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**Role of International Actors in the Azerbaijan-Armenia Conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh**

Mumtaz Hussain,<sup>1</sup> Zubair Hussain,<sup>2</sup> & Atif ur Rahman<sup>3</sup>

**Abstract:**

Nagorno-Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan, inhabited mostly by the Armenian-ethnic population. The unresolved territorial dispute between two states, Armenia and Azerbaijan, over the Nagorno-Karabakh region is the most dangerous threat to the security of the South Caucasus and neighboring states. Russia brokered the novel ceasefire agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan unilaterally, excluding the prominent regional actors. As a result, the Armenian masses were outraged, and the territory's legal status remained ambiguous. For decades, the regional confrontation significantly altered geopolitical and geostrategic circumstances and regional and non-regional actors' efforts to reach a comprehensive resolution. In this context, Turkey has a favorable impact on the entire region as a transit energy state, serving as a bridge to the West due to its distinctive location. Without the participation of major regional stakeholders, the frozen conflict can easily be transformed into a new cycle of violence. This research aimed to analyze the role of regional actors in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and explore their geopolitical and geostrategic interests of regional and great powers by using secondary sources of data and seeking a solution to the conflict.

**Keywords:** Azerbaijan, Armenia, South Caucasus, conflict resolution, regional actors, national interest, geostrategic importance

**INTRODUCTION**

The disintegration of the Soviet Union raised many questions, offering both opportunities and challenges to the international community, particularly in Central Asia. On July 12, 2020, an Armenian army attack triggered the conflict, resulting in the destruction of numerous civilians and military forces in both conflicting states. The region's unresolved conflict has resulted in many issues, including shifting ground, insecurity, long-term displacement, mistrust, and opportunity constraints. The July clatters drew significant powers, including the United States, Russia, and the European Union, into the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh (EU). They pleaded with both parties to stop fighting with their arms.

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<sup>1</sup> Assistant Professor, Department of Political Science, Govt. Graduate College, Bhakkar, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: mumtazbk786@gmail.com

<sup>2</sup> Holds M.Phil (Sociology) degree from Riphah International University, Faisalabad, Punjab, Pakistan. Email: smartmindldt@gmail.com

<sup>3</sup> Holds BS (International Relations) degree from Preston University, Islamabad, Pakistan. Email: atifyousafzai334@gmail.com

Furthermore, Turkey strongly endorsed Azerbaijanis. France has a sizable Armenian community, which has requested an immediate ceasefire, while Iran, Russia, and Turkey have deferred their stance on the conflict. Both conflicting states have repeatedly rejected United Nations, and other countries' mediation offers, particularly those from the United States and Russia, to hold dialogues and end the hostilities. Furthermore, in early October, Russia negotiated a ceasefire. France negotiated two other truces in coordination with Russia and the US; however, these ceasefires were broken as fighting continued. Iran is Armenia's most important trading partner, and there is a sizeable Armenian-ethnic population in Iran. In the region, Russia is moving closer to Iran, outpacing the Turkey-Azerbaijan-Georgia alliance.

To deter Turkey, several Russian military units have been stationed on Armenian territory. Both parties are aware of the consequences of ceasefire violations, which affect geostrategic significance such as infrastructure and trade routes and a unique railway connecting Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey. The natural gas pipeline route from the Shah-Deniz stadium to the Turkish-Georgian borderline was 692 kilometers long, stretching from Azerbaijan's bordering Aghstafa and Tovuz. Azerbaijan supplies oil and gas to Georgia and Turkey via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan channel, connecting Tovuz and Aghstafa. The central railway and land routes that connect Russia, Georgia, and other European zones run along the Armenian border and pass through the northern Tovuz region. Previous efforts to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict failed to produce a successful outcome (Nichol, 2012). The critical role of regional actors may secure their interest in resolving the long-standing dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The region's great powers, such as the United States and Russia, wield significant influence and are responsible for resolving the dispute (Carley, 1998). The key actors have a conflict of interest in the disputed area, which is the primary impediment to resolution. The study aims to evaluate the role of regional actors in the disputed region of Nagorno-Karabakh and the geopolitical and geostrategic interests of regional states and great powers. Furthermore, the study used secondary data sources to investigate the factors influencing and contributing to the dispute and recommend a permanent solution.

The study focused on these questions: Is the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict a shared issue between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and would it be resolved bilaterally, particularly in light of the Peace Deal 2020? Which actors and factors are important in resolving Nagorno-territorial Karabakh's conflict? What are the international community's roles and correlation to the issue?

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Since its inception, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been severely impacted by the interests of other states. In contrast, it has drawn the attention of numerous influential external factors in the region. Many significant states and organizations, including Minsk-Group, co-chairs the United States, Russia, France, Turkey, and Iran, have engaged and expressed their interest and regional development in resolving the conflict. Other international organizations, such as the EU, NATO, and numerous other local non-profits, have been involved in the peacebuilding of endless disputes. Russia is a significant player in the security calculus of the Armenian-Azerbaijan disagreement, despite the difficulties in resolving the conflict (Güleç, 2015). However, Moscow is willing to take a

unilateral aim at maintaining regional security. President Putin's policy toward the South Caucasus is more idealistic.

On the other hand, the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) play essential roles in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The OSCE is well-positioned to coordinate and carry out the collective effort to contribute to regional membership, such as field missions, political institutions, and prominent security approaches. Other actors, such as the EU and the UN, have little direct influence on the region's security. They can build more robust collaboration between the OSCE and other members in order to leverage their collective security impact on the security situation in the region. The disputed territory is more important to Turkey and France's national interests than Russia and the United States.

Furthermore, Turkey and Iran are the most important sources for the great powers and other regional authorities in terms of energy communication, security, and geopolitical dominance. Furthermore, the negotiation peace process approach to the contention is severely hampered by the various regional states' different designs, such as the principle of democracy and regional integration (Ong, 2001). Regarding the dispute, there are well-defined values and priorities under the leadership of the EU, international communities, and other nations. The EU, on the other hand, has a critical regional integration policy toward the South Caucasus. Furthermore, the resolution process under the auspices of the OSCE frequently fails due to a low budget and the involvement of fewer international institutions. The international community and world politics do not regard it as more severe than other global conflicts.

The conflict has progressed toward resolution at the international level, but the outcome is unsatisfactory due to the mediators' partial approach. The OSCE, the Mink group of co-chairmen, and their combination appear to be relatively insignificant. The OSCE is deeply engaged in conflict resolution, and it possesses the potential and capability to make a difference. However, its current configuration is incapable of achieving a permanent peaceful solution to the conflict. The United States of America seeks to balance Azerbaijan and Armenia, while France and Russia support Armenia (Minasyan, 2010). The diaspora and political perspective of Armenia are the most influential factors in French support for Armenia. On the other hand, Russia has strong military and political ties with Armenia and is strategically interested in the South Caucasus. The United Nations General Assembly has recognized the disputed territory as an integral part of Azerbaijan and has demanded that Armenian forces withdraw (Hirose & Jasutis, 2014).

In 2008, Russia sought a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia through the 'Moscow Declaration;' however, the critical issue, particularly the region's status quo, was not addressed in the dialogue process. At the same time, peaceful resolution through the OSCE Mink group is similarly unconstrained. The North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) has offered its mediation role to the conflicting parties through its "Partnership for Peace" platform, and the European Union has likewise offered its association through "European Neighbourhood Policy." Aside from the American and British-Georgian Fuel Company, Turkish, Italian, Norwegian, Japanese, and French gasoline corporations and the American and British-Georgian Fuel Company have established oil refineries in Azerbaijan. Turkey plays a limited role in the peace process, which favors Baku in the conflict resolution process of international and regional actors. Turkey has no hostile intentions

and seeks stable relations and a specific region to preserve more energy, such as gas, oil, and accession demands.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The study is exploratory, descriptive, and qualitative. Secondary data sources are used in this type of research to answer in order to meet the research study objectives. In addition, secondary data was gathered from various sources, including e-books, research journals, e-library, magazine reports, seminar and seminar reports, and expert video-recorded interviews. The content material has been subjected to a thematic/content analysis in order to extract a possible vital result of the entire process, including previous literature on conflict phenomena and the role of other actors in a prevailing environment. Primary sources, such as academic and field specialists such as prominent political and security analysts and defense site experts, have been consulted to build destinations by concerned nations and relevant the environment with the current phase. On the other hand, the political aspects are comprehended through qualitative analysis of the environment to determine the role of regional actors.

### **THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK**

There are numerous theoretical perspectives from which the territorial dispute in International relations can be resolved. Various schools of thought in international relations disagree on the substantive causes of states' external behavior and offer different solutions and explanations for the territorial dispute among states. According to the Neorealism school, the distribution of material power among states defines the structure of the international system, influencing how states behave. As a result, the critical assumption draws the line of reasoning, implying that Neorealism is based on anarchy in the international system. According to Waltz, there is no instant harmony in this context because any state may use force at any time, and all forms must constantly be ready to either counter influence with force or pay the cost of weakness (K. N. Waltz, 2010).

The decisive victory and the territory will serve as trophies for the achievement, as realism contends that peace or diplomacy is a temporary solution to any dispute. When it comes to territorial disputes, and conflict is the norm due to the anarchic nature of the international system, each state competes (J. R. Waltz, 1959). States are always eager to balance power with other powers in order to protect their vital national interests from external aggression. However, IR realist theory proposed a typical pattern of behavior, such as states building up their capabilities ' global balancing' or aggregating their strength with other states in alliances 'external balancing' that does not resolve territorial disputes. As a result, any defensive action taken by one side actor to strengthen its hold on disputed territory may be interpreted as offensive by the other.

Disputed territories foster aggressive intentions and an exaggerated perception of threat in areas where states are more likely to engage in armed conflict. Assume that the territorial dispute is resolved through force; in that case, the defeated will respond with strong nationalistic resistance. It will generate persistent territorial dispute dynamics that will last into the next generation, exacerbating the existing security quandaries. According to this theory, the Nagorno-Karabakh territorial dispute is becoming a victim of these factors. However, in light of this theory, Russia's truce was negotiated unilaterally; it is only a temporary solution to the dispute. Furthermore, each state has a vested interest in the region's security, and power politics outnumber regional actors

due to their geoeconomic interests. The goal of the balance of power, according to Neorealism, is to maintain state stability and peace (Choi & Eun, 2018). If Azerbaijan gains control of the region's strategic areas, it can shift the region's power balance. At the same time, neither Russia nor Turkey is concerned about the region's long-term peace. Instead, Russia will continue to be the sole actor; additionally, Moscow will exchange information with all parties. Moscow has justified its role as a mediator in the conflict by demonstrating a significant long-term interest in conflicting states.

### **DISPUTE OVER NAGORNO-KARABAKH: HISTORICAL BACKGROUND**

Following Russia's 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, Azerbaijanis and Armenians clashed over Nagorno-Karabakh and other territories in a brief period of control over the region. Following that, Azerbaijan and Armenia were admitted as constituent republics to the USSR in 1920-1922. The territory of Nagorno-Karabakh was ceded to Soviet-Azerbaijan in 1921 and was formally established and restricted in 1923, despite Armenian-Bolshevik opposition. Nagorno-Karabakh was officially a sovereign constituency (oblast) within Soviet-Azerbaijan until 1991 when the USSR collapsed. According to the 1989 census, the disputed territory is home to approximately 77% Armenians and 22% Azerbaijanis. The Armenian-ethnic population of Nagorno-Karabakh demanded in 1988 that their jurisdiction be transferred to Soviet-Armenia, resulting in a conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

As a result, the Soviet authorities prohibited it; however, the skirmish and subsequent mass mobilization and violent clashes sparked a battle between Nagorno-Karabakh various ethnicities, sponsored by Armenia and Azerbaijan. The conflict began in 1991 when the Soviet government launched counter-moves against Azerbaijan and Armenia's independence movements. Following that, the Armenian ethnicity declared the liberation of Nagorno-Karabakh from Azerbaijan; in response, Azerbaijan revoked the autonomous status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Following the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Armenian and Azerbaijani armed forces engaged in direct combat, suffering several significant defeats. Both states signed a ceasefire truce in May 1994, leaving control of Nagorno-Karabakh and several adjoining territories, which account for approximately 14 percent of Azerbaijan's total land area. According to the Observers, nearly 20,000 people were killed in the battle, and more than 1 million people were forced to relocate. An estimated 500,000 IDPs were Azerbaijani-ethnicity from the surrounding area of Nagorno-Karabakh and the region itself, with approximately 185,000 Azerbaijanis from Armenia and 350,000 Armenians from Azerbaijan having been displaced. In 1993, the United Nations (UN) Security Council (UNSC) agreed to four resolutions regarding the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh. The primary goals of the resolutions were to call for the cessation of hostilities, the reintegration of Azerbaijan's territory, and the disarmament of the standing army in order to gain territory. Furthermore, the resolution called for the withdrawal of forces from Azerbaijan's recently occupied zones (Welt & Bowen, 2021). On the other hand, Turkey warned the Yerevan government in 1992 that if Armenia did not withdraw from Nagorno-Karabakh and declare solidarity with Turks' brethren Azerbaijan, Ankara would revoke its land routes.

Meanwhile, Azerbaijan's political destabilization has been exacerbated by an internal faction schism. Armenia's political and economic situation deteriorated due to the persistent Azerbaijani obstruction; even the following year, Armenia came under direct attack by Azerbaijani shelling. The

Council of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) met in Helsinki in 1992 to consider its involvement in the conflict. The CSCE Council requested that the Chairman-In-Office convene a session on Nagorno-Karabakh under the auspices of the CSCE as soon as possible to provide a partial platform for the negotiation process toward a peaceful resolution of the crisis based on principles such as commitments and provisions. The Minsk Group, which included the United States, Russia, Germany, France, Italy, the Czech Republic, Sweden, Belarus, Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, attended the conference. From 1992 to the present, numerous states have tried their initiatives within or outside the collective confines of the Minsk Group; however, one party has consistently rejected the suggestions. In 1996, a summit known as the "Lisbon Summit" was held, coordinated by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE, in the past CSCE). Azerbaijan was prosperous in embedding three principles that govern the status of Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia was the only country that rejected the principles at the same time. In contrast, all Minsk Group members have endorsed these principles.

The following principles are here: To strengthen the territorial integrity of both states, Armenia and Azerbaijan; The contested region has been characterized in an arrangement dependent on self-assurance, presenting Nagorno-Karabakh's most extreme self-rule status inside Azerbaijan, and; Provision of assured security to Nagorno-Karabakh and its entire population, including mutual obligation to safeguard all the parties' compliance with the settlement requirements.

As a result, Armenia raised concerns about the principle of regional integrity and was rejected (Raptis, 1998). On November 9, 1998, the co-chairs' group proposed the third proposal, which Azerbaijan rejected as senseless and artificial without any consideration. The proposal's concept was based on a common state, with Azerbaijan exercising loose federalism over the disputed region. On April 26, 1999, Washington began direct negotiations between Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents in Washington DC, as approved by the OSCE Minsk Group. All efforts, however, have been futile in resolving the conflict indefinitely. Both states' foreign ministers met eleven times in 2004-2005 to discuss the new version of the peace strategy. The Minsk Group announced a set of doctrines to guide negotiations at the OSCE Ministerial Council in November 2007 in Madrid. The guidelines were known as the "Madrid Principle," which served as a formula around which thorough negotiations could occur. The opposing parties, on the other hand, see these doctrines through their own lenses. Azerbaijan emphasizes the territorial integrity of sovereign states, whereas Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh emphasize the rule of self-determination. As a result, Armenia was eager for Nagorno-Karabakh residents to have the right to vote, whereas Azerbaijan preferred that the entire Azerbaijani population actively engage in the referendum (Askerov, 2020). The peace process was at a standstill between 2010 and 2013, with an increasing number of ceasefire violations and fewer summits between the government and the Minsk Group. However, beginning in 2013, there was a noticeable increase in the Minsk Group's activities. Numerous conferences were held, and new announcements were made, while OSCE Chair Leonid Kozhara visited Baku and Yerevan to ensure the Minsk Group's work effectiveness. Furthermore, the United States has appointed a new Co-Chairperson who is reasonably active in disseminating information on Twitter and has presented a letter from Obama to both governments indicating a more dynamic United States contribution (Klever, 2013).

### **Russia's Efforts and Interest in the Conflict Resolution**

Russia has numerous geostrategic and geopolitical interests in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, such as Azerbaijan, one of Russia's largest purchasers of Russian weapons. The final treaty was signed in 2013, involving 4 billion US dollars. Furthermore, both countries work together on the gas and oil markets, and a contract was signed in August 2013. Russia and Azerbaijan's relations became strained as ties between the two countries grew closer, while Armenia relied entirely on Russian gas and oil. In addition, Russia's transportation, telecommunications, banking, and energy sectors are all important economic sectors. Furthermore, Russia has much more objectives than economic interests, which benefit from non-resolution due to Russia's current circumstances having a more significant influence.

Nonetheless, the conflict will never be resolved; instead, it will only exacerbate rivalry. Russians are eager to defuse the confrontation by preventing countries from joining the West's camp. Despite all the frozen regional conflicts in the former Soviet republics, Moscow's influence is limited, particularly in the South Caucasus. The indigenous population, on the other hand, has a more significant stake in the region. Within the CIS and Caspian regions, Russia and Azerbaijan have significant trade volumes. In addition, after Turkey and Italy, Azerbaijan is Russia's third-largest international trading partner.

Regarding Azerbaijan's vast energy holdings, Russian authorities are passive. In April 2016, there appeared to be a significant intensification between Azerbaijan and Armenia, with Russia playing a vital role in the context of Armenia's disregard (Klever, 2013). Under Russian leadership, the peace dialogues took place, and a ceasefire truce was reached. On the other hand, Iran was the first country to join the diplomatic triangle with Azerbaijan and Russia. As a result, the Russians attempted two ceasefire agreements, both of which failed. The Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) requires Moscow to use military force if Armenian territory, not Nagorno-Karabakh, is attacked. Despite Russia and Armenia's deep ties, Russia surprisingly observed the peaceful anti-corruption Velvet Revolution in Armenia in 2018, moving closer to Azerbaijan. Russia deliberately delayed its response, unsurprisingly motivated by a desire to punish revolution leader Nikol Pashinyan (Müller & Albert, 2021). The current situation suggests that Putin is warier than both states. The primary issue in this context is that all great powers, not just Russia, have been diverted; Russia's brokered ceasefire is not the only one that has failed.

The existing diplomatic mechanism is the most significant shortcoming in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Furthermore, the (OSCE) Minsk Group, co-chaired, and its primary members such as Russia, the United States, and France are out of date. The maintenance of state stability and peace requires a balance of power. According to international relations experts, it is the most appropriate diplomatic and strategic technique. If Azerbaijan gains control of the region's strategic areas, the balance of power in the disputed region may shift. At the same time, neither Russia nor Turkey is interested in the region's perpetual peace. Instead, Russia will eventually remain the sole actor, exchanging messages with all parties (Asgarov, 2020). According to Turkish President Erdogan, Moscow and Ankara can work together to solve the current problem; regardless of the present resentments, Russia and Turkey will work hard to divert Armenia-attention Azerbaijan's away from the West. Concurrently, the difficult Moscow-Ankara race will reveal beyond the South Caucasus region.

### **Turkey's Efforts and Interest in the Conflict Resolution**

Turkey emphasized the importance of presenting itself as a natural mediator in order to relieve conflict parties and achieve a peaceful resolution. However, with Russian assistance, Armenian armies massacred the civilian population of Azerbaijan's Khojaly town on February 26. In one of the war's most horrific moments, large demonstrations were organized in Turkey, with thousands of people favoring military intervention to support Azerbaijan. The conflict became a domestic issue in Turkey, with politicians, opposition parties, the Turkish parliament, and private citizens criticizing government policy and putting pressure on officials to support their Turkic brethren (Abilov, 1997). Due to the solid pro-Azerbaijani public opinion, the Turkish government could not take a neutral stance in this context. As a result, it was difficult for the government to ignore public demands, resulting in a shift in Armenian and Nagorno-Karabakh policy favoring Azerbaijan. While President Turgut Ozal publicly warned Armenia on numerous occasions, Armenia must accept responsibility for its aggressive behavior. Azerbaijan had previously expressed concern that the rapprochement would relieve Armenia of the need to negotiate over Nagorno-Karabakh. According to the Spokesperson for Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs, this issue is about Azerbaijan's national interests. Ankara should consider opening Turkey's Armenian borders before resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in Azerbaijan's national interest. The tightening of relations between Ankara and Baku reflects Azerbaijan's dissatisfaction with the Minsk Group (Pashayeva, 2009). Turkey's intervention in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has undeniably added a new dimension to the competition.

On the other hand, Ankara was eager to establish stability platforms in the South Caucasus between 2000 and 2008. The current consequences of Turkey's overall militarization of foreign policy are now being felt in this region. However, Europe sees Turkey as a threatening partner rather than a problematic one. As a result, following the signing of the Protocols, Turkey became deeply engaged in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In this context, Prime Minister Erdogan discussed the situation in Sochi with his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin, who stated that Russia must take more responsibility in resolving the conflict because both regional states have obligations in the region (Isachenko, 2020).

On December 21, the Azerbaijani Parliament ratified the Agreement on Strategic Partnership and Mutual Support between Turkey and Azerbaijan; it is valid until 2020, with the option of extending it for another ten years if both parties are willing. This was at its peak between 2005 and 2009. Turkey played a significant role in the region by reestablishing soft power, emphasizing "minimizing tension with neighbors" as one of its foreign policy pillars. The Republic of Azerbaijan is a crucial ally of Turkey. It has worked hard to maintain its regional and trans-regional actors through its intervention in the Nagorno-Karabakh crisis (Askerov, 2020).

In contrast, Turkey is always eager to end the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and support Azerbaijan through ethnic and linguistic integration and Pan-Turkism determination. On the other hand, Turkey seeks to limit Russia's and Iran's influence in the region and participate in Azerbaijan's oil production and transportation through Turkish territory. Ankara hopes to reserve a seat at the negotiating table for future processes involving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Turkey has consistently expressed a desire to deal with Russia in the South Caucasus region, preferably without the involvement of Western actors. However, due to the complexities of Turkish-Armenian relations, there is a risk that Armenia and Turkey will become the eventual adversaries in this



conflict rather than Azerbaijan and Armenia. Turkey is an emerging middle power in this context, and its foreign policy has liberated it from unilateralism and one-way commitment. It will use fluidity as a deciding factor in its foreign policy structure to profit Nagorno-Karabakh. Because geostrategic and geopolitical factors emerge gradually over time, they have a long-term impact (either positive or negative) (نوازنی & خواه وطن, 2020).

### **2020 Peace Deal between Azerbaijan and Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh**

Three state leaders backed the November 2020 truce ceasefire, which included a nine-point plan that concluded 44 days of fighting and claimed more than 5000 lives had been lost. As a result of the novel ceasefire treaty, protesters stormed the parliament, beating the speaker and reportedly looting the prime minister's office. The agreement was signed by three heads of state: President Vladimir Putin of Russia, President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan, and Armenia's Prime Minister. The peace agreement legitimizes Azerbaijan's control over areas of Nagorno-Karabakh occupied by Armenia during the conflict (McParland, 2021). Concurrently, Armenia has agreed to withdraw its forces from several adjacent areas over the next few weeks. Nagorno-territory Karabakh's is internationally recognized as an integral part of Azerbaijan, which consolidates Nagorno-Karabakh itself, for example, the region of the former independent area of disputed territory within the former USSR controlled Azerbaijan, and seven districts incorporating Nagorno-Karabakh: Lachin, Kalbajar, Jabrayil, Qubadli, Zangilan, Agdam, Fuzuli. The state of affairs has changed as a result of the new course of action. Initially, Azerbaijan regained control of all Nagorno-Karabakh-adjacent districts. This reconciles Azerbaijan's capture of regions during the conflict, while Armenia detained three zones during the détente period. Armenia has returned to Azerbaijan divisions such as Agdam territory on November 20, 2020, and Kalbajar territory on November 25, 2020. (The central cut-off time was loosened by ten days). As a result, on December 1, 2020, the Lachin area was offered to Azerbaijan (Minasyan, 2010). Azerbaijan also controlled parts of Nagorno-Karabakh, including the deliberately large region of Shusha city held during the conflicts. Along these lines, another road currently runs through the disputed territory; the conflicting region's central area, including the Stepanakert center, remains heavily influenced by Armenia-backed separatists.

Similarly, the pledge predicts that a policy close to the hall will be developed within three years, which Russian peacekeepers will heavily influence. Furthermore, the agreement allows for the unblocking of economic and transportation links, including constructing new highways through Armenia that connect the Nakhichevan self-governing republic. The harmony pinches similarly committed Russian peacekeepers and the Nagorno-Karabakh contact route, and the Lachin corridor. The Russian peacekeepers' arrangement, on the other hand, is unusual, as it has never occurred before in this dispute. Indeed, no peacekeepers have been dispatched.

As a result, the essence of the peacekeeping powers is a solid guarantee against any hatred and threats in the area. The Russian peacekeeping forces' primary duration is five years, with a planned extension for an indefinite period if none of the crowds declares its intention to end it a half year before the current time frame. Under Baku's authority, the seven surrounding areas and the disputed territory will be reintegrated into the Republic of Azerbaijan. As a result, these districts will be governed by the rules of the Azerbaijan constituent under European Convention on Human Rights article one. Azerbaijan emerges as the covenant's apparent victor, and it celebrates its victory. Azerbaijan has reclaimed territory that it had lost for 30 years. As anticipated in previous

ceasefire agreements, the new agreement does not grant the disputed region self-rule (Burke, 2020). Azerbaijan, on the other hand, has not obtained everything that it desired. Furthermore, the explicit principles of the mechanism over the Nagorno-Karabakh region have not been mentioned; its legal status is currently ambiguous. The deployment of Russian peacekeepers has undermined Azerbaijani pride in the area due to Russia's military presence on its soil. However, the gains more than compensate for any recognized loss. Moscow has justified its role as a mediator in the conflict by demonstrating a significant long-term interest in conflicting states.

Russian troops, on the other hand, have been stationed in the area for the foreseeable future. Turkey was left out of Russia's unilateral truce between conflicting parties in this novel peace agreement. On the other hand, Ankara has celebrated the victory triumph with Azerbaijan and has expressed diplomatic and military support for Baku. The covenant is a bitter pill for Armenia to swallow, and it risks throwing the country into even more turmoil. For most Armenians, it amounts to surrender, both of territory seen as intrinsically Armenian, central to the nation's history and culture, and pride in the victories three decades ago. Thousands of people took to the streets of Yerevan in the early hours after the ceasefire agreement was announced. Protesters assaulted Armenia's parliament speaker and accused the prime minister of betrayal. Armenians have strong reservations about the prime minister's legal standing in signing the agreement without extensive consultation with other state stakeholders, and opposition leaders have demanded that he step aside. In another place, the situation in Armenia's capital city, Yerevan, and the safety and security of the Armenian-ethnic population remains a significant concern in the region. Although the ceasefire agreement reduced the disaster for the disputed region's inhabitants, it did not provide safety and security for the ethnic Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh or adjacent area residents who wished to leave. People in the disputed territory or its surrounding areas who are not linked by a corridor, such as the Kelbajar population, will require safe passage and protection to leave or stay (Kelemen, 2020). The agreement emphasized the resettlement of displaced people and refugees into Nagorno-Karabakh and its neighboring regions, which will be completed with the assistance of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees. It was, however, excluded from the negotiating process.

This facility has been written for ethnic Armenian and Azerbaijani people, whether in the early 1990s or more recently. Establishing a corridor between Armenia and Stepanakert would imply that the signatories envisioned a permanent Armenian-ethnic population presence in those districts, albeit not in Shusha or other parts of the region currently held by Baku. This will be bypassed by a new connecting road built by the parties over the next three years. Despite Russian peacekeepers in Nagorno-Karabakh, it is unclear what specific provisions will be made for the Armenian-ethnic population. In this case, Russia would seek broader international support for the issue. More importantly, the United Nations and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which previously mediated between Azerbaijan and Armenia, are expected to consider deploying a global civilian mission to monitor IDPs and refugees.

## **CONCLUSION**

The overall assessment of the conflict briefly reflects the original parameters of the current regional political, economic, and strategic scenario. The prerequisites for resolving the competition are the democratic process, ethnic identical factors in and across the region, Armenia-Turkey

reconciliation, regional economic integration, and external intervention in regional politics. As a result, the current 2020 ceasefire posed numerous challenges and implications for the territorial and regional population and actors, eliciting the wrath of the Armenian masses. The recent ceasefire agreement mentions the resettlement of IDPs and refugees in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territories with UN High Commissioner for Refugees support.

However, neither the peace agreement nor the consultation process included these organizations. On the other hand, the frozen conflict has the potential to re-ignite a new cycle of violence as a result of the exclusion of significant territorial stakeholders. Following a brief analysis of the conflict, it is clear that great powers, international organizations, and regional actors all have different perspectives on the conflict. They treated it as a matter between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Instead of providing perpetual peace resolution to the conflicting states, they engage in resource politics; not a single international state actor has discussed the root causes of the conflict. As Svante E. Cornell (Cornell 1997) discussed, that despite admitting the reality of the conflict, the international community intentionally ignores the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict after conducting a brief strategic analysis. The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has no short-term solution, but hopes for a long-term resolution may be realized if the issues are examined in light of ground realities.

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