

# MONTHLY NEWS BULLETIN

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## **AZERBAIJAN**

### **Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project included in list of world's 100 projects**

(AzerTAc). The Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project has been included in the list of 100 world's projects. The statement was made by Ramaz Nikolaishvili, State Minister for Regional Development and Infrastructure of Georgia. The minister said that the construction is implemented according to the schedule and the railway section towards Turkey will be built on time. Most work will be done in 2012. The railway will be connected with Europe in 2013. Nikolaishvili underlined that the railway will be 245 km long, 175 km of which will run through Georgia. The project is realized by Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey and supported by State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan Republic. The Kars–Tbilisi–Baku railway, or Kars-Akhalkalaki-Tbilisi-Baku railway, is a regional rail link project to directly connect Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan. The key objective of the project is to improve economic relations between the three countries and gaining foreign direct investment by connecting Europe and Asia.

### **Azerbaijan`s President awarded “Worthy friend of Balkans” award**

(AzerTAc). The Serbian Foundation “Ana and Vlade Divac” has awarded President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev with the “Worthy friend of Balkans” award for his direct support, care, attention and special services in implementation of some important humanitarian projects in Balkan states.

### **Azerbaijani President attends informal meeting of Council of CIS Heads of State**

(AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today attended an informal meeting of the Council of the CIS Heads of State in Moscow. President of Russia Dmitry Medvedev welcomed President Ilham Aliyev and other participants of the event.

Opening the event President Medvedev thanked the presidents for the attention to the meeting. Then chairman of the Council, President of Tajikistan Emomali Rahmon, Azerbaijan`s President Ilham Aliyev and other heads of state delivered speeches at the event. A joint declaration was adopted on the results of the meeting.

### **Mexican Senate passes decision on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**

(AzerTAc). The Mexican Senate has passed a decision consisting of articles of agreement on the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. According to the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry, the decision says that on 26 February 1992, troops belonging to the Armenian armed forces launched attacks on Khojaly civilians in Azerbaijan's Nagorno-Karabakh region and claimed lives of hundreds of people mainly for ethnicity which was, without hesitation, called as genocide by international human rights organizations.

The decision also deals with the settlement process of Armenian-Azerbaijani, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Madrid principles and notes the importance of return of IDPs and refugees to their homelands occupied by Armenia. The decision reads: The Chamber of MPs, respecting sovereignty of Azerbaijani and Armenian nations, calls on Azerbaijani and Armenian governments to increase efforts and OSCE Minsk co-chairs to show required support to both countries for resolution of the conflict in a peaceful way and reach a treaty that will put a permanent end to the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh region rapidly and within a short period of time; Though 19 years have passed since Khojaly massacre and the fact that victims of the massacre haven't yet reached justice shows that a central element for possible peace agreement should be shortly formed, communications among people should be recovered and harmony should be created between the two nations as soon as possible.

### **Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev meets Kyrgyz counterpart**

(AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev met with the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev on Tuesday as part of his visit to Moscow. The Head of State congratulated

Almazbek Atambayev on his election as President of Kyrgyzstan, wished him every success in further activities. President Ilham Aliyev pointed out existence of good prospects for relations between the two countries, adding the sides will always support each other. Almazbek Atambayev, in turn, recalled Heydar Aliyev`s merits, underlining that the incumbent president Ilham Aliyev is worthy successor of him. Kyrgyz President stressed he was eyewitness of great changes in Baku. President Ilham Aliyev spoke of opportunities to expand economic cooperation and humanitarian relations, adding relations between the two countries were developing steadily. The Head of State invited Kyrgyz President to pay an official visit to Azerbaijan what was willingly accepted.

### **Azerbaijani top diplomat meets vice-president of Czech Parliament`s Chamber of Deputies**

(AzerTAc). Foreign Minister of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov has met today vice-president of the Chamber of Deputies of the Czech Parliament, Lubomír Zaorálek.

Mammadyarov said Azerbaijan attaches great importance to development of relationship with Czechia. They discussed Czechia-European Union relationship, Azerbaijan`s regional importance, the role of the country in energy security of Europe and other issues of mutual interest.

### **EU Council of Ministers gives mandate to EC for visa regime negotiations with Azerbaijan**

(AzerTAc). European Union (EU) Council of Ministers gave mandate to the European Commission to start negotiations to ease visa regime with Azerbaijan. The relevant decision was adopted in the meeting of EU Council of Ministers in Brussels. Simplification of the visa regime will contribute to reduction of documents for obtaining visas, reduce visa fees and alleviate visa regime for students, athletes, journalists, businessmen.

### **“US`s current activity in Minsk Group inadequate”, Araz Azimov**

(AzerTAc). Azerbaijan has dedicated 20 years of its independence to search of foreign policy priorities. We tried to fully and successfully benefit from this historical chance. This was stated by Araz Azimov, Azerbaijan`s deputy foreign minister, in his lecture at the Washington-based Atlantic Council on the theme “US-Azerbaijan Relations and View At South Caucasus”. At his words, Azerbaijan`s decision on integration to Euro-Atlantic space is unchangeable and plays important role in establishment of the East-West corridor, though these decisions sometimes were costly. Noting importance of the relations with the United States for Azerbaijan, the diplomat said America`s current activity in the Minsk Group as a co-chair is inadequate and that this activity has notably lessened than after the events of August in 2008. Azimov said the peace talks on Nagorno Karabakh suffer from several factors including geo-political interests of super powers in region, the regional trends, and mainly indifference to the basic principles of the OSCE who mediates in negotiations. He said: “I always state in Washington that the conflict will not prevent development of Azerbaijan. And it will be a priority for us to restore our territorial integrity. We believe there is a simple way of solution: Azerbaijani refugees have to return to their homelands, and their security should be guaranteed. This concerns not only the surrounding areas, but also Nagorno Karabakh. Further, Armenia can be included to the economic projects in the South Caucasus”.

Concerning Armenia`s position in talks, Azimov said Yerevan`s keeping the Kalbajar and Lachin regions of Azerbaijan in hostage and its attempts to control over the Lachin corridor unilaterally is the sign of insincerity of the Armenians for cooperation and co-existence/ This strategy and such game will bring no use. Azerbaijan`s deputy foreign minister Araz Azimov on December 20-22 has been on a working trip to the United States on invitation of the Department of State to conduct bilateral consultations with US. During the visit, a number of issues of mutual interest were discussed.

### **‘French National Assembly`s decision is unacceptable for us’**

(AzerTAc). “The decision of the French National Assembly is unacceptable for us. If they express position on events occurred hundred years ago, they also should express position on the

Khojaly genocide, turning of one million of Azerbaijanis into refugees and IDPs”, said Azerbaijan`s Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov. The Minister said that this decision serves nothing but creating problems. Mammadyarov noted during his last visit to the region OSCE Minsk Group`s former French co-chair Bernard Fassier confessed the fact of the occupation of Azerbaijani lands. Everybody should perceive and confess this fact. Mammadyarov also reminded that this decision was adopted by minority, about 10% of the French National Assembly.

### **‘French parliament`s bill is unjust’**

Commenting on the bill adopted by the French Parliament aiming at criminalizing negation of the so-called Armenian genocide, Chief of the Foreign Relations Department of Azerbaijan Presidential Administration Novruz Mammadov called it unjust. Mammadov added the parliament`s step would have negative effect on democratic image of France. Mammadov also noted the bill restricts freedom of expression of citizens. He pointed out the French parliament`s step could also influence Azerbaijan-France relationship. He added official Baku would take relevant steps after a certain time.

### **Iraq`s FM arrives in Azerbaijan**

(AzerTAc). Iraq`s foreign minister Hoshiyar Zubari arrived in Azerbaijan, press-service of Azerbaijan`s Foreign Ministry said. Mr. Zibari will meet with Azeri officials to discuss cooperation in energy and humanitarian sectors and participation of Azerbaijan in restoration of Iraq.

### **From the President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev (AzerTAc)**

Dear Ilham Heydar oglu!

Please accept my heartfelt and sincere congratulations on your 50th birthday anniversary! The success of the political and economic reforms carried out under your leadership and Azerbaijan`s improving international authority are evidenced by your country`s election as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for the 2012-2013 period. We appreciate the historical ties of friendship and cooperation between our peoples and attach great importance to the deepening the Kyrgyz-Azerbaijani relations in priority areas. I sincerely wish you good health, happiness, inexhaustible energy and success in your public activities in the name of the well-being and prosperity of the friendly people of Azerbaijan.

Sincerely,

Almazbek Atambayev  
President of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan

### **Presidential press-service informs**

(AzerTAc). On December 24, President of Turkey Abdullah Gul telephoned Azerbaijan`s President Ilham Aliyev. Abdullah Gul congratulated President Ilham Aliyev on his 50th birthday, and wished him strong health and successes in his presidential activity. The Head of State thanked Abdullah Gul for the congratulation and attention. The presidents expressed assurance that Azerbaijan-Turkey relationship would further develop in all spheres.

### **From the President of Turkmenistan Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow (AzerTAc)**

Dear Ilham Heydar oglu!

Please accept my heartfelt congratulations and best wishes on the occasion of your 50th birthday anniversary. Dear Ilham Heydar oglu, taking this pleasant opportunity I sincerely wish you robust health, prosperity, happiness as well as successes in your all initiatives and desires in the name of friendly Azerbaijani people.

Sincerely

Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedow  
President of Turkmenistan

### **Turkey, Azerbaijan sign contract on Trans-Anatolian pipeline consortium**

(AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s minister of industry and energy Natig Aliyev and Turkey`s energy and natural resources minister Taner Yildiz have signed here a contract on consortium for construction of Trans-Anatolian pipeline for delivery of Azerbaijani natural gas to Turkey and Europe. Signing of the contract on consortium was agreed on October 25 current year in Izmir in the frame of Shahdeniz-2 project, Natig Aliyev told journalists. The 7-billion Euro worth Trans Anatolian pipeline`s annual capacity averages 16 billion cubic meters. Coming years will see this figure to reach 24 billion cubic meters annually. Mr. Tanr Yildiz said in Trans Anatolian consortium SOCAR owns 80 percent, while TPAO (Turkey) and BOTAS - 20 percent. In near future, other companies are expected to join the consortium as well.

### **Azerbaijani President receives Premier of Saint Vincent and Grenadines**

(AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today received Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Ralph Gonsalves. PM Ralph Gonsalves congratulated President Ilham Aliyev on his 50th anniversary and election of Azerbaijan as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council. He underlined he had witnessed rapid development in Baku. The Premier said Saint Vincent and the Grenadines was interested in development of cooperation with Azerbaijan in the fields of education, tourism, investment and infrastructure. The Head of State expressed hope Prime Minister of Saint Vincent and the Grenadines Ralph Gonsalves`s visit to Azerbaijan would contribute to boosting bilateral relations between the two countries.

### **Address of Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijan Republic to the Senate of the French Republic**

Dear colleagues,

We were extremely disturbed by news about adoption on December 22 current year in the National Assembly of the bill meaning punishment for negation of the "genocide of Armenians". At the next stage, the project is planned to be submitted for discussions in the Senate of the French Republic. In this connection we urge you to approach with care to these old and not completely ascertained historical events. Undoubtedly, in case of adoption the said law will contradict freedom of speech and expression laying in the basis of democratic system and taking the basic place among the human rights and freedoms.

During the modern time, when there is a necessity for dialogue deepening between religions and cultures, adoption of such law will confirm thoughts on existence in the world of double standards. In the history of each country there are events not ascertained completely, and demanding scientific research. Statements that in 1915 in Ottoman Turkey the Armenians have been subjected to "genocide", also is one of those assumptions needing serious studying. By the way, we would like to remind that recently in Turkey there were opened the archives, concerning the Ottoman period, all the interested, including the Armenian politicians and scientists, have been invited to familiarize with historical documents of the beginning of the XX century. Unfortunately, the Armenian side has ignored this offer on healthy discussion.

We bring to your notice that during the period when, as claimed, the "genocide of Armenians" was made, that is in the beginning of XX century, the Armenian nationalists have committed massacre of hundred thousand innocent Turks and Azerbaijanis. In recent times, on February 26, 1992, hundreds civilians of the Azerbaijani city of Khojaly have been killed by armed forces of Armenia for they were Azerbaijanis. If to consider all this, probably, you will agree that attempts to estimate historical events from the position of one side, can lead to disrespect for historical truth. The law which can be adopted as a result of ill-intentioned activity of separate political groups and ethnic lobbies, can cause a damage to authority of such country with ancient democratic traditions, as France which has adopted the Declaration on human rights and citizens

more than 2 centuries ago. Besides, such law can call into question the objectivity of France as the co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk group, engaged in peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Therefore, the Milli Majlis (Azerbaijan Parliament) expresses confidence that the Senate of the French Republic will be attentive and sensitive during the discussion of the mentioned question, won't admit the adoption of law contradicting democratic principles.

(The Address was adopted at session of Milli Majlis of the Azerbaijan Republic on December 30, 2011)

### **Azerbaijan, NATO agree on third stage of Individual Partnership Action Plan**

(AzerTAc). Azerbaijan has agreed with NATO on the third stage of Individual Partnership Action Plan (IPAP). The third stage of the Plan covers 2012-2013 years.

The document includes four sections which envisage politics and security, defense and military, public information and civil emergency planning, information security, science and environment, administrative resources and legal issues. The first phase of IPAP was approved in 2005. Launched at the November 2002 Prague Summit, Individual Partnership Action Plans (IPAPs) are open to countries that have the political will and ability to deepen their relationship with NATO. Developed on a two-year basis, such plans are designed to bring together all the various cooperation mechanisms through which a partner country interacts with the Alliance, sharpening the focus of activities to better support their domestic reform efforts.

### **Turkic communities in Saint Petersburg rally against French parliament`s genocide denial bill**

(AzerTAc). Turkic communities including Uzbeks, Azerbaijanis, Turks, Kazakh, Turkmens staged a picket in front of the France`s consulate general in Saint Petersburg to protest against French parliament`s bill penalizing denial of so-called "Armenian genocide".

Picket participants urged France to step down as OSCE Minsk Group co-chair. They called on the French parliament to discuss Khojaly genocide instead of "Armenian genocide". Representatives of Azerbaijani and Turkish communities handed over to the embassy the appeal to the French people, parliament and President.

### **Congratulatory message of President Ilham Aliyev to the people of Azerbaijan on the occasion of the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World and New Year**

Dear ladies and gentlemen! Dear compatriots!

I would like to wish you all a Happy New Year. Year 2011 is being consigned to history. It has been a successful year for our country. The key issues facing the country in 2011 have been resolved. Azerbaijan has secured a successful economic development. It is gratifying that the non-oil sector of our economy has substantially expanded. Our non-oil economy has grown more than 10 per cent, which is evidence of the reforms conducted in previous years. All sectors of our economy are developing. Extensive creative and landscaping work is under way in the country. Azerbaijan is invigorating its positions in the region. Our economic development statistics are very positive. The country's currency reserves are growing. We already have over \$40 billion of currency reserves. Billions of dollars in investment are channeled in the national economy and this process is ongoing. The volume of investment is growing by the year. Our districts are developing successfully. This year, up to 100,000 jobs have been created. Overall, more than one million jobs have been created in the last eight years, the vast majority of which have been permanent. Population incomes have increased 20 per cent. The level of inflation is under 8 per cent. The level of poverty is falling. At the end of 2011, the level of poverty will be below 8 per cent. The unemployment rate is decreasing. The rate of unemployment in Azerbaijan is 5.5 per cent. All these indicators suggest that our country is developing successfully and dynamically. Despite the negative developments unfolding in world and European economies, Azerbaijan is moving forward confidently. All social issues are being resolved. This year, the average pensions of about 900,000 people have been

raised by approximately 40 per cent. The minimum wage was also raised on 1 December. Other social programs are under way. Schools, hospitals and sports centers are built. In other words, Azerbaijan is experiencing all-round and dynamic development. Political reforms are well under way. Democracy is successfully developing. Specific steps are taken to modernize the country. We are vigorously fighting corruption and bribery and seeing excellent results of this fight. It should be even more focused and vigorous in the coming years. All the necessary orders have been issued. In short, we are building a modern state. We are building a modern, secular state confident of the future on the basis of deep national and spiritual values and roots. The problem worrying us the most is the unresolved status of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijan is stepping up its efforts in all countries, especially in the recent period. But as you know, a solution of this issue depends not only on us.

Unfortunately, Armenia's non-constructive stance, its hypocrisy in the negotiations and the practical defiance of talks have dealt a serious blow to the process. Unfortunately, the world community and the countries directly dealing with the issue are shying away from naming the party responsible for disrupting the talks. There are positive statements. We are hearing and supporting these statements. In particular, this year's novelty has been a repeated indication by co-chairs that the status-quo is unacceptable. We support these statements. But statements should be followed by specific steps. Unfortunately, these steps are not taken. We will continue our diplomatic and political efforts. We have a principled stance in the negotiations. We will not back down a single step from it. Nagorno-Karabakh is native and historical Azerbaijani land. The international community and the United Nations recognize and support Azerbaijan's territorial integrity. The international community views Nagorno-Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan. The conflict must be resolved precisely on these principles. The territorial integrity of our country must be restored. Occupying forces must withdraw from all our occupied territories. Azerbaijani citizens must be able to return to occupied territories, including Nagorno-Karabakh and Shusha. Only then can a lasting peace be established. We will never tolerate a second Armenian state on native Azerbaijani lands. This is our principled position. I want to reiterate that this position is based on history, international law and justice. At the same time, as is the case in the economic sphere, we are conducting all-round reforms in the military area. Our military strength and potential are growing. In 2011, our military expenditure exceeded \$3 billion. This is more than Armenia's total expenditure. Next year our military expenditure will increase further. The latest weaponry, hardware, warplanes, helicopter gunships and ammunition are and will be brought to Azerbaijan. In addition, more than 600 types of military products are manufactured in Azerbaijan through the Ministry of Defense Industry which was established several years ago. We will continue doing our utmost to strengthen our military potential in the future. Our current military potential enables us to free our native lands from occupiers at any time. We simply haven't lost hope in the negotiations and for the time being these negotiations should be continued. In 2011, our country achieved great successes in the highly important energy sector. Azerbaijan has managed to further reinforce its positions. Earlier this year, the European Union and Azerbaijan signed a very important declaration on strategic cooperation. Azerbaijan is already viewed as a country capable of supplying Europe with energy, in particular natural gas. Our opportunities are growing. The new gas fields discovered this year and those discovered last year have substantially bolstered our gas potential. We will have our say in the world as a gas nation for many years to come. All the necessary transit agreements were signed in 2011. We now have the opportunity to transport Azerbaijani gas to world markets through various routes. I think major investment must be made in our immense gas fields in 2012. Our gas potential will prove to be a highly important asset for our country in a matter of several years. There is development in other sectors of the economy. Agriculture, industrial production and the non-oil sector are growing. Additionally, humanitarian issues were also successfully dealt with in 2011. Azerbaijan has asserted itself in the world as a tolerant state. The First International Humanitarian Forum was held in Baku this year. All forum participants have left Azerbaijan with wonderful impressions. Azerbaijan's rare experience, the experience of conducting an inter-religious, interethnic dialogue and the dialogue between civilizations, is of great interest to the world. Of course, our positive experience, the great atmosphere in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani society, the fact that representatives of all nationalities and confessions live like one family in Azerbaijan are a rare phenomenon in the present-day world. Unfortunately,

discrimination, mutual distrust and apathy trends are becoming increasingly widespread in different parts of the world and on different continents. These are very dangerous trends. Azerbaijan's positive experience must be studied and, in a broader sense, other countries should take advantage of it.

A very important event for country occurred in 2011. Azerbaijan has been elected to the UN Security Council for the first time. This is a major historic victory. I think that this is our biggest victory in the 20 years of independence. We have earned the confidence of the whole world in a difficult struggle. From the very first to the last round of voting Azerbaijan was in the lead. As a result, a total of 155 countries of the world voted for Azerbaijan, showed their confidence in us and supported our policies. There is great confidence and respect for Azerbaijan. Our policies enjoy support. Because our policies are based on justice. Our policies are independent. I have repeatedly stated in the last eight years that Azerbaijan is pursuing independent policies. Azerbaijan has a road of its own. This is a road of development, progress and democracy. This road has been chosen by the Azerbaijani people. All our steps proceed from the interests of the Azerbaijani people.

Underlying all our work are the interests of Azerbaijani citizens and Azerbaijan. We have achieved great successes in the area of state building. The whole world now supports Azerbaijan. When we say the international community, the first thing that comes to mind is the United Nations. Because this is the international community. The opinion of the international community is not the opinion of a small organization, a regional group or an NGO. The opinion of the international community is the opinion of the UN, the opinion of 155 countries. This support and confidence inspire us even more. We will be defending the principles of justice in the Security Council for the next two years. This year we have celebrated the 20th anniversary of the restoration of our independence. There have been difficult and great days in the 20 years. And there have been more great days. I am absolutely sure that there are only great days in store for us in the future. Azerbaijan will continue to develop and grow stronger. The 20 years of independence have shown that the people of Azerbaijan can live as an independent nation and live well. The state of Azerbaijan has asserted itself in the region as a stabilizing factor. No projects can be implemented in the region without Azerbaijan's participation. The experience of recent years has shown this yet again. Azerbaijan is reckoned with in the economic, energy, political, diplomatic and regional cooperation matters. We have achieved this ourselves and we must protect this achievement. We must and we will protect our country.

Dear friends!

It is also the Day of Solidarity of Azerbaijanis of the World today. I would like to send my greetings to all Azerbaijanis of the world and express my regards and love for them. The people of Azerbaijan is a great nation. We have a great history and a bright future. All Azerbaijanis of the world know that there is an independent and strong Azerbaijani state on the world map, a state that always thinks about its compatriots, shares their problems and does its best to ensure their well-being. I would like to congratulate all Azerbaijanis of the world on this remarkable holiday.

Dear compatriots!

We are entering 2012. I am confident that our country will continue to succeed in 2012. I would like to repeat that underlying all our work are the citizens of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijani families. I wish all our citizens, all the people of Azerbaijan good health, happiness and well-being.

Congratulations!

### **Azerbaijan takes office as non-permanent member of UN Security Council**

(AzerTAc). Azerbaijan took office as non-permanent member of the UN Security Council from January 1. Azerbaijan was elected as a non-permanent member of the UN Security Council for two-year term. Five new members were elected to the UN Security Council on October 21 2011. Azerbaijan gathered 155 votes and was elected to the UN Security Council for two years in the



voting held on October 24. Azerbaijan replaced Bosnia and Herzegovina, the term of tenure of which expired on December 31, 2011.

### **Azerbaijan takes over presidency of GUAM**

(AzerTAc). Azerbaijan took over the presidency of the Organization for Democracy and Economic Development, GUAM on January 1. During the one year presidency Azerbaijan`s main priority will be settlement of conflicts in GUAM countries, law enforcement cooperation, development of interparliamentary ties and cooperation within international organizations. A decision on Azerbaijan`s taking over presidency of GUAM was adopted on December 7 at a meeting of the GUAM Council of Foreign Ministers in Vilnius.

### **ADB to define new cooperation strategy for Azerbaijan in 2012**

(AzerTAc). Asian Development Bank will define a new strategy of cooperation with Azerbaijan this year, the bank`s country director, Olly Norojono, told an AzerTAc correspondent. According to Norojono, ADB is now carrying out negotiations with the Azerbaijani government. He said Azerbaijan`s national interests will be taken into account in the strategy. The 5-year strategy will be agreed by the end of the year.

### **‘Conflicts in South Caucasus threaten stability and security of the entire region’**

(AzerTAc). The conflicts in the South Caucasus region threaten stability and security of the entire region, Michael Och, a policy adviser at the U.S. Congress` Helsinki Commission said. Och noted despite the efforts of the Minsk Group and the occasional exuberant claims of imminent success, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict looks little different than 15 years ago.

### **Former Swedish FM: The UN will be platform for Azerbaijan to speak of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict**

(AzerTAc). Former Swedish Foreign Minister Jan Eliasson has said Azerbaijan`s membership of the UN Security Council could be a good chance for the country to speak of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict on the international scale. He noted the UN will be a platform for Azerbaijan to draw the world community`s attention to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. "Azerbaijan now has more opportunities to draw the international community`s attention to the conflict by raising this issue at the Security Council." Eliasson also pointed out that Azerbaijan`s membership increased the country`s chances of influencing global processes.

### **Azeri FM: “We must continue to approach conflict situation in Somalia with care and sensitivity”**

(AzerTAc). "We must continue to approach the conflict situation in Somalia with care and sensitivity on the basis of a comprehensive strategy aimed at and addressing the political, humanitarian and security problems in Somalia through the collaborative efforts of all states," said Azerbaijan`s Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov in a UN Security Council`s meeting dedicated to Somalia. Elmar Mammadyarov supported the African Union mission to Somalia in their efforts to overcome difficulties and to build "a secure, stable, united, democratic nation". The Azerbaijani FM also stressed the efforts of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation and its member states in contributing to peace and national reconciliation in Somalia and mobilizing assistance to meet the urgent needs of the people affected by humanitarian crisis in this country. "It is obvious that security gains cannot be consolidated. Without adequate assistance from the international community, including the provision of all necessary resources to strengthen the missions, the ability to implement the roadmap will not continue," he added. Elmar Mammadyarov said that Azerbaijan agrees that the humanitarian situation is continuing to deteriorate in Somalia.

### **Azerbaijan`s President receives speaker of South Korean National Assembly**

(AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has received today speaker of the Republic of Korea`s National Assembly Park Hee-tae and his accompanying delegation. President Aliyev said relations between republics of Azerbaijan and Korea were developing successfully. The Head of

State praised political relationship between the two countries, adding bilateral economic cooperation has good results, as well. The Azerbaijani leader also noted trade turnover between the two countries increases rapidly. The President expressed satisfaction with the participation of Korean companies in projects, which are important for Azerbaijan. He also added Azerbaijan was interested in expansion of this cooperation even more. President Aliyev also underscored the importance of inter-parliamentary ties in development of cooperation between the two countries. He expressed assurance that Park Hee-tae`s visit to Azerbaijan would be successful in terms of conducting fruitful negotiations and discussions to expand bilateral cooperation. Park Hee-tae expressed satisfaction with his first visit to Azerbaijan as a speaker of the National Assembly. He said the purpose of the visit was to participate in events to mark the 20th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic ties between republics of Azerbaijan and Korea and hold discussions to expand bilateral cooperation. Park Hee-tae also highly appreciated the ongoing development processes in Azerbaijan. He noted great progress had been made in Azerbaijan under the leadership of President Ilham Aliyev. The sides also noted Azerbaijan and Korea were interested in boosting cooperation in information and communication technologies, tourism and other spheres.

### **Bill on Khojaly genocide to be submitted to Turkish National Assembly**

(AzerTAc). A bill on recognition of the Khojaly genocide will be submitted to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey (GNAT) on the eve of anniversary of this massacre, one of the grave crimes of XX century, Sinan Dogan, member of Turkish Parliament from Igridir Province, told a new conference here. Along with that, two other questions are also to be discussed - erection of a monument to Khojaly genocide victims and naming one of the capital`s streets as "Khojaly". Sinan Dogan said that his National Movement Party is going to offer the Parliament to name the "Paris Avenue" in Ankara as the "Avenue of Algeria" in protest to adoption of the bill by the French National Assembly on the criminalization of negation of the alleged "Armenian genocide".

### **Korean parliament likely to investigate Khojaly genocide**

(AzerTAc). Parliament of Korea is likely to investigate the Khojaly genocide, speaker of the South Korean National Assembly Park Hee-tae told a press conference he held today in Azerbaijan`s capital. Commenting on the Khojaly genocide, the Korean speaker said he is not fully aware of the mentioned tragic events. Should this tragedy was committed against the humanity, we, as Korean Parliament, could investigate this atrocities more widely, and lift the question before our government, he stressed. As far as it concerns the Armenia-Azerbaijan, Nagorno Karabakh conflict, Park Hee-tae said his country supports Azerbaijan`s efforts to bring peace to the region.

### **Azerbaijani President extends condolence over death of first president of Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus Rauf Denktaş**

(AzerTAc). President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has today sent a letter of condolence to President of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus, Dervish Eroglu over the death of Rauf Denktaş, the first president of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus and eminent statesman and public and political figure. The President said in the letter that he was deeply saddened over the death of Rauf Denktaş and extended his heartfelt sympathy.

### **Saakashvili praises Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project**

(AzerTAc). Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili has stressed the importance of the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project. Saakashvili noted the project was of great geopolitical importance for the region, calling it "a global project". "This railway, which will be launched in 2013, will link us to Europe."

# KAZAKHSTAN

**17.12.2011**

## **Almaty paid tribute to participants of 1986 December events**



A flowers-laying ceremony to the Monument of Independence has been held in Almaty in honor of the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of independence and 25<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the December events. Representatives of political parties, young and nongovernmental organizations, local executive bodies as well as public figures participated in it. "Our strength lies in unity. The events occurred 25 years ago confirmed this," participant of the events Khassen Kozhakhmet said.

**19.12.2011**

## **Sequence of Zhanaozen and Shetpe events**



14 people were killed in the mass riots in Zhanaozen and Shetpe station in Mangystau region. Above 80 people were reported injured. During the unrest in Zhanaozen on this December 16, 46 facilities were set to fire and looted.

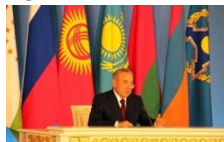
On December 17 President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev imposed a state of emergency there. The investigation and operational group led by Interior Minister Kalukhmet Kassymov and the governmental commission with 1<sup>st</sup> Vice Premier Umirzak Shukeyev in charge are working in the region.

**20.12.2011**

## **Massimov: Zhanaozen events - a very big lesson for us**

The events in Zhanaozen are a very big lesson for us, we must draw the appropriate conclusions from it. Prime Minister Karim Massimov has said at the Government's session. "I think that this is such a moment when we should rally round our Head of State, show once more the strength and stability of our country, power of our Kazakhstan, our President and stability in our society," K.Massimov noted.

## **President Nazarbayev defined priorities of Kazakhstan's chairmanship in CSTO in 2012**



Kazakhstan has taken over presidency of the CSTO at a session of the CSTO Collective Security Council. President Nursultan Nazarbayev told about priorities of Kazakhstan's work on the post of the CSTO chair-country.

The priorities of the work for the upcoming year: the first thing - protection of the information space of the Organization. The second one - further development of forces of the collective response. The third - preventive protection of the airspace in the Central Asian region and etc.

**23.12.2011**

## **Kazakh President fires Samruk-Kazyna Chairman Timur Kulibayev**



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev dismissed Chairman of the Board of JSC "National Welfare Fund "Samruk-Kazyna" Timur Kulibayev. The President told about the origins of problems in Zhanaozen town. There was a prolonged conflict between employees and management of "Ozenmunaygaz" Company. The third parties took advantage of a difficult situation

and organized the riots. "I will order Timur Kulibayev to resign as head of "Samruk-Kazyna" Fund. He did not fulfill my instruction to timely resolve a labor dispute. Moreover, the employers illegally dismissed employees, including those who were absent from work for legitimate reasons, were on sick or vacation leave, etc." Nazarbayev said.

### **Investigation into Zhanaozen riots must be conducted openly and transparently - Nazarbayev**



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev made a working visit to Mangystau region. The President visited the facilities destroyed during the riots in Zhanaozen town, and met with residents and law enforcement officials. Nazarbayev urged the governmental commission headed by First Deputy Prime Minister Umirzak Shukeyev within two weeks to identify all the reasons that caused the dissatisfaction among Ozenmunaygaz company's employees and Zhanaozen residents and make suggestions on how to eliminate them. The President emphasized that each resident of Zhanaozen had an opportunity to find job at one of the enterprises launched under the State Program of Forced Industrial Innovative Development.

Nursultan Nazarbayev instructed the General Prosecutor's Office and Ministry of Internal Affairs to take all measures to investigate crimes during the riots. It is needed to intensify efforts to identify, search for the instigators and those responsible for the riots. In this case the investigation must be conducted openly and transparently, with the involvement of the public commission headed by Omirzak Ozganbayev, Chairman of the Veterans' Council of Mangystau region.

**24.12.2011**

#### **Zhanaozen rioters will be punished - Kazakh President**

"I came to express my condolences to the families of those killed in Zhanaozen," Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev told Khabar TV Channel during his working visit to Mangystau region. "You know very well how it all happened. Peaceful people came to the festival and at that time drunk and armed instigators were handing out sawed off shotguns. Everything was done on purpose. Policemen at that time had no fire-arms, so they were beaten over the head, and when they fell down and someone wanted to help, no one was allowed to do. Police officers had to go back into the police station and take up arms. What could they do? They have a legal right to use arms, if they are attacked. However, despite everything, police fired into the air to the last. When it did not help they began to shoot into the ground, but the instigators were pushing people forward.

Investigation is not a matter of one day. The instigators have done their job and disappeared. Half of them have already been detained, but those who generally organized it did not even appear in Zhanaozen. Each of the young men were given 20 thousand tenge and made drunk.

We are seriously investigating this case and consider each death separately. We will search for organizers, no matter where in the world they may hide. There will be the court, and the guilty will be punished. Well, those oil workers who simply succumbed to the effects of the crowd, if they really are not guilty, will be set free," Nursultan Nazarbayev said.

**26.12.2011**

#### **Turkmenistan, Afghanistan discuss energy projects**

Ashgabat hosted a series of meetings of Afghan delegation with the Turkmen government in the context of further development of constructive cooperation, the Neutral Turkmenistan newspaper reported.

The question is about constructing the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India (TAPI) gas pipeline and laying power lines along the Mary-Atamyrat (Turkmenistan)-Andkhoy (Afghanistan) highway, which will increase the export of the Turkmen electricity to Afghanistan by 5 times and will meet the neighboring country's electricity needs almost by 70 percent.

A design capacity of TAPI is 33 billion cubic meters of natural gas per year. Buyers are Pakistani and Indian gas companies. The project significantly progressed in 2011. The basic document to advance TAPI project is an inter-state agreement to start implementation of TAPI, signed at a high level in Ashgabat in December 2010. Instability in transit Afghanistan remains as a serious

obstacle, but Kabul states that it can ensure the safety of the route. The length of the pipeline may hit 1,735 km.

**27.12.2011**

#### **Kazakh Prosecutor General meets with head of OSCE/ODIHR observation mission**



Kazakhstan Prosecutor General Askhat Daulbayev met with Miklos Harasti, head of OSCE/ODIHR observation mission. Daulbayev informed of the electoral process as well as the work of the prosecution bodies of Kazakhstan. Also, he answered the questions about the situation in Zhanaozen and told about the measures taken to stabilize and restore the town.

**28.12.2011**

#### **Kazakhstan's int'l reserves up by 27.3% to make USD 75.4 bln**

"International reserves of Kazakhstan rose by 27.3% to make USD 75.4 bln," Economic Development and Trade Minister Kairat Kelimbetov told at the governmental meeting in Astana.

#### **Kazakhstan's foreign trade turnover increased by almost 40% over 11 months of 2011 - Minister**



The foreign trade turnover of Kazakhstan has increased by almost 40 percent over 11 months of 2011. Minister of Economic Development and Trade Kairat Kelimbetov has announced it at the Government's session.

"High rate of growth in the real sector of economy along with a favorable external environment promoted the increase of foreign trade turnover by 39.7 percent following results of January-October, 2011 and made USD 101.1 bln," Kelimbetov said. According to him, the goods export increased by 48.2 percent over 11 months of 2011, import - by 22.4 percent. External surplus made USD 42.3 bln.

**28.12.2011 / 21:04**

#### **Kazakhstan plans to join WTO by the end of 2012**



"Kazakhstan plans to join the World Trade Organization until the end of 2012," Kazakh Economic Integration Minister Zhanar Aitzhanova told the governmental meeting. "Bilateral negotiations with countries, but for Argentina and Saudi Arabia, on the access to the market of goods and services are brought to a conclusion. The negotiations with these countries are scheduled for January-February 2012."

**29.12.2011**

#### **Kazakh CEC canceled registration of party list of Rukhaniyat party**

The Central Election Commission of the Republic of Kazakhstan has canceled the registration of a party list of Rukhaniyat party by the Order № 77/143 as of December 28, 2011.

#### **For the past 5 years Kazakhstan rendered USD 56 mln in humanitarian aid**



"For the past five years Kazakhstan rendered USD 56 mln in humanitarian aid," official spokesman of the Kazakh Foreign Ministry Altai Abibullayev told a briefing.

The international community highly appraised the results of the extraordinary meeting of the OIC Executive Committee on Somalia held in Istanbul under the chairmanship of Kazakhstan. The Government rendered USD 500,000 as humanitarian aid to Somalia.

Besides, Kazakhstan keeps on assisting Afghanistan. A group of 179 Afghan students arrived in Kazakhstan in 2011. April this year the Kazakh Emergencies Ministry sent there 5,000 tons of rice as humanitarian assistance.

In 2011 Kazakhstan rendered humanitarian and financial aid to Tajikistan, quake-stricken Turkey, Libya, Japan and implementation of Chernobyl projects.

**30.12.2011**

#### **Kazakhstan summed up 2011 harvest results**

Notable increase in the yield of the most arable crops is observed in 2011, the Kazakh Statistics Agency said. Kazakhstan gathered 26 960, 5 thousand tons of industrial crops and bean cultures, including 22 732,1 thousand tons of wheat.

**04.01.2012**

#### **Kazakh President extends state of emergency in Zhanaozen**



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev has signed the Decree "On extension of the state of emergency in Zhanaozen town of Mangystau region", press service of Kazakh Ministry of Emergencies told Kazinform.

A state of emergency in Zhanaozen, which has been imposed by the President on 17 December 2011, will be prolonged until 31 January 2012, 7:00 a.m.

**10.01.2012**

#### **Kazakh Government to provide over KZT 2.8 bln for Zhanaozen rehabilitation**



Kazakh Government adopted a resolution on allocation of funds from the Governmental reserve for emergency expenses.

"The resolution provides for allocation of KZT 2.8 billion from the governmental reserve for restoration of Zhanaozen facilities and purchase of equipment," said Kazakh Vice Minister for Emergency Situations Valery Petrov.

#### **Cabinet to approve special plan on business development in Zhanaozen for 2012-2014**



The Government of Kazakhstan approved a draft resolution on adoption of a special plan on entrepreneurship development in Zhanaozen town, Mangystau region, for 2012-2014.

The draft resolution envisages several measures. First of all, to provide soft loans to entrepreneurs affected by the riots at a rate of 0.1 per cent to replenish current assets. The second measure is to provide financial support to beginning and current entrepreneurs without branch limitations. It is envisaged to provide businessmen with affordable financing through interest rate subsidies on bank loans, through the guarantee mechanisms due to the placement of funds of the "Damu" Fund in second tier banks, as well as the subsequent crediting of business and the provision of microcredits. The third measure is to provide service support for beginners and existing entrepreneurs. For this purpose there was opened the center for entrepreneurship development for training and advisory services to the business on the principle of "one window".

#### **Government approves amendments into comprehensive development plan of Zhanaozen until 2020**



Kazakh Government has approved a draft resolution amending the Comprehensive development plan of Zhanaozen town until 2020.

**11.01.2012**

### **Kazakhstan Forex Expo 2012 to open its doors Mar 30-31 in Almaty**



International exhibition of foreign exchange industry Kazakhstan Forex Expo for the second time opens its doors to all attendees on March 30-31, 2012. Today, Kazakhstan is a great place for investment. Country is rapidly expanding in financial and economic industry.

Forex market is becoming very actual here. The second exhibition of foreign exchange industry Kazakhstan Forex Expo 2012 is a unique opportunity for anyone interested in Forex, and helps to get all the necessary information.

### **URGENT: Elections in Zhanaozen to be held - CEC**



Today at the evening the Kazakh Central Election Commission has adopted a resolution on holding elections of deputies for the Kazakh Majilis and the maslikhats of the country in Zhanaozen.

"The CEC received the documents from the Constitutional Council that at today's meeting its members failed to override veto of the Kazakh President on the decision to ban parliamentary elections and postpone the election of deputies to Maslikhats in Zhanaozen town. In this connection the Constitutional Council ceased the Constitutional production on the request of the Central Election Commission," CEC Chairman Kuandyk Turgankulov said.

**12.01.2012**

### **OSCE PA sends election observers to Zhanaozen - Joao Soares**



OSCE Parliamentary Assembly is sending observers to Zhanaozen town of Mangystau region to monitor the early parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan on January 15. Joao Soares, head of OSCE PA Mission, announced this after his meeting with Kazakh Foreign Minister Yerzhan Kazykhanov on Thursday. Mr. Soares expressed hope for the full observance of human rights and freedoms in the Majilis elections, as stated during the presidency of Kazakhstan in OSCE.

**12.01.2012**

### **Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan and Russia to establish single Islamic bank in CIS**



The International Bank of Azerbaijan (IBA) and Russia's VTB Bank plan to attract one of the leading banks of Kazakhstan for establishment of a single Islamic bank in the CIS space.

"At the fourth Baku International Banking Conference of the CIS member states, which was held in December, 2011, the IBA was chosen as a platform and a regional center on development of Islamic financing in the Commonwealth countries.

VTB Bank and the IBA, the Russian bank will use experience of the Azerbaijani specialists and consultants in the field of Islamic banking, and the Azerbaijani bank, in turn, - the VTB's experience.

**13.01.2012**

### **I have no doubts elections in Kazakhstan to be transparent - Halil Akinci**



Kazakh Minister of Foreign Affairs Yerzhan Kazykhanov has met with Secretary General of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-speaking States Halil Akinci, who arrived in Kazakhstan to observe the elections to the Majilis.

As the Secretary General noted, the Council's delegation plans to visit South Kazakhstan region during the elections, and not only Shymkent, but also such cities as Kentau, Turkestan and other densely populated areas.

"Today I have no doubts that the elections in Kazakhstan will be transparent. A lot of international observers and representatives of mass media will monitor the elections. All this gives hope that the elections will be democratic and fair," H.Akinci said. He outlined that the final results will be summed up after holding the elections.

### **We are pleased, that we were able to send observers to Zhanaozen - Head of OSCE observation mission**



The OSCE PA observation mission will give its estimations at a press conference next day after the elections. " We are pleased that the Kazakh Government cooperates with us. We are also pleased, that we were able to send our short-term observers to the town of Zhanaozen. I think that we will give our estimations at a press conference on Monday," Joao Soares noted.

### **More than one thousand foreign observers will monitor the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan.**

In particular, it will be representatives of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (PA), PACE, OSCE/ODIHR, CIS, Cooperation Council of the Turkic-speaking countries, TURKPA, SCO, OIC as well as independent observers from foreign states. Besides, more than 120 foreign journalists will come to Kazakhstan for coverage of the course and results of the elections.

Ministry of Education and Science announced plans to start building 418 schools in Kazakhstan in 2012. New schools will allow to get rid of old schools, which have fallen into disrepair.

Ministry of Industry and New Technologies unveiled the results of machine-building industry development in the past year. For 11 months of 2011 Kazakhstan's machine-building output reached KZT 447 billion. Labor productivity increased from USD 11 thousand per person to USD 15.2 thousand. Production of diesel locomotives was started under the State Program of Forced Industrial Innovative Development. Oil-and-gas machine-building was given fresh impetus. Production output in this sector grew by 62.8 percent in January-November 2011. Production of passenger cars increased 2.6 times, agricultural and forestry machinery - 1.8 times. 59 machine-building projects are planned to be carried out within the framework of the Industrialization Map, which will create about 14000 new jobs.



**13.01.2012 / 21:05**

### **Kazakh President received head of OSCE Observer Mission**



Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev received Joao Soares, head of OSCE PA Observation Mission in Astana.

The parties discussed the issues of parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan and work of the observer mission. Nazarbayev thanked Soares for the support of Kazakhstan's presidency of OSCE and Astana OSCE Summit in 2010.

Mr. Joao Soares said he admires with the development of Kazakhstan, great changes, which are taking place in the country. He noted that the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly reacted positively to the President's decision to hold parliamentary elections in Zhanaozen, where observers of the OSCE mission will work.

President Nursultan Nazarbayev stressed that he made this decision because all the people of Kazakhstan should take part in elections. The President noted that he had initiated changes to the Constitution of Kazakhstan in order to create the country's multiparty parliament. The forthcoming elections to the Majilis were announced ahead of time in order to quickly implement this reform.

**14.01.2012**

### **Kazakhstan's oil revenue amounted to KZT 3.8 trln in 2011**

Kazakhstan's revenue from oil sector amounted to KZT 3.8 trillion in 2011, Kazakh Vice Minister of Finance Ruslan Dalenov posted on Twitter.

**15.01.2012**

### **Early parliamentary elections kick off in Kazakhstan**



January 15, 2012 at 7:00 am Astana time voters in Kazakhstan begin to vote in early elections of Majilis deputies and election of deputies of maslikhats. 9700 polling stations were opened across the country. 56 polling stations operated in foreign countries for Kazakh citizens residing abroad. According to the CEC, a total of 9.2 million Kazakhstanis were included in voters list.

Kazakhstan invited 819 international observers to monitor the elections. Among them are 309 representatives of the mission of the OSCE/ODIHR, 262 CIS observers, 46 from the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly, 15 from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, 11 observers from the SCO, 9 from Cooperation Council for the Turkic-speaking countries, 7 from the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, 10 from the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking countries and 150 observers from 29 foreign countries.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs also accredited about 150 representatives of foreign media, which, according to the Kazakh election law, have the rights of international observers.

### **I am confident Kazakhstanis vote for stability, development and prosperity of the country - Nazarbayev**

"I am confident the Kazakhstanis will vote for stability, development and prosperity of the country," Kazakh President Nursultan Nazarbayev said after casting his vote at a polling station.

"Dear compatriots! Today our country sees a great political event - the election of deputies of the Majilis and maslikhats. This is not the first elections taking place in Kazakhstan. Exercising their constitutional rights Kazakhstanis make their choice today. Our people have always voted for peace, prosperity and the future of the country and strengthening of the independence," Nazarbayev emphasized.

## **Voter turnout at early parliamentary elections made 75.07% - CEC**



According to preliminary data, the voter turnout at the early parliamentary elections in the country made 75.07 percent. About seven million people have casted their votes in Kazakhstan as of 8.00 pm. Chairman of the Central Election Commission Kuandyk Turgankulov has announced at a briefing. "At present the voting at the early elections of deputies of the Majilis and regular lections of deputies of maslikhats were completed. At present we are ready to present operational information about the voter turnout, with the exception of data from 56 stations formed in the diplomatic representation offices of Kazakhstan abroad.

According to data of the regional, Astana and Almaty election commissions, 6.98 million people out of 9.3 million voters have casted their votes. The voter turnout made 75.07 percent.

In terms of the regions it looks like this: Astana's voter turnout makes 53.32%, Almaty city - 41.38%, Akmola region - 78.01%, Aktobe region - 78.4%, Almaty region - 92.6%, Atyrau region - 83.55%, East Kazakhstan region - 80.21%, Zhambyl region - 80.83%, West Kazakhstan region - 71.9%, Karaganda region - 75.2%, Kostanay region - 84.83%, Kyzylorda region - 80.95%, Mangystau region - 74.2%, Pavlodar region - 71%, North Kazakhstan region - 80.7%, South Kazakhstan region - 78.76%," K.Turgankulov said.

### **Prosecution agencies received 43 complaints during holding elections**

The prosecution agencies received 43 complaints during holding the elections. Official representative of the Kazakh Prosecutor General's Office Nurdaulet Suindikov told a briefing.

"The prosecution agencies received 43 complaints as of 8.00 pm. One of them is directed to the Prosecutor General's Office, another 42 addressed to territorial prosecutors," he said.

**15.01.2012 / 20:46**

### **No violations in elections in Kazakhstan - Great Britain's observer**

The elections in Kazakhstan are being held without violations. Siddharth Saxena, Chairperson of the Cambridge Central Asian Forum has announced today.

"I have visited seven polling stations and noticed no violations. The only thing is that some people, coming to vote, were confused and felt falter, but members of the election commission assisted them quickly," he said.

### **It is right that Zhanaozen residents have opportunity to participate in elections - observer from Finland**



It is correct that people of the town of Zhanaozen have a chance to participate in elections to the Majilis.

Special Representative to regional peace-mediation tasks of the Foreign Minister of Finland Kimmo Kiljunen has said it.

"I am very pleased that despite tragic events occurred on December 16 the Zhanaozen residents received opportunity to take part in the elections. We think it is right that the elections were organized in this town," Kimmo Kiljunen noted at a press conference.

## **Voter turnout at elections in Kazakhstan high - former Lithuanian PM K.Prunskienė**



The elections in Kazakhstan are normal, the voter turnout is high. International observer, former Prime Minister of Lithuania Kazimira Prunskienė has told a briefing in Astana.

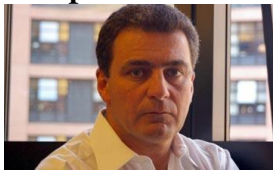
"I visited five polling stations, and I want to say, that the elections are being held in normal mode as in other countries," K.Prunskienė said. "The voter turnout is active, and I have not observed any deviations from the requirements and democratic norms. At every station I talked to observers, they represent various parties and international organizations," she noted.

"I have no criticisms," the international observer resumed.

## **No violations fixed - TurkPA observer**

No violations during elections to the Majilis have been fixed so far, Haluk Ipek, observer from the Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-speaking countries told a briefing in Almaty.

## **European observers find no election violations**



European observers found no significant violations of election laws during the parliamentary elections in Kazakhstan, member of the European Parliament Alexander Mirsky told journalists.

"We have visited four polling stations: none of us had any complaints. In general, we have a positive impression of Kazakhstan," he said.

Mirsky said he, as European Parliament member, came to Kazakhstan eight or nine times. He stressed he hardly knew other countries with the same complacency and good spirit among voters during polls.

**Source: Kazinform**

# **KYRGYZSTAN**

## **The Exhibition of Kyrgyz painters opened in Ankara city, Turkey**

In December the Exhibition of Kyrgyz painters with the support of philanthropist Ibragim Chechen's Fund was opened in Ankara city (Turkey). Art manager of the M Gallery Meerim Akmatkulova told.

According to her, exposition contains the works of many Kyrgyz famous artists: Danakan Adashkanova, Karabek Artykbaev, Zhyldyz Asangali, Momunbek Astar, Guzel Aitmatova, Asaken Beyshenov, Ivan Bulba, Kadyr Bekov, Alykul Biymyrzaev, Alexander Voronin, Zhambul Zhumabayev, Nurguyan Innokentyev, Alexei Kamensky, Talyat Mirrakhimov.

As the art manager noted, the purpose of exposition is strengthening of friendship and understanding between two countries.

## **The Council of heads of EurAsEC countries to consider Kyrgyzstan's proposals on development of co-operation with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan**

The Council of heads of EurAsEC countries will consider Kyrgyzstan's proposals on development of co-operation with Kazakhstan, Uzbekistan, Tajikistan and Azerbaijan. The respective issue is on agenda of the meeting which is taking place in the Russian capital today.

In case with Azerbaijan the matter is possibility of supply of jet fuel and other oil products to Kyrgyzstan. Kazakhstan will be offered to increase supplies of natural uranium concentrates up to 3 thousand tons through subsidiary production units of Kazatoprom NAK for processing at Kara-Balta ore mining industrial complex in 2012. Besides, issues on opening of coproduction of special products of NK Kazakhstan Engineering JSC with defence industry enterprises and on supply of tractor trailers from Kazakhstan to Kyrgyzstan will be raised.

In case with Russia, Kyrgyzstan will suggest signing intergovernmental agreement on development of cooperation in the sphere of electrical energy industry. In particular, the matter is construction of Kambarata-1 hydropower plant and four power plants of Upper-Naryn cascade. It will be offered to intensify cooperation in the military-industrial complex as well.

In case with Uzbekistan, Kyrgyzstan suggests raising an issue on not using restrictions over transit of products significant for Kyrgyz economy (oil products, raw material resources for needs of Mailuu-Suu electric-bulb plant and Kadamzhai stibial industrial complex).

As for all countries, Kyrgyzstan sees possibility of expansion of production of construction materials for the account of field development, opening joint ventures over processing fruits and vegetables, agriculture products and ventures on the basis of Worsted-Woolen Industrial Complex.

## **UNDP lent material and technical support for 19 labs of Sanitary and Epidemiologic State Department**

The Global Fund to Fight AIDS, Tuberculosis and Malaria (GFFATM) lent material and technical support for 19 labs of Sanitary and Epidemiologic State Department (SESD) on \$217.295K. GFFATM Grant Management group's PR expert Aida Mambetkulova reports.

According her before the repair work a valuation committee which included SESD officials had visited all the 19 labs. UNDP engineering experts defined that all the buildings are out of repair desperately.

"Now the specialists are going to widen a range of services. Particularly, additional researches on malaria intelligence will be held in the capital. Every interested person may come to the SESD lab in Bishkek and submit to a blood test," SESD explains.

## **Kyrgyz President to take part in meetings of EurAsEC Council, CSTO and in informal summit of heads of CIS countries**

The President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev will take part in meetings of EurAsEC Council, CSTO and in informal summit of heads of CIS countries.

Issues of social and economic cooperation of member countries will be discussed during EurAsEC summit. Presidents will review work of the organization over 20 years in course of the summit of heads of CIS countries. Kyrgyz official delegation comprises acting head of the Customs Service

Kubanychbek Kulmatov, Foreign Minister Ruslan Kazakbaev, Secretary of Defence Council Busurmankul Tabaldiev, acting Minister of Economic Regulation Oleg Pankratov.

It is expected that Almazbek Atambayev will have a number of bilateral meetings with CIS counterparts during two-day visit. Let's note this is first Atambayev's official trip abroad as the President of Kyrgyzstan.

### **Presentation of the Kyrgyzdar book held in the capital of Kyrgyzstan**

The presentation of the Kyrgyzdar (The history of the Kyrgyz) book is being held in the capital of Kyrgyzstan. The event is taking place in one of the universities.

According to one of the authors, deputy Kanybek Imanaliyev, the edition of 14 volumes is a compilation of historical facts about Kyrgyz people. "The book covers the period from 200 BC. It was composed on the basis of Arabic, Russian, Chinese sources. About 3 million soms were spent on the issue of one thousand copies dedicated to the 20th anniversary of Kyrgyzstan's independence. The money was allotted from the Parliament's budget, by separate deputies and by the publishing house as well. Next year we plan to release this 14-volume edition and distribute it to all schools of the republic," Kanybek Imanaliyev said.

He noted that this history book contains also profound research of the Kyrgyz language.

### **USA have contributed over \$1B to Kyrgyzstan for 20 years**

USA have contributed over \$1B to Kyrgyzstan for 20 years. It was announced by US Ambassador Pamela L. Spratlen in address to citizens of Kyrgyz Republic.

She recalled, on December 25, 1991, President George H.W. Bush officially recognized the independence of Kyrgyzstan, saying, "The United States applauds and supports the historic choice for freedom... We will move quickly to establish diplomatic relations and build new ties." On February 1, 1992, the U.S. flag was raised above the first foreign embassy in Bishkek.

Today the Kyrgyz Republic leads Central Asia in political reform with a new constitution, a government chosen by its citizens through admirably competitive and open elections, and leadership whose primary goal is to guide the country on a path of progress and stability. U.S. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton has attributed Kyrgyzstan's achievements to "the strong character of the Kyrgyz people, the incredible resilience that you have shown since independence, but, most importantly, the path of democracy that you have chosen now...You are pioneers. Look around you in this region. You are trying to do something that no one else has done," said Pamela L. Spratlen

We stand firmly in support of the people of the Kyrgyz Republic who have cast their votes for effective representative government that will create jobs and economic growth, improve rule of law and access to justice, promote the protection of human rights, and reinforce health and education sector reforms. Since the establishment of our diplomatic relations twenty years ago, we have contributed over one billion dollars in assistance through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and other U.S. Government institutions. We are fully committed to cooperating with the government and people of the Kyrgyz Republic to meet the most urgent development needs throughout the country. As the business environment improves, we hope to expand trade and investment ties.

### **Trading volume at the Kyrgyz Stock Exchange makes up near KGS 55,000**

Today trading volume at the Kyrgyz Stock Exchange (KSE) makes up KGS 54, 980 as KSE reports.

As noted totally it was made 5 securities transactions. Two of them were with bonds of Shoro CJSC. Total number of sold securities is 23 to the amount of KGS 23, 000.

Besides, bonds of Roskazmet limited company were traded. 6 securities of the company were sold in all to the sum of KGS 30, 000 (5, 000 per security).

1,100 shares of Electrical Stations OJSC were also sold to the amount of KGS 1,980 (1.8 som per share).

### **Extremist religious movements revealed in the border areas of southern Kyrgyzstan**

Extremist religious movements were revealed in the border areas of southern Kyrgyzstan. The head of 10th department under the Interior Ministry in the south of the republic Stanbek Bakirov told in the interview with Liberty Radio.

According to him, cells of female radical organizations were found out. "The residents of Shamaldy-Sai village of Jalal-Abad province were detained during inspection. They were accused of dissemination of religious extremism ideas. They were confiscated leaflets, CDs and books which content was contrary to the laws of our country. We are fighting against organizations propagating extremism and terrorism ideas in the border areas," Stanbek Bakirov noted.

He added that they often meet educated and wealthy people among followers of radical Islam. "Before adherents of these movements were the representatives of poor population of Kyrgyzstan. And the most important thing is that we are trying to arrest not only ordinary executors, but associates of a higher rank. But the primary target in 2012 is to find the sources of religious extremist groups financing and to reveal their links with other countries," Stanbek Bakirov said.

### **Kyrgyzstan's authorities consider that republic has "good conditions for investors"**

Kyrgyzstan's authorities consider that republic has "good conditions for investors". Prime Minister Omurbek Babanov stated this during a meeting with Parliamentary Vice-Minister for Foreign Affairs of Japan Kazuyuki Hamada.

Recall, the delegation of land of the rising sun has arrived in Kyrgyzstan for a visit on the eve of the 20th anniversary of establishing diplomatic relations between two countries.

"Japan always provided full support and assistance throughout the existence of an independent Kyrgyzstan. We need to strengthen mutually beneficial cooperation so as to bring it to a higher level. I think our visit is a start of implementing the agreements reached during my trip to Japan last year," a Kyrgyz official stressed.

"Kyrgyzstan is rich in natural resources. We make regular work to improve the investment attractiveness of our economy. We have prepared a package of investment projects, including mining of rare earth metals, which might be of interest to Japanese investors. If Japan decides to send a special delegation, the Kyrgyz side is ready to discuss issues of these projects implementation," Omurbek Babanov said.

### **Relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey attain absolutely new level – Almazbek Atambayev**

"Relations between Kyrgyzstan and Turkey attain absolutely new level," the President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev told a news conference in Ankara.

According to him, cooperation passes from formalities to the nitty-gritty. "The head of Turkey Abdullah Gül was right when saying that Kyrgyzstan passed its spring and we are beginning a new period of development. I think Turkic-speaking countries have to develop at same paces as Turkey. Then states of Turkic world will get stronger. It is very important not to forget own history," Almazbek Atambayev said.

### **Minister of economy is for creating of national resources assets list**

Minister of economy is for creating of national resources assets list. On the eve Temir Sariev initiated a first session of working group on reformation of subsurface management.

They were ordered to develop "new approaches to state policy in sphere of subsurface management, improvement of existing legal base in sphere of mining industry and implementation of international standards in subsurface management sphere".

The official himself announced about the necessity of law drafts on national resources and subsurface management, new standards of ecological expertise, improvement of investment and creating of employment.

### **The President of Kyrgyzstan given a title of professor emeritus of Bilkent University**

The President of Kyrgyzstan Almazbek Atambayev was given a title of professor emeritus of Bilkent University.

The head of Kyrgyzstan called on the Turkish leading university during his official visit. He met with the rector of the university Abdullah Atalar. After that he spoke in front of the staff and students.

Let's note 6 students from Kyrgyzstan are studying at this university.

### **UNICEF is going to invest \$30M in solving child problems during next 5 years**

From 2012 to 2016 UNICEF is going to invest \$30M in solving child problems. The joint plan of cooperation between UN and Kyrgyzstan was signed today by Deputy Prime Minister on Social Issues Gulnara Asymbaeva and UNICEF representative Jonathan Waytch.

As noted the 5-year program is aimed at social equality provision and improvement of access to qualified service in field of health, food, prematurity, elementary education for children and their parents.

Jonathan Waytch the document was designed in accordance with national priorities, Millennium Development Goals, UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and other basic international documents. "We are going to strengthen favorable atmosphere for children and teenagers that they could realize their constitutional rights. We ask Kyrgyz Government not to shorten a number of money for social sector. Social help must be targeted. However, alimentation of one child costs 7K soms and poor family gets only 250 soms. It is wrong," he noted.

### **Kyrgyzstan and Turkey will boost relations within framework of multilateral organizations – Ruslan Kazakbaev**

"Kyrgyzstan and Turkey will boost relations within framework of multilateral organizations," the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ruslan Kazakbaev stated yesterday during the official visit of the Kyrgyz President to Turkey, Ankara.

According to him, what is at issue is to promote each other in elective agencies of international organizations. "Turkey asked us to support its candidacy to the UN Security Council and to other agencies it lays claims to. Our candidacy is proposed to the UN Economic and Social Council in 2012 and we asked Turkey too to support us. We decided to boost cooperation within framework of the European Council, OSCE, the Organization of the Islamic Conference," Ruslan Kazakbaev said.

As the Minister noted the foreign policy wasn't filled with specific projects in the interests of the nation and state for recent years. "However shifts have begun after April 2010. We take measures on increasing trade turnover between Turkey and Kyrgyzstan. Today it doesn't exceed \$ 30 millions. It was said earlier that it had to reach up to \$ 1 billion. But this is political wish though we have potential," Ruslan Kazakbaev added.

### **Attracting investments in Kyrgyzstan is possible only in case of stability and security in the country and light-duty work for businessmen – Ruslan Kazakbaev**

"Attracting investments in Kyrgyzstan is possible only in case of stability and security in the country and light-duty work for businessmen," Minister of Foreign Affairs Ruslan Kazakbaev stated within the framework of Kyrgyzstan's President official visit to Ankara (Turkey).

According to him, concrete ideas were suggested during the negotiations with the Turkish President Abdullah Gül. "He thinks that it is necessary to create free economic and industrial and technological zones, industrial parks with lighter working conditions for investors to attract investments in Kyrgyzstan. It is also possible to create joint investment fund to support Kyrgyz businessmen in Turkey and vice versa. The main thing is to keep stability, security and acceptable conditions for investors in the country," Ruslan Kazakbaev said.

As the Minister noted thanks to brotherhood of two ethnic groups and personal friendship between two Presidents, Turkey lends a great support to Kyrgyzstan. "We have been prolonged our foreign debt for so many years. And in 2011 the Prime Minister of Turkey Erdoğan stated that if we count all trips of your officials for the last 5-10 years, and if they did not live in five star hotels, Kyrgyzstan would pay off the debt a long ago. Nevertheless Turkey gave us \$ 10 million grant, \$ 11 million loan and other funds in addition to debt relief of \$ 51 million," Mr Kazakbaev added.

### **Turkey to assist Kyrgyzstan in strengthening of Defense Ministry, Security Council and Frontier Service**

Turkey will assist Kyrgyzstan in strengthening of Defense Ministry, Security Council and Frontier Service. It was announced by Foreign Affairs Minister Ruslan Kazakbaev during the official visit of President Almazbek Atambayev to Turkey.

According to him on bilateral negotiations the issues of security, fighting against international terrorism, drug trafficking and illegal migration, strengthening of Defense Ministry, Frontier Service and law machinery," said Ruslan Kazakbaev.

As the minister noted the issue of quota increasing for students, officers and young diplomats wishing to study in Turkey was also discussed. "Turkish part is going to support our request," added the Minister.

### **Kyrgyzstan will suggest alternatives of reorganization of the Transit Center at Manas after 2014 – Ruslan Kazakbaev**

"Kyrgyzstan will suggest alternatives of reorganization of the Transit Center at Manas after 2014," the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ruslan Kazakbaev stated yesterday during the official visit of the Kyrgyz President to Turkey, Ankara.

According to him, initially the issue on Manas military base was considered as an amendment to the SCTO Charter. "But it was taken into a separate protocol. Before the SCTO Charter prescribed that consultations were needed when opening base of third countries on territories of SCTO countries. Today the addition was made that if there would be no official objections from SCTO members. But this is not related to agreements signed earlier like with the Transit Center at Manas," Ruslan Kazakbaev said.

As the Minister noted, they will suggest alternatives to transform the Transit Center into a civil traffic center with possible involvement of Russia, US and Turkey.

### **It is possible that Turkey will open its market for Kyrgyzstan through the method of quota arrangement - Ruslan Kazakbaev**

"It is possible that Turkey will open its market for Kyrgyzstan through the method of quota arrangement," announced Foreign Affairs Minister of Kyrgyzstan Ruslan Kazakbaev during Kyrgyz President's official visit to Ankara (Turkish capital).

According to him Kyrgyz delegation gave an agreement draft on quotas for working migrants from Kyrgyzstan. "Any country protects own internal market. It is very complicated to get permission for work in any field of work. We have the simplified quotas mechanism agreement with Kazakhstan, Russia and Korea. In its turn we are working at agreement on total cancellation of quotas for Kyrgyz nationals. If we achieve the result Kyrgyzstan will become the first country which has a clear access to Turkish market. Probably such spheres like medical service, tourism and agriculture would be open for Kyrgyz citizens. Nowadays our citizens are working illegally there and it very hard to protect their rights in Turkey. So, we will do everything possible to find new markets. In addition Ministry of Foreign Affairs got authority in migration issues," said Ruslan Kazakbaev.

As the minister noted that in 2011 the agreement on visa-free travel was signed. "Intergovernmental procedures were made by Kyrgyz Republic but Turkey hasn't ratified the agreement. We consider that this issue will be resolved in near future," added Ruslan Kazakbaev.

### **Kyrgyzstan intends to take an active part in Afghanistan's restoration – Ruslan Kazakbaev**

"Kyrgyzstan intends to take an active part in Afghanistan's restoration," the Minister of Foreign Affairs Ruslan Kazakbaev told the news conference yesterday during official visit of the Kyrgyz President to Ankara, Turkey.

According to him, international financial institutions, developed countries intend to render a huge financial aid to Afghanistan. "Kyrgyzstan hasn't participated in none of big financial projects over Afghanistan's restoration till now with except of a dozen of small projects when businessmen themselves "laid a road". Turkey has enormous influence on Afghanistan and Kyrgyzstan asks to render assistance that we can participate in big projects in the Islamic Republic of Afghanistan," Ruslan Kazakbaev said.

As the Minister noted it is planned within next three months that groups of strategic planning of two countries (Turkey and Kyrgyzstan) will discuss specifically all issues connected with participation in Afghanistan's restoration.



## **Turkish authorities expressed a desire to help in attracting tourists to Kyrgyzstan – Ibragim Zhunusov**

“Turkish authorities expressed a desire to help in attracting tourists to Kyrgyzstan,” Minister of Culture and Tourism Ibragim Zhunusov told journalists. He accompanies President Almazbek Atambayev, who is on an official visit to Ankara.

According to the Minister, advertising of Kyrgyzstan plays a very important role. “There is little sense that we promote our country only within its boundaries. At a meeting with the Minister of Culture and Tourism we agreed that we would prepare commercials. The Turks promised to transmit them free of charge. We plan to carry out much work to attract tourists before summer season,” the official said.

He noted that it is necessary to introduce proper order in travel companies’ activities that work in Kyrgyzstan. “Now they work out of control, only by license. In Turkey the Minister of Culture and Tourism controls all private travel companies and issues licenses. We will follow the same way. This will favour the development of tourism. We advertised our travel companies before, but did not get anything in return. We must license them. Surely travel companies will oppose this initiative. But I think we must change the law. In Turkey, the core Ministry controls the hotel’s activities, determines the quality of their work, status and policy. I will send my staff to survey the experiences of Turks in order to introduce this practice in the republic,” Ibragim Zhunusov added.

## **Kyrgyzstan has chosen a way of parliamentary democracy and everybody should know: power o authority is in truth – Almazbek Atambayev**

“Kyrgyzstan has chosen a way of parliamentary democracy and everybody should know: power o authority is in truth,” announced President Almazbek Atambayev in his address to Turkish Parliament on the eve.

According him if people doesn’t want unjust ruling then “authorities won’t save themselves with guns, cannons and tanks”.

“Events in Arab countries is the proof of my words. Since the first day of our independence Turkey and Russia always supported us. Russia is a strategic partner of Kyrgyzstan. And the development relations between Russia and Kyrgyzstan carried our conviction as our country will only win from such relations. Turkey is an example of how strong democratic state should be. I consider that other Central Asian countries should follow the example,” said Almazbek Atambayev.

According him the world knows tragic events occurred in the South of Kyrgyzstan in 2010. “On December 2011 during conversation with Uzbek President Islam Karimov announced that these events were provoked by enemies of Kyrgyz and Uzbek people in order to crush and destroy two friendly Islamic countries,” added Almazbel Atambayev.

## **TURKEY**

### **Turkish FM to Attend Trilateral Ministerial Meeting in Azerbaijan**

Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu will visit Azerbaijan in January, the Anadolu Agency quotes Turkish Foreign Ministry's spokesman Selcuk Unal as saying.

Unal said Davutoglu will visit Nakhchivan on Jan.17, where a trilateral meeting of Azerbaijan, Iran and Turkey's foreign ministers will be held.

An agreement to hold the meeting was reached during a meeting of the three countries' deputy ministers in Nakhchivan in November 2011. Azerbaijani Deputy Foreign Minister Khalaf Khalafov represented Azerbaijan at the meeting. The meeting discussed issues of trade, industry, investment, transport, energy, tourism and culture. 13/01/2012

### **Minister: Turkey Achieves Reduced Russian Gas Price**

By revising an agreement with Russia on gas supplies, Ankara has managed to achieve reduced gas prices which means the price for Russian gas supplies to Turkey is the same as to Europe, the Hurriyet newspaper quotes Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz as saying on Thursday.

"Turkey will get additional income from lower prices for Russian gas. If the country failed to achieve it, then the future would mean incurring heavy losses," Mr Yildiz said.

In connection with a trade secret Mr Yildiz did not mention the percentage of reduction of the gas prices, but stressed that the agreement highlighted the regional importance of Turkey. Last December, Russia and Turkey agreed to extend two long-term gas supply contracts until 2021 and 2025, respectively.

Ltd Gazprom Export and Turkish state company Botas have contracts for Russian gas purchase dated Dec.15, 1997 and Feb.18, 1998. 12/01/2012

### **Turkish Minister: Energy Agreement with Russia not to Affect Nabucco Project Implementation**

The last agreement in the energy sphere signed between Russia and Turkey will not affect the implementation of Nabucco project, on the contrary, will facilitate it, Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz told journalists on Monday, the Hurriyet newspaper reported.

"All the statements that implementation of Nabucco project will slow down after the signing the agreement on the South Stream, are wrong," Yildiz said.

He said that these projects will contribute to the economic development of Turkey and all countries of the region.

Nabucco project is designed to transport gas from the Caspian region and Middle East to the EU countries. Construction of the Nabucco project is planned to start in 2013 and the first supplies are scheduled for 2017. The total length of the pipeline is 3,900 kilometers with a maximum capacity of 31 billion cubic meters per year. The project's partners include the Austrian OMV, Hungarian MOL, Bulgarian Bulgargaz, Romanian Transgaz, Turkish Botas and the German RWE.

In December 2011, Turkey and Russia signed an agreement to start construction on the South Stream project. The South Stream project is implemented to diversify the routes of natural gas supplies to the European consumers and envisages the construction of a gas pipeline across the Black Sea to the South and Central Europe.

The total designed capacity of the offshore section of the South Stream is 63 billion cubic meters per year. It is planned that the offshore section stretching about 900 kilometers will run through the Black Sea bottom from the "Russkaya" compressor station on the Russian coast to the Bulgarian coast. The cost of construction of the offshore section will hit approximately 15.5 billion euros. 9/01/2012

### **More Syrian Refugees Come to Hatay Camps**

The number of Syrian refugees in sheltering camps in Hatay has risen from 7,500 to 9,200 in the last 1.5 months, while the new container camps built for Syrian refugees in the southern city of Kilis has the capacity to house 10,000 people, sources from the Turkish Foreign Ministry said.

Syrian refugees who have already fled are waiting to be relocated to Kilis, the newly built container houses in the southern province. Ministry sources say the capacity of the container camp in Kilis is larger than Hatay, "just in case the refugee influx from Syria continues."

Syrian refugees are expected to be transferred from Hatay to Kilis in the next two months. As well as aiming to country and are currently living in shelter camps in Hatay, which borders Syria. 7/01/2012

### **Compulsory Education Length to Rise to 12 years**

A new draft bill foresees to extend compulsory education to 12 years while dividing it to three-tier system. Accordingly, students will be able to continue their education in vocational schools after the first four years.

The ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) is set to present a draft bill to Parliament in the coming days to extend compulsory education in Turkey from the current eight years to 12 while augmenting the weight of specialized courses.

The new three-tier system will require students to attend a primary, secondary and a high school for four years each instead of the current arrangement requiring eight years of unbroken compulsory education in a primary school.

Students will now be able to change their schools after the first four years and attend another school's second tier for their secondary education to vocational and religious vocational schools as well, according to daily Zaman.

Speaking to Hürriyet Daily News, Ahmet Özer, head of the Union of Educators Syndicate, said the aim of the draft was well-intentioned, but the new system needed very good preparation.

"The secondary vocational and religious vocational schools were closed down in 1997, and since then both schools give less graduates. This new system may increase the number of students in vocational schools, yet its substructure should be prepared very well," he said.

Meanwhile, Batuhan Aydagül from the Education Reform Initiative at Sabancı University said the number of students attending schools was already rising in Turkey, so rather than focusing on the duration of mandatory education, Turkey should focus on the quality of education.

"Reports show that almost 60 percent of the students cannot solve a basic math problem. The Education Ministry should focus on raising the quality rather than the duration," he said.

Field Courses - If Parliament approves the draft bill, the Education Ministry will also redesign the existing secondary school curriculum so as to lend greater weight to specialized field courses.

Classroom teachers will conduct the initial four years of primary education, while subject-specific teachers will enter secondary school classes. Transition clauses will also reportedly be added to the

amendment to prevent currently enrolled students from being unfairly affected by the new changes. The system currently in effect is based on regulations adopted in 1997.

Meanwhile, legislators will also amend another law to prevent the judiciary from overturning a recent decision by the Higher Education Board (YÖK) to annul the application of different coefficients for students at university entrance exams. 6/01/2012

### **Foreign Minister Davutoğlu Warns of ‘Regional Cold War’**

On the eve of his Tehran visit, the top diplomat issues warning on the threat of a region-wide ‘Cold War’ if sectarian tensions are not defused.

The emergence of fresh sectarian tensions between Sunnis and Shiites threatens to plunge the Mideast into “a regional Cold War,” Turkey’s foreign minister warned yesterday ahead of a critical visit to Tehran. “We are determined to avoid a regional Cold War. Regional sectarian tension would be suicide for the entire region,” Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu told Anatolia news agency in an interview yesterday. Davutoğlu departed for Tehran late last night in preparation for two days of talks with Iranian officials.

The Turkish foreign minister’s trip to Tehran comes amid rising tensions in the Middle East due to growing concerns of a fresh armed conflict between Iraqi Shiite and Sunni groups following the U.S. withdrawal that could even spread to Baghdad’s neighbors and an ongoing turmoil in sectarian-fragile Syria. “There are some circles who wish to begin a Cold War on the axis of Sunni-Shiite tension whose affects would last for decades. I will raise this issue during my visit [to Tehran],” he said.

Turkey believes a dangerous situation is arising in the Middle East, Davutoğlu said, adding that Ankara had witnessed increasing polarization not only in Iraq and Syria but in every corner of the region.

Turkey is determined to avoid such polarization and will meet with every related party to prevent unwanted developments, he said. Noting that the entire region and its people suffered from the Iran-Iraq war in the 1980s, as well as Saddam Hussein’s occupation of Kuwait in the 1990s, Davutoğlu said: “Turkey is strongly against fresh tensions in the region, be it Sunni-Shiite tension or an anti-Iran campaign or the recent row [between Iran and the United States] in the Gulf. That is why our Iraq policy envisages being engaged with every group. No one should commit a mistake in this; no party should act with an understanding that a certain ideology, certain sect or ethnic group can rule [Iraq].”

Turkey is deeply concerned that Iranian influence will increase in Iraq and create a fresh conflict among Sunni, Shiite and Kurdish groups that could ultimately result in the country’s partition. Iran, for its part, has slammed Turkey for siding with the West against Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, its key regional ally. “We have different opinions on Syria but our stance has principles. They have their own perspectives and principles. We may discuss them,” Davutoğlu said. Despite differences between Tehran and Ankara, the fact that the visit can occur at all proves the close historical and friendly relations between Iran and Turkey, the foreign minister said.

### **Visits to Moscow and Washington**

“Everybody in this region is a friend and brother. If Bashar al-Assad had not launched this war against his own people, we would not be facing such a problem.” Davutoğlu said he was planning to meet Iranian leaders and intellectuals twice a year as part of a deal with Iranian Foreign Minister Ali Akbar Salehi. Expressing Turkey’s determination to prevent regional tension, Davutoğlu said he would hold talks with all relevant parties in coming weeks, noting that he would stage visits to Moscow and Washington in late January and early February to discuss regional issues. In addition, Turkey and the Gulf Cooperation Council will hold a strategic dialogue meeting this month. “What is important for us is to reduce the tension in the region,” he said. 5/01/2012

### **Local businesswomen will mentor female entrepreneurs**

The European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors will launch its project in Turkey this year, partnering with the Women Entrepreneurs Association of Turkey (KAGİDER), the Businesswomen Entrepreneurs' and Enhancement Association (ANGİKAD) and Turkey's Özyeğin University.

The European Network of Female Entrepreneurship Ambassadors has a 1 million euro budget, 60 percent of which is covered by European Union funds. The project links 13 successful businesswomen as mentors to 26 up-and-coming female entrepreneurs for two years.

There are 80,000 female entrepreneurs in Turkey, said KAGİDER's President Gülten Türktan.

"Entrepreneurship is a road we have to face on our own, but entrepreneurs need people to light the way; this is where mentorship comes in. None of us has to be completely alone on our path," said Türktan. Türktan said five of the 13 mentors will not come from Istanbul. 4/01/2012

### **Turkey and Israel to Meet at Seoul Nuclear Summit**

Turkish and Israeli authorities are expected to come together in the South Korean capital, which is set to host the Nuclear Security Summit on March 26-27, amidst diplomatic tension between the two countries, Today's Zaman reported.

Turkish-Israeli relations were strained following the murder of nine activists onboard a Gaza-bound Turkish aid flotilla by Israeli soldiers that took place in international waters on May 31, 2010. Turkish officials insist on an apology from Israel for its bloody raid as a condition for repairing diplomatic ties. Israel refuses to comply.

In an interview with Today's Zaman, South Korean Ambassador Lee Sangkyu said the Korean authorities expect to see Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan at the nuclear summit in Seoul. Lee said Israeli officials have also been invited to the meeting, although it remains unclear who will be representing the country at the summit.

US President Barack Obama, along with representatives from roughly 50 countries, is expected to be in attendance. The 2010 Nuclear Security Summit was held in Washington. 4/01/2012

### **2012 Will not be that Easy for World & Turkey**

2012 promises tough times, President Gül says as Turkey struggles to write a new charter amid strained EU relations and turmoil among its neighbors. Iranian- West tensions look set to continue, while the EU's economic prognosis is grim.

Turkey has left a difficult 2011 behind but 2012 is already promising plenty of challenges as the country attempts to draft a new charter amid a number of disagreements among the parties. "When the turmoil and political developments around our country are considered, I believe that 2012 will be busy year for Turkey," President Abdullah Gül said his New Year message.

Divisions over the new charter have already emerged between the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) and the Republican People's Party (CHP), mainly due to the AKP's insistence that provisions passed in a 2010 referendum to reshape the judiciary remain untouched. Parliamentary Speaker Cemil Çiçek, however, said it was absolutely essential that the country succeed in drafting a new constitution. The controversy over President Gül's term will also be a major topic of debate in 2012.

In a New Year's message published on the official website of the President's Office on Saturday, Gül underlined the importance of solidarity in Turkey, stating that Turkish nation's unity was a milestone in reaching goals of the country.

"When the turmoil and political developments around our country are considered, I believe that 2012 will be busy year for Turkey," Gül said in his message.

"That's why it is more important than ever to use our energy in a way to positively direct the developments and preserving solidarity within the country."

Turkish people expected that new constitution would be completed in 2012, he said, adding that a democratic, liberal and pluralist constitution would pave for the way of Turkey for its progress.

Gül said that Turkey did not give up its objectives on its EU path and the country would keep fulfilling reforms regarding its EU bid in 2012 as well. 2/01/2012

### **Turkey's Premier Says Turkey Establishes Balance Between Rights and Security in Countering Terrorism**

ANKARA (A.A) - Turkey's prime minister said on Friday that Turkey had established a balance between rights and freedoms and security in its fight against terrorism.

Premier Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Turkey had established a balance between rights and freedoms and security in its fight against terrorism and combatted terrorism by keeping this balance.

"None is detained discretionarily, and most fundamental legal principles are taken into consideration," Erdogan told a televised address to the nation.

Erdogan said Turkey was behaving in line with constitution, laws and universal norms and defined Turkey as a state of law.

"It is the most natural right of this nation to fight against injustice with the power and authorization ensured by laws," he said.

Erdogan said nobody could expect Turkey to remain indifferent to those who made the propaganda of terrorism and bloody murderers, who aided and abetted their murders, and who extended logistic support to terrorists in order to help them kill more people.

Moreover, Erdogan said Turkey had recorded great success, broke historic records, and ensured an atmosphere of confidence, peace and brotherhood in the last nine years thanks to government's democratization steps, active stance in foreign policy, and efforts to boost stability, confidence, security, peace and tranquility.

Erdogan hoped that the government would achieve its new targets in stability, confidence, unity, solidarity and unity, and bring Turkey to better conditions. 31/12/2011

### **Turkey Warns French Senate Over Genocide Bill**

Turkish National Security Council hopes "common sense" will prevent France's senate from making "mistake" with bill.

Turkey on Wednesday warned France it would take further action against Paris should the French senate pass a bill making it a crime to deny the 1915 mass killings of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey constituted genocide.

Ankara reacted furiously when the lower house of the French parliament last week approved the bill, recalling its ambassador from Paris, banning French military aircraft and warships from landing and docking in Turkey and freezing political and economic meetings.

Prime Minister Tayyip Erdogan slammed the bill as "politics based on racism, discrimination and xenophobia" and turned his anger on French President Nicolas Sarkozy, accusing France of colonial massacres in Algeria.

In a statement, the National Security Council, the top state body for security matters, said it hoped "common sense" would prevail in France and that Paris would give up on its "mistake".

France is Turkey's fifth biggest export market and the sixth biggest source of its imports, with bilateral trade worth \$14 billion in the first 10 months of 2011.

The National Security Council comprises Turkey's top generals, Erdogan, members of the cabinet and President Abdullah Gul.

"About this subject, measures announced by the government and further additional measures would be announced depending on France's steps," the National Security Council said at the end of a five-hour meeting.

"If the proposal passes into law, there will be an objection in every way against this unfair measure."

The French bill, which will be debated in the Senate next year, has caused outrage in Turkey, which argues killings took place on all sides during a fierce partisan conflict.

Erdogan, whose personal animosity towards Sarkozy is well-known for the Frenchman's opposition to Turkish membership of the European Union, has suggested Sarkozy was angling for ethnic Armenian votes in next year's presidential election.

Buoyed by its fast-growing economy while Europe battles a financial crisis and angered at its stagnant bid to join the EU, Ankara feels it has little to lose in a political fight with Paris.

Turkey's Economy Minister Zafer Caglayan has said French investments in Turkey are safe but has suggested that "consumers might take matters into their own hands" 29/12/2011

### **Turkey Gives Russia Green Light to Build South Stream Gas Pipeline**

Turkey has given Russia a final permit to build the South Stream gas pipeline intended to carry Russian natural gas under the Black Sea to Europe, Prime Minister Vladimir Putin said on Wednesday.

"I want to address the Turkish government with the words of special gratitude due to its decision to grant final permission to Gazprom to build the South Stream gas pipeline along the bed of the Black Sea in its exclusive economic zone," Putin said at a meeting with Turkish Energy and Natural Resources Minister Taner Yildiz.

The accord will contribute to stable energy supplies to the European market, Putin said. Russia also agreed with Turkey on extending two long-term contracts on gas supplies until 2021 and 2025, Putin said.

The gas export monopoly would boost gas supplies to Turkey by about eight percent or 2 billion cubic meters in 2012 compared with 25.5 billion cu m planned for this year, Gazprom CEO Alexei Miller said.

"As it normally happens in such cases, a final agreement is the result of a compromise acceptable for both parties," Putin said.

The South Stream pipeline is intended to transport up to 63 billion cubic meters of gas to central and southern Europe, diversifying Russian gas routes away from transit countries such as Ukraine. Commercial gas deliveries via South Stream will start at the end of 2015, Miller said.

The neighboring ex-Soviet republic accounts for 80 percent of Russian gas transit to EU nations but frequent rows with Moscow over gas prices have sometimes ended with Kiev switching the gas tap off in wintertime.

Miller said that Turkey's permit to build the South Stream pipeline in its territorial waters will not affect the gas price formula for Ukraine or other countries.

"As for market gas prices, they are linked to petroleum product prices and contractual gas deliveries to our partners are pegged to a basket of oil products, and the permit to build South Stream will not affect in any way the pricing formula Gazprom uses in its contracts as a whole and with separate countries," Miller said.

Ukraine has long been seeking to alter the terms of the 2009 gas deal it signed with Russia. The deal ties the price of gas to oil prices, which have risen sharply since 2009, inflating Ukraine's gas bill. 29/12/2011

### **Turkey aims to make Istanbul a 'UN center'**

In signing a cooperation protocol with the Istanbul Municipality Government, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu said the government aims to make Istanbul a major hub for the United Nations and world financial and cultural organizations.

Davutoğlu said the government wanted to make Istanbul a center for politics and diplomacy as a "U.N. city." "We want all countries' flags to wave in Istanbul. It's a diplomatic perspective. "We aim to make Istanbul a U.N. center for issues of mediation, peace and issues concerning the future of humanity," Davutoğlu said. "We agree with the U.N. on these matters and determined we have an important place [in these discussions]."

The foreign minister also said the government hopes Istanbul will become a center for finance, a main center for global economic influx and a main station for transportation lines. He said Turkey has already had talks with Switzerland and Luxembourg on the subject.

Davutoğlu said if human culture were to be encompassed in three cities, Istanbul would be one of them. It was crowned the European Capital of Culture in 2010.

At the annual ambassadors' meeting held in Istanbul, Davutoğlu said he was proud to give Istanbul Mayor Kadir Topbaş this year's award honoring a Turkish statesman's contributions to diplomacy. At the ambassadors' conference, Turkey signed an agreement to be the host country for the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States (CCTSC).

Davutoğlu said the CCTSC headquarters will be in Istanbul under the agreement, contributing to the effort to make Istanbul a center for international organizations. 28/12/2011

### **Turkey, Azerbaijan sign gas pipeline deal**

Turkey's Energy Minister Taner Yıldız signed an agreement in Ankara today with his Azerbaijani counterpart Natig Aliyev for the construction of a natural gas pipeline.

The deal on Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline envisages sale of Azerbaijani natural gas in Turkey as well as in Europe via Turkey.

Azerbaijani SOCAR, Turkish Petroleum Pipeline Corp. (BOTAS) and Turkish Petroleum Corporation (TPAO) will set up a consortium for the construction of the pipeline.

Other international oil and natural gas companies will be allowed to join the consortium later during the process. 26/12/2011

### **Turkish FM Says His Country Ready to Open Archives on Ottoman-Era Incidents of 1915**

KONYA (A.A) - Turkey is ready to face up to its history and open its archives for joint panel of historians to do a historical search on the incidents of 1915 in the Ottoman Empire, the country's foreign minister has said.



"But if that method of facing the truths was denied and dogmas started to come up, then we start talking over the French colonialism where ever we go," Davutoglu told a press conference on Sunday in response to a question over a French bill that makes denial of Ottoman era incidents of 1915 punishable in France with one year of prison term and a fine of 45 thousand euros.

The bill is expected to come next Thursday to the senate floor at the French parliament for debate. A similar bill -- proposed by the Socialist Party -- was approved in 2006 by the lower house of the French assembly but the Senate rejected to debate the bill last May.

Davutoglu said the French move would come as a blow dealt on the freedom of expression in France, urging French people to speak up to protect their rights.

"We hope French intellectuals come together and remind the French government that the bill is primitive even by the standards of the French enlightenment let alone standards of the 21st century. What is at stake is European values. This bill would create dogmas just like ones in the European middle ages," Davutoglu said.

Diplomatic sources close to the matter have told the Anadolu Agency that the bill had the backing of French President Nicolas Sarkozy who had recently expressed support during a visit to Yerevan last October ahead of the presidential elections next year.

Turkish Foreign Ministry has rejected the attempt as a pre-election campaign move. 19/12/2011

### **Turkey, African Countries Re-Iterate Commitment to Deepen Strategic Relations**

ISTANBUL (A.A) - A high level meeting between Turkish and African foreign ministers Friday in Istanbul expressed resolve to boost strategic relations further.

"The Ministers emphasized their satisfaction with the level of cooperation and support between African countries and Turkey, based on their comprehensive dialogue and partnership especially in the United Nations and various international organizations and expressed their commitment to further develop this cooperation to the benefit of both sides," said a declaration released after The First Ministerial Review Conference of the Africa - Turkey Partnership.

The declaration said the ministers had expressed the importance of organizing Turkish-African Media Forums in order to develop cooperation and communication among the members of the African and Turkish media representatives and organizations.

The declaration said the ministers had noted the reciprocal increase in the diplomatic representation between African countries and Turkey and its positive contribution to the enhancement of their relations within the partnership and encouraged further demarche in this respect.

The declaration said the ministers had taken note of the concrete steps Turkey has been taking to facilitate its visa regime for the benefit of nationals of African countries, in accordance with its determination to strengthen and expand their cooperation through human interaction.

"The Ministers considered various issues affecting regional peace, security and prosperity and called for further cooperation aimed at addressing these issues. They welcomed continuing political, social and economic transformation in their regions aimed at enhancing universal political, social and economic values. They reiterated their commitment to plural democracy; human rights; good governance; the pursuit of social justice, eradication of hunger and poverty, protection of environment and respect for international law as the guiding principles that govern their relations," the declaration said.

The declaration also said that the ministers had reiterated their firm support for the prevention and combating of terrorism, drug trafficking, migrant smuggling, human trafficking, illicit trafficking in

small arms and light weapons, money laundering and piracy which seriously threaten the peace and security of the countries. 17/12/2011

### **Turkey's Akkuyu 1st Nuclear Unit Seen Complete 2019**

Construction of the first unit of Turkey's first nuclear power plant is expected to be completed in mid-2019, and the global financial crisis will not hit costs of the project, the Russian contractor company said on Friday Reuters reported.

Last year Turkey awarded Russia's Atomstroyexport a contract to build its first nuclear power plant at Akkuyu on the country's Mediterranean coast.

"We are planning to finish construction of the first unit in mid-2019. Pre-construction work will start in the second half of 2012, and will take two years," Akkuyu NGS Power Production general manager Alexander Superfin told a press conference in Turkey's capital Ankara.

Atomstroyexport set up Akkuyu NGS Power Production in 2010 to build and operate the 4,800 megawatt nuclear power plant. The total investment is seen around \$20 billion.

The agreement includes a tariff package that guarantees Turkey's state electricity corporation will pay \$12.35/KWh for 70 percent of the power produced by two of the plant's four 1,200 MW units, and the same price for 30 percent of the power produced by two other units for 15 years after commissioning.

Turkey plans to construct three nuclear power plants of up to 5,000 MW each.

South Korea's Kepco pulled out of negotiations for a second plant at Sinop after Turkey refused sovereign guarantees for the plant's output. Japan's Tepco pulled out of the planned project in the aftermath of the Fukushima disaster. 16/12/2011