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Time to shine a light on a hidden conflict: Nagorno Karabakh in 2011

By Thomas de Waal

Inertia can be a powerful force. The ceasefire that halted fighting in the Nagorno Karabakh war in 1994 is now more than 16 years old and many people have come to assume that it is a kind of permanent fixture. A few dozen young soldiers die each year on the Line of Contact that divides Armenian and Azerbaijani forces, but the Karabakh conflict makes no impression on most of the world and is barely covered in the media or even foreign policy commentaries...**Read more on Page 3**

Vulnerable status quo and factors that can prevent armed conflict

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Over the years, there has been a growing interest in the concept of civil society and its contribution to peace. According to "A Dictionary of Civil Society, Philanthropy and The Non-Profit Sector " written by Helmut K. Anheier and Regina List (2005), civil society is "the sum of institutions, organizations and individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests"...**Read more on Page 5**

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15.01.2011 (RFE/RL) Radio Liberty Azerbaijan Service "[Azerbaijan is increasing its offense and Armenia its defense](#)" [AZ] Sergey Minasyan, Deputy of the Caucasus Institute speaks on the two countries' military preparations. He believes, the two sides continue approaching each other with much caution... **Read more on Page 21**

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Lessons learned: from theory to practice

By [Edgar Kachatryan](#)

Recently, most of us were witnesses to the failure of the Turkish and Azerbaijani film festivals organized by the Caucasus Center of Peace Building Initiatives in Armenia, first in Yerevan and then Vanadzor. With this piece, I would like to reflect on the effects and impacts this event had on society, in other words, how it affected people around me in Peace Dialogue NGO... **To read more please proceed to the site.**

Education abroad: a view from Azerbaijan

By [Tehmine Pasayeva](#)

According to state statistics, the official number of unemployed people living in Azerbaijan is approximately 40,000. Unfortunately, the majority of these unemployed are people who have received their education in Azerbaijan. In reality, when looking at today's hiring standards, an employer prefers someone who studied abroad rather than someone who studied at home... **To read more place proceed to the site.**

Should I also go?

By [Ani Matevosyan](#)

I am hurrying to my class. I am a first-year Master's degree student at the Journalism Department of Yerevan State University. If I am late and get a zero for attendance I will lose points. Now, Master's Degree studies are carried out based on a credit system. Students accumulate points by progress, participation and even attendance to make up their final mark at the end of the academic year... **To read more place proceed to the site.**

ANALYSIS

Time to Shine a Light on a Hidden Conflict: Nagorno- Karabakh in 2011

By Thomas de Waal

Inertia can be a powerful force. The ceasefire that halted fighting in the Nagorno Karabakh war in 1994 is now more than 16 years old and many people have come to assume that it is a kind of permanent fixture. A few dozen young soldiers die each year on the Line of Contact that divides Armenian and Azerbaijani forces, but the Karabakh conflict makes no impression on most of the world and is barely covered in the media or even foreign policy commentaries. In a recent quick survey by the respected Foreign Affairs website on potential conflicts to worry about in 2011 (“Next Year’s Wars”) I looked in vain for a mention of Karabakh. It has become an almost invisible conflict, hidden away in the shadows of international affairs.

In this situation, those of us who argue that it is important to redouble efforts to resolve the conflict—or at least make steps towards detoxifying it—face a difficult task building an argument. We must demonstrate that a rather distant theoretical peace is preferable to the status quo and that the current situation, although seemingly stable, is inherently dangerous. Seeking to get others to pay attention, we must be serious without being alarmist and try to talk about the benefits of peace without sounding too utopian.

Where do we get our evidence from as we make the case for greater urgency in dealing with the dispute? The suffering the ongoing non-resolution of the Karabakh conflict causes is mostly out of sight. Naturally—and thankfully—many of those who suffered very badly from the conflict in the 1990s have adapted to the new post-conflict realities. That is true of a large number of Azerbaijan’s displaced people, who are sharing the lot of other long-term refugees round the world. They lost homes and livelihoods in the conflict and suffered trauma and loss. Many of them still live on the margins of society. In common with, for example, Palestinians and Greek Cypriots, they still lack the basic right of not being able to return to their homes and see no prospect of that changing any time soon. Yet, thankfully, the last “tent camps” in Azerbaijan have been dismantled and most of the displaced people now have adequate living accommodation. Many have emigrated to Russia or Turkey to find work. Many now live no worse than other residents of the region. For understandable reasons, these people have become more invisible.

For the other group who suffered most in the conflict, the Armenians of Karabakh, life is not so easy but having visited Nagorno Karabakh in 2010 I can report that Stepanakert now generally looks no different to any other medium-sized provincial town in the Caucasus. The Karabakh Armenians generally respond to any skeptical outsider who tells them, “Your life is hard” by saying, “It is a lot better than it was 15 years ago,” to which they add, “And that is no thanks to you, the international community, who have entirely ignored and rejected us.” The other side of their message comes with the war memorials and ceremonies and military exercises that are part of daily life in Nagorno Karabakh and which are designed to transmit the message “No return to the past, no compromise.”

You could say then that the constituencies who will benefit from peace in Karabakh hardly even know it themselves: they have grown accustomed to the post-ceasefire status quo, despite all its inadequacies, and are not prepared for what a peace agreement will bring, even if it carries many positives. Therefore, as most locals seem reluctant to do so, is mainly up to outsiders to paint a positive vision of the better future of Armenia and Azerbaijan will enjoy when the conflict is resolved. But at the same time we have another more specific task, which is to warn about the dangers of things getting a lot worse.

As we know from other conflicts in this region, an illusion of stability can shatter very quickly. Nagorno Karabakh is often called a “frozen conflict.” This has always been a misleading concept given the precarious nature of the 110-mile-long Line of Contact dividing the Armenian and Azerbaijani armies. Many young men have died in shooting incidents across the line since 1994 and in 2010 nothing could be called “frozen” about the situation. Azerbaijani president Ilham Aliyev gave several belligerent speeches about the

conflict, saying he wanted peace but Azerbaijan was getting ready for war. In November Armenian president Serzh Sarkisian, wearing camouflage fatigues, gave a speech to soldiers near the ruins of the Armenian-held Azerbaijani town of Aghdam, telling them that he wanted peace but that they should be ready for war. He said, "I have no doubt that if the time comes, we will not only do again what we did in 1992-94, but will go even further and solve the issue once and for all; the issue will be closed for good."

2010 was a very bad year for the Karabakh dispute. A former U.S. official involved in the Minsk Group described to me the understanding that persisted between the Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents for most of the past decade as a "non-aggression pact." In other words the leaders continued peace talks without great hope of a breakthrough but with the confidence that neither side would surprise the other with unexpected moves. The Armenian-Turkish rapprochement which became public in 2008 changed that. Overall it was a positive development because it shook up the dynamics of the conflict, but it also unsettled Azerbaijan—and in my view the major flaw in the process was that no one properly made the case to Baku that the rapprochement was also in the interests of Azerbaijan. When the Ankara-Yerevan normalization process began to unravel in early 2010, it had a very negative impact on the Karabakh peace process. President Sarkisian, having used up much of his political capital with Turkey, had much less to bring to the Karabakh negotiating table. The Azerbaijanis were frustrated at what they saw as Armenian "stonewalling."

The situation on the Line of Contact is a kind of daily barometer of the situation on the peace process as a whole. 2009 was a good year for the ceasefire, 2010 became a very bad one. The incident on June 18-19 when several Armenian soldiers died in what appeared to be an Azerbaijani incursion across the line was the worst for several years. A hot bloody summer followed. Armenians regarded it as unjustified Azerbaijani belligerence. The Azerbaijanis regarded it as a natural consequence of the deadlock: in other words (although they did not say so openly), they thought that increased military activity on the ceasefire line was their only leverage when the Armenians were refusing to engage at the negotiating table.

The meeting chaired by President Dmitry Medvedev in October in Astrakhan cooled passions somewhat. Dead bodies were exchanged, the temperature went down on the Line of Contact (although the approach of winter may also have been a factor). But Medvedev's failure to make any progress on political substance also highlighted a disturbing new concern. For years many Western and Caucasian commentators had worried that Russia was too powerful in the Karabakh dispute and was seeking to dictate the terms of a settlement there. Yet in 2010 the president of Russia invested an enormous amount of time and effort in trying to bridge the gap between the two sides in three meetings, in Sochi, St Petersburg and Astrakhan—and achieved almost nothing. This means that in 2011 perhaps we should be more worried about Russia's *inability* to exert leverage on the two sides in the Karabakh conflict.

The OSCE summit in Astana reinforced the climate of mistrust and bad feeling between the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders. President Aliev made a speech listing Azerbaijan's grievances, all but blaming Sarkisian by name for the current situation. Sarkisian suggested that Yerevan might move to recognize the independence of Nagorny Karabakh (something opposition parties have been calling for).

Unfortunately therefore all the elements are in place for a very difficult 2011: a tired peace process, an atmosphere of mistrust between the parties, a fragile ceasefire, lack of leverage on the part of the mediators. We can only hope that as the winter snows thaw on the Line of Contact there will not be a new upsurge of violence there. My worry is not so much about a full-scale war, which is thankfully a remote possibility as the Azerbaijani military, although much better funded than in the past, is still relatively weak and poorly trained for combat. My worry is that a miscalculation on the Line of Contact could wreck the peace process. A bad incident on the ceasefire line could cause a localized conflict with heavy casualties. Even if this kind of incident was contained, it could cause tragic loss of life. And it could have dire political consequences. A bad bout of bloodshed, could persuade Yerevan to recognize the independence of Nagorny Karabakh or Baku to walk away from the Minsk process.

Vulnerable Status Quo and Factors that can Prevent Armed Conflict

By Anna Poghosyan

Over the years, there has been a growing interest in the concept of civil society and its contribution to peace. According to “*A Dictionary of Civil Society, Philanthropy and The Non-Profit Sector*” written by Helmut K. Anheier and Regina List (2005), civil society is “the sum of institutions, organizations and individuals located between the family, the state and the market in which people associate voluntarily to advance common interests.”

The end of the Cold War saw an increase in intra-state conflicts that correspondingly made civil society start engaging in the area of conflict prevention, management, and resolution.

In the early 1990s, the South Caucasus states Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia gained their independence and sovereignty. Since then these states have chosen the path of democratic governance (adoption of a constitution, division of powers, etc.), civil society (development of the NGO sector and independent mass media), and liberal economy (free market). After the collapse of Soviet Union, civil societies in the New Independent Countries had few chances to emerge. The trends in their developments are similar.

After the ceasefire agreements over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict were reached, much effort was spent by the international community towards the final resolution of the conflict, which mainly faced the hard-edged and polarized approaches of the conflicting parties. Also, this conflict has had its deep impact on the societies' awakening of latent negative feelings, strengthening existing negative stereotypes, and belligerent rhetoric in general. The unresolved conflict continues to decisively influence the political life of Armenia and Azerbaijan while hampering the process of their further democratization—people don't trust their governments, there is a high level of corruption as well as limited independent media, and so forth.

“Without stability, without a consensus around the rules of the game in terms of democratic institutions, elections, and so on, there will not be a basis for a mutually beneficial relationship based on mutual trust and common values with the EU,” the bloc's special representative for the South Caucasus, Peter Semneby, said in a June 12 interview, shortly after addressing the Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The unresolved Nagorno-Karabakh conflict also prevents regional development. The conflict is one of the main stones that doesn't allow regional integration and cooperation to exist, and it also breeds tense relations between Armenia and Turkey, as the Armenian-Turkish border was closed in 1993 because of the conflict. The closed borders and frozen conflict seriously slow down the process of integration in the region. Azerbaijan and Armenia currently strive towards the non-violent resolution of the conflict by peaceful means; however, there is no complete confidence in the stability and irreversibility of the peace process.

Civil society could also play a crucial role in terms of ensuring regional security (Rooy, 1998, p. 19). People in the South Caucasus are still highly concerned about the possibility of war due to the elusive peace and frozen conflicts. People certainly dream of peace, though they don't yet feel they can put down their arms because of tensions on the border. Civil society can play an enormous role in the conflict prevention/resolution process as its potential in the South Caucasus is high and needs further development. Effective interaction/cooperation between civil society and international organizations will firmly contribute to the peace, stability, and security of the whole region.

Thus, one of the most important, yet least understood aspects of peace processes in the South Caucasus is the importance of conflict prevention initiatives usually outlined by the international community and carried out by civil society institutions—NGOs and mass media. Public diplomacy makes involvement of civil society in conflict resolution activities possible, along with the efforts made by national governments.

That is one of the most influential mechanisms that needs to be strengthened and actively applied to peace processes. NGOs from conflicting sides try to spread the mutual feeling of tolerance that can lead to cooperation and peace building, but still people consider the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as the “intractable one.” Some of the reasons for this are the lack of public diplomacy and contacts between the confronted parties, NGOs and media activists, as well as the lack of media coverage of the other side’s positions and the enhancement of an enemy image through stereotyping.

In addition to civil society organizations, another important instrument in conflict prevention is the mass media, which can play both a positive and negative role in the process. The negative aspect implies information aggravating hatred and hostilities between parties, while the positive aspect brings tolerance and understanding. It can be suggested that media is both a friend and foe to a peace process. The media can foster human security, and there is evidence that media can reinforce motives for fuelling wars. It can be an instrument for peace and conflict management, which promotes messages and strategies that can lead to peaceful agreements and tolerant behavior in a given society. Media can also be a weapon of violence that propagates biased information and manipulates societies or groups in conflict with divisive ideologies and harmful actions. Thus, the media has become pervasive and extremely influential in attitudes towards conflict. The media of sides in conflict contributes to the dissemination of stereotypes and enemy images and rarely focuses on civil society activities.

Another important part of conflict prevention and the peace building process is the private and economic sector. In a speech to the UN Security Council made in 2004, Secretary-General Kofi Annan said, “the economic dimensions of armed conflict are often overlooked, but they should never be underestimated. The role of business, in particular, can be crucial, for good and for ill. Private companies operate in many conflict zones or conflict-prone countries. The development of economic co-operation and integration can stimulate positive economic changes in each country, providing people with new opportunities. Business itself has an enormous stake in the search for solutions. After all, companies require a stable environment in order to conduct their operations and minimize their risks. So all these are compelling reasons why business should play an active role in tackling these issues, without waiting to be asked.

Economic Cooperation is very positive process, but it seems non-realistic in the situation when every moment people think about the possibility of war.

In conclusion, I would like to mention again the importance of international as well as regional organizations, the private sector, the mass media, non-governmental organizations, and other civil society actors in preventing armed conflict. We should seek to enhance the cooperation and coherence of our actions at all levels, from the global level to enhancing national capacities for the peaceful resolution of conflicts and engaging civil society actors, in order to promote conflict prevention and support peace. The imperative for effective conflict prevention goes beyond creating a culture, establishing mechanisms, or summoning political will. The costs of prevention have to be paid in the present, while its benefits lie in the distant future. In addition, the benefits are often not tangible: when prevention succeeds, little happens that is visible, but the nurturing of societal stability and tolerance can be the foundations of sustainable peace.

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NEWS DIGEST

Digest of Armenian Media for Jan 15-31, 2011

By News Digest

01.15.2011

Lragir.am

[Scenario for Azerbaijan](#) (ARM)

The article says that the statement by Jose Manuel Barroso, the President of European Commission, in which he said that the EU backs the principle of territorial integrity over the Karabakh conflict, was perceived in Baku as a diplomatic victory. It was also perceived as a proof of the fact that Baku has agreed to sell gas to Europe in return for EU's promise to exert pressure on Armenia over the Karabakh conflict. But the author says that the Barroso's statement testifies to the fact that Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has not been given any promise; Barroso has simply taken a diplomatic step, and Aliyev cannot expect concrete actions from that step.

01.15.2011

News.am

[Karabakh issue closely linked to 1915 Armenian Genocide](#) (ENG)

Referendum in Sudan, as well as Kosovo's proclamation of independence serve as precedents in the process of international recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh, said Razmik Zohrabyan, Deputy Chairman of the Republican Party of Armenia. Zohrabyan also stressed that the Karabakh issue is closely linked to the 1915 Armenian Genocide in Ottoman Empire. "The Armenian nation lost Nagorno-Karabakh being weakened after the Genocide and could not protect its interests," he noted.

01.17.2011

Tert.am

[Authorities will attempt to maintain the status quo, says former FM](#) (ARM)

Former Armenian Foreign Minister Alexander Arzumanyan says that the international community will hardly give great significance to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the near future given Turkey and US are expected to hold elections in 2011. According to him, the number one issue for Armenia is to prevent the resumption of the war. "The authorities, that have neither internal nor external legitimacy ... attempt to do its best to maintain the status quo," said he, adding that the Karabakh issue will be forgotten at the stage elections.

[Mediators may neutralize the risk of the resumption war: Surenyants](#) (ARM)

The resumption of the war in Karabakh is a real threat as long as there is no document signed, political analyst Suren Surenyants said. According to him, the threat of the resumption has significantly increased since last year given the statements the parties make. "The mediators can neutralize the risk of the resumption of the war," said he adding that the mediators, however, do not have enough resources for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict. Further, he said that no comprehensive document over Karabakh will be signed this year, though the negotiations will continue.

[Georgia ready to mediate over Karabakh conflict: Grigol Vashadze \(ARM\)](#)

Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze said that Tbilisi is ready to assume an active role in contributing to the dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan as it is interested in the settlement of this conflict. He also said that the conflict should be resolved based on the norms of the international law. Further, he said that the South Caucasus should be stabilized to accelerate its European integration.

“We should immediately demonstrate unity, economic activity and think about the economic development of the three countries in the region so that it will be possible to integrate to Europe,” said he adding that both the Georgian government and the people are interested in quick settlement of the Karabakh conflict.

01.17.2011

RFEL

[Alexander Arzumanyan expects no progress in foreign policy \(ARM\)](#)

Former Armenian Foreign Minister Alexander Arzumanyan said that Armenia did not have any progress over the Karabakh issue in 2010. In his word, in 2010 the thesis – adopted in Athens and according to which the international community sees Karabakh’s self-determination within Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity – was strengthened.

“That was reaffirmed once again and approved of by all in Astana. Therefore, Armenia continues to be considered as a non reliable partner,” said he adding that it was also proved by the documents leaked by the WikiLeaks website which put Armenia in an inconvenient situation. Further, Arzumanyan said that the example of Kosovo is far more acceptable compared to Abkhazia and South Ossetia.

01.17.2011

FREL

[Two conscripts wounded in Karabakh](#)

Citing a press release by the Defense Ministry of the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno Karabakh, the article says that on January 14 an Armenian soldier was wounded by the Azerbaijani front troops on South-Eastern part of the Line of Contact. It also says that a similar incident took place on the following day on the Eastern part of the Line of Contact.

01.17.2011

Lragir.am

[NK has no future under Azerbaijani rule \(ARM\)](#)

Azerbaijan’s anti-Armenian and aggressive behavior confirms the conviction that Nagorno Karabakh does not have any future under Azerbaijani rule, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said at a visit to Cyprus. “Even more, Azerbaijan has neither legal, nor political, nor moral basis to have any intentions over Nagorno Karabakh. Of course, we are determined to solve the issue exclusively peacefully and through negotiations, but should Azerbaijan resort to adventures, our answer will be definitive,” said Sargsyan.

01.18.2011

Tert.am

[Cyprus admits self-determination is key issue in Karabakh process – Safrastyan](#) (ENG)

Cyprus has admitted that people's right to self-determination is a core principle in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, Turkologist Ruben Safrastyan said, adding that is the first time when both Cyprus and Armenia state in an official document that the right to self-determination should have legally binding effect in the process.

"The right to self-determination should have a predominant value in the Karabakh settlement process," he stressed.

[Latvia supports Karabakh peace process within Minsk Group format](#) (ENG)

Latvia expresses full support of the peace talks within the Minsk Group format and does not seek to intervene in the process of the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, said Janis Zlamets, the head of Latvian Foreign Ministry's Department on Bilateral Relations. He also said that Latvia's stance fully coincides with the European Union's position, i.e. the conflict should be settled based on the UN Charter and the principles of non-use of force, territorial integrity and people's right to self-determinations.

[No one has the right to press refugees to return to Baku or other liberated territories: statement](#) (ARM)

A network of civic society called "International Rights of Refugees" said in a statement that no person or organization has the right to speak on behalf of the whole Azerbaijani-Armenian society. Neither Armenia's authorities, nor the international organization can press on the Azerbaijani-Armenians "to return to Baku or resettle in any other liberated territory in NKR or elsewhere". It also said that the idea of creating a third Armenian state – the Republic of Azerbaijani-Armenians – poses threat to Karabakh's territorial integrity.

[Freedom House's evaluation isn't enough, says Hmayak Hovhannisyan](#) (ARM)

The fact that Freedom House referred to Karabakh in its recent report as a "not free" country, significantly hinders the possibility of the realization of Karabakh's right to self-determination in the peacetalks, the head of the Armenian Union of Political Scientists, Hmayak Hovhannisyan said. Lernik Aleksanyan, member of the Republican Party of Armenia, in turn, said that the evaluations of the international agencies are often conditioned by political issues; therefore, the opinion of only one organization isn't enough.

"The evaluation of an organization is very little, but anyway, it is very important and very dangerous," he said.

01.18.2011Lragir.am

[Film on Armenian-Azerbaijan relations has official website](#) (ARM)

The article says that about 50 representatives of the Armenian-Azerbaijani communities in Moscow participated in the opening ceremony of the website of the first feature film on Armenian-Azerbaijani relations – "Interrupted Song" (www.pervannya-pesnya.ru). The website has six sections. Together with others sections, the "Karabakh Conflict" section includes detailed information about the Karabakh conflict.

01.19.2011

Tert.am

[Possibility of war decreased after summit in Astana – Komandos](#) (ENG)

The possibility of the resumption of war in Karabakh has decreased after the OSCE summit in Astana, participant of the Karabakh war, Major-General Arkady Ter-Tadevosyan (nickname as Komandos) said. However, he said, Azerbaijan might not feel bound to refrain from its "belligerent statements and

provocations,” as recently it several times attempted to violate the ceasefire regime recently. According to him, it would be fair for Armenia to achieve the settlement of the conflict peacefully, based on the right to self-determination, as opposed to Azerbaijan’s ambitions to maintain its territorial integrity.

01.19.2011

Tert.am

[Italians will get familiarized with NK conflict and Artsakh’s history](#) (ARM)

The article says that Armenia’s embassy in Rome convened a press conference to introduce an initiative called “Italian Initiative for the Nagorno Karabakh” in an attempt to give the Italians a chance to get familiarized with the Karabakh conflict and its history. For that purpose the initiative has also launched a website (www.karabakh.it) which incorporates materials not only about the conflict, but also about the latest development over the conflict.

[Alexander Iskandaryan: Cyprus cannot find solution to Karabakh issue](#) (ARM)

Speaking about Armenian president’s visit to Cyprus and his speech made there, Armenian political analyst Alexander Iskandaryan said that Cyprus cannot play any role in the resolution of the Karabakh conflict, as it itself has problems with Turkey.

“It’s a small country, which itself has problems with Turkey. Eventually, it isn’t even a neighboring country. I don’t think that the president’s visit to Cyprus will have any significant role [in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict],” said he.

01.20.2011Lragir.am

[Lonsdale about Karabakh](#) (ARM)

Asked why does Great Britain recognize South Sudan and Kosovo, but doesn’t recognize Karabakh, Great Britain’s ambassador to Armenia Charles Lonsdale said that every conflict has its peculiarities and therefore requires a specific approach. Lonsdale reiterated the Karabakh conflict should be resolved through the OSCE Minsk Group and based on the three basic principles – non-use of force, nations’ right to self-determination, and territorial integrity. He also said that NATO has the same approach too.

01.20.2011

Tert.am

[Azerbaijani hacker ‘attacked’ the official website of “Interrupted Song” movie](#) (ENG)

According to this article, the website of the first feature movie (“Interrupted Song”) on the Armenian-Azerbaijan relationship (available at www.prervannaya-pesnya.ru) was attacked allegedly by Azerbaijani hackers on January 19. All visitors were automatically redirected to Azerbaijani websites with anti-Armenian contents. The organizers, however, took necessary steps and fixed the problem.

01.20.2011

Epress.am

[Vice Chairman of Azerbaijani parliament threatens Karabakh with war](#) (ARM)

According to this article the vice chairman of Azerbaijan's parliament, Bahar Muradov, said that the society of Nagorno Karabakh should know that the war isn't over and that military actions may resume any moment. Further, he said that Azerbaijan continues to take part in the negotiations and attempts to resolve the conflict peacefully.

"But Azerbaijan doesn't stop its military preparations, as the world will never come to terms with a weak state," said he, adding that Azerbaijan has achieved significant success in the military and other sectors and has shown Armenia that it will "never reconcile with the loss of its territories and with the intention of creating a second Armenian state in its region."

01.21.2011

Tert.am

[Azerbaijan resorts to blackmailing Karabakh –Foreign Ministry statement](#) (ENG)

In a statement the Foreign Ministry of the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno Karabakh said that recently "Azerbaijani leadership's attempts to interfere with the processes concerning the interests of the neighboring Nagorno Karabakh Republic are groundless and must be considered as another manifestation of hostility towards our country".

"Unfortunately, any testimony for the consolidation of the NKR statehood causes inadequate reaction by Baku, as a result of which the Azerbaijani authorities often resort to state blackmail or other typical actions contradicting the modern system of international legal and moral standards," read the statement.

[Soldier killed on contact line – Nagorno Karabakh Defense Army](#) (ENG)

According to this article, the front troops of the Azerbaijani army opened fire on the Armenian troops in the southern direction of the Line of Contact, killing an Armenian serviceman named Hovik Sukiasyan. The Defense Army's retaliatory operations suppressed the Azerbaijani side which is reported to have suffered greater losses.

[Armenian FM introduced recent development over Karabakh issue to Thomas Hammarberg](#) (ARM)

This article says that Armenia's Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan held a meeting with a European delegation headed by Thomas Hammarberg, the Council of Europe Human Rights Commissioner. Upon the latter's request Nalbandyan briefed him on the recent developments over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. They also spoke about other regional issues.

01.21.2011

Lragir.am

[David Karapetyan: Azerbaijani authorities either don't control their armed forces or incite provocations on the Line of Contact](#) (ARM)

Speaking about a recent incident on the Karabakhi-Azerbaijani Line of Contact that left one Armenian conscript dead, the spokesperson of Armenia's Defense Ministry said that this incident proves one more time that the Azerbaijani authorities either don't control the situation on the Line of Contact or they incite. "The responsibility lies on the Azerbaijan authorities in both cases," said he.

[20 years ago New York Times wrote about massacres of Armenians in Azerbaijan](#) (ARM)

The article says that on June 27, 1990 the New York Times published an open letter over the massacres in the Soviet Union authored by about 150 professors, scientist, intellectuals, political and figures from various

American and European universities. Stating “that in 1990 the Armenians became subjects of harsh and intolerable premeditated massacres” the authors of the letter expressed their deepest sorrow over those incidents. The letter refers also to the pogroms in Baku and Kirovabad with the authors saying that the horror of those events “has no limits”.

01.24.2011

[Tert.am PACE seeks to enforce resolution 1416 – Chavushoglu](#) (ENG)

According to this article, PACE President, Mevlut Chavushoglu, said that Azerbaijan seeks to resume the sub-committee dealing with Nagorno Karabakh. He also said that PACE’s objective is to implement the resolution within the sub-committee format, adding that the subcommittee which was suspended after its president’s death had always worked in an open manner. Further, he mentioned that certain politicians in Armenia considered the issue to be his personal project. “That’s a wrong idea. I clarified the issue during my visit to Armenia. It’s not a personal project. It’s my obligation as the PACE President,” Chavushoglu added.

[Moscow meeting to determine further course of talks over Karabakh](#) (ENG)

This article says that Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov will receive his Armenian and Azerbaijani counterparts Edward Nalbandyan and Elmar Mammadyarov in Moscow with a focus on the further prospects of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement. Further, the article says that Novruz Mammadov, the head of the Foreign Relations Department at the Azerbaijani presidential administration, announced earlier that this meeting in Moscow will determine the further course of the negotiations over Karabakh. He said the peaceful talks have been fruitless so far even though Azerbaijan intends to continue the process.

[Azeri Ambassador to Russia warns actors against starring in film featuring Armenian-Azerbaijani relations](#) (ENG)

Citing Yerkramas newspaper, the article says that Azerbaijani Ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbuloglu held meetings with Azerbaijani actors in Moscow theatres to warn them of the responsibility to the Azerbaijani state in case of agreeing to star in the film “Interrupted song”. It also says that many scenes of the film had been finally shot in December 2010 involving an actor of Azerbaijani descent. The latter, however, has reportedly refused to take part in the project because of the Azerbaijani media’s recent campaign.

[Azerbaijan is ready to give Artsakh autonomy: Mammadyarov](#) (ARM)

According to the article, Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov said in an interview with the Kuwaiti newspaper Alrai that Azerbaijan is ready to start negotiations with an aim to give Nagorno Karabakh a high level of autonomy. “This is Azerbaijan’s approach which is backed by the international community, and no one will succeed in forcefully changing Azerbaijan’s borders,” Mammadyarov was quoted as saying. He also said that Azerbaijan “is not afraid of giving Karabakh autonomy”.

[Semneby: EU’s stance on Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity is unchanged](#) (ARM)

EU’s special envoy in South Caucasus, Peter Semneby, said at a meeting with journalists in Baku that EU’s stance over Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity is unchanged, adding that he will hold discussions over the issue with Azerbaijani government officials. He also said that the EU is worried over the fact that the Karabakh issue is not resolved yet.

“We are paying attention to all efforts initiated with the aim to settle this conflict ... Of course there are principles for the resolution of the Karabakh conflict that should be followed. Our approach hasn’t changed,” he said.

01.24.2011

Epress.am

[‘We could not achieve satisfactory results in frozen conflicts’: PACE president](#) (ENG)

According to this article, the President of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) Mevlut Chavushoglu regretted about the fact that the PACE could not achieve satisfactory results in some of its undertakings. “Be it in Abkhazia, Transdnestria, Nagorno-Karabakh, and South Ossetia or on the island of Cyprus, it is difficult to see any meaningful progress in confidence-building over the last year. But we must and will continue our efforts because there is simply no other alternative,” he said.

[Azerbaijan will attempt to conquer Karabakh in the summer of 2012](#) (ARM)

This article says, that according to Konstantin Sivkov, a Russian military expert, Azerbaijan will in all probability try to enter Nagorno Karabakh at the end of 2011 or at the beginning of 2012. According to him, Azerbaijan is increasing its military potential on a daily basis by using its oil dollars. At the same time, he said he could not understand why Russia doesn’t take necessary steps to disarm the conflicting parties.

“Despite Azerbaijan’s significant military potential, the military actions unleashed against Armenia will be tense,” said he, adding that in such scenario the conflict can spread and involve other oil-rich regions such as the Caspian basin.

01.25.2011

Tert.am

[Settlement of Karabakh conflict will bring peace and security to region – Davutoglu](#) (ENG)

Speaking at the winter session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, according to this article, said that the settlement of the existing problems between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Nagorno Karabakh will bring peace and security to the region. [Armenian side hasn’t open fire at Azerbaijani village: NK Defense Ministry](#) (ARM) According to this article, the Defense Ministry of the unrecognized republic of Nagorno Karabakh dismissed reports in the Azerbaijani media as if the Armenian front troops opened fire at the Chiragli village in Aghdam, killing one Azerbaijan civilian.

“That information is not true, just the usual disinformation,” Spokesperson of NKR’s Defense Ministry, Senor Hasratyan said.

01.25.2011

RFEL

[PACE Bureau will discuss draft of establishing a subcommittee on Karabakh](#) (ARM)

Mevlut Chavushoglu, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) said at a press conference that the draft that envisages the creation of subcommittee on Karabakh will be brought on the agenda of Council of Europe Bureau. He also said that the sub-committee will act within the authorities of the previous committee, adding that the establishment of that committee is not his own initiative, but rather his duty as the PACE chairman.

[Armenia, Azerbaijan silent on fresh Karabakh talks](#) (ENG)

This article says that Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan remained on Tuesday unusually reticent about a fresh meeting of their foreign ministers on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict that was held in Moscow on January 24. It also said that none of the ministers made any public statements after the talks, adding that Armenia's Foreign Ministry released a short statement, saying that "discussions of pressing issues related to the resolution of the Karabakh problem continued at the meeting".

01.25.2011

News.am

[Russian diplomat says Karabakh conflict sinks in lies](#) (ENG)

There is hardly any other conflict sank in lies more than the Karabakh dispute, Russian diplomat Vladimir Kazimirov said at a Yerevan-Moscow spacebridge.

"They say an agreement on strengthening of ceasefire regime should be reached. Great idea, no doubt, but the treaty was signed long ago. Leaders of the states and defense ministers put signatures under it on February 4, 1995. Why is Baku silent about it?" Kazimirov said, adding that Yerevan and Stepanakert had repeatedly called to appeal to the document.

01.26.2011

Tert.am

[Armenia's intervention prevents Artsakh from making decisions independently – expert](#) (ENG)

Gegham Baghdasaryan, a former MP of the parliament of the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno Karabakh said that NKR will not be able to make decisions independently as long as the Armenian authorities intervene in its government-forming processes. However, he said that Armenia has much to do to contribute to the recognition of Karabakh, so as Karabakh could have its say in any matter concerning its interests. Speaking of the recent independence referendum in Sudan, he said it could not serve as a precedent for Karabakh as the referendum was held by the agreement of all the parties.

[Azerbaijani media has confirmed reports about Bulbuloglu's "conversations"](#) (ARM)

The article says that Azerbaijani news agency Tuna has confirmed the report by Yerkrmas newspaper according to which Azerbaijan's ambassador to Russia Polad Bulbuloglu is having what it calls "conversations" with Azerbaijani actors working at the theaters in Moscow and is threatening them not to play any role in the first feature film about Armenian-Azerbaijani relations – "The Interrupted Song". It also says that the Azerbaijani actor who played many scenes in the film has already refused to continue his participation in the project over the "hysteria by the Azerbaijan media over the film".

[Probability of war has decreased but not, but still exists](#) (ARM)

According to the article, Gagik Minasyan from the ruling Republican Party of Armenia said that the probability of the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Karabakh has decreased but it still exists and is still posing threat. Further he said that Armenia's recent agreements with its partners within the Collective Security Treaty Organization give it more grounds to act more self-confidently. But still, according to him, Armenia should not think that a war is impossible.

"That probability always exists, it is gradually decreasing, but hasn't reached zero yet," said he.

01.26.2011

News.am

[Armenian MP says Azerbaijan's provocations should get adequate response](#) (ENG)

Speaking about violations of ceasefire accord, Gagik Minasyan, MP from ruling Republican Party of Armenia, said that the more prepared Armenia will be for a potential war the less likelihood of hostilities will be. He also noted that Armenia should use both internal and foreign resources to turn ceasefire regime into final peace, but at the same time it should give an adequate response to "Azerbaijani provocations".

"Azerbaijan's provocations should get an adequate response for Baku to think twice while doing it next time. They do not understand other language," Minasyan said.

01.26.2011

Lragir.am

[Karabakh doesn't exist as a factor](#) (ARM)

Chief-Editor of Karabakh-based magazine Analitikon, Gegham Baghdasaryan, thinks that peace process of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict should take place parallel with the international recognition of Karabakh, as recognition will contribute to the negotiations. However, Baghdasaryan thinks that the "two Armenian states" don't do anything for the purpose, which is Karabakh's greatest mistake.

"The worst thing is that Karabakh as a factor doesn't exist in the latest decade. Karabakh should have its say over any related," said he.

01.26.2011

Epress.am

[Situation in Karabakh conflict zone could spiral out of control: Jagland](#) (ENG)

The situation in the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict could spiral out of control, Thorbjorn Jagland, the Secretary General of the Council of Europe said, referring on the increased cases incidents and violations of the ceasefire regime along the Line of Contact. He also said that the "recent incidents involving human losses on the frontline may lead to worse consequences."

"The risk of a new war will remain in the region until the conflict is resolved. Azerbaijan and Armenia, being members of the Council of Europe, assumed responsibility for a peaceful resolution of the conflict. I hope the situation does not worsen to such an extent," he said.

01.27.2011

Epress.am

[Why Armenia cannot recognize Abkhazia, South Ossetia independence](#) (ENG)

In an interview with Echo Moskv (Echo of Moscow) radio station Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said that recognition of Abkhazia, South Ossetia and Kosovo by Armenia is very important in terms of precedence for Karabakh. However, he said that Armenia cannot recognize any of them, without recognizing Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. "We do not recognize the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic de jure because we're negotiating with Azerbaijan. If we recognize [the de-facto republic] then what sense is there to negotiate? And if we continue negotiations on Karabakh, we cannot recognize other countries in a similar state," said he.

01.27.2011

Lragir.am

[Garabagh.org website targeted by Azerbaijan hackers](#) (ARM)

The article says that the newly launched website Garabakh.org, which is published in Persian, has been attacked reportedly by Azerbaijan hackers. The website, which published information about Khojalu, Sumgait and pogroms in Baku, according to the article, gained a large readership in a few days and therefore drew the attention of what it calls “pan-Turkism” and was attacked subsequently. It also says that the website will soon resume its work.

[German TV Channel reports on Karabakh](#) (ARM)

The article says that the German TV channel ZDF prepared a report on Nagorno Karabakh in which it noted that sixteen years now after the conflict both Armenia and Azerbaijan are getting armed. Azerbaijan which, according to the TV channel, is rich and is getting also the backing of Turkey and Pakistan, wants to bring Karabakh back, while Armenia intends to hinder Azerbaijan’s efforts with Russia’s help. It also says that the Line of Contact stands between the two well-equipped, hundreds of thousands-strong armies, which are ready to attack each other.

[Should Azerbaijan unleash war](#) (ARM)

According to Arkady Ter-Tadevosyan, who is a participant of the Karabakh war and is known as “Komandos,” Azerbaijan will succeed in occupying some territories at the initial stage of the war, should it attack Karabakh, especially given the resources Azerbaijan has at its disposal. Further, he said, that the second phase will be one of balancing the forces, and the Armenian side will centre its forces and will retaliate, bringing back those territories already occupied by Azerbaijan, let alone, that it may occupy some new territories under Azerbaijan rule.

01.27.2011

Tert.am

[Serzh Sargsyan is convinced that a war is avoidable](#) (ARM)

In an interview with Echo Moskv, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan attached importance to the fact that both Armenia and Azerbaijan should comply with their commitment not to violate the ceasefire accord. He also said he is convinced that a fresh war is avoidable. “I am convinced that the only way to resolve this conflict is to resolve it peacefully, and the only way to do that is to hold a referendum in Nagorno Karabakh or adopt the results of the previous referendum held in 1991, which are fully in line with the legislation of the Soviet Union and the international law,” said he, adding that the issue will be possible to solve only through compromises.

01.28.2011

RFEL

[PACE Bureau decided to re-establish sub-committee on Karabakh](#) (ARM)

The article says that the Bureau of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe decided to re-establish the sub-committee on Karabakh issues. Zaruhi Postanjyan, member of the Armenian delegation in Strasburg, told the source that the Armenian delegation opposed to the initiative, but to non avail. Speaking to the source, Naira Zohrabyan, another member of the Armenian delegation, said that she personally met with a member of the Bureau and explained that any format other than the OSCE Minsk Group is simply unacceptable to deal with the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

01.28.2010

Tert.am

[PACE committed procedural violation, by resuming sub-committee on Karabakh – Armenian MP](#) (ENG)

According to this article, Naira Zohrabyan, member of the Armenian delegation at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), said that by passing a decision to resume the sub-committee on Nagorno Karabakh, the PACE bureau committed a procedural violation at its Friday session. She also said the Armenian delegation had sent an open letter to the secretariat, stating in detail the reasons it considered the committee's work unacceptable.

"All the representatives of the assembly were supposed to have one copy of the letter this morning, but the Armenian delegation members noticed that the copies were missing from their tables," she said.

[If we are forced into war, our blow will be final and destructive – defense minister](#) (ENG)

Addressing an award ceremony dedicated to the 19th anniversary of the Armenian army, Armenian Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan said that "if Armenia is forced into a war, its blow to the enemy will be final and destructive." He also said Armenia is currently facing extremely serious domestic and foreign challenges. "Having pulled itself together after the losses suffered at wartime, Azerbaijan now uses every proper occasion to threaten Armenia with a new war. Violating the ceasefire regime and launching subversive acts, the enemy seems to be continuously testing our vigilance And yet, the possibility of new acts of violence and provocation is not ruled out," he stressed.

[Artsakh became part of Azerbaijan because of Kemal-Bolshevik deal – Heritage](#) (ENG)

Armenian Heritage party released a written declaration in which it said that "Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) never formed part of the Azerbaijani state, and it was because of the Kemal-Bolshevik "deal" that it was annexed to Soviet Azerbaijan. It also said that even "though Azerbaijan still violates this ceasefire, the Armenians of Karabakh continue to peacefully build their democratic state guided by international norms and standards.

[Resumption of the works of sub-committee on NK runs counter to the logic of the settlement: Artak Zakaryan \(ARM\)](#) (ARM)

Artak Zakaryan, an Armenian MP, said according to this article, that the resumption of the works of the PACE sub-committee on Karabakh cannot positively affect the settlement of the Karabakh conflict as it runs counter to the logic of the peaceful settlement. Zakaryan also reminded the view expressed by the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, according to whom, shifting the discussion of the issue into another platform will only aggravate the situation.

[Resumption of PACE sub-committee on Karabakh is a display of Serzh Sargsyan's diplomacy: Levon Zurabyan \(ARM\)](#) (ARM)

Coordinator of the opposition Armenian National Congress (ANC), Levon Zurabyan, said that the resumption of the works of the PACE sub-committee on Karabakh is a display of the diplomacy pursued by Armenia's president. He also said that the ANC had warned PACE Chairman Mevlut Chavushoglu that the resumption of that committee would impede the Karabakh peace process spearheaded by the OSCE Minsk Group. According to him, the resumption of this sub-committee will create the illusion for Azerbaijan that it can be dishonest in the OSCE MG-brokered talks and may use other formats to strengthen its position in the talks.

[NKR is an established state and deserves recognition by other countries: Heritage](#) (ARM)

Opposition Armenian party Heritage issued a statement in which it said that with its aspirations to build a democratic country Nagorno Karabakh is an established state and deserves recognition by other states and membership in influential international organizations. It also said that several international observers, experts and journalists have observed local, parliamentary and presidential elections in Karabakh, qualifying them as in line with the international standards.

01.28.2011

Lragir.am

[Sharmazanov: PACE sub-committee on NK will only hinder](#) (ARM)

Speaking about the resumption of the PACE sub-committee on Karabakh, spokesperson for the ruling Armenian party, the Republican Party of Armenia, Eduard Sharmazanov said that it will only hinder the peace talks spearheaded by the OSCE Minsk Group. He also recalled that the same view had for several times been expressed by the OSCE MG co-chairmen. Referring to Armenia's possible cooperation with the sub-committee, he said that cooperation cannot be effective.

[CSTO helmets in Karabakh](#) (ARM)

The article says that it appears as if Russia has resorted to active steps over the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, as Nikolai Bordyuzha, the Secretary General of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), said recently that the CSTO blue helmets are ready now and will soon initiate the design of the action plan. Further, it says that this news "surprisingly" coincided with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan's interview to Echo Moskvyy radio station, in which he said that Armenia is ready for a new referendum and territorial concessions. It also recalls, that Sargsyan accused the OSCE Minsk Group of failing to make Azerbaijan refrain from belligerence, and also thanked to Russia for its ability to restraining the arms race in the region.

01.28.2011

News.am

[Armenian side controls situation in border zone with Azerbaijan, Defense Minister says](#) (ENG)

Armenia's Defense Minister Seyran Ohanyan said that the Armenian side controls the situation on the border with Azerbaijan and is ready to rebuff any encroachments. Further, he said that today a relative peace has been established on the frontline. However, the truce, according to him, has been regularly violated since 1994 and snipers go on firing at Karabakh positions.

"We are ready to give an adequate rebuff to any encroachments of the enemy. We are ready not only to silence the enemy with a retaliatory fire, but also respond to Azerbaijan's warlike statements."

01.29.2011

Tert.am

[Protracting conflict settlement is not to parties' advantage – Armenian FM](#) (ENG)

In an interview with Russia Today TV channel, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan said that protracting the settlement of the Karabakh conflict doesn't favour any of the parties, adding that "speeding up efforts to achieve the conflict settlement will be advantageous to all".

“Before settling any conflict, it is necessary to prepare people in advance. It’s useless to think about public opinion post factum. What the Azerbaijani authorities are doing now is like putting fat on fire instead of preparing people for settling the conflict and making mutual concessions,” he said.

[Artsakhi people has the same rights as others to maintain its won fate: RA FM](#) (ARM)

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan said in an interview with the Russian TV channel Russian Today that much in the same way as other nations in the world the people of Karabakh has the same rights to maintain its own fate. For that, according to him, it will be enough to consider the fact that majority of the US state members became independent through the implementation of their right to self-determination. Further, Nalbandyan said that each conflict has its own peculiarities, its roots, its dynamics, and developments, and therefore the conflicts cannot be compared.

01.29.2011

Hetq.am

[Is there a principle of “maintaining territorial integrity” in international law?](#) (ARM)

Ara Papyan, the head of Modus Vivendi Centre, says in this article that there is no such principle as “maintaining territorial integrity” in the international law. Instead, what is mentioned in the Article 4 of the UN Charter is that “all Members shall refrain in their international relations from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state, or in any other manner inconsistent with the Purposes of the United Nations”. According to him, this provisions has nothing in common with the preservation of “territorial integrity”. Further, he says that the phrase “against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state” included in the UN Charter upon the request of some small countries as a guarantee that “force could not be used by the more powerful states in violation of the territorial integrity or political independence of weaker states”.

01.29.2011

News.am

[Re-establishment of PACE subcommittee on Nagorno-Karabakh to play a disorientating role, PAP MP says](#) (ENG)

Vardan Bostanjyan of the Prosperous Armenia Party said that the re-establishment of PACE subcommittee on Nagorno-Karabakh was something undesirable, but expected, and it will play what he called a “disorientating role” in the peace talks. He also said that the re-establishment of the subcommittee is a violation of a number of international treaties and agreements.

“The involvement of other agencies will play a disorientating role. Consequently, I oppose this structure,” Bostanjyan said.

01.31.2011

Tert.am

[Sudanese referendum proved free self-determination is each nation’s unalienable right – Armenian FM](#) (ENG)

Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan said that Armenia hails the referendum in South Sudan, adding that the preliminary voting results there showed that free self-determination is each nation’s unalienable right.

“Over the 60 years of the United Nations history, the Sudanese people’s decision has become the freshest example of choosing self-determination as the only right way of resolving one’s own problems, and the international community definitely hails the process,” he said.

[Ruling party says sub-committee on Karabakh will play no role in peace process](#) (ARM)

According to this article, the spokesperson for the ruling Republican Party of Armenia, Eduard Sharmazanov, said that the PACE sub-committee on Nagorno-Karabakh cannot play any role in the resolution of the conflict. He also said that the conflict must be resolved within the OSCE Minsk Group based on Madrid Principles.

“[Mevlut] Chavushoglu and other Turkish political figures succeeded in creating or re-establishing a sub-committee which will never play a positive or any role at all in the settlement of the conflict ...” said Sharmazanov.

[Political majority is to blame for the re-establishment of PACE sub-committee on Karabakh: Lilit Galstyan](#) (ENG)

Lilit Galstyan of the Dashnaktsutyun party said that it is the political majority to blame for the resumption of the works of the sub-committee at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), adding that the Armenian delegation to PACE did its best to prevent that – but in vain. Further, she said that Armenia is having losses both in domestic and foreign politics, which boils down to the fact the together with its citizens Armenia display will and resoluteness to solve their issue themselves, as “no European court or agency will find remedies for us.”

01.31.2011

Hetq.am

[Representatives of Azerbaijani Armenians send letter to UN Security Council](#) (ARM)

The representatives of the Azerbaijani Armenians sent a letter to the UN Security Council in which they drew UN’s attention to the fact that it “does not react to the racial hatred” systematically incited by the government of the Republic of Azerbaijan in people’s mind living in part of the Western Trans-Caspian region currently under Azerbaijan control. It also says that the UN doesn’t pay due attention to the threats by Azerbaijan to conduct mass extermination of and deportations of people.

Digest of Azerbaijani Media for Jan 4- 14, 2011

By News Digest

15.01.2011

(RFE/RL) Radio Liberty Azerbaijan Service

[“Azerbaijan is increasing its offense and Armenia its defense”](#) [AZ]

Sergey Minasyan, Deputy of the Caucasus Institute speaks on the two countries' military preparations. He believes, the two sides continue approaching each other with much caution. “There is no economic stability in the Southern Caucasus. Because of this, the sides are trying to maintain military and technical balance. By increasing potentials, the two sides are trying to bypass one another”.

In the meantime, Uzeyir Cafarov, military expert, says, Azerbaijan never said it wont resort to force if the conflict was not resolved peacefully. In fact, Cafarov stressed Russia's role in the resolution of this conflict adding that if there was no outside pressure, it would have been possible to solve this problem through military means.

Author's comment: and as the resolution process lingers further, negative attitudes and perceptions grow stronger, leaving less opportunities for peaceful rhetoric not only on government level but also among the communities of the two states.

[Ilham Aliyev says the enemy is shaking](#) [AZ]

In a meeting at the Cabinet of Ministers, President of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, spoke of his certainty that Azerbaijan's strong army must say its word in Armenia- Azerbaijan, Nagorno- Karabakh conflict and will say it when the time comes.

President stressed the country's focus on building a strong army adding that the enemy is well aware of this and is shaking from fear. And their recent statement full of hysteria, anger and fear are examples of this. And yet, having said all of this, the President also said that he would like this issue solved by peaceful means.

NEWS.az

[2011 to become year of fierce war in Karabakh](#) [ENG]

A voice from Armenia, Hovannes Hovannisian, leader of the Liberal Party of Armenia argues that the new war is inevitable unless there is a shift in Armenian leadership as current one exhausted any means to peaceful resolution of the conflict.

17.01.2011

TREND.az

[Certain touches to the Karabakh annexation policy](#) [ENG]

This lengthy article looks at the relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia and presents a subjective analysis of historical developments, including any conflicts, wars, atrocities and killings taken place between the two countries. Written with a sole purpose but to show Armenia as an aggressor and violator of pretty much most of the international conventions and agreements the article goes as far as to claim the other

side is a liar, with no history and culture. The author of this article, Mammad Jafarli, argues that Armenia's sole purpose is to "complete annexation of Karabakh" and everything it does is simply for this goal only.

DAY.az

[Russian political scientists: "Baku must coerce Yerevan to negotiation table seriously"](#) [RUS]

Boris Kagarlitski spoke to DAY.az commenting on the settlement process of NK and its further developments. Director of the Institute for Globalization and Social Movements, says that current situation evolving around NK settlement process, only benefits official Yerevan. Because as soon as there are any concrete steps taken towards the settlement process, Armenia will have to make some serious concessions. Kagarlitski thinks Armenia will continue extending the process for as long as it can, thinking there won't be a military solution to the problem. Official Yerevan hopes that even if official Baku decides to go to war, international community won't let this happen not to mention the first one who starts to fight, might as well be considered as an aggressor country.

However, Kagarlitski also thinks that going into war will be the right thing to do for Baku. Today, all the cards are in Baku's hands. The question that remains is will Baku be able to force Yerevan to sit at a negotiation table producing concrete result without resorting to force.

18.01.2011

(RFE/RL) Radio Liberty Azerbaijan Service

["Nagorno Karabakh has no future as part of Azerbaijan"](#) [AZ]

Speaking in Cyprus, President Sargsyan, spoke of the future of Nagorno Karabakh. In his speech President of Armenia accused Azerbaijan of wanting to resolve Nagorno Karabakh through ethnic cleansing and military abuse. According to his words Karabakh was made part of Azerbaijan's territory during the Soviet Union against its will and so it is normal for people who live there to claim their independence.

In addition, the President also noted that given current active anti-Armenian propaganda taking place in Azerbaijan and its quick militarization only shows Baku's unpreparedness for peace.

Sargsyan also accused other countries in the region of having energy interests in Azerbaijan, and therefore, closing a blind eye on Azerbaijan's claims.

In the meantime as the two countries' leaders continue a verbal fight EU's says it continues to support Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and this position won't change [[January 24, ENG](#)].

20.01.2011

TREND.az

[Azerbaijan MP: Military solution to NK conflict possible](#) [ENG]

Zahid Oruj, member of the Parliamentary Security and Defense Committee and Parliament Member, believes military solution to NK should not be dismissed given international law is failing at reaching any concrete solutions. Even "the most insignificant sanctions have not been imposed against Armenia", says Oruj therefore any kind of military build-up on Azerbaijan's side should not be considered as something unexpected as Azerbaijan is doing so [expanding its military] to eliminate its dependence on foreign countries.

Similarly another MP from Azerbaijan, Bahar Muradova, claims that while Azerbaijan is continuing its participation in all of the international talks, it also continues to develop its military build-up because "no

one in the world reckons with a weak country” says Muradova, adding that “Azerbaijan will fail to strengthen its position in the negotiations and other processes without economic and military power” [[January 20th, ENG](#)].

21.01.2011

NEWS.az

[2010 ‘a waster year’ for Karabakh resolution](#) [ENG]

Prof. Gerard Libardian, director of the Armenian Studies program at the University of Michigan, speaks about 2010 and Karabakh resolution process with deep regrets, noting that 2010 was a complete waste in terms of reaching any kind of mutual ground on the conflict. If not, it could be even said that both Armenia and Azerbaijan have taken steps back rather than forward over the last year.

Professor noted that little will change in 2011, unless official Baku and Yerevan show some change in rhetoric and political will to actually settle the conflict rather than continue to prolong it. Adding however, that he is certain that the two countries can come to a mutual agreement without resorting to force.

25.01.2011

TREND.az

[Azerbaijan’s ruling party considers document on Khojaly genocide adopted by the Organization for Islamic Conference \(OIC\) as a serious blow to Armenia](#) [ENG]

Parliament member Mubariz Qurbanli considers the adopted a serious to the aggressor noting that the world is aware of the atrocities committed on February 26, 1992.

The OIC recognized the tragedy as an act of genocide. Qurbanli believes this might be just the beginning for brining the perpetrators of this crime to justive with accordance to the international law.

26.01.2011

TREND.az

[Political analyst: it will need to model Russia’s behavior in case of outbreak of second state of war between Armenia ad Azerbaijan](#) [ENG]

Director of the Center for Political Innovation and Technology, Mubariz Ahmedoglu says Nalbandian lost Armenia’s honor during his tenure as a Foreign Minister and that Russia will now support Azerbaijan in the outbreak of a war as it has no other choice given its interests. He dismissed Russia’s support for Armenia as being no more but a myth, adding that Turkey would also reach out and help Azerbaijan given there is an agreement signed between the two countries.

Ahmedoglu’s bold statements come partially from an assurance that Russia will try to contain an outbreak of war as it is afraid it might spread to the Northern Caucasus- much-troubled region for Russia too.

NEWS.az

[‘Resumption of military actions is hardly possible’](#) [ENG]

Former co- Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group Vladimir Kazimirov says war is highly unlikely given none of the side are actually interested in it. Kazimirov added the resolution process takes time and energy and NK is

no different than any other conflict. In addition, former co- Chair also noted that while mediators play an important role in the resolution of the conflict, they cannot simply resolve the conflict, that requires commitment from the actual parties to a conflict involved.

27.01.2011

BBC Azerbaijan service

[If it is necessary Sargysan is ready for war with Azerbaijan](#) [AZ]

According to an interview given by President Sargysan to Moscow's radio, the President while saying he is against war, this should not come across as if we are afraid of war. Sargysan was quoted saying "if by some kind of miracle Karabakh moves under Azerbaijan's control even for an hour, there wont be any Armenians left. We must protect our citizens by any means".

(RFE/RL) Radio Liberty Azerbaijan Service

[Karabakh was discussed during a meeting between Prime Ministers in Moscow](#) [AZ]

Having met previously in November in Moscow, the three Prime Ministers- Elmar Mammadyarov, Edvard Nalbandyan and Sergey Lavrov meet again a month later. The three discussed proceedings of an agreement reached in Astrakhan in early December.

The details of the meeting been undisclosed given there was no presence of media representatives. This means, according to Lukasevich, an official representative from Moscow's Ministry of Foreign Affairs that no agreement been reached.

Another article published by TREND.az writes of other independent opinions commenting on this recently held meeting [[January 22, ENG](#)]. According to Alexei Vlaskov, Chief editor of the Russian analytical agency Vestnik Kavkaza and Deputy Dean of History Department at the Moscow State University no radical changes will take place following this meeting, apart from perhaps a specific content that may appear and fill in the gap that appeared following the Astana summit held in early December and discussions that took place then.

TREND.az

[Azerbaijan FM: Azerbaijan ready to use all means to achieve progress in Nagorno Karabakh problem](#) [ENG]

Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister, Elmar Mammadyarov, said Azerbaijan would do anything to solve NK in an interview with Russia Today. The FM sees the resolution of the conflict in the following steps:

- Withdrawal from the occupied territories;
- return of refugees;
- restoration of infrastructure in occupied territories

FM added that the current status quo cannot exist forever and must be resolved soon.

In another interview with Kuwaiti newspaper Alrai [[January 24, ENG](#)] Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister said no force can change Azerbaijan's borders adding that official Baku is ready to negotiate the provision of a high status of autonomy for NK and is not afraid of granting NK the status of autonomy as long as its all done in accordance with the international law.

28.01.2011

TREND.az

[PACE resumes activities of an ad hoc committee on Nagorno Karabakh](#) [ENG]

The decision was met positively especially by the Azerbaijani delegation to PACE. According to Samed Seyidov, head of the Azerbaijani delegation, the ad hoc committee and its activities could become crucial in explaining the world the situation in NK and its further resolution.

Seyidov also claims that much effort was put in resuming of the committee given how much Armenian side tried to prevent it.

NEWS.az

[‘Turkey can never act as a mediator in settlement of Karabakh conflict’](#) [ENG]

Unlike Samed Seyidov, Edward Sharmazanov, secretary of the Republican faction believes, the ad- hoc committee “can never play a role in the settlement of the conflict” given Armenia’s emphasis on one format for negotiations which requires no one except the OSCE Minsk Group. Sharmazanov believes that the only way to solve the conflict is by letting NK hold a referendum.

Speaking on this matter [[January 28th](#), ENG], coordinator of the Armenian National Congress Levon Zurabyan [NEWS.az] blamed Sargysan for the establishment of the sub- committee at PACE. Zurabyan believes that as a result, Azerbaijan will now avoid OSCE negotiations and look for other ways out.

[“Before referendum seven occupied regions of Azerbaijan must be released”](#) [ENG]

Political scientists, Fikrat Sadikhov argues in this article that before holding any referendum on the territory of Nagorno Karabakh, it is crucial that the seven occupied territories are returned to Azerbaijan first. Only then can the sides start talking about referendum and even then another problem arises says Sadikhov. You cannot hold referendum with only participation of Armenians; the referendum must also involve Azerbaijanis who were forced to flee their lands, like Shusha residents of Nagorno Karabakh back to their homes. Only this way can the authorities ensure effective referendum.

DAY.az

[Araz Alizade: “Armenian leadership is two faced and corrupt”](#) [RUS]

This is how an Azerbaijani political scientist, Araz Alizade sees Armenia. In fact, Alizada adds, that its good Azerbaijan is preparing itself for a war, noting that once everything is over (referring to end of KARabakh war either through peaceful or military means) both Sargysan and Kocharyan will be taken to military tribunal where they will be held responsible for all the human lives they were responsible for taking as no one will ever forget none of the victims died in Nagorno Karabakh war, Khojali and other events.

Alizade while referring to Sargysan’s messages that if Azerbaijan takes over Nagorno Karabakh there wont be any Armenians left, said despite everything, today in Azerbaijan there are approximately 40 thousand Armenian residents, while there are none left in Armenia.

29.01.2011

(RFE/RL) Radio Liberty Azerbaijan Service

[Nalbandyan calls an attempt to solve conflicts through force an “illusion”](#) [AZ]

According to Nalbandyan, any bad peace is better than a war. Armenia's Foreign Minister believes there are two ways to solve the conflict. One way is to hold a referendum in Nagorno Karabakh to determine the status of NK. Or to recognize the results of the referendum that was held in 1991. During that referendum, the majority of residents of NK wanted to be taken out of Azerbaijan's composition.

The article is an excerpt from an interview Edvard Nalbandyan gave to Russia Today, re-published by Radio Liberty.

In response, however, official Baku claims recognition of the 1991 referendum is impossible [[TREND.az January 27, ENG](#)]. Head of the Azerbaijan Presidential Administration Political Analysis and Information Provision Department, Elnur Aslanov says apart from peaceful resolution of the conflict, Azerbaijan expects full restoration of its territory. In addition, referendum that was held in 1991 was illegal, as it was held in violation of the USSR law, outside the legal framework and the international law.

Aslanov dismissed the suggestion of having a new vote, saying it is impossible under conditions of continuing occupation of the sovereign territory of Azerbaijan.

TREND.az

[Armenian Armed Forces break ceasefire](#) [ENG]

The article reports of the ceasefire violations by Armenian Armed Forces opening fire at Azerbaijan forces. Azerbaijani forces responded. No casualties were reported. A similar violation took place on January 27th [[January 28, ENG](#)] and January 31st. According to an article published on [January 26](#) [ENG] an Azerbaijani officer was killed during a ceasefire breach. The soldier was a 26-year-old Zamin Mammadov.

The loss of lives or any injuries are overshadowed by constant bickering of military forces from the both sides as it was the case in this article dated [January 21st](#) and published on TREND.az [ENG] informing its readers of false allegations released by the Armenian media regarding Azerbaijan witnessing great losses as a result of ceasefire violation on the front line.

In the meantime according to this article [[January 17th, ENG](#)] "Armenian media reported alleged ceasefire violations by the Azerbaijani armed forces [...] injuring two Armenian soldiers.

NEWS.az

[Armenians, residing in Nagorno Karabakh, want to live by Azerbaijani laws](#) [ENG]

A statement made by Bayram Safarov who heads the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno Karabakh, further claims that Armenians living in Karabakh are aware of internal developments Azerbaijan is going through and want to see the same in their lives, adding that it will only help Armenia if it liberates occupied territories. Safarov also noted that further escalation of the conflict, only damages Armenia- with people leaving the country and population decreasing.

[Armenia is ready to rebuff any encroachments, Defense Minister](#) [ENG]

Retaliation of statements continues among ministers of defense in both of the countries. In this article, Armenian Defense Minister, Seyran Ohanian speaks on Armenian military force and its strength. Ohanian also notes that in time of war, it's not the number of troops that counts but the spirit and high morale. Defense Minister spoke with certainty that Armenian government is ready to retaliate any militaristic statements coming from Azerbaijan.

31.01.2011

NEWS.az

[Armenia caused 'billions of dollars' of damage to Azerbaijan \[ENG\]](#)

News.az interviewed Aytan Mustafayeva, Director of the National Academy of Sciences' Human Rights Institute and parliament member on NK, the settlement process and overall relations. According to Mustafayeva, Armenia is not capable of making its decisions and is rather dependant on its Diaspora, which is blinded by believes of "Armenian genocide" and "Greater Armenia". Mustafayeva also believes, that it is possible that ASALA (Armenian Secret Army for Liberation of Armenia) may be behind recent attacks at the Domodedovo airport in Moscow. Also adding that not only Armenia is responsible for the still on- going conflict between the two states, but that it cost billions of dollars to Azerbaijan as a result of war and its repercussions.

[Nalbandian ignorant of theory of rights of nations for self- determination \[ENG\]](#)

The article dismisses recent statements made by Armenian Foreign Minister Nalbandian that referendum in Southern Sudan can serve as an example in case of Nagorno Karabakh conflict. According to the author, this case cannot be applied to NK conflict because it is not a domestic conflict, and it is not a case of self-determination coordinated between the states and referendum recognized by Khartoum. The article refutes many other arguments presented by Nalbandian regarding NK conflict and its possible solution.

[Senseless to boycott subcommittee on Karabakh in PACE \[ENG\]](#)

Head of the Center for Globalization and Regional Cooperation, political scientist Stepan Grigoryan believes it is pointless to boycott the sub- committee. Especially given that in CE decisions are adopted by majority there is no sense in boycotting. According to political scientist, Azerbaijan's move was predictable given during Astana summit it was clear that Azerbaijan won't be able to attain its goals and will look for other structures for its use. In addition, Grigoryan noted that even once the sub- committee resumes its work, the main format for the settlement will still be carried out by the OSCE and things won't change in near future anyway.

DAY.az

[Rasim Agayev: 'War will end existence of political elite in Yerevan' \[RUS\]](#)

According to political scientists Arasim Agayev, the war rhetoric used by the president of Armenia is only symbolic and is meant to attract Russia's and other countries' attention that the region is prone to war. Agayev noted that Azerbaijan on the other hand, has no intention of attacking Armenia and is only interested and wants to re- establish its territorial integrity. We should also not to dismiss an important fact, which is the settlement process between the two countries have reached a deadlock however, in no way will Azerbaijan agree to Armenia's proposals on the settlement of conflict such as holding of a referendum without the return of occupied territories or accepting the results of 1991 referendum.

About The Journal of Conflict Transformation

The Journal of Conflict Transformation is an independent online publication that provides a forum for scholars, practitioners, policy analysts, starting researchers and bloggers to analyze as well as discuss the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and issues related to it. The purpose of the publication is to contribute to sustainable resolution of the conflict by expanding scholarship on the subject and encouraging diverse perspectives and analysis.

The Journal welcomes contributions from established researchers and is also committed to include the voices of emerging analysts and writers within the peace process. This inter-disciplinary online publication accepts scholarly and analytical articles, as well as reflective writings, that contribute to the better understanding of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Armenian-Azerbaijani relations and suggestions for improvement of the peace process and positive transformation of inter-societal relations. The articles can analyze the conflict as a whole or any factor that potentially has implication for the conflict and/or its resolution from the perspective of political science, economy, sociology, anthropology, social psychology, collective memory studies, comparative history, ethnic conflict, identity-conflict, conflict resolution, peace studies, mediation and facilitation, conflict transformation and comparative case studies.

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