



## Azerbaijan Position Paper

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### I/ Background Information on Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan, officially Azerbaijani Republic, is a country occupying land in eastern Transcaucasia. The mainland of Azerbaijan is neighbored by Russia, Iran, Georgia, and Armenia, and Naxçıvan, a city that has Armenia between it and the region, is bounded by Turkey, Iran, and Armenia. The capital city is the ancient city of Baku, which has the best harbor in the Caspian Sea. The people of Azerbaijan are of a rich and blended culture. The area has been occupied by Iranians, Turks, Kurds, and Albanians in medieval times. Later with the Arab invasion of the area, Islam began to spread. Later on, Russia claimed parts of Iran. The country wasn't officially established until 1918, and after two years of independence, Russia came to occupy the land once more. Azerbaijan had lasted 71 years as the Soviet Socialist Republic, in that time it has been a part of the Transcaucasian Soviet Federated Socialist Republic, in control of Moscow, before the federation broke up. In 1991 Azerbaijan declared itself independent. To this day, the displacement of its citizens due to conflicts has not been solved. The land of Azerbaijan is rich in oil and played an essential role in the 19th century, where the resource was exploited due to overuse. In 2019 the governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan rebegan talking upon the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh, a problem causing a lot of trouble in the past decades.

### II/ Past Achievements and Attempts of Azerbaijan on the Issues

- A. **The Question of the Caucasus:** The Caucasus is a deeply rooted conflict, and Azerbaijan is an actor in the issue even though its area of effect is limited to the Nagorno-Karabakh region. The area has been a part of the Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic, which belonged to the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics before the USSR broke up. After the breakup of the USSR, the area has not known peace as the de facto independent state of the Republic of Artsakh claimed the land as its own, and Armenia supported them. The government of Azerbaijan has been trying to settle the matter of Nagorno-Karabakh ever since it was re-established as the Republic of Azerbaijan. Military actions have been taken to reclaim the area, and internationally the area is still recognized as part of Azerbaijan. Recently, the Azerbaijani government and the Armenian government have decided to restart talking upon the issue and declared that they are working on taking constructive steps towards the settlement of the dispute.



- B. The Question of the Caspian Sea and Surrounding Territories:** The Republic of Azerbaijan is a littoral country of the Caspian Sea. It is one of the five littoral countries which demand rights on the body of water. The coastal states have discussed the division of the area, and Azerbaijan was the only supporter of the idea of sectoral division. Thus, the states went with the idea of using the median line method of division. The bordering nations of the Caspian Sea would prefer the body of water to be declared a lake. Every country except Iran ended up satisfied after the convention of 2018, hence a new convention is necessary.
- C. The Question of the Shift of Trade Routes in Eurasia:** The state of Azerbaijan seems to be neutral on this matter as the to-be-established trade routes do not pass through their territory and therefore are not of benefit or harm. Azerbaijan has not taken any action towards the solution of this issue but would be in support of anything that would benefit its allies.

### III/ Objectives, Aims and Possible Solutions Proposed by Azerbaijan on the Issues

- A. The Question of the Caucasus:** The problem in the Caucasus has many branches, but the most significant part of this issue for Azerbaijan is the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. The region is recognized as a part of Azerbaijan and therefore stays that way. A possible way to satisfy the de facto state Republic of Artsakh's demand for independence could be to hold a referendum for the citizens to decide upon either remaining a part of Azerbaijan or becoming an autonomous oblast belonging to Azerbaijan and conforming to its foreign affairs. Full independence can not be granted as the soil is part of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and the protection of the integrity of a country's territory is quite essential. Armenian forces should immediately be withdrawn from Azerbaijani soil, and further talks regarding the region should be made. In Azerbaijan's point of view, Chechnya, Dagestan, Ingushetia, and Kabardino-Balkaria should be granted their sovereignty by the Russian Federation. However, before that, the criminal activity in the region should be ended with the help of the Russian government. Georgia should grant internal autonomy to South Ossetia, and keep their territorial integrity. This is the case for Abkhazia as well.
- B. The Question of the Caspian Sea and Surrounding Territories:** Azerbaijan has been working on this issue with its fellow littoral states for quite a while now and would like to propose the idea that this body of water is recognized as a lake, giving the littoral states the full control and the rights of use of the Caspian Sea's resources, surface area, etc. Provided the Caspian Sea is considered a lake, the five states would be able to use the body of water as they see fit, independently from other countries, and witness economic growth. Additionally, guidance provided by the United Nations could be useful; however, the application of the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea is strictly opposed by the littoral states which demand rights on the Caspian Sea. Also, the



government of Azerbaijan would like to call upon another meeting of these five littoral states and representatives of the UN with delegates of other nations as spectators.

- C. **The Question of the Shift of Trade Routes in Eurasia:** The government of Azerbaijan doesn't have any direct or indirect connections to the newly planned trade routes; however, would like to take part in international trade. The state would like to offer a shift in the planned route and propose the addition of a road passing through Azerbaijan, preferably the capital city, Baku.



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