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**BILATERAL NORMALIZATION AND REGIONAL SECURITY: AN  
ANALYSIS OF THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT RESOLUTION  
PROCESS THROUGH T.A.N.P**

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KARŞILIKLI NORMALLEŞME VE BÖLGESEL GÜVENLİK:  
DAĞLIK KARABAĞ SORUNUNUN ÇÖZÜM SÜRECİNİN ANALİZİ T.E.N.S.  
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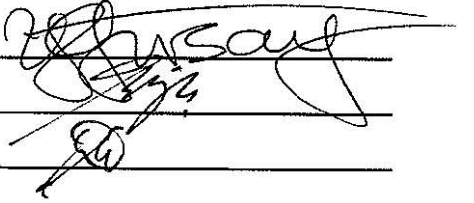
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- 1)Dağlık Karabağ sorunun çözümü
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- 1)Nagorno Karabagh conflict resolution
- 2)Turkey-Armenian Normalization
- 3)Azerbaijani- Armenian relations
- 4)Positive rhetoric
- 5)Negative rhetoric

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### **Abstract**

The direction taken by Turkish-Armenian relations changed after 2008 with the launch of the Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process (TANP). The key element of TANP is the opening Turkish-Armenian borders, with the goal of creating security and stability in the South Caucasus. This study compares the pre-TANP and post-TANP eras in order to answer the question "how did the liberal stand of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the issue of Turkish-Armenian bilateral relations (the so-called TANP) influence the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict?" Utilizing academic literature and secondary data of speeches, statements and quotes from the key political figures in the process, I compare two periods (pre-2008 and post-2008) to answer my research question.

The research demonstrates that furthering the TANP's liberal approach did not increase the chance for peace in the Caucasus region; on the contrary, it had the opposite effect on the prospects of peace for the Nagorno-Karabakh (NK) conflict by escalating the ongoing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

To verify my hypothesis I examine the following research question: "How did the liberal stance of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the issue of Turkish-Armenian bilateral relations (the so-called TANP) influence the resolution of the NK Conflict?" The outcome of my research will confirm or deny my hypothesis.

I use content analysis as my research methodology to compare two periods: pre-normalization (2006-2008) and post-normalization (2008-2010). I compare the reaction of the Azerbaijani and Armenian sides during these two periods on the resolution of the NKC. I collect data with "negative" and "positive" rhetorical statements from the presidents and ministers of foreign affairs in Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as opposition parties, government officials, experts, and others in the two countries. All of the data are collected from the Internet using Google search with the keywords: Nagorno-Karabakh resolution, Serj

Sargsyan statement on NK resolution, Minister of Foreign Affairs (MFA) of Armenia statement on NK, Ilham Aliyev statement on NK, MFA of Azerbaijan statement on NK, opposition reaction to NK resolution, Nagorno-Karabakh and TANP. Afterwards, I manually count the “negative” and ”positive” rhetorical statements of the two sides and compare the outcome in terms of percentages, counting how many changes were made from one period to the other.

## **Özet**

Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkileri, temel ilkesi Güney Kafkasya'da güvenlik ve istikrarın sağlanması beklentisiyle Türkiye-Ermenistan sınırlarının açılması olan Türkiye-Ermenistan Normalleşme Süreci'nin (TENS) başladığı 2008 yılı sonrasında farklı bir boyut kazanmıştır. TENS ve TENS sonrası dönemlerin karşılaştırıldığı bu araştırmanın hedefi “Türkiye'nin dış politikasında, Türkiye-Ermenistan ikili ilişkileri (daha sonra TENS şeklinde adlandırılmıştır) doğrultusundaki liberal temayül Dağlık Karabağ Sorunu'nun çözümünü nasıl etkilemiştir?” sorusunu cevaplandırmaktır. Bu çalışmada akademik literatürün yani sıra bu sürecin önemli politik figürlerine ait demeç, açıklama ve söylemler gibi ikincil verilerden de faydalanarak söz konusu iki dönemi karşılaştırıp yukarıda belirtilen araştırma sorusuna cevap bulmak amaçlanmıştır.

Gelinen sonuca göre, TENS sürecini doğuran liberal yaklaşım bölgedeki barış imkanlarının sınırlarını genişletmemiş aksine Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan arasında devam eden savaş tansiyonunu yükselterek barış olasılıklarını ters yönde etkilemiştir.

Aşağıdaki araştırma sorularını hipotezlerimi doğrulamak için inceliyorum: Türk dış politikasının liberal duruşuyla, Türkiye-Ermenistan ikili ilişkilerini (sözde TANP) karşılaştırdığımızda Dağlık Karabağ Münakaşasının çözümüne nasıl etki ediyor? Araştırmamın sonucu hipotezimi ya onaylayacak ya da red edecektir.

İki Dönemi kıyaslamak için araştırma metodolojimi içerik analizi kullanarak yaptım: Normalleşme öncesi (2006-2008) ve Normalleşme sonrası (2008-2010). Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan taraflarının Dağlık Karabağ sorunun çözülmesine gösterdikleri tepkileri bu iki dönemde kıyaslıyorum. Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan Cumhurbaşkanlarının, Dış İşleri Bakanlarının, muhalifet liderlerinin, hükümet sözcülerinin ve diğer yetkililerin yaptıkları retorik bildirimleri “olumsuz” ve “olumlu” bilgi olarak topladım. Bütün bilgileri Google arama motoru kullanılarak internetten toplandı, arama motorunda kullanılan anahtar kelimeler

aşağıdaki gibidir: Dağlık Karabağ Çözümü, Serj Sarkisyanın Karabağ çözümü hakkında demeci, Ermenistan Dış İşleri Bakanın Dağlık Karabağ çözümü hakkında demeci, İlham Aliyev'in Dağlık Karabağ çözümü hakkında demeci , Azerbaycan Dış İşleri Bakanlığının Dağlık Karabağ Çözümü hakkında bildirisini, muhalif partilerin Dağlık Karabağ çözümü, Dağlık Karabağ ve TENS'e olan tepkileri.

Daha sonra, her iki tarafın "olumlu" ve "olumsuz" Retorik demeçlerini sayıp, bir dönemle diğer dönem arasında yapılan değişiklik oranını sonucuyla kıyaslama yaptım.

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## **Abbreviations**

AKP - Justice Party

CHP - Republican People's Party

MHP - National Action Party

COE- Council of Europe

UN – United Nations

NATO- North Atlantic Treaty Organization

NK- Nagorno-Karabakh

NKC – Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

TANP- Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process

EU- European Union

CPSU- Communist Party of the Soviet Union

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

OSCE –Organization of Security

BSEC –Black Sea Economic Cooperation

PACE- Parliamentary Assembly of CoE

ARF-Armenian Revolutionary Federation

CSCP –Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform

TABDC –Turkish Armenian Business Development Council

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## **CHAPTER 1**

### **1.1.Introduction**

An analysis of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution process through the Turkish-Armenian normalization process (TANP), initiated back in 2008 with the key objective of opening Turkish-Armenian borders, should be based on the prospects of security and stability in the South Caucasus.

Many observers, in particular western analysts of Turkish foreign policy, mainly emphasize the positive aspects of TANP. In their view, such an opening would have had, or (if reincarnated) will have, several significant implications for Armenia and Turkey, as well as for the regional and international stance of Ankara. Firstly, such normalization would bring economic benefits to both sides. Successful normalization on one of its borders would also provide Turkey with more opportunity to concentrate on stabilizing the so-called "Kurdish problem," which has become a more essential element of Turkish national security. Beyond all of these, these observers note, normalized relations between Turkey and Armenia would have a positive impact on Turkey's European Union (EU) ambition (Giragosian, 2009).

However, because most international observers also agree that the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (NKC) plays a key role in the prospects of regional security in the South Caucasus, my research is concerned with the impact of TANP on the conditions surrounding the resolution of the NKC. In particular, my research question is: "How did the liberal stance of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the issue of Turkish-Armenian bilateral relations (so-called TANP) influence the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict?"

Although TANP (or, more precisely, its Zurich phase) is in a state of deep freeze, the Armenian Diaspora-initiated Western pressure on Ankara over "recognition of the so-called

genocide” has had a warming effect on the "normalization process" (Özbay), thus making it a potentially pressing issue on the Turkish foreign policy agenda.

One of the declared intentions of Turkish foreign policy was to normalize relations with Armenia (which was articulated in TANP) and it was believed that this process would positively contribute to long-standing peace in one of the most vital regions for Turkey – the South Caucasus. It was also contended that the success of TANP would strengthen Ankara’s aim to build a “Platform for Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus” (PSCC) - a cooperative system in the region aimed at conflict-prevention, multilateral security and regional stability. In turn, the PSCC was envisaged as one of the important mechanisms for broadening Turkey’s geopolitical influence in the region (Giragosian).

All that would be impossible without the resolution of the most difficult conflict in the region, where stakes are high for Turkey – the NKC. It is within this context that my research concentrates on exploring whether the active phase of TANP implementation indeed had a positive impact on relations between the parties of NKC – Azerbaijan and Armenia. In this sense, the research is both exploratory and explanatory.

The general framework of the research is based on testing one of the general propositions of the “Liberal concept of International Relations” which states that cooperation on “soft power issues” such as economic cooperation and humanitarian ties between two given states also has a positive effect on such “hard power issues” as peace and security, not just for these given two states but also for the relations between these states and the third parties – the so-called benign regional effect. According to Joseph S. Nye, parties use “soft power” to get others to want the consequences they want but the others are not coerced, as they would be if “hard power” were used (Nye, 2004). For Nye, “hard power” refers to big states that maintain large armies and also can exercise economic influence over other states, such as the US and Russia. But soft power is more appropriate for small states even though it takes long time to

build. Most strategists assume that hard power gets immediate outcomes with coercion and cuts in the short term, but soft power is based on voluntarism and takes a long period of time to be successful (Cooper).

## **1.2 Research methodology**

I test this general theoretical proposition against the real ground situation in the complex regional environment. My working framework, therefore, is to put this liberal concept (which has proven to be generally true in many instances, as liberal academics like to point out) at work in a complex regional environment - where geopolitical, economic and regional power competition factors as well as ethnic nationalism and separatist aspirations are tied in particular (in my case, the NKC) conflict, the prime drive of which is strategic/security concerns.

More specifically, my working hypothesis (in response to the research question posed above) is as follows: Furthering TANP's liberal approach did not increase the chance for peace in the Caucasus region; on the contrary, it had the opposite effect on the prospects of peace by escalating the ongoing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

In this research, I use content analysis and compare both pre-2008 (before reconciliation) and post-2008 (during reconciliation) periods, with the following key characteristics: Statements and public quotation by such major decision-makers as President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Elmar Mammadayrov as well as President S. Sarkisian and Minister E. Nalbaldyan of Armenia on the issue of the NKC; Statements and quotations by top functionaries of major pro-government and opposition parties in Armenia and Azerbaijan; Main publications on the issue in the most influential Azerbaijani and Armenian media. The outlets will be chosen in such a way as to represent both partisan and independent views.

In the identification of the periods, I also compare the content materials collected in Period I (from October 2006 to June 2008, before the start of TANP) with the content collected concerning Period II (from September 6, 2008, when Armenian President Sarkisian invited President Abdullah Gül to attend a match between the Armenian and Turkish football teams (which marked the start of so called football diplomacy, when information about active phase of negotiations between Turkey and Armenia on normalization process became a public knowledge) to April 24, 2010 (when Sarkisian publically announced withdrawal from the TANP negotiation, leaving the process in deep freeze). A period totaling 20 months allows me to examine the dynamics of diplomatic activity from both sides to turn engagement on cultural and humanitarian issues into a breakthrough on the diplomatic front.

For the clarity of research, I exclude the period between June-September 2008 from my research since it was marked by rumors of the ongoing TANP though the process was not yet public knowledge.

In this thesis, I choose the statements, articles and other publically available materials where the issue of Turkish- Armenian normalization process is discussed within the context of a resolution of NKC and I check my hypothesis that the Turkish-Armenian reconciliation process raised more negative rhetoric on both sides of the conflict against the data collected.

I look into the instances of negative rhetoric and positive rhetoric in Period I and compare the two variables. I use the statistical data of several key words grouped in positive and negative clusters and analyze the changes that took place before (2006-2008) and after (2008-2010) the Zurich protocol issue. After collecting all rhetoric from both sides, I put the Armenian “negative” and “positive” rhetoric for the 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 periods and Azerbaijan “negative” and “positive” rhetoric for the 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 periods into tables. I count the rhetorical statements manually and then represent the numbers of the



rhetorical statements made in 2006-2008 and 2008-2010 in the form of a graph. In conclusion, the number of changes between two periods for Azerbaijan and Armenian side is shown as percentages. If the balance in Period II is higher (meaning that there were more negative rhetoric than positive-oriented statements) then the analyses will demonstrate that the region was prone more toward conflict during TANP than before, thus proving my initial hypothesis to be right. It would mean that the Turkish Armenian normalization process has had a negative effect on the peaceful resolution of NKC and increased the probability of escalation of the conflict into the violent phase. If the balance in the period II is lower, it would prove my initial hypothesis was wrong.

The thesis consists of four chapters, including the introduction and conclusion: Chapter one begins with the introduction which explains the hypothesis of the thesis, research question and the methodology of analysis. Chapter two contains two parts: the first part explores the history of Azerbaijan-Armenian relations. It includes a discussion of the NKC, both its status before and after the Soviet era and the position of Azerbaijan and Armenia in its resolution process. The second part describes Turkish-Armenian relations both before and after the Ottoman Empire, demonstrating where the root of border conflict and diplomatic ties of two neighbors lies. This chapter concludes with the Political Analyses of Turkish-Armenian Relations, which analyses Turkish liberal approach to the normalization process. The third chapter of the thesis examines the transformation of Turkish foreign policy into a policy based on the notion of “trading state” in order to improve domestic political reform. The section “Renewal of Relations and Benefits of Sides” discusses the impact of the Turkish-Armenian normalization process on this conflict. Furthermore, this chapter also explains the “Normalization of Armenian-Turkey relations” through 'Football Diplomacy' and talks about the possible areas of cooperation before the ratification. The last section of the chapter discusses the condition of normalization, "Trading State" Turkish foreign policy and the

Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process (TANP). Nagorno-Karabakh was examined within the context of the rapprochement. The last chapter, “Analysis of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Resolution Problem through the Lens of TANP” is the main and concluding section of the thesis. As mentioned in the previous paragraph, chapter four focuses on analyzing two periods: the 2006-2008 pre-ratification and 2008-2010 post-ratification periods. The “negative” and “positive” rhetoric of both periods is presented in four tables for each period. After adding up the numbers, they are depicted on special graphics indicating the diversity of changes by percentages. Finally, the conclusion not only answers the key research question posed in the beginning of the research but also lays the foundation for some policy recommendations to be made regarding the process to key de-facto parties, including Turkey, Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Russia.

## **CHAPTER 2**

### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter is based on the historical background of the relations between neighbors in South Caucasus - Azerbaijan and Armenia, as well as the history of Turkish-Armenian relations from the Ottoman to the post-Ottoman era. The chapter consists of three headings and sub-headings. The first section, “The Background of Azerbaijani-Armenia Relations,” explains the status of Nagorno-Karabakh before and after the Soviet era. It also takes into account the case of the Nagorno-Karabakh War, which is still under consideration by International Organizations and affects the economy of both states and stability in the region. Most importantly, it addresses the positions of Azerbaijan and Armenia in the resolution process of the NKC. The second section describes the centuries of Turkish-Armenian relations, reflecting the relations of the two nations and the status of the Armenians during the Ottoman era and after becoming an independent state, and the effect of the NK conflict and the controversial conflict of “Armenian Genocide” on Turkish-Armenian diplomatic ties. The chapter concludes with a “Political Analyses of Turkish-Armenian Relations and Turkey,” where the concept of realism prevails over the South Caucasus Region.

## **2.2 Azerbaijani- Armenian relations: The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict (NKC)**

### **2.2.1 Pre-Soviet Animosity**

Azerbaijan and Armenian, continue to claim Karabakh for themselves. Many references show that this region was first invaded by the Persians in the 6<sup>th</sup> century BCE, by Alexander the Great in the 4<sup>th</sup> Century BCE and by the Romans in the 1<sup>st</sup> century CE (Altstadt). During the early ages, this region belonged to the various kingdoms in the East, which geographically had an Azerbaijani population. Nevertheless, some sources, such as the Greek Historian Strabo and Armenian chroniclers, claim that, until the 5<sup>th</sup> century, the Azerbaijani population was separated into a western third populated by Armenians, who included Caucasian Albanians from which the Azerbaijanis claim descent (Tololyan).

Caucasian Albania was basically a vassal of Sassanid Persia and survived until the 9<sup>th</sup> century. Thus, many sources approximately delineate this territory as present-day Azerbaijan territory. However, until the 14<sup>th</sup> century, with its large number of Armenians, Karabakh was under Arab, Mongol, Turkic and Persian control (Goldenberg). But in the 14<sup>th</sup> century, the Safavid Empire granted Karabakh a kind of autonomy, which was to last for several centuries. The autonomy also resulted in the internal conflicts which destroyed Armenian elites. These riots led to the region slipping away from Armenian control. Consequently, the Azerbaijani rulers established their sovereignty over the territory and created the semi-independent Khanate of Karabakh, based in Shusha. The newly established Karabakh Khanate was comparable to the Khanates of Baku, Guba, Sheki, Shirvan, Derbent, Nakhchivan, and Irevan (which was an area with the Muslim majority until 1826) and was ruled by Turkish Muslim families (Suny).

With Russia's expansion into the Caucasus at the end of the 18<sup>th</sup> century, the Azerbaijani regions fell under Russia control, with Karabakh becoming one of the first regions to be subject to Russian rule (Swietochowski). The Russian desire to control the

region led to the conquests inside and to the first Russo-Persian war in 1812-13. This war ended with the treaty of Gulistan, which let Karabakh officially pass from Persian to Russian control. In 1828, under the Treaty of Turkmenchay, the khanates were eliminated by the Russians and Azerbaijani was divided in to two parts: North and South (Goltz).

Until the 1905 Russian Revolution, there was mutual population resettlement. While Armenians made up 9% of the population of Karabakh in 1823, they represented 53% of the population in 1880 as the result of the Azerbaijani population being moving out of the Caucasus and being integrated into the Ottoman Empire by Russia support (Cornell). In 1905, during the Russian Revolution, relations between Armenians and Azerbaijanis deteriorated, with the first inter-ethnic riots breaking out in Nakhchevan, Baku and Irevan and soon spreading to Shusha. The central authorities were not able to intervene to stop the violence (Sunny). This occasion was marked by the symbolically important spilling of “first blood.” Soon, in 1906, this violence spread to the Nagorno-Karabakh region, resulting in battles between Armenian and Azerbaijani village communities. As a consequence of this conflict, Shusha broke into two parts having an Armenian uptown and an Azerbaijani downtown (Leeuw). In the end, there were between 3,000 and 10,000 casualties. All data suggest that there were greater casualties on the Azerbaijani side than on the Armenian side as the Azerbaijani units were very badly organized, while Dashnak-armed side was considerably more effective (Dasnabedian).

The third wave of conflict between two sides occurred in Baku in 1918, when the consequences of Bolshevik artillery shelling against Azerbaijani quarters resulted in the recognition of Soviet power by Baku and Azerbaijani representatives accepting the terms. Then the Dashnaks carried out a massacre in the Muslim section of the city. The March event was recorded in Azerbaijani history as the “Armenian-Muslim fights.” At least in 1918, with

the collapsing of the Czarist Empire, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia declared their independence from Czarist Russia as well.

### **2.2.2 Nagorno-Karabakh during the Soviet-Era and the Case of the 1988-1994 NK War**

Since 1920, the conflict over validity of the Karabakh National Council agreement has continued between Azerbaijan and Armenia, with both sides claiming jurisdiction. As a consequence of this contradiction, the agreement was cancelled by the Ninth Karabakh Assembly (Cornell; New England Center) However, in April 1920, Azerbaijan was taken over by the Bolsheviks. Armenia and Georgia followed in 1921. Taken by Bolsheviks, Armenia was persuaded that Karabakh, Nakhchevan and Zangezur would be united with Armenia in order to separate the borders of Nakhchevan and Turkey from Azerbaijan. But soon, according to the Treaty of Kars, which was signed by Turkey and Russia, Karabakh and Nakhchevan were to be placed under the control of Azerbaijan SSR, and Zangezur under the control of Armenia. Finally, on 7 July 1923, Karabakh was recognized as an autonomous region and called the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast. In 1924, Nakhchevan was given an Autonomous Republic status within the Azerbaijani borders of the SSR (Cornell, 1999). During the Soviet era and Soviet control over the Caucasus, the NKC died down until the disintegration of the Soviet Union.

However, after the collapse of the Soviet Union in 1988, the strained relationship between the neighbors snapped when the Armenian side insisted on the unification of NK with Armenia. The NKC became the most complicated case in the region as a result of the ethnic problems involved (self-determination of minorities) and attracted parties to the conflict in a short time. After the collapse of the USSR, the Karabakh conflict remained an international dispute between independent states. In most conflicts, there are two sides at odds with each other, but in the NK case this number was greater (Taylor).

On 20 February 1988, the local Soviet of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan adopted a resolution and called the USSR's Supreme Soviet to unite Karabakh with Armenia, addressing Michael Gorbachev (Cornell):

Welcoming the wishes of the workers of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region to request the Supreme Soviets of the Azerbaijani SSR and the Armenian SSR to display a feeling of deep understanding of the aspirations of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh and to resolve the question of transferring the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region from the Azerbaijani SSR to the Armenian SSR, at the same time to intercede with the Supreme Soviet of the USSR to reach a positive resolution on the issue of transferring the region from the Azerbaijani SSR to the Armenian SSR (Goltz).

But the response received from Gorbachev was negative:

Having examined the information about the developments in the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region, the CPSU Central Committee holds that the actions and demands directed at revising the existing national and territorial structure contradict the interests of the working people in Soviet Azerbaijan and Armenia and damage inter-ethnic relations (Croissant).

The consequence of the Moscow rejection was street demonstrations – stretching from Yerevan to Karabakh. As the result of these demonstrations, there was an enormous flow of refugees from both sides as people left their homes. A large number of Azerbaijanis left Armenia and about 350,000 Armenians left Azerbaijan (Goltz).

The idea to unite Karabakh with Armenia was considered as an effort to change “the structure” or the status quo. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan declared its independence from the USSR in 1991 and abolished the autonomous status of Karabakh. After Armenia gained independence on September, NK Armenians announced their secession from Azerbaijan some months later in 1992. Subsequently, in 1992 the UN recognized Azerbaijan and Armenia within the borders they had during the Soviet period. However, NK was not recognized as a self-proclaimed republic by the UN member states - not even by Armenia - and under international law, the area remains part of Azerbaijan (Human Rights Watch/Helsinki, 14 March 1997).

After independence, early in 1992, the entire world's attention was focused on the full-scale Karabakh War. On 26 February 1992, with the assistance of Russia's 366<sup>th</sup> regiment, Armenian armed forces invaded Khojaly and killed civilians. After Khojaly, troops moved to the Khankendi (Stepanakert) and in spring 1992 Khankendi came under total siege (T. Goltz). This occupation continued until 1994. In fact, 12 regions were occupied by Armenians and around 25,000 Azerbaijanis died and a million inhabitants left their homes (Krikorian)

### **2.2.3 Regional position**

Azerbaijan's economic resources, including oil and natural gas, provided the country everything it needed for independence. Its economic potential put it at an advantage compared to other former USSR states and enabled it to play a leading role in the Caucasus. The greatest importance of Azerbaijan in this region was its geo-strategic position linking East with West and South with North. To understand the geo-strategy of the region, it is important to see that the Caucasus is at the crossroads of East and West in the region and is central to Great Power politics there. Thus the Karabakh conflict remains a controversial issue for great and regional powers, which have their own intentions regarding the NK dispute.

Hence, Russia's loss of Azerbaijan meant losing control over the entire Caucasus and its economic benefits or natural resources such as oil and gas. Therefore, Moscow's indifference to finding a solution to the problem between Azerbaijan and Armenia served to bind both sides to the "central government" (Moscow). The reason for Azerbaijan wanting to be independent was the Russia's defense of the Armenians and destruction of the borders. Consequently, the "central government" refused to lose the South Caucasus and further fueled the conflict. Moscow's efforts were designed get the two sides to turn to the "central



government” to solve their problems under control and advice of Moscow. The main goal of the “central government” was to be the key figure in finding a solution to the NK problem.

#### **2.2.4 The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict on the International stage**

So far Nagorno-Karabakh has been internationally recognized as a territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan. Hence, Russia, the US, Turkey and Iran, as bilateral actors, and the UN, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), NATO and the Council of Europe (CoE), as multilateral actors, have become active in the conflict resolution process. Moreover, in 1993, the UN Security Council adopted number of resolutions, such as UNSC 822, 853, 884, to recognize the fact that Azerbaijani territory was occupied by Armenians. UNSC Resolution 822 called for the “withdrawal of all occupying forces from the Kelbejar district and other recently occupied areas of Azerbaijan” and reaffirmed “the territorial integrity of all States in the region” and expressed its desire for finding a peaceful solution to the Karabakh conflict under the auspices of CSCE’s Minsk Group (UNSC Resolution 822).

Another international organization indirectly involved in the resolution of the NKC is NATO. NATO draws the South Caucasus with its Partnership for Peace program and has offered to deploy its peacekeeping force in the conflict zone. At the beginning of 1994, Georgia and Azerbaijan joined the NATO program, however, Armenia did not. Kocharyan declared that Armenia was not going to join NATO and limited its cooperation with NATO. The reason for this limitation was the military assistance Russia gave Armenia in case of war (Nygren)

In turn, the Council of Europe tried to intervene in the resolution of the NKC. On 25 January 2005, the Parliamentary Assembly of the CoE (PACE) passed Resolution 1416, which states that “Considerable parts of the territory of Azerbaijan are still occupied by

Armenian forces, and separatist forces are still in control of the Nagorno-Karabakh region.” It called for both sides to repatriate refugees and to respect minority rights and welcomed efforts to find a peaceful solution to the dispute (Web.<[www.assembly.coe.int](http://www.assembly.coe.int)>; [www.wcd.coe.int](http://www.wcd.coe.int)>). Nevertheless, efforts to bring about a fair resolution of the NKC within international law have remained unsuccessful.

## **2.2.5 The Positions of the Parties to the Resolution Process of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict**

### **a) Azerbaijan**

Azerbaijan has been a member of the UN since 1992 and the UN has recognized Azerbaijan borders on the basis of what they were during the USSR period. According to international law, the world states recognized borders of the Azerbaijan Republic as per UN recognition. Thus, the territories and borders of the Republic have been included in the constitutions that providing for the indivisibility of the territory of Azerbaijan (e.g., the Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, 1995) However, approximately 20% of Azerbaijan territory is now occupied by Armenia. In each of his speeches and declarations, the President of the Azerbaijan Republic, Ilham Aliyev, stresses that Azerbaijan sees the resolution process of the conflict as depending on international law as well as on Helsinki Final Act of OSCE (Musavat)

Azerbaijan intends to put to negotiations the case of the security of the Karabakh region as well as protection of human rights in this territory. Another goal of Azerbaijan in the resolution process of conflict is to enable displaced people who were exposed to “ethnic cleansing” to return home, stating that the safety of Armenian minorities in Nagorno-Karabakh would be under the protection of the state and under the guarantee of international organizations (Web.<[www.mfa.gov.az](http://www.mfa.gov.az)>).

For Azerbaijan to be able to achieve these goals, both sides must attempt to reach mutual compromise and cooperation. This is because one of the interests of Azerbaijan is the integration of the region.

The resolution process of the conflict will provide Armenia the chance to participate in regional projects with Azerbaijan and the space for free trade and economic development in the country. This mutual cooperation will bring Caucasus security, which has remained unresolved for decades.

#### **b) Armenia**

The position of Armenia in the resolution of the NKC is completely contrary to that of Azerbaijan and international law norms. Armenia emphasizes three main principles for the resolution of the problem:

- 1) The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict settlement must be based on recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh people's right to self-determination;
- 2) Nagorno-Karabakh should have uninterrupted land communication with Armenia, under the jurisdiction of the Armenian side;
- 3) The security of Nagorno-Karabakh should be internationally guaranteed. ([Web. <www.mfa.am/en/artsakh/>](http://www.mfa.am/en/artsakh/))

But the fate of these principles is not supported by international law. According to the 1975 Helsinki Act (chapters III, IV, VI and VIII), the sovereignty of all states is inviolable and no state can interfere in the domestic policy of another state; every nation is responsible for its own fate within the border of its state (Helsinki Final Act, 1975).

Given the UN General Assembly Resolutions 62/243 (UN GA) and the EU Parliament Assembly Resolution 1614 (CoE PA) adopted in 2008, the Karabakh conflict should be resolved within the territorial integrity of the Azerbaijan Republic. However, for Armenia, resolution will come in the unification of territories of Karabakh and its vicinity with

Armenia. NK is rich in natural resources and access to them is the only way for Armenia to provide its economy with the resources it needs. Armenian rejects the return of displaced Azerbaijanis to NK as part of the NK resolution as this would mean returning the territories (Web.<[www.armtoday.info](http://www.armtoday.info)>)

Shahnazaryan, an Armenian politician analyzing the resolution process, claims that “releasing” any part of the territory of Azerbaijan from NK would be fraught with grave consequences for the entire Armenian nation. “Let’s deny history and international law for a while and see the real consequences of the releasing of territories in South Artsakh; the results would be as following: a) depriving NK a common border with Iran, b) lengthening the border of NK with Azerbaijan by about 150 km, c) adding a new frontier to Armenia and d) requiring a sharp increase in the cost of defense. It means any territorial concession or “compromise” would lead to irreparable weakening of the strategic position of the Armenian states” (Шахназарян). Armenia claims that the safety of Armenia is the safety of Nagorno-Karabakh and keeping these territories under control they are trying to keep Armenia safe.

### **2.3 Turkey-Armenia Relations through History**

This section describes the historical ties between Turkey and Armenia. The migration of Armenians to what was to become Ottoman lands which begun in early 11<sup>th</sup> century concluded with the deportation of Armenians from Ottoman territory in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The section provides the reason for the deportation, or so the so-called “Armenian genocide,” which has involved competing claims from both sides. Revenge taken for the “genocide” by Armenians through terrorist attacks on Turkish diplomats continued until the collapse of the USSR. Afterwards, Armenia’s independence strained the diplomatic ties between Armenia and Turkey.

The second continues by demonstrating the desire of Turkey to establish diplomatic ties with Armenia as well as discussing the Armenian claim of “genocide” carried out by Turkey.

### **2.3.1 Turkish –Armenian Relations from the Ottomans to Modern Times**

The relations between the two nations that had lasted hundreds of years became hostile when Turkey entered the European War in 1914. The great migration of Armenians to Anatolia began in the 12<sup>th</sup> century (Bryce). The first relations with the Ottoman Armenians were with a small minority in western Anatolia. In 1324, when Osman Gazi made Bursa capital of the central government, he transferred the majority of Armenians and the Armenian spiritual leadership from Kutahya to Bursa. Even after gaining Istanbul in 1453, he moved the spiritual leader of the Armenians to Istanbul and in 1461, he established the Armenian Patriarchate. In 1514-1516, after Yavuz Sultan Selim took the South Caucasus and Eastern Anatolia, where Armenians lived; he took all of them within the same community to the Istanbul Patriarchate. Within a short time, Armenians from various places within the community immigrated to Istanbul, where they expanded into one of the world's most affluent communities (Emas). What’s more, Armenians and Turks lived together for decades. Most Armenians even served in the Ottoman military and held posts in the government and other leading positions. This continued until the Armenians began to want a state of their own and were encouraged by enemies of the Ottomans. Turks feared Russian support of the Armenians and the ideal of an Armenian nation-state was unstoppable. Furthermore, Armenian leaders improved their relations with Russia and many Armenians hoped that they would get help and support from Russia and would get their own nation-state. Because of this encouragement, over 150,000 Armenians volunteered to assist the invading Russian army. As a result of these actions, in February, more than 200,000 Armenian military personnel were disarmed and over

200 Armenian leaders were removed from Constantinople and sent to prison camps (Mann, 2005). Armenians had begun betraying Turks by supporting the Balkans and the Russians in the Balkan War and the Russian War waged with the Ottomans in 1878 and 1895-6. This was met with deportations in 1915, which started in Zeitun, Marash and Cilicia (Bryce). The killings began in villages in Van and escalated to mass killings in the region, which was followed by Armenian atrocities.

Hence, these unreliable relations continued (as Armenians claim) with the extermination of Armenians in Anatolia into the 1920s, and Armenian terror attacks on Turkish diplomats, fueled by the thirst of vengeance, until the collapse of the USSR.

Turkish-Armenian relations have been deadlocked since Armenia gained its independence in 1991.

As mentioned in the previous paragraphs, the late recognition of the Armenian state by Turkey has its origins in the brotherhood between the Azerbaijan state and Turkey; specifically in the NKC (BBC). In the aftermath of the dissolution of the Soviet Union, Turkey recognized the independence of Azerbaijan on 9 November 1991, and, one month later, on December 16, the international arena witnessed the recognition of all other ex-Soviet countries by Turkey without discrimination.

Turkey recognized Armenia in early 1992, after which Turkey appointed an ambassador for the diplomatic mission in Yerevan that was going to be opened in the near future.

High-level diplomatic delegations from both sides visited Ankara and Yerevan to discuss possible areas of cooperation, as well as opportunities for trade. In addition to these preliminary meetings, Turkey invited Armenia to become a founding member of the Organization of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) (Görgülü). The Armenian president, Levon Ter-Petrossian, represented Armenia at the meeting of heads of state of the

BSEC countries in Istanbul in 1992, which signifies Armenia's willingness to normalize relations with Turkey (Görgülü).

The NKC between Azerbaijan and Armenia had a negative impact on this process and the border issues resulted in the closure of borders by Turkey-Armenia, a situation that continues to exist. Another problem from an historical point of view that has had a direct effect on current relations between Yerevan and Ankara and the Protocol ratification process is in fact a problem Armenia has with a third country – Azerbaijan.

The Armenian-populated Azerbaijani province of NK has been one of the oldest of the 'frozen conflicts' in the Black Sea region to gain importance after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. The brotherhood of Turkey and Azerbaijan has depended on sharing a common cultural and linguistic background. Moreover, enjoying strategic ties in energy and military policies has been crucial, too. Thus, NK has played an important role in Armenian-Turkish relations.

Turkey closed its border with Armenia in 1993 in solidarity with Azerbaijan, with which Armenia was at war over NK. Ever since then, Turkish leaders have been seeking ways to resolve the Karabakh situation before any ratification of the Protocols takes place.

Turkey has argued that Armenia has not officially recognized the existing common border between the two countries as established by the 1921 treaties of Kars and Gumru. Making the preservation of its territorial integrity a prerequisite for establishing diplomatic relations, Turkey asked Armenia for an official statement professing that the independent State of Armenia recognizes these treaties and respects the territorial integrity of Turkey. However, this claim of Turkey has never received approval from Armenian authorities, which in turn has led to a freeze in the bilateral relations between Armenia and Turkey.

In this regard, it can be argued that the 1990s was a period of stalemate for both Turkey and Armenia. Turkey aimed to coerce and to some extent punish Armenia by not opening the border. However, this policy has not only failed to bring the expected results, it has also deepened mutual misunderstandings shaped by the tragedies of the past.

The isolation of Armenia has, in addition, encouraged the Armenian Diaspora to wage campaigns promoting international recognition of the 1915 events as genocide. The 1915 events started with the betrayal of Turks by Armenians by the latter's support of the enemy in the Balkan and Russian Wars in 1877-1878. This was followed by deportations and continued with mass killings (Görgülü). The success of these efforts in the late 1990s and early 2000s generated a defensive rhetoric in Turkey and legitimized the deadlock with Armenia in the eyes of the public.

Even though the genocide issue was put on the Armenian government's agenda after Kocharian was elected president in 2001, it is actually the Armenian Diaspora that has exerted the greatest efforts to push for the recognition of the allegations of genocide in the parliaments of third-party countries, thus giving this issue an international character.

Turkey's official opposition vis-à-vis the recognition of genocide allegations by these legislatures was that such decisions are not binding on Turkey under international law. While this argument was valid, it has been unable to prevent "genocide" from becoming a reality in the countries like France and the US, which have recognized the 1915 events as such.

As mentioned before, the efforts of the Diaspora and their contacts within the parliaments made it inevitable the Armenian Genocide would be recognized by many countries in the West. Although there was no binding legal decision and no legal implications, the popularity of the Armenian Genocide conflict was enough to turn public opinion in these countries against Turkey.



It should be noted that Turkey's official position regarding the issue of genocide has also changed recently. Turkey's current strategy is to push Armenia to agree to the establishment of a joint committee of historians.

Turkey's current arguments are based on Article 2 of the 1948 United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and holds that genocide is a crime committed by individuals and can only be determined by the courts upon historical evidence, irrespective of the convention's retroactive irrevocability (International Crisis Group).

In this regard, Turkey expects reciprocation from the Armenian side for the formation of a joint committee of historians to collect relevant data; however, this invitation has been rejected by Armenian authorities and there has not yet been any concrete actions taken to establish such a commission.

### **2.3.2 Political Analyses of Turkish-Armenian Relations**

This section examines Turkish–Armenian relations in the 1990s. Despite Turkey being one of the first states to recognize Armenia's independence, Armenia was not interested in building diplomatic relations with its neighbor Turkey. The section describes Turkey's initial efforts, prior to the ratifications, to build diplomatic ties in the area of economics. However, the occupation of Azerbaijani regions by Armenians prevented Turkey's attempt at good will ties. There were mainly two factors that delayed the establishment of relations: one was Armenian insistence that Turkey recognize the 1915 events as genocide; the other was Turkish solidarity towards its brotherly ally Azerbaijan, demanding cooperation from the Armenians to resolve the Karabakh issue. The section explains the conditions of renewed relations between Turkey and Armenia as well as the ongoing process for achieving this renewal based on Turkey's "trading policy."

### **2.3.2.1 South Caucasus Region: *Geopolitics***

After the collapse of the USSR, Turkey decided to build diplomatic relations with the newly founded Caucasian states, and took its first steps by approaching Azerbaijan and Georgia in 1992 (Fuller).

Until 1991, the relations between Armenia and Turkey were shaped by the realities of the Cold War. Armenia being part of the Soviet Union and Turkey being one of the United States' closest allies were important factors. Despite the worsening of relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, Turkey tried to improve good relations with Armenia, especially with the main figure of Dashnaks Petrossian. Turkey sold Armenia 100,000 tons of wheat and softened Azerbaijan's embargo on the country by agreeing to provide Armenia with electricity (Cafersoy; Maharramzadeh).

With the aim of broadening its diplomatic relations with its neighbors in the Caucasus, the Turkish Ambassador in Moscow, Volkan Vural, visited Armenia in 1991 and prepared some mutual agreements for establishing relations. During the visit of the Armenian delegations, the relations seemed to improve and Turkey offered to establish trade relations and invited Armenia to be a founding member in Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC).

However, relations between Turkey and Armenia were cut short. The consequence of the sudden attack of Armenian troops on the Kalbajar region of Azerbaijan in 1993 negatively influenced its relations with Turkey. On his visit to Baku, Erdal İnönü stated that they would cancel the agreement between Turkey and Armenia and that no progress should be pursued in Armenian-Turkish relations without progress in resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict (İdiz).

Since the end of the Cold War and the emergence of Armenia as an independent state, relations between Armenia and Turkey have been determined within the larger pattern of

relations among regional powers in the Black Sea area (Goshgarian). Russia is a major player in the region and Armenia has had cultural, political and historical ties to the country, Armenia has leaned towards Russia. Turkey has been an ally of Azerbaijan, which has had problematic relations with Armenia that have sometimes led to war. One of the major outcomes of this has been the Turkish border closure in 1993. Azerbaijan, Turkey's main energy supplier, threatened Turkey with energy supply cuts if a deal with Armenia was signed without meeting its Karabakh-related demands, even warning of renewed hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh (Malysheva).

However, when all communication and energy transportation projects through Georgia were suspended during the war with Russia in 2008, Armenia's availability as an alternate route for oil and gas pipelines running to the West from the Caspian Sea became more visible. This surely created a new incentive for Turkey to open the border with Armenia. However, at the time, AKP's foreign policy was getting stronger and Turkey's application to EU membership was continuing. There had also been a shift towards cooperation in the region, which created an opportunity to end the Armenian hostility. This presented itself most visibly as a potential opening of the border with Turkey and resuming diplomatic ties. Therefore, one can mention two types of external factors – ones acting *in favor of progress* and ones *obstructing progress*.

On the one hand, the efforts made by the United States and the EU to achieve cooperation and good neighbor relations have been laying the foundation for settlement and the normalization of relations between Yerevan and Ankara. The US has an interest in the stabilization and development of the region, which is a key artery for Caspian, Central Asian and Middle Eastern energy sources bound for Europe. Another reason is that the region has also been a zone for US military operations in Afghanistan and Iraq (Ralchev).

Another factor is Congress passing a resolution condemning the 1915 events as “Armenian genocide” and President Barack Obama mentioning the term of ‘genocide’ in its annual commemoration on April 24 address on the “genocide” of Armenians in 1915. A US House of Representatives committee approved on March 4, 2010, by a one-vote margin, a non-binding measure to condemn the killings as ‘genocide.’ But it is unlikely that the full House will vote on it, and less likely that it will go to Congress, as the Obama administration has moved to stop the motion in view of preserving good relations with Turkey, a key ally (Aljazeera Magazine).

The EU, on the other hand, is interested in stability of the region, as well, in order to gain access to an alternative route to Russia for hydrocarbon supplies. Another important factor is the inclusion of Armenia in the European Neighborhood Policy. This situation indicates that the EU puts great emphasis on good neighborhood relations in the South Caucasus. As it mentioned in a TEPSA report, “The EU considers conflict resolution and good neighbourly relations as one of its prime foreign policy objectives. It calls for “all accession candidates to resolve outstanding difficulties with their neighbors before acceding to the EU” (Tocci). Azerbaijan is insisting that Armenian troops have to immediately leave the districts surrounding Karabakh and that a comprehensive peace agreement be signed on the province itself, with status settlement as its key component. As mentioned above, Turkey has made it clear on several occasions it will comply with Azerbaijani demands.

One factor obstructing progress in reaching a resolution has been the negative attitude of Azerbaijan, Turkey’s close ally, which maintains that no improvement should be pursued in Armenian-Turkish relations without first resolving the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Another obstructing external factor working against rapprochement is the influence of the Armenian Diaspora, which was formed after the 1915 killings and deportations.

But this is not the only impediment to the normalization process. Another was the adoption of the “Armenian genocide” allegations by the third-party countries, which has been taking place since 2001. This became the main problem for Turkey in reaching reconciliation.

## **2.4 Conclusion**

History shows the unwillingness of the parties to the conflict to compromise in order to achieve normalization. After the collapse of the USSR, Russia’s indirect influence instigated a war between the neighbors in the region. The NKC became the most perilous case in the region. Azerbaijan’s insistence that the maintenance of territory integrity was critical to the resolution of the NKC, Armenia’s demands that Karabakh be kept under Armenian control and the assertion that the Karabakh population had the right to self-determination; as well as Turkey’s obstinacy in supporting Azerbaijan over Karabakh, and Armenia’s claims of genocide led to an impasse in tripartite cooperation. While Turkey closed its border with Armenia in solidarity with Azerbaijan, Turkey tried to gain time for mediating in the Karabakh resolution process. Despite numerous meetings and official visits, Turkey and Armenia were not able to establish diplomatic relations. The negotiation process of the bilateral protocol for the establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries encountered several problems and eventually became frozen.

Nevertheless, the ratification process stalled not only for the NKC but also for the issue of “Armenian Genocide,” on which Turkey had expected to get some deal from the Armenian side in order to reach to the top of level of rapprochement.

But the willingness of Armenia to build relations with Turkey and its attempt to discuss the “Armenian genocide” issue within the Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission has led to the failure of this rapprochement (Görgülü).

Therefore, on the following pages I analyze the importance of normalization in terms of enhancing stability and cooperation in the South Caucasus region with a special focus on the latest regional developments and international actors' positions regarding Turkish-Armenian relations.

## **CHAPTER 3**

### **3.1 Introduction**

The roots of the transition from the conflict era to the new Era for Normalization of Armenian-Turkey relations lie in the so-called ‘Football Diplomacy’ in which the two countries engaged.

The chapter discusses Turkey-Armenia relations over the past twenty years, following the dissolution of the Soviet Union, and a significant historical event, the Zurich protocols, and its outcomes. However, it also points to possible areas in which the countries can cooperate to improve their economic relations prior to the ratification of the Protocols.

The chapter also examines the transformation of Turkish foreign policy into a “trading state” policy in order to enhance domestic political developments. Turkey’s foreign policy has led to the Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process, which encompasses eliminating historical disputes that are now in the spotlight. This includes the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which Turkey demands be resolved, and the issue of Genocide, which Armenia demands be recognized. Given the circumstances, normalization seems to be out of the question. The chapter provides an account of the ways in which normalization may be achieved that are in the interest of Russia and the US, and the reasons why ratification has failed.

### **3.2 Renewal of Relations or Benefits for the Sides**

#### **3.2.1 "Trading state" Policy of Turkey and Normalization of Relations**

Since the mid-1990s, Turkish foreign trade has grown and has become the basis for its foreign policy, with Turkey becoming a “trading state.” Hence, between 2003-2008, Turkish foreign policy was increasingly shaped by economic considerations and trade concerns became a factor which deeply affected Turkish foreign policy (Kirişçi).

According to Kirişçi,, in 2008, the AKP government established a “zero-problem policy on borders,” which can be considered a manifestation of the foreign policy of a trading state (48). Turkey now aimed to improve its relations with neighbors by relying on its economy, and its “trading state” foreign policy became a domestic issue. The main reasons for Turkey’s “trading state” policy becoming a domestic issue were democratization, civil society involvement and employment (Ibid.). Turkish foreign policy aims to eliminate all the problems with neighbors or at least to minimize them as much as possible based on the idea of prioritizing domestic politics (Aras). Its domestic reform and growing economic capabilities in the recent years have enabled Turkey to emerge as a peace-promoter in neighboring regions. Early in the 2000s, security in Turkey had been treated, to a considerable extent, as an internal problem (Ibid.). Foreign policies were seen as extensions of domestic considerations, and this attitude was traditionally accompanied by a visible tendency to externalize domestic problems and search for external factors as the root causes of security problems. This allowed political elites to exaggerate and manipulate them to preserve their hold on power (Potier). However, now, with a new policy focused on trade and economic outcomes the relationship between domestic and foreign policy was changing. It was expected that trading with neighbors would also have positive outcomes in Turkish politics and vice-versa.

One of the important components of TANP is taking responsibility in the Caucasus region. According to Aras, Turkey’s aim in normalizing relations with neighbors was to make the countries in the region, which have significant disagreements over deep-rooted problems, to have confidence in Turkey (Ibid.). This expected confidence in Turkey is based on economic development. This has made the resolute and constructive foreign policy adopted by Turkey ever more needed and sought after in the region. Being aware of its increasing tools and capabilities, and the responsibilities emanating from them, Turkey pursues a multi-



dimensional foreign policy that is pre-emptive rather than reactive (Ibid.). In other words, Turkey steers developments by taking initiatives rather than merely watching them unfold and determining a stance accordingly (Elanchenny and Marashliya). Turkey's desire for the normalization relations along the border allowed its intervention in the NKC in the Armenian-Azerbaijan relations that will be discussed further in this paper.

Another consequence of the "trading state" approach is that Turkish foreign policy is more pragmatic and realistically based on practical rather than theoretical considerations. Furthermore, the most important characteristic of Turkish foreign policy is its being visionary. Security for all, political dialogue, economic interdependence and cultural harmony are the building blocks of this vision. Turkey aspires eventually to reach a stage where all countries live in a state of welfare and carry the integration among them to the most advanced level by creating a zone of peace and stability, starting with its neighbors (Ibid.). While implementing its foreign policy on a global scale with these components, Turkey aims to see its positive outcomes in Turkey's immediate vicinity, that is to say, in its relations with neighbors (Elanchenny and Maraşliya).

While resolutely pursuing this policy, Turkey never puts realism aside and does not forget that the TANP approach represents an objective and an ideal. Indeed, it is not really possible to envisage that all problems in the region that have deep-rooted history being solved in a short period of time (Aras). Moreover, international relations are not free from problems anywhere in the world due to their very nature. However, the fact that some problems cannot be solved quickly does not diminish the need to take constructive steps to settle them. Once steps are taken in this direction, even if the problems are not solved immediately, favorable conditions for their eventual solution can finally be created. Accordingly, Turkey rejects the concept of freezing problems with her neighbors as well as trying to take advantage of them.

On the contrary, Turkey strives to actively work towards solving problems in line with a win-win approach through peaceful means (Ibid.).

Turkey's efforts to improve ties can clearly be seen in its relations with its neighbors. For instance, Turkey has engaged in a multidimensional dialogue with Greece since 1999. Turkish-Greek relations are developing through significant mechanisms such as regular political contacts, exploratory talks on Aegean Problems, confidence-building measures, and High Level Cooperation Council meetings. Turkey is of the view that the positive atmosphere prevalent in the bilateral relations will further facilitate the solution of common problems in the future (*Economist*, 2012). Similarly, Turkey has brought its relations with two other neighbors in the Balkans, namely Bulgaria and Romania, to a remarkable level. Furthermore, Turkey has solved all the fundamental problems with Bulgaria and Romania, former opponents during the Cold War period, and added the NATO alliance dimension to strengthening bilateral economic relations. In its relations with Ukraine, Turkey has made substantial progress and increased bilateral trade volume fivefold in the last 10 years as well. Visas have been abolished and the "High Level Strategic Council" with Ukraine was established with the aim of concluding the Free Trade Agreement, the negotiations for which started in December 2011. This will ensure the free movement of people, goods and capital and integrate the two great markets of the Black Sea basin (Ibid.).

Turkey has also increasingly developed her relations and cooperation with the Russian Federation since the 1990, thus attaining the objective of "enhanced multi-dimensional partnership" (Ibid.). Turkish-Russian relations, carried out in the framework of the High Level Cooperation Council established in 2010, are based on a multi-dimensional and balanced understanding, in addition to deepening mutual cooperation and engaging in sincere dialogue. Visa exemption between Turkey and the Russian Federation constitutes yet another important window of opportunity for further developing bilateral relations.

Turkey is conscious of the crucial importance of preserving the political and economic stability and territorial integrity of the Caucasian countries, and, accordingly, pursues an active foreign policy with a view to resolving the problems in the region through peaceful means and by promoting regional cooperation. Turkey's efforts geared towards launching the Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Platform and creating an environment of dialogue and trust in the region are clear signs of this approach (*Economist*). Turkey also takes steps towards strengthening her relations with Azerbaijan, a country with whom it has close social, cultural and historical ties. Moreover, while continuing to steadily develop her relations with Georgia, Turkey resolutely pursues a policy aimed at finding a solution to the Abkhazia and South Ossetia conflicts within internationally the recognized borders of Georgia (Ohannes).

Aiming to improve relations with its neighbors, Turkey seeks to develop good relations with Iran, with whom it has a long common history, and pays attention to preserving good neighborly relations on the basis of mutual interest. On the other hand, Turkey still closely follows Iran's nuclear program, of which the international community is highly suspicious, and spares no effort to settling this issue through diplomatic and peaceful means (*Economist*).

In the case of Iraq, Turkey is deeply involved both bilaterally and multilaterally to enable Iraq to establish its political unity and territorial integrity and integrate fully with the international community. Turkey's goal is to ensure that Iraq can maintain its own defense and has the capacity to eliminate terrorist elements, which also pose threat to Turkey. Furthermore, Turkey also strives hard so that Iraq becomes a prosperous country (*Economist*). In this respect, Turkey, maintains close contact with all political groups and aims to deepen her relations with Iraq in a multidimensional manner while benefiting from the High-Level Strategic Cooperation Council.

However, Turkey's bilateral relations with another important neighbor, Syria, have entered into a new phase due to the relentless violent reaction by the regime forces following the popular uprisings of March 2011 (Ibid.). The case of Syria shows that the normalization of relations is only applicable if the neighbor, through its actions, makes it possible to continue good neighborly relations. Such a transition would consolidate the basis for Turkey-Syria relations with the advantage of close and special political and economic ties.

Turkey has adopted a constructive attitude for the settlement of the Cyprus issue as well. In 2004, the international community missed an important opportunity on the settlement of the Cyprus issue when the United Nations Comprehensive Settlement Plan, accepted by the Turkish Cypriot side despite several negative elements, could not be put in effect due to the Greek Cypriot side's rejection. Thus, the Greek Cypriots appeared as hampering the resolution of the problem (*Economist*). Hence, Turkey supports all efforts aimed at a just, lasting and comprehensive settlement of the Cyprus issue based on established United Nations parameters and the ongoing negotiation process.

Through this brief survey of the developments in bilateral relations with neighbors adopted by Turkey, it appears that the approach taken by Turkey aims at achieving peace and stability in its neighborhood. Turkey efforts at normalization are not only based on the notion of "diversity in unity" with its neighbors, but also on economic considerations. Despite these major efforts, however, developing relations with Armenia seems to be the weak link in Turkey's endeavors towards fostering relations with its neighbors (Osipova and Bilgi).

### **3.3 Possible areas of cooperation before the ratification of the Protocols**

There has been an attempt to compensate for the collapse of bilateral relations between two neighboring countries since the 1993 closure of the borders. Non-official representatives of both sides, including businessmen and civil society, have argued that the closed border

would result in losses – economically as well as politically - on both sides. Therefore, The Turkish-Armenian Business Development Council (TABDC) was formed in 1997 and has dubbed itself “the first and only official link between the public and private sectors in each of the two countries' communities” (Web.<[www.tabdc.org](http://www.tabdc.org)>). TABDC tries to influence Turkish and Armenian foreign policies in such a way as to improve economic and trade ties between the two countries, which would ultimately benefit both.

Before the reconciliation processes, on August 2008, in order to improve relations with neighbors, to reinforce its role and to assert its geopolitical influence in region, the Turkish Prime Minister, Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, initiated the proposal for the “Platform for Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus.” The proposal sought to bolster stability and security in the region. This new project aimed to establish a regional alliance with Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia, and Turkey, as well as with Russia, in order to set up a new framework of regional security and to solve ethnic conflict in this partnership. It also sought to secure the vulnerable energy export routes running from the Caspian basin to Europe.

Although Azerbaijan and Georgia expressed interest in the Turkish proposal, Armenia was not ready to follow Ankara’s lead without any changes in non-existent relations and the closed borders between Turkey and Armenia (Grigosian).

Since Gül’s visit to Yerevan in September 2008, Turkish Foreign Minister Ali Babacan has had several meetings with Eduard Nalbandian to discuss the modalities of establishing diplomatic ties as well as an initiative CSCP proposed by Turkey with the participation of the three Caucasus states together with Turkey and Russia.

In sum, given the circumstances analyzed above, it would be appropriate to argue that a basis was provided for the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations. Diplomatic sources agreed to the establishment of diplomatic ties to take place in near future. The critical aspect here is that this development will surely change the regional balance of power in favor of

Turkey. However, it is critical here to follow a political strategy that does not threaten to undermine Azerbaijan-Turkey relations since their deterioration could sabotage the positive atmosphere. The opening of the border and the establishment of official ties between Turkey and Armenia shall indeed challenge the status quo in the region. It is obvious that both sides would benefit from normalization of interstate relations and the opening of the border between Turkey and Armenia.

Turkey and Armenia would both benefit economically from the opening of the border. Resolving the border problem would also mean more room for Turkey to concentrate on stabilizing so called "Kurdish problem," which has become a more essential element of Turkish national security (Ibid.)

In addition, the normalization of diplomatic relations is important for Turkey in terms of its foreign policy to develop good relations with Armenia. For far too long, bad neighborhood relations has undermined Turkey's credibility in the eyes its allies the EU and US. Turkey has also been trying to assume a more important role in Caucasus politics, even carrying out the "Platform for Stability and Cooperation in the Caucasus" project, which seeks stability and security in the region.

The re-opening of borders and normalization of the diplomatic relations would also alleviate pressure on Turkey from the West as well as improve Turkey's domestic reform. For example, this would promote regions like Erzurum and Ağrı, which are the least developed regions in Turkey and right near Armenia. However, unlocking the borders might open the Armenian labor market to unemployed Turks and Turkey could end up dominating the Armenian market. Meanwhile, this would enable Turkish goods to reach Armenia directly. While Turkey has imposed an embargo on Armenia's imports, Armenia has kept its market open to Turkish goods through third-country cargo transfer, channeled with Georgia, which means that Armenians have no problem buying Turkish goods (Chatham House). Turkey

could also benefit from Armenia as an agricultural producer as well as an energy supplier, which could possibly export electricity to eastern Turkey. Moreover, Turkish manufacturing and textile producers could set up new factories there for the lower labor costs as well.

Another obvious benefit for Turkey involves the Kars-Gyumri railway and making its access to Georgia, Azerbaijan and the whole of Central Asia easier. Accordingly, Turkey has considered extending the benefits via Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) licensing, which facilitates road transport across the Black Sea region. By using this license, Armenia could also enter and transport its goods and trucks through Turkey.

As for relations with the EU, the genocide allegations and the closed Turkish- Armenian border have had a negative impact on Turkey-EU relations. Turkey will eventually open its closed border with Armenia in order to become a full member of the EU. However, it is important to remember here that the major EU countries have recognized the genocide claims in their national parliaments and that the Armenian Diaspora is well organized in Europe. This decreases the likelihood of EU involvement in the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations and the union's ability to force Turkey to come up with a rapid solution. Turkey must be aware of this fact and face with it before it acts as a damper on TR-EU relations.

The European Commission's annual progress reports, which evaluate the course of the negotiations and the reforms carried out by Turkey, always put an emphasis on establishing good neighborly relations and the importance of opening the border without delay. Moreover, some heads of state, such as French President Nicolas Sarkozy, state on all occasions that it is not possible for Turkey to enter the EU without recognizing the genocide and opening the closed border with Armenia (Tocci). Armenia needs the normalization in order to cooperate with Turkey in various spheres including the Black Sea region and the establishment of an atmosphere of peace and security in the South Caucasus and also in order to deal with the global challenges and threats this country faces (Görgülü).

Armenia would profit from the new geopolitical status, which is the most important for Armenia as it may reduce Russian influence. There is also a more strategic advantage for Armenia as well. The first possible benefit for Armenia would be access to the huge Turkish market if the de-facto embargo is eliminated. Both Georgia and Armenia are poor countries but Georgia, being a neighbor of Azerbaijan and Turkey and having unrestricted borders, is able to take advantage of regional markets. Political conditions and high trade barriers make the markets of Azerbaijan and Iran inaccessible to Armenia. Armenia's economic relations are limited to the ones it has with Georgia. For this reason, opening the Turkish market to Armenia would greatly improve the country's investment rating and open new avenues for Armenia's foreign trade beyond the Turkish market, Armenia would also have access to the European and Middle Eastern markets.

On top of all of these, the major benefit for Armenia would be the opening of transportation by rail network. The opening of borders would lift the Turkish-imposed blockade against Armenia and facilitate Armenia's exports and imports. The transportation route through Georgia could be used and there would be an open direct bridge to Europe. With this new available transportation network, Armenia would be able to use Turkish shipping, which is safer and cheaper than the vessels running out of the Georgia and would overcome Georgia's monopoly on border trade (Web.<[www.tr.boell.org](http://www.tr.boell.org)>). Furthermore, considering all of these advantages, the major internal problem of emigration of the citizens in Armenia could be resolved as well (Grigosian).

In addition, the establishment of official relations and the opening of the border would launch a confidence-building process on both sides by reducing and eliminating mutual historical misunderstandings. Both Turkey and Armenia must remain neutral during this period, avoid the Russian or US sphere of influence, and decide to develop bilateral relations to start working at normalizing the mutual perceptions in both countries.



The normalization of diplomatic relations of two neighbors is also of interest to the West, which has tried to promote the reconciliation process between Turkey and Armenia. The West has sought through this normalization the elimination of the blockade imposed on Armenia by Turkey and Azerbaijan and the reduction of Russian influence on Armenia. It also supports Turkey's role in regional security and stability in the Caucasus (Mikhelidze).

### **3.4 Towards a new Era: The Normalization of Armenian-Turkey Relations: 'Football Diplomacy'**

Since the breakup of the Soviet Union, Turkey-Armenia relations have been challenging. Despite Turkey's recognition of the newly independent Armenia in 1991, the countries have yet to establish diplomatic relations. To resolve the border problem between Armenia and Turkey, in October 2009, Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and his Armenian counterpart Edward Nalbandian signed two historic protocols, which were initiated by Turkey side in order to restore bilateral relations and open the borders between two neighbors, which Turkey closed in 1993 to support Azerbaijan on the resolution of the NKC (Web.2009.<[www.todayszaman.net](http://www.todayszaman.net)>) These developments raised expectations on both sides of normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations. Both official and unofficial parties have been mobilized to promote normalization of bilateral relations. The solution of the border problem and the normalization of relations between the two countries would promote a new domestic reform for Turkey.

Of course, the August 2008 conflict in Georgia changed the regional landscape. There is the promise of Russian support in the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkish made possible by the opening of the Armenian-Turkish border. Hence, in addition to the situation in Georgia, key to this new diplomatic opening has been Russia's support for such a

breakthrough between Armenia and Turkey (Giragosian). While it has been more than 20 years since the demise of Soviet Union, Russia still sees the Caucasus as its “backyard.” While Russia’s influence in the region was limited to the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline, it tried to gain the re-opening of the borders by supporting the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement. It had three aims in doing so; it wanted i) to appear as a pro-peace country; ii) to create a wedge between Azerbaijan and Turkey, and iii) to pull Azerbaijan away from the West, paralyzing the Tbilisi link of Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline. Again, the main goal of Russia was to put whole the Caucasus under its control by exploiting Turkish-Armenian rapprochement process (Web.<[www.caucasusedition.net](http://www.caucasusedition.net)>).

Nevertheless, the effort to open the border between neighbors was welcomed not only by Russia but also by another superpower, the U.S. The regional interests of the two superpowers did not, however, coincide with each other. The aim of US was to execute its Caucasus plans via Turkey while hoping to save Armenia from Russian domination even as Georgia continued to be under the threat of such domination. This border opening could pave the way to a new energy corridor through Armenia instead of Georgia.

Indeed, opening the border between Armenia and Turkey is one of the foundations of Turkish foreign policy. This general theory has been cited on numerous occasions as theoretical ground for TANP and for its envisaged effect on the NKC. It was initiated to attain welfare, security and geopolitical influence in the region. However, the “trading state” policy of Turkey laid the groundwork for “football diplomacy” with its “soft power” issue.

The Turkish-Armenia rapprochement continued in September 2008 with the so-called “football diplomacy,” when Turkey’s President Abdullah Gül travelled to Yerevan to attend a World Cup qualifying football match between the two countries’ national teams at the invitation of Sargsyan, which was in response to Gül’s congratulations for the newly elected

President of Armenia. This instance of diplomacy came to be described as football diplomacy, with Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan becoming the first Armenian leader to visit Turkey.

Following the historic visit, the Armenian and Turkish foreign ministers held two follow-up meetings to maintain bilateral talks and engagement to normalize relations. Although both sides intended to engage in direct negotiations and dialogue, the separate views on normalization of relations between the two sides remains far from resolved (Giragosian). For Turkey, normalization of relations would be possible first, if the Armenian side would stop demanding recognition of the Armenian genocide at the international level and agree to placing the genocide issue under the jurisdiction of an historical commission; second, if Armenia would repudiate any territorial claims on Turkey or officially recognize the territorial integrity and current borders of the Republic of Turkey; and third, if the Armenian side would voice a desire to make some progress over the unresolved NKC. However, Armenian demands related to the frozen NKC had resulted in Turkey imposing a blockade of Armenia in support of Azerbaijan. In 2008, officials from Armenia and Turkey were finally preparing again to sign a comprehensive rapprochement deal. This deal took the form of the Protocols signed in October 2009 after diplomatic efforts made by the United States, the EU, France, Russia and Switzerland (Socor).

These Protocols held critical issues between two states such as establishing diplomatic relations, opening of the mutual border and setting up of a joint commission to address historical issues between the two countries. However, they cannot take effect until ratified by Armenia's and Turkey's legislatures. The signing of the Protocols opened a new era in Turkish-Armenian relations, which in return received mixed reactions from both sides.

### **3.5 Nagorno-Karabakh in Dispute: The Condition of Normalization**

Beginning in September 2008 with a football game, a diplomatic normalization process between Turkey and Armenia came under the spotlight. Following the first step of “football diplomacy,” the normalization of the relations between the two neighbors was linked to the protocols signed on 10 October 2009 in Zurich. The “*Protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations*” and the “*Protocol on the development of bilateral relations*” were signed by Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu and Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian with US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton and Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov as well as other officials of European countries in attendance (Goksel).

The “Protocol on the establishment of diplomatic relations” contained the following paragraphs: To agree on:

1. Opening the common border within 2 months after the entry into force of this Protocol;
2. Conducting regular political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries;
3. Implementing a dialogue on the historical dimension with the aim of restoring mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations;
4. Making the best possible use of existing transport, communications and energy infrastructure and networks between the two countries, and undertaking measures in this regard;
5. Developing the bilateral legal framework in order to foster cooperation between the two countries;
6. Cooperating in the fields of science and education by encouraging relations between the appropriate institutions as well as promoting the exchange of specialists and students, and acting with the aim of preserving the cultural heritage of both sides and launching common cultural projects;
7. Establishing consular cooperation in accordance with the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations of 1963 in order to provide necessary assistance and protection to the citizens of the two countries;
8. Taking concrete measures in order to develop trade, tourism and economic cooperation between the two countries;
9. Engaging in a dialogue and reinforce their cooperation on environmental issues.

10. Establishing an intergovernmental bilateral commission which shall comprise separate subcommissions for the prompt implementation of the commitments mentioned in operational paragraph 2 above in this Protocol; To prepare the working modalities of the intergovernmental commission and its sub-commissions, a working group headed by the two Ministers of Foreign Affairs shall be created 2 months after the day following the entry into force of this Protocol. Within 3 months after the entry into force of this Protocol, these modalities shall be approved at ministerial level. The intergovernmental commission shall meet for the first time immediately after the adoption of the said modalities. The sub-commissions shall start their work at the latest 1 month thereafter and they shall work continuously until the completion of their mandates (Protocol).

But the fiasco began after the signing of the documents, which remain unratified due to geopolitical and historic obstacles.

### **3.6 The “Genocide diplomacy” of Armenia**

Just before Turkish-Armenian ratification process, Obama made an official visit to Turkey on April 2009, during which he made a statement on commemorating the “World War I-era killings of the Ottoman Armenians.” This statement, which was addressed to the Yerevan government, generated criticism in Armenia and Armenian Diasporas, especially the one based in the US, for having left out the word “genocide” (Abrahamyan). Certainly, Turkey expected the force of “genocide diplomacy” from Armenia, which threatened to undermine the normalization of diplomatic relations initiated with Armenia in 2008 (Goksel). A resolution to recognize the “Armenian Genocide” had been submitted to the US Senate by senators R. Menendes and D. Insane. In response, the Turkish Ambassador to the US, Nabi Shensoy, declared, “Turkey is not going sign any document which is contrary to the interests of Azerbaijan” and finds “improper the submission of the resolution of “Armenian Genocide” to the US Senate” (Giragosian). Although Turkey tried to prevent Armenia’s genocide diplomacy within the framework of the protocols, Armenia was too focused on the “genocide” question. Therefore, the attempts made to achieve recognition of the issue of

“Armenian genocide” became one of the reasons for the deterioration of reconciliation (Doğan).

According to Armenia’s domestic law, each international agreement must first go through the Armenia Constitutional Court (The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia, 1995) and then go to the parliament for ratification. The Court approved this protocol but emphasized that approach to the genocide recognition issue was immutable since to do otherwise would contradict the Constitution as well as the requirements of the Declaration on Independence of Armenia, which states that “The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of the 1915 Genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia” (Armenian Declaration of Independence, 1990; The decision of the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia, 2010). Another point made by the Court was that Armenia was not obliged to recognize the existing Turkish-Armenian border established by the 1921 Treaty of Kars and refused to link the NK problem to this protocol (Web.<[www.concourt.am](http://www.concourt.am)>). Yet this revelation played one of the spoiler roles in the normalization process by Armenia’s side.

### **3.7 From the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict to the Protocols: Karabakh or Normalization?**

Following Armenia’s unchanging position regarding the “genocide issue,” Turkey decided to keep to its unwavering position, pressing Armenia to make progress on the NK conflict resolution within the framework of the protocols. However, critics of the Turkish government critics pressured Ankara to push Armenia to withdraw from Azerbaijani territory. Armenia believed that Turkey’s attempt to link the protocols to the progress of the NKC would contribute neither to the reconciliation nor to the resolution of conflict within the

Minsk group. However, some Armenians who were eager for normalization of relations with Turkey to occur felt that it would partially help solve the NK problem.

Even though the governing party had the majority in the parliament, there was great opposition in Turkey to normalization with Armenia without any progress on resolving the NKC (Doğan).

The Russian media incited Azerbaijan with provocative news about Turkey-Armenia reconciliation to disappoint Baku and spoil relations between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Russia did not want to lose control over the Caucasus so the Russian government tried making this process more complicated by urging the Turkish side to not link the Nagorno-Karabakh problem to the Turkish-Armenian question.

In this case, as a one of the interested party, the US urged Ankara to separate Karabakh issue from the Turkish-Armenia reconciliation process. Although the US was a backer of this rapprochement and tried to contribute to the relations between Turkey and Armenia, approval of US Congressional Committee for the resolution to recognize Armenian massacre as genocide was a failure for the US in its role as a contributor party. Despite neither Hillary Clinton nor Obama supporting this resolution, Turkey decided to recall its ambassador to the US.

While the Turkish leadership was under pressure not to betray Azerbaijan, the Armenian leadership was under pressure not to concede to any demands regarding Nagorno-Karabakh made by their Turkish counterparts. Rejecting dialog meant that realities were swept under the rug. Virtually no consideration could be heard - from supporters or critics of the Yerevan administration - about what kind of step might help unlock the Nagorno-Karabakh stalemate to create a win-win dynamic (Göksel).

The Armenian media was predominantly negative, arguing that Turkey had avoided the issue about Genocide and deportation of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire in 1915.

Similarly, commentators in the Turkish media remained cautious on the subject of the ethnic-Armenian enclave of Nagorno-Karabakh (BBC). Politically, the Protocols had received mixed reactions from both Armenian and Turkey opposition parties.

The Republican People's Party (CHP) and Nationalist Movement Party (MHP) in Turkey interpreted the rapprochement as "selling out" Turkish national interests. Likewise, the Armenian extreme nationalist Armenian Revolutionary Federation party (ARF) strongly opposed the signing of the Protocols.

This opposition and the image in the public eye delayed the ratification of Protocols by the two sides. And although there has been Western support for the Protocols, they still have not been ratified by the two parliaments.

In this context, Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan attempted to solve the issue of ratification of the Protocols by the Turkish parliament at the OSCE summit in Athens in December 2009. However, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian opposed the initiative, accusing Turkey of establishing preconditions for rapprochement by linking the NK resolution to the process. Moreover, Turkey has been accusing Armenia of setting preconditions via the Constitutional Court ruling. Therefore, the ratification process has not made any progress and has thus had a negative impact on Turkish-Armenian relations.

### **3.8 Conclusion**

It appears that the "trading state" foreign policy, beginning with "Football Diplomacy," was unsuccessful. Although Turkey attempted several times to build diplomatic relations as well as economic ties before the ratification, it did not result in opening of the borders.

Neither side was willing to compromise and the reduction of historical misunderstanding was a long way off. Turkey had more pressing interests. While the most



important component of Turkish foreign policy is its realistic approach to promoting security in Turkey by taking responsibility in the region, Turkey put aside its ambitions for some time and decided again to support its ally Azerbaijan by intervening in Nagorno-Karabakh resolution issue. Armenia, for its part, not wanting to make any concessions, also preferred to postpone the economic benefits that would be obtained by opening railway transportation and getting the blockade on one border lifted. In any case, the stance taken by each side threatened to undermine the normalization of relations.

However, Turkey is striving to find a solution and to develop its relations in accordance with AKP's "zero problems on border" approach. Thus, Turkey signed in 2009, two important Protocols aimed at not only solving current problems with its neighbor Armenia, but also facilitating the creation of sustainable peace in Southern Caucasus (Welt). Although there has been no progress in the ratification process of the Protocols due to factors associated with the situation in the region, Turkey maintains her political will to move forward in the normalization process of relations between the two countries (Osipova and Bilgi).

## CHAPTER 4

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter explains the research I conducted using the data gathered and the results obtained testing the data against the initial hypothesis. The main idea is to test the particular case of a liberal approach in foreign policy, i.e., the so-called “football diplomacy,” comparing it to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which is a case reflecting the purely realistic type of interstate relations. So the main question of this testing part is “has football diplomacy, as the liberal literature proposes, increased the chance of peace in the Caucasus region that is so vital for Turkish foreign policy?”

First, I focus on Period I, which is the period prior to the protocols of rapprochement. It includes the developments from October 2006 to June 2008 that feature the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict resolution process. I record both “negative” and “positive” rhetoric obtained from the Azerbaijani and Armenian sides and then analyze the results. Second, I focus on Period II of the analysis. This period, from August 2008 to August 2010, encompasses the “football diplomacy” in Turkish-Armenian relations. Examination of these two periods, totaling four years, allows me to examine the dynamics of diplomatic activity from both sides, whereby engagement on cultural and humanitarian issues is transformed into a breakthrough on a diplomatic front.

The major concern of this research is to find "how the liberal stance of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the issue of Turkish-Armenian bilateral relations (the so called TANP) influences the resolution of the NK Conflict." To answer this question, I analyze the instances of war rhetoric in contrast to peace rhetoric in Period I and compare the two variables. As mentioned in the methodology section, the analysis of these two different forms of rhetoric is obtained from the statements and public remarks made by major decision-makers: the

Presidents and the Foreign Affairs Ministers of Turkey, Armenia and Azerbaijan. The sources of media are Azbarez News, Newsarmenia, Panarmenian, Armtoday in Armenia and Azer News, Dayaz News, Lentaz and Musavat in Azerbaijan.

For the analysis of 'negative rhetoric' and 'positive rhetoric' generated from Armenia, I take into account President Robert Kocharyan, who served between 1998 and April 2008, and Serzh Sargsyan, who has been serving since April 2008. I also take the statements of Foreign Affairs Ministers, Vartan Oskanian who served between 1998 and April 2008, and Edward Nalbandian, who has been serving since April 2008. I include the statement of others, such as experts, government officials and MPs and statements made by opposition leaders in Armenia.

For the analysis of 'negative rhetoric' and 'positive rhetoric' generated by the Republic of Azerbaijan, I take into account President Ilham Aliyev, who has been serving since October 2003. I also take the statements of Foreign Affairs Minister Elmar Mammadyarov who has been serving since April 2004, statements of opposition leaders in Azerbaijan and others including experts, government officials and MPs.

#### **4.2 Nagorno-Karabakh Resolution through the Lens of TANP - PERIOD I**

War rhetoric is obviously a major subcategory of political rhetoric in general, which is in turn a sub-branch of the vast domain of rhetoric and rhetorical studies in every area of life. In literature, rhetoric refers to every conceivable resource, good or bad, for producing any effect on others. Its territory is thus, as Aristotle claimed, undefinable, since it includes almost every corner of our lives. Rhetoric is employed at every moment when one human being intends to produce, through the use of signs or symbols, some effect on another by words, or facial expressions, or gestures, or any symbolic skill of any kind (Snowball).

Paralleling war itself, the 'rhetoric of war' gained the attention of scholars throughout history, beginning with the likes of Thucydides and Aristotle. The rhetoric related to war survives in history, whereas the rhetoric associated peace is more likely to be forgotten. This is related to when the speeches are made, thus their success increases during war time. The two great masters of political rhetoric in the English-speaking world were Lincoln and Churchill. The power of their rhetoric carries into their speeches' written texts. Their rhetoric for the ages is usually sufficiently time-sensitive to be motivational (Kennedy-Shaffe). Lincoln's two inaugural addresses and the Gettysburg Address are considered as examples of successful rhetoric. In literature, Gettysburg Address is perhaps the greatest single speech in American history (Ibid.).

Among 20th century politicians, Churchill was a wartime leader when Hitler declared war on the United States on December 11, 1941. This was the single most short-sighted political decision of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. The Axis pact did not compel him to do this, for it was a defensive pact, and Japan had started the war. America's entry into the war bailed out Churchill. His speeches became rhetorical classics because his side won the war (Snowball).

Hitler was also a master of rhetoric. He was the probably the greatest master of large-crowd rhetoric in history, for he understood the psychology of large crowds. He planned every detail of those mass meetings. There were no wartime German anti-war speeches, although he failed in the end (Ibid.).

#### **4.2.1 Period I: Pre-2008 Turkish-Armenian Relations (October 2006 -June 2008)**

Returning to the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the related rhetoric from Armenia and Azerbaijan as counterparts need analysis in the literature. As I put the Nagorno-Karabakh resolution through the TANP at the center of my research, in Period I, I analyze the negative and positive rhetoric prior to the rapprochement. Table 1 shows the

number of news items about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the statements of the leaders of both countries, labeled as either 'pro-negative' or 'pro-positive' rhetoric.

**Table 1. Armenia's Negative and Positive Rhetoric (Pre-2008)**

<b>YEAR/FIGURE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE RHETORIC</b>	<b>POSITIVE RHETORIC</b>
<b>2006 April –December</b>		
President	-	<b>3</b>
Minister of FA	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>
Opposition	<b>3</b>	<b>1</b>
Others	<b>4</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2007 January-December</b>		
President	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Minister of FA	1	3
Opposite	2	-
Others	3	1
<b>2008 January- August</b>		
President	1	3
Minister of FA	2	4
Opposite	3	-
Others	4	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>25</b>	<b>22</b>

The analysis of Period I reveals a mixture of both pro-negative and pro-positive rhetoric of Armenian politician attitude. However, the statistics show the dominance of pro-war rhetoric as in Table 1. During the pre-normalization period in 2006-2008, the settlement of the NKC was the main issue for the Armenian side. However, at the OSCE Permanent Council Meeting, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia stated that the negotiation process regarding NK had developed after a meeting with the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Rambouillet and assured that Armenia was ready to show the necessary determination to resolve the conflict through the compromise (Panarmenian). Even Armenian President Robert Kocharian considered important the fact of the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in the framework of the OSCE and its fairly efficient format (Regnum).

Following Armenian relations with its neighbors, Kocharian said, "Turkey, which is an important state in its region, closed its borders to Armenia. An important country like Turkey should follow a different approach." Kocharian also dismissed the Turkish proposal to establish a joint commission of historians to study the Armenian genocide claims as a "Turkish ploy" by which he claimed Ankara will try to distance itself from the core of the alleged issue. Kocharian also stated that Yerevan wants the establishment of a commission of politicians instead of a commission of historians and said, "politicians, not historians, have responsibility for the genocide" problems with Turkey. In November, Kocharian also claimed that the disputed enclave of NK had declared its independence following the collapse of the Soviet Union and the enclave had never been a part of Azerbaijan. Stating that the young people in NK had grown up with the will to live in an independent state and wouldn't retreat from the ways things are, Kocharian underlined the need for the concerned sides in the region to be ready for a solution in NK before the OSCE made new initiatives. Kocharian stressed that no country that had gained its independence would give up this right and added, "people

of NK also fought for their independence and won it. Therefore, they don't want to lose it" (*Asbarez News*).

Furthermore, Minister of Foreign Affairs Vardan Oskanian admitted that the conflict in NK posed a major obstacle for ties with Turkey. He charged that "Ankara's unequivocal solidarity with Azerbaijan also works against Turkey because it undermines their credibility and weight in the Caucasus and their claim to be a bridge between East and West." However, the Armenian government does not want to link the NK problem resolution to the border opening policy with Turkey (*Ibid.*).

On the other hand, the opposition in Armenia followed a pro-peace rhetoric in their reactions to the NK conflict resolution. Head of the Liberal Progressive Party of Armenia (LPPA), Hovhannes Hovhannisyan, in his interview noted that there was still a chance to promote the settlement of the NKC in 2006. According to the leader of the LPPA, "The Armenian and Azerbaijani sides have already agreed on this NKC settlement, and it will be fully resolved in the forthcoming meeting of Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia." The LPPA leader also noted that while a few months earlier the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict had been seen as a component of the "Iranian dossier," today the resolution of the conflict is seen as a separate process. At the same time, Hovhannes Hovhannisyan noted that in the coming years, due to expiration of the terms of the Board of Presidents of Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, they have to complete the execution of their duties and to try to maintain the status quo. "The early settlement of the NKC is based on the interests of Armenia," said Hovhannisyan (*Ibid.*).

The government of Armenia believed that the NKC would be resolved through negotiation between the presidents at future meetings. They continually followed these meetings in order to obtain some final results. On November 15, Prime Minister Andranik Margaryan announced that if a meeting of the presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan would

take place soon, there would be chance for progress in the resolution of the NKC. According to him, the meeting would mean that the leaders of the two republics had found a common module or that there was some convergence of views (Panarmenian).

The analysis of 2007 reveals an increase in the pro-peace rhetoric of the Foreign Affairs Minister. However, the Armenian Foreign Minister parroted what was in the government interest in his statements and speeches that appeared in the media. He noted in his speech that Armenia continues to remain committed to negotiating solutions on the NK problem and was desirous of reaching a fair solution to the problem. But this solution must guarantee the safety of the people of NK and its right for self-determination (Panarmenian).

On the other hand, considering the safety of the people residing in the NK region, leader of the Armenian opposition party "Heritage," former Foreign Minister Raffi Hovannisian, presented to parliament a draft law "On the recognition of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic," which meant to interfere in the normal settlement of the NKC. To obtain the recognition of the Armenian opposition, it was necessary, in particular, to ensure the safety of the population of Karabakh and counter the military threat from Azerbaijan. But the President of Armenia, Robert Kocharian, was against this recognition until the talks between Yerevan and Baku on the settlement of the Karabakh conflict finally reaches a deadlock (Lenta News).

According to Newsarmenia during the meeting with US Vice President Dick Cheney and US Secretary of Defense Robert Gates on October 18, Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan declared that Armenia remained committed to a peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict through compromise to be achieved in the short term. Even though the Armenian government had declared its open position several times and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was a major foreign policy priority for 2008, the process of achieving a settlement was deadlocked.



It seems that during the pre-normalization process, Armenia intended to engage in a dialogue for the resolution of NK in a peaceful way before Yerevan officially began its ‘football diplomacy.’ It insisted on the inclusion of the Nagorno-Karabakh region in the settlement discussions under the pretext of granting the right to self-determination for the NK population as the third and main part of the solution to problem.

According to the laws of Azerbaijan, Karabakh was not a Republic; on the contrary, the region, as well as other surrounding lands, was viewed as being under Armenian occupation. Efforts would be made to deal with wrongdoing against Azerbaijan. The representative of the MFA of the Azerbaijan declared that any negotiations with the Armenian community in NK could only be carried out after Armenia had liberated the territory of Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani refugees had returned to their homes. Only then would Azerbaijan create all the conditions for the peaceful coexistence of the two communities in the Nagorno-Karabakh region (Panarmenian).

**Table 2. Azerbaijan's Negative and Positive Rhetoric**

<b>YEAR/FIGURE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE RHETORIC</b>	<b>POSITIVE RHETORIC</b>
<b>2006 April –December</b>		
President	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Minister of FA	<b>1</b>	<b>1</b>
Opposition	<b>1</b>	
Others	-	<b>1</b>
<b>2007 January-December</b>		

President	1	1
Minister of FA	2	1
Opposition	2	-
Others	1	1
<b>2008 January- August</b>		
President	1	1
Minister of FA	-	1
Opposition	3	-
Others	1	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>10</b>

The analysis shows that Azerbaijan political figures are more centric in their pro-war and pro-peace rhetoric. In October 2006, the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev, announced a campaign to counter the influence of the Armenian Diaspora, a major backer of ethnic-Armenian separatists in the disputed NK region. Aliyev said his oil-rich ex-Soviet republic was opening embassies and consulates in parts of the world where the Armenian Diaspora was especially influential. Aliyev said that Azerbaijan's new oil wealth gave it a chance to counterbalance ethnic-Armenians' influence abroad (*Hurriyet News*).

Although the speeches of both Aliyev and Mammadyarov become more acerbic regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, the analysis of the rhetoric of their statements does not show them to be completely pro-war. Thus, in November 2006, Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents met at the summit of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) leaders, reviving diplomacy on the long-running territorial dispute of Nagorno-Karabakh after

top-level talks collapsed before the same year. The Presidents and the foreign ministers of two countries aimed to explore ways to achieve progress on the NKC (*Ibid.*)

Neighboring Turkey closed its border gates more than a decade ago and severed diplomatic ties to protest the occupation of Nagorno-Karabakh by Armenian troops, bringing huge trade losses for the landlocked country. Armenia's economic hardships have grown recently due to a Russian transportation blockade on Georgia, the main route for Armenia to reach the outside world. Azerbaijan, on the other hand, sits on a significant part of the Caspian energy wealth and has been channeling money to boost its defense structure. Oil and gas money has brought a record high economic growth to Azerbaijan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has pledged to make his country's defense budget equal the entire budget of Armenia (*Ibid.*). On the other hand, the Aliyev administration, under domestic pressure to do more on the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute, is inclined towards engaging in diplomacy to achieve some progress since a military option would cost the country much more. After all, the country has only recently achieved political stability and to develop its economy and expand its national budget, it needs to achieve political stability in the region. (*Ibid.*)

Maintaining economic prosperity was not the only reason why the Azerbaijani government supported a peaceful settlement of the NK problem. It participated in negotiations for a settlement in order to preserve the welfare of its population and stability in country, and its status as the most powerful state in the South Caucasus.

Minister of Foreign Affairs Elmar Mammadyarov in his interview to the media in Norway declared that Azerbaijan's position on the settlement of the NKC had remained unchanged, and that Azerbaijan was willing to grant high-level autonomy to the Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. He also noted that Official Baku hopes for a peaceful settlement of the Armenian-Azerbaijani NKC. While the minister did not reject the possibility of solving the

problem militarily, he did say that a peaceful resolution of the Karabakh problem could be found (Day.az News).

President Ilham Aliyev expressed the same position during his visit to Brussels to attend the UN Foreign Affairs and Security meeting. He pointed out that the problem should be resolved within the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan. He said "This principle is reflected in the international legal norms. Apart from Armenia, all countries of the world and the international communities have recognized the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. We hope that the problem will be solved with the release of the occupied Azerbaijani lands, return of refugees to their homes, and the Azerbaijani border restored" (Ibid.). But Armenia does not recognize the territorial integrity and rejects this option in the negotiations.

Despite the poor progress of the negotiations, Azerbaijan displayed a tough determination to resolve the NK problem. However, while the use of pro-war rhetoric by Azerbaijan may have a detrimental impact on NKC resolution, the use of pro-peace rhetoric is not really an option, either, since it does little to contribute to the reaching a compromise.

#### **4.3 Nagorno-Karabakh resolution through the Lens of TANP - PERIOD II**

In this section, I analyze Period II. I focus on the Turkish-Armenian relations after the "football diplomacy" policy. The analysis forms the basis to answering the research question. The timeframe for this period is between September 2008, when Armenian President Sarkisian invited President Abdullah Gül to attend a match between the Armenian and Turkish football teams (which marked the start of so-called football diplomacy, when information about the active phase of negotiations between Turkey and Armenia on normalization process became a public knowledge) till August 2010 (some months after Sarkisian publically announced withdrawal from the TANP negotiations, leaving the process

in a deep freeze). In this section, I examine the public statements made by both government officials and member of the opposition in both Azerbaijan and Armenian. I investigate the influence TANP had on the NK resolution process.

#### **4.3.1 Period II: Post-2008 Turkish-Armenian Relations (September 2008-April 2010)**

In the aftermath of the Georgian-Russian war of August 2008, the Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan made a new proposal for a “Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Pact” (CSCP). The “Caucasus Stability and Cooperation Pact” aims to bring together Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia as well as Turkey and Russia in order to create a new regional security framework. One of the main objectives of the initiative is to help solve ethnic conflict through regional cooperation (German).

This new initiative was important for the solution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Therefore, Armenia has welcomed the initiative and declared its readiness to cooperate without any preconditions, but Armenia has underlined that the resolution of the NKC is possible only if Azerbaijan recognizes the right of self-determination of the NK people (Newsarmenia).

Nevertheless, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and former Defense Minister Samvel Babayan both declared that the Karabakh conflict should be resolved peacefully through negotiations and there was no other way to resolve the conflict but through conflict settlement, which is impossible without the participation of NK in the negotiation process: "Regardless of negotiations that take place between Armenia and Azerbaijan, direct participation of the Karabakh side in the negotiation process is important and we respect the position of the leadership of Nagorno-Karabakh. Without the participation of Karabakh in negotiations, the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is impossible" (Ibid.).

As mentioned before, for Turkey the reconciliation with Armenia has become part of its “trading state” foreign policy. Pre-2008 period analyses show that Armenia had also seemed to change its approach towards its historical enemy. This is because there was a new mood that saw normalization of relations with Turkey as inevitable. It is no longer a zero-sum game, but rather a win-win scenario for the Armenian side.

During the post-2008 period, after a year of intense diplomatic talks and active involvement of the international community, the two countries signed the above-mentioned agreements. The Armenia-Turkey Protocols call for the enhancement of trade, economic and cultural relations, especially within the framework of international organizations such as the UN, the Osce, the Council of Europe, the Euro-Atlantic Partnership Council and regional organizations such as BSEC. Furthermore, both parties have undertaken the commitment to “make the best possible use of existing transport, communications and energy infrastructure and networks” (German). The protocols shall be ratified by the parliaments of both countries. The borders would be opened “within two months after the entry into force of this Protocol” (Ibid.).

Almost all visits of Turkish authorities to Armenia since 2008 in the framework of the reconciliation process have been followed by visits to Azerbaijan, thus demonstrating the high level of interconnection between the Turkish-Armenian and NK conflict resolution issues. Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoğlu stated that Azerbaijani soil is as sacred for Turkey as its own and liberating this soil from occupation was one of their primary national concerns (*Hurriyet News*) At a joint press conference with the President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev, Turkey’s Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdoğan announced that the occupation of NK is a cause, and the closure of the border is an effect. Without the occupation ending, the gates would not be opened (Ibid.). Thus, he called upon Armenia to withdraw its military troops from the occupied territories. In his statement at the news conference during the meeting with

the US president Barak Obama in December 2009 President Erdoğan repeated once more that the NK question was of great importance in the context of Turkish-Armenian relations because the normalization process between Turkey and Armenia is very much related to these issues (*Hurriyet News*, 2 December 2009).

The Turkish government has also met with considerable opposition in Turkey to the rapprochement with Armenia. The protocols are opposed by many parliamentarians and especially by its main opposition parties, the Kemalist Republican People's Party (CHP) and the right-wing Nationalist Action Party (MHP).

However, the protocols were approved by the Armenian Constitutional Court on 12 January 2010. In Armenia, every international agreement must be examined first by the Constitutional Court and then passed on to parliament. The Court approved the documents, but made references to the preamble of the protocols underlying three main issues. (Kambeck). First, Armenia would continue its effort to reach worldwide recognition of the 1915 events as genocide. This reminded President Sargsyan that "The Republic of Armenia stands in support of the task of achieving international recognition of the 1915 Genocide in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia" as regulated by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian Declaration of Independence (Ibid.). Second, the ruling rejected any connection between the new agreement with Turkey and the NK issue. And lastly, it stated that the implementation of the protocols did not imply Armenia's official recognition of the existing Turkish-Armenian border established by the 1921 Treaty of Kars (Ibid.). By doing so, the Constitutional Court rejected one of the main premises of the protocols, e.g., "the mutual recognition of the existing border between the two countries as defined by relevant treaties of international law."

The Armenian President S. Sargsyan submitted the protocols to parliament on 15 February 2010. However, the deputies have made clear that they will not vote on them before

the Turkish Parliament’s ratification. Furthermore, they adopted an amendment to an existing law on interstate treaties, which makes possible the suspension of international agreements before they enter into force. The amendment, which has to be signed by the President, allows Yerevan to eventually refuse the ratification of the Armenia- Turkey protocols. Nevertheless, President Sargsyan has guaranteed the ratification in the Armenian parliament “if the Turkish side does it within a reasonable frame of time and without pre-conditions” (*Asbarez News*).

**Table 3. Armenia's Negative and Positive Rhetoric (Post-2008)**

<b>YEAR/FIGURE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE RHETORIC</b>	<b>POSITIVE RHETORIC</b>
<b>2008 August-December</b>		
President	-	<b>2</b>
Minister of FA	<b>4</b>	<b>1</b>
Opposition	<b>2</b>	-
Others	<b>1</b>	-
<b>2009 January-December</b>		
President	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
Minister of FA	1	2
Opposition	1	-
Others	4	-
<b>2010 January- August</b>		
President	2	-
Minister of FA	1	1



Opposition	2	-
Others	3	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>23</b>	<b>8</b>

Compared to pre-2008, during the post-2008 period the settlement process of the NK problem worsened. The NK issue had come close to a peaceful settlement at the Moscow meeting in 2008. Baku had declared that the negotiations would be based on the principle of territorial integrity of Azerbaijan and NK would never get independent status. The meeting was not without obstacles. However, Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov in his interview in Moscow told journalists that the highest status for NK could be elevated autonomy within Azerbaijan. His Armenian counterpart assumed that the case would be solved if Azerbaijan recognized the right of self-determination of the NK population, and would keep open land borders with Armenia in the region. Still, Azerbaijan does not appear to want to compromise and the Armenians do not intend to withdraw from the NK region (Musavat, November, 2008). While it seems as though Moscow's position was to be a guarantor of the agreement between Armenians and Azerbaijanis, in reality Russia was interested in maintaining the current "status quo" and playing the role of a mediator and avoiding the real key issues.

After the Moscow talks, Sarkisian displayed his readiness to sign the final document on the NK settlement to resolve the conflict. He also noted that both sides must sign the agreement. This would demonstrate the stages of peaceful resolution of the conflict. The resolution, which was based on the Madrid principles, called for the determination of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh by a referendum, after which both presidents would be ready to appeal to the people to sign a peace agreement (Ibid.).

Another point is that after the US, Turkey also joined this process as a key mediator. The Russian-Turkish diligence in this process was clear evidence of the clash of the geopolitical interests in the Caucasus. Ankara supported the agreement reached between Armenia and Azerbaijan in order to achieve Turkey's "developing" ambition of "zero problems on borders."

According to the Karabakh Declaration, "All stages and aspects of a peaceful resolution of the conflict must be accompanied by the international legal safeguards. Parties must be ready to help for improvement the stability and security conditions in the South Caucasus region, and ready to achieve a political solution of the NKC on the basis of the norms and principles of international law" (Musavat).

Unfortunately this meeting was last chance for the settlement of NKC by negotiations for that period.

The Turkish-Armenian rapprochement was widely perceived in Azerbaijan as a betrayal of the key principle upon which the partnership between Ankara and Baku had been based: no accords between Armenia and Turkey should be agreed upon until the resolution of NKC. Baku fears that with the opening of borders and the resulting end of Armenia's isolation, Azerbaijan will lose a crucial leverage to influence the talks on the future status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

After the signing of the Armenia-Turkey protocols, the Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan issued a press release declaring that Turkey's decision "directly contradicts the national interests of Azerbaijan and overshadows the spirit of brotherly relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey built on deep historical roots" (*Azer News*). Indeed, relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey have always been special because of language, ethnic and historical ties. Furthermore, Azerbaijan is one of Turkey's main trading partners in the gas and oil sectors and they share interests in pipeline routes such as the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and

Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline transporting Caspian energy resources from Azerbaijan to Turkey via Georgia. In general, Baku provides a bridge for Ankara to Central Asia and its Turkic peoples (Kambeck).

Furthermore, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev reacted harshly to Turkey-Armenia rapprochement, threatening to increase the price at which Azeri energy resources are sold to Turkey. The President declared that Azerbaijan has been selling its gas to Turkey at one-third of market prices under an agreement signed in 2002 between Azerbaijan and Turkey. Although, the agreement has expired and new negotiations have begun between the parties, Turkey has continued to pay the same price for gas imports from Azerbaijan due to the close relations between the two neighbors (*Azer News*).

Additionally, Baku warned Turkey as well as the West that it could decide to redirect the gas resources of the Caspian Sea towards Russia, and refuse to pump its gas into the future Nabucco pipeline, which is designed to transport second stage Caspian Sea via Georgia, Turkey and Balkans to Central Europe. Indeed four days after the ceremony in Zurich, Azerbaijan's State Oil Company and Russian Gazprom signed an agreement on Azerbaijani gas sales to Russia (*Welt*). Thus Baku made it clear that its oil and gas exports could also be used for projects other than the Turkish-Western ones.

Most of politicians believe that opening of borders between Turkey and Armenia would harm the settlement of the NK conflicts as well as spoil Azerbaijani -Turkish brotherly relations.

**Table 4. Azerbaijan's War and Peace Rhetoric (Post-2008)**

<b>YEAR/FIGURE</b>	<b>NEGATIVE RHETORIC</b>	<b>POSITIVE RHETORIC</b>

<b>2008 August–December</b>		
President	-	<b>1</b>
Minister of FA	-	<b>1</b>
Opposition	<b>1</b>	-
Others	<b>2</b>	
<b>2009 January-December</b>		
President	<b>2</b>	-
Minister of FA	1	1
Opposition	3	-
Others	4	-
<b>2010 January- August</b>		
President	1	-
Minister of FA	2	1
Opposition	1	-
Others	2	-
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>4</b>

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

In this chapter, I analyzed the influence of Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process on the Nagorno-Karabakh resolution issue by comparing two timeframes. The methodology I used was an analysis of the political rhetoric on the sides of the NK Conflict. The focus was on measuring pro-war “negative” versus pro-settlement “positive” elements in such rhetoric before and during the “football” diplomacy.

The data collected for my research consisted of statements on the NKC situation and its prospects for resolution made by both political leadership and influential public voices of both countries. The samples I used are statements by presidents, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, the Opposition and others. All of the data, which I collected for both sides, was found through an online search for the years making up the two periods. Overall, I took 80 statements and articles from Armenian sources, 72 of which were in Russian and eight in English language. I took 50 statements and articles from Azerbaijani online sources, 29 of which were in Russian and 21 in Azerbaijani. Because there is more discussion of the issue by Armenia than Azerbaijan online, the number of Armenian sources was higher.

To find sources of rhetorical content, I looked for statements and articles from both sides by using “Google” search of keywords: “NK resolution, Serj Srakisyan statement on NK resolution, Ilham Aliyev statement on NK resolution, Azerbaijani opposition on NK resolution, Armenian opposition on NK resolution, Elmar Mammadyarov statement on NK resolution, Edward Nalbandyan statement on NK resolution, Turkish-Armenian normalization and NK resolution.” I chose all of the articles using Google Search according to the keywords.

My aim when using statements was to identify a number of specific terms in the articles which express positive or negative rhetoric. I identified key words as “pro-war” or “pro-settlement” by looking at the context in which they were found - peaceful or aggressive. Only after this I could identify if the terms fell under positive or negative rhetoric. I also used both “positive” and “negative rhetoric” in a single speech. If both positive and negative rhetoric occurred in the same speech, I counted them based on evaluation of overall context of the usage. For example: if rhetoric was of conflict resolution followed by the key word “impossible,” which in the context implied the worsening of prospects for peaceful resolution, I counted it as “negative rhetoric,” and vice-verse, if the same key word occurred within the prospect of peaceful resolution, I counted it as “positive rhetoric.”

I manually counted to get the final outcome for both sides. I used the following rhetoric for each period: (see Table 5)

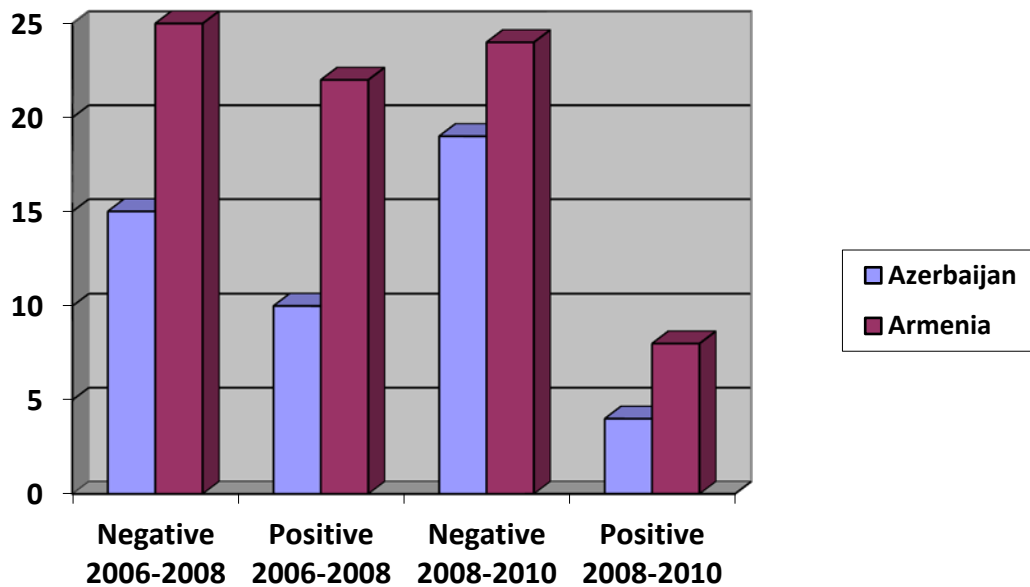
**Table 5. Key words- Rhetoric**

<b>Positive rhetoric</b>	<b>Negative rhetoric</b>
Improvement bilateral relation	Occupation
Regional development	Impossible
Continue negotiations	Failure of negotiations
Peace way	Self-determinations
Compromise	War
Good will	Enemy
Benefits	Participation of “Nagorno Karabakh Republic”
	Secession

Graphic 1 contains the results of Tables 1, 2, 3 and 4, where I put the “negative” and “positive” rhetoric for periods of pro-settlement (2006-2008) and post-settlement (2008-2010). For the first period (2006-2008), the number of cases characterized as negative rhetoric on the Azerbaijan side (in graphic first blue line) was 15 while the number of cases characterized as positive rhetoric was 10 (in graphic second blue line). The number of negative rhetorical statements made by Armenia (in graphic first purple line) was 25 and the number of positive rhetorical statements was 22 (in graphic second purple line) (See Graphic1.) During the second period 2008-2010 the number of negative rhetorical statements made by the Azerbaijan side (in graphic, third blue line) increased to 19 while the number of positive rhetorical statements decreased to the 4 (in graphic, fourth blue line). The number of

negative rhetorical statements made by Armenia (in graphic third purple line) was 23 and the number of positive rhetorical statements decreased to 8 (in graphic, fourth purple line) (See Graphic1.)

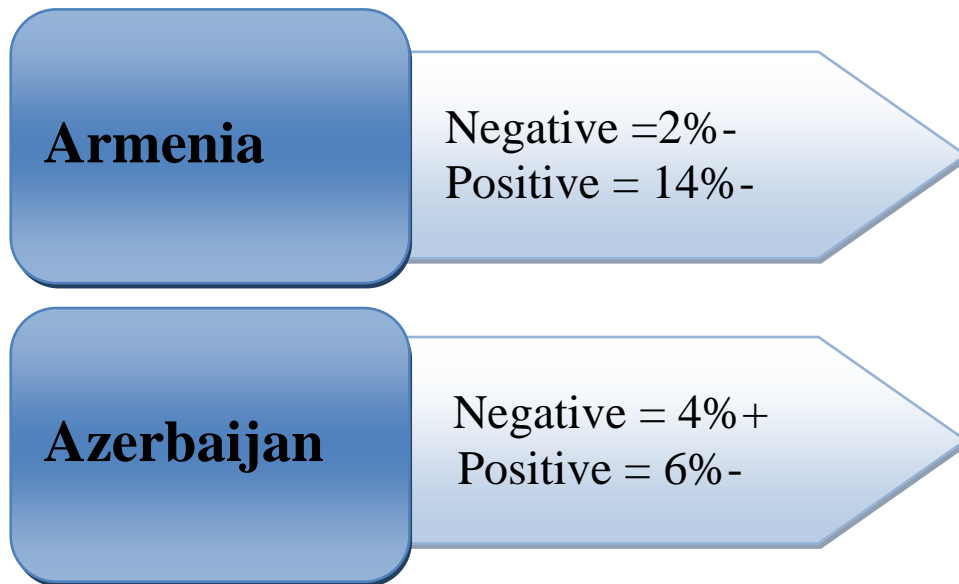
**Graphic 1. Comparisons**



In first period, the difference between Azerbaijani negative and positive rhetoric is 6 while the difference between Armenian negative and positive rhetoric is 3. This shows that the situation tends to be more negative than positive (settlement-oriented).

Nevertheless, the number of rhetorical cases between Period I and Period II for both sides changed as well. In comparing both periods, negative rhetoric by Azerbaijan side increased 4% percent and pro-settlement rhetoric decreased 6% compared to Period I. Despite Armenian negative rhetoric having decreased 2%, it does not matter much since positive rhetoric decreased 14% (see Graphic 2). That means that during the Turkish-Armenian Normalization process, the settlement question of Nagorno-Karabakh only got worse.

**Graphic 2. Outcome**



This shows that realistic type strategy and security concerns continue to prevail over the goods promised by the liberal type of aspirations in a security-based conflict situation. As of 2014 neither Armenia nor Turkey was willing to compromise their stand and interest on NK settlement for the sake of bilateral normalization.



## CONCLUSION

Turkey has not wavered from its position, as can be seen in a statement made by Prime Minister Erdogan: “We will not sign a final deal with Armenia unless there is agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia on Nagorno-Karabakh” (*Asbarez News*).

While raising hopes, the Turkish-Armenian normalization process after the liberal "zero problems on borders" in 2008 failed to bring a breakthrough in the Karabakh peace process. With neither the protocols nor the Basic Principles offering a promising way forward along separate tracks, it is worthwhile to consider how the two processes might be constructively linked. At the same time, it is important to keep in mind that neither track is ripe for a “grand” solution.

The so-called “football diplomacy,” which was seen as the first step in normalization of TANP, initially signaled the success the liberal approach, with “soft power” issues prevailing over the “realistic life vision.” The triumph of the “soft power” dimensions was confirmed by visits by two presidents on humanitarian grounds to age-old nemesis countries (humanitarian aspects of the liberal approach) and an emphasis on economic benefits from border opening (economic – soft power - elements of the liberal approach) by the active role of international sponsors who cooperated on bringing Ankara and Yerevan to Zurich. At the same time, Turkey’s strategic alliance with Azerbaijan, the only one it has in the region, has remained critical. Turkey’s commitment to this alliance is the “realpolitik” component of the dynamics being played out in the area. Alliance with a strong Azerbaijan that pursues independent policies is important for Turkey for several reasons. Geostrategically, Azerbaijan is the corridor to the Central Asian Turkic republics, which also make up a strategic area for Turkish foreign interests. Economically, Azerbaijan is an important partner, providing energy security for Turkey as well as enhancing Turkey’s image with the EU as the transporter of

Caspian energy resources to European markets. Geopolitically, the independent foreign policy of Azerbaijan and of Georgia (at the time concerned in this research) are important elements in curbing Russian ambition at the South frontiers of NATO to which Turkey is pivotal stakeholder.

A strong and independent Azerbaijan in turn means a 'just' settlement of the NKC, which requires pressure on Armenia to the point where it either considers settlement to be more beneficial than continuing status quo or where it weakens to the point where it allows Baku to militarily take over the lands currently occupied by Armenia. Both scenarios require continuation of pressure on Armenia as an occupying party thus making 'full normalization' meaningless from a point of Turkic strategic interest.

On the other hand, an economic benefit which has been promised by the TANP has not changed Yerevan foreign policy calculations either. Since the government of Sarkissian represents the so-called 'hawkish line' (contrary to the liberalist approach taken by former Presidents Ter Petrossian, who was overthrown by the forces where Sarkisyan has played a significant role) in the Armenian approach to the resolution of NKC, Armenia's policy has easily dismissed calculations of economic benefits for the sake of purely strategic ones (be it security concerns of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians or geostrategic) or ideological calculations of 'nation building through expansion.' However, neither the opinion of the elite in the NK resolution nor the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement plays an important role in policy formation on this issue.

The historical background of these neighbors demonstrates the core of the conflicts and its chronic failure to reach consensus. However, the expulsion of Armenians from Ottoman territory, the conflicting territorial claims of Azerbaijan and Armenia and the occupation of 20% of Azerbaijan territory by Armenians with support of Russian troops led Armenia to subjugate itself to his fraternal ally Russia. But another factor here is Russia's

efforts to dominate the region and its refusal to give another country the opportunity to get in its way. It is important to note that the movement for independence of the states within the Soviet Union continued in the early 1990s, and in all three conflicts, South Ossetian, Abkhazian and Nagorno-Karabakh, ceasefire was established with the direct participation of Russia, which means the problem will not be resolved without intervention by Russia. Hence, the main factor in obtaining resolution of the NKC is Russia. Nevertheless, Russia is also indirectly responsible for the Turkish-Armenian rapprochement as Russian-Armenian relations have historical roots and Armenia would not go forward in this issue without the support of Russia (Armtoday). The influence of Russia on Armenia began while Armenians lived under the Ottomans; Russia promised them support and assistance in building their own state, which was realist Russia's plan in the Caucasus. Bringing "autonomy" status to the three regions paved the way to the conflicts and boundary disputes between neighbors in the region. In fact, Russia has taken control over the region and has limited free trade and economic growth for those countries. Therefore, realism is the dominant paradigm in Russia and Russia plays an important role in the Turkish-Armenia normalization relations. Even if this rapprochement were to have chance in a liberal milieu, this normalization would not have a positive impact on the NK conflict resolution; it would spoil the historical diplomatic relations between Azerbaijan and Turkey. Moreover, opening of the borders and a direct corridor to Europe from Turkey, and lifting the blockade of Armenia would be the best opportunity for Armenia to increase its economic growth, free trade, open markets via the liberal approach of its neighbors. But the Nagorno-Karabakh settlement process will remain deadlocked.

As my research using the database demonstrates, there have been repeated public statements expressing desire to bring about a resolution of the conflict. Thus during (and particularly at the late stage) of TANP, aggressive rhetoric on both sides of NKC increased by

2-4% compared to the pre-TANP phase. This increase was even more visible if the statements made by political parties (in particular, the opposition), experts, and influential public movements are taken into consideration. It made it more difficult for leaders on both sides to utilize the momentum to come to mutually acceptable terms.

The analysis above offers a comparative evaluation of the Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process in two periods; both before and after "football diplomacy." The response to my research question "How did the liberal stance of Turkish foreign policy vis-à-vis the issue of Turkish-Armenian bilateral relations (so-called TANP) influence the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict?" shows that any such approaches would encounter many challenges, as have the approaches before them, and success for the resolution of NKC problem is not guaranteed. At the same time, all formal conflict-resolution processes require substantial and courageous on-the ground efforts to prepare populations for peace that, to varying degrees, the Turkish, Armenian, and Azerbaijani governments have not been willing to make. Thus, the future of the NKC and Turkish-Armenian relations requires alternative solutions from all sides. There is no doubt that any positive development in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict will significantly contribute to the improvement of Turkey-Armenia relations. Yet, Karabakh is not the sole dispute between the two countries. The definite recognition of the existing border between the two countries and studying the 1915 events in the Sub-Commission on the Historical Dimension are indispensable parts of solution.

In conclusion, the findings of the research show that my hypothesis in response to my research question is right. TANP's liberal approach did not increase the chance for peace in the Caucasus region; on the contrary, it had the opposite effect on the prospects of peace by escalating the ongoing conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

The Turkey-Armenia Normalization Process has currently reached a deadlock due to structural issues such as political obstacles and geopolitical constellation in the South Caucasus. Now it is very difficult to revive the Turkish-Armenian Normalization Process. However, such developments seem unlikely in the near future as both sides are creating big obstacles; Armenia by pressing for the recognition of the genocide and reiterating its territorial claims; Turkey by linking the bilateral rapprochement to the NK issue. As Turkish President Erdoğan states, "if you want to resolve NK conflict, you should also resolve the Turkish-Armenian issue" (*Azeri News*).

In sum, Turkey's foreign policy has taken a liberal twist that is based on the notion of "zero problems on the borders." Turkey wants to live in a region of welfare and security. Nye's claims notwithstanding, the analyses show that liberal paradigm cannot explain the consequences of "football diplomacy" and in this case, the soft-power instrument does not help solve hard-power issues.

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