

Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict Today

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Structure:

Skirmishes in N-K

The Four Days War

Six Weeks Armed conflict

Peace Agreement

Skirmishes in N-K

- In the years preceding 2014 total fatalities averaged 20–30 (2012 was the worst year, with 34 fatalities reported), and in several years the number of non-combat-related deaths exceeded those resulting from enemy action.
- Three trends converged to alter this situation: **increasing military capabilities on both sides, changing military intent, and the marginalization of negotiations.**
- Both sides' military capabilities have substantially increased over recent years in terms of the scale, sophistication and range of their arsenals. As a proportion of GDP, Armenia and Azerbaijan have emerged as the biggest military spenders in the post-Soviet space bar Russia.
- Globally, both countries have featured in the top 10 militarized states since 2011; moreover, they are the only pair of states within the top 10 engaged in active conflict with each other.

Skirmishes 2014

- July 30 – August 4 flash skirmishes
- → 13 Azerbaijani soldiers were killed and five Armenians died (mod.gov.az, August 4).
- Azerbaijan accused Armenia of having “repeatedly violated the cease-fire regime by attacking positions of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Azerbaijan” (mfa.gov.az, August 3); Yerevan made a similar statement about the Azerbaijani forces.
- May 29 meeting - Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, Moscow stated that Armenia should be admitted to the future Eurasian Union only within its United Nations–recognized borders, i.e. not including Karabakh (armradio.am, June 5).
- The United States’ co-chair of the Minsk Group Ambassador James Warlick as well as the US ambassador to Azerbaijan Richard Morningstar gave statements emphasizing a route to conflict resolution via restoring Azerbaijani’s territorial integrity, in line with the Madrid Principles (carnegieendowment.org, May 7; apa.az, May 16).
- Diplomatic failure for Armenia: sacrificed its European integration ambitions to join the Russian-led Eurasian Union, in large part based on the assumption that Moscow would support it on the Karabakh issue.

Table 2: Civilian deaths and major military incidents, January 2014–March 2016

2014	
January	LoC skirmishes
15 April	Armenian civilian killed by mine explosion in Berdavan, Tavush region
15 July	Azerbaijani infiltrator group kills Armenian teenager in Kelbajar area
31 July–2 August	Severe fighting along LoC, about 20 combatants killed, most of them Azerbaijani
13 November	Armenian MI-24 helicopter shot down over Agdam
2015	
11 January	Armenian civilian killed by Azerbaijani fire in Baghanis, Tavush region
23–26 January	At least three Azerbaijani soldiers killed in clashes along LoC; at least two Armenian soldiers killed along <i>de jure</i> border
5 February	Armenian civilian killed in Nerkin Kamiraghbyur, Tavush region
19 March	Four Armenian soldiers killed and four injured (two seriously) in Gulistan area; sides subsequently accuse each other of using 120-millimetre mortars for first time since 1994
July and August	Exchanges along LoC
24 September	Three Armenian civilians killed in Tavush area along <i>de jure</i> border
25 September	Four Armenian soldiers killed in mortar strike on training centre near Matagiz–Talish road; artillery continue to fire for two days
26 September	Azerbaijani civilian killed in Agdam by Armenian fire
27 October	OSCE co-chairs take cover from shooting while inspecting LoC
9 December	Tank warfare reported for first time since 1994
2016	
11 February	Armenian civilian killed by sniper in Martuni
29 March	Two Azerbaijani soldiers killed in Qazax area along <i>de jure</i> border

The Four days war 2-5 April 2016

Violence along the Line of Contact – after the Nuclear Summit in Washington D.C.

Skirmishes since 2014 – signal of bigger violence, In the course of the fierce fighting, both sides used all types of weapons at their disposal (tanks, heavy artillery, rocket launchers, and to a limited extent air power), including the shelling of civilian targets.




Armenian Deputy defence Minister David Tonoian: Armenian move from a “static defense” to more active deterrence mode as a respond to the 2014 August skirmishes.

Shair Ramaldanov - a retired Azerbaijani colonel - “(the aim) of the April war was to prevent constant shelling of civilian settlements. The goal was to (protect) civilian settlements from Armenia’s positions, especially in the Lele Tepe and Talish direction.”

Azerbaijan seized a sliver of territory.

Several hundreds deaths



-  territory controlled by Armenians
-  front line
-  areas of serious clashes between 2 and 5 April

Escalation of conflict

- July 12/13 2020 fights erupted on the northern border of the two countries in the Armenian region of Tavush and Azerbaijani region of Tovuz:
- shelling and drone attacks
- More than a dozen deaths, 15 soldiers (one Azerbaijani civilian died along a remote northern section of the border and Armenian civilian has been wounded from an Azeri drone attack).
- Specific trigger not clear, both Armenia and Azerbaijan blaming each other.
- Defense Minister Zakir Hasanov: aim was „to prevent provocations and reduce the impact of gun emplacements on our communities.“
- Azerbaijan’s frontline posts - tactical disadvantages, resulting in more casualties. April 2016 offensive aimed to strengthen Azerbaijan’s frontline positions: 1. in the north Seysulan/Talish Aghdere (Mardakert) direction with minimal gains; 2. the Lele Tepe heights success and better tactical advantage.
- The success of the April events resulted in a psychological boost for the Azerbaijani leadership, as well as for the public.

THE CONFLICT BETWEEN ARMENIA AND AZERBAIJAN



July 12-13
clashes

1 Berd

2 Dondar Gushchu

Chinari

Tavush region

ARMENIA

Yerevan

TURKEY

IRAN

RUSSIA

AZERBAIJAN

Baku

CASPIAN SEA




Berdzor/Lacin

Stepanakert/Xankandi

Naxcivan

July 12-13, 2020
Azerbaijani troops shelled the city of **Berd**¹ in the north of Armenia after accusing Yerevan of a shelling attack on the border village of **Dondar Gushchu**².

Armenia and Azerbaijan have been locked in a conflict over Azerbaijan's breakaway region of **Nagorno-Karabakh** since 1988.

 Nagorno-Karabakh region
 Azerbaijani-controlled territory
 Armenian-occupied territory



Six weeks armed conflict in N-K

Armenia and Azerbaijan accused each other of starting deadly clashes that broke out on September 27, 2020.

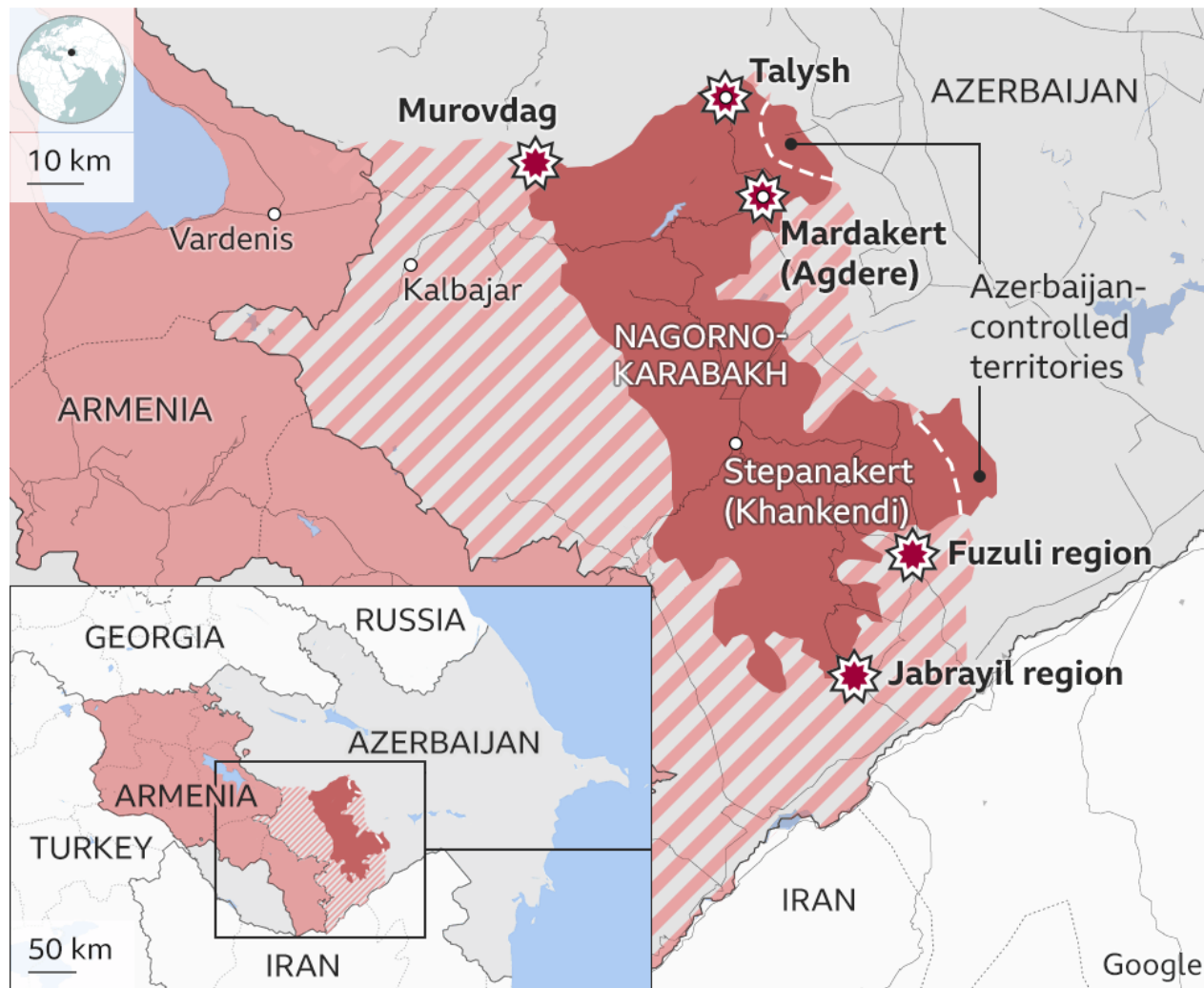
Azerbaijan said it was launching a "counter-offensive" in response to Armenian aggression.

Several thousand people have died and shelling has killed civilians on both sides. Tens of thousands have fled their homes.

Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

★ Approximate areas of battles, 27- 28 September 2020

▨ Armenian-controlled territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh

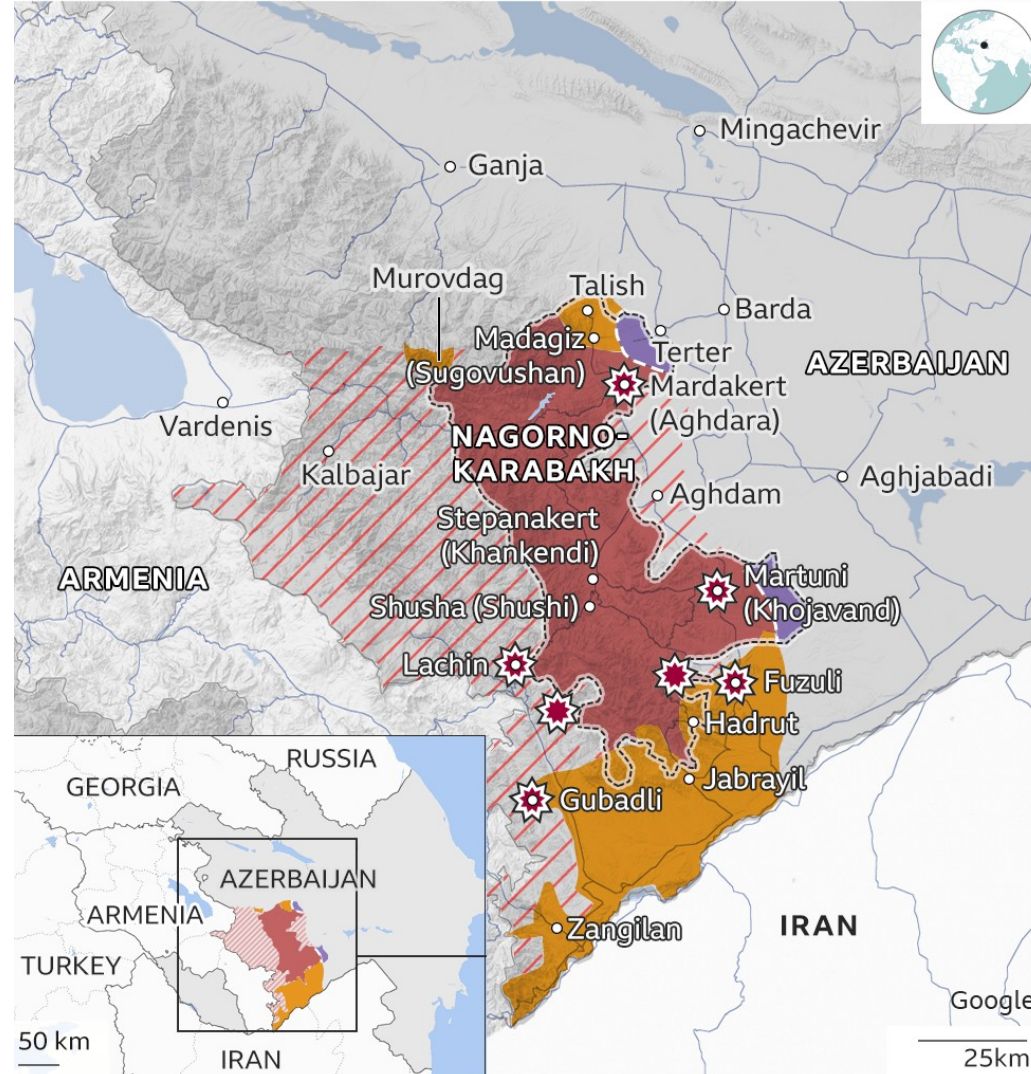


Source: BBC

BBC

Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

- Areas regained by Azerbaijan since 27 September
- Armenian-controlled territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh
- Azerbaijan-controlled territories
- ★ Approximate areas of ongoing fighting

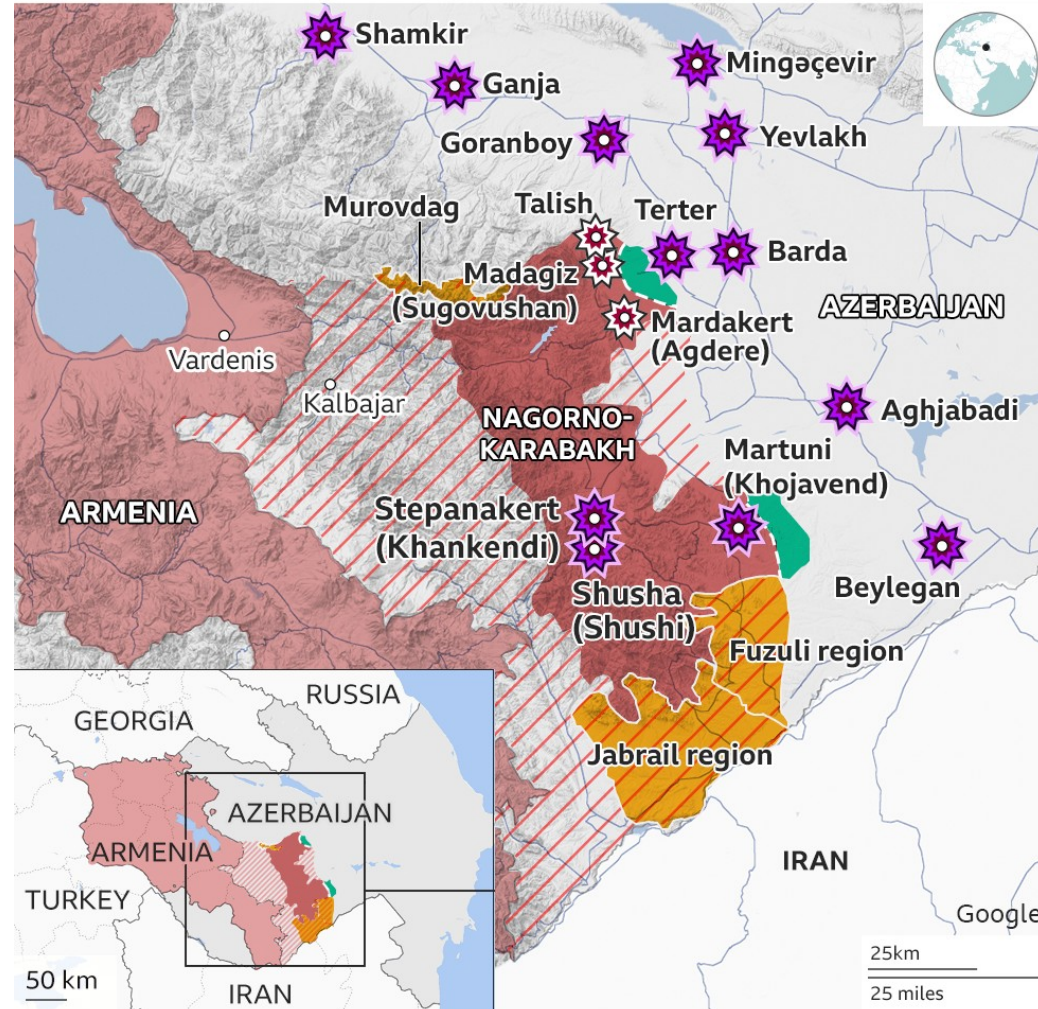


Source: BBC, 27 October 2020



Conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh

-  Approximate areas of battles
-  Cities and towns that have experienced shelling
-  Areas of active combat
-  Azerbaijan-controlled territories
-  Armenian-controlled territories surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh



Source: BBC



Peace Agreement

- On November 10, the agreement: Russia, Azerbaijan and Armenia on the cessation of hostilities in Nagorno-Karabakh came into force. Along the line of contact of Nagorno Karabakh and the Lachin corridor along the deploying peacekeepers Russia in the amount of 1 960 troops with small arms, 90 armored personnel carriers, 380 units of automobile and special equipment.
- On November 11, the defense ministers of Russia and Turkey signed a memorandum on the establishment of a joint center to control the observance of the ceasefire in Nagorno-Karabakh. He will be located on the territory of Azerbaijan and will collect, generalize and verify information on the observance of the truce in Nagorno-Karabakh. The center will also consider complaints, questions or problems related to violations of agreements, the Russian Defense Ministry said (<https://www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/356532/>)



Armenia-Azerbaijan peace deal

- Armenian forces to withdraw by 15 Nov
- Armenian forces to withdraw by 20 Nov
- Armenian forces to withdraw by 1 Dec
- Areas regained by Azerbaijan in the war
- Area of deployment for Russian peacekeepers



Source: BBC Research, 10 November 2020.



Statement by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and President of the Russian Federation

1. A complete ceasefire and all hostilities in the zone of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict are announced from 00:00 hours Moscow time on November 10, 2020. The Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of Armenia, hereinafter referred to as the Parties, stop at their positions.
2. Aghdam region is returned to the Republic of Azerbaijan until November 20, 2020.
3. Along the line of contact in Nagorno-Karabakh and along the Lachin corridor, a peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is deployed in the amount of 1,960 servicemen with small arms, 90 armed personnel carriers, 380 units of automobile and special equipment.
4. The peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is being deployed in parallel with the withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces. The duration of the stay of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation is 5 years with automatic extension for the next 5-year periods, if none of the Parties declares 6 months before the expiration of the period of intention to terminate the application of this provision.

Statement by the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia and President of the Russian Federation

- 5. In order to increase the effectiveness of control over the implementation of the agreements by the Parties to the conflict, a peacekeeping center is being deployed to control the ceasefire.
- 6. The Republic of Armenia will return the Kelbajar region to the Republic of Azerbaijan by November 15, 2020, and the Lachin region by December 1, 2020. The Lachin corridor (5 km wide), which will ensure the connection between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia and at the same time will not affect the city of Shusha, remains under the control of the peacekeeping contingent of the Russian Federation.
- By agreement of the Parties, a plan for the construction of a new route along the Lachin corridor will be determined in the next three years, providing communication between Nagorno-Karabakh and Armenia, with the subsequent redeployment of the Russian peacekeeping contingent to protect this route.
- The Republic of Azerbaijan guarantees the safety of traffic along the Lachin corridor of citizens, vehicles and goods in both directions.
- 7. Internally displaced persons and refugees return to the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh and adjacent areas under the control of the Office of the UN High Commissioner for Refugees.
- 8. The exchange of prisoners of war, hostages and other detained persons and bodies of the dead is carried out.
- 9. All economic and transport links in the region are unblocked. The Republic of Armenia guarantees the safety of transport links between the western regions of the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Nakhichevan Autonomous Republic with the aim of organizing the unimpeded movement of citizens, vehicles and goods in both directions. Control over transport communication is carried out by the bodies of the Border Guard Service of the FSB of Russia.

Peace Agreement

- The return of 5 regions adjacent to N-K would be more profitable for Armenia, but the society was not ready in accordance to Armenian PM Nikol Pashinyan.
- „This is a big setback for us, a big catastrophe, a big mourning for the lost lives (...) We fell, but we did not slide into the abyss, we made the decision to stop in time. Otherwise, our condition would be much worse. Lessons must be learned, this can help the future development of our country“
(www.kavkaz-uzel.eu/articles/356328/)



Protests in Yerevan against the Peace Agreement



- The Yerevanians, dissatisfied with the signing of a peace agreement with Azerbaijan, broke into the building of the Armenian government last night and demanded Nikol Pashinyan's resignation.
- The protesters also attacked the speaker of the Armenian parliament Ararat Mirzoyan and beat him.

The role of Russia and Turkey

- Turkey
- Since the fighting started on Sunday, Turkey has declared its unconditional support to Azerbaijan, and appears to be lending Azerbaijani various kinds of military capability. There is little doubt that highly regarded Turkish military drone technology is being deployed.
- Yerevan has also accused Ankara of shooting down an Armenian SU-25 aircraft on 29 September, which Ankara denies. Although such claims have been made before and found to be untrue, there are also unconfirmed - but growing - claims that Turkey has mobilised mercenaries from Syria to fight for Azerbaijan.
- Russia
- Russia plays diverse, often contradictory, roles in the conflict. Through bilateral ties and the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, Moscow provides Armenia with security guarantees, but these do not extend to the combat zone in Nagorno-Karabakh, which is internationally recognised as part of Azerbaijan. Moscow also supplies weapons to both sides and is one of the co-chairs of the Minsk Group mediating the conflict.
- Moscow has an uneasy relationship with Armenia's new post-2018 leader Nikol Pashinyan,
- Russia was not able in the 1990s to deploy peacekeeping forces on the ground in Nagorno-Karabakh.