

# Armenian-Azeri Tensions: Washington's "Reverse Brzezinski" Strategy against Russia and China

## Part 2

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*(Please read Part I before this article)*

### **The Reverse Brzezinski Unleashed**

#### The Stratagem:

The author published an analytical research paper in June 2014 whereby he expounded upon the geostrategic concept of the "[Reverse Brzezinski](#)", which is basically the return to the US' 1980s Afghan-style strategy of engineering debilitating quagmires for Russia but which can also be applied against other Great Powers such as China. The American perspective is that certain geopolitical destabilization scenarios can be whipped up around the post-Soviet rim which could take a tempting conventional Russian military intervention to quell, although this in turn would actually be a predetermined trap set by the US in order to tie Russia down in a needless war which would then bleed it of its physical, material, economic, and strategic capital. The three most likely Reverse Brzezinski battlefields are Donbass, Nagorno-Karabakh, and the Fergana Valley, and it's no surprise that all three of them have seen a pitched uptick in violence over the past week. Not counting the obvious and discussed-about situation surrounding Nagorno-Karabakh, the self-proclaimed Donetsk People's Republic [warned](#) last week that a significant deterioration was occurring along the Line of Contact with the Kievan forces, and Uzbekistan and Kyrgyzstan [just pulled back](#) from the brink of a border standoff that threatened to quickly grow into a larger conflict. These three examples of post-Soviet peripheral destabilizations and their near-simultaneous outbreak cannot be seen as incidental, but instead are part of what the author had initially forecasted almost two years ago about the US' ultimate Reverse Brzezinski scenario against Russia.

#### **Identifying The Culprit:**



Nagorno-Karabakh map

Out of the three 'probes' that the US had launched in gauging the viability of the next Reverse Brzezinski battlefield, the one in Nagorno-Karabakh quickly became the scene of the largest-scale fighting and the conflict with the greatest potential to rapidly escalate into an all-out war. It's unclear which side fired the first shot that led to the latest spate of ceasefire violations, and ultimately, while this is very important from a normative and legal perspective, it will likely never be known 100% for sure owing to the completely different and contradictory narratives coming from both the Armenian and Azeri camps. There's a convincing case being made that Azerbaijan started it in order to assist Turkey and the US in the New Cold War, but all of the aforementioned evidence of hitherto close Russian-Azeri cooperation and dwindling Azeri-Western ties draws the superficially simple explanation into question (although it doesn't discount it entirely). From the other side, Armenia has nothing at all to gain by trying to lure its Russian ally into a renewed Nagorno-Karabakh continuation war and would likely draw Moscow's sharp and immediate public consternation if it was even suspected in any sense of probability that this was truly the case. With both the Armenian and Azeri leaderships obviously not having anything of objective self-interest to gain in stoking the flames of a new war that could predictably involve Russia, all eyes once more return to the US in pondering the question of "[cui bono](#)".

### **The Fog Of War:**

To repeat what was just mentioned above, it will probably never be ascertained without a single shred of reasonable doubt which of the two sides' forces fired the first shot that sparked the worst outbreak of violence since the 1994 ceasefire, but it's exceedingly likely that a provocateur or group thereof on one or both sides took advantage of the fog of war in instigating the present hostilities. Neither Armenia nor Azerbaijan has full and total immediate control over their frontline forces, and the edgy state of near-war tension that they've both been exposed to for over the past two decades (and especially recently with the latest [September 2015 shelling](#)) means that a 'jumpy' and/or easily provoked serviceman or two could effortlessly be manipulated into a militant response that generates a disproportionate reaction by the opposing forces. In fact, judging by [the long list of ceasefire violations](#) even before this latest incident, it seems highly likely that this has been the case many times before and might even have been tested out and perfected well in advance of what could actually have been a preplanned Reverse Brzezinski geopolitical sabotage attempt by the US. With both sides restraining themselves for the time being and President Putin [calling](#) on each of them to step back from the brink, it certainly looks like neither one really knows who started the fighting first and that all sides are scrambling to

figure out what's going on and prevent it from unwittingly getting out of control and damaging all of their interests before it's too late.

## Broking Peace In Beijing

It's not known which direction the latest hostilities can go in, but it's clear that their intensity and scope are unprecedented for any time since the 1994 ceasefire. The OSCE Minsk Group conflict resolution party that was created in the mid-1990s and is co-chaired by Russia, the US, and France has pitifully failed to make any significant progress in improving the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan in its more than two decades of existence and has proven itself by the latest events to be absolutely irrelevant in calming the present situation. For that reason, a new format must be immediately spearheaded in order to increase the effectiveness of conflict resolution mechanisms and prevent the uncontrollable escalation of violence between the two sides. The author wrote a three-part series almost exactly a year ago about this topic and how the SCO, in which Armenia and Azerbaijan are now [officially dialogue partners](#), can substitute as the most effective replacement forum for the outdated OSCE Minsk Group and inject the peace process with the much-needed impetus by China's totally neutral participation. For the specific details of this plan, the reader is strongly encouraged to read the author's articles about "[The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict: The OSCE Minsk Group Is Obsolete](#)", "[SCO Will Be The New Framework For Resolving The Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict](#)", and "[How The West Plans To Prevent The SCO From Mediating In Nagorno-Karabakh](#)", but the following paragraph will succinctly summarize the most relevant aspects of this series as they pertain to the present article.



Latest meeting of the Minsk Group (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, France, USA and some European countries) took place in December 2015 in Switzerland.

Unlike Russia which various domestic Armenian and Azeri voices falsely accuse of being "biased" one way or another, China has no such accusative baggage and is generally regarded by both countries and their citizens as being completely neutral in the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute. As a rapidly rising Great Power with the impressive capability of exerting out-of-regional full spectrum influence, China is uniquely qualified to diplomatically play a prime role offering its stereotypically pragmatic guidance in pushing forward a win-win solution for everyone. China's only interest is that stability can be preserved so that its myriad New Silk Road networks can succeed in spanning the globe and integrating as many

of its corners as possible, and Beijing is astutely well aware that the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict could disrupt its vision for the Caucasus and even disastrously evolve into a larger conflagration that destabilizes more than its immediate warfighting participants. For all intents and purposes, China is much better configured to neutrally negotiate between Armenia and Azerbaijan than either the US or France, two of the three existing co-chairs of the failed OSCE Minsk Group, and in the interests of Eurasian solidarity and multipolar New Silk Road win-win benefit, it's clear to see how much more preferable it would be for China to replace its Western counterparts in the negotiating process and complement Russia's positive role via the already proven world-changing dynamics of the [Russian-Chinese Strategic Partnership](#).

## Concluding Thoughts

The most recent and unprecedented outbreak of violent hostility over Nagorno-Karabakh has taken many international observers by surprise, but **had they been fully cognizant of the US' Reverse Brzezinski stratagem and Washington's ambitions to destabilize Russia at all costs**, then the latest events wouldn't have been too unexpected. They occur at a significant geopolitical time when Russia has impressively flexed its muscles in outwardly defying the US' unipolar vision for global hegemony by partaking in the wildly successful albeit physically limited anti-terrorist operation in Syria, and it's reasonable to consider whether the US provoked the heated clashes in Nagorno-Karabakh as a form of asymmetrical 'punishment' for this historic development.

While there are many theories swirling around about who is to blame for all of this and what their ultimate goals are, the conventional explanation that Azerbaijan is behaving as a completely controlled puppet of the West has yet to be proven in this instance and is largely exposed as being a superficial stereotypical reaction when the recent geopolitical trajectory of Yerevan and Baku is taken into account. There's no ignoring that Azerbaijan has very close relations with proven troublemakers such as the US, Turkey, and Israel, but it's premature to jump to the conclusion that they ordered their partner to do this when all existing evidence up until this point proves to Baku moving noticeably closer to Moscow over the past year and equally further from the West. That doesn't necessarily mean that it can be completely discounted that Azerbaijan was put up to do this by its unipolar partners or alternatively that Armenia is guilty for everything, but that the situation is infinitely more complicated than the prevailing alternative media narratives largely make it out to be and is likely attributable to the US exploiting the dangerous fog of war that and decades-long tensions that had settled along the Line of Contact in order to provoke a Reverse Brzezinski scenario for its ultimate gain and each parties total expense.

Additionally, Russia's position is also a lot more complex than simply providing CSTO assistance to Armenia, since like what was mentioned earlier, this mutual defense guarantee does not extend to the Armenian-populated areas of Nagorno-Karabakh. Moscow still formally maintains that this territory is legally part of Azerbaijan, though with the key qualifier of understanding being this is the position for now and could theoretically change due to developing circumstances much as its previous positions about Georgian and Ukrainian territorial integrity changed in 2008 and 2014 respectively on a case-by-case basis. With this being considered, **Russia does not want to see Armenia and Azerbaijan conventionally go to war with one another, although it would unquestionably protected its CSTO if it were attacked on its home turf, with the key qualifier being that this relates only to its internationally recognized borders and not to what it legally views for the time being as Azerbaijan's "occupied"**

**region of Nagorno-Karabakh.** The quandary that an Armenian-Azeri War would provoke for Russia is immense and it would certainly throw Moscow into a geostrategic dilemma whereby it's forced by circumstances beyond its control to make what amounts to a zero-sum Catch-22 decision about whether or not to support Armenia's forces in Nagorno-Karabakh.

While there has yet to exist to a peace proposal that satisfies both the Armenians and the Azeris, it's unquestionable that the existing OSCE Minsk Group process has unequivocally failed in its stated objective of mitigating tension between the two sides and resolving their heated dispute. This means that a fresh, bold, and new alternative must be undertaken in order to inject the process with a renewed impetus, and the most likely possibility for this to occur is for the two recent SCO Dialogue Partners to request China's mediation in their spiraling dispute. It's not known how effective this would be in practice, but seeing as how the present model has miserably underperformed in reaching any of its founding objectives, **there's nothing to be lost by removing the unipolar states of the US and France from the conflict resolution process and replacing them with multipolar and pragmatic participation of China in hopefully harnessing the Russian-Chinese Strategic Partnership and preventing another recurrence of the Reverse Brzezinski.**

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