



Security Council

Mandate of the United Nations Security Council

One of the six main organs of the UN, the Security Council is the primary body for addressing matters regarding international peace and security.¹ Measures decided by the Security Council are legally binding under international law, as mandated by Article 25 of the Charter of the United Nations.² Other organs of the UN, such as the General Assembly, issue resolutions that are not legally binding.³

The actions the Security Council can take regarding the peaceful settlement of disputes is outlined in Chapter VI of the Charter of the United Nations.⁴ These actions include, but are not limited to, investigating disputes that may threaten international peace and security, adjudication, mediation, and issuing recommended actions to prevent violence and conflict.⁵ If the Security Council determines the existence of more serious threats to international peace and security such as a breach of peace or act of aggression, the Security Council can impose sanctions under Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations.⁶ The types of sanctions the Security Council implements can vary in scope and purpose. Economic sanctions, such as boycotts and trade embargoes, can be used to deprive a country of the economic benefits of international trade in an effort to pressure countries to comply with international agreements.⁷ Other forms of sanctions, such as arms embargoes, travel bans, and freezing of assets, allow the Security Council to combat aggressors by targeting their means to acquire weapons and recruits.⁸ Only when it is determined that the actions described have or would fail to address threats to peace does the Security Council considering authorizing the use of armed forces.⁹

Membership

The Security Council is comprised of 15 Member States. China, France, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States are the 5 permanent members,

¹ Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

² United Nations Conference on International Organization. "Charter of the United Nations." 1945.

³ Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

⁴ United Nations Conference on International Organization. "Charter of the United Nations." 1945.

⁵ Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.; United Nations Conference on International Organization. "Charter of the United Nations." 1945.

⁶ United Nations Conference on International Organization. "Charter of the United Nations." 1945.

⁷ Smeets. "Can Economics Sanctions Be Effective?" 2018.

⁸ United Nations Security Council. "Security Council Committee pursuant to resolutions 1267 (1999) 1989 (2011) and 2253 (2015) concerning ISIL (Da'esh) Al-Qaida and Associated individuals groups undertakings and entities."

⁹ United Nations Conference on International Organization. "Charter of the United Nations." 1945.

who have the authority to veto any substantive decisions, often called the P5.¹⁰ The other ten Member States are elected by the General Assembly for two-year terms as non-permanent members.¹¹ Originally, the Security Council consisted of the P5 and six non-permanent members, however, in 1963 the General Assembly amended the Charter of the United Nations to increase the number of non-permanent Member States to ten.¹² Since the 1950s there have been many debates concerning how to apportion membership among regional groups.¹³ In recent years, some Member States have called for Security Council reform, specifically expanding representation in the P5 to include underrepresented regions such as Africa and removing the veto power of the permanent members.¹⁴

Reporting

To assist in performing its functions, the Security Council is able to create subsidiary bodies such as committees and working groups regarding both procedural and substantive matters.¹⁵ Some of these subsidiary bodies include the Counter-Terrorism Committee, Non-Proliferation Committee, United Nations Military Staff Committee, Sanctions Committee, Working Group on Peacekeeping Operations, and the Ad Hoc Working Group on Conflict Prevention and Resolution in Africa.¹⁶

While directly overseen by the department of Peace Operations, Peacekeeping Operations are established and mandated by the Security Council. Though it is one of the main tools that the Security Council uses to maintain international peace and security, peacekeeping operations are not explicitly provisioned by the Charter of the United Nations.¹⁷ When deploying peacekeeping operations, however, the Security Council has often invoked Chapter VII of the Charter of the United Nations to justify its actions.¹⁸ In these instances, the Security Council formally approves the establishment of a peacekeeping operation through adoption of a resolution, which details the mandate of the operation, a time frame for the operation, and authorizes the deployment of troops.¹⁹ Mandates may consist of, among other tasks, facilitating the political process, protecting and promoting human rights, helping restore and extend State authority, and assisting in the restoration of the rule of law.²⁰ Though peacekeeping operations can be an effective tool in the maintenance of international peace and security, various challenges can undermine sustainable peace, including unfocused mandates, lack of political solutions, and threats to peacekeeper security.²¹

¹⁰ Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008. ; Dag Hammarskjöld Library. "On what basis was Security Council permanent membership granted?"

¹¹ Publantz et al. "Encyclopedia of the United Nations, Second Edition." 2008.

¹² Dag Hammarskjöld Library. "On what basis was Security Council permanent membership granted?"

¹³ Ibid.

¹⁴ United Nations Department of Global Communications. "Member States Call for Removing Veto Power, Expanding Security Council to Include New Permanent Seats, as General Assembly Debates Reform Plans for 15-Member Organ." 2018.

¹⁵ United Nations Security Council. "Committees, Working Groups and Ad Hoc Bodies."

¹⁶ Ibid.

¹⁷ United Nations Peacekeeping. "Mandates and Legal Basis for Peacekeeping."

¹⁸ Ibid.

¹⁹ Dag Hammarskjöld Library. "UN Documentation: Peacekeeping."; United Nations Peacekeeping. "Forming a New Operation."

²⁰ Ibid.

²¹ United Nations Peacekeeping. "Action for Peacekeeping (A4P)."

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https://www.un.org/securitycouncil/sanctions/1267#sanction_measures.



Security Council

Peace and Security in the Digital World

Introduction

The international community finds itself confronted with a host of multifaceted challenges in the realm of peace in the digital world. Based on its responsibility to act as the primary component of the United Nations (UN) in maintaining international peace and security as conferred by Chapter V, Article 24 of the Charter of the United Nations, the Security Council (UNSC) is finding itself confronted with issues of digital communications and threats more and more.²² As the digital age continues to evolve and shape the global landscape, it brings with it both immense opportunities and complex threats that transcend traditional boundaries. The unprecedented interconnectivity of our modern digital world has revolutionized communication, economies, and societies, but it has also given rise to a spectrum of challenges that have profound implications for international peace and security.²³

Within this digital ecosystem, the challenges that emerge are diverse and demanding. Cybersecurity threats, ranging from state-sponsored attacks to criminal hacking groups, loom as a constant menace to nations and organizations.²⁴ Disinformation and propaganda spread like wildfire through the vast web of social media platforms, potentially sowing discord, undermining trust, and destabilizing societies.²⁵ Moreover, the weaponization of digital technologies, such as artificial intelligence and the Internet of Things, opens new frontiers for conflict and potential breaches of international law.²⁶

The impact of these challenges reaches far beyond the virtual realm, often having tangible consequences on international relations, global stability, and even individual safety – such as the “infodemic” that evolved alongside the Covid-19 pandemic.²⁷ The urgency to address these challenges is underscored by the

²² “Charter of the United Nations.” United Nations. 1945.

²³ “Ensure digital technologies are 'a force for good', Guterres says in message for International Day.” United Nations. 2021.

²⁴ “‘Explosive’ Growth of Digital Technologies Creating New Potential for Conflict, Disarmament Chief Tells Security Council in First-Ever Debate on Cyberthreats.” United Nations. 2021.

²⁵ “Countries urged to act against COVID-19 ‘infodemic’.” United Nations. 2020.

²⁶ Nichols, Michelle. “UN Security Council meets for first time on AI risks.” Reuters. 2023.

²⁷ “Countries urged to act against COVID-19 ‘infodemic’.” United Nations. 2020.

increasingly blurred lines between digital and physical domains, making it essential for the international community to develop a comprehensive and coordinated approach to safeguard peace in the digital world.

Background

The digital world has undergone a remarkable transformation over the past few decades. The internet, once a limited academic and military network, has evolved into a ubiquitous global infrastructure connecting billions of people.²⁸ This transformation has redefined communication, commerce, and access to information, enabling a profound societal shift. That digital revolution has brought with it both enormous advancements and dire vulnerabilities. The ease of online communication and the interconnectedness of digital systems have given rise to cyber threats, including hacking, identity theft, and data breaches. Moreover, the digital world has become a fertile ground for the spread of disinformation, propaganda, and hate speech.²⁹ These developments have raised significant concerns about the preservation of peace in the digital realm.

Some of the earliest actions to shape our modern understanding of digital security predate the UN. As the internet and digital connections are fundamentally a form of communication, early treaties on telecommunications informed and developed into modern telecommunications structures such as the International Telecommunications Union (ITU).³⁰ Though the ITU in its current state is formally a specialized agency of the UN, it was initially founded as the International Telegraph Union.³¹ Its early standards and practices to protect our most basic electronic communications formed the basis of modern international telecommunications law.³²

The Internet itself came about as a result of research conducted by the United States Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, which developed a rudimentary information exchange platform known as ARPANET to connect researchers and institutions.³³ The modern World Wide Web was built on that foundation, debuting in the 1990s and changing the world dramatically.³⁴ Regional groups and connected bodies responded to the technology with treaties such as the Budapest Convention on Cybercrime in 2001.³⁵ While smaller groups organized themselves, the UN acknowledged the effects of near-instant global communications and organized the first phase of the World Summit on the Information Society (WSIS) in 2003.³⁶ The WSIS second phase in 2005 provided another opportunity for world leaders in government,

²⁸ "The Origins of the Internet." Council on Foreign Relations. 2023.

²⁹ "How Disinformation Spreads, and Why It's So Hard to Combat." National Public Radio. 2020.

³⁰ "Overview of ITU's History (1)." International Telecommunications Union. N.d.

³¹ Ibid.

³² Ibid.

³³ "The Origins of the Internet." Council on Foreign Relations. 2023.

³⁴ Ibid.

³⁵ Daskal, Jennifer et al. "Budapest Convention: What is it and how is it being updated?" Cross-Border Data Forum. 2020.

³⁶ "World Summit on the Information Society." International Telecommunications Union.

civil society, and the private sector to address issues related to the new frontier of the Internet.³⁷

More recently, as the vulnerabilities and opportunities connected to cyberspace have become more mainstream, additional action has been taken on the world stage. The UN convened its Group of Government Experts (GGE) and an Open-Ended Working Group to conduct further discussions on matters of security related to digital communications.³⁸ The findings of the GGE were published in two reports in 2015 and 2021, outlining new international norms and principles for state conduct in cyberspace that aimed to reduce digital conflict.³⁹

Current Situation

The current situation in the digital world is characterized by both opportunities and challenges. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the importance of digital technologies in facilitating remote work, online education, and global communication.⁴⁰ However, it also underscored the vulnerabilities of the digital ecosystem. Cyberattacks on critical infrastructure, healthcare systems, and research institutions surged during the pandemic, revealing the potential for disruption and damage in the digital realm.⁴¹ The current stance of the UN is that state conduct in cyberspace is subject to the rules and standards of international behavior set out in the UN Charter. The UN works to ensure international actors abide by these standards through works such as the UN Office of Counter-Terrorism Cybersecurity and New Technologies program.⁴²

The UN and other actors of the international community have responded to recent challenges with a range of initiatives. One of the primary mechanisms is the North Atlantic Treaty Organization's Tallinn Manual, which offers guidance on how international law, including the United Nations Charter, applies to cyberspace.⁴³ Published first in 2013, with a 2.0 update in 2017 and work being done on a 3.0 version now, the Tallinn Manual presents a variety of principles on norms and best practices to help states respond to cyber threats, whether in the form of outright conflict or more mundane day-to-day issues.⁴⁴ The African Union (AU) has held two Cybercrime Forums to improve communication and cooperation between the African and European

³⁷ Ibid.

³⁸ Efrony, Dan. "The UN Cyber Groups, GGE and OEWG – A Consensus is Optimal, But Time is of the Essence." Just Security. 2021.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Crawford, Ben. "COVID-19 has accelerated digital transformation - here's how companies can adapt." World Economic Forum. 2021.

⁴¹ "INTERPOL report shows alarming rate of cyberattacks during COVID-19." INTERPOL. 2020.

⁴² "Cybersecurity and New Technologies." UN Office of Counter-Terrorism. N.d.

⁴³ "The Tallinn Manual." NATO Cooperative Cyber Defence Centre of Excellence. N.d.

⁴⁴ Ibid.

continents.⁴⁵ These forums discussed topics of both large, state-level threats and narrow threats to individuals through digital means.⁴⁶

Additionally, the UNSC has held several meetings and issued statements on the topic of cybersecurity, acknowledging the global nature of cyber threats and their potential to impact international peace and security. The most recent formal discussion took place on July 18, 2023, at the Security Council's first meeting to discuss the potential harm of unrestricted artificial intelligence (AI) tools.⁴⁷

The UN also emphasizes the importance of countering the spread of disinformation and misinformation in the digital space.⁴⁸ In an era where information can be weaponized, the organization advocates for media literacy, fact-checking, and cooperation among states to combat the dissemination of false or harmful content.⁴⁹ The UN's approach is grounded in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which upholds the freedom of expression while also recognizing the responsibilities that come with it.⁵⁰ These principles helped the UN sculpt its response to the aforementioned "infodemic" that propagated across the internet starting at the beginning of the Covid-19 pandemic.⁵¹

Future Outlook

The future outlook for peace in the digital world is both promising and challenging. As digital technologies continue to evolve, new threats will emerge. The Internet of Things and AI introduce new dimensions of complexity and risk to the digital landscape.⁵² The potential for state-sponsored cyberattacks and hybrid warfare in the digital realm remains a significant concern.⁵³

The UN and UNSC are poised to play a critical role in shaping the future of digital peace. They are likely to continue developing and promoting international norms and agreements related to cyberspace. The UN's efforts to bridge the digital divide, ensuring that all countries have equitable access to digital technologies, will also be vital in promoting global stability.⁵⁴ Furthermore, the organization will likely intensify its focus on protecting critical infrastructure and preventing the weaponization of AI and other emerging technologies.⁵⁵

⁴⁵ "The African Union Convenes The Second African Cybercrime Forum." African Union. 2021.

⁴⁶ Ibid.

⁴⁷ Nichols, Michelle. "UN Security Council meets for first time on AI risks." Reuters. 2023.

⁴⁸ "UN tackles 'infodemic' of misinformation and cybercrime in COVID-19 crisis." United Nations. 2020.

⁴⁹ Ibid.

⁵⁰ "Universal Declaration of Human Rights." United Nations. 1948.

⁵¹ "UN tackles 'infodemic' of misinformation and cybercrime in COVID-19 crisis." United Nations. 2020.

⁵² "Ensure digital technologies are 'a force for good', Guterres says in message for International Day." United Nations. 2021.

⁵³ "The Application of International Law to State Cyberattacks." Chatham House. 2019.

⁵⁴ "Ensure digital technologies are 'a force for good', Guterres says in message for International Day." United Nations. 2021.

⁵⁵ Nichols, Michelle. "UN Security Council meets for first time on AI risks." Reuters. 2023.

Focus Questions

- Does your country currently have domestic initiatives to combat cybercrime?
- Has your country been the target of major cybercrime attacks?
- How developed is your country's digital infrastructure? What percentage of your population has access to the internet?

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<https://www.reuters.com/technology/un-security-council-meets-first-time-ai-risks-2023-07-18/>



Security Council

The Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh

Introduction

The UN Charter provides the foundation for global peace and security, outlining collective measures to foster friendly relations among Member States and encourage international cooperation.⁵⁶ The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict involves Armenia and Azerbaijan and represents a localized ethnic and regional dispute that holds broader implications due to major countries' power struggles in the Caucasus and Caspian regions.⁵⁷ Artsakh, also known as Nagorno-Karabakh, situated within Azerbaijan but predominantly inhabited by ethnic Armenians, is the crux of the conflict with roots in historical, ethnic, and territorial issues.⁵⁸

After a full-scale armed conflict in 1991, Nagorno-Karabakh declared independence, a move unrecognized by any Member State.⁵⁹ This declaration resulted in an intricate geopolitical scenario where the region, despite its unrecognized status, retained a connection to Armenia through a corridor on Azerbaijani territory.⁶⁰ Of particular importance, the Lachin corridor is the sole transportation link connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia, enabling the movement of people and goods.⁶¹

The conflict escalated significantly in September 2020, beginning along the line of contact (LoC) and spreading to encompass additional areas in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.⁶² The hostilities eventually led to a ceasefire agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan in November 2020, temporarily halting the conflict but leaving underlying tensions

⁵⁶ Charter of the United Nations and Statute of the International Court of Justice

Link: <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf> pg. 3

⁵⁷ Disputes over Nagorno-Karabakh: A Protracted Conflict

<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/777631> pg. 49; Global Conflict Tracker: Nagorno Karabakh Conflict <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

⁵⁸ ACLED Fact Sheet: Azerbaijan Moves to Retake Artsakh <https://acleddata.com/2023/09/21/fact-sheet-azerbaijan-moves-to-retake-artsakh/> ; Global Conflict Tracker: Nagorno Karabakh Conflict <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

⁵⁹ Global Conflict Tracker: Nagorno Karabakh Conflict <https://www.cfr.org/global-conflict-tracker/conflict/nagorno-karabakh-conflict>

⁶⁰ Nagorno-Karabakh: Embedded in Geo-Politics <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48580809> pg. 9

⁶¹ Nagorno-Karabakh: Embedded in Geo-Politics <https://www.jstor.org/stable/48580809> pg.9; pg. 2 <https://spcommreports.ohchr.org/TMResultsBase/DownloadPublicCommunicationFile?gld=27840>

⁶² Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan Final Report https://armenia.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/IARP%20Report_FINAL_Digital.pdf

unresolved.⁶³ After years of intermittent ceasefires interrupted by occasional clashes and escalations of violence, Azerbaijan launched a recent military campaign in September against Nagorno-Karabakh.⁶⁴ This operation enabled Baku to regain military authority over the long-disputed area, prompting a significant displacement of ethnic Armenians from their residences.⁶⁵ Most of this demographic has since evacuated, and the government of Nagorno-Karabakh has announced that the self-proclaimed republic is expected to dissolve by January 2024.⁶⁶

In a broader context, the General Assembly's adoption of the "Transforming our World: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development" established the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).⁶⁷ Among these goals is the aspiration to foster peaceful, inclusive societies, emphasizing the intrinsic link between sustainable development and endeavors toward peacebuilding.⁶⁸ The protracted Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has yielded tangible consequences, internally displaced around 700,000 individuals, and left a dangerous legacy of landmines.⁶⁹ In response, the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) voiced its apprehension through Resolution 874 in 1993, acknowledging the potential threats to peace and security in the Nagorno-Karabakh region and the escalating tensions between Armenia and Azerbaijan.⁷⁰ Per Article 24 of the Charter, the UNSC is entrusted with addressing issues that significantly jeopardize international peace and security, rendering it an indispensable entity in resolving conflicts of this nature.⁷¹

Background

In December 1991, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic conducted a pivotal referendum, with an overwhelming 99.89% endorsement for independence from registered voters.⁷² However, efforts to engage the Azerbaijani population resulted in divergent responses and

⁶³ Armenia Inter-Agency Response Plan Final Report https://armenia.un.org/sites/default/files/2022-08/IARP%20Report_FINAL_Digital.pdf

⁶⁴ Nagorno-Karabakh: MEPs set to condemn Azerbaijan's latest unjustified attack <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2023-10-02/10/nagorno-karabakh-meps-set-to-condemn-azerbaijan-s-latest-unjustified-attack>

⁶⁵ Nagorno-Karabakh: MEPs set to condemn Azerbaijan's latest unjustified attack <https://www.europarl.europa.eu/news/en/agenda/briefing/2023-10-02/10/nagorno-karabakh-meps-set-to-condemn-azerbaijan-s-latest-unjustified-attack>

⁶⁶ Nagorno-Karabakh Profile <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-18270325>

⁶⁷ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015
A/RES/70/1 https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf

⁶⁸ Resolution adopted by the General Assembly on 25 September 2015
A/RES/70/1 https://www.un.org/en/development/desa/population/migration/generalassembly/docs/globalcompact/A_RES_70_1_E.pdf

⁶⁹ Armenia and Azerbaijan: High risk of cross-border violence in Nagorno-Karabakh despite ceasefire
<https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099062923164533460/pdf/P1781240984ec608108c7f0164f8d0b3c98.pdf>

⁷⁰ UNSC 874 1993 <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/174420?ln=en>

⁷¹ UN Charter <https://treaties.un.org/doc/publication/ctc/uncharter.pdf>

⁷² Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Republic of Artsakh <https://www.nkr.am/en/independence-referendum-in-karabakh>

violence during the referendum.⁷³

Nations like Iran, Kazakhstan, and Russia mediated the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Simultaneously, the UN and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), formally known as the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) sponsored peace talks in 1992.⁷⁴ From 1992 to 1993 the UNSC adopted resolutions 882, 857, 947, and 884, reaffirming Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, condemning the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh, and urging the withdrawal of occupying forces.⁷⁵

In 1994, the Bishkek Protocol was signed, outlining provisions for autonomy in Nagorno-Karabakh, security measures, withdrawal of Armenian forces, standards for the Lachin Corridor, refugee return, and international support for reconstruction.⁷⁶ By 1994, Armenian troops-controlled Nagorno-Karabakh and seven neighboring districts, displacing over a million people.⁷⁷ The international community expressed concern through the Budapest Declaration, calling for a ceasefire and peaceful negotiations.⁷⁸ A pivotal moment occurred in June 1995 with the "Helsinki Statement," emphasizing ceasefire maintenance and humanitarian concerns.⁷⁹ In 2000, General Assembly Resolution 54/117 endorsed OSCE's efforts for a peaceful resolution, backed dialogue, and welcomed OSCE-UN cooperation.⁸⁰

In 2007, the Minsk Group proposed the Madrid Principles, which found no agreement due to disagreements on territorial return, interim status, linking corridor, legal status determination, displaced persons' return, and security guarantees.⁸¹ Minor border skirmishes persisted due to Armenia and Azerbaijan's differences.⁸² UN General Assembly Resolution 62/243 in 2008 emphasized peaceful resolution and Azerbaijani sovereignty.⁸³

⁷³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs: Republic of Artsakh <https://www.nkr.am/en/independence-referendum-in-karabakh>

⁷⁴ Nagorno- Karabakh JSTOR

https://www.jstor.org/stable/pdf/48580809.pdf?refreqid=excelsior%3A97808aaf6638f035b2cc0a85e6baf830&ab_segments=&origin=&initiator=&acceptTC=1

⁷⁵ Nagorno Karabakh: Armenia's Claims Azerbaijan's Position, and the Peace Efforts <https://www.e-ir.info/2016/06/04/nagorno-karabakh-armenias-claims-azerbajians-position-and-the-peace-efforts/>
pg. 3

⁷⁶ Analyzing the Upsurge of Violence and Mediation in the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

https://stabilityjournal.org/articles/10.5334/sta.du?utm_source=TrendMD&utm_medium=cpc&utm_campaign=Stability_TrendMD_0 pg. 11

⁷⁷ The elusive search for resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh dispute

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvdf0bmg.14> pg. 125; International Crisis Group <https://www.crisisgroup.org/content/nagorno-karabakh-conflict-visual-explainer>

⁷⁸ OSCE Budapest Declaration "Towards A Genuine Partnership in a New Era" <https://www.osce.org/mc/39554>

⁷⁹ OSCE talks on Nagorno Karabakh considered <https://www.osce.org/node/52558>

⁸⁰ <https://digitallibrary.un.org/record/404684?ln=en>

⁸¹ The Dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh: A Protracted Conflict

<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/777631> pg. 51

⁸² The Dispute over Nagorno-Karabakh: A Protracted Conflict

<https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/777631> pg. 51

⁸³ [https://documents-dds-](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/478/35/PDF/N0747835.pdf?OpenElement)

[ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/478/35/PDF/N0747835.pdf?OpenElement](https://documents-dds-ny.un.org/doc/UNDOC/GEN/N07/478/35/PDF/N0747835.pdf?OpenElement)

In 2014, heightened tensions led to severe violence along the LoC, with over 30 casualties on both sides over a few days.⁸⁴ During a UNSC meeting in the same year, Resolution 2171 was adopted, focusing on mediation, cooperation with regional organizations, and human rights mechanisms for conflict prevention.⁸⁵ Zohrab Mnatsakanyan highlighted its relevance to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict due to ceasefire violations and increased tensions.⁸⁶

The most intense clash since 1994 occurred in April 2016: the 'Four-Day War,' escalating casualties and equipment.⁸⁷ Despite rejecting Minsk Group proposals, the status quo held. Armenia and Azerbaijan sought to alter the situation through military enhancement.⁸⁸

In September 2020, Azerbaijan initiated a large-scale war in Nagorno Karabakh, leading to 44 days of conflict. Azerbaijani forces seized Shusha, followed by a Russian-brokered peace accord.⁸⁹ Armenia accepted the ceasefire arrangement, withdrawing from the most contested territory.⁹⁰ A trilateral agreement was signed in November 2020, with Russia, Armenia, and Azerbaijan maintaining control.⁹¹ Despite involvement from various stakeholders like the Russian Federation, the USA, France, OSCE, and the UN, sporadic fire exchanges persist until a comprehensive path to lasting peace is established.⁹²

Current Situation

Following the resurgence of the Armenia-Azerbaijan border conflict from September to

⁸⁴ The elusive search for resolution of the Nagorny Karabakh dispute

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/j.ctvdf0bmg.14> pg. 127

⁸⁵ Security Council, Adopting Resolution 2171 (2014), Pledges Better Use of System-Wide Approach to Conflict Prevention <https://press.un.org/en/2014/sc11528.doc.htm>

⁸⁶ Security Council, Adopting Resolution 2171 (2014), Pledges Better Use of System-Wide Approach to Conflict Prevention <https://press.un.org/en/2014/sc11528.doc.htm>

⁸⁷ The Role of Turkish Drones in Azerbaijan's Increasing Military Effectiveness

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/48673741> pg. 171

⁸⁸ The Role of Turkish Drones in Azerbaijan's Increasing Military Effectiveness

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/48673741> pg. 171

⁸⁹ Drones over Nagorno-Karabakh: A glimpse at the future of war?

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/48638213> pg. 15

⁹⁰ Drones over Nagorno-Karabakh: A glimpse at the future of war?

<https://www.jstor.org/stable/48638213> pg. 15 ; Spiraling Into Security Dilemma- The Case of 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ketevani-Grdzeldze/publication/361366494_Spiralling_Into_Security_Dilemma_-_The_Case_of_2020_Nagorno-Karabakh_War/links/62ac5337a920e8693efbe78f/Spiralling-Into-Security-Dilemma-The-Case-of-2020-Nagorno-Karabakh-War.pdf pg. 4

⁹¹ Spiraling Into Security Dilemma- The Case of 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ketevani-Grdzeldze/publication/361366494_Spiralling_Into_Security_Dilemma_-_The_Case_of_2020_Nagorno-Karabakh_War/links/62ac5337a920e8693efbe78f/Spiralling-Into-Security-Dilemma-The-Case-of-2020-Nagorno-Karabakh-War.pdf pg. 4

⁹² Spiraling Into Security Dilemma- The Case of 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War

https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Ketevani-Grdzeldze/publication/361366494_Spiralling_Into_Security_Dilemma_-_The_Case_of_2020_Nagorno-Karabakh_War/links/62ac5337a920e8693efbe78f/Spiralling-Into-Security-Dilemma-The-Case-of-2020-Nagorno-Karabakh-War.pdf pg. 15

November 2020, the governments of Azerbaijan and Armenia took a significant step by signing the Trilateral Cease-Fire Statement.⁹³ This statement addressed specific aspects of the longstanding conflict that had escalated during the Nagorno-Karabakh War of 2020.⁹⁴ As a result of this war, Azerbaijan shifted its stance, retracting its offer of special status or autonomy for indigenous Armenian residents and emphasizing their reintegration into Azerbaijan.⁹⁵

The situation escalated further in September 2022, with Azerbaijani incursions into Armenian territory.⁹⁶ In response, the European Union (EU) heightened its regional engagement, establishing the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA) in February 2023. This mission, a non-executive and non-armed civilian Common Security and Defense (CSDP) initiative, was introduced to bolster stability and cooperation in Armenia.⁹⁷

In the aftermath of the 2020 conflict, substantial efforts have been focused on the reconstruction and recovery of Nagorno-Karabakh.⁹⁸ The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) in Armenia, in collaboration with the Republic of Armenia Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, has spearheaded a vital initiative named "Support to Post-Conflict Recovery of the Most Vulnerable Communities and Groups in Armenia."⁹⁹ This project, funded by the Russian Federation, addresses the persistent displacement crisis stemming from the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.¹⁰⁰

Central to this initiative are vital objectives, including establishing sustainable emergency livelihoods for displaced populations, facilitating the socio-economic integration of vulnerable groups, and maximizing post-conflict recovery benefits. The project mainly focuses on regions bordering Nagorno-Karabakh, such as Syunik, Gegharkunik, and Vayots Dzor, aiming to bring stability and prosperity to the affected communities.

In mid-September 2023, Azerbaijan launched a military operation against Artsakh to end a

⁹³ Internally Displaced Persons in Azerbaijan: Livelihoods, Services and Intentions <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099062923164533460/pdf/P1781240984ec608108c7f0164f8d0b3c98.pdf> pg. 10

⁹⁴ Internally Displaced Persons in Azerbaijan: Livelihoods, Services and Intentions <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/099062923164533460/pdf/P1781240984ec608108c7f0164f8d0b3c98.pdf> pg. 10

⁹⁵ Azerbaijan quiet as Karabakh negotiations progress <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijan-quiet-as-karabakh-negotiations-progress>

⁹⁶ Armenia and Azerbaijan: Between war and peace [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)747919](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2023)747919)

⁹⁷ Armenia and Azerbaijan: Between war and peace [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI\(2023\)747919](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/thinktank/en/document/EPRS_BRI(2023)747919)

⁹⁸ Support to Post-Conflict Recovery of the Most Vulnerable Communities and Groups in Armenia <https://www.undp.org/armenia/projects/support-post-conflict-recovery-most-vulnerable-communities-and-groups-armenia>

⁹⁹ Support to Post-Conflict Recovery of the Most Vulnerable Communities and Groups in Armenia <https://www.undp.org/armenia/projects/support-post-conflict-recovery-most-vulnerable-communities-and-groups-armenia>

¹⁰⁰ Support to Post-Conflict Recovery of the Most Vulnerable Communities and Groups in Armenia <https://www.undp.org/armenia/projects/support-post-conflict-recovery-most-vulnerable-communities-and-groups-armenia>

nine-month blockade.¹⁰¹ This move aligned with the November 2020 ceasefire agreement brokered by Russia after the second war over the region.¹⁰² Since 2020, a 2,000-strong Russian peacekeeping force has been in place.¹⁰³ Intense strikes on Stepanakert, Aghdam, and Shusha led to Azerbaijan breaching several sectors of the LoC, nearing Stepanakert; on September 20, Artsakh consented to a Russian-proposed ceasefire involving disarmament and talks for integration into Azerbaijan, following deteriorating security and humanitarian conditions about a year after significant clashes along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border.¹⁰⁴

Landmines in Nagorno-Karabakh

In the context of mine action and its impact on Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), twelve of the seventeen SDGs, including SDG 16, which focuses on peaceful and inclusive societies, directly align with the goal of mine action to reduce violence and casualties.¹⁰⁵ Furthermore, mine action indirectly contributes to four more SDGs, such as SDG 15, concerning forest management and combating land degradation.¹⁰⁶ In Nagorno-Karabakh, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) has reported 747 landmine casualties, with civilians comprising 59% of these cases.¹⁰⁷

On April 4, 2023, the Center for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise (CHDE) in Armenia commemorated the UN International Day for Mine Awareness and Assistance in Mine Action with an international roundtable named "Together Against Mines."¹⁰⁸ This event facilitated discussions on mine action efforts, challenges, and collaborations relevant to Nagorno-Karabakh.¹⁰⁹ It underscored the importance of developing national mine action capacities, particularly in regions like Nagorno-Karabakh.¹¹⁰ Discussions on the National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plans for 2023-2027, organized in partnership with Armenia's Centre for Humanitarian Demining and Expertise, engaged various stakeholders,

¹⁰¹ ACLED Fact Sheet: Azerbaijan Moves to Retake Artsakh <https://acleddata.com/2023/09/21/fact-sheet-azerbaijan-moves-to-retake-artsakh/>

¹⁰² ACLED Fact Sheet: Azerbaijan Moves to Retake Artsakh <https://acleddata.com/2023/09/21/fact-sheet-azerbaijan-moves-to-retake-artsakh/>

¹⁰³ ACLED Fact Sheet: Azerbaijan Moves to Retake Artsakh <https://acleddata.com/2023/09/21/fact-sheet-azerbaijan-moves-to-retake-artsakh/>

¹⁰⁴ ACLED Fact Sheet: Azerbaijan Moves to Retake Artsakh <https://acleddata.com/2023/09/21/fact-sheet-azerbaijan-moves-to-retake-artsakh/>

¹⁰⁵ Mine Action and the Sustainable Development Goals <https://www.undp.org/publications/mine-action-and-sustainable-development-goals> pg. 9-10

¹⁰⁶ Mine Action and the Sustainable Development Goals <https://www.undp.org/publications/mine-action-and-sustainable-development-goals> pg. 9-10

¹⁰⁷ Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: Landmines, a disturbing reminder of war <https://www.icrc.org/en/document/nagorno-karabakh-conflict-landmines-disturbing-reminder-war>

¹⁰⁸ #togetheragainstmines <https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/togetheragainstmines>

¹⁰⁹ #togetheragainstmines <https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/togetheragainstmines> ; Discussion of the National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plans 2030-2027 <https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/discussion-national-mine-action-strategy-and-operational-plans-2023-2027>

¹¹⁰ Discussion of the National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plans 2030-2027 <https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/discussion-national-mine-action-strategy-and-operational-plans-2023-2027>

including UN agencies and NGOs.¹¹¹ This effort emphasized the alignment of mine action with EU peace, security, humanitarian, and development priorities within the "Strengthening National Mine Action Capacities in Armenia" project, funded by the European Commission and executed by UNDP.¹¹²

Since 2000, the Hazardous Area Life-support Organization (HALO) Trust has cleared almost 500 minefields in Nagorno-Karabakh, benefiting over 130,000 individuals.¹¹³ Amid the heightened conflict and the subsequent ceasefire in November 2020, explosive remnants threatened homes and public areas.¹¹⁴ HALO's current focus is on clearing cluster munitions and unexploded ordnances in critical population centers, ensuring the safety of the remaining residents, and facilitating the return of displaced families.¹¹⁵

In response to the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the United Nations Mine Action Service (UNMAS) dispatched experts to Armenia and Azerbaijan to assess conflict-affected areas.¹¹⁶ Collaborating with key partners, including the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), the Azerbaijan National Agency for Mine Action, and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), UNMAS evaluated mine action requirements in Azerbaijan.¹¹⁷ This collaborative effort led to the establishment of a joint Working Group for coordinated response planning.¹¹⁸ The most heavily mine-contaminated areas involve a mix of anti-personnel and anti-vehicle mines, some improvised with traps, found not only along the former LoC but also in diverse locations such as cemeteries, riverbanks, ruined settlements, and springs, constituting about 5% of the total mined area.¹¹⁹

Future Outlook

In February 2023, the International Court of Justice (ICJ) issued a binding provisional measure mandating Azerbaijan to guarantee unimpeded passage along the Lachin Corridor, a vital transportation link connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia. Despite this

¹¹¹ Discussion of the National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plans 2030-2027
<https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/discussion-national-mine-action-strategy-and-operational-plans-2023-2027>

¹¹² Discussion of the National Mine Action Strategy and Operational Plans 2030-2027
<https://www.undp.org/armenia/press-releases/discussion-national-mine-action-strategy-and-operational-plans-2023-2027>

¹¹³ The Halo Trust: Support Nagorno Karabakh <https://www.halousa.org/where-we-work/europe-and-caucasus/nagorno-karabakh/>

¹¹⁴ The Halo Trust: Support Nagorno Karabakh <https://www.halousa.org/where-we-work/europe-and-caucasus/nagorno-karabakh/>

¹¹⁵ The Halo Trust: Support Nagorno Karabakh <https://www.halousa.org/where-we-work/europe-and-caucasus/nagorno-karabakh/>

¹¹⁶ UNMAS Annual Report 2022
https://www.unmas.org/sites/default/files/unmas_annual_report_2022.pdf

¹¹⁷ UNMAS Annual Report 2022
https://www.unmas.org/sites/default/files/unmas_annual_report_2022.pdf

¹¹⁸ UNMAS Annual Report 2022
https://www.unmas.org/sites/default/files/unmas_annual_report_2022.pdf

¹¹⁹ Azerbaijan Mine Action Review: Clearing the Mines 2022
https://www.mineactionreview.org/assets/downloads/Azerbaijan_Clearing_the_Mines_2022.pdf

directive, its enforcement has yet to come to fruition.¹²⁰ The Trilateral Statement of November 2020, which designates Russian peacekeeping oversight and commitments for secure movement, has not entirely resolved the corridor's accessibility issues, further compounded by checkpoints and disruptions.¹²¹ This situation directly impacts the lives of 120,000 Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh and intersects with ongoing peace negotiations facilitated by the EU, United States, and Russian Federation.¹²²

Responding to Azerbaijan's persistent blockade of the Lachin Corridor, a team of UN experts has expressed deep concerns.¹²³ This blockade has precipitated a severe humanitarian crisis over several months, resulting in shortages of essential food items, medications, and hygiene products for the local population.¹²⁴ Furthermore, the blockade has hampered crucial operations, including medical and educational services, leading to a dire regional humanitarian situation.¹²⁵ This issue underscores the complexities of the conflict's aftermath and highlights the urgent need for sustainable solutions to address the humanitarian needs of the affected population.¹²⁶

Focus Questions

- When conducting further research on this topic, delegates should consider:
- To what extent has the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh impacted your Member State?
- How can future conflicts and tensions in Nagorno-Karabakh be prevented?
- What lessons can be learned from this situation?
- In what ways has the international community been impacted by the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh?
- What are the security implications arising from this regional dispute?
- What are the potential long-term implications and challenges associated with finding a sustainable and peaceful solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, including issues of territorial integrity, self-determination, and reconciliation?

¹²⁰ Humanitarian Situation in the Lachin corridor https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2023-000028_EN.html

¹²¹ Humanitarian Situation in the Lachin corridor https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2023-000028_EN.html

¹²² Humanitarian Situation in the Lachin corridor https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/O-9-2023-000028_EN.html

¹²³ UN experts urge Azerbaijan to lift Lachin corridor blockade and end humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/08/un-experts-urge-azerbaijan-lift-lachin-corridor-blockade-and-end>

¹²⁴ UN experts urge Azerbaijan to lift Lachin corridor blockade and end humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/08/un-experts-urge-azerbaijan-lift-lachin-corridor-blockade-and-end>

¹²⁵ UN experts urge Azerbaijan to lift Lachin corridor blockade and end humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh <https://www.ohchr.org/en/press-releases/2023/08/un-experts-urge-azerbaijan-lift-lachin-corridor-blockade-and-end> ; Lachin Corridor Must Be Reopened for Humanitarian Aid, Security Council Hears, as Speakers Urge Armenia, Azerbaijan to Normalize Relations <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15384.doc.htm>

¹²⁶ Lachin Corridor Must Be Reopened for Humanitarian Aid, Security Council Hears, as Speakers Urge Armenia, Azerbaijan to Normalize Relations <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15384.doc.htm>

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