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**Rethinking the Role of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in the Post-War Period:
Main Challenges Since the Liberation of Karabakh**

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List of abbreviations

AAA – Armenian Assembly in America

ANCA – Armenian National Committee of America

COP – Conference of Parties

EU – European Union

IDP – Internally Displaced Persons

PACE – Parliamentary Assembly of Council of Europe

PRC – People’s Republic of China

TCN – Third Country Nationals

UK – United Kingdom

UN – United Nations

USA – United States of America

Abstract

Diaspora communities are considered one of the influential groups when it comes to the foreign policy making process. Like any other country in the world, diaspora issues are considered one of the main policy elements for the Government Azerbaijani, especially amidst information wars against the Armenian community. Unfortunately, certain statistics, including adoption of anti-Azerbaijani resolutions, further spread of anti-Azerbaijani rhetorics in mass media, as well as increasing numbers of financing pose concerns for Azerbaijan and demonstrates noticeably hostile behavior. Considering these dynamics, the project aims to shed a further light to existing problems and provide alternative policies for Azerbaijani communities abroad for overcoming currently posed obstacles.

Rethinking the Role of the Azerbaijani Diaspora in the Post-War Period: Main Challenges Since the Liberation of Karabakh

Chapter I – Introduction

National diasporas have long been acknowledged as one of the key players in international politics with a significant ability to shape the political landscape in multiple areas of the world at the same time (Adamson 2016). That is to say, international diasporas can be a key figure that alters the political decision-making process simultaneously in both their host and home countries

(Adamson 2016). Interestingly, the word ‘diaspora’ originally referred to “the dispersion of the Jews to the lands outside Palestine after the Babylonian captivity” (Khara 2020, 12). However, as decades passed, diaspora as a phenomenon started to signify a completely different meaning. As a matter of fact, under the influence of globalization, modern diasporas have increasingly become more influential on the host country’s domestic and foreign policies, known as transnational political activism (Faist 2010). In turn, diasporas as independent actors also started actively influencing homeland foreign policy through constructive and destructive means (Shain and Barth 2003, 449). In other words, depending on the attitude that they receive abroad, members of the biggest diasporas in the world may reconfigure multiple dimensions (e.g., political, economic, or social) of their home countries’ foreign policies vis-à-vis the rest of the world.

Like any other country in the world, the Azerbaijani government also wants to actively maintain the weight of the diaspora as an important foreign policy element (Riaux, 2013). Arguably, Azerbaijani authorities also take into account that as globalization and multipolarity

in the world continue to grow, the role of diasporas in politics may also become more influential compared to previous decades. As a matter of fact, one of the main objectives in front of the Azerbaijani diaspora is the containment of activities of members of the Armenian diaspora, especially regarding issues surrounding Karabakh and atrocities orchestrated by the Armenian military over the past century, to defend the national interest at foreign countries. However, research suggests that patriotism in the Armenian diaspora significantly increased after the loss of the Second Karabakh War (Darieva, 2021). That is, according to Darieva, the transfer of ideas and values after the massive loss in the war led to stronger ‘reserved’ emotional attachment among members of the diaspora.

Additionally, the massive “anti-exodus” campaign circulated over the mass media after the anti-terror operation in Karabakh in September 2023 (Vardanyan, 2024), attempts to finance foreign diplomats for implementing sanctions against Azerbaijan (Freeman and DerSimonian 2023), as well as increasing anti-Azerbaijan narratives developed by members of the diaspora in the main political centers of the world (Feron and Baser, 2023) also demonstrate that the Armenian attitude towards ‘diasporic’ warfare after the loss in the battlefield might become more assertive over the last five years. Furthermore, research also suggests that as the dissolution of the so-called Nagorno Karabakh Republic caused further psycho-pathological trauma for the entire Armenian nation and ruined the Armenian fantasy existing since the 1990s, the current attitude toward

Azerbaijanis living abroad may turn more forceful compared to the pre-war period (Aliyev, 2024; DerSarkissian and Sharkey, 2021). Taking into all these, this capstone project aims to analyze how the Azerbaijani diaspora may help overcome the main challenges deriving from the increasingly assertive behavior of the Armenian diaspora – the spread of Armenian propaganda in mass media, funding of foreign politicians, as well as growing anti-Azerbaijani

sentiments – that the country has been facing since the beginning of the conflict, though this study will particularly focus on the post-liberation period.

We underline that the abovementioned tendency, that is, increasing assertiveness of members of the Armenian diaspora against Azerbaijan, may propose stronger challenges to the Azerbaijani foreign policy in the future if there are no proper counter-preventive measures. Put differently, we suggest that the Azerbaijani diaspora needs a clear vision – an understanding of their goals and what actions they should take, considering many members of the diaspora come from different professions and have limited knowledge of international relations. Additionally, while juxtaposing Azerbaijani and Armenian diasporas, it is worth considering that the Armenian diaspora is considered one of the biggest diasporas in the world, both taking into account the huge number of people and diaspora activeness in host countries (Shain and Barth, 2003; Haider, 2014). Therefore, we argue, that the Azerbaijani diaspora faced difficulties in promoting historical narratives that reflect the Azerbaijani perspective, particularly in academic and media spaces dominated by Armenian discourse. As a matter of fact, with the initiative of the State Committee on Work with Diaspora, since 2020 a platform called “Karabakh is Azerbaijan!” was established to deliver the position of Azerbaijan to the international community, as well as create awareness about the atrocities took place due to the Armenian occupation. At the same time, the diaspora also played an active role in humanitarian efforts for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and war veterans after both the first and second wars. However, we maintain that works carried out in the direction of improving awareness regarding Azerbaijan’s position in the conflict fall behind the propaganda of the Armenian diaspora, leading to the outcomes described above.

1.1. Methodology

Write this section in present simple

This paper relies on the comparative study of two case studies, namely activities of the Armenian diaspora juxtaposed with activities of the Azerbaijani diaspora after the liberation of Karabakh, that is, since late 2020. In other words, by comparing the two case studies, we want to demonstrate the role of diasporas in the post-war space. That is, our methodology aims to investigate how diasporas may influence post-war dynamics by demonstrating other corporative or deflecting behavior. For collecting data, we both use qualitative and quantitative methods. In other words, this paper is using a mixed-methods approach to examine the case of the Azerbaijani diaspora, integrating both qualitative and quantitative research methods. In terms of qualitative data, the project relies on existing literature based on the theoretical framework for diaspora analysis, as well as interviews (appendix A) from members of the Azerbaijani diaspora, the employee of the State Diaspora Committee of Azerbaijan, as well as political experts. Meanwhile, the quantitative data is used for the comparative analysis of the economic and financial data related to the activities of the two diasporas before and after the war in 2020.

To ensure a comprehensive analysis of the diaspora's activities and experiences in host countries vis-à-vis the Armenian diaspora, the study is based on both primary and secondary data collection. Secondary data was obtained from academic articles, government reports, and other online publications. Additionally, a content analysis of media coverage was also conducted to reveal the problems with the media engagement of the diaspora after the Second Karabakh War. Furthermore, our data collection also relies on statistical trend analysis on Google, which may help us understand the challenges the Azerbaijani diaspora has been facing over the last five years.

As a matter of fact, there are several limitations of our study as well. First of all, gathering detailed information and data on the activities of the Armenian diaspora is very challenging, since information is not easily accessible due to barriers to accessing Armenian portals in Azerbaijan. Similar accessibility issues arose with some English sources as well, as they

required paid subscriptions. Conducting interviews also presents difficulties due to conflicts with the work schedules of the officials who are willing to participate in our research, as well as time constraints that led to the cancellation of some planned discussions. However, despite these challenges, by relying on all collected and available (i.e., open source) qualitative and quantitative data, the project aims to present a nuanced understanding of the Azerbaijani diaspora's current challenges in containing the anti-Azerbaijani propaganda spread by the Armenian community in the biggest countries of the world.

1.2. Roadmap

Hence, in this paper, we aim to present novel alternatives for the Azerbaijani diaspora that would be plausible for countering the pressure of Armenian lobbies operating in different parts of the world. The first chapter of the paper will be introductory, explaining the role of diasporas in the current political setting, as well as underlining recent developments in diasporic activities of Azerbaijan and Armenia. The second chapter will focus on the background of the problem, with a proper emphasis on the recent activities of the Armenian diaspora against Azerbaijan and the response of the Azerbaijani diaspora to those actions. This chapter will be divided into three subchapters, each respectively explaining the massive anti-Azerbaijani media campaign after mass military operations, attempts of the Armenian lobby to finance foreign diplomats, as well as increasing anti-Azerbaijan narratives framed by sanction plans.

In turn, the third chapter will analyze possible policy alternatives that may be implemented by the Azerbaijani diaspora. As a matter of fact, the Azerbaijani diaspora can address post-2020 war challenges through more effective media engagement and management, increasing the financial assets of diaspora communities (especially of those communities located in huge political centers of the world), as well as by engaging more with local politicians in their host countries and increasing the number of "Azerbaijani houses" around the world. By

implementing these strategies, we maintain, that the Azerbaijani diaspora can become more influential in international affairs, protect the national interest, and in general, limit negative outcomes of the anti-Azerbaijani propaganda carried out by the Armenian diaspora. While the fourth chapter will focus on the analysis of policy alternatives based on their effectiveness, efficiency, flexibility, and feasibility, the final chapter will present possible steps for implementing the most rational outcome.

Alvan Mayilov

Chapter II – Problem Background

This chapter aims to demonstrate the roots of the existing problem, which is the failure to contain assertive Armenian behavior by Azerbaijani diaspora communities across the world. To elaborate on the situation explicitly, the paper refers to three main issues, which are growing

media propaganda of the Armenian diaspora, increased funding and advocacy of foreign politicians, as well as the promotion of anti-Azerbaijani sentiments in the West. While the first subchapter focuses on increasing anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in social media, that is to say, mostly among the ordinary people, the next two subchapters aim to show how the Armenian government manages to turn this anti-Azerbaijani sentiment spread among the masses into a concrete element of the political agenda of certain Western countries by financing and advocating number of politicians with the help of diaspora funding. In other words, this chapter maintains that the activities of members of the Armenian diaspora are interconnected and fulfilling one another. By maintaining this, the paper also argues that one of the strengths of the Armenian community in a ‘diasporic’ battle against Azerbaijan currently, is the level of organizational awareness. Put differently, with an advanced exploration of the main pillars of anti-Azerbaijani diasporic activities, it is possible to discover the algorithm of Armenian behavior and later easily de-construct it.

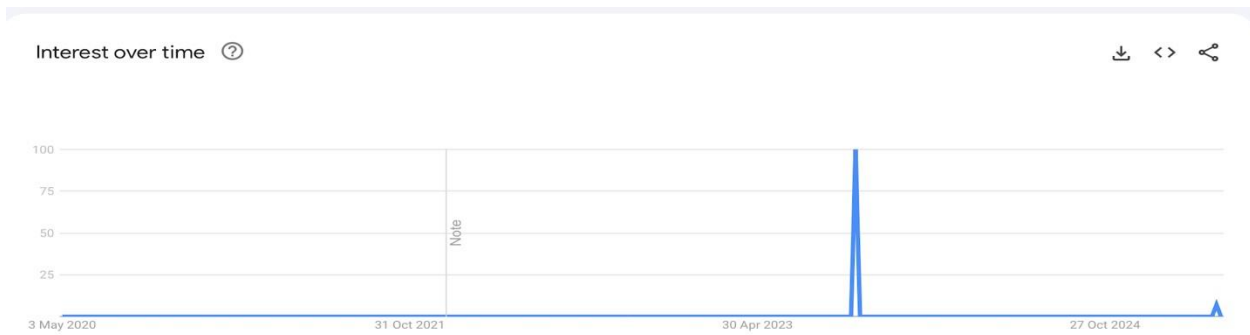
2.1. Growing Propaganda of the Armenian Diaspora

One of the key elements of the Armenian diaspora’s propaganda against Azerbaijan was the introduction of the term ‘Armenian exodus’ to mass media both after the 44 Days’ War in 2020 and the anti-terror operation in Karabakh in 2023. As a matter of fact, especially since 2023, the world’s most famous mass media outlets published reports and articles involving the phrasing of ‘mass exodus of Armenians.’ For instance, the Council on Foreign Relations (Roy 2023) published an article claiming, “Azerbaijan’s military takeover of Nagorno-Karabakh sparked a mass exodus of nearly the entire region’s population of ethnic Armenians.” Meanwhile, CNN published an article asking, “Why the Armenian exodus from Nagorno-Karabakh may not end Azerbaijan’s ambitions” (Edwards 2023).

Arguably, both over and after the conflict, the Azerbaijani diaspora could not manage to establish a well-established info politics compared to Armenians (Chernobrov 2022). To understand the essence of the problem we made a trend analysis with the help of Google Trends by running the phrases ‘Armenian exodus’ and ‘Armenians flee Karabakh’ as our key variables. The importance of such trend analysis was to discover data about the interest in the topic in world media. As a matter of fact, interest over time datasets in trend analysis presents a numeric ordinary scale for measuring the popularity of any term for the given region and time. In terms of the timing, we chose the last five years, starting from the end of the Second Karabakh War in November 2020 till today. Meanwhile, we decided to run the trend analysis worldwide, considering the same articles with similar titles appeared in various parts of the world simultaneously.

Our findings demonstrated that interest in the topic ‘Armenian exodus’ reached 81 on the scale of 100 both in 2021 and 2022. Considering a value of 50 means that the term is half as popular, such a high number means the issue of ‘exodus’ became almost popular within the two years of the liberation of Karabakh. However, in October 2023, the interest in the issue reached a value of 100, which is the peak popularity for the term. As a matter of fact, the same results are applicable to our second variable, which is the keyword – “Armenians flee Karabakh.” Compared to the ‘exodus’, ‘fleeing of Armenians’ does not have any significant impact factor in 2021 and 2022. However, data demonstrates that the search for fleeing Armenians from Karabakh also gained peak popularity in September 2023. Both cases demonstrate that the publication of articles on the Armenian exodus, as well as reaching those articles peak popularity over time demonstrates that the Azerbaijani diaspora has been facing a unique set of challenges, especially regarding promoting Azerbaijan’s position over ongoing issues.

Figure 1: Spike of interest to “Armenian exodus” globally



Source: Google Trends. Retrieved from:

<https://trends.google.com/trends/explore?date=today%205-y&q=armenian%20exodus>

Data shows that activities of the Azerbaijani diaspora could not compete with media campaigns and social media mobilization of the Armenian community in 2020 either. By analyzing Twitter activity linked to the Azerbaijan–Armenia conflict, Thomas and Zhang (2020) pointed out that, the Armenian diaspora heavily relied on social media platforms to spread its message and gain sympathy for the Armenian cause. Social media was flooded with posts claiming Azerbaijani aggression, often supported by videos or photos of damaged civilian areas, wounded individuals, or the aftermath of battles. The research figures out that the Armenian social media activities especially targeted English media accounts, as well as interaction with high-profile US figures under the influence of the diaspora members.

The same source also presents two figures that explain problems in the coordination of the Azerbaijani diaspora in preventing anti-Azerbaijani narratives and propaganda developed in media outlets. The first figure focuses on hashtag mentions per hour during the first three days of the escalation of conflict in 2020. Collected data demonstrates that pro-Armenian hashtags over this period are multiple times more than pro-Azerbaijani hashtags (Thomas and Zhang 2020, 3). Meanwhile, a network diagram of accounts using specific hashtags also demonstrates that throughout the conflict, there were at least five times more pro-Armenian hashtags originating in different parts of the world (Thomas and Zhang 2020, 4). As a matter of fact, the

research also presents the frequency of top hashtag mentions during the first days of the conflict. An analysis of this dataset demonstrates that excluding hashtags with no clear affiliation, six of the top ten most frequently used hashtags are anti-Azerbaijani. The pro-Armenian propaganda also differs from

Azerbaijani activities due to the variety of hashtags used (e.g., ‘#stopErdogan’, ‘#DefendArtsakh’, ‘#ArtsakhIsArmenia’ and ‘#StopAzerbaijanAggression’), which were strongly correlated with one another.

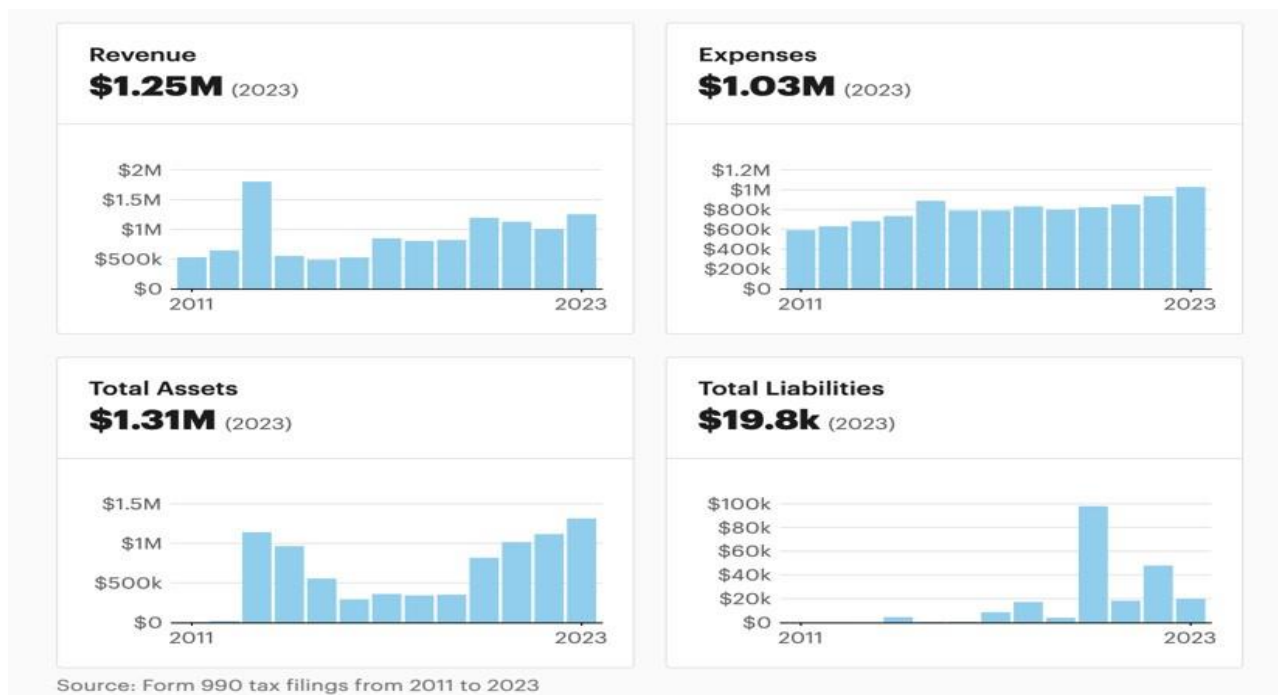
Farid Mammadov, who is representing the Azerbaijani diaspora in the United States, added that besides social media, there are certain magazines and newspapers (especially in California) that are directly funded by Armenians and used for spreading anti-Azerbaijani sentiments. Moreover, another interviewee Anar Jahangirli, the former Chairperson of the Canada-Azerbaijan diaspora network, also added that writing an article that would demonstrate the Azerbaijani realities to readers is also very problematic, since again, due to Armenian funding, most editors do not accept manuscripts that are ‘anti-Armenian’ in their opinions (From personal communication with Anar Jahangirli, 2025). According to them, despite these articles being written for newspapers or magazines, they are also circulated in many different media outlets (i.e., TV programs or social media posts) on purpose, making the job of the Azerbaijani diaspora against the spread of misinformation even harder. Last but not least, per them, even if the article written by an Azerbaijani person is accepted, almost half of it is changed, that is, it is never published the way that the authors wanted it to be published.

2.2. Increased Diaspora Funding and Advocacy by Armenians

As a matter of fact, currently, the Armenian communities in the United States and Europe are considered one of the biggest and most well-established diasporic communities in the world (Gevorgyan 2022; Papazian 2005). Since they immigrated to these regions, the Armenians have

successfully integrated into a wide range of fields of social life, ranging from business and entertainment sectors to politics (Bolsajian 2018). Among these communities, one of the biggest ones is the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), a group that has long been trying to achieve the US government’s recognition of Karabakh’s independence and US aid to this defacto entity (Gregg 2002). In that context, one research by ProPublica (2023) demonstrates that the ANCA expenses and total assets have been growing steadily since 2020, that is, since the liberation of occupied Azerbaijani territories.

Figure 2: ANCA expenses over the last years



Source: ProPublica. Retrieved from:
<https://projects.propublica.org/nonprofits/organizations/521492274>

Put differently, at the end of 2020, which coincides with the end of the Second Karabakh conflict, expenses of the ANCA amounted to \$823,000, which was \$30,000 compared to 2019. As a matter of fact, at the end of 2023, the total expenses of the ANCA became \$1.03 million. At the same time, the total assets of the ANCA also reached \$1.31 million at the end of 2023, which is almost four times higher than the \$350,000 assets at the end of 2019.

Another public source, OpenSecrets, which reports on lobbying spending of diasporas, also reveals that since 2021, the dynamics of Armenian diasporic communities' spending in the United States have been developing through an increasing tendency. According to numbers presented by the portal, the Armenian Assembly in America (AAA) spent \$110,000 for lobbying efforts (i.e., funding of politicians) in 2021 and 2022 (OpenSecrets 2022). However, the data demonstrates that for the following two years, there was a relevant increase in these numbers. According to the source, the AAA spent \$160,000 as the part of lobbying agenda in 2023 (OpenSecrets 2024). Interestingly, there is a relevant increase in 2024, which accounts for spending of \$230,000. This demonstrates that the Armenian diaspora started working even more for funding the US politicians especially special operations that took place in September 2023. Just in 2024, the Armenian diaspora lobbied 9 bills at the Congress, among which included bills on "Recognizing the Republic of Artsakh's independence and condemning Azerbaijan's continued aggression against Armenia and Artsakh," "Condemning Azerbaijan's blockade of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and ongoing human rights violations," and "Condemning Azerbaijan for perpetrating an ethnic cleansing campaign against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh". According to political expert Vasif Huseynov, despite after the Second Karabakh War, the Azerbaijani diaspora became more organized compared to earlier times and the Azerbaijani government started supporting diaspora communities even further,

this assistance is not always sufficient (From personal communication with Vasif Huseynov, 2025). That is to say, financial challenges remain a significant barrier preventing to strengthening of the position of the Azerbaijani diaspora in the world and discouraging active participation of the Azerbaijani youth in the work of diaspora.

As a matter of fact, per OpenSecrets, the Armenian National Committee has also been spending hundreds of thousands of dollars on lobbying efforts in the United States of America. Moreover, data demonstrates that these two big diasporic communities almost invest half a million dollars in lobbying foreign politicians in only the United States. It can be assumed that the numbers are even higher if we also include financial donations coming from relatively smaller organizations, as well as all extra undisclosed lobbying projects that have not been registered in open portals. Meanwhile, the Armenian community is also involved in financing several European diplomats to pursue anti-Azerbaijani policies. As a matter of fact, the financing of the Armenian lobby has always played a role in the election process (Mehman 2024). Research of the local media also revealed that the mediator between them and the Armenian lobby was Kaspar Karapetyan, an 80-year-old man living in Brussels of Armenian origin, whose name has been mentioned in various negative issues, from money laundering to suspicious financial transactions. Findings of several investigations have found out that Karapetyan, who played the role of the “cash register” of

Armenians in the Western world, for many years, held meetings with American senators and Western parliamentarians, and was an important part of the entire funding schema of most of the anti-Azerbaijani resolutions adopted in the European Parliament. In turn, after an investigation, the Report agency found out that especially after the liberation of Karabakh, Karapetyan transferred 3.8 million euros for the activities of the Armenian diaspora, known as the “cognac diplomacy”.

2.3. Increasing Anti-Azerbaijani Sentiments in the West

Not surprisingly, starting from September 2023 the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted several resolutions criticizing Azerbaijan on various accounts. Under the influence of lobbying efforts, PACE decided to condemn Azerbaijan's operations in Karabakh by adopting Resolution 2517 - The Humanitarian Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh – blaming the country for ethnic cleansing against the Armenian population of the region. Ongoing tensions further lead PACE not to ratify the credentials of Azerbaijan's parliamentary delegation due to concerns over Azerbaijan's commitments in front of the Council of Europe. PACE also adopted a resolution addressing human rights violations in Azerbaijan, as well as relations with Armenia late

October, just a couple of weeks before the start of COP29 in Baku. As a matter of fact, the adoption of so many resolutions against Azerbaijan within one year is a clear example that members of the Azerbaijani diaspora cannot adapt to the post-war political setting, since it has become impossible to block efforts of pro-Armenian political circles in the West.

Meanwhile, it is worth adding that last year a group of American congressmen, led by Dina Titus, submitted a bill on sanctions against Azerbaijan as well (Raufoglu 2024). The bill envisaged sanctions against more than 40 Azerbaijani officials - military personnel, judges, investigators, and high-ranking officials - who “played an active role in the violation of the rule of law and human rights in the country”. Interestingly, bills presented at the Congress under the Biden Administration also stated that the rights of “Armenian prisoners” have been violated. All these demonstrate how the US policy towards the South Caucasus in recent years has been

strongly shaped by the activities of the members of the Armenian diaspora. Comparatively speaking, despite the existence of proof regarding the ethnic cleansing against Azerbaijani people, the destruction of cultural heritage, as well as non-implementation of the four UN resolutions condemning Armenian actions, the

Azerbaijani diaspora never achieved lobby anything similar to “Amendment 907” at the Congress.

Table 1: Number of anti-Azerbaijani resolutions in the Western world

Country/organization	Number of resolutions
USA	4
France	6
PACE	3
Netherlands	2
Germany	1 (did not pass)
Canada	0 (debates and MP statements)
UK	0 (informal debates)

The above-mentioned figure summarizes adopted anti-Azerbaijani resolutions in the biggest political centers of the world since 2021. The number of resolutions includes the bills that were voted on and passed a certain threshold in the respective institutions of each country and organization. If we exclude the number of resolutions that were drafted, did not gain any support, or did not pass, we may see that over the past four years, there were fifteen anti-Azerbaijani resolutions adopted in various parts of the world. As a matter of fact, both during the 44 Days' War in 2020, as well as anti-terror operations in 2023, countries like France also wanted to pass UNSC resolutions targeting Azerbaijan for violating premises of the international law. In total, taking into account also draft resolutions that did not pass and preliminary discussions that were not continued later, we may realize that there are more than twenty anti-Azerbaijani cases recorded.

In other words, to pursue their anti-Azerbaijani sentiments, members of the Armenian diaspora tend to target places where members of the Azerbaijani diaspora are relatively low and unorganized, while Armenian money transferred to accounts of politicians from those places are very high. Anar Jahangirli also notes that since there are not too many members of the Azerbaijani diaspora in Canada, automatically, the capabilities for what the Azerbaijani diaspora can do also decrease. Therefore, he emphasizes that Armenians always choose such places where Azerbaijanis living abroad compared to other diasporas, are very small. According to him, based on official census data in Canada, about 10,000 Azerbaijanis are living in the country, which is twelve times less than about 120,000 Armenians living there (From personal communication with Anar Jahangirli, 2025). Moreover, according to him, comparative study also allows us to reveal that since the history of the Armenian diaspora is older than the history of the Azerbaijani diaspora, that is to say, as Armenians started immigrating to various parts of the world very early (i.e., at the beginning of the last century), most of them already represent the third or fourth generation of

Armenians abroad, compared to Azerbaijanis who have direct connection to Azerbaijan and started their diasporic activities essentially after the dissolution of the Soviet Union. Additionally, according to Ilgar Majidli, an employee of the State Diaspora Committee, when Azerbaijanis started to create organizations or communities, problems associated with leadership and governance inside those organizations also took place (From personal communication with Ilgar Majidli, 2025). In other words, the Azerbaijani diaspora to some extent also suffers from orderlessness, as well as a low level of organizational awareness, making it problematic to struggle against Armenian propaganda.

This chapter focused on the background of the problem that the Azerbaijani diaspora currently facing in a post-war political space. In a nutshell, we argued that four main challenges should be addressed to contain the activities of members of the Armenian community. The first option is to take measures against the growing propaganda of the Armenian diaspora, spread both in mass and social media through various channels. We believe such a misinformation campaign against Azerbaijan not only spoils the country's image among high-ranking politicians but also is quite influential for ordinary citizens. Secondly, research and statistics demonstrated that the financial expenses and assets of the main branches of the Armenian diaspora also increased since 2020. Additionally, findings illustrated that financial assets were not only used for the well-being of the Armenian community in host countries but also for operations targeting Azerbaijan. In connection with the second problem, the third issue explored growing anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in core political centers, as well as anti-Azerbaijani rhetoric by Western politicians. It should be added that we do not deny that Western institutions adopted anti-Azerbaijani resolutions before the settlement of the Karabakh problem as well. However, data demonstrates that there have never been such huge numbers of resolutions targeting Azerbaijan, and we believe that it should be a strong signal for members of the Azerbaijani diaspora.

The project therefore maintains that both of those abovementioned problems interconnectedly jeopardize efforts of Azerbaijani diplomacy vis-à-vis top political centers of the world; thus, necessitates an effective solution to described issues. Simultaneously, when the Azerbaijani diaspora fails to relocate itself in the post-war space, that is to say, fails to handle the pressures and propaganda of the Armenian diaspora, the work of the central government (i.e., official Baku) also becomes costlier. One should consider that this century is characterized by the dominance of new approaches, demands, and proposals in any sphere. In that sense, diasporas abroad play a more active role as a bridge between the international community and institutions operating within the country. In this regard, it is advisable to reconsider the state-diaspora strategy and increase the immunity and privileges of this area. In other words, in the shadow of all the described problems, there is an urgent need to rethink the role of the Azerbaijani diaspora in postwar space and overcome these challenges.

Elmir Huseynli

Chapter III – Policy Alternatives

Diasporas may function as intermediaries for boosting economic ties between the country of origin and the host country (Gevorkyan 2021). As a matter of fact, they may help establish the basis for multi-purpose financial flows by investing in businesses and infrastructure projects, as well as facilitate international trade by connecting markets between the two countries with the help of diaspora networks. Constant and Zimmermann (2016) also believe that diasporas may bring new perspectives to economic relations as, under the influence of globalization, some countries started to realize the economic power of respective diasporas in promoting economic growth, as well as projecting a positive ‘trademark’ image for both countries. Acting as financial representatives of the country of origin is very essential for huge diaspora communities since certain amounts of the money gained as the result of bilateral economic projects are reinvested for lobbying purposes. As a matter of fact, one of the

advantages of the Armenian diaspora is also coming from the huge number of business money, established decades ago with the flow of first-generation Armenians to the West, especially to the United States of America.

This chapter aims to explore how national diaspora committees function in general, manage to address any increasingly aggressive activity coming from the opposite rival side, and how these strategies might be utilized by Azerbaijani diaspora communities. The general experience of the biggest diasporas all around the world demonstrates that one of the best ways to contain the aggressive behavior of a rival diaspora is by utilizing the country's soft power abroad. In other words, an effective containment of the rival necessitates an effective coordination among political, economic, and cultural resources of the diaspora community. Therefore, based on other diasporas' experience, as well as the need for utilizing the soft power of the diaspora community, we may present the following policy alternatives that can be considered useful for tackling the problem that the Azerbaijani diaspora is currently facing. Based on the expertise of some other diaspora communities, we propose that the Azerbaijani diaspora can address the current challenges by maintaining a more effective media management, increasing the financial assets of diaspora communities, as well as increasing engagement with local politicians and promoting cultural diplomacy in their host countries.

3.1. Developing a More Effective (Social) Media and Public Relations Management

Azerbaijani communities abroad may consider focusing on a more influential content creation, in terms of the production of various documentaries in the language of the host country that would allow highlighting the Azerbaijani perspective on Karabakh for the local population more efficiently. Following the experience of the Jewish community, to fight against the rise of anti-Azerbaijani sentiments, members of the Azerbaijani community may also create volunteer teams, who are always in exchange with Azerbaijani diplomats and diaspora members, for

factchecking websites that are used for spreading social hatred. Additionally, to fight misinformation, the translation of any available content that might prove Armenian violence against the Azerbaijani people into multiple languages for a more active engagement should also be supported. As a matter of fact, Anar Jahangirli also highlighted the absence of an effective PR campaign due to the lack of coordination (From personal communication with Anar Jahangirli, 2025). Furthermore, Farid Mammadov, who is currently living in the United States, also highlighted that the American population tends to absorb any information without digging deeper into the content. Therefore, he also suggests that creating a fact-checking team might be very helpful for quickly responding to misinformation or biased narratives in foreign media (From personal communication with Farid Mammadov, 2025).

In turn, Ilgar Majidli noted that to fight against misinformation spread by the Armenian community, members of the Azerbaijani diaspora make official statements, send letters of protest, as well as speak at rallies. However, according to him, this is also carried out in a limited capacity, since the abovementioned preventive steps could not stop executive or legislative bodies in certain countries express an unfair opinion about Azerbaijan, despite members of the diaspora previously refuting them with facts (From personal communication with Ilgar Majidli, 2025). Therefore, he suggested a more active engagement with foreign journalists to build stronger relationships with mass international media outlets. We believe that this policy can be carried out both at the governmental, as well as in diasporic levels and may encourage balanced media coverage. That is, while the diaspora may support certain foreign media outlets and journalists with donations, also on a governmental level, cooperation between some mass media agencies can help them to refuse circulating anti-Azerbaijani segments. Additionally, the Azerbaijani diaspora may organize periodic briefings with local journalists and political experts of the host country to provide them with updates, as well as build truthful relationships.

As a matter of fact, the Jewish community effectively manages to combine the political interests of host countries with its own national interests and carries out a multi-layered foreign policy. As a result, they easily utilize ethnic lobbying strategies such as manipulation of electoral power and control of financial resources with the help of their organizational strength (Dekker 2010). Dekker also believes that due to the influence of the abovementioned factors, the Jewish community manages to contain the capabilities of the Arab diaspora in ‘pro-Palestinian’ movements. That is, the effective workings of the Jewish community led to the spread and maintenance of anti-Arab Prejudice in certain countries, as well as caused the limited access of Arab diaspora members to highly influential Western policymakers. Put differently, the Jewish diaspora, especially after the 9/11 attacks, managed to build cultural hostility in certain Western societies, by controlling the authority over the image of an ‘Arab’ with a huge influence on mass culture (i.e., Hollywood) and news industry (Ionides 2003; Shaheen 2001). Causing major disadvantages for their rival communities by portraying anti-Arab stereotypes, effective influence on media outlets became a major source for the Jewish community to contain aggression that they received from the opposite side. As a matter of fact, to fight against antisemitism, the Jewish community also uses large-scale volunteer teams for fact-checking websites and diminishing social hatred (Ozawa et al. 2024). Additionally, to fight misinformation, the Jewish diaspora community also maintains the translation of any available content into multiple languages for a more active engagement (Ozawa et al. 2024, 6-7). By doing so, the spread of anti-Jewish narratives is prevented and sources that spread such narratives can easily be detected, which allows to contain rival communities’ initiatives.

Research also suggest that there are various other success stories based on a more effective social media management. According to Antonjevic (2004) diaspora communities from former Yugoslavian countries managed to fight against misinformation and hostile behavior of other diasporas with the help of “Cyber Yugoslavia” resistance networks. According to Dona

(2014), certain diaspora communities like the Turkish society construct online communities, known as 'ye-diasporas.' As a matter of fact, the Russian speakers living in post-Soviet republics after the collapse of the Soviet Union has also been using the same technique already for decades (Laitin 1998). All cases demonstrate that establishing social bond through electronic means, as well as promoting the public relations image of country can be very successful and allow the diaspora communities avoid hostile behavior not only rival diasporas, but also some members of host country nationals.

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3.2. Promoting Cultural Diplomacy Further

As a matter of fact, in a century when interstate relations became increasingly determined by multidimensional policies, cultural diplomacy can play a crucial tool in fostering the global image of any country, including Azerbaijan, as well as promoting mutual understanding between various communities amidst growing global interconnectedness. In that regard, Azerbaijan as a country with a rich history, growing strategic geopolitical importance, as well as cultural identity, which can be presented as the amalgamation of Western and Eastern traditions, may utilize cultural diplomacy as a potential political tool for containing and countering negative stereotypes built around the country by rival diasporas. Arguably, the Azerbaijani diaspora, with its presence in various states, that is to say, with presence both in the Western and Orientalist countries, may play a very essential role in this context. By promoting the cultural essence of Azerbaijan, engaging with representatives of host countries, as well as diaspora communities of other states, and presenting the cultural nuances of Karabakh and all results of the cultural terrorism that Azerbaijan suffered for years, the diaspora can help prevent the spread of anti-Azerbaijani sentiments.

In that regard, one of the most effective ways to promote cultural diplomacy could be increasing the number of Azerbaijani cultural centers abroad, especially in places where strong anti-Azerbaijani sentiments rooted over the past decades. As a matter of fact, according to the information presented on the official webpage of the Ministry of Culture of Azerbaijan, currently, Azerbaijani cultural centers are operating only in six countries, which are France, Uzbekistan, Austria, Germany, Italy, and Turkiye. Interestingly, in this list, there are no names of countries like Canada, the United States of America, or the Netherlands, where members of the Armenian diaspora actively advocate for anti-Azerbaijani policies. Even despite the existence of a cultural center in the heart of France, huge problems continue to exist there as well. Since these institutions can serve as hubs for different activities, as well as may promote a more appealing image of the country with its deep cultural roots and traditions, the establishment and promotion of cultural centers by the Azerbaijani diaspora can prevent the spread of anti-Azerbaijani sentiments, which try to label the country as barbaric and violent.

Vasif Huseynov also suggested in an interview that when members of the diaspora have lived in a country for a long time, they become more familiar with the local culture, society, and psychology (From personal communication with Vasif Huseynov, 2025). This deep understanding allows them to connect more effectively with the host nation, making it easier to represent their countries and positively shape attitudes toward it. According to him, to counter disinformation about Azerbaijan, diaspora communities can organize events that engage local populations. Such events not only promote cultural understanding but also help build trust and correct misconceptions through direct interaction and dialogue.

The new Turkish diaspora policy aims to promote the cultural image of Turkey, while maintaining strong economic and political foundations for that. As a matter of fact, Unver (2013) suggests the diaspora, especially the Turkish community in Germany is a key political actor

whose multicultural contribution helps to support the full integration and compatibility of Turkey with the EU. The government of Turkiye also supports the operation of several Turkish-language news platforms and social media pages that would allow the promotion of Turkish views abroad. That's why, for decades, the Turkish-American diaspora played a key role in preventing the U.S. Congress from passing genocide resolutions. Additionally, the Turkish diaspora in Germany became pivotal for the inclusion of more Turkish history and culture in school curricula, without biases and distortions.

Besides the Turkish diaspora, various other communities also rely on the promotion of cultural diplomacy as the means for overcoming the hostile behavior of their rivals. In this context, Srinivas (2019) underlines cultural activities of the Indian diaspora in various parts of the world under the support of the Modi government, which has been used for containing the rival behavior of the Pakistani diaspora. Another research by Collins and Bekenova (2020) also suggest that Kazakh diasporas in Europe has been using promotion of cultural diplomacy as the means for attracting sympathy to their communities, as well as diminishing hostile behavior of host country citizens towards them. According to Ahmadi and others (2024), diaspora is the key component and instrument of the Persian cultural diplomacy. The Iranian diaspora also relies on cultural diplomacy, taking into account recent political problems that the country has been facing.

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3.3. Engaging and Supporting Local Politicians in Host Countries More

Arguably, in times when strong antagonism exists between two (or more) diaspora, the ability to influence host country politicians can be a strong determining factor. As discussed in

early chapters, historically, the members of the Armenian diaspora, particularly ones in the United States and France, have successfully lobbied for different anti-Azerbaijani political resolutions.

Ilgar Majidli also emphasized that the Azerbaijani diaspora has generally lagged in its capacity to influence political institutions and public opinion in host countries. However, he also adds that since the geopolitical situation changed in the world and Azerbaijan has become an important part of the new multipolar world order, the capabilities of diaspora communities have also changed and made them more influential.

Our interviewees from diaspora communities suggested that building political capital through engagement with politicians and institutions would be one the most effective ways for the country to contain the hostile behavior from rival diasporas. As a matter of fact, the success stories of the abovementioned diasporas also demonstrated that without building such strong relationships with local politicians on different levels, protecting consistent engagement could not have been possible. International experience also shows that when members of any foreign diaspora become reliable political supporters, their voices also start carrying more weight. Moreover, members of the Azerbaijani diaspora may also consider running for office in certain districts or counties, where the Azerbaijani diaspora is the majority since the representation within political institutions ensures more direct communication with the capital city.

An important aspect of the political weight of the Jewish diaspora comes from the degree of influence of its political activism. Not surprisingly, Jewish political lobbying for Israel has been considered the staple of diasporic activities and has taken the form of public demonstrations in host countries for decades (Ben-Moshe 2009). According to Aleskerova (2021), the strength of the Jewish lobby is related to the sympathy and closeness of the American community to Israel.

Turkish communities have also to suppress the assertive behavior of the Armenian diaspora over the fake ‘genocide’ claims, the Greek community of the Cyprus issue, as well as had to promote the European Union integration of the country in all host EU-member states. It is worth adding that the Turkish diaspora constitutes the largest group of Third Country Nationals (TCNs) living in Europe constituting a quarter of all TCNs in the continent (Ozdora-Aksak and Molleda 2014, 223). This is very important for carrying out Turkish integration into the European Union by putting pressure on Brussels. Okyay (2015, 112) also suggests that agendas of Turkish communities abroad over these matters mainly consisted of opposing the claims and activities of “enemy emigrants”, such as the Kurdish diaspora through street demonstrations and petitions, as well as financing and mobilizing politicians of host countries for blocking Armenian attempts to recognize the so-called genocide.

3.4. Diversifying Sources of Self-Funding

Finally, we maintain that a sustainable and diversified funding base, which can help cover multiple problems, should be created to protect the independence of Azerbaijani diaspora organizations in various parts of the world. Anar Jahangirli also highlighted that diversification of sources for self-funding is very essential for being vulnerable to possible political shifts and economic fluctuations, as well as might help cover the needs of certain local groups in host countries amidst any complex domestic situation (From personal communication with Anar Jahangirli, 2025). Initially, based on the experience of other communities, including the Armenian diaspora, this process can be carried out by creating membership-based contributions and increasing the amount of these contributions where such tradition already exists.

Diaspora communities can introduce membership fees, as well as monthly or annual donations that would later be allocated for lobbying activities. As a matter of fact, the experience of other communities demonstrates that large and medium-scale donating can create a steady

financial backbone for diasporas and might be used for containing the hostile behavior of the rival. Additionally, Azerbaijani communities abroad may consider building stronger business partnerships and sponsorships with Azerbaijani and host country companies. While Azerbaijani-owned businesses abroad or corporations interested in Azerbaijani markets can become key sponsors for diaspora activities, these sponsors can also receive visibility at events hosted by the Azerbaijani community, encouraging them to get involved in this process further.

Research demonstrates that the Chinese diaspora had an influential role in the increase of China's bilateral trade, that is to say, the economic potential of the country (Martínez-Zarzoso and Rudolf 2020). In other words, networks that members of the Chinese diaspora established in host countries years ago affected the volume of bilateral trade flows, since under the presence and influence of ethnic Chinese, host countries became more interested in partnership opportunities, especially in terms of imports of Chinese goods compared to exports. Moreover, scholars also emphasize that the capital of the Chinese diaspora also played a very substantial role in the reform period to take place successfully and led to the economic development of the country during the beginning of the XXI century (Afonaseva 2024).

Currently, the Chinese diaspora also plays an important role in promoting and sustaining Chinese economic and political image amidst the trade war against the United States. As a matter of fact, diaspora-led businesses help to diversify the supply chains by looking for alternative markets, which can establish new modes of cooperation between China and other parts of the world. In general, despite all the disadvantages of the trade war, that is, increased scrutiny, rising anti-China sentiment, and the sense of uncertainty regarding their place in Western societies, the Chinese diaspora continues to serve as a bridge between the mainland and business owners in the rest of the world, making the case of Chinese communities abroad a true success story.

To sum up, this chapter aimed to explore the alternative policies that the Azerbaijani diaspora may adopt based on the experience of other diaspora communities that are also faced with the same problem that the Azerbaijani diaspora is currently facing. Based on the experience of the Jewish, Turkish, and Chinese diasporas, the paper maintained that Azerbaijani communities abroad may distort the Armenian diaspora policy by developing a more effective (social) media and public relations management, promoting cultural diplomacy further, engaging with and supporting local politicians in host countries more, as well as diversifying sources of self-funding. The following chapter will focus on a comparative analysis of these four alternatives, to determine the most plausible one among others.

Chapter IV – Comparative Evaluation of Policy Alternatives

This chapter aims to analyze possible alternatives for Azerbaijani diaspora communities based on five criteria, namely, effectiveness, efficiency, equity, flexibility, and feasibility. In this case, effectiveness focuses on how given alternatives can help achieve intended objectives and pursue a highly effective strategy that would significantly strengthen the diaspora's role within their host societies. In turn, the efficiency of policy alternatives will assess the cost-benefit ratio of each option, while equity considers the equal distribution of resources within and afterward of the possible implementation of each alternative. In the context of this paper, flexibility will refer to the adaptability of policy options in response to (un)expected changes such as political, economic, or cultural shifts. Finally, feasibility examines the practical implementation potential of each alternative. In other words, it aims to explore whether alternative policy choices are realistically achievable to be considered a viable option.

4.1. Evaluation of Developing Effective Media and Public Relations Management Option

Based on the above-mentioned five criteria, we may proclaim that developing a more effective (social) media and public relations management can be one of the optimal decisions for the Azerbaijani diaspora. The policy will be effective considering effective media management and public relations promotion can help contain activities of the Armenian diaspora. Meanwhile, previous successful case stories also demonstrated that if implemented carefully, a new model of social media management prevents the spread of hostile representation of certain communities vis-à-vis others. Additionally, this option can be considered more efficient compared to others because it might be less costly compared to others. That is to say, establishing new cultural centers, funding politicians, as well as new funding policies may require a completely reordering allocation of financial resources. In turn, social media management might

require the allocation of funding to only one sphere, which is media management. Put differently, Azerbaijani diaspora communities may further invest the available funding in other spheres as well by focusing on current deficits in media management.

Since each Azerbaijani diaspora community may be involved to an equal degree in this process, we may also consider it to be equal. As a matter of fact, equity will be preserved even further considering the implementation of this policy aims to keep parity of the Azerbaijani diaspora with other hostile diasporas involved. We also believe that developing a more effective social media management can be more flexible compared to other options since based on the demands of media, it is easily possible to alter the agenda. Compared to other options, due to the strong influence of the digitalization movement, with well-organized access, a lot of problems can actually be quickly resolved. However, certain diaspora communities may be in a disadvantageous position in case they suffer from accessibility issues. This may also affect the equity criteria negatively, considering not every diaspora community will be involved in this process to the same degree. Nevertheless, in general, due to all the above-mentioned reasons, that is to say, with advantages and strongly overwhelming disadvantages, we may consider this policy feasible and plausible, serving the interest of Azerbaijani foreign policy with long-term goals.

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4.2. Evaluation of Promoting Cultural Diplomacy Option

In general, we consider the promotion of the cultural diplomacy option also effective since it may allow the Azerbaijani diaspora to contain the assertive hostile behavior of the rival diaspora by cultural means. Additionally, it will be very effective in terms of the promotion of the Azerbaijani culture, which might lead to the destruction of certain anti-Azerbaijani sentiments spread in the West. However, in terms of efficiency, it might be costlier, considering cultural diplomacy includes building Azerbaijani cultural centers, or at least, organization of exhibitions and cultural events aiming to introduce Azerbaijan to people of the host country differently. Moreover, creating cultural centers is not only limited to building that center but also maintenance of it in later stages. Therefore, the entire process may require the allocation of more funds, which may influence the overall economic situation of Azerbaijani diasporas abroad.

In terms of equity, we believe, disadvantages may also occur, taking into account that not all communities will be involved at the same degree in this process. As already noted, since building and maintaining cultural centers are costlier compared to social media management, the level of inequity among various diaspora communities might be visible even to a greater extent. Meanwhile, in terms of flexibility, we believe that cultural diplomacy can be advantageous considering culture is a broad term and the Azerbaijani culture is rich in various elements. Additionally, the culture houses under the diasporas may also be used for various other purposes, making them multifunctional and very flexible in practice. To sum up, promoting cultural diplomacy can be semi-feasible, that is to say, though implementation of this alternative may be beneficial, it will require an efficient implementation mechanism, which, at this stage, seems a bit problematic for Azerbaijani communities abroad.

4.3. Evaluation of Engaging & Supporting Local Politicians in Host Countries Option

Lobbying and financing local politicians in host countries can be considered one of the most effective ways to diminish the level of anti-Azerbaijani sentiment in various parts of the

world, especially in the West. As a matter of fact, most success stories of diasporas that faced the hostile behavior of rival communities are also associated with this factor. Since it is one of the commonly used options, we believe that implementation of this alternative might also be easier for Azerbaijani communities abroad. However, we also suggest that implementation and the degree of feasibility of this alternative are dependent on different external factors, and problems might appear in the efficiency of the process. That is, as discussed in previous chapters, for supporting and lobbying host country politicians a strong financial base should exist.

As a matter of fact, if the Azerbaijani diaspora fails to improve the level of available funding, costs will start prevailing benefits of this policy. Since there are no guarantees for maintaining long-term economic well-being, the flexibility of the policy is also under question. That is, to turn this policy into a long-term success story, the Azerbaijani diaspora needs to make sure that the supply of available funding overwhelms the demands of host country politicians or journalists. With the same logic, the equity of the proposed alternative might be questioned, considering economic conditions are not the same in various parts of the world, and therefore, Azerbaijani communities can face problems while following the economic situation in host countries. Overall, we may maintain that despite funding local politicians sounds very efficient, without a clear strategy and microeconomic analysis, the feasibility of this alternative might become jeopardized.

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4.4. Evaluation of Diversifying Sources for Self-Funding Option

We consider the last option the least feasible and effective one, considering diversification of sources for self-funding can be costlier and non-flexible. That is to say, compared to the other three options, the degree of the effectiveness of the work done is dependent on those sources through which self-funding is planned to be expanded. In that context, contrary to building a new basis for economic self-efficacy, Azerbaijani diaspora communities may become more dependent on foreign factors, complicating the work carried out by diasporas. Moreover, due to the involvement of external factors, making the process flexible would also be impossible, since each of those foreign actors might aim to protect their interests as well. Additionally, compared to the other three alternatives, this option seems the most unequal due to the possibility of contributing to this funding on different levels for each individual. If the discussed barriers are well-managed, in that context, diversification of funding might be very productive. Otherwise, socio-political and economic foundations on which diaspora work is organized have to be rearranged, which can lead to hardship in containing the hostile behavior of rival diasporas.

Table 2: Evaluation of Alternative Policies

Criteria/Policy	developing media management	Promoting cultural diplomacy	further engagement with politicians	diversification of self-funding choices
Effectiveness	commonly-practiced, very effective policy (+)	commonly-practiced, effective cultural policy (+)	commonly-practiced, effective financial policy (+)	may create dependency on other sources (-)
Efficiency	not too costly, since limited to only one sector (+)	costly compared to the first option (-)	very costly without a stable financial base (-)	hard to determine
Equity	equal, since accessible for each diaspora community (+)	not all communities will be involved to the same degree (-)	non-equal, depends on foreign factors (-)	most unequal due to the possibility of contributing to this funding on different levels (-)
Flexibility	very flexible, based on the requirement of media (+)	culture houses can be multifunctional (+)	requires a good organization, otherwise nonflexible (-)	hardly flexible (-)
Feasibility	generally, feasible (+)	semi-feasible (-)	semi-feasible (-)	not feasible (-)

Since developing an effective media management is a very commonly practiced, equal, as well as flexible option, we consider it as the best possible alternative among the rest. We believe that implementation of this policy creates better opportunity for members of the Azerbaijani diaspora to tackle the problem that they are currently facing with. In turn, our analysis demonstrated that the remaining options lack certain elements one way or another. In other words, while the promotion of the cultural diplomacy is costly, further engagement with politicians depends on several foreign factors. In turn, diversification of self-funding choices is the most unequal due to the possibility of contributing to this funding on different levels. Therefore, all the

mentioned options, except developing a new media management is either semi-feasible or non-feasible. Thus, considering the need for efficiency and feasibility, development of new sources for media and public relations management should be considered as the most reliable alternative for the Azerbaijani diaspora.

Chapter V – Conclusion & Recommendations

5.1. Conclusion

The post-war period following the liberation of Karabakh led to a new transformative foreign policy era for Azerbaijan, which is full of new tasks, including a fundamental reassessment of the Azerbaijani diaspora's purpose, structure, and potential. Historically rooted in defending national identity, advocating for justice, and countering anti-Azerbaijani narratives abroad, the diaspora now stands at a crossroads like any other actors of Azerbaijani policy. The shift from a conflict-centered agenda to one focused on post-conflict recovery, international diplomacy, and peace negotiations necessitates to rethink of the role of diasporas after the liberation of Karabakh.

This project focused on the increasing assertiveness of the Armenian diaspora after the liberation of Karabakh and the sources of the incapability of the Azerbaijani diaspora to defer those actions. The paper outlined that reasons for the rise of such types of problems might be multiple and urgent action is needed to limit the spread of problems further. In light of the spread of Armenian propaganda in mass media, funding of foreign politicians, as well as growing anti-Azerbaijani sentiments, we proposed that developing an effective media and public relations management can be a useful policy tool that would help to decrease the impact of the hostile behavior of the rival diaspora. That is, we suggest that through effective media management, the political-financial-cultural triad that the Armenian diaspora has been using for decades to promote its image can be spoiled. In other words, effective utilization of media as a political tool that frames foreign policymaking can help soften the links between the working mechanisms of the Armenian diaspora and help Azerbaijani communities abroad to struggle against misinformation and anti-Azerbaijanism more easily.

5.2. Recommendations

We suggest the below-mentioned recommendations to the Azerbaijani diaspora for developing a more effective (social) media and public relations management in order to contain the assertive behavior of the Armenian community abroad.

1. Together with the State Diaspora Committee or host country IT developers, diaspora communities in various parts of the world (especially in places where strong anti-Azerbaijani sentiment prevails) may build thematic webpages that would help to shed a better light on Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan. For example, the Azerbaijani diaspora may introduce a new draft project that comparatively demonstrates Azerbaijani territories during and after the occupation. Translated into multiple languages of the world and made public for various other communities, this could be an essential tool for containing the assertiveness of Armenian behavior.

2. Azerbaijani communities abroad may try building stronger relationships with host country journalists, as well as magazine and newspaper editors. Azerbaijani diasporas may regularly invite them to their events, hold briefs for them, as well as invite them to visit Azerbaijan and conflict areas to witness developments. An in-field observation of Armenian violence could be a great mechanism to decrease the magnitude of anti-Azerbaijani sentiments spread by those magazines and help to contain the actions of the Armenian diaspora.

3. The Azerbaijani diaspora needs also to focus on training spokespersons who can effectively articulate Azerbaijani positions in international media interviews and panels. Like the case of other diasporas, those spokespersons should lead to group of Azerbaijani people, who are in charge of the coordination of hashtag and awareness campaigns. These campaigns

should target regularly promoting global hashtag campaigns to keep attention on Azerbaijani perspectives.

4. Building digital coalitions with other diaspora communities with which Azerbaijan has friendly ties can be another powerful and feasible strategy for the Azerbaijani diaspora to expand its influence in the global media and public discourse. As a matter of fact, the Azerbaijani communities abroad may create partnerships with the Turkish, Jewish, as well as Pakistani diasporas, who are more experienced in this field. Arguably, narratives voiced by multiple groups at the same time will sound more credible for the Western media and help to combat information asymmetry more efficiently.

5. Social media pages of Azerbaijani diaspora communities may consider investing in visual storytelling more frequently since it can help attract more masses and resonate among more people. As a matter of fact, as social media algorithms also prioritize engaging content such as infographics, focusing on such content would allow spreading Azerbaijani perspectives faster.

6. Diaspora communities may fund filming documentaries and mini-series and help advertise them on famous foreign streaming services. Unlike short social media posts, documentaries will allow for a deeper exploration of historical events; thus, will help to spread Azerbaijani realities among the host country's population further. As a matter of fact, they can be screened at universities, forums, and film festivals, revealing results of Armenian violence for bigger audiences and countering misinformation at the same time.

Ultimately, rethinking the role of the Azerbaijani diaspora requires a vision that balances historical memory with forward-looking engagement. It must acknowledge past struggles while actively shaping the future. With strategically designed policies, the diaspora can become a very important aspect of national development and global integration. As a matter of fact, the

discussed role of diasporas in this paper holds not only national significance and symbolic importance for Azerbaijan, but also for all post-conflict societies worldwide. Thus, we believe that the discussion and recommendations in this paper might be utilized by some other countries as well, who have become victims of double standards. But for Azerbaijan, this means the diaspora will get a chance to evolve into the position of a multifaceted actor capable of contributing to soft power, and narrative shaping, as well as building stronger links with host country institutions, and ensuring that Azerbaijan's post-war aspirations are understood correctly and supported enough on the world stage.

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Appendix A – Interview Questions

- What are the main challenges that the Azerbaijani diaspora has faced since the liberation of the occupied territories?
- What role can the Azerbaijani diaspora play in strengthening Azerbaijan’s international image and diplomacy regarding the post-war period?
- How effective have the Armenian diaspora’s efforts been in influencing foreign powers to spread anti-Azerbaijani sentiments, particularly since the end of the Karabakh conflict?

- How can the diaspora maintain unity and coordination in addressing challenges related to integration, advocacy, and cultural preservation?
- How can the diaspora counter disinformation and promote Azerbaijan's perspective on international platforms?
- What steps should be taken to enhance the diaspora's economic and social engagement with host country politicians?