

Стратегический анализ Нагорно-Карабахской проблемы и ее возможные сценарии развития

М. Алемдар

*Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Санкт-Петербург, Россия
E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru, e-mail: st080793@student.spbu.ru*

Э. И. Атабай

*Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Санкт-Петербург, Россия
E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru, e-mail: st080793@student.spbu.ru*

Аннотация. Вопрос Нагорного Карабаха является одним из наиболее широко изучаемых в рамках кавказоведения как до Второй Нагорно-Карабахской войны, так и после нее. Вторая Нагорно-Карабахская война была начата с целью изменения «застывшего» статуса конфликта. Попытки урегулировать Нагорно-Карабахский конфликт оказались безрезультатными даже несмотря на то, что к его решению прикладывали усилия Организация Объединенных Наций и некоторые другие международные организации. Более того, ни переговоры, ни наличие режима прекращения огня на спорных территориях не способствовали фактическому завершению военных действий. Столкновения низкой интенсивности продолжались вплоть до начала Второй Карабахской войны. Помимо этого, на ход конфликта влияет и постоянное вмешательство третьих сторон. Так, Российская Федерация и Турецкая Республика выступали в конфликте в статусе крупных региональных игроков, а США и Франция представляли собой международных акторов за счет роли армянских групп интересов в социально-политической сфере США и Франции. Поскольку Нагорный Карабах имеет решающее значение для энергетических линий и структуры безопасности Кавказа, конфликт является одним из центральных пунктов регионального и международного конфликта. Помимо этого, Вторая Нагорно-Карабахская война представляет собой особую значимость для исследований в области безопасности в контексте изменения структуры войны в отношении роли военных беспилотников. В то же время относительное уменьшение напряженности между сторонами способствует критическому анализу возможности установления мира на территории Закавказья. В данной статье представлен отчет об анализе управления конфликтами для понимания специфики проблемы, а также рассмотрены три сценария развития конфликта: лучший, худший и наиболее вероятный.

Ключевые слова: Нагорный Карабах, стратегический анализ, управление конфликтами, миростроительство, дипломатия второго уровня

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Strategic Analysis of Nagorno-Karabakh Issue and Possible Scenarios of the Future of the Problem

M. Alemdar

*St Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russia
E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru, st080793@student.spbu.ru*

Eup I. Atabay

*St Petersburg State University, Saint Petersburg, Russia
E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru, st080793@student.spbu.ru*

Abstract. Nagorno-Karabakh is one of the most widely studied issue in Caucasian studies both before the Second Nagorno-Karabakh war and after the war. Second Nagorno-Karabakh War has been constituted a possibility to change its frozen status. Although Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been tried to resolve by United Nations and some other international organizations, attempts remained inconclusive. Moreover, the concluded negotiations and presence of ceasefire between parties has never sustained an actual ceasefire. Low intensity clashes between parties lasted until second Nagorno-Karabakh War time by time. As a regional conflict, Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been witnessed third parties' intervention. Russian Federation and Turkey have intervened as regional actor but also USA and France have intervened as international actor by Armenian interest groups' role within USA and France socio-political realm. Since Nagorno-Karabakh is crucial for Energy roads and Caucasian security structure, the conflict is one of the focal points of the regional and international conflict. Beside Caucasia has been always important region for Post-Soviet Studies, Second Nagorno-Karabakh war is also important for Security Studies in the context of changing war structure with regards of armed drones' role in the field. Yet the tension has decreased relatively between parties, peace possibility and future of issue should be analyzed and received considerable critical attention. To that end, this article will give an account of conflict management analysis to understand features of issue and examine three scenarios as best, worst, and most likely by using Conflict Analysis Tools

Key words: Nagorno-Karabakh, Strategic Analysis, Conflict Management, Peacebuilding, Track II Diplomacy

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Searching the roots of conflict takes this paper to 19th Century to understand spatial features and limits of conflict. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a frozen conflict conceptualized by international relations literature. Neither wars nor diplomatic attempts couldn't resolve this conflict. The core of conflict is looking like territorial and geopolitical issue, however problem beyond a simple border issue. Azerbaijani people separated from each other by Gulistan 1813 and Turkmenchay 1828 agreements. Azerbaijani people separated into two different countries that Russian Imperial and Iran. In three different era, Russian Imperial, USSR and post-Soviet era, conflict has remained unsolved and lasts up until today. Moreover, from the sovereignty perspective, in USSR era, Nagorno Karabakh recognized as Azerbaijani territory.¹ Third, the humanitarian aspects of conflict that over 1 million people had to migrate because of the wars and limited armed conflict in the region. Mostly, regional conflicts cause regional effects

and related to regional countries, Nagorno-Karabakh has exception feature in this context. Armenian diaspora especially in the Russian Federation, USA and France make the conflict international rather than regional and highly involved the OSCE and Minsk process. As a contribution to this point, Armenian diaspora using the conflict for the identity construction and consolidation that makes the conflict into identity issue. When everything is taken into account, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict exceeds its spatial limits and beyond a regional border issue. The main characteristics of conflict that briefly explained in this paragraph make this conflict out of spatial limits and allow the foreign and oversea intervention.

As for main actors that involved this conflict, varied actors, states and national interests is giving an idea to answer reason of unsolvable structure of the conflict. Since too many internal and external actors got involved the conflict, the best way is categorize them as primary and secondary actors. Primary actors

¹ Britannica. Nagorno Karabakh [Электронный ресурс] // Режим доступа: <https://www.britannica.com/place/Nagorno-Karabakh>

are Armenia and Azerbaijan but also, we can add Russia, Turkey and Iran if we consider the situation from the historical perspective. Secondary actors are USA and major EU countries especially France because of the Armenian diaspora as strong interest groups within the political system of those countries. As for official positions of actors, Armenia claims Nagorno-Karabakh region is part of national territory of Armenia however, Armenian government supported the independence of the region since 1998.¹ The reclamation is based on the principle of self-determination of the Armenian population which inhabits the territory.² Azerbaijani government is also claiming the Nagorno-Karabakh as national territory based on the historical reasons. As a response to self-determination claim of Armenia, Azerbaijan claims forced immigration of Azerbaijani people from Nagorno-Karabakh and ethnic cleansing by Armenian armed groups. Moreover, they do not recognize the sense of belonging of the inhabitants of the zone because of the common origin of all population in Caucasus [Vayrynen 1998]. Moscow position is partly neutral and partly pro-Azerbaijan because of the sustaining balance between parties because of near abroad policy and national interests in post-Soviet countries. Furthermore, Russia sells arms to both sides and limited conflict with low-pitched armed engagement allows to Russian army presence in the region as a peacekeeper force. The real interest of Russia and the reason beyond its ambiguous relationships with both parties is the influence on the Caucasus and energy roads [Behlul 2008: 572–599]. Turkish position is almost same with Azerbaijan because of the historical and identical links between two countries. Moreover, so-called genocide claims of Armenian diaspora makes the Turkey standing with Azerbaijan. Although initiation to build new relations between Turkey and Armenia in 2009 which included opening border gate that crucial for Armenian economy, diaspora who benefitting from tensed relation

between Armenia and Turkey, nationalists of Turkey prevent the process and initiation couldn't go further. Ankara's interests in the region is controlling over the Caucasus and energy independence from Russia. If the government of Turkey will be involved in the resolution of the conflict, it will become a new center of gravity for the region [Fidan 2010]. A weak Azerbaijan means the weak Turkish presence in the Caucasus which is very important for Turkey in the energy aspect when the reality of poor energy sources in Turkey is considered. Since Armenia claims a part of Turkish national territories as Armenian territory, realization of the Armenian arguments is the last thing Turkey wants in the region. As for Iran, there is a minority problem in the north of Iran region which mostly consist of people claims themselves as Turks which parted from Azerbaijan by 1813 agreement. Therefore, Iran approaches the conflict from the national security perspective and highly supported Armenia. A realization of Azerbaijanian arguments could trigger the internal unrests in Iran from the Iranian perspective. US and France approaches to this conflict as international external actors and consist of main supporters of Armenian arguments in international arena by the power of Armenian diaspora and interest group within those countries political system. Main fears of presidents and congress members of these countries are losing Armenian votes and Armenian media support in their political campaigns.

When the relationship that has been prevalent between the parties to the conflict over various stages of its development is considered, the level of interdependence of parties is significant to understand structure of conflict. The conflict has started as border issue without armed engagement between parties. During the Soviet Union era, parties followed the Moscow national policies and weren't engaged. During the 1980s, the Gorbachev's liberal policies weakened the control over the Caucasus, and as a consequence, many strikes and protests

¹ Zurcher C. *The Post-Soviet Wars: Rebellion, Ethnic Conflict, and Nationhood in the Caucasus*. New York, USA: New York University Press. [Электронный ресурс] // Режим доступа: <https://doi.org/10.18574/nyu/9780814797440>

² Mustafayeva N. Armenia's recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh could trigger a war. [Электронный ресурс] // Режим доступа: <https://www.euractiv.com/section/armenia/opinion/armenia-recognition-of-nagorno-karabakh-could-trigger-a-war/>

emerged in the region. Armenians from the Nagorno-Karabakh reclaimed their membership to Armenia, and thousands of Azerbaijanis left the region [Ayunts, Zolyan, Zakaryan 2016: 543-559]. After the weakening Soviet control over the region, conflict reached the peak point and many people died in the war until 1993.¹ After the first war, region stayed under Armenian control, but conflict remained unsolved because of the lack of an agreement defines territories and borders. Until the second war, parties didn't try to solve the issue and didn't develop a diplomatic relation. In the second war, parties reached the cease fire agreement and some particular territory agreement under the Russian reconciliation; however, disputes still remain in the applying articles of the agreement. All factors that given in the question have impacted the relationship since the beginning of the conflict. Both parties are interdependent each other in the context of energy, economic and political although both of them are member of CIS. Small scaled economy Armenia needs to Russia to make export, Azerbaijan is selling oil and natural gas via Caspian Sea. Both sides don't have any economic or political tie that caused lack of development of diplomatic relations since the beginning. Imbalance of power impacted two wars held between parties. At the first one Armenia could strength over Azerbaijanian army and vice versa in second war. Moreover, the theories and arguments of both sides are not seeking peaceful solution and don't step back from the fully control over the region which causes unsolved and frozen conflict.

As for the other aspects of the conflict, historical and cultural aspect of the conflict must be underlined. The roots of conflict between Armenian and Turks dates to beginning of 20th century. In the WWI, Armenian armed groups rose against the Ottoman Empire and cooperated with enemy in the eastern regions of Anatolia. Ottoman government made the deportation law against these rebelled regions and relocate Armenian people that cooperated with enemy. Today, Armenian diaspora is using this law to identity construction and consolidation besides

claiming this law as genocide. This issue lasts until today and still underpins of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Moreover, possible corridor via Nagorno-Karabakh could tie up Azerbaijan and Turkey which quite crucial threat from the Armenian perspective. On the other hand, dispute and war situation is covering weak economic situation of Armenia and constitutes a strong reason of government to excuse poverty in country. At the other side, Azerbaijan government consolidates public and legitimizes itself.

Even though the conflict dates back to early 20th century, it has been ceased with the Bolshevik Revolution. The region has given to Azerbaijan SSR and remain as autonomous region (oblast). Unrest within region reached the peak point when Nagorno-Karabakh assembly declared independence from the Azerbaijan SSR. After the collapse of USSR, conflict turned into armed conflict. In 1993, the United Nations Security Council passed four resolutions concerning the Azerbaijan Armenia conflict. In addition to calling for a cessation of hostilities, the resolutions "reaffirm[ed] the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other States in the region," as well as the "inadmissibility of the use of force for the acquisition of territory." The resolutions called for "the withdrawal of occupying forces" from "recently occupied areas" of Azerbaijan. Conflict has lasted ceased until 2020. Although low density armed engages since 1994, last attack from the Armenian side to Tovuz, ends the Azerbaijan's policy "strategical patient" and started to second Nagorno-Karabakh war. The first violent emerged after the collapse of USSR. The main reason was emerging power vacuum and lack of authority in the region. Parties was seeking to fully occupy the region and started to fight.

As last words on the analysis of conflict features, all wars and escalation of the crisis caused by the power vacuum and overwhelming one side. Second war emerged because of the stronger position of the Azerbaijan side and small armed engagements turned unto conventional war. Presence of the Russian army

¹Helsinki Commission Report x [Электронный ресурс] // Режим доступа: <https://www.csce.gov/sites/helsinkicommission.house.go>

v/files/Report%20-%20Nagorno-Karabakh%20-%20Design%20FINAL_0.pdf

in the region as a peacekeeping power and current overwhelmed position of the Azerbaijan could give us the idea of the less possibility of crisis escalation. Today, the main risk is unwillingness of Armenia to satisfy the conditions which defined by agreement after the Second Nagorno-Karabakh war. According to the agreement, Lachin Corridor which tie Azerbaijan and Nakhichevan up. Main opportunity is possible economic relation with Turkey and Armenia to build up warm relations and solve the problem.

This paper categorizes possible scenarios into three groups and name them as best, worst, and most likely scenarios. Main parameters are determined as follows governments' intention, increasing nationalism and heterogeneity within societies, international manipulation, militarization, increasing population and lastly economic performance.

The best case could be maintained by a sustainable and stable peace enhanced by the governments' initiatives without any foreign intervention or manipulation the process. An effective and logical agricultural, economic policies and population planning applied by governments, diplomatic relations sustained by regional actors and governments directly. Borders reopened and Azerbaijan, Turkey and Armenia encourage economic and diplomatic ties especially in the context of energy sector.

The worst case which would cause more casualty for each party and all regional actors could be emerged in case of any party perceives the current ceasefire agreement as unacceptable. Parties increase militarization, violence re-escalated, foreign intervention hold by different actors and societies triggered by nationalism.

As for most likely scenario, today's incidents within conflict show us to predict this scenario. Although a ceasefire is signed between parties, small armed groups violate agreement time by time. Threats between parties continue and peacekeeping initiatives mostly held by external actors Russia and Turkey rather than parties directly. Azerbaijani government replaces the Nagorno-Karabakh autonomous government and parties still insisted on the arguments. Despite of limited economic growth, economic values are not quite good to solve current issues within societies. Increasing population plus poor agricultural fertility

damaged by environmental issues would increase the social unrest. International manipulation and militarization still remain, and conflict most likely lasts in short and middle term.

When the key feature of the conflict is taken into account, it can thus be suggested that two different conflict management tools could be applied in Nagorno Karabakh Issue to maintain sustainable peace. This article concluded these two tools as Peacebuilding Process and Track II Diplomacy.

Peacebuilding Process between parties could start by bringing the parties together because since the beginning of the conflict main problem was lack of diplomatic contact between parties. Lack of diplomatic contact causes lack of negotiation and parties would be insisted on their arguments by fighting. Therefore, peacebuilding process would be best option for this conflict. The main actors would be political leaders of the fighting parties rather than their military officials. Moreover, Turkey and Russia would be part of process as direct involvers of the conflict and main mediator actors. Since the Armenian diaspora would seek the stuck process because of benefitting from the unrest and dispute within region, diaspora backed European or American actors should be apart from the process for effective solution. As for time, today or short term would be better to initiate the process because stopping war and dispute would enhance the economy of the countries and every actor in the region when Covid-19 (C19) negative consequences are considered on the national economies. Minsk Group within OSCE has tried to solve this conflict but failed through the time. It started in 1992 and ended in 2020. OSCE started the process in Helsinki under the presidency of US-France-Russia with the members that Belarus, Germany, Italy, Portugal, Netherlands, Sweden, Finland and Turkey besides Armenia and Azerbaijan. Multimember structure and internationalized the conflict even if it is a regional conflict hinder the process and failed. The main risk is manipulation the process by Armenian diaspora because diaspora is benefitting from dispute by using it as vote power within Western countries. Moreover, extremist approach of any parties could hinder the process.

Track II Diplomacy is the most effective solution, this paper argues. Since the main problem is lack of diplomatic contact between parties and building relations somehow or other, and parties' legitimizing themselves policy by using the conflict and wars, Track II diplomacy could give a way to develop relation between parties. Main actors are economical actors and companies businessmen/women. When weak economic situation of the Armenia is considered, developing a relation through companies and business interest groups within states rather than international society could be a solution. As for third parties, Turkish and Russian business environment could mediate the process. Turkish involvement is crucial in this process because Armenia and Turkey are constituting hinterland for each other. Especially Turkish open policy to Armenian companies could solve the tensed relations. As for time, same reasons are valid as written in Peacebuilding Process paragraph. Today or

short term would be better to initiate the process because stopping war and dispute would enhance the economy of the countries and every actor in the region when C19 negative consequences are considered on the national economies. Possible increase in nationalism level of societies or foreign manipulation or intervention to process is the biggest risk and threat before solution.

The main goal of this paper was to point out key characteristics of Nagorno-Karabakh Issue, analyze features of conflict and forecast possible scenario includes suggestions to maintain peace. The following conclusions can be drawn from the present study and personal ideas of the author, there is not any superior idea or process before peacemaking motivation of parties. Moreover, economic relations even it would be limited or small scaled could increase the interdependency and help peaceful relations between parties.

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ИНФОРМАЦИЯ ОБ АВТОРЕ / INFORMATION ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Мисдияр Алемдар, магистр в области «Международных отношений», Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Санкт-Петербург, Россия. E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru

Атабай Эюб Ибрахим, аспирант кафедры международных отношений на постсоветском пространстве, Санкт-Петербургский государственный университет, Санкт-Петербург, Россия. E-mail: st080793@student.spbu.ru

Misdiyar Alemdar, in «International Relations», St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia. E-mail: st098622@student.spbu.ru

Eup I. Atabay postgraduate student, Department of International Relations in the PostSoviet Space, St. Petersburg State University, St. Petersburg, Russia. E-mail: st080793@student.spbu.ru