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RƏSMİ XRONİKA – OFFICIAL CHRONICLE – ОФИЦИАЛ ХРОНИКА



DIPLOMATIC ACTIVITY OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, H.E. Mr. ILHAM ALIYEV IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2017

FOREIGN VISITS OF THE PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN H.E. MR. ILHAM ALIYEV IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2017

WORKING VISIT TO THE SWISS CONFEDERATION

16 – 19 January 2017

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with President of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) Suma Chakrabarti
- Meeting with global managing partner of McKinsey Dominic Barton
- Meeting with President of Europe Selling & Market Operations at Procter & Gamble Gary A. Coombe
- Meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Kingdom of Norway Borge Brende
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of SUEZ Environnement Company Jean-Louis Chaussade
- Meeting with President of the Swiss Confederation Doris Leuthard
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of BP Robert Dudley
- Meeting with Prime Minister, Minister of State of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel
- Meeting with managing director of VPS Healthcare of the United Arab Emirates Shamsheer Vayalil
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of LafargeHolcim Eric Olsen
- Meeting with Executive Chairman of CISCO John Chambers
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer and co-founder of Palantir Technologies Alex Karp

- Meeting with Minister of Energy, Industry and Mineral Resources of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Khalid Al-Falih
- Meeting with Executive Chairman of the World Economic Forum Klaus Schwab
- Meeting with European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maros Sefcovic
- Meeting with president of Russian LUKOIL company Vahid Alakbarov
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of Statoil Eldar Saetre
- Meeting with President of Ukraine Petro Poroshenko
- Meeting with head of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government Masoud Barzani
- Meeting with corporate vice president of Worldwide Public Sector at Microsoft Toni Townes-Whitley

PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV ATTENDED INTERACTIVE SESSION "THE SILK ROAD EFFECT"

19 January 2017, Davos

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev attended the interactive session "The Silk Road Effect" as part of the World Economic Forum in Davos.

President Ilham Aliyev addressed the session and responded to questions.

Speakers at the event also included Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili, President of Mongolia Tsakhiagiin Elbegdorj and representatives of other countries.

The moderator of the session asked the participants about how political and infrastructure investments into a modern Silk Road are affecting economic growth and harmonization across Asia and Europe.

President Ilham Aliyev: Definitely when we are talking about the Silk Road we should have a broader picture about this initiative. We will not be successful only by investing in transportation infrastructure, if we don't have a reliable political relationship in the region. Azerbaijan invested directly in the reconstruction of our segment of the Silk Road, and also supported the project politically by launching initiatives that lead to regional cooperation. When we are talking about regional cooperation it's very broad because it covers political, economic, cultural and other sectors. Therefore, our intention always was to initiate the projects and to participate in them, which will bring benefits to countries, to peoples, which will increase predictability, stability in the region and create equal opportunities for all the people to live in our region. Therefore, Azerbaijan has always played a very active role in the reconstruction of our segment of the Silk Road and hopefully this year together with our partners in Georgia and Turkey we will complete a very important part of

the Silk Road – connection between Baku, Tbilisi and Kars – in three countries, which will allow us to enjoy the benefits of this project for many years to come. This project will shorten the route from China to Europe from existing 30-35 days to 14 days. This will be the shortest route, but of course, not the cheapest. Now we are working together with our partners in order to unify the tariffs so that we can make this route also very attractive from a commercial point of view. And so far the development in this direction has been going on very successfully and as soon as this project is complete, we will enjoy the big movement of cargo. At the same time we are investing in sea port infrastructure. We are now building the biggest sea port in the Caspian, which will be handling more than 25 million tons of cargo every year, and, of course, as you correctly mentioned, this route crosses also the Caspian Sea. Therefore, there should be enough transportation infrastructure, ports, vessels, tankers in order to provide sustainable development of this project.

The moderator then asked about the role of China and economic diplomacy in the realization of the Silk Road project.

President Ilham Aliyev: I can tell you that we have already started the preparatory work and today's situation shows that we did a right thing because now we are very close to the completion of this missing segment and at the same time it is correlated with the Chinese vision for "one bridge, one road". We have good contacts with China. Actually Silk Road already is working and testing. Last year we had the first container testing train starting from China across Central Asia, Caspian, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Europe. Therefore, we are now looking into how to make this road very attractive for suppliers. And at the same time this project, as I said before, was not only about investments and the transportation infrastructure, though it's vital. It also will create interdependence. And interdependence strengthens the friendship. We are lucky that all the countries, which are now situated on the Silk Road, have good working relations with each other. But this interdependence will strengthen that further. This will provide a very unique form of cooperation of different countries with different political agenda, different culture, religion, history. I think this is the new model of the world. We in Azerbaijan invest a lot in issues related to intercultural dialogue. For instance, last year was announced a year of multiculturalism in Azerbaijan, and this year is announced a year of Islamic Solidarity. We are one of the few countries, which is a member of the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We are situated just between Europe and Asia, so this geographical location, our historical heritage, and our political agenda help a lot in order to bring this project together. Of course, we will support any other potential initiatives related to that. We are now working on a bilateral level with partner countries in order to attract more cargo in this direction. And not only those countries, which are situated directly on the Silk Road, but those that are situated close to that road can use this opportunity.



By the way, Azerbaijan is also working on another project, which is called North-South and will connect India, Iran, Azerbaijan, Russia, Northern Europe and the Middle East. So our segment of this project is already complete. Hopefully within coming two years this will open another transportation route,

which will be also integrated into the Silk Road.

The moderator then asked the Azerbaijani President to share his vision for a digital connectivity for the Silk Road project.

President Ilham Aliyev: We are working on that. Actually, ICT sector is one of the priorities for Azerbaijan and we are investing in developing this sector. More than 75 per cent of our population is internet users. We have a state-financed program to bring broadband internet to every village. Of course, we are also working on issues related to cyber security. We have not yet been a target of attacks. But the more a country develops, the more it is at risk.

There is also one project, which is called TASIM. This is a communication line, which actually goes the same corridor as the Silk Road. Actually the construction of these corridors is interconnected. For instance, we were talking now about energy resources. Energy resources of Azerbaijan played an important role in the restoration of the Silk Road because when we launched this idea in front of our partner countries the biggest problem was lack of financing. We reached out to several financial institutions, but they were not so enthusiastic. So what we did. We used the money we earned from energy resources and started to invest and provided financial assistance to our partners. And if you look at the energy corridor that today connects Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey, which consists of oil and gas pipelines, you will see that Silk Road is the same corridor. If not for those energy projects, probably we would not have started the construction of the railroad connection. Therefore, all these corridors are connected.

Today we already created a new corridor for export of electric energy from Azerbaijan and from Georgia to Turkey. We connected our electric lines. So one brings another one. We are now exporting electricity, exporting gas, exporting oil, building the railroad and, of course, will continue to invest in providing digital support for these projects. As it was correctly mentioned it will increase efficiency and bring more benefits.

Representative of the University of Hong Kong Peter Watson`s question was

about the use of labor force in global projects and the movement of people through the Silk Road.

President Ilham Aliyev: As far as our country is concerned we have very positive demographic dynamics. Our population has grown more than two million people since the restoration of independence in 1991. Therefore, we don't have this problem of inviting foreign labor force. But with respect to the question about movement of the people I think that will also be very good for our countries. These projects will also play an important role in increasing the number of tourists, and I think the countries should also have form of cooperation in order to attract more tourists. Maybe they should think about some joint touristic destinations program visiting several countries. Just recently Azerbaijan launched a new project of electronic visa system. Now everyone in the world, who wants to visit Azerbaijan, can get an electronic visa within three days just not leaving his house or office, and come to visit the country. So all these issues are inter-connected. As I said before, the Silk Road will unite not only companies, countries, but peoples. And that will make our region more stable.

Executive Director of Greenpeace International Jennifer Morgan asked the participants to highlight environmental issues.

President Ilham Aliyev: We have always treated the issues relating to environment with big concern and big attention. I can remind you of the time when we were constructing the major oil pipeline from Azerbaijan through Georgia to Turkish Mediterranean. At that time environmental NGOs were very actively involved in monitoring the situation. And a lot of measures have been taken in order to protect environment for birds and animals. So everything was done on the highest possible level.

Azerbaijan as a country, which suffered from an ecological disaster, now invests a lot in clean energy. We invest in hydro energy, in solar, in wind energy at the same time, petroleum operations in Azerbaijan, especially in our sector of the Caspian Sea, are being done in full compliance with international standards. Azerbaijan, Baku is the place where the first oil in the world was produced in 1847. At that time, and also through the most part of the 20th century ecological issues were not a priority. Therefore, when we became independent we found ourselves in very difficult situation of pollution, especially in Absheron peninsula, Caspian Sea. We had to spend hundreds of millions of dollars and still continue doing so to clean those territories. Of course, we have been very careful with respect to environmental protection. Of course, we can achieve these targets only in close cooperation because we share the same sky, we share the same air, we drink the same water. Therefore, I think, close monitoring of the leading environmental NGOs is important.

The moderator's last question was about what is needed in order to attract private sector capital to implement projects.

President Ilham Aliyev: In Azerbaijan, all the major transportation infrastructure projects were financed by the state budget and the State Oil Fund because the private sector, first of all, did not have sufficient money to invest, and secondly, this was strategic investment, long term investment. They would generate wealth and return investments for many years. Therefore, whether it is a railroad infrastructure, Caspian shipping, airlines, highways, Silk Road, everything is done by the state-provided money. But this creates an opportunity for the private sector.

I mentioned the construction of the new sea port in Baku. We already have several thousands of hectares of land as a free zone, just next door to that sea port. And all the private companies, local and foreign, are invited to participate and to start manufacture. At the same time, we create infrastructure to establish special industrial zones in different parts of Azerbaijan, and the private sector already comes as investor. When they have water, gas, electricity, roads, railroads, after that they come. So we tried to create better conditions for the private sector and not to put a financial burden, which is too difficult for them, but to stimulate the private sector by creating infrastructure.

WORKING VISIT TO THE KINGDOM OF BELGIUM

5 – 6 February 2017

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with former president of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Rene van der Linden
- Meeting with High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, Vice-President of the European Commission Federica Mogherini
- Meeting with King Philippe of Belgium
- Meeting with European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maros Sefcovic
- Meeting with President of the European Council Donald Tusk
- Meeting with President of the European Commission Jean Claude Juncker

**JOINT PRESS STATEMENTS BY PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND PRESIDENT OF EUROPEAN
COUNCIL DONALD TUSK**

6 February 2017, Brussels

Statement of President Ilham Aliyev

Thank you. First of all, Mr. President, thank you for invitation, I am very glad to visit you and have an opportunity to discuss important issues of our cooperation. I remember your very successful visit to Azerbaijan in 2015. Where we discussed the prospects for cooperation and I am very glad that tomorrow as you said we start negotiations on the new agreement. Cooperation between us is very fruitful, very sincere and with a big potential we have a very active political dialogue, we meet regularly and discuss important issues of political development, political reforms in our country. We are committed to a continuation of democratic reforms in Azerbaijan, in order to provide better opportunities for all the citizens of our country.



Of course, energy cooperation is an important part of our cooperation. We successfully cooperate on the promotion of the Southern Gas Corridor Project which is one of the biggest infrastructure projects now implemented in Europe, and the project which will need, already needs more than 40 billion dollars of investments. Southern Gas Corridor Project is a project of energy security and energy diversification, and when I am saying diversification, I mean not only routes but also sources. Azerbaijan with its

huge gas deposits is a new, alternative source for a natural gas for European market and I informed Mr. President that the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor, all the four segments of the project is moving successfully, and hopefully with additional efforts we will speed up the implementation of this project.

As Mr. President said, Europe is our main investor, and Azerbaijan created a very good investment climate, more than 200 billion dollars were invested to our economy since restoration of our independence, 25 years ago and, also Europe is our main trading partner, we supply many European countries with oil, and hopefully very soon we will supply them with natural gas.

We discussed the issues of resolution of Armenian-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. I, once again, mentioned that for many years our lands are under occupation, Armenia occupied almost 20 percent of the territory of Azerbaijan, violated all the humanitarian norms, norms of international law, and actually does not implement four resolutions of United Nations Security Council, adopted in the beginning of 1990ies and demanding immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Azerbaijani territories. Unfortunately, occupation lasts for more than twenty years, and this occupation cannot be justified. I am very grateful to Mr. President, that in his comments he also once again expressed support to the territorial integrity of our country. We also discussed today the future potential cooperation in the area of transportation, which could be important project, which will be attractive for countries of Eastern Partnership and European countries, and Azerbaijan invested largely to the creation of the new railroad connection in the region. Hopefully this year, the new route connecting Asia with Europe will be in operation which will shorten the time, almost two times from moving cargos from Europe to Asia, and in opposite direction.

Another important part of our cooperation is intercultural dialogue. I am grateful to Mr. President for mentioning that Azerbaijan largely invests in the dialogue between civilizations, cultures. We are country which is a member of the Council of Europe and Islamic Cooperation Organizations at the same time, and we are natural geographical and cultural bridge between civilizations. Investments of Azerbaijan in human capital, in interface dialogue, today bring good results.

Also, I'd like to mention that we have good experience in cooperation with the member states of European Union, with nine of them with one third of the member states we already have documents signed or adopted on strategic partnership. This is a good basis for future agreement between EU and Azerbaijan, and today it's a remarkable day, in the history of our cooperation, because we are opening the new chapter in our cooperation. I wish success to negotiators and hope that they will not lose time, start immediately, tomorrow and soon we will present a document which will determine strategic cooperation between us for many years to come. Thank you very much.

WORKING VISIT TO THE FEDERAL REPUBLIC OF GERMANY

16 – 18 February 2017

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer of MAN SE company Joachim Drees
- Meeting with Mayor of Kiev, leader of the Ukrainian Democratic Alliance for Reform (UDAR) Vitali Klitschko
- Meeting with President of the Republic of Croatia Kolinda Grabar-Kitarovic
- Meeting with Defense Minister of the State of Israel Avigdor Lieberman
- Meeting with Chairman and CEO of Kaspersky Lab Eugene Kaspersky
- Meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan Mohammad Ashraf Ghani
- Meeting with Prime Minister of the Republic of Turkey Binali Yildirim
- Meeting with Chief Executive Officer and General Manager of Leonardo company Mauro Moretti
- Meeting with the United Nations Secretary-General Antonio Guterres

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED ROUNDTABLE OF MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE**

17 February 2017, Munich

Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

Thank you very much. First of all, I would like to express gratitude to Ambassador Ischinger for invitation. It is a pleasure to participate at such an important global event like Munich Security Conference. Of course, energy security cannot be separated from countries' national security. From this point of view, Azerbaijan plays its important role in providing energy security for the neighborhood, and now, with respect to the implementation of the mega gas delivery project will play an important role for European energy security.

Of course, talking about today's role of Azerbaijan and our contribution to energy security of our region and Europe, we should go back to the beginning of energy strategy of Azerbaijan, to the mid-1990s when a young, independent country, only a three years old, with a lot of difficulties, internal and external, with million people homeless as a result of Armenian occupation, for the first time invited the major energy companies of the world to the Caspian Sea. That was a historic move and decision, which changed the situation not only in Azerbaijan, but in the region and actually now changed the energy map of the region. We managed to attract the investment to the country which just was a year ago in the situation of civil war, occupation, had million refugees, and without any means for successful

development. At that time, investments in our oil reserve was the only way how we could strengthen our independence and overcome difficulties. Therefore, middle of the 1990s was important for us. We attracted investments, we started to produce together with major energy companies huge oil fields of Azerbaijan and built a multiple pipeline system to transport our oil. And today we have seven pipelines – three oil pipelines, four gas pipelines to all the directions. Therefore, the first target was to provide energy security for ourselves and to be able to extract enormous oil and gas reserves to provide our interests, and to improve living standards of our people. At a later stage, this project transformed into regional cooperation project when the pipelines were built. Oil pipelines today connect Azerbaijan with the Black Sea and Mediterranean and provide also energy security for those countries, which help us to transport these energy reserves.



Later we became a transitor for oil and oil products delivery from the Eastern shores of the Caspian. So Azerbaijan is playing an important role in oil transportation through different means, through railroad, and through oil pipelines. Therefore, we are helping our partners on the Eastern shores of the Caspian to be able also to diversify their supply routes. Diversification actually, I

think, is the main word when we talk about energy security. And usually when we talk about diversification we mean diversification for consumers. We understand that. But we also mean diversification for producers, especially, when these producers are landlocked as Azerbaijan, when they don't have access to open seas.

By the way, some of the countries in Europe have about 30-40 percent of their oil from Azerbaijan. Therefore, today as a reliable oil producer and supplier, and also as a reliable transit country, Azerbaijan already established itself in the region as a partner that others can rely on.

Of course, today, together with a broader number of countries, companies and support of European Commission we implement the Southern Gas Corridor project, a project generated by the projects, which we started to implement in the 1990s. As soon as we made a huge discovery of the gas deposits in Azerbaijan the decision was made to transport it to the international markets. Now the Southern Gas Corridor is, as far as I know, the biggest infrastructure project in Europe. Its total cost is more than 40 billion dollars. It involves seven countries at this stage, and at least three countries in the coming year will join the project, which is supported by European Commission.

I just recently returned from Brussels and with Mr. Sefcovic, and also with President of European Council and European Commission we discussed this important project. We have a memorandum signed between European Commission and Azerbaijan on strategic partnership in energy. The Southern Gas Corridor is already a reality. It is an integrated pipeline system of three different pipelines connecting Azerbaijan with European markets, and connecting Azerbaijan with the countries on route to European markets. This project created an absolutely new regional cooperation format where there are countries of the Caucasus – Georgia and Azerbaijan and Turkey, and then countries of European Union like Greece, Bulgaria and Italy and also Albania as a candidate. So it is not easy to provide interests of all these players. For this reason, together with European Commission we launched three years ago a format, which is called the Consultative Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor, which already twice gathered in Baku. And the third meeting is scheduled with the presidency of Mr Sefcovic on the 23rd of February. There are important achievements. I can tell you that implementation of one of the main segments of the Southern Gas Corridor – Trans-Anatolian Pipeline – is already around 65 percent complete. Another segment, which is called South-Caucasus pipeline is close to 80 percent. And implementation the Trans-Adriatic Pipeline, which is called TAP, is around 34-35 percent. The development of the Shahdeniz Gas field, which is the biggest or one of the biggest fields in the world, is already 90 percent done. Our target is to deliver first new gas from Azerbaijan to the markets next year, and if there are no artificial delays in some of the partner countries, to complete this project by 2020.

Azerbaijan is a shareholder of all the four segments of the Southern Gas Corridor. Azerbaijan is an investor. We also raise money from the World Bank, from international financial institutions, Asian Development Bank, Asian Infrastructure Bank. We expect funds from EBRD, from EIB. So it's a really broad financial, infrastructure, technical, energy project, which was initiated by our country, and we are proud of that. Of course, the new format of cooperation between these countries creates absolutely new spirit of cooperation in the region. It creates interconnections, interdependence, predictability, reliability and partnership. So after the completion of the project the role of Azerbaijan as a reliable new and the only new source of natural gas for Europe will definitely grow and our relations with the European institutions will strengthen.

Thank you.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED "THE FAULT LINES OF EURASIA" PANEL DISCUSSION
AT THE MUNICH SECURITY CONFERENCE**

18 February 2017, Munich



On February 18, 2017 President Ilham Aliyev attended "The Fault Lines of Eurasia" panel discussion at the Munich Security Conference.

Azerbaijan's first lady Mehriban Aliyeva and vice president of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Leyla Aliyeva also attended the event.

The panel discussion was moderated by President and Founder of Eurasia Group Ian Bremmer.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: It is a pleasure to introduce you to an extremely distinguished group. Everyone here knows why they are here. The Munich Security Conference has been particularly replete with uncertainties and question marks. Eurasia is one of our more stable regions. And that has not always been the case.

There are a couple of points that I would like to raise just to start before introducing our panelists. If I look at Eurasia today, I am struck in some way about how the region looks so little bit like what the rest of the world might look like in the future. Number one – countries are generally minding their own business. There is very little ideological interference in each other's affairs. You don't see Kazakhstan telling Russia how to reform. You don't see Azerbaijan telling Georgia what to do internally. You also see Russia and China co-existing side by side, and sometimes even working together hand in hand, supporting an alternative to the Western order such as Shanghai Cooperation Organization. And finally in terms of globalization, which is very interesting, you see supply chains that aren't global, but are transnational working along a more bespoke hub model rather than a top-down globalization model, particularly "One Belt, One Road".

So the question of to what extent Eurasia represents the way the world is going to look increasingly in the future for good and for bad, I think, is an interesting one. But, of course, there are also some risks. But while countries aren't meddling in each other's affairs ideologically, they do clash. That is clear in terms of Russia-Ukraine. That is clear in terms of Uzbekistan and some of its neighbors. And more importantly the question of the long-term sustainability of Russia-China relationship.

And then finally you have the question of political sustainability long-term given rising populism, low oil prices, ISIS, terrorism, radicalism. To what extent are we going to have sustainability questions politically in Eurasia as well? So, Eurasia raises some key questions about the future of the global order in terms of security, in terms of trade, and in terms of political mandate.

I am delighted that in that context we have a truly outstanding panel that is pretty unique here at the Munich Security Conference. We have the President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev. We have the President of the Republic of Estonia, Kersti Kaljulaid. We have the Prime Minister of Georgia Giorgi Kvirikashvili. We have the chairman of the Senate of the Kazakh parliament, the former prime minister Kassym-Jomart Tokayev. And we also have the former Prime Minister of Ukraine and now head of the Narodniy Front political party, Arseny Yatsenyuk. I also see a lot of decision makers in the region in the audience. And I am looking forward to getting to all of you.

So with that to talk about their views, some initial interventions on the fault lines in Eurasia and the prospective on where the region is heading in this global context let me first go to Mr President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: Azerbaijan is situated between Asia and Europe. And our geographical location actually determines the geopolitical situation in our region. Azerbaijan for centuries was a country, area, where civilizations met and today, we preserve our historical heritage. We are proud to become one of the world's centers of multiculturalism. Geographical location, at the same time, good relations with the neighbors allowed us to become a very reliable partner in the region, which introduces initiatives, which serve the best benefit of the peoples who live in our region.

Azerbaijan is a reliable partner on international arena. We are a young country. Last year we celebrated 25th anniversary of restoration of our independence. And during this short period of time, I think, today in the world Azerbaijan is a country, which is respected. And the best sign of that was several years ago demonstrated in the United Nations when Azerbaijan was elected with the support of 155 countries as a non-permanent member of United Nations Security Council. So, that was a real appreciation of the absolute majority of international community of our activity. That was a sign of trust and respect.

We transformed our economy from planned economy to market economy through implementing reforms. Today, the share of market economy is more than 80 percent in our GDP. Azerbaijan introduced a new format of regional cooperation with our neighbors. At the same time, energy and transportation projects, which we initiated

more than twenty years ago, today bring good results not only to us, but also to the region. The issues of energy security today cannot be separated from the issues of national security. Our policy is aimed at strengthening cooperation first of all with our neighbors, at the same time, with Muslim world, we are part of the Muslim world, and with Europe. And we already started just recently negotiations with European Union on the new agreement, which will cover many areas of cooperation.

We are one of the very few countries, which is a member of Islamic Cooperation Organization and Council of Europe at the same time. In 2015, we organized the first inaugural European Games. This year we will host Islamic Solidarity Games. So this actually shows our intentions. And we contribute a lot to the dialogue of civilizations and cultures.

Among the concerns we are facing the biggest one is continued occupation by Armenia of the territory of Azerbaijan, which resulted in ethnic cleansing and occupation of twenty percent of our territory by Armenia. United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions demanding withdrawal – immediate and unconditional – of Armenian troops from our territories. They remain on paper for more than twenty years. Settlement of all the conflicts must be based on the same principle, on the same approach. Territorial integrity of every country must be respected, it cannot be violated, and internationally recognized boundaries cannot be changed by force. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan is the biggest threat also to the region. And our constructive policy is aimed at the soonest, peaceful resolution of the conflict based on the resolutions of Security Council of United Nations and other important organizations.

Now, I will conclude because I was told that for initial presentation we have five minutes. Later, of course, with pleasure I will answer your questions.

Thank you.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you very much Sir. Let's stick in the region and move to Georgia. Prime Minister Kvirikashvili, please.

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili: Thank you. Thank you for this opportunity. Well, let me start with the challenges facing the European Union. We are here to discuss the security issues of the Eurasian continent in general. And the challenges are different, multi-dimensional. We have hot conflicts, we have frozen conflicts. And at this backdrop, stability of small countries is extremely important. This is why I would like to bring Georgia's case as a country, which strives to be a member of European family and Euro-Atlantic community, a country, which is building stable future despite all the challenges. And the challenges are quite serious – Georgia's territorial

integrity is violated. Two of our historic territories are occupied by Russia. But even at this backdrop, we try to stay consistent, first of all, with our foreign policy goals and also constructive to prepare for a long-term solution of our problems.

Georgia signed Association Agreement very recently with the European Union, and part of that agreement is deep and comprehensive free trade area agreement. Our integration into the NATO structures is increasing. We are part of peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, one of the biggest contributors. We are participating in Central Africa peacekeeping operations with the European Union and we are becoming step-by-step, gradually part of European order. This is not a loud word because Georgia is building a system, which is closely in line with European standards.

But regional cooperation remains one of the cornerstones of stability in the South Caucasus. And there we have excellent regional projects, linking Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey through the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. We have new opportunities arising from the Silk Road Economic Belt “One Belt, One Road” initiative linking Europe and Asia.

And I should say that Georgia is the Christian country on the most eastern flank of the European Union and Europe. We are a European country historically and we are a country, which has free trade agreements with all of our neighbors, with the European Union. And we recently finalized free trade negotiations with China.

So we are a country with 3.8 million population having free economy, open economy. Just several days ago a heritage foundation published new rankings and Georgia is 13th freest economy in the world. We are number 16 in doing business ranking according to World Bank. We have very strong positions in democracy rankings and we step by step begin improving to our Association Agreement guidelines, which we have.

The most important thing is that our foreign policy aspirations are not only foreign policy. This is something that defines our internal reform agenda. And internal reform agenda is quite extensive. We set education as number one priority for the country, matching the gaps between demand and supply of education system. We set the professional education as the high priority according to German-Swiss-Austrian dual education system.

We set government reform as one of the highest priorities taking experience from Estonia on e-governance, one-stop solution concept. And we liberalized our tax system starting from January 1st of this year abolishing profit tax and taxing only dividends.

We are making massive investments in the infrastructure modernization. And again we have important regional projects as we are on the crossroads between Europe and Asia, and Russia, and the Middle East. So, regional cooperation and regional stability remains the cornerstone of stability in our region. At this quite challenging backdrop, we are trying to give some example of using all resources to create inner stability in order to provide long-term development prospects for our country.

Thank you.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you Sir. And now chairman Tokayev.

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: Thank you. Kazakhstan has the second largest economy in the post-Soviet area, and is open for international cooperation. And we are very much proud to have excellent relationship with our immediate neighbors, first of all Russia, and China. It's a matter of our security, it's a matter of our successful economic development. And we do fully realize the importance of having good and predictable, friendly relationship with our immediate neighbors. We have no territorial issues with all our neighbors since the longest on-land border between both Kazakhstan and Russia has been demarcated and ratified by both parliaments. And the same thing goes to our border with China as well as other central Asian countries. We are in the process of reforms. And truly Kazakhstan is a reformist country. We strongly believe that we should not stop the transformation of our society either in the economic area, or in the political domain. We strongly believe that the structural reforms must go on in any circumstances so that Kazakhstan could advance into to the group of 30 most developed countries in the world. Kazakhstan is a member of Security Council of United Nations. And we are making emphasis on our cooperation with United Nations as an indispensable organization, as a universal organization in the world.

Our priority in United Nations is to stop the spread out of nuclear materials as well as other nuclear weapons since we are very much concerned about the possibility of nuclear materials` falling into the hands of terrorists. Imagine that nuclear materials or even the weapons will be possessed by such terrorist groups like Boko Haram or whatever. And we can imagine that the whole world order will be totally destroyed by the terrorists. So it's our priority to take care about security at least in our part of the world. For that reason, Kazakhstan is involved in promoting the confidence building measures in Asia. And we are very much active in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Speaking about the economic cooperation in our part of the world, in Eurasia, I would like to make emphasis on Chinese concept "One Belt, One Road". This concept was announced by Chairman Xi Jinping in Astana in 2013. We believe that

this concept is very much promising because it will provide all the countries around China, in Eurasia, with a huge opportunity to transport commodities across the territory of Kazakhstan. So, Kazakhstan is expected to become a transit territory.

In the contemporary conditions of economic cooperation, to become a transit territory is extremely important, is extremely promising, is much better than to export oil and gas. There are so many countries having transit opportunities that thrive to transfer or to ship commodities across their territories. So, we believe that in five years more than one hundred thousand containers from China will be transported across the territory of Kazakhstan further to Europe. And, of course, in this chain of trade within the framework of “One Belt, One Road” concept the role of Russia is going to be quite prominent. So, these are my brief remarks. Thank you very much.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you so much. Now Arseny Yatsenyuk from Ukraine, please.

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: Let me go back to the fault lines in Eurasia. If I may remind you 10 years ago President Putin delivered a challenging and notorious speech at the Munich Security Conference. Some folks in the free world expected that this is just the lip service. But what happened? The Russian Federation invaded Georgia. Russia suspended and in the end withdrew from the Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe. Russia committed an international crime when they illegally annexed Crimea. Russia sent its military to Donetsk and Lugansk. Russia waged a cyber war against the free world. Russia waged a propaganda war and meddled into the elections and will meddle into the European elections too.

So we are living in a very insecure world. And the fault line is in Russia. I can tell you on behalf of the Ukrainian people that my country is at the state of war that was waged by the Russian Federation. We lost ten thousand people. We lost twenty percent of the Ukrainian economy. We lost Crimea and we practically lost Donetsk and Lugansk. We are the only country who deterred the Russian military. And what is at stake today? At stake are the values of the free world. At stake is the independence and territorial integrity not only of Ukraine, but of every single country sitting at this table.

What needs to be done? Well, the best option and the best remedy is that we need to stay united and to stick to our values, values of democracy, values of the free world, values of the free media. We need to support every single country and to respond and to act in concert. We, as Ukrainian people, are facing a very challenging time. Extremely one. Despite, the military aggression waged by the Russian Federation, we passed outstanding economic reforms. Could you imagine, for example, that just

in one year we cut the budget deficit from 10 percent to 3 percent. We passed four austerity packages – much more severe than even in Greece.

So, our economy is rebounding. But, for today the key issue for my country and the key issue for every member of the free world is how to make Russia not just cooperative, but how to make Russia stick to its international obligations, not to intimidate its neighbors, respect the UN Charter and respect independent nations, which Ukraine presents.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you Sir. And finally President of Estonia Kaljulaid.

President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid: Thank you for your introduction. It was quite interesting. You said that in Eurasia people had somehow learned to peacefully co-exist and they manage neighbors peacefully. As far as I know Europe and Asia form Eurasia, and you have Georgia and Ukraine here. So, I was wondering a little bit because it is really sad what happened with these two countries. But what happened with these countries? Indeed, they were standing on a very important line. I don't know whether that was a fault line or not a fault line. But their people expressed their democratic will to belong to the European values and system. And both countries were actually punished for that. That one now definitely is a fault line. And I think we should all consider carefully how we can push that fault line back.

For my own country, I look this panel spans from Baltics to Pamirs. So it's definitely more diverse than the yesterday evening's NATO panel where we had five ministers of defense stay in Brussels where they rehearsed their similar lines for two days. We will have much more different views on this panel, I am quite sure.

For me it's very important to realize that market economy and rule of law do guarantee you foreign investment to certain extent. But then you need to develop deeper. You need to develop to give people the freedom of speech, make sure that human rights are respected and that your country has low level of corruption. I'm telling this because of our experience. In 25 years, Estonia has turned from a country, which needed help exactly the same way as everybody who was just released from the prison of Soviet Union. And when the democratic countries were helping us financially to create institutions and build them they didn't know that in 25 years they will have a digital country, which can teach something to the same western European countries. It's payback time for us now.

And if I examine the different development paths of different countries who lived for the several decades under the Soviet Union rule, the difference seems to be that the quicker you realize that you need full freedoms for your people, the better you do. No doubt about that. I don't know why? Probably because of our history, we actually

fought not only for freedom from Soviet Union, but also for freedom of speech. You did not have that in the Soviet Union. Also for freedom to develop your business, you didn't have that in the Soviet Union. We fought for all that peacefully. Maybe I shouldn't be using this word behind this table I apologize to my neighbors who have fought really. I think we should not forget that the fault line is not a constant line. The fault line can move back and forth. But there should always be the will of the people, which way they want to go.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you very much. So, we have a lot of time, which is great, and a lot to discuss very different presentations from the panel. I want to dig into it. Let me just respond to the President. Of course, at the beginning I was starting with the good news, which was that we don't have the countries ideologically telling others which kind of systems they should have. But then I said the bad news that we have interventions and wars and the rest. And I'm going to start with the good news again. We clearly should start with Russia because everyone on this panel has a strong and personal perspective on it. And I want to start with Chairman Tokayev. You have the largest Russian population on your territory. And yet you have managed, and your country has managed to have a reasonably peaceful co-existence both internally and also with Russia. As we are going to get into some vastly more difficult relations with Russia, I wonder if you could share some lessons how you think Kazakhstan has managed that?

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: Historically, we are pretty much tolerant to different cultures and religions. Of course, we have today enough other cultures. And speaking about languages from the very beginning we said that Kazakh language will become a state language in Kazakhstan, but with regard to Russian language, which is popular in Kazakhstan, we believe that knowing Russian language is a huge asset for us. It has been said by the President that it will become an official language in our constitution. To fight against languages from my perspective is a very stupid thing. The more languages we know, the better for us, for our population.

Now we promote English as the third unofficial language. Perhaps, God knows, some time later it will become one of the official languages of Kazakhstan. But we acknowledge that the knowledge of English is extremely important, particularly for the younger generation. So to be tolerant, to be wise, to be reasonable, is one of the receipts, if I may say so, of sustaining stability within a country. And without stability in the country there is no possibility, there is no opportunity to pursue economic reforms. We believe that religious accord within Kazakhstan is also extremely important to taking advantage of all existing opportunities to promote economic reforms. Kazakhstan hosts summits of leaders of traditional world religions in order to bring together all the politicians as well as religious leaders to the same table to

talk about peace, tolerance in the global dimension.

At the last summit the Secretary-General of the United Nations, King of Jordan, President of Finland, as well as many other politicians, including heads of international organizations were attending and talking about peace, security and stability in Eurasia as well as beyond.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So that was the good news. Now everybody else on this panel has faced different levels of interference, intervention and in some cases direct war with the Russians. I want to ask why you think the threat has become what it is. We saw last year that so many people have said that Putin is the geopolitical winner, that he is increasing his influence. Is that that? Is that that Putin has become so much stronger as an individual? Is that that the Russian economy is in comparative decline, not doing so well? Is it still a Soviet imperial hangover? What is it that drives the challenges with the Russians that so many in the region presently have? Is it even the lack of support internationally from outside? May be I should start with the person who has had the greatest challenges. And that is, of course, former Prime Minister Yatsenyuk.

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: Let me put it bluntly. President Putin wants to run the world, at least part of the world. He was very vocal saying that the Russian Federation wants to restore the spheres of influence. To my mind, the Russian President is dreaming of restoring something like Soviet Union or new empire. This is the reason why President Putin decided to invade Ukraine. That is not the language issue. Everyone in my country speaks Russian. I am not sure that every Russian speaks Ukrainian.

This is a matter of geopolitics. He is challenging the free world. And it is not Putin who is stronger, this is the free world who is weaker. So I have to go back to the previous message. The stronger we are, the more united we are, the less we say that NATO is obsolete, or the less Brexits we are going to face, the better chances there will be for the free world, and for the democracy to thrive and to survive.

It is a geopolitical policy of President Putin just to have a leverage over neighbors, and not only over neighbors. Even in the European Union they are working very hard to split the European Union and to split the unity between the European Union and the United States. But my nation has shown a very strong resolve. We are fighting for our independence. We believe in our future, we believe in our sovereignty, we believe in our people, and we believe in real values. And we showed to the entire world how the Ukrainian people can fight for European values under European flags stained with the blood of the Ukrainian people.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So from what you have seen at this conference from the Americans and the Europeans, the leaders of the free world, how do you respond does it change your views for the perspective of Ukraine going forward? Does it change your views about what Putin can and cannot accomplish?

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: Well, it depends. First of all, let me start with the new US administration. The good news is that President Trump personally recognized illegal annexation of Crimea by the Russian Federation. Defense Secretary Mattis was very vocal saying that the United States is to support Ukraine. NATO General Secretary stayed on the same message. Chancellor Merkel, who is one of the leaders of the free world, who is the real stronghold of democracy in the European Union, is very straightforward in terms of urging Russia to fully implement Minsk agreement, which means full-fledged ceasefire, pullback of Russian forces, restoration of Ukrainian border, and actually restoration of Ukrainian independence. So, the good news, once again, is that it seems to me that both the European Union and the United States will stay on the same message, they will follow the previous policy, which is just to defend independent countries like Ukrainians.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Madam President, let me go to Estonia for the second. Let me ask you when you think about the threat or the challenge that Russia poses for your country, historically so many people have talked about the need for NATO to have strong guarantees, the Russian enclave, the issue of troops taking over. But when we see the threats today, we talk about cyber, we talk about elections, support for far-right popular movements across Europe. Is the Russian challenge a consequence of technology? Is it changing? Is it evolving? Is NATO suited to respond? Does it make it easy for you to make common cause with the Europeans because so many more of them potentially see that threat? I mean if the Russians are going to hack the French elections does it make easy for the Estonians to find common cause with Europeans? How do we think about this in 2017?

President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid: Thank you for the floor. You said that everybody else here faced different interventions from Russia. We have been lucky, we have not faced intervention from Russia, apart from a cyber attack in 2007. Simply because we are a NATO country, and no NATO ally has ever come under attack. And we are pretty convinced that this is exactly the way it is continuing to be. Indeed, NATO needs to react adequately to risks in the region. As we saw in Warsaw and following up the Warsaw decisions, their implementation, this deterrence for current situation is enough to feel secure, safe geographically and to concentrate on other risks. It is interesting as we chatted before that in this year's Munich conference the emphasis has not to be that much on Baltic region, direct threat from Russia to Baltic states probably because it really is not. This is not the

fault line. The fault line as such has gone away in principle. It is now the discussion about cyber threats, and even cyber has now been separated into conventional cyber, attacks against systems, servers, and then even less dangerous part – the media war, the media attacks.

And lot has been talked about this in this conference as well. And people have felt quite powerless. I have to say, we do not know how to counteract. I have a saying that everything can be considered a strategic communication issue unless proven otherwise. But it does not help you in election situation in Europe. And in 2017 there are some pretty essential elections coming up in Europe. So if I take now my Estonian digital experience, if you have an acute cyber risk what do you do? Do you use a patch? May you find the patch, until you figure out what to do in a more systemic way. And I have been thinking what can be done immediately today. And I am thinking that if we have people going into elections wholly aware, and I saw people here in Germany that they are aware that there are these risks. I read a slogan on the wall of the Ministry of Defense, which said that German freedom will also be decided in cyber room. Then the first line of defense should be a transparent acknowledgement that there is such an attack of false news, fake news, kompromat. But who needs kompromat today? It's too much work. Just send out a line somewhere that somebody is something horrible. It's enough to kill candidacy. And when you yourself are already in these processes then you can start argue "Hey, this is false". Therefore, beforehand it is possible to agree commonly to protect our democracy by promising that when I see that my opponent comes under attack I will not smugly sit in the corner, I will join my opponent to denounce that this is an attack what we are seeing, that I will not use it to my own benefit in the campaign. And if you make such a promise beforehand and everybody agrees to make such a promise, you have the patch. It is not perfect because after all some incredible news might be too. You never know. Some people might refuse to underwrite until they are not coming under such kind of false attack. Then ask them why.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Madam President. Given the response seen from the Europeans who feel very directly threatened by this, and the Americans, it is a little more uncertain what the Russian position is. Do you think that this response should really come primarily from NATO? Or do you think there is likely to be also a fruitful, separate common European response to the Russians on cyber?

President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid: I think I left the military domain long ago in my intervention and came to civil spillovers. That is no difference any more. And Europe, EU and NATO have also agreed to deal with those threats together as well. NATO has a StratCom center of excellence in Riga and a cyber security center of excellence in Tallinn. European Union has a StratCom east and StratCom south facilities. Everybody is dealing with it because the problem is everywhere,

everywhere in the free society. Everywhere you can find war, everywhere you can nowadays find a domain to fight on.

I think defense minister Leyen was actually on counteroffensive when she here stood up and said some people think that German troops might be in East. You denounced transparently yourself that this could be an issue to exploit. You do not let people to exploit it.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: The Georgian Prime Minister, the NATO question is relevant to you, of course, given long-standing interest in joining a challenging process to get there. How relevant is that to you today? And what is the Russian relationship for you going forward?

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili: First of all, let me recall briefly the history of Georgia's five-day war with Russia. It happened in 2008. Thousands of soldiers were killed. We held the line. But we are a small country, therefore we ended up with Russian military bases back to our soil. Geneva international discussion format has been created. We have international organizations. We have OSCE, we have European Union, we have UN present at the format. But unfortunately with very little or almost no progress for several years.

It took six years after that until Russia repeated it in Ukraine. So there is a lesson that we can draw out from this that the cornerstone principle for bringing stability not in our region, but throughout the continent is territorial integrity. And revisiting borders of the country is extremely dangerous.

So we are in a situation now when we have fences on our territories, we have ethnic Georgians captured almost everyday for occasionally crossing the so-called borders. We have ethnic Georgians deprived of the right of mother language education. Despite our very constructive and consistent approach and steps, especially, starting from 2012, we had some progress in economic dimensions, but we had absolutely no progress in political dimensions. We have treaties of integration with so-called Abkhazia and South Ossetia. We have swallowing the law-enforcement and military structures of Abkhazia and South Ossetia into Russian administrative space. And this process is going on. What is the remedy for this solution? Unfortunately I have no answer. The only virtual answer I may give will be the unity of civilized world against threats like this.

And NATO membership for Georgia is not something that the nation is preoccupied by, but this is a family of countries with certain values and principles where Georgia feels it belongs to. And again as I said this is not a foreign policy aspiration for Georgia. But it defines the existential needs for Georgia, and it defines the internal

DNA for Georgia`s reform. So NATO is something we believe we belong to, and European family is something we believe we belong to. And we are very gradual, very consistent, but also very patient. We believe that there will be someday a window of opportunity for Georgia provided that we stay consistent and dedicated on this path, but also constructive.

We try to send messages that we do not want any membership for hostility. We want our territorial integrity to be restored. And we want our sovereignty to be realized. Sovereignty is a sovereign decision of a nation to belong to one or another club. And we have made our decision.

Thank you.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: President Aliyev, actually I have a question to ask you for months on this. You have gone from what could have been one of the most impossible geopolitical positions, where Turks shoot down a Russian plane and then Turks and Russian are at each other`s throats, and then over night that relationship is now pretty close. How has it been to be the President of Azerbaijan going through this? Can you just share with everyone here a little bit of that process from the Baku perspective? Exactly, everybody wants to know.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: Actually, we are facing this kind of situation maybe not so visible to international attention. But more or less we are facing these tensions on a daily basis. This is our geography. And I told you in my introductory remarks that our geography is just between Asia and Europe, and between traditional forces in the region. Azerbaijan was part of Persian empire, part of Russian empire, and partly was part of Ottoman empire. Today these three countries are our immediate neighbors. With these three countries we have very good relations, the relations based on mutual respect first of all, non-interference with our internal affairs, and based on pragmatism, on our national interests. Therefore, the worst scenario for Azerbaijan is when something wrong happens between our neighbors as it happened, for instance, in 2008 when there was Russian-Georgian war, and as it happened during the incident, which you mentioned. We considered this as a serious threat to regional stability. And we need stability. We have stability inside our country, and we want stability around us because we are not an island, and whether we like or not, what is happening beyond our borders can influence us in positive and negative ways. Therefore, we used all our efforts in a very careful way in order to try to help our neighbors find the way out of this crisis.

And it was publicly acknowledged that Azerbaijan was among those countries, which helped normalize relations between Russia and Turkey. In any case, no matter how close relations we have with a country we are always guided by the

main principle, which is international law. International law must be respected. Those who violate international law do wrong thing. And we always articulate that. We support strongly territorial integrity of all the countries surrounding us, sitting on this table. We suffered ourselves from violation of territorial integrity. Therefore, the issue of territorial integrity for us is untouchable. At the same time we look what can be done in order to reduce the risks. Therefore, Russian-Turkish tension was a serious geopolitical risk and immediate risk to the neighborhood. And these are our two main economic partners. So if we help them overcome those difficulties, I think we deserve some credit.



But I can tell you that the role of Azerbaijan as a stabilizing factor is more and more acknowledged by the international community. I can bring you a very recent example. Just two days ago in Baku there was a meeting between the chief of staff of the US army Mr Dunford and chief of staff of the Russian army Mr Gerasimov. They met for the first time in our country. And the decision to select Baku was not ours. We did not initiate this kind of interaction. We were approached whether we agree or not. And we said “Of course, we agree”. And why Azerbaijan was selected? I ask myself this question. And then looking at the map of Eurasia, I thought that probably it is the only place where they can meet. We are not a member of NATO. We are not a member of Collective Security Treaty Organization. We are a country with strong international reputation. We are a country, which has very good relations with the United States, with Europe, with our neighbors, with Russia, and a country, which is respected by them. Therefore, the role of Azerbaijan as a stabilizing factor will grow not only in our region, but already in a broader environment. And this is our contribution to regional stability. It was already mentioned here that stability is the most important factor for any kind of development. If you don't have stability, forget about investments, forget about improving living conditions, and cooperation.

Our policy always was to invest in cooperation through projects. We have regional format of cooperation, which already exists for many years and is very efficient, which is Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey. We implement jointly energy projects, transportation projects and others. We are strong allies. At the same time, today we have another regional cooperation format, which is Azerbaijan-Iran-Russia. Azerbaijan is the only country in the world, which borders Iran and Russia at the same time. And they are our natural partners in trade, in transportation, in economic development and also in areas related to security. Therefore, I hope that there will be time in the coming future that we can integrate these existing regional formats in a broader cooperation. And this will be to the benefit of all the peoples, this will

reduce risks and create more opportunities for cooperation.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: That is a great answer, and I appreciate it. But I want to ask you personally because how close you are and have been for a long time with Erdogan. Initially, you could tell he was angry. He is not giving any apology to anybody, tourism is down, trade is down, it is hurting the economy. How quickly could you tell that suddenly there was a real change? Do you think this change, from what you know of him, is it really lasting, is it really durable? Was it on the spur of the moment emotional? How did you experience him?

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: I think that the presidents of Turkey and Russia evaluating what is happening made a very right decision and a very wise decision because it could not have lasted long. Because if it lasted longer, there could be very unpredictable consequences because the temperature was very high. I had conversation with President Erdogan. I had conversation with President Putin. I know that President Nazarbayev actively participated in this mediation process with a big success. Therefore, of course, it is not for public disclosure, but I personally know how difficult it was for them to have kind of reconciliation. And the fact that it happened shows that these politicians, they are guided by pragmatism, not by emotions. You must leave emotions, when you enter your office as president. If you go to the office with emotions, you will not succeed, and you will create a mess in your country and in the region.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So before you mentioned Kazakhstan, chairman Tokayev came over and said “I can add to that”. So please add to that.

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: I just wanted to say that Azerbaijan was playing a very important role in this conflict. And due to its proximity either in geographical or ethnic terms to Turkey as well as to Russia, this country, led by President Ilham Aliyev, was quite important in bringing together both presidents of Russia and Turkey. At the same time, as you mentioned, Mr President, it was President Nazarbayev who persuaded Mr Erdogan to bring his apologies to the Russian President. And the result is quite evident. The whole situation in the region, particularly around Syria, has changed drastically as a result of joint mediation efforts of relevant leaders during this very crucial time.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: In fact, you could argue, that this has been the most significant constructive geopolitical shift in the world in the last year. I mean Russia-Turkey... So Kazakhstan is playing a key geopolitical role.

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: We would not claim to play a geopolitical role since Kazakhstan is a regional

power. But at the same time, of course, we want to contribute to peace efforts with regard to Syria. Astana is hosting talks on Syria that are going to be successful, at least, to lay basis for political follow-up of the negotiations in Geneva. So it is our modest contribution since we believe that the globe has become increasingly small. Syria is not far from us, from Central Asia. And using this opportunity I would like to mention the geopolitical and global role of Central Asia, which is becoming increasingly important. I think that Central Asia, in a broader term Eurasia, in future will be playing an extremely important role in the world affairs either in the economic area or in the political dimension.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: I am going to stick to topic so forgive me for not going to Syria because I don't want to end the panel on that. But, instead to China, obviously. I want to start with Mr Yatsenyuk because, I'm interested, as we think about merging geopolitics with consciousness of how incredibly challenging your situation is, the Chinese are soon becoming the largest economy in the world. They have significant investments in Ukraine, not least agriculture. They are talking more about constructive diplomatic roles and things like Syria. I am wondering to what extent the Ukrainians view China and those interests as increasingly a break or a stabilizing factor, or at least a potential constructive limit on how much the Russians might do in your country?

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: Here is the theme: China is little bit far from Ukraine. That is one issue. Another one is that we would be happy to get more investment from China. We envisage China as a real partner. China has a very strong voice in a number of international organizations. China has a huge potential. And we strongly believe that we can cut a number of deals with our Chinese counterparts, with our Chinese friends. So no doubts that due to our cooperation with China we can bring in more investments and increase Ukrainian living standards just to boost Ukrainian economy. But there is the key impediment. That is what President Aliyev said a number of times. Stability is of crucial importance. For us stability and security are the same terms. So I am not sure that China could broker the deal how to urge Russia to implement the Minsk agreement. But I am sure that China, I can't recall whether China supported the UNGA decision on illegal annexation of Crimea (someone from the audience: abstained). Yes, they abstained. Probably next time China will support vocally territorial integrity of Ukraine. But once again going back to economic issue, China is a perfect country to cooperate with.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: In terms of China, of course, we have to go to Kazakhstan and talk about what has been increasingly the critical economic external driver for you guys. How do you think long term as China becomes the dominant economic player in the part of the world that Russia historically thinks of, as former Prime Minister Yatsenyuk said, sphere of its influence, how much do you see this as the

tinderbox, as a ticking time bomb that sooner or later blows?

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: As a sinologist, who spent eight years in China and four years in Singapore, I am closely following what is happening in China. I strongly believe that China has a very good perspective with regards to Central Asia, first of all in the economic area. For example, China is going to transfer 51 enterprises from its own territory to Kazakhstan. I mentioned the concept put forward by chairman Xi Jinping “One Belt, One Road”. I think it is a very promising concept. And provided that this concept will be properly supported and used by the Central Asian countries as well as the Eurasian economic union, it is going to be one of the key factors of the economic development of the Central Asian countries, including Russia. China has become an economic juggernaut. I think that the speed of the economic growth of China will be quite sustainable. Six percent of economic growth is quite enough to become one of the major investors in Central Asia. So the economic cloud of China is quite strong. But at the same time we believe that political cooperation at least with Kazakhstan is also developing quite successfully. Each year both leaders have three-four meetings talking about some important issues, first of all, of bilateral cooperation. And not only talking, but seeing how to translate those agreements and talks into practical deeds. So in one word China is increasingly strengthening its positions in Central Asia, if I may say so. China, of course, will be a major partner of Kazakhstan. There is no doubt about this.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So what about the Russians?

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: We have excellent relations.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: No. I want to go back to the point. Do you think that ultimately that is going to drive the level of Russia-China conflict? How do we avoid it?

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: There is no point in talking about rivalry between Russia and China. Economically China is bigger than anybody else in the region. This is the second largest economy in the world, the most successful economy. This is very much important that China is transforming its economy. They want to become a cyber power. Just recently I was in Shēnzhèn, one of the most developed cities in China. And my confidence is getting increasingly stronger that China will of course fulfill its goal.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: The Georgian Prime Minister is going to leave us in a

couple of moments to get to the airport. I want to give him the last word. Please, some closing from you Sir.

Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili: First, I would like to take this opportunity to say a couple of words about “One Belt, One Road” project, which brings enormous thrive to the region. This is about new investments, this is about investments not only in hard infrastructure, but also in soft infrastructure. This is about more mobility. And mobility brings more people-to-people interaction, and therefore it brings more stability. So this is an extremely important project. This is about redistribution of manufacturing facilities throughout the continent. So we are eager to engage in every possibility we have. And we are engaged, as it was mentioned by President Aliyev, in Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. We are modernizing our highways, building new energy facilities. We have new investments coming from China. So this is about more partnership, rather than competition. So we are absolutely happy. I would like to take this opportunity to thank you for inviting me to this panel. We very much hope that there will be more stability on the Eurasian continent.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So while we're on the topic of China let me turn to President Kaljulaid because you were the one that was speaking at the beginning about the values and the importance of the liberal values, human rights. Of course, with the extraordinary juggernaut as the chairman Tokayev have just mentioned of China, it is also increasingly the attractiveness of Chinese economic system. A very different set of values than those that have been supported by the Americans and the Europeans historically. How do you think about that in terms of changing globalization, in terms of Estonia's role? What that means for your country, your political model, your economic model? And how you articulate that to other countries?

President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid: Thank you. I would first like to come back to something you said before, and with which I didn't have a chance to deal with. You mentioned that the geopolitical shift and jolting back from that geopolitical shift. I give congratulations to all of those who managed to deal with that sudden shock, which was nobody's plan and to erase the potentially horrible consequences. But I don't think that was a geopolitical shift. Geopolitical shift, what we had, was in 2008, already. In 2008, Russia made a proposal to revisit Helsinki Act conclusions, Helsinki final act wordings. A little bit later we saw conflicts. Conflict of 2008, that was your geopolitical shift and the land slide followed in Ukraine.

And now, we are talking about stability. Stability is very good if you have an active conflict at hand, then you really need to fight very hard to shift stability. But then, nobody will try to build a new, secure or security architecture on a shifted, unstable ground. I think this is very important to keep in mind. And another aspect of stability,

which I was I thinking here is that I grew up in Soviet Union on occupied Estonian territory, in Tallinn. And I know that some people appreciate its stability and I know that there are still some people, many people, many governments, who did not recognize our occupation. And I think it's very important to remember these facts of history when we again are talking about stability, having security, building our new architectural shifting ground and maybe doing it at the expense of some nation, which wanted to express their democratic will. I can now come to China. We, in Estonia, of course, we know that we are incomparable to China. But the interesting thing is that as a free market economy we share this ambition that the world should trade open and free redistribution against globalization or for that matter enlargement of the European Union redistribution on Asia for every government so that everybody could benefit and nobody has the feeling of looking into other party from outside. And maybe something went wrong there. That is what is creating the instability in the western world, as well unpredictability. We need to step back from that and think about this issue. And again, while you're doing it we need to consider our liberal values, which also say freedoms, including globalization is for strong ones to support weak ones.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: So I am going to open it up for questions in just a few moments. So please, think of what you like to ask. We have time for planning, I believe. But before we do, let me also give President Aliyev a chance to talk about the China issue. Here I want just to ask you about, you know, clearly China is very different kind of power. It's a massive economic power. Russia is a massive security power. There is emerging architecture with the SCO that is potentially a counter-balance, some believe, to NATO, over the long-term. Do you see that as an emerging stronger force of integration? And to the extent that you do, do you feel that it's competitive?

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: We consider China as a good partner for us. We have good interaction on political level, on economic level. But the project which will definitely connect us and transform into very active partners is restoration of the Silk Road. Today, already I heard about the "One Belt, One Road" project, which was initiated by the President of China. I would like only to remind that back in 2007, Azerbaijan together with Georgia and Turkey initiated the project, which hopefully this year will be concluded - the connection of the rail roads between the three countries. And we were doing it, of course, in order to have access for Azerbaijan and Georgia through Turkey to the European market, a shorter access. At the same time, we were calculating the potential contribution from China to this connection. So, this year, this the construction of this railroad connection will be terminated, and thus, from Azerbaijan by train you can go to Europe, to the Western Europe. We discussed with China how to integrate their initiative with already existing infrastructure, and we saw a lot of opportunities for that. We hope that the increase

of cargo through Azerbaijan, across the Caspian Sea, will be very important for our economy.

As Mr Tokayev said many countries want to become transitors. And, of course, transit is much more valuable than natural resources because natural resources will come to an end sooner or later. If you have a reliable and modern infrastructure for transit you will earn money just taking advantage of your territory and investment which you make. Therefore, connection of the transportation infrastructure is one of the important challenges for us. We are building, by the way, now the biggest Caspian Sea port on the Caspian shores, with the handling capacity of 25 million tons and one million containers. We renovate our railroads. And we built already all types of ships in the Baku shipyard so we can satisfy not only our own needs, but also supply Caspian countries with the modern equipment. And we created a special free zone just next to the port, inviting companies to invest using this geographical location.

The route through Caspian, China, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey is 15 days shorter than the existing route. It is not the cheapest one, but, by unifying the tariffs, which we are already working on with Turkey, we will reduce the costs. So we will make this route also very attractive from commercial point of view. And those companies, which want to deliver their cargo in the shortest period of time, will definitely use this destination.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you. So we have a solid half an hour for the engagement questions with the audience. And I am told by the Munich Security Conference that Dmitry Androsov, a member of the federal political council in Moscow, is going to be our first intervention. Please.

Dmitry Androsov: Thank you very much. My name is Dmitry Androsov, I am a member of the Federal Political Council of the People's Freedom political party in the Russian Federation. I have actually two questions, which are pretty much connected with each other. And I would like to address my questions to the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr Aliyev. But it will be great if the other speakers could somehow also react. So Mr President, we do have now the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh. We have this conflict already more than 25 years. And we know about the role my country, Russia played in the issues about this conflict and the role it is playing today. So, my question is do you think that the current Russian government has any interests in really solving this conflict? And the second question would be do you think it is possible that Azerbaijan will become a member of the Eurasian Union while problems of Karabakh will not be solved?

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: Russia, as you probably know, along with the United States and France is one of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of OSCE,

the group, which has a mandate to facilitate resolution of the conflict. And we hope that Minsk Group co-chairs will be more active than they are today. Of course, Azerbaijan cannot agree with the current situation. Security Council resolutions demanding withdrawal of Armenian troops – immediate and unconditional – were adopted more than twenty years ago and they remain on paper. Three countries of the OSCE Minsk group co-chairs, at the same time, three countries - permanent members of Security Council. So that means that these resolutions were adopted with their participation. They did not object against these resolutions. But they are not implemented and these leading countries of the world cannot exert enough pressure on aggressor Armenia to pull back from the occupied territories. Therefore, we hope that the conflict will be resolved based on these resolutions. It is the only way of how to do it because you cannot justify the aggression. Armenia occupied not only Nagorno-Karabakh, but also seven districts surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh, where Armenian population never lived. In Nagorno-Karabakh itself 30 percent of the population was of Azerbaijani origin. They all have been expelled. And after that in Nagorno-Karabakh they held several times so-called referendums. And one of them will be held in a couple of days, which is absolutely illegal and is not recognized by any country in the world. By the way, Russia, United States, France and the European Union already issued statements that they do not recognize Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent entity, and they do not recognize the outcome of this referendum.

Russia is a neighbor to Azerbaijan. It is not a direct neighbor to Armenia, but a regional neighbor. Therefore, I think it's in the interests of Russia that the conflict is resolved because the conflict is a source of permanent threat and de-stabilization. And, of course, if the situation goes out of control, all the countries of the region will have problems.

With respect to potential integration of Azerbaijan to different structures, I can answer you like that: we are feeling ourselves very comfortable in our current position. Azerbaijan is a country with self-sufficient economy. We, according to the Davos World Economic Forum, are number 37 with respect to the competitiveness of economy, and number one in CIS. Again Davos World Economic Forum this year issued a report on development of the developing countries. And we are sharing the first and second places with Lithuania. Therefore, economic situation in Azerbaijan is positive. We have very low foreign debt, less than 20 percent of GDP. And our hard currency reserves are more than five times bigger than our foreign debt. In other words, we can repay all our debts within one week and this demonstrates the economic capability. Therefore, today we do not have in front of us an objective to integrate. When you integrate you integrate to do better, you integrate to get more advantages, you integrate to have more chances of development. We feel ourselves comfortable in this position.

The same goes to our cooperation with European institutions. We were and we are one of the six countries of Eastern Partnership. But we didn't sign Association Agreement, unlike Ukraine, Georgia and Moldova. But what is happening now? We started negotiations with European Commission on the 7th of February based on the draft proposal, which we proposed to the European Commission. This is for the first time in the history of European Commission that not them, but a country is making a draft proposal. And the mandate was given. And I hope that this agreement will be finalized soon. It should be based on already signed and adopted nine agreements and memorandums with EU member states. So, in other words, with one third of members states of the European Union, Azerbaijan already has strategic partnership agreements or memorandums. This is unique situation. And we are basing our future economic plans on our national interests. Therefore, we do not have plans to enter any other international organization for the time being. But what will happen in the future the life will show.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Thank you very much. With another question right here please.

Orkhan Sattarov: My name is Orkhan Sattarov. I am from the news agency Vestnik Kavkaza. I have a question for Mr President Ilham Aliyev. You mentioned that the principle of territorial integrity is one of the basic and main principles. And the same today was stated by the German Chancellor Angela Merkel, who stated that Europe is not going to give up this principle as it is the main one. What is your expectation from the role of Europe in the settlement of the conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh? And what do you expect Europe to do in this conflict? Thank you.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: As I said before, OSCE Minsk Group has the mandate for negotiation and facilitation, which consists of the United States, France and Russia. What do we expect? Of course, we do not expect from the European Union a direct involvement into the process of negotiations though European Commission has appointed a special envoy for the Caucasus, which deals with conflict resolutions. What we expect from Europe, and from everyone, from every country is a single standard approach to all the conflicts in the post-Soviet area. We highly appreciate what Madam Merkel today said about territorial integrity, but we want this principle to be applied to all the conflicts, not selective. One of the reasons why Azerbaijan didn't sign Association Agreement with the European Union, apart from that according to our impression it was not an agreement it was a unilateral instruction list to us, but the main reason was not that. The main reason was that they did not want to have a very precise wording about resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan based on territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. They have these provisions in the agreement with Georgia, with Moldova, at that time Ukraine didn't

have this problem. But when it comes to Azerbaijan it is a double standard. Russia was sanctioned for what happened in Ukraine. Armenia was not sanctioned for what happened in Nagorno-Karabakh. This double standard approach must be eliminated. Of course, it will not immediately lead to the resolution of the conflict, but if we have unified efforts and pressure on aggressor Armenia to liberate the lands, then I think the resolution will be achieved sooner. Because in our case as I said already many times in this audience we have four Security Council resolutions. The resolutions of the leading international body, which demands withdrawal of Armenian troops. And these resolutions must be implemented. So, we hope that unfortunately, situation in some of the post-Soviet countries with respect to the violation of the territorial integrity will lead to elaboration of unified, non-selective single standard approach to all the conflicts, including the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: I want to have a follow-up on that panel, which brought up a couple of times the importance of the universality of territorial integrity principal. And, of course, the Russians have perspective on this, which we hear a lot, which is that great so we beat up on the Russians for Ukraine. But of course, the Americans with Kosovo decided the territorial integrity doesn't mean as much. The Americans are more than happy to talk about the Russians bombing civilians and hospitals in Syria. But when you've got drone strikes in Yemen from the US, and when you're supporting Saudis, not so much. I am wondering if the panel, and I really want particularly turn to Estonia and Ukraine on this, actually think that these are similar cases? Do you believe that there is a level of American hypocrisy that not only undermined the principle, but also gave the Russians room to run? Or do you think that we shouldn't be making these comparisons and that Putin is simply engaging in propaganda? I'd love to hear what you think about that.

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: Ukraine has not recognized Kosovo. At that time I used to be the foreign minister and we said we would be happy under the UN Security Council resolution. This was a very clear statement on the Ukrainian side. But you know I always refer to this post-factual world. Let's consider and focus only on facts. The fact is that the Russian Federation illegally annexed Crimea. They sent their military. They orchestrated so-called referendum and even more they annexed and recognized Crimea as part of the Russian Federation. The fact is the Russian Federation sent its military, FSB, the intelligence, their military staff to Donetsk and Lugansk. They committed both an international crime in Crimea and in Donetsk and in Lugansk. The fact is that the Russian missile shot down MH-17. This is the fact. The fact is that they killed more than hundred people in MH-17 and more than ten thousand people in Ukraine. So, if we apply one standard I would be happy. So my message to the Russian Federation, which is a big nuclear state armed to the teeth, is: Get out of Ukraine, do not invade independent countries, respect the international law. And if should we apply the same standard not only to

Ukraine, but to Georgia, to Moldova. I do not want to dig into the details of nother conflicts because very respected people can do it much better than me. In this case, this is the fastest solution of all these frozen conflicts orchestrated by our neighbor.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: Madam President, can I have your views on this?

President of Estonia Kersti Kaljulaid: There is an international security architecture I was already once referring. This needs to be adhered to. There have been additional promises made, for example, to Ukraine by international agreements before. And these have not been kept. I cannot get further from that. I am stuck with it.

Chairman of the Senate of the Parliament of Kazakhstan Kassym-Jomart Tokayev: The point is that there are two major principles in the charter of the United Nations that contradict each other – the territorial integrity of the states and then the right of the peoples to self-determination. So it's a huge ambiguity, which comes from the charter of the United Nations and it has been translated into confusions around particular cases. Kosovo has been qualified as a special case. And the right for self-determination of the peoples has been applied to the so-called special case like Kosovo. Then other cases came out and we all started to speak about the territorial integrity of the states. I think that we must be clear while choosing a priority with regard to this two major principles of the United Nations. And I would like to draw your attention to the recent statement of the Secretary General of the United Nations Mr Guterres, who was absolutely eloquent having said that the territorial integrity of the countries must be respected.

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: The principle of the territorial integrity is the prevailing principle whether it is the United Nations charter or the Helsinki Final Act. And in the Helsinki Final Act there is a very clear definition of the territorial integrity and self-determination. Self-determination should not be violating territorial integrity of the countries. And this is the fundamental principle of international law, which is violated. But coming back to your question, actually you answered yourself in your question about the hypocrisy. Of course, we see double standards every week, every day. As if the rules and regulations and resolutions are written for small countries. They must obey the law, they must implement the resolutions. The big super powers they are free to interpret the international law in accordance with their national interests. When they like they support the territorial integrity, when they like they support the self-determination. And it's actually leads to degradation of international institutions, degradation of United Nations. If three permanent members of the Security Council themselves in the beginning of the 1990s adopt the resolution demanding withdrawal of Armenian troops and then do not press the aggressor to implement these resolutions, how we can understand that behavior. Only based on interests, not on international law. And here we come to the most

important issue of the 21st century whether we have still the mechanisms, which lead to the strengthening of the potential of international organizations or we don't have. And I think one of the topics for discussions should be that. If all of us are free from international obligations, then there should be no attacks on small countries, forcing them to implement this or that decision. Decision is made for everyone, and everyone is equal.

Moderator Ian Bremmer: And President Aliyev since you engaged in the final points of international law and grand strategy do you think that the moves towards the multi-polarity make this problem better or worse?

President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev: Well, it depends on where the multi-polarity will lead. Of course, multi-polarity for not a super-power, not a big country is an advantage and in the multi-polar world you can have more space for maneuver. But at the same time the multi-polarity can lead to a kind of behind-the-scenes agreement, which we know from the 20th century history when the world was divided in the offices of the leading countries of the world. Therefore, it depends how multi-polarity is treated. Is it only the spheres of interests and domination by some countries in this or that interest or multi-polarity is interaction, predictability, respect to small countries, to weak countries? Therefore, it depends on how it has been treated. But so far I think we have enough grounds for being concerned about that.

Former Prime Minister of Ukraine Arseny Yatsenyuk: If I may follow up on hypocrisy that you mentioned and Mr President mentioned. I just got the press news. You know what happened? President Putin decided to recognize all documents issued by self-proclaimed Donetsk and Lugansk republics just few minutes ago. So, it's just another world. Mr Lavrov delivered the speech during the Munich Security Conference saying that they will stick to the Minsk agreement and the rest of blah blah blah. So what is in the end? In the end, today, after the decision of the Russian President they practically withdrew from the Minsk format. So what is going on?

Moderator Ian Bremmer: My initial interpretation would be listening to the representatives of the United States and Russia at the Munich Security Conference and hearing the principles back in Washington and Moscow. This might be a smart approach. But if it holds true, it is going to be a very challenging news for everybody.

OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE STATE OF QATAR

26 – 27 February 2017

List of meetings held during the official visit:

- Meeting with Chairman of Al Faisal Holding and the Qatari Businessmen Association Sheikh Faisal Bin Qassim Al Thani
- Meeting with President and CEO of Qatar Petroleum Saad Sherida Al-Kaabi
- Meeting with Emir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani

List of documents signed during the official visit:

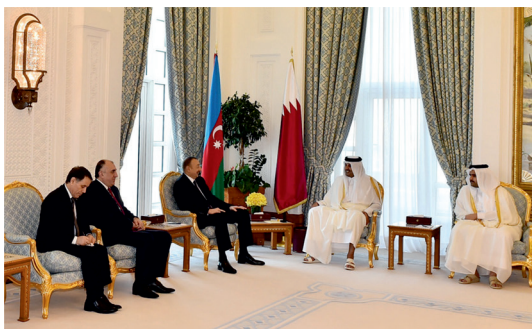
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the State of Qatar in the Field of Culture
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the State of Qatar in the Fields of Youth and Sports
- Memorandum of Understanding between Baku International Sea Trade Port CJSC and Qatar Ports Management Company – MWANI Qatar
- Memorandum of Understanding between the State Civil Aviation Administration of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Civil Aviation Authority of the State of Qatar
- Additional Protocol to the Agreement on Air Transport between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the State of Qatar
- Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the State of Qatar in the Field of Endangered Wildlife Protection and Habitat Conservation

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV AND
EMIR OF THE STATE OF QATAR SHEIKH TAMIM BIN HAMAD AL-THANI
HELD AN EXPANDED MEETING**

27 February 2017, Doha

On February 27, 2017 President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Emir of the State of Qatar Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani held an expanded meeting. They noted that Azerbaijan-Qatar cooperation has been rapidly developing in recent years.

Recalling his visit to Azerbaijan, the Emir of the State of Qatar said he witnessed rapid development, stability and security in the country. This creates opportunities for developing both economic and tourism areas, the Emir said. Sheikh Tamim Bin Hamad Al-Thani said reciprocal visits will contribute to the development of



cooperation between the two countries.

President Ilham Aliyev recalled his previous visit to Qatar, saying the country has experienced great development ever since.

The head of state highlighted the reforms to diversify Azerbaijan's economy. The President spoke of the development of the non-oil sector, saying the main goal is to export non-oil products to foreign markets.

They emphasized the importance of expanding Azerbaijan-Qatar relations in various areas, including, agriculture, tourism, culture and infrastructure, and also discussed opportunities for joint investment in projects in other countries and for cooperation in oil and gas sectors.

WORKING VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF PAKISTAN

28 February – 1 March 2017

List of meetings held during the working visit:

- Meeting with Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Muhammad Nawaz Sharif
- Meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mamnoon Hussain
- Meeting with President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan

List of documents signed during the working visit:

- Agreement on Energy Cooperation between the Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Government of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED 13TH SUMMIT OF ECONOMIC
COOPERATION ORGANIZATION**

1 March 2017, Islamabad

Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

Excellencies, dear friends,

First of all, I'd like to express gratitude to His Excellency Prime Minister of Islamic Republic of Pakistan Mr Muhammad Nawaz Sharif for hospitality and excellent organization of the ECO Summit. Azerbaijan hosted two summits of ECO in 2006 and 2012. Our country assumed the ECO chairmanship at our last meeting in Baku in 2012. This is the demonstration of our firm commitment to cooperation within the Economic Cooperation Organization. ECO is the product of our political will to cooperate closely for the benefit of our peoples. Successful activity of ECO is in our common interests. Peoples of our countries share common history, culture, traditions and religion.

During our chairmanship, Azerbaijan contributed a lot to the development of our organization, and to deepening our regional cooperation. Having excellent relations with all the member-states of ECO, Azerbaijan strengthened its economic ties both on bilateral and multilateral levels with its partners. We did our best to promote ECO not as a physical bridge between East and West and North and South, but also as a place which unites different civilizations and cultures.

Azerbaijan considers ECO as an important international organization. I am sure that the role of ECO in international economic cooperation will grow in the future. In 2013, we convened the first ECO high-level working group meeting on the Gazvin-Rasht-

Astara Iran-Astara Azerbaijan railway project. This is a sign of high level interest and political support to realization of the North-South corridor. Azerbaijan already completed its part of the project that can offer additional cooperation opportunities for other ECO countries. This year we will organize the ECO railroad ministers' meeting to develop our cooperation in this strategic direction.

We also initiated and held first and second international conferences on energy, regional integration and socio-economic development in 2013 and 2014, where cooperation within ECO was given a special attention. Azerbaijan is also committed to development of ICT cooperation in the ECO region. As a continuation of its efforts, Azerbaijan is planning to host a meeting of the respective ministers this year. I am sure that the outcome of this meeting will contribute to achieving our common goals. In 2013 and 2014, we organized first and second Baku forums of ECO member states' economic think tanks to allow economic intellectuals to come together and discuss issues of economic growth and cooperation.



We also hosted many other events to strengthen our cooperation in the fields of healthcare, renewable energy, oil and gas, taxes, disaster management. Since 2012, Azerbaijan as a chairman of ECO, has done its best to strengthen our organization, to increase its involvement in the world economic cooperation and promote

multilateral partnership between the member states.

Now we will elect the chairman of the 13th ECO Summit. I propose that the Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan His Excellency Mr Muhammad Nawaz Sharif be elected as the chairman of the 13th ECO Summit Meeting.

Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan His Excellency Mr Muhammad Nawaz Sharif has been elected as the chairman of ECO.

I congratulate you, Mr Chairman, wish you success and invite you to assume the chairmanship.

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

Our relations, which are based on mutual trust and support, are successfully developing. As a sign of brotherhood and solidarity Pakistan has not established diplomatic relations with Armenia, which continues to occupy 20 per cent of our

territories. The Azerbaijani people are very grateful to you for this.

Azerbaijan attaches great importance to the activity in the Economic Cooperation Organization. We have worked together with all the member countries to further strengthen the organization since our chairmanship started in 2012. Ensuring security and stability is the main element of building regional cooperation. Unfortunately, as new conflicts emerge security and stability in our region becomes even more fragile. We witness human catastrophe. Many people lose their lives, millions of people leave their native lands.

Azerbaijan is well aware of the pain and sufferings from its own experience. As a result of Armenia's military aggression 20 per cent of historical Azerbaijani lands – Nagorno-Karabakh and its seven surrounding regions – is under occupation. Ethnic cleansing was carried out in those territories and more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs. All our historical monuments, mosques and cemeteries were destroyed in the lands occupied by Armenia. In 1992, Armenia committed genocide against Azerbaijan. Of 613 civilians murdered as a result of Khojaly genocide, 106 were women, 63 were children and 70 were the elderly. Over one thousand people went missing. More than 10 countries have already recognized Khojaly genocide. We thank Pakistan for its Senate's officially recognizing Khojaly genocide in 2012.

UN Security Council adopted four resolutions on the conflict. Those resolutions demand unconditional and immediate withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied lands. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation, OSCE, European Parliament, Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, Non-Aligned Movement and other respected international organizations adopted similar resolutions and decisions. A contact group at the level of ministers on Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was established at the last summit of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, and finally in April of 2016 the contact group on Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan was created. Armenia must comply with those resolutions and must be subjected to sanctions. Azerbaijan's territorial integrity must be restored.

Azerbaijan attaches special importance to solidarity among Muslim countries. Azerbaijan announced 2017 as the Year of Islamic Solidarity. In two months Baku will host the 4th Islamic Solidarity Games. Islamophobia is today one of the most serious threats in the world. We severely condemn this tendency. Associating Islam with terror is a false and prejudiced attitude. Muslim countries are suffering the most from this terror. We should continue promoting the values of Islam, which is the religion of peace, mercy, tolerance and justice.

We attach special importance to strengthening economic cooperation among member states. Increasing mutual trade and investments, expanding export potential and encouraging close cooperation among business circles will serve this aim. Involvement of international financial institutions is also of great importance. In this regard, to play a more active role in financing the projects of regional importance, the Trade and Development Bank of the Economic Cooperation Organization needs to be supported by all the member states.

Cooperation in the field of transport is of great importance to Azerbaijan. The establishment of a strategic railway line between Europe and Asia through Azerbaijan`s territory will reduce cargo transportation time from 30 days to 15 days. The East-West transport corridor means restoration of historical Silk Road. The North-South railroad corridor is another important transport corridor. Azerbaijan is an active participant and investor of both strategic projects. We invite Economic Cooperation Organization member states to use the opportunities of this new infrastructure. The biggest international sea port in the Caspian Sea that was constructed in Azerbaijan is another contribution to transport infrastructure.

Energy cooperation plays an important role in regional cooperation. Azerbaijan has proposed a new energy strategy and a new vision for energy cooperation. Azerbaijan has become an important partner in providing energy security in a broader region. We created the infrastructure of diversified pipelines by linking the Caspian Sea, Black Sea and the Mediterranean. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipelines are symbols of regional cooperation. Together with its partners our country is now realizing Southern Gas Corridor project that is worth 40 billion dollars. This is a project of energy cooperation and energy security. The transport and energy projects that I mentioned create tens of thousands of new jobs in the region. These projects bring prosperity. This strengthens cooperation and friendship among countries.

Thank you for your attention.

OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN

5 March 2017

List of meetings held during the official visit:

- Meeting with President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani
- Meeting with Supreme Leader of the Islamic Republic of Iran Sayyid Ali Khamenei

List of documents signed during the official visit:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Financial Markets Supervision Chamber of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Financial Intelligence Unit under the Ministry of Economic Affairs and Finance of the Islamic Republic of Iran on Cooperation in Fighting Against Terrorism Financing and Legalization of Criminally Obtained Funds or Other Property
- Memorandum of Understanding between Azerbaijan Railways CJSC and the Railways of the Islamic Republic of Iran on developing the rail connection

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



Dear Mr. President!

First of all, I want to thank you for your invitation and the hospitality extended to me. I am very glad to be visiting the brotherly Iranian land. This is my third visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran in the last three years. In total, I have met with President Rouhani eight times over the past three years. This in itself is an indicator that the Iranian-Azerbaijani friendship and

fraternal relations are developing very successfully and rapidly. Our relations are based on ancient history, culture and common religion. On this solid foundation, we have established excellent cooperation. Our political relations are at high level. We support each other in all international organizations. We express our gratitude to the Islamic Republic of Iran for its efforts to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the basis of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. This position is based on the principles of international law and justice. The territorial integrity of any country is inviolable.

There are good results in the economic sphere. Our turnover increased by more than 70 per cent last year. This is a result of the agreements reached. All the documents

signed are being implemented. Last year alone, 18 documents were signed as part of my visit to Iran and the visit of President Rouhani to Azerbaijan. Today we signed two other documents. This creates a solid legal basis for our relations. The Iranian side has started to invest in Azerbaijan, and we are grateful for that. At the same time, as President Rouhani has stressed, Azerbaijan has mobilized significant financial resources for the construction of the Rasht-Astara railway. A year ago, I said in this room that Azerbaijan would build a railway to the Azerbaijani-Iranian border in 2016, and we achieved that. This is already a reality. Moreover, the railway bridge over the Astarachay River has been built and put into operation. The first train has recently crossed the border via the new bridge.

The North-South transport corridor being implemented jointly is a historic event. At the same time, this project is making an important contribution to regional cooperation. There is a growing number of trilateral formats in the region now.

Great progress has been made in the field of energy. We have joined our electricity lines and there is an exchange now. There are good opportunities for cooperation in the oil and gas sector. The Iranian company is an active participant and investor in the Shah Deniz-2 project. Today, we have a wide exchange of views on the implementation of joint oil and gas operations in the Caspian Sea. I want to emphasize the activities of the joint economic commission. The Commission is working very actively. It executed all the instructions of presidents in a timely manner and at a high level. Iranian-Azerbaijani relations are important not only for our people but also for the entire region. Our close ties make an important contribution to stability in the region.

I should note that the current year has been declared a Year of Islamic Solidarity in Azerbaijan. We are committed to strengthening the unity and solidarity of the Islamic world. We are very committed to our national-spiritual and religious values. Two months later, Baku will host the Fourth Islamic Solidarity Games. This will not only be a sporting event. It will signify unity of the Islamic world. I am sure that Iranian athletes will achieve a great success in this competition and reach high places. I should note that we attach particular importance to the development of Iranian-Azerbaijani relations and appreciate them very highly. My visit will provide great support for the development of these ties.

Thank you very much for your hospitality again, and I would like take this opportunity to invite you, Mr. President, to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan.

OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE FRENCH REPUBLIC

12 – 15 March 2017

List of meetings held during the official visit:

- Meeting with president of Vivaction company Richard Marry
- Meeting with Deputy Chief Executive Officer of SUEZ, vice-president of MEDEF Marie-Ange Debon
- Meeting with Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of DCNS Hervé Guillou
- Meeting with Chairman and CEO of CIFAL Group Gilles Remy
- Meeting with Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Credit Agricole SA Xavier Musca
- Meeting with Executive Vice President of Space Systems in the Airbus Defence and Space Division Nicolas Chamussy
- Meeting with Senior Executive Vice President of Thales International Raphael Eskinazi
- Meeting with Chairman and Chief Executive Officer of Total Patrick Pouyanne
- Meeting with members of the business council of Movement of the Enterprises of France (MEDEF)
- Meeting with President of the French Senate Gerard Larcher
- Meeting with President of the French National Assembly Claude Bartolone
- Meeting with President of the French Republic Francois Hollande

List of documents signed during the official visit:

- Memorandum of Understanding between the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of the Environment, Energy and the Sea with responsibility for International Climate Relations of the French Republic
- The Loan Agreement between the Development Agency of the French Republic and the Republic of Azerbaijan
- Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation between State Agency for Public Service and Social Innovations under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan and State Secretariat for State Reform and Simplification attached to the Prime Minister of the French Republic in the field of provision of public services
- Memorandum of Understanding on cooperation in the field of innovation, information and communication technologies between the Ministry of Transport, Communications and High Technologies of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Economy, Industry and Digital Technologies of the French Republic
- Protocol of Intentions between the State Committee for Urban Planning and Architecture of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Ministry of Housing and Sustainable Development of the French Republic

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



First of all, Mr. President, I want to express my gratitude for the invitation, the hospitality extended to me and the delegation. I am very glad to come to France again. You have visited Azerbaijan twice. In fact, this is an indicator of the level of French-Azerbaijani relations.

The political dialogue that has developed between us has entered a very active stage. We continue this dialogue today. We see that our positions on many issues overlap. Our strong political relations, of course, have a positive impact on all spheres.

France as a co-chair of the Minsk Group is making efforts to resolve the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We appreciate these efforts. In particular, I want to emphasize the meeting I held with the President of Armenia on your initiative at the Elysee Palace at the end of 2014. It was a very constructive and positive meeting. Unfortunately, after that meeting there was certain stagnation in the negotiations. We want to resolve the issue on the basis of norms and principles of international law as soon as possible. Armenia has for many years occupied Azerbaijani lands recognized by the international community. It occupies Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent districts. The entire Azerbaijani population, hundreds of thousands of people have been driven out of these regions. All infrastructure and buildings there have been destroyed. The OSCE fact-finding missions have visited the occupied territories twice and confirmed this in their reports. The UN Security Council has adopted four resolutions in connection with the conflict, which unequivocally state that Armenian forces must withdraw from occupied lands immediately and unconditionally. These resolutions were adopted in the early 1990s. Armenia, as it appears, is not inclined to implement these resolutions. Therefore, at the first stage, negotiations should resume as soon as possible. Armenia should not try to evade talks. As Mr. Hollande has noted, the status quo is unacceptable. The presidents of Minsk Group co-chair countries – France, Russia and America – have repeatedly stated that the status quo is unacceptable. We say the same thing. We want an early change in the status quo and an end to the conflict, so that peace could be guaranteed in our region and Azerbaijani IDPs could return to their native land.

Mr. President has said that our bilateral agenda is very extensive. Visiting MEDEF

yesterday, I saw a great mutual interest once again. Our economic ties are developing. French companies have invested more than \$2 billion in the Azerbaijani economy and are involved in many important projects in Azerbaijan. French companies support us in the development of the space industry of Azerbaijan. At the same time, projects are being implemented in the field of municipal transport, transportation, infrastructure, water, drinking water, environment, etc. We are very pleased with this cooperation. In the meetings held with French companies, I convinced them again that Azerbaijan has a wonderful climate for foreign investment. At the same time, Azerbaijan's economic potential is growing. Thus, even more French companies can work in Azerbaijan as contractors.

Cooperation in the humanitarian sphere is also very successful. Mr. President has noted this both in the sphere of culture and education. I simply want to emphasize that immediately after the decisions that we made with President Hollande, projects began to be implemented. We are seeing this on the example of the French-Azerbaijani University. In a short time, just a few months after the decision was made, the university opened its doors to students. There is a huge interest in the university.

We cooperate very actively in all other spheres. The President has noted that the relations between the European Union and Azerbaijan are of great importance. Last month, negotiations started on a new partnership agreement with the European Union. Countries of the European Union are our main trading partners. The vast majority of our products are exported to Europe. In addition, the European Union is the biggest investor in Azerbaijan. We are implementing various projects, among which I want to highlight the Southern Gas Corridor. This strategic gas pipeline being built on the initiative of Azerbaijan will contribute to the energy security of Europe. The total cost of the Southern Gas Corridor project is \$40 billion, and Azerbaijan is heavily involved in the realization of this project as an investor country, as an implementing party and as an initiator.

I am confident that French-Azerbaijani relations will become even stronger in the future. The talks held today give grounds to say expect that. We want these ties to reach an even higher level so that the people of France and Azerbaijan have could get even closer to each other.

Mr. President, I want to thank you for your hospitality again.

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

- 09.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Finland Arja Inkeri Makkonen
- 09.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Peru Luis Manuel Santiago Marcovich Monasi
- 09.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Estonia Marin Mottus
- 10.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by French Minister of State for Development and Francophonie, attached to the Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Development by Jean-Marie Le Guen
- 12.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received co-rapporteurs of the Monitoring Committee of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Cezar Florin Preda and Stefan Schennach
- 25.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by governor of West Azerbaijan Province of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ghorbanali Saadat Qarabagh
- 26.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan Saeed Khan Mohmand
- 27.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Minister of Social Policy of Ukraine Andrey Reva
- 27.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Secretary General of the World Customs Organization Kunio Mikuriya
- 29.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by President of American Jewish Committee John Shapiro

- 30.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Director General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations at the European Commission Christian Danielsson
- 31.01.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar Sheikh Mohammad bin Abdulrahman Al-Thani
- 01.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Chair of the Board of Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI) Fredrik Reinfeldt
- 08.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Vice-President of the Centrist Democrat International Mario David and General Coordinator for Asia Pacific and Latin America Cesar Rossello
- 08.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by French Minister of State for State Reform and Simplification attached to the Prime Minister, member of the government, President of the Senate's Ecologist parliamentary group Jean-Vincent Place
- 09.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received World Bank Vice President for Europe and Central Asia Cyril Muller
- 09.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received rapporteur on Azerbaijan of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe Committee on Legal Affairs and Human Rights Alain Destexhe
- 12.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Latvia Edgars Rinkevics
- 13.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Foreign Minister of Georgia Mikheil Janelidze
- 16.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the US Department of Defense Joseph Dunford
- 16.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Justice of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mostafa Pourmohammadi
- 20.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Education and Higher Education of the State of Qatar Mohammed bin Abdul Wahed Al-Hammadi

- 22.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a US delegation led by Deputy Assistant Secretary for Energy Diplomacy in the Department of State's Bureau of Energy Resources Robin Dunnigan
- 22.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a Japanese delegation led by State Minister of Economy, Trade and Industry Yoshifumi Matsumura
- 23.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev met with Minister of Energy and Natural Resources of the Republic of Turkey Berat Albayrak
- 23.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev met with European Commission Vice-President for Energy Union Maros Sefcovic
- 23.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev met with Minister of Economic Development of the Italian Republic Carlo Calenda
- 23.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a Turkish delegation led by Minister of Food, Agriculture and Livestock Faruk Celik
- 24.02.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister for Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Djibouti Mahmoud Ali Youssouf
- 06.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the United Kingdom's Permanent Under Secretary and Head of the Diplomatic Service at the Foreign and Commonwealth Office Simon McDonald
- 10.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of State for Gulf Affairs of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia Thamer Al-Sabhan
- 10.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led president of France-Caucasus Friendship Group in the Senate of the French Republic André Reichardt
- 11.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs Richard Hoagland, Igor Popov, Stephane Visconti, as well as Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk
- 15.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation of the Board of Trustees of Nizami Ganjavi International Center, including co-chairs of the center former Latvian President Vaira Vike-Freiberga and Director of the Bibliotheca Alexandria in Egypt Ismail Serageldin, and members

- of the center former Serbian President Boris Tadić, former Bulgarian leader Petar Stoyanov, former Croatian President Ivo Josipović, former Romanian President Emil Constantinescu, former Bosnia and Herzegovina Prime Minister Zlatko Lagumdžija, former Secretary-General of the Arab League Amr Moussa, UNESCO goodwill ambassador Marianna Vardinoyannis
- 17.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received a delegation led by Minister of Communications and Information Technology of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mahmoud Vaezi
- 17.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Prince of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, Chairman of the Board of Directors of King Faisal Centre for Research and Islamic Studies Turki Al-Faisal
- 17.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received Chairman of the Presidency of Bosnia and Herzegovina Mladen Ivanić
- 26.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Denmark Svend Olling
- 26.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received the credentials of newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Portugal Paula Leal da Silva
- 29.03.2017 President Ilham Aliyev received BP Chief Operating Officer (COO) of production, transformation and carbon Gordon Birrell and the company's Regional President for Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey Gary Jones



**ACTIVITY OF THE MINISTER OF
FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN,
Mr. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV
IN THE FIRST QUARTER OF 2017**

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

- 18.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Dato Sri Anifah Aman, Foreign Minister of Malaysia
- 18.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Dr. Yousef Al Othaimeen, the Secretary General of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation
- 24.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister of Russian Federation
- 26.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Ibrahim Rahimpur, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Iran
- 30.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received a delegation led by Christian Danielsson, Director General for European Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission
- 31.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with a delegation headed by David Harris and John Shapiro, Executive Director and President of the American Jewish Committee
- 31.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar

- 31.01.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Vincent Cochetel, UN Commissariat for Refugees (UNHCR) Director of the Bureau for Europe
- 09.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with a delegation led by Jean-Vincent Place, French Minister of State for State Reform and Simplification, attached to the Prime Minister
- 10.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with a delegation led by Georgia's Minister of Justice Tea Tsulukiani
- 13.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Mikheil Janelidze, Foreign Minister of Georgia
- 13.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Edgars Rinkevics, Foreign Minister of Latvia
- 17.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs Igor Popov (Russian Federation), Stéphane Visconti (France) and Richard Hoagland (the United States of America), as well as Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk, the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office
- 18.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Teodor-Viorel Meleşcanu, Foreign Minister of Romania
- 20.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with the Foreign Minister of Austria Sebastian Kurz and OSCE Secretary General Lamberto Zannier
- 20.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Alan Duncan, Minister of State for Europe and the Americas, Deputy Foreign Minister of the United Kingdom
- 20.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with delegation headed by Kuryachiy Maksim Pavlovich, Chairman of the Interparliamentary Working Group on the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Parliament of Ukraine
- 20.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Tsuguo Takahashi, Ambassador of Japan to the Republic of Azerbaijan upon the termination of his diplomatic mission

- 24.02.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Mahmoud Ali Youssouf, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Djibouti
- 06.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Sergey Lavrov, Foreign Minister of Russian Federation
- 07.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Dmitry Rogozin, Deputy Prime Minister of Russian Federation
- 07.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with Ilyas Umakhanov, deputy chair of the Council of Federation of the Federal Assembly of Russia
- 10.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with a delegation led by André Reichardt, the head of France-Caucasus Friendship Group in the Senate of France
- 16.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Franco Frattini, former Foreign Minister of the Republic of Italy
- 16.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Hekmat Khalil Karzai, Deputy Foreign Minister of the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan
- 17.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov received Julio Sezar Cobos, former vice- president of Argentina and Juan de Dios Cincunegui, General Director of International Relations of Argentine Chamber of Deputies
- 17.03.2017 Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov met with H.E. Raimonds Vejonis, President of the Republic of Latvia

**INTERVIEW BY FOREIGN MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV
TO AZERI-PRESS AGENCY (APA)**

17 January 2017, Baku

Question: *Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov believes the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is not an internal affair of Azerbaijan. What do you think of it?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: I'd like to note that the whole international community recognizes and supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. With regard to the peace process, the negotiations mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, is an international platform for the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict based on the norms and principles of international law. In connection with the settlement of the conflict, international organizations have adopted numerous decisions and resolutions based on the norms and principles of international law.

The most important documents on the resolution of conflict are four resolutions of the United Nations Security Council Resolutions - 822 (1993), 853 (1993), 874 (1993), 884 (1993), which condemn in a strong manner the use of force against Azerbaijan and the occupation of its territories. The resolutions also reaffirm the UN Security Council's respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan, reconfirm Nagorno-Karabakh an integral part of Azerbaijan and demand the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

Question: *The Russian foreign minister touched upon the issue of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh as well. What can you say about these views?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: In his latest interview to Sputnik news agency, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev once again clarified the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh's status. The President stated that there can be no compromise on Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, however, a compromise is possible on matters of local self-rule of Nagorno-Karabakh. If we agree, Nagorno-Karabakh can become an autonomous republic in the future.

Question: *Sergey Lavrov also underlines Russia's role in achieving a ceasefire during the April battles.*

Elmar Mammadyarov: The April battles and the armed incident that took place at the Armenia-Azerbaijan border on December 29, 2016 once again demonstrated that the presence of Armenian troops in the occupied Azerbaijani territories remains

the main source of tension in the region. The OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs have repeatedly declared at the level of heads of state that the status quo is unacceptable and unsustainable. Azerbaijan commends Russia's efforts to achieve a ceasefire during the Moscow meeting held on April 5 last year at the level of chiefs of the General Staff of the Armenia and Azerbaijan Armed Forces. However, the April escalation once again demonstrated that Russia, as an OSCE Minsk Group co-chair country and a neighboring country, should intensify its efforts for soonest resolution of the conflict. I remain fully assured that if Russia engages in this issue with all seriousness, the status quo will change, stability will be restored in the region and the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied Azerbaijani territories will be ensured.

Question: *What can you say about the comments by the Russia foreign minister on the issue of releasing blogger Alexander Lapshin?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: This issue should be addressed only within the legal framework. In accordance with the Criminal Code of the Republic of Azerbaijan, a criminal case has been initiated against Lapshin, who illegally crossed the state border of Azerbaijan and demonstrated disrespect to the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan. Lapshin has been put on Interpol's wanted list. All relevant documents have been submitted for the extradition of Lapshin, who was detained in Belarus in accordance with the Chisinau Convention of 2002 on the legal assistance and legal relations on civil, family and criminal cases. I believe Russia's law-enforcement authorities would have taken similar steps in respect of a person who committed a similar action in relation to Russia and illegally crossed its state border.

**STATEMENT BY MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, AT THE EXTRAORDINARY
SESSION OF THE COUNCIL OF FOREIGN MINISTERS OF THE OIC**

19 January 2017, Kuala Lumpur

Bismillahir Rahmanir Raheem.

Dear Mr. Chairman,

Mr. Secretary General,

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to express heartfelt gratitude to the Government of the Republic of Malaysia, Honorable Prime Minister and to my good friend and brother Foreign Minister the Honourable Dato' Sri Anifah Hj. Aman for the excellent organization of our session and warm hospitality extended to me and my delegation. We also highly commend the superb work done by the newly elected Secretary General of OIC Mr. Yusuf bin Ahmad Al-Othaimeen in the direction of urgent reaction to the problems of Muslim's communities in the World, including preserving their dignity, culture and religious identity.

As a country, which continuously promotes Islamic cultural and spiritual values all over the world and expresses its strong solidarity with Islamic Ummah, Azerbaijan is highly interested in the enhancement of OIC proactive policy and looks forward to strengthening its relations with the brotherly Islamic countries. I have the honor to underline that the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan H.E. Ilham Aliyev has signed the Declaration on announcing Year of 2017 as a Year of Islamic Solidarity.

Mr. Chairman,

The general overview of the current situation in a number of Muslim countries remains a deep concern for all of us. This shows a necessity for reaffirming our commitment to Islamic solidarity and increasing support to those in need. We must remain consistent in defending the just cause of our member states and to protect the rights of Muslim brothers and sisters in non-Muslim countries.

To the deepest regret, the situation in Rohingya continues to be a serious challenge for the Islamic Ummah and requires a unified stand of the OIC member states. We should not remain indifferent to the grave violence and humanitarian crisis that forced thousand of Muslims flee their homes in the Rakhine state.

Azerbaijan, which has faced longstanding problem of refugees and internally displaced persons, as a result of the military aggression of the Republic of Armenia

with notorious facts of occupation and ethnic cleansing, has full understanding of those who suffered from injustice and sufferings. Therefore, we extremely condemn the acts of repression as killing and arrest of Rohingya civilians, destruction of their homes and religious buildings and call upon the leadership of Myanmar to eliminate this humanitarian crisis and restore stability and dignity in the Muslim populated part of Myanmar.

At this point, I express our full support for the Republic of Turkey, as co-sponsor of the Alliance of Civilizations activities with regard to a meeting between the Buddhist and Muslim communities in order to promote interfaith and inter-communal dialogue. I believe this approach is utmost important and must be continued as it is extremely important to build up a solid base for promoting more understanding which will lead to more predictability.

I would like to express my believe that the efforts of the OIC Contact Group on Myanmar to restore peace between Myanmar government and Muslims community living in the Rakhine state, preserving their safety and providing them fundamental human rights.

Distinguished Colleagues,

Israeli-Palestinian conflict is very painful issue for us. I would like to reiterate Azerbaijan's full support to the brotherly people of Palestine in their struggle for achieving peace, stability and establishment of an independent State. Azerbaijan stands for the two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict which is the only guarantee of achieving the long-awaited, comprehensive, lasting and just peace, security and sustainable development in this sacred land. We highly commend the work done by the OIC in supporting the Palestinian people and serving the Palestinian cause.

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

Thank you.

Esselamu aleykum ve rahmetullahi ve berekatuhu.

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN, ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND
FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE STATE OF QATAR,
SHEIKH MOHAMMED BIN ABDULRAHMAN BIN JASSIM AL-THANI**

31 January 2017, Baku

Elmar Mammadyarov: Ladies and gentlemen! As you know, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar, Sheikh Mohammed bin Abdulrahman bin Jassim Al-Thani is on an official visit to Azerbaijan. It is the first visit of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the State of Qatar to Azerbaijan. A number of high level visits have been implemented and the cooperation is developing day-by-day between Azerbaijan and Qatar. Today morning, my counterpart was received by H.E. Mr. Ilham Aliyev, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Afterwards, we had a tete-a-tete meeting and a meeting with participation of delegations. We discussed the political relations between Azerbaijan and Qatar. We noted that the positions of both countries coincide in the international arena. I informed him about the negotiations process on the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

We touched upon the economic relations between Azerbaijan and Qatar. They are huge plans for cooperation. As you may know, the meeting of the Economic Commission is set to be held today. We plan to hold more intensive negotiations to strengthen the economic cooperation between the two countries.

We agreed on holding the cultural days. We touched upon the energy issue, as well. As you know, Qatar has a great role in the energy sector in the world. We had a discussion on TANAP, TAP, Southern Gas Corridor projects, as well as Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway. Ministry of Foreign Affairs is building intensive relationship with the Gulf Cooperation Council. We proposed to hold a meeting at ministerial level between the Gulf Cooperation Council and Azerbaijan. We plan to organize it in Baku in summer of 2017.

The State of Qatar is interested in cooperation in the areas of agriculture and tourism. As you know, there is a big flow of citizens of Qatar to Azerbaijan as tourists. We welcome it and consider that it is very important in terms of developing the infrastructure in Baku, as well as in the regions. We agreed that the “Qatar Airways” company should increase the number of its flights to Azerbaijan.

Q&A session

Question (Qatar television): *My question is for Mr. Elmar Mammadyarov. How do you see the perspectives of economic-trade cooperation between Azerbaijan and Qatar?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: I think that we have huge perspectives. First, there is a will by our Heads of State to advance the cooperation. We, from the both sides as foreign ministers and also other members of the government must follow up all agreements achieved between the two countries including those signed during the visit of Emir of the State of Qatar to Azerbaijan. As my friend and counterpart noted, we are preparing the visit of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan to Qatar. It is planned to sign a number of documents. We also plan to implement different projects with Qatar. The projects in the fields of agriculture, energy and construction are very important. The cooperation in the area of investment between the two countries has great importance, as well. There is no field which is closed to discussion between Azerbaijan and Qatar. There is great confidence between our countries. Taking this opportunity through the Qatar television, on behalf of the Republic of Azerbaijan I express my gratitude to the State of Qatar for supporting the just position of our country on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The position of Qatar on the conflict is the same with that of the international community. The UN Security Council adopted 4 resolutions on the conflict in 1993. In these resolutions, the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of occupying forces of Armenia from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan is demanded. There are resolutions that are implemented even before they are adopted in the Security Council. But for us, they have not been implemented for more than 20 years. Everybody knows that there is no timeframe for the implementation of the resolutions of the UN Security Council. But we are still waiting. We hope that the United Nations will have strong determination for the implementation of those resolutions. The stance of Qatar on the conflict is very important for us.

Question (APA news agency): *My question is for you, Mr. Minister. It is a long time no meeting on the conflict has been held. You made a visit to Moscow. Also prior to you, your counterpart from Armenia visited Moscow. Did you discuss any plans in regard with new meetings in Moscow? Also, the dead body of an Azerbaijani soldier is kept in Armenia. What kind of measures are taken to return it back? Besides, is the visit of co-chairs to the region expected?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: In the framework of my working visit to Moscow, the press services of both countries' foreign ministries made relevant statements. With my Russian counterpart, we agreed to continue the negotiations. There were proposals on holding a meeting between the foreign ministers of three countries. Unfortunately, the meeting did not take place. The Russian side is trying to organize a trilateral meeting. The Azerbaijani side has agreed for the meeting. But the meeting must be result-oriented. And on the visit of the co-chairs to the region, they had a meeting between themselves. The co-chairs from both France and the United States of America were newly appointed. First of all, they must be more informed about the conflict. I had a phone call with them. I probably meet them in the Munich Security

Council. They sounded such a proposal and we accepted.

On the dead body of the soldier I can say that this is not humanist action by Armenia. I discussed this issue with my counterparts, as well as with the co-chairs. In fact, we had agreed to exchange or to return the soldiers' dead bodies back after the battles. I repeat again, this is a non-humanist action.

Question (Interfax-Azerbaijan): *Mr. Minister, my second question goes to you. Does Azerbaijan plan to involve the international organisations in carrying out construction work in Jojukmarjanli village?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: I have no doubt that all occupied villages and territories will be liberated from the occupation. It is the first step. Afterwards, all those territories will be restored. We are carrying out negotiations with the international organisations to get them involved. There are different parts of the issue. This is not one-day issue. The preparation of documents, their submission and the feasibility study require time. The negotiations are being carried out and will be continued. But in the initial stage, the construction and reconstruction work in Jojukmarjanli village is done by the Government of Azerbaijan.

Thank you!

INTERVIEW BY FOREIGN MINISTER ELMAR MAMMADYAROV TO TREND NEWS AGENCY

1 February 2017, Baku

Question: *Foreign Minister of Armenia once again spoke with lies and slanders against Azerbaijan at a press conference yesterday. How would you comment on that?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: Armenian foreign minister's statements are out of diplomatic ethics and distort the essence of the negotiations process. His contemptuous and insulting statements are also contradictory. These warmongering and aggressive statements are only aimed at the consumption of internal auditorium.

In his groundless accusations and slanders there is no positive attitude in regard with ensuring peace in the region, future development of the region, as well as the perspectives of conflict settlement.

These emotional and destructive statements are out of any reasonable logic and serve for the escalation of the situation in a deliberate manner and consequently, the attempts of undermining the negotiations. With such destructive view and behavior inherent to the political leadership of Armenia, it seems very difficult to ensure the sustainable peace in the region and to achieve the settlement of the conflict. The people of Armenia and the international community have to give proper assessment to such actions of the leadership of Armenia and draw necessary conclusions.

Question: *Foreign Minister of Armenia also distorts the issues related to incident investigation mechanism, the OSCE office in Yerevan, A. Lapshin case and other matters. Although he has broken the meeting at the ministerial in 2+3 format in the framework of OSCE meeting in Hamburg, Edward Nalbandian now claims that the meeting in Hamburg took place at the level of co-chairs.*

Elmar Mammadyarov: The well-substantiated position of Azerbaijan on the incident investigation mechanism, the OSCE office in Yerevan and the case of A. Lapshin has been repeatedly brought to the attention of international community. Armenia intentionally attempts to make these issues the object of political speculations. Presenting the farewell dinner organized for James Warlick, the former co-chair from the United States in the framework of OSCE Ministerial in Hamburg as a meeting by Armenia's foreign minister is the zenith of absurdity. Probably, foreign minister of Armenia by these means attempts to present himself as constructive. But you can draw conclusions yourselves.

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN, ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND
FOREIGN MINISTER OF GEORGIA MIKHEIL JANELIDZE**

13 February 2017, Baku

Elmar Mammadyarov: Ladies and gentlemen! Welcome to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs!

As you may know, Mr. Mikheil Janelidze, Foreign Minister of Georgia, is on an official visit to Azerbaijan. Mr. Janelidze has already been received by H.E Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Today we had one-by-one meeting and a meeting with participation of delegations. We exchanged views on broadening and strengthening the strategic cooperation between Azerbaijan and Georgia based on the principles of friendship and good neighborhood.

As you are aware Azerbaijan and Georgia enjoy well-developed level of cooperation in the field of energy, economy, trade and transport. With regards to transport, we do hope that Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project will be operational no later than this year. On the other hand, the railway project will serve development of economy, as well as Azerbaijan and Georgia.

We also discussed the possibility of holding a meeting within Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey trilateral format in upcoming 6 month period of this year.

Azerbaijan supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Georgia. At the same time, Georgia supports the territorial integrity and sovereignty of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Our strong and shared position on this matter was repeatedly raised in the international arena.

As you may also know, Georgia has taken the chairmanship of the GUAM. We also had discussions on strengthening of the Organization. There are some economic ideas on the agenda and most probably high level meeting of member states will be held within forthcoming three months. GUAM plays a significant role in the development of economic and tourism sector.

Thank you!

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN, ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND FOREIGN MINISTER
OF THE REPUBLIC OF LATVIA EDGARS RINKEVICS**

14 February 2017, Baku

Elmar Mammadyarov: Ladies and gentlemen! As you may know, Foreign Minister of the Republic of Latvia, Mr. Edgars Rinkevics is on an official visit to Azerbaijan. Yesterday Mr. Minister was received by H.E Ilham Aliyev, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Numbers of issues of common interest were discussed at the meeting.

As you probably know, Azerbaijan and Latvia enjoy mutually strategic relations. In this regard, Latvia is close and crucial partner of Azerbaijan. In our opinion, number of high level visits will be realized within the year.

As Latvia is a member state of the European Union, we exchanged views on mutual relations between Azerbaijan and the EU, as well as Eastern Partnership. It is known that last Monday Mr. President within the visit to Brussels met with high officials of the European Union and discussed wide range of issues. Documents of strategic character with the European Union are already being considered. Azerbaijan has strategic partnership agreements with 9 members of European Union. Those documents will serve to deepening the relationship between Azerbaijan and the European Union. As you may know strategic partnership on energy cooperation between Azerbaijan and the European Union has already been signed. Southern Gas Corridor is a crucial element in diversifying delivery of natural gas to the European markets.

Furthermore, we discussed transport projects with my counterpart. Zubr railway project considers connecting Baltic, Black and Caspian seas. The project, starting from the East to Europe, has great potentials. We agreed on preparation of strategy on the project. Of course, regular contacts and meetings of expertise are important on this matter.

We also talked about Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict. I thank to Latvian side for the support based on the norms and principles of international law. That position has also been raised by the President Tusk in Brussels. European Union and member states expressed full support to territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of Azerbaijan. Taking into account threats Azerbaijan faces nowadays, that support is crucially important for us.

Thank you!

Q&A session

Question (Ilkin Shafiyev, CBC channel): *My questions are addressed to both Ministers. What areas of bilateral economic-trade relations do open opportunities for cooperation? Second question, I would like to have your opinions on connecting Zubr project to North-South.*

Elmar Mammadyarov: Trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Latvia unfortunately haven't met our expectations. We agreed on holding consultations on the eve of upcoming visits. For the first stage, we are planning to have consultations in the level of Ministries of Foreign Affairs for the assessment of economic-trade relations, as well as legal-treaty base between Azerbaijan and Latvia. I would point out agriculture sector as a field of cooperation with great potential with Latvia. Latvia is well known for the development of agriculture sector. Development of agriculture sector is priority and Azerbaijan makes investments on agriculture sector.

Agreement on avoidance of double taxation and investment protection was already signed between Azerbaijan and Latvia. In this regard, holding of mutual business forums would be beneficially important.

Zubr is a project with interesting elements. Politically, the project would connect Baltic, Black and Caspian Seas and bring closer three different regions. It wouldn't be correct to limit the project with North-South project. Our task is to engage related structures and institutions and to establish commercially beneficial atmosphere.

STATEMENT BY MR. ELMAR MAMMADYAROV, MINISTER OF FOREIGN AFFAIRS OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN, AT THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE ON “KHOJALY GENOCIDE, CRIMES AGAINST HUMANITY AND TERRORISM”

22 January 2017, Ankara

Excellences,
Ladies and gentlemen,

At the outset, I would like to thank the Secretariat of the Turkic Council and Ahmet Yasevi University for convening such Conference on the threshold of 25th Anniversary of Khojaly Genocide which represents a flagrant and tragic page of the Azerbaijani history.

On the night of February 25-26, the armed forces of Armenia, with participation of irregular armed bands and terrorist groups, as well as with direct participation of the infantry guards regiment No. 366 of the former USSR located in Khankendi, seized the town of Khojaly and perpetrated atrocious massacre of the civilian population of the town. In a few hours 613 civilians were killed, including 106 women, 63 children, 70 elders, moreover, 1275 inhabitants were taken hostage, while the fate of 150 persons remain unknown to this day. In the course of the massacre, more than 1000 inhabitants of Khojaly were severely maimed, including 76 children under the age. 6 families were completely wiped out, 26 children lost both parents, and 130 children lost one of their parents. As an integral part of occupation policy and another ruthless example of ethnic cleansing and genocide policy of Armenia against Azerbaijan, Khojaly Genocide was followed by massive flagrant violations of norms and principles of international law, human rights and fundamental freedoms.

The merciless massacres of Armenia against Azerbaijanis do not confine with Khojaly Genocide. The Khojaly Genocide is a part of ethnic cleansing policy of Armenia against Azerbaijanis committed stage by stage in XIX-XX centuries in Nakhchivan, Ganja, Baku and Irevan khanate. The truth about all of these crimes committed by Armenians must be conveyed to the international community, the legal appraisal should be given as well.

The Republic of Azerbaijan purposefully and sequentially takes steps in this regard. Namely, many states, as well as international organizations in their resolutions and statements recognized the Khojaly tragedy as Genocide. The Parliaments of Mexico, Columbia, Peru, Pakistan, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Slovenia, Romania, Czech Republic, Jordan, Honduras, Guatemala, Panama, Sudan, Djibouti, as well as legislative bodies of 16 States of USA adopted documents recognizing and condemning the Khojaly Genocide. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation is the first international organization that recognized Armenia as an aggressor and Khojaly

tragedy as Genocide. By initiative of Heydar Aliyev Foundation the “Justice for Khojaly” Campaign started in more than 40 countries of the world aimed at conveying to international community a truth about the bloody tragedy of Azerbaijani people.

A special resolution adopted at the 12th session of the of the Parliamentary Union of the OIC Member States held this January in Mali recognized Khojaly tragedy as a genocide supporting “Justice for Khojaly” campaign and called 54 member states to bring Armenian murderers to the justice.

Unfortunately, for decades Armenians by distortion of history put so-called “Armenian Genocide” issue on international agenda and tried to use it for their political purposes. Especially, I would like to emphasize the role of Armenian diaspora in this regard. The role of diaspora in putting their invented history entitled the “Armenian Genocide” on the agenda of international organizations, different conferences and meetings is undeniable. In spite of multiple suggestions of the Republic of Turkey regarding the opening archives, as well as proposals of Turkish and Armenian historians’ joint research of the issue, the Armenians and their intercessors declined them all. The reason is simple. They dread of truth.

By using this opportunity, I would like to recommend a joint action to be taken by diaspora organizations of the Turkic Council Member States against the Armenian anti-Turkic World propaganda.

Dear participants,

The existence of Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict undermines peace, security, stability and comprehensive economic development of the region. Unfortunately, as a result of Armenian aggression the internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan remain violated for decades.

As a result of Armenian ethnic cleansing policy more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs. The norms and principles of international law were flagrantly violated. The position of international organizations is well known. The UN Security Council adopted 4 resolutions demanding immediate, full and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian occupying forces from occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Unfortunately, none of them was implemented. Azerbaijan supports peace and willing to resolve the conflict by peaceful means. Our position remains unchanged. The conflict must be resolved on the basis of sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The soonest and just resolution of Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno Karabakh conflict on the basis of mentioned principles will end injustice and at the same time will contribute to peace and security in the region.

I would like to underline that the Republic of Azerbaijan makes efforts to ensure peace and stability in the region. Our country supports the efforts of international community in fight against terrorism and makes contributions to this end. Unfortunately, recent terror acts committed in brotherly Turkey lead to death and injury of dozens of innocent people. In this regard, I would like to state that as a victim of terrorism, Azerbaijan strongly condemns terrorism in all its forms and manifestations and stays side by side with Turkey.

It is regretful that in today's world some politicians and so-called researchers blame Islam in "serving" terrorism. I would like to express our deepest concern over the increased cases of religious intolerance, in particular Islamophobia and attempts to associate religions with terrorism. It is miserable that in some countries basic rights and freedoms of Muslims are objects of violation; radicals treat Muslims as potential terrorists. In this context, I would like to proudly state that Azerbaijan is a tolerant country, where all people with different religious and confessional affiliations live and exercise their religious rites without any restrictions, discrimination or prejudice. Our people proudly hold this salient feature and live side by side with religious, confessional and national minorities. The Government of the Republic of Azerbaijan also attaches great importance to this issue.

In accordance with Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2016 was declared in Azerbaijan as a "Year of Multiculturalism" and our country hosted 7th Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations. People of different cultures, religions and confessions visited our country and witnessed our achievements in mentioned spheres. Being a tolerant country, Azerbaijan is proud of its Muslim identity. We proudly revere Islamic culture, history and traditions for centuries.

In accordance with Decree of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan 2017 has been declared "A Year of Islamic Solidarity". The strengthening of cooperation with Islamic States was always a priority for Azerbaijan. Due to its geographical location Azerbaijan for centuries served as a bridge between East and West and was promoting Islamic cultural and spiritual values to the World. As a continuation of mentioned efforts, we are planning to host 4th Islamic Solidarity Games in Baku in May 2017.

The main aim of Azerbaijan, that is a leading economic power of South Caucasus and strengthens its positions in international arena day by day, is to ensure lasting peace, stability, prosperity and good neighborhood in the region.

I believe that those who respect and support sovereignty, territorial integrity, future prosperity of their own countries, as well as supremacy of international law will support the just stand of Azerbaijan.

I thank you for your attention.

**JOINT PRESS CONFERENCE OF FOREIGN MINISTER OF THE REPUBLIC
OF AZERBAIJAN, ELMAR MAMMADYAROV AND MINISTER OF FOREIGN
AFFAIRS AND INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION OF DJIBOUTI,
MAHMOUD ALI YOUSOUF**

24 February 2017, Baku

Elmar Mammadyarov: Ladies and gentlemen! As you know, my friend, brother, Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of the Republic of Djibouti Mahmoud Ali Youssef is on a visit in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijan-Djibouti relationship has a long history. After Azerbaijan gained its independence when a resolution on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was discussed in the UN Security Council in 1993, Djibouti's then permanent representative to the UN made big efforts for the adoption of the resolution. It is sorry that he is not alive at the moment. Djibouti was a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council that time. At today's meeting I expressed my gratitude to my colleague, as well as the people of Djibouti for that. As you may know, the parliament of Djibouti has adopted a resolution condemning in strongest terms the Khojaly genocide recently. Besides, our cooperation with Djibouti is continued within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation. We must expand the cooperation in economic, humanitarian and cultural fields, as well. Today, we talked about a number of joint projects. Some of them are being implemented; some are in their initial stage. Our civil aviation is interested in opening a cargo flight to Djibouti. Our delegations made visits to Djibouti and had discussions there. The leadership of the Djibouti Port and Free Economic Zones had a visit to Azerbaijan in order to get acquainted with our experience. At the same time, the leadership of the Baku International Sea Trade Port made a visit to Djibouti.

Then Mr. Minister raised the issue of opportunities for studying of Djiboutian citizens in Azerbaijan. The Djiboutian side is particularly interested in making experts in the field of information technologies. Also, my counterpart requested assistance of Azerbaijan in case of natural disasters and emergency situations in Djibouti.

Today we signed a Memorandum of Understanding on bilateral consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs. The geographic location of Djibouti is very strategic. We had an exchange of views on the situation in the regions where Djibouti and Azerbaijan are located. We also talked about the development and assistance programs. As you know, the Azerbaijan International Development Agency (AIDA) of MFA is implementing assistance programs in North Africa. The Azerbaijani doctors are doing the medical treatment of eyes in 12 African countries. We discussed the issues of providing medical equipment, medical aid and implementing joint assistance programs with Djibouti.

Q&A Session

Question (Caspian Broadcasting Company): *First of all, I would like to express my gratitude for the resolution condemning the Khojaly genocide adopted in the Djiboutian parliament. My question is about economy. The cooperation in the economic field with Djibouti is developing. As we know, the Azerbaijani companies intended to participate in the construction of the new airport in Djibouti. How is it going forward? Also, what about is the agreement signed between AZAL and the respective body of Djibouti? What kind of issues does it cover? And it was planned to establish a joint cargo company between Djibouti and Azerbaijan. How is it going forward?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: I would like to add a point. We consider Djibouti as a great hub in Africa. Therefore, the agreements signed between our respective bodies, including AZAL and Baku International Sea Trade Port will create opportunities for transportation of goods not only at bilateral and also international level.

Question (APA): *I have two questions. Mr. Minister, you will make an official visit to Russia in March. What kind of discussions will you have regarding the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict there? This year is the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Azerbaijan and Russia. Is it planned to hold events on that? Generally, how do you assess the current status of Russia-Azerbaijan relationship? Do the Minsk Group co-chairs plan to make a visit to the region? Which country will the visit start from? Recently, it is observed the escalation of the situation in the contact line. What could you say about that?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: Yes, I am going to visit Russia in March. First, I intend to meet with my counterpart Sergey Lavrov and we will discuss the issues of cooperation both on the bilateral basis and also within international organizations. Then there will be a meeting in the Cabinet of Ministers on the activity of the Inter-Governmental commission. Probably, I will also have a meeting in the State Duma of Russia. The Russian side proposed me to make a speech in the Diplomatic Academy. I accepted the proposal with great pleasure. I myself studied there. It is my pleasure to make a speech there. Also, I was proposed to participate with S.Lavrov in the opening ceremony of an exhibition on the 25th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations.

Unfortunately, we don't have optimistic news on the conflict yet. You have seen the statements of the Armenian side. Every time they blame Azerbaijan and say that it is the position of international organizations. But if you analyze the situation, you can see that all international organizations unanimously recognize the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The conflict must be settled by peaceful means. And it is clear to

everyone who undermines it. We could have gone forward if they had accepted this plan. Russia is one of the Minsk Group co-chair countries. I will touch upon this issue at the meeting, as well. We will discuss about which steps must be taken in order to change the current status-quo. In my interview to Ria-Novosti I clearly stated how the issue must be settled. There is even a written plan. This was discussed line by line in Presidents' Sankt-Petersburg meeting. Everyone knows which plans are on the table to achieve the progress in the settlement of the conflict. We know that it is not impossible to solve the problem within one day. First of all, the occupying forces have to be withdrawn. And the co-chairs will make a visit in March. Yesterday, I talked to them. They want to visit both Baku and Yerevan. Probably, we will make a statement on that soon. The visit of co-chairs to the region is planned.

Question (APA): *My question goes to the foreign minister of Djibouti. The position of Russia and the international organizations on the conflict are clear And everybody knows about the resolutions. What kind of measures could Djibouti take in order to urge the international community to make Armenia to implement those resolutions? What steps not only Djibouti, and also the international community overall should take?*

Elmar Mammadyarov: I share the same stance with my colleague. When the resolutions, especially the resolutions 822 and 853 on the conflict were adopted in the UN, they also had time-table on withdrawal of the occupying forces. There were other issues in the resolutions as well. But as an essential issue it was demanded the withdrawal of troops. If someone says the resolutions are about the cease-fire, make mistake. As Mr. Minister mentioned the problem is their implementation. Some resolutions are immediately implemented, but some of them are delayed for years. We appreciate highly the position of Djibouti on the conflict.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED THE THIRD MINISTERIAL MEETING OF SOUTHERN GAS
CORRIDOR ADVISORY COUNCIL**

23 February 2017, Baku

Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear guests,

First of all, I would like to welcome all our guests and express my gratitude for participating at the Third Ministerial Meeting of Southern Gas Corridor Advisory Council. Your participation is very important. It shows that governments and organizations you represent attach very big importance to the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor project.



Today, among our guests we have ministers of the member-countries of the Southern Gas Corridor, high representatives of the governments of the United States and United Kingdom, Vice-President of the European Commission. We have with us representatives of companies and international financial organizations. I would like to especially welcome Mr. Sevcovic, Vice-President of the European Commission, whom I met this year already four times. And this actually shows that European Commission and Azerbaijan are working very closely in order to implement this important project.

I think that we managed to establish a very unique, very special format of international cooperation. Definitely, this experience of cooperation between countries, companies, financial institutions is not only the main reason for successful implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor, but will also play its important role in future because after the completion of this global project, definitely, our cooperation will continue in many other areas.

Talking about international cooperation, of course, I would like to draw your attention to the history of energy policy of Azerbaijan because without that today's meeting wouldn't have been possible. After restoration of our independence, Azerbaijan invited major energy companies to work in the country. For the first time the Caspian Sea became the area of international cooperation and huge investments from major oil and gas companies of the world. In 1994, we signed a contract, which then was named the Contract of the 20th Century, to develop huge oil fields in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea. That was actually the opening of the Caspian Sea for foreign investment,

that was the first important step for our country to transform and to develop.

Today's Azerbaijan to large extent is a result of that policy because attracting multi-billion foreign investments, developing the oil fields of Azerbaijan created major prerequisites for successful development. We started to re-invest the money, which we receive from oil sales, in infrastructure, human capital, social projects, and managed to diversify the economy of our country. Without investments and without the international cooperation in the middle of the 1990s, none of this achievements would have been possible.

Therefore, we highly value the international cooperation between countries, companies. All investments are duly protected in our country. All the production sharing agreements Azerbaijan signed with international oil companies are ratified by our parliament and then signed as a law by the president. So, there is a hundred percent guarantee that not even one word will be changed in these agreements. And this creates confidence for investors. I think this also played an important role in positioning Azerbaijan as a reliable partner, a partner which values investments and duly protects them.

The Southern Gas Corridor resource base is a huge Shahdeniz gas field. The contract to develop Shahdeniz was signed back in 1996, and that was also a historic moment because before that Azerbaijan was known only as an oil producing country. But Shahdeniz allowed us to present ourselves as a country with huge gas deposits. Today Shahdeniz and other gas fields of Azerbaijan have proven reserves of 2.6 trillion cubic meters. This is a huge deposit, and definitely, production from Shahdeniz in the first stage created the real grounds for building Southern Gas Corridor project.

So these are two important milestones, which led to regional cooperation, and then to international cooperation. As far as regional cooperation is concerned, in our region we already successfully cooperate for many years. Three countries – Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey – managed to build the corridors because that was the most important. The Caspian Sea didn't have a connection with the crude oil pipeline with the Black Sea. So we first built Baku-Supsa oil pipeline to the Georgian shore of the Black Sea. Then a major oil pipeline to connect Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey – Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan and then Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum, which is today being expanded and is part of the Southern Gas Corridor.

All that happened as a result of regional cooperation between Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey and with the support of international financial institutions, and also with the support of the United States government which considered these projects as strategic. And they are really strategic because these projects started to change the energy map of our region. Thus, Azerbaijan became a reliable supplier of oil to the world markets and today some of European countries have 30-40 percent in their energy balance based on oil received from Azerbaijan.

I'm telling that in order to show that today's development has a very solid background, the history of active work, the history of mutual trust, cooperation. We are also grateful to the international financial institutions for financing those important projects in the area, which was considered to be of high risk.

Today, the Southern Gas Corridor is a reality and we will review the problems and talk about the challenges. I would also like to mention special importance of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Turkey in the implementation of this project. In 2012 in Istanbul, President Ergodan and myself signed a historical agreement on TANAP, Trans Anatolian Pipeline. Actually, we can consider that day to be the beginning of the implementation of the Southern Gas Corridor because before that there were different projects, different options, a lot of discussions, a lot of conferences, seminars on potential implementation of the gas project. But the signing ceremony in Istanbul was a turning point.

After that, a decision was made to invest into Shahdeniz Stage 2. That decision wouldn't have been made without the signing of TANAP agreement. After that Trans-Adriatic pipeline was selected as a continuation of TANAP. So, 2012 ceremony in Istanbul was a turning point and was supported by our partners. Today we already see the results of that agreement.

I am very grateful to our partners, representatives of countries, companies, organizations for being today with us. This is the third Advisory Council. This is already a good tradition. And the life proved that this kind of gatherings has a very important meaning because we not only review what has been done, but also, most importantly, plan for the future, coordinate our efforts because without coordination we cannot achieve success. All the four segments of the Southern Gas Corridor are implemented in parallel. Therefore, the most important is to have a very accurate implementation of the project and to protect the time table of the implementation.

Since we met last year in Baku a lot of things has happened. We have had good progress in implementation. According to information I received recently, Shahdeniz 2 project is implemented almost at the level of 90 percent, South Caspian pipeline close to 80 percent, TANAP 65 percent, and Trans-Adriatic Pipeline 34 percent. I think this is a good sign of progress. If we compare it with situation last February when we had the second Ministerial Meeting, we will see a lot of progress. This is a very important sign of successful implementation of the project.

At the same time, since we met last time here in Baku, another big gas project Absheron also started to be implemented. We are planning to start very soon practical work on the field with respect to drilling and Absheron phase 1 project's potential has already been estimated. So, Absheron will be an additional supply source for Azerbaijan's gas potential.

This shows that first, our gas potential is not limited only by Shahdeniz, though Shahdeniz is probably one of the biggest gas fields in the world with 1.2 trillion cubic meters. But also this shows the importance of the implementation of Shahdeniz 2 for other projects because without modern transportation infrastructure it would've been difficult to attract investments to other gas fields. And I think it is in the benefit of all of us because the more gas is transported through the network, the better will be for governments, for companies and for all of us.

The Southern Gas Corridor is a project, which can be considered the project of the 21st century. I am also glad that the costs of the implementation of TANAP were reduced, according to recent information, from 11.8 billion dollars to 8.5 billion dollars. This is a very important reduction, especially in these days when economic situation in many countries still creates some concern. And this will save a lot of money for the shareholders of TANAP.

We managed to raise funds to implement the project. Especially, I'd like to mention the World Bank, which not only provided substantial funds, but also that was a signal to other financial institutions. We are very grateful also to Asian Development Bank, Asia Infrastructure and Development Bank for providing large volumes of money to support the implementation of Southern Gas Corridor.

It's particularly important because gas from Azerbaijan will be delivered to Europe, not to Asia. But we see that Asian financial institutions are much ahead of those of European in providing the financial support. We hope that EBRD and EIB will also consider very seriously the provision of financial support, and will not be behind their Asian partners. Otherwise, it will be very difficult to understand.

Azerbaijan also provides substantial financial support to the project through our budget and through the funds of Azerbaijan Oil Fund. Today the financial resources of Azerbaijan allow us to implement any possible project in the neighborhood, and we are doing that very successfully. The Southern Gas Corridor is a project of energy security. As I said many times energy security is part of national security of the countries. It's a project of energy diversification. Diversification is needed not only for consumers, but also for us, for producers because we need to have a multiple network of delivery. Today we have seven pipelines – three for oil and four for gas, which transport our resources to different destinations. And the eighth one, the Southern Gas Corridor, will soon be also in operation.

When we are talking about energy diversification, of course, we talk about routes. But we also talk about sources. The sources, which are coming from the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea are the new sources and this is the only new source of natural gas. I mean new source of natural gas to supply the region and to supply the European consumers. Regional cooperation now already international cooperation, I think, mutual trust and mutual support is one of the most important elements in

the implementation of this project. Today, at the Third Ministerial Meeting we can already be absolutely sure that no obstacle will prevent us from the implementation of this project. The figures which I presented to you demonstrate that we are already at the final stage of the implementation. Nevertheless, we should by joint efforts, and I am sure today this topic will be thoroughly discussed here, avoid any kind of artificial delays on some segments of the implementation of this project.

And we know that there could be some interference, some external pressure, or kind of pretext, ecological or any other. But with all respect to that we have to take into account the reality. And the reality is that in none of the projects, which Azerbaijan implemented with its partners and we have our strategic partner – BP, which is operator in oil and gas projects, in none of them, we had any ecological problems neither in Azerbaijan, nor on route from Azerbaijan.

I remember when we were building Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan there was also a campaign against it. And it was called exactly Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan campaign. It was sponsored by those who didn't want that project to be implemented. And they launched huge activity to discredit Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, calling it kind of ecological disaster, catastrophe for the region. Unfortunately, at that time, some of the financial institutions delayed the process for a while. But Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan is in operation for eleven years and since that time there was not even a small episode of some concern. The ecological standards of the projects we implement together with BP and together with other partners are at highest possible level.

Therefore, as soon as we again heard about some ecological concerns with respect to some segments of the Southern Gas Corridor, immediately we remembered what was happening 10 years ago. It's the same scenario, the same pattern. And I am sure the result will be the same – we will implement the Southern Gas Corridor and we will achieve this success jointly. The only thing what we can lose – we can lose time. Why should we lose time? Time is money. And we need to implement this project on time. As I said before, all the four segments of the project Shahdeniz 2, South Caucasus Pipeline, TANAP and TAP, must be implemented in parallel.

I don't want to go much into details. I am sure this topic would be broadly discussed, but the importance of the gathering like this is that not only we talk about results and achievements, we talk about problems, challenges, and how to resolve these problems.

I'd like to wish the conference success, and thank you once again for being with us today.

Thank you.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED THE 5TH GLOBAL BAKU FORUM**

16 March 2017, Baku

Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

Ladies and gentlemen,
Dear friends,

First of all, I would like to express my gratitude to all the participants of the forum for being with us today. The 5th Global Baku Forum already became traditional. We organize this important international event for the fifth time. I would also like to take this opportunity and express gratitude to Nizami Ganjavi International Center, it's board and co-chairs – Madam Vaira Freiberga and Mr. Serageldin for their outstanding activity and contribution to transforming Nizami Ganjavi International Center into a global international institution, which works very actively and efficiently. And one of the directions of the activity of the center is today's forum.

I welcome all the participants who represent more than 50 countries. The total number of guests is 260. Every international forum, of course, its importance and future impact on the decision-making process in the world depends on the topics of discussions, and I think, even more than that, on the list of participants. Among our guests we have more than 40 acting and former presidents, vice presidents, prime ministers and parliament speakers.

So, this indicates the high level of our gathering. It already pre-determines interesting discussions and the valuable ideas, which will be available during these days in Baku.

Azerbaijan has already hosted a number of international events. These events are important, first of all, in terms of addressing important issues on the global agenda. At the same time, Azerbaijan as an independent country is relatively young. Only last year we celebrated the 25th anniversary of restoration of our independence. I think our international activity, also regional activity, the projects, which we initiate in our country, which have positive impact on the whole region, is one of the ways to present our country to the world. And, of course, such big international events like the Baku Global Forum is one of these activities.

Since we met last time in Baku, unfortunately, the world has not become safer. We still have protracted conflicts, we still have confrontations, wars in our region. And this, of course, is a very dangerous tendency.

Azerbaijan is playing an important role as a stabilizing factor in the region where



it is situated. Our initiatives aim at regional cooperation, predictability, and the strengthening of security measures in our region. But we are not an island. And, of course, situation beyond our borders, with the close neighborhood is of great concern for us.

We still have, as I said before, very serious challenges and wars, conflicts, the migrant crisis. This is a big humanitarian catastrophe. At the same time, the migrant crisis also leads to, I would say, less understanding between different parts of our world because it creates certain discomfort for the people of the countries where the migrants are heading. But this is only the consequence of what happened because the real reason of this crisis is external political and military interference into the internal affairs of these countries.

This migrant crisis was not happening five or ten years ago. It happened recently, just because of that. So, this is a consequence of, I think, not very thoughtful policy towards the countries of the Middle East.

And this in its turn leads to radicalization of societies of the countries where the migrants are heading and as the consequence of that radicalization of the political elite. Therefore, unfortunately, the most attractive slogans in election campaigns are slogans very close to nationalism and anti-migrant sentiments. We witnessed it during last months, years. This is a tendency. Therefore, the tendency, of course, pre-determines the development. I think, one of the most important issues on the global agenda is to reverse this tendency backwards and more towards cooperation, mutual understanding, mutual respect rather than alienation, political confrontation and lack of dialogue of civilizations.

Azerbaijan is a country, whose geography to certain degree predetermines its role in the region. We are investing in the dialogue of civilizations and cultures.

Azerbaijan itself suffered from wars, occupation, humanitarian catastrophe as a result of Armenian aggression and occupation of our territory. This occupation lasts for more than 20 years. Almost 20 per cent of the internationally recognized part of Azerbaijan – Nagorno-Karabakh and seven districts, which surround Nagorno-Karabakh, are under Armenian occupation.

All the infrastructure is destroyed. All our historical and religious monuments are destroyed. The OSCE fact-finding mission sent delegations and groups of observers to the occupied territories and their reports clearly show that all the buildings and historical heritage of Azerbaijan have been destroyed.

This conflict is a result of Armenian aggression against its neighbor. It's a result of separatism and war against Azerbaijan. And million Azerbaijanis suffered from that. They became refugees, and internally displaced persons. This figure is one of the highest per capita figures in the world.

Today's population of Azerbaijan is close to ten million, and when the conflict started it was around eight million. One million of eight million in the beginning of the 1990s became homeless. It was a serious political, economic and social issue and crisis for our young country because at that time Azerbaijan was a very poor country – economy was in chaos, there were no clear means of economic development, and plus million people came from the occupied territories and they had to be taken care of.

Since that time, of course, Azerbaijan has developed. And we are capable to provide decent conditions for our compatriots. But the conflict is not resolved. All the important international organizations adopted resolutions and decisions, which demand the withdrawal of occupational Armenian forces from our lands. United Nations Security Council, which is a top body on international arena, adopted four resolutions demanding I quote "immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories".

But these resolutions remain on paper. Armenia ignores them, and already 25 years have passed since that time. So, this also shows the lack of mechanisms of implementation of the decisions of international organizations, particularly UN Security Council on the one hand. On the other hand, it shows again the lack of consistency because we all know that in some cases resolutions of Security Council are implemented within days, if not hours. But in our case it takes 25 years, and still there is no progress. Our refugees, internally displaced persons still cannot go back to their native lands.

We consider this the policy of double standards. In general, I think the recent developments in the world show that the policy of double standards, unfortunately, becomes kind of a standard in international relations and the norms and principles of international law are being interpreted by different countries with respect to their preferences and current political interests.

I think this is an important issue when we are talking about the reform of United Nations, and in general, implementation of decisions of international organizations.

If the decisions are adopted but not implemented, of course, not only the countries, which suffer, will suffer more, but the world will be in danger because that means that any country can use its force in order to change situation on hand, in order to

occupy territories, in order to cause sufferings to millions of people and not to be punished.

Therefore, we have raised many times the issue in front of international organizations, and in front of countries that for this aggression, occupation and war crimes, which Armenia committed against peaceful Azerbaijani citizens, Armenia must be sanctioned. Then, it will be fair. Then, it will be a single standard.

In one case countries are sanctioned, in other case they are not. The conflict resolution must be based on international law, and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan must be restored. Our people must have the right to return to their homelands.

This is a danger for the region. Unresolved Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict possesses permanent danger to stability and peace. We want to resolve this conflict peacefully, but we want to resolve it. Armenia wants to keep the status quo unchanged and ignores the strong statements of the mediators, which are three permanent members of Security Council – France, Russia and United States – whose leaders on many occasions have said that status quo is not acceptable, and status quo must be changed. And change of status quo means the beginning of de-occupation of the territory of Azerbaijan.

Despite this heavy burden and humanitarian crisis Azerbaijan's development has been rapid and sustainable. We have big achievements in economic transformation of our country. I think that 25 years of freedom, 25 years of independence demonstrate that the people of Azerbaijan are not only capable to live as an independent nation and to build their future, but also they are capable to achieve success in many areas. If you look at the economic performance of Azerbaijan, especially in the recent years, you will see that our achievements in economic area really demonstrate that when you have a strong political will, consolidated society, when you have unity between the government and the people you can achieve a lot even with the conflict, even with occupation, even with not an easy geopolitical environment.

Our economy demonstrates sustainable development. We have a very low foreign debt, which is only 20 per cent of our GDP, which is a little bit unusual for today's world. In other words, we always try to spend less than we earn. Our currency reserves are five times bigger than our foreign debt.

Therefore, Azerbaijan can attract a lot of financing for different projects, but we try mainly to use our own resources in order not to increase the level of foreign debt, though its low. But the target is to reduce it.

Due to a broad regional development program, we managed to reduce poverty ten times within last 14 years, and now it's less than six per cent. Unemployment is around five per cent. Though, of course, Azerbaijan's economy suffered from the collapse of the oil prices. But at the same time, this situation forced us to be more active on economic reforms. And within a very short period of time we managed to overcome difficulties.

Just imagine that your revenues drop three-four times. It's a serious challenge for any country, for any family. So, the countries and the people are used to certain lifestyle, certain level of development. And then all of a sudden your revenues collapse and drop four times. This was a really serious challenge for our government. But I said that we managed to overcome it, though, there were difficulties and still they continue.

In general, the period of adaptation to low oil prices, I think, already happened. And 2017 is the year of economic growth. Even last year when we for the first time in 14 years had economic recession, if you look at the parameters, which are not linked to oil and gas, you will see development.

Our non-oil industry grew five per cent, agriculture more than two per cent last year. In the first two months of this year, we had the same performance in non-oil industry and had a growth of more than three per cent in agriculture. GDP started to grow and we managed to increase our non-oil export around 50 per cent in two months of this year.

Therefore, diversification of economy, this policy was conducted for many years, and already brings results. Now the main objective for the coming years is diversification of our exports. We need new markets, and, of course, to enter new markets we need to have very good political relations with the countries, whose markets are attractive for us.

On a foreign policy track, Azerbaijan has a strong position in the region and in the world. The international community respects us because we pursue an independent policy and also we always keep our word. In other words, we are a reliable partner, and we managed to build very positive, at the same time, pragmatic relations with our neighbors, which are based on history, friendship and mutual interests and mutual respect, and non-interference into internal affairs of each other.

Regional cooperation and our relations with all our neighbors are of extreme importance to us, to any country. If a country has a problem with its neighbor, both countries suffer.

Therefore, apart from Armenian aggression, with all our neighbors we have very good relations and we implement a lot of projects – energy, transportation, trade, cultural projects – which bring our peoples closer.

We established very good relations with member countries of European Union. With nine of them, this is one third of the member states, Azerbaijan signed or adopted strategic partnership documents. I think this is also a big achievement because this shows that many European countries treat Azerbaijan as a strategic partner and not only because of energy resources. Our cooperation is much broader. Last month we launched negotiations with European Commission on a new agreement, which will be a partnership agreement and which will cover many areas of our activity.

This policy sometimes is called balanced. I don't know maybe that's a proper word, but I think it's a policy based on national interests of our country. National interests dictate us that we must build relations based on national interests, based on realistic approach. We should not put in front of us unrealistic targets and then be disappointed, frustrated when these targets are not met.

The same can be applied to our relations with European Union. We put realistic targets and during the discussions now we see that our counterparts also prefer to treat Azerbaijan from a realistic point of view.

Instead of signing an association agreement with European Union, which frankly speaking, was not an agreement that could produce some tangible results, we preferred to go on a separate track and prepare an agreement on partnership. Now maybe it can be called strategic partnership, which will be balanced, mutually beneficial and with practical results.

Policy without results is populism. And we don't have time to waste on that. We base our policy on the real situation. Sometimes we try to change situation, and we managed to do it. Azerbaijan plays also a stabilizing role in the communication between some countries, which sometimes have problems.

It happened during the recent history, when our neighbors had misunderstanding, when there were clashes. We always tried to play our role. And due to the fact that Azerbaijan is considered to be a really independent country with its policy, we had success.

I would also like to mention one event, which took place last month here in Baku. For the first time the representatives of military command of the new American administration and Russia, chiefs of staff of both countries' armies met in Baku.

Selection of Azerbaijan for this meeting, of course, was not our initiative. We were approached by both sides. Selection of Azerbaijan actually is another demonstration of what I am saying now – Azerbaijan is considered as a reliable partner, which is respected by big powers, and whose independent policy is already a reality. This is appreciated because it is always better to have a predictable partner rather than a kind of satellite. We have satellites nearby and that does not lead to success or respect.

So, in the future, with respect to the foreign policy, it will be based on pragmatism, our national interests, our security. We were very active in the fight against terrorism. Azerbaijan has been a reliable partner in the peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan since 2001. Since the very beginning we have kept our troops there.

We provide very important transportation network, which is called northern distribution network, and provide all flights for NATO operations. This is a serious contribution to the peacekeeping efforts. At the same time, Azerbaijan is one of the few countries non-members of NATO, which provide serious military and economic assistance to the government of Afghanistan. Talking about distribution, of course, I also want to inform you about the recent developments in the transportation sector, which also is not our internal issue because the projects, which were initiated here in our region, today are growing and becoming global.

With our partners, with Georgia and Turkey, we initiated the construction of the railroad, which connects three countries and actually, connects continents. We can increase trade without having this railroad connection. This railroad connection is needed in order to connect Asia with Europe through the shortest transportation route. It is not the cheapest. We are working in order to reduce the tariff, but this is the shortest route. The companies, which prefer to send cargo in a short period of time, definitely will use this transportation network.

East-West corridor is a corridor of cooperation and business. It already generates thousands of jobs in Azerbaijan and in the neighboring countries and will generate a lot of profit for our country, and, of course, our role as a transitor will grow.

This project was inspired by energy diversification projects, which we started to implement with our Georgian and Turkish neighbors. Now it is growing. Whether it's an oil pipeline or a gas pipeline, we have already many countries involved in this process. First, it was an oil pipeline connecting Azerbaijan with Black Sea ports, then with Mediterranean port. Now it's time for gas distribution infrastructure to be successfully implemented. Seven countries – Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy, Albania – are already members of the Southern Gas Corridor and three Balkan countries – Croatia, Montenegro and Bosnia Herzegovina – are our partners for the next stage of the development of this project.

This is really a project of the 21st century, a 40 billion project initiated by Azerbaijan and supported by our partners, by European commission, and which is being successfully implemented. Even at the time of low oil prices for the last two years, still there has not been delay from the point of view of payment of our share in order to implement this project, which is an integrated system of three pipelines stretching from Baku to Italian coast, and investments in a huge gas field in the Caspian Sea.

This is contribution to energy security. At the same time, this is contribution to regional cooperation. So, these countries, which are members of the Southern Gas Corridor, already became natural long-term partners and friends. So we managed to transform positive regional cooperation here in the Caucasus and Turkey towards Europe, European Union. This creates a very unique format of cooperation. Already three times we gather every February or January here in Baku for the Advisory Council of the Southern Gas Corridor, which took place this year again. The declaration, which was adopted by all the members of that council, once again shows the leading role of Azerbaijan.

We initiated these projects. We invite neighbors and partners and receive good results. None of the projects, which we initiated, neither in economy, energy or transportation areas failed. The reason is that all of them were based on a realistic approach. None of them was just for the sake of making noise or praising ourselves or using populist ideas to demonstrate our potential.

Our potential is much bigger than what is demonstrated today. We are not trying to present Azerbaijan on every corner. We are just doing our homework. And life and time shows that we made a right choice.

The last issue I would like to mention today is our investments in the intercultural dialogue. Here we have representatives of almost all continents, 56 countries. This is more than a quarter of members of the United Nations.

In a two months` time, Azerbaijan will host the 4th World Forum on Intercultural Dialogue. It is also already traditional and it is also co-sponsored by such organizations like UNESCO, ISESCO, Council of Europe, World Tourism Organization, United Nations Alliance of Civilizations. So it's a global event, and I would say a unique event, which addresses the issues of intercultural and interreligious dialogue in the world.

Why Azerbaijan was selected? Not only because we initiated that, but because of our role as a bridge between civilizations and religions. Religious tolerance and the spirit of multiculturalism in Azerbaijan already makes us the center of these positive events.

We attach very big importance to this forum and to this movement because this is what the world needs today. As I said in the beginning of my comments, unfortunately, we talk about dialogue, but we see alienation, we talk about tolerance, but we see hatred, which is growing, which is a danger for all of us and for those in whose countries it happened, for those who suffer physically from that.

Therefore, the role of Azerbaijan as a cultural bridge is important. At the same time, today's positive, sustainable, safe, stable development of our country shows that only in the atmosphere of mutual respect, multiculturalism, respect for traditions, religion and roots of others, you can achieve success.

Azerbaijan is a multi-confessional and multi-ethnic country and this is our big asset. We demonstrate that only this is the way to develop. To isolate yourself, to cultivate hatred or any kind of superiority will be like a boomerang and hit those who do this.

I would like once again to express gratitude to you for being with us and wish the forum success.

Thank you.

**PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN ILHAM ALIYEV
ATTENDED THE DINNER RECEPTION IN HONOR OF PARTICIPANTS OF
THE 5TH GLOBAL BAKU FORUM**

16 March 2017, Baku

Speech by President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

Madam President Freiberga,
Doctor Serageldin,
Dear friends, dear guests,



First of all, I'd like to express my gratitude to Madam President for this very precious memory – the photographs of my father with the world leaders. Many of them are today present here. They have not changed much since 1997. I am really very grateful for that.

Madam President, you mentioned your meeting with Heydar Aliyev. I know because when he returned from that meeting he was telling me about his impressions and about you and was really impressed very much with your vision, with what you are doing for your country. And I think that relations between our countries, which are today on a very high level, they were actually initiated by that personal contact.

Heydar Aliyev for Azerbaijan is the leader who saved our people from the most dangerous tragic events, which could have happened here. He was the leader of Azerbaijan in Soviet times, then he was promoted. He was the first Azerbaijani who was working in the center of Soviet Union, holding very important position of senior deputy prime minister of the Soviet Union. Then he retired and when the Soviet army invaded Baku in January 1990, he was a pensioner. He was one of the first to raise his voice and to denounce the Soviet leadership, Soviet army for this brutal act of aggression against peaceful Azerbaijanis. Black January is a tragic event in our history. The next day after this tragic event we went together to, at that time it was not the embassy, it was a permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow.

We saw a big crowd of Azerbaijanis who came just to express their sorrow, to express their frustration, to share with each other this tragic moment, when more than hundred people, including women, children were brutally killed by the Soviet army and hundreds were wounded, many went missing.

Heydar Aliyev at that time was already for more than two years a retired pensioner. And when we approached that crowd the people just started to step back, and they opened a corridor for him and for us who were accompanying him to be able to enter into the building. That was a very emotional moment. That was a sign of unity of Azerbaijanis. This tragedy united us. That was a sign of respect of the people whom he probably never saw, who never saw him in person and who showed their respect, though he did not have any position.

On the contrary, at that time it was the beginning of the 1990s, the Soviet Union was still very powerful, and the Communist Party was dominating everywhere. He was retired. If you are retired from such a high position, you are completely out of any kind of not only public activity, but you are isolated morally and physically. We entered the building and he organized a press conference. The videos of that conference are available. It was shown many times. He condemned the Soviet leadership, he condemned those who committed that act of terror. After that he announced that he is leaving the Communist Party, the party, which he was a member of since his young ages. So, this was a sign of his approach to his people, his very brave gesture and he once again demonstrated that he is the leader of the people of Azerbaijan, regardless of whether he had any position or not.

Then, of course, we started to face difficult times. All our family, including myself, lost our jobs. That was our destiny. It was already dangerous for him to stay in Moscow because there were plans to arrest him. So, he came back to Baku. At that time, the Communist leadership of Azerbaijan also started to create obstacles for him. So, we had to go back to where he was born – to Nakhchivan. And there he felt himself safe because people immediately embraced him and elected him the leader of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. That was also, I think, one of the precedents at that time in the Soviet Union. The people demonstrated that they are free. They demonstrated that the central Soviet government is no longer of control of their will. And the Communist government of Azerbaijan just could not do anything. They were helpless in front of the will of the people. So, actually that was the beginning of our road towards independence. He was elected chairman of the parliament of Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic. At the same time, there were elections to the Azerbaijani parliament. He was elected a member of the parliament of Azerbaijan. That time was very difficult, economic situation was very bad. He made three very important decisions, which actually opened the road to independence. Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic was called Nakhchivan Soviet Socialist Autonomous Republic. So the decision of the parliament was to remove Soviet Socialist from the name of the Republic.

The second was, if you remember, at that time they organized the referendum on preservation of the Soviet Union. And unfortunately, the government here in Baku

organized this referendum and the results were very strange, majority of the people voted in order to preserve the Soviet Union, though, people wanted to be free. So, Heydar Aliyev did not allow this referendum to be held in Nakhchivan.

And third, at the session of the parliament of Nakhchivan Republic, he brought the flag of the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan, which was established in 1918, and announced it as the state flag of Nakhchivan. And also they adopted a statement to ask members of the parliament of Azerbaijan to do the same. Unfortunately, they didn't, and they changed the flag of the Soviet Azerbaijan into that of the independent Azerbaijan only when the Soviet Union collapsed. So these were steps of the leader, who completely dedicated his life to his people. Only such a leader could be able to do. And we are proud of that. We are proud of this history. I am proud of my father and I think that if he was alive now, he also would be proud of his country. Today, Azerbaijan is a country, which already demonstrated itself on the world map with a strong position, a self-sufficient, self-confident country in a good sense of this word, with so many friends, open to the world, and which looks to the future with optimism.

And I am very grateful to Madam President, to Mr Serageldin, and to all our friends for being with us today. Really, Nizami Ganjavi International Center, as I said this morning, already transformed into a very important international institution. Nizami is a world renowned personality. But now the activity of the center makes him more known to the world. The bigger and more capable the center is, the more people, those who do not know who he was, start to look for who Nizami Ganjavi is that after his name there is such a big international institution.

Of course, Nizami for every Azerbaijani is a symbol of national dignity, national pride. He was born in the ancient city of Ganja, where he died. His mausoleum is a symbol of talent of the Azerbaijani people, a symbol of humanity.

I would like to once again express gratitude to you for your activity. Without your personal daily commitment and activity the forum could have never transformed into such an important global event. And, of course, we hope that next year we will have more guests from more countries and will continue our friendship and partnership.

Thank you very much, have a nice stay in Baku.

BƏYANATLAR – STATEMENTS – ЗАЯВЛЕНИЯ

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

14 February 2017, Baku

According to the press reports, on February 20, 2017, Armenia plans to conduct so-called “referendum on constitutional changes” in the puppet illegal regime it has established in the temporarily occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan reiterates that the illegal regime established by Armenia in the temporarily occupied territories of Azerbaijan is ultimately nothing other than the product of aggression and occupation. It is under Armenia’s direction and control and survives by virtue of its military, political, financial and other support, as was confirmed by the European Court of Human Rights in its judgment of 16 June 2015 on the case of Chiragov and others v. Armenia.

This provocative step, as well as Armenia’s attempts to change the name of integral Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan is yet another clear manifestation that Armenia is not genuinely interested in seeking a political settlement of the armed conflict. Instead, Armenia pursues the path of escalation, undertakes consistent measures to consolidate the results of its occupation policy and to maintain unacceptable and unsustainable status quo, undermines efforts for the peaceful resolution of the conflict through substantive talks, illegally changes the demographic, cultural and physical character of the occupied territories, engages in economic and other activities, including transfer of Armenian population into these territories with the ultimate goal of imposing a fait accompli situation. By such actions Armenia also undermines and puts under jeopardy the regional and international peace and security.

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

The illegal “referendum” constitutes a clear violation of the Constitution of the

Republic of Azerbaijan and the norms and principles of international law, and, therefore, has no legal effect whatsoever. This so-called “referendum” is also being conducted in the seized lands under situation created through the use of force and threat of force against the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan by Armenia and accompanied by the notorious practice of ethnic cleansing and other flagrant violations of the norms and principles of international law.

We call upon the international community to reject this fabricated illegal “referendum” exercise and to exert political and diplomatic pressure on Armenia with a view to drop its futile attempts to mislead its own people and the wider international community, cease its policy of occupation and annexation, engage constructively in the conflict settlement process and comply with its international obligations.

AZƏRBAYCAN TARİXİNİN QANLI YADDAŞI BLOODY MEMORIES OF THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJAN КРОВАВАЯ ПАМЯТЬ ИСТОРИИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА

A GLANCE AT THE TRAGEDY OF 20 JANUARY 1990



20 January 2017 marks the 27th anniversary of the military invasion and vicious killing of civilians in the city of Baku, Azerbaijan by the forces of the Soviet Army on 20 January 1990. In response to the rising national independence movement, the Soviet leadership ordered some 26000 troops with heavy military equipment to storm the city of Baku in an operation called “Strike”.

The heavy-handed crackdown resulted in 147 civilian deaths and the injuring of around 800 people. The invasion was launched at midnight and was committed with particular violence against children, women and the elderly. The tragedy of 20 January was engraved in the history of Azerbaijan as “Black January”. Nevertheless, it was a heroic page in the history of Azerbaijani people’s struggle for freedom and independence. This violent suppression brought a 70-year Soviet rule in Azerbaijan to an end and led to the restoration of its national independence.

The events of 20 January were mainly provoked by the territorial claims of neighboring Armenia, requiring the annexation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO) of Azerbaijan. On December 1, 1989 the Supreme Council of the Armenian SSR made the unprecedented decision on “reunification” of the Armenian SSR and NKAO, and thus grossly violated the Constitution of the USSR as well as the Law “On the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast” of June 16, 1981. This decision had a very serious impact on further relations between the two peoples inflaming a mass hatred towards each other.

By that time, the entire Azerbaijani population living in Armenia had been forcibly expelled from the places of their permanent residence. In an effort to oust them from Armenia an estimated 300 000 Azerbaijanis were subjected to murder, torture and persecution and were forced to take refuge in Azerbaijan. These displaced Azerbaijanis - deprived of homes and shelters- were mainly settled in Baku and its suburbs.

This kind of illegal and hostile policy of Armenian authorities ignited anger among Azerbaijanis precipitating their mass protest against the ambiguous and negligent position of the USSR leadership in this regard. In 1989-1990, hundreds of thousands of people held demonstrations in the central square (now Freedom square) and the streets of Baku protesting the Armenia's separatist claims to tear out the Nagorno-Karabakh region from Azerbaijan and annexing it to Armenia. On January 13, 1990 at a mass rally held in Baku, the leaders of Azerbaijani opposition called for a referendum on secession of Azerbaijan from the Soviet Union. Reports about the killing and wounding of Azerbaijanis by Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh that were spread during the rally further enraged the crowd.

The Secretary General of the Communist Party of the USSR, Michael Gorbachev used the unrest and riots in Baku to justify the Soviet Army's intervention in the city. The military contingency sent to Baku consisted mainly of soldiers previously deployed in Afghanistan as well as the reservists some of whom were of Armenian origin conscripted from the Stavropol region of Russia for a short period in January 1990. Before being dispatched to Baku they were instructed that the Islamic radicals and mojaheds took the power in the city, and the Soviet soldiers must protect the allegedly violated rights of Armenians.

However, in reality the true face of the Soviet assault was drastically different. As it was later stated by D.Yazov, then the Minister of Defense of the USSR, the use of force in Baku was intended to prevent the takeover of the power in Azerbaijan by non-Communist opposition and ensure that the Communist government remained in power.¹

On January 19, 1990, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, without the consent of the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijani SSR, imposed a "curfew in the city of Baku" from 20 January, 00:00 a.m. Troops entered Baku without informing the local population of the curfew and its rules. Moreover, on the eve of the assault the special forces of the Soviet Army attacked the state TV building in Baku, cutting off the national TV and radio broadcast to prevent the dissemination of news to the local and international community. Therefore, the people were deprived of access to information about the entry of the Soviet troops into the city. Official information about the curfew was aired on 20 January 1990 at 05:30 a.m., i.e. after dozens citizens had already been killed or wounded in the streets of Baku.

Failure to announce a state of emergency before the assault cannot be justified either on the grounds of military necessity or protection the lives of the soldiers. If the purpose of the Soviet troops was to protect Armenians and restore order, there was no reason to launch a surprise midnight attack on the city. Advance warning

¹ Cornell S. Azerbaijan since independence. London, 2011. pp. 55

might have cleared the streets of peaceful civilians and saved their lives. Instead, the Soviet Army attacked the capital city of the Soviet Republic as if it was an enemy position that had to be taken by surprise with extreme cruelty. Irrespective of the announcement of the curfew, military offensive of a civilian city with heavy military equipment and use of violence against own civilian citizens by the troops of the Armed Forces cannot be justified under any circumstances. Incited with hatred against the local population and under the influence of drugs and alcohol, the soldiers indiscriminately fired on women, elderly and infants; even drivers of the ambulance cars and doctors were subjected to brutal killing. Tanks and armored transporters were crushing civilian and medical vehicles with people inside. Electricity of the hospitals had been cut off to prevent medical aid to the wounded.



Human Rights Watch report on “Black January in Azerbaijan” stated, “Indeed, the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19-20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. Since Soviet officials have stated publicly that the purpose of the intervention of Soviet troops was to prevent the ouster of the Communist-dominated government of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the nationalist-minded, noncommunist opposition, the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union”.²

The argument that the Soviet troops entered Azerbaijan to stop the violation against the Soviet citizens had no justification since Azerbaijani people, murdered and forcibly expelled by Armenians from Armenia and NKAO, were also Soviet citizens, and Soviet army did not intervene to stop the violence and pogroms against Azerbaijanis. In fact, the tragedy of 20 January was politically motivated and was the most brutal among the military interventions by the Soviet troops in Almaty (1986), Tbilisi (1989), and Vilnius (1991).

Rather than ensuring the violated rights and alleviating the suffering of Azerbaijanis forcibly displaced from the lands of their historical residence, the Soviet regime

² <https://www.hrw.org/reports/pdfs/u/ussr/ussr915.pdf>

instead carried out the military attack on them. Even though Azerbaijani people suffered great losses from the tragedy of 20 January 1990, its pride and dignity remained untainted. Black January was a turning point in the history of Azerbaijan and proved to be a vivid manifestation of the bravery and determination of its people in defending their national identity. To commemorate the memory of Azerbaijanis heroically perished in this tragedy, the “Alley of Martyrs” has been laid out at the highest point of the capital city of Baku. People from all over the country pay a visit to the Alley to honor and revere the victims of those events that paved the way for the independence and prosperity of the Republic of Azerbaijan today.

AZƏRBAYCAN TARİXİNİN QANLI YADDAŞI
BLOODY MEMORIES OF THE HISTORY OF AZERBAIJAN
КРОВАВАЯ ПАМЯТЬ ИСТОРИИ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА

26 FEBRUARY – KHOJALY GENOCIDE

At the end of 1987, the Soviet Socialist Republic of Armenia openly laid claim to the territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast of the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan. Contrary to the Constitution of the Soviet Union, which guaranteed the territorial integrity and inviolability of borders of the Union Republics, the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic adopted a number of decisions to institute the process of unilateral secession of the autonomous region from Azerbaijan. At the end of 1991 and the beginning of 1992, Armenia initiated combat operations on the territory of Azerbaijan. As a result, a significant part of the territory of Azerbaijan, including its Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven adjacent districts, was occupied by Armenia.



On the night of February 25-26, the armed forces of Armenia, with the support of irregular armed bands and terrorist groups, as well as with the direct participation of the infantry guards regiment No. 366 of the former USSR, seized the town of Khojaly and perpetrated atrocious massacre of the civilian population of the town. In a few hours 613 civilians were killed including 106 women, 63 children, moreover, 1,275 inhabitants were taken hostage, while the fate of 150 persons remains unknown to this day. In the course of the massacre 487 inhabitants of Khojaly were severely maimed, including 76 children under the age of 6. 6 families were completely wiped out, 26 children lost both parents, and 130 children lost one of their parents. Of those who perished, 56 persons were killed with special cruelty: by burning alive, scalping, beheading, gouging out eyes, and bayoneting pregnant women in the abdomen.

There are more than sufficient facts and reports from various sources, including eyewitnesses of the events, Governments and intergovernmental and non-governmental organizations, that testify to the responsibility of Armenia and its political and military leadership and subordinate local armed groups for the crimes committed in Khojaly.

In its judgement of April 22, 2010, the European Court of Human Rights arrived at an important conclusion with respect to the crime committed in Khojaly, qualifying the behaviour of those carrying out the incursion as "acts of particular gravity which may amount to war crimes or crimes against humanity". The European Court made

in this regard the following observation, which leaves no doubt as to the question of qualification of the crime and ensuing responsibility for it:

"It appears that the reports available from independent sources indicate that at the time of the capture of Khojaly on the night of 25-26 February 1992 hundreds of civilians of Azerbaijani ethnic origin were reportedly killed, wounded or taken hostage, during their attempt to flee the captured town, by Armenian fighters attacking the town".¹

In her letter dated March 24, 1997 addressed to the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, the Executive Director of the Human Rights Watch/ Helsinki responded as follows to attempts by the Armenian propaganda to obfuscate this human rights organization with its fabrications:

"Our research and that of the Memorial Human Rights Center found that the retreating militia fled Khojaly along with some of the large groups of fleeing civilians. Our report noted that by remaining armed and in uniform, the Azerbaijani militia may be considered as combatants and thus endangered fleeing civilians, even if their intent had been to protect them. Yet we place direct responsibility for the civilian deaths with Karabakh Armenian forces. Indeed, neither our report nor that of Memorial includes any evidence to support the argument that Azerbaijani forces obstructed the flight of, or fired on Azeri civilians".²



According to the Armenian author Markar Melkonian, who dedicated his book to his brother, the well-known international terrorist Monte Melkonian, who personally took part in the assault on Khojaly, the town "had been a strategic goal, but it had also been an act of revenge".³ Melkonian particularly mentions the role of the fighters of the two Armenian military detachments "Arabo" and "Aramo" and describes in detail how they butchered

the peaceful inhabitants of Khojaly. Thus, as he puts it, some inhabitants of the town had almost made it to safety, after fleeing for nearly six miles, when "[Armenian] soldiers had chased them down". The soldiers, in his words, "unsheathed the knives they had carried on their hips for so long, and began stabbing".⁴

¹ Judgement of the European Court of Human Rights of 22 April 2010, para. 87

² Available from www.hrw.org/news/1997/03/23/response-armenian-government-letter-townkhojaly-nagorno-karabakh

³ Markar Malkonian, *My Brother's Road: An American's Fateful Journey to Armenia* (London and New York, 2005), p. 214.

⁴ *Ibid*, pp. 213-214.

It should be particularly noted that the Khojaly events took place in a period when the incumbent president Serzh Sargsyan of the Republic of Armenia served as the head of the illegal military structures in the occupied Azerbaijani territories and, accordingly, his recollections constitute one of the most important sources of evidence. The following words by S.Sargsyan leave no doubt as to the question of the perpetrator of the crime in Khojaly:

"Before Khojaly, the Azerbaijanis thought that they were joking with us, they thought that the Armenians were people who could not raise their hand against the civilian population. We were able to break that [stereotype]. And that's what happened."⁵

There are sufficient grounds to conclude that the Government of the Republic of Armenia and subordinate forces, for which it is liable under international law, are responsible for serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law amounting to crimes under international law. The violations of the rules of war by the Armenian side include, inter alia, indiscriminate attacks, including the killing of civilians, the taking and holding of hostages, and the mistreatment and summary execution of prisoners of war and hostages.⁶

The following elements of the crime of genocide, as defined under international law, are present with regard to the attacks on civilians in Khojaly: the actus reus consisting of killing and causing serious bodily or mental harm; the existence of a protected group being targeted by the authors of the criminal conduct; and the specific genocidal intent to annihilate, in whole or in part, a group distinguished on racial, ethnic, national or religious grounds. According to the findings of the investigation, the following requirements are met for the purpose of sustaining the genocidal charges with regard to the crime committed in Khojaly: the clear and convincing proof of the intent to destroy the group in whole or in part; the fact that the destruction that took place in Khojaly was "significant" enough to affect the defined group as a whole; and the crime was committed within a specific geographic locality.

Offences committed during the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan entail State responsibility and individual criminal responsibility under international law.

The key provisions of international responsibility are laid down in the articles on State responsibility adopted by the United Nations International Law Commission on 9 August 2001⁷ and commended to States by the General Assembly on 12 December

⁵ Thomas de Waal, *Black Garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through Peace and War* (New York and London, 2004), p. 172.

⁶ See, Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, *Seven Years of Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh* (1994).

⁷ See A/56/10, section IV. See also James Crawford, *The International Law Commission's Articles on State Responsibility. Introduction, Text and Commentaries* (Cambridge, 2002), and James Crawford, Alain Pellet, Simon Olleson (eds.), *The Law of International Responsibility* (Oxford, 2010).

2001.⁸ According to article 1, "every internationally wrongful act of a State entails the international responsibility of that State", while article 2 provides that "there is an internationally wrongful act of a State when conduct consisting of an action or omission (a) is attributable to the State under international law; and (b) constitutes a breach of an international obligation of the State".

Article 4 (1) of the articles on State responsibility addresses the question of the attribution of conduct to a State, and declares that:

The conduct of any State organ shall be considered an act of that State under international law, whether the organ exercises legislative, executive, judicial or any other functions, whatever position it holds in the organization of the State, and whatever its character as an organ of the central government or of a territorial unit of the State.

This principle, which is one of long standing in international law,⁹ was underlined by the International Court of Justice in the LaGrand case,¹⁰ in which the Court declared that "the international responsibility of a State is engaged by the action of the competent organ and authorities acting in that State, whatever they may be" and reiterated in the case concerning the application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,¹¹ in which the Court noted that it was:

One of the cornerstones of the law of State responsibility, that the conduct of any State organ is to be considered an act of the State under international law, and therefore gives rise to the responsibility of the State if it constitutes a breach of an obligation of the State.

Comment 6 to article 4 of the articles on State responsibility underlines the broad nature of this principle and emphasizes that the reference to State organs in this provision:

"Is not limited to the organs of central government, to officials at high level or to persons with responsibility for the external relations of the State. It extends to organs of government of whatever kind or classification, exercising whatever functions, and at whatever level in the hierarchy, including those at provincial or even local level".¹²

⁸ See General Assembly resolution 56/83. See also Assembly resolutions 59/35 and 62/61 and document A/62/62.

⁹ See, for example, the Moses case, John B. Moore, *International Arbitration*, vol. III, pp. 3127, 3129 (1871).

¹⁰ *Provisional Measures*, I.C.J. Reports 1999, pp. 9 and 16.

¹¹ I.C.J. Reports 2007, para. 385. It was held that this principle constituted a rule of customary international law. See also *Immunity from Legal Process of a Special Rapporteur*, I.C.J. Reports 1999, pp. 62 and 87.

¹² See Crawford, *The International Law Commission's Articles on State Responsibility*, p. 95.

Similarly, article 5 provides that the conduct of a person or entity which is not an organ of the State under article 4 but which is empowered by the law of that State to exercise elements of governmental authority shall be considered as an act of the State under international law, provided that the person or entity in question was acting in that capacity in the instance in question. Accordingly, activities by armed units of the State, including those empowered so to act, will engage the responsibility of the State. Thus Armenia is responsible internationally for actions (and omissions) of its armed forces in their activities in Azerbaijan.

A key element of State responsibility, and one of particular significance for the present purposes, is the rule enshrined in article 8:

The conduct of a person or group of persons shall be considered an act of a State under international law if the person or group of persons is in fact acting on the instructions of, or under the direction or control of, that State in carrying out the conduct.

This provision essentially covers two situations, first, where persons act directly under the instructions of State authorities and, second, where persons are acting under State "direction or control". The latter point is critical. It means that States cannot avoid responsibility for the acts of secessionist entities where in truth it is the State that is controlling the activities of the body in question. The difference between the two situations enumerated in article 8 is the level of control exercised. In the former case, the persons concerned are in effect part of the apparatus of the State insofar as the particular situation is concerned. In the latter case, the power of the State is rather more diffuse.

Accordingly, the conclusion must be that, due to its initial and continuing aggression against Azerbaijan and persisting occupation of that State's territory, the Republic of Armenia bears full international responsibility for the breaches of international law.

The Republic of Armenia's international responsibility, which is incurred by its internationally wrongful acts, involves legal consequences manifested in the obligation to cease such acts, to offer appropriate assurances and guarantees that they will not recur and to provide full reparation for injury in the form of restitution, compensation and satisfaction, either singly or in combination.¹³

It is essential to note that the crime committed in the town of Khojaly should be seen as a serious breach of obligations under peremptory norms (*jus cogens*) of general international law. The obligations under such norms arise from those substantive

¹³ See Crawford, *The International Law Commission's Articles on State Responsibility*, pp. 66-68, articles 28, 30, 31 and 34-37.

rules of conduct that prohibit what has come to be seen as intolerable because of the threat it presents to the survival of States and their peoples and the most basic human values.¹⁴ Among these prohibitions, it is generally agreed that the prohibitions of aggression, the establishment or maintenance by force of colonial domination, genocide, slavery, racial discrimination, crimes against humanity and torture are to be regarded as peremptory.¹⁵ There can be no doubt that Armenia bears full international responsibility for a violation of a number of such prohibitions, as manifested in particular in the criminal acts committed against the civilians and defenders of the town of Khojaly.

Serious breaches of obligations under peremptory norms of general international law give rise to additional consequences affecting not only the State bearing the responsibility, but also all other States. As stated in the International Law Commission commentary to the articles on State responsibility, every State, by virtue of its membership in the international community, has a legal interest in the protection of certain basic rights and the fulfilment of certain essential obligations.¹⁶ A significant role in securing recognition of this principle was played by the International Court of Justice in the Barcelona Traction case,¹⁷ in which the Court identified the existence of a special category of obligations — obligations towards the international community as a whole. According to the Court, "By their very nature the former [the obligations of a State towards the international community as a whole] are the concern of all States. In view of the importance of the rights involved, all States can be held to have a legal interest in their protection; they are obligations erga omnes". In later cases, the International Court has reaffirmed this idea.¹⁸

In as much as all States have a legal interest, particular consequences of a serious breach of an obligation under peremptory norms of general international law include, inter alia, duties of States to cooperate in order to bring to an end such breaches by lawful means and not to recognize as lawful a situation created by a serious breach, nor render aid or assistance in maintaining that situation.¹⁹

Alongside the Republic of Armenia's responsibility as a State for internationally wrongful acts, under the customary and treaty norms of international criminal law, certain acts perpetrated in the context of an armed conflict, including those in the town of Khojaly, are viewed as international criminal offences and responsibility for them is borne on an individual basis by those who participated in the said acts, their

¹⁴ See A/56/10, comment 3 to article 40 of the articles on State responsibility.

¹⁵ Ibid., comment 5 to article 26 and comments 1-9 to article 40 of the articles on State responsibility.

¹⁶ See A/56/10, comment 4 to article 1 of the articles on State responsibility.

¹⁷ Case Concerning the Barcelona Traction, Light and Power Company, Limited, I.C.J. Reports 1970, para. 33

¹⁸ See East Timor, I.C.J. Reports 1995, p. 102, para. 29; Legality of the Threat or Use of Nuclear Weapons, I.C.J. Reports 1996, p. 258, para. 83; and Application of the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, Preliminary Objections, I.C.J. Reports 1996, pp. 615-616, paras. 31-32. See also A/56/10, comment 4 to article 1 of the articles on State responsibility.

¹⁹ See A/56/10 (Supp), comment 1-14 to article 41 of the articles on State responsibility. See also General Assembly resolution 62/243, para. 5.

accomplices and accessories. It is well known that both the present and former presidents of Armenia, Serzh Sargsyan and Robert Kocharian, together with many other high-ranking political and military officials of that State, including current minister of defense, Seyran Oghanyan, and leaders of the separatist regime set up by Armenia in the occupied territory of Azerbaijan, personally participated in seizing Azerbaijani lands and in the reprisals against Azerbaijani civilians and militaries. It is clear that, given the scale and gravity of the offences that they committed, the criminal prosecution of these persons would be an inevitable consequence of their crimes.

It is obvious that impunity still enjoyed by the perpetrators of the crimes continues to impede progress in achieving the long-awaited peace and reconciliation between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Therefore, the establishment of truth in respect to gross violations of international humanitarian and human rights law committed during the conflict, the provision of adequate and effective reparations to victims and the need for institutional actions to prevent the repetition of such violations are all necessary adjuncts to true conflict resolution. Consequently, ending impunity is essential not only for the purposes of identifying the responsibility of parties to the conflict and individual perpetrators, the achievement of which is undoubtedly imperative per se, but also for ensuring sustainable peace, truth, reconciliation, the rights and interests of victims and the well-being of society at large.

31 MARCH - DAY OF GENOCIDE OF AZERBAIJANIS



March 31, commemorated in the Republic of Azerbaijan as the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis, reflects the memory of the bloody massacre committed against Azerbaijanis in March 1918.

The rapid development of the oil industry in Baku in the late 19th and early 20th centuries attracted a wave of Armenian migration to the city. As one of the main industrial centres in tsarist Russia, Baku saw the emergence of an industrial proletariat and revolutionary fervour. Armenian workers, whose number increased considerably in the early 20th century, took active part in Baku's revolutionary and socialist movements. On the eve of the first Russian revolution (1905-1907), the Armenian nationalist Dashnaksutyun Party started to spread nationalistic ideas among Armenian workers in Baku. They used revolutionary ideas to promote their own nationalistic agenda. Inspired by ideas of creating a "Greater Armenia," Armenians carried out a series of bloody massacres against Azerbaijanis in the period of 1905-07. Hundreds of Azerbaijani settlements were destroyed and razed to the ground, and thousands of civilians were brutally killed.

The massacre of 1918 was a more skilfully prepared and ruthlessly implemented act than the 1905-1907 attacks. The victory of Bolsheviks during the Russian revolution of 1917 and thereby collaboration with them gave the Dashnaksutyun Party way for smooth realisation of its nationalistic objectives. Capitalizing on the situation that followed October 1917 Revolution in Russia, Armenian nationalists began to pursue the implementation of their plans under the banner of Bolshevism. In 1918, leader of the Russian Bolsheviks Vladimir Lenin appointed ethnic Armenian Stephan Shaumyan Extraordinary Commissar of the Caucasus. By that time, the Bolsheviks seized power in Baku and viewed the Armenian Party of Dashnaksutyun as a source of support for eliminating the influence of Azerbaijani national party-Musavat in Baku and the regions. In this regard, the interests of Bolsheviks and Dashnaks by March 1918 coincided.

On March 2, 1918, speaking at a meeting of the Baku Soviet, Shaumyan strongly criticised the Musavat Party, blaming it for secession of Azerbaijan from Russia.¹ Right at the beginning of tragic events, the Baku Soviet, under the pretext of combating counter-revolutionary elements, set about the plan to liquidate Azerbaijanis throughout the Baku Province.² By the acknowledgements of Stephan Shaumyan, 6000 armed soldiers of the Baku Soviet and 4000 armed men from

¹ <http://regionplus.az/en/articles/view/2484>

² <http://en.president.az/azerbaijan/memories>

Dashnaksutyun Party took part in the massacre of Azerbaijani civilians.³ On 30 March Armenian-Bolshevik units subjected Baku to volley fire from ships. Then, armed Dashnaks attacked the homes of Azerbaijanis and carried out a merciless slaughter. On 31 March and in the first days of April, the carnage became even more ruthless. Thousands of Azerbaijani civilians were killed only because of their ethnicity. In this period, Armenian-Bolshevik units wiped out more than 20,000 Azerbaijani civilians in Baku: people were burned in their homes, killed and tortured with unparalleled cruelty. As a result, more than 16,000 people were killed with utmost barbarity in the Guba province in the first five months of 1918; a total of 167 villages were destroyed, 35 of which do not exist to this day.

The Armenians had installed machine guns in various places of the city in order to shoot those who were trying to escape. Avanes Apresyan, an Armenian officer, one of the active participants in the massacre of the Azerbaijanis, wrote in his memoirs titled "Men were like this," that in Baku alone, they murdered 25,000 Azerbaijanis in the March massacre. However, genocide of the Azerbaijanis by the Dashnaks was not limited to Baku. Within a short period of time, Armenians committed massacres in Shamakhy, Guba, Irevan, Zengezur, Karabakh, Nakhchivan and Kars.⁴ The discovery of mass graves in Guba region of Azerbaijan in 2007 confirms Armenian inhumanity. Study of the burial site has revealed that during an Armenian armed attack on Guba in 1918, people were subjected to unprecedented violence and killed with cruelty. The grave contains remains of mass burials of local residents. Along with the Turkic-Muslim population, Armenian forces also slaughtered local Jews and Lezgins. Even those who demanded an end to the massacre, including Russians or Georgians, were brutally victimized in different places of the country.

S. Shaumyan boasted about Armenian brutality against Azerbaijanis: "We have gained brilliant results in the battles. The enemy has been utterly annihilated. We forced conditions on them and they signed them".⁵ Shaumyan shamelessly justified the involvement of the armed forces of the Dashnaksutyun Party in the slaughter of Azerbaijanis in Baku. In the letter of 13 April 1918, addressed to Council of People's Commissars of Russian Soviet Federative Socialist Republic, Shaumyan justifies the heinous crimes as saying, "the presence of national divisions has partly characterised the civil war as a national massacre, but it was impossible to do otherwise. We did it on purpose. Poor Muslim people have suffered a great deal, but have now come together with the Bolsheviks and Soviets... oil is already at our disposal". The German researcher Erikh Ficle in his research "Truth terror. Armenian terrorism – roots and reasons" speaking of Shaumyan's activity in 1918 stresses that his aim was to armenianize Baku "by any hooks or crooks". [6][7]

³ <https://no-genocide.com/post/8>

⁴ http://en.azvision.az/The_events_of_1918-1920,_-33790-xeber.html

⁵ <http://www.visions.az/en/news/137/fa98da44/>

⁶ <https://www.turkishnews.com/en/content/2010/03/11/genocide-over-azerbaijan-nation-in-march-of-1918/>

⁷ <http://www.visions.az/en/news/137/fa98da44/>

According to various estimates, 12,000 to 30,000 people were killed in Baku in three days alone. In this regard, S. Shaumyan, the Chairman of Baku Soviet, did not hide his satisfaction: "We were frightened by the national structure of our city. We were afraid that the fight might assume an unwanted colouration. We even had to resort to the Armenian Dashnak Regiment. We could not even allow ourselves the luxury of refusing their services. The Armenian National Council carried out arrests, searches, requisitions, etc. on its own. However, the victory is so great that it does little to overshadow the reality". Baku Soviet's reliance on the Dashnak forces caused outrage among the Bolsheviks of other nationalities. One of the witnesses of the genocide of Azerbaijanis, Bolshevik Blyumin, later noted in his memoirs, "With the advent of the events of 1918, we resorted to Dashnak troops, as we had no armed forces of our own. Still, Dashnak troops did their dirty work. They turned a civil war into a national cleansing, having slaughtered up to 20,000 poor Azerbaijanis".⁸

The March events of 1918 became the focus of attention following the proclamation of Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR). The Extraordinary Investigation Commission (EIC) was established by ADR on July 15, 1918 in order to investigate the violence against Azerbaijani population. An important trait of this commission was that it was comprised of the best lawyers of that time representing different nationalities – Russians, Jewish, Polish, Georgians and even Armenians. These factors testify competence and impartiality of the EIC. Materials collected by the EIC by August 1919 filed in 36 volumes and 3,500 pages. Based on this evidence, the EIC prepared 128 reports and drafts to file lawsuits against 194 persons accused of different crimes against a peaceful population. Thus, by mid-August, 24 people in Baku and about 100 people in Shamakhy were arrested. This was the first attempt to conduct a political and legal assessment of the policy of genocide perpetrated against the Azerbaijanis. However, the demise of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic made it impossible to complete this work.

After restoring its independence in 1991, the Republic of Azerbaijan resumed political assessment of genocide of March 1918 and is committed to complete ADR's unfinished attempts to bring about justice. On the eve of the 80th anniversary of the tragedy, the then President Heydar Aliyev issued a Decree to announce 31 March as a national day of mourning. The Decree has become a key document for conducting a political and legal assessment of the genocidal acts committed against Azerbaijanis in the beginning of 20th century. The Decree also signifies the Azerbaijani people's devotion towards its national values, historical roots and homeland. At the same time, the commemoration of the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis raises the awareness of the world community to the facts of the massacre and ethnic cleansing of Azerbaijanis in the past and present.

⁸ <http://regionplus.az/en/articles/view/2484>

MƏQALƏLƏR - ARTICLES – СТАТЬИ

AZERBAIJAN'S STRATEGIC ROAD MAP FOR DEVELOPMENT: A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS

Mehmood ul HASSAN KHAN*

Introduction

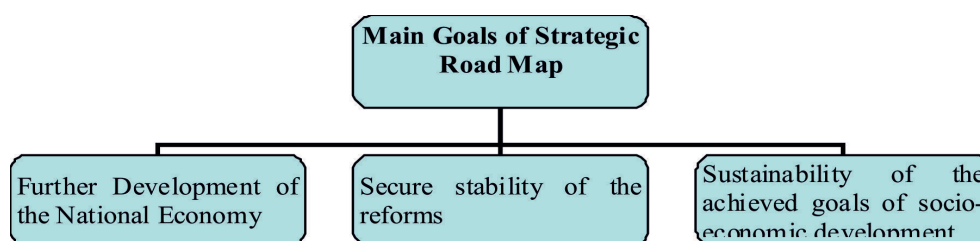
Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev has outlined his economic strategy for the next ten years. He has signed a decree endorsing 'Strategic road maps for the national economy and main economic sectors.' It has strategic orientation. It is forward-looking. It is of course result oriented. It is a detailed official document which provides a clear road map for its macro-economy, services, exports, energy production (renewables), education, health and the last but not the least, infrastructural development in the next ten years.

It outlines its foremost national priorities to be pursued for achieving high rates of GDPs, per capita income, job generation, exports, tourism and above all greater regional connectivity for a "shared prosperity". Ultimately it will provide important impetus to large-scale reforms. It will ensure socio-economic and political stability in the country.

It was approved on March 16, 2016 by the president's order.

Main Goal of Strategic Road Map

Figure-1



Development of the Strategic Road Map's Document

On March 16, 2016 the President signed a decree N1897 endorsing "Strategic road maps for the national economy and main economic sectors".

At the same time on president's order a working group was established for ensuring the implementation of development plans in accordance with these sectors.

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The said working group with the participation of the local and foreign experts, the experienced specialists, consulting companies and scientific organizations, international organizations functioning in the country had to develop the draft of the document on the strategic road map of national economy and its' 11 key sectors.

According to official news agency of Azerbaijan,¹ 400 local and foreign experts worked hard to complete the document. 4,000 people were involved in 150 meetings during the completion of the said document. More than 1000 written proposals were submitted from local and foreign academic circles, educational institutions, representatives of private sector and civil society which has made it masterpiece to move forward during the next ten years.

Strategic Road Map

Figure-II



It has now been completed after thorough discussions among different professionals of different disciplines. It has been completed with collective wisdom of so many people of the Azerbaijan and along with the valuable inputs of the Nobel Prize winner. Online proposals were also sought but with certain conditions. All diversified but integrated efforts have ensured the development of the strategic road map into ideal document.

The said group had to prepare and submit to the president a draft economic development strategy and action plan for 2016-2020, long-term review of the project for the period up to 2025, and the project review of the objectives for the period after 2025. In September 2016, the said group submitted its report.

¹ Nigar Abbasova, McKinsey to develop road map for Azerbaijan's economy. AZERNEWS August, 29 2016. <http://www.azernews.az/business/101490.html>

The decree of the president Ilham Aliyev of December 6, 2016 determines² the economic development strategy and action plan for 2016-2020, the long term vision till 2025 and target vision after 2025.

It outlined priorities for different preferred sectors of the national economy which are given below:-

Serial No.	Strategic Road Maps	Comparative Analysis
1	Development of the Oil and Gas Industry	It gives reason to believe that oil, gas and chemicals will not lose its relevance in the next ten years. Modernization in oil and gas industry will further enhance Azerbaijan's comparative advantage among the regional countries.
2	Manufacturing and Processing of Agricultural Products	It shows that agricultural sector will dominate the country's economy after petrochemicals in the near future. It will create more jobs for the youth. It will streamline price stability throughout the country. It will further enhance its exports diversity which will pay its dividends in the days to come.
3	Manufacturing of Small and Medium Entrepreneurship-level Consumer Goods	It upholds the importance of SMEs in the post oil era where it will play a crucial role in the next ten years. It plans to shift the production of consumer goods on small and medium enterprises, has been a long-standing goal of the public. It will increase national drive of "women empowerment" in the country. It will generate business activities always beneficial for the macro-economy. It will definitely increase SMEs role, and share in its GDPs.
4	Development of Heavy Industry and Machinery	Development of heavy industry and machinery is the backbone of massive industrialization in the country. Its modernization will open new opportunities for the local as well as foreign investors to invest in Azerbaijan. It will further strengthen its drive of "diversification of economy and productive channels".
5	Development of Specialized Tourism Industry	It will attract more and more tourists from the region and beyond. Its development will produce "feel good" spirits among the local people as well as foreigners. It will fasten infrastructural development. It will support associated industries mainly food & beverage, hoteliers, event management, aviation and the last but not the least, "services" sector in the country. Ultimately its development will cement its country drive for the development of "non-oil" sector in the next ten years.
6	Development of Logistics	In modern economics, logistics play very important role. Globalized world is the resultant of convergences of logistics technologies and development and its further development will create "rural and urban" balance throughout the country. It will reduce time consumption and fasten the pace of development. Moreover, it will increase its regional connectivity.

² Center for analysis of economic reforms and communication, The strategic road map has been approved. December 7, 2016. http://ereforms.org/news/the_strategic_road_map_has_been_approved-126

7	Development of Housing Provision at a Reasonable Price	Price hike has badly affected “housing industry” in the world. A home at affordable price is the dream of every common person which will be materialized through its further development. Modernization, innovation, regulatory mechanism, and alternativeness will boost housing in Azerbaijan in the next ten years.
8	Development of Vocational Education and Training	Vocational education and training is the prerequisite of achieving a smarter economy. Its development will create more jobs for the common people. It will further sharpen the skills of common people. It will create a better equipped “human resource” in every field.
9	Development of Financial Services	Its consolidation, channelization and mobilization will reduce the chances of bankruptcy and non-performing loans. It will stimulate business activities in the country by providing finances. It will be useful for the development of banking and insurance sector. It will give rise to “plastic money” in the country.
10	Development of Communication and Information Technologies	Azerbaijan has a leading position in terms of communication and information technologies and its further development will revolutionize its macro-economy in the next decade.
11	Development of Utilities (Electricity and Thermal Energy, Water and Gas Supply).	Azerbaijan has a comparative advantage in energy resources and its befitting production due to which there is no concept of “energy deficit” in the country. Its energy diversification and productive channels will further strengthen its position in the region and beyond.

New Model of Economic Development

Aforementioned document has formed a new model of economic development. It has set new development directions of its macro-economy. It emphasized that the non-oil sector would be the priority.” It would propel the rapid development of the non-oil sector. Serious steps were taken in this direction in 2016. Significant progress was made in agriculture, tourism, construction, information communication technologies and other non-oil industries. It would further strengthen socio-economic prosperity.

Role of “Mackenzie” firm

The strategic road map was influenced by the experiences of the “Mackenzie”³ firm in the USA: The strategies prepared as part of “road maps” were reviewed by the local experts after it was created by “Mackenzie” and it was adjusted to local principles. Azerbaijan made a lot of profit off of oil in a short period. But those profits have diminished now. Now it is post-oil era. The current economy should adjust to the demands of the post-oil era. The strategic road has been created to achieve this end. It aims to develop Azerbaijani economy in years 2020-2025 and post-2025.

Further strengthening and diversification of the export potential, meeting the domestic demand with domestic production (demand-supply chains), regulating the fiscal policy, developing the human capital for future generations, increasing

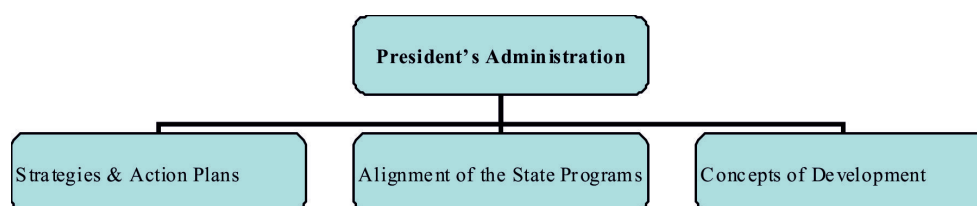
³ Road map will support the formation of a new economic model, KASPI. December 8, 2016.
<http://kaspi.az/en/road-map-will-support-the-formation-of-a-new-economic-model/?action=disablemobile>

the volume of small and medium businesses in the economy and such institutional reforms are thoroughly discussed in the road map. Ultimately, new strategy will help reduce the dependence of the economy on the oil revenues.⁴

Unity of the Command

The government of Azerbaijan believes in “unity of command” which is indeed the secret of its political stability and unparalleled socio-economic prosperity. The presidential decree states that the “Administration of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan” will administer and supervise the implementation of the strategic road maps and not the Cabinet of Ministers. It is a great step towards achieving high standards of “smarter governance” in the country because in the “Weber Model of Bureaucracy”⁵ and his concept of “Iron Cage” the large bureaucracy important issues are delayed for a long time. Moreover, larger bureaucracy carries inefficiency and incompetency.

Figure-III



The central and local executive authorities, the public legal entities created by a government and the legal entities a controlling parcel of shares of which belongs to the state will be guided by regulations of the strategic road maps that are approved by the decree during the development of the strategic plans on activity directions in the economic sphere, the development of the state programs, concepts, strategies, action plans and projects.

The Presidential Administration has also been advised to submit within 15 days to the president proposals related to the mechanisms of implementation of the strategic road maps approved by the present decree. The president through his assistant will personally supervise the reforms and monitor their progress. Monitoring, evaluation, communication arrangements in connection with the activities foreseen in the strategic road maps will be provided by the Centre for Analysis of Economic Reforms and Communications.

⁴ Elchin Mehdiyev, Azerbaijan on threshold of new development: Ali Ahmadov. Trend. December 24, 2016. <http://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/2702366.html>

⁵ Boundless. “Weber’s Model for Bureaucracy.” Boundless Sociology Boundless, December 20, 2016. Retrieved 23 Jan. 2017 from <https://www.boundless.com/sociology/textbooks/boundless-sociology-textbook/social-groups-and-organization-6/bureaucracy-56/weber-s-model-for-bureaucracy-352-10202/>

Rational for Strategic Road Map

- (a) Continuation of reforms as conceptualized and institutionalized by national Leader, Heydar Aliyev has achieved a prosperous Azerbaijan. Large-scale oil revenues were utilized to improve economic and social infrastructure, to deepen market relations, to reduce poverty, and to improve the economic security and strengthening of state administration. Due to which a middle class emerged. In all the modern economies, stabilized middle class is considered to be a guarantor of socio-economic and political stability which needs to be further nurtured. Implementation of strategic road map is must for the further consolidation of the Azeri middle class.
- (b) Azerbaijan has succeeded to achieve and maintain energy security, financial security, stable currency management, food security and the last but not the least, transport and logistics security. Azerbaijan has diverse capabilities in both directions: East-West and North-South. Now Azerbaijan possesses 75 percent of GDP of South Caucasus.⁶ Further development logistics and trade along with and expansion of transports are must and strategic road will support it.
- (c) Azerbaijan's initial economic development model was dominated by natural resources. Constant price decline in global oil markets has made the adjustment of development path necessary. Strategic road map is logical response to post oil era and Azerbaijan has adopted an economic model based on the intensity of labor and a model based on efficiency.
- (d) The strategic roadmap is the ideal combination of both models based on their short-term (until 2020) and medium term (until 2025) performance. But the strategic vision until 2025 provides for the transition to a model based on innovativeness. In comparison. Its new model of future economic development is similar to Malaysian model in short and medium terms although. It may use models of Israel, South Korea, and Singapore in 2025 and beyond to achieve certain goals of socio-economic stability and sustainability.
- (e) Azerbaijan is a connecting hub and its further development needs strategic imputes as provided and guided by the strategic road map.
- (f) Further diversification of macro-economy and its productive channels is necessary for achieving greater socio-economic prosperity, high inflows of FDIs, and the last but not, the least, high exports.
- (g) Further development of services sector is vital for generation of jobs and sharpens of skills and achieving smart economy in the next decade.

⁶ Mehmood Ul. Hassan Khan, Fascinating Azerbaijan, Defence Journal No. 4, pp. 36-48, at p 46.

Multiplier Effects of Reforms

Growth of non-oil and non-resource sectors of its macro-economy is now the need of the hour. Former President and national leader Heydar Aliyev was the main architect of modern Azerbaijan who announced, implemented and institutionalized so many diversified but integrated reforms in different sectors of national economy. Oil strategy was successfully implemented. Infrastructural development was planned and achieved. Moreover, socio-economic prosperity, energy and food security was maintained. Private sector was strengthened and qualitative life was secured. Ultimately it had defined Azerbaijan's unique position in the regional as well as world economy.

Reforms was remained constant and paramount due to which high rates of GDPs, per capita income, FDIs and the last but not the least export oriented policies pursued. Now sustainable economic reforms carried out by President H.E. Ilham Aliyev meet the new challenges of the global economy. Weak economic growth in the region and beyond the sharp decline in oil revenue, the complicated external economic growth factors/environment affects the country's macroeconomic and financial stability.

New Qualitative Model of the Economic Development

The implementation of a number of systemic economic reforms/measures, the creation of organic coherence and mutual reconciliation between current, medium and long-term periods of the socio-economic development, establishing a new qualitative model of the economic development are the main upcoming priority tasks of the government. It is hoped that the strategic road map will ensure the competitiveness of the economy, will increase inclusiveness and social welfare on the base of sustainable economic development.

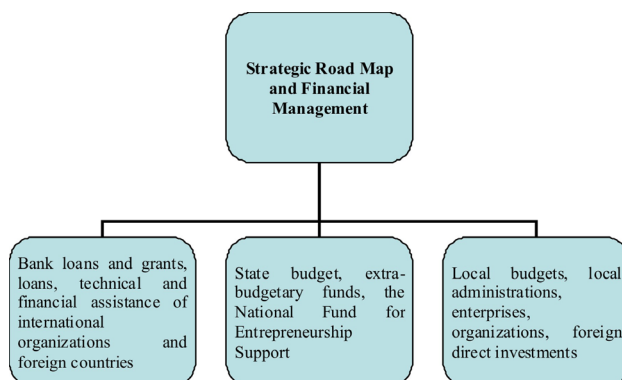
Successful implementation of the strategic road map will cater any global challenges and will increase inflows of investments. It will increase atmosphere of free competition and market economy. It will consolidate development of human capital of Azerbaijan.

Mobilization and Channelization of Financial Resources

According to Azeri figures⁷ December 9, 2016 twenty-seven billion manats will be required for Azerbaijan to implement the strategic goals outlined in Strategic Road Maps for the National Economy and Main Economic Sectors. The amount, required for the implementation of the strategic road maps on all economic sectors until 2020, will be provided through the state and private sources.

⁷ Azad Hasanli, 27B manats needed to realize Azerbaijan's strategic road maps. Trend, December 9, 2016. <http://en.trend.az/business/economy/2696069.html>

Figure-IV



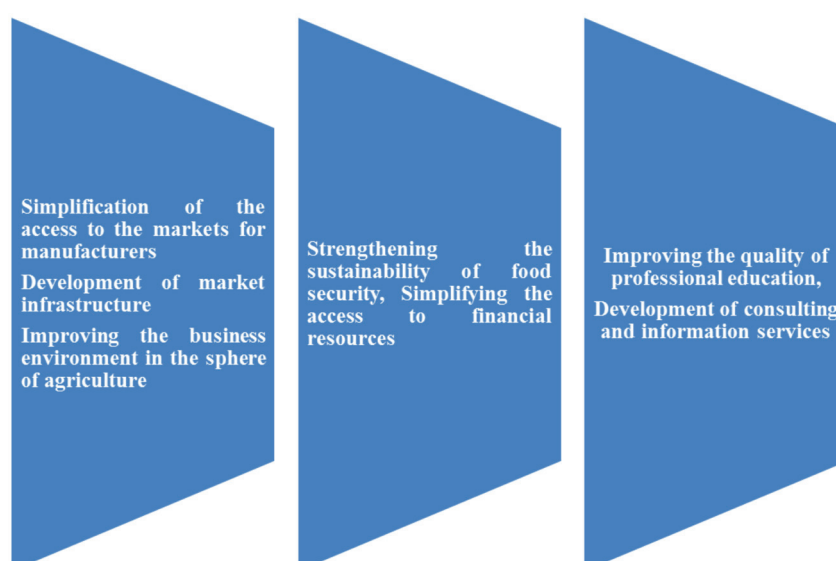
Most of the necessary funds will be provided through restructuring the existing budgets,⁸ as well as the joint efforts of the private sector and various investors,” says the Strategic Road Maps for the National Economy and Main Economic Sectors.

Vocational Education and Training Sectors

According to Azerbaijan’s figures and strategic road map December 8, 2016 the priorities set for the sector of vocational education and training in Azerbaijan will directly provide a GDP growth of 6 million manats, while their indirect effect within priorities of other sectors will provide a GDP growth of 1 billion manats by 2020. Investments worth 190.95 million manats will be required to reach the strategic goals defined in the Road Map.

Strategic Road Map and Further Development of Agriculture & Agro-Economy

Figure-V



⁸ Nigar Abbasova, Investment Fund may appear in Azerbaijan. AZERNEWS. December 20, 2016. <http://www.azernews.az/business/106745.html>

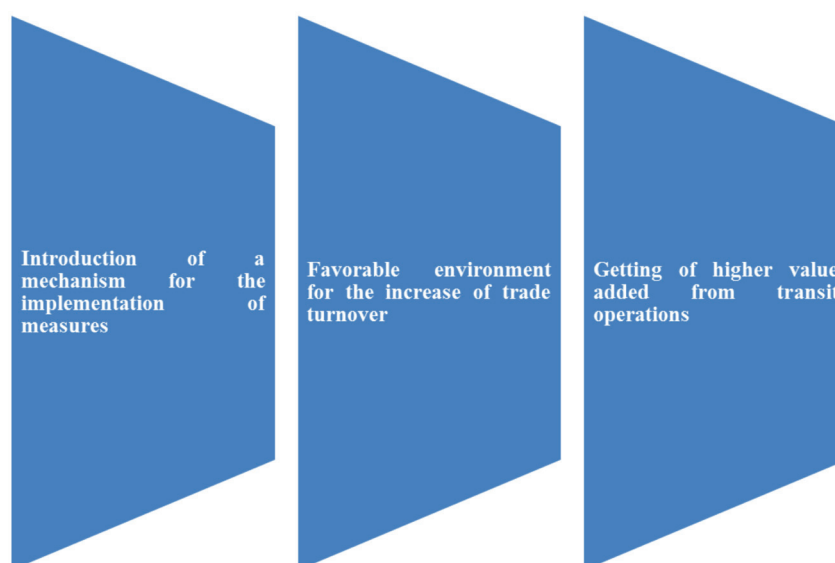
It is expected that the Strategic Road Map for the manufacture and processing of agricultural products in Azerbaijan will provide a significant GDP growth. According to Azerbaijan's figures⁹ (December 19, 2016), some 20,000 new workplaces will be built in the country until 2020, while the increase in GDP will reach to 1.2 billion manats (\$ 0.68). Direct effect of the measures conceptualized in the Road Map will be 575 million (\$ 328.1 million), while indirect effect will provide an additional increase of 660 million manats (\$ 376.5 manats).

According to strategic road map, an agricultural insurance fund will be created in 2018, while Azerbaijan's Financial Markets Supervision Body (FMSB), the country's Agriculture Ministry, as well as private insurance companies will examine the possibility of creating an insurance fund to expand the coverage of agricultural insurance.

The Road Map comprises short-term (until 2020), medium-term (until 2025) and long-term measures (post 2025) measures to be implemented in the sphere. Some nine strategic objectives were defined in the Map to create an advantageous environment, which will increase the competitiveness of the sector.

Development of Logistics

The Strategic road map for the development of logistics and trade in Azerbaijan is expected to ensure a GDP growth by roughly 605 million manats¹⁰ (\$ 342.5 million). Nearly 18,900 new working places will be created in the country till 2020. The document defined three strategic objectives to be reached in the sphere of logistics and trade.



⁹ Nigar Abbasova, Strategic Road Map on Agriculture to provide GDP growth. AZERNEWS, December 19, 2016. <http://www.azernews.az/business/106692.html>

¹⁰ Nigar Abbasova, Logistics road map to ensure GDP growth. AZERNEWS. December 30, 2016. <http://www.azernews.az/business/107145.html>

The objectives include creation of a favorable environment for the increase of trade turnover, getting of higher value added from transit operations, as well as introduction of a mechanism for the implementation of measures in the sphere.

Under the road Map, successful implementation of the measures envisaged in the document will up the share of Azerbaijan in marine cargo transshipments

Addition in Marine Cargo Transshipments	Addition in %
En Route Central Asia-the Black Sea	40
En Route Central Asia-Europe	25
En Route China-Europe	3
En Route Russia-Iran	40
En Route Iran-the Black Sea route	25

Moreover, revenues from air operations will increase by 5 percent till 2020. Nearly 5 logistics and trade centers will be constructed in the country by that period.

Role of Private Sector in the Development of Logistics

According to the country's "Strategic road map on development of logistics and trade" attracting private actors to the logistics and trade sphere will allow increasing the GDP by 15 million mantas.¹¹ Meanwhile, revenues will increase by five percent in the sphere of air traffic. The government of Azerbaijan plans to increase the share of the private sector in the sphere of logistics sector in 2017-2020. The government will prepare a long-term program on attracting the private sector to the logistics sphere, according to the road map. In this connection, further liberalization of specific components of the logistics sector has already initiated in other countries in air traffic, sea ports and railways.

The government will conduct a comparative research study of operations in the sphere of air traffic in Azerbaijan and other countries. Goals and tasks, which will allow increasing the private sector's share in this sphere, will be determined according to the results of the assessment. An aircraft fleet will be created and measures on attracting foreign investors to this sphere will be taken until 2017 the creation of a low-cost air company.

Moreover, relevant structures will prepare short-term and long-term plans on modernization of international and domestic airports' infrastructure, as well as will develop plans on expanding infrastructure opportunities of the Heydar Aliyev International Airport, according to the road map. As for the railway transportation,

¹¹ Nigar Abbasova, Transport and logistics at a turning point. AZERNEWS. January 5, 2017. <http://www.azernews.az/business/107202.html>

relevant measures will be taken in order to attract foreign investments or create joint enterprises in those spheres, where there is a great demand for investments. Relevant steps will also be taken in the sphere of maritime traffic in order to ensure the participation of private maritime operators, which will allow effectively transporting transit cargoes through the Caspian Sea.

Development of Specialized Tourism Industry

The development of tourism industry has been comprehensively and systematically discussed and examined by appropriate government agencies, research centers and independent experts, series of discussions in the recently announced strategic road map.¹²

Conclusion

H.E. İlham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan has officially announced “Strategic Road Maps for the National Economy and Main Economic Sectors”. It outlines new strategy for the national development and its associated macro-economic sectors. It forms a new economic development model where private sector will play a dominating role in the future. It is blue print of economic development of the next decade. It is also a post-oil strategy and successful implementation will further strengthen Azerbaijan’s pursuits and national drive for the development and further consolidation of non-oil sector in the country.

Recently announced strategic road map is comprehensive document to be implemented through president’s administration away from ministers of cabinet, a new and innovative idea/step to achieve smarter governance in the days to come. It pinpoints complete financial management for the optimal utility of available resources/funds to be mobilized and channelized for financing the different programs and projects in the years to come.

Strategic road map covers all important sectors of its macro-economy mainly oil and gas industry, manufacturing and processing of agricultural products, manufacturing of small and medium entrepreneurship-level consumer goods, development of heavy industry and machinery, development of specialized tourism industry, development of logistics, development of housing provision at a reasonable price, development of vocational education and training, development of financial services, development of communication and information technologies, and development of utilities (electricity and thermal energy, water and gas supply) to be implemented for achieving certain goals of sustainable socio-economic prosperity, rigorous industrialization, diversification of national economy.

¹² Strategic Road Map for development of specialized tourism industry in Azerbaijan revealed. REPORT.AZ. December 17, 2016. <https://report.az/en/tourism-and-exhibitions/strategic-road-map-for-development-of-specialized-tourism-industry-in-azerbaijan-revealed/>

Strategic road map also deals with further banking & financial reforms, liberalization, and privatization. Successful implementation of said strategic road map would further enhance inflows of Foreign Direct Investments (FDIs) in the country. It would support price stability and create strategic balance between demand and supply chains throughout the country for reducing inflationary trends. Modernization of the national economy, innovative production channels, and development of renewables (solar, wind) would further strengthen its regional position as economic power-house in the days to come.

Strategic road map will materialize the dreams of qualitative life to general masses of Azerbaijan through sustained socio-economic development. It is a forward-looking and result-oriented document which has push-forward systematic approach of Azerbaijan's government. It would definitely enhance its attractiveness, competitiveness being a tolerant country in the region and world alike.

It pinpoints the further development of oil and gas sector in the next decade. Development of its associated industries i.e. petrochemical and synthetic must be explored.

Small is beautiful and development of small and medium enterprises (SMEs) will generate jobs, support reduction of poverty and enhance further of women empowerment in the next decade. In this connection, needed financial assistance/ loans should be provided at concessional rates from banking (banks, DFIs, leasing companies etc.) and non-banking channels (micro-credit, micro-financing, community development through financial capacity building support etc.). Further development of SMEs sector would further diversify its economy, export mix and sharpen entrepreneurship among the people of Azerbaijan. There is an urgent need to study the SMEs system of Singapore, China and Taiwan along with successful experiences of micro-credits of Bangladesh and Brazil would also be thoroughly studied.

Banking and finance sector is backbone of modern economy and its stability and sustainability provides necessary fuel for further industrialization, diversification of economy, institutionalization of consumer goods production, innovative production channels and the last but not the least, encouraging domestic savings in the country. Strategic road map is silent about the growth of Islamic banking and finances which needs to be reconsidered and revised. Islamic economy, banking and finances are not economic reality in so many advanced countries of UK, Spain, Singapore, Japan, South Korea and Middle East region which need to be studied for having alternative financial system in case of any crisis in the future.

Moreover, further tightening of regulatory mechanism, credit processing, credit

monitoring and supervision, reduction of non-performing loans (NPLs) and regular audit would be beneficial for the further consolidation and development of banking and financial sector. Further development of insurance companies would a value-addition in the next decade.

Strategic road also pinpoints the importance of logistics and transports sectors. It also includes initiation of new mega infrastructural projects, completion of mega projects and holistic approach to integrate road, air, marine sustainable transport system in the next decade. In this regards, successful infrastructural development model of United Arab Emirates (UAE), Singapore, Malaysia and even Turkey may also be included and future explored. Active participation of private sector in the development of logistics and transports is the need of the hour.

Development of human resources is vital for achieving high rates of scientific technologies, innovations and smarter societies as happened in most of the European Union Countries (EU), Scandinavian countries, Qatar and UAE etc. Rigorous institutionalization of vocational and technical education and training would bring desired dividends in the days to come. In this regards, model of Japan, Taiwan, China and even Germany may also be further studied.

By announcing ‘Strategic Road Maps for the National Economy and Main Economic Sectors’ H.E. Ilham Aliyev, President of Azerbaijan has demonstrated immaculate qualities of genuine leadership. His business, investment and people’s friendly policies have achieved unmatched economic prosperity in the region which is now strong, stable and sustainable too. Strategic road map is right way to move forward.

THE HISTORY OF ECONOMIC RELATIONS AND THE COOPERATION IN THE ENERGY SECTOR BETWEEN AZERBAIJAN AND GERMANY

Matthias DORNFELDT*

Germany and Azerbaijan have been having connections for two hundred years. At the invitation of the Russian Tsar Alexander I, families from Swabia started settling in the western regions of today's Azerbaijan in 1818. Due to an economic hardship and the absolutist rule, they abandoned their southwestern Motherland and founded new settlements in the Caucasus. The first and most significant village is Helenendorf, today known as Göygöl. The local Azerbaijani population cordially received the immigrants. The German winegrowers were among the largest producers of wines and spirits of Tsarist Russia and the Soviet Union. They brought new technologies of wine production and transportation to Azerbaijan and built their own schools, churches, and hospitals. By 1914 the number of German settlements in Azerbaijan reached eight with over 6000 settlers. Lorenz Kuhn, the representative of the German minority, who made a significant contribution into the country's agricultural formation, when he was the chairman of the Agrarian Commission in the Parliament of the first Republic of Azerbaijan (1918– 1920).

The German company Siemens built the telegraph line Moscow-Tiflis-Poti-Vladikavkaz in 1863 and Tiflis-Baku in 1868 and therethrough gained the world-wide fame. The first 45 km naphthalene pipeline in the world was built in 1889-1894, which was made of seamless Mannesmann pipes to feed the Siemens copper plant in Kedabeg, where a consulate of Germany was situated as well. In 1898, the oil production on the Absheron Peninsula outstripped the one in the USA and became thereby the world largest oil-producing region. That led to the construction of the longest oil pipeline at that time running from Baku and the coast of the Black Sea. The pipeline was constructed of Mannesmann pipes and commissioned in 1907. The equipment for the pipeline, electrification and construction had mainly German origin. German chemists von Liebig and Engler played a significant role in the erection of first oil refinery in the Baku region.

The first German consular representations on the Azerbaijani soil were based in Kedabeg and Baku. The technical and administrative head of the copper mine in Kedabeg was Georg William Bolton, who was also in charge of the German Consulate in Tiflis. In connection with the transfer of his domicile to Kedabeg, on 5 December 1877, Bolton was authorized to provide consular services to in the Elisabethpol Governorate, where many employees of Siemens were working. Bolton was the first and the last German Consul in Kedabeg.¹

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¹ Deutsche Konsulate Rußland. (1918). Akten betreffend die Kaiserliche Konsular-Agentur in Kedabeg. Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes No. 46 (R 252214). Berlin: Deutsches Auswärtiges Amt.

In 1874, the brothers Ludwig and Robert Nobel started an oil venture in Azerbaijan. During the 1877-78 Russian-Turkish War, they were engaged in goods procurement for the Russian Army and therethrough had made profits, which were later used to establish the company 'Naphtaproduktionsgesellschaft' in 1879. Much interest in economic development was taken by Baron Gustav Schenck zu Schweinsberg, who was German minister in Tehran. He visited Baku for the first time in 1886 and wrote to the German Chancellor on 15 November 1888 about the remarkable flourishing of the city and a growing significance of the local oil industry. The completion of the Transcaucasian Railway would strengthen Baku as a trading center, why a consular presence was at this place important. 'Baku is the only place, where reliable information about trade and other conveyance conducted from Russia to Central Asia and Persia can be obtained'.² Therefore, a consulate in Baku would be of great value for the embassy in Tehran. There was a person perfectly suitable for that due to his exact knowledge of the state of affairs in Baku, his skills, his social position, and his excellent relations with the Russian authorities, namely Carl Deney, a German national from the trading company Burkhardt & Cie.

The ambassador recommended the Chancellor to appoint Carl Deney for the position of consul. On 7 March 1890, the German Emperor Wilhelm II. signed his appointment. The consulate in Baku, as well as the consular missions in Batumi, Kedabeg and Poti, were subordinated to the consulate in Tbilisi. In Baku, besides the German consulate, there was also a consular representation of Turkey. The German consulate had been open until the Germany's declaration of war to Russia in August 1914. The last German Consul Otto Tiedemann left Baku by ferryboat for Astrakhan, where he was captured.

The monarchy in Russia was abolished by the February Revolution in 1917. The history of Azerbaijan's independence has a hundred-year history, when it first appeared on the political map on the ruins of the Russian Empire. On 28 May 1918, the independence of the Azerbaijani Democratic Republic (ADR) was first proclaimed. The German government supported the yearning for independence because of military reasons. New official representations were established in the Caucasus, to protect German interests. A formal recognition of Azerbaijan by Germany was disapproved. According to Rudolf Nadolny of the Russia Unit of the Foreign Office of Germany, the withdrawal of the Russian troops from the Transcaucasus did not have any legal effect on the status of the territory and would not entitle countries to enter into international relations with the newly-created states.³

² Deutsche Konsulate Rußland. (1918). Akten betreffend das Kaiserliche Konsulat in Baku. Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes. Band 42 (R 252212). Berlin: Deutsches Auswärtiges Amt.

³ Deutsche Konsulate Rußland. (1918). Akten betreffend Russisch-Asien. Politischen Archiv des Auswärtigen Amtes. Band 97a (R 11058). Berlin: Deutsches Auswärtiges Amt.

The newly-founded Transcaucasian Republic was recognized as an independent state neither by the Russian nor by other governments, and therefore remained still a Russian territory. In accordance with the Russian consent, the German government was prepared to accept Georgia. On the contrary, recognition of Armenia and Azerbaijan was not possible at that time per international law. The self-determination right of nations could be applied, in the first instance, only between the Bolshevik government and the nationalities. Therefore, no foreign government had the right to recognize the new states without an inter-Russian legal arrangement. This argument was included into the agreement with the Turkish party to end the dispute, followed by its expansion in the Caucasus. On 23 September 1918, Mehemed Talaat Pasha, the State Secretary of the Turkish Foreign Office and the German Secretary of State Paul von Hintze, signed a secret protocol, which stated that Turkey acknowledges Georgia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan. 'Germany only recognizes Georgia but will first appoint consuls for Armenia and Azerbaijan. The Turkish government withdrew its troops from Armenia and Azerbaijan'. The head of the delegation in the Caucasus was already trying to reopen or rebuild consular missions. However, the ADR could not withstand the Bolshevik's expansion and fell two years later under the Bolshevik occupation in the South Caucasus. That resulted in establishing the Soviet Socialist Republic of Azerbaijan on 28 April 1920. In the new political framework, the independence of Azerbaijan was de-facto suspended for the next seven decades.

25 years after having declared independence in 1991, Azerbaijan is not only politically, but also economically the most prosperous and stable country in the Caucasus, with impressive economic growth rates. Politically, the Caspian state decided to integrate partially into the West and actively cooperates with European structures.

The export of fossil fuels assures Azerbaijan's political and economic independence. At the same time, the oil and natural gas are the main factors determining energy foreign policy of Azerbaijan. Germany was among the first countries to diplomatically recognize the state of Azerbaijan and established full diplomatic relations on 20 February 1992. Azerbaijan is an important supplier of oil to Germany which the latter sees as a significant partner in the Caspian Region.

The cooperation between Azerbaijan and the countries of the European Community started right after restoration of Azerbaijan's independence, where Germany has been one of the most active actors. German companies have been playing a significant role in the economic development of Azerbaijan. More than 100 German companies are active in Azerbaijan. There is a growing interest among Azerbaijani companies which are looking for opportunities to benefit from the advantages of doing business with Germany. Azerbaijan imports modern technologies and the know-how for building a competitive industry from Germany.

Azerbaijan is Germany's most important economic and trade partner in the South Caucasus. The economic relations between Azerbaijan and Germany are a very dynamic area of the cooperation. According to the Federal Ministry of Economics and Energy of the Federal Republic of Germany, around 80% of the total trade volume between Germany and the South Caucasus countries in 2015 fell on Azerbaijan.⁴

The trade turnover between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Federal Republic of Germany in 2015, according to the Ministry of Economic Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, accounted for US\$ 1.914 billion that consisted of US\$ 0.69 billion of imports and US\$ 1.223 billion of exports. Therefore, Azerbaijan had a positive balance of trade of US\$ 0.534 billion. In 2015, 9.27% of total Azerbaijan's foreign trade turnover fell on Germany.

The high-ranking German-Azerbaijani working group for trade and investment was founded on 5 May 2011. The co-chairs of this group are Samir Valiyev, Director of the Ministry of Economics of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Director General for Foreign Economic Policy at the Federal Ministry of Economics and Technology, Eckard Franz. The group has had five meetings since its foundation.

Besides the cooperation in energy domain, Azerbaijan has been looking for opportunities to develop non-energy cooperation. The emphasis was set on development of new directions by the head of the industry department of the Ministry of Economics of Azerbaijan Samed Bashirli during the innovations forum in June 2016. Among the priority areas were listed pharmaceuticals, manufacturing of machinery, building materials, information technologies.⁵

In order to expand economic relations, recently an important decision was made to establish a German Chamber of Commerce (AHK) in the Azerbaijani capital Baku. On 12 November 2012, AHK had an opening ceremony. A high-ranking government and economic delegation, headed by the German State Minister Cornelia Pieper and a former Federal Minister of Economics Michael Glos, came to Baku. It is the second Germany's Chamber of Commerce in the CIS⁶ region. At present, about 130 companies are registered by the AHK Baku from both sides. The Azerbaijani companies SOCAR, Azerbaijan Airlines and Azerbaijan International Bank have their representations in Germany. Thus, Germany has formed an economic bridgehead in Azerbaijan that will have even higher importance for trading with Azerbaijan in the future. German products and technologies enjoy an excellent reputation in Azerbaijan. The Crystal Hall for the Eurovision Song Contest in Baku 2012 was built by a German company

⁴ Federal Foreign Office (2017). Bilateral relations.

Available at: http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Laenderinformationen/Laenderuebersicht_node.html (Accessed: 4 February 2017)

⁵ Abbasova, N. (2016). Azerbaijan, Germany eye further cooperation in non-oil industry. Available at: <http://www.azernews.az/business/97482.html> (Accessed: 5 February 2017)

⁶ Commonwealth of Independent States.

which is no coincidence. Over 500 German engineers, architects and skilled workers were involved in the construction of the Concert Hall.

The development of the private sector outside the oil and gas sector is a part of the development policy cooperation. The German Association for International Cooperation (GIZ) supports economic diversification through advising the government on the improvement of the regulatory environment, establishing a vocational education and training system tailored to the needs and strengthening export potential. Another important project is the development of the credit system through a series of financial and technical joint measures (microfinance bank 'Accessbank', German Azerbaijani Fund, Support for Private Banking). A politically important area of cooperation is the support of the legal and judicial reform. The purification of water supply for more than 145,000 inhabitants in selected provincial centers as well as the preservation of biodiversity is the additional priorities for German-Azerbaijan cooperation. Since the independence of Azerbaijan, the cooperation on development policy with Germany has attracted in total more than EUR 600 million in the country's reconstruction (mainly as loans under the framework of financial cooperation).

Development of oil fields in Azerbaijan came relatively late. Germany in the meantime became one of the most important trade partners of this South Caucasus state and cooperation in energy sector has been continuing steadily since its delayed start.

The Caspian region is today one of the most important geo-economic areas of the world, due to its large oil and gas resources, together with related projects for export of energy products to the world markets. This also includes Azerbaijan with its natural resources and energy policy. Modern Azerbaijan initiated its long-term energy strategy in September 1994. The founder of this strategy was former president of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev. It was based on signing of a contract between the Azerbaijani State Oil Company (SOCAR) and ten other oil companies from six different countries. The agreement comprised of joint exploitation of Azeri, Chirag, and Guneshli oil fields, located in the Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea and consequent distribution of the oil products.

Duration of this contract is 30 years and was shortly after its signing nicknamed as "Contract of the Century". It laid the foundations of Azerbaijan's oil strategy, both in terms of diversification of stakeholders and development of the industry in general. Hydrocarbon reserves in Azerbaijan around this time were estimated to 7 billion barrels of oil. Significant amount of natural resources and favorable geostrategic position of Azerbaijan along the Eurasian transit routes have attracted enormous interest of foreign investors in Azerbaijani oil and natural gas. For this reason, 30 energy companies from 14 countries are now active in the area. Since 1994,

total numbers of 26 contracts have been signed between SOCAR and foreign oil companies for exploration, production and utilization of hydrocarbon resources. The amount of investments under these contracts is US\$ 60 billion.

Since 1994, the Azerbaijani energy sector has attracted attention of German interests. After signing of the "Contract of the Century", German media reported regretfully on the lack of participation from German companies in projects concerning the oil and natural gas sector of Azerbaijan. This opinion was expressed in an article published on 10 May 1999 titled "Petroleum is the life: A new oil pipeline from Baku to the Black Sea was opened " by Stefan Koch, editor of "Frankfurter Rundschau", who also participated in the opening ceremony of oil pipeline Baku-Supsa. That was his first visit to the prosperous region, which was made possible by Günther Rexrodt, Federal Minister of Economics at that time. Back then, representatives of German companies were surprised to find out that they are too late in order to participate in the new oil boom. Major companies like British Petroleum (BP), Chevron and Agip were already present in the South Caucasus. Koch called on German entrepreneurs and banks to cooperate with Azerbaijan. In the issue of "Berliner Zeitung", published on 15 February 2007, it was stated, "Chinese, Russians and Americans are already getting ready for battle for rich energy reserves of the Caspian Sea. The European Union has been late. "

Also, the "Spiegel" magazine wrote about "The battle for Caucasus" and lamented the "passive participation of German companies in division of the Caspian oil". On the contrary, the Azerbaijani side had a great interest in forging relations with the Federal Republic in the oil sector. President Heydar Aliyev was striving for German investments in the Azerbaijani oil industry and promised good conditions in order to achieve this. Otto Wolf von Amerongen, founding chair of the Eastern Committee of German Industry, stated in a meeting with Heydar Aliyev in July 1996 that only a few years after gaining its independence the Caspian state has established close economic and political contacts with Germany. Until then, the German companies were not involved in the development of Azerbaijani oilfields. The reason was not lack of interest, but other priorities of German investors, such as telecommunications, water supply, power plant construction, chemical industry and construction of petroleum refineries and pipelines. German businessmen were more active in investing in petroleum-related facilities, services and the non-oil sector in general.

There is a long tradition of cooperation in the oil industry. Starting from 1874, the company of Nobel brothers was active in the Caucasian oil industry for several decades. During that time, their stock company had the largest fleet of oil tankers in the Caspian Sea. From beginning of the 20th century, oil and oil products were exported from Azerbaijan to the German Reich. About 20 percent of German demand was covered by supply of petroleum products from Azerbaijan. In Bavaria a refinery

was built back then to process the oil from Baku. In the end of the 1990s a concrete cooperation in the petroleum sector began. From 1997 onward, Deminex-Wintershall participated in the exploitation of oil in Azerbaijani sector of the Caspian Sea as part of the project "Perspective structures in Lankaran and Talish" with a share of 30 percent. Between 1995 and 1997, the German company Grünwald cooperated with the German-Azerbaijani joint venture Azeralmneft in onshore oil production in area of the seventh oil field in Ramana. In the following years German capital was also invested in other oil-related sectors. German direct investments in Azerbaijani oil industry have risen sharply in recent years. According to the German Department of Economics and Export Control, Azerbaijan is the sixth largest oil supplier of Germany.⁷ In 2015 Germany imported US\$ 1.2 billion worth of Azerbaijani oil.⁸

The oil from Azerbaijan is transported via Georgian ports of Batumi and Poti to Trieste in northern Italy and then further to southern Germany for processing in local refineries. Out of US\$ 3 billion provided for implementation of the Baku-Tiflis-Ceyhan oil pipeline project, BP, as the main stakeholder, paid US\$ 1 billion for its orders to contractors, including US\$ 250 million to German companies.⁹ For example, Eupec, a German company producing high-quality pipelines, completed orders worth of US\$ 120 million in this project. Part of the pipeline installed by this company is corridor stretching between the fields of Azeri, Chirag and Guneshli and processing terminal of Sangachal, located about 60 kilometers south of Baku. In addition to that, a contract for technical upkeep of oil and gas devices was signed on 1 February 2005 between German company Oil and Gas ProServis GmbH and SOCAR. The Sangachal terminal of the Baku-Supsa pipeline was constructed by German construction company Gabeg. A striking example of the long-term interest of German business community in energy domain of Azerbaijan is a joint venture between Uniper¹⁰ and Azerbaijan's State Oil Company SOCAR that was established in May 2015. From 1993 to the end of 2011, German businesses invested about US\$ 202 million in the industrial sector of Azerbaijan, one third was invested in the oil and gas sector.

The 20th century was century of oil. The 21st century will be about ensuring long-term energy supplies, which are seen as a necessity from security point of view. Azerbaijan is therefore an important partner for both Europe and Germany. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline, the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline as well as the Trans-Anatolian pipeline (TANAP) and the Trans-Adriatic pipeline (TAP) projects are of the utmost importance to Europe's energy security.¹¹ Successful implementation

⁷ Caspian Energy. (2015). We want to use the full potential of our relations – Ambassador of Germany to Azerbaijan. Available at: <http://www.baku.diplo.de/contentblob/4693526/Daten/6197314/InterviewCaspianEnergy.pdf> (Accessed: 3 February 2017)

⁸ Federal Foreign Office. (2016). Azerbaijan. Available at: http://www.auswaertiges-amt.de/EN/Aussenpolitik/Laender/Laenderinfos/01-Nodes/Aserbajdschan_node.html (Accessed: 4 February 2017)

⁹ British Petroleum. (2016). <http://www.bp.com/> (Accessed: 4 February 2017)

¹⁰ formerly E.ON SE.

¹¹ European Commission. (2011). On security of energy supply and international cooperation – The EU energy policy: engaging with partners beyond our borders. Available at: <http://eur-lex.europa.eu/legal-content/EN/TXT/?uri=CELEX:52011DC0539> (Accessed: 4 February 2017)

of projects aiming to transport the Caspian hydrocarbon resources to Europe covers an important part of Germany's and EU's energy need. At the same time, this also represents an important contribution to diversification and long-term energy security. In the past 20 years Germany became an important partner of Azerbaijan in the field of energy cooperation. There is a need to continue this cooperation on all levels. Since the restoration of Azerbaijan's independence, the relations between Azerbaijan and Germany have developed into a full-scale political cooperation. The high-level of the political relations have been supported by the mutually beneficial economic successful interactions. The mutual economic interest in particularly in the energy sphere will continue to be a strong pillar in relations between Azerbaijan and Germany. There is also cooperation between Azerbaijan and Germany in renewable energy projects which have even higher potential than the cooperation in fossil fuels projects. Non-energy cooperation is outlined as the 'priority' for Azerbaijan and can greatly contribute to the growth in the cooperation between both countries.

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ



21 February 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan appointed Rashad Aslanov, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic as the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Paraguay



21 February 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan appointed Latif Gandilov the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Republic of Belarus as the Permanent Plenipotentiary Representative of the Republic of Azerbaijan in Commonwealth of Independent States



16 March 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan granted Ali Alizada the diplomatic rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



16 March 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan granted Anar Imanov the diplomatic rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the First Category

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ



16 March 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan granted Rashad Mammadov the diplomatic rank of Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary



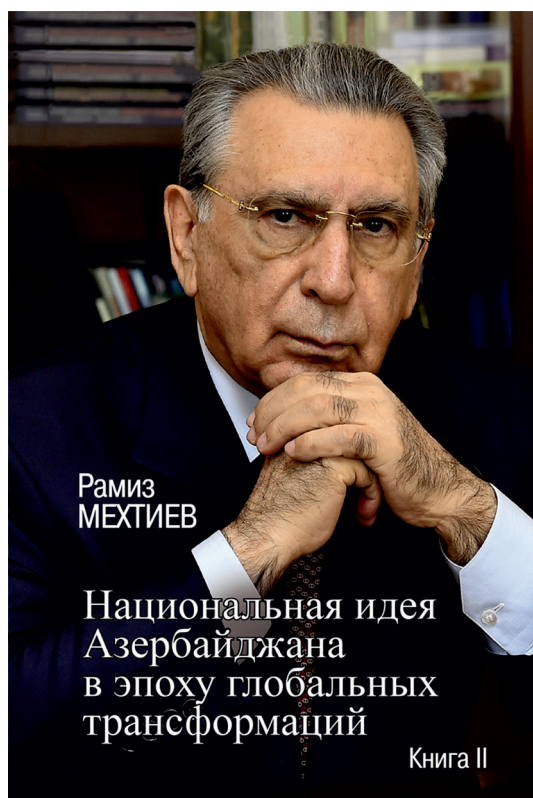
16 March 2017

The President of the Republic of Azerbaijan granted Ramzi Teymurov the diplomatic rank of Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the First Category

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ

YENİ TƏYİNATLAR – NEW APPOINTMENTS – НОВЫЕ НАЗНАЧЕНИЯ

«НАЦИОНАЛЬНАЯ ИДЕЯ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНА В ЭПОХУ ГЛОБАЛЬНОЙ ТРАНСФОРМАЦИИ (КНИГА II)» Рамиз МЕХТИЕВ



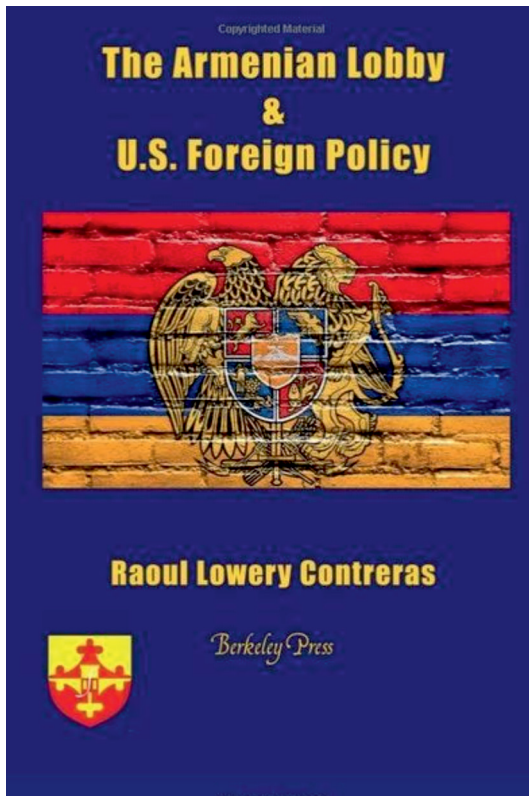
Настоящая книга, являясь второй частью труда академика Рамиза Мехтиева, посвящена анализу проблемы создания независимого Азербайджанского государства на исходе XX века. Автор попытался впервые описать основные этапы формирования и реализации Национальной идеи азербайджанского народа.

В работе исследуются вопросы национальной идентичности в условиях глобализации. Методом политического анализа доказывается, что приоритет общенационального самосознания особенно важен для страны, которую принято называть толерантным государством и центром мультикультурализма. На фактическом материале показаны социальные и

экономические ресурсы развития Азербайджана в движении к обществу XXI века. Сильное, независимое государство, инновационная экономика и созвучная эпохе национальная культура рассматриваются как отражение важного составляющего Национальной идеи и в будущем.

Впервые в национальной научной литературе сделана попытка рассматривать постепенный переход создаваемого в стране современного индустриального общества в постиндустриальное общество как реализация Национальной идеи Азербайджана в XXI веке.

**“THE ARMENIAN LOBBY AND U.S. FOREIGN POLICY”
Raoul LOWERY CONTRERAS**



“The Armenian Lobby and U.S. Foreign Policy,” by Raoul Lowery Contreras, published by Berkeley Press, which reveals the financial contributors and beneficiaries of the Armenian Lobby.

This book provides a comprehensive analysis of the Armenian lobby in the U.S., and brings to light its impact on U.S. foreign policy. The Armenian lobby, primarily composed of Armenian-Americans, is organized into several major groups. Through a variety of strategies and methods, the lobby has secured support for the Republic of Armenia and a range of Armenian issues from members of the U.S. Congress, as well as state and local officials.

The first of its kind to be published in the United States, this book offers a meticulous assessment of the Armenian lobby’s inner workings, as well as its achievements and failures. These observations will add to the growing amount of literature on the impact of ethnic lobbies in American politics.