

# BULLETIN

HIGHLIGHT OF THE FOREIGN POLICY OF REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN

## Table of contents

- I. Armenia has finally handed over minefield maps to Azerbaijan  
2
- II. The Shusha Declaration as a roadmap for a new security architecture in the South Caucasus  
3
- III. Armenia continues to weaponize environment against Azerbaijan  
5
- IV. President Ilham Aliyev meets joint EU delegation  
6
- V. Azerbaijan calls for a comprehensive peace treaty with Armenia  
7
- VI. Azerbaijan charges Armenian businessmen with arms smuggling  
10

### ADDENDUM I

Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey  
12

## I. Armenia has finally handed over minefield maps to Azerbaijan

On June 12, Baku handed over 15 Armenian detainees in exchange for maps of minefields of recently de-occupied Aghdam District. The minefield maps contained information on the location of 97,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines in Aghdam District. Until recently, Armenia has categorically denied the existence of minefield maps, with Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs openly [lying](#) that it was just a fake agenda pushed by Azerbaijan to manipulate the international community. However, on June 12, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan [announced](#) that “in exchange for providing Azerbaijan with maps of 97,000 anti-tank and anti-personnel mines in the Aghdam region, 15 detained Armenians were handed over to Armenia on the Azerbaijani-Georgian border with the participation of Georgian representatives.” Commenting on the swap, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan emphasized the role played by Georgia, the US, the EU, and the Swedish Chairmanship of the OSCE in getting the deal done. ‘We appreciate the support of the Georgian government headed by the Prime Minister of Georgia Irakli Garibashvili for the implementation of this humanitarian action. At the same time, we especially note the mediating role, first of all, of the US Secretary of State Antony Blinken, Acting Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker, President of the European Council Charles Michel and the Swedish Chairmanship of the OSCE for their contribution to the process,” the statement read.

Just recently, President Ilham Aliyev has urged the United States to persuade Armenia to sign a peace agreement with Baku following the recent 44-Days War. President Ilham Aliyev made the remarks at a video conference titled "South Caucasus: Prospects for regional development and cooperation" on May 20<sup>th</sup>. “As I said before, we are ready to start working on [a] peace agreement with Armenia. I think the United States can use its potential to persuade Armenia that this is the only way how to move forward,” President Ilham Aliyev noted. President Ilham Aliyev also said that Baku is willing to boost relations with the United States: “We are ready to work closely as strategic partners to expand our cooperation. And I think that the US can play a very important role in post-conflict development in the region.” “We are ready for the [Biden] administration to be fully established and to have more clear messages how they want to build their relations with us,” the president added. President Ilham Aliyev also suggested that the three South Caucasus countries could cooperate in a trilateral format. “Until now we had relations with Georgia, Armenia had relations with Georgia, and [there have been] no relations, no cooperation between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Maybe now it's time to... see whether it's possible to have kind of a trilateral format of cooperation. We are ready for that,” the president said.

As Shahmar Hajiyev, a leading advisor in the Center of Analysis of International Relations, (AIR Center), [puts](#) it, “taking into account the developments in the South Caucasus, especially after the 44-Days War, the constructive engagement of the United States in the region will also be significant for supporting peace efforts and economic integration. Looking back, it is apparent that U.S. regional involvement has been

inconsistent. In general, U.S. policy has been mainly connected with energy issues, such as exporting Caspian energy resources to global energy markets. However, recent developments and the visit of Acting Assistant Secretary for European and Eurasian Affairs Philip Reeker to the region emphasized the return of U.S. attention to the South Caucasus. While in Georgia, he noted that “the United States supports the development and economy of the South Caucasus and the aspirations of the peoples of the region for a stable, peaceful, and more prosperous future.” The positive impact of the visit on Armenian–Azerbaijani relations was seen when Azerbaijan handed over fifteen Armenian detainees in exchange for maps of minefields in the Agdam region. It should be noted that Armenia and Azerbaijan made this step forward thanks to the United States’ constructive engagement and assistance. Washington’s closest ally in the region, Georgia, also played a significant role in this process.”

Demining and the clearance of the liberated territories of unexploded ordnance and other explosive objects has been one of the most pressing issues after the war. The liberated territories of Karabakh are among the most mined territories in the world. Just recently, President Ilham Aliyev [noted](#) that “everything in the liberated lands has been destroyed... Armenians have ravaged our cities, annihilated our historical sites, plowed the cemeteries, knocked down gravestones, and wrecked more than 60 mosques and kept cows and pigs in semi-demolished ones... After the war, many Azerbaijani civilians and servicemen were killed and wounded by landmines. Armenia has not yet presented the maps of minefields to us. That is another war crime. Therefore, demining will take more time. Without completing this work, of course, we

will not be able to return our IDPs and refugees to those lands”. The liberated territories have been considerably mined, especially civilian infrastructure, water canals, crossroads, cemeteries, riverbanks, rural and urban paths. According to Azerbaijan Mine Action Agency (ANAMA), “sometimes more than 10 mines per square meter are found in the mined areas”.

In one of the latest deadly incidents, two Azerbaijani journalists and a local official were killed on June 4 by landmines set up by the Armenian occupational forces. Yerevan’s refusal to abide by the international law and co-operate on this sensitive matter despite ever increasing number of the victims rightfully enraged the Azerbaijani side, further straining the regional situation and hindering the emergence of a co-operative environment between the two countries. The fact that Armenia was unwilling to share with Azerbaijan its mine-laying records and maps in order for them to be used to guide demining operations in the liberated territories was a clear war crime that Yerevan continued to commit without any repercussions. Azerbaijan has considered this as the continuation of Armenia’s aggression against Azerbaijan and called upon the international community to pressure Armenia to share the minefield maps.

## II. The Shusha Declaration as a roadmap for a new security architecture in the South Caucasus

On June 15, President Ilham Aliyev and his Turkish counterpart Recep Tayyip Erdogan [signed](#) a Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey in historical town of Shusha. The declaration has formalized already existing agreements between the two countries on mutual support and cooperation.

Speaking at a press conference, President Aliyev said that the declaration brought the relations between the two countries to their highest peak and that Baku and Ankara would continue to ensure each other's security. "This is a historic achievement," President Ilham Aliyev noted, adding that the declaration contained a reference to the 1921 Treaty of Kars. President Erdogan said Ankara would like to establish a deeper cooperation with Baku. "Our relations in the defence industry will improve much differently from now on," President Erdogan said. President Erdogan also voiced plans to open a Turkish consulate in Shusha. The Shusha Declaration is conceived as a framework document for the future agreements between Baku and Ankara in the economic, defence, socio-cultural development, education, health care, and other sectors. The Shusha Declaration will give an impetus for the future trans-regional integration since it refers to the initiative of the six-party Caucasus development platform. The declaration focuses on coordination of security efforts, particularly on plans for holding joint meetings of the Security Councils of the two countries. In the humanitarian sphere, attention is drawn to the need to coordinate the Azerbaijani and Turkish diasporas in other countries of the world. The preferential trade agreement between the two countries entered into force on 1 March 2021 and the leaders of the two states set a goal to increase trade turnover from the current 4.3 billion dollars to 15 billion dollars by 2023.

An important element of the Shusha declaration is the thesis, which indicates that in the event of a threat or aggression from a third state or states to independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and inviolability or security of internationally recognized borders in relation to its

participants, they will hold joint consultations to eliminate this threat or aggression. "If, in the opinion of one of the parties, there is a threat or an act of aggression from a third state or states against their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability or security of their internationally recognized borders, the parties will hold joint consultations and, in order to eliminate this threat or acts of aggression, carry out initiatives in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and provide each other with the necessary assistance in accordance with the UN Charter. After determining through urgent discussions the volume and form of such possible assistance, a decision will be made to secure defense needs for the adoption of joint measures and coordinated activities will be organized of power-wielding and administrative agencies of the Armed Forces," the Shusha Declaration reads. It says that the Turkish and Azerbaijani Security Councils will hold regular joint sessions on national security issues. The two countries will also continue to work together to reorganize and modernize their armed forces in accordance with modern requirements and to support the normalization of life in the regions Azerbaijan liberated in the 44-Days War. "The parties note that the military-political cooperation developed between the two states and meeting their national interests is not directed against third states," the declaration underscores. The declaration eliminates the possibility for revanchism and the continuation of provocative actions by destructive forces of the countries in the South Caucasus. The declaration also confirms Azerbaijan and Turkey's desire to create a peaceful Caucasus in the interests of all peoples of the region. It shows that Azerbaijan's foreign policy is focused on fundamentally transforming the region and

creating a new security paradigm to make *Pax Caucasica* a reality.

One of the key points of the Shusha Declaration is the opening of the Zangazur corridor. The parties note that the opening of the corridor connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey between western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of the Republic of Azerbaijan (the Zangazur corridor) and, as a continuation of this corridor, the construction of the Nakhchivan-Kars railway will make an important contribution to the development of transport and communication links between the two countries. The Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan, the Southern Gas Corridor, and the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway projects implemented by Azerbaijan and Turkey have fundamentally altered the fate of the South Caucasus and the new Zangazur corridor will have a similar effect on the whole region. Azerbaijan has already launched the construction of a railway on the liberated territories from Horadiz to the border with Armenia. Most of the Nakhchivan railway is operational and the missing parts will be built shortly. Commenting on the positive role that the United States could play in the economic development of the South Caucasus, Shahmar Hajiyev [points out](#) that “there is a huge opportunity for Washington to play a more active role in ensuring stability and regional economic cooperation. For instance, opening transport links in the South Caucasus can create the backbone for a platform to enhance regional dialogue, cooperation, and partnership among the South Caucasus states. The United States should support the opening of the Zangezur corridor in the region, which will contribute to regional economic integration.”

### III. Armenia continues to weaponize environment against Azerbaijan

As a result of the 44-Days War, Azerbaijan has liberated territories occupied by Armenia for nearly 30 years, but despite the signed trilateral agreement on November 10<sup>th</sup>, Armenia continues an undeclared barbaric war against Azerbaijan by engaging in intentional large-scale pollution of shared natural resources, such as transboundary water bodies. During the decades-long occupation, Armenia was engaged in deliberate destruction of regional ecosystem through various scorched earth techniques, destruction of environmentally sensitive infrastructure, and unsustainable resource extraction to finance the conflict. Armenian occupational forces cut down more than 54,000 hectares of forest, which is 20% of the forests in the liberated territories. Many international companies that were illegally active in occupied territories of Azerbaijan engaged in the exploitation of more than thirty mining areas, often operating without any environmental oversight. Deforestation as a result of overharvesting, uncontrollable resource extraction, and processing methods in mining operations have severely damaged the regional ecosystem through transboundary impact from pollution and through the contamination of water bodies. Just recently, the results of the monitoring carried out by the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan after the 44-Days War and the analysis of water samples taken from four transboundary rivers have found that the pollution in those rivers was several times higher than the norm. According to the experts from the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources, the most polluted river is Okhchuchay in Zangilan District. It is into this river that wastewater from the two deposits located on the Armenian side of the river is

released, which pollutes not only this river, but also Araz River, which it flows into. Mining companies dump their waste, or tailings, into the river, creating environmental disaster of enormous proportions for the wider region.

International organizations should pressure Yerevan into halting pollution of transboundary rivers. Around 70 percent of Azerbaijan's groundwater resources are formed in neighboring countries due to the transboundary water flows. Mining activities along the rivers lead to the generation of large quantities of heavy metal laden wastes which are released in an uncontrolled manner, causing irreversible contamination and destruction of the regional ecosystem. One of the largest mining enterprises in Armenia, Zangazur copper-molybdenum plant located in Syunik region at the Okhchuchay River, dumps waste directly into the river without any treatment, which does not adhere to any environmental standards. The transboundary river Okhchuchay, which is the Araz River's left tributary, is constantly polluted in Armenia by wastes from the Gafan and Kajaran mining industries, which makes the water resources from this river virtually unusable on the Azerbaijani territory. "The level of pollution of this river is higher than that of some other border rivers. According to monitoring carried out in January-March 2021, the content of nickel is seven times, iron is four times, copper-molybdenum compound is two times higher than the norm," Mehman Nabiyeu, a specialist of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, [told](#) the media in April. Starting in the Zangezur ridge, Okhchuchay flows through the Zangilan region and flows into the Araz River. Waste from the Kajaran copper-molybdenum treatment plant at the source of this river, as well as domestic wastewater, are released into Okhchuchay. This leads to an excess of heavy metal

compounds in the river. The recent analysis of river water and bottom sediment samples was carried out in an internationally accredited and certified SGS laboratory in Germany by order of the Ministry of Ecology and Natural Resources of Azerbaijan, and the results of analyses of water samples taken from the Okhchuchay River revealed a high content of heavy metals, in particular iron, copper, manganese, molybdenum, zinc, chromium, nickel, and others. Commenting on the problem, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov [noted](#) that, "this is a large scale problem. Since the Okhchuchay flows into the Araz River and creates a big problem not only for Azerbaijan but also for Iran. We demand a serious response to this issue. It will be impossible for Armenia to avoid its responsibility. At the same time, we appeal to foreign companies operating in Armenia and demand taking practical measures."

#### **IV. President Ilham Aliyev meets joint EU delegation**

On June 25<sup>th</sup>, President Ilham Aliyev held a joint meeting with the visiting foreign ministers of Romania, Austria, and Lithuania. Addressing the EU delegation, mandated by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and European Commission Vice President Josep Borrell, President Ilham Aliyev commended cooperation with the EU as very successful, adding that Azerbaijan signed and adopted documents and agreements on strategic partnership with nine EU member states. Speaking about the objective of the visit to the region, President Ilham Aliyev said that "as far as I understand, your visit to the region is devoted to the situation, which took shape after the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan." Azerbaijan wants to move from the post-conflict situation to the peaceful

development and cooperation in the South Caucasus, President Ilham Aliyev noted, adding that “unfortunately, we have not heard anything similar from Armenian government so far.” Referring to the delegation's scheduled visit to Armenia, President Ilham Aliyev urged the EU delegation to discuss this issue in Yerevan. “If we do not have a peace agreement with Armenia, that would mean that we do not have peace not only between the two countries, but also in the South Caucasus,” President Ilham Aliyev underscored, adding that “we need peace and sustainable development and predictability, zero risk of war. We do not need war and we did not need war before. Therefore, I think this is the areas, where we can actively cooperate and I am glad that the European Union demonstrates its involvement in the regional affairs.”

Just recently, at a video conference titled "South Caucasus: Prospects for regional development and cooperation" in May, President Ilham Aliyev has praised Baku's relations with the European Union, pointing out that a new bilateral agreement has already been agreed 90 percent, and expressing optimism about further cooperation with the EU. “We are working on a new agreement between Azerbaijan and the European Union... More than 90 percent of the agreement has already been agreed,” the president said, noting that negotiations had been temporarily interrupted by the pandemic and then the war. Azerbaijan has always believed that the EU can play a very important role in post-war development in the region. “We would like to see more active cooperation between the EU and Azerbaijan,” the president said during the video conference in May, adding that the EU was always a good partner of Azerbaijan.

## **V. Azerbaijan calls for a comprehensive peace treaty with Armenia**

Baku renewed its call to official Yerevan to sign a peace agreement to end the enmity between the two states and once again reiterated its readiness to sign a comprehensive peace treaty with Armenia. There is a good foundation to launch a new chapter in relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Economic integration initiatives and unlocking of all transport links as laid out in the November peace agreement could be a powerful tool for achieving sustainable peace and stability in the region. The Karabakh conflict is over, and the regional countries should focus on the future, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov said at the panel discussion "South Caucasus: New Opportunities for Regional Peace and Cooperation" at the Diplomatic Forum in Antalya, Turkey. Although Azerbaijan put an end to the occupation, some continue to use the term "conflict", Jeyhun Bayramov pointed out, adding that “the conflict has been resolved. This does not mean that all issues have been resolved, but Azerbaijan has repeatedly called on Armenia to sign a peace agreement. We have called and are calling on Armenia to sign a peace agreement,” Jeyhun Bayramov noted.

Delimitation and demarcation of state borders between Armenia and Azerbaijan are fundamental elements of building sustainable peace and prosperity in the South Caucasus. Based on the norms and principles of international law, Azerbaijan wants the restoration of relations with Armenia according to the principles of inviolability of borders and territorial integrity. History does not know a case of one of the parties to the conflict providing the other side with a ready-made peace agreement, asking to sign it, the

minister said. "This is a bilateral political process and bilateral measures are needed to complete it," Jeyhun Bayramov added, emphasizing that it was Armenia's turn to demonstrate political will. "The political leadership of Armenia must understand that there is no alternative to good-neighborly relations. This is the best option for today," the minister said, noting that "Azerbaijan's proposal to improve relations remains relevant, but Armenia does not accept it." The new situation in the region has created new opportunities and a new paradigm of security, Jeyhun Bayramov added.

The cause of the political crisis in Armenia doesn't stem from the defeat in the war, but are rooted in the policy of aggression that Yerevan has been pursuing for decades, violating international law, using force, and changing the recognized borders of Azerbaijan. "The reality is that a unique opportunity emerged to normalize relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia since gaining independence. Why do I say it for the first time? Because there is no fact of occupation now," Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov [explained](#) in an interview with TRT World, adding that Azerbaijan has restored its territorial integrity as set forth in four UN resolutions. "There are about 30 years of hostility, occupation, losses, severe consequences of the war between us. But we believe that we must look to the future. You know, it's not easy for us, because the memory, everything that happens is new. However, the President of Azerbaijan stressed the need to normalize relations. Azerbaijan is ready to work with Armenia for a peace agreement. We offer it. We expect political will and real steps from Armenia at this level as well," the Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov has noted, urging Armenia to focus

on reality that has taken shape following the 44-Days War.

At the same time, Armenia's continued provocations are undermining the fragile peace process. Despite the overall optimistic tone, President Ilham Aliyev and other senior officials continue to repeatedly raise concerns about the threats to the precarious balance established by trilateral accord and to subsequent peace process. In this context, Minister of Foreign Affairs Jeyhun Bayramov highlighted the useful role of the Turkish-Russian Monitoring Centre in ensuring peace. "A joint Turkish-Russian monitoring centre has been established in the liberated Agdam in accordance with the trilateral statement on Karabakh. Today, the Russian and Turkish military are monitoring the region. We believe that this center is very useful in ensuring peace," Jeyhun Bayramov said and spoke about Azerbaijan's plans regarding the liberated territories. "Of course, our priority is to ensure peace and stability in the region and carry out rehabilitation and reconstruction work to return hundreds of thousands of internally displaced persons to their homes. The return of IDPs is our main goal," he added. Azerbaijan has already begun to act to this end and Turkey is also involved in the demining process. "As you know, our main task now is the accelerated demining of these territories. Most of them are mined. Unfortunately, Armenia had refused to provide mine maps for a long time," Jeyhun Bayramov noted.

The sabotage attempts and provocations by the Armenian side could have dangerous repercussions that might spiral out of control if not properly countered. Meanwhile, the Defence Ministry of Azerbaijan reported several instances of ceasefire violation on the western and northwestern sections of the country's border with Armenia between 24-27 June. In the evening of 27 June, Armenian



troops deployed in Berd Region fired from small arms at army positions of Azerbaijan in Tovuz District. Azerbaijani positions in Tovuz came under fire on 24 June as well. Military positions of Azerbaijan in the villages of Zaylik and Imambinasi in Kalbajar District also came under fire from small arms from the village of Verin Shorzha in Armenia's Vardenis Region on and off between the afternoon of 26 June and early hours of 27 June.

In an address at a meeting with the military's top brass and a group of servicemen on the Armed Forces Day held in Baku's Gulustan Palace on June 26, President Ilham Aliyev [said](#) that Azerbaijan will increase its army personnel, purchase modern weapons and carry out structural reforms in the army, adding that "Armenia must understand that Azerbaijan will continue to get stronger, there is no doubt about this. We will also increase our military power. Relevant instructions were given following the war, new contracts have been signed, the purchase of new weapons, hardware and equipment based on modern technology has started. Structural reforms in the army have been approved. I can say that the number of our army personnel will be increased." President Ilham Aliyev [reiterated](#) once again that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been settled, adding that "I have said this many times and I want to say again that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been resolved. Armenia must accept it and work with us to determine the borders. A working group on delimitation should be established. There must be preparations for a peace agreement." As President Ilham Aliyev put it, "because there is no territorial unit called Nagorno-Karabakh, there is no concept of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict." President Ilham Aliyev also pointed out that without renouncing its hostile policies against Azerbaijan, Yerevan will have very severely constrained options to revive any

economic activity. Armenia should reject irredentist delusions, give up territorial claims against its neighbors and strive for establishing normal relations with them. To overcome the political crisis, Armenia urgently needs to reconcile with its neighbors. Armenia's sustainable economic development is virtually impossible without peace with neighboring Azerbaijan and Turkey. The victory in the June 20<sup>th</sup> election has opened up a historic opportunity for Nikol Pashinyan to achieve this and the normalization of the relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey should be the main task of the Pashinyan's new government. Armenia's political establishment should understand that there is no alternative to the normalization of the relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey.

In a TV interview on June 26<sup>th</sup>, the Minister of Defence of Azerbaijan Zakir Hasanov [said](#) that Azerbaijan, Turkey and Pakistan were going to hold a joint military exercise in Azerbaijan in September. The Minister of Defence noted that Azerbaijan wanted to learn from the Pakistani army's vast experience in mountain warfare. The minister also said that Pakistan was going to render assistance to Azerbaijan in mine-clearing in the areas regained in the recent Karabakh war. Pointing out that in 2019 alone, 13 large-scale Azerbaijani-Turkish joint military exercises were held, Zakir Hasanov highlighted the role Turkey has played in strengthening and upgrading the military forces of Azerbaijan. Apart from modern conventional firepower assets and long-range assault capabilities, Baku has been keen on acquiring advanced military technologies that would give Azerbaijan a decisive qualitative edge in the battlefield. Even after the 44-Days War, Azerbaijan has been engaged in an enormous strive to upgrade its military forces by ramping up its defense spending and investing in various military technologies. This

qualitative edge has mainly been achieved through acquiring unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs). Between 2010 and 2014, Azerbaijan became the fourth-largest importer of UAVs andUCAVs in the world, receiving 7.8 percent of global deliveries. Drones have been crucial in securing air superiority for Azerbaijan in the 44-Days War. Turkish Bayraktar TB2 combat drones have become a cornerstone of Azerbaijan's unmanned air fleet. "Thanks to advanced Turkish drones owned by the Azerbaijan military, our casualties on the front shrunk," said Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev in an interview with the Turkish TRT Haber during the war. "These drones show Turkey's strength. It also empowers us." Turkey's unconditional support over the years has helped Azerbaijan to successfully complete the modernization of its armed forces. On June 28<sup>th</sup>, Azerbaijani and Turkish troops started three-day joint drills outside Baku. Up to 600 personnel, 40 tanks and other armored vehicles, 20 artillery systems, seven combat and transport helicopters, three UAVs and 50 vehicles were involved in the drills codenamed Mustafa Kemal Atatürk – 2021. As Dr. Esmira Jafarova, a Board Member of the Center of Analysis of International Relations (AIR Center), correctly [points out](#), the concept "one nation two states" has truly become the modus operandi for the relationship between Baku and Ankara, adding that Turkish political support has been indispensable for Azerbaijan's victory in the 44-Days War. The presence of Turkish military servicemen in the Joint Peacekeeping Monitoring Center, established by the November trilateral declaration, has further bolstered Turkey's stance and stabilizing impact on the overall security architecture of the region.

In parallel, Baku and Moscow held talks to discuss the activity of the trilateral working group set up by Armenia, Azerbaijan and

Russia for unblocking transport communications in the region. President Ilham Aliyev and his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin help a phone conversation on 23 June to discuss the practical aspects of the implementation of the trilateral declarations of 10 November 2020 and 11 January 2021. Particular attention was paid to the activation of the work in the trilateral format to restore economic relations and transportation communications in the South Caucasus. At the same time, the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Russia discussed over the phone the implementation of the Moscow-brokered agreements between Baku and Yerevan. "During the telephone conversation, the development of the region during the post-conflict period was discussed, and the activity of the trilateral working group headed by the deputy prime ministers of the three countries was emphasized in this regard," the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan noted on its website. In the meantime, the Azerbaijani co-chairman of the trilateral group, Deputy Prime Minister Shahin Mustafayev, has said he hopes that the group will resume its work after a new government has been formed in Armenia following the parliamentary elections there.

## **VI. Azerbaijan charges Armenian businessmen with arms smuggling**

Azerbaijan has brought charges against three prominent Armenian businessmen over their possible involvement in illegal arms deliveries to Armenia and Karabakh. The Prosecutor-General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan charged head of the Tashir group of companies Samvel Karapetyan, owner of the Royalsys Engineering company Davit Galstyan, Director-General of the KOMEXS company Ara Abrahamyan and others of planning an aggressive war, creating a criminal group with

the aim of committing serious and especially serious crimes, creating illegal armed groups and supplying them with weapons, explosives and other military equipment, as well as illegal purchase, sale, storage, transportation or carrying of firearms, explosives and devices by an organized group and smuggling committed by an organized group. The charged persons have been put on the international wanted list. "The Prosecutor-General's Office of the Republic of Azerbaijan investigated reports in a number of media outlets and in social media about smuggling of very expensive weapons and military equipment to the Republic of Armenia and from there to the Nagorno-Karabakh region of the Azerbaijani Republic. It has been established that businessmen, head of the Tashir group of companies Samvel Sarkisovich Karapetyan, owner of the Royalsys Engineering company Davit Galstyan, who is known in Armenia as 'grey businessman', Director-General of the KOMEX company Ara Abrahamyan and others illegally supplied the Armenian army with weapons, ammunition, explosives, military hardware and other military equipment at different times between 2001-2021 in violation of the Customs Convention on the International Transport of Goods and the Conventional Arms Control in Europe, for which they used various passenger flights, an Il-76 TD cargo plane of the Armenian army and an Ilyushin Il-76TD cargo plane acquired by Ara Abrahamyan. They illegally purchased with the money they allocated

large-calibre firearms, ammunition, military explosive substances and devices, and missiles and organised their smuggling into the Republic of Armenia as well as to Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding regions of the Azerbaijani Republic occupied by Armenia," the press service of the Prosecutor-General's Office announced. The Prosecutor-General's Office sent requests for legal assistance to relevant government agencies of foreign countries in connection with the criminal case. In a separate development, the Military Prosecutor's Office in the city of Ganja charged retired Armenian Colonel Koryun Ghumashyan of murder based on ethnic, racial and religious hatred and put him on the international wanted list. The charge is based on Ghumashyan's interview with Armenian Noyan Tapan news agency and Armenian television on 6 June 2021, in which he said that anti-tank and anti-personnel mines, which had been delivered on 17 lorries, had been planted on an area of 500-600 hectares in Azerbaijan's Lachin and Kalbajar districts.

**ADDENDUM I****Shusha Declaration on Allied Relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey**

The Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey,

Emphasizing the historic significance of the meeting between President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan in the city of Shusha, the ancient cradle of culture of Azerbaijan and the entire Turkic world,

Once again reaffirming their adherence to all international documents signed between the two friendly and fraternal countries, and to the Treaty of Kars of 13 October 1921,

Guided by the “Agreement on the Development of Friendship and Comprehensive Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey” and the “Protocol on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey” signed on 9 February 1994, as well as the “Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance” signed between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey on 16 August 2010”,

Emphasizing that raising the relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey to a qualitatively new and allied level on the basis of friendship and brotherhood between the two countries and peoples serves the interests of the two countries and peoples,

Realizing the importance of combining the capabilities and potentials of both countries in the political, economic, defense, cultural, humanitarian, healthcare, educational, social spheres, in the field of youth and sports in common interests,

Stressing the importance of continuing joint efforts to ensure global and regional peace, stability and security in accordance with the principles and norms of international law, including the Charter of the United Nations,

Expressing the need for mutual coordination of activities in regional and international strategic issues of common interest,

Proceeding from the principles of solidarity and mutual assistance in bilateral and multilateral formats in such issues of national interest as independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, inviolability of their internationally recognized borders,

Combining efforts in promoting joint activities on the regional and international plane aimed at the stable development of the Turkic world,

Emphasizing that the wise sayings of the founder of the Republic of Turkey, Mustafa Kemal Ataturk, and the national leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, “The joy of Azerbaijan is our joy and its sorrow is ours too” and “One nation, two states”, are regarded as the national and spiritual heritage of our peoples,

Comprehensively considering the prospects for further expansion and deepening of bilateral relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey,

Hereby declare as follows:

The sides, expressing their satisfaction with the level of strategically developing relations between the two friendly and fraternal countries, note the importance of continuing the political dialogue at all levels and mutual visits at the highest level.

The sides proudly declare that Azerbaijan, having won a victory during the 44-day Patriotic war, put an end to the aggressive policy of Armenia that lasted for 30 years, liberated its lands from occupation, secured the victory of justice and the restoration of international law.

Azerbaijan highly appreciates the moral and political support of the Republic of Turkey in ending the 30-year Armenian aggression, liberating the occupied lands and restoring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The parties will continue their efforts aimed at strengthening stability and security in the Caucasus region, restoring all economic and transport links, normalizing the relations between countries of the region and ensuring long-term peace. In this context, the special geographical location of the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of the Republic of Azerbaijan will be taken into account. The sides emphasize that the contribution made by Turkey to the operation of the Turkish-Russian Joint Center in the territories of Azerbaijan liberated from occupation plays an important role in ensuring peace, stability and prosperity of the region.

The Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey, guided by the principles of independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of internationally recognized borders, noninterference in the internal affairs of states, determine the political and legal mechanisms of their allied relations.

The parties note the importance of coordinating their foreign policies and holding regular bilateral political consultations and emphasize in this context the importance of activities between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey within the framework of the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

The parties pursue an independent foreign policy aimed at protecting and ensuring national interests.

The parties make joint efforts aimed at the development of international relations based on peace, friendship and good-neighborliness through stability and prosperity on a regional and international scale, as well as the settlement of conflicts and the solution of issues of global security and stability.

Demonstrating solidarity and mutual support on international issues of a topical nature and of mutual interest, the parties, speaking from a consolidated position, will deepen bilateral cooperation and support each other within the framework of international and regional organizations, including the United Nations, the OSCE, the Council of Europe, the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation.

If, in the opinion of one of the parties, there is a threat or an act of aggression from a third state or states against their independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, the inviolability or security of their internationally recognized borders, the parties will hold joint consultations and, in order to eliminate this threat or acts of aggression, carry out initiatives in accordance with the purposes and principles of the UN Charter and provide each other with the necessary assistance in accordance with the UN Charter. After determining through urgent discussions the volume and form of such possible assistance, a decision will be made to secure defense needs for the adoption of joint measures and coordinated activities will be organized of power-wielding and administrative agencies of the Armed Forces.

Joint meetings of the security councils on national security issues of the parties will be held on a regular basis, discussing issues of national defense, regional and international security that may affect the interests of the parties.

The parties will continue to make joint efforts aimed at reorganizing and modernizing the armed forces of the two fraternal countries in accordance with modern requirements.

Guided by the clearance of mined areas, the parties will support activities aimed at normalizing life in the regions liberated from Armenian occupation.

The parties will encourage the exchange of personnel aimed at strengthening the defense capability and military security, conducting joint exercises and trainings, increasing the interaction capabilities of the armed forces of the two countries, cooperating closely in the management of weapons and ammunition on the basis of modern technologies, and ensuring coordinated activities of authorized agencies and institutions for this purpose. Azerbaijan and Turkey will support the implementation of military exercises together with the armies of other friendly states.

The parties, carrying out mutual technological exchange in the maritime, air and space spheres, and taking into account their national and international obligations, will encourage the implementation of common projects in order to develop joint capabilities and make a positive contribution to the development of mutual technologies in the defense industry, provide their weapons and ammunition, and mutually encourage production technologies and support the creation of production industries that do not currently exist in their countries, the implementation of joint research and production activities, cooperation between defense industry bodies of the two countries in the field of technology, military products and services in the domestic and international markets.

The parties note that the military-political cooperation developed between the two states and meeting their national interests is not directed against third states.

The parties emphasize the importance of further developing cooperation in the field of cyber-security, and will conduct joint scientific research, train specialists in this area and encourage mutual technical cooperation.

The parties will step up efforts aimed at diversifying national economies and exports in trade and economic relations, as well as creating joint production in promising industries and developing more favorable conditions for the mutually beneficial development of investment cooperation. In this context, Azerbaijan and Turkey will take measures aimed at creating mechanisms for organizing the free movement of goods.

The parties emphasize the advanced role of Turkey and Azerbaijan in the implementation of the strategic Southern Gas Corridor, which contributes to the energy security of the region and Europe and ensures the diversification of sources and routes of natural gas. The parties will continue their efforts in a coordinated manner aimed at rational use and further development of the Southern Gas Corridor. The parties, taking into account the processes in the global energy sector, also express their intention to continue their efforts in the field of electricity and to intensify efforts towards regional cooperation in order to enhance the security of energy supply of the region.

The parties will strengthen their cooperation in order to increase the competitiveness of the East-West Transport Corridor passing through the territory of the two countries. Azerbaijan and Turkey, using the technologies of intelligent transport systems, will further develop the transit and transport potential on the Azerbaijani-Turkish sections of international transport corridors.

The parties note that the opening of the corridor connecting Azerbaijan and Turkey between western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic of the Republic of

Azerbaijan (the Zangazur corridor) and, as a continuation of this corridor, the construction of the Nakhchivan-Kars railway will make an important contribution to the development of transport and communication links between the two countries.

The parties emphasize that the current level of relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan contributes to the overall regional and international peace and prosperity and that by bringing peace and prosperity not only to the two countries but also to the region as a whole, these relations serve stability, peace and the interests of the international community headed by countries of the region.

The parties will expand and deepen their joint efforts and cooperation in the field of combating various threats and challenges that have a negative impact on regional and international stability and security, in particular terrorism, all its forms and manifestations, financing, as well as the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, organized crime, money laundering, drug trafficking, human trafficking, illegal migration.

The Republic of Azerbaijan condemns any activity directed against the sovereignty, territorial integrity, inviolability of borders, stability and security of the Republic of Turkey, including all forms and manifestations of terrorism, and resolutely supports the fight the Republic of Turkey is waging against terrorism.

The parties will consolidate their efforts to further develop cooperation between Azerbaijani and Turkish diasporas living in different countries, take joint action against common problems they face and show consistent solidarity.

The parties will encourage coordination and mutual support of diaspora activities in representing their countries and communicating the historical truth related to the protection of national interests to the world.

The parties, stressing that Armenia's unfounded claims against Turkey, attempts to distort history and politicize historical facts through their distortion, harm peace and stability in the region, strongly support the efforts of Turkey in this context, which has opened its archives in connection with the events of 1915 in order to encourage the opening of archives in Armenia and other countries and enable a research to be conducted on this topic by historians.

In accordance with the "Memorandum of Understanding on Strategic Cooperation between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Turkey in the Field of Media" signed on 10 December 2020, the parties, taking into account the capabilities of the Azerbaijan-Turkish media platform, will further strengthen cooperation between relevant agencies of the two countries in the field of information, communication and public diplomacy. Within this framework, active consultations and exchanges of information will be regularly held between the ministers of foreign affairs.

The parties encourage further strengthening of inter-parliamentary cooperation and increased interaction in this direction.

The parties will ensure the provision of the necessary public support for important manifestations of the common values of the two peoples and carry out joint activities to protect the historical and cultural heritage.

The parties note the intensification of national and international efforts that will serve the unity and well-being of the Turkic world.

The parties will strengthen cooperation in the field of promoting and advancing Turkic cultural heritage at the international level.

In order to further strengthen Turkic cooperation, the parties will give an impetus to the activities carried out within the framework of the Cooperation Council of Turkic-Speaking States, the Turkic Academy, the Foundation of Turkic Culture and Heritage, TURKSOY and the Inter-Parliamentary Assembly of Turkic-Speaking Countries.

The parties express their satisfaction with the agreement reached on the entry of citizens of one party into the territory of the other party with domestic passports only and, noting the exceptional importance of this agreement in terms of proximity between our peoples and ties between them, approve the adoption of appropriate measures to enable citizens of one party to obtain the right to reside in the territory of the other party in accordance with the principle of reciprocity.

The parties, providing the necessary state support, will continue to develop and deepen close ties on the basis of common values in the humanitarian sphere, in the field of social protection, science, education, healthcare, culture, youth and sports. To this end, relevant agencies of the two countries will carry out joint activities on a permanent basis.

This Declaration is signed in the city of Shusha on 15 June 2021 in the Azerbaijani and Turkish languages in two original copies, and all texts are equally authentic.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev

President of the Republic of Turkey Recep Tayyip Erdogan