

## Commemorative events

• <i>America's Azerbaijan Association calls not to forget Bloody January (21 January, 2004)</i> .....	3
• <i>Arabic world obtains information on the events of January 20 (22 January, 2004)</i> .....	4
• <i>Anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 to be marked in USA (18 January, 2006)</i> .....	5
• <i>Azerbaijani Diaspora in USA calls on world community to commemorate of the tragedy of January 20 (21 January, 2006)</i> .....	6
• <i>18th anniversary of Bloody January to be marked in Sweden (12 January, 2008)</i> .....	7
• <i>Azerbaijani embassy to Indonesia commemorates victims of Bloody January (17 January, 2008)</i> .....	8
• <i>18th anniversary of Bloody January tragedy marked in USA (19 January, 2008)</i> .....	9
• <i>Azerbaijani embassy in Netherlands holds ceremony to commemorate 19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 (19 January, 2009)</i> .....	10
• <i>Commemoration ceremony to mark 19th anniversary of the tragedy of January 20 held in Dubai (19 January, 2009)</i> .....	11
• <i>Azerbaijani embassy to Indonesia commemorates victims of January 20 (12 January, 2010)</i> .....	12
• <i>Azerbaijan's embassy to Ukraine commemorates victims of January 20 (14 January, 2010)</i> .....	13
• <i>January 20 events commemorated in different countries (18 January, 2010)</i> .....	14
• <i>Vienna hosts photo exhibition on Bloody January (20 January, 2010)</i> .....	15
• <i>Azerbaijanis remember Black January victims worldwide (21 January, 2010)</i> .....	16
• <i>Black January's 20th anniversary commemorated abroad (21 January, 2010)</i> .....	17
• <i>University of Los Angeles hosts seminar on Bloody January (26 January, 2010)</i> .....	19
• <i>Victims of Black January tragedy honored in PoliMedia University, Indonesia (19 January, 2011)</i> .....	20
• <i>Azerbaijan's embassy to Morocco commemorates January 20 victims (20 January, 2011)</i> .....	21
• <i>Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Saudi Arabia (20 January, 2011)</i> .....	22
• <i>21st anniversary of Black January marked abroad (20 January, 2011)</i> .....	23
• <i>Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Kazakhstan (21 January, 2011)</i> .....	25
• <i>Victims of Black January remembered in Ukraine (21 January, 2011)</i> .....	26
• <i>Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Denmark (24 January, 2011)</i> .....	27
• <i>Azerbaijan's consulate general to mark 20 January tragedy in Turkish city of Kars (14 January, 2012)</i> .....	28
• <i>20 January tragedy commemorated in Tashkent (19 January, 2012)</i> .....	29
• <i>World Azerbaijanis commemorate 22nd anniversary of Black January (20 January, 2012)</i> .....	30
• <i>London commemorates 20 January tragedy (21 January, 2012)</i> .....	32
• <i>New-York commemorates "bloody January" (21 January, 2012)</i> .....	33
• <i>Azerbaijan's embassy in Germany remembers January 20 victims (21 January, 2012)</i> .....	34
• <i>Tehran hosts conference titled "Impact of 20 January tragedy on collapse of USSR" (23 January, 2012)</i> .....	35
• <i>Benelux Azerbaijanis Congress Addresses European Parliament (11 January, 2013)</i> .....	36
• <i>Azerbaijani Embassy in Moldova issues a press release on 20 January tragedy. (14 January, 2013)</i> .....	37
• <i>Azerbaijani ambassador speaks of Black January tragedy on Belarus TV channel (16 January, 2013)</i> .....	38
• <i>January tragedy's anniversary to be marked in Tabriz (16 January, 2013)</i> .....	39
• <i>January 20 victims to be commemorated in Netherlands (16 January, 2013)</i> .....	40
• <i>Turkish Universities Graduates Social Community marks 23rd anniversary of Black January (17 January, 2013)</i> .....	41
• <i>20 January tragedy's anniversary to be marked in Kuwait (17 January, 2013)</i> .....	42
• <i>Azerbaijan Embassy in South African Republic spreads information on 23rd anniversary of Black January (18 January, 2013)</i> .....	43
• <i>Victims of Black January commemorated in Dubai (18 January, 2013)</i> .....	44
• <i>Swedish Azerbaijanis Congress to mark 20th anniversary of Black January (January 10, 2014)</i> .....	45
• <i>20 January tragedy to be commemorated abroad (January 14, 2014)</i> .....	46
• <i>January 20 victims to be commemorated in Kyrgyzstan (January 15, 2014)</i> .....	47
• <i>Black January victims commemorated in Houston</i> .....	48
• <i>(January 19, 2014)</i> .....	48

- *Azerbaijani Embassy in Sweden commemorates Black January victims (January 20, 2014)* .....49
- *US Azeris Network launches awareness campaign on January 20 tragedy (January 9, 2015)*.....50
- *The Korea Post publishes article about 25th anniversary of “Black January” (January 16, 2015)* .....51
- *“20th January Martyrs Spring” opens in Pakistan (January 18, 2015)* .....52
- *January 20 victims commemorated in Korea (January 19, 2015)*.....53
- *World Azerbaijanis commemorate January 20 victims (January 19, 2015)*.....54
- *January 20 victims remembered in Berlin (January 19, 2015)*.....55
- *Azerbaijan`s Embassy in Moscow organizes commemorative event dedicated to Black January tragedy (January 21, 2015)*.....56
- *The Jakarta Post: Black January in the history of Azerbaijan (January 21, 2015)*.....57
- *January 20 tragedy commemorated in Los Angeles (January 23, 2015)*.....58
- *January 20 victims commemorated in Berlin (January 19, 2016)*.....59
- *20 January victims remembered in Rome (January 21, 2016)* .....60
- *20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Beijing (January 21, 2016)* .....61
- *Heroes of Azerbaijan`s national liberation remembered in Los Angeles (January 21, 2016)* .....62
- *20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Korea (January 21, 2016)*.....63
- *US Congressman makes statement on January 20 and Khojaly tragedies (February 4, 2016)* .....64
- *Azerbaijani heroes remembered in Los Angeles (January 20, 2017)* .....65
- *20 January tragedy victims commemorated in Riyadh (January 21, 2017)* .....67
- *Azerbaijan's Black January tragedy commemorated in California (January 19, 2018)* .....68
- *Black January martyrs commemorated in UK Parliament (January 19, 2018)*.....69
- *Black January commemorated in Egypt (January 20, 2018)*.....71
- *20 January victims commemorated in Beijing (January 19, 2019)* .....72
- *20 January tragedy victims remembered in Kuala Lumpur (January 19, 2019)*.....73
- *Istanbul hosts conference commemorating Azerbaijan`s Black January (January 19, 2019)*.....74
- *ISESCO issues statement condemning 20 January events (January 19, 2019)* .....75
- *Black January martyrs commemorated in UK (January 20, 2019)* .....76
- *Italy hosts event commemorating Black January victims (January 21, 2019)*.....77
- *Indonesian news agency: Bloody “Black January” became the starting point for independence of Azerbaijan (January 17, 2020)* .....78
- *Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Ethiopia (January 18, 2020)*.....80
- *US Medium online media platform publishes article on Black January tragedy (January 20, 2021)*.....81
- *20 January victims commemorated in Switzerland (January 20, 2021)*.....82
- *Azerbaijan`s Consulate General in Los Angeles produces short film on Black January tragedy (January 20, 2021)* .....83
- *Ukrainian TV channel highlights January 20 traged (January 21, 2021)*.....84

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**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*

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**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*

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**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*

**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.

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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 Hajiyeu 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. Hajiyeu 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*

**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.

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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.

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**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 Hajiyevev 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**

**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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**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.

*AzerTAc*

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**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*

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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.

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

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.

*AzerTAc*

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

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)**

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.

*AzerTAc*

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

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

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.

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

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.

*AzerTAc*

### **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.

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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.

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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.

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**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.

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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.

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**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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**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.

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### **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.

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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.

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## **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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**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 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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**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.”

**“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*

**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.

*AzerTAc*

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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.

**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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**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*

## **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***

## **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.

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**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**

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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.

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## **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,

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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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**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*  
**AZERTAC**

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**Italy hosts event commemorating Black January victims  
(January 21, 2019)**

The Embassy of Azerbaijan in Italy has hosted an event commemorating the 29th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy.

The ceremony started with a minute of silence for the martyrs who gave their lives for the independence and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.

Addressing the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador to Italy Mammad Ahmadzade highlighted the bitter consequences of the 20 January tragedy. The ambassador emphasized that thanks to national leader Heydar Aliyev's invaluable services the tragedy was given a political and legal assessment.

In his remarks, associate professor of the Sapienza University of Rome Daniel Pommier spoke about the 20 January tragedy and its victims.

The event then featured the screening of a documentary on the 20 January tragedy.

*Asiman Asadov*  
*Special Correspondent*  
**AZERTAC**

**Indonesian news agency: Bloody “Black January” became  
the starting point for independence of Azerbaijan  
(January 17, 2020)**

Indonesian Mi’raj News Agency (MINA) has published an article by AZERTAC’s special correspondent in this country Vugar Aghayev commemorating the 30th anniversary of 20 January events.

Headlined “Bloody “Black January” became the starting point for independence of Azerbaijan”, the article reads: “What happened on 20 January 1990 was an act of terror by a totalitarian regime. The crime committed against the Azerbaijanis is, in fact, a crime against mankind, against humanity.

The people were infuriated by the territorial claims and aggressive acts of Armenia, backed by the then Soviet officials, against Azerbaijan, as well as by the anti-nationalist behaviour of the local authorities.

Azerbaijanis were being expelled from the land where they had lived for centuries. Since 1988 the national movement for liberty grew. This was a protest against the policy of the USSR and, as a result, for the independence of Azerbaijan. Thousands of people protesting against the policy of the USSR held demonstrations all day long in the central square (now Azadliq or Freedom Square) and the streets of Baku.

On 18 January 1990 the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR issued a decree “On the realization of the extraordinary situation in the city of Baku since 20 January”, which had not been co-coordinated with the parliament of Azerbaijan and the purpose was to choke the people’s voice, to stop the demonstrations and the movement.

Later on the night of 20 January a big contingent of the USSR Armed Forces was sent onto the streets of Baku. As a result, the Soviet Army committed a horrible crime against the Azerbaijani people.

That night the Soviet Army displayed particular cruelty against the people. They remembrance used chemical weapons, shot at ambulances and the wounded and mutilated dead bodies. According to official sources, as a result of this aggressive act, which was against the principles of international law, democracy and humane values, 131 people died, 774 were wounded, 400 imprisoned and four went missing. During the tragedy the courageous sons of the Azerbaijani people who stood up for the motherland’s dignity, honour and freedom became martyrs.

The day after the tragedy, despite the pressure of the Soviet Army, people on the the streets displayed their hatred both for those who had enforced the clampdown and for the Communist Parties of the USSR and Azerbaijan. On the night of the tragedy, the leader of the republic, fearing the people’s anger, escaped to Moscow. Azerbaijanis living in Moscow arranged a meeting about the tragedy. At that time Heydar Aliyev was living in Moscow and he came to Azerbaijan’s permanent representation and presented his condolences to the people of Azerbaijan.

In a speech he emphasized that the initiators of the tragedy were the then officials of the USSR and Azerbaijan and they had done nothing to calm the people down. Heydar Aliyev, who considered this tragedy a crime against the Azerbaijani people, emphasized that the initiators Martyrs’ monument, Baku Martyrs’ monument, Baku bore responsibility for it and should be properly punished.

The Azerbaijani people buried the martyrs, who perished on 20 January for the independence of the country, in the Mountain Park, the highest spot in Baku. Since then this place has been called Martyrs’ Avenue and people mark 20 January as a National Day of Mourning. The Martyrs’ Avenue is a most sacred place for every Azerbaijani.

Every year millions of Azerbaijanis visit Martyrs' Avenue and lay carnations on the graves. This ceremony begins in the early morning when the president of the Republic and representatives of foreign countries lay wreaths at the eternal flame.

Traditionally the head of state, accompanied by guards of honour, approaches the monument erected to commemorate the martyrs, lays the wreath, bows and keeps a minute's silence. Then officials of the diplomatic corps, dignitaries and martyrs' relatives offer their condolences to the president.

The Azerbaijanis visit Martyrs' Avenue until midnight. All national TV channels broadcast directly from the Avenue. On that day all tube stations and public transport to Martyrs' Avenue operate free of charge in order to allow the crowds to move freely. According to official protocol, every guest or delegation paying a visit to Azerbaijan begins their journey by visiting the Avenue.

The Azerbaijani people named a tube station after 20 January, near the place where the tragedy occurred (before this the tube station was named after the 11th Army that committed the atrocity).

The interior of this station reflects compositions by well-known Azerbaijani artists, who painted various scenes from the tragedy, and red carnations, the symbol of 20 January. That day the tube station of 20 January and nearby streets, pavements and walls, which were riddled with bullet holes where civilians were shot en masse, are covered with pink carnations.

On 20 January 1990, 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 the motherland, 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 our country. And today the Azerbaijanis are proud of those who are ready to perish for the sake of the people's national identity. On 20 January Martyrs' Avenue looks like a sea of carnations, but from a distance the image is horrifying.”

***AZERTAC***

**Anniversary of 20 January tragedy commemorated in Ethiopia  
(January 18, 2020)**

Azerbaijan's Embassy in Ethiopia has organized a lecture commemorating the 30th anniversary of 20 January events at the country's Addis Ababa University (AAU).

Professor of the Center for African Studies at AAU Dr. Samuel and university students attended the event.

Speaking at the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador to Ethiopia Elman Abdullayev provided an insight into the history of the Black January events. The Ambassador noted that on 20 January a terrible massacre against innocent people was committed upon the instruction of the Soviet government in order to suppress the expanding liberation movement in the country. He said that nevertheless, this massacre strengthened the spirit of independence of Azerbaijani people.

The diplomat hailed Azerbaijan's recognition in the world as a reliable partner under President Ilham Aliyev's leadership.

Responding to the questions of Ethiopian students, Abdullayev touched upon the prospects for relations with Africa, including Ethiopia. He also spoke about Azerbaijan's chairmanship of Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) and the allocation of educational scholarships by the Azerbaijani government to citizens of African countries.

Head of the Center for African Studies Dr. Samuel praised Azerbaijan's achievements, its economic development, traditions of tolerance and statehood.

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**US Medium online media platform publishes article on Black January tragedy  
(January 20, 2021)**

The US-based Medium online media platform has published an article by Azerbaijan's Consul General in Los Angeles Nasimi Aghayev on Black January tragedy. In the article, the Consul General states that 31 years ago, on January 20, 1990, 26,000 Soviet troops invaded Azerbaijan's capital city of Baku and brutally massacred Azerbaijani civilians, including women, children and the elderly. Highlighting the preceding events, he notes: "In 1987, anti-Azerbaijani pogroms broke out in Armenia. Armenian mobs, supported by officials in Yerevan, attacked Azerbaijani-populated villages, killing hundreds of innocent civilians". Aghayev mentions that following these pogroms, over 250,000 Azerbaijanis were forced to flee their ancestral homes in Armenia, becoming refugees in Azerbaijan. Meanwhile, Armenia raised groundless territorial claims against Azerbaijan, "launching a wave of violence that would result in a painful war between the two nations." Consul General Aghayev underlines that all these injustices, backed by pro-Armenian Soviet leadership in Moscow, caused public outrage and led to mass protests in Baku, which soon turned into a national freedom movement. Aghayev notes that "this powerful movement for freedom was recognized by Newsweek, which used a photo of one of the demonstrations in Baku as a cover for its December 1989 issue titled "Standing Up for Freedom. PEOPLE OF THE YEAR". "The movement made the Soviet leadership tremendously nervous. By invading Baku and killing peaceful demonstrators they wanted to instill terror in any nation that dared to challenge the hopeless grip of Soviet tyranny." He mentions that despite the curfew, "over 1 million Azerbaijanis took to the streets of Baku, literally flooding them, to demonstrate as a bold collective against the insanity of terror and tyranny and to honor and mourn the victims of the bloodshed. Muslim, Jewish and Christian faith leaders held public prayers together, as a message of our shared faith, hope, and the indomitability of our values," the Consul General notes.

Nasimi Aghayev mentions that Azerbaijan's national leader Heydar Aliyev visited the Azerbaijan SSR's office in Moscow and fiercely denounced the massacre. He writes that Heydar Aliyev's "defiance helped to inspire the Azerbaijani people and Aliyev became a leader of the struggle for liberty." The Consul General states that Soviet brutality backfired and in October 1991 Azerbaijan fully restored its independence. "Under the visionary leadership of President Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan is now economically dynamic, politically stable, and an important geopolitical power," Aghayev says. He also underlines that "Our values have seen us through hard times, even in very recent months. Just this past autumn, Azerbaijan liberated its territories from Armenia's nearly 30-year-long, illegal, U.N.-condemned occupation... We now begin the process of rebuilding and returning, and with peace finally achieved, the strength and vitality of our independence, and the values that led us there, are strong and invigorated, ready to take on the challenges of 2021, in all their complexity."

The article can be read here: <https://medium.com/@nasimiaghayev/remembering-black-january-finding-hope-in-the-wake-of-unspeakable-tragedy-acdd5d003ef0>.

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**20 January victims commemorated in Switzerland  
(January 20, 2021)**

A commemoration ceremony to mark the 30th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy was organized at the “Karabakh” weekend school under the Azerbaijani-Turkish Cultural Association in Solothurn, Switzerland.

Addressing the event, Azerbaijani Ambassador to the Swiss Confederation Khanim Ibrahimova highlighted the history of the January tragedy events. The Ambassador said that only after national leader Heydar Aliyev’s return to power in Azerbaijan in 1994, the 20 January tragedy was recognized politically and legally and the day was declared as the National Day of Mourning.

The ceremony then featured a special workshop conducted by Coordinator of the Coordination Council of Azerbaijanis in Switzerland Gasim Nasirov for children. He said the tragic events went down in history as an example of the Azerbaijani people’s struggle for independence, becoming the symbol of heroism.

The event participants were presented with publications on the 30th anniversary of the 20 January tragedy, as well as books highlighting the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

***AZERTAC***

**Azerbaijan's Consulate General in Los Angeles produces short film on Black January tragedy  
(January 20, 2021)**

The Consulate General of Azerbaijan in Los Angeles has produced a short film dedicated to Azerbaijan's Black January tragedy of 1990. The film mentions that in 1987 anti-Azerbaijani pogroms broke out in Armenia, and that Armenians, attacking Azerbaijani villages, killed hundreds of civilians. As a result, 250,000 Azerbaijanis were expelled from Armenia.

It notes that meanwhile Armenia raised territorial claims against Azerbaijan, and all this led to mass anti-Soviet protests in Azerbaijan, which soon turned into a national freedom movement. In order to brutally crush this freedom movement, by the order of USSR leader Mikhail Gorbachev, 26,000 Soviet troops invaded Baku on January 19-20, and shot indiscriminately into the peaceful demonstrators. As a result of this massacre, up to 150 Azerbaijani civilians, including women and children, were killed and over 700 were wounded.

The film states that despite the bloodshed the Gorbachev regime failed to break the will of the people of Azerbaijan and that a million Azerbaijanis, defying the curfew, filled the streets to mourn the victims of this brutal massacre.

It also stresses that Azerbaijan's national leader Heydar Aliyev fiercely denounced the bloodshed. The film includes a part from his speech made at Azerbaijan SSR's Permanent Mission in Moscow.

The film emphasizes that the Soviet brutality could not stop Azerbaijan from seeking its freedom, and that Azerbaijan finally restored its independence on October 18, 1991.

It notes that in the early 1990s, Armenia invaded 20% of Azerbaijan's territory and expelled 800,000 Azerbaijanis from their ancestral lands, and that in 2020, within 44 days Azerbaijani Army liberated the occupied lands.

The film concludes that 31 years after Black January, today, Azerbaijan is free, prosperous and strong and is striving to turn Caucasus into a region of peace and cooperation.

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.

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**Ukrainian TV channel highlights January 20 traged  
(January 21, 2021)**

Ukrainian ATR TV channel has broadcast a special program on the 31st anniversary of the January 20 tragedy.

The program provided insight into the causes and history of the January 20 tragedy.

“At that time the Azerbaijani people were rightly protesting against the territorial claims of the Armenian SSR against Azerbaijan. Instead of preventing the escalation of tensions, on the night of January 19-20, 1990, the Soviet leadership sent armed groups against the Azerbaijani people. By the order of Mikhail Gorbachev, the Soviet troops attacked the civilian population of Baku from both sea and land, thus committing a terrible crime against humanity. As a result of this terrible act, hundreds of civilians were killed, wounded and others went missing,” the program said.

The program also featured remarks by Azerbaijani Ambassador to Ukraine Elmira Akhundova and political scientist Tofiq Abbasov on the January 20 tragedy.

The 31st anniversary of January 20 tragedy was also in spotlight of the Ukrainian print media.

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