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*School of International Affairs*

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### **HISTORICAL ROOTS OF THE IDP CRISIS IN AZERBAIJAN**

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Karabakh and the surrounding mountainous area are considered one of the ancient and culturally rich regions of Azerbaijan. Azykh grotto is one of the first places of human origin and also it is a source of pre-Islamic culture. Albanian-Christian temples and cultural monuments of the Islamic era, generated throughout thousands of years, compose this rich cultural heritage and wealth. Karabakh is a fundamental part of Azerbaijan's history, culture and national identity.

Azerbaijan's geo-strategic location and rich natural resources are key components of interest in the region. Therefore, the territory of Azerbaijan has been the site of various bloody wars, with the foundation of these conflicts being laid in the late 18th century. To best understand the current IDP crisis in Azerbaijan it is important to examine the progression of events that shaped the history and foreshadowed the future of Azerbaijan.

In 1721-23, Peter I invaded Azerbaijani territories along the Caspian, including Baku. Having faced strong resistance from local people, Peter the Great decided to use the so called "Armenian card" and ordered to settle Armenians in historical Azerbaijani lands, especially in Baku and Derbend.

This historical heritage addressed by Peter I to his successors formed the policies of the Russian Empire, but also provided the core of Bolshevik Russia's South Caucasus policy. In 1768, Ekaterina II announced a decree of imperial trustee over Armenians and in 1802 Tsar Alexander I conveyed an order to the Caucasus police Sisianov when he declared that: "Armenians should be used at any cost to occupy the Azerbaijani khanates." This was the start of the occupation of Azerbaijani territories.

As a result of war of 1826-1828; 18,000 Armenian families were moved to the South Caucasus from Iran and southern lands of Azerbaijan. In the next two years, 40,000 Armenians from Iran and 84,000 Armenians from Turkey were moved to Elizavetpol and Irevan provinces. In March of 1828, immediately after the Turkmenchay Treaty, the decree of Emperor Nikolay I established the "Armenian province" within the Irevan and Nakhchivan khanates.

As a result of these policies, the foundation of the future Armenian state within the Azerbaijani lands was laid. According to the official statistics of the period; 7,331 Azerbaijanis and 2,369 Armenians were living in the Irevan city, which was the center of the "Armenian province." In addition, according to the Turkmenchay Treaty; 40,000 Armenians from Iran were moved to Azerbaijani lands, namely Irevan, Karabakh and Nakhchivan. A similar process unfolded during the Russian-Turkish wars of 1829 and 1878, when about 85,000 Armenians were moved to the above-mentioned regions from Turkey. Consequently, this process contributed to the displacement of thousands of Azerbaijanis from their homelands.

In the second half of the 19th century, the massacre of Azerbaijanis by Armenians acquired stronger organizational character and was implemented as a more integrated planned policy. Armenians with the intention of building "*Great Armenia*" in the territories of Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia instigated the activities of the political-terrorist organizations like "Hnchaq" (1887, Geneva), "Dashnaksutyun" (1890, Tbilisi), and "Union of Armenian Patriots" (1895, New-York).

One of the main goals of these organizations was to intimidate and pressure Azerbaijanis to move out from their homeland. The revolution of 1905-1907 created more opportunities for these organizations and during this revolutionary period many Azerbaijanis in Baku, Shusha, Zangezur, and Garabagh were massacred by Armenians. Even after the 1905-1907 revolution, mass deportation of Azerbaijanis continued while many Armenians were moving into the occupied territories. According to the Russian statistical reports published in 1916, during the 1830-1914 years the population of the Irevan province had increased 40 times to nearly 570,000 people. However, the Azerbaijani population living in the region increased just 4.6 times. Despite this oppression and deportation, in 1916 about 45% of the population of the Irevan city, that is 247,000, were Azerbaijanis.

World War I and the Great Russian Revolution of 1917, created another opportunity for Armenians to accomplish their "*Great Armenia*" plan. In 1915, over the course of World War I, the majority of Armenians living in the northeast regions of Turkey were deported to Irevan, Karabakh and Zangezur provinces. Supported by

Moscow and their Russian army, Armenians continued to persecute Azerbaijanis in Nakhchivan, Irevan, Karabakh and many other regions of Azerbaijan.

In December of 1917, according to the Arzinjan agreement signed between the Ottoman state and the Bolsheviks' Caucasus Commissariat, Armenian armed forces replaced the Russian army that was withdrawn from the Caucasus. As a result, by the end of March 1918, nearly two hundred Azerbaijani villages were destroyed in the Irevan province, while thousands of Azerbaijanis were massacred by Armenians.

In December 1917, Stepan Shaumyan, who was appointed an emergency commissar in the Caucasus by Russia's People's Commissars Soviet, was given the authority to implement the sovietization policy in the South Caucasus and create "*Turkish Armenia*" in the Turkish territories under Russian occupation. As a consequence of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty (March 1918), Russian troops left Kars, Ardagan, and Batumi, and these territories were returned to Turkey. However, some of the Russian and Armenian troops that returned from Iran and Turkey were placed in Baku. Commissar Shaumyan utilized this opportunity against Azerbaijanis.

In March 30, 1918 Armenian-Bolshevik united forces launched an attack on Azerbaijani settlements and during 3 days of violence some 17,000 people were massacred in Baku. The Armenian-Bolshevik forces confiscated many properties and destroyed many historical landmarks of Baku. In March and April of 1918, close to 50,000 Azerbaijanis in Baku, Shamakhy, Guba, Mugan and Lankaran were killed, and many more people were forcefully displaced.

In April 13, 1918 the organizer of this massacre Shaumyan confessed in his letter to the Russian People's Commissars Soviet: "We used the armed attacks on our infantry as an excuse and attacked along the front. We already had 6,000 armed forces. Dashnaks also had 3-4 thousand military forces, which were under our authority. Their participation especially gave the attribute of national massacre to the civil war. But it was impossible to prevent it. We went on this while being conscious. If the Azerbaijanis would prevail, then Baku could be announced capital of Azerbaijan."

Nevertheless, after the dissolution of the Caucasus Seym in May 27, 1918 Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia announced their independence. The Emergency Investigation Commission established by the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) on July 15, 1918 collected a number of documents and materials related to these events. Unfortunately the collapse of the ADR in April of 1920 terminated the investigation process that would otherwise reveal adequate information and the scale of this massacre and destruction.

In order to prevent the spread of bolshevism, the western states considered the existence of independent Caucasus states important. However, they stated that ADR's independence would be recognized only if Irevan was given to Armenia as a capital. Azerbaijan had to compromise in order to defend its independence and gain recognition by the international community. As a result, thousands of Azerbaijanis living in Irevan province were forced to move out of the region.

In 1920, as a result of Bolshevik Russia's military aggression, Azerbaijan's independence was brought to an end. The Dashnak Armenia was also occupied by

the Soviets. In 1920, Soviet Russia handed in Azerbaijan's Zengezur province to Armenia; and in 1923, the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast was artificially created.

Almost 70 years of the Soviet regime significantly altered Azerbaijani history. The forced displacement of Azerbaijanis from their homeland continued during the Soviet period. The deportation of 100,000 Azerbaijanis living in Armenia to the Kura-Araz valley of Azerbaijan perpetrated during Stalin's regime in 1948-1953 is worth a separate note.

In 1985, with the beginning of Michael Gorbachev's rule Armenians and the others supporting them tried to materialize the plan for "*Great Armenia*" that they had been cherishing for decades.

Beginning in 1988, some more than 250,000 Azerbaijanis living in Armenia were turned out of their native land by the way of terror. As a result of this policy of ethnic cleansing, 216 people were killed. Thus the last stage of the Armenian nationalists' policy of "*Armenia without Turks*" was realized; Armenia became a mono-ethnic state.

By the summer of 1991, the war in Nagorno-Karabakh became evident. The collapse of the Soviet Union gave a push to the organized Armenian military groups to begin large-scale military activities in Nagorno-Karabakh. In February 25-26, 1992 Armenian military units that were positioned in Nagorno-Karabakh supported by Khankendi-based 366th Russian motorized infantry regiment made a massive assault on Azerbaijani town of Khojaly killing 613 peaceful citizens.

Between 1991-1993, Armenian armed forces occupied some 20% of Azerbaijani land, namely Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent regions. Nearly 700,000 Azerbaijanis became refugees in their native land, and almost 20,000 people were killed, 250,000 were injured. As a result of the military aggression, the damage to the state economy has been more than 60 billion US dollars. Many Azerbaijani refugees driven out of their native country were obliged to live in unbearable conditions.

After coming to power again in 1993, Heydar Aliyev began work towards eliminating the results of this humanitarian misfortune. For this a legal basis was established according to international norms, and many state programs were adopted. The very first oil revenues were spent for social security and to better the life of refugees and internally displaced persons. The decree signed in March 26, 1998 by Heydar Aliyev is the first legal-political assessment of the crimes and terror of this ongoing conflict. The decree revealed many facts that had been banned for decades and confirmed that March 31 will be the Day of Genocide of Azerbaijanis.

Ilham Aliyev informed the public before the presidential elections that there would not be any refugee tent settlement during the next five years of his tenure. President Aliyev kept his promise and in December 2007 the last tent was disassembled.

With the growth of the economic potential of the state, the measures relating to the social protection of internally displaced persons grow as well. Over 270,000 internally displaced persons are provided with monthly food products and basic

necessities. Continuous improvement and development of the temporary settlement is among the highest priorities of our government.

Apparently, the sustainable solution to the refugee problem may only be possible after the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh is resolved. Our leadership will continue to make every effort to resolve this issue. Our occupied territories will be freed and our internally displaced persons will return back to their homeland.

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## **MIGRATION: SECURITY AND DEVELOPMENT**

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**Introduction.** After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the migration issue became linked with threat of extremism and terrorism. But such an association is flawed despite the popular belief that the status of being an illegal migrant could predispose an individual to terrorism. The main motivations for migration include fleeing violence and persecution, seeking greater economic opportunity, and state failure. Migration is a social-political phenomenon that can promote development in the migrant's country of origin and country of destination. Migrants can supplement the labor force in the country where they settle, and promote economic growth. By continuing to define immigration as a security threat, many countries limit the possible positive effects of immigration.

Some analysts argue that securitization of migration would help to insulate host countries against security threats posed by immigration and further mobilize the world community against terrorism. On the other hand, if states connect migration with terrorism, they must take strict measures to provide security for its citizens. However, there is a certain risk to this approach since the governments do not always implement their policies successfully when it comes to immigration. As a result, the government can lose public trust if the intended measures do not improve security; these issues illustrate the political complications associated with taking a hard-line against immigration.

Despite its strategic location as a crossroads between East and West, Azerbaijan has limited experience with immigration when compared to the EU. As the EU works to devise immigration strategy, Azerbaijan should observe the successes and failures of this endeavor and adopt the positive aspects from the EU example when appropriate to Azerbaijan's future immigration policy. In this paper I will outline some of the challenges facing EU policymakers related to immigration and present case studies from individual EU states. Then, I will briefly describe the status of immigration policy in Azerbaijan and speculate on how the EU cases could apply to future Azerbaijani immigration policy.

**EU Immigration Policy.** In Italy, a government coalition tried a policy stipulating harsh restrictions on immigration while at the same time allowing a significant in-flow of labor migration. In its public speeches, the government

prioritized security issues and announced a harsh policy toward unregulated migration. The government also announced the securitization of other spheres of activity. For instance, they declared an emergency situation in March of 2002 when a vessel with 900 Kurdish immigrants arrived in Italy and implemented joint patrol of the Mediterranean Coast with other EU members. Meanwhile, the government ignored the increased level of illegal immigration, continuing to legalize illegal immigrants, thus encouraging further migration. This type of compromise between a harsh migration policy in theory and a more tolerant one in reality shows how the securitization principle was present only rhetorically, while government practiced a softer approach.

Another example is the case of the UK government after the September 11th events. Initially, the government tried to connect terrorism with the immigration control issue, with the UK Internal Affairs Minister calling for strengthened policy preventing the entrance of people suspected of terrorism. But the government soon refused the securitisation idea and strived to get public support to implement full-scale labor migration policy, while avoiding statements on potential security threats.

To avoid eroding public trust in government's immigration policy, EU members moved this issue from control of the state to the jurisdiction of the larger European community. Political activities at the EU level do not attract as much domestic attention and the EU often attracts external resources in the area of migration control and refugee protection. Thus, the country gets a chance to avoid criticism for not observing human rights. Yet human rights groups criticize the EU for a harsh migration policy. Amnesty International and the European Council on refugees and immigrants believe that EU policy is harsh and is creating a "fortress Europe" that walls itself off from all who need its help. Even people who receive refugee status live under permanent threat of deportation and conditions of limited freedom. They have less rights than citizens of other non-European countries living in EU on a different basis.

There are internal contradictions among EU members, too. In June of 2007, Spain lodged an official complaint about Malta's refusal to help the Spanish ship that saved immigrants at sea south from Malta. European Commission vice-president responsible for justice, freedom and security Franco Frattini and members of the European Parliament harshly criticised EU members for refusing to assist countries like Spain and Malta, and for the absence of rules that lead to the death of immigrants in Mediterranean. Frattini incorporated refugees' interests into a strategy of standardisation of rules. But adopting standards on immigration in the EU is problematic, for some countries experience large inflows of migrants while others like Estonia and Latvia experience limited immigration. These differences illustrate why Finland so strongly opposed to proposals on standardisation set forward by the EU commission (see Choe 2007, pp. 1-4). Joe Shaw, professor of law at Edinburgh University, summarizes the issue in stating that "a single policy on strengthening of borders will collapse, once an issue arises of what to do with immigrants who reach territories or territorial waters of EU members... should all countries take responsibility for accomodating these people?" [1]

***Azerbaijan and migration issues.*** Thanks to its geographical location between Europe and Asia, migration flows in Azerbaijan were always active and continue to grow. During the first years of independence, the majority of migrants went to neighbouring countries (mainly Russia and Turkey). In recent years, however, there has been a tendency of decreasing flows of migrants to neighbouring

countries. Moreover, because of its political stability and the growth of its economy, Azerbaijan is becoming an increasingly attractive country for foreign labor.

Since 2001, 5,932 citizens (mainly from Turkey, India, Georgia and UK) received permission to work in Azerbaijan. However, unofficially the number of working migrants in the country is much higher. Azerbaijan became not only the country exporting migrants, but also the one importing them. For the effective regulation of migration processes in the country, Azerbaijan improved its migration policy at the legislative and institutional level and formalized the main goals of the country's immigration policy: to regulate migration flows, protect national security, address the negative consequences of non-regulated migration and provide for migrant's rights. To further realize these goals, the President of the Azerbaijan Republic signed a decree in 2006 adopting a state migration program of the Azerbaijan Republic for 2006-2008.

**Conclusion.** To summarize the aforementioned issues related to national policy on immigration and applicable to the case of Azerbaijan, it can be concluded that:

Migration can promote the development of both countries of origin and the destination country and if effective policy is designed on the national level.

EU cooperation on opening a common labor market will further regulate migration processes and provide an example of openness and tolerance to non-EU countries like Azerbaijan as their own immigration policies evolve.

All states should adopt special laws for protecting the rights of migrants and preventing discrimination.

Countries with low demographic indices or other development challenges should embrace student quota systems for immigrant communities, and create preferential conditions for furthering their integration to society.

#### Note

[1] <http://europa.eu/rapid/pressReleasesAction.do?reference=MEMO/07/197>.

#### Reference

Choe, Julia (2007). "African Migration in Europe", *Council on Foreign Relations*, July 10.

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

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

Ministry of Foreign Affairs announces that Azerbaijan will continue efforts for restoration of peace in Iraq (<http://www.today.az/news/politics/46053.html>).

Addressing a special meeting of Milli Majlis on June 19, President Ilham Aliyev stresses that Baku's concession in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict consists in granting highest administration right to Nagorno-Karabakh (<http://www.today.az/news/politics/45802.html>).

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

Anne Derse, US ambassador to Azerbaijan, announces that The United States believe in further development of democracy in Azerbaijan (<http://www.today.az/news/politics/45965.html>).

Turkish ambassador in Baku Khulusi Kilich says that Azerbaijan is a gate to Middle Asia for the whole world, and notes that Turkey is ready to assist Azerbaijan in NATO accession (<http://www.today.az/news/politics/45912.html>).

US ambassador Anne Derse highly evaluates the process of Azerbaijan's WTO accession and voices the US readiness to support Azerbaijan in this issue (<http://www.today.az/news/business/45902.html>).

In his letter to Safar Abiyev, Azerbaijani defense minister, US General Dan McNeil, commander of NATO's International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), expressed satisfaction with the service displayed by Azerbaijani peacekeepers in Afghanistan (<http://www.anspress.com/index.php?nid=77403>).

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

30 June

Azerbaijan's Minister of Communications and Information Technologies Ali Abbasov signs a document on Azerbaijan's joining Council of Europe's Convention on Cybercrime (<http://www.today.az/news/society/46054.html>).

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Victor Yushchenko, president of Ukraine, within the framework of the latter's one-day official visit to Azerbaijan.

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Monique Barbut, Chief Executive Officer of the Global Environment Facility.

27 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives David Kramer, the US assistant secretary of state for democracy, human rights and labor affairs.

President Ilham Aliyev receives OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs and the personal representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Anjey Kaspshik.

President Ilham Aliyev receives special representative of NATO secretary general on South Caucasus and Central Asia Robert Simmons.

President Ilham Aliyev receives Dagestani leader Mukhu Aliyev who is leading a large delegation to Baku.

25 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of Bulgaria to Azerbaijan Ivan Paltsev due to completion of his diplomatic mission.

24 June

Khalaf Khalafov, Azerbaijani deputy foreign minister, meets with his Russian counterpart Grigoriy Karasin within his working visit to Moscow.

23 June

Speaker of EU commissioner on external policy, Christian Homan, announces that in spring of 2009 the European Union will present definite proposals and potentials for expansion of cooperation with Azerbaijan, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Belarus and Armenia (<http://www.today.az/news/politics/45896.html>).

20 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives a delegation led by deputy chairman of Iranian parliament Muhammad Abu Turabi.

President Ilham Aliyev receives a delegation led by deputy chairman of the parliament of Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan Tahir al-Masr.

President Ilham Aliyev meets with Kristina Ojuland, vice-speaker of the parliament of Estonia.

An Azerbaijani, Mubariz Garayev, is appointed an adviser to the Georgian President.

19 June

Azerbaijan's economic development minister Heydar Babayev receives EBRD director on the Caucasus, Moldova and Belarus Michael Davy.

President Ilham Aliyev meets with the Turkmen parliamentary delegation led by Akja Nurberdiyeva, speaker of the parliament of Turkmenistan.

18 June

President Ilham Aliyev meets with a delegation headed by Vadim Popov, Chairman of the House of Representatives of the National Assembly of Belarus.

President Ilham Aliyev meets with a delegation headed by Arnaud Breuillac, Total's vice-president for Continental Europe and Central Asia.

17 June

President Ilham Aliyev meets with a delegation headed by Koksal Toptan, speaker of the Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

President Ilham Aliyev receives Saudi Arabian minister of culture and information Iad bin Emin Al-Madani.

President Ilham Aliyev receives a delegation led by Iranian energy minister Seid Perviz Fattah.

16 June

President Ilham Aliyev receives chairman of Central Asia-Caucasus Institute at Johns Hopkins University Frederick Starr.

### **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.