

Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

Ms. Iram Khalid¹

Abstract

Events in recent years tend to show that dissolution of the Soviet Union left many questions and opened the opportunity and challenges for the international community. Challenges on security and economic fronts are forthcoming in Central Asia Region. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is one of the important challenge for the international community, that resulted to a considerable refugee crisis in Azerbaijan, ethnic cleansing and massive human rights violations on both sides e.g. Azerbaijan and Armenia. A comprehensive and sound examining of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict indicates that it is defined as internal and further is misinterpreted. In fact, the issue is distorted diplomatically, only for sake of gaining maximum political, economic and strategic benefits, by the international community. The research paper will concentrate on the historical background of the conflict along with the attitude of the world community on the framework of negotiations on the issue. The dialogue process has done nothing to deescalate the alarmed and hostile relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The research paper is an attempt to call on the intensity of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as myth or reality. It provides a stake-holder analysis and to examine a political, economic, security and socio-cultural dynamics of the conflict. The presenting paper has evaluated the peace process, factors accounting for continuous dialogue failure and finally has suggested recommendations to resolve the conflict. One important aspect of the conflict that it is examined and critically studied in the context of oil and gas politics in Central Asia Region.

Introduction:

Over the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, a conflict evolved between Azerbaijan and Armenia. In the result of this prevailing disputed conflict, the Azerbaijan government has to face massive refugee crisis. According to the independent observation on this issue, Karabakh conflict brought out more than one million refugees, dislocated and displaced. More than 20% of Azerbaijan territory came into the control of Armenia and more over the Azerbaijan government has faced tense situation not only within country but also across the region. The conflict highlighted some important immediate consequences which are listed respectively below.

¹ Author is Assistant Professor at Political Science Department, University of the Punjab, Lahore - Pakistan

Nagorno-Karabakh, reputed as small region of 1,699 sq miles, having less dense population approximately 200,000. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict begun in 1987 as the disputed land between Azerbaijan and Armenia and it gained complicated conflicted regional situation when Soviet Union collapsed. Nagorno-Karabakh conflict lacks a valid particular solution. Infact, any definite solution of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict requires some concessions at the expense of both parties. The both involved parties have less concession attitude towards each other and therefore there is less possibility to develop a long term strategy.

1. Massive Azerbaijan refugee displacement.
2. Azerbaijan has to lose its 20% territory.
3. Ethnic issue is promoted and one ethnic identity was intentionally victimized.
4. Azerbaijan and Armenia both have to face bad economic conditions.

On international front, the issue has no gravity and remained failed to receive the intention as it was required for solving the conflict. International community treated to the issue as internal matter of the both involved parties e.g. Azerbaijan and Armenia.

Historical Perspective of Conflict:

Question of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh starts from 1920-21 when Soviet Empire incorporated to Transcaucasus. On this occasion, the border issue among Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia was not resolved. This situation led to evolve the boundary questionable status between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the Karabakh conflict but within the Soviet Union, in this period a struggle was continued between Azerbaijan and Armenia on Karabakh conflict but the Soviet political leadership dialogued more than three years on this issue but no positive development was taken place. Finally a long standing further discussion among the involved parties and Soviet leadership Armenia got in favor of pendulum on this issue.¹ Because of the Soviet political leadership pressure, the Azerbaijan Soviet Revolutionary Committee had to take the decision in December 1921. According to this decision, a statement was issued that Karabakh, Zangezour, and Naknichevan territories would remain under the possession of Armenia control. Stalin government on 2nd December 1921 transferred these areas from the domination of Azerbaijan to Armenia but Azerbaijan political leadership refused to accept the process of transformation.² Azerbaijan leader Narimanov simply stated that the decision, under taken by the Stalin committee, favored to Armenia and Azerbaijan had been deprived.. The tussle continued between Azerbaijan and Armenia on territorial status of Karabakh, Zangezour and Nakhichevan. Finally after four months, the situation came back on the same position on it was before 2nd December 1920.³ On March, 16th 1921, a positive development taken place when a treaty was signed between Republic

Turkey and Soviet Union, determined the future status of disputed areas. According to the treaty, Zangezur would be under the control of Armenia and Azerbaijan Socialist Republic, covered the rest of the areas.⁴

In 1924, Nakhichevan received autonomous status and entities as NASSR. On the other hand, the Nagorno Karabakh was awarded/granted autonomous status, entitled as 'Autonomous Oblast'. According to the former Soviet Union's regional hierarchy the 15 republics of Soviet Union had the constitutional right to withdraw from Union besides this degree of the autonomy as according to the Soviet Union can be awarded.⁵ In accordance with Soviet Union regional hierarchy, 'Autonomous Republic' is higher degree of autonomy as compare to 'Oblast Autonomous'. In this period, Stalin Soviet government made efforts to accommodate the Turkish newly government, headed by Kamal Attaturk with whom the Red political leadership given the preference to have political alliance.⁶ Furthermore, Stalin and Kamal Attaturk, both had some kind of thinking to be involved in the wars against the Western Power. Stalin favored Attaturk by giving concession to Azerbaijan and by reducing the scope of Armenia. Strategically, Kamal Ataturk was not interested to watch Armenia as strong on its border because in the case of strong Armenia, Kamal Attaturk feared to face the two independent states within its own territory e.g. independent Kurdish and independent Armenia state, in future. This territorial division could be possible if Armenia becomes strong and been in the position to compel the Attaturk Government to revive the Sevres Treaty.⁷ The strong Armenia can alarm Republican Turkey. On Moscow side, the intensity of situation was in same but in different perspective. Stalin was not interested to unite Armenia only to prevent resistance that can be challengeable for Stalin in future within Soviet Union. So, intentionally to keep the ground regional realities, Stalin played the ethnic division within Soviet Union. Armenians were divided between Armenian Republic and Nagorno-Karabakh. The same method was followed in dividing Azerbaijani into two entities. Azeris were divided between Armenian Republic Azerbaijani and Nakhichevan, although the later was administratively condoled by Republic Azerbaijan.⁸

On another reason, Soviet Government favored to Azerbaijan instead of Armenia, Azerbaijan political leadership strongly advocated to the Bolshevik Ideology. On the other hand, Armenia where the Dashnok political party was entirely dominant opposed to the Bolshevik Ideology and stood for the nationalist agenda. Till 1921, the political leadership ruled in Zangezur and did not follow the Bolshevik leadership, whereas, the Azeri leadership followed the parameters of Communist Regime. In the result, massive political demonstrations were launched in Azerbaijan in support of Bolshevik Ideology.⁹ On the one side the Soviet political leadership had accommodated the Turkish leadership and on the second side it made territorial arrangements to reduce the level of resistance from Armenians and Azerbaijan by dividing the both identities.¹⁰

Although these arrangements were made yet the Karabakh issue was not solved. It was assumed that issue would be solved but the internal and external factors became responsible to take concrete steps for finding out the possible solution of the issue. Again the Stalin Executive Committee completely briefed the issue and decided to influence Karabakh into the Armenia territory but the Azerbaijan again refused to accept the proposal. The decision was taken aback.¹¹

In the result of the continuous dialogue among the participants, a settlement of the issue was finally staged. It was decided that Karabakh would remain under Azerbaijan SSR administratively but it was given the Oblast autonomous status. Few months later, capital of NAKO was replaced from Shusha to Khankendi, Armenian political leadership protested against this decision and its forces did possible efforts to retake the settlement.¹² Whenever, the Moscow leadership changes, the Armenians always highlighted the issue. The issues again become the part of discussion as soon as the Soviet political leadership Mikhail Gorbacheve introduced Glasnost policy, which changed the internal political sphere of Soviet Union entirely. In August 1987, thousands of people of Armenia launched a 'Signatory Movement' which objective was to transfer of Nagorne and Nakhicheven to Armenia. The situation became more favorable when the NKAO officials request to the political leadership of Moscow to include them into the Armenian jurisdiction. Further more in Armenia, the huge demonstration in the favor of the NAKO official's, request was taken place. These circumstances in Armenia evolved a critical situation for the Azris who located in Armenia. The Azris did politically and physically tortured and finally led to compel them to leave Armenia. In Baku, very first time, majority of the Azris, located in Armenia, moved.¹³

The conflict brought massive retaliation against the Armenian by the Azeris within three days the number of Armenian casualties increased. In addition, the situation became, more terrible when the Moscow central forces did not format any security plan to reduce the level of the tension. In the long run, the inter-violence activities occurred respectively in both areas e.g Azerbaijan and Armenia. One political scholar argued that process of ethnic cleansing in both states respectively were indifferent to each other. In Armenia, the local Armenian security forces cleaned the Arzris systematically. Whereas, in Azerbaijan, the uprising and ethnic cleansing begun abruptly against the Armenians.¹⁴ The international human rights organizations stated that frequent massive human violence in both republics brought approximately 816 casualties.¹⁵ From this situation to onward, the Armenians demonstrations increased and its forces captured Karabakh territory by force. The increased uprising in Armenia and further military assistance from the regular Armenian forces weakened the Azerbaijan position on Karabakh issue. In this on going conflict, the Moscow had kept itself to aloof from the both sides. Some political experts argued that the Armenian get better position in Karabakh due to have military assistance

from Soviet forces, appointed in Armenia. On the other hand, Moscow denied allegations and stated that in the absence of the ample evidence, how it can be determined that either Soviet regular forces were involved or not.

Ongoing conflict introduced massive human rights violation, killings, looting and refugees in bulk. Azerbaijan had to take finally military stand against Armenian forces and Karabakh rebellious who established Karabkh National Conference, which later on declared the independence of Nagorno Karabakh.¹⁶ This movement was advocated and backed by the Armenians inside and outside Karabakh. To scatter the independence movement of Karabakh, the Azerbaijan government passed a parliamentary resolution to abolish the autonomous status of Karabakh and left no room for the Karabakh independence.

Although, the Azerbaijan government received economic aid yet the matters remained unsolved due to three important factors. First of all, in the Azerbaijan policy making process, the government has to face strong resistance from the Armenians pressure groups, placed in Azerbaijan Parliament, Second, the West media did not depict the true picture of the event and it was projected that Azerbaijan in itself remained involved through out the uprisings. Third, the attitude of the international community was extremely passive and did not bother to take concrete steps to stop the human violation and Armenian aggression.

Although, the Azerbaijan Parliament politically made arrangements to reduce the gravational force of the Karabakh independence yet it was observed that Bacu was losing military control of Karabakh. As compared to Armenia, Azerbaijan had no equipped trained regular forces and further no sound economic regular forces and no sound economic infrastructure. On the other side, Moscow's regular forces also assisted the Armenian forces voluntarily. In the long run consequently Azer government failed at the eleventh hour to counter the Armenian threats and lost more than 20% of its territory.¹⁷ Armenian forces controlled the geo-strategic, geo-economic and human capital forces of Azeri territory including Karabakh. This situation led to a Refugee Crisis in Azerbaijan and approximately more than 300,000 refugees arrived Azerbaijan from Armenia in 1998 to on wards.¹⁸ In the same as followed, approximately 600,000 to 8000,000 people were dislocated and displaced in Karabakh in Azerbaijan, the government failed to provide shelter to 1,000,000 to 1,200,000 people.¹⁹ In this massive refugee flow, the international community did not support Azerbaijan and most of the refugees have to live their lives without basic need of life. The international human rights organizations did not made possible arrangements to provide humanitarian assistance to displaced and missed Azeris.

In 1993, United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees planned to provide humanitarian assistance to Azerbaijan and allocated financial aid to the displaced persons. The aid was conditional only to those refugees who crossed the international border from Armenia to Azerbaijan.²⁰

Russia and Karabakh Conflict:

On tacking about the dilemma of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, one should put up concentration on those factors which are obstacles in the path of solving it. The interests of Russia and Turkey are closely associated with the unresolved issue.²¹ It is observed that Russia and Turkey both parties have open favoritism diplomatically and forensically. Russian government advocated to Armenia and Turkey always supported to the stance of the Azerbaijan government on this conflict. Second, the Georgian country has given assurance to the other neighboring states that unless its stance in accepted on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the security situation of the region would remain at stake. Third, the Central Asian Republics, having more Russian influence over internal and external matters do not prefer to bypass it on this issue.²² Fourth, central Asian states are independent politically but not on economic front. For boosting up the internal and external economic infrastructure, these states need of the U.S. capitalist economy, advanced technology and diplomatic support of the Moscow government. That is why, the regional neighboring central Asian States prefer to keep themselves aloof from the conflict. Finally, it is argued that Azerbaijan's natural gas resources attract the multinational oil and gas companies, by major global countries. The major oil and gas west companies have maximum economic share in almost all those gas pipelines, crossed to Georgia/Turkey and then Azerbaijan to European countries. From Azerbaijan's perspective, these pipelines would bring economic and strategic benefits whereas the Armenian government treats to those projects as the economic and strategic involution within the regional politic.²³

One important aspect which cannot be ignored is the involvement of the Moscow and Tehran government. The political experts argued if peace and stability take place in the region, the influence of the Moscow and Tehran governments would be minimized, which are already excluded from the major economic projects.²⁴ On the one side, the both government are involved to introduce peace and stability in the region but not at the expense of their marginalized role in the region. Russia and Iran both advocated to Armenia to counterbalance the alliance of Turkey with Azerbaijan, as referred to NATO.

America and Karabakh Linkage:

As soon as Soviet Union was dissolved, the Washington think tank began to concentrate on two aspects, evolved after Soviet disintegration e.g. future of Russia in the next future and control over massive stockpile of the nuclear weapons. Washington consciously focused states e.g. Ukraine and Kazakhstan in possession of the nuclear weapons. It is also notable feature that with the end of the cold war, Washington beeped to the region when Soviet federation disintegrated and the new independent states emerged on the world asked, having oil and gas natural resources on the one side and along with weak political and economic infrastructure and ethnic issues. Shortly after, it is observed that U.S officials observed the outlook features of the Russian sphere of influence in the context of Moscow-Chechnia conflict the political scientist observed that Moscow first of all preferred to be engaged with the former Soviet republics on economic and security fronts. Second, the Moscow officials continued its diplomatic efforts to retain the second super power image in the regional politics. Third, Moscow began to realize a new competition with china on the issue of sphere of influence within the region. As contrary to Moscow, Washington foreign policy towards the region can be categorically studied in to four phases.²⁵ In the first phase, started as dated back to the Soviet disintegration, Washington has no clear policy towards the region. In this phase, Moscow has totally remained as the center of approach in the region. In the second phase, although the multinational oil companies began to concentrate to formulate a time oriented policy towards the regions yet the Washington did not prefer to challenge the hegemonic status of Moscow in the region. In the third phase (1996-1997), Washington planned to move towards the region as it realized that the region has the geo-strategic and geo-economic interests for Washington decided fully to be present in the region to dominate the oil and gas resources of the region entirely as 9/11 event that happened, challenged Washington's global hegemonic status in world politics. To conclude U.S. policy towards the region in all these phases classified on the three modest policy goals.²⁶ First, Washington promised to support all these NIS states on trade, security and political fronts to help them from getting rid of the Russian and the Iranian influence. Second, the U.S. government officials advocated to support the liberal and secular democratize regimes in these NIS states for this point, Washington administration condemned to the orthodox fundamental Islamic militant parties in these newly independent states on one side and planned to work out on the process of democratization in the region. Third, Washington finally advocated those multinational oil and gas companies, to explore the Caspian Sea Region and formulated a policy to by pass Iran and Russia in the context of the oil and gas pipeline routes finally, U.S. planned to leave no room to be left for Russia, China and Iran in the region. Moscow changed its attitude towards china after 9/11 event in the region. In the same letter of spirit, China, instead of following the confrontation policy,

preferred to treat NIS states and Moscow according to the new changing parameters of the regional and global politics.²⁷

The 9/11 attacks challenged the global hegemonic position of Washington and it gave the lenience to the Bush Administration to show its physical presence in Afghanistan. Two factors were important, led to be present in the region besides the issues of war against terrorism. The political analysis argued that American availed this opportunity due to the ingenerating geo-strategic and geo-economic benefits in the context of Caspian oil. Caspian sea is a complex region and every Central Asian states including Iran, Turkey and Russia had demanded their respective share in the Caspian oil. U.S, although, has enough oil resources because of its sphere of influence in the Gulf and Middle East Countries yet the situation now for America was becoming critical due to two factors.²⁸ First, Saudi Arab, having close ties with Washington, was insisting on raising the oil prices. Second, Washington was feeling that due to its continuous diplomatic military and economic support to Israel, the militant Islamic groups in Saudi Arab had criticized the Saudi political leadership and further damaged to the American interests in Saudi Arabia. Washington planed to reduce the dependency on Saudi oil in future. The American National Energy Commission gave its new policy features. The National Energy Commission states,

“American needs to strengthen its trade alliance, to dialogue with the major oil produces and further to work out on various energy plans with greater oil production in Western Hemisphere, Africa, Including Caspian Sea oil resources.”²⁹

Table 1. Official Positions (intractability chart):

—————▶ - perceived support, int-I – international, Arm. – Armenian

Interested in Cooperation and peaceful resolution	US EU NATO	OSCE local and int-I NGOs	France Russia Iran
[Indifferent or neutral	↓ BP & Co., Georgia		↓
Non-interested in cooperation and peaceful resolution	Azeri government Azeri IDP/refugees Azri Public Azeri business Azeri intellectuals Turkey		Nagorno-Karabakh Armenian government Arm. Refugees Arm. Diaspora Arm. Public Arm. Business Arm. Intellectuals

Sources: www.monitor.upeace.org/documents/intractalivility.pdf

Table 2: Interests (resolution chart):

Interested in cooperation and peaceful resolution (give peace a chance)	US, EU, NATO, NGOs, BP & CO., Georgia, Majority of refugees and IDPs	
Have economic and security interest, but political and psychological obstacles in cooperation and peaceful resolution	Turkey Armenian gov-t, Arm. Public, Arm. Business Azeri gov-t, Azri Public, Azeri business	
Indifferent	France	
Non-interested in cooperation and peaceful resolution (give war a chance)	Azeri intellectuals (mainstream)	Nagorno-Karabakh Arm. Diaspora Arm. Intellectuals (mainstream) Russia Iran

Sources: www.monitor.upeace.org/documents/intractalivility.pdf

Second, geo-political significance of the Central Asian States attract Washington in the context of its War against Terrorism. For this objective, Azerbaijan has willingly given the permission to Washington to use its air space and navy has for the purpose of attacking Afghanistan³⁰ where Al-Quaida leadership was present. Azerbaijan was important for Bush Administration on two fronts e.g. strategic and economic perspective. Azerbaijan

was the suitable located placed Central Asian States which can provide access to Washington not only for Afghanistan but also for Caspian Sea. For this objective, Washington removed the Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act in January 2002.³¹ State Department's view of section 907 as follows:

“As Secretary Albright and Deputy Secretary Talbott have testified before Congress, Section 907 remains a serious obstacle to our diplomacy in Azerbaijan.... It is understandable that 907 is seen by some to raise doubts about U.S. neutrality vis-à-vis Azerbaijan and Armenia in negotiations on Nagorno-Karabakh. We do not believe that 907 has advanced the objective its supporters intended when it was passed in 1992. To be blunt, it has done nothing to bring us closer to a lasting peace to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Politically, section 907 and related provisions are an impediment to our making progress on Nagorno-Karabakh, to our ability to work effectively with Azerbaijan on the east-west Eurasian transport corridor, to advancing in Azerbaijan the same reforms we have supported in other NIS countries, and to the ability of U.S. firms to do business in Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani Government is strongly pro-U.S. It is being helpful to us on Caspian energy questions, on non-proliferation, on Iranian terrorism – and on Nagorno-Karabakh. Section 907 has limited and will continue to limit the expansion of U.S.-Azerbaijani relations – to no useful purpose”.

Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act as followed looking back to history, Washington has clearly defined its policy features in 1998 about Caucasus and Central Asia. These features are respectively as followed. First, Washington intended its plan to introduce the democratization process and to revamping the economic institutions of the Central Asian States according to the advanced capitalist market economy. Secondly, Washington advanced to the Central Asian States on economic front by introducing the idea of energy development and the creation of and East-West Energy Transport Corridor.³² Finally, Washington argued that security situation in Central Asian States must be improved to meet the future global challenges on economic front by accomplishing the Energy

Transport Corridor Successfully. Infact America was interested to reduce the dependency of the new CIS states over Russia and china.

Azerbaijan – Washington Linkage:

Azerbaijan, as 9/11 event happened, intentionally planed to join the American led coalition forces against War On Terrorism by giving complete assurance to the Washington Administration regarding naval and military bases. Although, Azerbaijan provided its complete support to the Washington yet it failed to receive any supporting statement from American State Department on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.³³ In the time-line period phase, Azerbaijan continuously invested large oil revenue to rebuild its army that in due time could be able to retake by force if negotiations failed. On the other hand, although Washington uplifted the section 907 of the Freedom Support Act yet it showed no intensive involvement in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.³⁴

In November 1999, American Congress passed Silk Road Strategy Act, clearly defined the Washington foreign policy for the Caucasus and Central Asia.

“To assist in the development of infrastructure necessary for communications, transportation, education health, and energy on a East-West Asia in order to build strong international Relations and Commerce between those countries and the stable, democratic and market oriented of the Euro-Atlantic Community and to support United State business interests and investments in the Region” (Silk Road Strategy Act 1999).³⁵

In order to make arrangements, Washington promoted to construct a 17500 Km pipeline across route from Baku to the Turkish post of Ceyhan on East Mediterranean Coast, the pipe line route called Baku-Tiblisi-Ceyhan oil Pipeline (BTC oil Pipeline).³⁶

To counter the American strategy, Moscow reshaped its foreign policy parameters towards, Central Asian States. For Moscow strategic makers, the main challenge for them was not to build Armenian infrastructure but it was asked how Azerbaijan can be brought in line in accordance to the Russian interests. For this objective, Moscow assisted to America militarily and financially, including military training and diplomatic supports. Behind this objective, Russia was not interested to disturb the balance of the power in region but it indirectly decided to check on Azerbaijan’s willingness to keep aloof

itself from Russian sphere of influence. It was the strategy of Moscow government to have dominant influence over both Armenia and Azerbaijan and that can be possible if Nagorno-Karabakh conflict remains as paramount disputed issue.³⁷

Armenia - Azerbaijan Geo-Strategic Position:

Armenia, since its independence, faces two important challenges e.g. security and economic leverage. On security front, Armenia has deep confrontation with Azerbaijan on Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Second, from manpower and military point of view, Armenia has weak position unlike Azerbaijan. In case, war is launched between both states, the balance of power would be in favor of Azerbaijan. Third, in the case of war situation between Azerbaijan and Armenia, the latter state has to face the economic blockade effectively due to its closed eastern and western borders. Georgia, located in North, is facing continuous internal security crisis situation and through Georgia's borders, it is not possible for Armenia to continue its economic activities.³⁸ Fourth, Armenia has no in itself sufficient economic and trading resources and furthermore it may be the industrial output. Fifth, Armenia showed its inclination toward Iran for developing close economic and strategic relations. On the other hand, although Iranian response towards Armenia was positive and effective yet the Tehran government decided to have good relations with Armenia but not at the expense of the Azerbaijan's relations. Iranian government did not show its involvement in Nagorno-Karabakh conflict because it feared that Azerbaijan government nationalist political leadership had irredentist ambitions as regarding about the large number of Azeri's presence in North Iran. That's why, Iranian government's national interests do not match with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Iranian strategic makers perceived the idea that as compared to Azerbaijan, if Armenian force is materialized and assisted, it would be difficult to resolve the conflict by force for the Armenian Government. So, instead of showing any kind of involvement, Iranian government opened option card on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The geo-strategic analysis argued that on contrary to Azerbaijan, Armenia has less geo-strategic importance.³⁹

Russia - Azerbaijan Relations:

Armenia has less support from Moscow, what Azerbaijan received on economic and security fronts. Vladimir Putin Administration in Moscow subsequently signed several trading treaties with Azerbaijan and further passed a memorandum to construct North-South Transport Corridor. In 2002, after a long period, despite of strong Russian opposition, Moscow government agreed to stretch out a demarcation line between Russia and Azerbaijan in the Caspian Sea, where oilfields are located.⁴⁰ Although,

Russian political leadership established strong economic and strategic relations with Azerbaijan yet it did not advocated to Azeri government on the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In 1994, the Azeri Administration in Baku invited to Russian oil company, "Lukoil" to give the 10% sharing in oil pipeline projects.⁴¹ The political analyst argued that in the beginning of the 1990s, Azerbaijan tilted towards America for gaining diplomatic support on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. At the same time, the relations between Moscow and Baku become restrained despite signing various economic, trading and technological based agreements, signed between Azerbaijan and Washington, latter did not support former on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As prior to America, the Azerbaijan government feared to Russian influence in the region so it decided to move towards Moscow. It is argued that Russia was in this respects most important factor. Baku government analyzed the whole situation and perceived an idea if it could get Moscow's diplomatic support on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, then a favorable resolution to the conflict might possibly reached in favor of Azerbaijan.⁴² On the other hand, Moscow government decided to formulate the balanced power structure foreign policy between Azerbaijan and Armenia as regarding about Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In November 2003, Vladimir Putin Administration planed to modernize the Armenian military by expanding training programs and weapons transfers. Obviously, the Moscow government did not change the stance on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and stated, whatever the Moscow developed the strategic agreements with Armenia but its stance on Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was not in favor or against. Obviously, Moscow statement led Armenia to look itself into a hurting stalemate of neither peace nor war.⁴³

Nagorno-Karabakh Peace Process: Analysis of Failure and Recommendation:

The problem is not in the inability of the involved parties or mediators to find out the possible ground based appropriate solution. The political observers argued that the secret of the failure regarding the conflict lies in the interests of international community and prevailing mistrust environment between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The negotiators argued that Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has no persistence solution on the long term basis. Unless, both respective governments e.g Azerbaijan and Armenia agree to sign an agreement by adopting the win-win policy. For achieving this target, the most important thing is to address the core issues of the conflict instead of discussing the sideline issues. The political and strategic observes argued that the conflict issue needs adopting the traditional approach. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is examined as an important incentive for Russia and Iran.

“But for Iranian and Russian to be reduced and incentives to be created for them to act according to their official positions and support the peace process, it is suggested that focus should not be on Russia and Iran but on the source of their influence”⁴⁴

Their influence source is the established alliance with Armenia because of the fear of Azerbaijan and Turkey and perceived need to be considered most essential to counterbalance their threat. If the Armenian, objectives interests are successfully achieved and in the long run it gets to develop a regional integration with Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia, it means the Armenia dependency level on Russia and Iran would be reduced to great extent.⁴⁵ Thus, both states Russia and Iran would lose their present influential position over the conflict, which led to further be able to distort or damage their respective national interests. Furthermore, the situation would become more critical for them in future if the reconciliation between Armenia and Turkey happens and threat perception concept is removed between both states. Reconciliation between Armenia and Azerbaijan looks never possible. In 2000, American State Department made possible diplomatic efforts to remove the mistrust environment between both by establishing the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Committee (TARC).⁴⁶ Negotiations for finding out reconciliations were continued for four years but all activities became fruitless and the plan to develop a joint business and civil societies, circles between the both states. The Turkish scholars began to use the word “Genocide”⁴⁷ to describe the 1915 Tragedy, a joint committee made a request to define the word ‘Genocide’, potentially to satisfy to both sides. The International Center for Transitional & Justice stated, “the term ‘Genocide’ can be applied to the events but no legal, financial or territorial claims could arise as a result of it.”⁴⁸ It is also observed that in the context of 1915 Tragedy, the traditional and radical intellectual from both sides had influence and this school of thoughts refused to reconcile the conflict. The TARC committees suggested that both governments should encourage to the moderate intellectuals to remove the grave history.⁴⁹ Next, the role of the Washington and Moscow should be positive, pragmatic and meaningful instead of exploiting the conflict for getting the domination over the oil and gas resources of Azerbaijan and Armenia. Russian and American oil companies are involved intensively in competition to dominate the region. It is not strategy and economically possible for the American Administration to leave the oil and gas construction projects for the Russian and Chinese companies including European Community. America interested to have the physical presence in and around the Caspian Sea. It is also observed.

“The exclusion of Russia’s North Caucasian regions from the prospects of regional co-operation would lead to an economic crisis near the Northern boundaries of the South Caucasus and could undermine the process of stabilizing the region.”⁵⁰

Conclusion:

Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has no short term solution and hopes for the final solution of the conflict could come true if the issues are examined on ground realities. The overall assessment of the conflict briefly reflects the original parameters of the present political, economic and strategic scenario of the regional politics particularly. Democratization process, ethnic identical factors in and across the region, Armenia-Turkey reconciliation failures, regional economic integration and the external interference within the regional politics are the prerequisites to resolve the conflict. The dialogues like Minsk Group Negotiations, and TARC should be considered as the positive efforts to resolve the issues that the question is why the negotiation failed? Its reality should be accepted that the participated negotiators always did efforts to find out short term peace process instead of pursuing the everlasting peaceful solution. The external interference and the radical minded intellectuals and politicians presence in Azerbaijan and Armenia and inducing Turkey are the two important factors, led to evolve the mistrust environment within the region. Finally, it is politically calculated that the Turkish, Armenian and Azerbaijan government respectively have knowledge that in the peaceful and co-operative environment, the benefits on the political strategic and economic fronts would be meaningful and ongoing integration within the region. That’s why the moderate intellectuals and politicians have inclination to move towards the better relations by adopting the backdoor channels policy to remove the mistrust factors, led to hamper the dialogue between the civilian governments among the Azerbaijan -Armenia-Turkish. The defense experts argued that in the peaceful environment, the Azerbaijan government would receive maximum benefits on military front because in a matter of few minutes, the Armenia S-300 missiles can reach Baku and destroy Azerbaijan energy resources led to further economic collapse within state. Next, if the tense environment between Azerbaijan -Armenia become reduce, obviously, the role of the Azerbaijan would become more important because its geo-strategic and geo-economic location, being a bridge role between Turkey and Central Asian States, further the prospects of NATO and European integration would become more realistic. The analysis who examined Nagorno-Karabakh conflict from strategic and economic integration perspective, said that ‘win-win situation’ can be helpful to resolve the issue. For it means, the economic integration concept within the region should be considered as a means to introduce a lasting peaceful resolution.

The economic interdependency and regional integration will undermine the status of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

After taking a brief analysis of the conflict, it is observed that the international organizations and major powers have treated to this conflict as internal matter of Azerbaijan and Armenia. Not a single international state actor has discussed the root causes of the conflict. Although the negotiations made possible in Minsk Group yet the participants have given preference to own strategic and economic benefits instead of resolving the conflict on the long term basis. The undeclared aggression of Azerbaijan against Armenia was never noticed by the international organizations. The aggression has further led cause of massive flow of refugees on both sides, hampered to damage the economic, political and social infrastructure of the both states. The International Community and the international law organizations have never noticed the policies of ethnic cleansing and use of force for acquisition of territory. The failure of the international community is not correctly evaluated either the nature of the conflict is not examined properly or it does not want to take conflict seriously. It seems that the nature of the conflict as internal rather was international; it is politically observed that it cannot be simply understood as incompetence or irresponsibility of international community at diplomatic level but it is the reality that the conflict has served interest of important forces.

Russian Strategy:

1. To establish sphere of influence in term of 'near abroad'
2. To play a leading role in CIS for restoring the traditional image in regional politics.
3. To formulate foreign policy by the Russian policy makers on basis of 'divide at imperia'.

Washington Plan:

1. To establish check and balance policy in Central Asia's Region to marginalize the Chinese and Russian influence in the region and across the region.
2. As prior to Senior Bush Administration and Bill Clinton Administration, George Walker Bush (J) Administration, dominated by the oil companies' stake holders, pressurized the American foreign policy in the Caucasus instead of partnership with Russia.
3. To establish the NATO forces influence in the region.

Svante .E. Cornell argued, that by taking a strategically brief analysis of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, inspite of admitting the reality of the conflict, the international community intentionally neglect it.

References:

1. Charles van der Leeuw, "Azerbaijan: A quest for identity: a short story", Khojaly Tragedy: an International View, 13th Anniversary of London – Azerbaijan Society and Angl-Azerbaijani Youth, (Baku – Azerbaijan, 2007), pp:51-70.
2. Svante E. Comell, *Undeclared War: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Reconsidered*, Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, Vol. XX, No. 4, Summer 1997, pp:100-150.
3. Ibid.
4. Robert Cullen. *A Reporter at Large*. The New York Magazine, 15 April, 1991.
5. Op.cit., Charles van der Leeuw
6. Ibid.
7. Gafar Chakhmagly, *Resettlement of Armenians: A look at the problem of their number during resettlement and some other issues*, Today & Tomorrow Azerbaijan in Focus, No.7 (07), December, 2007, pp:22-24.
8. Op.cit., Charles van der Leeuw
9. www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rs.html.
10. Ibid.
11. Nolyain Igor, *Moscow's Initiation of the Azeri-Armenian Conflict*, Central Asia Survey, Vol. 4, No. 13, 1994, pp:70-75.
12. Ibid.
13. Ibid.
14. Ginat Rami and Vaserman Arise, *National, Territorial or Religious Conflict? The Case of Nagano-Karabakh* Central Asian Survey, Vol. 4, 1994, pp;200-240.
15. Op.cit., Svante E. Comell
16. www.HumanRightsWatch/Helsinki,Azerbaijan,presrelease//.
17. Op.cit., Charles van der Leeuw
18. Op.cit., www.cia.gov/cia/publications/factbook/geos/rs.html
19. Op.cit., Svante E. Comell,
20. Ibid.
21. Op.cit., Charles van der Leeuw

22. Alieve Salik, *Oil and Independence*, Paper Presented at the International Conference on the Caucasus and Central Asia, Bilkent University, Ankara, May 1995.
23. Ibid.
24. Ibid.
25. Op.cit., Charles van der Leeuw
26. Christopher Walker, *The American Presence in Mountainous Karabakh*, London, UCL Press Publication, 1996, p.109.
27. www.caei.com.ar/
28. Abdul Hafeez Khan, *Central Asia: Center of New Great Game*, The Dialogue, Vol. 1 No. 4.
29. Phillip Gamaghelyan, *Intractability of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: A Myth or Reality?* www.monitor.upeace.org/documents/intractability.pdf.
30. www.energy.gov.engine/doi/fields/dynamic/195200312758_national_energy-policy.
31. Ahmad Rashid, *The Resurgence of Central Asia: Islam or Nationalism*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, PP 209-211.
32. Stephen Sestanovich, Ambassador-at Large and Special Advisor to the Secretary of State for the New Independent States, Statement before the House of International Relations Committee, Washington DC, 30 April 1998.
33. Paul Goble, *From Myths to Maps: American Interests in the Countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus*," In Caspian Crossroads, Vol. 3, No 1, Summer 1997.
34. Ibid
35. Ibid
36. www.caei.com,ar.org.
37. www.BTCOILPIPELINE.polities.central Asia /Congress.
38. www.usip.org/pubs/peaceworks/pwks 25/pwks25.html.
39. Moradian. M. and D. Druckman. *Hurting Stalemate or Mediation? The Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh*, Journal of Peace Research, Vol. 36, No 6. pp:709 - 711.
40. Ibid

41. Op.cit., Paul Goble,
42. ibid
43. www.cacianalust.org/view_article.php?articleid=1948
44. Op.cit., Paul Goble,
45. Patricia Carley, *Nagorno-Karabakh: Searching for a Solution*, United States Institute of Peace Roundtable Report, December 1998. www.usip.org/pubs/peacewroks/pwks25/pwoks25.html.
46. Ibid
47. Op.cit., Abdul Hafeez Khan
48. Ibid
49. Ibid
50. Ibid
51. Op.cit., Paul Goble,