

DESTABILIZING THE CAUCASUS: AZERBAIJAN'S ESCALATING THREATS AND ATTACKS

Jun 22, 2007	<i>AFP</i> reports that Azerbaijan has increased its military budget by a factor of 8 in the past four years.
Nov 27, 2007	<i>AP</i> reports that the Azeri Defense Minister vows, "As long as Azerbaijani territory is occupied by Armenia, the chance of war is close to 100 percent. " The Armenian Defense Minister Mikhail Arutyunian reiterated, however, that he sees no alternative to a peaceful settlement.
Jan 4, 2008	<i>RFE/RL</i> reports that Aliyev has told Armenians in Karabakh to accept Azeri rule or get out. Aliyev warns, "We are reinforcing our army because we must be ready to free our lands . . . at any moment and by any means."
Jan 17, 2008	President Aliyev proclaims that capital of Armenia is actually Azerbaijani territory and that Armenians living there are "guests." Aliyev also declares that the war with Armenia was not over, but that "it was just the first stage of the war," which was completed. www.regnum.ru/english/943595.html
Mar 3, 2008	<i>Reuters</i> reports that Azerbaijan's President Aliyev has said that it is ready to take Nagorno Karabakh by force and is buying the military equipment to do so.
*Mar 4, 2008	Azerbaijan attacks Karabakh in worst ceasefire violation in over a decade. Nagorno Karabakh forces immediately call OSCE peacekeepers to report the violation. At least 8 soldiers are killed.
Mar 5, 2008	Nagorno Karabakh urges OSCE mediators to immediately investigate the attacks of the night before. Azerbaijan will not guarantee the mediators' safety. As a result, the OSCE is prevented from beginning an investigation.
Mar 6, 2008	Azerbaijan violates the ceasefire for a second time in a week.
Jun 26, 2008	<i>Reuters</i> reports that Azerbaijan staged its first military parade in 16 years in a show of strength aimed at Armenia and that the military budget has increased 10 fold in the past five years. Azerbaijan's defense budget of \$2 billion now surpasses Armenia's entire budget.
Aug 9, 2008	Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister declares that like the Georgians' recent move against South Ossetia, Azerbaijan has the right to militarily impose its rule over Nagorno Karabakh and reserves the right to resolve the conflict militarily , setting the stage to further destabilize the volatile region. http://www.azernews.az/site/shownews.php?news_id=5942
Oct 14, 2008	<i>RFE/RL</i> reports that Azerbaijan's President Aliyev vowed a policy of "total offensive" against neighboring Armenia.

Nov 6, 2008	<p>During a visit from Turkey's Commander of the Armed Forces General Staff, Azerbaijan's Defense Minister threatened, "If the peace talks will not give results, Azerbaijan will use of all the possible ways to restore its territorial integrity" contradicting a declaration signed between Armenia and Azerbaijan only days before vowing to seek a political solution to the conflict.</p> <p>http://news.trendaz.com/index.shtml?show=news&newsid=1339074&lang=EN</p>
Nov 16, 2008	<p>Azerbaijan violates ceasefire and attacks Karabakh forces near Fizuli. Karabakh forces transfer Azeri soldier, who was killed after crossing the line of contact, to the International Committee of the Red Cross.</p> <p>http://www.icrc.org/Web/Eng/siteeng0.nsf/html/azerbaijan-news-191108</p>
Nov 27, 2008	<p>RFE/RL reports that Azeri President Aliyev refuses to exclude attacking Karabakh militarily, despite signing a declaration less than a month earlier to seek a political solution. Aliyev declares, "There is not a single commitment [in the declaration] that would keep Azerbaijan from resorting to a military option."</p>
June 25, 2009	<p>Aliyev threatens, "We live in a state of war, thus our primary goal is and should be the strengthening of our army. . . . With the war still going on and only its first stage over, we are continuing our efforts to be ready to free our motherland from the enemy by military means at any time."</p> <p>http://www.asbarez.com/2009/06/25/azeri-president-says-nation-must-prepare-for-war/ and http://www.turkishweekly.net/news/82404/ilham-aliyev-declared-azerbaijan-is-ready-to-go-to-war-with-armenia-.html</p>
July 14, 2009	<p>Just four days after Presidents Obama, Sarkozy, and Medvedev announced support for certain Basic Principles to resolve the conflict, including the non-use of force, President Aliyev threatened, "Unfortunately, I cannot totally rule out a military solution, as we have the total and based on international laws right to restore our territorial integrity"</p> <p>http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=105053</p>
November 23, 2009	<p>RFE reports yet another Aliyev threat: "Azerbaijan is spending billions on buying new weapons, hardware, strengthening its position on the line of contact We have the full right to liberate our land by military means."</p>
December 8, 2009	<p>Azeri Defense Minister Safar Abiyev tells U.S. Air Force Commander in Europe and Eurasia Gen. Roger Brady that Azerbaijan will use alternative methods at solving the Karabakh conflict, since Azerbaijan is unhappy with the Minsk Group peace process. http://en.trend.az/news/karabakh/1595850.html and http://www.today.az/news/politics/58025.html</p>
February 25, 2010	<p>Azeri Defense Minister Safar Abiyev states that Azeri military action is becoming "more imminent" and "inevitable."</p> <p>http://www.upi.com/Top_News/International/2010/02/25/Azerbaijan-threatens-end-to-cease-fire/UPI-25821267105427/</p>

<p>April 23, 2010</p>	<p>On the eve of the 95th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Aliyev warned Armenia against normalizing relations with Turkey, insisting that the Karabakh conflict must be resolved first, and alluded to a possible attack on Armenia itself. Azeri Defense Minister Safar Abiyev informed Aliyev that "The Azerbaijan army has all the capabilities to hit any target on the territory of Armenia if necessary." http://www.nytimes.com/reuters/2010/04/23/world/international-uk-armenia-turkey-azerbaijan.html</p>
<p>April 25, 2010</p>	<p>"The war is not over. Only the first stage of the war is over. We have to act in a way so we can free our lands any time by force," Aliyev said in a meeting attended by the country's top military officials on April 23, state-owned news agency Azartac reported. BBC Monitoring Trans Caucasus Unit</p>
<p>June 7, 2010</p>	<p>U.S. Defense Secretary Gates meets with President Aliyev in Azerbaijan to ease tensions with Azerbaijani leaders, who threatened to reconsider their relations with the United States, because of its support for normalizing relations between Armenia and Turkey. Gates delivers letter from President Obama, which warns against use of force to resolve the Nagorno Karabakh conflict.</p> <p>Gates reports discussing ways to expand U.S.-Azeri military-to-military relations, including exercises and intelligence sharing. http://www.reuters.com/article/idUSTRE6550XE20100607</p>
<p>June 18, 2010</p>	<p>Within hours of a meeting between the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to negotiate a peace settlement, Azerbaijan attacks the Nagorno Karabakh Republic in one of the worst ceasefires, since March 2008, when Azerbaijan also attacked Karabakh a day after Reuters reported that it was preparing to attack.</p> <p>AFP reports that the Azeri parliament approved a 30% increase in defense spending, which has nearly doubled in the past two years. http://www.google.com/hostednews/afp/article/ALeqM5gd6DFMDPwHhKbIhkDXiAf0rz1GMg</p>

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