



**POLITICAL
COMMITTEE (GA4)**

**PROMOTING POLITICAL
STABILITY THROUGH
EQUITABLE DEVELOPMENT
INITIATIVES IN THE
CAUCASUS REGION**

**MAXIMILIAN
SCHOENROCK
ZOE STYLIANIDES
ANNA TSIOTSKA**



IV ZYGMUN 2021

@ American School of Warsaw

Committee: GA4 – Special Political and Decolonization Committee

Issue: Promoting political stability through equitable development initiatives in the Caucasus region

Author: Maximilian Schoenrock

Chairs: Maximilian Schoenrock, Zoe Stylianides and Anna Tsiotska

Table of Contents

I. Introduction

II. Definition of Key Terms

III. General Overview

IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views

V. Relevant United Nations Documents

VI. Questions to Consider

VII. Conclusion

VIII. Bibliography

I. Introduction

The Caucasus region is home to the nations of Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and southern parts of Russia. Geographically, is surrounded on all sides by borders both natural and manmade. Spanning from the Black Sea in the west to the Caspian Sea in the east, the region is located directly to the south of Russia but is partially cut off from it by the Caucasus mountain range. To the south, the presence of a smaller mountain range and the countries of Turkey and Iran have isolated the Caucasus from the rest of the world.

This isolation from other parts of the world has contributed to increased political instability in the area, which was exacerbated by the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1991. As a result of stalled economic development and inter-ethnic tensions, the Caucasus now contains a set of protracted conflicts, such as the ongoing instability in Russia's North Caucasus area or the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The widespread political instability is jeopardizing the lives and livelihoods of millions of people, and recent economic crises continue to dominate regional politics. The development of these nations has become stagnant, and the region as a whole is in dire need of assistance. On the Political Stability index,

the four Caucasian nations are ranked 135th (Georgia), 138th (Armenia), 141st (Russia), and 150th (Azerbaijan).

II. Definition of Key Terms

a) Equitable development: a range of approaches for meeting the needs of underdeveloped communities through various policies, programs, and decisions that benefit all members of said communities. In particular, equitable development usually involves people-focused strategies, or efforts that support community residents, and place-focused strategies, or efforts that seek to stabilize and improve the community infrastructure. Equitable development also typically involves a reduction in inequalities among local communities.

b) Political Instability: the incidence of political upheaval or violence in a society, such as assassinations, demonstrations, and so forth.

III. General Overview

Previous Conflicts & Causes for Instability

A. Collapse of the USSR

The collapse of the USSR, which resulted in the creation of the post-soviet states Georgia, Azerbaijan, and Armenia, meant that each of these formerly codependent nations now had to fend for themselves. Because of the remoteness of the region, less aid was provided to the Caucasus than some of the European nations, and their economies suffered. The swift implementation of new governments also contributed to political instability and unrest, since laws had to be drawn up in a very short amount of time and thus the nations were built on insufficient legal frameworks.

B. Russo-Georgian War

The 2008 Russo-Georgian war was fought over the ex-Georgian territories of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, which had been under *de facto* control of Russia since 1992. After Georgia's shift towards pro-Western policy, diplomatic relations soured, and Russia invaded Georgia under the pretext of a "peace enforcement operation" (Allison, 1145-1171) in 2008. After the conflict, Georgia severed diplomatic relations with Russia.

C. Nagorno-Karabakh War

This is the latest of many conflicts surrounding the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, and the increased amount of clashes culminated in a 2020 conflict where Azerbaijan reclaimed territory that it had lost in the early 1990s. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan were supplied with weapons by Russia, with some international observers claiming that Russia is using the ongoing conflict to destabilize the region further.

IV. Major Parties Involved and their Views

Countries, organisations, individuals, etc.

A. Russia

Russia has a vested interest in the Caucasus region. In particular, it has a longstanding alliance with Armenia, and acted as an arms supplier during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. However, since the Armenian Revolution in 2018, this relationship has been deteriorating in favor of strengthening ties with Azerbaijan. The last of the three nations, Georgia, broke diplomatic relations with Russia in 2008. In general, since 1991 Russia's relationship with the Caucasian nations has contributed to their political instability, and its continued attempts to embroil itself in regional politics have led to further tension in the area. Russia has also drawn criticism from its involvement in the Nagorno-Karabakh war as the mediator of negotiations, amidst claims that it is benefitting from the situation and cannot be unbiased given its interests in the region.

B. Georgia

Georgia shares the longest border with Russia of all of the Caucasian countries, which is most likely why it has had the most conflicts with Russia. There are disputes over the regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia, and Georgia has accused Russia of breaking 2008 agreements by continuing to occupy those regions. It is the only Caucasian country that is openly hostile towards Russia, but has had few disagreements with Armenia and Azerbaijan.

C. Armenia

Despite its claims of good political relations with Azerbaijan, the two nations have yet to define a clear border, leading to a host of territorial disputes. Since the Armenian resolution, its relationship with Russia has also suffered, with Russian politicians comparing President Nikol Pashinyan to Ukrainian President Petro Poroshenko, who is considered to be hostile towards Russia. The effects of the revolution, which came about due to discontent with the government, are still felt today and further contribute to Armenia's political instability.

D. Azerbaijan

As the most populous nation in the Caucasus (excluding Russia), Azerbaijan has a larger land forces division, numbering 56,850 (Hackett, 216), than Georgia and Armenia. Azerbaijan comes into conflict with Armenia, notably in 2020 during the Nagorno-Karabakh war. It seeks to restore "territorial integrity" ("National Security Concept") and its government has been accused of authoritarian leadership as well as a poor human rights record.

E. Turkey

While not a part of the Caucasus region itself, Turkey's influence in the area cannot be understated. It borders both Georgia and Armenia and while its relations with Georgia have generally been cordial, Turkey and Armenia have historically been hostile to one another. While normalization protocols were signed in the mid late 2000s, these have since been annulled, and several territorial disputes have been raised by both sides. On the whole, Turkey is extending its influence in the Caucasus, and its presence has led to increased tension in recent years.

F. Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIRPI)

The SIRPI has been involved in resolving conflicts in the Caucasus for over a decade, and focuses on tracking militarization as well as conflict trends. Recently, researchers at the institute have been identifying potential peacebuilding initiatives and analysing the security policies of major parties in the conflicts.

G. OSCE Minsk Group

The Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, or OSCE, created the so-called Minsk Group in 1992 in order to negotiate a peaceful resolution to conflicts over Nagorno-Karabakh between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Since then, it has held several summits with the representatives of both nations as well as several Security Council members such as Russia, France, and the United States. The Minsk Group is still actively working towards its primary goal of mitigating regional tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan to this day.

V. Relevant United Nations Documents

["On approval of the National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan"](#)

This document identifies the aims and objectives of Azerbaijan's foreign policy and military, which includes national interests such as the establishment of civil society and human rights, as well as threats to national security such as terrorism.

["Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia"](#)

This resolution aims to resolve the refugee crisis caused by the Russo-Georgian war in 2008 as well as the smaller regional conflicts in Abkhazia, Tskhinvali and South Ossetia. This document is revisited every year, with the earliest version having been passed in 2007.

["The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan"](#)

This resolution was aimed at halting the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, demanding the "unconditional withdrawal of all Armenian forces" from Azerbaijani territory.

VI. Questions to Consider

- What is your country's political relation with the major parties involved? ● What kind of initiatives might be most effective at reducing political instability in the region?
- Which other NGOs might have an interest in the Caucasus situation, and how might they assist in reducing political instability in the region?
- What other delegations might have similar aims in solving this issue?

- Are there any disadvantages to the proposed initiatives?
- Are there any existing initiatives which could be strengthened?
- What long term impact will the proposed initiatives have?
- Has your country already done something about the issue?

VII. Conclusion

While the issues present in the Caucasus may be confined to that region, it is nonetheless vital for the global community to take the first steps towards eliminating the political instability observed in the area - any extended conflicts may well deteriorate into a large-scale crisis due to the involvement of member states such as Russia, Turkey, or Iran. To that end, it is recommended that all delegations diligently research what measures their nation might wish to take in supporting this endeavor, as well as seek out delegations with similar aims and resources in order to tackle the issue efficiently and effectively. It is the ultimate goal of this committee to structure resolutions which aim to alleviate and resolve political instability in the Caucasus through equitable development initiatives.

VIII. Bibliography

ALLISON, ROY. "Russia Resurgent? Moscow's Campaign to 'Coerce Georgia to Peace.'" *International Affairs*, vol. 84, no. 6, 2008, pp. 1145–1171., doi:10.1111/j.1468-2346.2008.00762.x.

Gevorgyan, Artyom. "South Caucasus: The Main Issues of Regional Insecurity and Instability." United States Army War College, Mar. 2013.

Hackett, James. *The Military Balance 2013: the Annual Assessment of Global Military Capabilities and Defence Economics*. Routledge, 2013.

Jansiz, Ahmad, and Mohammad Reza Khojaste. "Conflicts in the Caucasus Region and Its Effects on Regional Security Approach." *Journal of Politics and Law*, vol. 8, no. 1, 2015, doi:10.5539/jpl.v8n1p83.

Klimenko, Ekaterina. "Conflict and Peacebuilding in the Caucasus." *SIPRI*, www.sipri.org/research/conflict-peace-and-security/russia-and-eurasia/conflict-and-peacebuilding-caucasus#:~:text=The%20Caucasus%20contains%20a%20set,risk%20overspill%20beyond%20the%20region.

Kucera, Joshua. "Russian Press Portrays Armenia's Pashinyan as 'Carbon Copy' of Poroshenko." *Eurasianet*, 23 July 2018, eurasianet.org/russian-press-portrays-armenias-pashinyan-as-carbon-copy-of-poroshenko.

Laub, Zachary. "Instability in Russia's North Caucasus Region." *Council on Foreign Relations*, Council on Foreign Relations, 7 May 2014, www.cfr.org/backgrounder/instability-russias-north-caucasus-region.

Melvin, Neil J. "Building Stability in the North Caucasus." Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, May 2007.

"Order of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan On Approval of the National Security Concept of the Republic of Azerbaijan." Government of Azerbaijan.

"Political Stability by Country, around the World." *TheGlobalEconomy.com*, 2019, [www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/wb_political_stability/#:~:text=Political%20stability%20index%20\(%2D2.5,available%20from%201996%20to%202019](http://www.theglobaleconomy.com/rankings/wb_political_stability/#:~:text=Political%20stability%20index%20(%2D2.5,available%20from%201996%20to%202019).

"Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 1 June 2017." United Nations, 2 June 2017.

"Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 14 March 2008." United Nations, 25 Apr. 2008.

"Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 3 September 2020." United Nations, 8 Sept. 2020.

"Resolution Adopted by the General Assembly on 9 September 2009." United Nations, 30 Sept. 2009.

Ruane, Ciara. "Stability and Instability in the Caucasus: Social Cohesion." *Open Access Government*, 10 Sept. 2017, www.openaccessgovernment.org/stability-instability-caucasus-social-cohesion-2/35705/.