting with Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King of Saudi Arabia Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
- Meeting with Chairman of the Council of Saudi Chambers Abdulrahman Al Zamil
- Meeting with Minister of Petroleum and Mineral Resources of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ali Al-Naimi
- Meeting with Minister of Finance of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Ibrahim Al-Assaf
- Meeting with President of the Islamic Development Bank Group Ahmad Mohamed Ali
- Meeting with Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation Iyad bin Amin Madani

On April 5, 2015 President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King of Saudi Arabia Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud.

Custodian of the Two Holy Mosques, King of Saudi Arabia Salman Bin Abdulaziz Al Saud welcomed President Ilham Aliyev to his country, and expressed his confidence that the visit will be a success.



The parties expressed satisfaction with the level of the bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Saudi Arabia, and emphasized the importance of the visit in terms of the development of cooperation. The significance of developing mutual understanding and fruitful cooperation between Islamic countries was underlined at the meeting. The sides noted the fact that the two countries were actively cooperating and supporting each other in international organizations. Prospects for expanding cooperation in the fields of economy, particularly oil and gas, tourism, agriculture as well as between business communities were discussed.. The parties also exchanged views over mutual investment making.

It was noted that Saudi Arabia supported peaceful settlement of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan within territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV  
MET WITH THE SECRETARY GENERAL OF THE ORGANIZATION  
OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION**

6 April 2015

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

Your Highness Prince!

Mr. Secretary-General!

Dear friends! First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for this hospitality. I am very glad to be visiting Saudi Arabia again.

Yesterday I started my official visit to your beautiful country. I had the honor to discuss with His Majesty the King of Saudi Arabia, the minister of Two Holy Mosques, many issues of our bilateral relations and regional developments.

We have once again confirmed the strategic nature of our partnership. Saudi Arabia and Azerbaijan - are brothers and friends. We have always supported and will always support each other in all international institutions.

At the same time, during meetings with ministers of your country yesterday, we discussed various projects related to economic and political cooperation and the opportunities for expanding the volume of bilateral trade. We must raise our economic partnership to the level of political cooperation. A large delegation of businessmen from Saudi Arabia will visit our country next month, while our delegation will travel to your country in November. I think they will create a very productive format for economic cooperation. In other words, I am confident that my visit will further strengthen the fraternal relations between our countries.

It is also a great honor for to be at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, of which Azerbaijan is an active member, today.

Mr. Secretary-General, as you have noted, in the past few years Azerbaijan has hosted various ministerial meetings.

Azerbaijan as a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation seeks to play a very active role and contribute to the cause of Islamic solidarity in the world. Mr. Secretary General, you have correctly pointed out that when our country was a nonpermanent member of the Security Council of the United Nations, we paid special attention to the cooperation between the UN and the OIC, and thus succeeded in attracting even more attention to the activities of our organization.



I want to take this opportunity to express my appreciation to the Organization of Islamic Cooperation for the strong support of Azerbaijan's candidacy in the election of our country as a nonpermanent member of the UN Security Council. I clearly stated then that if Azerbaijan is elected, it will represent and protect not only itself, but also all the countries of the Muslim world.

We will work even harder to strengthen Islamic solidarity. In 2017, Azerbaijan will play host to Islamic Solidarity Games.

This is also a contribution to our unity because these Games will not be just a sporting event, but also days of our unity and the solidarity of our young generations in the Muslim world. We need to pass the traditions of brotherhood on to the younger generation who will replace us. It should be noted that the media, globalization and other elements of our daily life are playing a role in terms of various aspects. Unfortunately, sometimes they play a negative role, calling into question our roots and traditions. Globalization itself is a good process. But if it also means forgetting the roots, traditions, religion, holidays and values, then we do not support such a globalization.

For this reason, younger generations of the Muslim world should be raised in accordance with our national and traditional values. Of course, from this point of view, the role played by Saudi Arabia is very important. In its turn, Azerbaijan is also doing its best to promote our values. In order to demonstrate the culture of the Muslim world, present Islam as a religion of peace, brotherhood and tolerance, we have organized a lot of conferences, exhibitions and other cultural events in different parts of the world.

In order to prevent people from trying to present Islam as a threat to peace, we must work even harder and join our efforts. Islam is a religion of peace and brotherhood. We know that. Everyone should know this. We need to become more active to promote our values and present our past, present day and our future plans correctly.

We will continue to support our Muslim brothers in all international forums and organizations in which we participate. We will achieve our goals in the Muslim world and create a stronger partnership and unity we all need. I believe that together with the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which has now become one of the leading international organizations, we will achieve our goals.

I want to express my appreciation for the hospitality to the leadership of Saudi Arabia and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation once again. Since yesterday I feel very much at home here. This is a manifestation of our brotherhood and the essence of our cooperation.

Thank you very much again. I invite all of you to visit Azerbaijan.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY

24 April 2015

A solemn ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of Canakkale Victory was held in Turkey.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attended the event. A guard of honor was arranged at the Canakkale Martyrs' Memorial square decorated with the national flags of participating countries.



Wreathes were laid at the memorial. A moment of silence was observed for the Canakkale martyrs and founder of the Turkish Republic Mustafa Kemal Atatürk. The national anthem of Turkey was performed. Verses from the Quran were recited and prayers were said for the martyrs. Then, Prince of Wales Charles and President of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan addressed the ceremony.

The event is attended by presidents of 21 countries, as well as high-ranking officials from more than 70 countries.



**WORKING VISIT TO THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION**

9 May 2015



President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and his wife Mehriban Aliyeva attended celebrative events marking the 70th anniversary of Victory in the Great Patriotic War 1941-1945 in Moscow. At the Kremlin, President Ilham Aliyev and his wife Mehriban Aliyeva were welcomed by President of Russia Vladimir Putin.

At Red Square the Russian President congratulated the event participants on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Victory. The Russian President said representatives of different nations who showed vigilance and died in this war will always be revered.

A moment of silence was observed for the people who died in the Great Patriotic War.

Then, a military parade was held. Servicemen of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces also participated in the parade. A 70-man delegation of Azerbaijani servicemen led by Major Mehdi Mahmudov marched in front of the tribunes.

State and government officials, heads of international organizations, veterans of the War watched the parade. The parade featured more than 16,000 servicemen, various units of military equipment, planes and helicopters.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED THE OPENING CEREMONY  
OF THE 3<sup>RD</sup> GLOBAL BAKU FORUM**

28 April 2015, Baku

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

Dear ladies and gentlemen, dear guests,

I'd like to greet you all in Azerbaijan and say welcome to all of you. I am very glad that today here in Baku we organize such an important, remarkable, international event with the participation of the representatives of more than 60 countries. Acting and former presidents, prime ministers, politicians, statesmen, public figures will address here in Baku important issues of world politics. Their views are based on their valuable knowledge and experience. I think it is a unique opportunity having such a high-class representation to discuss what we are facing in the coming years, what are the challenges, what are the ways, how to reduce tensions, which we now see all over the world.

I am very glad and proud that the centre, which transformed in a very short period of time into an important international institution, carries the name of the great Azerbaijani Nizami Ganjavi. It is very difficult to find any Azerbaijani who is not proud of Nizami. I'd like to express my gratitude to the co-chairs of Nizami Ganjavi International Centre Madam President Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Mr. Serageldin for their remarkable activity and contribution to creation of a world class international institution. I am sure that Nizami Ganjavi International Centre will play an even more important role in addressing important issues of world politics, trying to find ways of how to move forward, how to reduce tensions, how to create, and building a better environment for cooperation and mutual understanding.

I am also glad that Nizami Ganjavi International Centre organizes from time to time its events in the ancient city of Azerbaijan, Ganja, the homeland of Nizami. The centre transformed from an institution which addresses primarily humanitarian issues into an institution which addresses all the issues of today's world politics, economic development, social problems, and issues related to the conflict resolution. Of course, a humanitarian segment plays an important role from this point of view.

Azerbaijan, for centuries, was a place where civilizations met. Our geographic location plus historical legacy of our nation created a special atmosphere in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan is a natural geographic bridge between Europe and Asia, and now it is a cultural and, I am sure, a political bridge between Europe and the Muslim World. The traditions of multiculturalism have very deep roots in our society. Regardless of the form of political structure all the representatives of different nationalities, ethnic groups, religions have always lived in peace and dignity in our country. That's why now when Azerbaijan is independent it already became one of the world centres of multiculturalism. Next month we will host the 3rd international Intercultural Dialogue Forum.

Every year we organize International Humanitarian Forum, which primarily addresses the issues of peaceful co-existence, building trust and reducing tensions between different countries of the world. But as an independent country, despite the great history, culture, as an independent country Azerbaijan has existed something for more than 20 years and these were the remarkable years of transformation.

What we achieved today clearly shows that only during a period of independence our people can achieve great success, can themselves determine their future, can themselves plan what to do and how to position themselves in the world and achieve great economic transformation and success.

Yes, Azerbaijan has always been a country blessed with energy resources. But at the same time we remember that at the time when Azerbaijan was not independent, we could not enjoy the benefits of these resources. In the beginning of the 20th century Azerbaijan produced more than half of the world's oil. And if you look at the pictures of those days you will not see prosperity, equality and social well-fare. During the Soviet time, particularly during the time of the Second World War, the oil of Azerbaijan played one of the most important roles in the fight against fascism. More than 70 percent of oil of the Soviet Union came from Azerbaijan. But when we became independent we saw ecological catastrophe, we saw devastation of oil industry, we saw economic and industrial stagnation. So only during independence in a very short period of time when our tale is in our hands we manage to achieve success. That was a challenging period because not only we had to build the state and create the foundation of the statehood, but also transform completely the political and economic system from plant economy to market economy, from one party-system to multiple-party system, from totalitarianism to democracy.

I think that the implementation of political and economic reforms in parallel provided the rapid transformation, stability, predictability and economic and social development. Today Azerbaijan enjoys all the freedoms. We are a free society, all the freedoms are fully provided, freedoms of media, we have free Internet without any censorship, freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, religious freedom. Political transformation continues. We still need to work more on the improvement of our legal system because justice in the society, justice in the family, justice everywhere is one of the most important elements for normal development and for stability of any society. Also Azerbaijan managed to position itself on international map. Our country is a member of Council of Europe and member of Islamic Cooperation Organization. It is one of the very few countries to be a member of both organizations.



Azerbaijan has a very strong position in these organizations and plays its important role in bringing closer the countries of different history, different traditions and culture. Azerbaijan is also a member of the Movement of Non-Alignment, and that is also an indicator of our priorities. We were proud to be elected to the United Nations Security Council several years ago with the support of 155 countries which clearly shows that the absolute majority of the international community supports Azerbaijan, trusts Azerbaijan and expresses its position during this important voting procedure.

When we were elected to the United Nations Security Council, which is the world's leading international body, we made it very clear that we will defend justice and international law. Unfortunately international law is no longer something which all the countries respect. Unfortunately, but this is the reality. It seems sometimes that international law is obligatory only for countries which are not strong enough to achieve their goals by different means. The leading countries of the world from time to time and, we see it very clearly, brutally violate international law norms and this, actually, undermines the whole construction of the post-war international relations system.

I think this is one of the most important issues which we need to address very openly, clearly and to try to use our opportunities, intellectual potential and the influence in the world in order to strengthen the system of international relations which exists,

strengthen international law and we need to respect the resolutions of international organizations. In some cases, resolutions are being implemented immediately, I mean resolutions of the Security Council of United Nations. In other cases they are not implemented for years and for decades.

And here comes a contradiction in international law with political interests and political priorities. That leads to frustration, a situation where double standards become a rule and not an exception. We as a country know how painful it is because we are suffering from double standards, we are suffering from brutal violation of international law.

And as you know the occupation by Armenia of internationally recognized and historic territories of Azerbaijan continues for many years regardless of four United Nations Security Council resolutions which demand immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territories. Nagorno-Karabakh is a historic part of Azerbaijan, integral part of Azerbaijan and no country in the world recognized this illegal Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent entity.

We suffered from occupation as almost 20 percent of our territories is still under occupation and more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and internally displaced on their own lands.

We suffered from ethnic cleansing, from Khojaly genocide, which is recognized already by more than 10 countries, and this process continues.

Territorial integrity is a fundamental principle of international law. It is written in the UN charter, it is one of the most important elements of the international law and it is defined in the Helsinki Final act. And there should be no contradiction. There should be a very clear understanding that the right for self-determination should not violate territorial integrity of countries. And territorial integrity of any country cannot be changed without the consent of the government and people of that country. Territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has the same value as territorial integrity of any other country. Unfortunately we see in different parts of the world that separatism, aggressive separatism, attempts to implement the policy of secession and violation of territorial integrity leads to conflicts. If Nagorno-Karabakh conflict would have been resolved probably today we would not have seen other conflicts.

But Azerbaijan is strongly committed to resolution of this conflict based on the international law norms and United Nations Security Council resolutions. By the way other important national institutions like the European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Islamic Cooperation Organization, Non-Alignment Movement adopted similar resolutions and the conflict must be based on the principles of international law, territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Of course, it is the biggest problem for our country and also the biggest impediment for our development. But in spite of that Azerbaijan's development was very successful and during the last 10 years our economy grew more than three times. We managed to diversify the economy and reduce dependence on energy sector. Today, energy sector makes something more than only 30 percent of our GDP so the policy of diversification led to substantial progress and even now with this fall of oil prices Azerbaijan's economy grew more than 5 percent in the first quarter of this year.

So we managed – through the policy of diversification and investment, creation of modern infrastructure and good business climate – to protect ourselves from the volatility of the oil prices. Azerbaijan is a country open for foreign investments. We received more than 200 billion dollar investment during the years of independence. Last year 27 billion – 30 percent – were direct foreign investment. So for foreign investors Azerbaijan is a very attractive country because we have a very good business climate, investment climate. According to Davos World Economic forum assessment, Azerbaijan's economy is number 38 in the world with respect to competitiveness. This is again not because of energy resources but because of reforms, because of what has been done in recent years. We managed to almost eradicate unemployment which is now less than 5 percent and poverty drop was dramatic from 49 percent in 2003 to 5 percent in 2015. So economic and political reforms, at the same time, very active social policy and social protection of the people, transparency in accumulating the wealth generated by energy development and transparency in spending state funds, I think, also played a very important role in our development.

In the coming years we will concentrate more on diversification and the areas of attention of our government are modern technologies and agriculture. Azerbaijan is already a country with space industry: we have two satellites and rapid development of space industry in Azerbaijan is an indicator of our plans because our population is

growing, our economy is growing and economy should grow faster than population. Otherwise, at certain points we will face difficulties. Therefore reforms should never stop and we should never feel ourselves relaxed because we need to work, to work hard in order to strengthen our statehood, independence. Economic independence allows us to implement independent foreign policy. When you are weak and dependent you will be influenced. No matter by who, but you will be influenced.

By building a strong economy we protected ourselves from any kind of external influence. We want to live our own life. For centuries Azerbaijan was part of empires, other countries. Today when we are free and our people enjoy freedom and they see the advantages of this freedom and independence, we must protect our choice and we will protect our choice. Our choice is democracy, our choice is social welfare, our choice is peace among all the people of Azerbaijan, multiculturalism, inter-religious dialogue and cooperation with all the countries in the world and implementation of the regional and continental projects which will be beneficial to all of us.

As far as energy security is concerned Azerbaijan is playing its important role in diversification of energy supplies. For 20 years we have been implementing the oil strategy which created absolutely new energy map in the region. We connected the Caspian Sea with Black Sea and Mediterranean Sea by multiple oil pipeline system. Today oil from the Caspian Sea – not only of Azerbaijan's resources, but also from Eastern shores of the Caspian – is being directed to international markets from Azerbaijan.

Now we are implementing the biggest infrastructure project of Europe where Azerbaijan again showed initiative and took the lead, which is called Southern Gas Corridor. It consists of four segments. It is development of one of the biggest gas fields of the World – Shahdeniz. Construction of the new pipeline system to connect Azerbaijan and Georgia – South Caucasus pipeline, Trans-Anatolian pipeline, which will be built - construction has already started all across Turkey - from Eastern to Western border of Turkey, and Trans-Adriatic pipeline – TAP, which will be constructed from the Turkish border through Albania to Italy.

And last Bulgaria. It is also part of our energy policy. From Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkish trilateral format we transformed into a much bigger format. In the coming years, I am sure, the countries of the Balkan region will join our pipeline system,

especially taking into account that inter-connectors have been built now in Europe, which we also fully support because Azerbaijan has huge, enormous gas reserves, infrastructure which is now already in the process of construction. According to our plans, in 2018-2019, all these projects which I already mentioned must be implemented. This is 45 billion dollar investment, very difficult from technical point of view and, of course, we need a broad coordination and cooperation. For that purpose Azerbaijan initiated and held this February the first advisory board of the Southern Gas Corridor.

It allowed all the representatives, high-ranking representatives of the countries, which I named, plus high representatives of the United States and European Commission to address this issue. We adopted a joint press statement where the leading role of Azerbaijan is purely identified. This is part of our cooperation with European Union. But not the only one, though, of course, it is important. We understand that for Europe energy diversification is really the issue of, I would say, national security and we should treat this issue particularly like that. Energy security cannot be separated from national security. Another important issue is diversification of sources. Diversification of routes is also important. But when the sources are the same it doesn't make sense. In our case it is diversification of sources and the only new source for Europe of natural gas is Azerbaijan. Of course, I am not trying to say that other sources are not important and we are not trying to compete with anyone, but other sources are already in action. The only new is Caspian, Azerbaijan and here we play, I think, and will continue to play a very important role.

At the same time, we have a format of cooperation European Union and next month in Riga there will be a regular summit of Eastern Partnership. Azerbaijan is an active participant of this program, and, I'd like to say, in the meantime, we strengthen our bilateral ties with member states of EU. Azerbaijan already signed either agreements or adopted joint statements on strategic partnership with seven EU member states. This is one fourth of EU members and, I think, that in the coming years there should be a more differentiated approach from European institution towards the members of the Eastern Partnership program because there are different countries with different aspirations and different level of economic development. Therefore, I think, the most appropriate format for us would be strategic partnership which will reflect the substance of our relations and of our future.



To conclude I would like to say a couple words on the issue which is now one of the most priority issues for us, which is education. Education is knowledge, education is future, education is for us modernization. We are lucky to have almost hundred percent literacy in Azerbaijan. Our government spends every year at least 40 million euros to train our young people abroad in the leading universities in the world. Education is also protection from radicalization and this is also important for a country which is situated in this region. Protection against radicalization, of course, is stability and justice in the society. It is economic development, eradication of poverty and unemployment. Poverty, unemployment, social, political injustice they feed radicals and they are the instruments which radicals use in order to brainwash young people and recruit them for their purposes.

Therefore for us education means protection from radicalization, it means modernization, development. This is how we want to see Azerbaijan in the future and we have a complete consensus in our society with respect to how Azerbaijan should develop. It should develop on the path of freedom, democracy, economic, social, progress, good relations with all our partners in order to strengthen our independence and protect our choice.

Once again dear friends, welcome to Azerbaijan. I wish the conference success. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED AN OFFICIAL OPENING CEREMONY  
OF THE 48<sup>TH</sup> ANNUAL MEETING OF THE BOARD OF GOVERNORS  
OF THE ASIAN DEVELOPMENT BANK**

4 May 2015, Baku

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

Dear President Nakao,

Ladies and gentlemen, dear guests,

First of all welcome to Azerbaijan. It is a big honor and privilege for us to host the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian development Bank. The meeting is taking place in the newly-built Baku Congress Center inauguration of which took place less than a week ago. This is the biggest venue in Baku. The construction of the center started a year ago. The speed of the construction is equal to speed of development of Azerbaijan. And I am sure that with the support of the Asian Development Bank our country will achieve even bigger results.

Azerbaijan joined ADB in 1999. Since that time we have enjoyed a very fruitful cooperation and we are very grateful to ADB for continuous support of our efforts to modernize our economy, to provide better living standards for our people. And I am sure that our fruitful cooperation will continue because a lot needs to be done in Azerbaijan in the area of reforms, improvement of infrastructure and investment in the real sector of our economy.

So far more than 1.5 billion dollars have been allocated from the Asian Development Bank to Azerbaijan and, as we said, these projects have served the benefit of our people, economic development and sustainable development of Azerbaijan.

Majority of our guests visit us for the first time. And I think it is a good opportunity to know Azerbaijan better because as an independent country it exists only something more than 20 years on the world map. So Azerbaijan is famous for its ancient history, culture, traditions and, I am sure, the guests will find time to visit our historic places

to know more about Azerbaijan, our traditions, our people, our past and the present of our country.

Azerbaijan's geographical location definitely influenced the development of our nation. Situated just between East and West, between Asia and Europe, Azerbaijan has enjoyed for centuries a multicultural society. One of our biggest assets is that Azerbaijan always was an area of cooperation, area of mutual understanding. We are proud of our history, proud of our multicultural history and we are strongly committed to the development of Azerbaijan as a modern, tolerant country, where representatives of all the nationalities and religions live in peace and dignity.

A recently created international center of multiculturalism is our contribution to the development of positive tendencies in the world so that the world is safe, so that people can feel themselves more protected, so that we jointly address the issues of racial discrimination, religious hatred. We need to strengthen these tendencies.

Due to our efforts Azerbaijan is now known in the world as one of the centers of multiculturalism. Cultural diversity of our nation is one of the biggest assets for us. And today we are proud to host the guests from so many countries. I am sure that our fruitful cooperation based on mutual trust, mutual respect and mutual interest will successfully continues.

As an independent country Azerbaijan emerged as a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union. Though, in the beginning of the 20th century after the collapse of the Russian empire Azerbaijan became independent for two years. And the first democratic republic in the Muslim world was created in Azerbaijan in 1918. But independence was taken from us by invasion and we lost independence for 70 years, and only in 1991 Azerbaijan restored its independence.

Those were difficult times, the times of big expectations because we had to build a country, we had to build a strong economy. But unfortunately Azerbaijan at that time was in a very difficult situation. Internal tensions, civil war, Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan and economic difficulties were the biggest challenges for us. Economy was not only in stagnation because of the recession, inflation was more than 1000 percent, and the prospects for economic and political development were not very clear.

Reforms, political and economic reforms started in mid 1990s allowed us to overcome difficulties and develop Azerbaijan, and it is today a modern, democratic country with very good prospects for the future.

We started to implement political and economic reforms but at the same time we had to address two important issues. First, state-building, because we didn't have a state before, and second, transformation of political and economic system. Political system was a system which existed in the Soviet Union and economy was based on the principles of planned economy.

Macro-economy did not exist. So we had these challenges – state-building process, transformation of political system, transformation of our economy. I think that in a very short period of time, in less than 20 years, starting from mid-90s until today we made substantial progress.

Azerbaijan is strongly committed to its democratic development. All the freedoms are fully provided in Azerbaijan – freedom of political activity, freedom of media, freedom of assembly, religious freedom, we have free Internet. The number of Internet users is growing day by day, and now it is more than 70 percent. Our government is actively investing in the modern technologies, ICT. We are now bringing broadband Internet to every village of Azerbaijan.



This shows our intentions. We clearly realize that without a political transformation, without modern system of governance we will not be able to achieve success. Therefore, political, economic reforms are implemented in parallel. We started the policy of attracting foreign investments because we didn't have financial resources and that was how Azerbaijan became known again in the end of the 20th century as a country famous for oil and gas.

I'd like to say that the first oil in the world was produced in Azerbaijan in the well which is situated in Baku in the second part of the 19th century. The first oil from offshore fields was also produced in the Caspian Sea – in the Azerbaijani sector of

the Caspian Sea in the middle of the 20th century. Therefore, attracting investments of major international energy companies to our oil industry was a way for us to develop. But we say that for us this is the means to develop, it should not be our ultimate target. We need to use our reserves in order to transform the country, to modernize, create better conditions for our people.

We had to implement these reforms in a situation when we were attacked by neighboring Armenia, which launched aggression against Azerbaijan. As a result of that aggression now almost 20 percent of territory of Azerbaijan is under occupation. One million refugees and IDPs still suffer from Armenian aggression and our people were a subject of ethnic cleansing. Armenian army and separatist forces committed ethnic cleansing and genocide in Azerbaijan.

Unfortunately, despite that negotiations are taking place for more than 20 years, we don't have results. This is a brutal violation of international law. This is absolutely unacceptable in the 21st century that one country occupies an integral part and real part of another country and does not pay the price for that.

This also brings us to the understanding that sometimes international law is not working. In our case the United Nations Security Council, the highest international law body of the world, adopted four resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian forces from the territory of Azerbaijan. These resolutions have not been implemented for more than 20 years.

This is the biggest injustice and biggest violation of international law. This once again shows that international law sometimes works selectively depending on political preferences of countries which have influence on world affairs. We had this humanitarian catastrophe, which we also had to address. Azerbaijan had one of the highest number of refugees per capita in the world. One million out of 9.6 million population.

So we had to take care of these people, we had to develop economy and attract investments. But we needed stability, we needed peace.

Therefore, we now have a ceasefire with Armenia and we are trying to resolve the issue on the basis of international law and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Territorial

integrity is the fundamental principle of international law. It cannot be changed by force, it cannot be changed without an agreement of the government and the people of the country.

Therefore, all the conflicts in the world must be based and resolved on the same basis – international law, territorial integrity – without any exception. We had to develop in this situation and we realized that only if we are strong, we can achieve our goals.

Economic development, political development, investments – all this allowed us to achieve what we planned. And if we look at the foreign policy of Azerbaijan, it is very active. It is aimed at winning more friends, it is very open. Azerbaijan is an active member of the international community, member of different international organizations. For instance, Azerbaijan is a member of the Council of Europe, at the same time, the Islamic Cooperation Organization. We also relevantly recently joined Non-Alignment Movement.

We have a very positive reputation in the world. Several years ago Azerbaijan was elected as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council with the support of 155 countries. Absolute majority of the international community supported Azerbaijan, trusted Azerbaijan and voted for us. That was our biggest diplomatic and political achievement.

We are proud of that. At the Security Council, as we declared, we defended justice and international law. We clearly realized that our destiny and our future is in our hands. Therefore, our target was to create a self-sufficient, sustainable economy. We were looking for the means to achieve that. Of course, energy factor was the most obvious. It attracted the most attention of our investments.

Therefore, in 1994, Azerbaijan started its energy strategy, which now resulted in a very active and broad cooperation between our government, foreign companies and our neighbors. We had huge oil and gas reserves, but we needed investments and we needed means to transport these reserves to the broad market. We are not connected with the world oceans, we are landlocked, and therefore we had to build pipelines. Now due to our energy strategy and our commitment we have connected for the first time in the world the Caspian Sea with the Black Sea and with

Mediterranean Sea with crude oil pipelines. This was the first step in changing the energy map of the region.

Attractive investments in oil and gas allowed our local companies to get contacts and to get experience. They allowed us to train young generation and prepare the new generation of Azerbaijanis, which already have experience in working in major international energy companies. When we discovered huge gas reserves in the end of 1990s that was also a challenge for us and a big opportunity. Today we know that energy security is primarily based on the natural gas reserves. From this point of view the role which Azerbaijan plays in the region is very important. Azerbaijan was the leading country in this process to initiate the construction of the Southern Gas Corridor which now connects almost 10 countries in the region and in Europe. And the construction already started.

This is the biggest infrastructure project which is now being implemented in Europe. Total investment for the construction of the Southern Gas Corridor and development of our gas fields is planned at the level of 45 billion dollars. Azerbaijan is the leading force in this process. Today gas of Azerbaijan is needed for consumers in different parts of the world. So energy policy, of course, increases the geo-political importance of our country, increases our opportunities. We started to get benefits from oil resources. When we complete the Southern Gas Corridor project in 3-4 years, Azerbaijan for many decades ahead, maybe for hundred years, will be one of the important suppliers of gas to our consumers in Europe, and, of course, geopolitical importance of Azerbaijan will grow, our influence will grow. And as many other countries we also want to have more opportunities in regional affairs.

But all our policies aim at regional cooperation. And we always tried to create a win-win situation. For instance, in energy policy between producers, transitors and consumers. Only in this case these projects can be successful. Also we never use our energy resources as a means of pressure or means of achievement of some unjustified advantages. On the contrary, we are always supporting our partners, our consumers, our transitors so that we create a family of countries united in one goal – to implement a project which will serve to benefit of all of us.

Now energy policy of Azerbaijan plays more and more important role in our region. The projects which we are now implementing are completely changing the energy

map of Europe. Diversification of resources and sources is now largely dependent on how successful Azerbaijan is in implementation of the projects. But we were always saying that for us, for our economy the most important is sustainable development. We are always trying to reduce dependence on oil and gas. And the policy of diversification, which we have implemented for many years, already creates big opportunities for further development.

If we look at the structure of our GDP we see that almost 70 percent of GDP is non-oil GDP. But when we look at our export, we see that absolute majority of our export is related to oil and gas, which is natural because it is large volumes and the volumes will grow because with the huge, new volumes of natural gas, which we will start to export in several years, the ratio of energy resources and our export will grow.

Therefore, we are trying to invest and attract investments and create good opportunities for local and foreign investors in non-energy sector. We are very proud that non-energy sector of our economy is growing faster than economy itself. In the first three months of this year non-oil sector grew 7 percent, while GDP growth was 5.3 percent.

Of course, as an oil producing and gas producing country, the radical change of oil prices is a matter of concern. But I have to say that it is also a big challenge for us to be more efficient, to do more for budget consolidation, reduce spending which is not so important, and to concentrate on good governance and management.

Therefore transformation of black gold, as we call oil, into human capital was a state policy of Azerbaijan. Today the economy is much more diversified than ever before and our target is to create sustainable economy where oil factor will not play an important role. It will play a role only in accumulation of more financial reserves, which for us is a matter of economic and legal security and it is a kind of guarantee from unexpected developments on the financial market.

But the main concern and main attention is aimed at non-energy sector of Azerbaijan. I know that during the meetings and seminars which took place these days our representatives already informed the audience about the economic achievements of Azerbaijan. I would like to provide just several figures to remind what has been



done in the last 10 years, which were the years of rapid economic development of our country. GDP grew three times, we have a very low foreign debt, it is around 10 percent of our GDP. We enjoyed billions and billions of investments – during the years of independence it is 200 billion dollars. Last year it was 27 billion dollars and we see that it is growing and for us it is also very important that about 70 percent of our investments are local investments. Azerbaijan is still a very attractive country for foreign investors. We managed to create more than a million jobs in a country of something more than 9 million. Therefore, unemployment rate is very low, it is around 5 percent. The biggest achievement, I think, is reduction of poverty which was 50 percent 15 years ago and now is 5 percent. That shows that we managed to avoid so-called Dutch syndrome, one-sided development of economy. We managed to transform black gold into human capital because, as we know, oil sector does not generate a lot of jobs and not in every case its leads to prosperity. In some cases it leads to alienation, fragmentation of society. The rich become richer and the poor become poorer. And it leads to social problems, leads to injustice. Therefore, our main target was that every citizen of the country benefits from this development. And every citizen can see it - in construction, in new schools, hospitals, in living standard, in infrastructure, in development, in jobs.

Therefore, reduction of poverty was one of the main targets for us and also regions of Azerbaijan. We wanted our regions to develop. Therefore, we adopted three regional development programs which created opportunities not only for citizens of Baku, but for most of those who live in the regions. Investment infrastructure is important. We used to import electricity and now we export it. We used to import natural gas and now we export it. With the help of ADB and other financial institutions and our state funds we invested largely in the social infrastructure. More than 500 hospitals and medical centers, more than 3,000 schools were built in the last 10 years, which totally changed the social infrastructure.

We now have to address issues related to ecological protection. Baku always was an industrial city and due to oil Baku actually became the center of Azerbaijan. Before the oil discovery it was one of the destinations on our map. We produced more than half of the world's oil production in the beginning of the 20th century.

During the Second World War Azerbaijan produced more than 70 percent of the oil produced in the Soviet Union, which played a decisive role in the victory over

fascism. But when we became independent what we had? We had inflation and stagnation; we had devastation of oil industry and ecological catastrophe. When the people who haven't been to Baku for 10 or 15 years come they cannot recognize it because it was dark, in dust and everywhere there were industrial sites which were out of date. But today Baku is a city of vacation, a city of events. We invested largely in public places, invested in the ecological issues. We had to spend a lot to clean those oil spills and to re-cultivate our soil here around Baku and Absheron peninsula. But this is possible only when you are independent, only when you are free, only when you are the owner of your own resources. If Azerbaijan gained independence not in 1991 but in 1971, for example, today we probably would have been one of the richest countries in the world. This is the reality. But in a short period of time, we are trying to catch-up, we are trying to compensate what we lost when we were not free and not independent.

And we clearly understand that without economic independence our political independence will not be full-scale. Therefore, energy security, economic independence and relying on our own resources was the driving force of our development. Of course we are trying to take advantage of other instruments, which we have, particularly our location. Azerbaijan is becoming a transportation hub. We have good location and good infrastructure; we invest largely in transportation infrastructure. Now we are building the biggest sea port in the Caspian with 25 million tons capacity. We have built 7 airports, 5 of them international. The construction of the railway connecting Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey very soon will be completed and thus we will connect Europe and Asia by the new Iron Silk Way. This road will cross Azerbaijan. This will be the shortest, the most convenient road for transportation. This will be a route for transportation of goods from Europe to Asia and in the opposite direction that will increase our geopolitical importance and attract additional investments and create a better situation.

What we are planning to do? What are our plans? It is modernization, increasing the quality of public services. We introduced our know-how, which is called ASAN. It is a one stop shop under one roof, which provides over the 30 public services to population within minutes. We will continue the policy of diversification. Information-communication technologies, space industry is developing now in Azerbaijan very successfully. There is great potential in agriculture. We think that agriculture and the export of more energy products will be the driving force for our economy. We

need to look for new markets and to get our place there because very soon we will to hundred percent provide ourselves with main agricultural products, and most importantly will be access to international markets. Taking into account that more than 40 percent of our people live in rural areas this also has a social impact.

We will closely watch macroeconomic situation in Azerbaijan. We devaluated our national currency a couple of months ago because we gave it a lot of weight. When we introduced the monetary reform one manat, our national currency, was equal to one dollar but in ten years manat gained weight in front of dollar which was not very natural. In all the neighboring countries national currency was already devaluated so we had to devaluate our national currency to the level of 33-34 percent. But taking into account that most of the daily consumption goods are produced here, it did not impact on the consumer prices. Macro-economic stability, lower rate of inflation will be under control to allow our exporters act freely.

We will continue to accumulate financial resources. Today our financial resources are approximately about 70 percent of our GDP. We will continue to accumulate and, at the same time, spend on the most important areas of infrastructure. We will continue to stimulate private sector and attract investment in the real sector of economy with mechanisms of low interest loans for the private sector. Diversification of our economy as a main priority for us, of course, will be in the center. We will try to keep the foreign debt as low as possible. Today the level 9-11 percent is considered to be an excellent result, but we must always take that into account. If we do not pay attention to it, one day it will grow and then it will be too late to react.

And, of course, taking into account our geographical location and climatic situation – we have 9 climatic zones in Azerbaijan – tourism will be also one of the important sectors of our economy in the coming years. And the gatherings like this, of course, create real impression and real picture about our country. We are young as an independent nation, not everybody knows about us, but we are committed to continuing this path of progress, independence, political, economic independence, freedom. I am sure that with support of such a great partner as the Asian Development Bank we will achieve all our goals.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED THE OPENING OF THE  
3<sup>RD</sup> WORLD FORUM ON INTERCULTURAL DIALOGUE**

18 May 2015, Baku

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

Ladies and gentlemen,

Dear guests,

Welcome to Azerbaijan.

I am very glad that the 3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue starts today in Baku. This is a good indicator and tradition. We are organizing this global forum for the third time already. This shows the growing importance of addressing the issues of intercultural dialogue.

Today in Baku we have representatives of more than hundred countries and this once again underlines the importance of such kind of discussions. I am sure that during the days of the forum valuable ideas will be presented in order to provide the positive dynamics in intercultural relations. Azerbaijan is playing its role in this area and by efforts which we always show, we try to bring peoples and countries, civilizations together.

Azerbaijan is situated on the crossroads of civilizations, cultures, religions. We are situated just between Europe and Asia. Of course, this geographical location played its role in cultural diversity of Azerbaijan. For centuries, representatives of all the cultures, religions, ethnicities have lived in Azerbaijan in peace, in dignity as one family. And we are very proud that during the years of independence these positive tendencies became even stronger. It is enough to look at our historical monuments to see the cultural diversity of Azerbaijan.

We are proud of our cultural and historical heritage. One of the oldest mosques in the world, which was built in 743, is situated in Azerbaijan in the ancient city of Shamakhi. One of the oldest churches in the world, the church of Caucasian Albania, is situated

near another ancient city of Sheki. Orthodox and Catholic churches, synagogues, Zoroastrian temples - all that is part of our cultural heritage, and we are proud of that.

Today, representatives of all the religions, ethnic groups live in Azerbaijan and contribute to the successful development of our country. I think this is one of our biggest assets. And we are proud of that. Therefore we organize numerous international events to promote the values of multiculturalism, values of peaceful cooperation, mutual understanding. I think the world needs this kind of events, needs open discussions, exchange of views in order to strengthen the positive tendencies.

Unfortunately what we see now in different parts of the world creates big concern. We see some tendencies in negative direction. Therefore we need open, frank discussion about what we must do together in order to bring countries, civilizations, religions closer to each other to reduce tensions, hatred. This is the issue, I think, one of the important issues on global agenda. Traditions of multiculturalism have always been very strong in our country. The creation of the international center on multiculturalism is another step made by our government in order to promote these values.



Multiculturalism has no alternatives. I think the responsibility of politicians, public figures, international institutions, NGOs, media is growing. I know that one of the topics of discussions of the forum will be precisely related to responsibility of public figures and politicians. Sometimes we see that religious hatred is deliberately cultivated. Sometimes we see in

different parts of the world the acts of violence based on ethnic and religious grounds. And the responsibility of politicians and those people who can influence the public opinion is growing. Therefore, I think that by common efforts we need to promote the values of multiculturalism. I know that there are different ideas about that - sometimes, pessimistic ideas. But there are positive examples of multiculturalism. Azerbaijan is one of them. I think it is dangerous to consider that multiculturalism is not something which can have future. On the contrary, if we give up our efforts, the situation in the world will be even worse. Therefore, the example of countries like Azerbaijan, which is now considered to be one of the world centers of multiculturalism, I think, is a good indicator that multiculturalism is alive. We need to stimulate the positive tendencies. What

are the alternatives for that? Alternatives are alienation, discrimination, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, dangerous factors which already many times in the history of mankind have led to tragedy of civilizations and peoples.

So, as a country, as a nation with deep roots of multiculturalism we are trying to play our role on global arena in order to promote these positive values. Azerbaijan is a country which is part of the Muslim world, and, at the same time, a country with strong connections with Europe. The first democratic republic in the Muslim world was created in Azerbaijan in 1918. And immediately after that women were granted the right to vote much earlier than in some of the European countries.

Therefore, our cultural and ethnic identity together with influence from Europe created an absolutely special atmosphere in our society. Throughout the centuries we have managed to protect our values, and we lived in different political, social and public environments. We were part of other countries and empires. Now we are independent, but this positive trend is still here. We are very committed to the course of promotion of these values.

One of the important elements in the promotion of values of cultural diversity, intercultural dialogue, is, of course, education. And we pay very big attention to education and we are proud that Azerbaijan is a country with a hundred percent of literacy. Education is not only the way to develop, the way to the future. We see the examples of developed countries. They achieve success not because of the natural resources but because of education, development of science and technologies. At the same time, education is the best guarantee against extremism, radicalism, fundamentalism, terrorism, it is insurance against these dangerous elements of today's life. Therefore, discussions around these topic, as far as I know, will be in the center of attention of the forum. I think the experience of Azerbaijan also could be of interest because we are also transforming now our system of education and bringing it to international standards. We are glad that young generation of Azerbaijanis wants to learn, improve their capabilities in order to find their proper place in the life and in order to strengthen the potential of Azerbaijan. At the same time, we are proud that our young generation is very patriotic. And patriotism means that people love their country. At the same time, in our opinion, patriotism is also the factor which strengthens the unity between countries and nations. We always think that respect to your own nation, your country, your own religion starts from respect to religion and values and traditions of your neighbors. Only this can lead to success.

Unfortunately, now we need to talk more about that because what we see now in different parts of the world is the divisions based on ethnic religious, sectarian ground. It is disastrous. We can see it in our neighborhood. We can see also very dangerous tendencies of neo-fascist movements. The international community and the leaders of the international community need to address this issue very seriously because we need to win the battle and only by common efforts we can do it. Therefore, the forums like what we are having today here, global forum on intercultural dialogue, are of great importance. We think that Baku is now a place where we address this kind of issues.

Azerbaijan is relatively young as an independent country. Only 24 years. But these were years of reforms, transformation, development. We got a chance to build a state. We are a country of people of traditions, culture. You can see the monuments of Baku and if you have a time to travel to other places of Azerbaijan you will see architectural, historical, religious monuments of our nation, and this is part of our heritage. But as an independent country we are very young. So we had to build a state and we had to transform our political system. I think that the experience of our country in a relatively short period of time shows that if you are committed to the cause of development, progress and if you have support of society in transformation, then you will achieve success.

Today Azerbaijan is a respected member of the international community, we play a very positive role on the regional scale. Our initiatives are aimed at strengthening regional cooperation. Political, economic issues related to energy security, of course, are in the center of attention. Our initiatives and projects, which we initiated, go far beyond our region to connect countries and continents. If you look at issues related to energy security, Azerbaijan is already playing an important role for the energy security of Europe. If you look at the transportation infrastructure, we actually are restoring the historical Silk Road. Building a new railroad connection between Europe and Asia, actually we invest in not only economic development and in better transportation facilities, but also in people-to-people contacts. Historical Silk Road was crossing Azerbaijan. So we are now restoring it with the modern technologies, and with participation of our neighbors. So all our projects related to economic and social development strengthen regional cooperation, strengthen mutual understanding between the countries and the peoples.

At the same time, the role which we play on the international arena is also appreciated by the international community. We are proud that in a very short period

of independence Azerbaijan managed to be elected to the United Nations Security Council – the highest international body - with the support of 155 countries. That means that absolute majority of the international community supported us. And frankly speaking not with all of these 155 countries we had very active relations. But I think that our behavior - in the short period of independence - as a reliable partner, as an independent country, which had its independent policy based on common values and national interests created a positive attitude to our country.

We invested a lot in economic and political transformation because when we became independent we had to build a state, we had to transform political system. Therefore political and economic reforms we implemented in parallel. We clearly realize that energy resources will not be sufficient to transform the country and provide sustainable development of Azerbaijan. Therefore, political reforms, issues related to democratic process and freedoms were in the center of our attention. Today, all the fundamental freedoms are provided in Azerbaijan - political freedoms, freedoms of media, free Internet, freedom of religion. This is the basis, the foundation for development.

Plus, very accurate economic policy based on natural resources of Azerbaijan and based on our potential allowed us to achieve what we planned in the very beginning of our independence, that is economic independence. We have very low foreign debt - only around 10 percent of GDP. Therefore, we do not depend on donors, sponsors, even donations and financial assistance from international financial institutions, though we work very actively with them. We managed to achieve, to the maximum degree, energy security of our country. Now we provide energy security of others.

Also social issues, issues related to unemployment, poverty are solved. We see a very positive dynamics. Today Azerbaijan is a country with one of the lowest rates of poverty and unemployment in the world. It is around 5 percent. And, of course, this creates positive dynamics in the society. Combination of these factors today plays the role in increasing the international importance of Azerbaijan. Of course, we mainly concentrate on domestic issues.

We still need to do a lot in order to achieve our goal and become developed country though already today our economy, according to Davos Economic Forum, is number 38 with respect to global competitiveness. This was achieved not because of energy resources, but because of reforms. We also initiate different projects which bring



nations together - as I already said - in energy sector, in economic sector, in the sector of political relations, and also in humanitarian area. Every year we have the international humanitarian forum in Baku. We held the world religious summit. We organize today`s forum already for the 3rd time.

In a three weeks` time, in less than one month, Azerbaijan will host the first ever European Games. The decision which was made in the end of 2012 was a very wise decision. Though it is a big challenge to organize the Games, scalable with the summer Olympic Games, in only two and a half years, the decision by the European Olympic Committees to organize the European Games for the first time in the world in Azerbaijan, in a country with Muslim population, was one of the wisest decisions of the recent past. We will bring together European athletes, more than 6000. We are already in the process of finalization of all the preparations. That will be really not only a big sport event, but an event of friendship, partnership and, of course, an opportunity for us to demonstrate our country and hospitality of our people. And in a two years` time, in 2017, we will have Islamic Solidarity Games. So in two years in one country, in one city European and Islamic Games will be held. Probably, that will be the only case in the history of European sport, when you have these games in two years, both in one country.

In 2008 we initiated the Baku Process. That was our initiative to invite the ministers of culture of members of the Islamic Cooperation Organization to the meeting of ministries of culture of the members of the Council of Europe for the first time. Azerbaijan is one of the few, very few countries that are members of both organizations. And then in 2009 it was a meeting of the ministers of culture of the Islamic Cooperation Organization where we invited the ministers of culture of the Council of Europe. So this was our initiative and now this initiative is named the Baku Process.

All what is happening now with respect to intercultural dialogue, dialogue of civilizations, issues related to multiculturalism, is framed by the Baku Process. We will continue our efforts and the very fact that representatives of more than hundred countries came to Baku to address these important issues creates more optimism that we will achieve our goal. We will try to contribute to the course of peace, friendship, partnership, and cultural diversity.

Once again, dear friends, welcome to Azerbaijan. Thank you.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED THE OPENING OF THE  
CASPIAN OIL & GAS 2015 EXHIBITION**

2 June 2015, Baku

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

Dear ladies and gentlemen,

Distinguished guests!

My sincere greetings to all of you – welcome to Azerbaijan!

Today I want to congratulate the people of Azerbaijan on the opening of the "Caspian Oil and Gas" exhibition because this exhibition plays an important role in the life of our country.

The first exhibition held in 1994 was a very significant event because at that time Azerbaijan was a newly-independent state. It was after 1994 that Azerbaijan began to take serious steps towards development.

Our independence was restored in 1991. But in the 1991-1993 period, the situation was extremely difficult, the country was gripped by the crisis – political, economic and military. The economy was paralyzed, while industrial production, including oil, experienced a decline. Therefore, the first exhibition in 1994 somewhat introduced Azerbaijan to the world.

I want to thank the organizers of the exhibition. For 22 years they have been organizing this exhibition, demonstrating Azerbaijan's growing energy potential to the world and actively working in partnership with us to ensure an even more rapid development of Azerbaijan.

As already mentioned, the exhibition is attended by more than 300 companies. This suggests that although the first exhibition was held 22 years ago, the interest in it has not shrunk and Azerbaijan continues to display its capabilities to the world.

In 1994, after the first exhibition, a new oil strategy of Azerbaijan emerged. Launched at the initiative of great leader Heydar Aliyev, the new oil strategy of Azerbaijan has provided successful development of our country to this day.

In September 1994, a historic agreement, the "Contract of the Century", was signed, paving the way for major foreign investments in our country. If that historic step had not been taken in 1994, it would be very difficult to imagine the development of our country today.

In those years foreign investors believed in us despite the fact that Azerbaijan was considered a very risky country at the time. Foreign investment, excellent conditions for investors, as well as the protection of Azerbaijan's national interests in all contracts signed, were the main conditions for this successful cooperation. The interests of investors, the state and the people of Azerbaijan coincided. It is this wonderful spirit of cooperation that provides for the successful development of Azerbaijan not only in the oil and gas sector, but also in all other spheres today. The experience we have gained together with foreign partners in the oil and gas industry allows us to attract investment to other areas, successfully cooperate with foreign companies and ensure a comprehensive development of our country.

The "Contract of the Century" was a contract of the 20th century. Today we are already implementing a contract of the 21st century. The Southern Gas Corridor is a contract of the 21st century. It is the contract signed in 1994 and the successes achieved later that made today's realities possible. In 1996, an international consortium was awarded a contract for the Shah Deniz gas field. The gas factor did not account for a lot in the oil and gas sector of the world at that time. The energy security of countries was not directly related to gas resources at the time.

The Shah Deniz gas field is one of the largest fields in the world. Its development provides the resource base of the Southern Gas Corridor. Prior to that, oil and gas pipelines Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum and Baku-Supsa were built. Thus, for the first time in history, the Caspian Sea was linked with the Black and the Mediterranean seas through a diversified network of pipelines. It was also a historic event. The partnership of the Caspian Sea, the Black Sea and the Mediterranean Sea emerged. This cooperation began to manifest itself in other areas. Today, it is through this corridor that the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, a major infrastructure project,

is being built. If we had built our energy policy incorrectly, this probably would have been impossible.

Thus, the work done in the late 1990s and the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines in the early 2000s, of course, were great historic achievements. These pipelines allowed Azerbaijan the opportunity to receive major currency reserves. By rationally using these resources, we channeled them into the main spheres of our country. People's well-being has improved and the economic development of our country was ensured. In the last 10 years the Azerbaijani economy has been developing at the fastest pace on a global scale – it has increased by 300 per cent. At the same time, the country has implemented the planned infrastructure projects and resolved social issues. By implementing sound economic policies, we have been able to significantly reduce our dependence on oil.

Today, the oil factor accounts for only about 30 per cent of our gross domestic product. Thus, we have made great strides in diversifying the economy.

Underlying all this, of course, are major investments made in our country in the 1990s and 2000s. Thus, we are much less dependent on the oil factor in the economic sphere today. This is why our economy has grown by more than 5 per cent this year, even though oil prices have fallen almost in half. So the diversified development of our country and the stability



of our economy are a reality. Today, our main goals, of course, are not related to the oil and gas sector. The main tasks are to diversify the economy, to further reduce dependence on the oil factor, to improve the welfare of the Azerbaijani people, to realize the outstanding major infrastructure projects and thus to create an even more solid foundation for long-term development. In addition, the major objectives facing us in the energy sector, of course, will be met because there is a very strong foundation for that. I want to reiterate that international cooperation in the oil and gas sector today shows that Azerbaijan's cooperation with foreign partners rests on a very sound foundation. Here I want to emphasize the relationship between SOCAR and BP. BP is our main partner, a company that has made very large investments. BP is the leading foreign investor and a partner in the realization of both the Contract of the Century and the Shah Deniz project.

The SOCAR-BP cooperation on other projects continues, and this cooperation has a history of more than 20 years.

The SOCAR-BP cooperation will be continued for decades to come. It benefits both our state and foreign partners. Such is the wonderful atmosphere in Azerbaijan. All foreign investments are adequately protected. As you know, all oil and gas contracts are approved by parliament and acquire the force of law. This, of course, further enhances investor confidence in us.

Today, in hindsight, we can say with pride that Azerbaijan has adequately and timely met all the challenges facing it in the energy sector. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline, the development of the oil and gas fields of Shah Deniz, Azeri-Chirag – each of these projects in itself is a major energy project. Along with this, the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor has begun. This is also a historic event. I should note that while implementing this project, Azerbaijan has once again demonstrated its leadership role. As you know, the gas transportation route from the Caspian basin to Europe was a topic of discussion for many years, and Azerbaijan took part in these discussions. But seeing that these discussions do not lead to specific results, we put forward our own initiative, and in 2012 Turkey and Azerbaijan signed an agreement on the TANAP gas pipeline project. After that the process went faster. The Trans-Adriatic Pipeline was selected as the main export route to Europe, and the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor was launched. This signaled the start of the Shah Deniz-2 project.

We have achieved all of these successes over the past three years. I remember speaking at the exhibition last year, exactly a year ago, and saying: I am sure that at the next exhibition we will report on new successes to our people. And it is the case. Look! Since the previous 21st exhibition, the ground-breaking ceremony of the Southern Gas Corridor has been held in Baku, at the Sangachal Terminal. In fact, this took place on 20 September, the date when the "Contract of the Century" was signed. It was an event of great symbolic significance. After that, on the initiative of Azerbaijan, the first meeting of the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor was held in Baku in February of this year. The event was joined by senior officials of all participating countries of the Southern Gas Corridor, as well as the Vice President of the European Commission and other officials.

In March, we launched the TANAP project in the Turkish city of Kars. Please note that all these events occurred over the past year, i.e. since the previous exhibition. The Southern Gas Corridor is already a reality and is being implemented. I am convinced that the work on the expansion of the South Caucasus gas pipeline, which essentially means a new pipeline, and the implementation of the TANAP project which will be commissioned in three years, will be implemented in a timely manner. Thus, Azerbaijan will be able to transport gas from Shah Deniz-2 to both Georgia and Turkey. At the same time, I hope that no problems will arise in the implementation of the TAP project. I believe that all parties need to show great responsibility, because it is our common cause. The discussions held during the meeting of the Advisory Board of the Southern Gas Corridor, which was held in Baku on Azerbaijan's initiative in February of this year, and the press statement adopted in the end indicate that all parties involved are aware of their responsibility. The statement highlighted the special leading role of Azerbaijan.

Therefore, I believe that the greatest need for the implementation of this project is felt in the coordination work. I talked about this at the meeting of the Advisory Board. This project requires a high level of mutual confidence. All participating countries have to persevere and no-one should seek additional benefits, because everything is obvious. All contracts have been signed, all parties, companies and countries participating in this global project will reap large benefits. Of course, now we come to a new format of cooperation. A trilateral format involving Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey emerged earlier, and we are working very effectively. Three fraternal countries have implemented all projects in close cooperation. Today, the format is expanding, as new players are joining the project. The members of the Southern Gas Corridor are Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Albania and Italy. At the same time, memorandums relating to the participation of a number of Balkan countries in the Southern Gas Corridor have been signed. So look how much our circle is expanding. On the one hand, it is a huge advantage. On the other, of course, at certain stages there may be some questions. All these issues should be discussed and resolved in the conditions of friendship and mutual understanding. I want to say again that there should not be and I am sure there won't be any artificial barriers between us. In this case we will implement the TAP project in a timely manner. Thus, we will start transporting Azerbaijani gas to Europe. It will be a historic event both for us – because we will gain access to a very large gas market – and for European consumers, because they will receive large volumes of gas from an alternative source.

The advantage of the Southern Gas Corridor is that we are talking about a new source of gas. The diversification of routes, of course, is an important issue. Every country, including Azerbaijan, is committed to ensuring that there is a diversified network of pipelines. Currently we have seven oil and gas pipelines. We do not depend on any particular direction. Of course, consumers also want their energy resources to come by different routes. Therefore, the diversification of routes, of course, strengthens the energy security. But if there is no diversification of sources, it does not matter much.

Our advantage lies in the fact that gas will be transported to Europe via a new route. At the same time, the gas will be extracted from a new source, and it is a very large source. The Shah Deniz field, which is currently the only resource base for the Southern Gas Corridor, has gas reserves of 1.2 trillion cubic meters. Currently, Azerbaijan's proven gas reserves make up 2.6 trillion cubic meters. I am sure that this is not the final figure. This figure will increase, because appraisal work is currently under way on several fields. Several fields are undergoing exploration work, and I am sure we will have even more proven reserves of gas.

Therefore, when people talk about energy security, of course, they usually imply the diversification of routes and sources.

Here, Azerbaijan plays a fairly unique role that is earning a decent assessment. Back in 2011, the European Union and Azerbaijan signed a memorandum on strategic partnership in the energy sector. The processes that recently took place in the energy policy of the European Union suggest that Azerbaijan is perceived as a very important partner and is highlighted in relevant documents. Of course, we are well aware of our role. At the same time, we are aware of our responsibility. Therefore, Azerbaijan manifests itself as a reliable partner for Europe. The future work in the energy sector will raise the relations between the European Union and Azerbaijan to an even higher level. Our intention is to create a format of strategic partnership. After that, each party may determine the long-term strategy, and all the questions, of course, can be resolved through serious coordination.

The ample oil and gas resources and Azerbaijan's bold policy and steps will redraw the energy map of Europe. This is a reality, and our role will gradually grow. This will strengthen our country. This will bring our country both political and economic dividends and, ultimately, provide a better life for the people of Azerbaijan.

Along with this, as I have already said, we are implementing reforms in the economic sphere. The reforms ongoing in Azerbaijan are highly appreciated by leading international financial institutions of the world. All our economic indicators are at the highest level. According to the Davos World Economic Forum, Azerbaijan is ranked in 38th place in the world in terms of economic competitiveness. Our external debt stands at just 10 per cent and the unemployment rate is 5 per cent. Foreign exchange reserves account for 75 per cent of the gross domestic product, maybe even more. Despite the sharp drop in the oil price, Azerbaijan provides its economic development. In four months of this year, the economy grew by 5.3 per cent. Our non-oil sector grew by almost 7 per cent.

Azerbaijan also hosts major and prestigious international events. Ten days later, Azerbaijan, Baku will host the first European Games in history. This is a historic event. We prepared for these games in just two years. In a short period of time we have organized games that will be held at the level of Olympic Games. It demonstrates the power, the strong political will of our country. This indicates that although we are young as an independent country, we are already capable of securing a firm place on the world map.

I wish the exhibition participants every success. I want to express my gratitude to the organizers of the exhibition again. I am confident that the exhibition will be held at a high level and our partnership with international companies will be successfully continued.

Thank you.



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

- 01.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan Amangeldi Jumabayev as he ends his diplomatic mission in the country
- 08.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation, Minister of Youth and Sports, President of Olympic Committee of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Abdullah bin Mosaad bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
- 08.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by European Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn
- 09.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Arab Emirates Salem Khalifa Mohammed Al Ghafli as he ends his diplomatic mission in the country
- 14.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Prime Minister of the Republic of Serbia Aleksandar Vucic
- 14.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the Republic of Tatarstan of the Russian Federation Rustam Minnikhanov
- 15.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Economic Development of the Italian Republic Federica Guidi
- 19.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of the newly-appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Kazakhstan Beybit Isabayev
- 19.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of the newly-appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam Nguyen Thanh Son

- 20.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Defense and Armed Forces Logistics of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hossein Dehghan
- 20.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by CEO of Rostec State Corporation of the Russian Federation Sergey Chemezov
- 27.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Prime Minister of the Republic of Malta Joseph Muscat
- 27.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by president of the Representative Council of Jewish Institutions of the French Republic Roger Cukierman
- 27.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Latvia Vaira Vike-Freiberga and director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Ismail Serageldin
- 28.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of Belgium Didier Reynders
- 29.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by European Union Special Representative for the South Caucasus Herbert Salber
- 30.04.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the Asian Development Bank Takehiko Nakao
- 01.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Hungary Zsolt Chutora who is completing his diplomatic activity in the country
- 01.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Managing Director of the International Monetary Fund Mitsuhiro Furusawa

- 03.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the World Bank's Vice President for Europe and Central Asia Laura Tuck
- 03.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister of Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatisation of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mohammad Ishaq Dar
- 04.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Economy and Finance of the Italian Republic Pier Carlo Padoan
- 04.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance of Japan Taro Aso
- 08.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development Suma Chakrabarti
- 11.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev has received a delegation by Secretary of the Security Council of the Russian Federation Nikolai Patrushev
- 12.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Ali Babacan
- 14.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by chair of the Germany–South Caucasus Parliamentary Friendship Group at Bundestag of the Federal Republic of Germany Karin Strenz
- 15.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Commerce and Industry of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Tawfig Fawzan Alrabiah
- 17.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev and his spouse Mehriban Aliyeva received former director general of UNESCO Koichiro Matsuura

- 17.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev and his spouse Mehriban Aliyeva received UN High-Representative for the Alliance of Civilizations Nassir Abdulaziz Al-Nasser
- 17.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev and his spouse Mehriban Aliyeva received director general of UNESCO Irina Bokova
- 18.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Chairman of the Foundation for Ethnic Understanding of the United States of America Rabbi Marc Schneier
- 21.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Belarus Vladimir Semashko
- 24.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Director-General of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations Jose Graziano da Silva
- 27.05.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by governor of Southern Sinai province of the Arab Republic of Egypt Khaled Fouda
- 01.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Lord Mayor of the City of London Alderman Alan Yarrow
- 01.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by OSCE Chairperson, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia Ivica Dacic
- 01.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Oil of the Republic of Iraq Adil Abdul-Mahdi
- 02.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Deputy Prime Minister, Minister of Economy of the Republic of Poland Janusz Piechocinski
- 03.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received OSCE Project Co-ordinator in Baku Alexis Chahtahtinsky, who is completing his diplomatic mission

- 03.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Moldova Igor Bodiou as he ends his diplomatic mission in the country
- 04.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of the newly-appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United Mexican State Juan Rodrigo Labardini Flores
- 11.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Captains Regent of the Republic of San Marino Andrea Belluzzi and Roberto Venturini
- 11.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Prime Minister of the Republic of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili
- 11.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received chairman of the House of Deputies of the Czech Republic Jan Hamacek
- 11.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria Boyko Borisov
- 11.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mladen Ivanic
- 13.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received president of the Islamic Solidarity Sports Federation, Minister of Youth and Sport and president of the National Olympic Committee of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Prince Abdullah bin Musaed bin Abdulaziz Al Saud
- 13.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Deputy Prime Minister of the Italian Republic Claudio De Vincenti
- 17.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Speaker of the National Assembly of the Republic of Hungary Laszlo Kover
- 22.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received ambassadors of the Muslim countries to the country on the occasion of the holy month of Ramadan

- 25.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the Republic of Latvia, co-chair of the Nizami Ganjavi International Centre Vaira Vike-Freiberga
- 26.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received co-chair of Nizami Ganjavi International Centre, director of the Bibliotheca Alexandrina Ismail Serageldin
- 27.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received chairman of the Parliament of the Principality of Liechtenstein Albert Frick
- 27.06.2015 President Ilham Aliyev received Secretary General of the Socialist International Luis Ayala



**ACTIVITY  
OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC  
OF AZERBAIJAN,  
H.E. Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
IN THE SECOND QUARTER OF 2015**

**STATEMENT OF MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AT THE 6TH MEETING OF  
EASTERN PARTNERSHIP FOREIGN MINISTERS MEETING**

20 April 2015, Luxembourg

Madam Mogherini,

Commissioner Hahn,

Distinguished colleagues,

Ladies and gentlemen,

Post-Vilnius developments, unfortunately, brought many challenges to the overall EaP region, including launching of another conflict. All conflicts in the EaP area have undergone the similar scenario and brought the same grave consequences – violation of territorial integrity, occupation and separatism. Now it is high time to demonstrate a unified stance and solidarity towards settlement of all conflicts in the region.

Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict remains a stumbling stone for making full use of multilateral framework of Eastern Partnership and keeps posing a serious threat in EU's immediate neighborhood. Therefore, we expect EU to demonstrate a firm

response to security challenges that persist in the region by consistent commitment to the territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of international borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan and urge for soonest implementation of respective United Nations Security Council resolutions adopted in this regard. We strongly believe that de-occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan will bring long-awaited by the people of the region and all international community peace and security.

Azerbaijan for a numerous times expressed its readiness to the calls of OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs to begin drafting Comprehensive Peace Agreement and bring peace and stability to the region.

Despite persisting security challenges, post-Vilnius period has registered a considerable progress in Azerbaijan-EU bilateral cooperation. Strategic partnership in the field of energy has evolved considerably thanks to the concrete steps taken by Azerbaijan in the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor. Groundbreaking ceremonies of the Southern Gas Corridor in Baku and later TANAP in Kars, Turkey was a clear manifestation of Azerbaijan's strong commitment to bring alternative gas volumes to the European market. Upon the initiative of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev and with support of Vice-president of the European Commission on Energy Union Mr. Maroš Šefčovič, the first meeting of the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor was convened in Baku on 12 February 2015. Next meeting is planned to be in Turkey very soon.

Dear colleagues,

The signature of the Mobility Partnership, Visa Facilitation and Readmission Agreements during and after Vilnius Summit has set the necessary ground for the practical implementation of our common goals.

Azerbaijan welcomes the public consultation launched by the EU to conduct a fundamental review of European Neighborhood Policy.

In this regard, I would like to share my observations on 4 key points of ENP revision – differentiation, ownership, focus and flexibility.

Azerbaijan is convinced that the priority-driven and project-based cooperation as



prerequisites of greater differentiation policy in the bilateral dimension of the Eastern Partnership promises positive outcome for mutual benefit. These priorities should be developed taking into account the geo-economic importance and geo-political position of Azerbaijan as well as major principles of its foreign policy.

As far as the ownership concerned, it should start from equal partnership and mutual commitment of parties to core principles of international law, because they are the foundations of building credible and trustworthy relations between parties. This factor is critically important for the success of the EU engagement in the Eastern Partnership geography where selective use of instruments in respect to the partners has negatively influenced the EU aspirations of partners.

Azerbaijan shares the EU's dedication to increasing the focus on specific areas of cooperation which partner countries desire to develop. Economic development, energy, connectivity (transport, ICT and including common aviation area), migration, mobility are in the interests of Azerbaijan to promote in cooperation with EU. Meanwhile, taking note of the EU ambition to promote religious dialogue and cultural diversity in the ENP area, Azerbaijan is extremely keen on sharing its expertise with its lively multicultural environment.

Azerbaijan believes that the flexibility will be exercised easily once both parties manage to fulfil the requirements of previous key pillars. The ENP history has demonstrated that the difficulties to adapt the EU policy towards partners stemmed from the persistent “one-size fits all” policy, miscalculation of individual needs and imposing extreme interdependency between values and interests.

Taking all these into consideration, Azerbaijan reiterates its interest in EU-Azerbaijan cooperation in the spirit of strategic partnership.

In June Azerbaijan will host the first ever European Games – an exciting and innovative new multi-sport event for the continent which will be one of the major sport events in the history of Europe.

Thank you!

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS, FOREIGN TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT  
COOPERATION OF THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM, MR. DIDIER RENDERS**

28 April 2015, Baku

Ladies and Gentlemen!

As you may know, Chairman of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Foreign Trade and Development Cooperation of the Kingdom of Belgium, H.E. Didier Renders is paying an official visit to the Republic of Azerbaijan within his regional visit.

During the meeting, we exchanged views on several issues, as well as touched upon regional matters. Within this context, I briefed my counterpart about Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Azerbaijan's stance on the issue, as well as the latest status of negotiations. I may say, I am planning to pay a visit to Paris, France for meeting up with co-chairs. We do believe that it is the real time for achieving progress on the conflict.

Meanwhile, we had discussion on the current status of bilateral relations between Belgium and Azerbaijan. Now, the fact that more than 60 companies of Belgium origin in Azerbaijan is of great importance and some of those companies are operating in our country. Apart from this, Belgium companies are interested in cooperation on various fields, especially energy field. Some companies are at negotiation stage regarding Southern Gas Corridor.

We had discussion on regional issues, process taking place in Ukraine, Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, negotiations within Riga Summit on Eastern Partnership. Generally, I may say that Azerbaijan also maintains its relations steadily within Council of Europe and will continue its cooperation from now on with this organization.

In respect to NATO, as you may know, productive cooperation has been established between Belgium and Azerbaijan in Afghanistan. Belgian soldiers fly to Afghanistan

by using Azerbaijan's airport. We are attempting with all available means to assure that Belgian soldiers feel comfortable while entering and leaving Afghanistan.

In terms of cooperation on humanitarian field, I may tell that, various cultural events were held in both countries. On sport field, 160 athletes representing Belgium will attend the First European Games to be held in Azerbaijan and we believe that many of sportsmen will be able to win.

### Q&A session

**Question:** *Concerning the upcoming Riga Summit, I would like to know what kind of precise relation or partnership you are expecting with European Union. My second question is about human right defenders in the country.*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** First on Riga Summit, I believe that Riga Summit is an essential platform to assess the developments of relations between Eastern Partnership countries and European Union within the last two years after Vilnius Summit. Everyone is absolutely aware of what happened in the region, so in this context, Riga Summit is a very important event. As to expectations of Azerbaijan from the Summit, as you know, Azerbaijan is building up its own cooperation with European Union within the very strategic elements, especially on energy. We already have memorandum of strategic partnership on energy field signed by President Aliyev and President Barroso which paved the way for ideas for the realization of Southern Gas Corridor. Also, recently-build Trans Anatolian Pipeline is a part of discussion with European Union. Besides that, we are cooperating on aviation, visa facilitation and we also want to add some elements like information technologies. The point is that it should be mutually interested and mutually fruitful. We are looking for kind of cooperation that will be consistently continued.

As to second question concerning human rights, to some extent it was also part of our discussion. Azerbaijan is clearly facing the double standards on the part of the NGOs. These double standards do not reflect themselves in regard to other countries but Azerbaijan and its immediate neighbors. The first and utmost example is Armenia. I totally agree with Didier who said whenever it comes migrants in Europe, it is to be shed a light upon in all newspapers, but one million of refugees and IDPs is not even discussed or it is very superficially discussed by different journalists and

the occupied territories, including ethnic cleansing is out of picture. So in this case, I will call upon on those journalist who wants to be honest and neutral in their reports regarding ongoing developments in the region that the first reference about violation of human rights should be the Article 1 of Universal Declaration of Human Rights which affirms their right to live in the place of their origin, which is very unfortunately forcefully, militarily violated by Armenia. When it comes to our domestic issues, if you look into the criminal cases filed, the reason of their persecution is not related to their activities as a human rights defender, but rather with activities that do not comply with the rule of law norms. If you are human rights defender, it doesn't mean that you can evade taxation or break any other legal procedures in the country. If run within rule of law, they will be no such elements. But on the other hand, I have to urge those journalists claiming to be truth defenders, there is dire need for reports about the violation of rights of almost one million people who is expelled forcefully from their places of origins. Thank you!

**Question:** *I would like you to provide information on your upcoming meeting with co-chairs, visit of co-chairs to the region and their meeting with presidents.*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** Since April events are over, we, first and foremost, need to ponder how we can achieve development on the conflict. This was mentioned by Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Ministry of Russia and by the President of France and Americans are most probably of the same opinion. Belgium Foreign Minister also stated that time for the resolution of this matter has already arrived. To this end, Armenian forces should be withdrawn from Azerbaijan's occupied territories and in turn this will pay the way for the implementation of further steps.

**ADDRESS BY MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AT NATO RESOLUTE  
SUPPORT MINISTERIAL MEETING**

13 May 2015, Antalya

Dear Mr. Secretary General,

Dear Minister Chavushoglu and Minister Rabbani,

Colleagues and friends,

I think I will speak everybody's mind thanking our fabulous Turkish hosts for hospitality in the marvellous Antalya and I extend our appreciation to the Turkish government and my friend Minister Chavushoglu.

For me it is a double pleasure to be here, since I am in brotherly Turkey and our troops at the Resolute Support Mission (RSM) also serve together with the Turkish contingent.

Azerbaijan contributes significantly to the RSM by providing troops, multimodal transit, training and financial assistance. Azerbaijan has already made one million Euros donations to the Afghanistan National Army (ANA) Trust Fund in 2012, and will further donate 2 million Euros to ANA Trust Fund by the end of 2017.

But experience of the last decade demonstrated that military assistance alone is not enough for establishing sustainable peace in Afghanistan. Therefore, my country's contribution to the stability of Afghanistan goes well beyond of our involvement in NATO operations. We support Afghanistan on its path towards self-reliance by enhancing practical contributions in the areas of education and training, infrastructure development, investments, and financial aid.

ADA University in Azerbaijan holds annual governance trainings for Afghan officials in addition to NATO trainings at its facilities, our Mine Agency provides mine-awareness projects, Ministry of Emergency is about to sign a memorandum to allow Afghan nationals to have a full 4-year education at its Academy, and we are building a school in Afghanistan. My government covers all expenses.

We also need to help Afghan government in its vast reform agenda. Transport infrastructure is a very important part of it. We should link Afghanistan and Europe in the shortest way possible.

New Alat Sea Port on the Caspian shore of Azerbaijan and Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, linking Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan, will bring its added-values in this regard and beyond, restoring the ancient Silk Road.

Last, but not least, future of Afghanistan will also very much depend on the neighbors and we should all help to make Afghanistan story a successful one.

Thank You.

**STATEMENT OF MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
AZERBAIJAN AT THE MINISTERIAL MEETING OF VISEGRAD GROUP (V4)  
AND EASTERN PARTNERSHIP COUNTRIES**

15 May 2015, Bratislava

Minister Lajcak,

Madam Mogherini,

Commissioner Hahn,

Distinguished colleagues,

Allow me to express my gratitude for a warm welcome and hospitality extended to us here in Bratislava.

We recently met in Luxembourg where we had the opportunity to refocus on the objectives of the Eastern Partnership and further consolidate our efforts in building a prosperous future against the backdrop of new geopolitical developments in the region.

The post-Vilnius period has unveiled the increasing difference of the will of partners in engaging with the EU as a whole and in relation to different policy sectors. In the case of Azerbaijan, EU integration goals have explicitly dwelled on joint interests with a view of promoting and ensuring equal level of ownership. Azerbaijan is ready to upgrade the contractual relations with the EU which will reflect on the elements of strategic partnership.

In this context, an enhanced political dialogue with V4 countries has been instrumental in drawing the new partnership agenda with the EU. The number of strategic partners of Azerbaijan within the EU has increased as a result of signing of the Joint Declaration on Strategic Partnership with Hungary last year. To date back, we have established a similar partnership framework with Romania (whose distinguished representative is here with us today) which inspired both sides to expand the scope of bilateral relations by concluding an Action Plan on its implementation at a later stage.

Our strategic partnership and growing relations with V4 group are largely predicated upon strengthening economic ties with these countries. Azerbaijan's trade turnover with Hungary tripled last year, considerable increase was also registered in our trade relations with Poland, Slovakia and the Czech Republic. Certainly, there is a huge potential to boost and diversify bilateral trade by means of EU offered instruments and programs. In this regard, V4 countries are welcome to step up with more TAIEX and Twinning initiatives in order to support institutional reform plans in the relevant fields under the Comprehensive Institutional Building Program.

Ladies and gentlemen,

As we are going through the review process of the European Neighborhood Program we have to make clear how we want to proceed so that it becomes more tailored and adaptable to the needs of partner countries. We already shared our initial reflections on this important development during the recently held Ministerial meeting in Luxembourg. I am convinced that the high level deliberations during the Riga Eastern Partnership Summit will significantly feed in the ongoing joint consultations to be finalized by the end of June.

A couple of words could be spelled out in this regard.

1. Only partnership based on equal rights and joint ownership can bring tangible results.
2. The focus on areas of strongest common interest should not narrow its inclusivity. For example, improving connectivity with partner countries should not entail the progressive disengagement of the EU from the existing inter-regional transport initiatives, notably TRACECA which maintains its vast potential to link Europe with Central Asian market and beyond. Speaking of connectivity, I am also pleased to reconfirm that Azerbaijan is ready for the talks on the Common Aviation Agreement with EU.
3. We believe that strategic partnership in the field of energy will further strengthen our mutually beneficial relations with EU. We welcome the recent decision of the European Commission on the prolongation of exemption of TAP from certain requirements of third party access as well as the recent decision of the Italian government with regard to the TAP project. These positive developments encourage the Southern Gas Corridor countries to intensify their actions in close coordination with EU to meet the deadline



for the first gas delivery from the Caspian Sea. Meanwhile, the recent quadripartite Ministerial meeting in Ashgabat emphasized the importance of diversification of energy sources, delivery routes and sales markets for the future of energy security of Europe.

Dear colleagues,

As much as it offered opportunities for cooperation, the ENP in its current form has fallen short of addressing key security challenges in the Eastern Partnership geography, that is, the protracted military conflicts.

The ongoing occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan by Armenia and its continuous engagement in illegal activities in these territories clearly demonstrate that Armenia is not genuinely interested in the pursuit of peace in the region. These activities represent a serious barrier to the settlement of the conflict, the core elements of which are the liberation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the realization by the forcibly displaced people of their right to live in peace and dignity in the place of their origin.

Deployment of Armenian military units in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, their regular and routine inspections by the highest leadership of Armenia, military exercises are an unequivocal evidence of acts of aggression in accordance with the international law. Only the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from all the occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan as called for in relevant UN SC Resolutions will help build lasting confidence between the parties.

Now that we are in an intensive phase of discussions on the draft Joint Declaration of the Riga Eastern Partnership Summit, it is imperative that our partners in Europe once again voice their unweaving support to the settlement of the conflicts in the region on the basis of the principles and norms of international law as well as documents and decisions adopted in this format.

Ladies and gentlemen,

I am pleased to announce that the torch of the 1st European Games has already been lit in Baku. We will transform this event that is as symbolic for the whole of Europe as it is for us, into a parade of peace, friendship and cooperation.

Thank you!

**SPEECH BY MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AT THE 125TH SESSION OF THE  
COMMITTEE OF MINISTERS OF THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE**

19 May 2015, Brussels

Mr. Chairman,

Excellencies,

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to wholeheartedly congratulate my distinguished colleague, Minister Didier Reynders and his team for able and successful Belgian Chairmanship and for excellent organization of the 125th Session of Committee of Ministers in Brussels. I also warmly welcome Mr. Igor Crnadak, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Bosnia and Herzegovina to this post and extend him my candid wishes for success in performing the functions he is about to assume.

Mr. Chairman,

It was with interest that we got acquainted with the Secretary-General's second report on "State of democracy, human rights and the rule of law in Europe" which presents a comprehensive overview of the existing situation with a special focus on concrete recommendations as to the ways of addressing the outstanding issues.

We also believe that democratic security is the ability of democratic societies to avoid conflict and instability by fostering tolerance based on shared values. Given the rising intolerance in Europe, the fight against violent extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism deserves to be high on the agenda of many European countries.

Azerbaijan, being one of the thirty two member states having signed and ratified the Council of Europe Convention on the Prevention of Terrorism, supported the adoption of the declaration on combating extremism and radicalization leading to terrorism at our Ministerial.

In the meanwhile, the fight against terrorism and extremism should not be used to target any particular religion or culture. Today, we are living at a time of heightened religious awareness, which is maliciously exploited in certain instances to fuel conflicts on ethnic, religious or cultural grounds. In recent years, alarming rise of “Islamophobia” in some European countries confirms the vital necessity of our joint efforts to counter this phenomenon.

Terrorism in many instances is inseparably linked to aggressive separatism. Areas affected by armed conflicts provide favorable conditions conducive to expansion of this evil. The international community should, therefore, facilitate the resolution of conflicts on the basis of the generally accepted norms and principles of international law, particularly those relating to respect for territorial integrity and inviolability of the internationally recognized borders of States, and help countries restore sovereignty and security over their own territories. The Council of Europe also has an important role to play in this respect.

Mr. Chairman,

One of the oldest unresolved or protracted conflict is Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict with notorious 20 percent occupation of Azerbaijani lands and one million refugees and IDPs.

The Government of Armenia must realize that reliance on the status-quo achieved as a result of military aggression by the use of force is a grave miscalculation. Occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan and ethnic cleansing of local population from homes of their origin does not represent a solution and will never produce a political outcome desired by Armenia. Withdrawal of Armenia’s troops as clearly required by relevant UN Security Council Resolutions of 1993, can be a significant confidence building measure and will completely change the dynamic of the ongoing peace process and open up immense opportunities for comprehensive and sustainable development of the entire South Caucasus region.

Thank you.

**STATEMENT BY MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV MINISTER OF FOREIGN  
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
42ND SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE  
ORGANIZATION OF ISLAMIC COOPERATION**

27-28 May 2015, Kuwait

Dear Mr. Chairman

Mr. Secretary General

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I would like to express my sincere gratitude to the Government of the State of Kuwait for the high-level organization of our session and extended gracious hospitality. I also convey our deep gratitude to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia for the strong commitment and flawless work done during its chairmanship of the CFM.

In the light of the major challenges which our world and particularly Muslim countries are facing today our session on “Joint vision to strengthen tolerance and reject terrorism” has to deliver very clear messages and should be directed towards consolidation of efforts within the OIC to raise awareness about Islam, as well as contribute to the promotion of mutual understanding and respect between various religions and cultures.

Since our last meeting we have been witnessed the sorrowful and tragic events, such as the Peshawar school massacre in Pakistan, Boko Haram violence in Nigeria, violent killings in Paris and atrocities committed by ISIS and the latest one on mosque in Saudi Arabia. To the deepest regret, executors of these heinous acts distort religion to serve their barbaric causes. As a result, all these actions lead to the misunderstanding of Islam religion in some parts of the world. Islam is a religion that promotes peace and understanding among people of all faiths, and it strictly prohibits all forms of violence and aggression against any human being regardless his or her faith.

The Republic of Azerbaijan has always called for fight against defamation of religions

and incitement to religious hatred. Azerbaijan condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations committed by whomever, wherever and for whatever purposes, as it constitutes one of the most serious threats to international peace and security.

As part of our sustained contributions for development of multiculturalism and tolerance, we were very pleased to host 3rd World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue in Baku on 18-19 May 2015. We are very delighted to host 7th Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations next year in our country.

It is a common knowledge that sport is a powerful tool to strengthen social ties and networks and to promote peace, fraternity, solidarity, non-violence and tolerance. As you know, Islamic Solidarity Games will be held in Azerbaijan in 2017 and it is a great honour and responsibility for us to host such event.

Excellencies,

The situation in Palestine and the question of Al-Quds Al-Sharif require a unified stand of the international community. We highly appreciate the valuable work of the OIC Secretary General and his staff to consolidate our efforts and organize visits of the OIC Ministerial Contact Group aimed to provide all necessary assistance to the people of Palestine. The Government of Azerbaijan stands for the two-state solution and reaffirms its full support to the brotherly people of Palestine in their efforts for achieving peace, stability and establishment of their independent state with East Jerusalem as its capital.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Azerbaijan reiterates its sincere gratitude to the Islamic Ummah, and OIC member states and OIC Secretariat for their long standing position in condemnation of the Armenian aggression and occupation of Azerbaijani territories with notorious ethnic cleansing on the seized lands. We highly appreciate OIC Member States demand for immediate, unconditional and complete withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from all our occupied territories, as it is urged by the relevant resolutions and decisions of UN Security Council, OIC and other international organizations.

Excellencies,

Following the rapid economic development, Azerbaijan has become an emerging donor country in the recent years. Since 2012 the national donor institution - Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA), within the frame of strategic cooperation with Islamic Development Bank, has jointly carried out humanitarian actions under the “Alliance to Fight Avoidable Blindness” campaign in numerous African countries. As a result, thousands of people suffering from cataract were undergone to eye surgeries.

Mr. Chairman,

In conclusion, I would like to wish successful deliberations to this important event and express our high appreciation to OIC Secretary General Mr. Iyad Ameen Madani and his highly dedicated team for the professionalism in the realization of the goals and principles of our Organization.

Thank you.

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF THE FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND DEPUTY  
PRIME MINISTER AND FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC OF SERBIA  
AND OSCE CHAIRMAN-IN-OFFICE, MR. IVICA DACIC**

1 June 2015, Baku

Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

As you probably know, Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Serbia, as well as OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Mr. Ivica Dacic is paying a visit to Azerbaijan. Today, Mr. Dacic has been received by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

We met with my counterpart in private and multilateral framework. Though Mr.Dacic is visiting Azerbaijan as an OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the visit allowed us to discuss bilateral strategic partnership issues between Azerbaijan and Serbia. Relations between two countries on the sphere of economy, political and humanitarian fields are in the highest level and during the meeting we exchanged views on energy, transportation, and visa related issues. Regarding the visa related- issue, Mr. Dacic put forward a very interesting proposal. He proposed to apply visa-free regime for the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan visiting Serbia. For sure, the issue will be considered through current internal procedures.

Regarding the discussion with Mr. Dacic in his capacity of OSCE Chairman-in-Office, we touched upon several issues of interests; mainly we had discussion towards Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. Also I asked Mr. Dacic to raise and discuss the issue of release of Azerbaijani hostages with the officials of Armenia within his visit to Yerevan.

We put on the table several proposals on the conflict resolution. As you probably know, we are in favor of starting negotiations on Peace Agreement and as Co-chairs proposed, on establishment of certain working groups as soon as humanly possible. Azerbaijan stands ready for cooperation on this issue and we do expect that the visit of Mr. Dacic to Yerevan will give an impulse to achieve progress. Thank you!

**Q&A session**

**Question:** *Your Excellences', the question is for both of you. Serbia has a lot of experience in difficult negotiations and Serbia has a very good bilateral cooperation with Azerbaijan. To what extent do you expect that these two circumstances will assist Serbia in offering through the Chairmanship?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** First of all, of course, as it was just sounded by Minister Dacic, Azerbaijan is standing in the same line with Serbia on the principle of territorial integrity and we believe that what was mentioned even if anyone reads Helsinki Final Act, including the principles as they shined thereof, principle of territorial integrity is higher than principle of self-determination. Self-determination-it means that within the agreement and the consent of the capital, self-right of the people living there. But it doesn't mean absolutely there should be violation of territorial integrity, unless the country agrees itself that this principle will be adequately introduced. With regard of our experience what we expect from Serbia, first and utmost what I mentioned in my advance statement, we believe that Serbia got pretty good office with regard of people-to-people contacts. We introduce the idea that why wouldn't under the patronage or chairmanship of Serbia we can establish people-to-people contact, for example, Armenian and Azerbaijani communities of Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Republic of Azerbaijan, or exchanging of data on missing persons which is very noble and very humanitarian. Because one day conflict will be resolved, but who lost their members of family should definitely know what happened to them through the hot period of war. We advise that why wouldn't we looking for the different working groups, including involvement of different institutions, like UNHCR and UNDP to see that whenever we achieve the stage when Armenia withdraws its troops from the occupied territories, at least we will have in full preparation for those who decide to return back to their place of origin and they will have at least a plan for that. I think that Serbia got a very good experience in this case, besides that it is now being in Chairmanship and putting that kind of noble proposals. I think that it would be useful for bringing peace and stability, particular to the South Caucasus and particular to Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**Question:** *Minister, within your last visit to Russia, during the meeting with the Foreign Minister of Russia, Mr. Sergei Lavrov, it was underlined that settlement of the conflict is ripe. What is the positive opportunity in this regard? My second question is about the hostages, what are being done for return of hostages?*



**Elmar Mammadyarov:** Regarding the second question, I have already mentioned that, I asked Mr. Dacic to raise the issue and discuss with officials of Armenia. I do believe that Mr.Dacic's visit to Yerevan will pave the way for solution of the issue.

We touched this issue at the joint press conference with Mr. Lavrov, needless to say, it is the time for the settlement of conflict. Positive aspect of this approach is that, all parties involved to the conflict resolution process, Co-chairs, intend to achieve a breakthrough in the negotiation process. Turning the positivity to the reality is another subject to discuss. We agreed with Mr. Lavrov on continuation of the discussions on these issues within Minsk Group.

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

- 03.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Amangeldy Jumabaev, Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Azerbaijan upon the termination of his diplomatic tenure
- 08.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Michael Georg Link, Director of the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights
- 08.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation headed by Johannes Hahn, EU Commissioner on European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
- 10.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Ambassador Salem Al-Ghaffli of the United Arab Emirates upon termination of his diplomatic mission in the Republic of Azerbaijan
- 13.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Beybit Isabayev, the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Kazakhstan to the Republic of Azerbaijan
- 28.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Nataliia Galibarenko, First Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Ukraine
- 29.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Director General of ISESCO Abdulaziz Othman Altwajiri
- 29.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Helbert Salber, Special Representative of the European Union for the South Caucasus
- 29.04.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Franco Frattini, former Foreign Minister of Italian Republic

- 04.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation of ambassadors of several countries to Switzerland who are visiting Azerbaijan by the initiative of Azerbaijani Embassy to Swiss Confederation
- 05.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Mohammad Ishaq Dar, Minister of Finance, Revenue, Economic Affairs, Statistics and Privatization of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan
- 05.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Ambassador Akira Muto, Special Representative for Central Asia and Caucasus of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Japan
- 06.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Gordon Birrell, Regional President of BP on Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey
- 06.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Ambassador Dejan Šahović, Head of the Task Force for the OSCE Chairmanship of Serbia in 2015
- 21.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Johannes Hahn, the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood and Enlargement
- 29.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the State of Kuwait, Sabah Al Khalid Al Sabah
- 29.05.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received newly-appointed Ambassador of the United States of Mexico Juan Rodrigo Labardini Flores
- 01.06.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Ivica Dacic, OSCE Chairman-in-Office, the First Deputy Prime Minister and Foreign Minister of the Republic of Serbia

- 03.06.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received former OSCE Project Coordinator in Baku, Alexis Shahtakhtinskiy on completion of his diplomatic term
- 08.06.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the members of Parliament of the Commonwealth of Australia
- 11.06.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Zsuzsanna Jakab, World Health Organization Regional Director for Europe
- 29.06.2015 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Albert Frick, Chairman of the Parliament of the Principality of Liechtenstein

## SƏFƏRLƏR – VISITS – ВИЗИТЫ

### THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE VICE PRESIDENT, PRIME MINISTER OF THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES AND RULER OF DUBAI TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

2 April 2015, Baku

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

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Emergency Situations of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the National Emergency Crisis and Disaster Management Authority of the United Arab Emirates on cooperation in the field of emergency management
- Memorandum of Understanding between the State Committee for Securities of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Securities and Commodities Authority of the United Arab Emirates in relation to assistance and mutual co-operation

An official welcoming ceremony for Vice President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum was held in Baku.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev welcomed Vice President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum.

The national anthems of the United Arab Emirates and the Republic of Azerbaijan were played.

State and government officials of the Republic of Azerbaijan were introduced to His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and members of the UAE delegation were introduced to President Ilham Aliyev.

Following the official welcoming ceremony, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Vice President, Prime Minister of the United Arab Emirates and Ruler of Dubai His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum have held an expanded meeting.

President Ilham Aliyev said:

-Your Highness, dear guests,

I'd like to welcome you sincerely to Azerbaijan. We attach very big importance to your visit. I am sure the visit will strengthen brotherly relations between our countries. We have very active political dialogue, cooperate actively in international organizations. We are very grateful for the support your country is showing us in UN, Islamic Cooperation Organization.



Azerbaijan, in its turn, always supports your country in all the international institutions. Therefore strong political relations based on brotherly relations between our peoples and also active political dialogue today create a very special format of bilateral partnership.

Off course, issues related to economic cooperation, investment, are also very important. We are glad the first foreign office of your Chamber of Commerce was established in Baku three years ago. There is a good opportunity for mutual investments, different projects, creation of joint ventures, off course, tourism. As you probably know many people from Azerbaijan are visiting your beautiful country. We hope that tourists from your country will also be visiting us more frequently.

So the format of cooperation is very broad. I am sure that members of delegations will have a chance also to exchange views on particular projects. I'd like to welcome you sincerely once again, and wish you a pleasant stay in Azerbaijan.

His Highness Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum said:

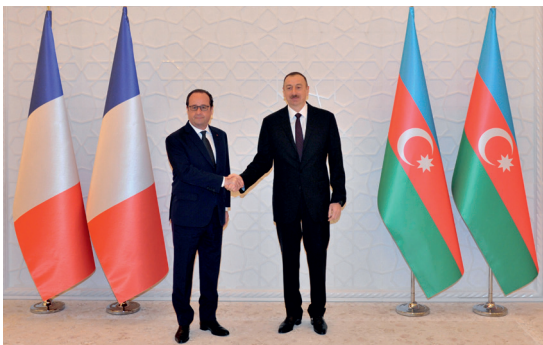
- Thank you very much. We received a warm welcome. We are very happy to be here in this beautiful country to make our relationship even wider and better. So this is very important to us to see your country and to look around. So we can learn from each other. Thank you very much for having us here.

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

25 April 2015, Baku

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

- A Letter of Intent on Azerbaijani-French University between the Minister of Education of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Minister of Higher Education and Research of the French Republic



On 25 April 2015, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev welcomed President of the French Republic Francois Hollande during his working visit to Azerbaijan.

The parties expressed satisfaction with the current level of bilateral relations between the two countries. Dynamic development of relations was also emphasized. The sides noted that reciprocal visits of the Heads of States over the last years gave a push to further development of bilateral relations.

The parties expressed interest in further expanding relations, saying there was great potential for this. The sides exchanged views on the current state of the negotiations over the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev expressed satisfaction with the activity of French President Francois Hollande towards the settlement of the conflict.

The parties discussed regional, international and other issues of mutual interest.

**THE OFFICIAL VISIT OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
OF VIETNAM TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

14 May 2015, Baku

List of documents signed during the official visit:

- Memorandum of understanding on cooperation in oil and gas industry between SOCAR and PetroVietnam
- Memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the fields of agriculture and rural development between the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Agreement on cooperation and mutual assistance in the field of customs between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Memorandum of understanding on cooperation in the field of transport between the Ministry of Transport of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Transport of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- Agreement on air communication between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

***Statement by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev during the Press Conference***

Dear Mr. President,

Distinguished guests!

Let me sincerely welcome you to Azerbaijan once again. Welcome to Azerbaijan!

We attach great importance to your visit. I am confident that your visit will be an important step in the development of Vietnamese-Azerbaijani relations. Last year I paid an official visit to Vietnam. The visit was very successful. I will never forget the hospitality I enjoyed. I believe that your visit to Azerbaijan within one year suggests that the relations between us are developing very fast.





Today, we broadly discussed various aspects of our bilateral relations. We have seen once again that our positions overlap on many issues. First and foremost, the two sides intend to expand bilateral ties. In particular, we will develop our political relations. Currently, our political relations are at a very high level. This is confirmed

by mutual visits. At the same time, we cooperate very successfully and support each other within international organizations. As a result of today's talks, we have reached the decision to continue supporting each other in all international organizations. This is a very important issue because it demonstrates the high level of bilateral relations.

Today, we also exchanged views on regional security issues. I informed Mr. President about the current events in our region.

I noted that the biggest threat to regional security is posed by the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Unfortunately, the issue has remained unresolved for many years even though the UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions on an unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces from Azerbaijani lands. Unfortunately, Armenia ignores them, does not fulfill these resolutions, thereby continuing the occupation.

As a result of this occupation and the policy of ethnic cleansing, more than a million Azerbaijanis have become refugees and IDPs in their own native land. We have been subjected to a policy of ethnic cleansing. Twenty per cent of our territory is still under occupation. I must say again that many international organizations have expressed their fair position on this issue. The UN and its Security Council, the OSCE, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Non-Aligned Movement – all of these influential organizations have unequivocally supported the just cause of Azerbaijan and adopted relevant decisions and resolutions.

This and all other issues must be resolved on the basis of international law. Territorial integrity is a fundamental principle of international law. The international community

must demonstrate a unified position on this issue. There can't be any discrimination here. The territorial integrity of all countries should be approached in the same manner.

Of course, we also had an exchange of views on the work done in the field of economy. It is very positive that the turnover between us is high and can grow even further. To achieve this, we must prepare a plan of specific measures. We have talked about this. I believe that there are good opportunities for increasing the turnover. We have discussed issues of mutual investment. Both Vietnamese and Azerbaijani companies already have extensive experience in this matter. I am sure that business entities of the two countries will also have their say on this matter at the business forum upcoming today. In short, the economic and trade relations have a very positive impact on our overall cooperation. There are great prospects.

Of course, according to the tradition, we have also heard reports related to the oil and gas cooperation. A wonderful experience has been accumulated in this area. Azerbaijani specialists used to work in the oil and gas sector in Vietnam and share their experience. Today, too, there is room for that. We are now inviting Vietnamese companies to Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan has ample reserves of oil and gas. We would like Vietnamese companies to also work on our fields and to participate in their development. At the same time, the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan, SOCAR, has also evolved into an international energy company and is committed to working in Vietnam.

The focus today was also on cooperation in the humanitarian sphere. There is a wonderful experience and great tradition in this area. While visiting Vietnam last year, I met with Vietnamese students who received their education in Azerbaijan. It was a very cordial meeting and I invited them to Azerbaijan. I am glad that they came to Azerbaijan a week ago and saw their homes again. I am sure they have returned to their homes with great impressions. The Vietnamese-Azerbaijani friendship forum has also been held. Mr. President and I have expressed our views on this issue again today. We also want to train more Vietnamese students in Azerbaijan. Thus, our relations can become even broader.

In short, in conclusion of my remarks I should note that our relations are already at a high level. Two official visits have been paid over the course of one year. This in itself is a record. The essence of our relations is also very positive. They are very durable. In the future, as two friendly countries, we will further expand our relations and strengthen the Vietnamese-Azerbaijani friendship.

Mr. President, I sincerely welcome you to Azerbaijan again. I say to you once again - "Welcome!"

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND  
PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM TRUONG TAN  
SANG ATTENDED THE AZERBAIJANI- VIETNAMESE BUSINESS FORUM**

14 May 2015, Baku

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

- Dear Mr. President,

Dear ladies and gentlemen.

The Vietnamese-Azerbaijani business forum is being held today. This is a great event. It is a very important event for the development of our bilateral relations. As you may know, the official visit of the President of Vietnam to Azerbaijan is successfully continuing. We have discussed practically all spheres of our bilateral agenda, exchanged views on the work being done and talked about joint plans for the future.

Our political ties are the main prerequisite for the development of relations in the economic sphere. Vietnamese-Azerbaijani relations are those of friendship and partnership. I am pleased to recall my last year's official visit to Vietnam. During that visit we laid the foundations of our cooperation, because it was the first contact at the highest level. The visit had a very positive outcome. Exactly a year later the President of Vietnam is our guest. In fact, this shows that the relations between us are very broad.



We would like the picture observed in the political sphere to take shape in the field of economy. In order to achieve this, of course, both members of the government and business entities must make efforts. Last year, during my visit to Vietnam, we held a business forum as well. It is now being held in Baku. This indicates quite a large interest in working together.

In recent years, Vietnam's economy has been developing very fast. We know this and congratulate you, Mr. President, on this achievement. This situation is already receiving praise worldwide and represents a manifestation of a sound policy.

The Azerbaijani economy is also developing rapidly. All our plans are fulfilled on time and successfully. Azerbaijan is a country open to foreign investment. In the years of independence our country received more than \$200 billion in investment. Last year alone investments in Azerbaijan amounted to \$27 billion. This shows that both foreign and local investors have confidence in our country and its future.

We have an excellent investment environment. Foreign and domestic investments are protected by the state. If this were not the case, so much investment would not be made in Azerbaijan. We observe dynamics also in the volume of investments. In recent years domestic investments have been dominant. Approximately 70 per cent of total investments are domestic. This shows that the Azerbaijani economy maintains a high pace.

Azerbaijan applies the best practices in the protection of foreign investments. In other words, I believe that Vietnamese investors could benefit a lot from working with and investing in Azerbaijan.

At the same time, Mr. President and I have also discussed possibilities of ensuring a broader representation of Vietnamese companies in Azerbaijan. I can't say that we have achieved great success in this, but I do hope that we will see excellent results here after this visit.

Our people have a great sympathy towards each other. In the 1970-1980s, Azerbaijani specialists worked in the oil and gas sector of Vietnam. In the Soviet period, Vietnamese people studied in Azerbaijan. While visiting Vietnam I met with them. Today there are about 30 Vietnamese students in Azerbaijan, and Mr. President and I decided that it was necessary to increase their number.

The Azerbaijani economy is sustainable. Of course, the oil and gas sector was crucial for our economic development in the early stages. But today, about 70 per cent of our gross domestic product is generated in the non-oil sector. This suggests that economic diversification in Azerbaijan is already a reality.

At the same time, the oil sector, of course, is always in the spotlight. The document signed between SOCAR and “PetroVietnam” today will contribute to further cooperation in this field. We want “PetroVietnam” to take part in the development of Azerbaijan’s ample oil and gas fields. I think that the relations between our companies will provide that. At the same time, SOCAR is also accessing foreign markets now and seeking to expand its operations abroad. Thus, there can be a very useful and fruitful cooperation based on mutual interests in this field.

I think that given such an attachment of our peoples to each other, we must strengthen the links between people. The first and foremost means of that, of course, is the tourism sector. In this area we can organize specific formats of cooperation. We must unlock our tourism opportunities so that people could know what options are available.

I think there is a good opportunity to increase our turnover. Our turnover is already quite high. We are countries located far apart and the distance is fairly large. Taking this into account, we can see that the turnover is at a good level. Of course, it can be increased further.

There are good opportunities for cooperation in the field of agriculture. Azerbaijan has been taking serious measures of late to develop agriculture. We signed an agreement on this area today. At present, Azerbaijan is in the process of creating large industrial estates. We would like Vietnamese companies to take part in this work.

In other words, taking advantage of the fact that our political relations are at a high level, we certainly need to achieve the best results in the field of economy. The main thing is that both sides have very serious political will. I believe that the holding of business forums will be a key tool in this, because there is political will and intergovernmental ties are strong enough. The delegation accompanying the President of Vietnam today includes senior officials. An important part is played by the relationships between state bodies and ministries.

Of course, our Vietnamese friends are getting acquainted with Azerbaijan today and seeing the opportunities available in our country. Indeed, in the years of independence Azerbaijan has covered a long and glorious road. We have provided complete economic independence and energy security. Transportation security

issues in the region are also being resolved with the participation of Azerbaijan. I have informed my colleague about that. As a result of the commissioning of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, Azerbaijan will become a very important transport hub between Europe and Asia. There will be new opportunities in this area.

In the years of independence we have only relied on our own strength, which is why our foreign debt is at a very low level. It is probably one of the lowest in the world. Our foreign debt accounts for about 10 per cent of our gross domestic product. In other words, it shows that we did not borrow a lot, have counted on our own strength and have fully achieved economic independence. We do not depend on foreign financial institutions but are actively working with them.

Earlier this month Baku hosted the annual meeting of the Board of Governors of the Asian Development Bank. More than 3,000 people were here. The holding of such a representative event in Azerbaijan reflects the attitude and confidence of Asian economic structures and governments in Azerbaijan. At the same time, Azerbaijan has established close ties with the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development. In other words, international financial institutions also appreciate the reforms carried out in Azerbaijan. We are making the best of our opportunities, but rely mostly on our domestic resources. This is the right choice. This choice has allowed us the opportunity to facilitate diversified economic development today.

The government of Azerbaijan has a fairly broad and meaningful approach to our plans for the future. In the future, we will take additional measures for the development of our country. Our economic development is sustainable and diversified. Therefore, the well-being of our people will improve.

The business environment in Azerbaijan is also very positive. The Azerbaijani government supports the private sector. I hold regular meetings with business people of Azerbaijan and provide them with political support. My only requirement from business people is that they organize their work within the frames of law. In this case, no-one will have no problems. Azerbaijan is building a law-governed state and all issues must be addressed within the framework of law.

Dear Mr. President, I sincerely welcome you once again. Let me say to all the guests from Vietnam - "Welcome!" Thank you.

**OFFICIAL DINNER RECEPTION HOSTED ON BEHALF OF THE PRESIDENT  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV IN HONOR  
OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE SOCIALIST REPUBLIC  
OF VIETNAM TRUONG TAN SANG**

14 May 2015, Baku

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

Dear Mr. President,

Dear Mrs. Tran Le,

Ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, I would like to thank you for accepting my invitation to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan. Let me once again welcome the delegation you are leading.

Today we held very useful meetings. I am convinced that the exchange of views and discussions we have conducted on issues of mutual interest, the agreements reached and the documents signed will contribute to the further development of bilateral relations between our countries.

The basis of friendly relations between Azerbaijan and Vietnam was laid last century by the visits of the great son of the Vietnamese people Ho Chi Minh to Azerbaijan and of national leader of our people Heydar Aliyev to Vietnam. I believe that my last year's official visit to your country and your current visit to Azerbaijan as a continuation of that great tradition will further strengthen our relations and give a powerful impetus for the high-level contacts to gain momentum.

Today, there are great opportunities for cooperation and long-term partnership between our friendly countries in the political, military and economic spheres, including energy, transport, agriculture, etc. We are very interested in using all possible avenues to expand cooperation with Vietnam.

It is gratifying that the nature of our relationship has advanced to a qualitatively



new level in recent years. I think it is commendable that the Center for studying the history and culture of Azerbaijan has been established within the Institute of Policy, Law and Management of Vietnam. I am convinced that this center will play an important role in communicating full information about the customs and traditions, history and culture of our country to the Vietnamese public.



I would also like to emphasize the Azerbaijani - Vietnamese friendship forum held in Baku last week. The event attended by the Vietnamese most of whom have graduated from higher educational institutions in Azerbaijan will further strengthen the friendship between our peoples. It is reassuring that these people

have received education in Azerbaijan and are making a significant contribution to the development of many industries, particularly the oil and gas industry, of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam.

I believe that the business forum held with the participation of influential Vietnamese companies today will be very useful in terms of assessing the favorable economic environment and the tourism potential of our country. In addition, the participation of Vietnamese companies in the projects being implemented in our country's oil and non-oil sectors is desirable from the standpoint of expanding our cooperation.

We also attach particular importance to multilateral cooperation with Vietnam. I think that by coordinating our activities within the United Nations, the Non-Aligned Movement and other influential international organizations, we will be able to achieve successful results.

We have also had an exchange of views on regional security issues. I noted that the most painful problem in the region, the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, remains unresolved. As a result of the military aggression of Armenia, 20 per cent of Azerbaijani territory, including Nagorno-Karabakh, which is our historical land, and adjacent seven regions, have been occupied. As a result of Armenia's deliberate policy of ethnic cleansing, more than a million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs.

There are four UN Security Council resolutions demanding an immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied Azerbaijani territories. There are similar decisions and resolutions of the OSCE, the European Parliament, the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and other influential international organizations. The summit of the Non-Aligned Movement saw 120 countries adopt a resolution on the settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Our definitive position is that the conflict must be settled only in accordance with international law and within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Mr. President, although our countries are far apart from a geographical point of view, I believe that our mutual efforts will bring the relations of friendship and cooperation between Azerbaijan and Vietnam even closer.

## BƏYANATLAR – STATEMENTS – ЗАЯВЛЕНИЯ

### STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

4 May 2015, Baku

According to the press reports, on May 3, 2015, Armenia has conducted the so-called “elections” to the “parliament” of the puppet separatist regime it has established in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

These “elections” constitute a clear violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the norms and principles of international law, and, therefore, have no legal effect whatsoever.

The international community has overwhelmingly united with the Republic of Azerbaijan in rejecting this mock “election” exercise and not recognizing as legitimate the situation created through the use of force against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, accompanied by the notorious practice of ethnic cleansing and other flagrant violations of the peremptory norms of international law, as reflected in the statements by the European Union, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, NATO, the Russian Federation, France and the United States of America individually as well as in their capacity as Co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group and many other countries.

This provocative step is yet another clear manifestation that Armenia is not genuinely interested in seeking a political settlement of the armed conflict and, instead, pursues the path of escalation, undertaking consistent measures to consolidate the results of its occupation policy and its annexationist aspirations through conducting large-scale military exercises in the occupied territories, illegally changing the demographic, cultural and physical character of the occupied territories, engaging in economic and other activities, including transfer of Armenian population into these territories with the ultimate goal of imposing a fait accompli situation.

The Republic of Azerbaijan once again underlines that it shall never reconcile with the seizure of its territories. The resolution of the conflict is possible only on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders.

The principled basis for the settlement of the conflict is laid down in the United Nations Security Council resolutions 822(1993), 853(1993), 874(1993) and 884(1993) and the U.N. General Assembly resolution 62/243 (2008), which condemn the use of force against Azerbaijan and occupation of its territories and reaffirm the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its internationally recognized borders. In those resolutions, the United Nations reaffirmed that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is an inalienable part of Azerbaijan and demanded immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The responsibility for the consequences of any action which the Republic of Azerbaijan may be obliged to take in connection with the continued illegal presence of the Armenian armed forces and unlawful activities in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan in order to protect its sovereignty and territorial integrity within the internationally recognized border will lie entirely with the Republic of Armenia.

**STATEMENT BY THE MINISTRY OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN**

16 June 2015, Baku

On 16 June 2015, the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights announced its judgment (Merits) on the case of Chiragov and others v. Armenia (Application no. 13216/05). The case originated in an application against the Republic of Armenia lodged with the Court on 6 April 2005 by six Azerbaijani nationals forcibly displaced from the occupied Lachin district of Azerbaijan during the Armenian aggression.

The Court ruled in favor of the applicants, recognizing continuing violations by Armenia of a number of their rights under the Convention for the Protection of Human Rights and Fundamental Freedoms, namely, those relating to the protection of property (Article 1 of Protocol No. 1), the right to respect for private and family life (Article 8 of the Convention) and the right to an effective remedy (Article 13 of the Convention). Furthermore, the judgment effectively put an end to Armenia's persistent denial of its responsibility for the unlawful occupation of and military presence in the territories of Azerbaijan.

In the course of the Court's proceedings, in its usual attempts to mislead the international community and distort the root causes and essence of the conflict, Armenia submitted that its jurisdiction did not extend to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories; that it did not and could not have effective control of or exercise any public power on those territories; that it had not participated in the military conflict in question; that it had not taken part in the seizure of the Lachin district and in any later military actions; and that it did not have any military presence in Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories. Armenia further asserted that "the 'NKR' was a sovereign, independent state possessing all the characteristics of an independent state under international law"; that "it exercised control and jurisdiction over Nagorno-Karabakh and the territories surrounding it"; that "the Republic of Armenia and the 'NKR' were different countries", and that "the 'NKR', since its formation, had carried out its political, social and financial policies independently".

In response to these and other allegations submitted by Armenia, the Court noted in particular that the war had started with calls for the incorporation of Nagorno-Karabakh into Armenia and specifically referred in that regard to a joint resolution on the “reunification” adopted in December 1989 by the Supreme Soviet of the Armenian SSR and the Nagorno-Karabakh regional council. The Court established that the citizens of Azerbaijan were forced to leave Lachin as a result of military attack on the district in May 1992. The Court stated that Nagorno-Karabakh and the district of Lachin and the other surrounding territories are now under occupation and that the international law of belligerent occupation, as laid down in the relevant provisions of the 1907 Hague Regulations concerning the Laws and Customs of War on Land and the 1949 Geneva Convention relative to the Protection of Civilian Persons in Time of War, applies to a given situation.

The Court confirmed its conclusion from the admissibility decision of 14 December 2011, according to which “the ‘NKR’ is not recognized as a State under international law by any countries or international organisations...”, thus reaffirming the position of the international community that overwhelmingly rejected this entity and refused to recognise as legitimate the situation created through the use of force against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, accompanied by the notorious practice of ethnic cleansing and other flagrant violations of the peremptory norms of international law.

Furthermore, having examined the evidence presented, the Court confirmed that “the Republic of Armenia, through its military presence and the provision of military equipment and expertise, has been significantly involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from an early date”, that “[t]his military support has been – and continues to be – decisive for the conquest of and continued control over the territories in issue” and that “...the evidence ... convincingly shows that the armed forces of Armenia and the ‘NKR’ are highly integrated”. Based on this and other evidence testifying to the political, financial and other dependence of the separatist entity from Armenia, the Court concluded that “... the Republic of Armenia, from the early days of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, has had a significant and decisive influence over the ‘NKR’, that the two entities are highly integrated in virtually all important matters and that this situation persists to this day” and that “the ‘NKR’ and its administration survives by virtue of the military, political, financial and other support given to it by Armenia which, consequently, exercises effective control over Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding territories, including the district of Lachin”.

The Court reaffirmed the right of displaced persons to return to their homes or places of habitual residence and recalled the relevant standards and principles under international humanitarian and human rights law relating to the legal and technical issues surrounding housing and property restitution. In the Court's view, it is not realistic in practice for Azerbaijanis to return to their homes in the current circumstances, which include, inter alia, the continued presence of Armenian and Armenian-backed troops and ceasefire breaches. At the same time, the Court made it clear that the ongoing negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group do not provide a legal justification for the interference with the rights of the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, including the proprietary rights that are still valid, and recalled Armenia's obligations towards Azerbaijani citizens who had to flee during the conflict. According to the Court, attempts of the Armenian side to extinguish the land rights of the Azerbaijani displaced persons who had fled the occupied territories cannot be considered legally valid. Having found the violation by Armenia of the rights of the Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, the Court concluded that Armenia had failed to discharge the burden of proving the availability to the applicants of a remedy capable of providing redress in respect of their Convention complaints and offering reasonable prospects of success. For the same reasons, the Court found that there was no available effective remedy in respect of the denial of access to the applicants' possessions and homes in the district of Lachin.

Accordingly, the conclusion must be that due to its initial and continuing aggression against Azerbaijan and military occupation of its internationally recognized territory (Nagorno-Karabakh and the surrounding areas), expulsion of hundreds of thousands of the citizens of Azerbaijan from the occupied territory and the denial of their return to their homes and access to their property in those areas, the Republic of Armenia bears full international responsibility for the breaches of international law that have occurred and continue to occur. A key element of State responsibility, and one particularly significant for present purposes, is the obligation to cease violations, to offer appropriate assurances and guarantees that they will not recur and to provide full reparation for injury. Consequently, Armenia is under the obligation, in the first place, to put an end to the occupation of the territories of Azerbaijan and to withdraw immediately, completely and unconditionally its armed forces from these territories. The implementation of that obligation, which would create necessary conditions for the return of Azerbaijani internally displaced persons, can in no way be considered or introduced as a compromise and, a fortiori, used as a bargaining chip in the

conflict settlement process. It is an established principle of general international law that no territorial acquisition resulting from the threat or use of force shall be recognized as legal, as reaffirmed by UN Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) adopted with regard to the armed conflict in question. This understanding also applies to individual rights and freedoms, the violation of which can in no way produce the outcome that was ab initio designed by the perpetrator and that would serve for its benefit.

The Republic of Azerbaijan finds it expedient to remind that serious breaches of obligations under peremptory norms of general international law give rise to additional consequences affecting not only Armenia, but also all other States, which include, inter alia, duties of States to cooperate in order to bring to an end such breaches by lawful means and not to recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation. It is therefore critical that the international community insist on the implementation of UN Security Council resolutions 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993) and 884 (1993) demanding the withdrawal of the Armenian occupying forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and supporting the return of displaced persons to their places of origin in safety and dignity.

The resolution of the conflict is possible only on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders. The territorial integrity of Azerbaijan has never been and will never be a subject of negotiations. Azerbaijan remains committed to the conflict settlement process based on this understanding. The sooner Armenia reconciles with this reality, the earlier the conflict will be resolved and the countries and peoples in the region will benefit from the prospects of cooperation and economic development.



## YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 19 may 2015-ci il tarixli 1226 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Azərbaycan Respublikasının Cənubi Afrika Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri Elxan Polux oğlu Poluxov iqamətgahı Pretoriya şəhərində olmaqla, eyni zamanda Azərbaycan Respublikasının Svazilend Krallığında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri təyin edilmişdir.



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 19 may 2015-ci il tarixli 1227 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Altay Vasif oğlu Əfəndiyev Azərbaycan Respublikasının İspaniya Krallığında və Andorra Knyazlığında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri vəzifəsindən geri çağırılmışdır.



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 19 may 2015-ci il tarixli 1228 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Azərbaycan Respublikasının Böyük Britaniya və Şimali İrlandiya Birləşmiş Krallığında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri Tahir Tofiq oğlu Tağızadə iqamətgahı London şəhərində olmaqla, eyni zamanda Azərbaycan Respublikasının İrlandiyada fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri təyin edilmişdir.

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 19 may 2015-ci il tarixli 1230 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Şahin Şakir oğlu Abdullayev Azərbaycan Respublikasının Əlcəzair Xalq Demokratik Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri vəzifəsindən geri çağırılmışdır.



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 19 may 2015-ci il tarixli 1231 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Mahir Məmməd oğlu Əliyev Azərbaycan Respublikasının Əlcəzair Xalq Demokratik Respublikasında fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri təyin edilmişdir.



Azərbaycan Respublikası Prezidentinin 3 iyun 2015-ci il tarixli 1254 sayılı Sərəncamı ilə Eynulla Yadulla oğlu Mədətli Azərbaycan Respublikasının Ukraynada fəvqəladə və səlahiyyətli səfiri və Demokratiya və İqtisadi İnkişaf Uğrunda Təşkilat - GUAM yanında daimi nümayəndəsi vəzifələrindən geri çağırılmışdır.

## REDAKSİYANIN QONAĞI – EDITORIAL BOARD GUEST – ГОСТЬ РЕДАКЦИИ

**Владимир Дмитриевич Дорохин**  
**Чрезвычайный и Полномочный Посол Российской Федерации**  
**в Азербайджанской Республике**



Год и место рождения: 1948 г., Астраханская область, Российская Федерация.

Образование: окончил МГИМО МИД СССР в 1971г.

Профессиональная карьера:

1977-1984 гг. – третий, второй секретарь, Посольство СССР в Венгрии.

1984-1990 гг. – референт, заместитель руководителя группы, руководитель группы отдела, Международный отдел ЦК КПСС.

1990-1998 гг. – советник, советник-посланник, Посольство СССР (России) в Венгрии.

1998-2001 гг. – Директор департамента по культурным связям и делам ЮНЕСКО, МИД Российской Федерации.

2001-2005 гг. – Посол Российской Федерации в Республике Замбия.

2005-2009 гг. – Посол по особым поручениям, МИД Российской Федерации.

2009 г. – настоящее время – Посол Российской Федерации в Азербайджанской Республике.

Языки: венгерский, английский.

Семейное положение: женат, имеет двух дочерей.

***Господин посол, как вы оцениваете нынешнее состояние двусторонних отношений между Азербайджаном и Россией?***

Отношения между Россией и Азербайджаном – это отношения стратегического партнерства, отвечающие национальным интересам двух стран и служащие делу стабильности в регионе. Такую оценку нашим отношениям дают лидеры России и Азербайджана. И как посол я могу эту оценку только повторить.

Базовыми принципами российско-азербайджанских отношений являются

независимость, взаимопонимание и уважение. Россия осознает все нюансы самостоятельной политики Азербайджана и относится к Баку с полным пониманием. В Азербайджане существует такое же отношение к политике России.

На первый взгляд, это привычные слова. Но их смысл особенно проявляется в нынешней турбулентной международной обстановке. Понимание партнера, уверенность в его предсказуемости и в том, что он никогда не сделает ничего для тебя плохого. Это сейчас дорогого стоит. Я рад, что могу сказать, что Баку является для Москвы именно таким партнером.

***Каковы текущие тенденции торговых отношений между двумя государствами и как вы оцениваете будущие экономические отношения?***

Самое главное заключается в том, что экономические отношения между Россией и Азербайджаном оказались способными противостоять поворотам мировой экономики, которая, как известно, переживает сейчас далеко не лучшие времена. Товарооборот между Россией и Азербайджаном по итогам 2014 года увеличился более чем на 12 % и достиг, по российской статистике, исторического максимума – 4 млрд. долл. США. Позитивные тенденции продолжаются и в этом году.

Причина такого положения заключается в том, что Россия и Азербайджан сотрудничают прежде всего в ненефтяном секторе, который меньше подвержен влиянию скачков цены на энергоносители.

Россия является партнером номер один для Азербайджана в ненефтяном секторе. Плюсы от этого заключаются не только в стабильности. Такой характер сотрудничества способствует созданию рабочих мест, отражается на материальном положении десятков, а может быть и сотен тысяч людей. Основной тренд российско-азербайджанских экономических связей хорошо коррелируется с курсом руководства Азербайджана на диверсификацию экономики страны. И это, конечно, придает нашим связям особое значение.

Хотел бы отметить еще один важный и позитивный момент. Это – рост взаимных инвестиций и активизацию межбанковского сотрудничества.

В июне этого года «Газпромбанк» предоставил кредит на финансирование

строительства установок по производству в Азербайджане полипропилена и полиэтилена высокой плотности на сумму 489 млн. долларов. «Сбербанк» открыл кредитную линию на производство метанола азербайджанскими производителями в России на сумму в 1,2 млрд. долларов США.

Активно идет вхождение азербайджанского капитала на российский рынок. Лидером здесь являются Государственный нефтяной фонд, группа компаний «Азерсун-Холдинг», «Матанат-А».

На первый взгляд кажется невероятным, но объемы капитала из Азербайджана в России составляют уже почти 1 млрд. долларов США, и это больше средств, которые вложили русские в Азербайджане. С одной стороны, это лишний раз демонстрирует возможности Азербайджана как партнера. А с другой – говорит о доверии, которое сложилось между деловыми кругами двух стран. Доверие же, как известно, имеет в бизнесе решающее значение, тем более по нынешним временам.

В апреле крупнейшая российская автомобильная компания «КамАЗ» начала сборку автомобилей на Гянджинском автомобильном заводе. У нас есть планы совместного производства вагонов и других видов техники. А это уже совсем другой уровень сотрудничества. Не просто товарообмен, а производственная кооперация, которая предполагает сближение и ориентацию друг на друга на длительную перспективу. Такое развитие сотрудничества с Азербайджаном полностью отвечает интересам России.

Следующий саммит по определению правового статуса Каспийского моря пройдет в Астане в 2016 году. Каковы ваши ожидания относительно саммита?

Ожидания – это эмоции, речь же надо вести о реальностях. В советское время было две прикаспийские страны – СССР и Иран, которые и определяли статус Каспия. После развала СССР прикаспийских стран стало пять. На повестке дня встал вопрос о новой договоренности по статусу моря.

Переговоры по этой теме ведутся уже около двадцати лет, но я не разделяю позиции тех, кто сокрушается по поводу этого срока. За столом сидят представители стран, у которых разная военно-политическая и экономическая ориентация, разные национальные интересы. Предмет переговоров исключительно сложен. Необходимо найти формулировки, которые завтра

должны будут пройти испытание историей для каждой стороны. Прийти к консенсусу в этих условиях крайне сложно.

И тем не менее, результаты достигнуты уже значительные. Большая часть конвенции согласована. Получилось это благодаря сложившейся в «каспийской пятерке» атмосфере взаимного уважения и готовности считаться друг с другом. Свидетельствую это как непосредственный участник нескольких раундов каспийских переговоров.

После прошлогоднего саммита прикаспийских стран в Астрахани стороны, действительно, вышли, как говорится, на «финишную прямую». Шанс на завершение переговоров на саммите в Казахстане есть. Но никто не ставит задачу добиться соглашения к этому событию любой ценой. Главное, повторяю, содержание и качество договоренностей.

***Как сопредседатель Минской группы ОБСЕ, Россия активно участвует в переговорном процессе вокруг армяно-азербайджанского, нагорно-карабахского конфликта. Как вы видите будущее переговорного процесса?***

Понимаю, что ни один азербайджанский журналист, который берет интервью у Посла России, не может не спросить про Карабах. И это понятно. В разрешении нагорно-карабахского конфликта на Россию возлагаются особые надежды. Это во многом связано с тем, что Россия была частью государства, где этот конфликт зародился. Ни у кого из других стран нет таких близких отношений со сторонами конфликта.

Мы это хорошо понимаем и свою ответственность осознаем. Но когда говорят, что «ключи от Карабаха в руках Москвы», и стоит ей только захотеть, как все сразу образуется, то я должен ответить, что Россия не всемогуща. Не может быть такого, чтобы Россия принудила кого-то или приказала решить конфликт. Решение об урегулировании вопроса должно быть достигнуто между Азербайджаном и Арменией. Только тогда оно будет настоящим и долгосрочным. Мы можем только посредничать и содействовать.

Читатели Вашего журнала, наверное, знают, что Россия делает на этом направлении, в том числе с участием Президента В.В.Путина, и заверяю Вас, что мы продолжим делать все от нее зависящее для справедливого мирного урегулирования конфликта.

## MƏQALƏLƏR - ARTICLES – СТАТЬИ

### CHANGING WORLD POLITICS, PEACE AND COOPERATION IN EURASIA AND TURKISH FOREIGN POLICY

Ali Resul USUL\*

*World Politics in the 21st Century: More Plural, Complicated, Still Dangerous*

The United States, NATO, the European Union, the Organisation for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) and the Council of Europe (CoE) had all put their stamps on the new security environments in Europe and Eurasia after the end of the Cold War, and the worldwide international security architecture in the early 1990s was refigured by the new hegemonies of the international system. However, early enthusiasm over the victory of liberal values in the international arena soon withered, and policy makers, academicians and commentators began articulating the fact that the world in the late 20th century was turning out to be a more complicated and complex yet still dangerous place.

I use the metaphor of “twilight” to define the strange world we now live in, and I believe that world politics have been passing through twilight years in the late 20th and initial decades of the 21st. century. This is not only because of the relative erosion in American preeminence in global politics and economics and the rise of the Asia Pacific, China or India or the non-Western World in general, but also due to the proliferation of new actors in world politics and even the changing nature of conventional actors in this ever globalizing politics and economics. In addition to the conventional threats and challenges at the state level, the proliferation of new dangers, threats and challenges emanating from non-state actors in the international arena were stamped on even NATO’s often-cited strategy concept in 2010.

With regard to the more complicated world politics and international security structure of the 2000s, I would mention three seismic shocks that have triggered fault lines of international politics and have had the capacity to change the international system in a structural way. One is, of course, the attack on the US on 9/11 and the subsequent US invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq; the second is the Arab awakening and the

\* Director of the Center for Strategic Research of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey.

subsequent political crisis in the Middle East, including NATO's military intervention into Libya and the Syrian civil war; and third is the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea and Russia's aggressive policy against Ukraine's eastern border. We would add the recent partition of Iraq as a consequence of the Great powers' grave mistakes in the field.

As can be easily seen, all these seismic shocks have taken place around Turkey. The picture is more complicated if we add in the diversity of the actors involved in the political processes. The new actors in the international security arena are not only the powerful sovereign states, but also non-state organizations, such as para-military organizations, that could potentially even win victories over sovereign state militaries, such as that of Iraq. Thus, the nature of conflict has been in a process of change and the frontiers between domestic and international wars have become blurred as can be seen in the cases of Syria, Iraq and some eastern towns of Ukraine.

#### *Central Asia and the Caucasus*

All these changes and challenges have started to influence broader Eurasian politics including those of Central Asia and the Caucasus. The geopolitical future of Eurasia, in this global context, will depend on four basic global variables: One is the American re-evaluation of the politics of a new silk road initiative after America's general Asia-Pivot strategic orientation; second is the future of Chinese political, economic and social policies toward the region and China's next steps in terms of the Silk Road Project; third is the future of Russian-American/European tensions after the Ukraine/Crimea crisis and finally, Sino-Russia relations. Yet another very important variable in this regard is the capability and capacity of Eurasian nations to boost regional, bilateral and multilateral cooperation and collaboration to face new challenges and promote prosperity, peace and security in the region.

#### **The Need for Greater Cooperation among Eurasian Nations**

I believe that cooperation among the Central Asian nations and Azerbaijan is also a very important variable. However, the reluctance for more regional cooperation, which seems widespread among regional policy makers, remains a big obstacle. It is critical that we see and understand this reluctance in order to figure out effective and original ways of getting rid of or, at minimum, reducing it.



One reason behind the reluctance is the low-level of mutual trust and confidence among decision-makers and peoples in the region. Even the liberal concept of a win-win situation may not be helpful in this regard because policy-makers in the region may prefer “relative gains” over a “win-win” conceptualization.

Therefore, what we need now is to enhance mutual trust at both the elite and popular levels. When we look at some successful examples from world political history of regional cooperation and integration and the constructing of mutual trust and confidence, the role and function of societal factors comes to the fore.

A good example is the history of European integration. The EU is not a model per se for the whole of Central Asia and the Caucasus, which is quite a different region, but there might be still some inspiration that can be drawn from European history. Two processes could be emphasized here: one is the famous idea in international relations, *doux commerce*, the soothing effect of trade, the other is the societal factors or transnational relations as a strong tool for regional cooperation/integration. The term ‘transnational relations’ has some negative connotations in the region, as it may be associated with transnational crime, drug trafficking or even transnational extremist groups. These are, of course, real threats to regional security, stability, and peace. On the other hand, transnational relations and interactions and increasing social mobilization across borders can also have the potential to eliminate social and cultural stereotypes and prejudices and help remove some historical baggage in the region.

In addition, increasing transnational activities among civil societies from different countries in the region could establish some transnational, not supranational, common identities that could potentially lead to less fear, and more trust and understanding among the peoples. More transnationalism should not be seen as an alternative to the national identities in Central Asian states and Azerbaijan. Strong national identities in the region are an indispensable part of regional cooperation and integration. Some suggestions in this regard may include building up student and academic exchange programmes, like the Erasmus program, or regional cultural and social organizations, events and occasions among the various Central Asian states.

The second issue concerns the cultural ties that promote cooperation in Central Asia and Azerbaijan. My sincere belief is that common cultural and linguistic ties shared

by the peoples in the region could contribute positively to a popular psychology of mutual trust and understanding if conducted properly and professionally. I differentiate the cultural policies in this regard as inclusive and exclusive. Promoting a common history, language, culture and traditions should not be exclusive, rejectionist and parochial but inclusive and universal appeals. The Central Asian states and Azerbaijan share many common cultural and civilizational elements. One point here is important and quite sensitive: promoting common ties is not for the construction of any kind of supranational identity but rather in order to contribute to mutual understanding among the nations in the region.

There exist, for example, many figures that constitute a common historical literature in the region, such as Hoca Ahmet Yesevi, Hoca Nasreddin or Effendi, Korkut Ata or Dede Korkut, Köroglu or Göroglu, Manas, Mevlana Celaleddin Rumi, Ali Shir Nevai, Mahtumkuli, Fuzuli and so on. Let me repeat again that cultural policies should not produce enmity or promote the idea of “the other” in the region but should rather emphasize common cultural ties. Thus, the robust transnational linkages from people to people could be an important factor for furthering cooperation among the nations in Central Asia and Azerbaijan.

One of the interesting facts regarding the possibility of regional cooperation in the region, though there exist several such regional organizations, is that it seems that few are truly effective in terms of supporting preventive diplomacy and conflict management. It seems that there is almost a consensus that the region needs an effective, robust and powerful regional cooperation to cope with the problems and challenges that could stabilize the whole region. Let me refer to the Turkic Council, as a young organization in the region, and as a possible regional organization with the potential to boost peace, cooperation, collaboration and friendship among nations in the region.

### **The Silk Road Project and New Opportunities for the Whole Region**

After China’s president Mr. Xi Jinping announced the Chinese version of the New Silk Project in September 2013 in Kazakhstan, and referred to a “strategic thoroughfare from the Pacific Ocean to the Baltic States,” all Eurasian countries, including Turkey, began discussing the nature of the new silk road project and new Eurasian transport corridors or networks. The project and the new concept of a ‘one belt, one road’

approach has sparked debate across Eurasia and in the Southern Caucasian and Central Asia states in particular.

Before Xi Jinping announced the Chinese version of the revival of the historical silk road project, the European Union and the Americans both promoted their own versions of the Silk Road. In addition to the European initiative TRACECA (Transport Corridor, Europe, Caucasus, Asia), the American initiative of the New Silk Road project was first envisioned in 2011, initially as a means for integrating Afghanistan into the region. The latter project includes resuming traditional trading routes and reconstruction infrastructure links, and creating new North-South transit and trade routes connecting the Central Asian states, Afghanistan, Pakistan, India and other states.

The Chinese initiative of the New Silk Road project, which is defined as the 'One-belt, One road' project, refers to a trade route stretching by land from China, through Central Asia, Iran, Iraq and Turkey, before crossing the Bosphorus into northwest Europe. The project extends the New Eurasian Land Bridge, which originally referred to a network of rail links from the Chinese coastal city of Lianyungang, through China to Kazakhstan and Iran, finally crossing under the Sea of Marmara in Turkey, thereby realizing an uninterrupted rail link from China to Europe. The route would be an additional one to the Trans-Siberian route which already hosts two regular freight connections from China to Germany. It goes beyond the other route because it also includes a maritime link stretching by sea from China through to the Indian Ocean.

The revival of the Silk Road Project requires improvements of both hardware and software elements in the region. The project requires not only reliable and good quality roads, bridges and borders, but also the harmonizing of national customs systems and getting neighbors to work together effectively to reduce all legal, formal and informal barriers. The initiative has the potential to increase the possibility of more cooperation among the states and to support cross-border transnational movements as mentioned before.

### **Turkish Foreign Policy**

Turkish policy makers, under these very complicated international and domestic political conditions, have been endeavouring to figure out some new, innovative

ways of handling all these new threats and challenges. For example, Turkey in the early 2000s started to initiate some new policies to realize a sort of “security zone” around Turkish borders, by promoting Turkey’s social and economic integration with the neighboring countries. The economic and social integration between Turkey and Syria was for a while promoted by Turkish policy makers, believing that the old liberal conventional wisdom of *doux commerce*, the soothing effect of trade, would promote regional peace and stability in the region. In a similar way, Turkey-Russia relations are based on very important bilateral trade and economic relations. Russia is now Turkey’s second biggest trading partner, just after Germany.

Turkish policy makers have pursued pro-active policies to decrease the threat and challenges in the region and sustain peace and stability in the Middle East, the Caucasus and the Black Sea region. Turkey’s political, economic and social integration efforts toward Syria and Iraq, the improved relations with Russia despite various disagreement between these two nations, and the rapprochement with Armenia are all in support of regional peace and stability and aimed at creating a sort of “security zone” in the region. However, three very recent geopolitical earthquakes have put Turkey’s endeavor in a difficult position: the Syrian civil war; the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea; and the recent events in Iraq and emergence of the possibility of Iraq’s partitioning and related issues, such as ethnic and sectarian division, the question Mosul and Kirkuk, and the possibility of a wider sectarian war in the region.

#### *The Silk Road Initiative and Turkey*

In general, we welcome all economic and societal efforts or tools intended to boost regional cooperation, integration, collaboration, partnership, or synergy among nations in the region. Turkish policy makers basically believe that further cooperation, integration and interdependence in terms of regional economy, trade and transportation will boost the chance of regional and international peace, security and prosperity.

Turkey particularly emphasizes the significance of the Middle/Central Corridor, in addition to the North and south corridors in the region. The Middle or Central Corridor includes the Baku-Tblisi-Kars railway project, which will provide uninterrupted rail connection from London to China via Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan with train-ferry

lines crossing the Caspian Sea. The project gained importance when the Marmaray project, which is the deepest immersed tube tunnel used by any rail system in the world, was realized in 2013. The Marmaray project now connects Asia to Europe through a rail link that crosses the Bosphorus under the Marmara Sea. Turkey is working now on new projects which will provide additional rail and motorways connecting East and West. The Eurasia Tunnel crossing under the Bosphorus Straits will be completed next year and a third bridge over the Istanbul Straits will be completed at the end of this year. Furthermore, a new transportation project has been recently announced by the Turkish Prime Minister. This most recent project is for a three-layered tunnel under the Bosphorus and will include separate rail and motorways connecting Asia to Europe. There are numerous other projects in Turkey, both large and small, that we have no time to talk about here in detail.

All of these projects will increase Turkey's contribution to the revival of the silk road project. It is clear that all these silk road initiatives will serve to a more prosperous, secure and modern Eurasia. They will expand national and regional markets and create a large scale economy, while also expanding regional cooperation among Eurasian nations. All these agreements embrace the extensive movements of goods and services, which will create a sort of economic interdependence among the Eurasian nations, which will mean more trust and less conflict between these nations. Furthermore, all these projects will also facilitate transnational movements and the exchange of ideas and peoples across borders.

## Conclusion

We cannot predict the future, but it seems that world politics are heading towards a more pluralistic and complex yet not very secure place. We cannot be sure whether we will have global re-equilibrium after passing through the aforementioned period of time. But, we can be sure that Eurasia will continue to maintain its importance in global politics and economics. Further cooperation and integration among the Central Asian nations and Azerbaijan will help serve to broader Eurasian security, peace and prosperity. The Turkic Council, as one example, can serve to these purposes in the region, in collaboration with other regional and international organizations.

Turkey's policies to face regional problems will be most probably within the following parameters: Central Asia and Azerbaijan will continue to be very special for Turkey,

and Turkey's good relations with these states will continue to be a high priority for Turkish national interests.

Turkey will continue to attach great importance to NATO membership, and NATO will continue to be the major security-provider organization in the region. Turkey, as we all know, has supported Ukrainian sovereignty and has never accepted the Russian invasion and annexation of Crimea. Turkey has declared several times that the Russian annexation of Crimea is against international law and regulations, and that this action would jeopardize regional and international security. However, Turkey also wants to maintain good relations with Russia, which is in fact a requirement of Turkey's multifocal and diversified foreign policy strategy. Therefore, while Turkey is a staunch member of NATO and a negotiating candidate for the EU, it is also a dialogue partner in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO); a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which is the second largest international organization in terms of number of members; a member of the Turkish Council; and a member observer of the Africa Union organization.

Turkey will continue to pursue this multifocal foreign policy, in its ongoing efforts to strengthen regional and international peace and security. As a member of NATO, a dialogue partner in the SCO, and a member observer of the AU, Turkey's place in the world is unique.

## POLITICAL RELIGIOUS GROUPS AND THEIR FUTURE

Dr. Jamal Sanad AL-SUWAIDI\*

The study of political religious groups - or so-called "political Islamic movements" - and their future has recently come to monopolize the attention of research centers and think tanks both in the Arab region and beyond, particularly since their failed experiences in governance in some countries following the so-called "Arab Spring." This has raised a series of questions about their future, such as: Why do these groups insist on irrevocably linking religion and politics? Why do they seek to monopolize the right to speak in the name of religion and impose their own particular approaches on society? And what is their stance on issues such as citizenship and the homeland, women, progress and etc?

There is no doubt that one aspect of the current impasse facing political religious groups is their insistence on mixing religion and politics -politicizing religion, and 'religionizing' policy - even though Islam, in its pure form, separates the two. Islam presents general principles about justice, equality, tolerance, the protection of rights and freedoms and other aspects of life, without providing detailed conditions dictating forms of governance, institution-building or the management of the affairs of states and communities. Nevertheless, political religious groups have sought to drag religion into these matters, disguising it in a political cloak to serve their goals of attaining power. They have done so without taking into consideration the dire consequences that may result from this approach or considering the bitter experience of Europe during the Dark Ages, which suffered the abuse of religion by clergymen and politicians alike. Under the banner of religion, the authority of the Pope and his representatives was amplified, while scientists and intellectuals who opposed the church were prosecuted, and their work and scientific theories confiscated on the basis of their incompatibility with the teachings of Christianity. This plunged Europe into a state of ignorance and darkness which was only dispelled when religion was finally excised from politics.

Today, political religious groups seek to relive this European experience; they exploit true religion for narrow political or personal interests, insist on blaming the 'other'

\* Director General of the Emirates Center for Strategic Studies and Research, UAE.

for the underdevelopment of their civilization and culture - and the decline of Arabs and Muslims more generally - and monopolize the interpretation of religion. Many have even accused those who oppose them of blasphemy, and sought to kill them—something utterly contrary to the principles and teachings enshrined in Islam, which seeks to foster moderation, equity and tolerance.

Perhaps the most blatant example of exploiting religion for political purposes is the promotion by these groups of the concept of establishing a Caliphate, taking advantage of its symbolic status among Arabs and Muslims in order to gain ground, expand and prevail politically in the Arab and Islamic countries. This tactic seeks to surpass the concept of national loyalty which has formed the basis of the nation-state since 1648, and ignores the principles of international law which emphasize respect for sovereignty and non-interference in other states' internal affairs.

The attempts of these groups to monopolize the right to speak in the name of religion have contributed to the growth of a culture of extremism and sown the seeds of violence in the community. This may explain the recent regional escalation in the threat posed by terrorism – a trend that cannot be separated from the practices of these groups which claim to represent Islam, speak in its name and resist any alternative approach (the logic followed by the European Inquisition).

The recent period of governance by political religious groups in some of the so-called "Arab Spring" countries has failed to provide a model of development through which progress can be made, particularly in terms of ensuring the concept of citizenship or the rights of women and minorities. It was evident to all that these groups do not have any vision or agenda to improve the economic, social or cultural aspects of society. Therefore, it is perhaps unsurprising that their experiences in government ended in failure, particularly after the fallacy of their self-proclaimed ability to address the problems of development was exposed.

This experience has also confirmed, beyond any doubt, that these groups are far from democratic; they have worked to marginalize their opponents and exclude them from political life, flouted basic concepts such as citizenship and equality, and abandoned their slogans such as "participation not competition" and "faith in the rights of women".



I foresee no future for political religious groups in the region or elsewhere, since they market themselves by way of an illusion and seek to play on peoples' emotions, particularly those for whom religion holds a special significance. They will never succeed because their ideas and ideologies are like a mirage, without any basis in reality, as evidenced by their limited experience of authority in both Egypt and Tunisia, where they had no clear understanding of the nature of the state or the concept of the political system.

They have also failed to develop political, economic and social programs to benefit those who aspire to achieve the renaissance and development promised by these groups in their slogans. Indeed, their time in authority has shown that these groups are incapable of governance, and pose a threat to the security and stability of their countries, the region and the world. This explains the obvious dislike expressed by the people toward these groups, and their inevitable subsequent decline.

In fact, the Arab nations' recent aversion to political religious groups is not only a result of the insincerity of their slogans or their use of religion to achieve political ends, but also several other factors. First, these groups are hostage to a rigid vision of religion— one that is only concerned with a literal reading texts, and does not consider the sophisticated nuances of a changing reality. This is directly responsible for the failure of these groups to interact with the requirements of modernity and progress in their communities. Second, these groups attempt to promote the idea of a religious state that does not accept dialogue with others and adopts exclusionary approaches in dealing with its opponents. This became clear during the Muslim Brotherhood's time in government in Egypt, where they sought to seize power and monopolize positions, in an effort to secure power—a process known idiomatically as Ikhwana [the "Brotherization" of the state and society], as well as other practices that are incompatible with modernity and a commitment to democracy.

While political religious groups in the Arab and Islamic worlds in the past offered a distorted model of Islam, it is fair to say here that some Muslim countries have succeeded in eliminating the entanglement of religion and politics. These include Malaysia, which has adopted a successful model of development based on a belief in pluralism and participation in nation-building, openness to others, and capitalizing on its scientific, industrial and technological achievements.

## ЛОЗАННСКАЯ КОНФЕРЕНЦИЯ И ДИПЛОМАТИЯ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСКОЙ ДЕЛЕГАЦИИ В ПАРИЖЕ (1922-1923)

Георгий МАМУЛИА\*, Рамиз АБУТАЛЫБОВ\*\*

С осени 1922 г., деятельность азербайджанской дипломатической делегации в Париже вновь активизировалась.

После сокрушительных поражений, понесенных греческими войсками в боях с кемалистами, и эвакуации 9 сентября греческой армии из Смирны западные державы были вынуждены окончательно пересмотреть свою политику в отношении Турции. 23 сентября правительства Франции, Великобритании и Италии пригласили М. Кемалья<sup>1</sup> начать переговоры, предварительно обещав, что Турция получит Смирну, Анатолию и Восточную Фракию. Приняв эти условия, кемалисты и западные союзники подписали 11 октября Муданийское соглашение о прекращении огня<sup>2</sup>.

Понимая, что урегулирование ближневосточной проблемы станет предметом международной конференции уже в ближайшее время, 8/9 октября А. М. Топчибаши<sup>3</sup> составил текст специальной ноты, обращенной к руководителям Франции, Англии и Италии, где были сформулированы основные приоритеты азербайджанской дипломатии по данному вопросу. В документе отмечалось, что Кавказ исторически был самым тесным образом связан с Ближним Востоком. Эту связь, обусловленную самой природой, не смогло уничтожить даже столетнее владычество России, хотя оно и нанесло «чувствительный удар делу экономического развития Кавказа и Ближнего Востока»<sup>4</sup>.

Те же деструктивные цели преследуют и русские большевики, насильственно

\* Доктор исторических наук. В 1992-1994 гг. – государственный советник президента Грузии по вопросам международных отношений. С 2003 г. работает во Франции. Доктор Высшей школы общественных наук (EHES) Франции.

\*\* Дипломат, общественный деятель, исследователь истории азербайджанской эмиграции. С 1972 по 1979 и 1985 по 1992 гг. работал в Секретариате ООН по образованию, науке и культуре (ЮНЕСКО) в Париже.

<sup>1</sup> Мустафа Кемаль, глава правительства Великого Национального Собрания Турции в 1920-23 гг.

<sup>2</sup> Pichon J. Le partage du Proche-Orient. Paris. 1938. p. 240-242.

<sup>3</sup> А.М. Топчибаши, председатель парламента АДР, глава азербайджанской делегации в Париже.

<sup>4</sup> Pichon J. Le partage du Proche-Orient. Paris. 1938. p. 240-242.

оккупирующие Азербайджан, хотя азербайджанский народ никогда не примирится со своими угнетателями. Следовательно, и эта искусственная попытка Кремля не способна «порвать связи Кавказа с Ближним Востоком»<sup>5</sup>.

В обращении отмечалось что, хотя Азербайджан и не является причерноморским государством, не меньшее значение для него имеет и вопрос Проливов. Именно маршрут Батуми – Черное море – Проливы представляет для него единственный ближайший и важнейший путь сношения с Европой в политическом, культурном и экономическом отношении.

«Исходя из этого, делегация Азербайджана обращается к руководителям упомянутых западных стран с просьбой допустить ее представителей к участию в будущей конференции, чтобы выслушать их объяснения при решении вышеуказанных вопросов, непосредственно касающихся жизненных интересов Азербайджана»<sup>6</sup>.

30 октября упомянутая нота была переслана премьер-министру Франции Пуанкаре. В сопроводительном письме, датированном этим же числом, Топчибаши выражал надежду на то, что правительство Франции, традиционно благосклонно относящееся к малым нациям, поддержит его просьбу относительно допуска руководимой им делегации к участию в работе международной конференции<sup>7</sup>. В тот же день с аналогичными сопроводительными письмами документ был отправлен аккредитованным в Париже послам Англии и Италии<sup>8</sup>, а 6 ноября – на имя председателя Лозаннской конференции<sup>9</sup>.

Топчибаши, наряду с этим, попытался воспользоваться двухдневным пребыванием в Париже Исмета-паши Иненю, министра иностранных дел

<sup>5</sup> Там же.

<sup>6</sup> Mémoire présenté par la délégation de la République d'Azerbaïdjan à la conférence du Proche Orient. Paris, 8/9. 10. 1922 // Le Centre d'études des mondes russe, caucasien et centre-européen (далее – CERCEC). Ecole des hautes études en sciences sociales (далее – EHESS). (Paris). Archives d'Ali Mardan-bey Toptchibachi. Carton n° 13/2.

<sup>7</sup> A. M. Toptchibachi (président de la délégation diplomatique d'Azerbaïdjan). A Son Excellence Monsieur Raymond Poincaré, président du Conseil des ministres et ministre des Affaires étrangères de la République Française. Paris, 30. 10. 1922 // Ibidem.

<sup>8</sup> A. M. Toptchibachi (président de la délégation diplomatique d'Azerbaïdjan). A Son Excellence Lord Harding, ambassadeur de la Grande-Bretagne auprès du gouvernement de la République Française. Paris, 30. 10. 1922 // Ibidem; A. M. Toptchibachi (président de la délégation diplomatique d'Azerbaïdjan). A Son Excellence Monsieur le comte Sforza, ambassadeur de S.M. le roi d'Italie auprès du gouvernement de la République Française. Paris, 30. 10. 1922 // Ibidem.

<sup>9</sup> A. M. Toptchibachi (président de la délégation diplomatique d'Azerbaïdjan). A Monsieur le président de la conférence de la paix du Proche Orient. Paris, 6. 11. 1922 // Ibidem.

Турции, исполняющего также функции председателя дипломатической делегации правительства Анкары на Лозаннской мирной конференции.

В соответствии с достигнутым соглашением утром 17 ноября Топчибаши представил на имя Исмета-паши специальную ноту, переданную им в турецкое посольство.

В ноте отмечалось, что « азербайджанская делегация позволяет себе уверенность в том, что интересы Азербайджана встретят в лице Вашего Превосходительства и всей делегации надежных защитников и на теперешней международной конференции в Лозанне при обсуждении и решении вопросов, касающихся Кавказа и, в частности, Азербайджана»<sup>10</sup>.

С целью защиты азербайджанских национальных интересов, 30 ноября утром Топчибаши приехал в Лозанну, оставаясь в тесном контакте с членами турецкой делегации. В воскресенье 3 декабря после завтрака, данного Исметом-пашой в честь прибывших накануне в Лозанну большевистских представителей, глава большевистской делегации Чичерин официально заявил, что представителями Азербайджана, Грузии и Украины должны быть признаны только члены советской делегации. «Турецкая сторона не должна оказывать никакой поддержки находящимся в Лозанне руководителям бывших антибольшевистских правительств Кавказа»<sup>11</sup>.

Уже 5 декабря Г. Чичерин во время своего общего интервью корреспондентам местных газет, наряду с прочими вопросами, коснулся проблемы Азербайджана. На вопрос одного из корреспондентов, чем вызван тот факт, что большевики, постоянно кричащие о праве народов на самоопределение, сами первыми же нарушают этот принцип, насильственно захватывая Грузию и Азербайджан, Чичерин в лучших традициях свойственной ему демагогии ответил: сам азербайджанский народ призвал на помощь красную армию против угнетающего его буржуазного правительства Баку<sup>12</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> A. M. Toptchibachi (président de la délégation diplomatique d'Azerbaïdjan). A Son Excellence Monsieur Ismet-Pacha, ministre des Affaires étrangères de la Turquie et président de la délégation turque à la conférence de la Paix à Lausanne. Paris, 17. 11. 1922 // Ibidem.

<sup>11</sup> Там же.

<sup>12</sup> Там же.

На следующий день Топчибаши передал швейцарским газетам текст заявления, в котором, опровергая ложь Чичерина, подчеркнул, что упомянутое «утверждение комиссара абсолютно противоречит реальности, свидетельствующей о насильственном захвате страны большевиками, о ненависти, которую испытывает азербайджанский народ к русским большевикам, видя в них еще более отвратительных своих угнетателей, чем царские чиновники и правительство»<sup>13</sup>.

Топчибаши удалось встретиться с генеральным секретарем Лозаннской конференции Р. Массигли, а также с представителями делегаций Франции, Англии и других стран. Особенно интересно было посещение английской делегации. «Все они подчеркивают важность заключения мира на Ближнем Востоке»<sup>14</sup>. Дипломаты не исключали того, что на следующей конференции может быть поставлен и общерусский вопрос, непосредственно касающийся и Кавказа. При этом, подчеркивая этническое родство азербайджанцев и турков, западные представители отмечали, что Анкара, в объективном отношении, «заинтересована в поддержке кавказских республик». Необходимость сохранения этого союза считается важнейшим фактором их независимости<sup>15</sup>.

Наряду с этим немало времени Топчибаши уделял взаимодействию с другими кавказцами. Почти каждый день он виделся с Чхенкели, с которым работал в полном согласии, сведя его со многими знакомыми ему турецкими представителями. Так же, как и сам Топчибаши, Чхенкели был уверен, что кавказский вопрос может быть поставлен после заключения мира с Турцией, для чего необходимо было сохранять дружественные отношения с Анкарой. Гораздо хуже обстояло дело с армянами, в отношении которых, по словам самого Топчибаши, «турки были непримиримы»<sup>16</sup>. Со своей стороны, армяне продолжали антитурецкую агитацию в прессе, склоняя на свою сторону церковные общины крайне религиозной Швейцарии. Попытка Топчибаши уговорить армян прекратить агитацию, встав на путь конструктивного диалога с Анкарой, окончилась неудачей<sup>17</sup>. Вернувшись в Париж в последних числах

<sup>13</sup> Déclaration de Monsieur Toptchibacheff. Lausanne, 8. 12. 1922 // Ibidem.

<sup>14</sup> А. М. Топчибаши – М. Рафиеву. Лозанна, 20. 12. 1922 // Там же.

<sup>15</sup> Там же.

<sup>16</sup> Там же.

<sup>17</sup> Там же.

декабря, Топчибаши продолжал свои демарши, направленные на сближение с кемалистами.

Наряду с этим Топчибаши продолжал поддерживать связь и с турецким дипломатическим представительством в Париже, получая оттуда более или менее регулярную информацию об идущих в Швейцарии переговорах, а также о событиях в самой Анкаре.

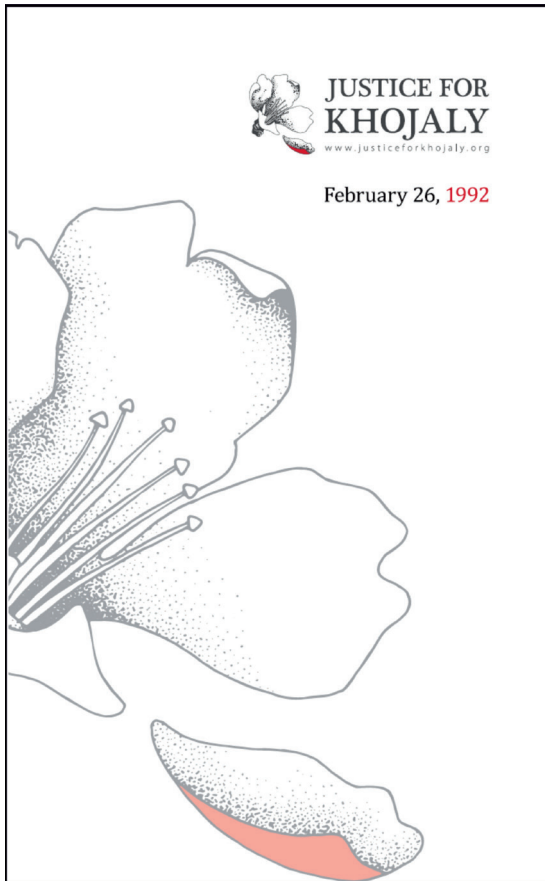
15 июля, когда результаты конференции уже стали известны, Топчибаши в очередной обратился к Исмету-паше. Горячо поздравляя министра иностранных дел Турции с успешным для правительства Анкары завершением конференции, Топчибаши отмечал, что за последние восемь месяцев (время, прошедшее с подачи им 17 ноября 1922 г. меморандума о бедственном положении Азербайджана), «указанное безотрадное положение не изменилось, или, вернее, сделалось более тяжелым. [...] Насильственно завладевшие Азербайджаном новые его хозяева с еще большей враждой и ожесточением продолжают свою разрушительную политику уничтожения всяких следов независимости, насильственного отбирания всякого рода имущества под видом несвойственного туркам-азери отрицания всякого принципа частной собственности, свободы труда и экономических сношений. Все эти разрушительные действия, в связи с применением жестоких репрессий вплоть до расстрелов и способов русификации, практиковавшихся в царское время, довели богатый Азербайджан почти до полного обнищания»<sup>18</sup>.

Последовавшие за этим события, однако, внесли ясность в создавшееся на Ближнем Востоке положение. Будучи прожженными реалистами, власти Анкары не желали идти на какую-либо конфронтацию с советской империей. В лучшем случае они были готовы закрыть глаза на деятельность эмигрантов-кавказцев на своей территории, если только это не было чревато какой-либо существенной реакцией со стороны большевиков. Такое положение продолжалось до 1931 г., когда, под усиленным давлением Кремля, власти Анкары были вынуждены запретить на своей территории деятельность азербайджанских и других кавказских политических организаций.

<sup>18</sup> А. М. Топчибаши (председатель дипломатической делегации Азербайджана). Его Превосходительству Исмет-паше, министру иностранных дел Турции и председателю турецкой делегации на мирной конференции в Лозанне. Париж, 15. 7. 1923 // CERCEC. EHESS. Archives d'Ali Mardan-bey Toptchibachi. Carton n° 13/2.

## YENİ NƏŞRLƏR – NEW PUBLICATIONS - НОВЫЕ ИЗДАНИЯ

## “JUSTICE FOR KHOJALY”



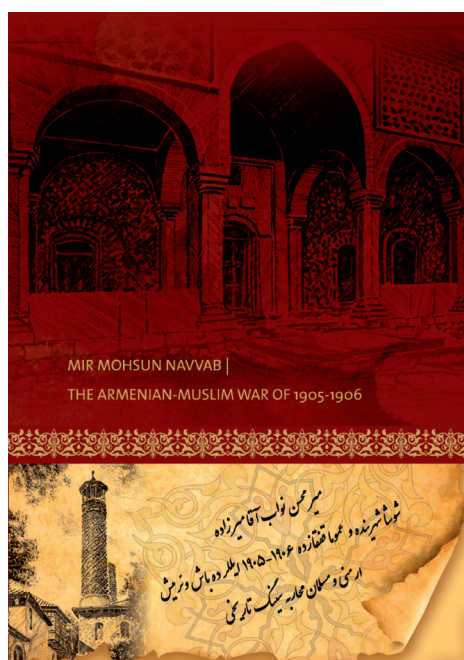
The International Awareness Campaign “Justice for Khojaly” was initiated on 8 May 2008, by Leyla Aliyeva, General Coordinator of the Islamic Conference Youth Forum for Dialogue and Cooperation.

The Campaign aims to raise international public awareness of the Khojaly Genocide, the root causes and consequences of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the need for the soonest and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent regions of Azerbaijan.

The Campaign makes use of a variety of communication tools and resources to

reach out globally and deliver its messages, including in particular through the media, internet and live events. Events organized within the framework of the Campaign are designed to demonstrate the strong opposition to massacres, ethnic cleansing, racial, ethnic or religious discrimination, express solidarity with the victims of the Khojaly Genocide and to underline the need for a fight against impunity for the crimes committed against Azerbaijani civilians in Khojaly.

The campaign functions successfully in dozens of countries and so far more than 120 000 people and 115 organizations have joined the Campaign. Social networks, exhibitions, rallies, contests, conferences, seminars and similar activities are other effective tools promoting the Campaign’s goals.

**“THE ARMENIAN-MUSLIM WAR OF 1905-1906”****Mir Mohsun NAVVAB**

Mir Mohsun Navvab, a scholar, musician, historian, literary critic, and pedagogue, who occupied a prominent place in the history of science and culture of Azerbaijan, was born in 1833 in Shusha. He got involved in science and literature since his early youth, and actively participated in the public and cultural life of Karabakh.

The author's work "The Armenian-Muslim War of 1905-1906" underlies his legacy as a historian.

The work reflects valuable information about the massacres committed by the Armenian extremists against the Azerbaijanis in different regions of Azerbaijan, especially in Karabakh in the early XX century, and comprises some facts not encountered in other sources about many people associated with these events. The main point adding to the value of this work is, no doubt, its author's being a direct witness of the events he describes, as Mir Mohsun Navvab personally knew many people he was speaking about, and was well aware of their actions and thoughts.

It is no coincidence that a great many copies of that book were destroyed in the Soviet period. In 1993 the book was re-published on the basis of its manuscript.

The present book is the English translation of the 1993 edition. The translation of the book written in Azerbaijani into foreign languages will, no doubt, facilitate the elucidation of the mysteries related to the 1905-1906 events, eradication of the distortions, and thus make one more step towards the objective scene.

Mir Mohsun Navvab, who was rightly called the last outstanding representative and encyclopaedic scholar of the classical period in Azerbaijan, passed away in his native city of Shusha in 1918.