

Editor's Note

The current issue of the Caucasus Strategic Perspectives (CSP) journal entitled “*Armenia and Azerbaijan: Between Failed Peace and War*” is dedicated to the latest 44-days war between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone with focus on different aspects of the conflict and the war. The CSP’s new issue includes 6 articles, 7 commentaries and 2 book reviews. In the framework of Armenia-Azerbaijan confrontation, the CSP’s current authors analysed the role of ideology, western media coverage, economic issues, illegal activities, multilateral diplomacy, international reaction, as well as humanitarian and geopolitical issues.

The new issue’s *Articles Section* starts with **Vugar Gurbanov’s** article of “*The role of ideology in mass atrocities: The case of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan*” which analyses in detail the ideological aspects of the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict by focusing on mainstream Armenian concepts. His main argument is that the nationalist and exclusionary Armenian ideology with its indiscriminate “enemy” concept provides a substantial answer to the exercised brutality on a massive scale against those deemed “guilty.”

Damjan Krnjević Mišković’s article of “*Geopolitics and the Second Karabakh War*” examines the question of geopolitics of the Second Karabakh War with reference to Aristotle’s presentation of tragedy (entanglement, unravelling). Mišković argued that the strategic consequences of the return of geopolitics to international relations owing to the onset of a G-Zero world were prudentially understood by Azerbaijan and tragically misunderstood by Armenia.

Robert M. Cutler’s article of “*Western Blind Spot in the South Caucasus: Chronicle of a War Foretold*” explains how much it is the case that European and American diplomacy has declined to acknowledge new developments in the South Caucasus over the last quarter century. According to Cutler, the European and American information media also failed to inform their readerships about the facts of the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and behind the conflict.

Rovshan Ibrahimov’s article of “*Economic Potential of the Liberated Territories of Azerbaijan: A Brief Overview*” narrates that after the liberation of Azerbaijan’s formerly occupied territories, the main task that now needs to be addressed is the restoration of those territories and the return of internally displaced persons to their homes therein. Ibrahimov provided the general assessment of the economic potential of the liberated territories.

Murad Muradov’s article of “*Armenia–Azerbaijan Conflict: The Failure*

of Multilateral Diplomacy” describes the failure of the long-term attempts to resolve the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict in and around the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan through the means of multilateral diplomacy. It shows that the OSCE Minsk Group has been unable to fulfil its mission and analyses the structural problems their attempts have had.

The joint article of **Javid Alyarli** and **Arzu Abbasova** titled “*Assessing Damage Caused by Illegal Activities of Armenia to Azerbaijan in the Liberated (Formerly Occupied) Territories*” touches upon Armenia’s illegal activities in Azerbaijan’s formerly occupied territories, primarily the level of damage caused during the entire period of the Armenian occupation. By highlighting the financial parameters and legal ramifications of the illegitimate actions, both authors find that an underlying political motive was cementing the Armenian occupation and promoting annexationism.

The new issue’s **Commentaries Section** commences with **Esmira Jafarova’s** commentary of “*The Gordian Knot of the Armenia–Azerbaijan Conflict and the Second Karabakh War: Conclusions and Reflections*” focuses on the most recent events in the run-up to the war between Armenia and Azerbaijan that lasted from September 27 to November 10, 2020, and offers some thoughts on the war itself and the myths and misperceptions associated with the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict.

Ayça Ergun’s commentary of “*Turkey’s Presence, Involvement and Engagement in the Armenia–Azerbaijan Conflict: A Reflection on Azerbaijani–Turkish Relations*” discusses Turkey’s position on the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict and provides an overview of the nature of the bilateral relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey and shows how they conditioned Turkey’s presence and involvement in this conflict.

The joint commentary of **Nizami Safarov** and **Najiba Mustafayeva** titled “*Violations of International Humanitarian Law by Armenia in the Second Karabakh war*” discusses international crimes committed by Armenia during the recent fighting, dubbed the Second Karabakh War. The authors provide a legal analysis of these international crimes and examine existing international mechanisms establishing the international criminal responsibility of the Armenian political-military leadership for the violation of international humanitarian law.

Anna Korzeniowska-Bihun’s commentary of “*Ukrainian Discourse on the Armenia–Azerbaijan Conflict*” highlights the Ukrainian discourse over the Armenia–Azerbaijan conflict. The commentary focuses on both the Ukrainian mainstream political declarations and media perceptions of the Armenia–Azerbaijan clashes.

Nina Miholjčić’s commentary of “*International Response to the Second Karabakh War*” argues that the Second Karabakh War has changed the

balance of power in the South Caucasus with Turkey became a more important foreign stakeholder in the region, Russian presence remained strong in the South Caucasus, while the West experienced a significant weakening of its influence in this region.

Sama Baghirova's commentary of "*Exculpation of Armenian terrorism under guise of the 'Armenian martyr'*" argues that the role of the nationalist narrative plays a key role in the activities of Armenian diaspora in order to keep its dispersed community united. This commentary, in turn, posits that the same activities of the diaspora have had a strong influence on the emergence of Armenian radicalized groups.

The CSP's current issue also includes a *Journalistic Dispatch* from the war zone covered by brave Azerbaijani war correspondent **Elmira Musazadeh** titled "*Dispatch from the Conflict Zone during Azerbaijan's Patriotic War*" with compilation of photo shots from her field trip. Her emotional story narrates that from the very first day of the Second Karabakh War the Armenian armed forces deliberately and overtly resorted to targeting with constant artillery shelling the peaceful citizens, villages and cities in the front-line districts.

The new issue's *Book Review Series* includes comprehensive review of two books: (1) "The Light that Failed: why the West is Losing the Fight for Democracy" (authored by Ivan Krastev and Stephen Holmes) reviewed by Murad Muradov and (2) "The Brussels Effect: How the European Union Rules the World" (authored by Anu Bradford) reviewed by Mahammad Mammadov.

Finally, on behalf of the CSP team, we hope this issue provides food for thought and contributes to and enriches the discussion on subject-matter issue.

Sincerely,
Farid Shafiyev
Editor-in-Chief of CSP Journal