

Concrete Steps to Break the Deadlocks in the South Caucasus

20th Workshop of the “Regional Stability in the South Caucasus Study Group”,

Reichenau/Rax, 07-10 November 2019

08 November 2019, 12:00-13:30, PANEL 2: “Scenarios for Conflict Resolution for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia”

- As you know from the Programme and Workshop Outline, the **aim of this workshop is to achieve a series of constructive and concrete roadmaps for each of the major unresolved conflicts in the South Caucasus**. These roadmaps will constitute the bulk of this workshop’s policy recommendations.
- We have attempted this at the RSSC SG before. However, this time, we’d like to have speakers **focus on what outcomes and conditions are required to break the current deadlocks in moving towards peace and regional stability**, rather than exclusively suggest what the opposing side must do.
- That is by setting out the operational conditions for conflict resolution we would like you to develop roadmaps for each conflict in the SC to reverse engineer the processes required to achieve a suggested scenario for conflict resolution during interactive and breakout group discussions.
- And here the notion of **scenarios planning/building** comes into the picture. Scenarios are stories about how the future might unfold and how this might affect an issue that confronts a certain actor today. **Scenarios do not predict the future, but they do illuminate the drivers of change, whose understanding can help managers to take greater control of the situation**. Drivers of change are social, technological, economic, ideological, cultural, political, security, as well as geopolitical factors which may change the long-term direction of trends. Over the long run, **we might equate the required outcomes and conditions with drivers of change leading into scenarios of peaceful resolution of conflicts**. Scenarios are particularly useful in developing strategies to navigate organizations and public institutions in highly uncertain times. By proposing to policy makers from relevant capitals and international organizations realistic scenarios for conflict resolution we might be able to contribute to breaking the current deadlocks in the South Caucasus.

- This panel should seek to make suggestions for renewing the discourse on conflict resolution from the point of view of the appropriate authorities from Baku, Tbilisi and Yerevan. **The aim here is to describe the outcomes and conditions (i.e. the drivers of change) that are required to move towards peace.** Speakers were thus expected to include into their proposed scenarios key outcomes and conditions, such as:
 - the non-use of force,
 - applying confidence-building measures,
 - return the refugees and internally-displaced persons to their homelands,
 - peacekeeping force deployments,
 - applying peace-building initiatives (including those which have been agreed within this Study Group),
 - **overcoming the legacies from the (Soviet or pre-Soviet) past by considering unbiased outlooks of the future,**
 - use of the **ambivalent statuses** to allow the accomplishment of individual rights of citizens,
 - **pursue regional economic integration** as an incentive for peace,
 - **draft and conclude temporary agreements for achieving regional stability** until a new East European order was built, etc.

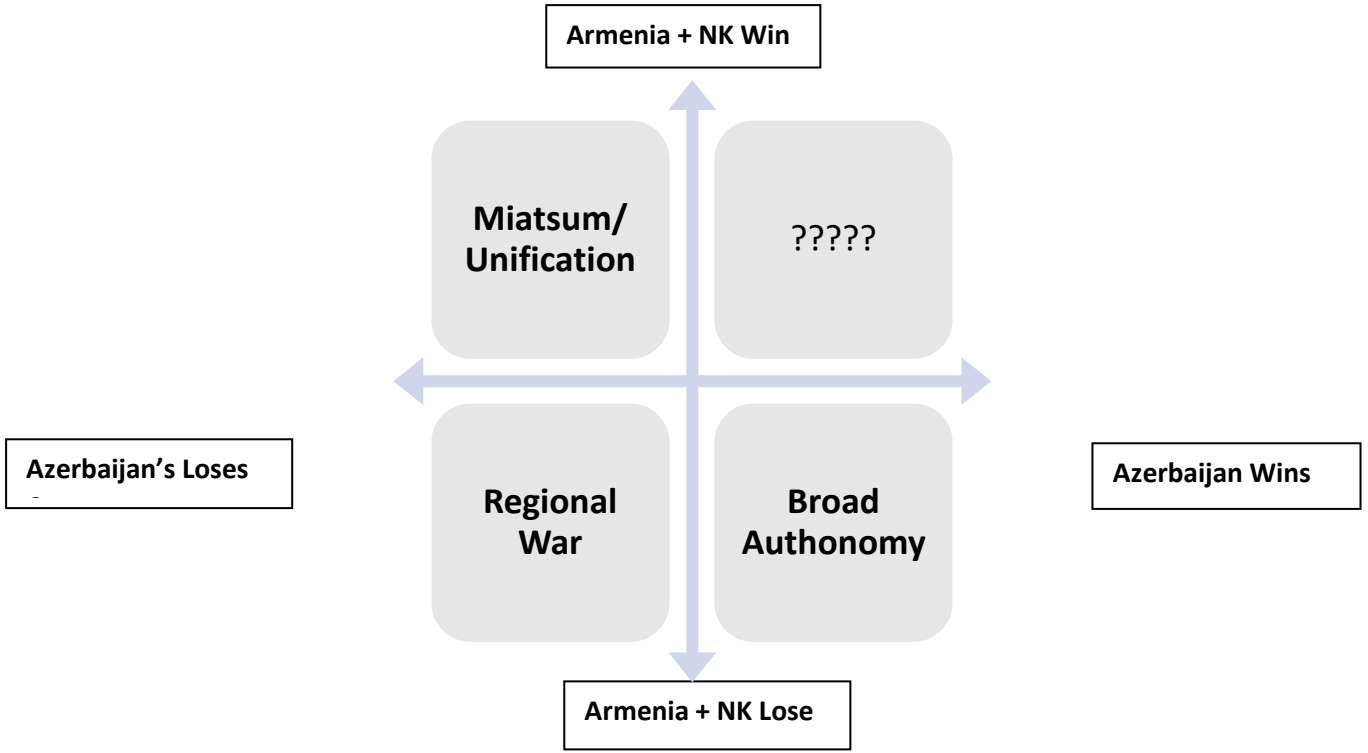
Conclusion

This panel has demonstrated that we are not short of ideas for building scenarios leading to breaking the deadlocks towards regional stability and peace in the South Caucasus. The speakers have also put forward a number of **drivers of change which might be used in planning strategies** leading the various regional actors from now towards a peaceful future in the South Caucasus region. They have also highlighted **the constraints preventing the achievement of the desired outcomes.** Those are critical ingredients for developing constructive and concrete roadmaps leading into plausible scenarios for the resolution of conflicts over Abkhazia, Nagorno-Karabakh and South Ossetia during the Interactive and Breakout Groups discussions. The hardest part of this workshop is thus still to come, where we would need to agree on what are, and how to reach the most satisfactory scenarios for peaceful conflict resolution, in the foreseeable future.

09 November 2019, 08.30–10.30,

BREAKOUT GROUP “Da Vinci” on Eastern South Caucasus

- As you know from the Programme and Workshop Outline, the aim of this workshop is to achieve a series of constructive and concrete roadmaps for each of the major unresolved conflicts in the South Caucasus. These roadmaps will constitute the bulk of this workshop’s policy recommendations.
- This time we’d like to **focus on outcomes and conditions required to break the current deadlocks in moving towards peace and regional stability** rather than exclusively suggest what the opposing side must do.
- To that end, during this breakout group discussion, I would like to invite you to outline an agreed roadmap for NK conflict resolution. Since timings are critical to the implementation of any future agreed peace process, we should probably focus on determining the main elements for this roadmap.
- **The focal issue for this discussion would be: “What scenario would outline a win-win solution for the status of Karabakh that would satisfy both Armenian and Azerbaijani interests in 2025-2030? How to reach there?”**
- Starting from a pretty simple scenario matrix, I’d suggest that we look at what would be the most relevant outcomes and conditions potentially leading towards a peaceful conflict resolution scenario in Karabakh.



Scenario-Matrix for the Status of Nagorno-Karabakh, 2025-2030

Discussion

- The purpose of our discussion is to define the win-win scenario, and on that basis to develop the elements of a roadmap leading into that scenario.
- Back in 2014, during a series of three workshops aimed at “Exploring the Role of Economic Incentives as Peace Building Tools in the NK context” experts from Armenia, Azerbaijan and NK, gathered by the European Geopolitical Forum, agreed that any **roadmap towards conflict resolution should 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**) including:
 - 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;
 - the right of all IDPs and refugees to voluntary return to their homes and/or lands and live there in peace and security.

Could these principles be included as outcomes and conditions for the win-win scenario?

Which of the Madrid+ 3 principles (Non-Use of Force, Territorial Integrity, and Equal Rights and Self-Determination of Peoples) and 6 elements (return of the territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh to Azerbaijani control; an interim status for Nagorno-Karabakh providing guarantees for security and self-governance; a corridor linking Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh; future determination of the final legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh through a legally binding expression of will; the right of all internally displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation) could we agree to be associated with the win-win scenario?

Now, turning to the roadmap to the win-win scenario:

In terms of implementation of the roadmap, would it be better to have “**step by step**” or “**package deal**” approaches for the rapprochement and for the **post-conflict phases** of the conflict resolution, respectively?

What **key drivers of change** could be added to the roadmap of the win-win scenario?

- **Applying confidence-building measures,**
- **Applying peace-building initiatives** (including those which have been agreed within this Study Group), such as the SC Energy Community, Strategic Peacebuilding Group under the Eastern Partnership (EU) where regional experts (peace scholars) and EU-based conflict resolution professionals can exchange views, share innovative ideas, scenarios, political advice, and corresponding proposals,
- Possible **use of the ambivalent statuses** (such as “guided” or “trial” separation, “shared sovereignty” formulae,) to allow the accomplishment of individual rights of citizens,
- **Concluding temporary agreements** for achieving regional stability until a new East European order was built:
 - setting up “**free economic zones**”;
 - “**engagement without recognition**” by relevant regional actors (states and international organizations) with local authorities;
 - **regional convention on the protection of human rights, freedom of movement, and human security** (would be to the credit of all the actors involved in the conflict, and to the benefit of their constituents, wherever they currently live) to prepare the respective constituencies to co-exist regardless of the final status by raising awareness of the benefits of confederative solutions- as proposed at RSSC SG8;
 - a “**condominium**” solution for Karabakh, as proposed at the RSSC SG11, where public administration would be mixed. The intent is to share authority, and jointly administer the area with the interests of both communities in mind. For example, Joint Commissions might be tasked to develop and publish a concrete program for bilateral reconciliation and reconstruction in Karabakh, as well as joint policies and a bilateral program dealing with refugees and IDPs,
- **Pursuing regional economic integration** as an incentive for peace,
- **Overcoming the legacies from the Soviet or pre-Soviet past.**