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MEDIA POLICY OF AZERBAIJAN REPUBLIC

SUMMARY

The information policy is still very important tool for all countries. Modern Azerbaijan Republic`s media policy is divided into three periods. In the 1st period, during unskillful leaders` reign Azerbaijan was in chaos because of inappropriate, unexperienced and insufficient media policy. In the 2nd period, under the great politician Haydar Aliyev`s successful media policy our nation building process strengthened, stability and confidence restored. In the 3rd period according to Ilham Aliyev`s powerful media policy Azerbaijan is in the list of few cosmic states and free Mass Media meeting the modern standards is being developed in Azerbaijan.

Key words: National leader Heydar Aliyev, freedom of expression, mass communication, media policy.

Media is the main means of mass communication including broadcasting, publishing, and the internet collectively. It is regarded a very important tool not only for ruling the national society but also whole of the world. The great politicians had understood media`s importance especially after the World Wars I and II regarding the radio`s being main effective mass communication tool for states. The

powerful states were considered for not only their good and highly-qualified armament condition, but also propagandas among their citizens, even neighboring countries' people. I want to state that media's dominance is still continuing in the world. That's why all the powerful states or the states that want to become powerful understand that their only way to achieve this goal is to conduct media policy in such a way that both their country can gain power and their citizens can live in a powerful country.

Contemporary media is directly regarding with high technologies' development, especially the development of media technologies and internet. By means of internet we can watch and listen to very important online radio channels, online TV programs and so on.

The Azerbaijani media is an instrumental in reporting such major problems and success in economy, culture, politics, education, sport, social defence and security, health and so on. The history of Azerbaijani media refers to "Akinchi" newspaper. The national media was founded on July 22, 1875, with the start of the publication of the newspaper "Akinchi" (The Ploughman) by one of the well-known representatives of the era of enlightenment movement in Azerbaijan, Hasan bey Zardabi. Each year on 22 July, the Azerbaijani national press celebrates its anniversary, commemorating the first release of the "Akinchi" newspaper. "Molla Nasraddin" journal took an important role in national press's development process for its ideology's being more concrete and realistic [1].

Talking about Azerbaijani media we can divide it into three periods after gaining independence. These periods are: 1) Media policy in chaos era 2) Media policy era under former president and national leader Haydar Aliyev 3) Contemporary media policy era under president İlham Aliyev

As a post-Soviet country Azerbaijan Republic gained its independence in 1991, October 18. In the beginning of 1990s Azerbaijan Republic's media policy was insecure, influenced with many neighboring countries propagandas

because of incompetent Azerbaijani politicians like Ayaz Mutallibov, E.Elçibey, Nemet Panahov, Isa Gambar, Isgandar Hamidov, Suret Husseyinov, Aliakram Humbatov and so on. During their reign Azerbaijan was in chaos because of inappropriate, unexperienced and insufficient media policy. According incompetent leaders` pursuing bad policy in all spheres, especially in media sphere Armenian invaders occupied 20 % of our territory. As a result more than one million internally displaced person(s), including me and whole my family had to leave their motherland and live under worse condition as survivors. All of these were unhealthier and insufficient characteristics of 1st media policy period of Azerbaijan Republic. Our people didn`t know whom to trust, who will save them from this complicated situation. Because incompetent political figures did not keep their promises which was broadcasted on mass media and day by day the general situation was worsening.

The 2nd period of media policy in mainland Azerbaijan started after Azerbaijan Republic`s great politician Haydar Aliyev`s being president in October 1993 and lasted until 2003. The most complicated situation was stopped by his successful political course. He ruled Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic until his presidency. He started to restore the confidence between the Azerbaijani people and state rulers through the adequate media policy. Azerbaijan could realize its geopolitical opportunities under his governance.

Haydar Aliyev entered into a ceasefire agreement that remains in force until today. Through successful media policy he could overcome a chaos situation, signed ceasefire agreement, in order to keep peace and stability in Azerbaijani territory he involved foreign investment of many powerful states` oil companies` into Azerbaijan. Due to his political capability, the threat of isolation of Azerbaijan from the world community was overcome. Haydar Aliyev was aware that without keeping mass media communication technologies under state`s control it would be extremely hard

to overcome chaos regime and restore Azerbaijani people's broken confidence again. All time Azerbaijanis supported all his decisions. He, against coup d'état attempts towards him called for support to his people for participating in the demonstrations at "Freedom Square"(Azadliq meydanı) on 4th October 1994 and reply was positive and nation's supporting was broadcasted on television [2].

The national leader Haydar Aliyev signed a decree on abolishing press censorship, laid the foundation of freedom of expression in Azerbaijan on August 6, 1998. In 1999, other normative acts of the Law of the Azerbaijan Republic on Mass Media came into effect [3].

On 9 December 1999 the Azerbaijani Parliament adopted in the third hearing the new Mass Media Statute containing several changes to the structure of relations between media and government. First, all news media of Azerbaijan shall now be registered with the Ministry of Justice. Until that time it was registered with the Ministry of Press and Information. Second, there has been a few changes to the licensing process. The new act make terms the creation of an unnamed government agency in order to control broadcasting licensing. If any media organization violates the broadcasting regulations, the agency will have the power to stop and withdraw broadcasting immediately. Third, new principals relating to the accreditation of journalists have been declared. According to Article 50 of the Statute, journalists' or editorial staffs 'accreditation can be withdrawn without a decision of the court if the principals are violated by them, or if diminutive information or information on false facts are published by them. Finally, the most important part of the Statue is regarding with penalizing principles of the journalists who try to insult the honor and dignity of Azerbaijan Republic and the Azerbaijani people or contrary to the national interest. The Statute shall enter into force within 70 days of the third hearing by a separate Decree of the President of Azerbaijan that brings into force any statute of the parliament [4]. Thanks to the the Law on Mass Media in Azerbaijan which was

adopted in 2000 expressly forbids any act of censorship. We, Azerbaijanis are always thankful to our national leader Haydar Aliyev regarding with his great effort in new media policy. Due to successful media policy he achieved all his goals like strenghtening nation building process, purged foreign influence over our state, attracted foreign investment into Azerbaijan by restoring stability and confidence in mainland Azerbaijan, development in all spheres and so on [5].

The Law on “Strengthening State Support to Media” adopted in 2001, July 20 ensured the freedom of expression and independence of the media. Main legislative measures was taken in field of TV and radio broadcasting. In 2002 Law on TV and radio broadcasting came into force. In 2003, the Council of National TV and Radio Broadcasting and Press Council were established to control over the broadcast, print and Internet media These Councils are responsible for implementation of state policy in field of giving the licenses to TV and radio broadcasting and removing the disputes [6].

After Haydar Aliyev`s death his media policy was successfully pursued by his succeder president Ilham Aliyev. So the 3rd term of Azerbaijan Republic`s media policy started fromm 2003 up today. Law on Public TV and Radio was adopted on 9 January 2004. The Law on Access to Information adopted in 2005 obliges not only state agencies, but also legal entities to create all conditions for free, unimpeded and equal access to information by all. There is no restriction on free use of mass media by ethnic and religious minorities none of the newspapers face restrictions in their free circulation and in Azerbaijan due to the successful media policy of president Ilham Aliyev [6]. 130 and 140 year anniversaries of honored Azerbaijani media were solemnly celebrated in 2005 and 2015 years,and media workers were awarded with honorary titles and Presidential grants. Ilham Aliyev always supported mass media`s development policy.

In order to strengthen material, technical and financial basis of the media he signed the Executive Order on Paying

off Newspapers' Debts to the Publishing House on February 8, 2006. According to this Order debts of both ruling power and leading opposition newspapers amounting to 450 thousands US dollars should be paid from the state budget [6].

According to the president Ilham Aliyev's decree on "State support for the development of media in Azerbaijan" which was signed in 2008, the State Fund for Support of Mass Media Development under the President of Azerbaijan was established on May 2009. The Fund annually shares out money to newspapers, holds competitions among journalists and carries out different progressive projects in media field. Media workers always feel great sensitiveness and care of President Ilham Aliyev towards them and their job. We can see it from his decree on "social security of press workers of Azerbaijan Republic" in order to protect their all rights [6].

Thanks to Ilham Aliyev's powerful media policy Azerbaijan is in the list of few cosmic states. Starting from 2013 "Azerspace-1", the first telecommunication satellite of Azerbaijan, the next years "Azersky" and "Azerspace-2" satellites were sent to Orbit [7].

Today we, Azerbaijani people enjoy media by all means. We are free to use internet, social media, to express our opinions, to develop ourselves, get and share information through social media whenever we want. I must state that media of Azerbaijan Republic is the main and powerful tool to achieve our society's dynamic development. There are about 5000 registered mass communication tools, 40 daily and more than 200 weekly and monthly newspapers, more than 80 magazines, about 20 information agencies, 100 local newspaper and journal and so on in mainland Azerbaijan [6].

Thanks to Ilham Aliyev's successfully leading media policy even though living in war condition, we defeated foreign influences over our broadcast, print and social media. We acquired the purification of national media from foreign influences. Free Mass *Media* meeting the modern standards is being developed in *Azerbaijan*. The media policy of

Azerbaijan under president Ilham Aliyev is considered a very good example for many countries in the world.

As it was stated above, our national leader Haydar Aliyev's successful media policy and his reliable successor president Ilham Aliyev's pursuing and developing this media policy, Azerbaijan is a leading country in the region.

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РЕЗЮМЕ

Информационная политика по-прежнему является очень важным инструментом для всех стран. Медиаполитика современной Азербайджанской Республики делится на три периода. В 1-й период, во времена правления непрофессиональных лидеров, Азербайджан находился в хаосе из-за неуместной, неопытной и недостаточной политика средства массовой информации. Во 2-м периоде, благодаря успешной политика средства массовой информации великого политика Гейдара Алиева, укрепился наш процесс

государственного строительства, восстановились стабильность и доверие. В третий период, согласно мощной политике средства массовой информации президент Ильхама Алиева, Азербайджан входит в число немногих космических государств, и в Азербайджане разрабатываются свободные средства массовой информации, отвечающие современным стандартам.

Ключевые слова: Национальный лидер Гейдар Алиев, свобода слова, массовые коммуникации, медиа политика.