

Azerbaijan

The Internet in Azerbaijan remains largely free from direct censorship despite the government's heavy-handed approach to political opposition and evidence of second- and third-generation controls. Azerbaijan has a growing Internet population, supported by a national strategy to develop the country into an information and communication technology



(ICT) hub for the Caucasus region. The Azerbaijani government actively seeks to attract foreign aid to help boost the telecommunications and ICT sectors.¹ Investment in the ICT sector has been prioritized, with ICT seen as an essential pillar for diversifying the country's oil-dependent economy—an important policy given that Azerbaijan's rich oil and gas reserves are expected to run out in the next 20 to 40 years. Azerbaijan's transition from war and instability in the 1990s under the charismatic former president, Heidar Aliev, has left the political opposition weak and fragmented and has led to certain authoritarian tendencies in the government. The Internet is also beginning to surface as an important medium and space for political communication, and there are some indications that restrictions on content may emerge in the future.

Background

After a decade of civil unrest and a disastrous war over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan recovered and stabilized under the strong hand of former President Heidar Aliev (elected in 1993). Since then, the country's political life has remained dominated by the presidential apparatus. In 2003, Heidar Aliev was succeeded by his son Ilham Aliev in an election whose fairness is questioned by international observers.² In October 2008, President Ilham Aliev was re-elected. Transparency International has ranked Azerbaijan as one of the most corrupt countries in the world.³

The high economic growth in the country over the last several years is largely due to revenues coming in from oil and gas sales. Seeking to advance other sectors, the first President Aliev strongly promoted ICT as a pillar for national development, enacting a national ICT strategy in 2003 that set ambitious targets for the development of Internet in government, education, and the industrial sector.⁴ However, the poor

RESULTS AT A GLANCE					
Filtering	No Evidence of Filtering	Suspected Filtering	Selective Filtering	Substantial Filtering	Pervasive Filtering
Political			•		
Social			•		
Conflict and security	•				
Internet tools	•				

Other Factors	Low	Medium	High	Not Applicable
Transparency	•			
Consistency	•			

infrastructure and slow regulatory reforms in the country proved to be a challenge in developing medium-level local business and attracting foreign investors.

The Internet plays an increasingly important role in daily life, including politics. Opposition groups as well as individuals use the Internet as a communications platform, prompting sporadic crackdowns by authorities. The opposition in Azerbaijan is weak, and its leaders are often targets of government repression. A number of cases have been reported where journalists have been arrested for criticizing the government policies.⁵

Opposition groups in Azerbaijan are “seasonal” and not well coordinated. Most of the opposition and political media Web sites are created during elections and are not periodically updated. After the elections, domain names used in the campaigns are usually left to expire. Hardly any political media or opposition groups’ Web sites have

KEY INDICATORS	
GDP per capita, PPP (constant 2005 international dollars)	7,414
Life expectancy at birth (years)	67
Literacy rate (percent of people age 15+)	100
Human development index (out of 179)	97
Rule of law (out of 211)	161
Voice and accountability (out of 209)	177
Democracy index (out of 167)	135 (Authoritarian regime)
Digital opportunity index (out of 181)	101
Internet users (percent of population)	18.2

Source by indicator: World Bank 2009a, World Bank 2009a, World Bank 2009a, UNDP 2008, World Bank 2009b, World Bank 2009b, Economist Intelligence Unit 2008, ITU 2007, Miniwatts Marketing Group 2009.

been created since 2007 when elections were last held.⁶ Even though there were expectations of increased political activity online from the opposition before the October 2008 presidential election, no notable political discussion was documented. By contrast, the president and the government update their Web sites periodically.⁷

Online groups are popular with young Internet users. Most of these groups focus on issues of practical interest—that is, free mailing lists, file-hosting services, forums, dating, blogs, and WAP services. A few opposition youth groups have focused on organizing public actions against corruption and freedom of speech (e.g., *Dalga*, *OI*). One example of such youth activist groups is the ANTV—the first organized and moderated Azerbaijani video channel on YouTube, which aims to reveal unpopular decisions taken by officials.⁸ Based on the reaction of state officials to events highlighted by ANTV, it is likely that officials are tracking it regularly.

The Internet has also become a source of information for government bodies and the police. For example, at the beginning of 2008, the police tracked down online information from a car drivers' community Web site in relation to a forthcoming street race. As a result, the police arrested 17 young drivers for speeding.

The longstanding “cyberwar” over the unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Azerbaijani and Armenian hackers continues to take place, although rather infrequently. No official sanctions have been imposed upon Azerbaijani hackers. The attacks do not appear to be part of a government-organized campaign, but rather the work of individuals acting on their own. Web site defacements and DoS attacks have also led to disruptions in the Azerbaijani Internet.

Internet in Azerbaijan

During the Soviet era, Azerbaijan was a major center for IT development, particularly in the area of process control systems. This legacy left the country with a reasonably large and well-developed technical infrastructure, including several research institutes and a political leadership savvy about the importance of the ICT sector. Internet development is following the pattern typical of many developing countries, with access centered on major cities, particularly the capital city Baku. Overall Internet penetration is rising as a result of the support of the government's ICT strategy as well as the large Azerbaijani diaspora, for whom the Internet is increasingly an important channel for maintaining contact with their homeland. The number of Internet users has grown over the last several years to 1.5 million users, or 18.2 percent of the population, as of March 2009, estimated by the Ministry of Communications⁹ (or close to 17 percent for 2008 according to the latest estimates of ITU¹⁰).

Many Azerbaijanis access the Internet from shared connections, such as their place of work or study, or from Internet cafés (with the latter providing access for 19 percent of users in 2007). The rate of ownership of computers is low (2.4 units per

100 inhabitants), and Internet usage in homes is moderate—it accounts for 41.6 percent of the total usage for 2007, up from 36.4 percent for 2006. For connectivity, some individual subscribers rely on mobile telephony, though access remains expensive, with most using dial-up services as their primary means. Official survey results for 2007 indicate that economic and educational barriers are the main contributing factors for these low figures, with 31.4 percent blaming the high cost of computer equipment and 21.8 percent indicating a lack of necessary skills.¹¹

The Ministry of Communications and Information Technologies (MCIT), together with the Ministry of Education, Microsoft, and Hewlett Packard, has started the pilot stage of the National PC Initiative aiming to provide conditions for a rapid increase of the PC penetration rate (up to 15 percent) and e-society development.¹² The state-backed Program on Information of the Education System (2008–2012) plans to provide Internet connectivity to all the schools of Azerbaijan. Currently, more than 200 secondary schools have been connected to the Internet (ADSL).

The cost of Internet service remains high for the average citizen: a DSL connection of 64 Kbps costs around USD 40–50 per month, and unlimited monthly access costs around USD 35. For comparison, the average salary in the country is slightly over USD 300 per month. While the cost of international traffic has gone down over the last several years, the cost for usage of the local infrastructure remains unchanged. Approximately 50 percent of the expenses of small ISPs are local connection costs paid to the state-owned company controlling the market. Because these expenses are the same for all providers, they have agreed among themselves to charge end users the same price for unlimited monthly dial-up service. Larger providers temporarily blocked the ISPs that tried to contravene the concerted practice. In December 2007, for example, two small providers—SuperOnline and AvirTel—were blocked by local ISPs (Adanet and IntraNS) while trying to provide service at a lower price for the customers. Shortly after the providers agreed to bring the price of their services into line, the block was lifted. For similar reasons, the larger ISPs blocked another smaller local ISP—Azeronline.

In Azerbaijan, fixed-line telephony is largely centralized in the hands of the state-owned telecom provider AzTelecom, which also acts as a commercial ISP. Delta Telecom (previously operating as AzerSat) is the main ISP in the country, supplying international connectivity to at least 90–95 percent of all users. Delta Telecom also owns the Internet international gateway and sells international traffic to almost all ISPs.

The nonprofit AZNET/AZRENA project provides connectivity to the educational and research community and benefits from a satellite channel built under NATO's "Silk Road" project. AzEuroTel started commercial activity as a telecommunications company and thus managed to establish a relatively wide network infrastructure. AzEuroTel and Adanet also have satellite channels to Russia. AzerOnline, which is

funded predominantly by the largest mobile operator, AzerCell, has an additional satellite connection to Turkey. The cost of satellite connection is very high because of the monopoly regime set by the MCIT.

Since the second half of 2007, Azerbaijan does not have a free Internet Exchange Point (IXP). Delta Telecom controls the only IXP and charges the same amount for local and international traffic. Providers have not been able to agree on setting up another IXP. The external traffic of Azerbaijan is now 6 Gbps, which is a notable increase from the 155 Mbps capacity of 2006. Delta Telecom has external fiber-optic connections with Russia via TransTelecom and with Turkey via RosTelecom.¹³ (Indirectly, Delta Telecom serves Georgian users because a local ISP, TransEuroCom, buys international traffic from Delta and carries it by fiber to Georgia. Through the TRACECA Fiber Optic Cable line, TransEuroCom is connected also to the TurkTelecom in Turkey.)

State control over domain name registration is limited. The assignment of the country code domain name “.az” is controlled by AzNic, Ltd., a joint venture between three Azerbaijani firms. The cost for a one-year registration is USD 34. Network Technologies (a subsidiary of IntraNS) is the company that carries out the registration and administration of the top-level domain level (TLD) in the country. Domain name registrations cannot be done online. Instead, a client is required in most cases to go in person to the offices of the domain name holder. Since 2002, the number of registered domain names has rapidly increased, with approximately 3,000 first-level and more than 6,000 second-level domains registered under the “.az” domain.

The Azerbaijani Internet population is young, mostly male, and largely concentrated in urban areas: more than 55 percent of the users are people in the age range of 16 to 24, and approximately 70 percent of the users are male. During the 1990s, the official language of Azerbaijan switched from Russian to Azerbaijani, and the script from Cyrillic to Latin. As a result, the number of Web sites using Azerbaijani language increased. Due to the increased use of blogs by young people, several local blog servers were created in the Azerbaijani language. However, most of the bloggers still post on Russian blog servers, and others on Western European and Turkish sites. The Azerbaijani language is currently used on all official government Web sites, as well as within mainstream media and the general Internet population.

Mobile telephony is increasingly popular among the younger population. This is especially the case in rural areas where the fixed-line infrastructure is poor and people are increasingly subscribing to mobile services. The major mobile operator in the country is AzerCell with more than 35 percent MCIT participation. Bakcell, the second operator, is relatively small. AzerCell recently started offering mobile e-mail services. Both operators provide coverage of the whole Azerbaijani territory (except the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh). In March 2006, the MCIT agreed to grant a license to a third GSM operator, Azerphone.¹⁴ Catel¹⁵ started operation earlier. The state telecom,

AzTelecom, has participation in the two new mobile operators. Azercell, Bakcell, and Azerphone provide WAP and GRPS services. Mobile providers also use Delta Telecom's external channel for Internet.¹⁶

Legal and Regulatory Frameworks

Even though Azerbaijan made telecommunications and Internet national development priorities, the telecom regulatory framework remains insufficiently developed. The MCIT acts as both regulator and operator. In 2008, the MCIT moved to separate the two functions but has not yet completed this process. Some telecommunications services must be licensed,¹⁷ including VoIP.¹⁸

The major public telecom operators are the government-owned AzTelecom, Azeronline, IntraNS, Adanet, and AzEuroTel (50 percent owned by the MCIT and 50 percent by a British company). Around half of the telephone lines in Azerbaijan are analog, and more than 85 percent of the main lines are in urban areas. The MCIT has adopted a program for development of telecommunications aimed at modernizing the telecommunications infrastructure.

Under foreign pressure, the government has taken steps to liberalize the ISP market. Compulsory state licensing for ISPs was eliminated in 2002,¹⁹ although the MCIT has continued to ignore this provision on isolated occasions. The MCIT continues to hold about a 50 percent share in a few of the leading ISPs in Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan applied for World Trade Organization (WTO) membership in 1997, and even though some progress in liberalization of services was made, the country still remains on the accession agenda. It has been suggested that there is not enough political will to join the WTO, mainly because local businesses fear the loss of their advantageous position in the internal market.

From a regulatory perspective, the Internet is treated as mass media²⁰ and included on the list of telecommunications services regulated by the 2005 Law on Telecommunications. Azerbaijani law does not provide for mandatory filtering or monitoring of Internet content. However, as Web sites that criticize governmental policies have emerged, the government has considered introducing a law that will impose restrictions on Web sites with obscene or antinational content, thereby strengthening already existing defamation laws. Content filtering is practiced by AZNET, the education and research ISP, but is regulated by an accepted usage policy and is restricted to filtering out pornographic content. Anecdotal accounts claim that filtering of specific Web sites occurs, which is seemingly the result of informal requests to ISP managers by state officials from the Ministry of National Security, MCIT, or the presidency. These instances have been infrequent, and the resulting public outcry has led to the swift unblocking of affected sites.

YouTube is also becoming increasingly popular among Azerbaijani Internet users. Several youth groups are posting videos online and are using YouTube as a platform to communicate with other YouTube members or members of the public at large. The popularity of the multimedia site prompted the head of the National Council on TV and Radio Broadcasting of Azerbaijan, Nushirevan Magerramli, to announce the government's intention to regulate Internet TV and Internet Radio.²¹

The Telecommunications Act is expected to prohibit the same legal entity from concentrating more than three publications under one TV and radio company. In 2007, the government announced that in some regions of the country, TV signals from neighboring Armenia and Iran are stronger than the national TV broadcast.²² As a result, the National Television and Radio Council ordered a discontinuation of the broadcast of Russian and Turkish TV stations on Azerbaijani territory. In October 2008, the council announced its decision to suspend the licenses of some international radio channels, such as the BBC, Radio Liberty, and others.

The Azerbaijani defamation legislation has been a frequent subject of criticism by the international human rights community. The government has been under pressure to decriminalize libel, especially after prosecution against journalists and bloggers has intensified. For example, Eynulla Fatullayev, the editor of Azerbaijan's largest independent newspaper and an outspoken critic of the government, was sentenced to eight years and six months in prison on charges of terrorism and inciting ethnic hatred.²³ Fatullayev was sentenced earlier during the same year under the criminal libel provision to 30 months in prison for a posting attributed to him. The posting blamed the Azerbaijani government for one of the massacres in the Nagorno-Karabakh war in 1992.²⁴ Fatullayev denied writing the posting and argued that the charges were politically motivated. This case stirred massive protests in the country against the editor's conviction. The authorities shut down the publications in which Fatullayev participated. The hard disk drives of the computers of these publications were also seized.²⁵

Another recent case shows that the government has exercised pressure on ISPs to take down specific Internet content. Sensitive videos considered offensive to Azerbaijani national feelings were uploaded online to cause a massive uproar in the society. In response, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs sent an official letter to the ISP to express its disapproval and have the videos removed.

Surveillance

Azerbaijani law does not include a formal legal foundation requiring Internet surveillance. Nevertheless, surveillance does occur, mainly by means of sporadic visits of the State Security Services to ISPs. In 2000–2001, there was an unsuccessful attempt to adopt the Russian SORM-II model for Internet surveillance, but the project was

interrupted because of financial difficulties and opposition from ISPs and the Internet community.

In order to deal with cyber attacks, the MCIT is planning to establish a council dealing with Internet-related problems.²⁶ The Azerbaijani Internet community is hoping that the proposed council will be able to decrease cyber security risks without undermining the privacy of users. Another recent MCIT initiative is the launch of an Internet antihackers agency.

There are several reported cases of people arrested because of content posted online. The author of the Web site <http://www.pur.gen.az>, infamous for its biting humorous content, posted a caricature of the president of Azerbaijan in 2006. In 2007, the Ministry of National Security searched one of the Internet cafés in Baku and discovered this caricature on the cache page. The author and the webmaster of the site, as well as several café guests, were arrested and indicted for organized criminal activities. The individuals were released several days later, but the Web site was shut down by its owners in order to avoid further prosecution.

Another case followed the rapid increase of the price of petrol, gas, and electricity in the country in January 2007. The author of <http://www.susmayaq.biz>²⁷ published a protest letter to the president online. As a result, the author was arrested, and the Web site was temporarily inaccessible on ten Azerbaijani ISPs from January to March 2007.²⁸ After a protest by youth organizations, the author was released without charges.

ONI Testing Results

In 2007 and 2008, the OpenNet Initiative tested for content filtering on four ISPs—AzNet, DeltaTelecom, AzerOnline, and AzEuroTel, as well as several end user locations (such as Internet cafés). Most of the ISPs in the country purchase international traffic from Delta Telecom and utilize the infrastructure of AzTelecom for local traffic. It appears that most of the filtering occurs on Delta Telecom lines. The ONI found reverse filtering on a number of U.S. military sites.

Evidence of second-generation controls was also evident in the run-up to the 2008 parliamentary elections. The political section of the most popular online forum (<http://www.day.az/forum>) in Azerbaijan was removed around 20 days before the elections and was still inactive in May 2009.

The popular opposition Web blog Tinsohbeti.com was blocked in March 2008 after it published an article detailing the political and economic problems in Azerbaijan. Earlier, in 2006, the same Web site was blocked because it posted satirical cartoons of the president.²⁹ Before the presidential elections in October 2008, the Web site was unblocked, but by then the original domain registration had expired and no longer hosted the opposition Web blog.

The autonomous republic of Nakhchivan, an exclave of Azerbaijan, closed down Internet cafés for several days in March 2008, according to the Azerbaijani press.³⁰ The reasons behind the ban remain unclear, but restrictive policies on seeking and distributing information in the republic are not isolated cases. At the end of 2008, a number of Web sites were locally blocked in Nakhchivan.³¹

At the Internet café level, many owners impose restrictions that prevent users from downloading large attachments and visiting certain pornographic sites. But these policies are not universal, and they are implemented at the discretion of Internet café owners.

At the business level, most employers limit access to the Internet through the use of intelligent firewalls that restrict the downloading of files with certain extensions (.mp3, .avi, .mpg, .mov, etc.), as well as access to storage file servers and to the servers of instant messaging clients such as ICQ, MSN, Skype, and others.

The ongoing cyberwar between Azerbaijani and Armenian hackers has also caused disruptions to some Web sites and ISPs. In early 2007, five Armenian Web sites were inaccessible, and users were displayed a block page commenting on the political affiliation of the Nagorno-Karabakh region.³² At the same time, the Web site of the Azerbaijani Public Television ITV was taken down.³³ Since most of the allegedly inaccessible sites contained oppositional political content, there are allegations that the Azerbaijani government was involved in the attacks. However, ONI testing could not confirm these suspicions. The ONI did not test for political issues related to the proclaimed independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh region.³⁴

Conclusion

The Internet in Azerbaijan remains for the most part “free and open” as a result of the government’s strong interest in converting the country into an “ICT hub” for the region. However, evidence of second- and third-generation controls is mounting. As the IT market is not yet fully liberalized, the commercial ISPs operate under economically inconvenient conditions set by the state monopolist, which stifle smaller competitors. Government pressure on content providers is not isolated and takes different manifestations ranging from surveillance to the shutting down of commercial activities. Instances of “just-in-time” filtering appeared to result from “informal” requests by state officials to ISP operators and were limited in duration and scope. Moreover, public pressure led to a swift reversal of the policies. That said, the filtering requests appear to be directed through informal channels. Given the prospect of increased use of the Internet by Azerbaijani opposition groups and the government’s sensitivity to opposition, we may expect to see some attempts to regulate Internet content and further instances of “just-in-time” filtering affecting opposition Web sites.

Notes

1. Azerbaijan has signed grant agreements with the UNDP (National Information Communication Technologies Strategy for 2003–2012), the World Bank (for expanding telecommunications in the rural areas of the Southern Caucasian countries), and other international organizations.
2. Human Rights Watch, “Azerbaijan: Presidential Elections 2003,” <http://www.hrw.org/backgrounder/eca/azerbaijan/index.htm>.
3. Transparency International, “Corruption Perceptions Index 2008,” http://www.transparency.org/policy_research/surveys_indices/cpi/2008.
4. Decree 1146 on the Establishment of National Strategy on Information and Communication Technologies Aimed at the Development of the Republic Azerbaijan (2003–2012), signed by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan on February 17, 2003.
5. Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Azerbaijan: RFE/RL Journalist Freed but Faces New Charges,” December 10, 2007, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/12/0d8a4642-2e50-4135-a8c2-21bfbe12eefa.html>; Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty, “Azerbaijan: Activist Becomes First Female Political Prisoner to Die in Detention,” November 29, 2007, <http://www.rferl.org/featuresarticle/2007/11/6bd1a0ac-31ce-4874-bf46-f6d4525ce5ca.html>.
6. Two previously active opposition news Web sites, <http://www.times.az> and <http://www.kiv.az>, were bought out by a U.K. media corporation and are no longer supported.
7. A local nonprofit multimedia center conducts regular monitoring of state Web sites and provides information about e-governance services, frequency of information updates, and accessibility (<http://www.informasiya.org/>).
8. ANTV is a product of an initiative of the Forum of Azerbaijani Students in Europe. ANTV encourages free speech, video sharing, and discussions using the YouTube platform. See <http://www.youtube.com/user/vhsoy>.
9. *BBC News*, “Country Profile: Azerbaijan,” April 15, 2009, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/europe/country_profiles/1235976.stm.
10. International Telecommunication Union (ITU), “Internet Indicators: Subscribers, Users, and Broadband Subscribers,” 2008, http://www.itu.int/ITU-D/icteye/Reporting/ShowReportFrame.aspx?ReportName=/WTII/InformationTechnologyPublic&RP_intYear=2008&RP_intLanguageID=1.
11. Transport, Communication, Information, and Communication Technologies, State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan. The latest published data are for 2006; The State Statistical Committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, http://www.azstat.org/statinfo/communication/en/042_1.shtml.
12. The project targets selling more than 100,000 PCs in the country by 2010 and providing each Internet user with free Internet hours. *Trend*, “National PC Project Open for Cooperation: Azerbaijani IT Ministry,” April 13, 2009, <http://en.trend.az/capital/it/1455207.html>.

13. Delta Telecom inherited the infrastructure of AzerSat with connections to TeliaSonera (Sweden) and preserves partnership with Eutelsat, Belgacom, SatGate, XANTIC, Hughes Network Systems, Pandatel, Siemens, and Motorola.
14. Azerphone is expected to cover 85 percent of the territory of the country by 2008, offering lower prices than the two preexisting operators and 3G technology. *Today.Az*, "Azerphone Company to Cover 85% Territory of Country in Following 2 Years," January 17, 2006, <http://www.today.az/news/business/22128.html>.
15. Catel is an entirely CDMA based mobile operator and also provides Internet services.
16. For operators, it is easier to obtain a license for CDMA services using transportable phone, rather than for a mobile operator. All CDMA operators provide Internet services, and their coverage is mainly in big cities. GPRS services in the country are expensive (in the range of 15 MB for USD 5).
17. As provided in Presidential Decree No. 861, March 19, 2003.
18. *Day.az*, "Azerbaidjanskije Internet—Provaideri Mogut Okazyvat' Uslugu IP-telefonii" [Azerbaijani Internet—ISPs Can Provide VoIP Services], February 5, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/69561.html>.
19. "Pravilami Pol'zovaniya Uslugami Internet Svyazi" [Internet Service Use Rules], www.mincom.gov.az.
20. Under the provisions of the Law on Mass Media adopted on December 7, 1999.
21. *Day.az*, Nushirevan Maharramli, "Internet-radio i Internet-TV Doljny Regulirovatsya Zakonom" [Internet Radio and Internet TV Should Be Regulated by Law], July 27, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/87198.html>.
22. *Regeneum.ru*, "V Azerbajdžane ne Mogut Aaglushit' Armyanskije i Iranskije Telekanaly" [In Azerbaijan, Armenian and Iranian TV Cannot Be Drowned], January 17, 2008, <http://www.regnum.ru/news/944030.html>.
23. Human Rights Watch, "Azerbaijan: Outspoken Editor Sentenced to Eight Years and Six Months," October 29, 2007, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/10/30/azerba17204.htm>.
24. Human Rights Watch, "Azerbaijan: Opposition Editor Sentenced to Prison," April 25, 2007, <http://hrw.org/english/docs/2007/04/26/azerba15790.htm>.
25. Several journalists were arrested during the last two years on different accusations. Six of them were released, and three remain in jail. The last police attack on journalists occurred on June 23, 2008, when the leader of the Institute of Freedom and Security of Journalists, Emin Huseynov, was arrested while filming a meeting dedicated to Che Guevara's birthday.
26. *Day.az*, "V Azerbajdžane Sozdaetsya Sovet po Resheniyu Problem, Svyazannyh s Internetom" [In Azerbaijan, a Council to Address the Problems Associated with the Internet], December 24, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/102319.html>.

27. The Web site, in translation from Azerbaijani, bears as its title the provocative slogan "Let's not be silent."

28. *Day.az*, "V Azerbaijane Arestovan Avtor Sajta, Vyrajavshego Protest Protiv Podnyatiya Tzen" [In Azerbaijan—the Author of a Web site Protesting Price Increases is Arrested], January 15, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/politics/68040.html>.

29. The site was still blocked in July 2008. Reporters Without Borders report on a previous block. See Reporters Without Borders, "Blog that Satirizes President Aliiev made Inaccessible," July 28, 2006, <http://www.rsf.org/Blog-that-satirizes-President.html>.

30. *Day.az*, "V Nahchyvane Vnov' Zarabotali Internet-kluby" [Internet-clubs are in Operation Again in Vahchivan], March 7, 2008, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/110584.html>.

31. See <http://nakhInternet.az>, <http://www.nakhchivan.org.az>, <http://www.turan.az>, <http://www.azadliqradiosu.az>, <http://www.azadliq.org>, <http://www.irfs.az>.

32. *Day.az*, "Azerbaijanskii Haker Vzlomal Pyat' Armyanskih Sajtov" [Azerbaijan Hacker Breaks Five Armenian Web sites], January 29, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/68996.html>.

33. *Day.az*, "Spetsslujby Armenii Vzlomali Sajt Obshestvennogo Televiden'ya Azerbaijana" [Azerbaijani Public Television Web site Defaced by Armenian Secret Service], January 22, 2007, <http://www.day.az/news/hitech/68493.html>.

34. In an attempt to improve the hostile relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the first site in Armenian was launched last year in Azerbaijan. The purpose of this site is to inform Armenians about the real situation in Azerbaijan and the conflict from an Azeri viewpoint.