

REGIONAL SECURITY DYNAMICS: AZERBAIJAN

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This research discusses Azerbaijan's security and military dynamics, the influence of recent political and military development and processes in the Middle East and South Caucasus regions on Azerbaijan's security environment by analyzing Azerbaijan's National Security Concept documents (hereinafter referred to as Concept/NSC,) and Military Doctrine (hereinafter referred to as Doctrine/MD,) and President Ilham Aliiev's speeches.

The main issues discussed in this paper are as follows:

- Understanding the challenges and the threats defined in Azerbaijan's NSC and MD,
- Clarifying Azerbaijan's priorities in its security policy and implementation,
- Indicating how recent political and military developments in the Middle East and South Caucasus regions influence Azerbaijan's security environment.

Azerbaijan's perception of security policy is set out in two documents: "the National Security Concept" adopted in 2007, and "the Military Doctrine" of 2010.

The Concept is a set of goals, principles, and approaches to the policies and measures, all of which underline the independence, territorial

integrity and democratic development of the country, and integration into the Euro-Atlantic area as a strategic choice.¹ The main goal of the document is to protect the society and the state of Azerbaijan against internal and external threats.

1. THE CHALLENGES AND THREATS

The Azerbaijani National Security Concept, consists of four main components: political, economic, military, and ecological. Each of the aforementioned components have challenges and threats: both internal and external.

The documents' position debating the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict will be discussed later.

Political

According to a general definition typically found in the document's language, the disruption of the democratic system, hindering the implementation of state functions (NSC art. 3.2) as well as separatism and ethnic, political, regional extremism (NSC art. 3.3) are characterized as **internal** threats. The following issues are considered as real challenges to internal political stability:

- The fight against corruption, the maintenance of democratic rule, protection of human rights, and issues related to freedom of speech and press (NSC art. 4.3.1),
- The creation and maintenance of an atmosphere of religious and ethnic tolerance in the state (NSC art. 4.3.2),
- Preservation of the Azerbaijani cultural-historical heritage and increasing the scientific-educational level (NSC art. 4.3.3),

¹ Azərbaycan Respublikasının milli təhlükəsizlik konsepsiyası, Yekun müddəalar, 23 may, 2007 (National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan). http://www.mdi.gov.az/files/uploader/Milli_tahlukasizlik_konsepsiyasi.doc (19.06.2017)
Here in after the references to the document of the National Security Concept will be made in the text as in (NSC art.)

- Providing internal security, which can only be reached through a respect towards human rights and basic freedoms, in terms of developing civil society and social welfare (NSC art. 4.3.5),
- Migration processes and the measures taken against them by the state; developing mechanisms that regulate migration processes needs to make an effective immigration policy, strengthening international cooperation, and tighter control over migration processes (NSC art. 4.3.7),
- The creation of a professional workforce, and establishing a modern educational and training system (NSC art. 3.9).

This image of what defines Azerbaijan's internal political threats and challenges is also portrayed in the analysis of Ilham Aliyev's annual speeches made at the incumbent party conventions. There are two additional points that are found in the speeches: one refers to Heydar Aliyev and to the role and significance of the "New Azerbaijan" party in maintaining stability in the country, and the other is the absence of the opposition in the country.² However, the reports produced by international authoritative structures defending human rights show that these challenges are often not overcome. For instance, the Freedom House 2017 Country report on Azerbaijan shows that the press is not free,³ but Internet Freedom is considered partly free. (2017)⁴

In terms of international cooperation, the Concept considers the political, economic, and military overdependence on other countries as an **external** challenge and threat. (NSC art. 3.7)

The fight against terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, (NSC art. 3.4) the banning of unlawful drug trafficking and prevention of illegal arms trade, and the fight against organized crime are considered the external challenge. (NSC art. 3.5)

² See Ilham Aliyev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2005, <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/28>; Aliyev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2008 <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/40>; Aliyev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2013 <http://az.president.az/articles/8393>. (16.06.2017)

³ Freedom of Press 2017: Azerbaijan, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-press/2017/azerbaijan> (19.06.2017)

⁴ Freedom of Net 2017: Azerbaijan, <https://freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-net/2017/azerbaijan> (19.06.2017)

Although such issues are formulated in the Security Concept, Ilham Aliiev defines these elements a topical external political threat and challenge the fact that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict is not regulated, as seen in his platform speeches at “New Azerbaijan” party conventions.

In his speeches, the analysis shows how the rhetoric changes from peacefully resolving the issue⁵ to defining the talks as being unfruitful, and that the emergence of a more aggressive rhetoric and the recognition of territorial integrity principle as a single principle⁶.

Economic

The Azerbaijani dependence on oil and gas sectors is viewed as an internal threat: it can distort the macroeconomic stability and make the country vulnerable in case of global or regional economic crises. (NSC art. 3.8)

Diversification of the economy, the development of the non-oil sector, and liberalization of the economy are formulated as internal challenges. (NSC art. 4.3.4)

An **external** economic threat are considered as any attempt of distorting energy power projects by political means or the attempts of doing physical harm to the relevant infrastructures. (NSC art. 3.6)

The construction and launching of modern oil-gas platforms is considered as an **external** economic challenge (NSC art. 4.3.8.) In other words, the challenge is the detection and evaluation of threats to major oil and gas pipelines and terminals, taking preventive measures (NSC art. 4.3.8), and making the country a transit hub from north-south and west-east axis. (NSC art. 4.3.4) An external challenge is also considered to be modernizing the economy through the investing in modern technologies and developing the information technologies system, and developing alternative energy sources. (NSC art. 4.3.8)

Though the Concept discusses the necessity to diversify the

⁵ Ilham Aliiev Speech at “New Azerbaijan” Party conventions, 2005, <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/28> (18.06.2017)

⁶ See Aliiev Speech at “New Azerbaijan” Party conventions, 2008 <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/40>; Aliiev Speech at “New Azerbaijan” Party conventions, 2013 <http://az.president.az/articles/8393>. (16.06.2017)

economy, it should be noted that in his speech in 2008, I. Aliyev identified the importance of energy carriers from the intention of increasing Azerbaijan's political weight (influence).⁷ The 2013 speech, however, already discussed the necessity to reduce dependence on oil and energy infrastructures and the importance of providing security for the cargo transportation routes.⁸ Therefore, it can be stated that these challenges have not been overcome yet.

Ecological

The internal issues associated with nature protection according to the Concept are connected to the nature protection issues that stem from the continual use of outdated oil extraction methods in the Caspian Sea and in the Absheron peninsula. (NSC art. 3.11)

Another important issue for Azerbaijan is the springs reservoir for its drinking water, which is mainly located in neighboring countries. There are also significant traces of dangerous i.e. radioactive, chemical, and other harmful substances that impact Azerbaijan's environment. (NSC art. 3.11)

The PACE Resolution N2085 "Inhabitants of frontier regions of Azerbaijan are deliberately deprived of water"⁹ includes the aforementioned phenomenon.

The NSC also claims that one of the "threats for Azerbaijan and for the whole region" is the Metsamor nuclear energy station located in the seismic zone in Armenia. (NSC art. 3.11)

Military doctrine

The military component of the Concept is formulated within the frame of the Military Doctrine.

The main goals of the MD are reviewing conditions, processes, and factors that create threats and prevent the implementation of a sound

⁷ Aliyev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2008
<http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/40> (19.06.2017)

⁸ Aliyev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2013
<http://az.president.az/articles/8393> (19.06.2017)

⁹ The PACE Resolution N2085 <http://assembly.coe.int/nw/xml/XRef/Xref-XML2HTML-en.asp?fileid=22429&lang=en> (19.06.2017)

security environment and Azerbaijan's national interests.¹⁰ MD is based on the principle of necessary and efficient defense. (MD art. 1.7)

The Doctrine's provisions, which are aimed at ensuring that the military should operate under security, military, political, economic, social, informational, legal and other measures through the coordination with state and local self-government bodies, Armed Forces, and other military units of Azerbaijan. (MD art. 1.9)

The NSC states that separatism, ethnic and religious extremism are all their manifestations, and that the existence of major terrorist groups in the region are potential sources of threat to Azerbaijan's national security. According to the article 2.17 of MD, different forces continue to fuel the separatist tendencies in different regions of Azerbaijan by separate forces. (MD art. 2.17)

According to the NSC, the unresolved conflicts in neighboring countries provide fertile ground for transnational organized crime and other illegal activities, as well as the outbreak of conflicts in the regional countries also threaten Azerbaijan. (NSC art.3.5)

According to MD, in cases of (1) violation of regional military balance, (2) the deployment of troops close to Azerbaijan's state borders or territorial waters, (3) participation of neighboring states in interstate conflicts, and (4) the existence of domestic conflicts or armed riots, Azerbaijani Armed forces and other armed units could be involved in security protection. (MD art. 3.24) Although it is not mentioned in the document, this provision is accredited to the Georgia-Russian war in August 2008, and the possibility of another outbreak of this war is considered to be an additional threat to Azerbaijan's security. Also, this can explain the reason for a hasty adaptation of the Military doctrine by the government of Azerbaijan without any public and parliament discussions.

The article 4.29 of MD states that the Azerbaijani Republic does not allow the placement of foreign military bases within its territory, except the

¹⁰ Azərbaycan Respublikasının Hərbi doktrinası, 17 iyun 2010, 1.5 müddəa (Military Doctrine of the Republic of Azerbaijan)

http://www.mdi.gov.az/files/uploader/harbi_doktrina.doc (23.06.2017)

Here in after the references to the document of the Military Doctrine will be made in the text as in (MD art.)

cases stipulated in the international treaties that it supports. However, the article also states that in case of fundamental changes in military-political conditions, Azerbaijan has the right to place foreign military bases in its territory or temporarily to allow foreign military participation in other forms. (MD art. 4.29)

In this context, the signing of a protocol¹¹ for placing a Turkish manpower of the Armed Forces in Azerbaijan is important. According to that protocol, there is an area allocated to the Turkish armed forces near the military airport that is situated near Baku's "Gzl sherkh" base and Sumgaiti Haji Zeinalabdin airbase. On July 20, 2016, the protocol allocating an area in Azerbaijan to the Turkish armed forces was signed by the Azerbaijani president Ilham Aliyev. In September 2016, the aforementioned protocol was ratified by the Turkish Council of Ministers.¹² Interestingly, this accord between the two countries was reached after the Karabakh escalation in April 2016. This, in essence, is a powerful tool in the hands of Azerbaijan for making policy with regional actors.

It is worth mentioning that the protocol about the allocation of Turkish armed forces in Azerbaijan, signed in June 2016, is part of the Contract of cooperation in military education, technical, and scientific spheres, and is part of the Contract of Strategic Partnership and Mutual Assistance signed in 1996 and 2010 respectively between Turkish and Azerbaijani governments. Nevertheless, the text of the Protocol, signed in 2016, states that after the implementation of the latter, the documents signed in 1997 and 1999 are invalid. Despite that the Protocol is a revised version of the previous documents, the fact that the Turkish parliament has ratified the protocol as recently as June 2016, it is reasonable to state that the situation and processes have changed in the region, which have led to the revision of the previous agreements.

According to the Military Doctrine, the sole threat for Azerbaijan is the Republic of Armenia, while threats from other countries are less

¹¹ Signed in Baku, between the governments of two countries, on June 3, 2016

¹² The decision of Turkish Council of Ministers on Protocols:

<http://www.resmigazete.gov.tr/eskiler/2016/10/20161006M2-1.pdf> (19.06.2017)

probable and pertinent. However, local clashes and confrontations are not excluded. (MD art. 5.42)

Terrorist acts, and the targeting of state-owned infrastructures (including energy) are also considered to be a source of instability and security threat. (MD art. 5.42)

The 4.28 article of the Doctrine affirms that Azerbaijan has no intention of beginning military operations against any other state unless it becomes "**the victim of aggression.**" Article 4.26, of that document claims that Azerbaijan is interested in establishment, development, and the strengthening of friendship, partnership, or allied relations with its neighbors and other countries without taking military action.

In addition, article 4.1.3 of NSC states, that The Republic of Azerbaijan has made its airspace and airfields available in support of the international fight against international terrorist organizations. (NSC art. 4.1.3)

Nagorno-Karabakh

In both the NSC and MD, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is characterized as a main challenge against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. According to the NSC, "the aggression against the Republic of Azerbaijan" is a major determinant of the country's security environment and is a key factor in the formulation of its national security policy. (NSC: chapter 1)

According to article 2.14 of MD, "Armenia's continual occupation of Azerbaijan's territories" is the chief threat for Azerbaijan (MD art. 2.14.) The NSC states that restoration of its territorial integrity by making **use of all means laid down in international law** is a key objective of the National Security Policy of Azerbaijan. It should be noted, that two articles of MD (4.28 & 5.43) unanimously state that Azerbaijan has the right (by using all necessary means, **including force**) to liberate the territories "that have been seized and re-establish the territorial integrity" of the country.

It should be noted that the National Security Concept does not directly mention the use of military force.

The Articles found in the MD concerning the use of military force is

directly connected with tabling “the Madrid principles.”

The fact that Azerbaijan defines Articles about using military force can be viewed as a bid to strengthen its stance in the negotiation process. This means that in case of not accepting “the Madrid principles,” it has the right to use military force: the escalation of April 2016 is a clear example.

The annual growth of Azerbaijan’s armament should be viewed from this perspective.¹³

Furthermore, according to Article 4.28 of MD, any political, military, economic, or other support provided to the Republic of Armenia and “to the separatist regime created with Armenia’s support on Azerbaijani territory with the aim of official recognition of the results of occupation” will be interpreted as an act directed against the Republic of Azerbaijan. (MD art. 4.28)

Article 3.10 of NSC claims that the excessive accumulation of armaments and weapon systems in the region undermines regional stability and may distort the military balance between the countries in the region. A military build-up exceeding reasonable national security purposes, including the foreign military bases lacking effective control mechanisms, may create concerns about each player’s intentions and can result in a regional arms race.

With regard to practical approaches to the Nagorno Karabakh Conflict, it can be inferred from Ilham Aliyev’s speeches at Munich Security Conference that there are two main problems that should be addressed:

- Humanitarian (refugees, displaced); connected with the security of spring water resources (in the speech of 2016 it acquires an element of nature protection),
- Political; that is, the precondition of de-occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh’s environmental territories for the improvement of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations.

Regarding to the question of the normalization process between Armenia and Turkey over the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, Ilham Aliyev has announced that “Azerbaijan does not interfere in relations between two sovereign countries, and both Turkey and Armenia are sovereign countries and the relations between the two countries should be considered only by two

¹³ Centre for Analysis of World Arms Trade, Pivot table of World Arms Import 2008-2019. pp 604-607, <http://www.armstrade.org/files/obrazecglava4.pdf> (21.06.2017)

countries." According to Aliyev, the opportunity should be granted to Armenia and Turkey to find a solution amongst them. However, simultaneously, Aliyev has noticed that if the normalization processes in Turkish-Armenian relations and the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are carried out in one package, peace can be achieved in the region.¹⁴ Unlike these formulations, İlham Aliyev's rhetoric is rather aggressive and militant when he makes speeches at "New Azerbaijan" incumbent party conventions: this may be due to his speech being addressed to the home auditory.¹⁵

In reality, "the Madrid principles," around which the two sides negotiate, continue to be the main map of regulating the conflict, even though, Azerbaijan continues to acquire more armor simultaneously.

2. AZERBAIJAN'S SECURITY POLICY PRIORITIES

For understanding Azerbaijan's security policy priorities, it is important to analyze the speeches of different high-ranking officials of Azerbaijan, particularly, the speeches of president of Azerbaijan İlham Aliyev and the Foreign Secretary Elmar Mammadyarov made during international security meetings such as Munich Security Conference.

The main issues discussed by the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs are as follows:

- The issue of Economic security,
- The issue of Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. (see above)

Economic Security Issue

In all of his speeches delivered at the Munich Security Conference used in this research, Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev has always announced that energy security cannot be separated from national security.

According to Aliyev's speeches, investments in oil reserve were the only way for the Azerbaijani Republic to strengthen its independence and

¹⁴ Prezident İlham Əliyev Münxen Təhlükəsizlik Konfransının "Təbii sərvətlərin təhlükəsizliyi və dəyişən global güc" mövzusunda müzakirələrində iştirak etmişdir, 05 fevral 2010, <http://files.preslib.az/site/ialiyev/2010.pdf> (22.06.2017)

¹⁵ İlham Aliev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2005, <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/28>; Aliev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2008 <http://yap.org.az/az/view/pages/40>; Aliev Speech at "New Azerbaijan" Party conventions, 2013 <http://az.president.az/articles/8393> (19.06.2017)

overcome difficulties in the 1990s. In one of his speeches made in 2017, Aliyev especially emphasized the importance of the pipeline system of three different pipelines connecting Azerbaijan with European markets, and connecting Azerbaijan with the countries on route to European markets.¹⁶ According to Aliyev, the pipeline system opens new prospects for a regional cooperation format where there are some Caucasian countries – Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey, and then countries of the European Union i.e. Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Albania.¹⁷

During the Munich Security Conferences in 2017 and 2016, Aliyev also highlighted the importance of diversifying Azerbaijan's export potential and reducing its economic dependence on oil and gas.¹⁸

Aliyev also mentioned in his speech that for the government of Azerbaijan, energy security and energy policy was a way to modernize, to diversify, and to invest in the infrastructure because the money accumulated from oil sales was invested in infrastructure in order to reduce oil dependence. According to Aliyev, that diversification policy resulted in today's non-oil sector, which accounts for more than 70% of Azerbaijan's GDP.¹⁹ Aliyev also announced that Azerbaijan depends on oil prices with respect to the country export as oil and gas account for 90% of Azerbaijan's total export.²⁰ In spite of this, the CIA World Factbook's Azerbaijan report states the portion of non-oil sector in GDP of Azerbaijan in 2016 was around 50%.²¹

Aliyev underlined the importance of implementing large-scale reforms including privatization, diversification of the economy, improvement of business climate in order to reduce the dependence on oil

¹⁶ Ilham Aliyev attended roundtable of Munich Security Conference 17 february 2017, <http://en.president.az/articles/22869> (19.06.2017)

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ President Ilham Aliyev attended Energy Security Roundtable as part of Munich Security Conference, 12 february 2016 , World of diplomacy journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Azerbaijan, http://www.mfa.gov.az/files/file/Diplomatiya_Alemi_41.pdf (19.06.2017)

¹⁹ Ibid

²⁰ Ibid

²¹ CIA World factbook: Azerbaijan, <https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/aj.html> (18.06.2017)

and gas, and the importance of investments in technology, non-oil economy, agriculture, and ICT.²²

In the 2015 Speech, Aliyev announced that issues related to energy policy are strongly linked to national interests and to the global political map of Europe in the South Caucasus region.²³ He mentioned the importance of the agreement with Turkey on the Trans-Anatolian gas pipeline – TANAP. He also highlighted the importance of the cooperation between Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, and the other EU countries involved in the Southern Gas Corridor project, among others. According to Aliyev, the Southern Gas Corridor is an energy security project, and therefore, it should be treated as a project of national security of the countries involved²⁴.

During the Munich Security Conferences in past three years (2017, 2016, 2015,) Aliyev mainly discussed the importance of decreasing the dependence of Azerbaijan's economy on oil and gas and developing the other non-oil economic fields. This is likely connected to the global drop in oil prices. In the earlier speeches, Aliyev especially concentrated on the issue of diversification and finding the right balance between the producer, Azerbaijan, and consumers.²⁵

It should be noted that during one of the 2012 speeches, Aliyev also spoke about environmental problems. According to Aliyev, for many years, Azerbaijan's oil reserves have been developed without any attention being paid to the environment. He has also mentioned that it is Azerbaijan's obligation to clean up the “legacy” left over from the previous decades of oil production off- and onshore, and to contribute to the global environmental cause.

²² President Ilham Aliyev attended Energy Security Roundtable as part of Munich Security Conference, 12 february 2016 , World of diplomacy journal of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Republic of Azerbaijan,

http://www.mfa.gov.az/files/file/Diplomatiya_Alemi_41.pdf (19.06.2017)

²³ Ilham Aliyev attended “Diversification strategies” roundtable of the Munich Security Conference 06 february 2015, <http://en.president.az/articles/14264> (19.06.2017)

²⁴ Ibid

²⁵ Speech by Ilham Aliyev at the Munich Security Conference, 4 february 2012 , <http://en.president.az/articles/4209> (20.06.2017)

In his Speech in 2010, Aliyev particularly concentrated on the issue of conducting oil and gas exports from Azerbaijan to European countries.²⁶ He also underlined the importance of investments in creating infrastructure and pipeline projects for exporting gas and oil from Azerbaijan to European markets²⁷.

Another noteworthy security formula is the so called “3G concept” announced by Foreign Secretary of the Republic of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadyarov in 2013 during the Munich Security Conference:

- Geology - oil and energy resources of Azerbaijan,
- Geography - Azerbaijan under connection between east and west, and south and north,
- Geo-strategy - both geology and geography move Azerbaijan to geostrategic position.²⁸

The analysis of the reflection of Economic Security issues at the Munich Conference platform shows that Azerbaijan is attempting to present itself as a stable (longstanding) partner to the international community and potential investors. That is, a country with diversified, modernized, and is a non-oil dependent economy, yet is also as a reliable energy supplier and carrier on the other hand.

3. REGIONAL AND EXTRA REGIONAL/GLOBAL SECURITY SYSTEMS

Although it is mentioned in the NSC that integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic political, security, economic and other institutions, cooperation with NATO and NATO member-states constitutes the strategic goal of the Republic of Azerbaijan (NSC art. 4.1.2.,) the MD

²⁶ Prezident İlham Əliyev Münxen Təhlükəsizlik Konfransının “Təbii sərvətlərin təhlükəsizliyi və dəyişən qlobal güc” mövzusunda müzakirələrində iştirak etmişdir, 05 fevral 2010, <http://files.preslib.az/site/ialiyev/2010.pdf> (24.06.2017)

²⁷ Ibid

²⁸ Security and Stability in Southeastern Europe and the Caucasus, Elmar Maharram oğlu Mammadyarov (Minister of Foreign Affairs, Republic of Azerbaijan), 2 February 2013, https://www.securityconference.de/en/media-search/s_video/breakout-session-security-and-stability-in-southeastern-europe-and-the-caucasus/s_term/Elmar/38:40—48:35minutes

Document does not mention the integration of Azerbaijan with Euro-Atlantic structures as a strategic goal. At the same time, the MD document only affirms Azerbaijan's continued willingness to cooperate with NATO, particularly in its peacekeeping missions. (MD art 7.61)

On the topic of cooperation with international organizations, the NSC identifies the UN, OSCE, the Council of Europe, Organization of Islamic Conference, the Commonwealth of Independent States, Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization, and GUAM as organizations “of great importance for the security and foreign policy of the Republic of Azerbaijan.” (NSC art.4.1.4)

Since the adoption of the Document, it is clear that the cooperation level with OSCE is the lowest. The Baku Office of the Organization is closed. Despite that, the OSCE Minsk Group remains as the only political tool for resolving the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.

On the level of regional cooperation, the NSC gives priority to the “trilateral strategic partnership and deepening cooperation between Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey” as a stabilizing factor in the region, mainly because of its importance as a hydrocarbon infrastructure corridor. The NSC sees Armenia as the main destabilizer in the region and views the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement as a precondition of normalizing bilateral relations. (NSC 4.1., 5.1)

The NSC identifies the relations between **Azerbaijan and Russia** as one of “strategic partnership and cooperation.”

The other aspect of regional cooperation is the establishment of “peaceful and good neighborly relations **with Caspian littoral countries** and joint participation in regional projects.” The document mentions Russia and Kazakhstan as key partners among the Caspian littoral countries. In spite of this, the Concept mentions that Azerbaijan shares “a common rich, historical and cultural heritage” with Iran and “is interested in promoting mutually beneficial relations with Iran in political, economic, cultural and other spheres.” (NSC art. 4.1. 5.1)

According to the NSC’s main vectors of non-regional cooperation, Azerbaijan sees the expansion of economic and political relations with the Baltic, East, and South-East European States, the **Far East and South-**

East Asia (China, Republic of Korea, and Japan), and the Central Asian countries, Middle Eastern countries (NSC art. 4.1., 5.2,) and also defining Azerbaijan's relations with the U.S. as a strategic partnership.

Though the NSC mentions the significance of cooperation with Turkey, Georgia, USA, Russia, NATO, and with GUAM member states (Georgia, Ukraine, and Moldova,) and refers to some of them as strategic partners, the MD perhaps significantly does not identify any other country as an ally.

According to the NSC, bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey (which are sharing ethnic, cultural and linguistic affinity) are further expanding and deepening on the level of **strategic partnership**. (NSC 4.1.5.1) However, the final version of the MD does not name Turkey (or any other state) **as an ally**. This can be connected with Baku's indignation because of the Zurich Protocols signed by Turkey and Armenia in 2009. The protocols were aimed at opening the borders and establishing diplomatic relations between the two countries. However, this process was stopped.

In Azerbaijan's security sphere, regional and non-regional cooperation can be described as balanced, based on the creation of a checks system.

On the regional level, Azerbaijan has been able to play on the contradictory interests of Turkey, Russia, and Iran. Thus, the signing of the 2016 Protocol for deploying Turkish Armed Forces in Azerbaijan should be viewed in this context (see above.)

The European region sees Azerbaijan mainly as a potential market for energy resources and consumption, or as a transport hub for goods.

4. MIDDLE EAST TRANSFORMATIONS AND AZERBAIJAN'S SECURITY ENVIRONMENT

As a corollary of transformation processes going on in the Middle East, there is a high level of terrorist threat, which in turn, is a threat to Azerbaijan's security. Particularly, the activities of the DAESH and the membership of Azerbaijani residents to that group and, generally, the Azeri participation in the Syrian conflict make the aforementioned threats

feasible.

The number of Azerbaijani fighters in Syria started to increase with the growing international prominence of DAESH. They mainly formed a separate Azerbaijani Jamaat in “Jaish al-muhajirin wa-l-ansar” group. According to a “Combating Terrorism Centre” report published in April 2016, more than 4,000 foreign fighters from 71 countries joined ISIS in 2013-2014, and 122 of those fighters are Azerbaijani residents.²⁹ According to other sources, 1,500 people from Azerbaijan went to Syria to fight with DAESH, but now, given the deteriorating security situation, many of them are returning home where they pose an increasingly serious problem for Baku.³⁰ On the other hand, in March 2017, Lieutenant General Madat Guliyev of The State Security Service of Azerbaijan reported that upwards of 900 Azerbaijani citizens have joined the ranks of ISIS terrorists in Syria and Iraq.³¹

SINIR DIŐI EDİLEN / DEPORTATION INFORMATION

AB ÜYESİ İLK 10 ÜLKE / TOP 10 EU COUNTRIES

İLK 10 ÜLKE / TOP 10 COUNTRIES

UYRUĐU / NATIONALITY	TOPLAM TOTAL
FRANSA / FRANCE	252
ALMANYA / GERMANY	133
BİRLEŐİK KRALLIK / UNITED KINGDOM	106
İSVEÇ / SWEDEN	55
BELÇİKA / BELGIUM	37
AVUSTURYA / AUSTRIA	31
DANİMARKA / DENMARK	23
HOLLANDA / HOLLAND	22
BULGARİSTAN / BULGARIA	21
İSPANYA / SPAIN	21
DİĐER / OTHER	71
TOPLAM / TOTAL	772

UYRUĐU / NATIONALITY	TOPLAM TOTAL
RUSYA / RUSSIA	804
ENDONEZYA / INDONESIA	435
TACİKİSTAN / TAJIKISTAN	308
İRAK / IRAQ	278
FRANSA / FRANCE	254
AZERBAYCAN / AZERBAIJAN	252
FAS / FAS	183
MISIR / EGYPT	150
SUUDİ ARABİSTAN / SAUDI ARABIA	141
ALMANYA / GERMANY	133
DİĐER / OTHER	2.019
TOPLAM / TOTAL	4.957

²⁹ Brian Dodwell, Daniel Milton, Don Rassler, The Caliphate’s Global Workforce: An Inside Look at the Islamic State’s Foreign Fighter Paper Trail, Combating Terrorism Center at West Point, 2016, p. 11, https://www.ctc.usma.edu/v2/wp-content/uploads/2016/04/CTC_Caliphates-Global-Workforce-Report1.pdf (19.06.2017)

³⁰ “ISIS Fighters Returning to Azerbaijan Seen Creating Serious Problems for Baku,” Goble, P., Windows on Eurasia, 7 november 2015, <http://windowoneurasia2.blogspot.nl/2015/11/isis-fighters-returning-to-azerbaijan.html> (19.06.2017)

³¹ State Security Officer: More Than 900 Azerbaijanis in the Ranks of ISIS, p. 57, 7 March 2017, <https://www.meydan.tv/en/site/news/21656/> (28.06.2017)

Azerbaijani citizens usually try to cross the conflict zones from Turkey. According to the General Directorate of Migration Management, from 2011 – July 2017, 4,957 foreign individuals were listed as foreigners who were arrested and/or deported at the border cities while trying to cross the conflict zones. 252 of these individuals were citizens of Azerbaijan.³²

It should be noted that the Azerbaijani residents are engaged in the Syrian conflict both in Sunni radical groups and in pro-governmental Shia/Iranian groups.³³

The engagement of the Azerbaijani residents in the Middle East conflict and their affiliation to either terrorist groups, or “non-legitimate military” groups distort the Azerbaijani Security environment. On one hand, they promote the spread of Sunni extremist ideology in the country, which results in the increase of risk of terrorism. Yet on the other hand, it promotes the deepening of the Sunni-Shia division inside the country.

CONCLUSION

1. Nearly 10 years have passed since the adoption of the National Security Concept and Military Doctrine, and a lot of changes have occurred. With that, new problems and challenges in the South Caucasus and Middle East regions have also taken place, so these documents should be updated to address security concerns, and to allocate responsibilities among different national security institutions.

According to the NSC and MD, the main threats and challenges for Azerbaijan’s security are:

- Separatism, ethnic, political, and religious extremism,
- Terrorism and proliferation of weapons of mass destruction,
- External political, military, or economic dependence,
- Violation of The Republic of Azerbaijan’s state borders by military

³² Turkey’s Fight Against DEASH, Ministry of interior of Turkey, July 2017, <http://www.mia.gov.tr/kurumlar/mia.gov.tr/Genel/deas%CC%A7%207%20temmuz.pdf> (23.07.2017)

³³ Konfliktoloq, siyasi İslamın araşdırmaçılarından olan Arif Yunusun Publika.Az –a müsahibəsi, 3 Fevral 2014, <http://publika.az/news/nida/3970.html> (21.06.2017)

units and armed groups,

- Diversification of the economy and development of the non-oil sectors,
- The safeness of drinking water sources and the existence of the Metsamor atomic station,
- Regional militarization, creation of military bases in the region or directly near the state borders and water territories of the Azerbaijani Republic.

The main objectives that Aliyev points out in his speeches at the “New Azerbaijan” Party Conventions concern strengthening the country’s internal stability, where the consumer is mainly the inner auditorium. For the inner audience, Aliyev uses more military rhetoric concerning the Nagorno-Karabakh issue, and he promotes Heidar Aliev’s cult of personality. By the logic of ruling elites in Baku, this can strengthen the country’s internal stability.

Though it is not directly mentioned in the MD and NSC texts, the increase of Iran’s influence on the Shia Muslim population of Azerbaijan is also considered as an external threat. One of the most interesting cases referring to Iran’s influence is the Shiite village of Nardaran on the Absheron Peninsula. In Nardaran, Iran’s influence facilitated the emergence of a higher degree of religiosity amongst the population with a more profound degree of respect for Islamic traditions. The authorities of Azerbaijan occasionally carry out operations against the population of Nardaran. One of the most recent examples of this is the armed clashes between the population of Nardaran and police in 2015.³⁴

2. The priorities of the Azerbaijani Security Policy outline two directions: settlement of the Karabakh Conflict, and Energy Security issues.

The unresolved Nagorno Karabakh Conflict is a main challenge against the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. The resolution format of the Karabakh conflict is within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group Mandate. The so-called “Madrid Principles” that are

³⁴ Azerbaijan Deepens Crackdown On Shi’ite Stronghold, December 01, 2015, <https://www.rferl.org/a/azerbaijan-nardaran-raid/27400436.html> (24.06.2017)

on the negotiating table are acceptable for Azerbaijan. For clarification purposes within that frame, Azerbaijan has prescribed its right of using arms in the Military Doctrine to restore regional integrity.

In the security sphere, Azerbaijan's policy is to provide transit by connecting the North-South and West-East axis. It is also trying to participate in various projects held by the geopolitical center with its own hydrocarbon resources, trying to maneuver in the domain of clashes of interest, and to expand its role and position.

3. On the regional and extra-regional levels, Azerbaijan is trying to balance its security issues through estimating the interests of the parties engaged; positioning itself as a provider of hydrocarbon resources and a country of North-South and East-Western transit routes.

It can be inferred that integration into the European and Euro-Atlantic political, security, economic and other institutions, and cooperation with NATO and NATO member-states constitutes a strategic goal. In accepting the U.S. as a sole regional actor, it also prescribes relations with the U.S. as a strategic priority.

From security perspective, Azerbaijan's approaches to its relations with regional countries are twofold. On the one hand, the importance of trilateral relations between Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan for maintaining stability in the South Caucasus and providing the uninterrupted functioning of transit roads is of great interest, yet so are the possibilities of maneuvering within a clash of regional interests between Russia, Turkey, and Iran. In this regard, Turkey is Azerbaijan's main partner, with a high cooperation level, even though it is not stated as an ally in the documents.

The signing of the protocol for allocating a territory to the Turkish Armed Forces in the Azerbaijani region is a key tool for Baku to maintain security, which can be employed in extreme and/or major force situations only, as it might undermine self-government of the country.

Unlike Baku, Turkey can implement functions from the protocol, as it dramatically increases Turkey's role in the regional sphere.

In the case of ratifying the agreement, Turkey will be in the Caspian Sea basin, as according to the protocol, the site of the Turkish staff is

Sumgait. Appearing in the Caspian basin, Turkey will impose new realities on Iran and Russia. Another important fact is that Sumgait is the center of Sunnite Muslims with wahabi/ ikhwanji moods and the choice of the site is not accidental.

4. The Middle East transformation processes and, especially, the activities of Islamic extremist groups in Syria and Iraq, present certain dangers. Azerbaijani citizens are involved in the Syrian conflict both among opposition militants, and in the Syrian governmental forces. The return of these forces to Azerbaijan is a source of instability for the authorities. On the one hand, the Sunni extremist moods intensify, and on the other, the role of Iranian influenced groups on public life increases.

Turkey may be viewed as a most interested party in strengthening the Sunni extremist groups (which mainly share the ikhwanji ideology,) as it can use these factors as a tool for keeping the Azerbaijani authorities under dependence.

**ՏԱՐԱԾԱԾՐՉԱՆԱՅԻՆ ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ
ԴԻՆԱՄԻԿԱ ԱԴՐԲԵՉԱՆ**

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Քանալի քառեր՝ Ադրբեջանի ազգային անվտանգության հայեցակարգ, ռազմական հայեցակարգ, Արցախյան հակամարտություն, Հարավային Կովկաս, տարածաշրջանային անվտանգություն

Հետազոտությունը ներկայացնում է Ադրբեջանի ռազմական և ազգային անվտանգության հայեցակարգերը և դրանց փոփոխման դինամիկան, ինչպես նաև փորձ է արվում ցույց տալ Մերձավոր Արևելքում և Հարավային Կովկասում ընթացող քաղաքական և ռազմական գործընթացների ազդեցությունը Ադրբեջանի անվտանգային միջավայրի վրա: Հետազոտության հիմքում ընկած են Ադրբեջանի «Ազգային անվտանգության հայեցակարգ» և «Ռազմական դոկտրին» փաստաթղթերը և այդ երկրի նախագահ Իլհամ Ալիևի ելույթները:

Հետազոտության հիմնական խնդիրներն են.

- Հասկանալ «Ազգային անվտանգության հայեցակարգ» և «Ռազմական դոկտրին» փաստաթղթերում նախանշված Ադրբեջանին ուղղված մարտահրավերները և սպառնալիքները,
- Հասկանալ Ադրբեջանի՝ ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականության առաջնահերթությունները,
- Պարզել Ադրբեջանի դիրքորոշումը տարածաշրջանային և գլոբալ անվտանգային համակարգերի հարցում,
- Սահմանել մերձավորարևելյան և հարավկովկասյան տարածաշրջաններում ընթացող ռազմական և քաղաքական գործընթացների ազդեցությունը Ադրբեջանի անվտանգային միջավայրի վրա: