

POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

Study Group Regional Stability in the South Caucasus (RSSC SG)

“What Future for Nagorno-Karabakh in the wake of the 2020 Six-Weeks War? Consequences for Conflict Settlement in the South Caucasus Region”

2nd Virtual Roundtable RSSC SG Workshop
4th December 2020

PfP Consortium of Defense
Academies and Security
Studies Institutes



“Shattering Hate: If we are to lessen the hate narratives, we must find the stereotypes and prejudices and begin to break them down. Conversely, we need to build up the shared positive experiences. And if we have none, then search for one. And if we cannot find this, we must create it.” By Alan Whitehorn

Executive Summary of Recommendations

1. There must be an immediate halt to aggressive, nationalistic, triumphalist, provocative and xenophobic rhetoric. Hate narratives fuelled by intolerant nationalism should also immediately cease.
2. The parties are strongly encouraged to assess the outcome and results of the combat phase realistically and constructively with an eye towards building a common peaceful future.
3. The parties should cooperatively promote reconciliation, confidence building and mutual understanding through governmental and nongovernmental channels.
4. The parties should actively look for and develop new opportunities for long term reconciliation and re-integration of the conflict-affected communities, socio-economic recovery, good neighbourly relations, as well as sub-regional economic, commercial and infrastructural integration projects.

Summary of the Workshop

The 2nd Extraordinary Virtual Workshop of the RSSC SG was held on 4 December 2020 exceptionally in lieu of the annual Reichenau workshop. Its occurrence was made all the more timely in view of the historical changes at work in the South Caucasus, as a result of the recent military confrontation over Nagorno-Karabakh, between Armenia and Azerbaijan. A dozen speakers and discussants, mainly from the South Caucasus, but also from Russia, Turkey, and Europe met virtually to consider the implications of these changes.

What follows is a synthesis of the topics discussed, punctuated by policy recommendations developed by the speakers and discussants. The co-chairs of the RSSC SG congratulate the participants for setting aside their differences and coming together in making these recommendations.

We also thank the Partnership for Peace Consortium and the Austrian National Defence Academy for providing the platform for these discussions, and Ms. Lisa-Maria Tagwercher for ensuring the formatting and production of this document.

The presentations and discussions indicate that the second Nagorno-Karabakh war has been prompted in significant degree by the deadlocked negotiations within the OSCE Minsk Group, also noted in the Policy Recommendations of the RSSC SG 20th workshop in November 2019 (www.bundesheer.at/wissenforschung/publikationen/publikation.php?id=996).

On 27 September 2020, the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh entered a new military phase generally known as the “war of fall 2020/44 days war”. The outcome of the war has facilitated the application of the so-called Lavrov Plan (a Russian version of the OSCE Minsk Group’s Madrid/Basic Principles),

