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# Baku In The Focus Of Intrigue

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RUSSIA STARTS A NEW TOUR AIMED AT CONDUCTION OF MORE ACTIVE POLICY IN TRANSCAUCASIA

After the breakup of the USSR the Transcaucasian states of Azerbaijan, Georgia and Armenia turned out to be in the zone of permanent geopolitical instability. This circumstance impacts not only the foreign policy of these countries but also their ability to build their statehood. Georgia and Azerbaijan lost control over part of their territories. Armenia being in economic blockade is painfully seeking a vector for development acceptable for it and has acute reaction to changes of the established fragile balance in this sensitive region of the world.

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Let us go back to Azerbaijan. During the years of independence, Baku tried practically all possible options of actions: the establishment of closer relations with Moscow and alienation from it, attempts to obtain support of the West and many other things. However, everything remained where it was. That is why many analysts do not rule out that during the visit of Medvedev, Moscow may offer a new scenario for future actions to Baku. It is possible to draw this conclusion if we bear in mind that Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has visited Ankara previously and has had negotiations with the authorities of Turkey, the country being an active geopolitical player in Transcaucasia. After Ankara, Lavrov will go to Baku to join Medvedev there. If we bear in mind that literally on the eve of arrival of the Russian President to Azerbaijan, American Ambassador Ann Dersy has released an unprecedented statement in Baku saying that Azerbaijan may become "the third GUAM country that may enter into NATO" we can draw a conclusion that the intrigue related to the visit of Medvedev is very complicated.

Many analysts in Baku understand that being in NATO, Azerbaijan may finally lose the chances for regaining of Nagorno-Karabakh. Besides, people in Baku see that active pro-Western course of Tbilisi does not lead to resolving of the problems of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. There is only one way out, that is the conduction of a more active policy in the Russian direction and working out such joint social, economic and transport projects that involve Armenia. That is why it is possible to presume that starting a new tour aimed at the conduction of more active policy in Transcaucasia Moscow will try to persuade Baku to take a more active part in the North-South project reaching countries of the Indian Ocean. This project can really connect Russia, Azerbaijan, neighboring Iran and Armenia. Thus, Moscow sees an opportunity of relieving of tension in the South Caucasus in economy and not in the bloc confrontation.

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