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**2004**

**America's Azerbaijan Association calls not to forget Bloody January  
(21 January, 2004)**

The US-based Azerbaijan Association disseminated information whereby called on the world community not to forget the victims of this bloody tragedy, AzerTAj correspondent reported from Washington.

The humanity should not forget on what human loss was gained today's independence of Azerbaijan, the statement says. The people took out to the Baku streets in 1990 to protest the Armenian aggression and indifference of the then soviet leadership to the ousted 200 thousands Azerbaijanis from their homes in Armenia. Former USSR leader Mikhail Gorbachev ordered on this massacre to suppress the raising people. In January 1990, the soviet troops attacked to Baku and brutally killed over hundred innocent people. Number of wounded was over 700. But this only strengthened the wish of freedom in the hearts of millions. In a year, Azerbaijan gained state independence.

On the eve of the 14th anniversary of the Bloody January, on 1 February, the American Azerbaijan Association will hold a ceremony where will be commemorated the memory of Heydar Aliyev and will condemn the act of the then soviet leadership. The ceremony will be attended by eyewitnesses of the January events, the American journalist Thomas Golts, head of the state committee on work with Azerbaijani living abroad Nazim Ibrahimov and others.

**AzerTAj**



**Arabic world obtains information on the events of January 20  
(22 January, 2004)**

Azerbaijan's diplomatic mission in Saudi Arabia has prepared a statement concerning January 20 tragedy and sent that to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and mass media of the Kingdom, as well as to General Secretariat of the Organization Islamic Conference, Islamic news agency for dissemination in friendly Moslem countries, it was announced by the Embassy of Azerbaijan to Saudi Arabia.

The statement says that former Soviet leadership acting in concert with Armenians contrary to international laws committed aggression against Azerbaijani people in Baku on January 20, 1990. These barbarities however could not undermine the will of Azerbaijani people, quite the reverse, brought to further broadening the liberation movement in the country.

These days, representatives of number governmental and public organizations of Saudi Arabia contacted the Embassy of Azerbaijan to express deep condolences on the 40th day of demise of President Heydar Aliyev and 14th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20.

**AzerTAj**

**2006**

**Anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 to be marked in USA  
(18 January, 2006)**

As informed from the State Committee on Work with the Azerbaijanis Living Abroad, the 16th anniversary of tragedy on 20 January will be marked and in the United States of America. With the organizational support of the Azerbaijan embassy in the USA and the Azerbaijan communities of this country, in large cities will be carried out ceremonies of respect of memory, scientific - practical conferences, organized photo-stands devoted to tragedy. The wide information on acts of genocide and terror, committed against Azerbaijani people will be given to the American public.

Representatives of Turkish Diaspora organizations also will take active participation in these actions.

**AzerTAj**

**Azerbaijani Diaspora in USA calls on world community to commemorate of the tragedy  
of January 20  
(21 January, 2006)**

Azerbaijanis living in the United States on the anniversary of Bloody January called on the international community to commemorate this tragedy. The American Azerbaijan Society has disseminated a statement whereby it says, “the world nations should remember the people of Azerbaijan have gained today’s independence due to huge human losses”.

The New-Jersey-based headquarter of the Society in the statement sent to influential American information sources stresses that on 20 January 1990 the soviet troops attacked to Baku where massacred 140 innocent civilians. On direction of Mikhail Gorbachev, the troops armed up to teeth, the military helicopters and naval forces attacked the capital of Azerbaijan in sleepy-time on that day. Among the killed in the early morning on 20 January, there were Azerbaijanis, Russians, Tatars, Lezghins, Jews and others. Women, children, the old were subjected to fire. This was the attempt to turn out the nation from the struggle that rose to defend its sovereignty. The tragedy, on the contrary, cemented the will of people for liberation. In 1991, one of the firsts among the soviet republics, Azerbaijan adopted Constitutional Act on independence. And then, the soviet troops that became the token of oppression and cruelty were completely driven from the Republic.

**AzerTAj**

**2008**

**18th anniversary of Bloody January to be marked in Sweden  
(12 January, 2008)**

A commemoration ceremony for the 18th anniversary of the “Bloody January” tragedy will be organized next Saturday at one of the central squares of Stockholm, the capital of Sweden.

The event aims to inform international society about barbarism committed in Baku by the Soviet leadership in January 1990.

The organizers of the event are “Azadtribun” website, “Odlar Yurdu”, “Butov Azerbaijan”, “Ulduz”, “Haray”, “Garabagh” and “Prometey” societies, as well as the Azerbaijanis Union of Sweden, “Tribune” magazine and “Haray” radio station.

**AzerTAj**

**12 January, 2008**

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**Azerbaijani embassy to Indonesia commemorates victims of Bloody January  
(17 January, 2008)**

Embassy of Azerbaijan to Indonesia held an event on the occasion of the 18th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20, the Embassy said.

Ambassador Ibrahim Hajiyev told of reasons of bloody January, reforms being implemented in different areas of Azerbaijan, including Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipelines, Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project.

Mr. Hajiyev also informed about the Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, and non-constructive stance of Armenia in solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Ambassador handed collection of articles about economic development of Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan- EU and Azerbaijan-Indonesia cooperation, January 20 and Khojaly tragedies, GUAM Organization as well as book "Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict" over to the meeting participants.

Representatives of Indonesia Foreign Affairs Ministry and mass media were present at the meeting.

**AzerTAj**

### **18th anniversary of Bloody January tragedy marked in USA (19 January, 2008)**

The United States Congress has commemorated the 18th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy, Azerbaijan`s Embassy said.

Joe Wilson, member of Congress representing South Carolina, member of working group on Azerbaijan, called congressmen to revere memory of the 20 January victims, who sacrificed their lives for freedom and democracy.

He said 18 years ago, Moscow ordered 26,000 Soviet troops to invade Azerbaijan`s capital Baku.

In the early morning hours and into the day of January 20, 1990, the Soviet troops attacked innocent civilians, slaughtering 130 people and wounding approximately 700.

He stressed the use of force by the Soviet regime was an attempt to suppress Azerbaijani people`s demand for independence.

However, the invasion of Soviet troops aimed at strangling people`s dreams of freedom, ignited the spirit of struggle for freedom even more.

The Congressman also said today Azerbaijan is considered a rapidly developing country thanks to its freely elected President, parliament, as well as thanks to reforms to establish free market economy and for not allowing presence of foreign troops in its territory.

Afterwards, documentary film about the tragedy “The way leading to Bloody January” produced by Lider TV of Azerbaijan was shown.

Americans, for the first time, saw the killer image of Mikhail Gorbachev, who was named “hero” in the West for ending the Cold War.

In his letter to the Azerbaijani Community in Houston, Bill White, Mayor of Houston, expressed his condolences on the 18th anniversary of the Black January.

**AzerTAj**

**Azerbaijan permanent representative office to UN marks 18th anniversary of the tragedy  
of January 20  
(19 January, 2008)**

Azerbaijan`s permanent representative office to the United Nations held an event to commemorate the 18th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy.

The event started with a moment of silence in memory of shahids who died for the country`s freedom and independence.

Addressing the event, Azerbaijan`s permanent representative at UN Agshin Mehdiyev described “those days” as terrible for Azerbaijani people who fell victim to ex-Soviet leadership`s barbarism.

Mehdiyev added “However, the Azerbaijani people restored their independence”.

He said he believes Azerbaijani territories will be liberated soon from Armenian occupation and refugees will return to their homelands.

Mehdiyev stressed special role played by Azerbaijan`s nationwide leader Heydar Aliyev and President Ilham Aliyev in the overall development of Azerbaijan.

President of the Azerbaijani-New York Association Ali Nasibov noted the people of Azerbaijan will always remember January 20 shahids.

Among those in attendance at the event were employees at Azerbaijan`s Permanent representative office to UN, representatives of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in New York, as well as leadership and members of Mountainous Jewish Community in the USA.

**AzerTAj**

**Victims of Bloody January commemorated in Spain  
(19 January, 2008)**

Embassy of Azerbaijan to Spain held an event on the occasion of the 18th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20, the Embassy said.

The members of the Azerbaijan and Turkish communities were present at the event. The participants of the event revered memory of 20 January victims, who sacrificed their lives for independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Speaking at the event, Ambassador Mammad Aliyev told of reasons of bloody January and assessed the event as the glorious page in history of Azerbaijanis in struggle for independence.

The Ambassador highlighted that after return of the nationwide president Heydar Aliyev to the power, the legal and political assessment was given to the January 20 tragedy and the names of offenders who committed this monstrous crime towards innocent people were proclaimed.

The correspondents of the newspapers “El Pais” and “El Mundo”, as well as magazines “Cita Internacional” and “Encuentron Diplomatico” were present at the event. The photo stands, books and films about the 20 January were demonstrated during the event.

**AzerTAj**



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**Azerbaijani embassies in foreign countries remember of the victims of January 20  
(20 January, 2008)**

Azerbaijani embassies to Kyrgyzstan, Romania, UK, China and Pakistan hosted a ceremony to mark the 18th anniversary of 20 January 1990 tragedy.

Events discussed the history, causes and bitter consequences of the tragedy. Participants of the event watched the documentaries and viewed photo expositions reflecting those bloody events.

**AzerTAj**

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**Canada's AZCAN TV prepares Black January-special edition  
(20 January, 2008)**

Canada's AzCan TV channel has prepared a Black January-Special Edition dedicated to the 20 January 1990 tragedy. It narrates on the history of the bloody January, its causes and grave consequences.

The special edition will feature the statement the Former Canadian Foreign Minister Peter MacKay made in accordance with the appeal of the Federation of Azerbaijan-Canada Associations.

The edition to be released on DVD and CD will be sent to Canadian government agencies and offices of international organizations.

**AzerTAj**

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**Romania commemorates victims of the tragedy of January  
(21 January, 2008)**

Embassy of Azerbaijan to Romania held a commemoration ceremony on the occasion of 18th anniversary of January 20 tragedy.

Members of Romania-Azerbaijan Friendship Society, Azerbaijan-Romania Culture and Youth Association, Romania-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and Industry, Heydar Aliyev Foundation and the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan attended the event.

Ambassador Eldar Hasanov told of history of bloody January, where over 130 men died and 700 wounded.

Meeting participants watched documentary about the January tragedy. Romania's OTV and Romania International Radio broadcasted programs as well.

**AzerTAj**

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**Tragedy of January 20 commemorated in Bishkek  
(21 January, 2008)**

Azerbaijan`s embassy in Kyrgyzstan and Azerbaijani students studying at the Manas Kyrgyz-Turkish University in Bishkek held an event at the university to mark the 18th anniversary of January 20 Tragedy.

The event brought together more than 300 students and teachers, who observed a minute of silence in memory of shahids.

Counselor at Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Bishkek Elkhan Zeynalov informed about reasons of January 20 events in Baku.

He thanked the University`s leadership for remembering Azeri shahids who died for sovereignty and independence of their motherland.

Other speakers including Rector of the University Suleyman Kayipov and first pro-rector Ugur Ural described January 20 tragedy as the most honorable date of Azerbaijani people in their struggle for freedom.

The participants also saw a film and viewed a photo exhibition about the tragedy.

**AzerTAj**

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**Azerbaijani embassy in Britain commemorates victims of January 20  
(21 January, 2008)**

Azerbaijan's embassy in Britain hosted an event to mark the 18th anniversary of the 20 January, 1990 tragedy.

Addressing the event, Ambassador Fakhraddin Gurbanov told of reasons of the tragedy.

The ambassador mentioned that the bloody tragedy is commemorated in different countries throughout the world.

Afterwards, a documentary film about the tragedy was demonstrated.

Representatives of the Azerbaijan Youth Club and community in London, students and members of the Turkish Association Federation were present at the event.

**AzerTAj**

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**Pakistan Observer publishes article of the tragedy of January 20  
(22 January, 2008)**

Pakistan Observer, major Pakistani daily newspaper, published Sunday the article on the 20 January tragedy.

According to the Azerbaijani embassy in Pakistan, the article narrates on the crime committed against the people of Azerbaijan by the Soviet military machine 18 yeas ago.

It says Soviet troops including military units from Stavropol, Krasnodar and Rostov regions of the former USSAR was largely composed of Armenians. The army stormed Baku killing and wounding hundreds of people. Head of the empire Mikhail Gorbachev later received a Nobel Prize.

The soviet leadership was an abettor of the occupation of Azerbaijan lands, which resulted in seizing the Nagorno-Karabakh region and 7 more Azerbaijani regions, and forcing over a million people from their homes.

Pakistan Observer says Azerbaijan people continued its struggle for freedom and independence and today has created a strong state in the region.

**AzerTAj**

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**January 20 victims commemorated in Stockholm  
(23 January, 2008)**

Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in Stockholm - “Odlar yurdu”, “Garabag”, “Butov Azerbaijan”, “Azad Tribun”, “Haray”, “Sweden Azerbaijanis Union”, “Ulduz”, “Prometey”, “Tribun” and “Haray Radiosu” - held an event to commemorate the 18th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy, State Committee for Work with Azerbaijanis living abroad reported.

The event started with a moment of silence in memory of shahids who sacrificed their lives for independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Speakers at the event told of the role and essence of bloody January in the history of Azerbaijan.

Visitors watched photos and films about the tragedy.

The ceremony ended with the adoption of an appeal to Swedish state and government bodies calling them to react to the tragedy of January 20.

**AzerTAj**

**2009**

**Book “Realities about genocide committed against Azerbaijanis” to be presented in Ukraine  
(17 January, 2009)**

A book entitled “Realities about Genocide committed against Azerbaijanis” by head of President’s Office of Azerbaijan, academician Ramiz Mehtiyev will be presented in Ukraine during a ceremony to commemorate the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The book features historical facts, massacre committed by Armenians against Azerbaijani nation over the past two centuries as well as crimes perpetrated by Soviet Empire in 1990 in Azerbaijan.

The event will bring together representatives from Azerbaijani Embassy to Ukraine, Ukrainian Azerbaijanis Congress, Azerbaijan-Ukraine Friendship and Charitable Fund, Supreme Rada, Diaspora, officials and media, one of the ceremony organizers, head of Turkic Speaking Countries Policy Support Foundation Nusrat Mammadov said.

The book will be distributed to national libraries and higher educational institutions of Ukraine.

**AzerTAj**



**Azerbaijani embassy in Netherlands holds ceremony to commemorate  
19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20  
(19 January, 2009)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in the Netherlands has organized a commemoration ceremony to mark the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together Azerbaijanis living in the country, employees of the Embassy, members of Diaspora organizations, as well as media representatives.

Speakers at the event spoke of the history of the tragedy. They said a day after the tragedy, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow where he condemned those who committed savageries against the Azerbaijani people.

They also underlined that thanks to Heydar Aliyev's efforts, the tragedy received legal and political assessment.

The speakers also noted the Azerbaijani Diaspora organizations should spare no efforts to provide the Dutch people with unbiased information about their country.

**AzerTAj**

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**Commemoration ceremony to mark 19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 held in Dubai  
(19 January, 2009)**

The United Arab Emirates-based Azerbaijan Society has organized a commemoration ceremony to mark the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy in the United Arab Emirates.

Chairman of the Society Samir Imanov briefed the participants on the history of the tragedy. He underscored due to national leader Heydar Aliyev`s efforts, the tragedy was given legal and political assessment.

The event participants were handed over the books “Armenian terrorism” and “Realities of Karabakh” prepared by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

**AzerTAj**

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**19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 commemorated in Tajikistan  
(19 January, 2009)**

A ceremony to commemorate the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy was held in Tajikistan. The event brought together members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in Tajikistan and employees of the Embassy of Azerbaijan in the country.

Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Tajikistan Maharram Aliyev spoke of savageries committed by Soviet soldiers against Azerbaijanis on January 20, 1990.

The event participants also saw a documentary on the tragedy.

**AzerTAj**

## **Azerbaijani embassies abroad commemorate 19th anniversary of Black January (20 January, 2009)**

Azerbaijan`s embassies across the world are arranging a series of events these days to commemorate the 19th anniversary of January 20 tragedy of 1990 when Soviet army invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

In Romania, a commemorative event co-organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy and representative office of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation brought together members of the Azerbaijani community in the country, representatives of foreign embassies and international organizations functioning here, Romanian senators, and journalists.

Ambassador Eldar Hasanov made a speech at the event, condemning the leadership of the former Soviet Union which ordered the massacre. The Ambassador also stressed nationwide leader Heydar Aliyev`s role in making it possible to give a legal and political assessment to the bloody action.

The event also featured documentary Road towards Democracy.

In Russia, the Azerbaijani Embassy hosted an event which was attended by members of Diaspora, representatives of the diplomatic corps and journalists.

Ambassador Polad Bulbuloglu called the January 20 events “one of the most tragic days in Azerbaijan`s history”. The Ambassador praised President Ilham Aliyev`s role in bringing the realities behind the January 20 massacre and Azerbaijanis` genocide to the world community.

Following the event, its participants placed flowers and wreaths at a memorial plaque to the nationwide leader Heydar Aliyev at the embassy.

In Ukraine, a commemorative event was arranged by Azerbaijan`s Embassy in collaboration with the Congress of Azerbaijanis of Ukraine and Azerbaijan-Ukraine Friendship and Charitable Fund.

The event saw the launch of book “Realities behind the genocide of Azerbaijanis” by Head of the Azerbaijani President`s Administration, academician Ramiz Mehdiyev.

Ambassador Talat Aliyev gave an insight into the details of the Bloody January events.

In China, a commemorative event hosted by the Embassy saw attendance by diaspora representatives, Azeri business people and journalists.

Ambassador Yashar Aliyev made a speech at the event which was followed by a documentary on the Black January.

In Turkmenistan, the Azerbaijani Embassy lowered the state flag to pay tribute to the January 20 victims, and hosted a commemorative event.

Ambassador Elkhan Huseynov hailed President Ilham Aliyev`s keeping problems of shahid families in focus of attention.

In Iran, foreign ambassadors and heads of international organizations functioning in Tehran and members of the Iranian public came together at the Azeri Embassy for a commemorative event which featured a photo exhibition and documentary about the history of the Bloody January tragedy.

Ambassador Abbasali Hasanov gave an insight into the history of the bloody massacre. He said “the people of Azerbaijan will always honor the blessed memory of brave sons and daughters of the country who gave their lives for its independence”.

In Hungary, Azerbaijan`s Embassy arranged a commemorative event which brought together MPs and state and government officials of Hungary, representatives of the diplomatic corps and international organizations, members of the Azerbaijani diaspora and journalists.

Ambassador Hasan Hasanov made a speech at the event which featured a photo exhibition and documentary films on the January 20 tragedy.

In the USA, Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Washington in collaboration with Azerbaijan Trade and Culture Center will arrange a series of events to commemorate January 20 victims.

Meanwhile, US Congressman Steve Cohen, member of a Working Group on Azerbaijan in the House of Representatives, made a statement on the Black January tragedy. He said “this incident contributed to the breakup of the Soviet Union”.

“Armed with a state of emergency declared by the U.S.S.R. Supreme Soviet Presidium and signed by then President Mikhail Gorbachev, the incursion was intended to suppress a growing independence movement. The net result was the opposite. This incident inflamed Azerbaijani nationalism and contributed to the breakup of the Soviet Union” said the Congressman.

“The Republic of Azerbaijan has maintained its independence for more than 17 years, despite lingering economic and social problems from the Soviet era and the military occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijan by Armenia. Today, Azerbaijan has developed into a thriving country with double digit growth, in large part due to a freely elected president and parliament, free market reforms led by the energy sector, and, most importantly, no foreign troops on its soil” Steve Cohen said.

**AzerTAJ**

### **Tragedy of January 20 remembered in US congress (21 January, 2009)**

20 January tragedy was commemorated in the US Congress.

Member of the US congressional Azerbaijan caucus, Democratic member of the United States House of Representatives representing the state of Tennessee Steve Cohen made a statement on this occasion. According to him, people of Azerbaijan remember 20 January victims who were killed by Soviet troops. Every four years it coincides with the inauguration day in USA.

In accordance with USSR President Gorbachev`s decision on declaration of a state of emergency, 26,000 Soviet troops on the night of January 19-20 stormed Baku, killing 140, wounding over 700 and arresting 841 people. This event sped up the disintegration of the USSR.

The Human Rights Watch report entitled "Black January in Azerbaijan" states: "Indeed, the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19-20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. Since Soviet officials have stated publicly that the purpose of the intervention of Soviet troops was to prevent the ouster of the Communist-dominated government of the Republic of Azerbaijan by the nationalist-minded, noncommunist opposition, the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union."

Cohen noted Azerbaijan managed to keep its independence despite Armenia`s occupying 20 percent of Azerbaijani lands. According to him, Azerbaijan is a prosperous nation whose economy maintained a very strong growth performance. These accomplishments are associated with free conduct of presidential and parliamentary election, market economic reforms in the energy sector and lack of foreign military bases in Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan Trade and Cultural Center in Washington and Azerbaijan embassy co-hosted a meeting. American audience watched a documentary "Path leading to Black January" made by the Lider TV.

**AzerTAJ**

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**Azerbaijani embassy in China commemorated victims of Bloody January of 1990  
(21 January, 2009)**

Embassy of Azerbaijan in China held a ceremony to pay tribute to innocent victims of 20 January, 1990, the day, when Soviet troops invaded Baku, and committed slaughter among peaceful and defenseless people of the city.

The 19th anniversary of this bloody tragedy has been commemorated at the Azerbaijan Embassy's "Shusha" cultural center in China. The ceremony brought together employees of the Embassy, Azerbaijani business leaders working in China, and students studying in Beijing. Ambassador Yashar Aliyev, who has officially kicked off the ceremony, spoke of the history of "Black January", the causes and outcomes of a large-scale military operation and heroism of Azerbaijani people.

Participants of the ceremony observed a one minute silence in memory of those who died for the independence of Azerbaijani state.

The event also featured a documentary, based on the tragedy of January 20.

**AzerTAj**

**19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 held abroad  
(21 January, 2009)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Germany, Coordination Center of Azerbaijanis and Azerbaijan-German Solidarity Association co-organized a ceremony to commemorate the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event participants heard speeches by Azerbaijani ambassador to Germany Parviz Shahbazov, Education Minister Misir Mardanov and others.

Misir Mardanov spoke of the history of the tragedy. He stressed due to national leader Heydar Aliyev`s great efforts, the tragedy received a legal and political assessment.

Afterwards, the participants saw a documentary “Way Leading to Freedom”

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A commemoration ceremony to mark the 19th anniversary of 20 January tragedy was organized in Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles.

Representatives of Azerbaijani community in California attended the event. Azerbaijan`s Consul General to Los Angeles Elin Suleymanov told of the history of the tragedy.

A documentary “Way towards 20 January” was demonstrated at the event, as well.

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The Azerbaijan`s Embassy in UK arranged a commemorative event to mark the 19th anniversary of the tragedy which was attended by representatives of the Azerbaijani community in the country and Turkic speaking peoples.

Speakers at the event briefed the attendees on the history of the tragedy.

A documentary on the tragedy was shown at the event.

**AzerTAj**



**2010**

**Azerbaijani embassy to Indonesia commemorates victims of January 20  
(12 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijan`s embassy in Jakarta organized an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Addressing the event, Ambassador Ibrahim Hajiyeu gave detailed information about the tragedy.

He said this day played “huge” role in struggle of the Azerbaijani people on the way to freedom and sovereignty.

**AzerTAj**

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**Azerbaijan`s embassy to Ukraine commemorates victims of January 20  
(14 January, 2010)**

A meeting dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy today has taken place in Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Kyiv.

The event brought together diplomats, members of Diaspora organizations, Azeri scientists and workers of culture.

Speaking at the event, Ambassador Talat Aliyev said a memorial evening to pay tribute to the victims of 20 January, 1990, the Baku bloody tragedy, will be held in the House of Teachers, in Kyiv. The book “Realities of Genocide of Azerbaijanis” written by head of Azerbaijan`s Presidential Administration, academician Ramiz Mehdiyev will be also presented here, Mr. Aliyev said.

PhD in political science, Ambassador Talat Aliyev is adviser of the book translated into Ukraine. The editors are professor of the Institute of International Relations of Ukrainian National Aviation University Arif Guliyev and docent of the Institute of Philology of Taras Shevchenko National University Zamina Aliyeva.

Photos of Azerbaijani State Telegraph Agency (AzerTAc) were applied in the book.

**AzerTAj**

**January 20 events commemorated in different countries  
(18 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijanis living in the different countries hold commemoration ceremonies on the occasion of 20th anniversary of January 20 events and pay tribute to the victims of the tragedy, press service of the State Committee for Diaspora Activities told APA. Strasburg-based Azerbaijani House devoted January 17 edition of half-monthly Sunday radio program to January 20 tragedy.

Head of Azerbaijani House Mustafa Alinca joined the program via phone and spoke about the protest of Strasburg Azerbaijanis against some French publications based on Russian and Armenian sources about the events in Azerbaijan in that period and Azerbaijani House's activity to deliver true information to the French community. The program also broadcasted Azerbaijani House's statement on the January 20 tragedy, which demands France, the first country adopted human rights law and Strasburg-based European Court of Human Rights to give political value to the January 20 events, to bring its originators to justice and to make efforts to punish them.

Benelux Azerbaijani Congress (BAC) held a commemoration ceremony in Rotterdam, the Netherlands on the occasion of January 20 events. Azerbaijani embassy officials, Diaspora organizations, businessmen and students attended the ceremony and remembered the victims with a minute of silence. Ramiz Aliyev's film about January 20, as well as art composition were shown at the event.

Event on the 20th anniversary of January 20 tragedy was held in Kant, Kyrgyzstan, by Azeri Public Union in Bishkek and Fund for Supporting the Policy of Turkic-speaking States. Chairman of Azeri Public Union Akif Alaferdov gave information about the tragedy, crimes committed by the Soviet army in Baku.

**APA**

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**“Americans in sympathy with the Azerbaijani people in commemoration of 20 January martyrs”,  
USA charged affaires  
(20 January, 2010)**

The 20 January bloody events have been the focus of the leading media in the United States twenty years ago. “The Washington Times”, “The New York Times” and other influential newspapers and electronic media paid due attention and space to the happenings then.

Speaking to the correspondent of AzerTAc, Mr. Donald Lu, charged affaires of the USA Embassy in Baku, said his country is in sympathy with the Azerbaijani people in commemoration of the 20 January martyrs. “Twenty years ago, they have died for freedom”, he stressed.

According to the diplomat, the United States supports territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and is keen in strengthening of partnership.

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**Azerbaijan's embassies abroad commemorate 20 January tragedy  
(20 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijan's embassy in Moscow held mourning and celebration dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the tragic Black January events in Baku.

Ambassador Polad Bulbuloglu and others spoke of the bloody events happened 20 years ago in the capital of Azerbaijan.

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Embassy of Azerbaijan in Belarus carried out a range of actions dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the tragic events of "Bloody January".

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**Azeri ambassador to Canada meets leaders of Jewish community  
(20 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijani ambassador to Canada Farid Shafiyev met leaders of Jewish community in Toronto.

The ambassador praised Azerbaijan-Israel relations, saying the Jewish community in his country makes “great” contribution in this regard.

Shafiyev also hailed cooperation between the Azerbaijani and Jewish communities in Canada.

Executive Director Frank Dimant praised the Azerbaijan-Israel relations.

**AzerTAc**

**Azerbaijan's Kuwaiti ambassador issues statement on Black January anniversary  
(20 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Kuwait, Shahin Abdullayev, has issued a statement in three local Arabic language newspapers as his country marks the 20th anniversary of the Black January events when Soviet army invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

In the statement, published by Al Qabas, Al Watan and Al Shahid newspapers, Abdullayev says the invasion of the Soviet military units resulted in the killing of 140 people, while more than 740 were wounded.

“By committing those murderous deeds the Soviet leadership demonstrated its support for Armenia's territorial claims against Azerbaijan which date back to late 80s.”

“The January 20 tragedy was nothing but an attempt of the Soviet leadership to suppress the Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence,” the Ambassador adds.

“However, the January 20 events were what boosted the struggle for an independent Azerbaijan, and the country regained its independence in 1991.”

In the statement, Abdullayev also increases public awareness of Armenia's “long-running aggression policy” against Azerbaijan.

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**Vienna hosts photo exhibition on Bloody January  
(20 January, 2010)**

A photo exhibition dedicated to the 20th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy opened Tuesday at the Time gallery here. The event organized by the Azerbaijan Academic Union, Azerbaijani embassy and Business, Culture & Sport Society brought together Azerbaijani community, diplomatic corps and media.

AzerTAc's correspondent, chairman of the Azerbaijan Academic Union Elgun Niftaliyev briefed the participants on the history of the Bloody January events.

First secretary of Azerbaijani embassy Rufat Hamidov noted the 20 January is the most important period of Azerbaijan's struggle for independence.

The photographs at the exhibition were provided by AzerTAc photographers Mirnaib Hasanoglu and Tahir Jafarov.

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**Al Watan Daily publishes article by Azerbaijani envoy to Kuwait on Black January  
(20 January, 2010)**

The Al Watan Daily newspaper, on its 20 January issue, has published an article by Azerbaijani ambassador to Kuwait Shahin Abdullayev concerning the 20th anniversary of Black January.

The article says on January 20, 1990 the Soviet troops, to save the communist regime and suppress the Azerbaijani people's national struggle of freedom, invaded Baku killing more than 140 and injuring over 700 innocent and defenseless people.

The article goes on to say that the 20 January tragedy could not break the Azerbaijani people's will to become free, and on October 18, 1991 Azerbaijan regained its independence.

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**Mexico's largest daily features 20 January tragedy in Baku  
(20 January, 2010)**

An article about 20 January tragedy by Azerbaijani ambassador to Mexico Ilgar Mukhtarov has been published in the Mexico's largest circulation daily Reforma. The story titled "The end of the soviet era in Azerbaijan" narrates on the history of January bloody events, its causes, national movement in Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

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## **World Azerbaijanis commemorate 20th anniversary of Black January (20 January, 2010)**

The embassy of Azerbaijan in **China** has organized an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

Opening the event, Ambassador Yashar Aliyev said on January 20, 1990, the Soviet troops invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

The diplomat noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given political and legal assessment.

In **Tehran**, a commemorative event organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy brought together members of the Azerbaijani community in the country and workers of foreign embassies functioning here.

Ambassador Javanshir Akhundov made a speech at the event, condemning the leadership of the former Soviet Union which ordered the massacre.

The Ambassador also stressed national leader Heydar Aliyev's role in making it possible to give a legal and political assessment to this bloody and tragic action.

The event also featured a documentary on the tragedy.

In **Syria**, Azerbaijan's Embassy hosted an event which was attended by representatives of the community.

Speakers at the event briefed the participants on the Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence and freedom. They condemned the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

A commemorative event to mark the 20th anniversary of the Black January was organized in **Tbilisi**.

Making a speech at the event, Azerbaijani ambassador to Georgia Namig Aliyev spoke of history of the tragedy.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

The Ambassador praised President Ilham Aliyev's role in bringing the realities behind the January 20 massacre and Azerbaijanis' genocide to the world community.

In **Turkmenistan**, the Azerbaijani Embassy lowered the state flag to pay tribute to the January 20 victims, and hosted a commemorative event.

Ambassador Elkhan Huseynov described the 20 January events as a "grave crime" against the Azerbaijani people. He said only national leader of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev gave political and legal assessment to the events.

The diplomat also hailed President Ilham Aliyev's keeping problems of martyrs families in focus of attention.

The event participants saw a documentary featuring the tragedy.

The Association of Azerbaijan Cultural Center in **Uzbekistan** hosted a commemorative event which was attended by members of the community and journalists.

Speaking at the event, chairman of the Association Akif Agatalibov briefed participants on the history of the tragedy. He called the January 20 events “one of the most tragic days in Azerbaijan’s history”.

In **Ankara**, Azerbaijan’s Embassy has organized an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The Embassy also sent data concerning the facts on the tragedy to foreign representation accredited in the country.

Azerbaijani students in Turkey have organized a series of events to honor memory of the martyrs.

In addition, Turkey-based TRT channel has demonstrated a documentary featuring the tragedy. Azerbaijan’s consulate general in Kars has arranged an event to commemorate anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Consul-General Hasan Zeynalov spoke of the history of the massacre.

The diplomat noted the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev held a press conference in Azerbaijan’s representation in Moscow where he openly condemned the Soviet leadership’s actions against the innocent and defenseless people of Azerbaijan on 20 January, 1990.

Azerbaijan’s permanent representation to the Council of Europe has arranged an event to honor the memory of martyrs.

The country’s permanent representative to CoE Arif Mammadov spoke of the history of the Azerbaijani people’s struggle for independence and freedom. The diplomat condemned the 20 January events as a “grave crime” against the Azerbaijani people.

The event participants also saw an exhibition featuring the tragedy.

An event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of 20 January tragedy was held in the Azerbaijan Trade and Cultural Center in **Washington** with support of the country’s embassy.

The event brought together U.S. officials, members of the Azerbaijani and Turkish communities and journalists.

The event was addressed by executive director of the U.S. - Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce Mahir Isgandarov, the embassy’s official Khazar Ibrahim and founding editor of the Azerbaijan International Magazine Betty Blair.

They spoke of the history of the Azerbaijani people’s struggle for independence and freedom.

Azerbaijan’s Embassy in the Netherlands has organized an exhibition featuring the 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together heads of diplomatic representations in the country, members of the Azerbaijani community and journalists.

Ambassador Fuad Iskandarov made a speech at the event which was followed by a documentary on the Black January.

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Azerbaijani ambassador to **Russia** Polad Bulbuloglu made a speech at the Lomonosov Moscow State University on the 20 January tragedy. He said on that day in 1990, the Soviet troops entered Baku to suppress the people's movement as a result of which 137 innocent people were killed.

The ambassador noted the event went down the Azerbaijan history as "Black January."

**AzerTAc**

**Azerbaijanis remember Black January victims worldwide  
(21 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijanis across the world have arranged a series of events these days to commemorate the 20th anniversary of the Black January tragedy when the Soviet army invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

**In London**, a commemorative event brought together representatives of the Azerbaijani and Turkish communities, journalists and embassy staffers. Speaking to the ceremony, ambassador Fakhraddin Gurbanov called the January 20 events “one of the most tragic days in Azerbaijan`s history”. The event featured a film on the bloody January events.

**In Israel**, a commemorative event was arranged by the Azerbaijan-Israel International Association, and featured a photo exhibition featuring scenes of the bloody events.

**In St. Petersburg**, Azerbaijan`s Consul General Gudsi Osmanov addressed a commemorative event to condemn the leadership of the former Soviet Union “which ordered the massacre”.

**In Lithuania**, a commemorative event was arranged at the Saeima where MPs observed a minute of silence. Deputy Speaker Ceslovas Stankevicius condemned the executors of the bloody events.

**In the UAE**, the embassy arranged a commemorative event which brought together representatives of the Azerbaijani community, embassy staffers and students. The event featured a documentary on the bloody events. Local Gulf News newspaper published an article about the Black January.

**AzerTAc**

**Black January's 20th anniversary commemorated abroad  
(21 January, 2010)**

Azerbaijan's Embassy in Saudi Arabia has arranged an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of Black January.

Opening the event, ambassador Tofiq Abdullayev said on January 20, 1990, the Soviet army invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent people.

The diplomat said the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, where he held a press conference condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people. The diplomat added only Heydar Aliyev gave political and legal assessment to the

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The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Egypt has organized a press-conference on the 20th anniversary of Black January.

Ambassador Faig Bagirov said on January 20, 1990 the Azerbaijani people suffered terror acts committed by the Soviet troops. Other speakers described the 20 January events a "grave crime" against the humanity.

The participants saw a documentary featuring the massacre.

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Azerbaijan's Embassy in Pakistan in collaboration with the Preston University have held a conference to honor the memory of Black January martyrs.

Addressed the event were rector of the University Abdul Basit, Ambassador Eynulla Madatli, president of Pakistan-Azerbaijan Friendship Association Khalid Mahmood and Jordanian ambassador Saleh Ahmed Al-Jawarneh.

They spoke of the history of the Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence.

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A commemorative event to mark the 20th anniversary of 20 January was held in Azerbaijan's Embassy in France.

The embassy's charges d'affaires Emil Aliyev said on January 20, 1990 the Soviet troops entered Baku to suppress the Azerbaijani people's movement of freedom as a result of which hundreds of innocent people were killed.

He said the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to Azerbaijan's permanent representation in Moscow, where he demanded that the Soviet leaders must be punished for their actions.

Other speakers condemned the 20 January events as a "grave crime" against the Azerbaijani people.

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The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Germany, together with the German-Azerbaijan Forum, Coordination Center of Azerbaijanis and EuroKaukAsia scientific and cultural society, held an event to commemorate the 20th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event was attended by representatives of the Azerbaijani community, workers of the embassy and journalists.

Speakers at the event were chairman of the forum Otto Hauser, Ambassador Parviz Shahbazov and chairwoman of EuroKaukAsia Center Eva-Maria Auch.

They said on January 20, 1990 the Soviet army entered Baku to suppress the Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence as a result of which hundreds of innocent people were killed.

The event participants saw a film entitled "Black January".

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**University of Los Angeles hosts seminar on Bloody January  
(26 January, 2010)**

According to Azerbaijan's consulate in Los Angeles, a seminar entitled "Path to Freedom and Bloody January" dealing with 1990 January events in Baku has been held at the University of Los-Angeles (UNCLA) with the support of the Near Eastern Studies Center.

Azerbaijani consul Elin Suleymanov delivered a presentation on the bloody January tragedy. He noted the 20 January events played a key role in laying a foundation for the country's independence, saying the violence against Azerbaijan and other Soviet republics caused the demise of the "empire".

The diplomat pointed out national leader Heydar Aliyev's support in the aftermath of 20 January events played an important role.

He also told of his article "The Price of Freedom: Remembering January 20, 1990" published in the Huffington Post newspaper.

**AzerTAc**

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**Victims of Black January tragedy honored in PoliMedia University, Indonesia  
(19 January, 2011)**

The Ambassador of Azerbaijan to Indonesia and Republic of the Philippines Ibragim Hajiyev has made a presentation dedicated to the Black January. The Ambassador, speaking in the University PoliMedia in Indonesia, stressed that late at night on January 19, 1990, Soviet troops entered Baku smashing through the barricades. Up to 700 civilians were injured and 130 were killed, thousands went missing as a result of the Soviet invasion.

Black January also known as the January Massacre was a violent crackdown of the Azerbaijani independence movement in Baku on January 19–20, 1990, pursuant to a state of emergency during the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

**AzerTAc**

**Azeri ombudswoman releases statement on Black January anniversary  
(19 January, 2011)**

Azerbaijan`s Commissioner for Human Rights Elmira Suleymanova has issued a statement on the 21st anniversary of the January 20 tragedy.

“On January 20, the Soviet Army, consisting of the troops of the USSR Defense Ministry, Internal Ministry and State Security Committee, stormed Baku brutally killing over 130 and wounding more than 600 innocent civilians...”

Ombudswoman called the January 20 tragedy “the cruelest crime ever committed by a state against its citizens”.

The statement said the tragic events of 1990 were “a strict violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights proclaimed by the General Assembly of the United Nations, and a number of other international legal documents on human rights”.

The ombudswoman expressed regret that “the January tragedy, which resulted in mass violation of human rights, has not yet been given a due legal assessment”.

The statement was sent to UN Secretary General, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, OSCE, the Council of Europe, Institute of International and European Ombudsmen, Asian Ombudsman Association, International Peace Bureau and Universal Peace Federation, as well as foreign human rights commissioners, Azerbaijan`s embassies abroad, foreign embassies in Azerbaijan and Diaspora organizations.

**AzerTAc**

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**Azerbaijan`s embassy to Morocco commemorates January 20 victims  
(20 January, 2011)**

Baku, January 20 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s embassy to Morocco has held a commemorative event marking the 21st anniversary of the January 20 tragedy.

The event brought together MPs, representatives of a Morocco-Azerbaijan friendship group and diplomatic corps.

The event started with a minute of silence, which then was followed by the performance Azerbaijan`s anthem.

Speaking to the ceremony, ambassador Sabir Aghabayov highlighted the history of the Bloody January events.

He stressed national leader Heydar Aliyev`s role in ensuring that the tragedy is given a due legal and political assessment.

**AzerTAc**

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**Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Saudi Arabia  
(20 January, 2011)**

Baku, January 20 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Saudi Arabia has organized a commemoration event to mark the 21st anniversary of Bloody January tragedy.

Speaking at the event ambassador Tofiq Abdullayev briefed the participants on the history of the tragedy. He said over the night from January 19 to 20 military units of the former Soviet Union stormed Baku without warning and committed terrible massacre against innocent people. The next day after the tragedy national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the permanent office of Azerbaijan in Moscow, shared the grief of his people, condemned those responsible for the January tragedy, and demanded to give a political and legal assessment to the events despite the threat to his life and the life of his family members.

The diplomat also spoke of the Azerbaijani leadership`s care and attention for the families of the 20 January tragedy.

Other speakers at the event spoke of the Azerbaijani people`s struggle for independence and freedom.

**21st anniversary of Black January marked abroad  
(20 January, 2011)**

Baku, January 20 (AzerTAc). The Embassy of Azerbaijan in China and Shusha Culture Center have co-organized an event to commemorate the 21st anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together employees of the Embassy, Azerbaijani businessmen, students, representatives of diplomatic missions accredited in the country and others.

Addressing the event, counselor of the Embassy Bayram Hasanov spoke of the history of the bloody January events and Armenia`s aggression policy against Azerbaijan.

The diplomat noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given political and legal assessment.

The event participants also saw a documentary on the 20 January events.

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Another commemoration event to mark the 21st anniversary of 20 January tragedy was organized in Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Kuwait.

The event was attended by members of the Azerbaijani community in the country, public and political figures and media representatives.

Opening the event, ambassador Tural Rzayev said on January 20, 1990, the Soviet troops invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

The ambassador noted the next day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the permanent office of Azerbaijan in Moscow, shared the grief of his people, condemned those responsible for the January massacre, and demanded to give a political and legal assessment to the events.

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The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Romania has arranged an event to commemorate the 21st anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together employees of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation`s representation in Romania, chairman and members of board of directors of the Romania-Azerbaijan Friendship Society, members of Turkish and Tatar communities, representatives of media and NGOs.

Speaking at the event, ambassador Eldar Hasanov condemned the massacre committed by the leadership of the former Soviet Union, Soviet armed forces and communist regime. The ambassador noted on January 20, 1990 the Soviet Army stormed Baku brutally killing over 130 and wounding more than 7000 innocent civilians.

He added due to national leader Heydar Aliyev`s initiative the tragedy was given political and legal assessment.

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The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Libya has organized an event to honor the memory of 20 January martyrs.

The event was attended by Azerbaijanis living in Libya, students and employees of the Embassy.

Ambassador Agasalim Shukurov briefed the participants on the history of the bloody January events.

He particularly underlined national leader Heydar Aliyev`s efforts to give the tragedy political and legal assessment.

The diplomat also touched upon the Azerbaijani leadership`s efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict peacefully.

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Another commemoration event was held in Preston University in Pakistan at the initiative of Azerbaijan`s Embassy.

The event was attended by the University`s staff, diplomats, public and political figures, media representatives.

Addressing the event Azerbaijani Chargé d`Affaires Dashgin Shikarov highlighted the crimes committed by the Soviet troops against Azerbaijani people.

Rector of the Preston University Abdul Basit, professor of National University of Modern Languages Zulfugar Gureyshi, journalists

Tahir Farooq and Amir Bhatti told of the 20 January massacre. The also touched upon the ongoing development processes in Azerbaijan.

Pakistan-based "The News" newspaper has published in its 20 January edition an article by Azerbaijani Chargé d`Affaires Dashgin Shikarov. The article features the essence of the 20 January tragedy.

The country`s other newspapers including "Daily Ittehad" published articles on the bloody January events.

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Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Russia has organized an event to mark the 21st anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

Opening the event, ambassador Polad Bulbuloglu spoke of the history of the bloody January events.

He condemned the savageries committed by the Soviet troops against the Azerbaijani people.

The diplomat noted the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev held a press conference in Azerbaijan`s representation in Moscow where he openly condemned the Soviet leadership`s actions against the innocent and defenseless people of Azerbaijan on 20 January, 1990.

Lithuanian ambassador to Russia Anatanas Vinkus said his people share the Azerbaijani people`s grief.

Other speakers at the event stressed national leader Heydar Aliyev`s role in making it possible to give a legal and political assessment to this bloody and tragic action.

The event brought together ambassadors of Lithuania, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Sudan, Mali, counselors of the embassies of Turkey, Tajikistan, Ukraine, Mauritania, Zambia, Moldova, Paraguay, Belarus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan, employees of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation`s representation in Russia and others.



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**Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Kazakhstan  
(21 January, 2011)**

Baku, January 21 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s consulate general to Kazakhstan has organized a commemoration event to mark the 21st anniversary of Bloody January tragedy.

The event brought together members of Azerbaijani Diaspora in Aktau, scientists, veterans of war and journalists.

Consul general Rashad Mammadov briefed on history of the bloody tragedy and brave sons, who died for independence and territorial integrity of the country. He said over the night from January 19 to 20 military units of the former Soviet Union stormed Baku without warning and committed terrible massacre against innocent people.

The participants familiarized themselves with photo exhibition and watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

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**Victims of Black January remembered in Ukraine  
(21 January, 2011)**

Kyiv, January 21 (AzerTAc). A ceremony to mark the 21st anniversary of the 20 January tragedy was hosted here Thursday by the Azerbaijani embassy to Ukraine and Congress of Ukrainian Azerbaijanis.

Speaking to the event, ambassador Eynulla Madatli expressed gratitude to Azerbaijani compatriots and Ukrainian society for revering the memory of sons and daughters of Azerbaijan who laid down their lives for independence of the country. He gave a background of the 20 January tragedy.

The ambassador highlighted the importance of the statement national leader Heydar Aliyev made at a press conference on January 21, 1990 in Moscow.

Madatli pointed out President Ilham Aliyev places an emphasis on social security of shahids` families.

Chairman of the Congress of Ukrainian Azerbaijan Ilgar Abbasov, head of the Congress`s Kyiv city branch Oleg Krapivin and others touched on the bravery and patriotism of 20 January heroes.

The function was attended by Azerbaijani embassy staffers, Ukrainian public, Azerbaijani, Turkish and local media.

The commemoration ceremony also took place in many regions of Ukraine where Azerbaijani Diaspora representatives live.

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**Mayor of Washington signs statement on Black January events  
(22 January, 2011)**

Washington, January 22 (AzerTAc). Vincent C. Gray, an American politician, who is currently serving as the Mayor of the District of Columbia, issued a statement to pay an honor to the victims of the Black January.

Black January also known as Black Saturday or the January Massacre was a violent crackdown of the Azerbaijani independence movement in Baku on January 19–20, 1990, pursuant to a state of emergency during the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

More than 130 people died from wounds received that night and during subsequent violent confrontations and incidents that lasted in February; the majority of these were civilians killed by Soviet soldiers. More than 700 civilians were wounded. Hundreds of people were detained, only a handful of whom were put on trial for alleged criminal offenses. Civil liberties were severely curtailed.

The statement says that all Azerbaijanis living in the United States mark the 21st anniversary of the Black January tragedy. The mayor urged all residents of the U.S. capital to honor the victims of the Black January.

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**Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Denmark  
(24 January, 2011)**

Baku, January 24 (AzerTAc). The Denmark-Azerbaijan-Turkish Unity Society has organized a commemoration event to mark the 21st anniversary of Bloody January tragedy in Copenhagen, Denmark.

The event brought together members of Azerbaijan and Turkish communities in the country.

The head of the Society Anakhanim Huseynova briefed participants on the history of the tragedy.

Exhibition of books and photos about the 20 January tragedy demonstrated at the event.

**US congressman issues statement on Black January  
(29 January, 2011)**

US Democrat congressman Edolphus Towns has issued a statement on the occasion of the 21st anniversary of Black January, which saw the killing of civilian Azerbaijanis in one of the most brutal acts in the last moments of the Soviet Empire.

In his statement, Towns said he joined the people of Azerbaijan in marking the anniversary of the January tragedy when late at night in 1990 the 26,000-strong Soviet troops invaded capital Baku

The Congressman recalled the Human Rights Watch`s condemning the Soviet troops` attack.

“According to a report published by Human Rights Watch, among the most heinous violations of human rights...were the numerous attacks on medical personnel, ambulances and even hospitals.” The report further stated that the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers appeared to have been intended as a warning to Azerbaijan as well as to the other republics of the Soviet Union seeking independence.”

Towns added, however, the tragedy united the Azerbaijani`s people even more.

The Congressman also praised Azerbaijan`s development path. He said Azerbaijan is today a prospering country, describing it as the United States` important partner in strengthening the energy security in the region and fighting against terrorism and extremism.

“I thank the Azerbaijani people for their friendship, and offer my sincere condolences to the families of those who sacrificed their lives for the future of their country.”

Towns said: “The United States will continue working towards ensuring the human rights and the rule of law in the region, preserving stability, strengthening institutions and solving conflicts.”

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**Azerbaijan`s consulate general to mark 20 January tragedy in Turkish city of Kars  
(14 January, 2012)**

Baku, January 14 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s consulate general in Turkish city of Kars will hold an event to commemorate victims of 20 January tragedy.

The event will bring together Azeri consul general Aykhan Suleymanov, representatives of Kars municipality and deputies of Grand National Assembly of Turkey.

The participants will familiarize themselves with photo stand and watch documentary on bloody 20 January tragedy.

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**20 January tragedy commemorated in Tashkent  
(19 January, 2012)**

Tashkent, January 19 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Uzbekistan organized a commemorative event to mark the 22nd anniversary of Bloody January tragedy in the Centre of Culture named after Heydar Aliyev on Wednesday.

Speaking at the event, Azerbaijan`s charge d`affaires Akif Aliyev briefed the participants on the history of the tragedy. He said over the night from January 19 to 20 military units of the former Soviet Union stormed Baku and committed a terrible massacre against innocent people.

“The next day after the tragedy national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the permanent office of Azerbaijan in Moscow, shared the grief of his people, condemned those responsible for the January tragedy, and demanded a political and legal assessment to be given to the events despite threats to his life and the life of his family members.”

The event was attended by employees of Azerbaijani and Turkish Embassies, members of the Azeri diaspora and Uzbek cultural figures.

The Embassy distributed information material on the tragedy to Uzbekistan`s Ministry of Foreign Affairs and other governmental bodies, embassies of foreign countries and representations of international organizations in Uzbekistan.

The event featured a photo exhibition and a documentary on 20 January tragedy.

**World Azerbaijanis commemorate 22nd anniversary of Black January  
(20 January, 2012)**

Baku, January 20 (AzerTAc). The embassy of Azerbaijan in Tajikistan has organized an event to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together employees of the Embassy, representatives of the diplomatic corps and international organizations, Azerbaijani businessmen and journalists.

Opening the event, charge d`affaires Ilham Zamanov said on January 20, 1990, the Soviet troops invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

Participants of the event watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

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In Dubai, a commemorative event organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy brought together members of the Azerbaijani community in the country and students studying here.

Ambassador Elkhan Gahramanov made a speech at the event, condemning the leadership of the former Soviet Union which ordered the massacre.

The diplomat noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The event also featured a documentary on the tragedy.

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In Bosnia and Herzegovina, Azerbaijan`s diplomatic representation hosted an event which was attended by representatives of the Azerbaijani community and students.

Speakers at the event briefed the participants on the Azerbaijani people`s struggle for independence and freedom. They condemned the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Speakers noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

Participants of the event watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

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A commemorative event to mark the 22nd anniversary of the Black January was organized in Aktau, Kazakhstan.

Making a speech at the event, Azerbaijan`s Consul General in Aktau Rashad Mammadov spoke of history of the tragedy.

Other speakers called the January 20 events “one of the most tragic days in Azerbaijan`s history”.

The event participants saw a documentary featuring the tragedy.

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Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Turkmenistan organized an event to commemorate the 22nd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together employees of the Embassy, representatives of the community, intellectuals and businessmen.

Ambassador Vahdat Sultanzade spoke of the history of the massacre.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

The Ambassador praised President Ilham Aliyev`s role in bringing the realities behind the January 20 massacre and Azerbaijanis` genocide to the world community.

The event also featured a documentary on the tragedy.

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**London commemorates 20 January tragedy  
(21 January, 2012)**

Baku, January 21 (AzerTAc). The Azerbaijan`s Embassy in the United Kingdom organized a commemorative event to mark the 22nd anniversary of Bloody January tragedy in Azerbaijan House Culture and Friendship Centre in London.

Opening the event representative of the Azerbaijan House Ali Takin Atalar briefed the participants on the history of tragedy.

Ambassador Fakhraddin Gurbanov stressed importance of raising world community`s awareness about the tragedy.

The attendees watched a film and photos reflecting realities about the bloody day.

The event was attended by the representatives of the Azerbaijani community and Diaspora Organizations, British community, and Azerbaijani students.

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**New-York commemorates “bloody January”  
(21 January, 2012)**

Washington, January 21 (AzerTAc). The representatives of Azerbaijani community organizations expressed their condolences to Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan to the UN over the 20 January tragedy.

The Azerbaijan`s diplomatic mission distributed news release on the history, causes and results of the tragedy among the UN member states`s missions.

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**Azerbaijan`s embassy in Germany remembers January 20 victims  
(21 January, 2012)**

Baku, January 21 (AzerTAc). The embassy of Azerbaijan in Germany has organized an event to mark the 22nd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together Azerbaijan`s Minister of Agriculture Ismat Abasov, Deputy Economic Development Minister Niyazi Safarov, representatives of the community, members of the country`s Diaspora in Germany.

Ambassador Parviz Shahbazov made a speech at the event, condemning the leadership of the former Soviet Union which ordered the massacre.

The diplomat noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given political and legal assessment.

Agriculture Minister Ismat Abasov and Deputy Economic Development Minister Niyazi Safarov spoke of history of the tragedy.

The event participants also viewed an exhibition reflecting the January 20 massacre.

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**Tehran hosts conference titled “Impact of 20 January tragedy on collapse of USSR”  
(23 January, 2012)**

Tehran, 23 January (AzerTAc). The embassy of Azerbaijan in Iran hosted a scientific conference under the theme “impact of 20 January tragedy on the collapse of USSR”.

The conference featured a documentary film about the tragedy.

In his speech, ambassador Javanshir Akhundov briefed participants on political causes of the bloody 20 January.

The diplomat noted that national leader Heydar Aliyev was the person who was to first to give political and historical judgment of the tragedy and protested against soviet leadership`s deeds.

Other speakers, including Professor of Tehran University Bahram Amirahmadiyan, chairman of Azerbaijan-Iran Friendship society Ahad Gazayi noted that this tragedy was perpetrated to suppress the struggle of people for freedom and independence.

They said the tragedy of 20 January prompted the collapse of the Soviet empire.

**“The Washington Times” issues article on “Black January”  
(10 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 10 (AzerTAc). The US newspaper “The Washington Times” published an article on the 23rd anniversary of “Black January” in its issue dated January 9.

The article states that on January 20, the Azerbaijani Americans commemorate the 23rd anniversary of “Black January,” events that marked the beginning of the end of Soviet rule in Azerbaijan.

The article informs about the history of the tragedy. On the night of Jan. 19, 1990, Azerbaijan was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops. A courageous resistance by Azerbaijanis to the Soviet invasion continued into February. Eventually, 170 Azerbaijanis were killed, 321 disappeared, more than 700 were wounded, and hundreds more were detained.

The Soviet attack against innocent civilians in Azerbaijan followed massacres in other Soviet republics, including Kazakhstan (1986) and Georgia (1989), and was tragically replicated one year later in Lithuania, although the brutality of the “Black January” tragedy was the biggest exercise in collective punishment by reactionary forces of the Communist Party.

The terrible event in Azerbaijan was an atrocity, but it also gave birth to a hope that led eventually to independence and freedom the following year.

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**Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress Addresses European Parliament  
(11 January, 2013)**

Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress Addresses European Parliament

Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress addressed the European Parliament in connection with the 23rd anniversary of the Black January events. The appeal was addressed also to the lawmakers of the Benelux countries. The 20 January 1990 was also the start of the Soviet regime collapse in Azerbaijan

Baku, January 11 (AzerTAc). Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress addressed the European Parliament in connection with the 23rd anniversary of the Black January events.

The appeal was addressed also to the lawmakers of the Benelux countries.

The 20 January 1990 was also the start of the Soviet regime collapse in Azerbaijan, the appeal says.

Members of the Congress expressed hope that the European Parliament would adopt a resolution condemning this anti-human action and will give political assessment to these atrocities.

**Azerbaijani Embassy in Moldova issues a press release on 20 January tragedy.  
(14 January, 2013)**

Chisinau, January 14 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani Embassy in Moldova distributed a press release on January 20 tragedy.

The document distributed among all branches of the Moldovan authorities, including the diplomatic corps accredited in Chisinau, NGOs and the media of this country, narrates on the invasion of Baku by a large contingent of the Soviet army, interior troops and special units, accompanied by extreme cruelty and unprecedented atrocities in January 1990. It was implemented a carnage over the peaceful population, hundreds of people have been killed, wounded, missing, the documents says.

Totally, according to the press release, by the illegal introduction of troops in Baku and regions of the country there were killed 133 people, injured 744 people, illegally arrested 841 people and five people were missing. The soldiers were annihilated, and burnt 200 houses and apartments, 80 vehicles, including ambulances, the state and private property for a total of 5,637,286 rubles. Among the dead were women, children and the elderly, as well as ambulance workers and police.

Soldiers with cruelty shot people in the face, carried out deliberate assaults of tanks and armored attacks on passenger cars to kill them, shelled hospitals and prevent health-care personnel to assist the wounded. The soldiers took away the wounded, bayoneted them, and used special bullets to frighten and kill people, and multiply the suffering and make death inevitable.

On this day, in Moscow before the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan there was held a protest meeting of Azerbaijanis who raised in their hands black flags in the streets of Moscow and rallied towards the Central Committee of the CPSU to present their protest appeal. Former leader of Azerbaijan, member of the Politburo of the CPSU Central Committee, First Deputy Chairman of the USSR Council of Ministers, who was retired then, Heydar Aliyev, appeared in Azerbaijan's permanent representation in Moscow, held a press conference to condemn inhumane action of the Soviet troops in Azerbaijan.

Finally, the press release says: "Baku said farewell to the dead sons and daughters of Azerbaijan. Millions of people gathered on the Lenin Square. The funeral procession passed in the Highland Park of Baku, which was selected for the burial of the victims. They were heroes for future generations, and they were martyrs, killed for the independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan.



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**Azerbaijani ambassador speaks of Black January tragedy on Belarus TV channel  
(16 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 16 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani ambassador to Belarus Isfandiyar Vahabzade has highlighted the history of January 20, 1990 events in Baku as he was a guest of the ONT TV channel.

The ambassador noted the Black January victims had been commemorated not only by Azerbaijani residents, but Azerbaijanis throughout the world.

He said: “20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in history of the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as a heroism page.

“Leading of the battle divisions of the Soviet army aimed against wide mass who got out in the streets and squares of Baku to protest against aggressive actions of Armenia, which was raising territorial claims to our country, against protection rendered to this country by the government of the former USSR had brought to the unprecedented tragedy in Azerbaijan,” he added.

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**January tragedy`s anniversary to be marked in Tabriz  
(16 January, 2013)**

Tehran, January 16 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani Consulate General in Tabriz will organize a ceremony to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

Iranian officials, political and public figures, staff of Turkish Consulate General in Tabriz, as well as media representatives are expected to attend the event.

The ceremony will feature a documentary film and an exhibition of books and photos narrating on the tragedy.

**Egypt`s leading newspaper publishes article on 20 January tragedy  
(16 January, 2013)**

Cairo, January 16 (AzerTAc). Egypt`s leading newspaper “Youm7” (<http://www.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=908060>) has published an article by Ambassador S. Abdullayev in connection with the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy, informed Embassy of Azerbaijan to Egypt.

The author notes that 20 January tragedy had left unforgettable traces in the people`s memory. The ambassador also compared these tragic events with those events happened on January 25, 2011 in Egypt.

The author says Armenia`s territorial claims against Azerbaijan, the mass deportation of Azerbaijanis from Armenia were among the factors that caused to people`s protest against the Soviet regime.

As a result of the bloody operation on January 20, more than 130 Azerbaijanis were killed, while 700 injured.

Azerbaijan`s Ambassador also informed the readers about Azerbaijan`s intensive development.

Azerbaijan`s embassy in Cairo, Egypt also plans to publish articles on January 20, organize broadcast of programs on TV channels and hold a ceremony in memory of martyrs.

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**January 20 victims to be commemorated in Netherlands  
(16 January, 2013)**

Paris, January 16 (AzerTAc). Commemoration ceremonies to mark the 23th anniversary of the Black January tragedy will be organized by Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress in the Netherlands.

On January 20 the Black January victims will be commemorated in Rotterdam's office of the Azerbaijan-Netherlands Solidarity Society.

The event is expected to bring together general public, diplomats, representatives of Turkish, Jewish and other Diasporas, members of the political parties.

A documentary about the Black January events will be screened at the event.

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**Turkish Universities Graduates Social Community marks 23rd anniversary of Black January  
(17 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 17 (AzerTAc). Social Community of Graduates of Turkish Universities (SCGTU) has today organized an event to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event participants visited the Alley of Martyrs to pay tribute to Azerbaijani heroes who sacrificed their lives for independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. They laid a wreath at the Eternal Flame monument.

The ceremony in Ataturk Center has started with the observance of a minute of silence.

SCGTU chairman Chingiz Bayramov spoke of the history of the Bloody January events and Armenia`s aggressive policy against Azerbaijan.

**20 January tragedy's anniversary to be marked in Kuwait  
(17 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 17 (AzerTAc). Azerbaijani embassy in Kuwait will organize a range of events to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The embassy, the "Vatansever" friendship society and "Kuwait-Azeri" joint company will held a commemorating ceremony on January 20.

The ceremony will bring together representatives of the embassy, Azerbaijani, Turkish, Iranian and other Diaspora organizations, political and public figures, MPs and journalists.

The "January 20" photo album, the CD of the documentary film in the Arabian language and information on the tragedy will be sent to the social and Mass Media organizations operating in Kuwait.

The ceremony will also feature a documentary film and exhibition of books and photos narrating on the tragedy.

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**Turkish TV channels to air documentaries on Black January  
(18 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 18 (AzerTAc). The Turkish Radio and Television Corporation`s (TRT) 4 channels will broadcast news and programmes on 20 January tragedy.

According to Baku Office of TRT, programmes entitled “Tears of carnations” and “Wind blowing through Caucasus” will be also aired in TRT Haber, TRT Turk, TRT Avaz and TRT Anadolu channels.

20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in the history of struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as a heroic page.

Leading of the battle divisions of the Soviet army aimed against wide mass who got out in the streets and squares of Baku to protest against aggressive actions of Armenia, which was raising territorial claims towards our country, against protection rendered to this country by the government of the former USSR had brought to the unprecedented tragedy in Azerbaijan.

**Pakistani magazine covers an article on January 20 tragedy  
(18 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 18 (AzerTAc). Pakistan`s monthly “Centreline” magazine has issued an article dedicated to the 23rd anniversary of the January 20 tragedy by Farooq Riaz Chaudhry titled “20 January, 1990 – A day of nightmare for Azerbaijan people”.

According to the Azerbaijan embassy to Pakistan, the article covers the events happened at the end of the XX century in the eve of Soviet Union`s collapse in Azerbaijan. The author writes: “Collapse of the USSR was one of the most remarkable events of the XX century. Decline of economy, war in Afghanistan, Chernobyl catastrophe, deficit of trust to ideas of communism shook the pillars of the great empire. The Armenian nationalists tried to avail this chance and raised territorial claims to Azerbaijan demanding to annex Nagorno-Karabakh district to Armenia. In 1988 more than 300 thousands Azerbaijanis were expelled from their homelands in Armenia. Some of them were killed with brutality, some died on the mountain passes trying to escape from men-hunters. The then leader of the Soviet Union Mikhail Gorbachov backed Armenian separatists instead of calming down tension. In respond, thousands of protesters moved to the central squares of Azerbaijan`s capital and other cities demanding to put an end to the communist rule and to restore independence and sovereignty of Azerbaijan”.

The article states: “At early morning hours of 20 January, 1990, twenty six thousands of Soviet troops, including the special forces entered Baku from different directions and stormed demonstrators firing the crowds. The forces of Baku garrison and the internal troops joint them, having come out of their barracks, and started shooting and smashing by tank tracks unarmed people. As a result of this unprecedented illegal action, 134 men were killed, about 700 men wounded, 841 men got arrested and 5 were declared missing. There were many children, elderly, women, representatives of different ethnic groups and religions amongst the killed innocent civilians. The soldiers gutted 200 houses, state and private movable and immovable property. Military operation was a rough violence of constitutions of the USSR and Azerbaijani SSR as well as International Pact on civil and political rights. Prior to operation the energy block of Azerbaijan Television was blasted and people were deprived of information. The state of emergency was announced only seven hours after operation began. These all are clear indications of the fact that the main aim of this massacre was to teach a lesson to the nation who dared to demand independence”. “Azerbaijan gained its independence on October 18, 1991. By decree of Mr. Heydar Aliyev, the President of Azerbaijan, all victims of the massacre were awarded the title “Martyrs of January 20”. The families of the 20 January`s victims taken care by Government of Azerbaijan. Facilities for free accommodation, education, healthcare and other the privileges provided to them. They are also paid monthly cash allowances. Those who embraced martyrdom on that black day are buried in the Alley of Martyrs which is located on the highest peak of Baku. Every year hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis visit that place to pay tribute to the sons and daughters of Azerbaijan who laid down their lives for the freedom of motherland,” Farooq Riaz Chaudhry addes.



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**Azerbaijan Embassy in South African Republic spreads information on 23rd anniversary  
of Black January  
(18 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 18 (AzerTAc). The Azerbaijan Embassy in the South African Republic distributed on Thursday materials on the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy to the state and media bodies and diplomatic corps accredited in the country.

Information, as well as photos and videos on 20 January have been launched at the web site of the “Friends of Azerbaijan in South Africa” organization thanks to the efforts of the Azerbaijan Embassy in South African Republic.

More information can be found at <http://www.azerbaijan.org.za/index.php/history/black-january>

### **Victims of Black January commemorated in Dubai (18 January, 2013)**

Baku, January 18 (AzerTAc). The event to mark the 23th anniversary of the Black January tragedy was organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy in UAE at Grand Hyatt hotel in Dubai.

The event was attended by the Consul General of Azerbaijan to Dubai, representatives of the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan in UAE, representatives of the Azerbaijan International Bank, members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora.

The ambassador Elkhan Gakhramanov briefed the participants on the bloody events of January, 20, 1990. He also drew the attention of the audience to the Armenian aggression towards Azerbaijan and occupation of the Azerbaijani territories.

The guests also watched a documentary about the tragedy.

Black January also known as Black Saturday or the January Massacre, was a violent crackdown in Baku on January 19–20, 1990, pursuant to a state of emergency during the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Black January is seen as the rebirth of the Azerbaijan Republic. It was one of the occasions during the glasnost and perestroika era in which the USSR used force against dissidents.

Late at night on January 19, 1990, after demolition of the central television station and termination of phone and radio lines by Soviet special forces, 26,000 Soviet troops entered Baku, smashing through the barricades in order to crush the Popular Front. The troops attacked the protesters, firing into the crowds. The shooting continued for three days. They acted pursuant to a state of emergency, which continued for more than four months afterward, declared by the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, signed by President Mikhail Gorbachev. The state of emergency was, however, disclosed to the Azerbaijani public only several hours after the beginning of the offensive, when many citizens already lay dead or wounded in the streets, hospitals and morgues of Baku. Almost the whole population of Baku turned out to bury the dead on the third day, January 22. For another 40 days, the country stayed away from work as a sign of mourning and mass protest. Estimates indicate that between 133 and 137 civilians died with unofficial number reaching 300. Up to 800 were injured and 5 went missing. An additional 26 people were killed in Neftchala and Lankaran regions of the country.

Gorbachev later apologised to Azerbaijan in 1995 by stating: "The declaration of a state emergency in Baku was the biggest mistake of my political career". In 1994, the National Assembly of Azerbaijan adopted a full political and legal evaluation of the Black January events. According to the decree of then President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev from December 16, 1999, all victims of the crackdown were awarded an honorary title of the "Martyr of January 20". January 20 is marked as Martyrs' Day (or literally, "the Day of the Nationwide Sorrow") in Azerbaijan.

**Memory of 20 January tragedy victims honored in UK  
(19 January, 2013)**

London, January 19 (AzerTAc). The Azerbaijani Embassy in the United Kingdom held a commemorative event here to mark the 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Employees of Embassy, representatives of the Azerbaijani organizations functioning in the UK and British society participated at the event.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Ambassador to Great Britain Fakhraddin Gurbanov informed about the historical roots of this bloody tragedy.

He said the 20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in history as the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and as a heroism page.

British poet David Parry praised deeds of the Azerbaijani martyrs who sacrificed their lives for their country.

He also emphasized the importance of the restoration of justice in the international arena.

The representative of the "Azerbaijan House" in London and witness of the Black January Farida Panahova talked about this tragedy.

Speaker stated that President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev constantly carries out concrete measures to solve social problems of the families of martyrs and shows care and attention to them.

**Victims of Black January commemorated in Ashgabat  
(19 January, 2013)**

The event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Black January tragedy was organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy in Turkmenistan.

The event was attended by the members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora, public and creative union representatives, scholars, businessmen and the Embassy staff.

The event started with a minute of silence to commemorate Azerbaijani heroes who gave their lives for the country's independence and territorial integrity.

Ambassador Vahdat Sultanzade made remarks at the commemorate ceremony.

Sultanzade briefed the participants on the history of the tragedy; Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence and freedom, reason and results of the tragedy. They condemned the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Speaker noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The memory of the 20 January martyrs will be engraved in the heart of the Azerbaijani people and will never be forgotten, Mr. Sultanzade emphasized.

The Ambassador has praised President Ilham Aliyev's role in bringing the realities behind the January 20 massacre and Azerbaijanis' genocide to the world community, his special care for the martyrs' families. He also thanked President Ilham Aliyev for granting special allowances to the martyr families.

The orators stressed the important role of the martyrs they played for restoration of country's statehood. Participants of the event watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

## **20 January tragedy`s anniversary marked in Russia (January 20, 2013)**

Azerbaijani embassy in Russia has organized an event to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

Participants laid flowers to bas-relief of national leader Heydar Aliyev and stand reflecting the list of innocent victims of the 20 January tragedy at the embassy.

They also familiarized themselves with photo stand to the effect.

Azerbaijani ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbuloglu said that this day is a day of remembrance of the Azerbaijani martyrs who died in the Black January night. "It is the day of the unity of our people fighting for the country`s territorial integrity."

"On the night of 20 January, Soviet troops and armored vehicles were deployed in Baku, Sumgayit and other cities and regions of our country without any warning. The Constitution of the Azerbaijan SSR was rudely violated. 147 people were killed, 744 were wounded, hundreds were missing and 841 people were arrested illegally", he said.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

The participants watched a documentary on the Black January.

The event brought together employees of the diplomatic corps accredited in Moscow, the Russian Office of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation, the All-Russian Azerbaijani Congress, Azerbaijani Youth Union of Russia and Russian society.

Russian TV channels "Rossiya 24" and "Mir" have broadcasted news on the Black January.

**AzerTAc**

**European Azerbaijanis Congress issues statement on Black January tragedy  
(January 21, 2013)**

The European Azerbaijanis Congress has made a statement, in Berlin, in connection with the 23rd anniversary of Black January tragedy.

The statement says: “Every year on this day, the Azerbaijani people commemorate the victims of 20 January tragedy of 1990. Some 66,000 soldiers and officers were sent to Baku ordered the then leader of the USSR Mikhail Gorbachev.”

“This terror act was aimed at physical annihilation of the Azerbaijani people. From 19th to 20th January, 1990, without preliminary declaration of the state of emergency, military units of the former Soviet Union stormed Baku and some regions of Azerbaijan.”

The Congress said in the statement: “Armless civilians were massacred by security forces of the former Soviet Union. As a result, 147 civilians were killed, while over 800 wounded. After this tragic event the Azerbaijani people mourned forty days, with the whole country remaining paralyzed for a long time.”

“On October 18, 1991 a Constitutional Act ‘On restoration of the state independence of the Republic of Azerbaijan’ was adopted and Azerbaijan ensured its independence,” the statement said.

**AzerTAc**

### **Victims of Black January commemorated in China (January 21, 2013)**

The event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Black January tragedy was organized by the Azerbaijani Embassy in the country.

The event was attended by the members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora and students studying in China.

The event started with a minute of silence to commemorate Azerbaijani heroes who gave their lives for the country's independence and territorial integrity.

Ambassador Latif Gandilov made remarks at the commemorate ceremony.

Gandilov briefed the participants on the history of the tragedy; Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence and freedom, reason and results of the tragedy condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Speaker noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Participants of the event watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

**AzerTAc**

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**Memory of 20 January tragedy victims honored in US  
(January 21, 2013)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in the United States (US) held a commemorative event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Ambassador to US Elin Suleymanov informed about the historical roots of this bloody tragedy.

He said the 20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in the history as the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and as a heroism page.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people. He also noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev, the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

Activists of the Azerbaijani Diaspora Habib Azersinan and Gadir Shiraliyev provided information on the Black January.

**AzerTAc**



## **20 January victims remembered in Lithuania (January 21, 2013)**

The embassy of Azerbaijan organized here at the Seimas a meeting "Baku-Vilnius: January events on the way of freedom" dealing with January tragedies, which took place in Baku and Vilnius.

The event gathered vice-speaker of the Lithuanian Seimas, MPs, politicians, members of the government, representatives of the embassy, Azerbaijani Diaspora, Azerbaijani students.

The participants of the event got acquainted with the photo exhibition devoted to the 20 January massacre.

Speaking at the event, chairman of the Lithuanian Azerbaijanis Society Mahir Hamzayev said Azerbaijani and Lithuanian peoples bow their heads to pay tribute to those who laid down their lives for the independence of their homeland.

After taking the floor, Azerbaijani ambassador Hasan Mammadzade pointed out that 20 January tragedy is one of the black pages of the country`s history.

The ambassador pointed out that these events were political and legally judged only after national leader Heydar Aliyev`s returning to power.

A documentary 20 January-1990 was shown at the event.

Also speaking at the event was member of the European parliament, honorary doctor of the Public Administration Academy of Azerbaijan Vitautas Landsbergis who noted that by committing terror in Baku, Tbilisi, Vilnius, the leadership of the USSR decided to resort to the most anti-humanity means to preserve the empire.

He proposed to publish the shared album on January events in Baku and Lithuania with documents, lists of victims, and orders of military aggressors.

Flowers were laid at the graves of protectors of independence on behalf of event participants.

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**Latvia commemorates victims of Black January  
(January 21, 2013)**

The event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Black January tragedy was organized in Latvian capital.

Latvia also commemorates victims of the Barricades.

Members of Azerbaijani Diaspora in Latvia laid flowers on the Freedom Monument.

The Barricades were confrontation between Latvia and forces loyal to Soviet Union in January 1991 in Latvia. The events are named for popular effort of building and protecting barricades from 13 January until about 27 January. Latvia, which had declared restoration of independence from the Soviet Union a year earlier, anticipated that Soviet Union might attempt to violently regain control over the country. After attacks of pro-Soviet OMON of Riga in early January the government called on people to build barricades for protection of possible targets (mainly in the capital city of Riga and nearby Ulbroka, as well as Kuldīga and Liepāja). 6 people were killed in further attacks, several were wounded in shootings or beaten by OMON. Most victims were shot during Soviet attack on Latvian Ministry of the Interior on January 20. 1 other person died in building accident reinforcing the barricades. Casualties among Soviet loyalists are considered likely, but exact number remains unknown. A total of 15,611 people have registered themselves as participants of the Barricades.

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### **World Azerbaijanis commemorate 23rd anniversary of Black January (January 21, 2013)**

The embassy of Azerbaijan in Korea has organized an event to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy in the Istanbul Cultural Center in Seoul.

The event brought together employees of the Embassy, leadership of the Istanbul Cultural Center, representatives of the Azerbaijani-Korean student organization BUTA, Korean students, and special correspondent of TRT 1 channel in Korea.

Addressing the event, second secretary of the Azerbaijani Embassy Farrukh Jumayev said on January 20, 1990, the Soviet troops invaded Baku killing and injuring hundreds of innocent and defenseless people.

Attaché of the Embassy Azer Shirinov provided information on the history of the Black January.

Participants of the event watched a documentary on the Bloody January.

Attendees were handed over articles on Black January, which issued in “Korean Times” newspaper.

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The Jordan-Azerbaijan Friendship Society has organized a commemorative event on the 23rd anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

According to the Azerbaijan Embassy in Jordan, the event attended by Secretary General of the Jordan-Azerbaijan Friendship Society Hamshavi Khalid, ambassadors of Turkey, Ukraine, Georgia and Kazakhstan to the country, employees of the diplomatic corps, representatives of sociopolitical circles of Jordan, Azerbaijani Diaspora and students.

Ambassador Sabir Agabayov made a speech at the event, condemning the leadership of the former Soviet Union which ordered the massacre.

The event also features an exhibition reflecting the 20 January tragedy and demonstration of documentaries.

Materials on Black January were distributed among participants.

Jordanian newspapers “Al-Dustur” and “Al-Diyar”, as well as Aruba News Agency have covered the 20 January tragedy.

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In Serbia, Azerbaijan`s diplomatic representation hosted an event which was attended by representatives of the Serbian society, members of the Azerbaijan-Serbia Inter-Parliamentary Friendship Group, the Azerbaijan

Culture Center and the Serbia-Azerbaijan Trade and Economy Chamber, Azerbaijani community, mass media and Islamic community of Belgrade.

Photos reflecting 20 January tragedy were demonstrated in the event.

Ambassador Eldar Hasanov spoke of the history of the massacre.

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Eldar Hasanov noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

Participants watched a documentary entitled “The Path to Liberty”.

Press information on 20 January tragedy by Azerbaijan Embassy were distributed among embassies of foreign countries in Belgrade, representative offices of international organizations, governmental and non-governmental bodies of Serbia and mass media.

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A commemorative event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Black January was organized in Azerbaijani Embassy in Saudi Arabia.

Addressing the event, ambassador Rasim Rzayev called the January 20 events “one of the most tragic days in Azerbaijan`s history”.

The event saw demonstration of film and photo stand to the effect.

Materials on the 20 January tragedy and statement of Azerbaijani ombudsperson were distributed among the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, embassies in Riyadh, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) in Jeddah and mass media.

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A commemorative event on the 20 January tragedy has been arranged in Al-Mehdi Mosque in Vienna, Austria.

Speakers of the event condemned the massacre committed by the leadership of the former Soviet Union, Soviet armed forces and communist regime. They noted on January 20, 1990 the Soviet Army stormed Baku brutally killing over 147 and wounding more than 7000 innocent civilians.

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First secretary of the Azerbaijan Embassy in Austria Rovshan Mirzakhanli highlighted the crimes committed by the Soviet troops against Azerbaijani people.

Funeral repast was given in the mosque.

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**Kars commemorates victims of Black January  
(January 22, 2013)**

The event to mark the 23rd anniversary of the Black January tragedy was organized in Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Kars, Turkey.

After a minute's silence in memory of the martyrs of 20 January, Azerbaijan's consul general Aykhan Suleymanov said the Soviet Army committed a horrible crime against the Azerbaijani people. In spite of all threats, the national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the Permanent Representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow to express his resolute protest and blamed the Soviet leadership Gorbachev for bloody tragedy.

He also expressed his gratitude to the Turkish people and government for protests and rallies.

A documentary dedicated to the 23rd anniversary of 20 January-1990 was demonstrated at the event.

The participants of the event got acquainted with the photo exhibition devoted to the 20 January massacre.

Deputy Governor of Kars, vice chairman of Kars municipal committee, members of the Justice and Development Party (AKP), Nationalist Movement Party (MHP), the Republican People's Party (CHP), chiefs of the law enforcement agencies in Kars, Qafqaz University's teaching staff and media representatives were participated in the ceremony.

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**Black January marked in Dresden  
(January 22, 2013)**

Germany-Azerbaijan Society headquartered in Dresden has organized a ceremony to commemorate the 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together Azerbaijani diaspora representatives, members of Saxony parliament, officials of consulates general of Czech Republic, Hungary, Kazakhstan based in Dresden, as well as German public figures.

One-minute-silence was observed in memory of the martyrs of the Black January.

Addressing the event, head of “Alm.az” Society Agahuseyn Babayev gave detailed information about the tragedy.

Sharing his views on Black January, Doctor Frau Veisgerber said as Azerbaijan was in the information blockade at that time, some circles were trying to take advantage of this situation to cover up their ugly deeds and to hide the truth from the international community. He added that in spite of all those efforts, photo and video documents featuring crime acts committed against Azerbaijani civilians by the then leadership of the Soviet Union were demonstrated to the whole world.

**AzerTAc**

### **Victims of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Berlin (January 22, 2013)**

Coordination Center of Azerbaijanis in Germany (CCAG) has organized an event dedicated to the 23rd anniversary of the Black January entitled “Baku - Bloody January of 1990 and USSR`s disintegration process. Presentation of Dr. Azer Babayev`s article”.

The event also saw a presentation of the book “Disintegration of the Soviet Union: reasons, impacts and backgrounds”, which was recently printed by the well-known publishing house Nomos. The book was written by European experts on post-soviet affairs. It is the first international collective research focusing on systematic and detailed analysis regarding the reasons behind the dramatic collapse of the Soviet Union.

The book also includes analysis by Dr. Azer Babayev, research fellow of the Peace Research Institute Frankfurt, on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the collapse of the Soviet regime.

The event started with one-minute-silence in memory of the martyrs.

Addressing the event, CCAG`s executive director Samira Patzer-Ismayilova raised awareness of participants about the bloody tragedy.

In his speech, Azer Babayev touched upon the results of the massacre committed against peaceful people, describing it as “crimes against humanity”.

Other speakers, including professor of Potsdam University Wilfred Furman, shared their views concerning the Black January.

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**U.S. newspaper publishes letter on Black January tragedy  
(January 22, 2013)**

The Wisconsin State Journal published a letter covering the Black January tragedy. The letter by the U.S. citizen of Azerbaijani origin Nazaket Hasani gives briefs the readers on the military aggression of Soviet troops against Baku on the night of 19 to 20 January, 1990 and the massacre of civilians.

The letter also says that the military aggression against Azerbaijan took place following the similar attacks against Kazakhstan and Georgia, as well in Lithuania, although the severity of the January tragedy can be considered as the most flagrant violation of human rights and the biggest example of "collective punishment" of the population by the USSR Communist Party.

In her letter, Nazaket Hasani urges the American citizens to join the campaign initiated by the U.S. Azeris Network and honor the victims of the Baku tragedy.

**AzerTAc**

### **Lithuania hosts event dedicated to Black January tragedy (January 22, 2013)**

Lithuanian Azerbaijanis Society, Lithuania-Azerbaijan Interparliamentary Friendship Group and Lithuania- Azerbaijan Association have organized an event to commemorate the victims of the Baku Black January tragedy and 1991 tragic events in Vilnius.

The event entitled “Baku – Vilnius: the way to freedom and tragic January events” was held at the Constitution Hall of the Lithuania’s parliament. Addressing the event, Chairman of the Lithuanian Azerbaijanis Society Mahir Hamzayev spoke about the aggression of the Soviet Union against both republics and its consequences.

The organizers have arranged a photo exhibition reflecting the Azerbaijani and Lithuanian tragedies. The participants also watched a documentary about the events.

Black January also known as Black Saturday or the January Massacre, was a violent crackdown in Baku on January 19–20, 1990, pursuant to a state of emergency during the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Late at night on January 19, 1990, after demolition of the central television station and termination of phone and radio lines by Soviet special forces, 26,000 Soviet troops entered Baku, smashing through the barricades in order to crush the Popular Front. The troops attacked the protesters, firing into the crowds. The shooting continued for three days. According to the decree of then President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev from December 16, 1999, all victims of the crackdown were awarded an honorary title of the "Martyr of January 20". January 20 is marked as Martyrs' Day (or literally, "the Day of the Nationwide Sorrow") in Azerbaijan.

In Lithuania the January events took place between January 11 and 13, 1991 in the aftermath of the Act of the Re-Establishment of the State of Lithuania. As a result of Soviet military actions, 13 civilians were killed and around 140 injured. The events were centered in its capital, Vilnius, along with related actions in its suburbs and in the cities of Alytus, Šiauliai, Varėna, and Kaunas.

These events are considered some of the main factors that led to the overwhelming victory of independence supporters in a referendum on February 9, 1991. (Turnout was 84.73% of registered voters; 90.47% of them voted in favor of the full and total independence of Lithuania.) Streets in the neighborhood of the TV tower were later renamed after victims of the attack.

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**Black January anniversary marked in Georgia  
(January 23, 2013)**

Azerbaijanis` Culture Center in Georgia (ACCG) has held a commemorative ceremony on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

ACCG`s chairman Fazil Hasanov spoke of the tragedy, saying Azerbaijani people had always felt support of the Georgian state and Azerbaijanis living in the country during their difficult times.

Also speaking at the event were advisor of Azerbaijan`s embassy Israfil Ahmadov, official of SOCAR in Georgia Shovgu Mehdizade, MP Ali Mammadov and leader of Geyrat people`s movement Alibala Asgarov.

The event also saw an exhibition and a documentary film featuring numerous scenes of the Black January.

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**Azeri diplomat gives interview to Egyptian satellite TV channel  
(January 23, 2013)**

Azerbaijan's ambassador to Egypt Shahin Abdullayev gave an interview to this country's satellite TV Channel.

The diplomat told of the national movement against the Soviet regime in Azerbaijan, 20 January massacre, Armenia's territorial claims against Azerbaijan.

Abdullayev pointed out that the people of Azerbaijan restored its independence despite Armenia's aggression and Soviet leadership's attempts to suppress the will of the people.

He noted after returning to power national leader Heydar Aliyev managed to achieve cease-fire with Armenia, implement economic and social reforms, prepare the oil strategy, and establish the Oil Fund.

The diplomat also spoke about the country's rapid growth after President Ilham Aliyev's coming to power in 2003.

He also provided insight into the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and Armenia's unconstructive stance on the dispute.

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**Fars News Agency publishes article on Black January  
(January 23, 2013)**

One of the most influential agencies of Iran, the Fars News Agency has published an article in the occasion of the 20 January tragedy.

The article, dedicated to the 23rd anniversary of Black January, speaks about that horrible night and massacre committed against the Azerbaijani people.

The author Parvin Imanli described the tragedy of January 20 committed by the Soviet leadership headed by Mikhail Gorbachev, as a state terror.

“However, Azerbaijani people have not been shaken from this crime, on the contrary, more resolutely continued its struggle for the independence”, the article says.

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**London to host concert to commemorate Khojaly genocide victims  
(January 24, 2013)**

London will host a concert to commemorate the memory of Khojaly genocide victims on February 26. Supported by European Azerbaijan Society, the concert will feature compositions by Fikrat Amirov, V. A. Mozart, G. B Pergolsi and Edward Elgar.

London`s Orion Symphony Orchestra to be conducted by Laurent Petitgirard will perform European and Azerbaijani classical music.

After the commemorative concert, a reception will be arranged.

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**Azerbaijani Embassy in Minsk commemorates Bloody January  
(January 24, 2013)**

The 23rd anniversary of Black January tragedy was marked in Azerbaijani Embassy in Belarus.

According to the Azerbaijani Community congress of the Belarus (BAIK) Employees of the Embassy, Azerbaijani Community Congress in Belarus, Belarus Parliamentary Assembly Chamber of representative members, the Maxim Tank Belarusian State Pedagogical University (BSPU) Azerbaijani language and cultural center department students, and the community`s representatives participated in the event.

Isfandiyar Vahabzade, Azerbaijani Ambassador to Belarus spoke of the hard days that Azerbaijani people have lived during the struggle for freedom. He stressed the importance of the Black January tragedy to be highlighted in the public-political organizations and in mass media.

BAİK chairman Natiq Bagirov has talked about the Black January tragedy bringing sorrow for many Azerbaijani families, killing innocent people.

The Azerbaijani language and culture department of Baku Slavic University and the members of BAIC youth group have exhibited a stand.

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**Istanbul to host conference on Black January  
(January 24, 2013)**

Association of Culture and Support for the Crimean Turks will organize a conference on Friday in Istanbul on the occasion of the 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The conference participants will be informed about the tragedy and the heroic page of Azerbaijani people`s struggle for freedom.

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**Black January tragedy commemorated in Warsaw  
(January 25, 2013)**

The 23rd anniversary of the 20 January tragedy was commemorated in Warsaw University, said Azerbaijani Embassy in Poland.

“Azerbaijani Culture Center” Society’s chairman Shahla Kazimova briefed the event participants on the history of the tragedy and the heroic page of Azerbaijani people’s struggle for freedom.

The event brought together employees of the Embassy and students.

A documentary on the tragedy and a presentation prepared by students were demonstrated.

Materials about the Bloody January massacre were given to the event participants.

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**Swedish Azerbaijanis Congress to mark 20th anniversary of Black January  
(January 10, 2014)**

On January 16, 17, and 20, the Swedish Azerbaijanis Congress is going to mark the Black January tragedy.

The event will feature materials, books and documents on this tragic day of Azerbaijanis, when hundreds of civilians were crushed or injured by the Soviet troops in Baku on January 20, 1990, on an order from the USSR leadership that was trying to maintain the Communist regime in Azerbaijan and strangle the national liberation movement.

Every year Black January victims are commemorated with great sorrow not only by the people in Azerbaijan, but also by the Azerbaijanis throughout the world.

Though the Azerbaijani people suffered military, moral and political aggression, they displayed their ability to maintain the traditions of historical heroism and resist the cruelest attacks for the sake of the freedom and independence of their Motherland, even at the cost of losing their lives. The sons of the Motherland perished on January 20, 1990 while defending the freedom and independence of Azerbaijan and with their bravery made history in the chronicles of heroism of our country.

**AzerTAc**

## **20 January tragedy to be commemorated abroad (January 14, 2014)**

Azerbaijan`s diaspora organizations will hold various events in a number of countries to mark 24th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

Victims of the tragedy will be commemorated in many countries like the United States of America, Canada, Latin American countries, Australia and New Zealand, State Committee on Work with Diaspora said.

Starting from 19th January, commemorative events, roundtables will be organized in Washington, Huston, San-Francisco and other cities of the USA where Azerbaijanis live compactly.

The 24th anniversary of the Black January will be also marked in Magdeburg, Berlin and other cities of Germany.

The memory ceremonies dedicated to the 20 January tragedy will be organized in Haag, Amsterdam and Rotterdam of the Netherlands too.

Turkey, Russia, United Arab Emirates, Georgia, Egypt, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan and other countries will also host commemorative events dedicated to the tragedy.

The tragic events of January 19-20, 1990 mark a turning point in the story of Azerbaijan`s independence from the Soviet Union. Every year at the end of January, Azerbaijanis enter a period of mourning for their loved ones who were lost in the attack by Soviet military forces who stormed Baku and murdered hundreds of civilians.

Late at night on January 19, 1990, 26,000 Soviet troops stormed Baku. They began to open fire on protesters at will, crushed many with tanks, and arrested hundreds more for imprisonment and torture. Though the final death toll is still contested to this day, at least 130 people died from wounds received that night and during subsequent violent confrontations. A vast majority of the casualties were civilians, with over 700 wounded.

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**January 20 victims to be commemorated in Kyrgyzstan  
(January 15, 2014)**

A commemoration ceremony to mark the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy will be organized by the Azerbaijan Embassy in Kyrgyzstan.

The event will be attended by state and government officials of Kyrgyzstan, scientists and artists, members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora organizations, Azerbaijani students studying in Kyrgyzstan and journalists.

The victims will be commemorated by a minute of silence on January 20.

Azerbaijani ambassador to Kyrgyzstan Hidayat Orujov is set to speak of the history of the tragedy, Azerbaijani people`s struggle for independence and freedom, causes and consequences of the tragedy.

The participants are scheduled to visit photo and book exhibitions featuring the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

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### **Head of Azerbaijani Diaspora meets UAE officials (January 16, 2014)**

Head of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in the United Arab Emirates Samir Imanov has met officials of this country on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Raising awareness of UAE officials about the tragedy, Imanov said this crime was committed by the Soviet empire in order to support ethnic cleansing policy of Armenians against Azerbaijan.

The head of the Azerbaijani Diaspora pointed out that the Kojaly genocide perpetrated in 1992 by Armenians and generally occupation of Azerbaijan`s 20 percent territory were a continuation of Armenians` planned, insidious and inhumane policy against the Azerbaijani people.

He said leader of the USSR Mikhail Gorbachev and defense minister Dmitry Yazov were directly responsible persons for this crime.

Imanov stated that 20 January is a day, which went down in the history of struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, as a heroism page. He said “tragedy of January 20, which brought to huge losses of innocent people, demonstrated martial spirit, inexorability and pride of our nation, which couldn`t stand the policy of the government of Gorbachev who headed criminal empire treacherous towards Azerbaijan, intended to the freedom and independence. As a result of it, we gained our independence many years we had been dreaming of and our country had achieved sovereignty.”

The diplomat pointed out the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people. He also noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev, the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

Imanov also handed over the Dubai officials various books and brochures featuring realities about the tragedy.

UAE officials stressed importance of highlighting the international community about these bloody crimes committed against Azerbaijanis.

They also said that after Imanov`s meeting with Director General of the Dubai Islamic Affairs and Charitable Activities Department, USD 1 million was allocated by the UAE to Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs every year.

The head of the Azerbaijani Diaspora also met with leadership of the Dubai State Library to discuss the issue concerning the 20 January tragedy. Imanov presented to the library books, magazines and brochures published by the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

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**Azerbaijani Embassy in Tajikistan to honor Black January victims  
(January 16, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Tajikistan will conduct a ceremony to commemorate the 24th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The event will bring together Tajik scientists, members of the Azerbaijani Diaspora and journalists.

The memory of martyrs will be remembered with a minute of silence. Azerbaijani Ambassador to Tajikistan Abbasali Hasanov will make a speech regarding the causes of the 20 January tragedy. He will also tell of how the government cares about the massacre's victims and the memory of martyrs.

The attendees will also visit a photo stand and view a documentary about the 20 January tragedy.

Tajik media, including radio and TV channels will broadcast materials about the 24th anniversary of the bloody January tragedy.

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**Human Rights Commissioner issues statement on 24th anniversary of January 20 tragedy  
(January 16, 2014)**

Azerbaijan`s Human Rights Commissioner Elmira Suleymanova has issued a statement on the 24th anniversary of January 20 tragedy.

The statement has been sent to UN Secretary General, UN Security Council, Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, European Commission, OSCE, the Council of Europe, Institute of International and European Ombudsmen, Asian Ombudsman Association, International Peace Bureau, Universal Peace Federation, human rights commissioners of various countries, Azerbaijani embassies in foreign countries, embassies of foreign countries in Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani Diaspora organizations.

The statement underlines that as a result of punishment carried out against civilians, crime committed against humanity on January 20, 1990, the UN Human Rights Declaration, as well as other international documents on human rights were violated.

“The January 20 tragedy is a horrible crime among the terrorist attacks that caused massive human losses. But this tragedy has not received international legal assessment. Those who ordered and committed this crime have not been punished. We believe that the world community, international organizations will support the right demands of Azerbaijan, the crime against humanity will soon receive its international legal assessment, the perpetrators will not remain unpunished.”

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**Caucasian Muslim Board issues statement on 24th anniversary of Black January  
(January 17, 2014)**

The Caucasian Muslims Board (CMB) has issued a statement on the 24th anniversary of January 20 tragedy.

The statement says that January 20 was the first struggle and the first moral victory of the way leading Azerbaijan to independence, freedom, restoration of national-moral values.

“On that day people did not yield to the punishments of the Soviet army, did not lost their determination of freedom.”

The statement mentions that from the very beginning of the bloody events, the Caucasian Muslims Board became the center controlling the situation and the only place of hope for people.

“The board made efforts to inform the world community, influential international organizations about January 20 tragedy, to achieve recognition of the tragedy as an atrocious crime against humanity. In his letter to USSR President Mikhail Gorbachov, Sheikh-ul-Islam Allahshukur Pashazadeh expressed tough and principled position on what was going on.”

The Caucasian Muslims Board regrets that this tragedy has not received full legal assessment due to the double approaches in the world, criminals have not been brought to justice and the hangmen of Azerbaijani people still remain unpunished.

“But we are sure that they will not be able to escape trial of Allah and History. Therefore, January 20 has become the day to commemorate our martyrs, instill spirit of heroism and patriotism in our people, especially in our youth.”

According to the statement, khutbahs, Koran will be read for martyrs in all mosques and religious ceremonies on January 20. Spirit of heroism will be promoted among the youth in our right struggle for Motherland, Justice, Karabakh. Caucasian Muslims Board offers condolences to the families of all those who sacrificed themselves for the territory integrity, independence of our Motherland and Karabakh.

**AzerTAc**



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**Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress appeals to EP and Benelux legislative bodies over January 20 Tragedy (January 18, 2014)**

The Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress has made an appeal to the European Parliament (EP) and the legislative bodies of Benelux countries on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the 20 January Tragedy.

The appeal says that the 20 January Tragedy marks the national mourning day in Azerbaijan, as well as the beginning of the collapse of the Soviet regime in Azerbaijan.

The Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress calls on the European Parliament and the legislative bodies of the Benelux countries to adopt a resolution condemning the massacre of 1990.

The Congress members express their hope that the EP will give a political assessment to this tragedy as a crime against humanity.

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**Black January victims commemorated in Houston  
(January 19, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Center in Houston has arranged a ceremony to commemorate the 24th anniversary of 20 January Tragedy.

President of the Center Irada Akhundova said the event would begin with a moment of silence in memory of those who died that day. She then provided a brief insight into the history of the event that led to the January 20 Tragedy.

One of the active members of the Azerbaijan Center, Mehriban Efendi, said that even though Black January is one of the most tragic pages in the history of Azerbaijan, it laid the foundation of a bright future of independent and free Azerbaijan. She highlighted the achievements of Azerbaijan in the last 24 years in economic development, sports and culture, as well as challenges faced by a developing country.

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**Azerbaijani Embassy in Uzbekistan remembers Black January victims  
(January 19, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Uzbekistan has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The event participants laid a wreath at a monument to national leader Heydar Aliyev in the foyer of the Embassy.

They viewed photos and watched a documentary about the tragic events that happened in 1990.

Director of Azerbaijan Culture Center Samir Abbasov gave a brief history of the events which led to the 20 January tragedy. He praised the Azerbaijani government's attention to families of the Black January victims.

Among those attending the commemorative event were of Azerbaijani Ambassador Huseyn Guliyev, Azerbaijan's military attaché in Uzbekistan Elbrus Orujov, journalist Shovkat Aliyeva, and Uzbek poet Sunnatulla Suleymanov.

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### **Korean media writes about Black January (January 20, 2014)**

The Republic of South Korea`s leading newspapers Joong Ang Daily and The Korea Herald have posted articles about the 20 January tragedy.

Titled “Azerbaijan remembers the bloody January”, the articles highlight criminal acts of the Soviet leadership against the Azerbaijani people who fought for freedom and sovereignty.

Providing an insight into political processes of that time, the newspapers say “twenty-four years have passed since the Central Soviet Authorities perpetrated an atrocious crime against the people of Azerbaijan”. On January 20, 1990, 26,000 Soviet troops invaded the capital of Azerbaijan, Baku, in a desperate, brutal and yet futile attempt to strangle the growing independence movement and prevent the fall of the Soviet Communist regime in Azerbaijan as well as to punish ordinary people who rallied on the streets to legitimately protest against violations of the territorial integrity of their homeland.”

“At that time, Azerbaijan was also subjected to aggression from neighboring Armenia. The country violated the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, which has resulted in the occupation of Azerbaijani territory, and tried to incorporate Nagorno-Karabakh into Armenia. Armenia`s territorial claims and separatist activities were supported by the ruling Soviet regime.”

Authors note that at midnight on January 19, 1990, the “Alfa” Soviet special forces invaded and cracked down ferociously, without mercy for children, women or the elderly. “As a result, more than 147 civilians were killed. More than 700 people were wounded.”

“Hundreds of other civilians were detained, harassed and tortured by the Soviet army in the days and weeks that followed. This massacre became known in Azerbaijan`s history as Black January.”

The Korean media stresses that on January 21, 1990, great son of the Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev, who was living in Moscow at the time, went to Azerbaijan`s permanent representative office in the Soviet capital to flatly condemn the crimes perpetrated by the USSR leaders against Azerbaijan and its citizens and express support for his people. “In a statement made at the meeting, Heydar Aliyev gave a political assessment of the tragedy: “As far as the developments in Azerbaijan are concerned, I am convinced that they run counter to the rule of law, democracy, humanity and the principles of state building in our country.”

“However, this did not stop the people of Azerbaijan from continuing their just struggle until the achievement of national independence in 1991, which in itself stands as the best memorial for the victims of Black January.”

“Although 24 years have passed since those bloody days, Azerbaijani people remember and widely commemorate the January 20 tragedy every year, which has been immortalized in the collective memory of Azerbaijan as the “Day of Nationwide Sorrow.”

**Egyptian newspapers publish Azerbaijani Ambassador`s article  
(January 20, 2014)**

Leading newspapers in Egypt, Youm7 and Akhbarelyom have published an article by Azerbaijani Ambassador in Cairo Shahin Abdullayev commemorating the 24th anniversary of the Black January events. In his article, the Ambassador says the tragic events of 1990 have been a heroic page of the struggle of the Azerbaijani nation for the freedom, and compares the tragedy with the events that happened on January 25, 2011 in Egypt. Mr. Abdullayev says that unlike the Egyptian army, the 9th Red Army committed one of the worst crimes against humanity as hundreds of innocent people were killed and wounded as a result of a massive terror, a massacre of peaceful population who stood up for national liberation and territorial integrity of its country.

The Ambassador also touches upon Armenia`s territorial claims against Azerbaijan, and the causes and consequences of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. He also draws attention to Azerbaijan`s achievements and provides an insight into how the country has overcome difficulties to become the regional leader.

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**Jordanian newspaper posts article by Azerbaijani Ambassador  
(January 20, 2014)**

Jordan-based Al Khaimah Al Urduniyya newspaper has posted an article by Azerbaijani Ambassador Sabir Aghabayov, who remembers the Black January events of 1990.

In the article, the Ambassador strongly condemns the massacre of Azerbaijani civilians committed 24 years ago, calling it one of the bloodiest crimes of the Soviet leadership in an attempt to save the empire. He notes that Soviet troops with support of tanks, helicopters and navy stormed the city, indiscriminately killing unarmed inhabitants, including women, children, and the elderly. The Ambassador calls the events of 1990 the most violent crackdown of the Soviet regime on its own citizens. Mr. Aghabayov says the 20th of January is a day, which went down in the history as the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and as a heroism page.

The articles also gives a brief history of the events that led to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, occupation of Azerbaijan`s lands by Armenia, and the emergence of over one million refugees and IDPs in Azerbaijan.

The Ambassador also touches upon Azerbaijan-Jordan relations, stressing the role of “sincere contacts” between the heads of state, and also highlights Azerbaijan`s achievements over the years of independence (<http://www.alkhaimahjo.com/ViewArticle.aspx?Id=1885>).

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**Black January victims remembered in Kars  
(January 20, 2014)**

Azerbaijan`s Consulate General in Kars has arranged a commemorative ceremony on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January events.

The ceremony, attended by leadership of Kars, staff members of the Azerbaijani diplomatic representation in the city, as well as local public figures, began with a minute`s silence.

Opening the event, Azerbaijan`s Consul General Aykhan Suleymanov highlighted the country`s path to independence as well as the events that led to the January 20 tragedy. He said the Soviet Army`s bloody invasion of Baku was a vast violation of the constitutions of the former USSR and the Azerbaijan Soviet Republic. The Consul General said national leader Heydar Aliyev once again demonstrated his courage and bravery and his devotion to his people, when he appeared at Azerbaijan`s Moscow representative office to condemn the violence and urge punishment for those who had committed the crime.

Kars Municipality chairman Nevzat Bozkus and professor at Kars Caucasus University Hacali Necefoglu spoke of the struggle of the Azerbaijani and Anatolian Turks against the Armenian gangsters throughout history.

The event ended with demonstration of a documentary on the Black January.

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**Azerbaijan observes moment of silence for Black January victims  
(January 20, 2014)**

A state-wide moment of silence was observed for the Black January victims today at 12:00 (local time) across Azerbaijan. Ships, cars, and trains sounded sirens throughout the country to remember victims of the January 20, 1990 tragedy.

In accordance with a relevant plan of action, commemorative events have been arranged in all cities and towns of the country.

Hundreds of thousands of Baku residents as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps have been visiting the Alley of Martyrs since early hours on Monday to pay tribute to Azerbaijan's valiant sons and daughters.

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**Tabriz-based www.anaj.ir website posts article on Black January  
(January 20, 2014)**

Tabriz-based www.anaj.ir website has posted an article commemorating the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The article says the massacre of innocent Azerbaijanis committed on January 20, 1990 was a result of biased policy of Mikhail Gorbachev against the people of Azerbaijan.

The article says Armenia`s separatism and territorial claims against Azerbaijan were one of the major causes of the January tragedy.

“In 1988, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis were ousted from Armenia. Armenians living in Karabakh started killing Azerbaijanis and expelling them from their homelands.”

The article says the Soviet forces entered Baku, without declaring a state of emergency, and committed atrocities against the innocent Azerbaijani people. The invasion was launched at midnight and was committed with brutality, and even children, women and the elderly were not spared, the article notes.

The article says the Black January went down in Azerbaijan`s history as a heroic page of the nation`s struggle for its independence.

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**20 January tragedy victims commemorated in China  
(January 20, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in China has hosted a commemorative event to mark the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Addressing the ceremony, Ambassador Latif Gandilov briefed the event participants on the bloody tragedy.

He said the 20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in the history as the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and as a heroism page.

The diplomat pointed out that the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held there a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people. He also noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev, the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The event participants watched a documentary on the Black January.

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### **January 20 victims remembered in Berlin (January 20, 2014)**

A commemorative ceremony to mark the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy has been organized in the Azerbaijan Embassy in Germany.

The event was attended by Bundestag members, political and cultural figures, journalists, diplomats and members of Azerbaijani diaspora.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Opening the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador Parviz Shahbazov spoke of the history of the tragedy, Azerbaijani people`s struggle for independence, causes and consequences of the tragedy. He condemned the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Shahbazov noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev, the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

Head of the Department of History of Azerbaijan at the Humboldt University of Berlin, Professor Eva-Maria Auch delivered a lecture on the history of the 20 January tragedy.

The event featured a commemorative concert by Germany-based Azerbaijani musicians Tamilla Guliyeva and Anar Ibrahimov.

The participants also viewed a photo exhibition on the 20th January tragedy.

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## **Black January – the Path to Independence (January 20, 2014)**

The night of January 19 into the following day, often referred to as Black January, is the bitter experience of every Azerbaijani citizen. That frostbitten night, as many awoke from the sounds of the tank caterpillars and continuous gunfire, the entire nation would awake from the calls to break free.

The Black January massacre, considered the gateway event to the independence of Azerbaijan, traces its roots to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. If we look back at how Azerbaijan was brutally integrated into the Soviet empire, we find that history, often forgotten by Azerbaijanis, does repeat itself. After the dissolution of the Transcaucasian Sejm and subsequent birth of the first Azerbaijani Democratic Republic (ADR) on May 28, 1918, the country became entangled in territorial disputes with Armenian Dashnaks and saw an influx of external pressure from the Russian Bolsheviks, who eventually made their way into Azerbaijan.

The bitter truth about the 11th Red Army marching through the northern regions of the ADR and perpetuating atrocities in its capital Baku upon the occupation of Absheron peninsula in April 1920 was soon forgotten. Or was it? During the next two decades, outspoken Azerbaijani critics of the Soviet system were systematically silenced, and most were completely removed from Azerbaijan during the Great Purge of 1937. Once the immediate threat to Soviet rule was tamed, mistreatment of Azerbaijani Turks was re-executed on a more massive scale. Although the mountainous part of Karabakh had already been carved out to form the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast within the Azerbaijan SSR in 1921, and Zangezur Uyezd was previously awarded to the Armenian SSR in 1920 at the behest of Armenian nationalists, the territorial claims on Azerbaijani lands did not stop. Shortly after World War II, Stalin signed two executive decrees of Soviet Union's Council of Ministers No. 4083 and No. 754 on December 23, 1947 and March 10, 1948, respectively, initiating the forced relocation of up to one hundred thousand Azerbaijanis from Armenia to southeastern Azerbaijan, with the objective of creating living space for Armenians who were subsequently moved there from Lebanon, Iran, and Syria. In the late 1960s, several villages of Nakhchivan and Gazakh were transferred to the Armenian SSR. Silent enough, the Azerbaijani leadership succumbed to unjust Moscow's territorial policies. Although Armenians did instigate protests in Armenia demanding the transfer of Nagorno-Karabakh itself to the Armenian SSR, their efforts did not fall through.

A more organized agenda was put forth after a row of Armenian terrorist attacks on Turkish diplomatic missions and civilian targets in Europe and the United States from 1975-1982, which provided for an assertive ultra-nationalist awakening among Armenians. Many of those terrorists would later be glorified by the Republic of Armenia after it gained its independence in 1991.

Fast forward to February 1988, when an ongoing three months of brutal expulsion of thousands of Azerbaijanis from Armenia that originated in its Masis and Gugark districts in November 1987 back to back with significant incidents in the central parts of Yerevan and Khankendi, prompted the Sumgait events - ironically led by three ethnic Armenians. Within the next twenty months, Azerbaijan was forced to restrain the ill-advised ideology of the "friendship of peoples," all the while the country was being terrorized by a mass

exodus of Azerbaijanis from their homes, attacks on buses, trains, and other civilian targets. Repeated calls to prevent atrocities and the burning of Azerbaijani villages in Karabakh went in vain.

The national awakening movement, literary referring to the awakening of Azerbaijani people from the seventy-year-old nightmare of unjust territorial transfers, forced population migrations, and the mishandling of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue by the Soviet regime, was in acceleration mode.

The meticulous plan of invasion of Baku foresaw instilling terror into the republic, intending to break the momentum of a popular movement. By the time the information blockade was enforced on Azerbaijan by blowing up the central television transmission block and main telephone network of Baku at 19:00 hours from January 19 into the early morning of January 20, as many as 147 civilians laid dead, many from sporadic fire on crowds, others by gunfire into buildings as tanks rolled through the streets of the city, and some by individual beatings and point blank executions in various locations of the town. Selective shootouts resulting in more deaths would continue through January 22. The autopsies identified the main utilized arsenal of the special forces as the infamous 5.45 mm caliber bullet with a shifted center of gravity, which upon entering a body - unlike conventional bullets - travels in sporadic movements spiraling through the organs causing excessive pain and internal bleeding, thus increasing the chances of death.

As reports of the massacre leaked to international press and the world wondered how and why the bullets with a shifted center of gravity were used, Azerbaijanis had questions of their own: What caused the center of the Soviet leadership's gravity to shift, to commit the massacre of innocent civilians? Fables about the glorious Soviet army fighting for the greater good of the Soviet man were suddenly gone, and the true nature of the Red Army was revealed. The Bolshevik regime was established in Azerbaijan with the brutal invasion of Baku by the 11th Red Army on April 28, 1920. Ironically from January 19-20, 1990, as the monument to the Bolshevik invaders depicting three Red Army soldiers overlooked the 11th Red Army Square, the Soviet army opened fire on Azerbaijani civilians at the same Baku entrance and with the same brutality as seventy years ago. The Soviet regime had forced Azerbaijan to celebrate the former event for 70 years while the latter event ensured the regime's eventual departure. As a sign of protest on the dawn of January 20, the plants and factories of Sumgait and the ships and vessels in Baku Bay simultaneously blew their horns for hours - so loud that the sounds could be heard beyond the Absheron peninsula where Baku is located. But their noise couldn't have been louder than the cries of mothers and fathers, sisters and brothers whose mourning could be heard farther away. Black January would become a tacit realization that the republic did not belong to the Soviet Union and that it would serve as a springboard for the independence of all fifteen republics. It was the occurrence which wobbled the Soviet regime, and the event that would eventually cause its collapse.

**Yusif Babanli**

**Special Correspondent for AzerTAc**

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**Azerbaijani Embassy in Sweden commemorates Black January victims  
(January 20, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in the Kingdom of Sweden has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Opening the event, Ambassador Adish Mammadov highlighted the 20 January events. Mammadov said it was the day of the unity of Azerbaijan`s people struggling for the country`s territorial integrity.

He called the tragedy one of the bloodiest crimes of the Soviet empire against its citizens. The Ambassador drew the participants`s attention to the fact that the Soviet troops had used internationally prohibited weapons in Baku, and slaughtered women, children and the elderly.

Mammadov said Azerbaijan`s great son Heydar Aliyev, who then lived in Moscow, came to Azerbaijan`s permanent representative office - a day after the tragedy – and strongly condemned those who committed the January massacre.

The diplomat noted that the memory of the 20 January martyrs will remain engraved on the Azerbaijani people`s minds.

The ceremony also featured demonstration of “The Path to Independence” documentary.

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**UK Avrupa Times newspaper issues article on 20 January tragedy  
(January 20, 2014)**

London-based Avrupa Times newspaper has published an article headlined “Azerbaijan Remembers Black January Tragedy”.

The article reads: “20th January 2014 marks the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy, military invasion and indiscriminate killing of civilians in the city of Baku by the Soviet troops on 19-20 January 1990. In response to the rising national independence movement, the Soviet leadership ordered some 26000 troops equipped with heavy military equipment such as tanks, in an operation called "Strike" (Udar), to storm the city of Baku. The heavy-handed crackdown resulted in indiscriminate killing of some 147 civilians with more than 700 injured and many others went missing. The Soviet army also attacked the state TV building, cutting off the power supply in an attempt to prevent the dissemination of news to the international community.

The day the tragedy took place later came to be known as Black January or Black Saturday, widely commemorated in Azerbaijan and by Azerbaijani communities around the world. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis visit the Martyrs' Lane, where the victims of Black January lay buried, to pay respects to the victims. 20th January is a national mourning day in Azerbaijan with nationwide commemorations taking place and the national flag flying at half-mast over the public buildings and diplomatic missions abroad. Though it was a tragic and sad day, the 20th January events are also considered a milestone on the road to Azerbaijan’s independence from the Soviet Union. It weakened the Soviet rule in Azerbaijan and led to the regaining of independence of Azerbaijan on 18 October 1991.

In its report dedicated to the Black January, Human Rights Watch notes: "Indeed, the violence used by the Soviet Army on the night of January 19–20 was so out of proportion to the resistance offered by Azerbaijanis as to constitute an exercise in collective punishment. ....the punishment inflicted on Baku by Soviet soldiers may have been intended as a warning to nationalists, not only in Azerbaijan, but in the other Republics of the Soviet Union. The Wall Street Journal editorial of January 4, 1995 stressed that the then Soviet leader Gorbachev chose to use violence against "independence-seeking Azerbaijan."

As Azerbaijani community in the United Kingdom commemorate the victims of Black January, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to London Fakhraddin Gurbanov said on the occasion: “Today our nation pays tribute to those killed by the Soviet army in 1990. This is a very tragic and sad day for our people. It was a crime against humanity and a rare case where state used force on such a large scale against its own citizens. But it is also a time to reflect on the value and importance of the independence. Those killed on that day sacrificed their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan and it is our duty here in the United Kingdom as Azerbaijani community to always remember and pay our respects to them. My hope is that perpetrators of this crime against humanity will be brought to justice.”

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**Azerbaijan Embassy to Kyrgyzstan remembers Black January victims  
(January 21, 2014)**

Azerbaijan`s Embassy to Kyrgyzstan has held a commemorative event to mark the 24th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy. The event started with a minute of silence, and the participants then watched a documentary on the tragic events that happened on January 20, 1990.

Ambassador Hidayat Orujov gave a brief history of the events that led up to and followed the tragedy.

He said national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the permanent representative office of Azerbaijan in Moscow to hold a press conference, in which he strongly condemned the brutality of the Soviet troops in the capital of Azerbaijan.

The Embassy sent books on the history of the January 20 tragedy to the Kyrgyz government, social organizations, diplomatic corps and journalists.

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## **20 January massacre victims remembered in Libya (January 21, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy to Libya has held a commemorative ceremony on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Speaking to the event, Ambassador Agasalim Shukurov told of the causes and perpetrators of the Black January massacre. He noted that the event is a heroism page in the history of Azerbaijan and has become the symbol of the people's strong will. He hailed national leader Heydar Aliyev's initiative to give a political and legal assessment of the tragedy.

Shukurov pointed out that this policy is today successfully continued by President Ilham Aliyev.

He said Azerbaijan is developing in all fields with its international positions strengthening. The ambassador provided an insight into the efforts of the Azerbaijani leadership to peacefully solve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The press-releases of the embassy were sent to the Libyan General National Congress, Foreign Ministry and International Cooperation Ministry. The press-releases along with the Arabic version of the IRS magazine were also sent to the diplomatic missions, Libyan and Tadamun news agencies, Tripoli Center for Strategic Studies and Libya Archive and Center for Libyan Archives and Historical Studies, cultural centers of Egypt, Tunis and Palestine.

Libyan leading media outlets provided coverage of the 20 January tragedy ceremonies. Libyan citizen Zeid Hamza made a telephone call to Hamzah Bufaris, former minister for Endowments and Religious affairs in the Libya Transition Government, to brief him on the Black January tragedy during the Islam and Life religious program on local Al-Wataniyya channel.

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**Polish branch of World Azerbaijanis Congress marks anniversary of Black January  
(January 21, 2014)**

The Polish branch of the World Azerbaijanis Congress (WAC) has held a commemorative event to mark the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Representatives of the office spread brochures, pictures and informative material about 20 January tragedy in the capital's central streets.

The event aroused great interest from the locals and tourists, WAC's press office said.

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### **Victims of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Iran (January 21, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Iran has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The event brought together state and government officials, as well as representatives of the diplomatic corps accredited in Iran, employees of the international organizations, foreign and Azerbaijani students studying in Iran.

The participants watched a documentary on Black January tragedy.

Azerbaijani ambassador to Iran Javanshir Akhundov highlighted the history, as well as causes and consequences of the tragedy.

The ambassador said Azerbaijan's great son Heydar Aliyev, who then lived in Moscow, came to Azerbaijan's permanent representative office - a day after the tragedy – and strongly condemned those who committed the January massacre.

The event saw speeches by official of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Iran Baghban Kondori, Secretary to the Ecology Ministry of Iran, and Head of Center for World Religions Research, Ambassador Ali Ashraf Mojtahed Shabustari, employee of Tehran University Mamadou Lamine Seydi.

The press releases on Black January have been sent to the local Media.

The event participants viewed photos reflecting the horrors of the Black January tragedy.

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### **Moroccan newspaper publishes article on 20 January tragedy (January 21, 2014)**

Morocco's Al-Alam newspaper has posted an article highlighting the 20 January events.

The article says the 20th January 2014 marks the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy, military invasion and indiscriminate killing of civilians in the city of Baku by the Soviet troops on 19-20 January 1990.

The author notes that in response to the rising national independence movement, the Soviet leadership ordered some 26,000 troops equipped with heavy military equipment, including tanks to storm the city of Baku. The heavy-handed crackdown resulted in indiscriminate killing of some 147 civilians with more than 700 injured and many others went missing. During the tragedy the courageous sons of the Azerbaijani people who stood up for the motherland's dignity, honor and freedom became martyrs.

The article underlines that only after national leader Heydar Aliyev's return to power at the persistent request of the people legal and political assessment to 20 January tragedy was given, reasons of this serious crime perpetrated against the Azerbaijan people were investigated and the names of the criminals were announced.

The day the tragedy took place later came to be known as Black January or Black Saturday, widely commemorated in Azerbaijan and by Azerbaijani communities around the world. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis visit the Alley of Martyrs, where the victims of Black January lay buried, to pay respects to the victims. 20th January is a National Mourning Day in Azerbaijan with nationwide commemorations taking place and the national flag flying at half-mast over the public buildings and diplomatic missions abroad. Though it was a tragic and sad day, the 20th January events are also considered a milestone on the road to Azerbaijan's independence from the Soviet Union. It weakened the Soviet rule in Azerbaijan and led to the regaining of independence of Azerbaijan on 18 October 1991.

The newspaper also highlights Armenia's ethnic cleansing policy and territorial claims against Azerbaijan. Taking advantage of difficulties Azerbaijan faced in first years of independence, Armenia occupied the Nagorno-Karabakh region and seven surrounding districts. As a result, over one million people turned into refugees and IDPs. Armenians destroyed mosques, schools and historical monuments in Azerbaijan's lands.

The author also points out that resolutions and decisions of international organizations support the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan and call for the unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from Azerbaijan's occupied territories.

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**January 20 victims remembered in Turkmenistan  
(January 21, 2014)**

A commemorative ceremony to mark the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy has been organized in the Azerbaijani Embassy in Turkmenistan.

The event brought together Azerbaijanis living in Turkmenistan, as well as representatives of NGOs, businessmen and the Embassy staffers.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Azerbaijani ambassador Vahdat Sultanzade spoke of the history of the tragedy.

The diplomat said Azerbaijan's great son Heydar Aliyev, who then lived in Moscow, came to Azerbaijan's permanent representative office - a day after the tragedy – and strongly condemned those who committed the January massacre.

He noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev, the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The ambassador said this policy was successfully continued by President Ilham Aliyev.

The event participants watched a documentary on the January tragedy.

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**January 20 victims remembered in Moscow  
(January 21, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in the Russian Federation has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The event participants laid flowers at a bas-relief of national leader Heydar Aliyev and a stand reflecting the list of innocent victims of the 20 January tragedy at the embassy.

Ambassador Polad Bulbuloglu said that this day was a day of remembrance of the Azerbaijani martyrs who died in the Black January night.

The diplomat pointed out that the day after the tragedy national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people.

The participants watched a documentary and viewed a photo exhibition on the Black January.

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### **World Azerbaijanis remember Black January victims (January 22, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Representation to the Council of Europe has organized a commemorative event on the 24th anniversary of the Black January.

Delivering a speech at the event head of the representation, Ambassador Emin Eyyubov spoke of the January 20 tragedy, and noted that 147 people were killed during the bloody event.

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Vietnam also has arranged an event marking the anniversary of the Black January. The event was attended by members of the friendship groups with Azerbaijan, officials of the Vietnamese Foreign Ministry and others. The event participants viewed a photo exhibition reflecting the tragedy. A documentary was shown at the event.

The January 20 tragedy was also commemorated in Aktyubinsk and Aktau regions of Kazakhstan. The Azerbaijani Consulate General in Aktau has organized a range of events in accordance of "Action Plan" approved by the Azerbaijan Presidential Administration.

A commemorative event on the victims of the January 20 tragedy has also been held at the Haifa University in Israel. The event was organized by the Israel-Azerbaijan Association (AzIz) with the support of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation.

Azerbaijani ambassador to US Elin Suleymanov addressed at the event organized in New York. The event participants commemorated the tragedy victims with one minute`s silence.

Black January also known as Black Saturday or the January Massacre, was a violent crackdown in Baku on January 19–20, 1990, pursuant to a state of emergency during the dissolution of the Soviet Union and following pogroms and violence against the Armenian population in Baku.

As a result of special military operation held following the Orders of the leaders of the USSR, the military forces entering Baku from different directions killed 147 unarmed civilians with special cruelty regardless their nationality, age and sex. In the capital, surrounding settlements, and districts 744 innocent persons were injured, hundreds of persons went missing and 841 persons were imprisoned unlawfully.

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**Egypt's "tahrirnews" website posts article on Black January  
(January 22, 2014)**

Egypt-based "tahrirnews" website has published an article on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The article was written by the ambassador of Azerbaijan to Egypt Shahin Abdullayev.

The article says that Black January was a massacre of innocent Azerbaijanis committed on January 20, 1990, which was a result of biased policy of the Soviet regime against the people of Azerbaijan. It notes the Soviet Army's bloody invasion of Baku was a vast violation of the constitutions of the former USSR and the Azerbaijan Soviet Republic. The article stresses the fact that the Soviet troops had used internationally prohibited weapons in Baku, and slaughtered women, children and the elderly.

It described as "a great injustice" the fact that Mikhail Gorbachev, who was responsible for the January tragedy, received the Nobel Peace Prize.

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**Kuwait's Al-Vasat newspaper writes about 20 January tragedy  
(January 22, 2014)**

Kuwait's Al-Vasat newspaper has posted an article highlighting the 20 January tragedy. Written by Al-Rashidi, a teacher, the article says a number of innocent people were killed, wounded and arrested as a result of the tragedy perpetrated by the soviet troops. The author notes that 20 January 1990 is the Azerbaijani people's heroic page of fighting for freedom.

“On 20 January though the Azerbaijani people suffered military, moral and political aggression, they displayed their ability to maintain the traditions of historical heroism and resist the cruelest attacks for the sake of the freedom and independence, even becoming martyrs. The sons of the motherland perished on 20 January 1990 while defending the freedom and independence of Azerbaijan and by their bravery made a vivid history in the chronicle of heroism of the country. And today the Azerbaijanis are proud of those who are ready to perish for the sake of the people's national identity.”

The newspaper stresses that “late at that night 26,000 Soviet Special Forces called “Alfa”, without declaring state of emergency, entered to Baku and committed ferocity action against innocent Azerbaijani people. The invasion was launched at the midnight and committed with brutality and no mercy for children, women and elderly. On that tragic night of January 19, Azerbaijan was isolated from the world. The USSR State Security Committee's "Alfa" group exploded the energy block of the Azerbaijani television to stop it from broadcasting, and the press were silenced. People were not aware of the emergency situation announced in Baku and all those on the streets were killed brutally.”

The author underlines that on that tragic night, tanks and armored vehicles crushed everything they met on the streets of Baku, and soldiers opened fire ruthlessly. Not only the people on the streets, but also those on the buses and in their homes were shot dead. The Soviet soldiers also fired at ambulances and the medical staff who rushed to help the wounded.

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**Italian media outlets cover 20 January events  
(January 22, 2014)**

Italia's several news agencies have posted articles on their websites covering the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Articles say the large contingent of the Soviet Army, commandos and interior troops entered Baku committing special cruelty and unprecedented murderous deeds. Hundreds of innocent people were killed and wounded as a result of the massive terror, the massacre of peaceful population stood up for national liberation and territorial integrity of its country. This once again demonstrated to the whole world the criminal nature of the totalitarian Soviet regime on the threshold of its collapse.

“The crime against the Azerbaijani people was committed by the leaders of CPSU, Soviet state and personally Mikhail Gorbachev. At that time, Azerbaijan was subjected to aggression from neighboring Armenia. Armenia violated the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, which was resulted the occupation of the Azerbaijan territory, and tried to unite Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia. And Moscow was supporting Armenians' demands on this issue.”

Articles note that the people of Azerbaijan commemorate the Black January and pay tribute to the memory of the victims of this tragedy. Azerbaijanis living in various countries organize conferences, seminars and roundtables to mark the anniversary of the tragedy.

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**Egyptian newspaper issues article on January 20 tragedy  
(January 24, 2014)**

The Egyptian newspaper “Al-Alam al-Yaum” has issued an article by Azerbaijani ambassador to the country Shahin Abdullayev on the 24th anniversary of Black January tragedy.

In the article, the Ambassador gives detailed information about the event that led to the tragedy and its consequences.

Abdullayev strongly condemns military invasion and indiscriminate killing of civilians in the city of Baku by the Soviet troops on 19-20 January 1990. “The heavy-handed crackdown resulted in indiscriminate killing of some 147 civilians with more than 700 injured and many others went missing.”

The Ambassador ends his article by stressing that although a young independent state, Azerbaijan had already become the regional leader.

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**Kazakh online newspaper Express K issues article on Black January  
(January 24, 2014)**

Kazakhstan's online newspaper Express K has published an article headlined "Black January pain" referring to witness of the massacre Bakhtiyar Gasimov who is from Kazakhstan's Aktyubinsk region.

Bakhtiyar Gasimov who came to Azerbaijan to visit his relatives calls his survival a 'miracle'.

He told how the people were killed by tanks and armed troops in accordance with the order of Gorbachev.

The article says the January martyrs are remembered every year in the province of Aktyubinsk

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**Azerbaijani Embassy in Hungary commemorates January 20 victims  
(January 24, 2014)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Hungary has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the Black January tragedy.

The event participants watched a documentary and viewed a photo exhibition on the Black January.

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**Jordan newspaper publishes article headlined “Azerbaijani ambassador welcomes Jordan’s support on Arab and Islam affairs” (January 24, 2014)**

Jordan’s daily Al-Diyar newspaper has posted an article titled “Azerbaijani ambassador welcomes Jordan’s support on Arab and Islam affairs”.

The article highlights thoughts of Azerbaijan’s ambassador Sabir Aghabayov on efforts of Jordan King Abdullah II to ensure peace and security in the region, his role in tackling questions concerning the Arabic and Islamic world, the Kingdom’s influence in the world, as well as the country’s becoming member of the UN Security Council.

The diplomat also touches upon the current state of and prospects for the Azerbaijan-Jordan relations.

The Azerbaijani ambassador emphasizes the importance of friendship ties between the heads of states and the two nations. The ambassador says friendship relations between heads of states contribute to developing cooperation between the two countries.

In the article, Aghabayov praises support of Jordan to Azerbaijan’s fair stance on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The Azerbaijani diplomat stresses that his country is interested in expanding relations with the Arabic countries, particularly with Jordan.

On Azerbaijan’s development, the ambassador says for a short time after restoring its independence, a democratic system based on political pluralism and free market economy was established in the country. “The country enjoys modern state and civil society intuitions thanks to the far-sighted policy of the leadership.”

On the 20 January tragedy, the article condemns the bloody crime committed by the Soviet regime against the Azerbaijani people. The date of 20 January is written in blood for Azerbaijanis across the world, for it commemorates the day in 1990 when peaceful demonstrations in Baku, the capital, were violently suppressed by Soviet troops. These demonstrations highlighted the fact that the Azerbaijani independence movement had come of age, and they contributed to the final collapse of the Soviet Union. The peaceful and unarmed people demanding the restoration of their constitutional rights were murdered by the armed forces, but this act failed to break the will of the people demonstrating their invincibility to the world. This fight for freedom consolidated the population closer, which resulted with gaining of the independence of Azerbaijan in 1991.

The article also provides an insight into the fact that Azerbaijan’s 20 percent territories are kept under occupation by Armenia and over one million Azerbaijanis have become refugees and IDPs as a result of the Armenian aggressive policy.

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**Gulf News publishes article headlined “Azerbaijan community remembers Black January”  
(January 26, 2014)**

Dubai-based Gulf News newspaper has issued an article headlined “Azerbaijan community remembers Black January”.

The article reads: “The Azerbaijan community in the UAE commemorated the 24th anniversary of ‘Black January’ on January 20, the day in 1990 when Soviet troops massacred scores of residents in its capital city Baku.

Samir Imanov, head of the Azerbaijan community in the UAE, said January 20 will always be etched in their memory as a time when local martyrs fought for territorial integrity, unity and equality.

Imanov said that on the night of January 19 and 20, Soviet troops invaded Baku and other districts and killed at least 100 unarmed civilians and injured hundreds.”

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**Egyptian state TV channel broadcasts documentary on Black January  
(January 28, 2014)**

Egyptian “Cairo 3” state TV channel has broadcast a documentary on the occasion of the 24th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The film highlights the events that happened on January 20, 1990 when the Soviet troops stormed Baku to commit a massacre against civilian Azerbaijanis, who took to the streets to defend their independence and territorial integrity.

The bloody action, incited by Armenians, executed by the Soviet troops failed to crush the Azerbaijani people’s will and aspiration to freedom. The film successfully demonstrates how Azerbaijan’s struggle for its self-determination and sovereignty, lead to success in 1991.

The film points to Armenia’s territorial claims against Azerbaijan starting from 1980s, which later resulted in an open violence.

The documentary stresses that Azerbaijani people suffered political and economic hardships through the war with Armenia, which resulted in the occupation of 20 percent of their lands.

It also highlights reforms carried out by the Azerbaijani government, saying they ensured the country’s rapid development and helped it become a reliable partner on an international scale.

The film is available at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Snh4VIMFrh0&feature=em-upload\\_owner](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Snh4VIMFrh0&feature=em-upload_owner)

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**US Azeris Network launches awareness campaign on January 20 tragedy  
(January 9, 2015)**

The United States Azeri Network (USAN) has launched awareness campaign on 20 January tragedy. The campaign contains the facts from the report of “Human Right Watch” international organization on “Bloody January in Azerbaijan”. The campaign informs about the statistics on the peaceful Baku residents killed by the Soviet Army.

The USAN statement says that on January 20, 1990, sovereign Azerbaijan was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops. A courageous resistance by Azerbaijanis to the Soviet invasion continued into February. Eventually, 147 Azerbaijanis were killed, and a lot of people went missing. The Black January events were the continuation of the massacres committed in Kazakhstan in 1986 and in Georgia in 1989. After the tragedy happened in Azerbaijan the same has been committed in Lithuania in 1991.

“The terrible event remembered by this commemoration was an atrocity, but it also gave birth to a hope that led eventually to independence and freedom the following year. Twenty five years later, "Black January" has not lost its importance. Millions of Azerbaijanis and friends of Azerbaijan visit Martyrs' Alley in the Azeri capital, Baku on January 20th to pay tribute to the memory of their compatriots who laid their lives for the country's independence. They lay flowers on the graves of the victims and the nation's commitment to independence, democracy and freedom,” the statement adds.

Through USAN’s letter campaign, members of Azerbaijani-American community inform the American public and call their legislators to issue proclamations and resolutions to officially commemorate the victims of January 20 by the government of the United States.

***Yusif Babanlı***  
***Special correspondent***

**The Korea Post publishes article about 25th anniversary of “Black January”  
(January 16, 2015)**

The Korea Post newspaper has published an article titled “The 25th anniversary of “Black January” Struggle for independence and freedom”. The article reads: “Twenty-five years have passed since the January events of 1990 which went down in the history of Azerbaijan as “Black January”. On that day, the Central Soviet Authorities perpetrated an atrocious crime against the people of Azerbaijan. Hundreds of civilians were crushed or injured by the Soviet troops in Baku at one night, on an order from the USSR leadership that was trying to maintain the Communist regime in Azerbaijan. In the fall of 1989, the national independence movement had reached incredible momentum with hundreds of thousands of people struggling for the ideals of freedom, independence and sovereignty to preserve the nation's territorial integrity. Thousands of people protesting against the policy of the USSR held demonstrations all day long in the central square and on the streets of Baku. At that time, Azerbaijan was also subjected to aggression from neighboring Armenia. The country violated the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, which has resulted in the occupation of 20% of Azerbaijani territory. Armenia's territorial claims and separatist activities were supported by the ruling Soviet regime. On January 20, late at night 26,000 Soviet Special Forces without declaring a state of emergency, entered Baku and committed atrocities against the innocent Azerbaijani people. The invasion was launched at midnight and was committed with brutality; even children, women and the elderly were not spared. In total, as a result of the intrusion of troops into Baku and regions of the republic 133 people were killed, 611 wounded, 841 illegally arrested and five went missing. Looking to the background of the massacre committed by the Soviet troops, it was clearly understood that this military operation was totally planned and calculated act. This aggression against Azerbaijani people fulfilled step by step. Before the troops arrived in Baku, the Azeri Supreme Soviet and other political bodies were paralyzed; weapons were gathered from militia employees under the pretext of population disarmament. The Soviet authorities exploit the power block of televisions and stopped the broadcasting in Azerbaijan on January 19 in order to deprive population from getting information. Foreigners were not allowed to enter to the city. Western reporters were banned from travelling to Baku to cover the events. Soviet Defence and Interior Minister, and military officials came to Baku some days before, for realization of this calculated terrorist attack. The Black January was a turning point in the history of Azerbaijan. This massacre did not stop the people of Azerbaijan from continuing their struggle until the achievement of the national independence of the country. Despite being subjected to military, political and moral aggression, Azerbaijani national movement succeeded to stand against Soviet challenge, and Soviet troops eventually had to withdrawn from Baku. Subsequently Azerbaijan declared its independence on October 18, 1991. With the Decrees of the President of Azerbaijan Heydar Aliyev of December 16, 1999 all the victims of the crackdown were awarded the title "Martyrs of January 20." On 20 January 1990, the Azerbaijani people displayed their ability to maintain the traditions of historical heroism and resist the cruellest attacks for the sake of the freedom and independence of the motherland, even becoming martyrs. The people of Azerbaijan perished on 20 January 1990 while defending the freedom and independence of their motherland and by their bravery made a vivid history in the chronicle of heroism of Azerbaijan. In spite of the fact that a few years has passed since those

bloody days, Azerbaijani people remembers that dreadful night and expresses its deep contempt to those who committed that tragedy. Azerbaijan commemorates the day of tragedy of January 20 broadly every year, which had immortalized in the vital memory of Azerbaijani nation as a Day of the Nationwide Sorrow. The Martyrs, who died in that day, are among the first, who sacrificed their lives for freedom that Azerbaijan nowadays enjoy and those heroes will never be forgotten. The sons and daughters of Azerbaijan killed at that terrible night have written a brightest page in the history of Azerbaijan, and paved the way to national liberation and independence of the Azerbaijani people.”

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**The Hill posts article on January 20 tragedy  
(January 18, 2015)**

The Hill, the US congressional newspaper, has published an article by Azerbaijani Consul General in Los Angeles Nasimi Aghayev. The article titled “Black January and an unwarranted Nobel Peace Prize” informs about the tragedy happened 25 years ago and the struggle of the Azerbaijani people for freedom. The article reads: “On October 15, 1990 the Nobel Peace Prize Committee announced probably one of its most unusual decisions. According to it, Michael Gorbachev, then President of the Soviet Union, was awarded the highly coveted Nobel Peace Prize. The Committee justified its position by stressing Gorbachev’s “leading role in the peace process” and his “many and decisive contributions” to peace. The Committee and its supporters seemed to be so “impressed” by the Soviet leader, that they decided to be oblivious to many egregious crimes he committed, which had nothing to do with the notion of peace. And no one knows it better than the people of Azerbaijan. Ten months before the Committee’s decision, on January 20, 1990, Gorbachev personally sent 26,000 Soviet troops to Azerbaijan’s capital city of Baku killing hundreds of civilians, including children, women and elderly, and wounding a thousand. In a bloodshed carried out by the heavily-armed soldiers, which the Human Rights Watch would later call a “collective punishment”, the troops stormed the city from all directions and began shooting indiscriminately into the peaceful demonstrators. The victims’ only crime was to demand freedom for Azerbaijan from the Soviet Union: proof that the Soviet authorities were presiding over a collapsing empire, and that Azerbaijan was leading the fight for freedom. The Baku uprising was the first occasion in the USSR in which a whole city had risen up against Soviet occupation – and the first in which the authorities used such overwhelming force, including tanks and helicopters, to kill protesters and innocent civilians. Through this massacre Mr. Gorbachev’s regime was determined to crush the Azerbaijani people’s fight for freedom and intimidate others. However, the brutal regime utterly failed. After the massacre, which entered the history books as Black January, around a million Azerbaijanis – young and old, men and women, Muslims, Jews and Christians - filled the streets to mourn the victims, and a general strike in honor of the dead shut down the city for 40 days. Heydar Aliyev, who would become later the founder of the modern Azerbaijan, came to Soviet Azerbaijan’s Permanent Mission in Moscow and fiercely denounced the bloodshed. His defiance helped to inspire the Azerbaijani people and Aliyev became a leader of the struggle for liberty. The force could not stop the people of Azerbaijan from seeking their freedom. In fact, it only increased their resolve to re-establish a free and independent Azerbaijan. The independence was finally restored on October 18, 1991, as the USSR collapsed, in part because of the callousness of Black January and the resulting crisis of legitimacy for the Soviet authorities. A massacre intended to shore up the empire ended up contributing to its demise. Many historians now agree that Black January marked the beginning of the end of the Soviet Union. Since the restoration of independence, Azerbaijan has gone from strength to strength. Azerbaijan is now economically dynamic, politically stable, and an important geopolitical power. It is the biggest economy in the South Caucasus, and one of the biggest in the whole of the former Soviet Union. International investors have been attracted by the country’s business climate, and Azerbaijan is the centerpiece of the Caspian oil and gas developments, vital for global energy security, as well as other regional megaprojects. Baku, which was

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consumed by the sound of gunfire in Black January, now resounds to the sound of construction as the city is transformed into a vibrant and modern community. The streets which once saw Soviet tanks are now filled with Azerbaijanis passionate and determined about their country's freedom and independence. Ironically, Alfred Nobel would not have been able to establish the Nobel Prize in 1901, had it not been the immense fortune he and his brothers made with oil development in Baku. And Alfred Nobel would not have been able to even dream that his Prize would one day be awarded to a man who turned the very city of Baku into a bloodbath. On January 20, the people of Azerbaijan will mark the 25th anniversary of the tragedy of Black January and pay tribute to its martyrs. But they will also commemorate the achievements in the years since as an independent nation, and acknowledge that January 20, for all its bloodshed, was a first and vital step towards Azerbaijan's freedom."

**“20th January Martyrs Spring” opens in Pakistan  
(January 18, 2015)**

An opening ceremony of the “20th January Martyrs Spring” built at the Heydar Aliyev Foundation's initiative in Punjab Province of Pakistan has been held. At the ceremony organized at Ibn-e-Haldun Academy in the city of Gucharkhan, Rector of the Academy Gazi Mohammad Imran talked about the 20th January tragedy committed 25 years ago in Baku. Head of the district municipality Raja Rizvan Nazim, representative of the Education Ministry Mahammad Azad and well-known politician Mushtag Ishtiag Choudru highlighted the tragedy of the 20th January.

Secretary General of the Azerbaijan-Pakistan Media Forum Raja Javid Batty also delivered a speech at the ceremony. He mentioned that the “20th January Martyrs Spring” was built at the initiative and with the support of Azerbaijan's First Lady, President of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation Mehriban Aliyeva. According to Raja Javid Batty, within the framework of the project, two artesian wells to be operated using alternate energy have been drilled in the region suffering from water shortage. He thanked Mehriban Aliyeva and the people of Azerbaijan for the works done. Azerbaijan's Ambassador to Pakistan Dashgin Shikarov informed the attendees of the event about the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and the Bloody January events.

At the end of the ceremony, small scenes reflecting the Black January were shown by students studying at the Academy.

**Gulu Kangarli**  
**Special correspondent**

**January 20 victims commemorated in Korea  
(January 19, 2015)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Korea has organized a commemorative event dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy. The event brought together Azerbaijanis living in Seoul, members of the Azerbaijan-Korea Student Association (BUTA), representatives of the Korean companies operating in Azerbaijan, as well as journalists. The event began with a minute silence for the January 20 victims. Azerbaijani Ambassador to Korea Ramzi Teymurov spoke about the causes of the tragedy and the terror act committed by the Soviet army against the Azerbaijani people. He said that the brutality against peaceful Baku citizens committed on January 20, 1990 once again showed the criminal essence of the Soviet regime. The Ambassador characterized the terror act as violation of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights, as well as other international documents on human rights. He also expressed his sorrow as the tragedy has not been given its legal assessment. The January issue of "The Korea Post" magazine which posted an article titled "The 25th anniversary of "Black January. Struggle for independence and freedom" were distributed among the event participants. The event also featured a documentary and a photo exhibition on the January 20 tragedy.

**Shahin Jafarov**  
**Special correspondent**  
**AzerTAc**

**The Diplomatic Star: “Black January: The Bloody Path to Freedom”  
(January 19, 2015)**

The Diplomatic Star magazine of Pakistan has posted an article titled “Black January: The Bloody Path to Freedom” by well known journalist Mohsun Ali. The author stresses the territorial claims of the Armenian nationalists against Azerbaijan. “At early morning hours of 20 January, 1990, twenty six thousands of Soviet troops, including the special forces entered Baku from different directions and stormed demonstrators firing the crowds. The forces of Baku garrison and the internal troops also came out of their barracks, and started shooting and smashing by tank tracks unarmed people. As a result of this unprecedented illegal action, 134 men were killed, about 700 men wounded, 841 men got arrested and 5 were declared missing. There were many children, elderly, women, representatives of different ethnic groups and religions amongst the killed innocent civilians. The soldiers gutted 200 houses, state and private movable and immovable property. Military operation was a rough violence of constitutions of the USSR and Azerbaijani SSR as well as International Pact on civil and political rights,” the article says. The author writes that the events of the next days ruined the plans of Soviets. “On 21 January, 1990, the National Leader of Azerbaijan, Mr. Heydar Aliyev, who was leaving in Russia under the eye of Soviet KGB, ignoring the threat to his life, came to the Permanent Mission of Azerbaijan SSR in Moscow and in his speech before thousands of ethnical Azerbaijanis strongly condemned communist leaders of the USSR for the massacre. That was a first open statement against regime which not only broke information blockade around that very event but also instilled the confidence to the hearts of Azerbaijanis. On 22nd January, despite of warnings of the military rulers of Baku, more than one million people turned out to bury the victims of that bloody night. The entire republic announced a strike for 40 days what badly affected the USSR economy which was dependent on Azerbaijan’s oil machinery. A special session of the Parliament of Azerbaijan SSR held on the same day condemned the military operation of Soviet Army. Despite of military, political and moral aggression, Azerbaijani national movement kept on struggling and succeeded to stand against the Soviet challenge. The Black January was a turning point in the history of Azerbaijan. It buried chances of preserving the collapsing empire and resurrected national movement for independence. This was a beginning of the end of the USSR,” the author adds.

**Gulu Kangarli**  
**Special correspondent**  
**AzerTAc**



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**World Azerbaijanis commemorate January 20 victims  
(January 19, 2015)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in Austria has organized a commemorative event dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy. The event was attended by representatives of the Azerbaijani and Turkish Diaspora organizations, Azerbaijani students in Vienna and others. The event began with a minute silence for the people killed on January 20, 1990. Ambassador Galib Israfilov described the tragedy as a historical phenomenon paving the way for Azerbaijan's independence. The Azerbaijani Embassy in Uzbekistan also hosted a commemorative event on the 25th anniversary of the Black January. The event brought together employees of the Embassy, public figures of Uzbekistan, and representatives of the Azerbaijani Diaspora. The event started with an exhibition of books on the January 20 tragedy and the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Addressing the event, Ambassador Huseyn Guliyev spoke about the discrimination policy of the Soviet leadership against Azerbaijan. He said that the day after the tragedy, national leader Heydar Aliyev held a press conference and condemned the USSR leadership for committing this terror act.

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**January 20 victims remembered in Berlin  
(January 19, 2015)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Germany has organized a commemorative ceremony to mark the 25th anniversary of the Black January tragedy. The event was attended by Bundestag members, political and cultural figures, journalists, diplomats and members of Azerbaijani diaspora. The ceremony started with a minute silence for victims of the January tragedy. Opening the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador Parviz Shahbazov spoke of the history of the tragedy, Azerbaijani people's struggle for independence, causes and consequences of the tragedy. He condemned the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people. Shahbazov noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment. The event featured a commemorative concert by Germany-based Azerbaijani musicians Elnara Ismayilova and Faig Aliyev. The participants also viewed a photo exhibition on the 20th January tragedy.

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**The Washington Times publishes Azerbaijani Ambassador`s article on 20 January massacre  
(January 20, 2015)**

The Washington Times has published an article by Azerbaijani Ambassador to the USA Elin Suleymanov, in which he highlights the 20 January massacre.

In the article headlined “From tragedy to independence”, the Ambassador says: “Twenty-five years ago today, while then-President George H.W. Bush was delivering his State of the Union message before a joint session of Congress in Washington, Soviet troops attacked unarmed civilian protesters in the Azerbaijani capital of Baku, killing some 147 people and wounding hundreds of others. The Soviet effort to crush the growing Azerbaijani pro-independence movement culminated in the largest massacre in a generation, it but failed miserably, hastened the end of the USSR, and led directly to our formal declaration of independence two years later.”

“The events of 1990 helped crystallize key elements of the Azerbaijani social and political identity. Today two of those elements, namely a strong, unquestionable commitment to its independence and the inclusive nature of its tolerant society, remain at the core of Azerbaijan’s strategic importance. Despite a history of imperial domination, the people of Azerbaijan persevered, sacrificed and ultimately won the freedom and independent future they sought. In fact, Azerbaijan was the first nation of the Soviet Empire or Eastern Europe to become free of any foreign military presence on its soil.”

Mr Suleymanov says: “Independence has given Azerbaijan the ability to act in the best interest of our own people without outside interference. Azerbaijan’s strengths today include energy security, a growing economy, modern infrastructure and a remarkable degree of stability. Independence has allowed us to pursue and achieve our peoples’ centuries long dream of a prosperous and successful nation. This is no small accomplishment anywhere, but especially in the complicated geopolitical neighborhood in which we are located.”

“Azerbaijan is today a reliable international partner. History has shown that unstable nations with compromised sovereignty pose the greatest threat to peace and security while stable, prosperous societies committed to the fundamentals of international law both promote peace and establish the basis for continued democratic reforms. A stable, prosperous Azerbaijan is good for its people, for the strategically important region in which it finds itself, and for its international partners.” “For a quarter-century, every Jan. 20 citizens of Azerbaijan of all persuasions bring red carnations to the memorial of the tragedy. It is, however, a truly independent, successful and diverse Azerbaijan that is the best tribute to the sacrifice of those who died on the streets of Baku at the hands of a collapsing Soviet regime,” says the article.

**Yusif Babanli**

**Special Correspondent**

**AzerTAc**

**“The Road to independence: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania” exhibition opens in Prague  
(January 20, 2015)**

Azerbaijani Student Organization, Azerbaijan Student Network, The Union of Georgian Students in the Czech Republic and the Lithuanian Embassy in the Czech Republic have arranged “The Road to Independence: Azerbaijan, Georgia, Lithuania” photo exhibition at the Lucerna Palace in Prague. During the exhibition, that will run until February 2, the organizers will show Czech citizens and visitors of the city more than 40 photographs of the events in Tbilisi, Baku and Vilnius which occurred on 9 April 1989, 20 January 1990 and 13 January 1991 respectively. “The three countries together have shown the cost of the freedom for each of them from the “prison of nations” under the name of the USSR,” Azerbaijan Student Network said on its website. The opening ceremony was attended by representatives of the diplomatic corps in the Czech Republic, Czech officials, in particular former European Commissioner for Enlargement and Neighborhood Policy Štefan Füle, scientists, Azerbaijani, Lithuanian, Georgian, Czech students studying in Prague, diaspora members of the three countries, and media representatives. “With this exhibition, we want to show that we remember, the way our people fought for independence and we honor the ultimate sacrifices made by our fellow citizens,” said the manager of Azerbaijan Student Network and supervisor of the exhibition Geda Montvilaite. Azerbaijani Ambassador Farid Shafiyev recounted events of the Black January tragedy in Baku during which Soviet soldiers killed 147 people. “The Soviet leaders sent troops under the pretext of reestablishing order and stability in Baku, but in this case it is not clear why it was necessary to blow TV center and interrupt communications in the city. The only purpose of the invasion was to punish the protesters,” said the Ambassador. Mr Shafiyev stressed that despite the extreme brutality in suppressing the protest, the Soviet government didn’t achieve what they had desired and couldn’t break the will of the Azerbaijani people. “The best proof of that is the fact that after 25 years since the Black January I’m standing here in Prague in front of you as an ambassador of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan,” he added.

**Parvana Garayeva**  
**Special Correspondent**  
**AzerTAc**

**Mexican Excelsior newspaper: 2015. Twenty-five years after the Bloody January  
(January 20, 2015)**

Mexican Excelsior daily newspaper has published an article headlined “2015. Twenty-five years after the Bloody January”.The article says the 20th January marks the 25th anniversary of the Black January tragedy, military invasion and indiscriminate killing of civilians in the city of Baku by the Soviet troops.“In response to the rising national independence movement, the Soviet leadership ordered troops equipped with heavy military equipment, including tanks to storm the city of Baku. The heavy-handed crackdown resulted in indiscriminate killing of civilians.”“The day the tragedy took place later came to be known as Black January or Black Saturday, widely commemorated in Azerbaijan and by Azerbaijani communities around the world. Every year, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijanis visit the Alley of Martyrs, where the victims of Black January lay buried, to pay respects to the victims.” “20th January is a National Mourning Day in Azerbaijan with nationwide commemorations taking place and the national flag flying at half-mast over the public buildings and diplomatic missions abroad,” says the article.

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**Azerbaijani students in Glasgow commemorate victims of January 20 tragedy  
(January 21, 2015)**

Azerbaijani students, studying at the University of Glasgow, UK have held a commemorative event called "My name is January 20", dedicated to the 25th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy. According to the Azerbaijan Student Youth Organizations' Union (ASYOU), as part of the campaign, foreigners studying together with Azerbaijani compatriots in different parts of the University of Glasgow attracted the attention of international community to the January 20 tragedy holding the papers with the names and surnames of people who gave their lives for the independence of Azerbaijan on 20 January 1990. The organizer of the campaign, the former director of the Department of International Relations of the ASYOU Togrul Mammadli said the event brought together students about 30 countries (Mexico, Moldova, Pakistan, Vietnam, France etc.) including Azerbaijan. "Each of them was informed on the events of January 20, martyrs, the first steps of Azerbaijan during the independence, the development of country and its success and achievements", said Mr. Mammadli.

**AzerTAc**

**Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Moscow organizes commemorative event dedicated to Black January  
tragedy  
(January 21, 2015)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in the Russian Federation has organized a commemorative event on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the Black January tragedy. The attendees first put flowers at a bas-relief of Azerbaijan`s national leader Heydar Aliyev and a stand with names of shahids. A minute of silence was observed in memory of shahids. Opening the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbuloglu highlighted the history of the 20 January tragedy. He said a leadership of former Soviet Union lost control over the situation that night and sent troops to Baku. That night 147 innocent citizens were killed, hundreds of people were wounded. Among shahids were representatives of various nations and religions. The diplomat pointed out that the day after the tragedy national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership`s actions against the Azerbaijani people.

Photos of shahids were demonstrated in the hall of the Embassy. He stressed the leadership of the country gave huge importance to this event, which is being remembered every year on a state level. Polad Bulbuloglu expressed gratitude to ambassadors and representatives of diplomatic mission for supporting Azerbaijan in this issue and for participation in the event.

The Ambassador also presented a book-album “January 20 – A bloody and glorious page of our history”, a joint project of the Public and Political Affairs Department of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration and AzerTAc. Project managers are head of Public and Political Affairs Department of the Azerbaijani Presidential Administration, professor Ali Hasanov and AzerTAc`s Director General Aslan Aslanov. The book-album was published in 4 languages. “This is a fundamental book, which includes rare photos, depicting the January 20 events and information.” The attendees heard speeches by translator and publicist Ilham Badalbeyli, who attended the protest action of Azerbaijani community in Moscow and secretary of the Moscow office of the Union of Azerbaijani Writers Nasib Nabioglu.

They mentioned Azerbaijanis gave more victims for its freedom and independence than other nations of the former union. The attendees watched a documentary on the January tragedy.

The event brought together ambassadors, employees of the Heydar Aliyev Foundation`s Russian representation, representatives of All-Russian Congress of Azerbaijanis, Azerbaijani Youth Union of Russia and Russian society.

**Farida Abdullayeva**  
**Special correspondent**  
**AzerTAc**

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**The Jakarta Post: Black January in the history of Azerbaijan  
(January 21, 2015)**

The Jakarta Post newspaper has posted an article headlined “Black January in the history of Azerbaijan”.

The author noted that using the mixed-up situation in the former Soviet Union in the second half of 1980, Armenian nationalists came to the decision to connect Azerbaijan`s Nagorno-Karabakh region to Armenia, adding head of former USSR Gorbachov supported them to realize their sly plan. Azerbaijanis started to protests those events and demanded the independence to the country.

The author underlined on January 19-20, 1990, troops of former soviet army entered Baku and shot the unarmed people, and stressed the action was contradicted to the constitutions of the Azerbaijan SSR and international treaty on human rights. The article ends with thoughts that Azerbaijani people will never forget those, who died for the territorial integrity and freedom of the Motherland.

**Vugar Aghayev**  
**Special correspondent**  
**AzerTAc**



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**Columbian “TNN” news portal issues article “Azerbaijan, January 20, 1990”  
(January 21, 2015)**

The author noted starting from 70s Azerbaijan rapidly developed in the fields of economy, culture and science and became one of the important ally countries in the former USSR. The author mentioned the preconceived policy of the former USSR leadership against Azerbaijan, its support to the neighbouring Armenia over groundless territorial claims, which resulted with the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. The author also spoke of the pressure of the totalitarian soviet regime on national leader Heydar Aliyev, who protested the dirty game of the USSR leadership and later became the founder of an independent Azerbaijan, adding on January 20, 1990 under M. Gorbachov`s order soviet troops entered Baku and killed innocent citizens.

The author stressed Azerbaijan has restored its independence and as a result of political and economic development became the strongest country in the region.

The full article is available at: [www.tnnpoliticas.com/author/admin](http://www.tnnpoliticas.com/author/admin).

**AzerTAc**

### **January 20 tragedy commemorated in Los Angeles (January 23, 2015)**

Azerbaijan`s Consulate General in Los Angeles has hosted a commemorative event on the occasion of the 25th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy. Attendees of the event, including consul generals of foreign countries, scientific and cultural figures, Hollywood producers, professors of local universities and member of the community, observed a minute of silence in memory of shahids.

Azerbaijan`s Consul General in Los Angeles Nasimi Aghayev highlighted the history of the January 20 events, saying innocent civilians were mercilessly killed by the Soviet troops. He noted that the next day of the tragedy national leader Heydar Aliyev came to the permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow and overtly condemned the genocide and gave a push to people`s struggle for freedom.

He stressed following the restoration of its independence Azerbaijan was rapidly developing and its political and economic positions are being strengthened in the regional and global scale. Addressing the event, former U.S. diplomat, professor of the University of San Diego James Coyle highlighted the history of the tragedy, and stressed the Black January tragedy was a starting point in the collapse of the USSR.

Journalist of Los Angeles Nancy Pearlman said few months ago of those bloody events she was in Baku. She said that time there was an intensive situation in Baku, and underlined she felt that USSR leadership was going to broke Azerbaijani people`s will for freedom. She also spoke of her last trip to Azerbaijan, and underlined Azerbaijan has been incredibly changed in past 25 years and became modern and developed country.

The attendees then heard music of classic composers performed with violin and violoncello, and viewed a photo-exhibition depicting the Black January tragedy.

**AzerTAc**

### **January 20 victims commemorated in Berlin (January 19, 2016)**

A commemoration ceremony to mark the 26th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy was organized in the Azerbaijan Embassy in Germany.

The event was attended by employees of the Foreign Ministry of Germany, representatives of political and cultural community, media outlets, foreign diplomats and representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Germany.

The event began with a moment of silence in memory of those who died that day, after which Azerbaijani Ambassador to Germany Parviz Shahbazov briefed about the January events.

Shahbazov said this bloody crime aimed to put down the ideals of freedom of the people of Azerbaijan by the Soviet authorities was unable to turn the nation from the path of independence.

He said Azerbaijan's great leader Heydar Aliyev, who then lived in Moscow, came to Azerbaijan's permanent representative office - a day after the tragedy - and strongly condemned those who committed the January massacre and gave the political-legal assessment to the tragedy after returning to the political power in independent Azerbaijan.

The memory of the 20 January martyrs is traditionally marked by the state and people every year. The Day was engraved in the heart of the Azerbaijani people and will never be forgotten.

Matthias Dornfeld, Chairman of the European Institute for Caucasus and Caspian Studies gave the depth analysis of the events of that period, talked about the policy of the Azerbaijani state, the achievements and considerably significant progress the country gained in all spheres in the past years.

The event was culminated with the performance by Narmin Najafli, young and talented Azerbaijani musician who now studies at the Hanover University of Music, Drama and Media.

**Vugar Seyidov,**  
**Special correspondent**

**Japanese World Investors TV broadcasts program about Bloody January tragedy  
(January 19, 2016)**

Japanese “World Investors TV” internet television has broadcast a program about the 20 January tragedy.

The program featured chairman of the Foreign Students Organization Alibay Mammadov and AZERTAC’s correspondent to Japan Vugar Agayev as a guest who highlighted Azerbaijan’s state independence.

They spoke about the history of Bloody January tragedy. On the night of January 19-20, 1990, soviet army and its tanks invaded Azerbaijan’s capital city Baku and killed 147, wounded more than 700 people. That day entered the history as a page of heroism of those who was killed for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

The Soviet regime used force to suppress struggle for freedom of Azerbaijanis. Among the former soviet republics, Azerbaijan was the first republic which made serious step towards the independence. Despite great slaughters, soviet leadership couldn’t impede the struggle for freedom of Azerbaijani people, and after 20 months the country restored its independence.

The “Black January” demonstrated will and bellicosity of Azerbaijani people to whole world. The Soviet leadership’s effort to frighten people and to lengthen life of the soviet system by means of power failed.”

*Vugar Agayev*  
*Special Correspondent*

### **Diplomatic Star magazine highlights Bloody January events (January 20, 2016)**

Islamabad-based Diplomatic Star magazine has published an article on the Bloody January events in Azerbaijan.

“The Republic of Azerbaijan commemorates the 26th anniversary of the defining moment in its history. On January 20, 1990 the Soviet Empire launched a full-scale military attack in midnight on Azerbaijan’s capital, Baku. The mass murder of about 150 unarmed civilians in one of the major cities is more than enough to measure the brutality of the Soviet Empire against the freedom movements.”

The magazine says: “The national movement for liberty grew in 1988 against the Soviet Empire and communism in Azerbaijan. There were two main factors; first was the Soviet imperial policy that unconditionally defended Armenians who were committing the crimes of mass killing and ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijanis. In 1988, over 200 thousand Azerbaijanis were expelled from current Armenian lands where they and their fathers had lived for centuries. This policy caused huge amount of wrath in Azerbaijan. Second factor was Azerbaijani Nation’s wish for independence and freedom, deriving from their national and spiritual values, as well as from the fact of having had their own independent state in 1918-20 before Soviet occupation.”

“In order to curtail the freedom movement in Azerbaijan against the Soviet Empire, it was decided to send a big contingent of the USSR Forces to Baku. Hence, on January 20, Soviet forces were sent to crush the voice; the height of brutality was displayed by the Soviets that night. They were heavily armed with bullets to chemical weapons and what not to kill the unarmed civilians.”

“Despite of the cruelty and immense pressure from the Soviet Empire, the people of Azerbaijan were on the streets the very next day of tragedy to show detestation of brutal imperialism wherever they lived. The Azerbaijanis in Moscow gathered in Azerbaijan’s representative in Moscow, as they seemed sorrowful and helpless; Heydar Aliyev, outstanding leader of Azerbaijanis, who was under significant political pressure, came there and presented his commiserations to the people. He emphasized that the inhuman act against the civilians of Baku was initiated by the officials of Soviet Empire; and they should accept the responsibility for that and thus should be punished,” the article says.

“The Azerbaijani nation stand united against the Soviet policies and later for an independent state. The military operation was totally calculated, planned and was a political act to preserve communist imperial rule. The journey of independence is not that simple as it looks. Thousands of people sacrifice their lives for independence. The sacrifices and compromises made by Azerbaijani nation on that day of January is not less than a lesson. It’s a lesson for the powerful empires to not invade a territory where the civilians are more enthusiastic for freedom and liberty; and for those who are arrogantly unable to realize the power of unity.”

“The martyrs of January 20th were buried in the highest spot in Baku, the Mountain Park. Since then this place has been called Martyrs’ Avenue and the people of Azerbaijan mark January 20th as a “National Day of

Mourning” in Azerbaijan. This mass massacre from that time on is mentioned as “Black January”. The massacre in Baku did not stop the people from their struggle until the achievement of independence. Regardless of being subjected to political, moral and military aggression, Azerbaijani independence movement succeeded to rise against Soviet Empire, and Soviet forces at last had to withdraw from Baku. Consequently Azerbaijan declared its independence on October 18, 1991,” the article says.

**AZERTAC**

## **20 January victims remembered in Rome (January 21, 2016)**

Research Centre on Azerbaijan under La Sapienza University in Rome has hosted an event commemorating the 26th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

Moderated by Maryam Mehdiyeva, vice president of the Azerbaijan-Italy Youth Association (AIYA), the ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the January tragedy.

In his opening remarks, President of the Young Italian Researches Association on Azerbaijan and Caucasus (ASSAC), Professor Daniel Pommier noted that “looking through the history we have eye witnessed how our peoples gave martyrs in the struggle for freedom”. Underlining the Italian public's awareness of the history of Azerbaijan's independence, Mr. Pommier paid tribute to those who lost their lives on the night of 20 January.

Azerbaijan's charge d'affaires in Italy Vugar Hajiyev said that on the night of January 19 to 20, 1990 the armed-to-the-teeth Soviet army deployed troops to Baku without any warning, torturing Azerbaijani civilians. He said dozens were killed and hundreds were injured in the 20 January tragedy, which he described as “one of the bloodiest pages of our history”.

“However, 20 January went down in the history of Azerbaijan as a page of pride and heroism,” he said.

"Although the Soviet government deployed 30,000 soldiers in Baku that night, in the morning a large crowd of people took to the streets to bury their martyrs. It was a challenge against the unjust regime," Hajiyev added.

The event then featured presentation of the film "Shusha Galasi" (Shusha Castle) made in partnership with the Council of State Support for NGOs under the President of Azerbaijan.

Addressing the event, employee at the Council Toghrul Mammadli called on Azerbaijani students to be active in “promoting the truth about our country, including about the 20 January tragedy in the universities they study abroad and in the events they participate”. He said that the Azerbaijani government has always assisted young people in holding such awareness-raising events. “The Council is always ready to support such initiatives. Promoting the realities of Azerbaijan is the duty of every Azerbaijani young person,” he added.

Co-chairman of AIYA Emin Rustamov, director of the film Nihad Isa, president of the Dance Mission Association in Italy Raisa Salakhova said 20 January events have been etched on the minds of Azerbaijanis as a page of heroism in the history of their struggle for freedom and territorial integrity. The event participants then watched Shusha Galasi film.

*Magsud Dadashov*  
*Special Correspondent*

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**20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Beijing  
(January 21, 2016)**

The Azerbaijani Embassy in China has hosted an event commemorating the 26th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute silence for victims of the January tragedy.

Addressing the ceremony, Ambassador Latif Gandilov briefed the event participants on the bloody tragedy.

He said the 20 January 1990 is a day, which went down in the history as the struggle for the freedom and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, and as a heroism page.

The diplomat pointed out that the day after the tragedy happened, national leader Heydar Aliyev came to permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow, and held a press conference overtly condemning the Soviet leadership's actions against the Azerbaijani people. He also noted that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

The event featured a demonstration of video on victims of bloody January tragedy.

*Shahin Jafarov*  
*Special Correspondent*



**The Jakarta Post highlights January 20 tragedy  
(January 21, 2016)**

The Indonesia-based newspaper 'The Jakarta Post' published an article in connection with the 26th anniversary of January 20 tragedy.

Titled "When invader attempts to justify brutality" the article says: Twenty-six years ago, exactly on the night of January 20, 1990, 26.000 Soviet troops invaded Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. This invasion, according to the official investigation report of the General Prosecutor's Office of Azerbaijan, killed 132 people, injured 612 and led to the illegal arrest of 841 people. Hundreds of buildings were destroyed, causing both the state and its citizens to suffer amid huge material damages.

The Soviet justified its invasion by citing the necessity of evacuating Armenians from Baku. This was a lie. After the dismissal of civil authorities, the Soviet Military Commandant's office, along with the USSR military prosecutor, did not investigate the so-called massacre due to the absence of any elementary fact. The pretext was simply used to justify the invasion of Baku, the true purpose of which was the suppression of a national movement for independence and peaceful protests against the aggressive actions of Armenia, which was raising territorial claims against Azerbaijan," says the article.

"The announcement of the state of emergency in Baku and deployment of troops in the city were the biggest mistakes of my political tenure" admitted former USSR president Mikhail Gorbachev during his statement in Istanbul on April 27, 1995.

*Vugar Aghayev*  
*Special correspondent*

### **Heroes of Azerbaijan's national liberation remembered in Los Angeles (January 21, 2016)**

Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles has held an event to commemorate the 26th anniversary of the Black January tragedy. The event was jointly held with the Wende Museum. Specializing on the Cold War history and the Fall of the Berlin Wall, the Wende Museum is one of the most unique museums in the United States.

Held at the Museum, the event was attended by former U.S. co-chairman of the OSCE Minsk Group Ambassador Rudolph Perina, Los Angeles-based diplomats of various countries, representatives of academic and cultural institutions, community members and others.

At the outset, the event attendees paid tribute to the Black January martyrs with a moment of silence.

Welcoming the guests, the Museum's Founder and Executive Director Justin Jampol expressed their satisfaction of hosting such an important memorial.

Addressing the event, Azerbaijan's Consul General Nasimi Aghayev informed the participants about the Black January tragedy. He said: "On January 20, 1990, Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops, which, at the order of Mikhail Gorbachev and his Politburo, stormed the city and began shooting indiscriminately into the peaceful demonstrators. Hundreds of civilians were killed, including children, women and elderly; people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, both Muslim, Christian and Jewish. And a thousand were wounded."

"The pretext was a massive popular uprising in the capital, calling for Azerbaijan's independence from USSR: proof that the Soviet authorities were presiding over a collapsing empire, and that Azerbaijan was leading the fight for independence," Aghayev continued.

"However, the brutal regime utterly failed. After the massacre, a million people - young and old, men and women, Muslims, Jews and Christians - filled the streets to mourn the victims, defying the curfew and showing national solidarity. Heydar Aliyev, who would later become president and founder of modern Azerbaijan, fiercely denounced the bloodshed. His defiance helped to inspire the Azerbaijani people and Aliyev became a leader of the struggle for liberty," the Consul General noted. "A year and half later Azerbaijan restored its independence."

"What was the reaction in the West to Black January? The Nobel Peace Prize for Gorbachev! 10 months after the massacre, the Nobel Committee awarded Michael Gorbachev the Nobel Peace Prize. The Committee justified its position by stressing Gorbachev's "leading role in the peace process" and his "many and decisive contributions" to peace. The Committee and its supporters decided to be oblivious to many egregious crimes Gorbachev committed, which had nothing to do with the notion of peace. Ironically, Alfred Nobel would not have been able to establish his Nobel Prize in 1901, had it not been the immense fortune he and his brothers made with oil development in Baku. And Alfred Nobel would not have been able to even dream that his Prize would one day be awarded to a man who turned the very city of Baku into a bloodbath," Aghayev said.

“Since the restoration of independence, Azerbaijan has gone from strength to strength. Under the visionary leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan has become an island of stability in an otherwise unstable region, and an important geopolitical power. Azerbaijan is the centerpiece of the Caspian oil and gas developments, vital for global energy security, as well as other regional megaprojects. Today, Azerbaijan's freedom is solid and irreversible, and we always remember the victims of the Black January tragedy – the true heroes of our national liberation,” the Consul General concluded. Speaking at the event, former U.S. diplomat Dr. James Coyle of the Chapman University highlighted the role of Black January in the eventual collapse of the USSR, calling this tragedy the “beginning of the end of the Soviet Union.” Following the speeches, a short documentary on Black January prepared by Azerbaijan’s Consulate General, as well as a CNN report on the massacre were shown. The event concluded with the classical music performance.

**AZERTAC**

## **20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Korea (January 21, 2016)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in the Republic of Korea has hosted an event commemorating the 26th anniversary of 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony, which brought together Korea's public and political figures, journalists, a number of professors and teachers of higher educational institutions, as well as members of Buta Azerbaijani-Korean student organization, started with a minute of silence for victims of 20 January tragedy.

Azerbaijani Ambassador to the Republic of Korea Ramzi Teymurov briefed the participants on the tragedy.

Highlighting the history, causes and consequences of the tragedy, Councillor of the Embassy Vagif Jafarov drew the audience's attention to the position of the world community on the tragedy.

The event participants watched a short feature film, and viewed photos on 20 January tragedy, were also given brochures and information sheets.

**Shahin Jafarov**  
**Special correspondent**  
**AZERTAC**

### **Jewish Journal publishes article about Black January (January 22, 2016)**

US-based Jewish Journal has published an article headlined “Remembering Azerbaijan’s Black January: An Intersection of Tragedy and Inspiration”.

Written by Head of the Community of Azerbaijan’s Mountain Jews Milikh Yevdayev, the article reads: “On January 19, 1990, friends were scheduled to visit us to celebrate my daughter’s birthday in Baku, Azerbaijan. But our plans were suddenly changed by the news of massacres taking place in different parts of the city. We urgently sent messages to our friends to stay home, for the safety of their lives.

Almost all victims were civilians, most tragically including women and even children. The news spread fast, and communities throughout Azerbaijan heard of what happened and no one could believe the story. It was a day we will never forget; the heartbreak was felt in every community, in every home.

We mourn for the many Muslim and Christian victims, brothers and sisters of the same nation who were killed on that brutal day. Many know that Azerbaijan is a special place for people of every faith and culture to live harmoniously, as our history and daily life demonstrates. The unity that is fundamental to our country is also fundamental to the national attitudes and emotions surrounding this anniversary.

In our Jewish communities specifically, the tragic news of murder of Vera Bessantina, a young Jewish girl, struck us very hard, deeply in the heart. Vera was only 16 years old and had just successfully completed her studies in music wishing to become a great violinist one day. We also mourn other members of our Jewish communities like Ian Meyerovich, who endured 20 bullets through his body before the Soviet soldiers left him for dead, and Alexander Markhevka, the hero who was killed in an ambulance as he rushed to save the wounded, scattered throughout the city.

In the Mountainous Jewish synagogues in Baku and Quba, we held a special service for every day of this week through January 20th. Our communities have very deep feelings on the memory of Black January.

Even in the sadness of remembering Black January, something in me looks for a positive, as if to spite it all. Immediately after the massacre, the Azerbaijani people refused to be intimidated, and defying the curfew imposed by Soviet authorities, filled Baku’s main square for the funeral in honor of the victims.

As we remember our fallen brothers and sisters, and raise our heads high with the pride of survivors, we hope for a time to come soon that will include no new days of mourning to add to the calendar, when this cause for grief only remains in the memory of our past.

In Azerbaijan, Los Angeles, Hebron, or Paris; for all of us mourning together, I am grateful that at least we have each other. That is what makes it possible for us to move forward with life, giving to us strength to honor those who lost their lives and to never forget their bravery.

**AZERTAC**

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**US Congressman makes statement on January 20 and Khojaly tragedies  
(February 4, 2016)**

US Congressman from New Jersey Donald Payne has made a statement on January 20 and Khojaly tragedies. He said he would like to recognize January 20, 1990 as “Black January”, adding Soviet troops invaded the capital city of Baku and surrounding areas killing tens and injuring hundreds of civilians.

He also asked congressmen to join him in recognizing the horrific atrocities that took place during the month of February in Khojaly, Azerbaijan, 24 years ago. On that day, Payne said, more than 600 people, mostly elderly men, women and children, were brutally killed.

The Congressman also described Azerbaijan as a strong ally of the United States in a strategically important region of the world.

**Yusif Babanli**  
**Special Correspondent**  
**AZERTAC**

**Azerbaijani heroes remembered in Los Angeles  
(January 20, 2017)**

Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles has hosted an event titled "Stories of Heroism: Serving Your Nation with Courage & Honor", in cooperation with the Azerbaijani community in California.

Opening the event, Azerbaijan's Consul General Nasimi Aghayev informed the attendees about Azerbaijan's 'Black January' tragedy of 1990. He said: "On January 20, 1990, Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops, which, at the order of Mikhail Gorbachev and his Politburo, stormed the city and began shooting indiscriminately into the peaceful demonstrators. Hundreds of civilians were killed, including children, women and elderly; people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, both Muslim, Christian and Jewish. And a thousand were wounded."

"The pretext was a massive popular uprising in the capital, calling for Azerbaijan's independence from USSR: proof that the Soviet authorities were presiding over a collapsing empire, and that Azerbaijan was leading the fight for independence," Aghayev continued.

"However, the brutal regime utterly failed. After the massacre, a million people - young and old, men and women, Muslims, Jews and Christians - filled the streets to mourn the victims, defying the curfew and showing national solidarity. Heydar Aliyev, who would later become president and founder of modern Azerbaijan, fiercely condemned the bloodshed in Moscow. His defiance helped to inspire the Azerbaijani people and Aliyev became a leader of the struggle for liberty," the Consul General noted. "A year and half later Azerbaijan restored its independence."

"What was the reaction in the West to Black January? The Nobel Peace Prize for Gorbachev! 9 months after the massacre, the Nobel Committee awarded Michael Gorbachev the Nobel Peace Prize. The Committee justified its position by stressing Gorbachev's "leading role in the peace process" and his "many and decisive contributions" to peace. The Committee and its supporters decided to be oblivious to many egregious crimes Gorbachev committed, which had nothing to do with the notion of peace. Ironically, Alfred Nobel would not have been able to establish his Nobel Prize in 1901, had it not been the immense fortune he and his brothers made with oil development in Baku. And Alfred Nobel would not have been able to even dream that his Prize would one day be awarded to a man who turned the very city of Baku into a bloodbath," Aghayev said.

"Since the restoration of independence, Azerbaijan has gone from strength to strength. Under the visionary leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan has become an island of stability in an otherwise unstable region, and an important geopolitical power. Azerbaijan is the centerpiece of the Caspian oil and gas developments, vital for global energy security, as well as other regional megaprojects. Today, Azerbaijan's freedom is solid and irreversible, and we always remember the victims of the 'Black January' tragedy – the true heroes of our national liberation," the Consul General concluded.

Then a short documentary on 'Black January' prepared by Azerbaijan's Consulate General was screened.

Following the documentary, Consul General said: “Tonight we are also honoring another Azerbaijani hero, namely Mourad Ragimli, who lived in California, joined the U.S. Marine Corps and was killed in Iraq in January 2005 at the age of 20. He was a bright and talented young man. He could have gone to any other profession. But seeing the United States attacked by terrorists on 9/11, he could not stand idly by. So he volunteered for the Marines and sacrificed his life for the United States and its liberty and freedom.” Welcoming Mourad’s family members, including his father, grandfather and uncle, Aghayev thanked them for Mourad’s service and courage.

Then the floor was given to Kimiya Mammadova, an activist of Azerbaijani community in California, who presented more information on Mourad, his family as well as the documentary “My Little Brother” dedicated to him.

Afterwards, the film “My Little Brother” was screened, which was received by the audience with much acclaim.

The event concluded with the mesmerizing performance of Azerbaijani national music by Vahid Bayat and Jamil Mammadli. At the end, a photo exhibition dedicated to the ‘Black January’ massacre was presented to the attendees.

**Baku, January 20, AZERTAC**



## **20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Riyadh (January 21, 2017)**

The Embassy of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has hosted a mourning event dedicated to the 27th anniversary of 20 January tragedy. The event brought together employees of the Embassy, foreign guests, businessmen, as well as Azerbaijanis living in Saudi Arabia.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for blessed memory of the martyrs who died for the independence of their Motherland.

Then Ambassador Rasim Rzayev gave detailed information about the tragedy committed by Soviet troops on January 20, 1990 in Azerbaijan, and the crimes committed against civilians who walked out in the streets for the sake of independence of Azerbaijan. Rasim Rzayev said that in 1985 the Soviet Union led by Mikhail Gorbachev provided support to Armenian nationalists, who lived with the dream of Nagorno-Karabakh secession from Azerbaijan and the creation of "Great Armenia". The diplomat noted that the shocking events of 1988 around Nagorno-Karabakh and the policy of double standards have resulted into the protest of our people.

Ambassador Rzayev stressed that national leader Heydar Aliyev arrived in permanent representation of Azerbaijan in Moscow and revealed to journalists at a press conference plans of Gorbachev's dirty politics. Based on the facts Heydar Aliyev brought to the attention of the world community the main objective of the events of January 20.

Afterwards, the employees of the Embassy - 1st Secretary Mehdi Abdullayev and 3rd Secretary Imran Sadikhov, as well as Yashar Valiyev and other nationals living in Saudi Arabia, shared their thoughts and concerns about the bloody events of 20 January. They noted that leading a decisive struggle for justice people of Azerbaijan expressed their will firmly standing face to face with Soviet tanks. Grateful people of Azerbaijan will always highly appreciate the bright memory of the heroic sons and daughters who gave their lives.

Then 2nd Secretary of the Embassy Elvin Khalilli read a statement of the Commissioner for Human Rights of the Republic of Azerbaijan due to the 27th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20, 1990. After the official part of the event participants familiarized themselves with a photo exhibition placed at the Embassy, reflecting the horrors of Bloody January.

In connection with the day of commemoration of the martyrs - January 20 Statement of the Ombudsman of the Republic of Azerbaijan was sent to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Saudi Arabia, Bahrain and Oman, also it was spread in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, located in Jeddah. In connection with the 27th anniversary of the events of January 20 Saudi Arabia's leading newspaper "Riyadh" has published articles in Arabic and English languages by Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan Rasim Rzayev.

*Sabir Shahtakhti*

*Specail correspondent*

*AZERTAC*

### **Azerbaijan's Black January tragedy commemorated in California (January 19, 2018)**

The 28th anniversary of the January 20 tragedy of Azerbaijan has been commemorated at the influential Thomas Jefferson Law School in San Diego, California. The event was jointly organized by the Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles and the San Diego Baku Friendship Association.

In his opening remarks, Executive Director of the San Diego Baku Friendship Association Martin Kruming underlined the importance of the commemoration and thanked the guests for their presence at the event, paying tribute to the innocent victims of the bloodshed.

Addressing the event, Dean of the Thomas Jefferson Law School Joan Bullock noted that Black January played a significant role in the struggle of the Azerbaijani people for freedom and independence.

In his remarks, Consul of the Consulate General of Azerbaijan Orkhan Rustamli described the Black January tragedy as a heroic page in Azerbaijan's history paving the way towards the nation's eventual independence and freedom in 1991 following the collapse of the USSR. He noted that Azerbaijan's national leader Heydar Aliyev, who would later become founder and President of modern Azerbaijan, fiercely condemned the bloodshed while being in Moscow. "His defiance helped to inspire the Azerbaijani people and Aliyev became a leader of the struggle for liberty," Rustamli added.

Speaking at the event, the American journalist Raoul Lowery Contreras described the Black January as a military aggression and crime committed by the Communist regime to suppress the national liberty movement in Azerbaijan and destroy the freedom spirit of Azerbaijani people.

Following the speeches, the event featured the screening of a short documentary on Black January prepared by Azerbaijan's Consulate General.

The event concluded with a mesmerizing performance of classical music by San Diego's prominent violinist Julia Pautz.

On January 20, 1990, Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku was invaded by 26,000 Soviet troops, which, at the order of the Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev and his Politburo, stormed the city and began shooting indiscriminately into the peaceful demonstrators. Hundreds of civilians were killed, including children, women and elderly, people of different ethnic and religious backgrounds, both Muslim, Christian and Jewish. And a thousand were wounded. The pretext was a massive popular uprising in Baku, calling for Azerbaijan's independence from USSR. This mass killing went down in Azerbaijan's history books as the 'Black January' tragedy.

*Yusif Babanli*

*Special Correspondent*

*AZERTAC*

### **Black January martyrs commemorated in UK Parliament (January 19, 2018)**

On 18 January, the Black January dead were remembered during a landmark reception in the Macmillan Room of Portcullis House in the UK Parliament, located a few metres from Big Ben. The event was attended by Peers Lord David Evans and Lord Leslie Turnberg, and around 40 diplomats, Azerbaijanis and friends of the country and hosted by Bob Blackman MP, Chair, Azerbaijan All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG). It was jointly organised by the Embassy of Azerbaijan to the UK and The European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS).

This commemoration marked one of the saddest events in recent Azerbaijani history. On 19–20 January 1990, around 26,000 Soviet armed forces violently suppressed a peaceful independence demonstration in Central Baku. They were acting on the direct orders of Mikhail Gorbachev, final General-Secretary of the Soviet Communist Party and Dmitry Yazov, Soviet Defence Minister.

Official estimates state that between 131 and 170 civilians were killed, and between 700 and 800 were injured. Unofficial figures, based on the accounts of witnesses, put the figure much higher. Following this, a State of Emergency was declared. Despite this tragedy, the demonstration marked the start of the path to Azerbaijani independence on 18 October 1991, and heralded the swift collapse of the Soviet Union.

In 1995, Gorbachev admitted his mistake by stating: "The declaration of a State of Emergency in Baku was the biggest mistake of my political career." When questioned in 2015, he remained guilt-stricken, saying: "I am reluctant to give any comments about the events of January 1990, because it is difficult to speak about that night without a lot of remembering, analysis and deep thoughts."

Bob Blackman MP, Chair, Azerbaijan All-Party Parliamentary Group (APPG), stated: "I have had the pleasure of visiting Azerbaijan on four occasions. Azerbaijan was very different when it was under Soviet rule and oppression. Obviously, at that time, there was a desire for freedom in the country and the Soviet Union was clearly at breaking point. Mikhail Gorbachev asserted that it was necessary to use the military to put down the peaceful protests in Baku. This was an attempt to suppress the natural desire of the Azerbaijani people for independence.

"There are unofficial estimates that 300 were killed. These were individuals that just wanted to live in a free society. We commemorate and honour their memory today and that they gave their lives so that Azerbaijan could be free, and thank them for their sacrifices.

"We should also remember that this terrible and horrible event led to the emergence of the Azerbaijani state that we see today, which has a thriving economy, and accepts individuals for what they are and permits freedom of religious expression. The UK reaches out the hand of friendship to Azerbaijan, and we acknowledge the great partnership between our countries."

Tahir Taghizadeh, Azerbaijani Ambassador to the UK, reflected: "We should focus on the positive outcome of the sacrifices of those young men and women who gave their lives for the creation of Azerbaijani statehood 28 years ago. The massacre was the result of the Soviet regime, which was like a dying whale, trying

to maintain a grip on its republics. In fact, it speeded a mass exodus from the Communist party and resulted in greater anti-Soviet sentiments in Azerbaijan. The uprising was the point at which we stopped being Soviet.

"The regime was oppressive, but there were hopes in the west that Gorbachev would be able to reform the country and give communism 'a human face'. In my view, this was not possible in the Soviet Union. The forcible repression in Baku disillusioned the west from thinking that this was possible and they realised, at that point, that the Soviet regime was beyond reform. The events in Baku were a great catalyst for the collapse of the Soviet Union as a whole.

"It should be remembered that the Black January victims buried in Martyrs' Alley included Georgians, Russians and Jews, representing the inclusive nature of Azerbaijani society. We were and remain a multi-ethnic, progressive state that aims to play its role in the international arena, and we pay a great debt to those who lost their lives in 1990."

The event concluded with a brief, yet heartfelt, solo performance by septuagenarian tar maestro Rafiq Rustamov, who commented: "Today I play in memory of those who gave their lives during the Black January tragedy in Baku." His illustrious career of performance and education continued unhindered throughout both the Soviet and independence periods of Azerbaijani history.

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**Pakistani National Courier newspaper: Azerbaijan's Black January Stands for Martyrdom and Victory of Humanity  
(January 20, 2018)**

Pakistan-based National Courier newspaper has published an article on the 28th anniversary of the Black January tragedy in Azerbaijan.

Written by Mehmood Ul Hassan Khan, the article is headlined "Black January Stands for Martyrdom and Victory of Humanity".

"January 20th 2018 marks the 28th anniversary of the military invasion and brutal killing of civilians in the city of Baku, Azerbaijan by the forces of the former Soviet Army on 20 January 1990. Black January stands for martyrdom and miraculous human courage, resistance, denial of aggression and state terrorism which led to restoration of independence of Azerbaijan from 70 year former Soviet rule. It was victory of precious "human blood" over brutality and barbarism," the article says.

"Black January reflects sorrow as well as Azerbaijanis strength, struggle and success against all odds. The Soviet leadership ordered some 26000 troops with heavy military equipment to storm the city of Baku in an operation called "Strike" during which humanity was "bleed" and "beasts" were everywhere in the city but it could not strike-down the true spirits of interfaith harmony, patriotism, national pride and communal unity and people having diversity of faith, belief and origin stood fast to fight against all odds."

"Black January also portrays "victory of humanity" over vicious killing, collective determination over indiscriminate cleansing and ultimately Azerbaijanis became victors and forces of evil and darkness and attackers on democratic norms, civil liberties and free will got diminished which showed values of die-hard spirits of "economics of humanity".

"Martyrs of Black January 1990 are real heroes and sons of the motherland, "Azerbaijan" which defended the freedom and independence of Azerbaijan with their bravery and became "larger than life characters". Martyrs are still alive in shapes of Azerbaijan's "irrevocable independence", "uncompromising sovereignty", "sustained socio-economic prosperity" and the last but not the least, "unbending national pride", says Hassan Khan.

"Subsequently, Azerbaijan declared independence on October 18, 1991. And today the Azerbaijanis are proud of those who are ready to perish for the sake of their people's national identity, sovereignty, and freedom around the globe."

"Black January was "turning point" for all the Azerbaijanis people who abandoned Soviet identity and becoming citizens of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan at the time when such independence still seemed unreachable. It also bears heroism of common people, a newlywed couple and children shot by soldiers and to bullet-ridden ambulances. It showed height of dutifulness and responsibility on part of doctors, nurses and paramedical staff who died as they protected their patients. Black January also upholds "grief" which has enduring human befitting propositions. It united the people of Azerbaijan despite ethnic diversity and strengthened their resolve to achieve that independence. Ultimately, it sustained values of faith, courage, and the

strength of human spirits which are universal and everlasting. It was act of perseverance and will to move on and move forward with a better life, a life of freedom, fairness, tolerance and peace and it had also left an even stronger and even greater impression in daily lives of people to centralization of command to national politics to the regional geopolitics.”

“Black January carries “tragedy” too but it transformed outlook of Azerbaijan after which dreams of “qualitative life”, socio-economic prosperity, modernity, and smarter economy became reality and now, the Republic of Azerbaijan holds 75 percent of GDP of South Caucasus,” says Hassan Khan.

***Gulu Kangarli***  
***Special Correspondent***  
***AZERTAC***

**Black January commemorated in Egypt  
(January 20, 2018)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Egypt has organized a commemorative event on the 28th anniversary of January 20 tragedy.

The event was attended by the embassy employees, Azerbaijanis studying in Cairo, as well as diaspora representatives.

In his opening remarks, Azerbaijani ambassador Tural Rzayev described the Black January as a military aggression and crime committed by the USSR armed forces against the innocent citizens of Azerbaijan on January 20, 1990. He said that the national leader Heydar Aliyev fiercely condemned the bloodshed in a statement made at Azerbaijan`s representation in Moscow immediately after the tragedy.

Head of the "Patriot" diaspora organization of Azerbaijan in Egypt, researcher Seymur Nasirov shared his memories of the 20 January tragedy.

Following the speeches, the event participants observed a minute of silence for victims of the tragedy and viewed photo stands reflecting the bloody events.

Then a short documentary on Black January was screened.

The Egyptian Middle East News Agency and other influential media news outlets covered the event.

*Asya Hajizade*  
*Special Correspondent*  
*AZERTAC*

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**20 January victims commemorated in Beijing  
(January 19, 2019)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in the People's Republic of China has hosted an event commemorating the 29th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for victims of the 20 January tragedy.

Addressing the event, Ambassador Akram Zeynalli highlighted the history of the 20 January events.

The event participants watched a film and viewed photos on the 20 January tragedy.

*Shahin Jafarov*  
*Special correspondent*  
**AZERTAC**



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**20 January tragedy victims remembered in Kuala Lumpur  
(January 19, 2019)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Malaysia has organized a commemorative ceremony to mark the 29th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The event brought together representatives of diplomatic corps accredited in Malaysia, journalists and Azerbaijanis living in the country.

The event participants first viewed photos on the 20 January tragedy.

Addressing the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador Galey Allahverdiyev briefed the event participants on the tragedy.

A documentary on the 20 January tragedy was screened at the event.

*Vugar Aghayev*  
*Special correspondent*  
**AZERTAC**

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**Istanbul hosts conference commemorating Azerbaijan's Black January  
(January 19, 2019)**

Co-organized by the Istanbul University, Azerbaijan Culture and Solidarity Association and the Hazarfem Turkey-Azerbaijan Friendship Society, a conference to commemorate the 29th anniversary of Azerbaijan's 20 January tragedy has been held at the Istanbul University, Turkey.

Speaking at the event, chairman of the Azerbaijan Culture and Solidarity Association Rashid Mustafazada briefed the audience about the tragedy, saying that the Turkish people will never forget the bloody January tragedy and the memory of martyrs.

Representatives of Azerbaijan's consulate in Istanbul, political and cultural figures, scientists, as well as Azerbaijanis living, working and studying in Turkey attended the conference.

*Gunel Malikova*  
*Special correspondent*  
**AZERTAC**

**ISESCO issues statement condemning 20 January events  
(January 19, 2019)**

The Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) has issued a statement on the 20 January tragedy for the first time.

The statement says: “On the occasion of the 29th anniversary of the tragedy of Black January perpetrated by the Soviet troops when they stormed Baku from all directions at midnight on the 20th January 1990, killing and injuring scores of innocent and defenseless people, Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri, Director General of the Islamic Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (ISESCO) joined the Republic of Azerbaijan, ISESCO member state, in commemorating this hideous crime and paying tribute to the martyrs.

ISESCO Director General condemned this crime against humanity in which the prohibited weapons which were used killed hundreds of innocent civilians and collectively displaced others from their historical lands.

Dr. Abdulaziz Othman Altwajri called the international community and human rights organizations to undertake a legal evaluation of that tragedy and punish its perpetrators according to the international law.”

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**Black January martyrs commemorated in UK  
(January 20, 2019)**

Co-organized by the Embassy of Azerbaijan to the UK and the Azerbaijan House Culture and Friendship Centre, an event to commemorate the 20 January victims has been held in London.

Azerbaijani Ambassador to the UK Tahir Taghizade highlighted the 20 January tragedy.

Other speakers at the event drew the audience's attention to the military crime which was committed by the Soviet armed forces against the Azerbaijani people.

The event then featured the screening of a documentary highlighting the bloody January events.

*Aynura Taghiyeva*  
*Special Correspondent*  
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