

THE EUROPEAN GEOPOLITICAL FORUM

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Report on the Seminar Series

What the South Caucasus Region Could Be:

Exploring the Role of Economic Initiatives as Peace Building Tools in the Nagorno-Karabakh Context

*Brussels, Belgium
27 March, 2014*

*Berlin, Germany
7-8 July, 2014*

Common Heritage, Shared Future?





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*Exploring the Role of Economic Initiatives as Peace Building
Tools in the Nagorno-Karabakh Context:
Summary of Conclusions*

Published by European Geopolitical Forum

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Director's Foreword

Brussels,
September, 2014

Dear Reader;

When analysts try to work out the root causes of some of the world's most intractable conflicts, economic factors often come to the fore. Conflict over, in particular, natural resources, has spurred a whole industry of academic and policy literature linking economic factors to the cause of conflict in modern-day international relations. Many of us have subsequently become obsessed with the links between geopolitics, energy and/or natural resources, security, global tensions, and, inevitably, bloodshed. We at the European Geopolitical Forum, however, have reason to believe that economic factors may contribute just as much to peace building and conflict resolution, as they can to the eruption of war and fratricide. This theme remains a much under-researched arena, however. Europe has demonstrated that politically-driven projects promoting economic integration and the 'pooling of sovereignty' can, most unequivocally, cement peace building processes, primarily by reducing the incentives for countries to wage war on one another. This, for better or worse, has resulted in the Nobel Peace Prize being accorded onto the European Union. Can such experiences be replicated in other regions of the world which have been afflicted by war? Can countries in troubled regions of the world let bygones-be-bygones, and focus on reciprocal trade and investment flows, instead of manning the trenches?

The ensuing booklet reports in some detail on our honest efforts at introducing the prospect of economic incentives as conflict resolution tools to the people of the South Caucasus, namely Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Building on our previous work on the region, our efforts have resulted in the staging of two highly interactive dialogue sessions during the first half of 2014, where we brought Armenians and Azerbaijanis together to discuss the prospect of a common economic future for their region. This, in itself, is no mean



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feat – talk of the reigniting of hostilities was evident in the media in these countries whilst we gathered in Berlin for our second meeting last July. That said, the seminars have clearly shown that there is a will for nascent economic cooperation to emerge between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. Furthermore, we have learned that the region needs not only the prospect of economic cooperation, but an entire post-conflict scenario-building blueprint for integration and regional (economic) development, inclusive of projects of ‘common economic interest’ that can be developed jointly. While military strategists in these countries keep in place their contingencies for war, our work offers ‘cool heads’ in the region an alternative choice: the path to eventual peace, prosperity and possibly economic integration for the entire South Caucasus region.

The ensuing pages provide a flavour of the ideas and concrete suggestions that were gathered in light of frank yet constructive discussions between Armenians and Azerbaijanis. We hope that our endeavours will offer decision makers working with these challenging issues some real food for thought, and, will maybe open an entirely new path to ‘economic dialogue’ between Armenians and Azerbaijanis in the realm of Track II diplomacy.



Dr Marat Terterov
Founder and Principal Director of the European Geopolitical Forum



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Dr Marat Terterov, EGF Principal Director, speaks in the opening of the constructive event, which included approximately 40 experts from the region, international organizations, and NGOs

Overview

Brussels, Belgium
27 March, 2014

On 27 March 2014, the European Geopolitical Forum (EGF), in cooperation with international NGO partners, organized an expert roundtable on ***“Exploring the Role of Economic Initiatives as Peace Building Tools in the Nagorno-Karabakh Context”***. This event was attended by more than 40 experts from the South Caucasus region, Brussels-based think tanks, and international organizations who engaged in discussion in a constructive, informal ‘atmosphere of exchange’. The roundtable focused constructive energies on discussing a common future in an economically integrated South Caucasus, as a way to build mutual trust aimed at helping to overcome the current stalemate within political and security negotiations.

Following up its recent study titled ***“A Pragmatic Review of Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Resolution: Could Economic Incentives Help Break the Deadlock?”***, EGF has deepened its research on ‘economic incentives as peace building tools in the unresolved conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh’, and plans to publish a new study towards the end of this year. This research will include extensive outreach activity consisting of consultation rounds with stakeholders and presentation of the research findings. The roundtable



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discussion on 27 March was the first outreach event, and it was comprised of three main interactive discussion sessions. Each session was initiated by a few ‘discussion openers’, and followed by fully interactive discussion under the Chatham House Rule.

Session I: Missed opportunities and lessons learned from conflict resolution processes



Pascal Heyman, Dr Gulshan Pashayeva, and Ambassador Bernard Fassier listen closely

The year 2014 marks 20 years since the signing of the cease fire agreement over the Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) conflict, following which peace negotiations commenced under the auspices of the Minsk Group. The aim of this session was to reflect on opportunities lost with the subsequent peace process and to consider lessons which may have been learned for future occasions. While the general view that the peace process was currently in a state of stalemate seemed to prevail, speakers were asked to elaborate on whether considerations of ‘missed opportunities’ could provide some clues for onward normalization and peaceful coexistence between Armenian and Azerbaijani peoples.

The following **conclusions**, which are relevant to the topic of this session, were drawn from the speakers’ briefings and the ensuing discussion:

- Throughout the 20 years of post-conflict tension in NK, there have been a broad range of missed opportunities both in political and security aspects of the conflict resolution process, and in the economic field. They have fundamentally slipped the South Caucasus region into the current state of fragmentation, where Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia are heading towards different political, socio-economic and security horizons.
- It is well known that the inability to solve the NK conflict so far was to a large extent linked to the dilemma regarding the prevailing legal principle that would be applicable: preserving the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, or the right to self-determination of the Armenian population in NK. In this context, the Madrid Principles proposed by the co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group were labelled by one speaker as a “golden missed opportunity”, since they

The Madrid Principles proposed by the co-Chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group were a golden opportunity missed



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Expert discussion on economic issues is essential to preparing the ground for the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to make “tough decisions” on a compromise solution

would provide both application of the principles of self-determination for Nagorno-Karabakh itself, and of preservation of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan with regard to the seven districts around Nagorno-

Karabakh. However, neither Azerbaijani nor Armenian participants manifested enthusiasm for the revival of this “golden missed opportunity”.

- One international expert expressed support for the Madrid Principles as they would ensure “recognition of territorial sovereignty without independence”. This might offer the opportunity to temporarily transform some of the Azerbaijani territories around NK, currently under Armenian control, into “free” spaces. Those “free” spaces might become the terrain of Armenian-Azerbaijani cooperation in the South Caucasus, possibly in the shape of common business ventures.
- The 2009 rapprochement between Armenia and Turkey was also deemed to be a missed opportunity, for instead of adding synergy to conflict resolution, it became part of the current stalemate.
- Economic missed opportunities were also discussed: for example, participation of Armenia in the energy flow from the Caspian Sea to Europe could have offered a guarantee for Armenia’s independence, just as it did for Azerbaijan and Georgia. Likewise, the high potential for agricultural development of western Azerbaijan has been blocked by the NK conflict.



Armen Grigoryan and Fred Labarre gave strong presentations in Session I

- The main conclusion of EGF’s published study on NK that: “economic incentives, cannot, on their own, substitute a political settlement to the conflict, including its territorial dimensions, but they could play a key role in confidence building” was echoed by many speakers. For example, an international speaker thought that, while economic projects are not going to be a panacea for conflict resolution in NK, expert discussion on economic issues is essential to preparing the ground for the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to make “tough decisions” on a compromise solution to the NK conflict. Others talked about this expert roundtable as potentially opening an economic chapter of Track II diplomacy in NK conflict resolution.
- Another speaker, who called for strengthening the inter-connectedness of Track I and Track II diplo-



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macy on conflict resolution in NK, welcomed the composition of the body of experts participating at this roundtable, for it included both people who played key roles in Track I and who participated in Track II events.

- In order to move political negotiations forward from the current stalemate, the following suggestions were made:



Adel Ibrahim, Deputy Head of the Mission of Egypt to the EU, reflected on lessons learned for Karabakh from the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty over lunch

- ◆ Each party to the NK conflict should demonstrate its political will to take risks while accepting a compromise solution. That would involve ceasing to demonize and threaten the other party, and adopting a changed narrative on conflict resolution reflecting a constructive, dialogue-oriented approach. As long as one side demonizes the other, there will be no way for presidents Alyiev and Sargsyan to achieve a political breakthrough, nor will they be able to demonstrate to the other president that they are able to persuade their

people to accept a compromise solution. A dialogue on economic issues may have an important role to play in preparing the political and psychological conditions for readying wider circles of Armenian and Azerbaijani societies to accept a negotiated compromise solution.

- ◆ Armenia should give concrete signs that it is committed to giving up the political and security status quo, in exchange for Azerbaijan demonstrating its commitment to remove the use of force from its conflict resolution options.

Each party to the NK conflict should demonstrate its political will to take risks while accepting a compromise solution

- ◆ The application of military confidence-building measures (CBMs) (such as a partial demining of the territories around NK to enable some economic activities, or removing snipers from the line of contact) is essential to peaceful conflict resolution. The role of third parties, whose neutrality is not questionable, in

monitoring the implementation of military CBMs and in fairly reporting on their failings, remains critical.

- ◆ Negotiations should be maintained at the presidential level in spite of the ensuing discomfort created for the two presidents, since this is the only possible way to have the parties agree on a political compromise.
- ◆ Create a “Commission on Difficult Issues”, as a non-political, non-binding mechanism of rap-



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prochement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which would support the work of the Armenian and Azerbaijani negotiating teams in the Minsk Group format. For example, the Commission on Difficult Issues could test certain conflict resolution scenarios against the availability of economic incentives.

- ◆ Promote democracy and civil society building in both Armenia and Azerbaijan, to help Track II diplomacy work.
- ◆ Negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group should be led with fair and unbiased cooperation between the co-Chairs. In the past, this proved rather difficult, in particular because Russia has had a different range of interests to defend in the South Caucasus compared to France and the US.
- ◆ Washington should send high level signals to the conflicting parties, and to Russia, that it is deeming the resolution of the NK conflict as a very important strategic issue.
- ◆ The role and regional interests of Iran in the South Caucasus should not be underestimated. For example, in the field of energy, Iran assumed a middleman role between Azerbaijan and Armenia: they buy gas from Azerbaijan, resell it to Armenia to produce electricity, which is then purchased back by Iran. The links between the South Caucasus and the broader geopolitics of the Middle East might be also relevant for Iranian interests.

Session II: Can economic initiatives make a difference for Karabakh?



Ambassador Douglas Townsend moderated Session II

After publishing the previously discussed initial research, EGF was invited by Armenian, Azerbaijani and international conflict stakeholders to provide more concrete evidence on their possible roles in confidence building. The aim of this session was to explore, with roundtable participants, ideas for ‘projects of common economic interest’ for future post-conflict regional economic development scenarios. More specifically, speakers were asked to suggest economic initiatives in the sphere of, for example, energy, transport



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and telecommunications infrastructure, trade, agriculture, tourism or other areas which would be technically feasible, could attract investment, and be justified in commercial terms.

The following points were considered relevant to the **conclusions** of this session:

- Over the past years there was relatively little research on economic infrastructure projects in the South Caucasus. However, one speaker shared information about a recent research study focused on a costs/benefits analysis of the rehabilitation of the former Soviet railway Baku - Fizuli - Meghri - Nakhichevan - (Yerevan) - Gyumri - Kars, which would cross Azerbaijan, Armenia, Turkey, and some of the Azerbaijani districts around NK currently under Armenian control. A comparison to the costs of the railway Baku - Tbilisi - Alkhalaki - Kars, which is currently under construction, was also made. The total estimated costs of the rehabilitation of the former Soviet railway was calculated at 433 million USD, which would be much less than the 700 million – 1 billion USD expected for the new railway going around Armenia. In addition, building a new Kars-Nakhichevan railway would cost another 1 billion USD. In terms of benefits, it was calculated that Armenia, Turkey and Nakhichevan would get the most out of the rehabilitation of the former Soviet railway, although, apparently, in order to be a profitable investment it needs 3-4 times more freight than was annually transported on that railway in Soviet times. One important challenge in conducting this study was the lack of reliable figures allowing an accurate calculation of benefits, given the major socio-economic changes since the collapse of the Soviet Union.



Ambassador Urban Rusnák, head of the Energy Charter Secretariat, anchored Session II

Rehabilitation of a former Soviet railway:

\$433 million

Building a new, replacement railway around Armenia:

\$700 million – \$1 billion

- Several speakers noted that, on the one hand, economic projects cannot be included in the category of ‘traditional’ CBMs, and, on the other hand, there are major practical obstacles to implementing them while a political solution to the conflict is missing. Furthermore, in reaction to opinions highlighting a certain lack of interest from Azerbaijan for economic cooperation with Armenia, one speaker thought that such projects might not even work in practice if not all stakeholders were economically motivated to participate. Therefore, creating a platform for exchange of information on, for example, energy,



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transport, trade issues, including their possible social implications, or the rehabilitation of the territories affected by the conflict and the return of IDPs to their homeland, might be considered as a soft form of confidence building cooperation which would be closer to the purposes of Track II diplomacy than to CBMs. Economic projects which might be discussed should be feasible, not politically sensitive, and important enough, in terms of their potential social implications, to contribute to changing people's mindsets.

- While the ability to use energy projects as tools for conflict resolution was questioned by some participants, both Armenian and Azerbaijani experts admitted that a dialogue on energy cooperation opportunities might be useful since there are misunderstandings on both sides of the current realities, policies, and future challenges in the other country. For example, Armenian and Azerbaijani experts



George Niculescu, EGF Head of Research, intervenes in Session II

could not reach agreement on whether or not producing electricity in Armenia from imported Azerbaijani gas would be profitable for both sides, and why. According to the Azerbaijani expert, Armenia buying gas from Azerbaijan at 100 USD/1000 cubic meters, instead of from Russia (currently at 189 USD/1000 cubic meters) would save 160 million USD/year, while exporting electricity generated from that gas to Iran or Turkey might add another 100 million USD to Armenian

coffers. In response, the Armenian expert questioned the economic motivations of Azerbaijan to sell cheaper gas to Armenia, Iran's willingness to pay higher prices for Armenian electricity, and the technical capability of Turkey to import electricity from Armenia. In addition, Armenia would also need investment in modernizing its electricity production capacities, which is currently sought from Russia and Iran. Neither possible interests nor the roles of external players, such as Russia, the EU, Iran and Turkey, in supporting Armenian-Azerbaijani energy cooperation in a post-conflict scenario were perceived in a similar way. However, suspicions that the other party was bluffing were apparent in that discussion, displaying the lack of mutual trust among energy experts, most likely due to diverging mindsets shaped by the status of the overall relationship between the two countries.

- For the past 20 years, the economic blockade by Azerbaijan and Turkey against Armenia has hampered regional economic cooperation, including in the energy sector. It has basically forced Armenia to seek alternative energy cooperation partners, such as Russia and Iran. Consequently, instead of achieving its original political goal of forcing Armenia to give in on the settlement of the NK conflict,



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Dr Oktay Tanrisever elaborates on a point

this economic blockade has increased the dependence of the Armenian energy sector on Russian interests. This could make Armenia's participation in any future common economic energy project with Azerbaijan subject to Russian approval.

- On the other hand, trade cooperation was deemed to be a more appropriate starting point for bilateral economic cooperation between Armenia and Azerbaijan, possibly in combination with some sort of small scale (at the level of neighbouring towns or villages)

green energy cooperation. In that context, the critical role of the private sector was highlighted as the driving force in energizing a regional network and in making economic cooperation possible. It was argued that promoting small scale enterprises would increase constituencies' support for peace in both countries. In fact, the involvement of relevant business people in the discussion on regional economic cooperation in post-conflict scenarios, when the time was ripe, was a recurring message from a number of speakers.

Developing a “strategic plan for regional development” might facilitate a political compromise on the resolution of the NK conflict

- Another point of convergence in the discussion was that a blueprint for economic development in the South Caucasus was missing. One Armenian speaker, supported by other Armenian and international experts, suggested that developing a “strategic plan for regional development”, and publishing it in both countries with a view towards starting a debate on the advantages and disadvantages of choosing peace over the current state of war might increase the stakes for, and thus might facilitate, a political compromise on the resolution of the NK conflict. This proposal might lead to a new way forward for ongoing EGF research, if seen in connection with the proposal of an Azerbaijani expert during the EGF study trip to Baku in early March 2014 to discuss and agree with Armenian counterparts a roadmap setting out priorities and a logical sequence to the implementation of post-conflict economic projects. These might then be chronologically linked to the implementation plan of a future peace agreement.

- Topics of potential interest for economic dialogue in the South Caucasus might also include: increasing connectivity of regional transport networks to European transport systems and the potential for regional countries to harmonize their taxation policies given their different strategies for regional integration.



- The case studies of Northern Ireland and Cyprus might offer interesting insights into economic aspects of conflict resolution in NK. For example, one Azerbaijani speaker highlighted three major factors that helped conflict resolution in Northern Ireland (i.e. EU membership by both state actors involved, a bolder role of international leaders and mediators, and large amounts of foreign investment). From this perspective, a deeper insight into the lessons learned from Northern Ireland and how they could be best applied to the NK conflict resolution would be needed.

Session III: Consensus building techniques and regionalism in the South Caucasus

While EGF's longer term vision envisages the South Caucasus as an economically developed, integrated and prosperous region, where greater power is devolved to local levels of governance, at present this type of scenario is a long way off. However, consensus already exists amongst stakeholders that a regional development strategy may be highly desirable. A diversity of peoples will need to live and coexist with one another in South Caucasus territories for centuries to come. The aim of this session was to explore practical consensus building techniques and share people-to-people experiences. In particular, consensus building techniques that might give rise to institutions for the promotion of regional strategies in the Caucasus were to be considered, since such strategies could play a key role in enabling mutual trust by committing the stakeholders to greater levels of interdependence and building regionalism.



Lutful Kabir led Session III at a lively pace

The mutual need to pursue economic development and social welfare in a globalized world might be a powerful driver towards regional cooperation between the two countries

This slightly shorter and more technical session highlighted the following conclusion:

- The overall perspective on the feasibility of post-conflict regionalism building in the South Caucasus was quite similar for both Armenian and Azerbaijani experts. While both parties agreed that

the historical background and the lack of common socio-political values were a heavy burden to region building, they also recognized that forging a common future in the aftermath of the NK conflict would be a worthwhile effort. The current geopolitical context was not conducive to either regional cooperation nor to integration. However, in a post-conflict context, the mutual need to pursue eco-



Dr Stepan Grigoryan responds in Session III

conomic development and social welfare in a globalized world might be a powerful driver towards regional cooperation and better policy coordination between the two countries. More concretely, the possibility for Armenia to join the existing regional cooperation framework between Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia, in the aftermath of the NK conflict, was proposed by an Azerbaijani expert.

In his concluding remarks, Dr Marat Terterov, the Director of EGF, proposed a number of very broad and uncontroversial principles which were meant to form the Brussels Consensus on post-conflict regional integration scenarios in the South Caucasus, including: the right of all people to live in peace and security; a shift from preparing for war to building enduring peace; good neighbourly relations as a basis for peace building; the right of all people to strive for economic prosperity; the right of all

IDPs and refugees to return to their homes and/or lands, and live there in peace and security.

The principles of the Brussels Consensus:

- The right of all people to live in peace and security;
- A shift from preparing for war to building enduring peace;
- Good neighbourly relations as a basis for peace building;
- The right of all people to strive for economic prosperity;
- The right of all IDPs and refugees to return to their homes and/or lands, and live there in peace and security



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Participants came to the European Parliament from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Turkey, France, Germany, Canada, and other countries

Agenda

Brussels, Belgium
27 March, 2014

9.30am-9.45am

Arrival of all participants at the European Parliament at the Altiero Spinelli entrance, issuing of access passes. Escorted walk to Room A1 E201.

9.45am-10.15am

Registration, tea and coffee

10.15am-10.30am

Introduction to the substance and format of the day's proceedings

Dr Marat Terterov, *Director, European Geopolitical Forum*

10.30am-12.30pm

Session I: Missed opportunities and lessons learned from conflict resolution processes



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Moderator:

Dr Marat Terterov, *Director, European Geopolitical Forum*

Initial presentations by:

- Ambassador Bernard Fassier, *former co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group*
- Ambassador Matthew Bryza, *former co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group (pre-recorded video address)*
- Pascal Heyman, *former Deputy Director, Conflict Prevention Centre, OSCE Secretariat*
- Fred Labarre, *co-Chair, PFP Consortium, South Caucasus Group*

Initial responses (followed by moderated discussion):

- Dr Gulshan Pashayeva, *Deputy-Director, Centre for Strategic Studies, Baku*
- Armen Grigoryan, *Research Fellow, Central European University, Budapest*

12.30pm-1.30pm

Lunch (with 'mystery' guest speaker addressing the Arab-Israeli peace treaties and subsequent energy cooperation between Israel and the Arab states)

1.30pm-3.30pm***Session II: Can economic initiatives make a difference for Karabakh?*****Moderator:**

Ambassador Douglas Townsend, *Senior Advisor, International Tax and Investment Centre, Washington DC, former-Australian Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Hungary*

Initial presentations by:

- Ambassador Urban Rusnák, *Secretary General, Energy Charter Secretariat*
- George Niculescu, *Head of Research, European Geopolitical Forum*
- Dr Natalia Mirimanova, *Senior Adviser to the Eurasia Program, International Alert; Eurasia Peace Initiative, Director*
- Sevak Sarukhanyan, *Deputy-Director, Noravank foundation, Yerevan*

Initial responses (followed by moderated discussion):

- Dr Vusal Gasimli, *Economist, Centre for Strategic Studies, Baku*
- Vahagn Ghazaryan, *Trade Expert, IBF International Consulting S.A. Germany (Yerevan office)*
- Dr Oktay Tanrisever, *Associate Dean, Middle East Technical University, Ankara*

3.30pm-4.00pm

Coffee break



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4.00pm-6.00pm

Session III: Consensus building techniques and regionalism in the South Caucasus

Moderator:

Lutful Kabir, *Executive Director, Centre of Excellence for Talent and Management, Baku*

Initial presentations by:

- Frédéric Soudain and Matteo Pederzoli, *Principals, MCI Benelux, Brussels*
- Emmanuel Dupuy, *President, Institute of Prospective Security in Europe, Paris*

Initial responses (followed by moderated discussion):

- Dr Stepan Grigoryan, *Chairman, Analytical Centre for Globalisation and Regional Cooperation, Yerevan*
- Zaur Shiriyev, *Editor-in-Chief, Caucasus International, Baku*

End of Roundtable

7.00pm-10.00pm

Team building dinner for all speakers and participants from abroad

- Salon LesANGES, Hotel Leopold, Rue du Luxembourg 35, Brussels



The positive chemistry witnessed during the day concluded with a dinner gathering at an exclusive venue in Brussels' European Quarter



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Participants

Brussels, Belgium
27 March, 2014

Leyla ABDULLAYEVA	Azerbaijan Mission to NATO
Orkhan AKBAROV	Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh, region of Azerbaijan
Atanas BALTOV	European External Action Service (EEAS)
Vardan BARSEGHIAN	Armenian Mission to the European Union
Bedo DEMIRDJIAN	European Armenian Federation For Justice and Democracy (EAFJD)
Emmanuel DUPUY	Institut Prospective and Sécurité en Europe
Steffen ELGERSMA	NATO IS
Amb. Bernard FASSIER	Former co-chairmen of the OSCE Minsk Group
Dr Vusal GASIMLI	Strateji Arasdirmalar Merkezi (SAM)
Vahagn GHAZARYAN	IBF International Consulting S.A. Germany (Yerevan office)
Armen GRIGORYAN	Matej Bel University
Dr Stepan GRIGORYAN	Analytical Centre on Globalization and Regional Cooperation
Pascal HEYMAN	OSCE - Conflict Prevention Centre
Roman HUNA	The European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS)
Adel IBRAHIM	Arab Republic of Egypt to the European Union
Aygun ISMAYILOVA	The European Azerbaijan Society (TEAS)
Lutful KABIR	Center of Excellence for Talent Management (CETaM)
Angele KEDAITIENE	Xinhua News Agency
Frederic LABARRE	Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Study Group of the PpP Consortium
Togrul MALIKOV	Azerbaijan Mission to NATO
Lianna MARGARYAN	European Armenian Federation For Justice and Democracy (EAFJD)
Dr Aude MERLIN	Université Libre de Bruxelles (ULB)
Dr Natalia MIRIMANOVA	International Alert
Rashad NAVRUZ	Azerbaijan Mission to NATO
George Vlad NICULESCU	European Geopolitical Forum (EGF)
Dr Gulshan PASHAYEVA	Centre for Strategic Studies under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Amanda PAUL	European Centre Policy (EPC)
Matteo PEDERZOLI	MCI Benelux
Amb. Urban RUSNÁK	Energy Charter Secretariat
Amb. Salome SAMADASHVILI	Center for European Studies (CES)
Sevak SARUKHANYAN	NORAVANK Foundation Armenia
Dmitry SEMENOV	Russian Federation Mission to the EU
Dr Demir Murat SEYREK	Global Communications
Mesrop SHABOYAN	Armenian Mission to the European Union
Zaur SHIRIYEV	Strateji Arasdirmalar Merkezi / Caucasus International
Dr Oktay TANRISEVER	Middle East Technical University / European Geopolitical Forum (EGF)
Nicolas TAVITIAN	Voice in Europe / Globe Europe / Armenian General Benevolent Union
Dr Marat TERTEROV	European Geopolitical Forum (EGF)
Amb. Douglas TOWNSEND	International Tax and Investment Center (ITIC)
Tom TRIER	European External Action Service (EEAS)



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Many experts from Armenia and Azerbaijan attended the Berlin meeting

Overview

Berlin, Germany
7-8 July, 2014

The second stakeholder consultation round in EGF's ongoing Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) research took place on 7-8 July, 2014 in Berlin (Germany), including the introduction of a post-conflict scenario building workshop. More than 30 experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan, and international partner NGOs and institutions attended this event, held in a constructive atmosphere of 'exchange between gentlemen'. This meeting was the first concrete step towards exploring the idea of a roadmap leading towards an economically integrated South Caucasus, and establishment of a deeper **platform for exchange of information** between Armenian and Azerbaijani experts. During the post-conflict scenario building workshop, regional participants simulated the negotiation of a roadmap for the implementation of economic components of a peace agreement built upon the Madrid principles, encompassing joint economic measures in areas such as energy, transport, trade, rehabilitation of the territories affected by the conflict, and the return of IDPs to their homeland.

Reflections on the First Consultation Round (Brussels, 27 March, 2014)

Prior to the Berlin session, an earlier consultation round was held in Brussels on 27 March 2014, which revealed a possibility for a new approach to pursuing the strategic aims of EGF's current research on Karabakh. The Brussels consultation round alluded to the creation of a platform for exchange of information between Armenian and Azerbaijani experts on energy, transport, trade issues, the rehabilitation of the territories affected by the conflict and the return of IDPs to their homeland. It was deemed at the time



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that such exchanges could lead to development of post-conflict scenarios for Karabakh, based on a roadmap leading towards an economically integrated South Caucasus.

It was determined that the roadmap would be underpinned by a number of very broad and uncontroversial principles (also known as the Brussels Consensus on post-conflict regional integration scenarios in the South Caucasus). These include the right of all people to live in an environment of peace and security; a shift in government strategy from preparing for war to building enduring peace and fostering economic development; good neighbourly relations as a basis for peace building; the right of all people to strive for economic prosperity; and the right of all IDPs and refugees to return to their homes and/or lands and live there in peace and security. The Berlin session was further based upon many of the positive elements that came out of the Brussels consultation round.

Introductory Remarks: Berlin Session (7-8 July, 2014)

At the commencement of the Berlin session, Dr Marat Terterov, the Principal Director and Founder of the EGF, stated that the aim of the current research is to develop an alternative narrative on Nagorno-Karabakh through Track 2 diplomacy on conflict resolution. To that end, he pointed at developing economic incentives, as well as establishing links between economic dialogue, on the one hand, and political and security negotiations, on the other, as key priorities. He further wondered whether a different way of thinking can be instilled in the minds of decision makers on NK through highlighting the commercial and economic value of peace. This way, leaders may be offered flexibility on making the tough decisions related to NK conflict resolution, through providing them with a thorough consideration of post-conflict scenarios. From this perspective, rethinking regional cooperation in the South Caucasus (SC) may actually start with a blueprint for regional development focused on Armenia and Azerbaijan.



Ambassador Townsend delivers a point

Ambassador Douglas Townsend, Senior Advisor, International Tax and Investment Centre, Washington DC, and former Australian Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Hungary, thought that this seminar should bring to the attention of major international investors in infrastructure projects new business opportunities in the South Caucasus. He further elaborated on his organization's support to achieving that goal.

Ambassador Douglas Townsend, Senior Advisor, International Tax and Investment Centre, Washington DC, and former Australian Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Hungary, thought that this seminar should bring to the attention of major international investors in infrastructure projects new business opportunities in the South Caucasus. He further elaborated on his organization's support to achieving that goal.



Session I: Post-conflict Regional Cooperation in the South Caucasus: A Strategic Plan for Regional Development?



Asim Mollazade elaborated from the Azerbaijani contingent

EGF's ongoing research suggests that economic incentives are unlikely to be a panacea for conflict resolution in the NK context. However, it likewise shows that expert discussion on economic issues may be highly useful in 'preparing the ground' for some level of flexibility in the current rigidity which grips the parties regarding NK. Starting a public debate amongst NK stakeholders on the advantages/disadvantages of choosing peace and regional economic development over the current state of hostility may ease some of the tension in the NK context. This view appears to be broadly supported within international peace

building circles relevant to NK. The aim of this session was to explore the scope of a 'strategic plan for regional development', or a 'blueprint for economic development in the South Caucasus' as a key trigger for such a public debate. Speakers were asked to elaborate on potential 'elements of cooperation' that could lead to something far bigger and grander, if a strategic plan for regional development could be articulated by experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan and international circles working together.

Speakers' briefings and the ensuing discussion highlighted the following key messages:

- Although it is difficult to de-politicise the economic dialogue, we need to think 'outside the box' to break the current stalemate in NK conflict resolution. For example, a legal framework for trade is necessary to start moving from a mere economic dialogue to the practical implementation of economic incentives. The green line regulations in Cyprus may serve as a potential model. However, questions remain on how we could come up with a legal document in the absence of a political compromise on conflict resolution. How could stakeholders be motivated to adhere to/come up with a legal framework? Two possible options were proposed: 1) A leading external actor (i.e. the EU, who has already done it in the Western Balkans); 2) A combination of motivating one conflicting party via economic interests, and the other party by the prospects for joining an international organization (the China-Taiwan conflict and the role of ASEAN were evoked).

Starting a public debate amongst NK stakeholders on the advantages/disadvantages of choosing peace and regional economic development over the current state of hostility may ease some of the tension in the NK context



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- Establishing a legal and/or political framework for economic interaction is very important for both Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to help secure public support for the peace process. However, economic interests must be genuine to drive cooperation on both sides. Otherwise, economic incentives may never work in conflict resolution. In addition, the psychology of economic cooperation should be advanced across the conflict's dividing lines.
- Azerbaijan is becoming economically stronger and able to support both post-conflict reconstruction and regional cooperation. This is an opportunity which should not be missed. Azerbaijan's extensive and effective cooperation with Georgia might be replicated in relations with Armenia, in a post-conflict context. Azerbaijan may be able to invest 25 billion USD in rebuilding the territories around NK, on the basis of a post-conflict strategic plan for regional development. This could include building an urban agglomeration on the Aghdam-Shusha-Khankhendi/Stepanakert axis, or a special economic status being granted to NK (similar to the one granted by China to Hong Kong).



Richard Giragosian gave a powerful presentation

Azerbaijan may be able to invest 25 billion USD in rebuilding the territories around NK, on the basis of a post-conflict strategic plan for regional development.

- The synchronization of the political and security agenda with economic cooperation is essential for successful conflict resolution in NK. From an Azerbaijani perspective, a successful application of economic incentives in conflict resolution is conditional to the implementation of two principles: 1) The return of the seven districts around NK – Baku wants to rebuild these territories where Armenia and NK have no interest to invest; 2) An interim political status for NK, within the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, with international security and self-governance guarantees. The return of IDPs to their homes is also a vital component of the peace process.
- Armenia is looking with more interest at economic cooperation with Turkey rather than with Azerbaijan. There is lack of political will (from all sides) to solve this conflict. This is partly because there is no constituency for peace, while the economic incentives are not properly articulated yet. The biggest security threat for Armenia is insignificance (in the international context), if it does not reform its political and socio-economic structures and legislation. Confidence building is needed between Armenia

*The biggest security threat for Armenia is **insignificance** (in the international context)*



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and Azerbaijan. There might be at least two areas of cooperation opportunities between Armenia and Azerbaijan: countering shared threats (earthquakes, wild fires, water management, and nuclear security), and job creation and training for IDPs. Successful conflict resolution in NK requires: more local politics rather than geopolitics; broadening the constituency for peace; and fostering a new model of cooperation: to agree to disagree, but cooperate wherever it is possible.

- Azerbaijan invested in Turkey 10 times more than Turkey has invested in Azerbaijan in recent years. This fact should be also understood in Yerevan, where expectations for economic

Both Armenia and Azerbaijan have to recognize the benefits of doing business with each other

cooperation with Turkey might be overstated. Azerbaijan needs Armenia as an economic partner in the South Caucasus. For example, they may include Armenia and Armenians from NK in the new Silk Road strategy, which is currently being developed in Baku. Both Armenia and Azerbaijan have to recognize the benefits of doing business with each other, but these are difficult to assess when there is no business on the table.

- It is too premature to conclude that ‘Armenia is doomed to economic collapse’ while Azerbaijan has a ‘glorious economic future in front of it’. Armenia has partially diffused the economic pressure created by the Azerbaijani-Turkish blockade, while the dynamics of the global demand for oil and gas are set to further dominate Azerbaijani economic growth prospects. In fact, the main challenge for both countries is not so much the threat of economic collapse, but rather “to build-up a sound framework for good economic governance”.



Vusal Gasimli speaks in Session I



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- Transforming any form of “Armenian-Azerbaijani economic dialogue” from an instrument of information war into an incentive for future peace might be placed at the core of EGF’s research priorities on NK. Key questions which need to be addressed in conceptualizing such a transformation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani economic dialogue are: What scope for a blueprint for regional development? What are the key priorities? What other topics could be included? What regional frameworks might enable joint planning, funding, and management of economic projects? What impact might the on-going European and Eurasian integration processes have? How to inter-connect the process of resettlement of the IDPs and refugees communities of both ethnicities with the economic integration processes? Are the prospects for regional development strong enough to change the current security concerns across the South Caucasus region?



David Shahnazaryan at a strong moment of his presentation

- A public debate amongst NK stakeholders on the advantages and disadvantages of choosing peace and regional economic development over the current state of hostility might facilitate political compromise. Could such a public debate support efforts to broaden the constituency for peace around the NK conflict? Could a (roadmap) Strategic Plan for Regional Development trigger such a debate?
- From an EGF perspective, a Strategic Plan for Regional Development should:
 - ◆ Be a scenario building exercise rather than a political/legal document;
 - ◆ Build upon previous attempts (i.e. Stability Pact for the Caucasus, Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform, etc.) without duplicating them;
 - ◆ Be underpinned by the principles of the Brussels Consensus on post-conflict regional integration scenarios for the South Caucasus;
 - ◆ Adjust to the dynamics of the regional context, focus on Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno-Karabakh, while maintaining an inclusive approach against other regional actors;
 - ◆ Address the dichotomy of European and Eurasian integration processes;
 - ◆ Be consistent with the political and security aspects of conflict resolution scenarios;
 - ◆ Involve to the largest extent possible interested business circles;
 - ◆ Enshrine relevant political and diplomatic feedback.
- Both Armenia and Azerbaijan recognized the need to improve the mobility of their citizens in the EU, and agreed on visa facilitation rules. However, at present, Azerbaijan seems to be happy with the status



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quo in relations with the EU, while Armenia has to settle its agreements with the Eurasian Customs Union before it may figure out the way ahead on relations with the EU.

Session II: Considerations of Business and Investment: Reintegrating Post-conflict Karabakh within the Regional South Caucasus Economic Framework



Natalia Mirimanova anchored the opening of the event

EGF's research has highlighted that business people in both Armenia and Azerbaijan do not consider cooperation with one another as a viable option at the present time. However, the need to involve the business community in the discussion on post-conflict regional economic scenarios was a recurring message from the Brussels consultation round last March. Some voices from the region call for Karabakh to become the modern day Alsace-Lorraine of the South Caucasus, implied to mean a thriving zone of regional significance, where important historical cultures intersect

and economies thrive. Others, in the same spirit, call on the region to become a “free economic space”, where abundant investment from Azerbaijan will one day be welcome. At the purely commercial level, such investment may eventually come in the form of joint projects between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, as well as international partners, replacing the many missed opportunities forced on the region as a result of conflict and tension.

The aim of this session was to examine the role that business could play in regional economic development in a post-conflict scenario in the NK context. A broad range of questions were posed to the speakers in this section: Would Armenian and Azerbaijani businesses be willing to invest in this region of the Caucasus? Could region-wide investment projects ‘sweep up’ NK as part of a future regional economic boom? Are we too fixated on security questions relating to Karabakh, and missing immense opportunity by seemingly ignoring scope for economic cooperation? Could Armenians and Azerbaijanis, possibly from diaspora communities, as well as Turkish, Russian and other investors see incentives in the development of joint commercial projects in the region? Can we work together towards a blueprint for regional economic development,

Some voices from the region call for Karabakh to become the modern day Alsace-Lorraine of the South Caucasus, a thriving zone of regional significance



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at least in the form of a strategic policy document for decision makers and foreign investors? What is the opinion of business leaders about the overall ‘prospects for NK’, were an appropriate political climate to emerge?

The most relevant **messages drawn** from the briefings and the ensuing discussion in this section included the following:

- A global approach for the European continent, from Lisbon to Vladivostok, has major economic and energy related advantages. However, European politics are currently disruptive, and partly responsible for maintaining the protracted conflicts in the South Caucasus.
- Armenia needs open borders to optimise the conditions for its economic development. If it achieved that, it may offer alternative transit routes for Caspian energy flows to Europe. Mutual trust is essential



A “Marshall Plan for the South Caucasus” could offer the international guarantees needed by private investors

for conflict resolution, but it can hardly be gained while Armenia seems more dependent than ever on other regional actors. One Armenian participant thought that a ‘Marshall Plan for the South Caucasus’ could offer the international guarantees needed by private investors to consider involvement in supporting regional infrastructure projects. Such a Plan should be prepared before the Peace Agreement was signed, and should be included in its annexes. The same Armenian speaker proposed, as a central element of a post-conflict scenario, that a DCFTA should be signed with the EU by the three South Caucasus countries together. This proposal was echoed by a couple of Azerbaijani speakers. While it is doubtful that such a step might be implemented in any circumstances, for both political and practical reasons, it may also reflect an Armenian-Azerbaijani consensus on the need to strengthen regional economic cooperation in the South Caucasus in a post-conflict context.

- Azerbaijan could become a key source of Armenian economic growth if the NK conflict would be solved. Furthermore, it may become a net contributor to the development of the whole South Caucasus region, including Armenia. Currently, even if Azerbaijani private investors were ready to invest in Armenia, they could not, since the return on investment would not outweigh the costs and overcome the security risks. Given the huge financial burden IDPs are posing on the Azerbaijani budget, in a post-conflict context, Baku seems prepared to invest large amounts in the reconstruction and rehabilitation



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Marat Terterov leads the proceedings

of the seven Azerbaijani districts around NK, and it will be looking for strong partners to associate itself with.

- One Azerbaijani speaker expected the EU institutions to take a bolder role in NK conflict resolution as a consequence of European energy interests in Azerbaijan. In his view, nothing short of NK self-government within Azerbaijan would be an acceptable solution to the NK conflict for Baku. However, this bold political statement generated negative reactions from the Armenian side. This proved once again that only a step by step approach could

lead to a dialogue-based solution to the NK conflict, while the reiteration of the current disagreement on the political status of NK may counter efforts at establishing a meaningful Armenian-Azerbaijani economic dialogue.

Only a step by step approach could lead to a dialogue-based solution to the NK conflict

- The security of investments is very important in any economic post-conflict scenario. Regional business communities and international organizations active in the region should set up a dialogue on this particular issue. Ideally, a Marshall Plan for the South Caucasus would supply the needed investment for making economic incentives work in a post-conflict scenario. However, there are many business-related steps to be taken before the conflict is solved. For example: monitoring to what extent the market rules (taxing regimes and the practices for protecting investors) are favourable to investments; establishing informal business communities; setting up an international body tasked to assist business communities in both countries to resolve problems related to taxation; identifying which sectors might offer a comparative advantage; or collecting information and proposing recommendations regarding the improvement of the business climate.

- Post-conflict economic scenarios should also take into account:

- ◆ The future presence of peace-keeping forces;
- ◆ Turkish-Armenian relations, although few Armenians were prepared to accept that they belong to a package deal on NK conflict resolution;
- ◆ The potential disruptive role of Russia, if Moscow would perceive its geopolitical interests in the region as being threatened;
- ◆ The prospects of Eurasian integration in the South Caucasus and its possible points of contention with the European integration process.

Setting up a dialogue between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities from NK seemed to be of mutual interest



- Although somewhat beyond the scope of EGF’s current research on NK, an ensuing idea thrived in the discussion: setting up a dialogue between Armenian and Azerbaijani communities from NK seemed to be a mutual interest. An Azerbaijani speaker proposed to use the EGF platform for dialogue on economic incentives as a springboard for organizing a meeting between the two communities in NK. A possible subject might be the restoration of Azerbaijani cultural monuments in NK, with a view to issuing a common letter of support. Another possibility for dialogue among the two communities from NK could be the joint management of the Sarsang Water Reservoir. The Armenian interlocutors seemed to agree with these proposals, and added a new possible item on the agenda of a NK communities’ dialogue: establishing joint businesses in the region. However, when it came to the status of NK, it appeared that no concessions would be made by the Armenian side unless firm security guarantees were in place. Furthermore, in response to an Azerbaijani proposal in the first session to grant the status of special economic zone to NK, one Armenian speaker thought that only a step by step approach may work. Therefore, initially, Azerbaijan could grant the status of special economic zone to the seven districts around NK.

Session III: Post-conflict Scenario Building Workshop and Group Simulation

The aim of this workshop was to simulate a negotiation process in order to reflect a possible real life situation which may occur in the NK context at a future date, and to draw lessons learned during a feedback session. The provided (future, post-conflict) scenario was set in the year 2019. A few months had passed after a peace agreement based on the (current) Madrid Principles was reached between the imaginary Republics of Salandia and Oronia, which were engaged in years of fighting over the political status of the ‘break-away territory’ of Mordovia.¹



The ‘Salandian delegation’ discusses their position

Participants in the simulation were issued with instructions about engaging each other prior to commencing the simulation. The task of participants was to simulate negotiations of a bi-national Task Force, which in ‘2019’ was mandated with drawing up a roadmap for implementation of the economic considerations of the (2019) Peace Agreement. Furthermore, the ‘Task Force’ was invited to propose additional economic projects that could act as confidence building measures by addressing the restoration of war-torn energy,

¹The country profiles of Salandia and Oronia were identical to those of Azerbaijan and Armenia, respectively, while the status of Mordovia was mirroring that of Karabakh.



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The Salandians receive a proposal from the Oronian Lead Negotiator

transport and socio-economic infrastructure in NK and the territories around it, by establishing, where possible, ‘economic projects of common interest’. The end goal was to agree upon an ‘official’ roadmap document which could be supported by both parties.

The simulation succeeded in finding a means of enabling participants to talk to each other in a most constructive manner in the framework of hypothetical bi-national Task Force mentioned above. The discussions were mediated and assisted by international experts. The dialogue among

experts highlighted the inherent interdependence of the political, economic and security agendas of the two countries, Salandia and Oronia. It eventually resulted in drafting a realistic, mostly agreed-upon action plan for implementation of the economic aspects of a Peace Agreement based on the Madrid principles, and for restoring war-torn infrastructure. This action plan was set into a timetable outlining a possible post-conflict roadmap for peace building in Karabakh.

While EGF intends to elaborate in more detail upon the conclusions of the Berlin simulation exercise in a research paper in the near future, it already appears that the action plan may result in a solid basis for developing more robust post-conflict scenarios in the context of future simulations of this nature. End game: an economically integrated South Caucasus, underpinned by the very broad and uncontroversial principles of the Brussels Consensus.



The productive atmosphere included a tour of Berlin's famous Mitte district



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Agenda

Berlin, Germany
7-8 July, 2014

Sunday 6 July, 2014

Before 19.00

Arrival of participants in Berlin

19.30 – 22.00

Welcome dinner for all out of town participants at the '**Borchardt Restaurant**'

Monday 7 July, 2014

09.45 – 10.15

Welcome and registration of participants (coffee and tea available)
Salon Gontard, the Regent Berlin, Charlottenstrasse 49, 10117 Berlin-Mitte

10.15 – 10.45

Introductory remarks and reflections on the first consultation round in Brussels

- Dr Marat Terterov, *Director, European Geopolitical Forum, Brussels*
- Ambassador Douglas Townsend, *Senior Advisor, International Tax and Investment Centre, Washington DC, former-Australian Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Hungary*

10.45 – 13.00

Session I: Post-conflict regional cooperation in the South Caucasus: A strategic plan for regional development?

Moderator

Dr Marat Terterov, *Director, European Geopolitical Forum, Brussels*

Discussion openers

- Dr Natalia Mirimanova, *Senior Adviser to the Eurasia Program, International Alert; Eurasia Peace Initiative, Director, Brussels*
- Dr Vusal Gasimli, *Economist, Centre for Strategic Studies, Baku*
- Richard Giragosian, *Founding Director, Regional Studies Centre, Yerevan*
- Tibor Váradi, *Directorate for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Regional Cooperation and OSCE, European External Action Service, Brussels*
- Asim Mollazade, *Chairman, Party of Democratic Reform*



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Initial responses

- Anna Hess, *Senior Program Officer, Mediation Support Project, Centre for Security Studies, Geneva*
- George Niculescu, *Head of Research, European Geopolitical Forum*

Discussion

13.00 – 14.00

Lunch

14.00 – 16.00

Session II: Considerations of business and investment: reintegrating post-conflict Karabakh within the regional South Caucasus economic framework

Moderator:

Ambassador Douglas Townsend, *Senior Advisor, International Tax and Investment Centre, Washington DC, former-Australian Ambassador to Kazakhstan and Hungary*

Discussion openers

- Christian Cleutinx, *Former Director General of Euratom Supply Agency - European Commission; Global Energy Associate, Brussels Energy Club, Brussels*
- Ambassador David Shahnazaryan, *Senior Analyst, the Regional Studies Center (RSC)*
- Fuad Muradov, *Chairman of the “Great Silk Way” International Youth Union*

Initial responses

- Dr Oktay Tanrisever, *Associate Dean, Middle East Technical University, Ankara*
- Vahagn Ghazaryan, *Trade Expert, IBF International Consulting S.A. Germany (Yerevan office)*
- Vugar Seidov, *Special representative, Azerbaijan State Telegraph Agency (AzerTAG) in Germany and Belgium, Budapest*
- Armen Grigoryan, *Research Fellow, Central European University, Budapest*

Discussion

16.00 – 16.15

Coffee break

16.15 – 18.00

Session III: Post-conflict scenario building workshop and group simulation

18.30 – 20.30

Berlin sightseeing walking tour with local guide (English speaking), departing from the Regent Hotel



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20.30 – 22.30

Group dinner for all out of town participants

Venue: traditional German/Bavarian pub-restaurant '*Augustiner*'

Tuesday 8 July, 2014

10.00 – 13.00

Session IV: Post-conflict scenario building workshop and group simulation (continued)

10.00 – 12.00: Negotiations continued

12.00 – 12.30: Press conference and statements on the outcome of negotiations

12.30 – 13.00: Feedback on the Post-Conflict Scenario Building Workshop and Concluding Remarks

13.00 – 14.30

Working lunch and networking opportunities

15.00

End of the consultation round and workshop, departure of participants



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Participants

Berlin, Germany
7-8 July, 2014

Emil AGAZADE	Public Affairs Consultant - Baku
Ibrahim AHMADOV	Azerbaijan Student Network
Andranik ASLANYAN	Free University of Berlin
Christian CLEUTINX	Euratom Supply Agency - European Commission (former)
Vusal GASIMLI	SAM - Strateji Arasdirmalar Merkezi
Vahagn GHAZARYAN	IBF International Consulting S.A. Germany (Yerevan office)
Richard GIRAGOSIAN	Regional Studies Center (RSC)
Armen GRIGORYAN	Matej Bel University
Togrul MALIKOV	Azerbaijan Mission to NATO
Ashot MARGARYAN	Eurasian Research and Analysis Institute (Yerevan)
Ben MCPHERSON	EGF
Natalia MIRIMANOVA	International Alert
Asim MOLLAZADE	Chairman, Party of Democratic Reform
Anna Catharina MULLER	TEAS - The European Azerbaijan Society
Fuad MURADOV	Chairman of the "Great Silk Way" International Youth Union
George Vlad NICULESCU	EGF
Alexander RAHR	Wintershall
Rovshan RZAYEV	Management Board of the Public Union "The Azerbaijani Community of Nagorno Karabakh"
Vugar SAIDOV	Azerbaijan State Telegraph Agency (AzerTAG)
Ofelya SARGSYAN	European Union Foreign Affairs Journal (EUFAJ)
Anna Hess SARGSYAN	Mediation Support Project, Centre for Security Studies, Geneva
David SHAHNAZARYAN	Regional Studies Center (RSC)
Oktay TANRISEVER	Middle East Technical University / EGF
Marat TERTEROV	EGF
Amb. Douglas TOWNSEND	International Tax and Investment Center
Tibor VARADI	EEAS - European External Action Service
Wendt-Dieter Freiherr von GEMMINGEN	TEAS - The European Azerbaijan Society



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About EGF

The European Geopolitical Forum was established in early 2010 by several independently minded practitioners of European geopolitics, who saw a certain vacuum in the information flow leading into the European geopolitical discussion. EGF is dedicated, therefore, towards the promotion of an objective pan-European geopolitical debate incorporating the views of wider-European opinion shapers rather than simply those from the mainstream European Union (EU) member states. EGF seeks to elaborate upon European decision makers' and other relevant stakeholders' appreciation of European geopolitics by encouraging and effectively expanding the information flow from east to west, from south to north. In order to achieve these objectives, the European Geopolitical Forum was established as an independent internet-based resource, a web-portal which aims to serve as a knowledge hub on pan-European geopolitics. EGF's strength is in its unique ability to gather a wide range of affiliated experts, the majority of whom originate from the countries in the EU's external neighbourhood, to examine and debate core issues in the wider-European geopolitical context. Exchange of positions and interactivity between east and west, south and north, is at the heart of the EGF project. Please visit our website for further information at www.gpf-europe.com.

Thank You

The entire European Geopolitical Forum team would like to thank all of the experts and stakeholders from international organizations, governments, NGOs and especially those from the region who have participated in these seminars. The depth and breadth of knowledge that has been represented and exchanged at these events has been immense. This ongoing initiative undertaken by the European Geopolitical Forum could not have been possible without these contributions. We at the European Geopolitical Forum look forward to the continuation of this work, hopefully meeting participants again, and, ultimately, helping to pave the road to a positive resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.



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