Research Article

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The Defence Needs of Azerbaijani Armed Forces for Peace, Security, and Stability

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Abstract: Azerbaijan is a peace-loving country and a cooperative member of the United Nations Organization. Being a sovereign member of the international community, it has all the rights and privileges entitled to a state. However, the claims of neighbouring Armenia driven by irredentism and revanchism over the contested region of Nagorno Karabakh have led to numerous conflicts between the two. Having the role of ensuring Azerbaijan's political integrity and sovereign status, the role of its armed forces is demanding yet challenging. This article is geared towards analysing the operational capabilities of Azerbaijani Armed Forces with a special focus on equipment, doctrine, and command and control platforms. It also assesses and prescribes the necessary and immediate needs to deter the threats and to thwart any military conflict. It theorises the potential of Azerbaijan-Pakistan defence relations. Finally, it aspires to take a structural approach in explaining the state behaviour and the relevance of security in contemporary times.

Keywords: Azerbaijan, Armenia, Nagorno Karabakh, Armed Forces, Caspian Sea, Peace and Security

1 Introduction

The military force of a state not only ensures security, but it guarantees a rapid yet credible response in case of an armed conflict. The size, structure, organization and equipment along with training play a vital role in such endeavours. Apart from these pivotal constituent elements, the doctrine by the virtue of which an armed force guides its actions serves as the basic framework to achieve policy objectives. Armed forces across the globe formulate, devise and revise their warfighting instruments to keep up with the ever-evolving nature of war and warfare. Undoubtedly, the history of mankind has been overshadowed by war and it is as old as man itself. The unending and perpetual nature of war has always inspired analysts and strategists to study and learn the doctrines under which the wars were actually fought. This inherent inquisitiveness in human nature leads to better understanding of war and warfare and further prevents military misfortunes.

Historically, one can take the example of the unprecedented German victory in May 1940, over France. The French were better armed; had superior equipment; possessed considerable firepower and had overwhelming numbers in relation to Germans². However, their German counterparts were able to

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¹ Gwynne Dyer, *War* (New York: Crown Publishers, 1985), xi.

² William L. Shirer, *The Rise and Fall of the Third Reich: A History of Nazi Germany* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster Paperbacks, 1990), 710–25.

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catastrophically defeat them along with the British Expeditionary Forces (BEF), the Netherlands, Belgium, and Luxembourg. Apart from the size, structure, organization, and equipment along with training; the unparalleled German conquest was the result of nothing but a better doctrine i.e. Blitzkrieg³. Likewise, the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) devised the doctrine of 'Massive Retaliation' to deter and strike back in case of a Soviet invasion of Europe⁴. The doctrine explicitly articulated that the NATO Military Forces will not respond with conventional means but will rely on nuclear weapons to destroy the Soviet Union⁵. It can be argued that the doctrine of 'Massive Retaliation' posed a credible threat towards Soviet Union and prevented Europe from dealing with any Soviet Red Army's misadventure.

In modern times, Azerbaijan is among those struggling nation-states in the world which right from its inception and independence has been facing a belligerent and antagonistic neighbour i.e. Armenia. This antagonism has caused Azerbaijan to diverge a considerable amount of budget to fulfil the defence needs of its armed forces, consequently, considerably compromising the industrial development and overall development of Azerbaijan. The nature of the boundary between Azerbaijan and Armenia further exacerbates the border management and makes it a little more difficult to monitor infiltrations and respond to cross-border skirmishes.

The bone of contention between Azerbaijan and Armenia remains the naturally beautiful and rich valley of Nagorno Karabakh. The irredentist claims of Armenia have been continuously fuelling the fire and its politico-military adventurism is resulting in conventional military imbalance. The revanchist ideology of Armenia has resulted in military engagements and numerous border skirmishes. Similarly, Armenia is steadily but surely arming its armed forces with latest equipment and deadly weaponry – ostensibly, against Azerbaijani Armed Forces. This ongoing acquisition of military hardware by Armenia has caused severe negative ramifications on the strategic stability of the Caucasus region.

Interestingly yet dangerously, the arming of Armenian Armed Forces and its increased offensive and defensive operational capabilities have caused a security dilemma in the region – especially for Azerbaijan. Accordingly, it puts enormous pressure on Azerbaijan to modernize its armed forces with advanced command and control platforms, the latest equipment and an adaptable yet flexible doctrine to respond to future threats while securing its political integrity and geographical boundaries.

2 Force Structure of Azerbaijani Military Forces

Azerbaijan maintains a standing armed force of 95,000 personnel. Of the armed force, 8,000 serve in the unified force of air power and air defence; and 2,000 in the navy; the remaining 85,000 personnel belong to the ground forces. Apart from that, 2,500 enlisted men and women are part of the National Guard (a constituent element of the ground forces). The Ministry of the Interior has 12,000 people at its disposal; with 5,000 armed personnel dedicated for the purpose of border security. The 95,000 personnel combined armed forces work and operate with an overt military doctrine⁶.

The Azerbaijani Ground Forces, which constitute the main thrust in the country's defensive or offensive operations, have 85,000 personnel at their disposal. The Ground Forces comprise of five army corps: The 1st, 2nd and 3rd Army Corps are particularly focused on Nagorno Karabakh. Some regiments of the 2nd Army Corps are deployed on the Azerbaijan-Iran international border. The 4th Army Corps are responsible for the defence of the capital – Baku. The 5th Corps is deployed in the strategically important region of Nakhichevan⁷. The Azerbaijani Army has a relatively small force structure in relation to modern armies primarily due to its geography and budget constraints. However, I argue that the geopolitics of the region and Armenia's unending antagonism towards its neighbour, the force structure demands immediate expansion.

3 Will Fowler, *Blitzkrieg France, Holland and Belgium 1940-1941*, vol. 2 (Hersham, Surrey: Ian Allan Publishing, 2002), 80–87.

4 Samuel F. Wells, Jr., 'The Origins of Massive Retaliation', *Political Science Quarterly* 96, no. 1 (Spring 1981): 33.

5 Dyer, *War*, 181.

6 C.W. Blandy, *Azerbaijan: Is War Over Nagornyy Karabakh a Realistic Option?*, Caucasus Series 08/17 (Shrivenham, England: Defence Academy of the United Kingdom, 2008), 6.

7 Blandy, *Azerbaijan: Is War Over Nagornyy Karabakh a Realistic Option?*

According to *Army Recognition*, an online think tank, the Azerbaijani Ground Forces are equipped with 94 T-90 main battle tanks (MBTs), 120 T-72 MBTs and 100 T-55 MBTs⁸. Of these tanks, the T-90 is one of the most advanced MBTs in the Azerbaijan's arsenal. It has the capability to fire anti-tank guided missiles (ATGM) from its main cannon, thus increasing the firepower and lethality. The Ground Forces also have various armoured personnel carriers (APCs) mostly of Russian origin including BTRs and BMPs, fundamentally for infantry fighting roles. The Turkish-built Otokar Cobra is also in inventory which is an APC with a mounted ATGM.

The Azerbaijani Air Force and Air Defence Forces are mainly equipped with Russian origin equipment. The Air Force is armed with almost 17 MiG-29 Fulcrum multi-role fighters. It also has 26 MiG-25 Foxbat and 4 MiG-21 Fishbed for interception roles. For ground operations to provide the Ground Forces with close-air support it has 12 Su-25 Frogfoot, 5 Su-24 Fencer and 4 Su-17 Fitter aircrafts. It also has gunship helicopters such as 27 Mi-24 Hind and 4 Mi-35 Hind-E to support Ground Forces⁹. However, recently it was announced officially to acquire Italian-built Leonardo M-346 Master trainer aircraft which is an advanced trainer and can also carry dumb and smart munitions¹⁰.

The Azerbaijani Navy has a unique geographical area of responsibility. Basically, it has the role of guarding and patrolling the world's largest inland water body i.e. the Caspian Sea along with Azerbaijani islands. The naval force possesses a total of 14 warships and several supporting vessels. It also possesses 4 midget submarines to operate under sea i.e. the Caspian Sea.

3 Necessary up-gradation of Azerbaijani Armed Forces

The Azerbaijani Armed Forces need a facelift in their arsenal so that they can be in a position to devise a highly mobile doctrine. Russian T-90 MBT is a reliable and robust tank with day and night capabilities. The number of T-90s is to be increased and is to be coupled with BTR-80 to support the role of mechanized infantry. This combination is supposed to be flanked by low-level air defence and self-propelled artillery. In this way the entire formation can work and operate independently. To further enhance the operational capability of this brigade or division-sized battle group, gunship helicopters may provide them with better fire support. The acquisition of a Turkish T-129 gunship is an appropriate option, as, Azerbaijan maintains cordial relations with Turkey. Moreover, acquiring the spare parts and necessary technical assistance would also be easy.

In the era of 5th Generation Warfare or non-kinetic warfare, the importance of electronic, cyber and information warfare cannot be denied¹¹. Modern militaries are striving hard to get the best possible picture of the battlefield to enable commanders to have complete knowledge and situational awareness. This knowledge leads to better understanding and reduces the time taken for decision-making. The Azerbaijani Armed Forces need Airborne Early Warning and Control Systems (AWACS) to help them in the better understanding of the battlefield environment. The commanders would get a better picture and the armed forces would be able to guide their potential in the required direction. According to a report by *News.Az*, Azerbaijan has the second highest military budget in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) with Russia having the largest. Currently, Azerbaijan is spending almost 8.9 percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) on defence¹². The high defence budget can only profit Azerbaijani Military if it is spent in those areas which increase the synergy among the forces.

In terms of modernization, the Azerbaijani Navy has been severely neglected. The Caspian Sea can serve as a fire base for the Azerbaijani Armed Forces and can provide unprecedented fire support in case of

⁸ Ibid.; 'Azerbaijan Land Forces Military Equipment and Vehicles', 21 June 2017, http://www.armyrecognition.com/azerbaijan_azerbaijani_army_land_ground_forces_uk/azerbaijan_azerbaijani_army_land_ground_armed_defense_forces_military_equipment_armored_vehicle_inte.html.

⁹ 'Azerbaijani Air Force', *Xair Forces*, 23 June 2017, <http://xairforces.net/airforces.asp?id=61#WVZsBbZRxcu>.

¹⁰ Gareth Jennings, 'Azerbaijan to Buy M-346 Master Jet', *Jane's*, 23 February 2020, <https://www.janes.com/article/94472/azerbaijan-to-buy-m-346-master-jet>.

¹¹ Muhammad Ali Baig, 'An Analysis of North Korean Cyber Warfare Capabilities and Impact on USFK and USINDOPACOM', *Journal of Cyber Security Technology* 3, no. 4 (2019): 219–48.

¹² 'Azerbaijan Has Second Highest Military Expenditure in CIS', 23 June 2017, <http://news.az/articles/politics/31785>.

an armed conflict. For instance, in October and November 2015¹³, Russia destroyed targets inside Syria by launching *Kalibr* cruise missiles from its warships in the Caspian Sea¹⁴. The water body has served Russia with a unique platform to conduct long-range strikes¹⁵. Furthermore, the Caspian Sea has the potential to be utilized as a launching pad by violent actors other than state (AOTSS) financed and recruited by Armenia to conduct terrorist and sabotage operations inside Azerbaijan. To prevent this, the navy must be armed with advanced patrol boats capable of conducting littoral warfare. Also, missile boats armed with cruise missiles can be acquired and deployed in the Caspian Sea to strengthen the firepower of the overall armed force. This offshore firepower is somehow reminiscent of second-strike capability in a nuclear war scenario; nevertheless, apart from its philosophical essence, it is likely to deter the enemy.

4 Command and Control with De-Centralized Command System

Advanced Command and Control platforms have revolutionized the efficiency, efficacy and output of armed forces around the globe. The inclusion and incorporation of modern technologies and concepts have supplemented the war fighting ability of the war fighters. For instance, Network Centric Warfare (NCW) has successfully integrated different branches of military forces on the battlefield and with this, the capabilities of forces have increased manifold¹⁶. The modern technology has also achieved a considerable amount of operations security (OPSEC) for the forces. It is conceivable that as the defending or invading forces achieve a significant level of OPSEC, the results of the battlefield could change dramatically. Azerbaijan must equip its armed forces with C4ISTAR (Command, Control Communications, Computers, Intelligence, Surveillance, Target Acquisition and Reconnaissance) standard command and control platform¹⁷, so that the commanders and the command may establish a strong and credible relation with one underlying objective to achieve synergy among the attacking forces.

5 Command's Intent or Commander's

Modern armed forces are striving to assimilate and combine command and control with a de-centralized command system so that operational level commanders can comfortably seize the initiative and feel free in conducting operations on the battlefield. Originally this idea was conceived by German General Heinz Guderian¹⁸. Similarly, Azerbaijani Armed Forces need such a manoeuvrable, flexible, and mobile military doctrine that can enhance their mobility and lethality while projecting a credible conventional response to the enemies of Azerbaijan.

There remains a debate over whether the command would dominate, or the commander's intent prevail while employing a de-centralized command system. However, a de-centralized command system enables a commander to fulfil the command's vision in an independent and more flexible manner. It results in an enhanced output while enabling the commander to act efficiently and more responsibly.

¹³ Patrick J. Lyons, 'Russia's Kalibr Cruise Missiles, a New Weapon in Syria Conflict', *The New York Times*, 8 October 2015, <https://www.nytimes.com/2015/10/09/world/middleeast/russias-kalibr-cruise-missiles-a-new-weapon-in-syria-conflict.html>.

¹⁴ Rod Thornton, 'Countering Prompt Global Strike: The Russian Military Presence in Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean and Its Strategic Deterrence Role', *The Journal of Slavic Military Studies* 32, no. 1 (2019): 13–14.

¹⁵ Rod Thornton, 'The Russian Military Commitment in Syria and the Eastern Mediterranean', *The RUSI Journal* 163, no. 4 (September 2018): 30–38; Nitika Srivastava, 'Russia's Naval Resurgence in Eurasia?', *Maritime Affairs: Journal of the National Maritime Foundation of India* 12, no. 2 (2016): 42–57.

¹⁶ David S. Alberts, *Information Age Transformation: Getting To A 21st Century Military*, Revised, Information Age Transformation Series (Washington, D.C.: Command and Control Research Program, Department of Defense, 2002), 7–23.

¹⁷ Colin S. Gray, *War, Peace and International Relations: An Introduction to Strategic History* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2007), 240–42.

¹⁸ Muhammad Ali Baig and Hamid Iqbal, 'A Comparative Study of Blitzkrieg and Cold Start Doctrine: Lessons and Countermeasures for Pakistan', *IPRI Journal* 18, no. 1 (Winter 2018): 29.

6 Superior Doctrine coupled with Better Training

Azerbaijan established its 'Military Academy of the Armed Forces' on February 20, 1999¹⁹. The war college is producing some highly professional, technical and capable military men to strengthen the defence of Azerbaijan. Apart from modernizing the personnel, it is an imperative for the Military Academy of the Armed Forces to help the Azerbaijani Armed Forces in formulating a new yet joint military doctrine to fulfil its doctrinal needs just like the United States 'National Defense University' helped U.S. Armed Forces in realizing the doctrine 'Shock and Awe – Rapid Dominance' in 1996²⁰.

While keeping in view the consistent aggression of Azerbaijan's arch-rival – Armenia and the latter's expansionist designs, the Armed Forces of Azerbaijan need to modernize themselves in terms of doctrine, better training and equipment. It puts heavy pressure on the military to keep peace, security and stability in the Caucasus Region by relying on their hard power.

7 Four Day – Nagorno Karabakh War, April 2016

Orhan Gafarli called Azerbaijani Military operations as 'Controlled Conflicted Strategy' or small-scale operations²¹. It asserted that Azerbaijan acted in response to Armenian provocations. But even employing small-scale operations, Baku was able to capture pivotal positions in areas such as Seysulan, Leletepe, and Talish in Karabakh.

In hindsight, Azerbaijan could have achieved more; nonetheless, the ostensible lack of flexible, manoeuvrable and mobile doctrine, it could not. Baku can deter any Armenian military threat even using its current military arsenal; however, with a clear doctrine and an upgrade of its equipment with better training can regain the lost territories in Nagorno and Karabakh.

8 Pakistan – Azerbaijan Defence Co-operation

Pakistan and Azerbaijan are brethren nations and maintain cordial relations. Baku can revolutionize its military capabilities with Islamabad's co-operation and co-ordination. Pakistan is a battle-hardened nation-state with enormous experience of fighting conventional and asymmetric warfare and possesses nuclear weapons of tactical, operational and strategic nature. Pakistan maintains the sixth largest armed forces in the world with sophisticated weaponry and highly disciplined and well-trained military personnel.

Apart from imports, Pakistan has been manufacturing fighter aircrafts, submarines, frigates, main battle tanks, artillery pieces, and radars, armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs), anti-tank guided missiles (ATGMs), cruise missiles, and ballistic missiles. Islamabad's reliance on indigenous products put it relatively free from external diplomatic and political pressure and opened new horizons of research and development.

Pakistan and Azerbaijan signed a defence agreement in 2003 and are steadily increasing their defence cooperation. Azerbaijan took part in the Pakistan-led multinational exercise AMAN-2013 in March 2013. Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited Azerbaijan in October 2016 and expressed the significance of bilateral defence and military exercises, hence increasing defence cooperation. Azerbaijan has shown keen interest in the JF-17 Thunder, multi-role aircraft. JF-17 was jointly developed by Pakistan and China. Now Islamabad is manufacturing it indigenously. Baku has also shown interest in buying Pakistan-manufactured MFI-395 Super Mushshak trainer aircraft²².

¹⁹ 'MINISTRY OF DEFENCE OF THE REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN', 24 June 2017, <http://mod.gov.az/en/military-academy-of-the-armed-forces-435/>.

²⁰ Harlan K. Ullman and James P. Wade, *Shock and Awe: Achieving Rapid Dominance* (Washington, D.C.: National Defense University, 1996).

²¹ Orhan Gafarli, 'Secrets of the Four-Day Karabakh War', *National Interest*, 21 June 2017, <http://nationalinterest.org/blog/secrets-the-four-day-karabakh-war-15772?page=2>.

²² Fuad Shahbazov, 'Azerbaijan's Growing Military Cooperation With Pakistan', *The Diplomat*, 21 June 2017, <http://thediplomat.com/2017/01/azerbaijans-growing-military-cooperation-with-pakistan/>.

Apart from the air assets, Azerbaijan can buy a wide range of armoured, anti-tank and ground support vehicles from Pakistan which are built locally by Pakistan's Heavy Industries, Taxila. This advanced military equipment will help Baku in replacing its old Soviet-era weaponry and equipment and would significantly help it in maintaining peace, security and stability in the Caucasus Region especially with its rival – Armenia.

9 Advancement of Military Equipment

It was argued previously that the hostilities emanating from Armenia have left little choice for Azerbaijan but to spend a large chunk of budget on its military and defence, while compromising its human development and economic expansion. Consequently, Azerbaijan needs to improvise and pay attention to the sectors of most need. In the modern warfare the role of continental army remains dominant as it was outlined by Mearsheimer²³. John Mearsheimer maintained that 'Land Power' is a prerequisite for conquest as well as coercion. Accordingly, Azerbaijan has to pay special attention to its land forces. The different branches of land forces including infantry, armour, artillery, and army air arm need an immediate facelift. The importance of gunship helicopters is growing rapidly with the changing character of war and the need of close air support for the ground troops.

Likewise, tanks, armoured infantry fighting vehicles (IFVs) and armoured personnel carriers (APCs) spearhead the attack in the defensive as well as offensive operations. The terrain between Azerbaijan and Armenia has a considerable space for armoured warfare. In such terrains where armour cannot operate primarily due to geography – the role of gunship helicopters become vital. Also, Special Forces units can operate in diverse environments regardless of terrain and geography. The terrain, geography, and topography of this region requires specially trained forces to conduct rapid operations. They can be inserted and deployed using helicopters and retain the potential of being paraded on rough and rugged terrains.

10 Airborne Warning and Control System (AWACS)

AWACS are aircraft which carry on-board radar and provide situational awareness to the armed forces in defending as well as invading modes. These aircraft can vary in their configuration and mission requirements. However, modern AWACS like the E-3 Sentry of the United States can perform multiple tasks like conducting electronic warfare (EW) while disrupting enemy's communication and jamming radars²⁴.

11 How Pakistan can assist Azerbaijan in the latter's defence needs?

Azerbaijan can learn a lot from Pakistan since the latter is a battle-hardened state with vast experience of fighting symmetric conventional wars, irregular asymmetric wars and counter-terrorism wars. Defence analyst Sameer Lalani argued that Pakistan is winning its war against terrorism²⁵. It can be argued that Pakistan has been successful in flushing out Taliban fighters from its territory apart from the manifold challenges posed by Afghan and Allied Forces in Afghanistan. Unfortunately, some elements in Afghanistan continuously provided terrorists with strategic depth against Pakistan.

Pakistan has faced unjustified intense international sanctions which have severely hindered their defence needs. However, the resilience and self-reliance of Pakistani nation is being manifested in the indigenously produced ballistic and cruise missiles with the capability to deliver conventional and

²³ John J. Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics* (New York, NY: W.W. Norton & Company, 2001), 83–87.

²⁴ Colonel Timothy M. Laur and Steven L. Llanso, *Encyclopedia of Modern U.S. Military Weapons*, ed. Walter J. Boyne (New York, United States of America: The Berkley Publishing Group, 1998), 57–59.

²⁵ Sameer Lalwani, 'Actually, Pakistan Is Winning Its War on Terror', *Foreign Policy*, 10 December 2015, <https://foreignpolicy.com/2015/12/10/actually-pakistan-is-winning-its-war-on-terror/>.

nuclear tipped warheads with precision and accuracy up to thousands of kilometres – while ensuring credible minimum deterrence. Pakistan intends to ensure its territorial integrity and sovereign status with one foundational intention to minimize its reliance on foreign military hardware. It is producing and manufacturing almost all sorts of defence equipment indigenously. Like Azerbaijan, Pakistan has also been facing a hostile neighbour i.e. India. The animosity that is deep rooted in both nations' shared history with the unresolved Kashmir Dispute has caused Pakistan to mobilize a considerable amount of its latent power to match its antagonistic counterpart.

The Armed Forces of Pakistan are one of the finest, well-disciplined and able fighting forces in the world with significantly exceptional in their quality as well as quantity. Pakistan is also producing and manufacturing trainer as well as fighter aircrafts such as JF-17 Thunder with Chinese cooperation. Similarly, Pakistan is on its way to achieving self-sufficiency – at least in the defence sector. Azerbaijan can arm its military forces and can train them in the military academies of Pakistan so that the two brotherly nations might strengthen their defence against their respective enemies. This augmented defence developments would surely amplify the military capabilities of Azerbaijani Armed Forces so that they can respond to the emerging threats – foreign and domestic.

12 Offensive-Defensive Doctrine

The importance of military doctrine can be understood from Sir Julian Corbett's assertion that "Doctrine is the soul of warfare"²⁶. Azerbaijan can learn a lot from Pakistan not only in term of equipment and hardware but also it can draw lessons from Pakistani offensive-defensive military doctrine known as the New Concept of Warfighting (NCWF). NCWF has remarkably contributed towards achieving security and operational readiness for the Armed Forces of Pakistan in relation to India's Cold Start Doctrine²⁷.

13 Proposed Course of Action for Azerbaijan

Azerbaijan is a peace-loving country and being a member of United Nations Organization, it intends to abide by the international law, norms, customs and liberal values. Azerbaijan, while honouring its firm commitment to maintain peace in the world – has been contributing and committing its forces in war zones under the mandate of UN for peace-keeping operations.

Realism is "the oldest and most prominent theoretical paradigm in international relations"²⁸. Perhaps it is due to the fact that Realism traces its foundations from the teachings of Thucydides, Machiavelli, Hobbes, Rousseau and Morgenthau as it was argued by many²⁹. Defensive Realist school of thought of the Realist tradition and its main proponent Kenneth Waltz argued that states seek security and should enhance security up to a level where balance of power is maintained. Waltz forbade states to increase power, since he argued that it may result in punishment from the system. Since realists believe that the international structure is inherently anarchic in nature that leaves states with little or no choice to rely on their own muscles to ensure their survival. Waltz asserted that security is the means towards the end that remains survival of the state³⁰.

However, John Mearsheimer – an advocate of Offensive Realism, stressed states on the maximization of power in terms of military, economy, and demographic sectors – while intending to become a regional

²⁶ Geoffrey Sloan, 'Military Doctrine, Command Philosophy and the Generation of Fighting Power: Genesis and Theory', *International Affairs* 88, no. 2 (March 2012): 243.

²⁷ Baig and Iqbal, 'A Comparative Study of Blitzkrieg and Cold Start Doctrine: Lessons and Countermeasures for Pakistan', 20.

²⁸ Jeffrey W. Legro and Andrew Moravcsik, 'Is Anybody Still a Realist', *International Security* 24, no. 2 (Fall 1999): 5.

²⁹ Robert Gilpin, *Global Political Economy: Understanding the International Economic Order* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 2001), 15–18; Konstantinos Kostagiannis, *Realist Thought and the Nation-State: Power Politics in the Age of Nationalism*, The Palgrave Macmillan History of International Thought (Cham, Switzerland: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018), 11–13; Ken Booth, ed., *Realism and World Politics* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2011), 6–9.

³⁰ Kenneth N. Waltz, *Theory of International Politics* (Massachusetts, United States of America: Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, 1979).

hegemon. Also, it emphasised on the mobilization of latent power³¹. Nevertheless, Azerbaijan does not seem to be a revisionist state, instead it intends to maintain status-quo in the international and regional politics. Hence, it does not have hegemonic designs to dominate and alter the balance of power. Consequently, Realism dictates that states are inherently obsessed with their existence and survival – Azerbaijan is no exception.

14 What is the Security Dilemma?

Though, the preceding part of the paper made certain arguments using the prism of Offensive Realism; nonetheless, there is another source that rather describes Azerbaijan's dire situation. The Security Dilemma is a concept that was first advanced by John Herz³². Later on, Robert Jervis explained that an enhanced security of a state results in an increased insecurity for another³³. Ostensibly, perhaps due to the Iranian backing of Armenia – the Azerbaijani government, people and military forces are facing a security dilemma where the unjustified demands of Armenia are constantly threatening the peace of the region and the sovereign status of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan is a security seeker state rather than a power-seeking entity with hegemonic aspirations, that is under a continuous and constant threat – primarily emanating from its hostile neighbour – Armenia. Azerbaijan does not have hegemonic or designs to achieve regional domination. As a result, the dictates of Defensive Realism emphasize Azerbaijan to put significant attention on its security – particularly in military terms.

15 Conclusions

Israeli historian and war theoretician Martin van Creveld cited Leon Trotsky who argued that “You may not be interested in war, but war may be interested in you”³⁴. Similarly, Gwynne Dyer argued that “War is a central institution in human civilization, and it has a history precisely as long as civilization”³⁵. Likewise, the Realist tradition argues that states can never be certain about the intentions of other states. It is one's contention that with the increase in military capabilities and in the presence of a history of hostilities – the chances of a military conflict can increase dramatically. A state's irredentist claims eventually become a part of its history and consequently its strategic culture. The military remains a dominant part and parcel of the strategic culture of any state.

Sir Julian Corbett, a British strategist and thinker during World War-I argued that “doctrine is the soul of warfare”³⁶. By this very notion it becomes pretty much understandable that a military doctrine not only ensures peace but also poses a credible threat towards a potential enemy. It also helps the military to use its abilities and capabilities in a refined manner to deter, counter, and even strike back in relation to the intentions and actions of the enemy. The Azerbaijani Armed Forces need to formulate a viable doctrine while keeping in view the terrain, geography, and weather conditions along with their force structure to pose a credible threat towards its hostile rival, Armenia, to preserve its independence and sovereign status. The short distance of operations between Azerbaijan and Armenia greatly reduces the vulnerability of forces and their dependence on logistics and resupply, while it increases the chances of a deep strike to psychologically and physically break the cohesion of the enemy forces.

The Azerbaijani Armed Forces must acquire such an offensive military capability to hit and destroy enemy's ‘Centre of Gravity’ as it was argued by Clausewitz. The German General Clausewitz also argued

³¹ Mearsheimer in his thesis emphasized on the maximization of power while declaring power to be the means towards the end, that remains survival of the state. Please see: Mearsheimer, *The Tragedy of Great Power Politics*.

³² John H. Herz, ‘Idealist Internationalism and the Security Dilemma’, *World Politics* 2, no. 2 (January 1950): 157–80.

³³ Robert Jervis, *System Effects* (Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1997), 60.

³⁴ Martin van Creveld, *More on War* (New York, NY: Oxford University Press, 2017), vii.

³⁵ Dyer, *War*, xi.

³⁶ Sloan, ‘Military Doctrine, Command Philosophy and the Generation of Fighting Power: Genesis and Theory’, 243.

that “...the essence of war is fighting, and since the battle is the fight of the main force, the battle must always be considered as the true centre of gravity of the war”³⁷. It can be deduced that for Clausewitz, war is lost and won in major battles i.e. *Hauptschlacht*³⁸ – and since battles are fought on the operational level so this particular concept has to be taken seriously. Accordingly, it can be argued adamantly that with a strong military force with advanced weaponry and offensive capabilities, the intentions of a state fuelled by its strategic culture, irredentism and history can lead to military provocations with pre-emptive and preventive wars. It is essential for Azerbaijan to enhance its military capabilities to match its antagonistic neighbour. It is an imperative for Azerbaijan to learn lessons from the 1994 Nagorno Karabakh War. The growing importance of gunship helicopters just cannot be denied since they act as ‘artillery in the air’ and provide mobile defence. They can also be used for both – offensive and defensive purposes. Similarly, the role of armed unmanned aerial vehicles (UAVs) is also very much relevant in the Azerbaijani case keeping in view the terrain of possible operations.

³⁷ Clausewitz, *On War*.

³⁸ *Ibid.*, 29.