

WHO IS ILHAM ALIYEV



Ilham Aliyev is the authoritarian President of Azerbaijan. Although he draws only a modest government salary, he is reportedly worth billions of dollars, holds vast assets overseas, actively lobbies foreign governments, and controls, along with his family, most of the economy of Azerbaijan, a country still plagued by poverty.

Ilham's father, Geidar, was a KGB general who sat on the Soviet Politburo in Moscow. Between Geidar and Ilham, an Aliyev has ruled Azerbaijan for roughly 38 of the past 44 years.

Aliyev spends over \$3 billion a year on arms, incites anti-Armenian hatred, attacks peaceful protesters, and regularly threatens to renew his country's war on the neighboring Republic of Nagorno Karabakh.

In August of 2012, in an act condemned by President Obama and leaders worldwide, Aliyev **pardoned, praised, and promoted an unrepentant axe-murderer, Ramil Safarov**, who was convicted in a Hungarian court for murdering an Armenian NATO Partnership for Peace participant in his sleep in Budapest.

In February of 2012, Aliyev - in a sweeping and hateful indictment of an entire ethnic group, chillingly similar to Hitler's attempts to demonize all Jews - **publicly announced that: "our main enemies are Armenians of the world,"** and said that: **"Armenia is a country of no value."**

In February of 2013, Aliyev **stripped an Azerbaijani writer, Akram Aylisli, of his state honors and pension** (his relatives were fired from government jobs), because he wrote sympathetically about Armenians in his recent novel. (A political ally of Aliyev offered a bounty of \$12,000 for Aylisli's ear.)

As recently as July of 2012, officials of Aliyev's government have **threatened to shoot down civilian airplanes flying between Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh.**

In December of 2005, Aliyev's armed forces were **video-taped demolishing thousands of intricately carved stone-crosses** in a 1,300 year-old sacred Christian cemetery in Djulfa, Nakhichevan. The U.S. condemned this desecration, and Baku has **barred two U.S. Ambassadors from visiting this site.**

Transparency International regularly rates Azerbaijan as **one of the world's most corrupt nations.**

The State Department warns that Azerbaijan cannot guarantee the safety of all U.S. citizens.

Ilham Aliyev presides over an intolerant regime that abuses the rights of its own citizens, even as he seeks, without legal or moral basis, to extend his control over the free people of Nagorno Karabakh.

