



### AUSTRALIAN AZERBAIJANIAN ASSOCIATION (AAA)

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## **100 years of Azerbaijan Republic Day - 1918**

Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was founded on 28 May 1918 as the first secular and democratic country in the Muslim east. Azerbaijan declared independence from The Russian Empire to become Azerbaijan Democratic Republic. Azerbaijan proclaimed independence in Tiflis on 28 May 1918. The founder, first president of Azerbaijan was Mammad Amin Rasulzadeh. The first state that officially recognized the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was the Ottoman Empire.

One of the important accomplishments of Azerbaijan was the extended suffrage to women, making Azerbaijan one of the first countries in the world, and the very first majority-Muslim nation, to grant women the right to vote and equal political rights with men.

At the time of independence in 1918, Azerbaijan was able to operate in a tense and complicated socio-political situation for only 23 months. The Soviet Union invaded Azerbaijan on 28 April 1920 and ceased the country as part of the USSR for and occupied North Azerbaijan for 71 years.

Russia has played a key role in how the nation of Azerbaijan was organised particularly over the last 200 years. In 1804, the Russian Empire attacked, captured, and killed Qajar Shah in present day Iran and many civilians. The Russo-Persian War resulted in Russia now being the unquestioned dominant power in the Caucasus who now possessed Azerbaijanian lands fearing the power of Turks and the Ottoman Empire (which extended through Europe and Spain).

In 1990 when the USSR began to collapse, Azerbaijanian people protested and were met with Russian tanks and bullets fired at civilians on the street. Following

the harrowing efforts of Azerbaijanian civilians, North Azerbaijan gained its present independence from Russia for a second time in this century.

Today, we can proudly call Azerbaijan our own, and part of 55 Million Azerbaijanians in the world. Presently, the Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan is a beautiful, independent, modern, democratic and secular nation which we are proud of today. Again, today is a great day in remembering and appreciating how north Azerbaijan became Independent. This is also a time to reflect on the independence of South Azerbaijan in present day Iran, and future prosperity of all Turkish nations across the globe.

On behalf of the Australian Azerbaijanian Association and the South Azerbaijan Democratic Turkic Unity, from the bottom of my heart, I celebrate and extend congratulations to North Azerbaijan's independence, and all Azerbaijanis and Turkish people around the world.

Happy Azerbaijan 100<sup>th</sup> year Republic Day.

Thank you very much

President Of

Australian Azerbaijanian Association Inc

