# 40 THE PROTRACTED CONFLICT OF NAGORNO-KARABAKH

[**Issue Number 40 - April 2002**](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/40-d)

**The protracted conflict of Nagorno-Karabakh**   
Prepared By: Rudyard KAZAN   
Researcher

Even if you forget your mother, do not forget your mother tongue

Sylva Gaboodikian**[[1]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn1" \o ")**

Much has been written about the Armenian-Azeri conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh. Inspired by these writings, this essay covers a brief survey about the origins of the conflict. It also examines the position of the parties to the conflict (Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh), the foreign interests (United States, Russia, Iran and Turkey) as well as the regional and international organizations trial to put forth a settlement Plan (OSCE and the UN). Furthermore, the article studies the grave consequences of the conflict. Last but not least, it analyses a suggested settlement plan (Aivazian's plan).

**Historical Background**

Nagorno Karabakh is a fertile, mountainous area of 4,400 square kilometers in the southern Caucasus situated inside what is internationally recognized as Azerbaijan. It is located about 270 km west of the Azerbaijani capital of Baku. Nagorno-Karabakh has a population of 192,000 (1989 estimate) of whom three quarters were Armenians and the rest Azerbaijanis. But in 1921, when the region was allocated to Azerbaijan, the Armenian population was 94%. The numbers have been depleted by the war. Both sides passionately dispute the history of the region.

According to Armenian sources, the province of Nagorno-Karabakh (described as Artsakh) was part of the ancient kingdom of Urartu (8th to 5th centuries B.C.) under the name of Urtekhe-Urtekhini. Azerbaijani sources also claim that the present-day inhabitants of Azerbaijan are direct descendants of the ancient local tribes that gradually adopted the language and cultural ways of the Turkic populations which started moving into the area by the 11th century A.D.

When the Armenian state was divided (in 387 A.D.) between the Byzantine and the Persian empires, the eastern part of Southern Caucasus, including Artsakh, went to Persia but retained some degree of ethnic homogeneity and home rule under local princes (melikhs). The situation changed by the 18th century with the completion of the Turkic migration into the region. That is when the province acquired a new name: the Khanate of Karabakh.[[2]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn2" \o ")

In the late l8th century, several khanates, including Karabakh, emerged in the south Caucasus to challenge the fading influence of the Ottoman Empire. After the Russian Empire eventually took control over the region in 1813, Azerbaijani Turks began to emigrate from Karabakh while the Armenian population of Nagorno  Karabakh grew.

According to Azeri sources, the Russian Empire regarded the Armenian Christian population living in the Ottoman Empire and Iran as a key element in the achievement of its far-reaching Eastern policy, which was designed to secure for Russia access to the shores of the Persian Gulf. The Russian authorities began to exploit the Armenian factor as early as the eighteenth century[[3]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn3" \o ").

Also according to Azeri sources, on 10 November 1724 Peter I issued a decree allowing the Armenians  who were being assigned the role of a "fifth column" in implementing the Russian Empire's plans to seize vast territories to the south of the Caucasus, as far as the Persian Gulf - to settle in a strip of Azerbaijani land located along the Caspian Sea and containing the cities of Derbent and Baki as well as the regions of Gilyan, Mazandaran and Gorgan. As part of this scheme, the Russian generals were instructed to "displace" the local Azerbaijani population in any way they could. However, Russia's subsequent military reversals in the Caucasus blocked this planned resettlement of the Armenians[[4]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn4" \o ").

With the 1917 Russian Revolution, Azerbaijan and Armenia each declared independence and sought control over Karabakh during the Russian Civil war.[[5]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn5" \o ") In 1921, Armenia, weakened and threatened by war, famine, and economic collapse, fell under the Bolshevik power and soon became a Soviet state[[6]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn6" \o "). Azerbaijan was conquered by the Red Army in 1920. Under the Bolsheviks, nationalists and "counterrevolutionaries" who resisted grain requisition were hunted down and shot. Private property was seized. Antireligious campaign followed, schools were repeatedly purged and textbooks replaced in order to create a new generation of communists. The communist party and its organ of surveillance and security grew[[7]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn7" \o ").

On March 1922, Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan formed the Transcaucasian Socialist Federative Socialist Republic. The Republic was dissolved on December 1936 and each of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia entered into a restructured federal USSR as one of 11 republics[[8]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn8" \o ").

The dispute was pointedly and cleverly exacerbated by Soviet leader Josef Stalin[[9]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn9" \o "). In July 1923  Stalin, annexed the region of Nagorno-Karabagh, in the east of Armenia, and the region of Nakhichevan, in the southwest of Armenia, to the Soviet republic of Azerbaijan.[[10]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn10" \o ") Thus by 1930 the Nagorno-Karabakh became an Autonomous Region placed it under Azerbaijani control.[[11]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn11" \o ")

Hence  it took the Soviet leadership many years to settle the issue. Initially the pendulum seemed to swing in favour of Armenia, as the revolutionary committee of Soviet Azerbaijan in December 1920 (under Soviet pressure) issued a statement that Karabakh, Zangezur and Nakhichevan were all to be transferred to Armenian control. Stalin (then commissar for nationalities) made the decision public on December 2, but the Azerbaijani leader Narimanov later denied the transfer. Four months later, the pendulum swung back.[[12]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn12" \o ")

On March 16th, 1921, a treatybetween republican Turkey and the Soviet Union determined that both regions were to be under the authority of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic (Zangezur was left within Armenia). In 1924, Nakhichev obtained the status of an autonomous republic (the NASSR) whereas Nagorno-Karabakh had been granted the status of an Autonomous Oblast only (the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast). It seems as if this development was a concession on the part of Stalin to the newly founded Turkish republic; the Bolsheviks were initially positively inclined to Kemal Atatürk, whom they saw as a potential ally at the time, especially given the fact that both movements had certain common points; both were revolts against the ancien régime of their respective countries, and were involved in wars with the western powers, notably Britain.[[13]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn13" \o ")

Atatürk was hostile to any territorial arrangements favoring Soviet Armenia, since a strong Armenia could have potential territorial claims on Turkey, which strongly opposed the provisions of the Sèvres treaty aiming to establish both a Kurdish and an Armenian state on Turkish territory. Thus keeping Armenia weak was a way to guarantee the territorial integrity of the nascent Turkish republic[[14]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn14" \o ").

Even given Stalin's tendency to divide the Caucasian peoples in order to prevent unified resistance, the idea of separating the Armenians into two entities-the Armenian republic and Nagorno Karabakh-must have been welcome. Furthermore, Stalin managed not only to divide the Armenians but also the Azeri, into the Azerbaijani republic and Nakhichevan (although the latter remained administratively a part of the Azerbaijani SSR). Another reason for the Soviet government's favoring Azerbaijan may very well have been related to the way the Bolshevik ideology was received in the Caucasus. In fact, Armenia had shown no mentionable communist tendencies in the years of the revolution and civil war. By contrast, there was a certain popular support for Bolshevik ideology in Azerbaijan. Notably, the industrial workers in Baku were pulled towards the Bolsheviks[[15]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn15" \o ") .

Ever since, Armenian forces have constantly attempted to reverse this situation, especially at times of change in Soviet rule or policy. The dormant Armenian claims surfaced once again in the late 1980s, with the Glasnost policy of Mikhail Gorbachev allowing for more openness in the political atmosphere of the Soviet Union. Thus the number of sporadic incidents between the two communities, having occurred even during the Brezhnev era, grew quickly from 1987 onwards; letters demanding reunification started flowing in to the Moscow authorities, Armenians refused to accept an Azeri Kolkhoz director, and numerous events of this kind started to increase and to appear in the lightened political and media atmosphere of the Soviet Union. In August of 1987, a petition prepared by the Armenian academy of sciences with hundreds of thousands of signatures (in Armenia) asked for the transfer of Nagorno Karabakh and Nakhichevan (where a 1979 census recorded a population consisting of over 97% Azeris) to the Armenian SSR. These events culminated in February of 1988, when the officials of the NKAO officially requested to the authorities in Moscow to be put under the jurisdiction of the Armenian SSR. In Armenia, huge demonstrations supported this bid for reunification by the Karabakh Armenians; according to Armenian sources, one million people were reported on the streets of Yerevan demonstrating in favor of this claim. According to some the number is clearly inflated given the fact that the whole of Armenia totals less than three and a half million. Simultaneously, the Azeris in Armenia face increasing difficulties and harassment, and in the end of January of 1988 the first refugee wave reaches Baku, and most refugees are relocated in Sumgait, in Baku's industrial suburb. Before the end of February, two more waves of refugees were to reach Baku.[[16]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn16" \o ")

The conflict was to burst out for real on 27 February, as violent riots erupt in response to Karabakh and Azerbaijani Radio reports of two Azeri youths killed in Karabakh. Thus Azeris start retaliating against Armenians in Azerbaijan, and the ethnic conflict, followed its own logic. For what could be a more logical place for retaliatory violence than Sumgait, Baku's dark industrial suburb, with a large Armenian minority, where on top of everything huge numbers of furious and frustrated Azeri refugees had been resettled? The official figures show 32 dead (26 Armenians and 6 Azeris) for the three days, 27-29 February, that the unrest went on, although Armenian sources multiply the numbers of (Armenian) casualties by a factor of at least ten. The fact that the Soviet army and Interior ministry troops were in the area did not change anything; in fact the army stood by and watched the pogrom take place, and may even have initiated it. According to some sources, the Soviet forces did not stay at neglecting to prevent the bloodshed, but deliberately seeked to create a conflict between the two communities, both in Armenia and in Azerbaijan. This was done through the control of the media, by spreading exaggeratedly provocative statements on both sides, and by deploying criminals from Soviet prisons in Sumgait to initiate the pogrom. Whatever the real level and nature of Russian involvement, it seems clear in retrospect that the Russians did not have to do much to set both Armenia and Azerbaijan on fire. If their aim was, as it seems, to destabilize the area by creating an inter-communal war which would weaken both governments and enable Moscow to reestablish control over the area, they were only wrong in the sense that they did not know what kind of a monster they were giving birth to. Indeed, the Azeri-Armenian conflict soon slipped out of the Russians' hands. In fact, the mutual hatred had escalated to such a point that any spark would initiate the conflict. And the spark which would make the process of escalation of the ethnic conflict irreversible, was indeed the Sumgait pogrom. After Sumgait, it seems as there was no way to bring about a de-escalation of the conflict, and in any case this was made impossible by the wobbling approach of the Soviet authorities.[[17]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn17" \o ")

To the Armenians, Sumgait was like a reminder of the massacres of the first world war and equated the Azeris with the Ottoman armies. It only made them more firm in their belief that there was no way they could live in any form of arran gement with the 'Barbarian Turks'. From this point onwards, the Armenians systematically chased all Azeris from Armenia, notably from the Ararat region where the latter lived in substantial numbers[[18]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn18" \o ").

Subsequently, inter-communal violence escalated rapidly in both republics. Armenia was cleaned of everything Azeri or Muslim, whereas most Armenians were chased from Azerbaijan, notably the sizable Armenian population in Baku. There were huge refugee flows crossing the Azeri-Armenian border in both directions during 1988 and 1989; notably, large numbers of Armenians were forced to leave Baku during this period, whereas Azeri villages in Armenia were evacuated and renamed.[[19]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn19" \o ")

With the start of perestroika in the Soviet Union in February 1988 the local assembly in the capital Stepanakert passed a resolution calling for unification with Armenia. Violence against local Azeris was then reported on Soviet television, which triggered massacres of Armenians in the Azerbaijani city of Sumgait. The conflict gradually escalated.

In 1990, after the violent episodes in Nagorno-Karabakh, Baku, and Sumgait, Moscow declared a state of emergency in Nagorno-Karabakh, sent troops to the region and forcibly occupied Baku. In April 1991, Azerbaijani militia and Soviet forces targeted Armenian paramilitaries operating in Nagorno-Karabakh; Moscow also deployed troops to Yerevan. However, in September 1991 Moscow declared it would no longer support Azerbaijani military action in Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenian militants then stepped up the violence. In October 1991, a referendum in N-K approved independence. On 2 September, the resuscitated Karabakh Soviet, renamed the 'Karabakh National Council', proclaims the independent republic of Nagorno Karabakh over the territory of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast and the Shaumianiovsk district of the Azerbaijani republic.[[20]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn20" \o ") The violence increased dramatically after the withdrawal of Soviet troops.[[21]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn21" \o ")

During Autumn, Azerbaijani forces move to counter Nagorno Karabakh's declaration of independence, and Armenians respond by conquering or retaking villages. As the Azerbaijani government realizes the military force behind the Karabakh Armenians, it proceeds to nationalize all military hardware in the republic and to recall all Azeri conscripts from the Soviet army. Furthermore, as a direct answer to the declaration of independence, the Azeri parliament on 26 November abolishes the autonomous status of Nagorno Karabakh and reduces it to a 'region', with the same status as any other district. Naturally, this move has more of a theoretical pol itical importance than a real value, since the military control of the region was rapidly slipping out of Baku's hands.[[22]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn22" \o ")

Faced with a powerful aggression, the ill-organized forces of the Azerbaijani republic were unable to protect their lands, and by 1992 the military situation for Azerbaijan was disastrous. Not only the territory of the NKAO was under the control of Armenian forces, but also neighboring and surrounding regions, which were homogeneously Azeri-populated. Totally, over 20% of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan remains under occupation.[[23]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn23" \o ")

Indeed, over 30,000 people were killed in the fighting from 1992 to 1994. In May 1992, Armenian and Karabakhi forces seized Susha (the historical, Azerbaijani-populated capital of the region) and Lachin (thereby linking Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia). By October 1993 Armenian and Karabakhi forces eventually succeeded in occupying almost all of Nagorno-Karabakh, Lachin and large areas in southwestern Azerbaijan. As Armenian and Karabakhi forces advanced, hundreds of thousands of Azerbaijani refugees fled to other parts of Azerbaijan. In 1993 the UN Security Council adopted resolutions calling for the cessation of hostilities, unimpeded access for international humanitarian relief efforts, and the eventual deployment of a peacekeeping force in the region. The UN also called for immediate withdrawal of all ethnic Armenian forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan. Fighting continued, however, until May 1994 when Russia brokered a cease-fire.[[24]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn24" \o ")

But Russia was not the only power to intervene in the conflict. Other powers interfered and Organizations offered their mediations.

**Foreign intervention in the Armenian -Azeri conflict**

**The United States**

According to Cornell[[25]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn25" \o "), the United States policy towards the conflict has been heavily influenced by its domestic politics and notably the powerful Armenian lobby in the congress.

In October 1992, the Freedom Supports Act 907a was passed by the United States congress. With this act, Azerbaijan was denied all forms of governmental U.S. aid unless it "respects international human rights standards, abandons its blockade of Armenia, ceases its use of force against Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, and searches a peaceful solution to the conflict." - such is the text of the act.[[26]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn26" \o ")

To counter this lobby, a pro-azeri task force was organized composed of former and actual senior officials including Zbignew Brzezinski (former assistant to President Carter), John Sununu  (former cabinet director), James Baker (former secretary of state) and ... Richard Cheney (now vice president). Many of the members of this group work as consultants to oil companies having interests in Azerbaijan[[27]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn27" \o ").

In fact, the American administration sees the Caspian sea oil as a supplementary source of energy in case the oil interests in the gulf is threatened[[28]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn28" \o ").

Azerbaijan, Armenia and the surrounding area contain the potential for as much as 200 billion barrels of oil that may be worth more than $4 trillion, and natural gas reserves larger than those in all of North America. Chevron Corp. is leading a proposed $2.5 billion Azerbaijan-to-Turkey pipeline project[[29]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn29" \o ").

"The U.S. realizes today that more than ever, the region of the south Caucuses, the Caspian region, is of great importance to the strategic interests of the United States," said Elin Suleymanov, a spokesman for the Azerbaijan embassy in Washington[[30]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn30" \o ").

The proposed 1,000-mile pipeline would run from the Azerbaijani capital Baku through the Georgian capital Tbilisi to the Mediterranean port of Ceyhan in Turkey, a North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally of the U.S.[[31]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn31" \o ")

Several top Bush administration officials have ties to major petroleum companies, including those with interests in the Caspian region. That, along with creating a model for resolving other ethnic-based land disputes in the former Soviet Union, may be driving U.S. involvement in the Armenia-Azerbaijan dispute, participants and analysts said[[32]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn32" \o ").

"I would think oil was, in part, behind it all,"said Robert Ebel, director of energy and national security affairs at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, a Washington, D.C., think tank[[33]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn33" \o ").

"This is not a problem area of the world that we should shy away from," Willard Workman, vice president for international affairs at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, said of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. "We think that we ought to at least devote as much as an effort there as we did the Middle East.''[[34]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn34" \o ")

Oil industry ties permeate the administration. Bush followed his father into the Texas oil business years before following him into the White House. Vice President Dick Cheney previously served as chairman and chief executive of Halliburton Co., the world's largest oilfield services company[[35]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn35" \o ").

Halliburton has operations in Azerbaijan and has bid for work on the pipeline to Turkey. The U.S. government has worked to convince U.S. companies to support the pipeline, wanting a transportation route from the Caspian oil fields that bypasses both Russia and Iran[[36]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn36" \o ").

Other top Bush officials and advisers with oil industry connections include national security adviser Condoleezza Rice, who was on Chevron's board of directors from 1991 until January of this year, and has a company oil tanker named after her[[37]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn37" \o ").

The law firm of former Secretary of State James Baker, a Bush family adviser, represented several oil companies with interests in Azerbaijan, among them Exxon-Mobil Corp. Brent Scowcroft, a Rice adviser who was national security adviser in the administration of Bush's father, has industry connections that include sitting on the boards of Pennzoil-Quaker State Co. and Enron Global Power & Pipelines, a unit of Enron Corp. Deputy Secretary of State Richard Armitage is a former co-chairman of the U.S.-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce[[38]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn38" \o ").

On April 2001, the United States brokered peace talks in Key West, Florida.

Senior administration officials briefed reporters April 9 on President Bush's meetings with President Robert Kocharian of Armenia and President Heydar Aliyev of Azerbaijan at the White House, and said peace talks in Key West, Florida between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno-Karabakh had been "very successful."[[39]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn39" \o ")

The briefers said Bush met with Kocharian and Aliyev separately, accompanied by Vice President Dick Cheney, Secretary of State Colin Powell, National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, and Ambassador Carey Cavanaugh, one of the three co-chairs of the Key West talks[[40]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn40" \o ").

"Both meetings were extremely warm in tone. Both meetings consisted of, from the American side, President Bush expressing his support for the efforts that both countries have made for peace, appreciation for the progress, understanding that there remains a good deal of work to be done," a briefer said.

In summarizing the April 3-6 Florida talks, a briefer said: "Both presidents have come into these discussions with an understanding that the only way to find a durable peace is through serious compromise. That has been the hallmark of their efforts. It is, I think, the most difficult task that faces them, both at the bargaining table and in returning to their publics to gain broad support for this. But they understand this is the only way to craft for their countries the kind of futures they believe that their people deserve." The briefer said the exact nature of the Florida talks is confidential. "We have said repeatedly that any solution that would bring about a durable settlement has to be a solution that is acceptable to the general populace in the region," he added[[41]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn41" \o ").

**Russia**

Transcaucasia is considered by the Russian government as part of the geopolitical concept of "near abroad"[[42]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn42" \o "). Moscow in fact was active in speeding up, if not creating, the conflict in the first place. Russia's interest lies in two main factors.

First, Russia wants to reestablish control over the borders of the CIS (the Commonwealth of Independent States) with Turkey and Iran, and thus wants to have troops posted in Azerbaijan, as it does in Armenia and Georgia. Georgia was brought back into the fold mainly by quite overt Russian support for the Abkhazian separatists but also by Russia's stirrings in South Ossetia; in a similar way, Russia plays the card of stepping up its military support for Armenia to force Azerbaijan to make concessions and return to Moscow's economic and security sphere of influence. Thus Russia is pursuing a classic policy of divide et impera - divide and rule.[[43]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn43" \o ")

Secondly Russia tries to gain control over Azerbaijan's oil riches. This was made very clear by Russia's vehement rejection of the Azerbaijani Caspian oil consortium, (the so-called 'Deal of the Century') signed in Baku in 1994. Andrej Kozyrev personally declared that Moscow does not recognize Azerbaijan's right to exploitation of the Caspian shelf oil fields until a conclusive resolution of the debate about the status of the shelf is reached[[44]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn44" \o ").

With respect to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, Russia prefers a Russian-only mediation to the Minsk process of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. Armenia favors this solution, whereas Azerbaijan refuses to accept a peace-keeping mission including only Russian forces, fearing that the international control of the peace-keepers would be made impossible.[[45]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn45" \o ")

To the Russian government, the conflict can only be settled by stage:

- Entry into force of a cease fire and deployment of intervention forces

- Withdrawal of troops from occupied territories, restoration of lines of communication, return of refugees

- Negotiations on the status of Nagorny-Karabakh[[46]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn46" \o ")

**Iran and Turkey**

The Azeris being of Oghuz Turkic origin but of Twelver Shi'i Islamic confession, they possess strong ethnic and linguistic ties with the Turks, and are the only people of the former Soviet Union to share the same religion with the Iranians; Thus initially, Azerbaijan hoped to be able to exert support from at least one of these powers. The two states were perceived by many observers as pursuing a struggle for influence in the Muslim republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia. A priori, this may have led to a belief in Baku that Turkey and Iran would both take this opportunity to show their solidarity with their Turkic/Muslim kin.[[47]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn47" \o ")

Unfortunately for the Azerbaijanis, nothing of this kind happened. While both Iran and Turkey announced their willingness to mediate in the conflict, neither was ready to officially support Baku unconditionally.[[48]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn48" \o ")

This development was due to different causes in the two countries. Iran fears that its northwestern provinces and its Azeri minority - estimated to consist of between 8 and 15 million people (10-20% of Iran's population, in any case more numerous than the entire population of the republic of Azerbaijan[[49]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn49" \o ")) - might be contaminated by what it usually describes as "Turkic nationalism." Tehran's concerns were particularly acute during the tenure of nationalist Azerbaijani President Abulfaz Elchibey, who took over from former Communist Party boss Ayaz Mutalibov in 1992.[[50]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn50" \o ")

Authorities in Baku fear that the influence of Iranian religious clerics on the Azerbaijani population might threaten their Turkey-like secular statehood.

Iran sees stability along its 611-kilometer-long border with Azerbaijan as a prerequisite to its security. In early 1992, Tehran began to mediate between the warring sides in Karabakh and succeeded in brokering what turned out to be a short-lived cease- fire[[51]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn51" \o ").

However the Azeris in Iran are well-integrated into Iranian society and have a weak Azeri identity. Hence the authorities in Iran do not  fear an  immediate upheaval but long-term complications which would arise if the Azerbaijani republic would emerge as a rich oil-producing state while Iran's economic condition would continue to decline.[[52]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn52" \o ")

Turkey being dependent on U.S. aid, especially in the military sphere, and already under hard pressure for its Human Rights record, was forced not to distance itself too much from the European and American policies. Prime Minister Süleyman Demirel nevertheless tried to appeal to President Bush to intervene and mediate in the conflict, ordered the inspection of aircraft en route to Armenia over Turkish airspace to search for weapons, and even threatened to mobilize the Turkish army on the Armenian border. Nevertheless, the Turkish actions amounted to nothing more than declamations, and did not have any significant impact on the course of events[[53]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn53" \o ").

In general, Turkey has been very careful not to endanger its relations with Russia, where Turkey has important commercial interests. Thus besides the euphoric pan-Turkic rhetoric of 1992-93, Turkey soon realized that it could not simultaneously safeguard its interest in Russia and assert its influence in the post-Soviet area. Thus Turkey's 'leading role' in the Muslim republics of the Caucasus and Central Asia has amounted to virtually nothing in the political sphere, whereas important economic, cultural, educational and scientific agreements have been reached with these republics, which doubtlessly will have an important impact on Turkey's role in the area in the long term. However, the fact remains that Azerbaijan did not get the supp ort it expected from Turkey. Azerbaijani dissatisfaction was especially strong when Turkey, after American pressure, lifted the total embargo on Armenia that it held together with Azerbaijan, which prevented even humanitarian assistance to Armenia to pass through Turkey. The Azeri reaction was commonly voiced in terms such as 'They claim to be our brothers but give bread to our enemies'. In the final analysis, Turkey did not do much in concrete terms to support Azerbaijan. However, Turkey retained its fri endly attitude, as a contrast to Iran, and lobbied internationally for the Azeri cause-an act in which Turkey was largely alone in the world community.[[54]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn54" \o ")

**OSCE**

Since 1992, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) has been the primary forum for mediation efforts, led by a subset of OSCE members called the Minsk Group. Unfortunately, little progress has been made by the OSCE, as each side has insisted on incompatible conditions that the other will not accept. The Armenians will not discuss the withdrawal of their troops from Azeri territories until Nagorno-Karabakh is recognized as independent; Azerbaijan insists on its complete territorial integrity and demands the withdrawal of Armenian troops before it will discuss any other matters, including the eventual status of Nagorno-Karabakh.[[55]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn55" \o ")

In September 1997, the Minsk Group proposed a "phased" approach plan, entailing an Armenian withdrawal from seven Azeri provinces followed by a discussion of the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh. The plan was accepted by Azerbaijan, accepted with reservations by Armenia, and rejected out of hand by Nagorno-Karabakh. In February 1998, the president of Armenia, who had conditionally accepted the plan, was forced to resign.[[56]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn56" \o ")

Early in 1999, Russian Foreign Minister Igor Ivanov proposed the convening of a "Forum on the Caucasus" but did not elaborate further.

The "Peaceful Caucasus" initiative conceived by President Eduard Shevardnadze of Georgia was launched at about the same time. It emphasized the common interest of the three countries of the Southern Caucasus to develop a modern revival of the ancient Silk Road[[57]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn57" \o ").

A meeting of the speakers of the Parliaments of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan took place, in October 1999, at Luxembourg under the aegis of the Speaker of the Council of Europe Parliamentary Assembly.

At the OSCE Summit in Istanbul (18-19 November 1999) the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan referred in their speeches to the need for a stability arrangement in Southern Caucasus. It is to be noted that the two presidents suggested somewhat different lists of out-of-area participants: while President Aliyev of Azerbaijan suggested the involvement of the United States, Russian Federation and Turkey, President Kocharyan of Armenia mentioned Russia, Turkey and Iran[[58]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn58" \o ").

Reports that have not yet been officially confirmed indicate that, in December 1999, Armenia put forward a proposal for a Security Treaty for Southern Caucasus which was immediately supported in a separate demarche by Moscow[[59]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn59" \o ").

The proposal was apparently tabled again in early January 2000 in a modified version as a preliminary Round Table on Stability in Southern Caucasus according to a 3+3+2 formula (Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan + Russia, Turkey, Iran + United States, European Union)[[60]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn60" \o ").

**The UN**

During 1993 the United Nations Security Council adopted four resolutions on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict reaffirming the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Azerbaijani Republic and of all other states in the region.

In Resolution 822 of 30 April 1993 the Security Council called for the immediate cessation of hostilities and the immediate withdrawal of all occupying forces. It also made an urgent appeal to the parties concerned to resume the peace talks under the aegis of the OSCE Minsk Group without delay.[[61]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn61" \o ")

In Resolution 853 of 29 July 1993 the Security Council condemned the taking of Agdam and other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijan. It also made an urgent appeal to the parties concerned to refrain from any action which might hinder the peaceful settlement of the conflict, and to pursue talks within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Conference or in the form of direct contacts with a view to finding a definitive solution.[[62]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn62" \o ")

Resolution 874 of 14 October 1993 urges the parties to the conflict to accept the peace plan drawn up by the OSCE on 28 September 1993.

In Resolution 884 of 12 November 1993 the Security Council "strongly urges the parties concerned to resume promptly and to make effective and permanent the cease-fire established as a result of the direct contacts undertaken with the assistance of the Government of the Russian Federation in support of the OSCE Minsk Group, and to continue to seek a negotiated settlement of the conflict within the context of the OSCE Minsk process and the "Adjusted timetable" as amended by the OSCE Minsk Group meeting in Vienna of 2 to 8 November 1993".[[63]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn63" \o ")

**Position of the parties to the Conflict**

**Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan's official line is that Armenia is waging a war of conquest in order to acquire new territory.[[64]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn64" \o ")

Azerbaijan demands the unconditional liberation of all occupied territories, stresses the problem of refugees and maintains that they should be able to return to their homes immediately and in complete safety. The government of Azerbaijan is not particularly favorable to Russia's mediation initiative and has not yet submitted any proposal concerning the legal status of  Nagorno-Karabakh.[[65]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn65" \o ") The Azerbaijanis refuse to talk directly to the Karabakhi Armenians and are offering Karabakh a 'high level of autonomy' within Azerbaijan, but are not very specific about this.

**Nagorno-Karabakh**

For Nagorno-Karabakh's leaders, the settlement of the conflict must be based on the international recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh's independence; one of the main conditions that must be met before Nagorno-Karabakh can play a full part in the peace talks is that it should be officially recognised as a party to the conflict. They also demand that Nagorno-Karabakh's political status be addressed in these talks.[[66]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn66" \o ")

The Karabakhi Armenians say they are prepared to be part of Azerbaijan, but only with, as they call it, 'horizontal' links to the government in Baku. Furthermore they want to keep control of the so-called 'Lachin corridor' that links them to Armenia and have security guarantees from Armenia.

The return of the occupied territories, with the exception of the Latchin corridor, will depend on the guarantees obtained for its security, indeed for recognition of its autonomy.[[67]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn67" \o ")

**Armenia**

The government of Armenia demands not merely a cease-fire, but a cessation of all hostile actions, in particular the blockade of lines of communication. It also insists that Stepanakert should be included in the peace talks as an independent party and puts the emphasis on the security guarantees to be granted to the population of Nagorno-Karabakh.[[68]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn68" \o ")

**Consequences of the conflict**

The failure to resolve the conflict has severe consequences for the whole region. Around a tenth of the population of Azerbaijan are refugees from the conflict. Many of them still live in misery in camps and they are a cause of great social tension for the country. Armenia's economy virtually ground to a halt as a result of a both Azerbaijan and Turkey closing their borders and three of its four main rail routes are closed. Foreign investors in the oil industry are worried that pipeline routes from the Caspian Sea could be damaged by a resumption of the conflict.

Although neither side seems interested in renewing the conflict, there is almost no movement in the peace process.

It is not surprising that the Azeris, having the greater number of refugees and having lost territory to their adversary, would support in principle external intervention to enforce a return of territory and resettlement of refugees. Nor is it surprising that the Armenians, having the upper hand with respect to occupation of territory would oppose such intervention.[[69]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn69" \o ")

Western companies have already invested about $40,000,000,000 in Azerbaijan's oil industry, but so long as the conflict with Armenia remains unresolved, many of them will keep their suitcases packed. Like so many other Azeris, the director of a foreign affairs think tank in Baku blames the Russians for the hostilities between the two neighbors. He sees Armenian military occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territory as an expression of Russian intent to regain lost influence in the Caucasus and Caspian regions. Russian military support and security guarantees are important to Armenia now, as often in the past, because of Turkish hostility, Armenian diplomat Garik Israelian observes, but that has nothing to do with Nagorno-Karabakh. The issue in the enclave, he says, is not geopolitics or even the rights of states or nationalities, but, rather, human rights[[70]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn70" \o ").

Azeri security forces sought to suppress the rebellion, whereupon Armenian military forces came to the support of their beleaguered kin in the enclave. Along with occupying Nagorno-Karabakh and a corridor connecting it with Armenia, the Armenian armed forces claimed and, in effect, depopulated a security zone around it. Azeris argue that more than 1,000,000 of their kinsmen are now refugees. Armenians counter that the estimate includes all the refugees, of whom about 400,000 are Armenian. Azeris maintain that Armenia is occupying 20% of their land. Armenians say the occupation zone represents just nine percent of their neighbor's territory. For the time being, Nagorno-Karabakh is treating itself like an independent state, including the requirement of a visa for visitors. Meanwhile, the stalemate was enormously costly for both countries. For Azerbaijan, it meant exclusion from most forms of direct U.S. foreign assistance. For Armenia, considerable portions of American assistance serve to ameliorate the scorn of some U.S. diplomats and security strategists about the company it keeps. The great cost for Armenia lies in the blockage of trade routes. Sealed borders with both Turkey and Azerbaijan leave only Iran and Georgia as overland outlets, and transit through Georgia to Russian markets is still precarious. Western routes through Abkhazia remained blocked by the unresolved conflict there and to the east. Even as secessionist South Ossetia appeared to be coming to terms with Georgia, the Chechens and Dagestanis across the border were by no means coming to terms with Russia.[[71]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn71" \o ")

**An Alternative Settlement Plan****[[72]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn72" \o ")**

Two other solutions have been proposed since 1992 in addition to the plan offered by the OSCE's Minsk Group. The first involved the recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh as an independent state and the simultaneous withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied territories except the Lachin corridor. However, this solution has been completely rejected by Azerbaijan and would not be supported by the international community. A second proposal involved a territorial swap between Armenia and Azerbaijan that would have united Karabakh with Armenia but also would have resulted in the loss to Armenia of some of its provinces in the south, making it unacceptable to Armenia. Another possibility would have been a different swap-essentially of Nakhichevan for Karabakh-but this would be opposed by both Azerbaijan and the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh; it would also be opposed by Turkey, which would be separated even more from Azerbaijan. In any case, none of these proposals would be desired by the international community, because all would require border changes of some sort. Nevertheless, the Nakhichevan-Nagorno-Karabakh swap may still contain the best strategic solution to this conflict and should be kept in mind, especially as other solutions prove to be unacceptable or unworkable.

**Aivazian's settlement plan.**

The plan suggested by Armen Aivazian, a Fulbright fellow from Armenia at Stanford University consists of three interrelated agreements: political, military, and legal. This plan would give Armenia the necessary level of defense; Karabakh, de facto (but not de jure) independence and security guarantees; and Azerbaijan, the return of all currently occupied territories (except the Lachin corridor) and the preservation of its territorial integrity. All of these outcomes would have to be implemented simultaneously.

The political elements of the plan would begin with a tripartite agreement among Armenia, Turkey, and Azerbaijan, each recognizing the territorial integrity of the others. Second, the currently self-proclaimed Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh would be renamed the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenian Republic (NKAR) and recognized by Armenia as a part of Azerbaijan. Relations between the NKAR and Azerbaijan would be established on a confederative or horizontal basis. Third, the United States, Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan would sign an agreement recognizing Armenia as a guarantor of the NKAR's security. (This is similar to the Moscow Agreement of 1921, which recognized Turkey and Russia as the guarantors of Nakhichevan.) Fourth, there would be no mention of the Armenian genocide in any of these documents.

The fifth element of the political framework of this plan, would be a tripartite defense agreement among Armenia, Russia, and the United States, guaranteeing the long-term strategic security of Armenia. Anything less than this, will not serve the security needs that Armenia requires, given its current security predicament. This security arrangement should include the provision that any attack on the Republic of Armenia will be considered an attack on the United States and Russia; the United States would not make this commitment unilaterally-nor, in any case, would it be accepted by Russia.

The current security agreement between Russia and Armenia is not sufficient for a number of reasons. First, Russia remains an unpredictable state, perhaps bound for disintegration; second, after the withdrawal from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Armenia's geostrategic importance would diminish, causing Moscow to lose interest in its defense accord with Yerevan; and third, Russia's financial position in the foreseeable future will remain dependent on Western loans and other support. It should be pointed out, Aivazian continued, that as part of this three-way agreement the United States would not need to engage combat troops directly, which it would be unlikely to do. American political and diplomatic backing would be enough to ensure Armenia's security. Furthermore, this agreement would be of great geostrategic importance, in that it would be the first Russian-American military pact since World War II, possibly paving   the way for greater-and much needed-Russian-American military cooperation.

The other stipulations of the settlement plan proposed by Aivazian involve military and legal provisions within the political framework outlined above. Regarding military matters, the NKAR military forces would withdraw from the six provinces of Azerbaijan that they currently occupy, and the army of Azerbaijan would withdraw from certain areas of Nagorno-Karabakh. The NKAR, nominally under Azeri sovereignty, would maintain separate armed forces as a defensive military force and a 25,000-man army during peacetime. (Limits on armed forces can be negotiated within the confines of the CFE Treaty.) The Lachin corridor would remain under the control of the NKAR defense force, which could not maintain certain offensive weaponry. Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the NKAR would sign a limitation-of-forces agreement under which demilitarized zones would be established along the most sensitive and potentially tension-filled borders. The zones would be patrolled by a small OSCE or UN monitoring force. And Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the NKAR would hold talks on the border issues with the understanding that some of the more "unnatural" borders would be revised to provide certain Armenian regions (Nagorno-Karabakh and Siunik) with a greater depth of defense.

The proposed plan would also contain the following legal provisions. First, the NKAR would receive the right to have its own government, constitution, flag, and coat-of-arms, and could determine on its own the extent of its trade and other economic relations with Azerbaijan. However, its financial institutions would be governed by Azerbaijan's central bank. The citizens of Azerbaijan, or at least those residing in the NKAR, would have the right to dual citizenship. Finally, the extent of the NKAR's cooperation and coordination with the foreign policy of Azerbaijan and its defense, security, and law enforcement apparatuses would be determined according to negotiations between Stepanakert and Baku. According to Aivazian, the implementation of this settlement plan would give all parties the necessary prerequisites to ensure their security and access to economic development. Armenia would see the end of the blockade against it, enabling it to build its badly damaged economic, social, and other spheres and to benefit from the development of the Azeri oil industry. Nagorno-Karabakh would receive security guarantees, a permanent land corridor to Armenia, and de facto (though not de jure) independence. Though Nagorno-Karabakh has rejected such status, it has not as yet been offered this kind of horizontal relationship with the government of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijan would preserve its territorial integrity and regain the six occupied provinces. Nakhichevan's future security as part of Azerbaijan would also be guaranteed.

In addition, Turkey would acquire Armenia as a more friendly neighbor on its border, ensuring the ease of the development of the Baku-Ceyhan pipeline, among other things. Russia would continue as the most influential power in Armenia, but U.S. involvement in the security pact would reassure Azerbaijan. Finally, the United States would see the realization of two of its key foreign policy goals: a safe and practical export route for Caspian oil and the consolidation of the independence and political development of both Armenia and Azerbaijan.

**Conclusion**

Most analysts accept that the status quo cannot endure indefinitely and cannot provide the basis for a permanent settlement. The stalemate has so far favoured the ascent of more radical elements in both Armenia and Azerbaijan ("It's not just land, it's honour!")[[73]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn73" \o ").

On the territorial level three aspects need to be more thoroughly examined: The legal status of the Nagorno-Kharabakh province and the nature of its relationships with Azerbaijan and Armenia; Transitional arrangements concerning the territories of Azerbaijan which have never been part of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region and are now occupied by the Armenian forces, including the strategic corridor linking Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia; and the Symmetrical or similar arrangements for free access to the Azerbaijani enclave of Nakhichevan along Armenia's border with Iran[[74]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn74" \o ").

On the conflict level, the cease-fire should be replaced by a legally binding political commitment. Here again two possible solutions can be realistically envisioned, both of them requiring an involvement of, and guarantees by, the international community: a bilateral political treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan; more comprehensive multilateral arrangement for the Southern Caucasus; the safe return of displaced persons and refugees[[75]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn75" \o ").

On the Economic and human development level, the sheer size of the domestic markets, complementarity of resources, and interconnection of infrastructure networks would warrant a regional approach rather than go-it-alone strategies. Although the economies of both Armenia and Azerbaijan have been able to adapt to a certain extent to the post-war situation, their bilateral trade is virtually nil, and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict continues to affect in a perverse manner their relations with the neighboring countries and the rest of the world. Significant foreign direct investment is not likely to happen unless and until the conflict is resolved[[76]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn76" \o ").

For hundreds of years the Nagorno Karabakh region has been ethnically mixed. The Armenians have left more physical evidence behind them in the form of dozens of medieval churches, but the Azeris also built two mosques in the town of Shusha, where famous musicians and poets lived.[[77]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_edn77" \o ")

The fact above proves that two communities with different cultural, ethnic and religious backgrounds can coexist.

[[1]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref1" \o ")  Meline Karakashian , "Armenia: a country's history of challenges", Journal of Social Issues,Summer, 1998.

[[2]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref2" \o ")  Sergiu Celac, Romanian Ambassador, "The Nagorny Karabakh conflict : An update", 20 May 2000, http://cbw.grmbl.com.

[[3]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref3" \o ")  Azerbaijan International, Key West Talks, Azerbaijan Embassy in Washington, www.Azer.com.

[[4]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref4" \o ")  Ibid.

[[5]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref5" \o ")  US Department of State, International Information Programs, History of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict, http://usinfo.state.gov.

[[6]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref6" \o ")  Karakashian, op.cit.

[[7]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref7" \o ")  Audrey L. Altstadt, "Republic of Azerbaijan", in Encylopedia Americana, 1997, vol.2, p.892

[[8]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref8" \o ")  Vernon V. Aspaturian, "Republic of Armenia", in Encyclopedia Americana, 1997,  vol.2, p. 337

[[9]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref9" \o ")  Patricia Carley, Nagorno Karabakh  searching for a solution,  United States Institute of Peace, www.usip.org.

[[10]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref10" \o ") Karakashian, op.cit.

[[11]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref11" \o ")  Svante Cornell, "Undeclared war. The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Reconsidered", Journal of South Asian and Middle Eastern Studies, vol. 20, no. 4, Fall 1997.

[[12]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref12" \o ")  Ibid.

[[13]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref13" \o ")  Ibid.

[[14]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref14" \o ")  Ibid.

[[15]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref15" \o ")  Ibid.

[[16]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref16" \o ")  Ibid.

[[17]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref17" \o ")  Ibid.

[[18]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref18" \o ")  Ibid.

[[19]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref19" \o ")  Ibid.

[[20]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref20" \o ")  Cornell, op.cit.

[[21]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref21" \o ")  US Department of State, op.cit.

[[22]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref22" \o ")  Ibid.

[[23]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref23" \o ")  Ibid.

[[24]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref24" \o ")  US Department of State, op.cit.

[[25]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref25" \o ")  Cornell, op.cit.

[[26]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref26" \o ")  Ibid.

[[27]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref27" \o ")  Vicken Cheterian, " Grand Jeu pétrolier en Trancaucasie ", Le Monde Diplomatique. Manière de voir n?60, Novembre-Décembre 2001.

[[28]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref28" \o ")  Ibid.

[[29]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref29" \o ")  Azerbaijan International, op.cit

[[30]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref30" \o ")  Ibid.

[[31]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref31" \o ")  Ibid.

[[32]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref32" \o ")  Ibid.

[[33]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref33" \o ")  Ibid.

[[34]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref34" \o ")  Ibid.

[[35]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref35" \o ")  Ibid.

[[36]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref36" \o ")  Ibid.

[[37]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref37" \o ")  Ibid.

[[38]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref38" \o ")  Ibid.

[[39]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref39" \o ")  Ibid.

[[40]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref40" \o ")  Ibid.

[[41]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref41" \o ")  Ibid.

[[42]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref42" \o ")  Council of Europe, Report on the conflict in Nagorno Karabakh, 17 October 1994, http://stars.coe.fr.

[[43]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref43" \o ")  Cornell, op.cit.s

[[44]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref44" \o ")  Ibid.

[[45]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref45" \o ")  Ibid.

[[46]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref46" \o ")  Council of Europe, op.cit.

[[47]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref47" \o ")  Cornell, op.cit.

[[48]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref48" \o ")  Ibid.

[[49]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref49" \o ")  Ibid.

[[50]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref50" \o ")  Jean-Christophe Peuch, "Caucasus: Iran Offers To Mediate In Nagorno-Karabakh Dispute" Radio Free Europe - Radio Liberty (RFE/RL), July 25, 2001

[[51]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref51" \o ")  Ibid.

[[52]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref52" \o ")  Cornell, op.cit.

[[53]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref53" \o ")  Ibid.

[[54]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref54" \o ")  Ibid.

[[55]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref55" \o ")  Patricia Carley, op.cit.

[[56]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref56" \o ")  Ibid.

[[57]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref57" \o ")  Selak, op.cit.

[[58]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref58" \o ")  Ibid.

[[59]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref59" \o ")  Ibid.

[[60]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref60" \o ")  Ibid.

[[61]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref61" \o ")  Council of Europe, op.cit.

[[62]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref62" \o ")  Ibid.

[[63]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref63" \o ")  Ibid.

[[64]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref64" \o ") Ibid.

[[65]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref65" \o ")  Ibid.

[[66]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref66" \o ")  Ibid.

[[67]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref67" \o ")   Ibid.

[[68]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref68" \o ")  Ibid.

[[69]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref69" \o ")  Jan Knippers Black, "Ethnic Conflict and Pipeline politics in the Caucasus", USA Today, May 2000.

[[70]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref70" \o ")  Ibid.

[[71]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref71" \o ")  Ibid.

[[72]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref72" \o ")  Patricia Carley, op.cit.

[[73]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref73" \o ")  Celak, op.cit

[[74]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref74" \o ")  Ibid.

[[75]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref75" \o ")  Ibid.

[[76]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref76" \o ")  Ibid.

[[77]](https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh" \l "_ednref77" \o ")  BBC.com

- See more at: https://www.lebarmy.gov.lb/en/content/protracted-conflict-nagorno-karabakh#sthash.vEhNvnrT.dpuf