



Press-release on the occasion of 28 May - Republic Day

On 28 May, the people of Azerbaijan celebrate the Republic Day marking the establishment of the first democratic and secular state in the entire Muslim world.

On this date in 1918, Azerbaijan Democratic Republic (ADR) was founded with the adoption of the Declaration on Independence which fulfilled dreams and aspirations of Azerbaijani people for a strong, prosperous and independent state.

Despite facing grave internal and external challenges and lasting only 23 months, the ADR succeeded in setting up efficient state institutions, upholding basic human rights of all its citizens and earning the trust of the international community. The Parliament enacted more than 200 legal acts during this period, which included among others granting universal suffrage right, including the voting rights for women. The Government was formed on the basis of accountability and separation of powers, and the Azerbaijani parliament was a democratically-elected, multi-party, multiethnic and truly representative legislative body.

The newly established Republic made education one of its primary targets by founding the Baku State University. Despite the economic and political difficulties that the first Republic was facing, it aspired for long-term human capital investment by providing scholarships for hundreds of young students to study in leading European universities.

As stated in the Declaration of Independence, establishment of friendly relations with all states, especially neighbouring ones was declared one of the foreign policy priorities of the ADR. From the very outset, the ADR pursued active foreign policy, built bilateral relations with a number of states, established and hosted numerous diplomatic missions.

Regrettably, the existence of the ADR was short since the Bolshevik invasion of April 1920 put an end to its historical achievement. Despite the fall of the ADR, the national idea that was fostered during 23 month independence survived and helped to revive an independent Azerbaijan towards the end of the 20th century. Having restored its independence in 1991, the modern Republic of Azerbaijan declared itself as a successor of the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic.

Since regaining its independence, Azerbaijan has succeeded in establishing a democratic society enjoying political and economic stability. It implements large-scale transnational energy and transport projects, contributes to the international peace and security and successfully develops bilateral and multilateral cooperation with international partners.

This year, Azerbaijan also gratefully remembers its brave martyrs whose sacrifices have enabled the people of Azerbaijan to proudly celebrate the Republic Day with restored territorial integrity of Azerbaijan after thirty years long foreign occupation of one fifth of the internationally recognized territories of Azerbaijan.

As President of Azerbaijan Mr. Ilham Aliyev stated, the Republic of Azerbaijan will always cherish values, ideals and legacy left by the founding fathers of the ADR and honor with deep respect their contribution to Azerbaijan's statehood.

Geneva, 28 May 2021