

Organizations of the Azerbaijan Diaspora and Strategic Directions of its Activities

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Abstract

The power of diasporas usually begins with the first wave of emigration, when people leave their homeland and settle in other countries. As a result, the community of people who preserve their culture, language, customs and traditions is expanding.

During this time, the diaspora believed that extensive networks and a social structure were being formed. Members of the diaspora often use connections with their homeland, for example, through charitable organizations, cultural exchanges or entrepreneurship.

An important part of the formation of the diaspora is its influence on the socio-political situation both at home and in the countryside. The Diaspora can actively influence politics, change, education and culture both in its homeland and abroad. Thus, supporting the diaspora is a long-term process that includes many aspects, such as socio-cultural adaptation, preservation and transfer of cultural heritage, maintaining connections and networks, and active influence on socio-political life.

The relevance of this article is due to the significant contribution of the Azerbaijani diaspora to various spheres of public life, both inside and outside the country.

The purpose of this study is to analyze the strategic directions of the Azerbaijani diaspora and the mechanisms of their application to strengthen ties with the motherland, preserve and promote cultural heritage, as well as protect the interests of fellow citizens abroad. The article examines the role of the diaspora in the economic, cultural and political development of Azerbaijan, as well as its impact on socio-political processes.

The results of the study. The Azerbaijani diaspora arose in different periods of time, starting from the 19th century. It consists of various groups of migrants and refugees who left Azerbaijan due to political conflicts, economic crisis, wars and other difficult circumstances.

The largest communities of the Azerbaijani diaspora have been formed in different periods and are located in countries such as Turkey, Iran, Germany, USA, France, Great Britain, Canada, Israel, Georgia, Ukraine, etc.

This information allows us to conclude about the enormous potential of the Azerbaijani diaspora in realizing national interests and further development of the country.

Keywords: diaspora, national interests, cohesion, socio-cultural interests, political asylum

Організації азербайджанської діаспори та стратегічні напрями їх діяльності

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Анотація

Влада діаспор зазвичай починається з першої хвилі еміграції, коли люди залишають свою батьківщину і осідають в інших країнах. В результаті цього розширюється спільнота людей, які зберігають свою культуру, мову, звичаї і традиції.

Протягом цього часу вважалося, що діаспорою формуються розгалужені мережі і соціальна структура. Члени діаспори часто використовують зв'язки зі своєю батьківщиною, наприклад, через благодійні організації, культурні обміни або підприємництво.

Важливою частиною становлення діаспори є її вплив на суспільно-політичну ситуацію як на батьківщині, так і в замському проживанні. Діаспора може активно впливати на політику, зміни, освіту і культуру як у своїй батьківщині, так і за її межами. Таким чином, підтримується діаспора – це тривалий процес, який включає в себе безліч аспектів, таких як соціокультурна адаптація, збереження і передача культурної спадщини, підтримання зв'язків і мереж, активний вплив на суспільно-політичне життя.

Актуальність цієї статті обумовлена значним внеском азербайджанської діаспори в різні сфери суспільного життя, як всередині країни, так і за її межами.

Метою даного дослідження є аналіз стратегічних напрямків діяльності азербайджанської діаспори і механізмів їх застосування для зміцнення зв'язків з Батьківщиною, збереження і просування культурної спадщини, а також захисту інтересів співгромадян за кордоном. У статті розглядається роль діаспори в економічному, культурному та політичному розвитку Азербайджану, а також її вплив на суспільно-політичні процеси.

Результати дослідження. Азербайджанська діаспора виникла в різні періоди часу, починаючи з XIX століття. Вона складається з різних груп мігрантів і біженців, які покинули Азербайджан через політичні конфлікти, економічну кризу, війни та інші складні обставини.

Найбільші спільноти азербайджанської діаспори сформувалися в різні періоди і знаходяться в таких країнах, як Туреччина, Іран, Німеччина, США, Франція, Великобританія, Канада, Ізраїль, Грузія, Україна та ін.

Дана інформація дозволяє зробити висновки про величезний потенціал азербайджанської діаспори в реалізації загальнонаціональних інтересів і подальшому розвитку країни.

Ключові слова: діаспора, національні інтереси, згуртованість, суспільно-культурні інтереси, політичний притулок

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Introduction.

The Azerbaijani Diaspora is an organization or social community consisting of Azerbaijanis living outside their homeland, Azerbaijan. It includes Azerbaijanis who emigrated from the country for various reasons such as political persecution, economic opportunities or education.

The organization of the Azerbaijani Diaspora has its own goals, which usually include protecting and representing the interests of Azerbaijanis, supporting their culture, language and traditions, as well as providing assistance and support to compatriots living abroad.

The diaspora can be official, which means that its work is organized and registered according to the laws of the country of residence, or informal, when social and cultural ties of Azerbaijanis are maintained informally, through public clubs, public organizations or simply through personal connections.

Official Azerbaijani diasporas, as a rule, have their own governance structures, such as councils, committees or public associations that coordinate work with the diaspora. They hold various events such as cultural festivals, concerts, exhibitions, seminars, etc. to maintain cultural and social ties between Azerbaijanis and their homeland. They can also provide assistance and support to fellow migrants, helping them adapt to a new country and find work or organize their education (Kelo, & Dubosk, 2013).

Unofficial Azerbaijani diasporas can function through social clubs and organizations created by Azerbaijanis who share common interests and goals. They can organize gatherings and meetings where Azerbaijanis can communicate, share experiences and maintain their culture and traditions.

The role of the Azerbaijani diaspora in society can be very important. It can contribute to the preservation of the cultural heritage of Azerbaijanis, maintain ties with the homeland, and also draw attention to issues of concern to the Azerbaijani community.

However, the diaspora may also face some challenges, such as preserving Azerbaijani identity in conditions of assimilation, combating prejudice and discrimination, and participating in politics and public life of the country of residence. The mass formation of the Azerbaijani diaspora took place especially during the Great Caucasian Healing in 1864, when thousands of Azerbaijanis, Armenians and Georgians were forced to leave their native lands due to the policy of the Russian Empire.

The second wave of migration of Azerbaijanis occurred in the period 1918-1920, in connection with the Turkish-Armenian war and the establishment of the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic, as well as during the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The third wave of migration of Azerbaijanis is associated with the collapse of the USSR in 1991 and national conflicts in the post-Soviet space.

In modern times, the growth of the diaspora continues to increase around the world and its new functions and interests are developing.

Research methodology. To study the topic "Organizations of the Azerbaijani Diaspora: strategic directions of its activities", we conducted a comprehensive study using various methodological approaches.

The first stage of the research is the analysis of academic literature and scientific publications on the topic of diasporas and their activities, which will identify key theoretical approaches, identify the main concepts and terms used in previous studies, based on the works of domestic researchers such as: H. Aliyev (2002); I. Ibragimov (2012a, 2012b, 2012c); R. Mustafayeva (2015) and many other researchers.

An important stage of the research was the analysis of specialized Internet resources, strategic documents, reports and publications of Azerbaijani diasporas and their organizations, such as: Ya. Aliyev (2023); etc. This made it possible to identify the main problems, tasks, goals and strategies of the Azerbaijani diaspora in various countries of the world.

Finally, based on the data obtained, a comparative analysis of the strategic directions of the Azerbaijani diaspora in various countries of the world was carried out, general trends and features were highlighted, and recommendations were proposed for improving and efficiency of their activities.

The purpose of this article is to consider the organization of the Azerbaijani diaspora, its strategic directions and activity. The Diaspora is a society of Azerbaijanis living outside their homeland and having common interests and goals. It plays a significant role in strengthening ties between different countries, in supporting cultural heritage, as well as in protecting the rights and interests of Azerbaijanis. Thus, the purpose of this article is to examine various aspects of the activities of the Azerbaijani diaspora, identify strategic directions of its work and its importance for the development of socio-cultural, political and economic ties between the countries.

The results of the study.

The Azerbaijani Diaspora is a phenomenon that arose as a result of the mass emigration of Azerbaijanis from their native country to different parts of the world. The origin and formation of this organization are associated with various historical and political events.

The first waves of emigration of Azerbaijanis began in the late 19th and early 20th centuries, when Azerbaijan was part of the Russian Empire. Socio-economic difficulties and political restrictions have led to a massive migration flow from the country. Most of the Azerbaijani emigrants settled in nearby countries such as Turkey, Iran and Russia. However, some of them have gone even further - to the countries of Western Europe, North America and other parts of the world. (Aliyev, 2023).

One of the important reasons for the mass emigration of Azerbaijanis was the creation of the Soviet Union in 1922. During the period of Soviet rule, Azerbaijan faced political repression and economic difficulties, which led to an increase in the number of emigrants. This led to the formation of the Azerbaijani diaspora around the world.

In the post-war years, emigration from Azerbaijan continued due to various factors. In particular, the period of national awakening after the collapse of the Soviet Union led to the formation of the majority of modern Azerbaijani diasporas in Europe and America. This was possible due to the opening of borders and new economic opportunities for emigrants (Ibragimov, 2012b).

The organization of the Azerbaijani diaspora took place on several levels. Firstly, Azerbaijanis living abroad began to unite along ethnic lines. They created public organizations, cultural centers and communities that set themselves the task of preserving Azerbaijani identity and culture.

Secondly, the Azerbaijani government actively supported the activities of the Diaspora. This was manifested in financial and organizational assistance, the provision of programs for Azerbaijanis living abroad, as well as the organization of cultural and sports events aimed at supporting the diaspora and strengthening ties with the motherland (Mustafayeva, 2015)

Thus, the emergence and formation of the organization of the Azerbaijani diaspora is the result of historical, political and economic factors.

Heydar Aliyev, during his entire reign in Azerbaijan, played a significant role in shaping the diaspora of his country. He was an active supporter of the support of Azerbaijanis living abroad and recognized their importance for the national identity and development of the country (Mammadov, 2013).

During his presidency, Aliyev held many events aimed at supporting the Azerbaijani diaspora. He stimulated contacts with Azerbaijanis living in other countries, provided financial assistance for the development of cultural and educational programs, and opened diaspora centers in various cities around the world (Ibragimov, 2012c).

Heydar Aliyev also actively advocated for the protection of the rights of national minorities and Azerbaijani citizens living abroad. He drew attention to the problems faced by diasporas and took steps to solve them.

Thanks to the efforts of Heydar Aliyev, a strong and active diaspora of Azerbaijan was created, capable of supporting its homeland and contributing to its development. It is important to note that the diaspora plays an important role in strengthening ties between countries and peoples, as well as in strengthening cultural and economic ties. One of the landmark events was the meeting of Heydar Aliyev with the Azerbaijani diaspora in the United States on April 6, 1997. He actively discussed issues of interaction between the Diaspora and

the homeland, as well as proposed solutions to improve the living conditions of Azerbaijanis abroad. In 2002, Heydar Aliyev conducted a tour to Canada, met again with the Azerbaijani diaspora and discussed various aspects of their lives and activities. Such meetings contribute to strengthening ties between the country and its compatriots abroad (Aliyev, 2002).

Meetings and speeches of Heydar Aliyev with the Azerbaijani diaspora in various countries of Europe, Asia and the Middle East were also held. He calls on the Diaspora to actively participate in the lives of their relatives, support their traditions and culture, and contribute to the development of the country.

Thus, Heydar Aliyev has organized various performances and meetings with the diaspora over the years, trying to support and help his compatriots abroad.

And this explains that the role of Heydar Aliyev in the formation of the Azerbaijani diaspora was invaluable. His efforts to support and develop the diaspora contributed to strengthening the unity of the Azerbaijani people and their ties with the world.

One of the key functions of the diaspora is to protect the political and territorial interests of their country. The Diaspora plays an important role in ensuring the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, actively participating in the political, social and economic processes of the country.

One of the key functions of the Diaspora in ensuring territorial integrity is its support for state policy and strengthening the international diplomatic position of Azerbaijan. Diaspora organizations are actively working in various countries of the world, representing the interests of Azerbaijan and informing the international community about problems related to the territorial integrity of the country.

For many years before the Second Karabakh War, the main activity of diaspora organizations was aimed at drawing attention to the aggression by Armenia, which occupied Azerbaijani territories, including Nagorno-Karabakh and seven adjacent districts. They conducted information campaigns, rallies, conferences and other events to raise awareness of the conflict and draw international attention to it.

The results of the activities of diaspora organizations are visible in achieving concrete political and diplomatic successes. For example, the signing of the final OSCE document on Nagorno-Karabakh in 1994, known as the Ceasefire Agreement, which consolidated the cessation of hostilities in the region and preparations for negotiations on a complete solution to the conflict (Mamedov, 2013).

Also, diaspora organizations are actively working on the development of economic relations between Azerbaijan and the countries where Azerbaijanis live. They help to attract foreign investment, develop trade and cooperation in the field of culture and education. This contributes to strengthening the economy of Azerbaijan and increasing its influence in the international arena.

Conclusions.

Since the middle of 1993, the Azerbaijani leadership has been interested in the lives and affairs of Azerbaijanis living abroad with great attention and care. The Azerbaijani Diaspora is a collection of Azerbaijanis living outside their homeland who maintain ties with Azerbaijan and promote its interests in other countries. The Azerbaijani diaspora mainly consists of migrants who have moved to other countries in search of work, education or refugee status.

The strategic activities of the Azerbaijani Diaspora include:

Support for Azerbaijani culture and language: The Azerbaijani Diaspora is actively working to preserve and promote Azerbaijani culture and language. They organize festivals, exhibitions, concerts and other events to introduce the local population to the richness of the Azerbaijani heritage.

Support for the economic development of Azerbaijan: The Diaspora is actively investing in the Azerbaijani economy by creating its own companies, providing financial assistance and providing expert support. They also contribute to the promotion of Azerbaijani goods and services on the world market.

Education support: The Azerbaijani Diaspora provides various programs and scholarships for Azerbaijani students who want to study abroad. They also provide assistance in establishing educational institutions and ensuring access to high-quality education in Azerbaijan (Suleymanov, 2010).

Political lobbying: The Azerbaijani diaspora is actively engaged in lobbying for the political interests of Azerbaijan in other countries. They participate in political campaigns, organize meetings with political figures and provide financial support to political parties and candidates who support the interests of Azerbaijan.

The mechanisms for applying the strategic directions of the Azerbaijani diaspora's activities include:

Political participation: The Azerbaijani diaspora actively participates in the political life of the country

where they live, as well as influence political decisions made in Azerbaijan. They can organize lobbying groups, support politicians who advocate for the interests and rights of the Azerbaijani diaspora, and participate in elections.

Promotion of culture and art: The Azerbaijani Diaspora actively promotes Azerbaijani culture, traditions and art in the countries where they live. They can organize cultural events, exhibitions, concerts and dance shows to show the richness and beauty of Azerbaijani culture.

Assistance to compatriots: The Azerbaijani Diaspora provides support to compatriots who need help. This may include financial assistance, immigration and adaptation counseling, educational assistance, and professional support.

Business and economic development: Many representatives of the Azerbaijani diaspora invest in business and economic projects in their countries of residence. They can create their own companies, develop trade relations between Azerbaijan and the country where they live, as well as attract investments to Azerbaijan (Aliyev, 2023).

Education and science: The Azerbaijani Diaspora actively supports the development of education and science in the countries of residence. They can organize scholarships and grants for young Azerbaijanis, provide assistance in university admission, and conduct cultural and educational programs (Seidbeyli, 2015).

Social assistance and charity: The Azerbaijani Diaspora also provides assistance to low-income compatriots, as well as others in need in their countries of residence. They can organize charity events, raise money and material resources for those in need, and provide assistance in solving social problems (Ibragimov, 2012a).

In general, the Azerbaijani diaspora uses various mechanisms to promote its strategic activities. They actively participate in the political, cultural, economic and educational life of their countries of residence, as well as provide assistance to compatriots in need around the world.

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