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## OFFICIAL CHRONICLE



**DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY  
OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV  
(JANUARY – MARCH 2019)**

**FOREIGN VISITS**

**WORKING VISIT TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION  
21 – 23 January 2019**

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with President of the World Economic Forum Borge Brende
- Meeting with President of Visa Ryan McInerney
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of BP Robert Dudley
- Meeting with Executive Vice President and Chief Sales and Marketing Officer at CISCO Gerri Elliott
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of SAP SE Bill McDermott
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer for the World Bank Kristalina Georgieva
- Meeting with Prime Minister of Georgia Mamuka Bakhtadze
- Meeting with President of Russian LUKOIL company Vahid Alakbarov
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of French Total company Patrick Pouyanné
- Meeting with Microsoft Vice President, President for Europe, Middle East and Africa Michel van der Bel

- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of Signify company (former Philips Lighting) Eric Rondolat
- Informal meeting with Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan
- Meeting with President of Europe Selling & Market Operations at Procter & Gamble Loic Tassel
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of The Boston Consulting Group (BCG) Rich Lesser
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of Lazard Freres company Matthieu Pigasse
- Meeting with President and Chairman of VTB Bank Management Board Andrey Kostin
- Meeting with Executive Vice-President of SUEZ for International Development Eric Ghebali
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of Equinor (former Statoil) Eldar Saetre
- Meeting with President of the Swiss Confederation Ueli Maurer

**President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev  
attended “Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative:  
China`s Trillion Dollar Vision” session**

22 January 2019, Davos



A session on “Advancing the Belt and Road Initiative: China`s Trillion Dollar Vision” held in Davos as part of the World Economic Forum.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and first lady Mehriban Aliyeva attended the session.

**Session facilitator:** Let`s begin with you, Mr. President. What does the “One Belt, One Way” initiative mean for a neighboring country such as Azerbaijan? I am aware that you see economic activity of your country not only in the oil and gas sector, but also in the creation of infrastructure.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** Yes, you are absolutely right. Creating a modern infrastructure is one of the main goals of our government. I believe that we did the right thing by taking advantage of our geographical location and investing mainly in infrastructure, i.e. our domestic infrastructure and the infrastructure that will allow Azerbaijan the opportunity to turn into one of the international hubs. We are investing in infrastructure inside the country to build roads, highways, airports, for gasification and power generation. We have also invested in transport infrastructure. This will enable us to transport cargoes from the East to the West, from the North to the South and from the South to the North.

Azerbaijan is an active member of the East-West transport corridor initiative. Of course, we support the “One Belt, One Way” initiative of the Government of China. Azerbaijan

is creating an opportunity for countries to its north and south to join this project. We are already seeing this. Azerbaijan is the only country participating in the East-West and North-South transport corridors. The modernization of our railway systems, the construction of the largest seaport on the Caspian coast with a cargo handling capacity of about 25 million tons, and the construction of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway linking us to Turkey and Europe by creating the missing link between Europe and Asia opens up good opportunities for those interested in using our infrastructure. We are spending money to create a good tariff policy. The volume of freight traffic is also growing. Ten times more cargo than in the previous year was transported along the North-South corridor last year alone.

**Facilitator:** I must admit that I have already interviewed Mr. President and he remembers all the numbers. We are currently analyzing only a small part of these figures. Mr. President, let's talk about the debt, because you have repeatedly faced this issue. If I remember correctly, you have had to repeatedly answer people's questions about debt over the course of 10 years. What can you say about this?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** As for the infrastructure, we financed it mainly from the state budget. I believe that we have managed to correctly channel our revenues from the sale of oil and gas into the infrastructure, and we can be proud of that now. According to the Davos World Economic Forum, Azerbaijan ranks 34th in the world for the quality of roads. We did this using the funds fetched from the sale of oil and gas. Then, of course, this contributed to the creation of a business environment because if you have modern infrastructure, gasification, electricity, good incomes and highways, then it is easier for businesses to invest in your country. We have done work in this direction. According to the latest Doing Business report of the World Bank, Azerbaijan is in 25th place in the world, having improved on its previous position by a record of 32 steps. In this program of the World Bank, we are among the world's top 10 reformist states.

**Facilitator:** With your permission, I am aware that you can mention some excellent results. However, the process leading to these results is not always easy. This is why I asked you about the debt because you, like many others, were criticized for accumulating debts as a result of this infrastructure. So in your opinion, what are the investments leading to the accumulation of debts and how can this question be resolved?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** Over the years, our strategy has been to spend less than we earn. It would be nice if this difference was greater. This is why we did not accumulate debts. As for our domestic debt, it is very low. Our external debt accounts for only 19 percent of the gross domestic product. We have a strategy to reduce it to 10 percent. Therefore, as I have already noted, all infrastructure projects implemented in Azerbaijan, i.e. as I said, the projects linking countries to each other, were implemented without borrowing. Twenty years ago, when we were not very developed and were rather poor, we had to borrow. We are grateful to the financial institutions that lent us money. Today we are lenders ourselves. At present, Azerbaijan has an investment strategy not only for other countries, but also for infrastructure and the real economy. At the same time, we provide funds for infrastructure projects being implemented in other countries. Our debt has nothing to do with infrastructure. By investing in infrastructure, we did not expect our funds to pay off immediately. We understood that

there would be no direct return of the money. You cannot make money on the construction of a road but you will earn on taxes paid by those using this road to deliver their goods to the market. Or we will earn the funds paid by those who use our territory as a transit from East to West and in the opposite direction. And this means a return on investment. At the same time, I believe that the money we have spent on infrastructure in the country and our regional cooperation may pay off in 10 years.

**Facilitator:** And yet not every country is as happy as Azerbaijan. You have ample resources of oil and gas. I once discovered this as a surprise. Is this a cause for concern in other countries building infrastructure and participating in this platform? What is the way to balance this situation?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** Of course, I think that this is a concern. If we did not have money to invest, we would have to borrow it from foreign investors. I can give you an example related to the railway project we completed a year and a half ago. I am talking about a railway link between Azerbaijan and Turkey which connects the East with the West. For several years, we were looking for funding from external sources.

**Facilitator:** When was that?

**President Ilham Aliyev:** It was at the beginning of the 2000s, 2004–2005. Our applications were rejected because this investment, as you noted, would not have paid off even in the medium term. Of course, the countries that do not have financial resources find themselves in a difficult situation. Those who do not have financial resources have more urgent issues to address, such as unemployment and investment in the real sector of the economy to generate income. So infrastructure projects are not a priority for these countries. Therefore, I believe that financial institutions should pay more attention to this issue. I mean international financial institutions in particular. They should provide assistance in investing in the infrastructure of countries that will create opportunities for job creation within 10 years.

Then the head of state answered questions from the audience.

**Lourdis Cardsanella from Cornell University:** Investments from countries of the “One Belt, One Way” initiative have increased by 50 percent over the past five years. Given the constraints faced by Chinese companies in the United States and Europe, will there be any further growth?

**Representative of the largest energy company in China and the world:** I have a question for His Excellency President Aliyev. I know that you are paying attention to transport infrastructure. But what can you say about the energy infrastructure, including the provision of electricity? Are there opportunities for our companies in this area? Thank you very much.

**Representative of Swiss Parliament Fred Bigley:** To what extent is the “One Belt, One Way” initiative an infrastructure project and to what extent is it a project of consolidating foreign relations?

**Employee of “Omata Group” operating in Thailand:** We have spoken a lot about the tensions between China and the United States. Will the “One Belt, One Way” initiative slow down or speed up these tensions? Thank you.

**President Ilham Aliyev:** We have invested heavily in the generation of electricity. We have now completely eliminated the shortage, have become an exporter of electricity and have earned tens of millions of dollars. We are open to investment. We also invite companies to become contractors. This year we will commission a new power plant with a capacity of 400 megawatts. Of course, we are currently working on efficiency and loss reduction. From a practical point of view, if you come to our country as investors, contractors or in any other capacity, I will be very happy.

I would also like to touch on the question of the representative of the Swiss Parliament. I am absolutely convinced that any transport project connecting countries has a geopolitical basis. These projects have a positive impact on the geopolitical situation, on stability, on predictability, because they create interdependence. Without our neighbors, we will not be able to become a transit country. Our neighbors cannot become transit countries without their neighbors. So this is a chain of countries, as I have already said, and we are located on the road from East to West and from North to South. In this way, we connect continents, countries and create a more predictable future.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF AUSTRIA

28 – 29 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Vice-Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Heinz-Christian Strache
- Meeting with Federal Chancellor of the Republic of Austria Sebastian Kurz
- Meeting with Federal President of the Republic of Austria Alexander Van der Bellen

### **President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan to discuss the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict**

29 March 2019, Vienna



On March 29, 2019 President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan to discuss the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict in Vienna.

Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan first held a one-on-one meeting.

The meeting then continued with the participation of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs.

**MEETINGS OF THE PRESIDENT**

- 14.01.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Secretary General of the World Customs Organization (WCO) Kunio Mikuriya
- 15.01.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received former President of the French Republic Nicolas Sarkozy
- 16.01.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mohammad Bagheri
- 31.01.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Parliamentary State Secretary at the Federal Ministry for Economic Affairs and Energy of the Federal Republic of Germany Thomas Bareis
- 01.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by head of the Karachay-Cherkessia Republic of the Russian Federation Rashid Temrezov
- 04.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Executive Director of the International Astronautical Federation (IAF) Christian Feichtinger
- 05.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Patriarch Kirill of Moscow and All Russia
- 05.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Chief Executive Officer and Executive Chairman of the Formula 1 Group Chase Carey
- 09.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Economic Development of the Russian Federation, co-chair of the Azerbaijan-Russia intergovernmental commission Maxim Oreshkin
- 11.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Former President of the Senate of the Kingdom of the Netherlands, Honorary President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Chairman of Dutch-Azerbaijan Friendship Group Rene van der Linden
- 18.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by the UK Prime Minister's Trade Envoy to Azerbaijan Baroness Emma Nicholson
- 19.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Director-General for Mobility and Transport (MOVE) of the European Commission Henrik Hololei
- 19.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by member of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey, head of the Turkey-Azerbaijan inter-parliamentary friendship group Samil Ayrim

- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Turkey Fatih Donmez
- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with European Commissioner for Budget and Human Resources Günther Oettinger
- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State in the Bureau of Energy Resources Sandra Oudkirk
- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Undersecretary for Economic Development of the Italian Republic Andrea Cioffi
- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Vice-President of the European Investment Bank Vazil Hudak
- 20.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Regional Director of the World Bank for the South Caucasus Mercy Tembon
- 21.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs Stephane Visconti of France, Igor Popov of Russia, Andrew Schofer of the US, as well as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk
- 21.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received member of the Committee on the affairs of soldiers-internationalists under the Council of Heads of Government of the CIS and the Supreme Council of the International Organization of Veterans “Battle Brotherhood”, Lieutenant Colonel, Hero of the Soviet Union Ruslan Aushev
- 28.02.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received President of the Centrist Democrat International Andres Pastrana
- 03.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev accepted credentials of newly appointed Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela Christopher Alberto Martinez Berroteran
- 03.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev accepted credentials of newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Rwanda Williams Nkurunziza
- 03.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev accepted credentials of newly appointed Ambassador of the Kingdom of Thailand Phantipha Iamsudha Ekarohit
- 04.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Governor of the General Investment Authority of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, co-chair of Azerbaijan-Saudi Arabia Joint Intergovernmental Commission Ibrahim bin Abdul Rahman Al-Omar

- 04.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the US-based Foundation for Ethnic Understanding Marc Schneier
- 05.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia Miroslav Lajčák
- 05.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Suma Chakrabarti
- 05.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received head of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, deputy head of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament Paolo Grimoldi
- 06.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey Mustafa Sentop
- 06.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia Toivo Klaar
- 08.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by president of the Russian Jewish Congress Yury Kanner
- 11.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev accepted credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of India Bawitlung Vanlalvawna
- 12.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev accepted credentials of the newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the United States of America Earle Litzenberger
- 13.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Assistant Secretary-General of the United Nations, Assistant Administrator of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) and Director of the UNDP Regional Bureau for Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States Mirjana Egger
- 13.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received co-chairs of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Ismail Serageldin, former heads of state and government, and members of the Center's Board of Trustees
- 13.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received President of the Chinese People's Institute of Foreign Affairs, Special Assistant to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the People's Republic of China Wu Hailong

- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with President of Albania Ilir Meta
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Member of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Sefik Dzaferovic
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with President of Moldova Igor Dodon
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with President of Montenegro Milo Dukanovic
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Prime Minister of the Republic of Bulgaria Boyko Borissov
- 14.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev met with Vice Prime Minister of Romania Ana Birchall
- 15.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Economic Affairs and Finance of the Islamic Republic of Iran, co-chair of Azerbaijan-Iran intergovernmental joint commission Farhad Dejpasand
- 15.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Chairman of the Board of Directors of King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Turki Al-Faisal
- 15.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Director of the Earth Institute at Columbia University, Special Adviser to the United Nations Secretary-General on the Sustainable Development Goals Jeffrey Sachs
- 15.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri
- 16.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Secretary General of the Organization of the Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC) Mohammad Sanusi Barkindo
- 16.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Khalid Abdulaziz Al-Falih
- 18.03.2019 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister of Energy and Industry of the United Arab Emirates Suhail Mohammed Al Mazrouei

**President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev  
attended the 5<sup>th</sup> Ministerial Meeting of Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council**

20 February 2019, Baku

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



Dear ladies and gentleman, dear guests, dear friends,

Welcome to Azerbaijan, I am very glad to see you and thank you for participating at the 5<sup>th</sup> Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor. Back in 2015, we launched this important process. Azerbaijan initiated the idea of having such a format of cooperation.

This was supported by the European Commission, and that is how it started. And now this is the benefits of these meetings, the benefits of broad discussions on what should be done in order to move forward this huge project.

I would like to express gratitude to European Commission, for active involvement in the process, the European Commission and Azerbaijan are co-organizers of this Council and our close cooperation brings good results. It is a special pleasure to welcome Commissioner Oettinger who used to be a commissioner on energy and who played very important role in strengthening cooperation between the European Union and Azerbaijan on energy issues and in moving forward the project of the Southern Gas Corridor. It is really a team work, we work as a team and we see results, see progress year after year.

I would like to express gratitude to the governments of the United States and the United Kingdom for their permanent support to all the energy projects which Azerbaijan initiated and particular for the support in implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor.

I welcome the high representatives of the United States, the United Kingdom and I am sure that your contribution to the meeting will be outstanding. Also, I would like to greet high representatives of the countries involved in the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor, our neighbors, Turkey, Georgia, European countries, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania, Italy. We are all now in one team of implementation of this project.

As you know, Azerbaijan signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro on further expansion of energy development in Europe and building a modern, new infrastructure and network for diversification of energy supplies of Azerbaijan, and I welcome representatives of these countries. Also I am glad that a number of our guests, the countries which participate at annual Council also is growing. I was informed that we have representatives from Hungary, Romania, Serbia, San-Marino, Turkmenistan. I am glad that the number of countries which show interest in this project also is growing. And of course, the companies. Without the active participation of the companies

it would not have been possible to implement this huge project.

I would like to particularly mention close strategic cooperation between SOCAR and BP. BP is our strategic partner, strategic investor. It is a company which has been working in Azerbaijan for 25 years and which makes big efforts in order to support energy projects in Azerbaijan, and of course the investments from BP are highly welcomed. By the way, we are working on many important projects of energy development in Azerbaijan. Our joint efforts would not have been possible without close support from the international financial institutions.

I would like to mention that I am glad that today among our guests we have representatives of leading international financial institutions, World Bank, IBRD, Asian Development Bank, European Investment Bank. And I would like to use this opportunity to express my gratitude for your financial contribution and your trust in us, trust in this project. So, mentioning this list of participants, already I think enough to imagine what kind of a huge initiative and project we are implementing.

The Southern Gas Corridor is really a project of common interests, project of mutual importance. And it is part of Azerbaijan's energy strategy which was launched back in 1994, when Azerbaijan signed an agreement with the Consortium of international oil companies on development of the huge oil field Azeri-Chirag-Gunashli. So that was the beginning of our close cooperation with international energy companies. That was a time when Azerbaijan opened its resources for international cooperation. For the first time, international investments came to the Caspian Sea, and 1994 was actually the turning point in the development of Azerbaijan, because at that time Azerbaijan was a newly independent country. Independence was less than three years, and economic situation in the country was very difficult. So, opening country for investments allowed us to attract multi-billion investments to create tens of thousands of jobs to present Azerbaijan as a country with the good investment climate and then to use benefits of oil and gas development the revenues to diversify economy to build modern infrastructure and now to concentrate mainly on non-energy sector. This is our priority but at the same time, energy sector, oil and gas sector in Azerbaijan will continue to be the leading sector of our economy and will continue to be one of the most important elements of regional cooperation.

In 1996, the agreement contract on Shah Deniz gas field was signed. And Shah Deniz is a main resource base for the Southern Gas Corridor, I hope it will not be the only, but so far it is the only and the main resource base. It is a huge gas field which is already producing and exporting. If look at the chronology of our energy development, we see that step by step we were coming towards the main goal, to diversify our energy supplies and to build modern energy transportation infrastructure. Therefore, of course commissioning of the pipeline connecting Caspian Sea and the Black Sea in the end of 1990s, Baku-Supsa was important element of energy supply and diversification. Then came Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan that was a historical event.

In 2006, this huge energy project was inaugurated that allowed companies to invest more, to extract more, and allowed us to export as much as we can. And today Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan

also is transporting oil from other countries. So, Azerbaijan is already important transitor for oil supplies, and therefore, of course, the role of Azerbaijan in the region is growing.

In 2007, Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline was inaugurated, and for the first time Azerbaijan became gas exporter to international markets. Before that we were actually importing natural gas. So as I said, step by step we were coming towards the main energy projects which is the Southern Gas Corridor and implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor today is a reality. And I remember in 2012, Azerbaijan and Turkey signed an agreement on TANAP, which actually was a starting point for the Southern Gas Corridor. Because a year later, in 2013, the companies made an investment decision to develop Shah Deniz-2, second phase of Shah Deniz, and in 2013, Trans-Adriatic pipeline also was selected as the continuation of TANAP. So, all these demonstrates that we were working very closely with our partners, and really team work made it possible to talk about success. Since our last meeting last February there were two most important ceremonies, one in Azerbaijan, another in Turkey: May official opening of the Southern Gas Corridor, and June official opening of TANAP was really important milestone in the development of the Shah Deniz field and implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor project. And today we are very close to the completion of this huge energy project, three out of four elements of the Southern Gas Corridor are already in operation. We are glad that since opening TANAP has already transported more than one billion cubic meters of gas to the Turkish markets. So, TANAP is already in operation, and there is a big progress in implementation of TAP.

I remember last February when I addressed the Council, I talked about the completion about 67 percent of TAP and now according to recent information it is already 85 percent. So, we really made a big progress within one year, and everything goes successfully. So, hopefully, next year we will talk about new results. Southern Gas Corridor project is a project of energy diversification, diversification of energy resources is very important for producers, for consumers, for transitors, and I think we found a very good balance between producers or producer Azerbaijan, transitors and consumers. And the balance of this interest make this project successful. Because we always were trying to understand the needs and concerns of each other. We always try and I think succeeded in supporting each other, and importance of this kind of meetings is really very very big. Because we review what has been done during one year, at the same time, we plan our future steps and then, during the year bilateral or multilateral consultations, meetings, conferences help to move forward. Southern Gas Corridor is a project of energy diversification also because its diversification of roots and sources.

Azerbaijan is a new source for energy supply to Europe and of course, building the new pipeline or pipelines, we diversify the roots. Therefore, it is full diversification, and actually it is changing the energy map of Europe, and thus, the importance of the Southern Gas Corridor is growing. And of course, the Southern Gas Corridor is a project of energy security. Because we all understand that without energy security it is difficult to provide national security. So, energy security is integral part of the country's national security. And the countries which depend on external energy supplies of course, they need to be sure that the supplies will be sustainable, and long-term. So that they can plan their future, the industrial development. At the same time, the countries which produce and which are rich with energy resources without reliable markets, they cannot achieve their goal. Therefore, it is a project of energy security,

energy diversification, energy cooperation and broad international cooperation. Therefore, today's format of the meeting really demonstrates that we managed to establish very broad format of international cooperation, financial institutions, companies, countries and all of us have the same goal. And all of us believe in implementation of the project, and we believe that it will be long-term success story for all of us.

As far as Azerbaijan's gas reserves are concerned, proven reserves are at the level of 2.6 trillion of cubic meters. Of course Shah Deniz is a main gas reservoir of Azerbaijan, but at the same time, there are other fields, which are now in the process of exploration, and soon I think we will have good results from Absheron field. I am sure that in the nearest future we will start to extract gas from there, and also, very promising field is Umid-Babak, which also has a huge gas potential and other fields. Therefore, I am sure that Shah Deniz will not be the only resource base for the Southern Gas Corridor, and the more gas is extracted from our fields the more potential will be to supply our partners and to diversify the supply network which we are talking about.

And of course, energy cooperation projects, they play very important role in cooperation in other areas, particularly I would mention transportation. Because today Azerbaijan is becoming the transportation center of Eurasia. East-West and North-South transportation corridors cross our countries. We invested largely in modern transportation infrastructure, Baku Sea Port, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad which connects Europe and Asia, highways, Caspian shipping, airports, all that was possible because of the revenues we got from oil and gas sales. So, we redirected the revenues to the sectors which will generate additional wealth, and which will also serve our common cause. Because transportation projects as well as energy projects, they unite countries. Countries become interconnected, interdependent and everybody gets benefit. Therefore, energy security projects we see their benefit in other areas, and also, of course, successful energy development of Azerbaijan allowed us to present ourselves to the world as a reliable country, reliable partner, country which hundred percent protects foreign investments, all our contracts with energy companies are ratified by parliament and signed as a law. Therefore, investors are 100 percent sure that even one single word will not be changed in this contract.

So this creates credibility and also, it allowed us to attract billions and billions of investments to other sectors of total number of investments in Azerbaijan is close to 150 billion dollars and half of it is foreign investment. It allowed us to diversify our economy to implement successful reforms, to create good business climate. According to the latest World Bank Doing Business report Azerbaijan is number 25. So, we made a tremendous success and we are among ten most reformist countries with respect to the business climate and business environment. We managed to invest huge amount of money in infrastructure, in social infrastructure to increase living standards of our people because of the proper use of energy resources and their revenues.

Therefore, for us this project is of extreme importance, I am sure for all of us, and I am glad that today we can talk about success, we can talk about results, and of course today we will talk about future plans.

Wish you success. Thank you for being with us.

**President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev  
attended the 7<sup>th</sup> Global Baku Forum**

14 March 2019, Baku

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



Dear ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear guests, Dear friends!

Welcome to Azerbaijan. I am very glad to see you all. Thank you for being with us at this important international event.

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to the co-chairs of the Nizami Ganjavi International Center, Madam Vike-Freiberga, and Mr. Serageldin, and members of Board whom I met yesterday for their outstanding contributions in transforming Nizami Center into a global international institution.

Baku Global Forum today is one of the most important international platforms to address important issues on global agenda, urgent issues. And the topics of the previous forums reflect today's agenda of global affairs and I think it is a good choice to address the issues related to foreign policy, called a new foreign policy, because a lot has been changed since the last forum, especially in relations between countries, in issues related with security, and predictability in the world. I am very glad that we have a broad participation at the forum representatives from 55 countries, more than 500 participants among them, among our guests we have five acting presidents, one acting prime minister, two deputy prime ministers, and 42 former heads of state and government. Prominent politicians, representatives of civil society, journalists, scientists, young leaders. So, in this room today we have an outstanding intellectual potential which actually is a reflection of the importance of the forum. There are many international events, conferences on global agenda, but the quality is measured by list of participants and by experience of them and intellectual potential. Therefore, I think that Baku Global Forum has its unique place on the world map, and what will be discussed in the coming days I am sure will attract attention of those who make decisions about the future of international relations and future of the world.

Talking about Azerbaijan's foreign policy, I would say it has not changed much, we cannot talk about new Azerbaijani foreign policy, but of course, situation in the region, in the world, is changing and we are adjusting, our foreign policy initiatives to the changing world. But basically our foreign policy is stable, predictable, and independent. It is based on our national interests and establishing close ties with countries is one of the priorities of Azerbaijan through partnerships, through mutually beneficial cooperation towards security, stability in our region, and in a broader region. Therefore, with respect to foreign policy

directions, Azerbaijan since the last global forum continue its initiatives. I think we managed to strengthen our ties with our traditional partners and find new friends to build new bridges.

Of course, for any country including Azerbaijan, relations with its neighbors is a main priority and in this respect, since last forum our relations strengthened. We have established very fruitful working relations based on mutual interests and mutual respect with our neighbors and this helps to build more bridges in the areas of transportation, energy security, trade and investments. Therefore, our traditional ties with neighboring countries provide regional security. Talking about regional security of course, we must talk about the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Occupation by Armenia 20 percent of internationally recognized territory of Azerbaijan continues. As a result of this occupation Nagorno-Karabakh, historic part of Azerbaijan and seven other districts of our country are under occupation and more than one million refugees and IDPs suffer from occupation. Our people were the subject of ethnic cleansing and all our historical monuments on the occupied territories are destroyed by Armenian armed forces. And this is reflected in the report of OSCE which twice sent missions to find facts on the occupied territories. Occupation of Azerbaijani lands is a brutal violation of international law and relevant resolutions and decisions of main international organizations. United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops, from our territories and they are not implemented by Armenia. United Nations Secretary General, OSCE, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, European Parliament, Non-Aligned Movement and other organizations adopted similar resolutions and decisions. They are based on international law. They are based on justice, and they create a legal framework for peaceful resolution of the conflict. Status-quo is unacceptable, and presidents of the countries of the OSCE Minsk Group which has a mandate to organize negotiations, on several occasions stated that the status-quo is unacceptable and we fully support that status-quo must be changed. And in order to do it, Armenia must start to withdraw its troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, and allow refugees and IDPs to return to their homeland. There have been and still we see the tense of the Armenian government to try to change the negotiation format.

This is absolutely unacceptable and counterproductive and we consider it as an attempt to block negotiation process. And not only we think like that, we are glad that international organizations share this view. Just recently OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs issued a statement actually sending a clear message to Armenia that their attempts to change negotiation format are not accepted. Couple of days earlier high officials of the European Union, made the same statement. Negotiation format has been elaborated for many years and any attempt, on unilateral change is considered an attempt to block the negotiation process with all responsibility on the side which tries to do it. Therefore, negotiations format cannot be changed. This is first thing and second negotiations must be result-oriented not just for the sake of negotiations. Azerbaijan is ready to continue this process. And as a result of the negotiations, our territorial integrity must be restored. Territorial integrity is fundamental principal of international law. United Nations Charter, Helsinki Final Act, has a very clear definition of the balance between territorial integrity and self-determination. Self-determination should not violate territorial integrity of countries. Therefore, the conflicts must be resolved based on international law norms, relevant resolutions of Security Council of United Nations and based on territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Our foreign policy

priorities also cover relations with international organizations.

We are actively participating in different initiatives which create bridges between different international organizations as one of the few countries which is a member of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Council of Europe. We knew this opportunity in order to establish more partnership between these two organizations. Azerbaijan in Organization of Islamic Cooperation plays important role in strengthening Islamic Solidarity in reducing tensions between some member states and as a demonstration of our efforts we successfully held two years ago the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games. Two years before Azerbaijan was the country which held the First European Games. Can you imagine in two years time in one city we had the European Games and the Islamic Solidarity Games that is actually reflection of our role on international arena and our efforts to bring countries and civilizations closer.

We have signed and adopted with nine members of European Union declarations and agreements on strategic partnerships. This is one third of member states, and this also demonstrates our active cooperation with the European countries. Last year with the European Union we initialed very important document which is named partnership priorities which actually covers all the major areas of our cooperation. Particularly, there is a clear indication to the conflict resolution between Armenia and Azerbaijan and in this documents there is a full support to Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, sovereignty, and inviolability of the borders. Therefore, coming back to the conflict with Armenia, all the international, major international organizations see the resolution of the conflict based on these principles and the only way how to resolve the conflict is to restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. Using this opportunity of close cooperation between different countries Azerbaijan launched the Baku process.

We celebrated last year the tenth anniversary of Baku process that started when we invited ministers of cultures, members of Organization of Islamic Cooperation and Council of Europe for the joint session and that was very successful. So, the next year we had another meeting and then this format was named Baku process which is supported by the United Nations and this is an only format of interaction and discussions between these two big international organizations which embrace more than hundred countries. Multiculturalism is a state policy of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijan is recognized in the world as one of the centers of multiculturalism. This has a historical background. For ages Azerbaijan was a place where representatives of different religions and ethnic groups lived in peace and harmony, and we are proud that after restoration of our independence this tendency strengthened, and we try to promote these ideas on global arena.

Therefore, we organized numerous events, international conferences like World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue, World Religious Leaders' Forum, Forum of the United Nations Alliance of Civilizations, Baku Humanitarian Forum and many other international events concentrating on issues related to multiculturalism specially when we see different views on this issue. And I think that example of Azerbaijan clearly demonstrates that multiculturalism is only way how the world can develop, and how to reduce tensions and strengthen cooperation and mutual understanding. Azerbaijan is relatively young independent country, but we receive a very strong support from international community, as a reflection of that,

indicator of that I would refer to the election of Azerbaijan as a non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council several years ago with the support of 155 countries. So, this shows that Azerbaijan has a support and trust from the absolute majority of international community. And as a non-permanent member of Security Council we play very important role in addressing important issues related to security, and intercultural dialogue.

We also play our role in global security we participate in peacekeeping operations, relatively recently we increased the number of our servicemen who served in Afghanistan, providing security there. Also we provide very important transportation and logistical support, for coalition forces, and the Northern distribution network, which Azerbaijan is a participant of, is very reliable route of supply. That was possible also due to the investments in modern infrastructure, especially in transportation. Since the last global forum, we inaugurated big trade sea port, on the Caspian shore of Azerbaijan. This sea port is capable to transport large volumes of cargo from 15 at the first stage to 25 million tons, and is playing a very important role in bringing countries closer.

When we talk about foreign policy of course we need to have a substance in that foreign policy. Without our foreign policy, without our political efforts it would not be possible to establish a strong transportation links which Azerbaijan already has. And our targets several years ago to transform the country into a regional transportation hub are already bringing results. Azerbaijan is active participant of the East-West Transportation Corridor. In 2017, we inaugurated the railroad connection between Azerbaijan and Turkey via Georgia, thus, connecting European railroad with Asia. And last year inauguration of the sea port is just another element of this transportation network. We already receive cargoes from Asian countries, from Central Asia, relatively recently we already had physical connection with the Lapis Lazuli railroad which Afghanistan is promoting, and the East-West Corridor. So, we receive cargoes already from new sources and it is not only economic benefit, it's also connection between countries, interdependence, and close cooperation. So, the transportation sector is an important sector of international relations, and it creates a very good spirit of partnership. Another sector which also is important for global security is energy sector, and Azerbaijan is investing a lot in energy security. Our energy projects together with major international energy companies not only bring benefit to our people, our country, they create tens of thousands of jobs in Azerbaijan and in the neighborhood and they lead to international partnership. Azerbaijan connected Black Sea and Caspian Sea with oil pipeline, Mediterranean Sea and Caspian Sea with oil pipeline for the first time in the world, and now we are working on the big project which is named Southern Gas Corridor, which connects Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania and Italy with the integrated pipeline system. This is 3,500 kilometers long pipeline which is in the final stage of completion. Last year, last May, we officially inaugurated the Southern Gas Corridor and last June one of the important part of that Trans-Anatolian Pipeline (TANAP) was also inaugurated. Azerbaijani gas is already being transported through this pipeline and hopefully next year the full project will be completed. It is one of the biggest infrastructure projects in the region, total amount of investments into production, transportation, production of gas and transportation is around 40 billion dollars.

We have a strong support from international financial institutions and of course corporate

money is used so this is the project of energy security, energy cooperation and cooperation between countries. And our plans go beyond today's format. We already signed MoU with countries of Balkans like Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Montenegro, hopefully at the next stage we will start also active cooperation with these countries. Geography of the countries, which are planning to join in this or that way the projects of the Southern Gas Corridor, is growing. So, this clearly shows how energy transportation initiatives lead to a broad international cooperation. I think that in energy sector and in transportation sector we created a new broad format of international cooperation including countries of Asia, Caucasus, Europe and members of the European Union. This is really a big asset and we are only on the beginning of this process. Because we are only in the phase of implementation and after all this projects are implemented, there will be economic incentives, economic benefits, tens of thousands of jobs in these countries and this will bring the countries closer. In the beginning I said that Azerbaijan's foreign policy is independent and based on national interests the basis for that is not only our political will but also our economic development. During the last fifteen years our economy grew 3.2 times. We managed to complete the major infrastructure projects for Azerbaijan, improve largely our financial situation. We have a very low foreign debt about 19 percent of our GDP and our reserves are 4-5 times bigger than the debt. So financial stability, economic development of Azerbaijan creates opportunities not only for our country but allowed us to invest in the neighborhood and thus building more bridges.

I think that agenda of the forum is selected very wisely and you will address the most important and urgent issues which today is of concern and I am absolutely sure that your fruitful discussions and recommendations will lead to strengthening partnership and reducing tensions. I wish the forum success.

Thank you very much.

**President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev  
hosted a reception in honor of participants of the 7<sup>th</sup> Global Baku Forum**

14 March 2019, Baku

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



Thank you very much, Madame President, Mr. Serageldin for such a generous gift.

I first of all, once again, would like to express gratitude to the co-chairs, our outstanding co-chairs Madam President Vike-Freiberga, Mr. Ismail Serageldin, for their contribution. I talked about that this morning and I can talk about it every day. Because this is truth and it was amazing how Nizami Ganjavi International Center transformed into one of the leading

global institutions which attracts a lot of interest, attracts a lot of intellectuals. And the Intellectual level of our forum is growing year after year.

We the people, who participated from the very beginning in this event definitely can say that. And today this forum has a very important place on the world map and it is still in process of growing. As we discussed with the members of the Board, a couple of days ago, this forum has a potential to grow. This forum has a dynamism. This forum has an energy and young leaders who are today with us, they give additional energy to this forum. We were just discussing with our friends before entering this room, what is the special touch of this forum? And I said that, though, I know that at the panels there are very hot discussions, conflict of ideas, different views which make a forum really an attraction and very productive, at the same time, we see the unity, we see a kind of a team work. A number of people, heads of state, former heads of state and government who participate regularly in the forum at the same time we have new friends, people who visit Azerbaijan for the first time. So, this spirit of unity we think is one of the main specialties of our forum. And I am sure that those who visit us for the first time will decide to come back, we are always glad to see new friends and always greet our old friends. So, I wish you all success, thank you for being with us, and the forum will always be dynamic, intellectual platform for all of us.

Thank you.



**MEETINGS AND VISITS  
OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN  
Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
(JANUARY – MARCH 2019)**

**MEETINGS**

- 22.01.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation led by the Secretary General of the Foreign Ministry of Montenegro Veselin Šuković
- 22.01.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation of the Interparliamentary Friendship Group with Azerbaijan in the Shura Council of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia headed by Dr. Fayez bin Abdullah bin Ali Al-Shihri
- 07.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Olexandr Mischenko, Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Azerbaijan upon termination of his diplomatic term
- 15.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Johannes Hahn, the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations
- 15.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Pavlo Klimkin, Foreign Minister of Ukraine
- 15.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Dr. Johann Wadepful, Member of German Bundestag, Member of Bundestag Committee on Foreign Affairs and deputy chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group
- 16.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Chingiz Aidarbekov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic
- 16.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Marija Pejčinović Burić, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia

- 16.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Fiona Hill, the US Senior National Security Council Director
- 16.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Jan Hecker, Foreign and Security Policy Adviser to the German Federal Chancellor
- 19.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation headed by Director-General for Mobility and Transport under the European Commission Henrik Hololei
- 19.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation of the Turkey-Azerbaijan friendship group of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey headed by Shamil Ayrım
- 26.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Retno Marsudi, Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia
- 26.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Andrej Žernovski, Deputy Foreign Minister of North Macedonia
- 26.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Didier Reynders, Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium
- 26.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Peter Maurer, President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC)
- 27.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Michelle Bachelet, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
- 27.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees
- 27.02.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Børge Brende, President of the World Economic Forum
- 02.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Pierre Krähenbühl, Commissioner-General of the Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA)
- 02.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Yldiz Pollack-Beighle, Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Suriname
- 02.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Hazim Al-Yousifi, Foreign Ministry Undersecretary of the Republic of Iraq

- 03.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Taha Ayhan, President of the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum
- 05.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation headed by the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia Miroslav Lajčák
- 05.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Deputy State Secretary on Foreign Affairs of Switzerland Christina Marti Lang
- 07.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation headed by Rabbi Marc Schneier, President of US-based Foundation for Ethnic Understanding
- 07.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Paolo Grimoldi, head of the Italian delegation to the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, Deputy Head of the Foreign Affairs Committee at the Chamber of Deputies of the Italian Parliament
- 07.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Mikhail Bocharnikov, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Russian Federation to the Republic of Azerbaijan
- 07.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the newly appointed Ambassador of India to the Republic of Azerbaijan Bawitlung Vanlalvawna
- 07.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Toivo Klaar, the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the crisis in Georgia
- 09.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with a delegation headed by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Javad Zarif
- 09.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani
- 09.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Chairman of the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Larijani
- 09.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Shamkhani
- 11.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation of the Kuwait-Azerbaijan Interparliamentary Friendship Group of the Kuwait National Assembly headed by Khalid al-Utaybi

- 11.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the newly appointed Ambassador of the United States of America to the Republic of Azerbaijan Earle Litzenberger
- 11.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the newly appointed Ambassador of Ukraine to the Republic of Azerbaijan Vladislav Kanevski
- 12.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Gabriel Jara, Chargé d'affaires of the Republic of Chile
- 14.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received the newly appointed Ambassador of the Republic of Argentina to the Republic of Azerbaijan Sergio Osvaldo Perez Gunella
- 19.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Roberto Ampuero, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Chile
- 20.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Jaime Quintana, President of the Senate of the Republic of Chile
- 20.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with José Miguel Insulza, President of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Chile
- 20.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Francisco Chahuán, Head of the Chile-Azerbaijan Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group
- 21.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Argentine Jorge Faurie
- 23.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay Rodolfo Nin Novoa
- 24.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Foreign Minister of Paraguay Luis Alberto Castiglioni
- 24.03.2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Victor Gonzalez, President of the Chamber of Senators, the upper house of the National Congress of Paraguay and Walter Harms, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay

## WORKING VISIT TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

16 January 2019

Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov and Acting Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan held a meeting in Paris on January 16 with the participation of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs.

During the talks between the parties, which lasted more than 4 hours, a useful and very positive exchange of views, including the significance of building more understanding and trust, took place. The continuation of the consistent and result-oriented negotiations in the next month was agreed upon.

During the talks, the sides discussed a number of issues, including the ways to prepare the population of both sides for peace, security and sustainable regional development.

## INTERVIEW OF THE MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ELMAR MAMMADYAROV TO KOREA TIMES

11 February 2019, Baku

**Question:** *What are the results of the ongoing negotiations on the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict? How do you see their prospects, especially against the background of recent encouraging statements?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** The position of my country regarding the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been repeatedly stated at the highest level within all platforms. The conflict must be resolved on the basis of the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders. Coming to the legal basis of the settlement, it is necessary to recall that this basis consists primarily of the four resolutions of the U.N. Security Council, a body responsible for ensuring peace and security worldwide, adopted in 1993, numerous resolutions and decisions of other international organizations, including the OSCE, Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the Non-Aligned Movement, NATO, the European Parliament and etc, as well as joint documents adopted in bilateral and multilateral formats.

Unfortunately, negotiations held over the years haven't yielded any results. But the recent developments taking place in Armenia, the conversations that took place between the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, as well as four meetings with my Armenian counterpart create certain grounds for advancing the negotiation process. The press statement by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs released on the latest meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Paris on Jan. 16, 2019 expressed appreciation for the ongoing efforts of the sides to maintain an environment conducive to intensive results-oriented negotiations. It stated the agreement of both sides upon the necessity of taking concrete measures to prepare the populations for peace. The statement also outlines that the sides considered next steps toward a possible summit between

the leaders of Azerbaijan and Armenia in order to give a strong impulse to the dynamic of negotiations. Here I would like to be clear that Azerbaijan stands for tangible results of the negotiations, not talks for the sake of talks and this is our principled position.

In general, I would like to note that the current leadership of Armenia should demonstrate the political will to resolve the conflict and, in accordance with good-neighborly philosophy, act in the name of achieving peace, stability and sustainable development in the region.

We hope that this year certain progress will be achieved in terms of withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and the normalization of relations between the two countries. Progress in the conflict resolution, creating conditions for peace, security and stability in the entire region, opens up opportunities primarily for economic growth in Armenia itself. Our country, in the same way as it ensures the safety of its citizens of different ethnic groups, in accordance with its international obligations is ready to do so with respect to its citizens of the Armenian origin in Nagorno-Karabakh and to grant them the right of high-level self-rule within the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Azerbaijani Community of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of our country is ready to return to their homes, and this issue was again stressed in the recently released statement of the Community. Some time ago there were contacts between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of the Nagorno-Karabakh region, but, unfortunately, due to the “efforts” of the previous leadership of Armenia, these contacts were interrupted. You know, it is impossible to take the land and move with it to another place. After the settlement of the conflict, of course, these two communities will have to live together. That is why it is important to promote and restore contacts between the Azerbaijani and Armenian communities of Nagorno-Karabakh.

**Question:** *What are the prospects opened by the agreement on the legal status of the Caspian Sea signed this year by the Caspian countries from the point of view of development of new oil and gas fields and the construction of the Trans-Caspian gas pipeline?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** The Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, signed by the leaders of the “Caspian Five” in August of this year, opened up new, unique opportunities for cooperation among states. The Convention regulates the rights and obligations of the parties regarding the use of the Caspian Sea and its rich natural resources. It defines the delimitation parameters in the Caspian Sea.

The signing of the Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea was a truly historic event that marked the goodwill of the five littoral states. The main significance of this document for our country is that it defines the sovereign and exclusive rights of coastal states to use the rich natural resources of the sea. Thus, the Convention ensures the consistency and safety of the implementation of various projects in the field of oil and gas industry, as well as the implementation of other economic activities at sea. It creates conditions for freedom and safety of navigation, which plays an important role in terms of development of trade in the Caspian Sea and growth of the economies of our countries. In general, the implementation of the Convention’s provisions will ensure the achievement of its announced

goal - the transformation of the Caspian Sea into a zone of peace, good neighborliness, friendship and cooperation.

Azerbaijan, as a country that has historically been a pioneer in the implementation of large projects in the Caspian Sea, plans to continue and expand cooperation with coastal states here. Due to a successful energy policy, Azerbaijan has managed to guarantee its economic security, as well as to gain the image of a reliable partner, producer and transit state, contributing to the energy security of Europe. Currently, by the initiative and with the participation of Azerbaijan, the construction of the largest infrastructure and energy projects like, for instance, the Southern Gas Corridor is going on. This project plays a great role in terms of transporting natural gas from the Caspian Sea region to Europe, and we are always ready to provide our capabilities to neighboring, friendly countries wishing to use transit routes through Azerbaijan.

**Question:** *What are the priorities of Azerbaijan's foreign policy for 2019?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** As in the current year our country will continue its independent, diversified, balanced and active foreign policy based on the national interests of our country and will defend our national interests in the international arena during the upcoming year under the direct leadership of the President Ilham Aliyev. Today, Azerbaijan is the initiator and participant of large-scale projects promoting regional cooperation and an influential state in the international arena.

Today, the foreign policy achievements of our country, which is regarded as a reliable partner, are of course based on establishing balanced relations with neighboring countries and other countries of the world, as well as implementing equal dialogue and cooperation based on mutual interests. Of course, our foreign policy priorities in 2019 will include the strengthening of sovereignty and independence of our country, elimination of consequences of military aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan and restoration of territorial integrity within internationally recognized borders, as well as, the continuation of large-scale infrastructure projects implemented with the initiative and participation of Azerbaijan, further development of mutually beneficial cooperation with all international actors, including states, associations and international organizations.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

15 – 16 February 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with the EU Commissioner for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Johannes Hahn
- Meeting with Foreign Minister of Ukraine Pavlo Klimkin
- Meeting with Member of German Bundestag, Member of Bundestag Committee on Foreign Affairs and deputy chairman of the CDU/CSU parliamentary group Dr. Johann Wadephul

- Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kyrgyz Republic Chingiz Aidarbekov
- Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of the Republic of Croatia Marija Pejčinović Burić
- Meeting with the US Senior National Security Council Director Fiona Hill
- Meeting with Foreign and Security Policy Adviser to the German Federal Chancellor Jan Hecker

On February 15, 2019 Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov left for a working visit to Germany and took part at the Munich Security Conference.

During his visit along with participation at the 55<sup>th</sup> Munich Security Conference, Minister held several bilateral meetings.

### **WORKING VISIT TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION** 26 – 27 February 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs of Indonesia Retno Marsudi
- Meeting with Deputy Foreign Minister of North Macedonia Andrej Žernovski
- Meeting with Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Foreign Affairs and European Affairs of the Kingdom of Belgium Didier Reynders
- Meeting with President of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Peter Maurer
- Meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Michelle Bachelet
- Meeting with the UN High Commissioner for Refugees Filippo Grandi
- Meeting with President of the World Economic Forum Børge Brende

### **STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AT THE 40<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE UN HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL**

26 February 2019, Geneva

Excellences,  
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to congratulate Ambassador Coly Seck on assuming responsibilities of the President of the UN Human Rights. Let me also use this occasion to congratulate UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Madame Michelle Bachelet on her recent appointment and wish her every success in discharging her important mandate.

At a time when human rights challenges, in particular forceful displacement of millions of people and racial and other forms of discrimination are on the rise globally, the role of

the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights with principal responsibility for promotion and protection of all human rights has become even more crucial. We value the Office's pivotal role in extending technical assistance and capacity building to the Member States upon their request. With this in mind, Azerbaijan will continue to make voluntary contributions to support Office's advisory services.

Azerbaijan believes in importance of multilateral institutions for promotion and protection of human rights around the world. Therefore, Azerbaijan attaches importance to the UN Human Rights Council mandated to promote and protect all human rights through cooperation and genuine dialogue.

While being an observer to the Council, Azerbaijan actively contributes to its work. At the 37th session of the Council Azerbaijan together with Georgia, Kenya, Thailand and Turkey submitted a draft resolution co-sponsored by 92 States on promoting human rights and SDGs through transparent, accountable and efficient public services delivery, which was unanimously adopted by the Council. This year Azerbaijan in cooperation with the OHCHR will host a follow-up international conference where countries with effective models of public services can share their best practices with other Member States as encouraged by the abovementioned Resolution. Azerbaijan was among the core group of the HRC Resolution 37/24 on promotion and protection of human rights and the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development adopted in March 2018. The joint statement initiated by my country on an increased role of High Commissioner for Human Rights during the 38th session of the Council enjoyed support of 125 Member States.

My Government continues to carry out large-scale programs to ensure that our citizens fully enjoy all human rights and fundamental freedoms. In this regard, I would like to highlight the recently adopted State Program on the Development of Justice in 2019-2023, which aims at further legislative and structural measures to improve performance of judiciary.

Let me underline that Azerbaijan is strongly committed to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, which embodies all human rights, including economic, civil, cultural, political, social rights, and the right to development. Azerbaijan will submit its 2nd Voluntary National Report on the implementation of SDGs later this year. As my country is further developing its social security system, this Report will reflect special importance attached to the rights of all vulnerable groups, including persons with disabilities. In that context, we welcome the decision of the UN Secretary General to promote the System Wide Action Plan on Disability Inclusion across all pillars of the UN work.

Madame Chair,

I am also pleased from this high podium to announce that this October Azerbaijan will host the 18th Summit of Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement where my country will take over the presidency of the Movement. We are convinced that the presidency of Azerbaijan will provide another impetus for advancing the founding principles of the Movement the 65th anniversary of which will be celebrated in 2020, across many UN platforms, including in the Human Rights Council.

I take this opportunity to reaffirm my country's commitment to the Non-Aligned Movement endeavors.

Madam Chair,

I am compelled to stress that unfortunately the on-going armed conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan still represents a major threat to international and regional peace and security, human rights and development.

Today, Azerbaijan marks the 27<sup>th</sup> anniversary of one the brutal pages of this conflict – the Khojaly Genocide committed by Armenia, as a result of which 613 residents of this small town in the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan were murdered by Armenian military in 1992, including 106 women, 63 children and 70 elders.

As a result of the armed aggression by neighboring Armenia 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan has been under occupation since 1992. Over 1 million Azerbaijanis subjected to ethnic cleansing remain to be forcefully displaced from their native lands, which in per capita terms makes it one of the highest numbers of IDPs and refugees in the world with a country of 10 million. Armenia continues the occupation of Azerbaijani territories by disregarding the UN Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 and related documents of many other international organizations, which firmly reaffirm the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and demand immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

In this context that I urge the UN Human Rights Council, its mandate holders and the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights to take a principled standing and efficient actions for administration of justice and restoration of human rights of Azerbaijani IDPs and refugees violated more than two decades.

Thank you.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

1 – 3 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Commissioner-General of the Relief and Works Agency for Palestine Refugees (UNRWA) Pierre Krähenbühl
- Meeting with Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Suriname Yldiz PollacK-Beighle
- Meeting with Foreign Ministry Undersecretary of the Republic of Iraq Hazim Al-Yousifi
- Meeting with President of the Islamic Cooperation Youth Forum Taha Ayhan

**STATEMENT BY FOREIGN MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
AT THE 46<sup>TH</sup> SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN  
MINISTERS OF THE OIC**

1 March 2019, Abu-Dhabi

Bismillahir Rahmanir Rahim

Excellency Chairman,  
Distinguished Secretary General,  
Excellences, Distinguished Delegates of the Session

I would like to start by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to Mr. Chairman, and the OIC Secretary General for the excellent organization of our session and my sincere congratulations to all on the occasion of 50<sup>th</sup> Gold Jubilee of the OIC. I'm pleased to also thank the Government of UAE for the warm hospitality extended to our delegation and thank the Government of Bangladesh for the skillful stewardship of the Council as the chair of the 45<sup>th</sup> CFM.

Over five decades since its establishment, the OIC as the unique multilateral body of the Muslim world, has become a strategic dialogue partner to the international community in the maintenance of global peace and security. Yet today our organization is facing the unprecedented challenges both internal and external - which constitute existential threats to the Members' unity, integrity and sovereignty.

The continuous armed conflicts and terrorist attacks in our geography notably in Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Libya, Afghanistan, as well as rising trend of intolerance, racism and xenophobia in various parts of the world demonstrate the deficiency of current international mechanisms aimed to guaranty international peace and security. Therefore our joint actions aimed at peaceful and brotherly resolutions of conflicts within our geography and firm stand in fighting terrorism, preserving the territorial integrity and sovereignty of all Members, countering Islamophobia are of utmost priority. In this regard Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the reform process in the OIC aimed at increasing the overall efficiency of the Organization, in particular strengthening its mediation capacity to address the conflicts.

The Republic of Azerbaijan being adherent to the collective approach and joint strategy of the Organization will continue to work with the Member States towards peaceful resolution of the conflicts, including through various OIC Contact Groups to which Azerbaijan is a member, notably on Palestine, Jammu and Kashmir, Somali and Muslim minorities in Europe. In this regard we call upon all Member States to spare no efforts in implementing the principles of collective approach and Islamic solidarity.

Mr. Chairman,

The Palestinian issue being at the heart of the OIC raison d'être is the one which requires such collective approach. Azerbaijan reaffirms full solidarity and persistent support for the

just and lasting solution to the issue and stands for the two-state solution of the Palestinian conflict with East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine.

Being committed to this objective Azerbaijan congratulate Palestinian government for official assumption of the “Group of G77 and China” presidency, which would consolidate the political and legal status of Palestine in the international arena, and its well-deserved right to acquire full UN membership. Last year Azerbaijan hosted NAM Ministerial Committee on Palestine within 18th Mid-term Ministerial Meeting of the Non Alignment Movement (NAM). The Final Baku Declaration reiterated urgent call for serious, collective efforts to bring a complete end to the violence in Palestine. In November of 2018, Azerbaijan hosted the Annual Meeting of Ambassadors of the State of Palestine accredited in Asia thus contributing to capacity building of Palestinian government. On humanitarian part of support for Palestinian people Azerbaijan allocated last October 200 000 dollars to UNRWA .

Let me assure this Organization that during our chairmanship in the NAM in the period of 2019-2022 Azerbaijan will spare no efforts to further contribute to the peace in Palestine as well as towards peace, security and development of the Islamic countries at large.

Mr. Chairman,

While doing its utmost to contribute to international peace and security Azerbaijan is still facing continuous military aggression by Armenia, which resulted in occupation of 20 percent of internationally recognized territory of my country, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions; in ethnic cleansing of almost 1 million Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs; in destruction and desecration of numerous historical, cultural and religious monuments in the territories of Azerbaijan still occupied by Armenia.

The mediation efforts by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe unfortunately have still not yielded results which should be liberation of the occupied lands and restoration of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. This definitive result for negotiations is vested in the UN SC relevant resolutions as well as resolutions of the OIC, relevant documents of OSCE, European Union and almost any international organization ever dealt with the conflict.

Despite all of these calls, despite all our efforts to resolve the conflict by peaceful means Armenia continues its policy of predatory looting of the natural resources and destroying historic and Islamic legacy of the occupied territories aimed at solidifying the results of its aggression; violating the ceasefire, killing and wounding Azerbaijani servicemen and civilians almost on a daily basis. I appreciate just position of the OIC member-states with regard to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, reflected in the OIC Ministerial resolutions. I also call for reflection of the position of justice and solidarity expressed within this august body while dealing with the aggressor state on bilateral basis as well as at international fora. The attempts by Armenia to abuse international cultural, language-based or humanitarian fora with a view of promoting its policy of occupation and of breaching solidarity of this very organization should be met with our unified stance. Armenian attempts to engage some of the Member States into economic and cultural cooperation, organize

touristic promotion of occupied Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan or of so called preserved Islamic heritage in its own territory while destroying this very heritage is nothing else but cynical policy of legalizing the occupation and strengthening the occupier from which we strongly call upon the Member States to refrain from.

While commending the annual meetings of the OIC Contact Group on the Aggression of the Republic of Armenia against the Republic of Azerbaijan held since 2016 in New-York and expressing in this regard our appreciation to its members and the OIC Secretary General we call upon all Members to practically support the activities of the group to operationalize the OIC decisions and resolutions on Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and facilitate appropriate actions to compel Armenia to comply with the relevant OIC documents.

Mr.Chairman

Azerbaijan commends the work of the OIC institutions aimed at strengthening our solidarity and raising our collective voice in international arena. In this regard I would like to highlight ISESCO statement condemning construction by Armenia of a new canal from the Sarsang Reservoir in Azerbaijan's occupied territories being in flagrant violation of the international law and aimed at creating environmental disaster for the adjacent regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

We appreciate the members solidarity demonstrated within the "Justice for Khojaly" international campaign carried out by the Islamic Conference Youth Forum and within implementation of the resolution on "The solidarity with the victims of the Khojaly massacre" aimed at raising global awareness on genocide of civilian Azerbaijanis by the Armenian forces in the Azerbaijani town of Khojaly in February 1992.

I would like also to underline importance of our solidarity in times of hardships and natural disasters such as OIC humanitarian support in the aftermath of Indonesian 2018 earthquake to which Azerbaijan was privileged to contribute.

Our solidarity need to be demonstrated also in strengthening the much needed global inter-cultural dialogue and countering dangers of xenophobia, racism, hate speech and Islamophobia. In this regard I call upon Member states to actively participate in the 5th edition of the World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue to be held in May 2019 in Baku, which constitutes a central part of the "Baku Process" initiated by the President of Azerbaijan H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev in 2008. The process supported by influential international partners such as OIC, UNESCO, UN Alliance of Civilizations, World Tourism Organization, Council of Europe and ISESCO is aimed at strengthening inter-cultural dialogue and mutual understanding as foundation for sustainable peace and inclusive development.

In 2018, Nakhchivan, an ancient Azerbaijan city, named capital of Islamic culture hosted various cultural programs further contributing to enriching our cultural ties. We are looking forward to host the first ever OIC Cultural Week this year in Azerbaijan and the Eighth International Contest of young performers of classical music from our countries which will support the young talents and creativity.

Azerbaijan supports the activities of the ICYF and its Eurasian Regional Centre hosted by the Government of Azerbaijan in Baku and during our tenure of chairmanship in the Ministerial Council on Youth and Sports we will continue practical contribution to youth and sports development. The 2nd Executive Model OIC games, Islamic countries young entrepreneurs' network to be hosted within this tenure by Azerbaijan among various youth oriented programs are aimed at strengthening friendship between Islamic countries through youth and sports activities.

We also invite members to finalize the ratification process of the OIC specialized organ namely, The OIC Labour Center, initiated by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E Mr. Ilham Aliyev with the aim to support the productive force and economic growth of our countries, an important goal of the "OIC-2025 Programme of Action".

Mr.Chairman,

I would like to conclude by reiterating my sincere congratulations to the OIC Members on the occasion of the 50th Jubilee once again and wish the next 50 years to be marked with our greater strength and solidarity to fruit with sustainable peace, stability and development for our Ummah.

Thank You.

Assalamu aleykum va rahmatullahi va barakatuhu

## **WORKING VISIT TO ROMANIA**

4 March 2019

### **STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS**

**ELMAR MAMMADYAROV**

### **AT THE SPECIAL MEETING OF MINISTERS OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF AZERBAIJAN, GEORGIA, ROMANIA AND TURKMENISTAN ON "CASPIAN SEA – BLACK SEA INTERNATIONAL TRANSPORT ROUTE"**

4 March 2019, Bucharest

Dear Colleagues,  
Your Excellencies,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to greet all participants and express my sincere appreciation to our hosts for excellent organization of this special meeting dedicated to the "Caspian Sea – Black Sea International Transport Route" (CSBS), the outcome of which I do believe can contribute to further promotion of cooperation among our countries and other interested

parties in the field of transport, transit and logistics.

As it is known, the idea of CSBS put forward by Romania and Turkmenistan was initially discussed by our experts last year in Ashgabat and now we have the chance to exchange views on the matter at the ministerial level here in Bucharest.

The region that the territories of our countries cover is of paramount geostrategic importance: it naturally forms the bridge between Europe and Asia, while at the same time it is a vital transportation hub between North-South and East-West. Today we have gathered here to endorse our intention to build up a new avenue of cooperation between our countries.

Mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of our countries constitutes the basis of our cooperation.

It is obvious that development of economically feasible transport infrastructure always has tremendous role on increase of trade volumes which in its turn has a multiplier effect on promotion of overall bilateral and multilateral relations.

Having this in mind, Azerbaijan has always been strongly supportive to building interconnectivity in the region and spared no efforts to enhance the region's transit potential through promoting East-West, North-South and South-West transport corridors.

In this regard, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad commissioned in 2017 will connect not only the participating countries but continents as well. Along with this, the construction of the New International Sea Trade Port in Alat city of Azerbaijan and its International Logistic Centre, as well as Free Economic Zone will significantly increase the competitiveness of the international transport corridors and trade and transit capacity of the region.

We also welcome the EU publication on Indicative TEN-T Investment Action Plan and inclusion of the Azerbaijani part of the East-West corridor, both road and rail, into TEN-T core networks. This can provide a solid platform to further enhance our transport dialogue with EU which was successfully launched in Baku just two weeks ago.

There are some issues that can simply not be overlooked. Romania is one of the geographical gateways to EU market for us, but with realization of the CSBS route I do believe it will be turned into an operational one. When it comes to our immediate neighbors, Turkmenistan provides us with an access to Central Asia and further to the Far East and Georgia is also an important link of East-West, South-West transport corridors and an entry point to the Black Sea.

Citing the abovementioned promising perspectives and geo-economic benefits the said initiative able to yield, I once again would like to reaffirm Azerbaijan's support to the development of the "Caspian Sea – Black Sea International Transport Route" in a quadruple partnership, which intends to be another competitive link in the broader region and express our readiness to be an active contributor to this process.

We have no doubt that establishment of a quadrilateral working group and elaboration of a road map by our experts will ultimately lead us to multilateral agreement with the purpose of ensuring rapid implementation of CSBS and consequently, its effective operation.

Concluding my remarks, I would like to wish us all success in the future endeavors for realization of the CSBS route which will play a facilitator role in bringing our countries and peoples closer, making their economies more vibrant and prosperous.

I thank you for your attention.

## BUCHAREST STATEMENT

### Special Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan

4<sup>th</sup> of March 2019

The First Special Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs was convened in Bucharest, Romania on - March 2019 to further strengthen and enhance economic cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan in support of sustainable development and stability across the wider region.

The Meeting was attended by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia Mr. David Zalkaliani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania Mr. Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu and Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of the Ministers of Turkmenistan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan Mr. Rashid Meredov.

The Ministers,

**reaffirmed** the mutual respect for sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of their internationally recognized borders,

**highlighting** the current achievements of sectoral cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan and calling for expanding trade and economic relations and fostering interregional connectivity,

**recalled** a significant project for all four States about the development of the international transport route between the Black and Caspian Seas in a quadruple partnership, giving the growing international significance attached to the global trade and effective transport connectivity,

**stressed** that the States of the Black and Caspian Seas are playing an important role in further promotion of the Black Sea-Caspian Sea freight transportation route as a competitive link connecting Europe and Asia,

**underlined** that Black Sea-Caspian Sea international transportation route will complement other similar regional projects, which are aimed at establishing effective transportation of goods from Asian states through Caspian and Black Seas to Europe and vice versa across the territories of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan,

**underlined** importance of creating all necessary conditions for developing a direct route between port of Constanta and Danube River as an important connection with the Central and North-Western European water channels and an alternative route for effective transportation of cargo, highlighting the priority of improved interconnectivity as one of the key elements of the European Neighborhood Policy and the EU Strategy for Central Asia,

**stressed** the importance of making the best use of existing and other potential cooperation formats with the EU to develop international transportation route connecting the EU with the Central Asia through Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan,

**stressed** the importance of promoting active engagement of private enterprises and business communities in the implementation of projects and initiatives within the international transport route, also **called** upon international partners for active cooperation in realization of the initiatives within the concept,

**reaffirmed** that regional economic cooperation and integration offers broad opportunities for growth, and can assist with taking advantage of and developing the long-term economic potential that exists in the wider region, and **stressed** the need for further advancing regional economic cooperation as an effective tool for achieving economic prosperity,

**emphasized** the achieved progress in development of the Baku International Sea Port infrastructure along with the creation of the Free Economic Zone in Alat (AZ), Port of Batumi (GE), Poti (GE), Constanta (RO) and Turkmenbashi International Sea Port (TM), and building the Anaklia (GE) Deep Sea Port, stressing importance of utilization of facilities/opportunities offered by the mentioned ports for successful and effective operation of the international transportation route,

**emphasized** the progress of development of other infrastructure projects in all four States that will ensure fast and secure transportation of goods within and beyond the Black Sea-Caspian international transport route,

**agreed** to implement practical steps for ensuring fast and effective progress, and particularly:

- to establish quadrilateral expert working group to conduct all technical aspects with the aim to ensure effective implementation of the initiative of establishing the Black Sea-Caspian Sea international transportation route, hereinafter “*BSCS international transportation route*”;
- to ensure seamless functioning of the BSCS international transportation route through optimization of operational procedures and ensuring effective cooperation of relevant national authorities;
- to facilitate work of harmonization of tariffs and simplification of customs procedures

- for raising the competitiveness of the BSCS international transportation route;
- to facilitate cooperation between the national operators of the States for realization of this project;
- to identify remaining infrastructure gaps and facilitation needs along the corridor for taking respective measures to mitigate the existing challenges;
- to promote jointly the BSCS international transportation route with other interested states and international organizations, notably with the EU for further development of relevant infrastructure and attraction of additional cargo flows;
- to promote safe, efficient, affordable and environmentally sound use of the BSCS international transportation route;
- to consider improving the transport legislation of the participating States for ensuring competitive conditions for all parties of the transportation process;
- with the view to reducing the processing time of ferries and improving the service quality, to encourage the use of digital technologies for simplification of export and import procedures and introduction of advanced information exchange system;
- to continue dialogue with interested countries in order to expand the geography of the BSCS international transportation route;
- to meet regularly, but not less than once a year, on the ministerial level to assess the progress and plan the next steps for promotion of the BSCS international transportation route.

Elmar Mammadyarov  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan

David Zalkaliani  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Georgia

Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu  
Minister of Foreign Affairs of Romania

Rashid Meredov  
Deputy Chairman of the Cabinet of the Ministers of Turkmenistan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Turkmenistan

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON ILLEGALITY OF ECONOMIC  
AND OTHER ACTIVITIES IN AND WITH REGARD TO TERRITORIES  
UNDER MILITARY OCCUPATION: THIRD-PARTY OBLIGATIONS AND  
IMPLICATIONS FOR CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

5 March 2019, Baku

Distinguished Ministers,  
Distinguished Director of the UNESCO World Heritage Centre,

Distinguished Participants,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am pleased to welcome such a distinguished audience to discuss an extremely topical issue related to promotion of rules-based international order based on respect for norms and principles of international law, and obligations and responsibility of states in that regard.

Illegal activities in and with regard to territories under military occupation are serious challenge to international peace and security as they threaten the rule of law, good governance, environmental sustainability, and undermine perspectives of resolution of conflicts. It is a complex phenomenon necessitating holistic approach and concerted actions at national, regional and global levels. Given the comprehensive programme and high-quality participation, I am fully confident that today's conference will serve to this goal and contribute to establishment of the rule of law and justice in the context of unresolved conflicts.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

It is not without reason that this conference takes place in Baku. Azerbaijan has been suffering from military occupation of almost 20 per cent of its internationally recognized territories by neighboring Armenia for more than two decades. In 1993, the United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions condemning the use of force against Azerbaijan and occupation of its territories and reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its international borders. In those resolutions, the Security Council reaffirmed that the Nagorno-Karabakh region is part of Azerbaijan and called for immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Armenia continues to disregard these demands of the international community, and instead, directly by its own means and indirectly through the subordinate illegal regime and with the assistance of the Armenian Diaspora, carries out large-scale illegal activities aiming at altering demographic, cultural, economic and social character of the occupied territories with a view to consolidating status-quo of occupation.

At the request of the Government of Azerbaijan, the OSCE dispatched two missions into the occupied territories in 2005 and 2010. The reports issued as a result of these missions confirm the validity of concerns of Azerbaijan. On the basis of their findings, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairmen urged “[...] to avoid any activities in the territories [...] that would prejudice a final settlement or change the character of these areas.”

The report of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs issued in 2016 extensively documents multifaceted illegal activities in the occupied territories on the basis of facts collected from different sources, including those of Armenia. These include transfer of settlers from Armenia and abroad to the occupied territories, destruction and appropriation of historical and cultural heritage, in particular through illegal excavations, embezzlement of artifacts, exploitation and pillage of natural resources, including agricultural and water resources, change in social, economic and transport infrastructure, interference with Azerbaijan's fixed and cellular radio-telecommunication networks and radio frequencies, and illegal visits to and from the occupied territories, to name just a few. Armenia also actively promotes illegal de-mining to make the

occupied territories available for illegal activities, first and foremost for illegal settlements.

As a result, serious damage was inflicted upon public and private property, including those belonging to hundred thousands of IDPs expelled from these territories. Illegal activities in the occupied territories also raise a number of environmental concerns, such as de-forestation, depletion and water pollution. There is also trans-boundary pollution from the tailings in Armenia that pollute rivers crossing the international border of Azerbaijan and end up in the Azerbaijani farmlands and forests. Of particular importance is illegal exploitation and export of rare trees for furniture, barrel and rifle production.

Illegal activities take place within a nexus with transnational organized crime, such as money laundering, tax evasion and other serious economic and financial crimes. The profit acquired from these activities is extensively used for financing lobbyists and corrupt politicians in foreign countries to promote and propagate the illegal regime established in the occupied territories and carry out smear campaigns against Azerbaijan.

These activities must be seen in the context of consistent policy and practice of Armenia to secure the annexation of occupied territories and to prevent the Azerbaijani internally displaced population from returning to their homes. The financial resources acquired as a result of these activities, as well as transactions, investments and infrastructure changes made in respect of the Nagorno-Karabakh region and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan are mostly used for sustaining and prolonging the occupation.

It is utterly disturbing and unacceptable that some foreign natural and legal persons engage in or facilitate illegal activities. By so doing, foreign companies and entities violate international law, including the international humanitarian and human rights law, and national legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan and contribute to continuation of the status-quo and the prolongation of the armed conflict.

Prevention of illegal activities in the occupied territories is one of the policy priorities of the Government of Azerbaijan. We take consistent, coordinated actions at bilateral and all relevant multilateral levels in that respect. This include raising awareness of governments and private sector of foreign countries, elaboration of legal-political measures in the framework of relevant specialized international organizations and taking appropriate legal actions at national and international levels to hold the perpetrators accountable. We continuously raise this issue in the framework of bilateral joint economic commissions that gradually bears certain results. Taking this opportunity, I would like to thank all countries which positively reacted to our appeals and take measures with a view to preventing their natural and legal persons from engaging in any activity in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Our request from the Co-Chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group to dispatch a new fact-finding mission to the occupied territories is still pending due to apparent resistance of Armenia. We will continue to closely follow this issue at all relevant levels and formats and hope for constructive and responsive engagement by our counterparts.

The Republic of Azerbaijan expects that the third-countries and international organizations to

impose economic, trade and financial restrictions and take all necessary measures to prevent their legal and natural persons from engaging in the illegal activities in occupied territories. Such measures would include prohibition of importation/exportation, sale or supply into/from of any goods and services with regard to these territories. In parallel, all countries should live up to their obligations under international law, and ensure that their economic and other engagement with the Republic of Armenia fully corresponds to Armenia's commitments taken within relevant international organizations, in particular the World Trade Organization, and exclusively confine to its internationally recognized borders.

It is within this understanding that I attach great importance to discussions in specific panels during the conference. I hope that deliberations will be instrumental for taking stock of existing international and regional legal instruments, elaboration of obligations of third-parties, and will focus on identification of possible areas for future work with a view to improving response of international community.

I wish you all success and look forward to fruitful exchange of views throughout the day.

I thank you.

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
AT THE JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE WITH THE OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE,  
MINISTER OF FOREIGN AND EUROPEAN AFFAIRS OF  
SLOVAKIA MIROSLAV LAJČÁK**

5 March 2019, Baku

Ladies and gentlemen,  
Dear media representatives,

As you know, OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Minister of Foreign and European Affairs of Slovakia and my friend Miroslav Lajčák is visiting Azerbaijan. We had a tête-à-tête meeting, as well as a meeting with participation of the delegations. During the meetings we discussed the cooperation between Azerbaijan and the OSCE, also bilateral cooperation issues between our countries.

As you know, the OSCE is an important international organization. The OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs institute within this organization is responsible for the resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I informed my counterpart about Azerbaijan's position and we touched upon the issues discussed at the last negotiations and had a broad exchange on this regard. Mr. Lajčák informed me that he would visit Armenia next week. He underlined that the issues discussed with us would be touched upon in Armenia as well. In general, I would like to emphasize that everyone wants the peaceful resolution of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I also stressed this issue at the international conference held today and I requested Mr. Lajčák to ask a question to the Armenian leadership during his visit to the country:

What did Armenian people and Armenian citizens gain from the occupation of Azerbaijani territories and ethnic cleansing of the Azerbaijanis?! If they say at least one positive argument, perhaps we could have discussions on that regard. In addition to demographic, political and economic difficulties, this conflict has given nothing to the Armenian people. As you know, we have met four times at the level of foreign ministers, and Mr. President has met with the Prime Minister of Armenia three times. Every time we discuss these issues. The co-chairs are in the same position as well. The steps should be taken to resolve the conflict based on the Madrid Principles within international organizations, including the United Nations. The co-chairs highlight that the current status-quo is unacceptable. Azerbaijan is of the same position. The latest statements require preparing the people of Armenia and Azerbaijan for peace, and we have done certain work in this direction and we continue our activities.

As you know, a German based non-governmental organization called Berlin Economics has prepared a report. This report clearly shows that if progress is made in the resolution of the conflict, only in the first year GDP will grow by five percent in Armenia and Azerbaijan and economic growth will be observed in both countries. I would advise you to get acquainted with this report.

We also touched upon the bilateral issues within the OSCE. We discussed the cooperation in energy sphere and transport issues. As you know, yesterday the First Special Meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Romania and Turkmenistan on “Caspian Sea – Black Sea International Transport Route” was held and a new transport corridor was established. In this regard, the Bucharest Statement was signed; everything is mentioned there. It is noted that a ministerial meeting will be held once a year. We have also agreed to establish a working group to assist in transporting some goods through this corridor from China and Central Asia to Europe.

Thank you.

#### **Q&A session:**

**Slovakian Pravda Agency:** *Thank you. Two questions for the Ministers if I may. The final report of the OSCE ODIHR after last year’s presidential elections recommends bringing legislation on elections in compliance with international standards and also recommends an independent investigation of the election day. After issuing the report, were there any changes in the election legislative and was there any independent investigation? Because you also will have an election in 2020. So how much you are following the ODIHR report? And the question is for Minister Lajčák. Can the OSCE be somehow helpful in implementing the recommendations of this report?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** According to the commitments taken by Azerbaijan, we are in cooperation with the ODIHR. By the way we discussed with Minister Lajčák today the opportunities to strengthen our cooperation with the ODIHR. An idea was introduced by Minister Lajčák on stronger cooperation between Azerbaijan and the ODIHR. I think it will be carefully considered and this proposal will be responded properly. With regard to the investigation, honestly speaking I do not remember such recommendation. Probably I

missed it, I don't know if we should investigate something. I have to check if there is such kind of request rather than immediately responding. There are a lot of recommendations, sometimes you can pick it up or drop it. So it is up to the decision of the sovereign state. But I don't remember such kind of investigation. I have to check. Thank you.

**Leyla Gurbanova, AZERTAC:** *What might be specific contribution of Slovakia to the settlement of Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office. I would like to know the position of the Chairperson-in-Office on the recent statements made by the Armenian political leadership, particularly attempts of the latter to change the format of the negotiations, stating non return of the occupied territories, as well as the continuation of the illegal settlement policy in the occupied territories.*

*The next question is to Minister Elmar Mammadyarov: Mr. Minister, how do you see the prospects of negotiations in the light of the recent groundless statements made by the Armenian leadership?*

**Elmar Mammadyarov:** You have asked a very good question. We discussed these issues with Mr. Chairperson-in-Office. During our meeting we had broad discussions on our expectations from the negotiation process. Of course, as you heard, Mr. Lajčák made a positive statement. I would like to join this statement, but unfortunately the recent statements are not peace oriented. Especially, Azerbaijan officially discussed the statement of Artur Vanetsian, Director of the National Security Service of Armenia made by him in Nagorno-Karabakh. Today I discussed this issue with the Russian co-chair in a telephone conversation. Also, I informed the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office about this. Such statements harm the positive environment. On January 15 our meeting with the Foreign Minister of Armenia took place in Paris. On this basis, the co-chairs made a positive statement on the preparation of the peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan to peace. The Azerbaijani side is working in this direction and will continue to work. On the other hand, you made it clear that while speaking on behalf of the Armenian leadership, as well as the statements made by the Prime Minister himself do not allow us to believe in the positive progress. I totally agree with you. We should also analyze ourselves in which direction we will go within the negotiations. I requested Mr. Lajčák to discuss all these issues while visiting Armenia next week. We need to know if we prepare the population to peace or work in another direction.

Thank you.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

9 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran Javad Zarif
- Meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani
- Meeting with Chairman of the Parliament of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Larijani
- Meeting with Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Shamkhani

On 9 March 2019 within his official visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov conveyed the greetings of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev to the Iranian President Hassan Rouhani.

Expressing his gratitude, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani requested to convey his sincere greetings to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov congratulated the Iranian side on the opening of the Rasht-Gazvin railroad. Iranian President expressed his gratitude for participation of the high level delegation from Azerbaijan at the event dedicated to the commissioning of the railroad.

The sides exchanged views on the economic projects of the bilateral agenda. Also, the development of cultural, political, economic relations between the two states was underlined.

Iranian President Hassan Rouhani noted his satisfaction over the development of existing relations between Iran and Azerbaijan. It was stressed that all branches of government in Iran support the development of relations with Azerbaijan. President Ruhani expressed their support to the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict by peaceful and diplomatic negotiations based on the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of Azerbaijan.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov presented the letter of invitation of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan with regard to the Summit meeting of the Heads of States and Governments of the Non-Aligned Movement to be hosted on 25-26 October of this year in Baku. President Hassan Rouhani accepted the invitation with great pleasure.

Supporting the bilateral and multilateral cooperation formats between the two states, Iranian President appreciated the existing Iran-Azerbaijan-Russia trilateral cooperation format and noted the importance of organizing the next meeting of the heads of states. Also, highly appreciating the Azerbaijan-Iran-Turkey and Azerbaijan-Iran-Turkey-Georgia formats, the significance of continuing cooperation in these directions was emphasized.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE REPUBLIC OF CHILE

19 – 20 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Foreign Minister of the Republic of Chile Roberto Ampuero
- Meeting with President of the Senate of the Republic of Chile Jaime Quintana
- Meeting with President of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate of the Republic of Chile José Miguel Insulza
- Meeting with Head of the Chile-Azerbaijan Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group Francisco Chahuán

On March 19, 2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Foreign Minister of Chile Roberto Ampuero on the sidelines of his official visit to the Republic of Chile

Foreign Minister of Chile Roberto Ampuero highly appreciated the first official visit of his Azerbaijani counterpart to Chile and expressed his confidence that this visit will further contribute to strengthening the exiting friendship relations between the two countries, adding that Chile is interested in comprehensive cooperation with Azerbaijan.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov underlined the importance of intensifying high-level mutual visits between the two countries for the expansion of contacts at various levels and holding political dialogue on regular basis.

At the meeting the sides expressed their satisfaction with the current level of diplomatic relations between the two countries, which will mark the 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year. To this end, it was highlighted that the establishment of the Embassy of Chile in Azerbaijan will give a new impetus to the development of bilateral relations.

The Ministers noted that there are huge opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation in economic, trade, education, tourism, agriculture, energy, transport, investment and humanitarian spheres.

The sides also exchanged their views on the current issues of international agenda, as well as the situations in the relevant regions. In this context, Minister Elmar Mammadyarov informed his counterpart about the latest situation of the negotiation process on Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Also the sides discussed the cooperation issues within international organizations, including the Non-Aligned Movement and other issues of mutual interest. Minister Elmar Mammadyarov emphasized that Chile is invited to the summit of the Non-Aligned Movement, which will be held on October in Azerbaijan and expressed his hope that that Chile will be represented at the event at the highest level.

On March 20, 2019 Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov held several meetings at the National Congress of Chile on the sidelines of his official visit to Chile.

At the meetings with Jaime Quintana, the President of the Senate of Chile, José Miguel Insulza, the President of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Senate, Francisco Chahuán, head of the Chile-Azerbaijan Inter-parliamentary Friendship Group and with the other members of the Group, the development of the friendship relations between Azerbaijan and Chile and the activity of the mutual diplomatic representations were highlighted. The existence of great potential for development of relations in economic, trade, energy, agriculture, investment, transport, humanitarian-cultural, education and other spheres was noted and the importance of inter-parliamentary friendship groups for strengthening of ties between our nations was underlined.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov noted that Azerbaijan and Chile actively cooperate within international organizations and the positions over many issues of international agenda coincide. In this context, the membership of both countries to the Non-Aligned Movement was stressed and the invitation of Chile to the summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement to be held this October in Baku was highlighted.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov also participated at the daily session of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Chile and met with the chair of the Chamber of Deputies, vice-chair of the Chile-Azerbaijan Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group Pablo Vidal and other members of the Group. Presenting wide information on Azerbaijan at the meeting, Foreign Minister went through all aspects of bilateral relations and noted the existence of enough potential for developing the cooperation. Also, he spoke about cooperation of Azerbaijan and Chile within international organizations, including the Non-Aligned Movement and noted in this regard the capital Baku to host the XVIII summit meeting of the Movement.

At the meeting Foreign Minister gave information on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and continuing occupation policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan, which is a serious threat to security in the South Caucasus region, emphasized the necessity of the settlement of the conflict based on the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan and return of the internally displaced persons to their homelands in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the UN Security Council.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov expressed his gratitude to the Chamber of Deputies of Chile for its support to the just position, sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and the relevant UN SC resolutions with regard to the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE ARGENTINE REPUBLIC

20 – 21 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Argentine Republic Jorge Faurie

On March 21, 2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs and Worship of the Republic of Argentine Jorge Faurie within his visit to Argentine. Minister Elmar Mammadyarov expressing congratulations to his counterpart for successfully hosting the UN High-level Conference on South-South Cooperation in Buenos-Aires stressed the importance that Azerbaijan attaches to the cooperation within this platform.

Minister Mammadyarov noted that the developing countries face with the similar development problems and therefore, this platform contributes to sharing and discussing the common views, experiences and methods of national development strategies and priorities.

At the meeting, exchange of views was held on the current situation of the Azerbaijan-Argentine bilateral relations and the issues of the cooperation agenda. Noting the existing wide prospects for cooperation in the fields of agriculture, energy, transport, health and tourism, common intention for strengthening the joint efforts were expressed.

Noting that he was following the prominent achievements of Azerbaijan in the socio-economic sphere after the restoration of its independence, Minister Faurie expressed his willingness to visit Azerbaijan.

**STATEMENT BY MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS  
ELMAR MAMMADYAROV  
AT THE PLENARY SESSION OF THE SECOND HIGH-LEVEL UN  
CONFERENCE ON SOUTH-SOUTH COOPERATION**

20 March 2019, Buenos Aires

Mr. President,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates,  
Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am privileged to address the Second High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation, which is a timely opportunity to assess what has been reached so far, where we stand and what South-South cooperation can do to tackle the development challenges.

At the outset, I would like to thank the Government and the people of Argentina as a host country for warmly receiving us here in Buenos Aires. I would like also to express gratitude to the President of the General Assembly, the President of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Co-Facilitators and all delegations for their outstanding support in this process.

We have gathered here to commemorate a historical event in advancing the South-South cooperation. The United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, held in this city in 1978, was a major landmark in the continuing efforts of the United Nations to promote economic and technical cooperation among developing countries. This meeting is an occasion to reaffirm the continued relevance of South-South cooperation to build a more equitable global partnership for development and peace.

As we are all aware, South-South cooperation is an expression of South-South solidarity that had proven its relevance by a rapid growth. It is a rising and dynamic phenomenon, an important process that is vital to confront the challenges faced by developing countries, making an increasingly important contribution to their development. In the light of the processes of globalization and deepening interdependence among economies, strengthening of South-South cooperation has become a major imperative both as a development strategy and as a means for ensuring that developing countries participate fully in international

economic relations, which is a key objective of the United Nations.

The rapid economic growth of some major developing countries has, indeed, dramatically improved the development prospects of neighboring countries, spurring economic growth and South-South trade and investment. Today, developing countries have accumulated varying degrees of capacities and experiences in development that can be shared on a South-South basis.

Global partnership as agreed in Goal 17 would be crucial for meeting the challenges of developing countries. The construct of South-South & Triangular Cooperation requires that developing countries have the policy space for their own development.

The South-South learning and policy coordination and the peer-to-peer transfer of expertise and technology are effective ways to accelerate sustainable development. In other words, developing countries face similar development challenges. Therefore, the proximity of experience and methods allows sharing common views on national development strategies and priorities.

Our approach to South-South Cooperation has been therefore to share this experience and knowledge in a spirit of solidarity with countries from the South treading similar paths of socio-economic development.

Drawing on our own country, we understand the essential role of South-South cooperation in the provision of collaborative frameworks and cross-border and interregional programmes, as well as standards, regulatory arrangements and implementation mechanisms.

Having joined the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, Azerbaijan is currently intensifying its efforts to align national development strategy with the global Sustainable Development Goals (SDG), while translating them into national policies and programs. Building inclusive and resilient growth, moving from oil based to a more diversified economy, continuing investment in human development, and ensuring greater connectivity to regional and global markets to fully unleash Azerbaijan's export potential are among the top priorities for the Government.

In order to ensure effective implementation of SDGs and their regional coordination, Azerbaijan in cooperation with the UN Country Office organized Baku Forum on Sustainable Development last year to discuss the means of implementation of the national sustainable development agenda, share relevant knowledge and experience and learn best international practices related to SDGs. Attended by the officials responsible for coordination of SDGs implementation at the national level as well as UN representatives, international and local experts, the conference adopted "Baku Principles" for National SDG Mainstreaming and Acceleration, which can serve a good basis for knowledge-sharing.

The national stocktaking exercise on "Trends and opportunities in advancing South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Azerbaijan" conducted by the UN Country Office and the UN Office on South-South Cooperation in 2016 suggests that Azerbaijan has a comparative

advantage in sharing its expertise in various fields of development, such as effective public service delivery, education, labor and social protection, youth empowerment, mine action and others.

It should be noted that pursuing prudent economic policy, Azerbaijan has made a rapid social-economic success during the last 15 years, which transferred our country from recipient to a donor. The social-economic growth was followed by increasing appeals to Azerbaijan from foreign governments and international organizations for humanitarian aid and development assistance. To respond to these requests in a timely and well-coordinated manner, the national donor institution – the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) was established within the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan in 2011.

Since its inception, AIDA has been employing multiple mechanisms to address poverty eradication and sustainable development in developing countries through building the human and institutional capacity, sharing good practices and experiences in a manner consistent with their national and strategic plans.

During the past years, over 90 countries, especially those in Africa, Asia and Latin America have so far benefited from technical assistance and humanitarian aid programs delivered bilaterally and multilaterally by AIDA. We have helped nearly 2 million people, and the number of beneficiary countries and the volumes of provided aid are constantly growing.

Mr. President,

One of the vital importances of the new donor countries, such as Azerbaijan, is that they present new vital sources for replenishment and reversal of declining trend of Official Development Assistance (ODA), which is extremely important for sustainable development of vulnerable economies, such as LDCs, LLDCs, and SIDS. They also serve as an example and encouragement for other developing countries that consider the possibility of joining their ranks and becoming donor countries themselves.

However, Azerbaijan represents an interesting example of a donor country. We provide international assistance under the circumstances when 20 percent of our territory has been under the military occupation of Armenia for over 2 decades, as a result of which more than 1 million people have become refugees and IDPs. Yet, Azerbaijan has succeeded in recovering, diversifying and modernizing its economy, while reducing poverty level from 49 to 5 percent. Most importantly, having effectively integrating both refugees and IDPs into the society, Azerbaijan has accumulated a vast experience in providing them with adequate shelter, health and education services, employment, while strengthening their human capital, which could serve as possible areas for the South-South cooperation.

Aside from being a donor country, Azerbaijan has also become the leading economy in the region and the initiator of large-scale regional projects, and if the military occupation of Armenia ceases, Azerbaijan could contribute to South-South cooperation more actively.

We recognize triangular cooperation as a modality closely linked to and supportive of South-

South cooperation, which brings an added value by leveraging and mobilizing additional technical and financial resources, sharing of experiences and flexible arrangements between Southern and other partners.

Azerbaijan signifies the role of taking concrete and practical steps to stimulate and enliven the cooperation and economic integration in the South-South direction. We believe that the Non-Aligned Movement is one of the most relevant venues to discuss and define the ways and mechanisms for such cooperation. During its chairmanship to the Movement starting from October 2019, Azerbaijan will do its best to explore new opportunities in this direction.

Azerbaijan believes that one such opportunity lies in the heart of ensuring inclusive and equitable quality education and promoting lifelong learning opportunities for the youth from the developing countries. With the orders of President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, last year my country has adopted full scholarship programs for 2018-2022 that would annually enable 40 students from Member States of Non-Aligned Movement and Organization of Islamic Cooperation to obtain higher education at the universities of Azerbaijan. The five-year program is expected to contribute to strengthening of the human capital and the fulfilment of sustainable development goals in the OIC and NAM countries.

In addition, Azerbaijan attaches high importance to applying innovative technologies in public administration to promote effective public services and realization of the Agenda 2030. In 2018 the UN Human Rights Council has unanimously adopted a resolution on “Promoting human rights and SDGs through transparent, accountable and efficient public services delivery” at the initiative of Azerbaijan. This resolution highlighted the vital importance of public services as one of the key areas of meeting the standards of human rights while achieving the SDGs. It also promoted the concept of ASAN public service delivery brand of Azerbaijan, which received the UN Award in 2015 for successful public delivery that can serve as one of the areas among countries for South-South cooperation.

Detailed information about what Azerbaijan offers for international cooperation in general can be obtained from the Azerbaijani stand in the South-South Cooperation Expo 2019 to which all the esteemed participants are cordially invited.

In conclusion, I would like to remind that the strategic partnerships harness the collective experiences towards a common goal while increasing the pool of resources and that strong partnership among countries of the South supported by the UN system will help unlock the economic potential of the developing countries and benefit the entire international community. This Conference will certainly contribute to further strengthen South-South cooperation.

Thank you for your attention.

## WORKING VISIT TO THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF URUGUAY

23 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay Rodolfo Nin Novoa

On March 23, 2019 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Oriental Republic of Uruguay Rodolfo Nin Novoa and held discussions on wide range of issues of bilateral relations.

At the meeting successful development of bilateral relations was appreciated and intention of further developing the cooperation was expressed. The importance of considering the existing opportunities for wide cooperation in economic, agriculture, energy, transport, education, culture and tourism spheres and taking concrete steps in this direction was highlighted. Minister Mammadyarov noted that Azerbaijan was among 5 largest oil exporting countries to Uruguay last year, which is a vivid example of development of trade relations between the two countries. Minister said that some states of Latin America get access to Asia by using the transit-transport infrastructure passing through the territory of Azerbaijan and stressed the possibility for Uruguay to use these opportunities.

At the meeting Minister Mammadyarov informed his counterpart on the current negotiation process of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and noted with satisfaction the position of Uruguay on the settlement of the conflict based on international law.

On his turn, Minister Rodolfo Nin Novoa expressed the interest of his country in further deepening of relations with Azerbaijan. Realizing the sensitivity of the conflict issue for Azerbaijan, Minister Nin Novoa said that the current position of Uruguay based on international law and documents adopted by international organizations will remain unchanged.

Minister Mammadyarov noted the mutually beneficial cooperation between Azerbaijan and Uruguay within international organizations and pointed out that the positions of both sides over numerous issues of international agenda overlap. He expressed his hope on the participation of Uruguay at the highest level at the Summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement to be held in Baku on October of this year.

It was agreed at the meeting to evaluate the cooperation opportunities between the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) and Uruguay International Cooperation Agency.

**WORKING VISIT TO THE ORIENTAL REPUBLIC OF PARAGUAY**

24 March 2019

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Foreign Minister of Paraguay Luis Alberto Castiglioni
- Meeting with President of the Chamber of Senators, the upper house of the National Congress of Paraguay Victor Gonzalez
- Meeting with President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay Walter Harms,

List of documents signed during the working visit:

- Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Paraguay and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on mutual exemption of visa for diplomatic, official and service passport holders

On March 24, 2019 Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov met the Foreign Minister of Paraguay Luis Alberto Castiglioni in the framework of his first official visit to the Republic of Paraguay.

At the meeting expressing satisfaction over the current level of political relations between Azerbaijan and Paraguay, discussions were held about mechanisms of strengthening political dialogue between the sides. Also, exchanging views on cooperation opportunities in the spheres of agriculture, transport, investment, education and etc. it was agreed to establish the legal-contractual basis for development of cooperation in these spheres in future. Mutual intention on establishing the Azerbaijan-Paraguay Trade Chamber was expressed.

Foreign Minister of Paraguay noted that despite the distance between two countries, high level cooperation exists between the sides and the first official visit of the Azerbaijani Foreign Minister would give an impetus to furthering the bilateral relations.

Elmar Mammadyarov spoke about the social-economic reforms by the Government of Azerbaijan, as well as big energy and infrastructure projects successfully realized by the initiative and participation of Azerbaijan. In this regard, Minister Mammadyarov informed his interlocutor on the ongoing settlement process of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is a serious threat to regional security and main impediment to regional integration processes in the South Caucasus. Minister emphasized that the conflict should be settled on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan and all internally displaced persons should return to their homelands. Elmar Mammadyarov stressed that the adoption of the statement by the Chamber of Deputies of the National Congress of Paraguay condemning the Khojaly genocide is highly appreciated.

Noting the successful cooperation of Azerbaijan and Paraguay within multilateral platforms, Minister Elmar Mammadyarov expressed hope on participation of Paraguay at the highest level in the upcoming Baku Summit meeting of the Non-Aligned Movement to be held in October of this year within the chairmanship of Azerbaijan to the Movement.

Minister Mammadyarov invited his Paraguayan counterpart to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan. Highly appreciating this invitation, Luis Castiglioni accepted it with great pleasure.

At the end of the meeting “The Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Paraguay and the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan on mutual exemption of visa for diplomatic, official and service passport holders” was signed.

Minister Elmar Mammadyarov, also held meetings with Victor Gonzalez, President of the Chamber of Senators, the upper house of the National Congress of Paraguay and Walter Harms, President of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Chamber of Deputies of Paraguay. At the meeting the importance of strengthening the inter-parliamentary relations for development of bilateral ties was underlined and the usefulness of mutual visits by the legislative bodies of both countries was emphasized.

## VISITS OF THE HEADS OF STATE AND GOVERNMENT TO THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

### Working visit of the President of the Republic of Zimbabwe to the Republic of Azerbaijan

19 January 2019, Baku



On January 19, 2019 President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met with President of the Republic of Zimbabwe Emmerson Mnangagwa.

The head of state welcomed the Zimbabwean President.

**President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said:** Welcome. I am very pleased to see you. I am sure that your visit will be fruitful and will create opportunities for strengthening our partnership. This is the first visit of the President of Zimbabwe to Azerbaijan. Therefore, it is historic. I am

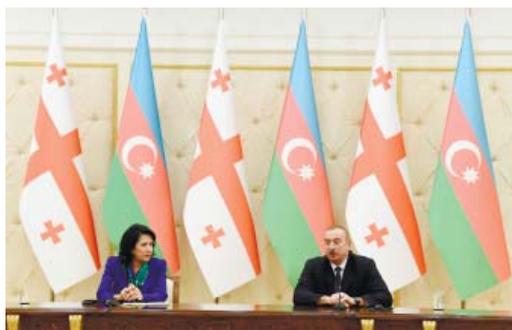
convinced that we will identify very important areas of cooperation in the course of fruitful discussions. We will examine opportunities for expanding our trade relations, as well as issues relating to political interaction.

I am aware that you will visit several countries during this visit. I am very pleased that Azerbaijan is one of these countries. This is an indicator of the importance you attach to our country and to our relations. We, in turn, also want to develop relations between our countries. Of course, your visit is an excellent opportunity from the point of view of discussing the development of these relations. Once again, you are welcome to Azerbaijan!

## Official visit of the President of Georgia to the Republic of Azerbaijan

27 February 2019, Baku

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



Dear Madam President.  
Dear guests, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, Madam President, let me cordially welcome you to Azerbaijan again. Welcome to Azerbaijan.

Once again, I congratulate you on your victory won in the recent presidential election. I am very pleased that you are visiting Azerbaijan shortly after the election. This indicates that you attach great importance to the ties between our countries. We also attach great importance to the development of Azerbaijani-Georgian relations. We are very pleased that these relations are developing successfully and rapidly. Today's visit and our discussions and negotiations confirm once again that our relations have a bright future.

Our peoples have been together for centuries. We have always lived in friendship and fraternity. And today, the friendly and fraternal ties are a major factor for our interstate relations. We are building our interstate relations on this solid foundation. Today, Georgia and Azerbaijan successfully cooperate in all areas.

Our political contacts are at a high level, meetings and high-level consultations are held on a regular basis. We always support each other within international organizations. In all international organizations, Georgia and Azerbaijan always demonstrate solidarity and support each other in matters of territorial integrity.

Of course, a significant part of our cooperation is related to the energy sector. These issues were also widely discussed today. I must say that this cooperation has a long history. We have managed together to implement very important and major projects together. If we turn to history, we will see that the construction of the Baku-Supsa pipeline back in the late 1990s was a huge event. This allowed us the opportunity to connect the Caspian and Black Seas via an oil pipeline. Following this, of course, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum oil and gas pipelines were built. We, the three countries involved – Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey – have implemented all of this through joint efforts. Today, these projects have significantly accelerated our economic development. At present, the Southern Gas Corridor project is being successfully implemented along this route. This is the largest infrastructure project in the region. There is not too much time left for the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor. Last year was very important from the point of view of project implementation. The Southern Gas Corridor was officially inaugurated last year. The TANAP project, which constitutes its main part, was put into

operation. Gas is already being transported through the TANAP pipeline. These projects are of tremendous importance for our countries and the region, as they deepen our cooperation. Whereas three countries were involved in these projects at the initial stage, there are many more countries involved today and new partners are joining the projects.

At the same time, we are paying great attention to cooperation in the transport sector, which was also the subject of negotiations. These projects are also bringing huge benefits to our countries. As a result of the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway a year and a half ago, the volume of cargo currently passing through the territories of our countries is growing and will continue to grow. We are still in the first stage of this project, but are already seeing its benefits. The increasing freight traffic suggests that we are on the right track. After the opening of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway, Azerbaijan held negotiations with its neighbors, countries located in the eastern part of the Caspian Sea, and reached an agreement. I am sure that on the basis of this agreement, the freight traffic will significantly increase. This is our common project. The new corridor will connect continents. And again, the main role here has been played by the traditional format of the Azerbaijani-Georgian-Turkish trilateral cooperation. The number of cooperating countries is now increasing.

Of course, we have had a wide exchange of views on all other issues today, including those related to cooperation in the humanitarian sphere, in the fields of culture, education and tourism.

The Georgians living in Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijanis living in Georgia play a very important role in the development of our relations. Georgia and Azerbaijan are multiethnic and multi-confessional countries. This is our great asset. Representatives of all the peoples living in our countries feel very comfortable. This is a very important factor for the current and future development of our countries.

I am glad that Madam President will also visit the north-western region of Azerbaijan and meet local people there, including our citizens of Georgian origin. Of course, this will be a very important event for them too. I am sure that representatives of other nations living there will also be very happy about this. In addition, I am convinced that familiarization with this picturesque part of our country will make a pleasant impression on you.

In a nutshell, I can say that our cooperation in all areas has great prospects and, most importantly, there is a strong political will. Georgia and Azerbaijan will continue to support each other. We will continue to develop the implemented projects and think about new projects. I am sure that our peoples and states have a bright future. The current official visit is of great importance for our relations.

Dear Madam President! Let me once again welcome you to Azerbaijan. Thank you!

**President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev  
hosted an official reception in honor of the President of Georgia Salome Zourabichvili**

27 February 2019, Baku

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



Dear Madam President.  
Dear guests, ladies and gentlemen.

First of all, Madam President, I would like to once again warmly welcome you and the Georgian delegation you are leading to Azerbaijan. You are welcome!

For centuries, Azerbaijani and Georgian peoples have lived in an atmosphere of friendship and good neighborliness. After our countries had gained independence, the relations between us acquired the nature of strategic partnership in line with the will of the two peoples. The political, economic and humanitarian relations between Azerbaijan and Georgia are at the highest level. The fact that Mrs. Salome Zourabichvili is paying one of her first official visits after being elected President of Georgia to Azerbaijan demonstrates the high level of relations between our countries. Noting the successful development of bilateral and multilateral cooperation between the two countries, President Ilham Aliyev stressed that good results had also been achieved in the economic sphere. President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Azerbaijan is one of the main trading partners of Georgia and one of the key investors in Georgia. Azerbaijani companies are among the largest taxpayers into the state budget of Georgia. The large-scale energy projects we have implemented – the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and Baku-Supsa oil pipelines, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline – are very important events in terms of diversifying the transportation of our energy resources and creating a modern infrastructure for this. The large-scale transnational Southern Gas Corridor project being implemented today is of great importance for our countries. Three of the four component of this successfully ongoing project – Shah Deniz-2, the South Caucasus gas pipeline and TANAP – have already been completed. Of course, energy cooperation projects play a very important part in our relations and in other areas. I want to highlight our cooperation in the transport sector. The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway we opened in 2017 is of historic significance. This railway connects continents and significantly expands the transit potential of Azerbaijan and Georgia. Today, there is already an increase in the volume of cargo transported along the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway.

Noting that the two countries closely cooperate in international organizations, President Ilham Aliyev emphasized that Azerbaijan and Georgia always support the territorial integrity and sovereignty of each other. President Ilham Aliyev said:

- The ongoing aggression of Armenia against Azerbaijan, its military occupation of the

Nagorno-Karabakh region of our country and seven districts adjacent to it pose a serious threat to regional peace and security. The numerous decisions and resolutions adopted in connection with the conflict by the UN Security Council and the UN General Assembly, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, the OSCE, NATO, the Council of Europe and other international organizations express resolute support for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan and the need for resolving the conflict on the basis of these principles. The “Partnership Priorities” document which was initialed between Azerbaijan and the European Union last year also expresses support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty of Azerbaijan and the inviolability of its borders.

Stressing that close cooperation between the two countries would continue to develop successfully, President Ilham Aliyev said:

- Today there are good opportunities and prospects for the development of bilateral cooperation between our countries in other areas as well – in the fields of tourism, agriculture, information and communication technologies, science, education, culture.

Dear Madam President, let me welcome you to Azerbaijan once again, wish you good health, every success in your activities, and prosperity and well-being to your country and people.

## ARTICLES

### The growing geopolitical importance of the Caspian Sea

*Paulo BOTTA \**

Political developments surrounding this landlocked sea are attracting more and more attention not only on the regional level but on the international level as well.

We are referring not only to natural resources, which are very important, of course, and were studied from different points of views over the last decade, but to the Caspian Sea as a Eurasian transportation hub, which will become the heart of the North-South and East-West infrastructure projects.

The Caspian Sea is of great importance in the 21<sup>st</sup> century geopolitics and every political and strategic development in that region has a direct influence beyond that area.

In this article, we intend to analyze several aspects of the geopolitical importance of the Caspian Sea: legal developments, natural resources, security and military uses, logistics and transportation projects and at the end a view from Argentina in particular and South America in general.

#### *Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea*

Since the collapse of the Soviet Union lack of agreement among Caspian littoral states on the legal status of the Caspian Sea has been considered one of the most important regional issues.

During Soviet times, agreements of 1921 and 1940 signed by the USSR and Iran constituted the legal framework under which both states conducted their activities in the Caspian Sea. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union, new states obtained independence - Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Turkmenistan – and, there was a need to develop an updated legal framework for now five littoral states.

The final agreement was reached after more than 50 meetings of different working groups and four presidential summits (2002 in Ashgabat (Turkmenistan), 2007 in Tehran (Iran), 2010 in Baku (Azerbaijan) and 2014 in Astrakhan (Russia)).

Discussions, from legal perspective, were aimed at deciding if the Caspian should be considered a “landlocked sea” (inland sea) or a “lake” since regulations and political implications for the littoral and non-littoral states would be different depending on which position prevailed.

Fortunately, in August 2018 five Caspian littoral states – Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Iran,

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Russia and Turkmenistan – reached an agreement in Kazakh city of Aktau on legal status of the sea. Even though many remaining questions still have to be addressed, the importance of this agreement should not be underestimated.

“The Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea” intends to set the basis and general principles according to which littoral states must regulate their Caspian maritime activities.

One of the most important regulations is the increase, of territorial waters “up to a limit not exceeding 15 nautical miles set forth by the Montego Bay Convention of the Law of the Sea in 1982”<sup>1</sup>. We should bear in mind that until 1982, when the Law of the Sea was approved, territorial waters had a limit of three nautical miles, and then the Montego Bay convention extended it to 12 miles.

This increase of the area where a state exercises its exclusive sovereignty is an international norm and the increase of those areas is one of the most important trends in the 21<sup>st</sup> century<sup>2</sup>.

The Caspian Sea Convention also grants the right of navigation exclusively to the “ships flying the flag of one of the Parties”, i.e., the five littoral states.

It is important to stress that while the main issue is concluded, other issues such as the final status of the seabed and subsoil beyond territorial waters will be negotiated in the near future, which means that the process is far from being completed. The delimitations of the seabed and subsoil could be done by the parties directly involved as it was done before between Azerbaijan and Iran regarding Araz, Alov and Sharg or Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan regarding Kapaz.

### *Natural resources and infrastructure*

According to EIA estimates there are “48 billion barrels of oil and 292 trillion cubic feet of natural gas in proved and probable reserves in the wider Caspian basin area, both from onshore and offshore fields”<sup>3</sup>. Based on that the importance of the Caspian Sea resources due to their size and location between Europe and Asia is quite understandable.

The new legal framework will improve international investment environment but it is very clear that foreign oil and gas companies have been investing in this region for almost three decades without problems.

What we can expect is a more comprehensive level of cooperation among littoral states, which will lead to a better business environment.

There is, however, another area where the agreement about the legal status of the Caspian

<sup>1</sup> Convention on the Legal Status of the Caspian Sea, article 7.1.

<sup>2</sup> Columba Peoples, “The Securitization of Outer Space: Challenges for Arms Control”, Contemporary Security Policy, 32:1, 2011, pp. 76-98.

<sup>3</sup> Energy Information Administration, “Overview of oil and natural gas in the Caspian Sea region”, August 26, 2013, available at [https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis\\_includes/regions\\_of\\_interest/Caspian\\_Sea/caspian\\_sea.pdf](https://www.eia.gov/beta/international/analysis_includes/regions_of_interest/Caspian_Sea/caspian_sea.pdf)

Sea will be extremely useful. Different transportation and infrastructure projects - from North to South and from East to West traverse the sea and have the potential to make it a crucial transportation route.

At this moment, there are oil and gas pipelines, railways and seaports that have turned the Caspian Sea into an area of growing international significance.

The recently completed TANAP (Trans Anatolian Pipeline) and the future TAP (Trans Adriatic Pipeline) to reach Europe, the already operational Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and other initiatives such as the project of the Trans Caspian pipeline which will connect Turkmenistan with the Azerbaijani energy network to the West, increasing the importance of the Caspian Sea region to Europe.

The Chinese OBOR (One Belt One Road) initiative will make the most of the improvements of Caspian seaports such as Kuryk and Aktau (in Kazakhstan) and Alat (in Azerbaijan) and will allow a logistic integration of other projects, which, in the end, will connect China and Europe.

In October 2017, the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway became operational stretching from the sea port of Alat, south of Baku, to Kars in eastern Turkey. To stress the regional importance of this project, presidents of Kazakhstan and Uzbekistan attended the inauguration ceremony.

The Russia-Azerbaijan-Iran trilateral format, inaugurated in 2016, or the Turkey-Azerbaijan-Iran format, just to mention two of the most important, include presidential and ministerial summits where infrastructure cooperation is widely discussed.

Beyond different points of views regarding issues of the international agenda, those meetings reflect political will aimed at generating cooperation among the states of the region.

As we can see, many projects are developing in the Caspian Sea area and there will be many more in the near future.

### ***Security and Military activities***

The Convention signed by the coastal states only allows the five states to conduct military activities in the Caspian Sea (Article 3. Paragraph 6). Needless to say this wise decision will overcome the problem of foreign military activities that could lead to regional instability.

However this does not mean that military activities conducted by member states could not have a regional impact. We should consider, for example, the air route used by Russia to secure logistical support of its troops in Syria. In September 2015 Russian navy launched cruise missile attacks from the Caspian Sea at terrorists groups in Syria.

When considering Russian military developments we should bear in mind that the new headquarters of the Russian Caspian sea forces will be located in Kaspiysk (Dagestan) and, in

this regard, the Caspian is not a landlocked sea since it is connected to the Azov Sea through the Volga-Don Channel, which was built in Soviet times. This means that the Russian navy in the Caspian Sea has a direct connection to the Mediterranean (Caspian Sea – Volga-Don Channel – Azov Sea – Black Sea – Turkish Straits – East Mediterranean)

### *A view from Argentina*

The growing importance of the Caspian Sea and its littoral states should be addressed as a new area for the Argentinean foreign policy.

Argentinean President Mauricio Macri was invited to participate in the “Belt and Road Forum for International Cooperation”<sup>4</sup>, that was held on 14-15 May 2017 in Beijing (China). It could be seen as something odd - a head of state of a South American state attending to a meeting with the main objective of discussing future infrastructure and communications projects in Eurasia, but it is not. It is, actually, one of the key priorities for Argentina and other countries of the region (such as Chile, which was invited as well).

This connectivity project goes beyond Eurasia and it is framed as a link between continents and Argentina is very interested in developing contacts with the most active economies of the world which are based today on Eurasian continent.

From geopolitical point of view the development of these infrastructure and communications projects will allow Argentina to reach Asia through Europe (the Euro-Atlantic and traditional route) or via the Pacific route. Therefore, OBOR will become the link between China and Europe that will allow Argentinean products to reach Eurasian countries, mainly the states of Central Asia and Caucasus through both routes.

Based on this general framework, now it is time to participate in OBOR and related infrastructure projects and, which is equally important, to develop deeper and more comprehensive relations with hub states that are located at both ends of the OBOR: Turkey, Caucasian States and Central Asian states.

Improvements in logistical opportunities will become the first step towards more comprehensive and deep relations between Argentina and other South American countries and the Caspian Sea region.

The centrality of the Caspian Sea and the complexities of the geopolitical environment will require developing a comprehensive strategy toward the region, which should include economic, political and cultural objectives.

Argentina and other South American countries should take a closer look at the political and economic developments in the Caspian Sea region in order to take advantage of the possibilities and opportunities in the Caspian Sea countries.

<sup>4</sup> Official website of the Forum <http://www.beltandroadforum.org/english/>

## European Union – Azerbaijan relations: the importance of energy cooperation

Elena-Andreea BORDEA \*

### *First steps in the European Union's cooperation with Azerbaijan*

The European Union and Azerbaijan first established bilateral relations 28 years ago when the country located in South Caucasus region became independent (1991). The European Community's interest in promoting values such as democratization, good governance, rule of law, human rights and fundamental freedoms, or economic reforms in its eastern neighborhood found favorable ground thanks to the foreign policy strategy promoted by the former President Heydar Aliyev (1994-2003). He wanted to maintain stable relations with powers like U.S., EU and Turkey, but also wise partnerships with actors like Russia or Iran<sup>1</sup>. His “balancing”<sup>2</sup> strategy contributed to Azerbaijan's highly active participation in various Western association political structures.

The direction adopted by Heydar Aliyev but also the EU's desire to interact politically and economically with Azerbaijan were the main factors for the signing, in 1996, of the *Partnership and Cooperation Agreement*. Entered into force in 1999, it became the document that laid the foundations for political, commercial, economic, legislative and cultural cooperation between the two. Additionally, new priorities of this partnership were negotiated between 2016 and 2018. Through renegotiation, the two actors renewed their commitment to a much broader and revised agenda for areas of concrete cooperation aimed at ensuring peace, prosperity, resilience and support for planned Azerbaijani reforms. Due to its geographic position and capabilities which could contribute to Europe's energy security, one of the key points was the establishment of direct connections for energy and transport: the quick completion of the Southern Gas Corridor from the Caspian region's energy producers and beyond<sup>3</sup>.

Returning to the onset of the interaction between these actors, another remarkable moment was the appointment of the Special Representative for South Caucasus in 2003 proposed by the Greek government holding the Presidency of the Council of the EU. This meant a much greater EU political involvement in this region (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia) and further implementing the objectives related to assistance in carrying out political and economic reforms, conflict prevention and resolution, support for regional cooperation and so on<sup>4</sup>.

### *European Neighbourhood Policy and Eastern Partnership*

The largest expansion of the European Union in 2004, when 10 states became members, had

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<sup>1</sup> Sabina Strîmbovchi, „Azerbaijan's balanced foreign policy trapped in a volatile geopolitical context”, *Europolity*, vol.9, no. 2, 2015, pp. 121-134, at p. 123.

<sup>2</sup> Eske Van Gils (2018), „Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy, Strategies and the European Union: Successful Resistance and Pursued Influence”, *Europe-Asa Studies*, pp 1-21, at p. 4, doi: doi.org/10.1080/09668136.2018.1479733

<sup>3</sup> Consiliul de Cooperare UE-Azerbaijan (2018), *Recomandarea nr. 1/2018 a consiliului de cooperare ue-azerbaidjan din 28 septembrie 2018 privind prioritățile parteneriatului ue-azerbaidjan [2018/1598]*, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:22018D1598&from=EN> (Accessed: 12.02.2019).

<sup>4</sup> European Commission (2003), *Council appoints an EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus*, Available at: [https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_PRES-03-196\\_en.htm](https://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_PRES-03-196_en.htm) (Accessed: 04.02.2019).

as a consequence the development of the *European Neighbourhood Policy*. The aim was to establish a framework of privileged relationships and to strengthen the prosperity, stability and security of EU's southern (Algeria, Morocco, Egypt, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, State of Palestine, Syria, Tunisia) and eastern (Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine) neighbours. Thus, Azerbaijan, along with 5 eastern states became part of this policy that involved political cooperation and close economic integration without the prospect of accession. Statistics highlight the progress made by these countries. The six eastern ENP partners enjoyed rapid economic expansion even against the backdrop of the 2008 economic crisis when the EU exhibited a rather low economic growth. Azerbaijan occupied a leading position in GDP growth in 2013 with a value of EUR 5,956 per capita, followed by Belarus with a value of EUR 5,709. In 2016 situation has changed with the GDP per capita showing a decrease of EUR 2,047 in Azerbaijan and EUR 1,188 in Belarus<sup>5</sup>.

The effectiveness of reforms implementation was ensured by a series of Action Plans based on the ENP which established a set of priorities for a period of 3-5 years. For the South Caucasus, such plans were approved and implemented in 2006. The European Community set ambitious targets for cooperation with Azerbaijan and opened up new possibilities for progressive participation in key EU policies and programmes. Therefore, the Action Plan for Azerbaijan has created a favourable framework for gaining benefits (for both partners), but also for effective change in this country. In 2015, the European Commission published a report on the implementation of this Action Plan and welcomed the achievements in macroeconomic developments, in the energy partnership with the EU, notably the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor and the progress with regard to several bilateral agreements<sup>6</sup>.

For efficient implementation of the ENP<sup>7</sup>, in 2007, the European Union introduced a new financial instrument called: the *European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument*. It provided additional assistance to co-finance actions supporting political, economic, social, sectoral, regional and local development or participation in European Community programmes and agencies<sup>8</sup>. The budget set out in the founding document was around EUR 12 billion for the 2007-2013 period, of which EUR 143.5 million were distributed to Azerbaijan. The investments have led to a number of advances in energy (promotion of energy efficiency and of renewable energy sources), agriculture (reduction of dependency on food imports) or rural developments (access to credit and extended business opportunities in rural areas)<sup>9</sup>.

<sup>5</sup> Eurostat (2018), Basic figures on the Neighbourhood Policy-East countries, pag. 3, Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/documents/4031688/8627755/KS-01%E2%80%9118%E2%80%91035-EN-N.pdf>, (Accessed: 04.02.2019).

<sup>6</sup> European Commission (2015), Implementation of the European Neighbourhood Policy in Azerbaijan Progress in 2014 and Recommendations for actions, pp. 1-2, Available at: <https://library.eunighbours.eu/content/implementation-european-neighbourhood-policy-azerbaijan-progress-2014-and-recommendations-ac> (Accessed: 04.02.2019)

<sup>7</sup> Article 8(1) of the Treaty on European Union states that „the Union shall develop a special relationship with neighbouring countries, aiming to establish an area of prosperity and good neighbourliness, founded on the values of the Union and characterised by close and peaceful relations based on cooperation”. (The European Union (2012), Consolidated versions of the Treaty on European Union and the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=celex%3A12012M%2FTXT> (Accessed: 06.02.2019).

<sup>8</sup> The European Parliament, The Council of the European Union (2006), Regulation (EC) No 1638/2006 of the European Parliament and of the Council of 24 October 2006 laying down general provisions establishing a European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument, pp. 3-4, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX%3A32006R1638&from=EN> (Accessed: 06.02.2019).

<sup>9</sup> European Commission (2014), European Neighbourhood and Partnership Instrument. 2007-2013. Overview of Activities and Results, pag. 43, Available at: [https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/overview\\_of\\_enpi\\_results\\_2007-2013\\_en\\_0.pdf](https://ec.europa.eu/europeaid/sites/devco/files/overview_of_enpi_results_2007-2013_en_0.pdf) (Accessed: 06.02.2019).

The vital interest in consolidating partnerships with the states in the southern and eastern neighbourhood has led to the adoption of a new instrument for the 2014-2020 period, which provided a budget of EUR 15.4 billion<sup>10</sup>: the *European Neighbourhood Instrument*. The ENPI also supported the launch of the Eastern Partnership and invested nearly EUR 2.5 billion for bilateral and regional cooperation in 2010-2013<sup>11</sup>.

Thus, in 2008, amid the EU's desire to strengthen relations with its eastern neighbours and the outbreak of the conflict in Georgia that shook regional stability, the European Council called for urgent action to be taken in the form of the development of the *Black Sea Synergy* initiative and the *Eastern Partnership*<sup>12</sup>. On 7th May 2009, following the Prague summit, officials of the European Union, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine agreed to establish a specific Eastern dimension of the European Neighbourhood Policy complementary to the already existing bilateral contractual relations. This format aimed at focusing on multilateral cooperation and at deepening bilateral cooperation by concluding new association agreements, developing Comprehensive Institution Building Programmes or encouraging civil mobility (visa liberalisation)<sup>13</sup>.

At the fifth Eastern Partnership Summit, the results of 8 years of cooperation were outlined with much optimism and *20 Deliverables for 2020* were established in terms of economy, connectivity, governance and society. During this period, Association Agreements with Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine, a new Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with Armenia were signed, and negotiations for such an agreement with Azerbaijan were in full swing. From the economic point of view, significant progress has been made in supporting small and medium-sized enterprises and regarding the trade with the six states. EU becomes the largest importer and exporter for Ukraine, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Moldova, the second largest for Armenia and Belarus, but also a major investor in these countries<sup>14</sup>. Specifically, available data indicates that the European Union accounts for 48.6% of Azerbaijan's total trade (60.7% exports and 31.8% imports<sup>15</sup>).

We can observe that the European Union is trying through multiple instruments to contribute to the Eastern Neighbourhood countries prosperity and stability. The former enlargement Commissioner Gunter Verheugen (2003) articulated the purpose of this policy and asserted that "an area of stability and prosperity in Europe could be only sustainable if this area would also be extended to the neighbours of the EU"<sup>16</sup>.

<sup>10</sup> European Commission (2015), Towards a new European Neighbourhood Policy: the EU launches a consultation on the future of its relations with neighbouring countries, Available at: [http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release\\_IP-15-4548\\_en.htm](http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-15-4548_en.htm) (Accessed: 06.02.2019).

<sup>11</sup> Ibidem, pag. 11.

<sup>12</sup> Council of the European Union (2008), Extraordinary European Council, pag. 3, Available at: <http://register.consilium.europa.eu/doc/srv?l=EN&f=ST%2012594%202008%20INIT> (Accessed: 06.02.2019).

<sup>13</sup> Council of the European Union (2009), Joint Declaration of the Prague Eastern Partnership Summit, pp. 5-8, Available on: [https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31797/2009\\_eap\\_declaration.pdf](https://www.consilium.europa.eu/media/31797/2009_eap_declaration.pdf) (Accessed: 08.02.2019).

<sup>14</sup> Council of the European Union (2017), Remarks by President Donald Tusk after 5th Eastern Partnership summit, Available at: <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2017/11/24/remarks-by-president-donald-tusk-after-the-5th-eastern-partnership-summit/> (Accessed: 09.02.2019).

<sup>15</sup> European Commission (2018), Azerbaijan, Available on: [ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/azerbaijan/](http://ec.europa.eu/trade/policy/countries-and-regions/countries/azerbaijan/) (Accessed on: 26.02.2019).

<sup>16</sup> Deniz Devrim, Evelina Schulz (2009), „Enlargement Fatigue in the European Union: From Enlargement to Many Unions (WP)”, Elcano Royal Institute, Available at: [https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano\\_en/contenido?WCM\\_GLOBAL\\_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano\\_in/zonas\\_in/DT13-2009](https://www.realinstitutoelcano.org/wps/portal/rielcano_en/contenido?WCM_GLOBAL_CONTEXT=/elcano/elcano_in/zonas_in/DT13-2009) (Accessed at: 11.02.2019).

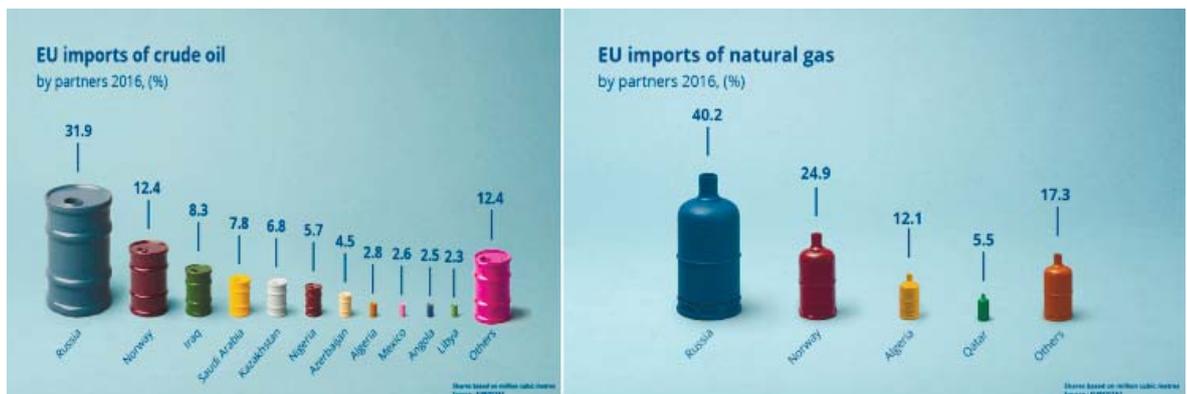
### *Azerbaijan – a high energy partner for the European Union*

„The availability of significant oil and gas reserves in Azerbaijan is the fortune of our people and the major factor in the development of the country for the welfare of the people and their present and future”<sup>17</sup>.

Heydar Aliyev

Since the creation of the European Community, energy has been a central theme on the agenda of the debates, and has become increasingly important with the challenges of the 21st century: increased dependence on imports, limited diversification, high energy prices, threats of climate change, need for better integration and interconnection in energy markets or security risks. The recent context of the 2009 energy crisis favoured the enhancement of negotiations on the concept of energy security as defined in the Commission Green Paper (2000) ‘*the uninterrupted physical availability of energy products on the market, at a price which is affordable for all consumers (private and industrial), while respecting environmental concerns and looking towards sustainable development*’<sup>18</sup> and its link to the diversification of energy sources, the development of energy infrastructure and implicitly the stability of the international arena.

Numerically speaking, in the 21st century more than half of the energy consumed was secured from imports: 90% oil, 66% natural gas, 42% solid fuel and 40% nuclear fuel (according to 2014 statistical data). This dependency is especially relevant in regardst to a single supplier, Russia, which in 2016 provided 40% of natural gas requirements and 30% of oil (followed by Norway - 25% and Algeria - 12% as suppliers)<sup>19</sup>.



Source: Eurostat (2016), From where do we import energy and how dependent are we?, 2016, Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html> , (Accessed: 12.02.2019).

<sup>17</sup> Heydar Aliyev Foundation (2007), „Azerbaijan Oil”, Available at: [https://www.azerbaijan.az/\\_Economy/\\_OilStrategy/\\_oilStrategy\\_e.html](https://www.azerbaijan.az/_Economy/_OilStrategy/_oilStrategy_e.html), (Accessed: 03.02.2019).

<sup>18</sup> European Commission (2000), Towards a European strategy for the security of energy supply, Available at: [https://iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/remea/sites/remea/files/green\\_paper\\_energy\\_supply\\_en.pdf](https://iet.jrc.ec.europa.eu/remea/sites/remea/files/green_paper_energy_supply_en.pdf), (Accessed: 14.02.2019).

<sup>19</sup> Eurostat (2016), From where do we import energy and how dependent are we?, 2016, Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/cache/infographs/energy/bloc-2c.html> , (Accessed: 12.02.2019).

### *Regulations on the energy cooperation between the EU and the Caspian region*

Most of the documents adopted at the European Commission level stressed the need to shape an external dimension of energy policy and a strong international partnership which should pursue the common objectives of security, competitiveness and sustainability. *The Energy 2020 Strategy* (2010) identified energy security as interlinked with external priorities, therefore, the diversification of fuels, of sources of supply and of transit routes was essential for the EU security. It proposed „the integration of energy markets and of regulatory frameworks with the neighbours through comprehensive EU agreements based on the EU rules in the countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy and the enlargement process and also the establishment of privileged partnerships with key partners”<sup>20</sup>. In its communication, *Energy infrastructure priorities for 2020 and beyond* (2010), the European Commission is developing an integrated energy network plan starting from different interconnections. With regard to the diversification of natural gas supply sources, four axis that could contribute to the obtaining of secure commitments and to the construction of transport infrastructure are: *The Southern Corridor*, *The Northern Corridor* from Norway, the *Eastern Corridor* from Russia and the *Mediterranean Corridor* from Africa. The Southern Corridor is of main importance to our discussion, which was to link the EU natural gas market with the Caspian Sea, the potential supplier being Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan. It is estimated that this route should cover 10-20% of the EU’s gas demand by 2020 (45-90 billion cubic meters of gas per year)<sup>21</sup>.

Cooperation with the Caspian Sea and the Middle East producers continues to be highlighted in the *The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond our Borders* (2011) document, which defines for the first time the global external energy policy. This was to be done on a strong economic and political basis, which is why providers such as Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan or Iraq had to be assisted in developing their energy sectors<sup>22</sup>. This document also proposed the setting up of an information exchange mechanism on intergovernmental agreements between Member States and third countries in the field of energy. It entered into force in 2012<sup>23</sup>.

Nevertheless, the *European Energy Security Strategy* (2014) established 8 pillars to address security concerns, two of them giving special significance to the external dimension of energy policy: „diversifying external supplies and related infrastructure, as well as improving coordination of national energy policies and speaking with one voice in external energy policy”. In the medium and long term, the European Union has to reduce its dependence on certain external suppliers by building a strengthened partnership with Norway, speeding up the Southern Gas Corridor and launching a new gas terminal in Southern Europe. In this regard, 30 projects were considered essential for the security of supply, including: TANAP,

<sup>20</sup> European Commission (2010), *Energy 2020. A strategy for competitive, sustainable and secure energy*, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1409650806265&uri=CELEX:52010DC0639>, (Accessed: 13.02.2019).

<sup>21</sup> European Commission (2010), *Energy infrastructure priorities for 2020 and beyond – A Blueprint for an integrated European energy network*, pp. 31-32, Available at: <https://ec.europa.eu/transparency/regdoc/rep/1/2010/EN/1-2010-677-EN-F1-1.Pdf>, (Accessed: 13.02.2019).

<sup>22</sup> European Commission (2011), *The EU Energy Policy: Engaging with Partners beyond Our Borders*, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?qid=1408370068358&uri=CELEX:52011DC0539> (Accessed: 14.02.2019).

<sup>23</sup> The European Parliament, The Council (2012). *DECISION No 994/2012/EU OF THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT AND OF THE COUNCIL of 25 October 2012 establishing an information exchange mechanism with regard to intergovernmental agreements between Member States and third countries in the field of energy*, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/ALL/?uri=CELEX%3A32012D0994> (Accessed: 18.02.2019).

TAP, but also other LNG interconnectors and terminals<sup>24</sup>.

The European Union had a framework that regulated energy policy both internally and externally but in practice it faced the existence of 28 national regulations in the field. Hence, the integration of the energy market for efficiency, sustainability and competitiveness became indispensable. That is why in 2015 the European Commission adopted the *Energy Union Strategy*, which proposed five interdependent dimensions as follows: energy security, solidarity and trust (1), a fully integrated energy market (2), energy efficiency to moderate demand (3), decarbonising the economy (4), research, innovation and competitiveness (5)<sup>25</sup>. The Southern Corridor and Northern Europe remained central to the discussion of the diversification of energy sources.

#### *The main directions of energy cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan*

The conclusion drawn from the analysis of documents governing the European Union's external energy policy is that the countries of the Caspian Sea region have an important potential in terms of diversifying Europe's energy supply and transit routes through the abundance of natural resources available to them, but also through the strategic position in the EU's neighbourhood. Azerbaijan is part of this category and it remains in focus of the international attention since signing the famous „contract of the century” on 20th September 1994. It was signed with top West oil companies on the development of its major offshore oil field Azeri-Chirag-Guneshli and it is the result of the successful implementation of an oil strategy designed by Heydar Aliyev for the economic development of independent Azerbaijan: “The project presented today guarantees the economic interests of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Azerbaijani people and it will do the same in future, and that is why, I decided to sign this contract”<sup>26</sup>. And the results were as expected; oil production increased from 184,000 barrels per day in 1994 to 794,000 barrels per day (BBL/D/1K) in 2018, recording a maximum of 1072 thousand barrels per day in June 2009 and a minimum of 268 thousand barrels per day in February 1997<sup>27</sup>.

Since 1994, the transport of Azerbaijani oil to international markets has become one of the fundamental goals adopted by Heydar Aliyev, and gradually Azerbaijan has risen to become an extremely important source for Europe's energy security. This can be proved by the developments recorded during the 21st century. In 2000, the construction of a pipeline on the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan route was launched, whose length (1769 km), capacity (50 million tons) and investment (US \$ 3.6 billion) distinguished it from other pipelines. It was the first time when Western countries intervened directly in the construction of a pipeline considered “a strategic milestone in post-Soviet Eurasia”<sup>28</sup>.

<sup>24</sup> Comisia Europeană (2015), *Strategia europeană a securității energetice*, pp. 22-28, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/RO/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52014DC0330&from=EN> (Accessed: 14.02.2019).

<sup>25</sup> European Commission (2015), *A Framework Strategy for a Resilient Energy Union with a Forward-Looking Climate Change Policy*, pag. 4, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52015DC0080&from=EN> (Accessed: 14.02.2019).

<sup>26</sup> Administrative Department of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan (no date), *Oil Strategy*, pag. 1, Available at: [files.preslib.az/projects/republic/en/azr3\\_4.pdf](files.preslib.az/projects/republic/en/azr3_4.pdf) (Accessed: 26.02.2019.)

<sup>27</sup> Trading Economics (2018), „Azerbaijan Crude Oil Production”, Available at: <https://tradingeconomics.com/azerbaijan/crude-oil-production> (Accessed: 18.02.2019).

<sup>28</sup> Thassy N. Marketos, *China's Energy Geopolitics. The Shanghai Cooperation Organization and Central Asia*, (London: Routledge Contemporary China Series, 2009), pag. 73.

It is worth mentioning that in the 1990s, the role of the European Union in regional energy competition was rather modest. It offered limited technical and financial assistance in the field of gas and oil infrastructure in the immediate neighbourhood<sup>29</sup> through the *INOGATE programme* (Interstate Oil and Gas Transportation). The programme underwent a process of upgrading to a multilateral cooperation framework ending with the launching of the *Baku Initiative* in 2004. The enlargement of the Union, the high consumption and imports of energy, and the lack of availability of significant hydrocarbon resources in the Black Sea, Caspian and neighbouring countries have confirmed the importance of strengthening energy cooperation. Participants at the launching Conference agreed on four common objectives to be met by four working groups<sup>30</sup>: supporting the gradual development of regional energy markets in the Caspian littoral states and their neighbouring countries; enhancing the attraction of funding for new infrastructures; adopting energy efficiency policies and programmes; and making progress towards a gradual integration between the respective energy markets and the EU market.

The European Union's commitment to promote common energy policies continued in Astana in 2006, when a new Ministerial Conference led to the adoption of a roadmap which was to be implemented by the four working groups set up in Baku. The purpose of the document was to set out "a long term plan for enhanced energy cooperation between all the partners whose implementation will pave the way for a comprehensive legal and regulatory framework governing an integrated EU-Black Sea-Caspian Sea common energy market functioning based on the EU legislation"<sup>31</sup>. The emphasis was put on the concept of convergence based on the EU internal market, but also on the explicit definition of energy security, including not only technical issues, but also issues related to import/export, transit, energy demand or investments<sup>32</sup>.

Recognizing Azerbaijan as key producer and potential transit country for hydrocarbons in the Caspian region and Central Asia, the European Union has begun cooperation in this field with the state by adopting in November 2006 a *Memorandum of Understanding on strategic partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of energy*. It promotes a common vision on the energy challenges and identifies four areas of cooperation<sup>33</sup>: gradual harmonization of Azerbaijani legislation with EU legislation; enhancing safety and security of supplies from Azerbaijan and the Caspian region to the EU; development of comprehensive energy demand management policy in Azerbaijan; technical cooperation and exchange of expertise.

<sup>29</sup> INOGATE's members are: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakstan, Kyrgystan, Moldova, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Russian Federation (observer status only).

<sup>30</sup> Baku Initiative (2004), CONCLUSIONS of the Ministerial Conference on Energy Co-operation between the EU, the Caspian Littoral States and their neighbouring countries, Available at: <https://w1.inogate.org/attachments/article/89/baku.pdf> (Accessed: 19.02.2019).

<sup>31</sup> Karen Henderson, Carol Weaver eds., *The Black Sea Region and EU Policy: The Challenge of Divergent Agendas* (Farnham: Routledge, 2010), p. 135. (vezi pagina)

<sup>32</sup> Francesc Morata, Israel Solorio Sandoval eds., *European Energy Policy: An Environmental Approach*, (Cheltenham: Edward Elgar, 2012) p. 144.

<sup>33</sup> The European Union, the Republic of Azerbaijan (2006) Memorandum of understanding on a strategic partnership between the European Union and the Republic of Azerbaijan in the field of Energy, p. 5, Available at: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009\\_2014/documents/dsca/dv/dsca\\_20130321\\_14/dsca\\_20130321\\_14en.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2009_2014/documents/dsca/dv/dsca_20130321_14/dsca_20130321_14en.pdf) (Accessed: 19.02.2019).

*Southern Gas Corridor – “the highest energy security priority” for the European Union*

At the beginning of the 21st century, the European Union imported more than two-thirds of its natural gas from Russia, Algeria and Norway through three corridors: the Eastern Gas Corridor, the Northern Gas Corridor and the Western Gas Corridor. A series of disputes between Russia and Ukraine occurred in 2006 and 2009, which signaled the insecurity of Russia's natural gas supply and the need to build alternative routes to meet Europe's increasing demand for energy. For this reason, the European Union was increasingly interested in establishing a new corridor to bring natural gas from the Middle East and the Caspian region to South and East Europe<sup>34</sup>. The mention of the Southern Gas Corridor as one of the highest energy security priorities of the European Union appears for the first time in the European Commission document from 2008: *Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan*. The main partners mentioned for the construction of the pipelines which will constitute this corridor are: Azerbaijan, Turkmenistan and Iraq among others with the possibility of future cooperation with Uzbekistan and Iran<sup>35</sup>. Also, the role of transit country, as well as of gas beneficiary, was granted to Turkey. At that time, the SEC concept was referring to the existing pipeline infrastructure including the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum pipeline, the Turkey-Greece-Italy interconnector and the Nabucco natural gas pipeline. The latter project was prioritized by the European Commission because of the strategic advantages and political and economic benefits it would offer. The pipeline proposed the capacity of 31 bcm and a length of 3300 km from the Turkish-Georgian and Turkish-Iraqi borders to Baumgarten in Austria, transiting through Bulgaria, Romania and Hungary<sup>36</sup>. But Nabucco failed to win gas supply from Shah Deniz II, fact that brought success for the Trans Adriatic Pipeline. Supporters of this project considered this step to be the real debut of the Southern Corridor while sceptics placed the pipeline in a distant future.

The European Union's representatives continued to provide political and financial support for the Southern Corridor, dubbed *New Silk Road* at the ministerial meeting in Prague in 2009. The signing of the *Joint Declaration on the Southern Gas Corridor* in 2011 by the President of Azerbaijan and the President of the European Commission gave Azerbaijan the premises of becoming the most important gas supplier in the European Union (the commitment to export 10 bcm of gas per year to Europe<sup>37</sup>). Specialists believe that the motivations behind the European Commission's interest go beyond the pipeline's actual capacity. Firstly, European consumers will be connected to a region rich in gas through a route that could be expanded if additional resources were available (from the Eastern Mediterranean, Iraq or Iran) and, secondly, the corridor could diminish the monopolistic position of Russian Gazprom in Central and Eastern Europe.

<sup>34</sup> In 2010, the gas reserves in the Caspian region totaled 12.42 trillion cubic meters, of which 2.5 trillion cubic meters in Azerbaijan, 1.82 trillion cubic meters in Kazakhstan and 8.1 trillion cubic meters in Turkmenistan. An important role in shaping energy policy in this area was played by the discovery of Shah Deniz giant field in 1999. It is one of the world's largest gas-condensate fields with over 1.2 trillion cubic meters of gas in place with considerable upside potential. S. Amirova-Mammadova, *Pipeline Politics and Natural Gas Supply from Azerbaijan to Europe. Challenges and Perspectives* (Wiesbaden, Springer, 2018), pp. 127-128.

<sup>35</sup> Commission of the European Communities (2008), *Second Strategic Energy Review. An EU Energy Security and Solidarity Action Plan*, p. 4, Available at: <https://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/PDF/?uri=CELEX:52008DC0781&from=en> (Accessed: 21.02.2019).

<sup>36</sup> S. Amirova-Mammadova, *op.cit.*, pp. 135-137.

<sup>37</sup> *Ibidem*, pag. 132.



Source: Bankwatch Network (no date), „Southern Gas Corridor”, Available on: <https://bankwatch.org/project/southern-gas-corridor-euro-caspian-mega-pipeline> (Accessed: 03.03.2019)

Currently, the Southern Gas Corridor means four projects: Shah Deniz 2, the Trans-Anatolian Pipeline and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline, the South Caucasus Pipeline (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum). At the end of 2018, implementation of these projects ranges from 82% to 100% (82,4 % TAP, 98.8 % TANAP, 99, 8 % SCP-X, 100 % SD2 Upstream<sup>38</sup>). The SCG is not completed, but it started its activity. For example, gas deliveries to Turkey (Eskisehir offtake station) through TANAP began on 30<sup>th</sup> June 2018, and TAP is on the right track with three quarters of the total of 878 km achieved. Emily Olson, BP’s Vice-President for Communications and External Affairs, Southern Corridor, stated on September 2018 that „Progress is being made and I am very confident that we will land this pipeline in Italy”<sup>39</sup>.

Years of work dedicated to the Southern Corridor have highlighted the importance of the European Union’s involvement in this project. The decisions taken by the producing and transit countries (Azerbaijan chose Europe as destination for its gas, it concluded an agreement with Turkey for transit through TANAP, the consortium Shah Deniz preferred TAP over Nabucco) have been politically, technically and financially sustained by the European Union. For example, in 2018 the European Investment Bank approved a EUR 1.5 billion loan for the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline<sup>40</sup>. Through this corridor, Azerbaijan supplies the European Union with 5% of its gas needs.

<sup>38</sup> Azernews (2019), „Current state of SGC projects disclosed”, Available at: [https://www.azernews.az/oil\\_and\\_gas/144347.html](https://www.azernews.az/oil_and_gas/144347.html), (Accessed: 23.02.2019).

<sup>39</sup> John M. Roberts (2018), „Europe’s Southern Gas Corridor: The Italian (Dis) connection”, Atlantic Council, p. 1, Available at: [https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Europe\\_s\\_Southern\\_Gas\\_Corridor\\_101018.pdf](https://www.atlanticcouncil.org/images/publications/Europe_s_Southern_Gas_Corridor_101018.pdf) (Accessed: 23.02.2019).

<sup>40</sup> Reuters (2018), „EIB approves 1.5 billion euro loan for TAP gas pipeline”, Available at: <https://uk.reuters.com/article/uk-energy/eib-approves-1-5-billion-euro-loan-for-tap-gas-pipeline-idUKKBN1FQ2DA> (Accessed: 23.02.2019).

### *Conclusions*

The global energy landscape is currently characterized by transformation and continuous evolution as a result of rising energy needs, growing environmental concerns, price volatility (for oil, for example) and increasingly advanced technologies. The 21st century also meant a switch to increased natural gas production and consumption on the backdrop of the industrialization of the economy, as well as emphasis on energy security concerns.

At least on the European policy agenda energy security has emerged as a key issue in the context of exhaustion of what resources and of dependence on energy imports, especially on Russian gas. In this complex scenario, the solution was to diversify the energy sources by developing new transport routes that would assure connection with resource-rich areas. It was the case of Caspian Sea and implicitly of Azerbaijan, which has become particularly important as a gas exporter with the discovery of the large Shah Deniz gas field in 1999 and the onset of gas production in 2006. Also in 2006 the European Union and Azerbaijan signed the first document that regulates the principles of energy cooperation between them, which would be followed by many others indicating directions for action in order to strengthen these relations.

The outcome was, in my view, an advantageous one for both sides: the European Union has achieved a very important energy partner with a strategic position and richness of natural resources, with a key role in bringing energy resources to the European market, and Azerbaijan has obtained support from all points of view for its development in the energy field. This is how the Southern Gas Corridor project, considered by the EU to be the “highest energy security priority” emerged. The question is the following: Will the Southern Corridor succeed in reducing dependence on Russian gas and ensure the diversification desired by the European Union? In the short term, the answer could be optimistic, but in the long run, Southern Gas Corridor would not “radically change the overall EU gas security of supply architecture, as it will basically represent less than 5% of the EU gas import requirements”<sup>41</sup>. That is why I believe that measures are needed to obtain additional volumes of gas. But what counts now is the successful finalization of the goals already set, as this project means access to one of the world’s richest natural gas regions, the diminishing of the monopoly held by the Russian Gazprom and the ability to cope with energy demand over the next decade.

<sup>41</sup> Natural Gas News (2015), „The Southern Gas Corridor And The Eu Gas Security Of Supply: What’s Next?, Available at: <https://www.naturalgasworld.com/southern-gas-corridor-and-eu-gas-security-of-supply-22688> (Accessed : 2.03.2019).

## Reading Diplomatic History of Azerbaijan: a neoclassical realist approach

*Ali İhsan KAHRAMAN* \*

### *Introduction*

On May 28<sup>th</sup>, 2018, the Republic of Azerbaijan celebrated the centenary of the establishment of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR). Attempts to draw parallels between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan increase the complexity and attractiveness of studies on Azerbaijan within divergent disciplines such as political science, international relations and history. Indeed, there was a huge disconnectedness in Azerbaijan's politics even though it has succeeded in protecting its own cultural identity while under the rule of the Soviet Union. Given that being under the political and economic umbrella of a different state and society for a long period engenders challenging conditions for the protection of cultural identity, these attempts become more interesting and more exciting for scholars in any social science field.

This article investigates how the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan can be compared through both similarity and differences as it relates to diplomatic relations. For this purpose, this article will use neoclassical realist approach which 'is a foreign policy theory'<sup>1</sup>. The reason behind the preference for neoclassical realism consists of the framework's ability to account for the criteria required for comparing the two eras and placing them in context in order to understand how Azerbaijan's regional relations are affected by its historical legacy. Because neoclassical realism analyzes foreign policy in light of a combinative perspective of the international system and domestic politics, this article suggests that this theoretical approach can give a comprehensive comparison between these two eras of Azerbaijani history. In this vein, the research question of this article relates to systemic pressures and Azerbaijan's responses to those pressures in both eras.

This article is organized as follows. Firstly, a theoretical background of neoclassical realism will be given in order to understand how it can shed light on the criteria required for comparing the two eras of Azerbaijani political history. In the second and third sections, the respective foreign policies of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic and the Republic of Azerbaijan will be investigated and analyzed with respect to pressures emanating from the international system. The main task of these sections will be to imply the theoretical background and to show similarities between these different states established by the same nation. The last section will offer concluding remarks in addition to a discussion on those similarities. The main argument of this paper is that Azerbaijani responses in different eras have shared a common objective, in order to take necessary precautions against pressures of international system.

### *Theoretical Background*

Neoclassical realism can be thought of as an approach that offers younger historians

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<sup>1</sup> Ramazan Gözen, Uluslararası ilişkiler teorileri, 2014.

a chance to come up with a theoretical background who cannot take their place in international relations theory which is swamped with the realist assumption of “das Primat der Aussenpolitik – Primacy of Foreign Policy”<sup>2</sup>. Those younger historians essentially try to fill the gap that show domestic politics have influences on foreign policy of states. Making critiques on the assumption of the primacy of foreign policy, many of them might not overcome the risk of completely taking the side of Innenpolitik which avoids impacts of the international system’s pressure on foreign policy decision making process. Therefore, according to Zakaria, finding the balance between InnenPolitik and realism should be the priority of international relations scholars<sup>3</sup>. Neoclassical realism assures its place by asking the following questions to which neorealism and liberalism cannot give satisfactory answers: ‘How do states, or more specifically the decision-makers and institutions that act on their behalf, assess international threats and opportunities? Who ultimately decides the range of acceptable and unacceptable foreign policy alternatives? To what extent, and under what conditions, can domestic actors bargain with state leaders and influence foreign or security policies?’<sup>4</sup> More specifically, Lobell and his colleagues defined the main question of neoclassical realism as ‘why, how and under what conditions the internal dynamics of states intervene between the leader’s assessment of international threats and opportunities and the actual diplomatic, military and foreign economic policies those leaders pursue’<sup>5</sup>. Neoclassical realism can also be understood as ‘the transmission belt’ between systemic explanations and domestic readings<sup>6</sup>.

For neoclassical realism, structure has dominance over domestic politics on foreign policy, while it ‘attempts to combine structural factors with domestic politics in order to explain foreign policy’; however, it cannot be completely independent of it in opposition to the assumption of neorealism<sup>7</sup>. Gideon Rose, who first used the term neoclassical realism as a variant of realism, emphasized this interdependency as following:

“Yet a theory of foreign policy limited to systemic factors alone is bound to be inaccurate much of the time, the neoclassical realists argue, which is why offensive realism is also misguided. To understand the way states interpret and respond to their external environment, they say, one must analyze how systemic pressures are translated through unit level intervening variables such as decision-makers’ perceptions and domestic state structure.”<sup>8</sup>

Therefore, foreign policy decisions of any given country can sometimes be explained through domestic politics. However, reasons for foreign policy decisions can be discovered by focusing on structural pressures because ‘the foreign policy decision makers determine

<sup>2</sup> Fareed Zakaria, review of *Realism and Domestic Politics: A Review Essay*, by Jack Snyder, *International Security* 17, no. 1 (1992): 178, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539162>.

<sup>3</sup> Zakaria, 178–79.

<sup>4</sup> Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro, eds., *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy* (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 1.

<sup>5</sup> Lobell, Ripsman, and Taliaferro, 4.

<sup>6</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup> Anders Wivel, “Explaining Why State X Made a Certain Move Last Tuesday: The Promise and Limitations of Realist Foreign Policy Analysis,” *Journal of International Relations and Development* 8, no. 4 (December 2005): 360, <https://doi.org/10.1057/palgrave.jird.1800064>.

<sup>8</sup> Gideon Rose, “Neoclassical Realism and Theories of Foreign Policy,” *World Politics* 51, no. 1 (1998): 152.

their preferences largely in accordance with international constraints and incentives<sup>9</sup>. By ‘seeking an explanation for variation in foreign policy of the same state over time or across different states facing similar external constraints’, it makes room for the scholars that are in the dilemma between *Innenpolitik* and *Primat der Aussenpolitik*<sup>10</sup>. Although neoclassical realists have been also distinct between two sides which are closer to *Innenpolitik* and *Aussenpolitik*, the simplicity of methodological application of structural pressures makes the side closer to *Aussenpolitik* more applicable among neoclassical realist studies. In fact, this discussion has emerged as a result of the traditional question in IR discipline on why great powers were in need of overexpansion and imperialist foreign policies; either because of *Innenpolitik* or *Aussenpolitik*. The neoclassical realist approach emerges as an approach that tries to combine the two. As Zakaria remarked, ‘a good explanation of foreign policy should not ignore domestic politics or national culture or individual decision-makers. But it must separate the effects of the various levels of international politics’<sup>11</sup>. As Lobell and his colleagues suggested, ‘neither a purely systemic theory of international outcomes, such as neorealist balance of power theory, nor a purely *Innenpolitik* theory of foreign policy, such as liberal or democratic peace theory, can explain why the George H. W. Bush and Clinton administrations sought to preserve and expand US influence in Europe and East Asia in the 1990s, despite the absence of a great power competitor (at least in the near term) and despite strong domestic pressure to reap the benefits of the so-called peace dividend following the Cold War’<sup>12</sup>.

As Wohlforth asserted, ‘neoclassical realism has the claim to capture more central causal relationships and is connected to a set of theories that have proven their utility in great many different instances’<sup>13</sup>. Utilization from different theories makes neoclassical realist theory more open to analytical eclecticism; and therefore, it is also appropriate to be coupled with another theory. In fact, neoclassical realism has emerged because of the lessons that it takes from the failure of classical realism to predict the future of international politics. According to Wohlforth, this failure results from the reluctance of scholars to undertake an empirical examination of the influence of power on policy. In order to overcome this reluctance, neoclassical realism applies ‘an amalgam of classical realism and hegemonic variant of neorealism coupled with a pragmatic empirical focus on decision makers’ capabilities assessments’<sup>14</sup>.

### *Systemic pressures and the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR)*

As the article suggests, employing a neoclassical realist approach to understanding the ADR’s foreign affairs requires an analysis of the position of the international system towards the ADR and the responses of its leaders to those pressures. To do this, firstly, this article

<sup>9</sup> Norrin Ripsman, “Neoclassical Realism and Domestic Interest Groups,” in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009).

<sup>10</sup> Jeffrey Taliaferro, Steven Lobell, and Norrin Ripsman, “Introduction: Neoclassical Realism, the State and Foreign Policy,” in *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, ed. Steven E. Lobell, Norrin M. Ripsman, and Jeffrey W. Taliaferro (Cambridge, UK ; New York: Cambridge University Press, 2009), 21.

<sup>11</sup> Zakaria, “Realism and Domestic Politics,” 197.

<sup>12</sup> Lobell, Ripsman, and Taliaferro, *Neoclassical Realism, the State, and Foreign Policy*, 2.

<sup>13</sup> William C. Wohlforth, “Realism and the End of the Cold War,” *International Security* 19, no. 3 (1994): 96, <https://doi.org/10.2307/2539080>.

<sup>14</sup> Wohlforth, 126.

examines the nature of regional politics in the Caucasus.

The nature of the international system in the South Caucasus between 1918 and 1920 can best be described as anarchic. The reasons for this are multifaceted in nature and result from divergent and conflicting great power interests in the South Caucasus between 1918 and 1920. Therefore, Karl Haushofer did include the Caucasus geography into ‘the region of military attacks bordered to continents’<sup>15</sup>. By following Haushofer, we can analyze the military dominance of Great Britain in the Caucasus as a precaution against Russian threat to get into the Mediterranean trade. Great Britain obtained the military dominance by adding the fourth ‘C’ (Canberra) to the other three ‘C’s which are Capetown, Cairo, and Calcutta). On the other hand, the Ottoman Empire sought to advance its Pan-Islamist policies under Abdulhamid II, followed by a Pan-Turkic approach under Enver Pasha’s leadership. However, the Ottoman Empire’s WWI German allies did not support the Ottoman pan-Islamist and pan-Turkic policies and expected the Ottomans to take appropriate precautions against the increasing influence of Great Britain over Northern Iran. On the other hand, military conflicts between Soviet troops, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan also made the closest land to those states. As a result of such conflicts between enemies and misunderstandings even between allies, it is very clear that an environment had been dominant in international politics in the Caucasus during the period of the ADR, supporting to the neoclassical realist assumption on the nature of the international system. The speech made by Georgian leader, Noy Jordiya, at a meeting of political organizations from all around the Caucasus shows us the environment suggestion was understood even by political leaders in that time. He said that the broken relations with Russia, following the Bolshevik Revolution, had presented two options before them: either to be independent or to fall under the chaotic environment<sup>16</sup>.

Perhaps the common argument on the interests of great powers in the region is based around Baku oil<sup>17</sup>. The importance of Baku oil reserves was addressed by Lloyd George, the incumbent Prime Minister of Britain. He said that if the German Empire could have benefited from Baku oil reserves, then ‘it had been ambiguous how much time WWI would last and anything could be said about the consequences of the war’, because ‘Baku oil reserves could meet most of the demand by German Industry’<sup>18</sup>. On the other hand, it was known that 83% of Russian oil reserves had been in the Absheron Peninsula. Therefore, Baku oil reserves had importance for the great powers in the Caucasus, namely the British Empire, the Russian Empire, the German Empire and the Ottoman Empire.

Another important conflict field for great powers centered on securing their respective colonial interests. For the British Empire, the importance of the Caucasus was in its functioning as a gateway to its Indian colony. For instance, according to Broadberry, Custodis and Gupta (2015), the fraction of Indian GDP in Britain’s economy decreased

<sup>15</sup> Pervin Darabadi, “XX. Asrın Başlarında Uluslararası Jeopolitik İlişkiler Sisteminde Güney Kafkasya,” in Kafkas İslam Ordusu ve Azerbaycan Halk Cumhuriyeti’nin oluşumu, ed. Mehmet Rıhtım and Mehman Süleymanov, 2012, 23.

<sup>16</sup> C.Hasanlı, Azerbaycan cumhuriyeti: Türkiye yardımından Rusya işgaline kadar (1918-1920) (Ankara: Azerbaycan Kültür Derneği, 1998), 35.

<sup>17</sup> Anar İsgenderli and Yusif Axundov, Realities of Azerbaijan 1917-1920, 2015, 144–46.

<sup>18</sup> Hasanlı, Azerbaycan cumhuriyeti, 27; Mustafa Çolak, “İttifaktan İhtialafa: Kafkasya Üzerinde Osmanlı-Alman Mücadelesi (1917-1918),” in Kafkas İslam Ordusu ve Azerbaycan Halk Cumhuriyeti’nin oluşumu, ed. Mehmet Rıhtım and Mehman Süleymanov, 2012, 141.

four times from 1600 until 1871<sup>19</sup>. Normally, it is unreasonable to directly link this kind of decrease in one economy to increase in another's. However, while considering the fact that India was the colony of Great Britain in that period, this linkage becomes more reasonable.

On the other hand, ways to reach the colonies of British Empire was also important for the Germans because of their desire to disrupt British power. Thereby, Germany could use the resources – through which Britain had obtained its own power – for its own sake. The Ottoman Empire held similar motivations regarding the British. If the transit routes to its colonies had been under threat for Britain, then the activities of British Empire in the Middle East could have been significantly disrupted and the security of the Ottoman Middle East could have been maintained.

In addition to Baku, Mosul and Kırkuk also had significant oil reserves. Therefore, even if Ottoman Empire could not acquire sovereignty or a protectorate over the Caucasus oil fields via the ADR, it was able to secure its Middle East oil fields by preventing the British Army from establishing itself in the Caucasus. The same delay tactics were also applied by the British against the Ottoman Army. This reason can be very clearly seen in the report edited by British General F.J. Moberly addressing attacks of British Army on Baku between 1914 and 1918. In that report, the presence of Ottoman forces in the Caucasus and Baku would relieve the British Army in Palestine and Iraq<sup>20</sup>.

The other conflictual environment was between the Ottoman Empire and Germany although they were allies in WWI. The reason behind the crisis was the Bolshevik Revolution. As the consequence of the revolution, the Russian threat to the Caucasus and Baku oil reserves had diminished and the German Empire had evaluated it as an opportunity to link itself directly to the region. Therefore, it wasn't obliged to the alliance with the Ottoman Empire which had been seen as the patron of Muslim people in the Caucasus. The German Empire had seen Georgians as its natural allies in the Caucasus because 'they were Christians and anti-Russian'<sup>21</sup>. However, Enver Pasha had imaginations of establishing a Turkic union in Central Asia and he also has seen the absence of Russian threat in the Caucasus as an opportunity to realize this dream. Therefore, the Bolshevik Revolution was seen by two allies as an opportunity to achieve divergent objectives in the Caucasus, thereby contributing to the failure of their WWI alliance.

Even though the ADR had been caught in the dilemma between great powers' struggles, the ADR had also tried to benefit from this environment in order to maintain its independence. Following the establishment of the Islamic Caucasus Army (ICA), which was the leading organization for independence, the leader of this organization was also recognized as the leader of the government of the ADR. Although the governing organization had been mostly military-based, the parliament of the ADR can be counted as one of the most democratic

<sup>19</sup> Stephen Broadberry, Johann Custodis, and Bishnupriya Gupta, "India and the Great Divergence: An Anglo-Indian Comparison of GDP per Capita, 1600–1871," *Explorations in Economic History* 55 (January 2015): 70, <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.eeh.2014.04.003>.

<sup>20</sup> Mehmet Rihtim, "İngilizlerin Bakü ve Hazar Denizine Hakim Olma Planları," in *Kafkas İslam Ordusu ve Azerbaycan Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin oluşumu*, ed. Mehmet Rihtim and Mehman Süleymanov, 2012, 448.

<sup>21</sup> Çolak, "İttifaktan İhtialafa: Kafkasya Üzerinde Osmanlı-Alman Mücadelesi (1917-1918)," 144.

parliaments in its era because all nations and minorities were represented<sup>22</sup>. The parliament, which was established by Georgian Mensheviks, the Musavat Party, Organizations of Dashnaksutyun and Right SR's has consisted of 11 Georgian Menshevik deputies, 10 deputies from Musavat Party, 9 from Dashnaks, 2 from the Muslim socialists, and 1 from the Bolsheviks and Unionists<sup>23</sup>. In accordance with this democratic structure in domestic politics, the main goal in international politics of the ADR was to secure its independence, as all newly established states have done. Therefore, its diplomatic approach consisted mainly of seeking to forge friendships through international agreements. By doing so, the ADR tried to acquire recognition of its independence by more states. Ultimately, the ADR was unsuccessful in sufficiently achieving its objectives. The reasons for this are manifold, of course. The political environment in the Caucasus had made it very hard to realize this goal. As neoclassical realism suggests, systemic pressures mostly dominate over domestic politics. In addition, the extent of the dominance of systemic pressures increases during wartime because great powers, which are the main drivers of international system, have increased power to shape international politics. Due to the rejection of great powers of ADR's independence recognition, the ADR's independence could not be officially recognized by the majority of states in the international system except a few, such as Turkey, despite promises for recognition.

The change in the situations of Bolsheviks and the US respectively can better exemplify this suggestion. On November 15<sup>th</sup> 1917, Soviet Bolsheviks had affirmed the Declaration of Rights of the Russian People one month following the Brest-Litovsk Peace Agreement between Soviet Russia and Germany. This declaration had been built over on principles. These principles were given as follows:<sup>24</sup>

1. The equality and sovereignty of the peoples of Russia.
2. The right of the peoples of Russia to free self-determination, even to the point of separation and the formation of an independent state.
3. The abolition of any and all national and national-religious privileges and disabilities.
4. The free development of national minorities and ethnic groups inhabiting the territory of Russia.

It is necessary to point out that this declaration was made by accepting the self-determination rights of people for their own administration. Moreover, it is a historical fact that this declaration setting forth the right of self-determination was made by the Bolsheviks before the US President Wilson articulated his principle of self-determination at the Paris Peace Conference in 1919. In 1920 however, in contradiction to the rights enshrined in the Brest-Litovsk Peace Agreement, Baku was occupied by Soviet Red Army forces. On the other hand, Resulzade couldn't get a sufficient reaction from President Wilson to his letter of support requesting assistance against the Soviet occupation. As the response of the ADR to

<sup>22</sup> Hasanlı, Azərbaycan cumhuriyeti, 2.

<sup>23</sup> Anar İskenderov, "Azərbaycan Halk Cumhuriyeti (1918-1920)," in Kafkas İslam Ordusu ve Azərbaycan Halk Cumhuriyeti'nin oluşumu, ed. Mehmet Rıhtım and Mehman Süleymanov, 2012, 41.

<sup>24</sup> Robert V. Daniels, ed., A Documentary History of Communism in Russia: From Lenin to Gorbachev (Hanover, NH: University of Vermont, Published by University Press of New England, 1993), 66–67.

these disinterest by Western states, Rezulzade stated that. In addition, Topcubashov, who was the president of Azerbaijani delegation to the Paris Peace Conference in 1919, told the Iranian government under the Shah that the ADR's independence would be also be in the interests of Persia.

In Conclusion to this section, the essential inference is that the diplomatic discourse of the ADR was usually prudent. It believed that the independence of the ADR could have been better secured by explaining to other states that the ADR's independence was also in their interests, thereby increasing recognition of the ADR's claims of independence.

### *Republic of Azerbaijan in 1990 against systemic pressures*

As a result of the collapse of the Soviet Union, in 1991 international systemic pressures recognized the Republic of Azerbaijan as a sovereign state with full sovereignty over its territory and natural resources. In this territory, the Republic of Azerbaijan has not witnessed the same degree of problems that its predecessor, the ADR, experienced. However, this situation is not a result of the differences between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan *per se*. The reasons behind this difference are mainly due to the changes in international system in association with the neoclassical realist perspective. The collapse of the Soviet Union essentially changed the fundamental dynamics of international system. Thereafter, the international system developed unipolar characteristics and caused the reconstruction of states and sub-states, which were in the Soviet-Socialist bloc. The Republic of Azerbaijan, and its establishment process, could not ignore the influences that this change brought about. As a result, there was a possibility that the Republic of Azerbaijan might follow some inconsistent, complex and unsustainable foreign policies during the period of transition. However, this article suggests – by drawing on the neoclassical realist tradition – that these inconsistencies did not result exclusively from government failures, but rather from ambiguities caused by the change in the international system and the expectations of the Republic of Azerbaijan. This section will reveal the reason behind this. Additionally, because the differences were created by the inconsistencies in international system, this section also seeks to show the similarities between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Firstly, the international system shifted dramatically from bipolarity to unipolarity. However, this does not entail that the nature of international system has changed, because unipolarity does not necessarily entail hegemony in which one country can constrain the rest of the world in the direction of its own interests. Without an absolute hegemony, the environment in international politics cannot be discounted. Therefore, unipolarity does not actually eliminate anarchy in the international system. As a result, the change in international system towards unipolarity does not entail the redundancy of neoclassical realism as a theoretical approach to understanding foreign policies of states. Therefore, this article continues its reading based upon neoclassical realist assumptions and suggests that the environment in international politics accounts for similarities between the diplomatic approaches of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan respectively. The rest of the section demonstrates these similarities. The first similarity can be shown in the perceptions of the leaders and the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Heydar Aliyev, the national leader, said during his oath taking ceremony on October 10<sup>th</sup> 1993, that the first foreign policy priority of his government must

be the reinforcement of the independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan by establishing friendly relations with willing states<sup>25</sup>. For the same reason, Resulzade had also emphasized the importance of independence. Though it may seem unreasonable to use this example of similarity, due to the assumption that all states wish to reinforce their independence, I argue that the details of establishment processes of new states say differently. For instance in 1912, Sun Yat-Sen established the Republic of China and mainly focused on wars with foreign countries which violated sovereignty rights of China Republic in its lands. However, Mao, the founder of People's Republic of China, prioritized forging friendships with its neighbors. Both founders have the same aim, the reinforcement of China's independence. However, they followed different approaches. Such a difference does not exist in the comparison between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan. It tells us that there is a strong linkage between leaders' perceptions of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan, although they operated in different times.

Another similarity between these two states in terms of foreign policy is the level of prudence. Even though Russia, the US, France, Germany, Britain and Iran have applied sanctions against the Republic of Azerbaijan, it has succeeded in improving cooperative relations in the area of security<sup>26</sup>. The motivation to improve cooperative relations holds similarities with the ADR's motivation in seeking support for its recognition in the international arena. On the other hand, this article asserts that the priority of the Republic of Azerbaijan foreign policy to balance the interests of its stronger neighbors – Iran, Russia and Turkey – has some failures. To be clearer, this suggestion may be true, but it is articulated with the wrong conceptual tools. What the Republic of Azerbaijan has done was not to balance the interests of its stronger neighbors, but rather to benefit from international systemic pressures on those countries. Therefore, Azerbaijan could not balance the interests of those states in bilateral relations with them, particularly as it relates to its oil reserves. However, it has the potential to steer those countries towards its own interests or to prevent those countries from forcing Azerbaijan to do what they want, at least proportionately. The difference between the two concepts of “balance the interests” and “benefitting from international systemic pressures” is important for this article. For comparison and to make a consolidation between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan, we need a common theoretical approach that can illuminate the commonalities of the two eras despite of differences in their particular characteristics. Because a neoclassical realist reading focuses on the effects of international systemic pressures on foreign policy making, it gives us the opportunity to bring different states in different times into the same conceptual framework. Yet, balancing interests cannot offer the same opportunity because the ADR did not have the capability to establish a balance between states while these states did not recognize it and while they were also at war with each other.

<sup>25</sup> “Haydar Aliyev: ‘Azerbaycan’ın Bağımsızlığı Ebedidir” (Research Center for the Heritage of Heydar Aliyev), accessed February 5, 2019, [http://aliyevheritage.org/book-view/files/pdf/Heyder\\_Eliyev:\\_Azerbaycan%C4%B1n\\_dovlet\\_musteqilliyi\\_ebedidir.pdf](http://aliyevheritage.org/book-view/files/pdf/Heyder_Eliyev:_Azerbaycan%C4%B1n_dovlet_musteqilliyi_ebedidir.pdf).

<sup>26</sup> Ali Hasanov, *Azerbaycan cumhuriyeti'nin ulusal kalkınma ve güvenlik politikası* (İstanbul: Ötüken Neşriyat, 2013), 174.

### *Concluding Remarks*

Linkages between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan have become more popular among politicians and scholars. The centenary of the ADR shows us also that the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan is seeking ways to illuminate those linkages. Because there is a significant historical gap between two states and the factor of decades of Soviet dominance, it has become more difficult to find the similar characteristics between these two different states. This article argues that the emphasis on domestic characteristics of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan creates this difficulty. However, Hasanlı suggested that a new conceptual framework is needed in order to properly investigate these linkages<sup>27</sup>. If we look to the characteristics of the international system and changes in it, then it becomes easier to find similarities between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan. To do this, this article suggests that neoclassical realism gives us a sufficient conceptual framework and applies it to the case of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan. Because of neoclassical realism's focus on the interrelation between domestic and international politics, it is easier to determine the similar conditions of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan and to make a more efficient comparison. As the result of the analysis, this article suggests that the linkages between the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan could be found by understanding the nature of international system surrounding them, perceptions of their leaders and their prudential diplomatic discourse. On the other hand, these suggestions can be said to only represent a starting point. The issue ultimately requires a deeper analysis, one that can benefit from relevant documentary evidence in order to bring out more precise linkages. Further studies on this issue should thus pay attention to a methodological and theoretical application of neoclassical realism in the comparison of the ADR and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

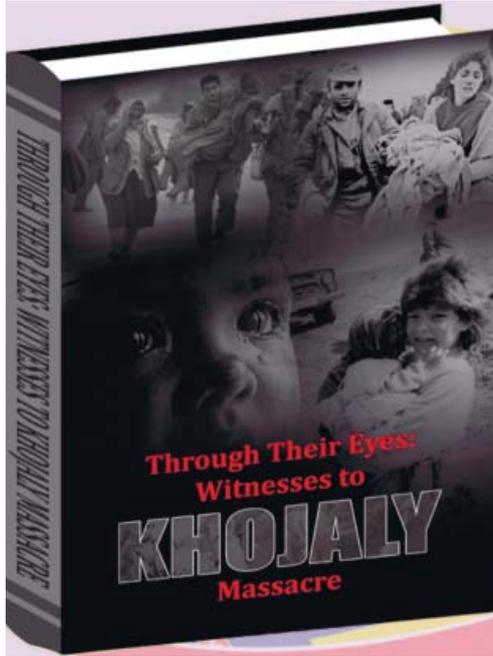
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<sup>27</sup> Hasanlı, Azərbaycan cumhuriyeti, 4.

## NEW PUBLICATIONS

## “THROUGH THEIR EYES: WITNESSES TO KHOJALY MASSACRE”

Ali HASANOV



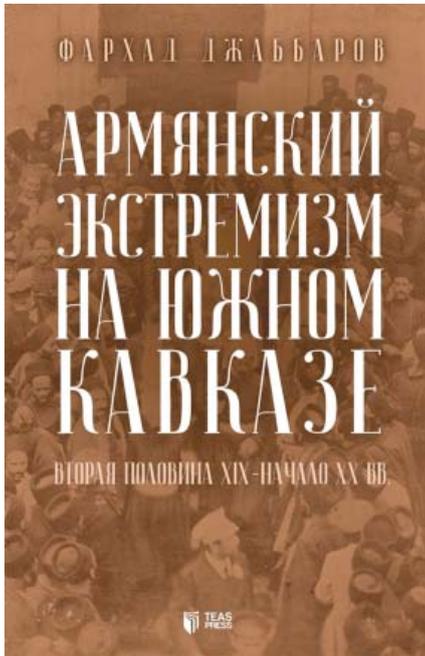
The Azerbaijan State Translation Centre (AzSTC) has published the book “Through Their Eyes: Witnesses to Khojaly Massacre” in English and “Ходжалы глазами очевидцев” in Russian devoted to the 27<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Khojaly genocide.

The book reflects the barbarism and Armenian vandalism in Khojaly through the eyes of witnesses to Khojaly massacre. AzSTC’s aim is to exhibit this book at international book fairs and other events, and to distribute it among related international organizations.

The author of the idea is Ali Hasanov, an assistant to the President for Public and Political Issues, and the designer of the book is Ikhtiyar Huseynli.

## «АРМЯНСКИЙ ЭКСТРЕМИЗМ НА ЮЖНОМ КАВКАЗЕ»

Фархад ДЖАББАРОВ



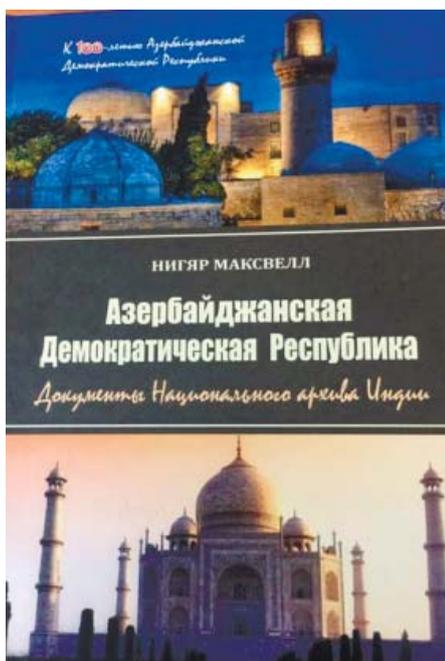
Монография Фархада Джаббарова представляет большой интерес, как первое комплексное научное исследование национальной политики Российской империи и межнациональных отношений на Южном Кавказе, армяно-азербайджанского конфликта 1905-1906 гг.

На основе фактов, изложенных в книге, представлены новые сведения о масштабах армянского террора в начале XX в., о тех лишениях, которым подверглось мусульманское население, позиции правительственных кругов, о национальной борьбе азербайджанских тюрков, шагах, предпринятых для достижения национального единства.

Автор попытался отойти от ранее сформировавшихся штампов и изложить проблему с новых позиций. Собранные автором материалы исследования и представленные в монографии выводы представляются вполне обоснованными и заслуживающими внимания научного сообщества, в том числе российского.

## «АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНСКАЯ ДЕМОКРАТИЧЕСКАЯ РЕСПУБЛИКА: ДОКУМЕНТЫ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОГО АРХИВА ИНДИИ»

Нигяр МАКСВЕЛЛ



В книге, автором которого является Нигяр Максвелл, собраны неопубликованные до сих пор документы Национального архива Индии, которые проливают свет на еще неизведанные страницы истории Азербайджанской Демократической Республики.

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