

Azerbaijan

Rice

Upon independence from the USSR in 1991, the former First Secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party, Ayaz Multalibov, became the first President. As he was a member of the AKP (Azerbaijani Communist Party), technically the same party in power before independence, I have not coded his entrance into office as a SOLS change. However, Multalibov resigned as the president of the AKP (Europa World Yearbook, 2003, Book 1, 638), which dissolved itself in 1991 (de Waal 1991, 160); hence, a nonparty coding for this year. Multalibov was in office until March 1992, when a massacre of Azerbaijanis in Nagorno-Karabakh resulted in his resignation. The presidency was taken over by Yagub Mamedov, the Speaker of the National Assembly, with the purpose being to schedule new elections. Because of this, I have chosen not to code Mamedov's time in office as being a SOLS change. In May, Multalibov was returned to power by the "old guard" on 14 May 1992, which is not a SOLS change, but was he ousted again on May 18 due to his efforts to suspend the scheduled presidential election and ban all political activity (United States Department of State 2010). Isa Gambarov of the AKC (Azerbaijan Popular Front) was then put into office, but he is also considered to be an acting President. This is not a SOLS change. Gambarov held the presidency until elections were held in June.

The elections resulted in Abulfaz Elchibey, a member of the AKC, being elected President. This is a SOLS change. However, discontent with his leadership grew, due to his government's inability to prosecute the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict or to manage the economy (United States Department of State 2010). In June 1993, an armed insurrection began and spread towards the capital city. Elchibey fled the city, and the National Council gave presidential powers to Heydar Aliyev, also a former First Secretary of the Azerbaijani Communist Party. This is a SOLS change. Elchibey was formally deposed in a referendum in August 1993, and Aliyev was officially elected in October. From that point on, Geddes classifies Azerbaijan as a personalist state.

Aliyev was technically a member of the New Azerbaijani Party (YAP), and remained in office until October, 2003. At that point, due to his failing health, he stepped down from the presidency, and nominated his son, Ilham Aliyev, as his party's candidate for president. Ilham Aliyev won the election (which did not meet international standards), and remains in office in the present day (United States Department of State 2010).

References

De Waal, T. 1991. Black garden: Armenia and Azerbaijan through peace and war. New York University. p.160.

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