

# Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict went down in history as one of the most tragic conflicts of the 21st century, with its consequences seriously affecting the fate of millions of Azerbaijanis.

Having started with open territorial claims against Azerbaijan and provocations on ethnic grounds and terror acts in late 1980s, the conflict resulted in military aggression against Azerbaijan. The Armenians, who occupied high positions in the Soviet Union, the leadership of Armenian SSR and the Armenian diaspora abroad embarked on a purposeful campaign to seize the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast (NKAO), which was established within Azerbaijan Soviet Socialist Republic in 1923, and annex it to Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic taking the opportunity created by the weakening of the central government of the USSR in late 1980s.

The forced expulsion of Azerbaijanis from their historical lands began in Gafan region of the Armenian SSR in the late 1987. In 1988-1989, Azerbaijanis living in other regions of Armenia (Amasya, Ararat, Ijevan, Yeghegnadzor, Meghri, Sisyan, Gorus, Gukark, Vardenis, Masis, Azizbeyov, Artashat, Hoktembryan, Noyemberyan and others) and cities (Yerevan, Kirovakan, Stepanavan, Spitak, Jermuk, Gyumri, etc.) suffered the same fate. More than 250,000 Azerbaijanis were expelled from their historical lands, 216 of them were brutally murdered, and 1,154 people were wounded. They were forced to take refuge in Azerbaijan saving their lives from the Armenian violence. Until 1988, Armenia's territory had been densely populated by the Azerbaijanis. But unlike the Armenians living in the Nagorno-Karabakh region, the areas densely populated by Azerbaijanis were not given an autonomous status by the Soviet leadership within the Armenian SSR.

Azerbaijanis were purposefully expelled from the territories of present day Armenia in 1905-1906, 1918-1920, 1948-1953. In 1948-1953 alone, more than 150,000 Azerbaijanis were forcefully and brutally removed from their historical lands in the territory of the Armenian SSR. Some of them, including the elderly and infants died of unbearable conditions during deportation process, severe climate change, physical violence, and moral suffering.

Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict The Armenians staged the first rally relating to Karabakh in NKAO's central town of Khankandi (the then Stepanakert) on February 13, 1988. A number of rallies were organized in NKAO from February 16 to March 2. Armenian members of NKAO Soviet of People's Deputies voted (Azerbaijani MPs and representatives of other nationalities did not attend the session) for annexation of NKAO to Armenian SSR. On February 21, 1988, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union adopted a resolution "On the Events in Nagorno-Karabakh", describing the events as "a campaign provoked by nationalist elements". However, on February 22, 1988, near the town of Asgaran on the Khankandi-Aghdam highway, the Armenians opened fire on a peaceful demonstration by the Azerbaijanis protesting against the decision of the Soviet of People's Deputies of NKAO. Two Azerbaijani young people were martyred in this incident.

In early March, two organizations with the aim of annexing Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia were established without any obstacles. One of them, named "Karabakh" operated in Yerevan, while another one "Krunk" in Khankandi. On June 14, 1988, the Supreme Soviet of Armenian SSR adopted a resolution on "inclusion" of NKAO in the Armenian Soviet Socialist Republic. In response, on June 17, 1988, the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan SSR reaffirmed NKAO's status within Azerbaijan SSR. On July 18, the Presidium of the Supreme Soviet of USSR adopted a resolution on the impossibility of changing the national and territorial division of Azerbaijan SSR and Armenian SSR. By doing so, the Supreme Soviet of the USSR supported the principle of territorial integrity of the republics, guided by the relevant provision of the USSR Constitution (Article 78).



The gradual weakening of the USSR state structure was further exacerbating the situation. Armed groups and terrorists appeared in Nagorno-Karabakh. Mostly sent from Armenia, these groups were engaged in destructive activities. Under these circumstances, Special Administration Committee (existed from January 12 to November 28, 1989) created by the Presidium of the USSR Supreme Soviet was doomed to failure. In addition to influencing the course of the conflict, the Armenian diaspora and lobby were conducting campaigns on the basis of fabricated allegations in the countries of their operation, trying to coerce various states into resolving the conflict in accordance with their own interests.

On December 1, 1989, the Supreme Soviet of Armenian SSR adopted an unprecedented decision "On the unification of Armenian SSR and Nagorno-Karabakh". On January 9, 1990, the Supreme Soviet of Armenia included the plan on the social and economic development of NKAO in Armenian SSR's plan for 1990. On May 20, 1990, deputies of the Supreme Soviet of Armenian SSR from NKAO were elected. The decisions of the Supreme Soviet of Armenian SSR revealed the aggressive essence of Armenia. Territorial claims against Azerbaijan were raised not only by the nationalist groups, but also by the Armenian government authorities. Armenia wanted to occupy part of Azerbaijan's territory at any cost. In May 1990, the Armenian All National Movement won the parliamentary elections in Armenia. In fact, the radical nationalists and chauvinists advocating the war came to power in Armenia. This speeded up their unleashing an aggressive war. Yerevan concentrated all its efforts on establishing and arming informal military units. Armenia gave preference to a forceful way of resolving the problem in line with its war goals.

Therefore, Armenia never took a serious position on the negotiation process and used it to deceive the international community. Both during the war and in the following period, Azerbaijan's position was fully justified in terms of the Constitution of the USSR and the norms of international law. But incompetence of the then Azerbaijani political elite and the absence of a political leader made the situation even more difficult. National leader of the Azerbaijani people Heydar Aliyev, a far-sighted person and a prominent statesman capable of analyzing the course of events and perfectly aware of the importance of displaying a strong will and a principled position of the state, was on imposed leave at the time. His removal from politics had a direct impact on the further deepening of the conflict in line with the interests of the Armenians. After the Soviet troops rolled on Baku on 20 January 1990 to commit a bloody January tragedy, the Kremlin and personally President Mikhail Gorbachev completely lost their credibility. After the bloody events in Baku, the Soviet troops killed civilians in the regions of Neftchala and Lankaran. A total of 150 people were killed in those bloody January events.

The tragedy of the 20th January played a crucial role in reshaping the Azerbaijani people's attitude towards the USSR and in fulfilling their national independence ideas. While the communist leaders of Azerbaijan did not see radical changes in the nation's consciousness, national leader Heydar Aliyev visited the permanent representative office of Azerbaijan in Moscow on 21 January and voiced his vehement protest at the biased policy of the USSR leadership against the Azerbaijani people and later quitted the Communist Party.

The Republican Organizing Committee for NKAO, which was created under the resolution of the Supreme Soviet of the USSR, was doomed to failure since the very beginning. The Committee was based on the weakening possibilities of the Soviet system. Its activities became definitely idle in the aftermath of the August events of 1991 which completely undermined the Soviet statehood. The new political reality showed that the USSR government was nominal and that its end was approaching. On September 2, 1991, the so-called "Nagorno-Karabakh Republic" (NKR) was declared within the borders of NKAO and Shaumyan region of Azerbaijan SSR. On December 10, 1991, a "referendum" was held in "NKR". Taking into account the prospect of the collapse of the USSR, Armenia shifted its strategy to avoid describing itself as one of the sides involved in the conflict. On November 23, 1991, in order to respond to this events, the Supreme Soviet of the Republic of Azerbaijan made a decision to abolish the autonomous status of Nagorno-Karabakh. Armenia, which had long been openly laying territorial claims, launched military operations against Azerbaijan without announcement of war. Consequently, the conflict entered a new "hot phase". During the military campaign, the Armenian armed forces ferociously murdered the peaceful Azerbaijani population in the regions and cities that they occupied, including civilians and servicemen. The Azerbaijanis were subjected to ethnic cleansing and a genocide. The military and political leadership of Armenia, who were systematically conducting massacre and genocide of civilians in Meshali village in Asgaran, Malibayli and Gushchular villages in Shusha, Garadaghli village in Khojavand, Khojali town, Aghdaban village in Kalbajar and other places, intended to physically exterminate the indigenous Azerbaijani population of the Nagorno-Karabakh and to break the spirit of resistance of the remaining part of population.

In the early hours of 26 February 1992, Armenia committed an act of genocide against the Azerbaijani population in Khojaly. As a result, 613 civilians were killed, including 106 women and 63 children. The Khojaly carnage has been officially recognized as an act of genocide by more than 10 countries.



Armenia's military aggression as well as the threat of civil war emerging in Azerbaijan, the chaos and economic crisis, and the paralysis of state institutions put the country facing the danger of destruction. At such a crucial point, the Azerbaijani people found their salvation in their great son, experienced statesman, national leader Heydar Aliyev, and entrusted the country's fate to him. When national leader Heydar Aliyev returned to power on persistent demands of the people on 15 June 1993, the country was in a very difficult situation. The national leader made a conclusion that the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict requires a comprehensive approach and consideration of internal and external factors. This entailed ensuring social and political stability, establishing a regular army with combat capability, restructuring state institutions and ensuring their effective functioning, rehabilitating the economy and conducting radical governance reforms, signing strategic oil contracts that will ensure the development of the country for decades to come, and uniting Azerbaijanis around a single idea of Azerbaijanism. On May 12, 1994, the agreement on ceasefire was signed. Until then, as a result of Armenia's military aggression 20 percent of the Azerbaijani territory – Khankandi town, Khojaly, Shusha, Lachin, Khojavand, Kalbajar, Aghdam, Fuzuli, Jabrayil, Gubadli, Zangilan regions, as well as 13 villages in Tartar, 7 villages in Gazakh and 1 village in Sadarak region in Nakhchivan – had been occupied by the Armenian armed forces.

As a result of Armenia's aggression, more than one million Azerbaijanis became refugees and IDPs, while more than 20,000 Azerbaijanis were killed in military operations and over 50,000 became disabled. The fate of 3,889 Azerbaijanis, including 71 children, 267 women and 326 elderly people, who went missing as a result of the conflict, as well as 871 people taken prisoner and hostage, is unknown.

From 1988 to 1993, 900 settlements, 150 residential buildings, 7,000 public buildings, 693 schools, 855 kindergartens, 695 health-care facilities, 927 libraries, 44 temples, 9 mosques, 473 historical monuments, palaces and museums, 40,000 museum exhibits, 6,000 industrial and agricultural facilities, 160 bridges and other infrastructure facilities were destroyed in Karabakh.

The Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which grew into a serious threat to international peace and security, has led to serious debates within international organizations and a number of important documents have been adopted.

On 30 April 1993, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 822, demanding an immediate withdrawal of Armenian troops from Kalbajar district and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

On 29 July 1993, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 853, demanding complete, immediate and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from Aghdam district and other occupied territories of Azerbaijan.

On 14 October 1993, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 874, demanding withdrawal of Armenian troops from the recently occupied territories in accordance with the CSCE Minsk Group's settlement schedule.

On 11 November 1993, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 884. The resolution condemned the occupation of Zangilan district and Horadiz settlement, the attack on the civilian population and the bombing of the territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan, and demanded withdrawal of the occupying forces from Zangilan district, Horadiz settlement and other recently occupied territories of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

These resolutions adopted by the UN Security Council, which acts as the main guarantor of international peace and security regarding the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict laid a legal base for the political process to resolve the conflict based on the norms and principles of international law. All these resolutions condemn the occupation of the Azerbaijani lands and emphasize the inadmissibility of occupation of territories through the use of force, reaffirm the territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of Azerbaijan's borders, that Nagorno-Karabakh is an integral part of Azerbaijan and demand immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of the occupying forces from all the occupied territories of Azerbaijan.



Documents adopted within the framework of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), principles and norms of international law constitute a legal framework and mechanism of the negotiations based on the resolutions of the UN Security Council. After Azerbaijan and Armenia became members of CSCE at the meeting of its Council of Ministers held in Prague on January 30-31, 1992, the organization started to get closely involved in the conflict. After sending a mission of rapporteurs to Armenia and Azerbaijan in February, the CSCE Committee of Senior Officials adopted a decision, calling the parties to peace and to reach a ceasefire, and urging cessation of territorial claims to neighboring states. On March 24, 1992, Committee of Senior Officials convened the Additional Meeting of the CSCE Council in Helsinki where CSCE was called on to play the leading role in the conflict resolution. The Council decided to convene a special conference in Minsk that would act as a permanent framework for negotiations. An agreement was reached at the organization's 1994 Budapest summit to dispatch a multinational force to the conflict zone to strengthen the efforts and protect peace as part of the coordinated action to stimulate conflict resolution process, and the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office was instructed to appoint the co-chairs of the Minsk Conference. Despite Armenia's attempts to interfere, the OSCE Lisbon Summit held on December 2-3, 1996, discussed the principles of conflict resolution. And the statement by the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, which was added to the final document, featured these principles. The principles, which all the OSCE member states joined, are as follows:

1. Territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of Armenia;
2. Legal status of Nagorno-Karabakh which gives it the highest degree of self-governance within Azerbaijan;
3. Guaranteed security for Nagorno-Karabakh and its entire population, including mutual commitment to ensure compliance with the provisions of the settlement. Stipulation of the aforementioned principles at the Lisbon Summit, establishment of a new co-chairmanship institution within the Minsk Group in early 1997, and the appointment of Russia, US and France as co-chairs gave an impetus to the negotiation process. The co-chairs gave written proposals on the settlement of the conflict. In summer of 1997, a draft comprehensive agreement on the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict was presented to the parties. Despite Azerbaijan's constructive stance, Armenia rejected the proposal. In autumn of 1997, during the co-chairs' visit to the region, the parties were presented a "stage-by-stage" plan of settlement of the conflict. The plan prioritized the following stages of conflict resolution-withdrawal of the Armenian troops from the occupied territories, return of internally displaced persons to their lands, restoration of communication means, deployment of the OSCE peacekeeping mission, review of the status of the Nagorno-Karabakh. However, Armenia again displayed a completely unconstructive position in the negotiations.

In November 2007, the Minsk Group developed the principles of a peaceful settlement of the conflict. The first version of the Madrid document, which included proposals within the Madrid process, was submitted to the parties. At the end of 2009, an updated draft of the Madrid document was developed and submitted to the parties. But Armenia's destructive position again prevented the achievement of the expected progress. Both documents provided for a stage-by-stage settlement of the conflict and featured the following elements: withdrawal of the Armenian armed forces from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, return of internally displaced persons to their native lands and restoration of the communication lines.

On November 2, 2008, after the meeting between the Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and the Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan in Moscow, the Russian, Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents signed the Moscow Declaration. The Declaration pointed to the settlement of the conflict by political means based on the norms and principles of international law and on the basis of the documents and decisions adopted within this framework, which will in turn pave the way for a comprehensive cooperation in the region.

At subsequent meetings, the presidents agreed to continue talks towards peaceful settlement of the conflict and paid special attention to humanitarian aspects of the problem. However, as negotiation process intensified and went beyond Armenia's interests, Yerevan attempted to undermine the negotiations through military provocations. Thus, instead of discussing specific issues on the negotiation table after the Paris meeting of the presidents initiated by France on October 27, 2014, Armenia held a large-scale military training in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan involving more than 40,000 personnel. The intensity of the negotiations declined after the Armenian armed forces performed provocative and offensive flights above the positions of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces on the line of contact and the meeting between the presidents of the two countries resumed on December 19, 2015, in Bern, Switzerland.



In the early 2016, when specific plans for the settlement of the conflict were discussed, Armenia once again resorted to a military provocation and shelled densely populated areas, including schools, hospitals and worship sites along the line of contact on April 2. The Armenian attacks killed six Azerbaijani civilians, including children, while 33 people were seriously injured. The Azerbaijani armed forces launched a successful counter-offensive to retaliate the enemy's provocations, and liberated more than 2,000 hectares of occupied territories in Fuzuli, Jabrayil and Aghdara regions. If on the one hand, the April events showed the strength of the Azerbaijani army, on the other, they once again demonstrated that the maintenance of the status quo and the presence of the Armenian troops in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan are the key causes of tension in the conflict zone and that Azerbaijan will never reconcile with the occupation.

Throughout 2016, substantial discussions were held between the presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in Vienna and St. Petersburg. But because of Armenia's non-constructive position these meetings marked no progress in the settlement of the conflict. Armenia continued its political and military provocations in 2017 too.

In June and July, Armenia tried to escalate the situation along the line of contact against a backdrop of the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs' increasing efforts to resolve the conflict and the international community's serious calls for substantive negotiations. The Armenian military units continued their aggressive actions and intensively shelled the Azerbaijani armed forces' frontline positions, and the civilian population from heavy artillery. This resulted in the killing on July 4 of civilians of Alkhanli village of Fuzuli region, Sahiba Allahverdiyeva, born in 1966, and her granddaughter Zahra Guliyeva, born in 2016. The international community sharply condemned Armenia's deliberately targeting civilians and facilities. The international community once again became convinced that Armenia is not interested in the political settlement of the conflict.

Other international organizations have also adopted numerous documents supporting Azerbaijan's fair position on the conflict, which is based on international law and historical justice.

The UN General Assembly's resolution on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict adopted on 7 September 2006, entitled "Situation in the Occupied Territories of Azerbaijan", condemned the fires committed by Armenia in the occupied territories. A same-named resolution adopted by the UN General Assembly on 14 March 2008 covers legal, political and humanitarian aspects of the conflict and reaffirms the principles of its settlement. These principles include respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the immediate, complete and unconditional withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the right of the IDPs to return to their native lands, the conditions for a coexistence of both communities within Azerbaijan and the illegal nature of the occupation of territories.

The conflict has been repeatedly discussed within the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). Guided by the principles and norms of international law, the organization declared that Azerbaijan was subjected to military aggression. The resolution adopted by the 21st meeting of the organization's foreign ministers in Karachi, Pakistan, in 1993 condemned the Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan, demanded an immediate withdrawal of Armenian troops from all occupied territories, urged Armenia to respect Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and called for a peaceful and just settlement of the conflict.

The 7th Summit of the OIC Heads of State and Government held in Casablanca, Morocco, in 1994 adopted another resolution on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The resolution strongly condemned the occupation of 20 percent of Azerbaijani territory by Armenia and expressed concern with the fate of more than 1 million Azerbaijanis who have become refugees and internally displaced persons. The document called for an immediate withdrawal of Armenian forces from all occupied territories of Azerbaijan in accordance with four UN Security Council resolutions and assessed the actions against civilians as a result of Armenia's aggression against Azerbaijan as a crime against humanity.



The OIC Summit held in Istanbul in 2016 established a “Contact Group on the aggression of the Republic of Armenia against Azerbaijan”. The Contact Group included nine countries: Azerbaijan, Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Pakistan, Malaysia, Morocco, Djibouti, Gambia, and Somalia.

The Declaration of the Summit of the Cooperation Council of Turkic Speaking States held in Baku on 15 October 2019 expresses support for the settlement of the conflict on the basis of the territorial integrity, sovereignty and inviolability of the borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Final Document adopted by the 16th Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the Non-Aligned Movement in Tehran in 2012 stressed the importance of resolving the conflict within the territorial integrity, sovereignty and internationally recognized borders of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The Final Document adopted by the 17th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held on the island of Margarita in the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in 2016 expressed regret that the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan remains unresolved despite the relevant UN Security Council resolutions and supported the settlement of the conflict within the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

A new item was incorporated into the Final Document of the 18th Summit of the Non-Aligned Movement held in Baku on 25-26 October 2019. In this paragraph, the Heads of State and Government stressed the inadmissibility of the occupation of territories by force. In addition, the Final Document states that no state will recognize the legitimacy of the situation resulting from the occupation of Azerbaijani territories and will not provide any support for maintaining the situation in the occupied territories, including economic activity. The “Document of Gratitude and Solidarity with the People and Government of Azerbaijan” adopted by the Summit expressed solidarity with Azerbaijan’s efforts to restore its territorial integrity.

The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) reaffirmed the occupation of Azerbaijani territories in Resolution No. 1416 “On the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group” dated 25 January 2005 and expressed concern over facts of ethnic cleansing in these territories. It called for a compliance with UN Security Council Resolutions 822, 853, 874 and 884 and for a withdrawal of troops from the occupied territories. The organization also reaffirmed the right of IDPs to return to their lands and stressed the inadmissibility of occupation of the territory of a member state by another member state.

The European Court of Human Rights ruled in the case of “Chiragov and others vs. Armenia” on 16 June 2015 that Armenia occupied Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding districts. In addition, the PACE Resolution on “Deliberate deprivation of residents of borderline regions of Azerbaijan of water” adopted on 26 January 2016 states that the Sarsang water reservoir, built on the Tartar River in 1976 to provide water to about 100,000 hectares of land in six districts of Azerbaijan, fell into disrepair as a result of the occupation. This led to the fact that local residents were deprived of irrigation water. It also demands withdrawal of Armenian troops from the said region, describes the deliberate creation of an artificial environmental crisis as an act of “environmental aggression” and confirms the occupation of a part of Azerbaijan by Armenia.

The European Union issued a statement on 9 November 1993, calling for withdrawal of troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan and expressing support for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

The joint declaration adopted by the EU Eastern Partnership Summit in Brussels on 24 November 2017 expresses the EU’s support for the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of all partners.

The “Partnership Priorities” document initialed between Azerbaijan and the European Union in 2018 also expresses support for Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity, independence, sovereignty and inviolability of internationally recognized borders.



The final documents of NATO summits, including the Chicago Declaration of 2012, the Cardiff Declaration of 2014, the Warsaw Declaration of 2016, and the Brussels Declaration of 2018, supported Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence.

In addition, when the heads of the CIS member states were signing a memorandum on maintaining peace and stability in the Commonwealth of Independent States in 1995, Armenia refused to accept paragraphs 7 and 8 of the document. The said paragraphs articles stated that "Member states ... shall take measures to prevent any manifestation of separatism, nationalism, chauvinism and fascism in their territories ...". They also "undertake not to provide them with economic, financial, military or other assistance."

Despite the numerous calls from the international community to restore the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, Armenia continues to pursue an unconstructive policy, obstructs the negotiating process by all possible means, avoids resolving the conflict and tries to continue the occupation and maintain the status quo.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan made a statement in Khankandi on 5 August 2019 that "Karabakh is a part of Armenia and full stop". Until now, the Armenian side, realizing the international political, legal and moral responsibility of the policy of military occupation and annexation, has concealed its policy of aggression and tried to cover it up with the alleged self-determination of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh. This statement of Pashinyan proves that Armenia's real goal is aggression. By calling for the annexation of the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, Armenia violates the norms and principles of international law, the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and demonstrates disrespect for the international community, especially the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs responsible for resolving the conflict through negotiations. Addressing the 16th annual meeting of the Valdai International Discussion Club on 3 October 2019, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev responded to Pashinyan's statement as follows: "... the statement literally says that 'Karabakh is a part of Armenia and full stop'. First, to put it mildly, this is a lie. Both the lower and the upper parts of Karabakh are recognized by the world as integral parts of Azerbaijan. Armenia does not recognize this illegal entity itself. Karabakh is historical and ancient land of Azerbaijan. So Karabakh is Azerbaijan and exclamation mark!"

On 15 February 2020, President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan held panel discussions within the framework of the Munich Security Conference. During the discussions, the President of Azerbaijan once again brought Azerbaijan's legitimate position on the conflict to the attention of the international community and crushed Armenia's policy of aggression and false claims with his arguments based on historical facts and international law.

President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has repeatedly stated that "the international community has not paid sufficient attention to the occupation of the territory of a sovereign state recognized by the whole world ... All this is the greatest injustice and this injustice has been going on for many years."

Aggression is an international crime that flagrantly violates the fundamental principles of international law and represents the most serious form of illegal use of force. Forcing Armenia, which has committed an act of military aggression against Azerbaijan, into peace and subjecting it to sanctions for pursuing an explicit policy of annexation must be seriously considered.

The Armenian-Azerbaijani Nagorno-Karabakh conflict must be resolved within the framework of Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev said, "Our biggest compromise is our commitment to peace talks. However, we must use these opportunities to create new conditions. I want to say again that the strengthening of military potential does not automatically lead to a resumption of war. This is the last option. We must be prepared for that. Every country, including a country at war, a country whose territory is occupied, must be prepared for this."



Based on the norms and principles of international law, the known UN Security Council resolutions and the principles of the Helsinki Final Act, the political and legal basis for a phased settlement of the conflict has been developed and adopted by the international community. This includes the withdrawal of Armenian troops from the occupied territories of Azerbaijan, the restoration of the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan within its internationally recognized borders, the return of Azerbaijani refugees and IDPs, including the Azerbaijani community of Nagorno-Karabakh, and the coexistence of Azerbaijani and Armenian communities, in Nagorno-Karabakh.

The world community unequivocally recognizes and supports the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Azerbaijan. President of the Republic of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev has explicitly stated that “Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity is not and never will be the subject of negotiations ... Azerbaijan will not back down an inch from this position. In other words, there will be no concessions on the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan.”

Azerbaijan will never put up with the violation of its territorial integrity. Karabakh is ancient and eternal land and an integral part of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan will use all possible means to protect and restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty within its internationally recognized borders, and to return IDPs to their native lands.

## APPENDIX: No1

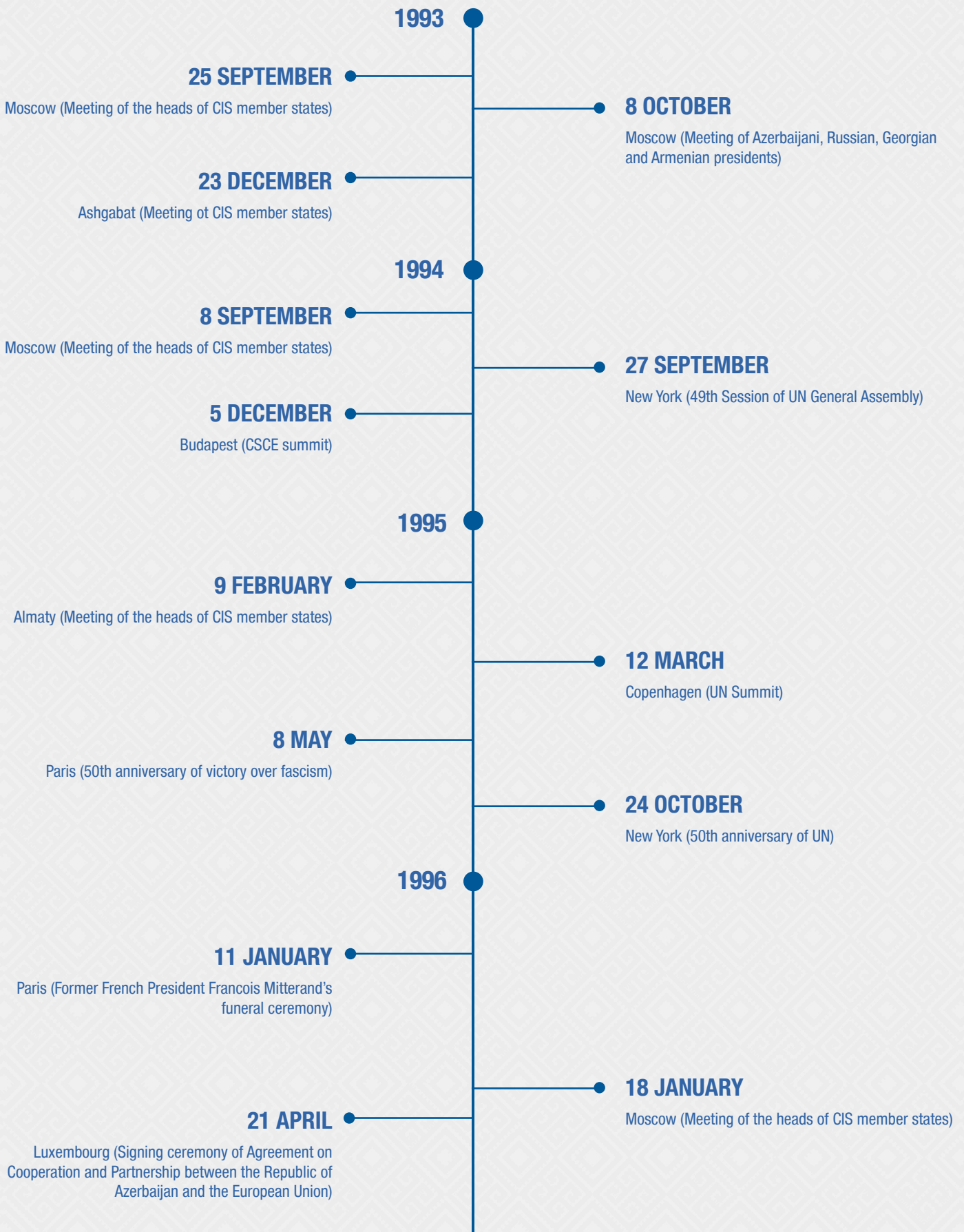
[Documents of regional and international organizations regarding Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict](#)

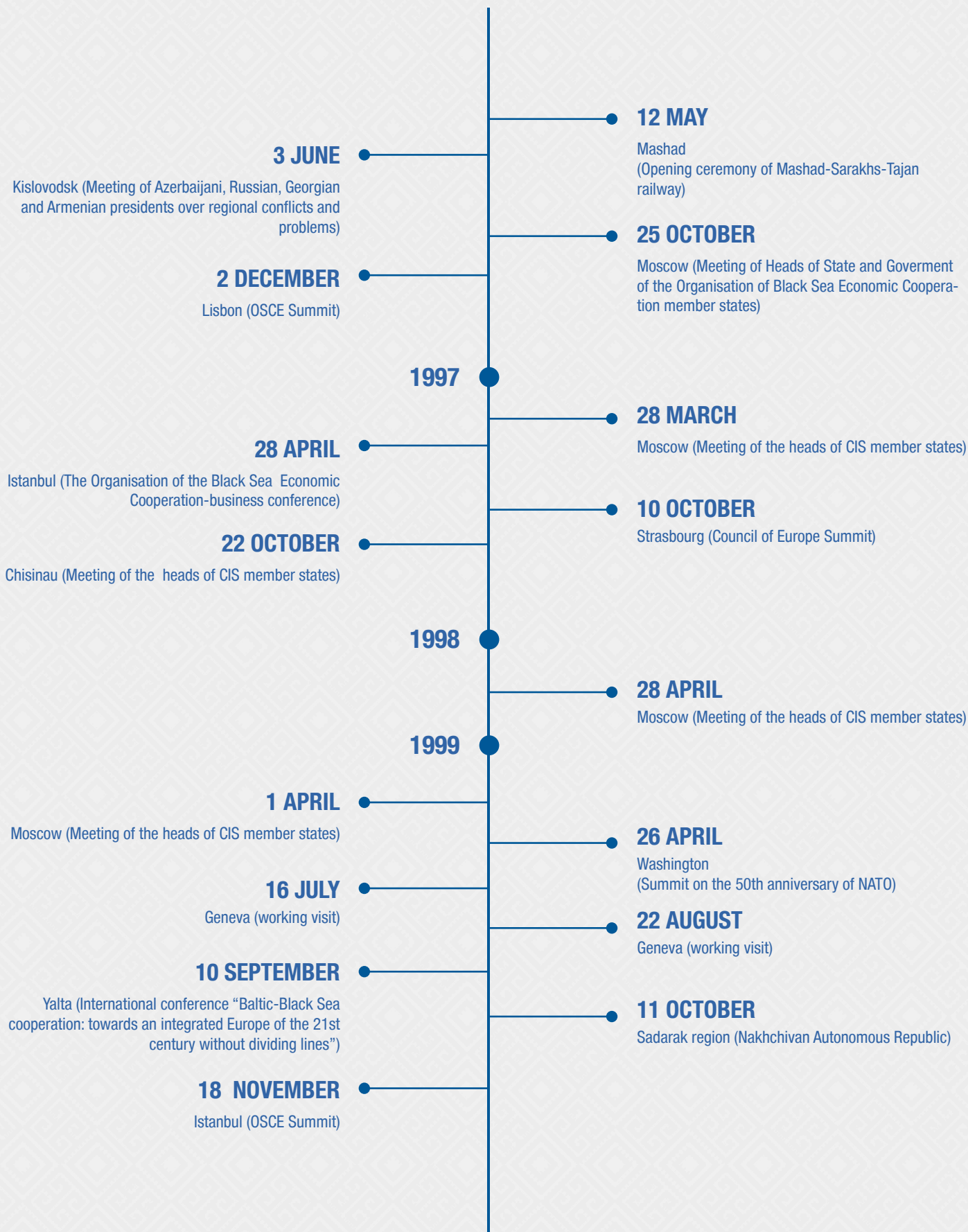




# APPENDIX: No2

Chronology of meetings over settlement of Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict held between Azerbaijani and Armenian presidents





2000

**24 JANUARY**

Moscow (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

**28 JANUARY**

Davos (World Economic Forum)

**20 JUNE**

Moscow (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

**18 AUGUST**

Yalta (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

**7 SEPTEMBER**

New York  
(Millenium Summit of the United Nations)

**30 NOVEMBER**

Minsk (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

2001

**25 JANUARY**

Strasbourg (Ceremony of Azerbaijan's and Armenia's admissions to the Council of Europe)

**26 JANUARY**

Paris (mediated by French President)

**4 MARCH**

Paris (mediated by French President)

**3 APRIL**

Key-West (mediated by US)

**31 MAY**

Minsk (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

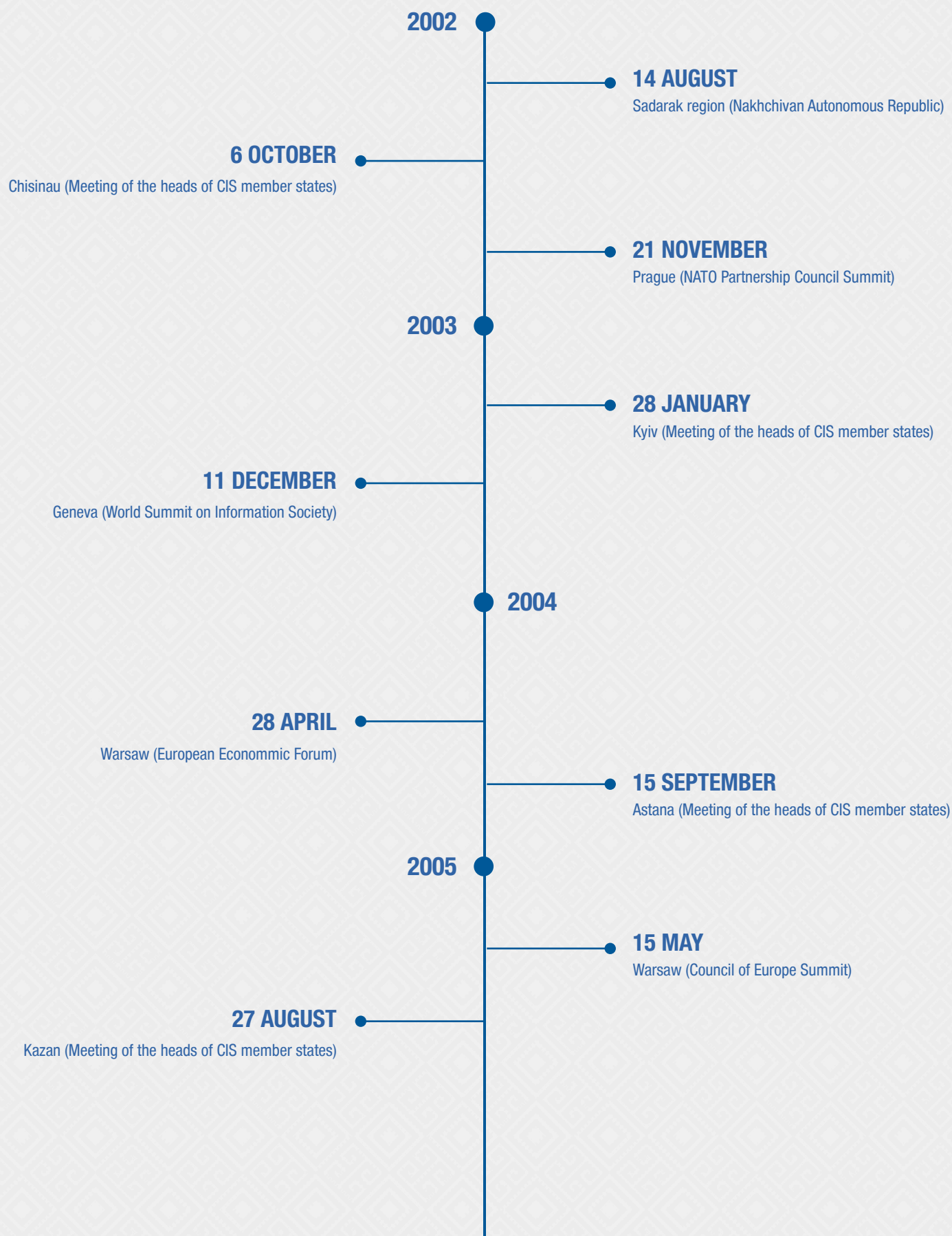
**1 AUGUST**

Sochi (Informal meeting of CIS Heads of State)

**30 NOVEMBER**

Moscow (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)





2006

**4 JUNE**  
Bucharest  
(Black Sea Forum for Partnership and Dialogue)

**10-11 FEBRUARY**  
Rambouillet  
(with participation of OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs)

**28 NOVEMBER**  
Minsk (Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

2007

**9 JUNE**  
St. Petersburg  
(Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

2008

**2 NOVEMBER**  
Moscow (In Mayn Dorf Castle, mediated by President of the Russian Federation)

**6 JUNE**  
St. Petersburg  
(Meeting of the heads of CIS member states)

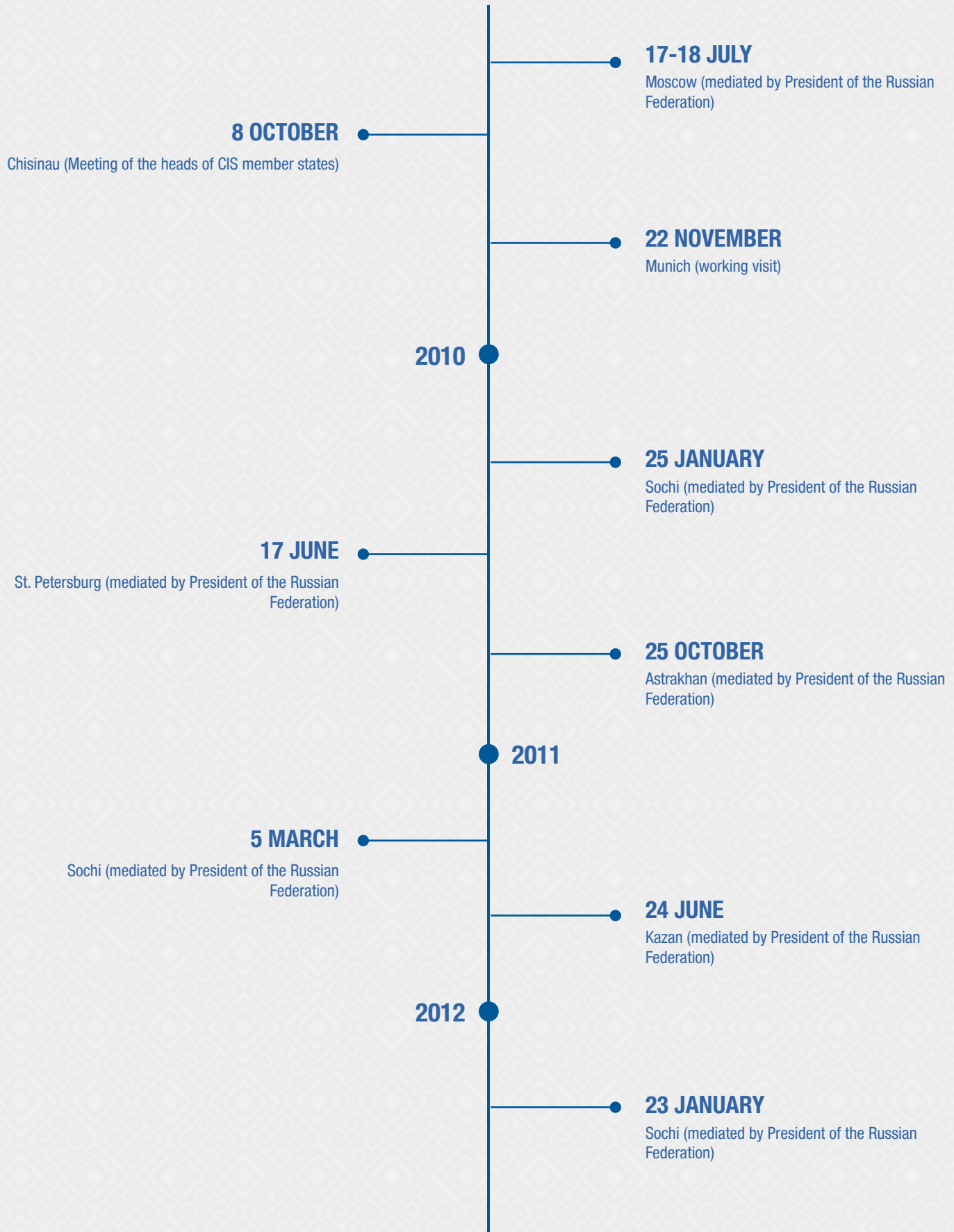
2009

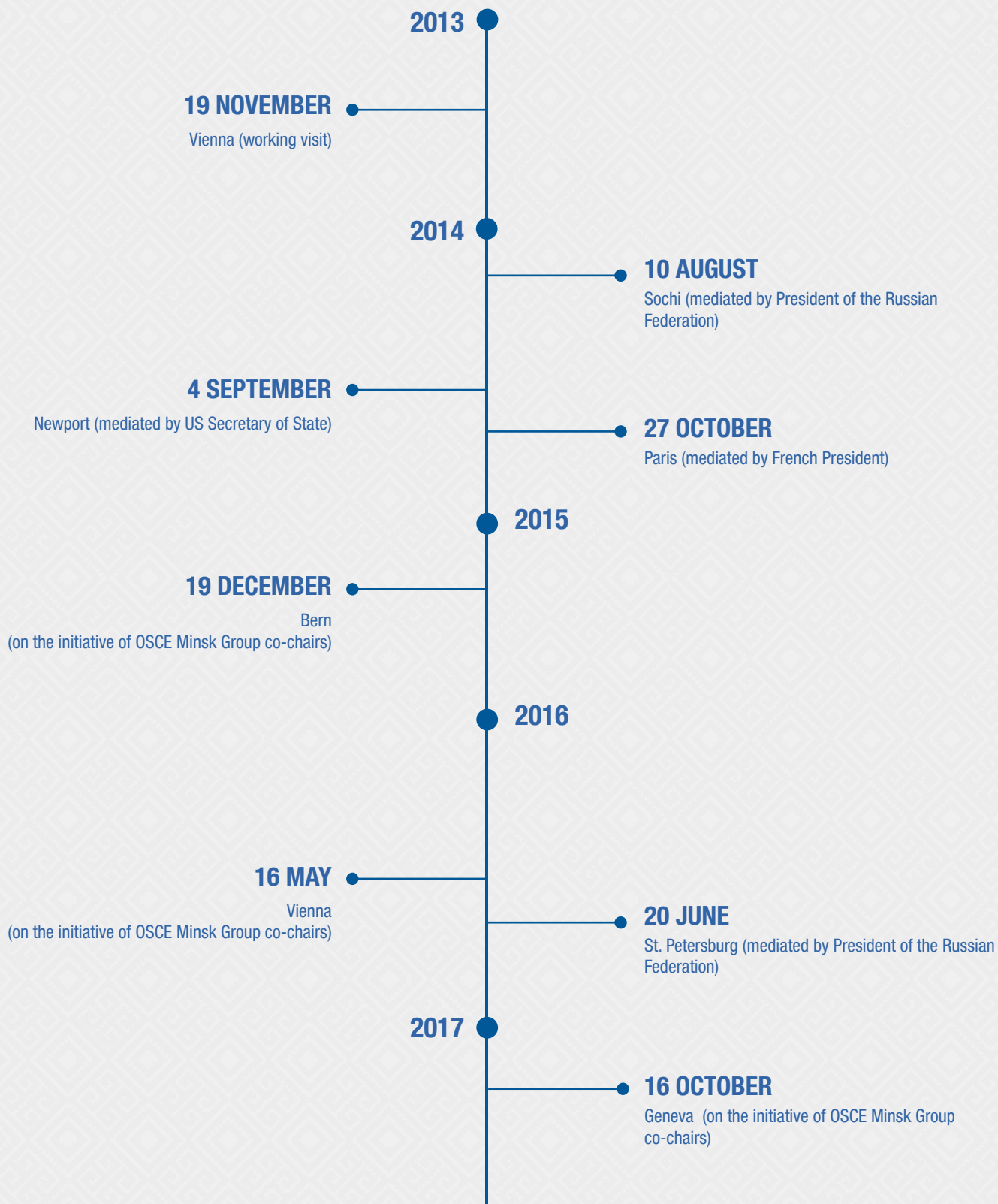
**7 MAY**  
Prague (Southern Corridor-New Silk Road Summit)

**28 JANUARY**  
Zurich (working visit)

**4 JUNE**  
St. Petersburg (mediated by President of the Russian Federation)







# APPENDIX: No3

Chronology of meetings over the settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan  
Nagorno-Karabakh conflict held between Azerbaijani President and Armenian Prime Minister

