De-escalation in Nagorno-Karabakh

I- Background

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a part of the post-Soviet conflicts. Situated in today's Azerbaijan, it is a territorial and ethnic conflict which sprouted in the early 20th century. Two wars have been fought over this region, the first one from 1988 to 1994 and the second one in 2020.

In 1918, the Armenians living in the area were known as the Karabakh council (although they weren't recognized as an autonomous state), which was forced to recognize the authority of Azerbaijan only a year later. In 1920, the governor of the Karabakh council led a rebellion against the Azerbaijani government which resulted with the Armenian-Azerbaijani war. A year later, the Nagorno-Karabakh area was under Soviet rule known as the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO).

In 1964, Armenia sent a letter to the USSR requesting that the NKAO transfers from Soviet Azerbaijan to Armenia. The USSR declined, resulting in even bigger tensions between the two countries.

The conflict escalated in 1987 when both sides started using violence (a consequence of growing nationalism on both sides, even racism towards each other). Starting with Azerbaijanis being driven out of Armenia (from the estimated 200,000 living in Armenia in the 1980s to 84,000 in 1989) and attacks on Armenians who lived in Nagorno-Karabakh (even though they made up 79% of its population).

In 1988, as tensions started to grow because of the upcoming dissolution of the USSR, both sides started accusing each other of pogroms and attacks. When Azerbaijan declared its separation from the USSR, the Armenian population living in the NKAO voted and proceeded to create the unrecognized Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh. In 1992, both countries were mobilized as a full-scale war started. In May 1994, a ceasefire was signed. However, that was not the end of the fighting. Throughout the years, many border clashes occurred. In September 2020, both Armenia and Azerbaijan declared martial law and mobilisation. After 44 days of fighting, in November of that same year a ceasefire was signed, once again brokered by Russia. Armenia agreed to give back all occupied territory to Azerbaijan.

Clashes continue to happen to this day, however, only 3 Armenian casualties have been reported.

The conflict is one of the most long-standing ones in post-Soviet regions. It is particularly thanks to the involvement of other countries such as Russia, Turkey, Iran, or Albania, as most of these countries don't actually have an official stand on the conflict and import weapons to both sides (mostly Turkey or Russia).

II-   UN involvement

Regarding this conflict, only four resolutions have passed and been adopted, all of them in 1993. However, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is a recurring topic in not only the UN Security Council.

All four of these resolutions „Call for the cessation of the hostilities" and demand the withdrawal of the occupying forces from territories around the Nagorno-karabakh region.

III-   Questions to take into consideration
- What is my country's view and stand towards the conflict?
- How does the conflict affect economic stability of both countries? Does it affect my country's economy as well?
- Were/are there any similar conflicts? Has a deescalation taken place? If yes, how did it/does it work?

Sources:

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