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*School of International Affairs*

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### **Great Power Rivalry in the Caucasus After Bucharest\***

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Tension in the Caucasus has steadily grown since 2005. Russia's undeclared war against Georgia includes a creeping annexation of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, economic, trade, and energy sanctions, over flights, bombings, and intelligence operations. In 2006, Georgia, not to be undone, contemplated military action to recover South Ossetia. Meanwhile, its leadership is clearly unduly susceptible to using intemperate language and taking provocative risks. Neither has it been fully successful in democratizing Georgia as intended. Nor is this the only conflict in the Caucasus. Armenia and Azerbaijan have regressed regarding efforts to resolve the stalemate in Nagorno-Karabakh. Baku has raised defense spending 53% and both sides say that either Nagorno-Karabakh will never again belong to Azerbaijan or that it never will become independent of it. These actions plus endless charges and counter-charges by both sides have only intensified the stalemate there. Consequently, the Caucasus is more than ever vulnerable to great power rivalry; indeed, it is the only place in the CIS where actual military hostilities are easily conceivable.

At his 2007 speech to the Munich Wehrkunde conference Russian President Vladimir Putin unleashed a diatribe against American policy. He blamed US unilateralism for provoking a new arms race, destabilizing the Middle East, undermining international

institutions, distorting the purpose of the OSCE, expanding NATO and supporting democratic revolutions in the CIS. Thus Putin confirmed that the sources of Russian discord with Washington are military, political, and ideological (struggles over democratization). However, he also ignored the fact that much of American policy towards CIS members stems from their and American apprehensions dating back to 1993-94 that Russia sought to restore an imperial like domination in the CIS, beginning with its intervention in the wars in Abkhazia, South Ossetia, Moldova, and Nagorno-Karabakh. Putin also overlooked the fact that his own government knows full well that many of its charges against America are utterly false, e.g. that missile defenses in Europe threaten Russia or that American action rather than local regimes' corruption of the electoral process are directly responsible for the color revolution in the CIS. Indeed, Russia has blamed America for these revolutions since Georgia's Rose Revolution to conceal its own failed interventions in these states and the absence of any positive values that it can offer to the CIS.

Moscow's charged rhetoric has only worsened with the advent of the issue of giving Ukraine and Georgia Membership Action Plans (MAPs) for NATO. Russia's storm of threats and charges directed at these two states and NATO sufficiently influenced Germany so that it blocked this from happening. But typically Moscow's hysteria (no other word fits) made it overreact. Therefore NATO took the unprecedented step of stating publicly that Ukraine and Georgia will be members and that a Foreign Ministers meeting in December can take up the issue of granting MAPs. Moscow also revealed its contempt for the sovereignty of these states. At the April 4 meeting of the NATO-Russia Council Putin told President Bush, "But George don't you understand that Ukraine is not a state." Putin further claimed that most of its territory was a gift from Russia in the 1950s; moreover, while Western Ukraine belonged to Eastern Europe, Eastern Ukraine was "ours". Furthermore, if Ukraine did enter NATO Russia would then detach Eastern Ukraine (and presumably the Crimea) and graft it onto Russia. Upon returning home a frustrated Putin then said that Russia would give further help to Georgia's secessionist provinces of Abkhazia and South Ossetia, presumably to graft them too onto Russia. Since then he has also given these provinces a formal legal status preparatory to declaring their independence or even annexing them to Russia.

None of this should surprise us. Russian spokesmen regularly argue that Russia counts for more than do these small states, that its interests trump their interests, and that their sovereignty and independence is a sham. Sergei Markov, Director of the Moscow Institute for Political Studies, told a Georgian interviewer in 2006 that, "Georgia has not yet deserved our respect for its sovereignty because it has proved unable to achieve an agreement with the Abkhazian and South Ossetian ethnic minorities." Of course, Markov ignored Russia's unremitting efforts to frustrate all efforts at conflict resolution. Similarly Russia's ambassador to Georgia, Vyacheslav Kovalenko said that "Russia wants Georgia to be independent, sovereign, and neutral." Since Georgia's political class unanimously wants entry to NATO and then EU, Kovalenko is demanding that Georgia renounce its independence and leave itself vulnerable to Russia. Similarly Russian diplomats at an OSCE meeting called Georgia "some province." These actions represent a deeply held attitude in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and government. Such double talk is not restricted to Georgia. Neither was this an accidental one-time affair.

And with that derogation of former republics' present sovereignty goes the formulation and implementation of policies designed to undermine it in fact. Self-determination then becomes a principle to destroy sovereignty. In late 2006, Putin offered Ukraine unsolicited security guarantees in return for permanently stationing the Black Sea Fleet on its territory, a superfluous but ominous gesture since Russia had already Ukraine's security through the 1992 Tashkent Treaty and the 1994 Tripartite Agreement with Ukraine and America to denuclearize Ukraine. Putin's offer also coincided with his typically "dialectical" approach to Ukraine's sovereignty in the Crimea where he stated that,

The Crimea forms part of the Ukrainian side and we cannot interfere in another country's internal affairs. At the same time, however, Russia cannot be indifferent to what happens in the Ukraine and Crimea.

Putin thus hinted that Ukrainian resistance to Russian limits on its freedom of action might encounter a Russian backed "Kosovo-like" scenario of a nationalist uprising in the Crimea to which Russia could not remain indifferent. Obviously,

Moscow has the political and covert action means to create in the Crimea the very type of situations against which Putin is offering to "protect" Ukraine if the Russian Fleet's presence is extended. Thus far such means have been shown to include inflammatory visits and speeches by Russian Duma deputies in the Crimea, challenges to Ukraine's control of Tuzla Island in the Kerch Strait, the fanning of "anti-NATO – in fact anti-American – protests by Russian groups in connection with planned military exercises and artificial Russian-Tatar tensions on the peninsula.

Russia is also augmenting its capabilities for such covert subversion by instituting a substantial program whereby it gives soldiers and officers in the Transdnestrian "Army" that occupies part of Moldova, Russian military service passports and rotating them through elite Russian officer training courses called Vystrel at Solnechegorsk at the Russian combined arms training center there. As one intelligence officer in a post-Soviet republic told American analyst Reuben Johnson,

You do not try to cover up a training program of this size unless you are someday planning on using these people to overthrow or otherwise take control of a sovereign government.... The facility at Solnechegorsk is used by Russia to train numerous non-Russian military personnel openly and legally for peacekeeping and other joint operations. If then, in parallel, you are training officers from these disputed regions – officers that are pretending to be Russian personnel and carrying bogus paperwork – then it does not take an enormous leap of faith to assume that Moscow is up to no good on this one.

Clearly the post-Bucharest scenario can only entail intensified pressure upon them from Moscow whether it is directed at their gas and oil economies or at their freedom of action with regard to their defense and foreign policies. In 2007-08, Moscow has sought to intimidate the Baltic States, Ukraine, Belarus, Moldova, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Central Asia to accept unfair terms either for the sale to them of Russian gas or for the sale of their gas to Russia rather than to Western markets where they would get a fair market price and to subordinate their foreign policies to Moscow's dictates. We see similar tactics being applied in Eastern Europe as well.

Similarly, Russia has intensified its efforts to project its defense forces into these states, most recently in its only partially successful efforts to get an air base in Uzbekistan at Navoi. Russia is also pressuring the Caspian littoral states, among them Azerbaijan, to adopt its proposals for a Caspian naval force (CASFOR). The purpose of CASFOR is to prevent Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and potentially a future Turkmen regime from carrying out the defense of their littoral and territorial waters in the Caspian Sea by their own means and by their own choice of foreign partners from whom they would receive assistance and training. Rhetoric aside, in practice Russian leaders' consistent actions display their belief that these states have or should have a diminished sovereignty just as the Brezhnev doctrine postulated for the former Soviet bloc. Russian foreign policy still suffers from the imperial hangover, what the Tsarist statesman, P.A. Valuev, called the lure of something erotic in the borderlands. Certainly Russian efforts to compel economic and military submission of Azerbaijan and its sister states to Moscow reflects Moscow's continuing desire to create what Russian analysts themselves call a solar system where it is the sun and they revolve submissively around it.

Accordingly, Azerbaijan can expect more Russian pressure upon its energy holdings and exports, more pressure to join the CASFOR, probably more support for Armenia in the negotiations over Nagorno-Karabakh, and more attempts to compel it to get rid of American influence and presence. Most importantly, mounting Russian pressure will seek to prevent it from deciding to turn to NATO and to blacken its name and that of Georgia abroad. Given the heavy police nature of the present Russian regime and widespread influence and

subversion activities that it conducts across Eurasia, we can expect a significant increase in such "active measures" and efforts to subvert and corrupt CIS and European political institutions across the CIS from Belarus to Tajikistan to prevent the integration of the European members of the CIS with Europe.

These Russian pressures are closely tied to the increasing despotism of the regime in Moscow. Russian commentators themselves admit the domestic system is a softer version of Communist rule and cannot survive without exporting itself abroad and corrupting local political processes. The answer, then, for Azerbaijan, Georgia, and other members of the CIS is to adopt their own consistent course of sovereign reforms. Whereas Russia invokes sovereign democracy as a mantra to sustain its independence and desire for freedom from all restraints in foreign as well as domestic policy, governments like Ukraine and Azerbaijan can only survive by defending their sovereignty and by strengthening their resources and capabilities. This course is only possible by a sustained long-term program of reform that will make their states more capable in economics, politics, and defense.

These reforms will both strengthen their capacity for defending against foreign threats whether they are from Moscow or Tehran, and increase their domestic stability and attractiveness as partners to Europe and Asia. They will also then possess more capability to resist domestic threats to security and stability. That attractiveness to foreign partners and enhanced domestic stability ultimately represent the surest guarantees of their long-term security, stability and prosperity. If they wish to avoid being objects of a new Cold War or great game then reform and regional integration, its natural byproduct, is these governments' only true alternative. Otherwise they will be divided from within and under pressure from without. Lincoln's abiding insight that a house divided against itself cannot stand applies as much to the domestic threats they might face as it does to the increased foreign threats, particularly from Moscow, that they will face and which already are part of this intensified great power rivalry in the CIS.

*\* The views expressed in this article do not represent those of the US Army, Defense Department, or the US Government.*

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### **Public Diplomacy: An Azerbaijani Priority Since 1918**

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In the contemporary world, few governments fail to devote significant attention to public diplomacy, to all those means of influencing other governments by influencing their populations. But most of these states began to use this strategy only in the course of the last several decades. Azerbaijan represents an important exception: Its current efforts in this direction have their roots in decisions made by the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan in 1918-1919.

At that time, the Azerbaijani ministry of foreign affairs drafted a memorandum for the government on "The Organization of Propaganda in Western Europe," a document remarkable not only for its detailed discussions of the tasks of what is now called public diplomacy but also and perhaps especially for the uncanny way in which its contents anticipate Baku's outreach activities today. [1]

Prepared at the end of 1918 and the beginning of 1919 by the foreign ministry's secretary A. Subkhandberdikhanov for the foreign minister's signature, the document specified that Azerbaijan must reach out to the peoples of the great powers of Western

Europe because so few of them knew anything about the Caucasus in general and Azerbaijan in particular and because most of what they thought they knew was wrong, the product of "highly tendentious" propaganda by the Armenian government and by Armenians living abroad.

To that end, the document called on the Azerbaijani government to pursue three distinct but interrelated goals. First, it said that Baku must counter Armenian propaganda because the latter had succeeded in poisoning the view of so many people in Europe.

Second, the document continued, Azerbaijani diplomats must devote particular attention to working with the media of these countries to "popularize" Azerbaijan, thereby ensuring that the governments of these democratic governments would take Baku seriously.

And third, the foreign ministry paper argued that Azerbaijani officials abroad must develop "close ties with Azerbaijanis living far from the Motherland," to enlist them in Baku's efforts to achieve the first two goals and also to reinforce the links between these communities and Baku itself.

Among the document's specific recommendations were the following:

1. To begin the publication of a newspaper with an illustrated supplement in some politically important centers such as one of the cities of Switzerland;
2. To prepare brochures about Azerbaijani history, literature, art and current social-political situation;
3. To organize meetings with political and social leaders [of other countries]...;
4. To arrange public lectures and speeches;
5. To place in the foreign press articles on various issues [of concern to Baku];
6. To develop relationships with representatives of the foreign media in order to acquaint them with the actual situation [in Azerbaijan];
7. To organize banquets and receptions in honor of political and other figures arriving [in Azerbaijan] from abroad; [and]
8. To convene congresses of former citizens of the Russia[n empire] and especially its Turkic-Tatar population in order to position Baku to be able to speak on behalf of this broader community to various European countries." (Sadykhov 2004, p. 58).

Given that Baku's most important task at that time was securing diplomatic recognition for the Republic of Azerbaijan and that the chief obstacle to such recognition consisted of the anti-Turkic attitudes Armenians had sought to promote because of the events of 1915, it is perhaps not surprising that the Azerbaijani foreign ministry should have focused on what is now called public diplomacy.

Indeed, any perusal of Azerbaijani foreign ministry documents from that period shows that Baku's representatives abroad took this advice to heart. Especially suggestive in this regard are the dispatches of Ali Topchibashev during his stay in Turkey (Topchibashev 1994). There, even when he was talking to other diplomats, he was thinking about how to influence them and their governments by appealing over their heads directly to the populations of the countries they represented.

But what is most intriguing about this 1919 document is that the issues it raised and the recommendations it made continue to inform Azerbaijan's approach almost a century later, an indication both of just how prescient Azerbaijan's diplomatists were so long ago and how little the challenges facing Baku have changed over the course of that time.

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#### Note

[1] See *Gunay*, October 24, 1994; and Sadykhov (2004, pp. 55-59).

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### **The United States and Azerbaijan: Cultural Diplomacy at Work**

**Jeffrey Werbock  
Chairman  
Mugham Society of America**

*NOTE: For more than 35 years, Jeffrey Werbock has used his knowledge of and ability to perform traditional Azerbaijani music on native instruments to present the country and people of Azerbaijan to the United States and other Western countries. Below are his reflections about a career that has won him recognition as Baku's musical ambassador to the world.*

In the early days of my earnest pursuit of the grand old musical traditions of Azerbaijan, I found myself sharing living quarters with my first teacher, an old oriental Jewish man from Derbend, Daghestan, Mr. Zevulon Avshalomov. Besides my being utterly mesmerized by his playing style on kamancha, I found him to be a unique human being, and well worth taking the time to be near to him. His sense of humor was superb, if different from the usual – I learned much later that his brand of mirth was typically "Kavkazi," that is, Caucasian, if such a category of humor could be allowed.

My fascination with Mr. Avshalomov was not only regarding his personality. He seemed to radiate a quality of presence that I could only find among those few who also came from this part of the world, and although my interest was experiential, not scholarly, I often wondered whether anyone had done any proper anthropological studies on the peoples of the Caucasus. For such a strategically critical part of the world, it seemed that the amount of material on the subject was disproportionately spare and hard to come by.

Serious scholarship on the region and its peoples was beyond the scope of my activities in those early days beginning in 1972. I read what was available, most notably *The Sabres of Paradise* by Lesley Blanch (1960). The mystique of the Caucasus was a compelling force which led to many fascinating conversations with my elderly teacher. Our teacher/student relationship, one very much like father and son or perhaps master and disciple, lasted until his death at the age of 77 in the year 1987. But the main aim of my association with Mr. Avshalomov – learning his music – took on momentum and public presentations increased in frequency and the profile of the venues rose to some prominence.

Four appearances at Merkin Hall by Lincoln Center, NYC, four at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, countless at the American Museum of Natural History, the World Music Institute, colleges, universities, community centers, and so on, all added up to some great exposure for the name of Azerbaijan among the cultural and intellectual elite of America and Europe.

All these experiences and more led me to take on the unofficial role of what is sometimes called second tier diplomacy, a position that can have significant reach that can be every bit as effective as official efforts to promote good relations between countries. Thus, it seemed only natural that some instructors of Caucasus Studies at the US State

Department's Foreign Service Institute (FSI), now known as the George P. Schultz Foreign Service Training Center in Arlington, Virginia, would invite me to share my insights into the socio-psychology and folkloric mind-set of the people of the Caucasus, with a particular emphasis on Azerbaijan. Of course, there has to be music, not just talk, and I am always happy to comply with these requests.

The thrust of my message, usually to a class constituting the consolidation of the foreign service workers and diplomats to be assigned to the three Caucasian republics, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia, and the five Central Asian States of Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan and Turkmenistan, is to encourage the future assignees to try to find some genuine interest in some aspect of the local culture, and not be shy to show their hosts that they are enthusiastic about that.

It appears to be a common complaint that Americans in general do not show enough interest in the rest of the world, but those who choose a career in foreign service should be the exception to this. Undoubtedly, anyone attracted to the idea of being assigned to work in a foreign country would presumably have a greater than average interest in world affairs and possibly even the cultures of other peoples. With this in mind, who could be a better, more receptive audience to the message such as the one contained in a presentation of music and other folkloric items from one of the least known and understood parts of the world, the Caucasus.

Thus, I see my main task in the presentations at FSI is to share my enthusiasm for the cultures and peoples of the Caucasus and to a certain extent Central Asia – I should mention that for several years, a number of musicians who performed with me in NYC venues were from Uzbekistan and who were able to play the Azerbaijani tar, a plucked skin faced fretted "lute" and the gaval, and a frame drum somewhat resembling a large tambourine but without the metal cymbals around the edge of the frame. Thus I had some contact with members of that community and was a guest in their homes countless times.

And the message is that we do our best diplomacy when we find ourselves genuinely interested in some aspect of the culture of the host country. Our tendency is to feel that just because we have the world's most powerful military and economy, and just because we are successfully exporting much of our culture and values, that our culture is therefore somehow superior. In certain respects, we Americans do have much to offer the world, and that is not under examination here. But there is much for us to delight upon that comes from other cultures, some of which are much more ancient than ours and have a richness that may not be evident upon first look, or listen.

One recent and excellent example of using culture for conducting second tier diplomacy took place in North Korea when the NY Philharmonic performed an orchestrated version of a popular Korean folk song. Reported that the performance brought tears to the eyes of what had been up until that moment a sea of stony faced North Koreans, I read that the idea to do such a thing was suggested by someone from the State Department. I would like to congratulate you, whoever you are, for not only thinking of this kind of soft diplomacy, but I imagine that it took a bit of lobbying, given the degree of commitment to learn and rehearse what is essentially a foreign musical genre, and for that you must have had a solid conviction in the power of music to bridge the wide gap that had opened between USA and North Korea.

Thankfully, there are no such yawning gaps to be closed between America and Azerbaijan, nevertheless the same principles of culture as an effective diplomatic tool can be implemented to bring these two great countries even closer.

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**Sara Khatun:  
Azerbaijan's First Female Diplomat**

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Azerbaijanis have always taken great pride in the fact that their country was the first nation in the East to extend the franchise to women, a step it took even before the United States did. But they have another reason to be proud about the role of women in public life: More than 500 years ago, an Azerbaijani woman played a key role in the politics and foreign relations of her country, centuries before women did so elsewhere.

Throughout the 15<sup>th</sup> century and later, women like the mother of Shah Ismail I, his wife, and the sisters and wives of others at court not only helped to define Azerbaijan's foreign policies but also to implement them. But in this group of outstanding women, a special place is occupied by Sara Khatun, the mother of the ruler of the Akkoyunlu state – Uzun Hasan.

His government played an enormous role in the history of Azerbaijan because he united in his own lands control over an enormous territory. It had relations with the Principality of Moscow, with Poland, the Venetian Republic, the Vatican, Ottoman Turkey, India, the Golden Horde, and many others.

During the years of Uzun Hasan's rule, it acquired particular authority in the international arena. And in defining its foreign policy conception, a major role was played by Sara Khatun. Thanks to her outstanding mind, diplomatic skill and political position, Sara Khatun was well known both in Europe and in the countries of the East as a supporter of feudalisms who struggled against divisions within the state and the elite.

After the death of Turali bek Akkoyunlu, his sons engaged in a struggle for power. That struggle exhausted the resources of the state. But Sara Khatun by her wisdom and authority was able to stop this fratricide in the palace and put on the throne the politically far-sighted and militarily capable leader Uzun Hasan (ruler from 1453-1478).

Over the course of a short time, Uzun Hasan was able to pacify his military-political opponents and transform the Akkoyunlu state into a powerful feudal empire. In all actions of her son Uzun Hasan, Sara Khatun was the chief advisor and most devoted comrade in arms. Diplomatic dispatches from many countries of Europe and the East were addressed to her. And foreign diplomats arriving in Tebriz sought audiences with her and even conducted negotiations directly with her.

In the primary sources for this period, one can find many extremely interesting testimonials to this.

In February 1473, for example, Iosofat Barbaro, an ambassador from Venice arrived at the palace of Uzun Hasan. He had been given the following secret assignment, the documents say: "Meet with the mother of the ruler, show to her great respect and provide her with gifts ... [and thus] try to incline her to the idea of continuing the war with Turkey."

As a diplomat, Sara Khatun not only received ambassadors, she also conducted negotiations with the heads of neighboring states and successfully defended and advanced the foreign policy interests of Azerbaijan. And at the most difficult times for her country, she displayed courage, wisdom and the highest degree of diplomatic art.

Several petty feudal states nearby, one of which was the Greek state of Trapezund, were obstacles on the path to the expansion of Ottoman Turkey, a path that Sultan Mehmed II had been pursuing on and off for several years. Then, in 1461, he decided to conquer Trapezund.

The feudal holding of Trapezund was the only exit to the Black Sea for the state of Akkoyunlu and was its ally in the struggle against Ottoman Turkey. And consequently, by seizing Trapezund, Mehmed II not only broadened his possession but weakened his opponents by denying Akkoyunlu access to the sea and to Europe.

In addition, Uzun Hasan was married to the daughter of the emperor of Trapezund, Ioan IV Feodor. Wishing to protect his area, Mehmed II before seizing Trapezund attacked Akkoyunlu. Uzun Hasan was not yet prepared for war with a powerful Turkey, lacking both weapons and aid from Europe. And consequently, the Akkoyunlu state was at risk of disappearing.

Uzun Hasan had to play for time. And it was decided to send Sara Khatun at the head of a delegation for negotiations with Mehmed II.

Not far from Erzindzhan in the settlement of Yassychemen, where Mehmed II had his military camp, the negotiations took place. Sara Khatun's goal was to dissuade the sultan from launching a war against Akkoyunlu.

Sara Khatun, who enjoyed great authority in the Near and Middle East, was received by Mehmed with great respect and honor. In the course of the talks, it was decided that the state of Akkoyunlu would remain neutral during Mehmed II's campaign against Trapezund, and Turkey would not go to war with Akkoyunlu. That accord had enormous importance for Akkoyunlu. Indeed, it was thanks to this agreement that the state of Akkoyunlu preserved its independence.

But Sara Khatun sought even more. Not being satisfied with that achievement, she accompanied the Turkish forces as they moved toward Trapezund and in the course of the entire trip attempted to convince Mehmed II not to attack the cities. In such circumstances, Sara Khatun made her own demands for the treasury of the Trapezund state, pointing to the rights of her daughter in law Feodora. In the event, the city's treasury was divided between Akkoyunlu and Turkey.

Later she also served as the lead negotiator when the danger of invasion by Timurids' leader Abu Said hung over the state of Akkoyunlu. And later still, she again conducted talks with Sultan Mehmed II.

Consequently, despite some gaps in the historical record, we can assert with confidence that Sara Khatun was the only woman diplomat of the East in the 15<sup>th</sup> century and the first female diplomat in the history of Azerbaijan.

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## **A Guide To Contemporary Azerbaijan**

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The Azerbaijan National Encyclopedia Scientific Center has just published what almost certainly will be for many years the most comprehensive guide to the geography, history, culture, economy, politics and foreign relations of the Republic of Azerbaijan: the 884-page *Azerbaijan* (2007) volume of what will ultimately be a 25-volume national encyclopedia in the Azerbaijani language.

Its 155 articles were prepared by leading scholars. Its 591 pictures and illustrations and 89 tables are the most current available. And its 55 maps were prepared by the State Land and Mapping Committee. Some idea of its detail and richness is suggested by three of the most interesting sets of articles: those devoted to national security, the Azerbaijani diaspora, and economic development.

Azerbaijan's national security policies, as the encyclopedia makes clear, are based on the principles of independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity and are developed and conducted by the collection of institutions known as the National Security System. Among these are the president of the republic, the parliament, the council of ministers, and the security council. The volume describes the way these and other bodies interact to advance the national security interests of the state.

Perhaps most interesting for many will be the sections on Azerbaijanis living abroad. According to the encyclopedia, there are approximately 10 million members of the Azerbaijani diaspora today, that is, Azerbaijanis who have moved from Azerbaijan rather than those who may be ethnically related (as in Iran) but who have lived outside its borders from time immemorial. The volume traces the history of diaspora organizations from the 1920s until today.

Because of the importance of economics and foreign trade, the encyclopedia devotes particular attention to these subjects, providing comprehensive and detailed information about oil, gas, and metal production, trade, and related issues. In addition, it includes tables and charts on government spending, poverty rates, employment and foreign trade.

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## **A CHRONOLOGY OF AZERBAIJAN'S FOREIGN POLICY**

### **1. Key Government Statements on Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy**

President Ilham Aliyev tells Interfax-Azerbaijan that he expects Baku to spend almost two billion U.S. dollars on defense this year.

Speaking at the NATO summit in Bucharest, President Ilham Aliyev reaffirms that Baku will not accept any resolution of the Karabakh dispute that does not maintain the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan ([http://www.1news.az/articles.php?item\\_id=20080403083750598&sec\\_id=2](http://www.1news.az/articles.php?item_id=20080403083750598&sec_id=2)).

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov says the status Tatarstan and Bashkortostan enjoy in Russia could be a model for resolving the Karabakh dispute ([http://www.analitika.az/articles.php?item\\_id=20080415091116869&sec\\_id=8](http://www.analitika.az/articles.php?item_id=20080415091116869&sec_id=8)).

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan have reached agreement on the legal status of the Caspian seabed (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/114572.html>).

Azerbaijani officials denounce Russian, Armenian and Iranian involvement with ethnic minorities inside Azerbaijan (<http://www.ethnoglobus.com/?page=full&id=178>).

## **II. Key Statements by Others about Azerbaijan**

Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili says that what affects Azerbaijan affects Georgia and vice versa (<http://www.day.az/news/georgia/113353.html>).

Vladimir Zhirinovskiy, deputy speaker of the Russian Duma, says he expects Azerbaijan to join NATO after Ukraine and Georgia do ([http://www.1news.az/articles.php?sec\\_id=2&item\\_id=20080401101737773](http://www.1news.az/articles.php?sec_id=2&item_id=20080401101737773)).

U.S. Ambassador to Azerbaijan Anne Derse says US views Azerbaijan as a strategic partner and will not recognize the independence of Karabakh (<http://news/tremd/az/index.shtml?show=news&newsid=1166799&lang=RU>).

The GUAM countries issue a joint statement to the OSCE about the resolution of conflicts and peacekeeping issues (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/114342.html>).

Moldova's Deputy Foreign Minister Ion Stevila says that he does not know where the "rumors" that his country plans to leave GUAM got started, adding that Chisinau has no plans to do so (<http://www.day.az/news/politics/114807.html>).

Turkey's ambassador in Baku calls Azerbaijan "the Switzerland of the South Caucasus" ([http://www.1news.az/articles.php?item\\_id=3&item\\_id=2008040304233677](http://www.1news.az/articles.php?item_id=3&item_id=2008040304233677)).

Moscow's Carnegie Center hosts a conference on Azerbaijan's security situation (<http://www.ioa-centr.ru/expert/797/>).

## **III. A Chronology of Azerbaijan's Foreign Policy**

April 15

Azerbaijani peacekeepers return home from Kosovo.

President Ilham Aliyev receives Ukraine's new ambassador to Azerbaijan, Stepan Volkovetskiy.

Azerbaijani Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that GUAM plans to introduce a resolution at UNGA on the conflicts on the territory of GUAM countries.

Azerbaijan and the United States hold bilateral military consultations in Baku.

The Azerbaijani foreign ministry hosts a two-day conference on "Principled Foundations of the Regulation of Conflicts on the Territories of the GUAM Countries."

President Ilham Aliyev receives Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty President Jeffrey Gedmin.

April 14

Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov says Azerbaijan, Russia and Kazakhstan have reached agreement on the legal status of the Caspian seabed.

Valeriy Chechelashvili, the secretary general of GUAM, arrives in Baku for a two-day working visit.

April 12

An Azerbaijani parliamentary delegation leaves to attend the spring session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe in Strasbourg.

April 11

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkish Deputy Prime Minister Jemil Cicek.

U.S. Deputy Assistant Secretary of State Matthew Bryza in his capacity as U.S. co-chair of the Minsk Group arrives in Baku for talks.

April 10

Azerbaijani Defense Minister Safar Abiyev holds talks with a visiting Turkish military delegation.

Azerbaijani and American defense officials open a two-day conference to discuss bilateral military cooperation.

April 9

Vasiliy Istratov, the Russian ambassador in Baku, says Moscow's proposal for joint US-Russian operation of the Gabala radar station remains open.

April 8

President Ilham Aliyev receives the European Union's new ambassador to Baku Alan Waddams as well as Turkmenistan's new ambassador to Baku, Annamamed Mamedov.

President Ilham Aliyev delays his official visit to Kuwait.

Azerbaijan's embassy in Moscow protests to the Russian Foreign Ministry over the decision of the Russian Duma to include representatives from Karabakh in a conference on conflicts in the CIS.

April 7

President Ilham Aliyev receives the participants of an international conference on "The Defense of Political Rights in Azerbaijan – New Criteria."

President Ilham Aliyev receives Turkmenistan's defense minister, General Agageldy Mamedgeldyyev.

Azerbaijani and American defense officials open a four day conference on coastal defense.

April 4

Azerbaijan's ambassador in Moscow, Polad Bul-Bul, says that Baku is in no hurry to join NATO ([www.anspress.com/nid67202.html](http://www.anspress.com/nid67202.html)).

April 3

President Ilham Aliyev participates in NATO discussions on Afghanistan.

President Ilham Aliyev meets with the presidents of the United States, the Russian Federation, Latvia, and other countries participating in the Bucharest summit.

The Azerbaijan government says that more than 2500 Azerbaijanis have been killed or wounded by landmines in the course of the Karabakh conflict (<http://www.echo-az.com/obshchestvo07.shtml>).

The Congress of Azerbaijanis of Georgia is formally founded in Tbilisi ([www.1news.az/articles.php?item\\_id=20080402054837929&sec\\_id=2](http://www.1news.az/articles.php?item_id=20080402054837929&sec_id=2)).

April 2

President Ilham Aliyev arrives in Bucharest, meets with the Minsk Co-chairs at their request, and discusses Karabakh and energy security.

Prior to his departure for Bucharest, President Ilham Aliyev meets with Jose Luisa Herrero Ansol, the head of the Baku Office of the OSCE.

Deputy Foreign Minister Araz Azimov says that Baku is generally satisfied with the Minsk Group but has been troubled by its recent actions, including the UNGA vote by the three co-chairs.

The Organization of the Islamic Conference elects Azerbaijan to its commission on technology.

Azerbaijan announces that it hopes to open a consulate in the Georgian city of Marneuli later this year.

April 1

NATO seminar begins in Baku.

### **Note to Readers**

The editors of "Azerbaijan in the World" hope that you find it useful and encourage you to submit your comments and articles via email ([adabiweekly@ada.edu.az](mailto:adabiweekly@ada.edu.az)). The materials it contains reflect the personal views of their authors and do not necessarily represent the views of the Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy or the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan.