



**TIGRAN SARGSYAN: "WE ARE CONVINCED TO SUCCEED IN ALL SPHERES IN 2011" PAGE 2**



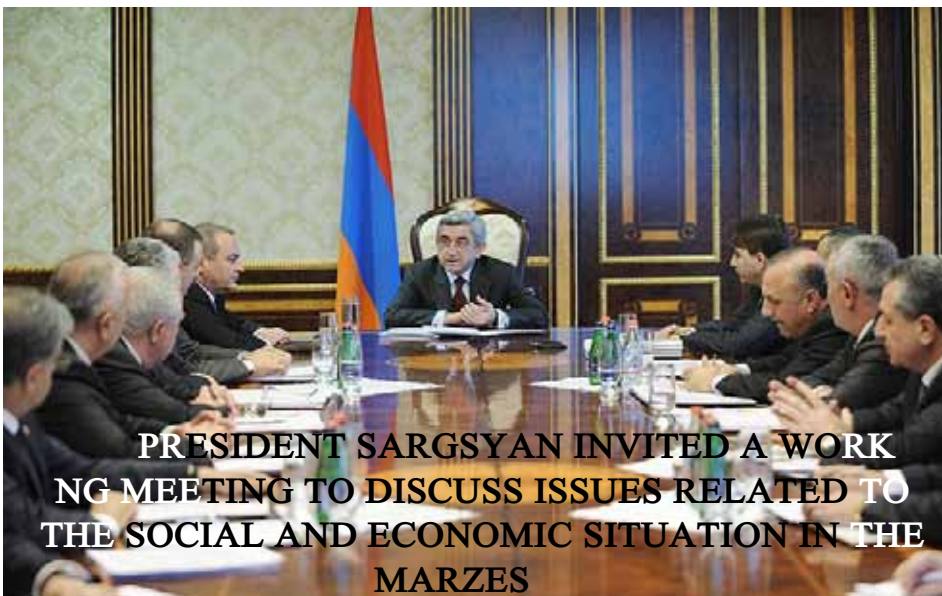
**IRAN, ARMENIA TO BOOST INDUSTRIAL TIES PAGE 4**

# ARMENIA HIGHLIGHTS

**Weekly Digest of the Government of Armenia**

**March 15-21, 2011**

## THEMA



**PRESIDENT SARGSYAN INVITED A WORKING MEETING TO DISCUSS ISSUES RELATED TO THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC SITUATION IN THE MARZES**

On March 16 President Serzh Sargsyan invited a working meeting to discuss issues related to the social and economic situation in the marzes, problems related to the implementation of development programs, summarized works conducted in 2010, and spoke about programs for 2011 and their efficient implementation. The meeting was attended by the Vice Prime Minister, Minister of Territorial Administration Armen Gevorkian and heads of the regions. Before the Vice Prime Minister gave his report on the activities conducted by territorial and local administration bodies and programs for 2011, the President of Armenia presented his observations regarding issues of the agenda and gave tasks. "It is no secret that the bulk of the problems existing in our country – poverty, social problems and challenges conditioned by them – persist particularly in the regions. It is also in the regions that people are more depressed, often feel abandoned and as a result the entire atmosphere is pessimistic. Sense of injustice that people feel on different occasions, builds an impenetrable wall of helplessness;

running into that wall, people become very irritable and emotional. That's very sad. The existing situation can be justified by many factors: for instance, by the factors common for all developing countries, or geopolitical realities, and, finally, by the impact of the global financial and economic crisis. However, to search for the reasons of people's troubles means to relieve the authorities from any responsibility. It's a wrong approach. First of all, people need to be heard, to be understood. This is the only way to mitigate the situation. So far, the humanity has not invented any other way to do it. And I am confident that you know it too: people can cope with the difficulties and discontent is not always too wide. Discontent is huge when people are denied equal opportunities to be heard. This must be your main task," said President Sargsyan. The President of Armenia noted that in his understanding the head of regional administration is not just a boss: he must be the leader for the population, one who shares their troubles, one who presents their problems in the state structures, one who establishes in the regional an atmosphere of justice, and, of course, one who contains local chieftains.

*continuation on the 2nd page*

### "QUOTE OF THE WEEK"

"IT IS MY PLEASURE TO STATE THAT THE COOPERATION IS DEVELOPING QUITE SUCCESSFULLY AND THE PURPOSE OF OUR VISIT IS TO GIVE A NEW SCOPE TO BILATERAL TIES"

TIGRAN SARGSYAN  
PRIME MINISTER OF RA

### Upcoming Events

**MARCH 31-APRIL 1: President of Switzerland Micheline Calmy-Rey will visit to Armenia**

**APRIL 24: Armenia marks the day of Armenian Genocide**

### USEFUL LINKS

- [www.president.am](http://www.president.am)
- [www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)
- [www.parliament.am](http://www.parliament.am)
- [www.mfa.am](http://www.mfa.am)
- [www.armenpress.am](http://www.armenpress.am)
- [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)
- [www.matenadaran.am](http://www.matenadaran.am)

**TIGRAN SARGSYAN: "WE ARE CONVINCED TO SUCCEED IN ALL SPHERES IN 2011"**

During the joint press conference following his meeting with Jose Manuel Barroso, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia described as very warm the talks held with the head of the European Commission. "First of all, I wish to extend my appreciation of the warm welcome offered to the Armenian delegation. We had sub-developing quite successfully and the purpose of our visit is to give a new scope to bilateral ties," Tigran Sargsyan said. The Prime Minister advised that central in the discussion was the economic impact of the global crisis on our country. "Europe's assistance went a long way toward mitigating the hardships. We have set a task of enlarging the scope of joint efforts. First of all, I mean the programs of our comprehensive interaction with the European Union. We are convinced to succeed in all spheres in 2011 so that we can start negotiating on the comprehensive agreement," Tigran Sargsyan mentioned thanking Mr. Barroso and other partners for continued assistance. As to whether Armenia has any expectations concerning the allocation of extra credits or other resources in addition to the proceeds stipulated under the partnership program, the Prime Minister of Armenia said that the Head of the European Commission had been presented with the program of reforms and the assurances of the Armenian government to promote them ahead. "On the one hand, it goes without saying that the reforms have to be strengthened in capacity. On the other hand, we should be watchful of such threats and risks as may arise during their implementation. In particular, we have asked our partners to help establish a buffer fund in support of drastic tax and customs reforms to ensure macroeconomic stability in case we face problems connected with revenue collection. We have agreed that the matter will be taken up with European experts after we submit our reform program," Tigran Sargsyan said. Mr. Barroso noted in turn "We pledged support for Armenia. Our teams will continue working together in order to single out those areas in need of technical assistance. As to the financial help, we have already extended one to the Republic of Armenia. Since the country is facing macroeconomic challenges, we will follow up on the matter considering the developments. It is important for Armenia to continue along the path of reforms, and the European Union will stand by it."



*March 16, 2011 [www.gov.am](http://www.gov.am)*

#### THE MEETING BETWEEN THE ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER AND THE OSCE CHAIRPERSON-IN-OFFICE TOOK PLACE

On March 18, the Armenian Foreign Affairs Minister Edward Nalbandian met with Audronius Azhubalis, the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office and Lithuanian Foreign Minister who arrived in Yerevan. Welcoming the guest, Edward Nalbandian noted, "It is symbolic that yesterday – the first day of the visit of the Lithuanian Foreign Minister visits, the National Day of Lithuania was celebrated in Yerevan." Edward Nalbandian added that it also was a symbolic fact that Lithuania is the first country that recognized Armenia's independence in 1991. Express-

stantial talks on all the items of the EU-Armenia cooperation agenda." As he gave his estimate of the cooperation, Jose Manuel Barroso highlighted all those spheres supported by the European Union's technical assistance regarding which we have assumed specific commitments. "It is my pleasure to state that the cooperation is

ing gratitude to the Armenian Foreign Minister for warm reception and participation at the events dedicated to the National Day of Lithuania the previous day, Audronius Azhubalis noted that the Armenian-Lithuanian cooperation is on a high-level and there are good conditions for their further strengthening and deepening. The Ministers Nalbandian and Azhubalis exchanged views on March 17 in the non –official format on the bilateral relations, as well as a number of regional and international issues.

*March 17, 2011 [www.mfa.am](http://www.mfa.am)*

## HEADLINES OF THE WEEK

- **MARCH 15: NKR MP: OSCE MG refrains from visiting NKR, as it has nothing to say**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 17: Persian manuscripts displayed in Matenadaran**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 17: Armenia interested in Turkey's success on its road to EU accession**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 17: Armenian President ready to hear PACE co-rapporteurs' recommendations**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 18: RA President and OSCE CiO estimate positively results of Sochi meeting**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 19: Armenian Genocide commemorative billboards installed in Boston**
- **AH**
- **MARCH 21: Tigran Sargsyan: Armenia should carry out huge amount of work to ensure free competition**

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"When I talk about local chieftains, I also mean that neither one of you should become a local chieftain. Such attitude is unacceptable. And you should serve an example. You and us – we are servants of the people. And we must do our work very well especially now, when existing difficulties are augmented by new ones, linked to the inflation, complex developments in the global economy. If we were to leave our farmers, our entrepreneurs on their own, it would be an unpardonable mistake, because now we have all opportunities to make this year a breakthrough for our economy and, certainly, for our agriculture. I underline agriculture because activities in the regions are related to this particular field, also because we already have multiple programs for this area. This year, the existing programs will be supplemented by others and more programs will follow. People should know about these programs and make use of them. Day before yesterday I met with the Head of the Central Bank. After our discussions, the Bank proposes new instruments such small interest loans, where part of the interest to be paid and subsidized by the state," noted the President of Armenia. President Sargsyan underscored that additional funds have been allocated this year to the marzes to solve part of the existing problems.

*March 16, 2011*

*full story [www.president.am](http://www.president.am)*



## ARMENIAN PRESIDENT VISITS CONSTRUCTION SITE OF MATE-NADARAN-ADJACENT BUILDING



On March 19, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan visited the construction site of a new building adjacent to Matenadaran, the museum of

ancient manuscripts. The building plan was drafted by a chief architect, singer and composer Artur Meschian, who briefed the President on the possibilities of the building aimed for scientific and research activities, storage of and restoration of exhibits. The new building complete with up-to-day equipment is also meant to host various events.

The exhibition halls will be allocated in the old building, Matenadaran.

Total area of a new building comprises 11358 sq.m., while the old building has an area of 3186 sq.m. The new building will be put into operation in August 2011.

March 19, 2011 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## EP CALLS TO AVOID ARMED INCIDENTS IN KARABAKH



The European Parliament is concerned over the situation in the Nagorno Karabakh conflict zone. "We will do our utmost to secure peace

and stability in the region. Armed incidents in the conflict zone should be ruled out," EP President Jerzy Buzek said at a news conference with Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan. Mr. Sargsyan, in turn, emphasized that official Yerevan's position in unchangeable: the conflict must be resolved through peaceful efforts. "The OSCE Minsk Group is advancing in the right direction," he said. Asked about the Armenian-Turkish reconciliation, the PM said that Armenia stands ready to normalize relations without preconditions.

March 17, 2011 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## LARA FABIAN DREAMS OF WORKING WITH FRENCH SINGER CHARLES AZNAVOUR

World-known French singer Lara Fabian dreams of working with French singer Charles Aznavour.

Besides, she would welcome any offer on cooperation from an Armenian composer, Fabian told Armenian journalists.

She added that she has already received an offer for cooperation with a Canadian composer of Armenian origin.

On March 18, Lara Fabian will perform a concert in Yerevan within the framework of Francophonie Days in Armenia.

March 17, 2011 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## ARMENIAN DRIVERS WILL BE PROVIDED WITH INTERNATIONAL STANDARD LICENSES

At March 18 sitting, the Armenian government introduced amendments to one of the resolutions on the Law on Traffic Safety Provision. The law stipulated for provision of national and international driving license, in accordance with international standards. According to the law, the rights for possession, mortgaging and rent are subject to state registration with police authorized to organize the indicated processes.

March 18, 2011 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## FOREIGN MINISTRY: ERDOGAN'S VISIT TO MOSCOW CAN'T AFFECT ARMENIA-RUSSIA PARTNERSHIP



Yerevan is not concerned over the recent visit of Turkish Prime Minister to Moscow and the development of Russia-Turkey relations. As Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian told a news conference in Yerevan, Armenian-Russian strategic and partnerships are too strong to be affected by Turkish Prime Minister's visit to Moscow. "Resolution of Nagorno Karabakh conflict will have a positive impact on normalization of the Turkish-Armenian relations," Turkish PM Recep Tayyip Erdogan said at the Moscow State Institute on Wednesday, March 16. Erdogan also stressed Russia's role in the negotiation process. "Organization of the trilateral talks with Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia is an important initiative," Erdogan noted.

March 18 2011, [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

## RUSSIAN TRANSLATION OF A BOOK ABOUT SOGHOMON TEHLIRIAN TO BE PRESENTED IN YEREVAN

World known singer, Armenian Ambassador to Switzerland Charles Aznavour voiced regret over the fact that Presidents Nicolas Sarkozy of France and Barack Obama of the United States have failed to meet their electoral pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide. As freelance journalist Jean Eckian told PanARMENIAN.Net in an interview with Nouvelles d'Arménie, Aznavour urged Sarkozy to be as good as his word, otherwise Armenians of France can remember about the broken promise during the next presidential election in 2012. On October 12, 2006, French National Assembly passed a bill on criminalization of the Armenian Genocide denial. Recently, WikiLeaks released a cable quoting French President Nicolas Sarkozy as saying that the bill "will be buried in the Senate", what aroused Aznavour's indignation. On March 12, 2011, about 3000 people gathered at the French Senate building to demand adoption of the bill criminalizing denial of the Armenian Genocide. A similar action was held in Marseille.

March 15, 2011 [www.panarmenian.net](http://www.panarmenian.net)

**IRAN, ARMENIA TO BOOST INDUSTRIAL TIES**

**I**ran and Armenia called for further expansion of bilateral industrial ties when the two countries' officials met in Tehran, the local English language satellite Press TV reported on Sunday. Iranian Deputy Minister of Industries and Mines Ahmad Khademolmelleh and Armenian Ambassador to Iran Grigor Arakelian on Sunday discussed the prospects for the two countries' industrial relations, the report said. Khademolmelleh stressed both countries'

potentials for bolstering cooperation in mines and industrial areas and called for organizing industrial tours for Armenian business owners in Iran, according to Press TV. For his part, the Armenian ambassador announced his country's readiness to participate in the projects introduced by Iran's ministry of industries. Arakelian said that bilateral trade value between the two sides currently stands at 270 million U.S. dollars and the figure is on the rise, according to Press TV. In the past years, Iran and its northern neighbor Armenia have signed agreements on energy cooperation and agreed to cooperate in technology and research and enhance ties in commerce and economy. In January, Armenia and Iran struck a deal on constructing an oil pipeline between the two countries which could cost 240 million U.S. dollars to complete.

*March 14 2011,*

[www.english.peopledaily.com.cn](http://www.english.peopledaily.com.cn)

**ARMENIAN FOREIGN MINISTER ADDRESSES OSCE PERMANENT COUNCIL, VOICES COMMITMENT TO DURABLE CONFLICT RESOLUTION**

**A**rmenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan told the OSCE Permanent Council today that the OSCE Minsk Group remains the only internationally mandated format for negotiations on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and expressed his hope for a peaceful resolution of the conflict.

"The OSCE has an important role in dealing with security and co-operation issues," he said. "In the current fragile regional environment we regard it as a valuable component of our security. Armenia is ready to contribute, in the spirit of the principles set forth in the Helsinki Final Act, to the efforts to revitalise this Organisation by making it stronger, more reliable, effective and responsive". Speaking on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Nalbandyan said that "over the past years Armenia spared no effort to find a peaceful and durable resolution to the conflict".

He emphasized that the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs "remain the only format internationally mandated to mediate". Nalbandyan reiterated Armenia's support to the Madrid principles proposed to the sides by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs in 2007 - non-use of force, self-determination and territorial integ-

riety - as well as to the elements presented in the framework of the G8 Summit in L'Aquila as basis for negotiations. He stressed that Armenia fully shared the view of the Minsk Group co-chairs that any attempt to select some elements over others would make it impossible to achieve a solution. "Armenia is ready to move towards the settlement on the basis of these principles and elements, which also reflect the position of the entire international community". The Minsk Group spearheads the OSCE's efforts to find a political solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. It is co-chaired by the Russian Federation, the United States and France. The next meeting of the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan will take place on March 5 in Sochi at the initiative of the Russian President Dmitry Medvedev and in the presence of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs. Speaking about Armenia's state building, Nalbandyan stressed the efforts of Armenia to ensure the sustainability of its progress in building modern society based on the rule of law and respect of human rights and fundamental freedoms, including in the field of the media and fight against corruption.

*March 16 2011* [www.osce.org](http://www.osce.org)

**AN ACTION OF PROTEST AGAINST THE VISIT OF PRIME MINISTER OF TURKEY TO MOSCOW PASSED OFF IN ARMENIA**

**O**n March, 16, an action of protest against Prime Minister of Turkey Recep Erdogan's visit to Moscow passed off in Armenia near the Russian Embassy in Yerevan. The participants of the action demanded dissolution of the Moscow treaty signed between Turkey and Russia 90 years ago. The participants were holding posters with slogans "Erdogan = Ataturk, Medvedev = Lenin?", "Moscow treaty is a ninety-year's long disgrace", "Fraternize with anyone you like but not for account of the Armenians" and flags of Armenia and Armenian Revolutionary Front "Dashnaksutiun" (ARF). In front of the building of the Embassy the people were singing national-patriotic songs and chanting "Disgrace!". "We demand that Russia should cancel this treaty for it is illegal and contradicts all the international legal regulations on a number of points", "Novosti-Armeina" quotes Armen Rustamyan, representative of the supreme body of ARFD in Armenia and deputy of the Parliament. The personnel of the Russian Embassy did not come out to meet the manifestants. Nevertheless, the participants found a way to deliver their message. The put it into a coffin they placed in front of the diplomatic mission office with a superscription "Mail-box of the Embassy of the Russian Federation for the Russian-Turkish treaty". After the participants of the action dispersed policemen moved the coffin to the wall of "Ardshinvestbank" located nearby. The Youth branch of ARF "Dashnaksutiun" party, Students' Association "Nikol Agbalyan" and other youth organizations of Armenia as well as deputies of ARFD took part in the action, "Armenia Today" reports. Note: Moscow treaty is a Russian-Turkish treaty of "friendship and fraternity" signed on March, 16, 1921, in Moscow between the Grand National Assembly of Turkey and the Government of RSFSR. The treaty tallied up international legal division of the Republic of Armenia between RSFSR, Turkey and Azerbaijan.

*March 17, 2010* [www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru](http://www.eng.kavkaz-uzel.ru)



## SCREENING OF AWARD WINNING FILM AGHET – EIN VÖLKERMORD – GENOCID AT THE GLENDALE CENTRAL LIBRARY



Glendale Public Library to screen the documentary film *Aghet – Ein Völkermord* on Sunday, March 27, 2011, at 4 p.m., in the Glendale Central Library Auditorium, 222 East Harvard Street, Glendale. Admission is free and the seating is limited. Library visitors receive 3 hours FREE parking across the street at The Market Place park-

ing structure with validation at the loan desk. *Aghet* is a powerful documentary, depicting the annihilation of 1.5 million Armenians from 1915-1923 and the effects of the Turkish government's international campaign of genocide denial. The film highlights the Turkish authorities' current policy of those crimes. Award-winning director Eric Friedler assembles an impeccable cast, who bring to life the original text of German and U.S. diplomatic dispatches and eyewitness accounts, interspersed with never-before-seen footage of the Genocide and its political aftermath. The 2010 film, applauded by Nobel Prize laureate Gunter Grass, has sparked debate throughout Europe.

March 21, 2011 [www.massispost.com](http://www.massispost.com)

## MENSOIAN: ALIYEV'S KARABAGH DILEMMA

These are difficult days for Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev. In fact, he has been experiencing difficult days ever since his military forces were decisively defeated in their attempt to prevent the former Karabagh autonomous region from becoming a free and independent political entity. A Russian-brokered ceasefire between Armenia and Azerbaijan brought this war to a close and established the de facto independence of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic. Since then negotiations have been ongoing between Yerevan and Baku under the mediating efforts of the Minsk Group—created in 1992 and co-chaired by France, Russia, and the United States—by the Conference for Security and Cooperation in Europe, now known as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE). During the intervening years, Aliyev has failed to fashion a solution favorable to Azerbaijan, while Artsakh (Karabagh and the liberated territories) has successfully developed a sustainable economy and a democratic form of governance. In its assigned role as mediator, the Minsk Group continues to subvert the principles of self-determination and remedial secession. Instead, the principle of territorial integrity favorable to Azerbaijan's interests serves as the basis for negotiations. This is an absolutely unacceptable precondition because it precludes any consideration of de jure independence for Artsakh.

During the period 1989-90, the government of Azerbaijan sponsored pogroms against the Armenian population in the cities of Sumgait, Kirovobad (now Ganja), and Baku. These pogroms, properly defined as massacres, were responsible for the deaths of hundreds of Armenians and the forced exodus of tens of thousands of Armenians from Azerbaijan. Having failed in its efforts to deter the Karabaghtsis, Azerbaijan committed its military to a full-scale assault on Karabagh. Since the ceasefire in 1994, numerous breaches have occurred along the agreed Line of Contact (LoC) by Azeri probing units or deadly sniper fire. Unfortunately, both sides have suffered unnecessary casualties by these wanton acts. During the ceasefire, while negotiations were ongoing, the Azerbaijan government shamelessly continued its long-standing policy to eradicate cultural artifacts attesting to Armenian occupation of the region centuries before Azerbaijan existed. Perhaps the most egregious occurred in 2005 when the government sponsored the senseless destruction of thousands of khatchkars (hand-carved Armenian stone burial monuments), some dating back to the 6th century, in the ancient Armenian cemetery of Julfa (Jugha) in Nakhitchevan. Against this background, a reasonable assessment is that no acceptable common ground exists for a negotiated settlement.

March 16, 2011

full story [www.armeniaweekly.com](http://www.armeniaweekly.com)

## JUSTICE HAS YET TO PREVAIL FOR SUMGAIT

Matthew Bryza's collusion with the Baku government took center stage this week with an announcement by the newly-minted envoy, which seemed to reek of official Azeri propaganda aimed at hindering the already-fragile Karabakh peace process. Before OSCE mediators could assess the situation, Bryza took the podium to say he was "saddened" after Azeri officials alleged that Karabakh snipers killed a nine-year-old boy at the line of contact. The use of such misinformation by Azerbaijan has been the backbone of its efforts to ramp up its military rhetoric and play "victim" in front of the international community. Bryza lent his voice to this war-mongering policy by saying that "the incident, once again shows that a peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict has no alternative," signaling that he has taken the Azeri authorities at their word. "Together with colleagues from Washington and friends, we are looking for ways to reduce the hatred between the conflicting sides. We believe that the elimination of hatred can be a basis for resolving the conflict peacefully," said Bryza in capping off his remarks on the Azeri allegations. It is exactly this type of selective condemnation that serves as a foundation for ongoing concerns of Bryza's bias toward his Azerbaijani hosts. On Friday, a Karabakh soldier was killed hours after an International Committee of the Red Cross-monitored prisoner exchange mission ended and a day before the new OSCE Chairman in Office was to hold talks on the conflict with Armenian and Azeri leaders. Will Bryza call out Azerbaijan for its continued ceasefire violations? Just this week, Aliyev and his cohorts threatened to shoot down civilian planes travelling to Karabakh.

March 18, 2011

Full story [www.asbarez.com](http://www.asbarez.com)

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