

Изворна научна статија
УДК: 327.7:323.1(479.24)
327.7:323.1(497.7)

Jordanka Galeva

THE GEOPOLITICAL INTERESTS OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY IN RESOLVING MULTICULTURAL ISSUES IN REPUBLIC OF AZERBAIJAN AND REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

POLITICAL THOUGHT

62

Introduction

In the last decade of the twentieth century, when the political transition in Eastern Europe began, more precisely within the USSR and SFRY, the countries of the Balkans and the Caucasus in their attempts for independence attracted the world's attention with ethnic conflicts. What makes the countries of these two regions similar are their multicultural societies and geopolitical attractiveness. While the Balkans are a crossroads and a key road point between West and East, the Caucasus, as a land bridge between the Black and Caspian Seas, is a source of energy resources and a key passage for their transport to the West. Such characteristics, as much as they are an advantage for the geopolitically attractive states, are also a target of the great powers' influence. On the other hand, as much as multiculturalism is a wealth for a society, it can also be a starting point for the outbreak of conflicts, a weak point that the great powers can use to achieve their geopolitical interests. For the purposes of this research an analysis of Republic of Azerbaijan from the Caucasus and Republic of North Macedonia from the Balkans has been made¹. What makes these two countries similar besides their geopolitically attractive regions is their multicultural societies and the involvement of the international community² in finding a solution to the ethnic conflicts³ (the 2001 conflict in Macedonia and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in Azerbaijan). The aim of the research is to find out: what are the results and the role of the international community in resolving multicultural issues, i.e. in resolving the ethnic conflicts that have gripped the two countries; and whether geopolitical factors (such as location or possession of energy resources in conflict-affected countries) have an impact on finding lasting solutions.

Brief overview of the constitution of the states of Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of North Macedonia

If we start from Skopje and travel to Baku, we have to travel 2946 km by road, passing through the territory of Bulgaria (European Union), Turkey (Eurasian member of NATO) and Georgia (pro-European Eurasian country). This vast area, to which both Republic of North Macedonia and Republic of Azerbaijan belong, is part of the Balkan and Caspian region, which have always aroused the interests of others. Azerbaijan is geographically

1 In the analysis and comparison of the two countries, the author uses the abbreviation Macedonia when referring to the Republic of North Macedonia (except where it is otherwise explained) and the abbreviation Azerbaijan when referring to the Republic of Azerbaijan.

2 The international community in this paper refers to several institutions, their representatives and countries, i.e.: European Union, NATO, UN, OSCE, USA, Minsk Group.

3 According to the definition of Britannica: ethnic conflict is a conflict in which the objectives of at least one party are defined in ethnic terms. In other words, when the conflict, its antecedents and possible solutions are perceived along ethnic lines. The conflict is usually not about ethnic differences themselves but over political, economic, social, cultural, or territorial matters. Encyclopædia Britannica, Inc. (20.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.britannica.com/topic/ethnic-conflict>

located in the southern part of the Caucasus, on an area of 86,600 km² and borders Armenia, Georgia, Iran, Russia, Turkey and the waters of the Caspian Sea. Its state borders include the exclave Nakhchivan, an autonomous republic, and the Nagorno-Karabakh region, that until 1991 had autonomous status. The history of Azerbaijan⁴ is closely linked to the history of its neighbors in the South Caucasus region, first under Persian rule, only to be gradually conquered and become part of the Russian imperial empire. The first Democratic Republic of Azerbaijan was constituted in 1918 (which lasted 23 months, until the Russian invasion in April 1920), while its first Constitution was adopted in 1921 within the Soviet Union. With the beginning of the collapse of the USSR in October 1991, the Supreme Soviet of Azerbaijan will adopt the constitutional act of independence, and in 1995 the constitution of the independent Republic of Azerbaijan will be adopted. Similar to the case of Azerbaijan, the territory of today's Republic of North Macedonia (which covers an area of 25,430 km² and borders Serbia, Bulgaria, Greece, Albania and Kosovo) as part of the geographical region of Macedonia⁵, first falls within the Ottoman Empire, then it became a constituent part of Serbia (with Treaty of Bucharest from 1913) and later constituent part of the Yugoslav federation (1944), and finally in 1991 was constituted as an independent and sovereign state.

Unlike Azerbaijan, which after the collapse of the Russian Empire was constituted as a state, and then became part of the Soviet Federation, the territory of Macedonia⁶, in the process of disintegration of the Ottoman Empire was subject to agreements for its

4 Gabriele Natalizia, Daniele Pommier Vincelli (a cura di), *Azerbaijan, una lunga storia*, Passigli Editori, 2012, Firenze, (04.02.2021) Retrieved from https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264542999_Azerbaijan_Una_lunga_storia

5 The use of the term Macedonia within the Ottoman Empire refers to the geographical region of Macedonia, an Ottoman province that was administratively divided into three vilayets: Thessaloniki, Kosovo (Skopje) and Bitola. In the book *The politics of terror*, Duncan M. Perry, writes that any attempt to determine the borders of Macedonia, even today, is fruitless, and in that context he roughly says that Macedonia is a territory located between Shar Mountain and the Osogovo mountains to the north, the Pind mountain range, the Bistrica River and the Aegean Sea to the south, the Mesta River and the Rhodopes to the east, and the Albanian mountains to the west. He explains that the territory within the Ottoman Empire was divided into three territorial provinces (vilayets), and that at the end of the 19th century the core of ancient Macedonia was again called Macedonia. Namely, in the era of Alexander the Great, Macedonia was considered an area that included today's Macedonia, Thrace, Kosovo, Albania and some other territories. *Duncan M. Perry, The politics of terror, Macedonian liberation movements 1893-1903*, Skopje, Magor, 2001, p.13. During the Byzantine rule, the territory of Macedonia was divided into three themes (provinces) called New Epirus (present-day eastern Albania), Macedonia Salutaris (former Dardania and present-day Republic of Macedonia) and the main part of Macedonia (present-day Aegean Macedonia). John Shea, *Македонија и Грција, битката за дефинирање нова балканска нација*, Скопје, Макавеј, 2002, p.60.

6 The term Macedonia is mentioned in certain bilateral and multilateral agreements concluded in the period from the second half of the 19th century until the Balkan Wars from 1912-1913. See: Михајло Миноски (редакција и коментари) *Македонија во билатералните и мултилатералните договори на балканските држави 1861-1913, документи*. Архив на Македонија, Филозофски факултет, Матица македонска;

division.⁷ Its territory, which will finally be liberated by the Balkan Wars of 1912-1913, is divided among its neighbors (in 1913⁸), and on the geographical part that will then belong to Serbia, later in 1944 a Democratic Federal Macedonia is constituted.⁹ Its first constitution was adopted in 1946 as the constitution of the People's Republic of Macedonia, within the Yugoslav federation, while the last constitution was adopted in 1991, when it was constituted as the independent and sovereign Republic of Macedonia.

After the independence and declaration of autonomy, the two countries attracted worldwide attention: Macedonia due to its peaceful withdrawal from the federation (which was not the case with the other members) and the subsequent difficulties over international recognition under its constitutional name; Azerbaijan after the conflict that took place on the territory of Nagorno Karabakh, still inflamed from time to time, due to its not fully resolved status¹⁰. In the context of Macedonia's *peaceful exit* and the successful avoidance of conflict during the break-up of the Yugoslav federation, writer Predrag Matvejevic will state: *Gligorov is living proof that the war in Yugoslavia could have been avoided. That we could have separated without bloodshed ... Macedonia is looking for its place in a changed world. It does so with preserved dignity. It avoided war, which was almost impossible to avoid there. Got rid of enemies that were much stronger. People with good will respect and love that Macedonia*¹¹. Namely, the success of the avoided war is evidenced

7 With the formation of the Balkan Alliance, through negotiations between Bulgaria, Serbia and Greece, joined by Montenegro, it was agreed to liberate the European part of Turkey, whereas the Treaty of Friendly Cooperation between Bulgaria and Serbia dated 13 March 1912 also contained a Secret Annex for the division of the territory of Macedonia. (See: Art. 2 of the Secret Annex to the Treaty of Friendship and Alliance between the Kingdom of Bulgaria and the Kingdom of Serbia, (Sofia, 29 April /13 March 1912) in: Александар Христов, Јован Донеv, *Македонија во меѓународните договори 1875-1919*, Архив на Македонија, Матица Македонска, Скопје, 1994, p.165), while Greece on 13 (26) October 1912, proposed to start negotiations on future borders with Bulgaria and expressed interest in the Macedonian cities of Kavala, Drama, Serres, Thessaloniki, Florina and Bitola. (Јан Рихлик, Мирослав Коуба, *Историја на Македонија*, Македонска Реч, Скопје, 2009, p.181). On September 17, 1912, the Balkan allies issued an ultimatum to the Turkish government, requesting, on the basis of Art. 23 of the Berlin Agreement, autonomy for the Christian areas. After this request was rejected, the Balkan allies declared a state of war, between them and the High Porte. After the victories, in November in London, in the presence of the superpowers, peace negotiations began, and the agreement was signed as late as May 17 (30) 1913. (See: Doc. 31 London Peace Agreement in: Александар Христов, Јован Донеv, *Op.Cit.*, pp. 176-179), with which Turkey renounces all territories west of the Midia-Enos line and the islands in the Aegean Sea. Only two days after the signing of this agreement, Serbia and Greece conclude a secret agreement, by which they agree not to allow Bulgaria to rule the territory west of the Vardar River, marking the border between their countries on the territory of Macedonia. (Art. 3 of the Treaty of Alliance between the Kingdom of Greece and the Kingdom of Serbia, Thessaloniki 19 May /1 June 1913, see in: Александар Христов, Јован Донеv, *Op.Cit.*, p.183).

8 In June 1913, the Second Balkan War broke out between Bulgaria on the one hand and its former Balkan allies Serbia, Greece and Montenegro (joined by Romania and Turkey). The war ended with a truce in July of the same year, and on July 28 (August 10) the Peace Treaty was signed in Bucharest, dividing the territory of Macedonia between Greece, Bulgaria and Serbia (Doc.33 Peace Treaty between the Kingdom of Serbia, Kingdom of Greece, The Kingdom of Romania and the Kingdom of Montenegro on the one hand and the Kingdom of Bulgaria on the other, Bucharest, 28 July /10 August 1913).

9 On August 2, 1944, the First Session of ASNOM was held, at which with the Decision for proclamation of the Anti-Fascist Assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM), ASNOM was constituted in the supreme, legislative and executive representative body of Macedonia and the Macedonian state. The Macedonian state is constituted as an equal federal unit within the newly formed Democratic Federal Yugoslavia. *Acts of the first session of ASNOM, Parliamentary Institute of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia*, (24.06.2021). Retrieved from <https://www.sobranie.mk/>

10 The term "unresolved status" in this paper refers to the Win-Win agreement reached, which offers an acceptable solution for both parties, i.e. results that both parties are satisfied with, and which could be assumed to end the conflict.

11 *From the travel through Macedonia, "Gligorov is a living proof that the war in Yugoslavia could have been avoided"* Excerpts from the book by Predrag Matvejevic, "Borders and destinies" (1), 17.03.2015, MKD, (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.mkd.mk/makedonija/od-patot-po-makedonija-gligorov-e-zhiv-dokaz-deka-deka-vojnata-vo-jugoslavija-mozheshe-da>

by the Mediterranean Peace Prize¹², awarded to President Kiro Gligorov in 1998 by the Mediterranean Laboratory Foundation. It can most certainly be said that the skill of avoiding conflict was due to his proposal: if there is peaceful withdrawal from Macedonia, the Yugoslav People's Army (JNA) can take all its weapons, and by the end of April 1992 allow the return of all soldiers from Macedonia who served in the JNA to their country¹³. This proposal was made in 1992 during a meeting with Deputy Federal Secretary of Defense General Adzic where the manner of withdrawal of the JNA from the territory of Macedonia was being agreed. Following the agreement, the weapons were withdrawn, the last JNA soldier left Macedonia on March 27, 1992, and at the end of the same year, in order to protect the country's borders, Gligorov sent a request to the UN President for the presence of peacekeepers in Macedonia. With the Resolution 795¹⁴ a peacekeeping mission was established to monitor the northern and western border of Macedonia and it will remain until 1997, when it will be replaced by NATO. With such actions, avoiding bloody conflict, maintaining peace when leaving the federation, Kiro Gligorov gave his country the epithet "oasis of peace", a term often used by analysts and politicians in describing the situation in the first decade of the Macedonian state's independence¹⁵. In this context of the "oasis of peace" I would mention the view of the American analyst Greg Schulte who later elaborating on the genesis of the 2001 conflict, said that until recently Macedonia was pointed out as a model of democracy and ethnic harmony in the Balkans, but later that picture changed significantly with the outbreak of violence in 2001¹⁶.

This period, although relatively calm compared to the situation in the other former Yugoslav republics, was not at all easy considering: Greece's dissatisfaction with

12 On January 5, 1998, in Naples, Italy, Kiro Gligorov was awarded the Mediterranean Peace Prize by the Fondazione Laboratorio Mediterraneo for his actions in preventing a tragedy experienced by similar European regimes. With this award, among other things, he is recognized for his courage in terms of affirming leading ideas that did not coincide with the policies of the time and through which he managed to set Macedonia as an example. *Premio Mediterraneo di Pace 1998 a Kiro Gligorov*, 5 gennaio 1998, Fondazione Laboratorio Mediterraneo (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.fondazionemediterraneo.org/index.php/comunicati-stampa/20153?id=313>

13 Киро Глигоров, *Македонија е се што имаме*, ТРИ, Скопје, 2000, стр.187-190

14 Resolution 795, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 11 December 1992, UNSCR, (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <http://unsr.com/en/resolutions/795>

15 Cit: "Prior to the 2001 armed conflict, it was known as the "oasis of peace", largely because everyone needed at least one peaceful actor and an alleged success in the regional nightmare. "The very fact that there was no violence and hostility was highly commended - primarily because this 'achievement' was incredible compared to all other cases in the region", Biljana Vankovska, *The role of the Ohrid Framework agreement and the peace process in Macedonia*, Stefano Bianchini et al (eds.), Regional Cooperation, Peace Enforcement, and the Role of the Treaties in the Balkans, 2007, (16.06.2021) Retrieved from https://www.academia.edu/1267906/The_role_of_the_Ohrid_framework_agreement_and_the_peace_process_in_Macedonia

Cit: "While Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina and even Kosovo endured calamity, Macedonian officials boasted of their "oasis of peace". Western diplomats pointed to Macedonia as a success story. Preventive diplomacy was matched by a UN conflict prevention force, with a few thousand Scandinavian soldiers and a few hundred US rangers, to prevent the conflict from "spilling over". It seemed to work". Blerim Shala, *Fyrom: Removing the causes of war*, (BCR N. 272 17 -Aug-2001), Blerim Shala is editor-in-chief of the Pristina-based daily *Zeri*. (18.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://reliefweb.int/report/former-yugoslav-republic-macedonia/fyrom-removing-causes-war>

Cit: Macedonia's brush with disaster has been a sobering experience, shattering the casual optimism that had earlier characterized the attitudes of the Macedonian regarding their country's security, stability and economic prospects. Indeed, during the first decade of their country's independence, Macedonians of all ethnicities were probably complacent about the dangers lurking beneath the surface. In part, the lavish praise of foreigners, who variously described Macedonia as an "oasis of peace", a "multiethnic miracle" and the "only former Yugoslav republic whose sovereignty did not bear the scars of an armed conflict", contributed to this false sense of security. The 2001 crisis brought both Macedonians and their leaders back to reality with a bump. Nano Ruzin, *looking forward to a Balkan Big Mac*, (18.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2003/issue2/english/special.html>

16 Сашо Вељановски, *Геополитиката на САД во конфликтите на Балканот (1990-2001)*, Балкански форум за безбедност, Скопје, 2007, p. 157

Macedonia's recognition despite the positive assessment received by the Arbitration Commission (also known as the Badinter commission) within the framework of the European Community Declaration on Yugoslavia¹⁷. The name dispute with Greece will lead to a Greek trade embargo¹⁸, delayed recognition and establishment of diplomatic relations with the EU¹⁹, as well as a veto set by Greece on Macedonia's entry into NATO (at the 2008 Bucharest Summit)²⁰. Internally, international attention was also drawn to the armed conflict that took place in 2001²¹, preceded by a series of tense situations and events linked to certain open issues related to the demands of the Albanians from Macedonia. Current events and topics from the third decade of Macedonia's independence that have attracted international attention are the events of April 27, 2017 that the Washington Post wrote about²², as well as the denial of the Macedonian language by Bulgaria and its veto of 2020 to start negotiations with the EU²³.

With regard to Azerbaijan, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has attracted international attention in the first year of independence, when the European Conference on Security and Co-operation expressed deep concern over the ongoing escalation of the armed conflict in and around Nagorno-Karabakh and discussed how to end the conflict, bearing in mind the implications of its spread for regional and international security.²⁴ Three decades later, this region is still in conflict and a topic of the international community. The last armed clashes took place in the autumn of 2020, where Turkey openly supported Azerbaijan, Russia demanded a ceasefire, while Iran, Georgia and Qatar offered mediation²⁵. That this region is still in the spotlight is evidenced by the latest financial

-
- 17 *Conference on Yugoslavia Arbitration Commission, Opinion on question arising from the dissolution of Yugoslavia*, (18.06.2021) Retrieved from https://www.pf.uni-lj.si/media/skrk_mnenja.badinterjeve.arbitrazne.komisije.1_10.pdf
 - 18 *Во Фебруари 1994 година Грција воведува целосно трговско ембарго кон Македонија*, Македонска Нација, 03 ноември 2010, (18.06.2021) Retrieved from <http://www.mn.mk/aktuelno/2855-Vo-fevruari-1994-godina-Grcija-vovede-celosno-trgovsko-embar-go-kon-Makedonija>
 - 19 Due to Greece's opposition to the Republic of Macedonia being recognized under its constitutional name, the process of international recognition and the establishment of diplomatic relations with the EU was delayed. The full diplomatic relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the EU were established in December 1995, when the mission of the Republic of Macedonia in the EU was opened. *Меѓународна соработка, Република Македонија на патот кон ЕУ*, Собрание на РСМ (18.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.sobranie.mk/r-makedonija-na-pat-kon-eu.nspx>
 - 20 We recognise the hard work and the commitment demonstrated by the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia to NATO values and Alliance operations. We commend them for their efforts to build a multi-ethnic society. Within the framework of the UN, many actors have worked hard to resolve the name issue, but the Alliance has noted with regret that these talks have not produced a successful outcome. Therefore we agreed that an invitation to the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia will be extended as soon as a mutually acceptable solution to the name issue has been reached. We encourage the negotiations to be resumed without delay and expect them to be concluded as soon as possible. *Bucharest Summit Declaration, 03 April 2008*, NATO, (18.06.2021) Retrieved from https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm
 - 21 *Macedonia: Country Background and recent conflict*, Congressional Research Service, Novembre 7, 2001- March 28,2002 (19.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL30900.html>
 - 22 Sarah Wilson Sokhey, Danilo Gjukovikj, *This is why the West should pay attention to the drama in Macedonia*, Washington Post, 29 May 2017, (19.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/29/this-is-why-the-west-should-pay-attention-to-the-drama-in-macedonia>
 - 23 Branimir Jovanovic, *The EU should resolutely after the Bulgarian veto*, The Vienna Institute for international Economic studies,15 December 2020, (19.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://wiiw.ac.at/the-eu-should-act-resolutely-after-the-bulgarian-veto-n-476.html>
 - 24 *Summary of Conclusion, Helsinki Additional Meeting of the CSCE Council*, 24 March 1992 (19.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/9/29121.pdf>
 - 25 Laurence Broers, *Armenia - Azerbaijan conflict: Why Caucasus flare-up risks wider war*, 30 September 2020.VWC News, (19.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-54356336>

support of an additional 10 million euros that the European Union has earmarked for those affected by the conflict.²⁶

From the above brief presentation it is evident that in both cases the international community is involved in solving certain problems, and to compare their involvement, diligence and geopolitical interest, this paper reviews the conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the armed conflict in Macedonia in 2001. Common to these two conflicts, in addition to their ethnic nature, is the international involvement.

For the purposes of this research, in continuation a brief overview of the multicultural reality and legal protection in both countries is given.

Comparison of multiculturalism and constitutional protection in Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of North Macedonia

If we take into account the ethnic, religious and linguistic affiliation of the population living in Azerbaijan and Macedonia, we can safely say that both are multicultural societies. According to the latest data from the beginning of 2020, the total population of Azerbaijan is 10,067,100, and according to ethnicity 91.6% are Azerbaijanis, 2% are Lezgis, 1.3% are Russians, and the same percentage are Armenians and Talysh, while the rest of 2.4% are from other ethnicities, such as Avars (0.6%), Turks (0.4%), then Tatars, Tats and Ukrainians (0.3% each), Sakhurs, Georgians, Jews, Kurds (0.1% each), Kryzs, Udins (0.04% each), 0.2% are Khynalgy and 0.10% are of other ethnicities²⁷. The languages used in this country belong to the Turkic family of language, North Caucasian languages, the Slavic and Iranian languages of the Indo-European language family, as well as the Kartvelian language family²⁸. According to CIA data from 2009²⁹, 92.5% of the population speaks Azerbaijani, 1.4% Russian, 1.4% Armenian and 4.7% speak other languages, while in terms of religion 96.6% of the population is Muslim (Shiite), 3% are Christians, less than 0.1% belong to other religions, and an equal percentage do not associate with any religion. Although the figures show that the majority of the population is Azerbaijani (91.6%) with a Muslim religion (96.6%), the existence of other ethnic minorities who speak a language

26 Nagorno Karabakh conflict: EU allocates additional 10 million euro to support those affected, European Commission, 17 May 2020 (19.06.2021) Retrieved from https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_2462

27 Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan 2020, The state statistical committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, (04.02.2021) Retrieved from https://www.stat.gov.az/menu/6/statistical_yearbooks/?lang=en

28 The Azerbaijani language belongs to the Turkish language family; Lezgian is spoken by the Lezgians, and falls into the category of vulnerable languages (according to the UNESCO classification). The Avar language belongs to the Northeast Caucasian family of languages and is spoken in northwestern Azerbaijan and Dagestan, while the Talysh language is a language of Iranian origin. In the group of endangered languages according to UNESCO, which also belong to the north-eastern Caucasus family of languages are: Budukh language and Kryts (Krizki) language (which are samuri languages), Khinalug language, Cek language and Udi language. In addition to these, other endangered languages are the Juhuri language, also known as Judeo-Tat, which belongs to the Indo-European languages and is closely related to Persian, then Rutul, Tsakhur and Tat, which are of Iranian origin. *The minority languages in Azerbaijan*, Worldatlas (18.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-azerbaijan.html>

29 *The world Factbook, country Azerbaijan*, CIA, (04.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/azerbaijan/>

other than the official one and belong to other religious communities characterizes Azerbaijani society as multicultural.

In the case of Macedonia we have the following situation: according to data from the census held in 2002³⁰ of a total population of 2,022,547 inhabitants, 64.18% declared themselves as Macedonians, 25.17% as Albanians, 3.85% as Turks, 2,66% as Roma, 1.78% as Serbs, 0.84% as Bosniaks, 0.48% as Vlachs and 1.04% members of other ethnic communities. In terms of religion, 64.78% of the total population is Orthodox Christians, 33.33% Muslims, 0.35% Catholics, 0.03% Protestants, while 1.52% of the population has identified with another religion or in general has not been identified on religious grounds. Regarding the mother tongue of the population, the Macedonian language is the mother tongue of 66.49% of the population, the Albanian language of 25.12%, the Turkish language of 3.55%, the Romani language of 1.9%, the Serbian language of 1,22%, Bosnian language of 0.42%, Vlach language of 0.34%, while 0.95% of the population uses another language as mother tongue.

In both cases the multicultural reality is visible and it is a solid basis for the establishment, promotion and development of multicultural societies, i.e. policies for their consolidation. Starting from the fact that both cases had ethnic conflict, the following will be an analysis of the constitutional provisions (from 1991 in the case of Macedonia, and from 1995 in the case of Azerbaijan), in order to see to what extent, does the highest legal act provide protection and promotion of this multiculturalism and in this context, whether it is the cause of the conflict.

The first chapter of the Constitution of Azerbaijan³¹, titled "People's power" contains provisions that determine the source of power, sovereignty, the right to represent the people and its unity. Hence, according to the first article entitled "Source of Power" as the people of Azerbaijan are considered the citizens of the Republic of Azerbaijan who live in and out of its territory and who are subordinate to the state and its rights. Article 5 entitled "Unity of the People" stipulates that the people of Azerbaijan should be united and that it is the basis of the state of Azerbaijan, which is the common and indivisible motherland of all its citizens. Article 18 regulates the issue of religious, stating that religion is separate from the state and that all religions are equal before the law. According to the State Committee for Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan,³² there are 942 registered religious communities in the country, of which 907 are Islamic and 35 are non-Islamic: 24 Christian, 8 Jewish, 1 Chrishna and 2 Bahai. The total number of religious buildings is: 2054 mosques, 14 churches and 7 synagogues.

30 Државен завод за статистика на РМ, Попис на населението, домаќинствата и становите во РМ, 2002 (05.05.2020) <http://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPoslednaPublikacija.aspx?id=54>

31 The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, (04.02.2021) Retrieved from https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/5748/file/Azerbaijan_Const_1995_am2009_en.pdf

32 The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, (04.02.2021) Retrieved from http://www.dqdk.gov.az/en/view/pages/306?menu_id=83

Regarding the language issue, Article 21 stipulates that the official language of the Republic of Azerbaijan is the Azerbaijani language, and its development, whereas the guarantee for free use and development of other languages spoken by the population is provided by the Republic. More specifically, Article 45 stipulates that everyone has the right to use their native language and the right to be educated and to carry out creative activity in the language of their choice. Part ten of Article 127 stipulates that the official language of the republic or the language of the majority population in a certain area is used for legal procedures. Article 7 of the Law on Education stipulates that education in educational institutions is held in the official language, but in exceptional cases (international agreements or on the basis of agreements with the executive authorities) at the request of citizens and founders of educational institutions, education may be maintained in other languages abiding by certain standards. Set as it is the constitution of Azerbaijan seems to be in line with the standards for the promotion and protection of religious and linguistic diversity, while the ethnic diversity of the people is unified into the civic principle.

Unlike the Azerbaijani Constitution, which is based on the civil principle, the Preamble and Article 7 of the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia from 1991 started from the national principle and determined that: Macedonia is constituted as a national state of the Macedonian people, and that the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet are official in the Republic of Macedonia. In addition, Article 19, which guaranteed the free expression of religion, mentioned only the Macedonian Orthodox Church. With such provisions it is perceived that the constituent people of the state are the ethnic Macedonians, and hence their language and religion are accompanying elements for the identification of the majority of them³³, as well as for the identification of the state itself. However, taking into account the fact that nationalities with other ethnic, linguistic and religious affiliations live in the country, i.e. Albanians, Turks, Roma, Vlachs and other nationalities, the Preamble stipulates that the Republic of Macedonia ensures their full civil equality and permanent coexistence with the Macedonian people and Article 7 stipulates that in addition to the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet in the units of local self-government in which as a majority or as a significant number live the members of the nationalities, their language and alphabet are also in official use. Namely, Article 9 stipulates that the citizens of the Republic of Macedonia are equal in freedoms and rights regardless of gender, race, skin color, social and national origin, political and religious beliefs, property and social status. For all issues of inter-ethnic character within the country, the Constitution guarantees in Article 78 the establishment of a Council for Interethnic Relations with the task of reviewing these issues and giving advice and proposals for their resolution.

³³ The majority of ethnic Macedonians are of Orthodox religion and mother tongue Macedonian, while a small percentage of them are of Muslim faith.

Taking into account the positive assessment that Macedonia received in 1992 by the EU Arbitration Commission for its international recognition, it meant that its constitution, among other things, meets the conditions, and is in harmony with international standards for the protection of minorities³⁴. It should be noted that in addition to the required documents submitted to the Commission, Macedonia had to confirm that it rejects all territorial claims and that using the name Macedonia does not mean a territorial claim towards another country. Namely, from the very beginning of its path as an independent state, Macedonia was faced with disputes by neighboring Greece regarding the name Macedonia and with the objection of the Albanians in Macedonia regarding their status in the country. The international community will be involved in resolving both cases, with the armed conflict, resolved in a few months and the dispute with Greece, lasting more than two decades. On the other hand, Azerbaijan will not go unnoticed in its independence and will attract international attention after the military conflict in Nagorno-Karabakh and the dispute with the Armenians that has lasted since 1988.

The involvement of the international community in resolving the conflicts in Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of North Macedonia

Azerbaijan will become a member of the United Nations one year after declaring its independence in 1991 and will use it to promote its peace policy regarding the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan started in 1988 within the USSR, but will continue when the Caucasian republics were proclaimed independent and turn into an armed conflict and attract international attention. Nagorno-Karabakh, as part of the Transcaucasian region (with a total area of 4,400 km²), became part of the Russian Empire after the wars with Persia and entered its borders in the mid-1920s. Almost a century later, with the constitution of the first Caucasian republics (in the 1920s), claims to this region were made by both Azerbaijan (due to its territorial ties to the "Turkish-Ottoman brothers") and Armenia (due to the natural border of the geographical unity of Armenia and Armenians)³⁵. The status of this region in the USSR will be resolved with broad autonomy within the Soviet Republic of Azerbaijan, and stability will last until the beginning of the collapse of the USSR. With the introduction of the Gorbachev Perestroika policy, in February 1988, the authorities of the Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Region of Azerbaijan will submit to the Soviet Supreme Council, a Resolution

³⁴ The set conditions provided for the protection of nationalities to be ensured under the provisions of the United Nations Charter, the Helsinki Final Act and the Paris Charter.

³⁵ In July 1918, the Armenians of this region, based on the right of peoples to self-determination, declared their independence, and after less than two years a conflict broke out between Azerbaijan and Armenia, but would soon be resolved within the USSR. The Central Committee of the Russian Communist Party in 1921 will decide to cede the region to the new Republic of Azerbaijan, which is of course granted broad autonomy. *Breve storia del Nagorno-Karabakh tra diritto internazionale e legge del più forte*, 2.11.2020, Filodiritto, Quotidiano di cultura, diritto e società, Bologna, (07.02.2020), Retrieved from <https://www.filodiritto.com/breve-storia-del-nagorno-karabakh-tra-diritto-internazionale-e-legge-del-piu-forte>

on the annexation of the region to the Soviet Republic of Armenia. This Resolution will be rejected by both the Azerbaijani Council and the Supreme Soviet Council, citing Art 78 of the Soviet Constitution of 1977, according to which the federal territory cannot be changed without its approval. Additionally, in accordance with Art. 86, the autonomous regions were granted to and under the jurisdiction of the Soviet republics, meaning that they are a constituent part of them and have no right to secede. The second move to separate the region from Azerbaijan was made in 1991 in accordance with Art. 3 of the Soviet Law on secession from the USSR (from 1990) according to which the peoples of the autonomous communities reserve the right to decide autonomously whether to remain within the USSR and within the secessionist republics, as well as to raise the question of their legal status. Namely, after Azerbaijan adopted the Resolution on Independence on August 30, three days later the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh declared their independence, but on November 26 the Azerbaijani Parliament abolished its statute of autonomy. Following this act, in December, the authorities in Nagorno-Karabakh held a referendum, in which only the Armenian population voted, and in January they declared the independence of the Republic of Artsakh³⁶. In the next two years military battles will be fought, with the Armenians occupying the entire region and conquering seven more Azerbaijani areas, increasing the territorial area to 7,000 km². The Armenian-Azerbaijani military conflict involving Armenia, the Nagorno-Karabakh authorities and Azerbaijan will be temporarily frozen in 1994 with the signing of the Bishkek Ceasefire Agreement³⁷ with the hope that a peaceful solution will soon be found for all parties involved. Representatives of Kyrgyzstan, the Commonwealth of Independent States and Russia, which, along with the United States and France, are part of the Minsk Group³⁸ will take part in the signing of the agreement. In the period that followed this group called for non-violation of the ceasefire and proposed the implementation of several strategies³⁹. In 2004, ten years after the signing of the ceasefire, the issue of Nagorno-Karabakh was raised at the "Prague Process" between the leaders of the two countries, without the participation of the Armenian government in Karabakh, and new negotiations were

³⁶ It is not recognized by any member of the UN, nor by Armenia itself. Gabriele Natalizia, Daniele Pommier Vincelli (a cura di), *Op.cit.*, pp.77, 86.

³⁷ For more information on the Bishkek Protocol <https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/310>

This agreement was preceded by the initiative of the UN, whose Security Council in 1993 will adopt 4 resolutions for a ceasefire.

³⁸ The Minsk Group was set up by the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE), which will be in charge of further negotiations to find a lasting solution. <https://www.osce.org/minsk-group/108306>

³⁹ The first step-by-step strategy envisaged the military evacuation of Armenians from Azerbaijani parts (with the exception of Karabakh) and their settlement with Azerbaijanis (not accepted by Armenians); followed by a package deal strategy to resolve the status of Nagorno, which was to be defined at the same time as the withdrawal of Armenian forces (it was not accepted by the Azerbaijanis because they considered the right of return of refugees not sufficiently protected); the third mediation proposed a "common state" as a federal state of Azerbaijan (rejected by the Azerbaijanis). Gabriele Natalizia, Daniele Pommier Vincelli (a cura di), *Op.cit.*, p.84

resumed based on the “Principles of Madrid”⁴⁰. In 2016, the conflict flared up again and although it lasted for several days, it took many victims and was reactivated in September 2020 and ended on November 9 of the same year with the signing of a ceasefire. The ceasefire agreement was signed by the presidents of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Russia and stipulates: end to the conflict; takeover of the occupied territories by Azerbaijan and withdrawal of the Armenians from the occupied Azerbaijani territories; Armenia to guarantee transportation to Nakhchivan and eastern parts of Azerbaijan, while Azerbaijan to provide communication along the Lashin corridor connecting Karabakh and Armenia. Both corridors will be under the supervision of Russian peacekeepers who also have the task to take part in the control of Karabakh for the next five years. The issue of the status of Nagorno-Karabakh remains unresolved, i.e. the demands of the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh for an independent republic are not satisfied.

Unlike the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, what preceded the 2001 conflict in Republic of North Macedonia had a different dynamic. A series of demands made by the Albanians from Macedonia (which to some extent, over the years, were realized through adopted laws and policies), were the reason for the outbreak of the conflict, although there are views that the war was “staged”; that Macedonia was a “victim of crime and terrorist operations”; that the extremists wanted “territorial secession”, or that the conflict was the result of a “spillover effect” from Kosovo, a direct outcome of “NATO aggression against Yugoslavia”⁴¹. The demands were certainly not new, but had a history dating back to the independence referendum and the vote on the first constitution in 1991. Namely, after the adoption of the Decision to announce a Referendum (adopted at the parliamentary session held on August 6, 1991⁴²), the Albanian members of parliament (MPs) did not sign and did not support the Proclamation to call on the people of Macedonia to vote

40 Return of the territories around Nagorno-Karabakh under the control of Azerbaijan; Interim status for Nagorno-Karabakh to guarantee security and self-governance; a corridor connecting Armenia with the NK; future determination of the final status of Nagorno-Karabakh through a legally binding expression of will; the right of displaced persons and refugees to return to their former places of residence; and international security guarantees that would include a peacekeeping operation. If accepted by both sides, it would enable the preparation of a comprehensive solution for future peace, stability and prosperity for both countries and the wider region. This proposal was supported by the Minsk Group and at the G8 meeting in 2007 it received the consent of Azerbaijan, but Armenia did not take a clear position. *Statement by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries*, 10 jynv 2009, (07.02.2021) Retrieved by <https://www.osce.org/mg/51152>.

41 According to an Ethnobarometer report published in 2002, most ethnic Macedonians believed that the 2001 armed conflict was the result of a spill-over effect from Kosovo, while most ethnic Albanians rejected such views, arguing that conditions in the country hinted at such a dramatic escalation of events. In the context of the latter, we can mention Aliti's statement according to which: the armed conflict is a reflection of decades of accumulated dissatisfaction of Albanians with their general position ... which springs from the heart and intimately maybe all Albanians support the NLA and are with it. According to Todor Atanasovski, a retired general, the war was staged and methodically and systematically heated and provoked by many, while professor Shkaric says that terrorism, ethnic guerrilla, mercenaries and external influence (NATO and USA) are visible in the 2001 conflict and that extremists wanted to appropriate part of the territory of the Macedonian state and annex it to Albania or Kosovo. A similar view was shared by Mark Thomson of the International Crisis Group, who said that extremists were not interested in human rights and dialogue, but in territory. On the other hand, the American analyst from the Center for International and Strategic Studies, Bruce Jackson says that Macedonia has been a victim of crime and cross-border criminal and terrorist operations.

See in: Сашо Велјановски, *Op.Cit.*, p. 146, 147, 150, 151,152

Russia's position on the events at the beginning of the 2001 crisis in Macedonia was that it was a direct outcome of the NATO aggression against Yugoslavia and the subsequent wrong steps taken by the Western countries towards Kosovo.. *Russia calls for Balkans intervention*, *Op.Cit.*, The Guardian, 23 март 2001 (25.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/mar/23/balkans4>

42 The question that the citizens of Macedonia voted on in the referendum, organized on September 8, 1991, was: Are you for a sovereign and independent state of Macedonia, with the right to enter a future union of sovereign states of Yugoslavia?

in the referendum⁴³, and later boycotted the vote on the Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (November 17, 1991), due to the unaccepted “national demands of the PDP”⁴⁴. Of the total population with the right to vote 75.75% (1,132,981 citizens) turn out for the referendum, of those 72.16% voted “for”, while 92 MPs out of 120 voted for the proposed Constitution of the Republic of Macedonia (96 MPs voted for the Decision for promulgation of the Constitution)⁴⁵. One of the main reasons for the boycott, referred to the constitutive element of the state. Namely, although the Constitution of 1991 stipulated that the sovereignty arises from and belongs to the citizen (Article 2), the Preamble of the Constitution stated that Macedonia is constituted as a national state of the Macedonian people providing full civic equality and permanent coexistence of the Macedonian people with Albanians, Turks, Vlachs, Roma and other nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia, in order to ensure, among other things, peace and coexistence of the Macedonian people with the nationalities living in the Republic of Macedonia. This content of the Preamble was in a way a reflection of what was previously adopted by the LVI Amendment of 1989⁴⁶ (when the Socialist Republic of Macedonia was still part of the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia) amending the Preamble of the 1974 Constitution⁴⁷ with which in fact the Albanian and the Turkish nationalities⁴⁸ lost their constitutive status in the country.

The 1991 Preamble did not even mention Serbs, who represented about 2%⁴⁹ perhaps because they were one of the constituent peoples in the Yugoslav federation and were now to be listed as nationalities⁵⁰. In the course of the procedure for the adoption of the new constitution, the Albanian MPs also demanded rights related to education, official

-
- 43 Дејан Маролов, Оливер Митев, *Создавање на независна Република Македонија, внатрешни состојби и надворешни политики*, Универзитет Гоце Делчев-Штип, 2016, стр.82-83
- 44 From the interview of Ismet Ramadani, MP of PDP in the first composition of the multi-party Assembly, with Sakamadakazam.mk, “If they had listened to the PDP in 1991, there would have been no conflict over a framework agreement,” said Ismet Ramadani. “ Sakamadakazam.mk (21.06.2021) Retrieved by <https://sdk.mk/index.php/neraskazhani-prikazni/daja-slushaa-pdp-vo-1991-nemashe-da-ima-konflikt-zarankoven-dogovor-veli-ismet-ramadani/>
- 45 Shorthand notes from the 26th session of the Assembly held on 17.11.1991, Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia, Skopje November 1991, (21.06.2021) Retrieved by <https://sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/26sed17noem91god.pdf>
- 46 Amendment LVI: 1. Amendment LVI: 1. The Socialist Republic of Macedonia is a national state of the Macedonian people, based on the sovereignty of the people and the government and self-government of the working class and all working people, and a socialist self-governing democratic community of working people and citizens, the Macedonian people and equal to it members of other nations and nationalities living in it; 2. This amendment deletes the words: “and state of. the Albanian and Turkish nationalities, in it” in line 2 of paragraph 1 of the preamble; paragraph 1 of Article 1 is replaced; Article 2 is repealed; the words: “members of other nations” are added in Articles 3 and 4 of the Constitution of the SRM. Amendment to the Constitution of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, Official Gazette of the Socialist Republic of Macedonia, No. 29 of July 26, 1989 (June 21, 2021) Retrieved by <https://www.sivesnik.com.mk/Issues/245BBB86D1354148B0725DC74D5D893A.pdf>
- 47 Constitution of SRM from 25.02.1974, Official Gazette of SRM, no. 7, year XXX, 25.02.1974, (21.06.2020) Retrieved from <http://www.sivesnik.com.mk/Issues/0AF2E0456C964935B7705FB5BF6F31F9.pdf>
- 48 In a segment of science nationality refers to the kind or degree of development of an ethnic community that lies between a “nation” and a “people.” With the constitutional changes in Yugoslavia, “nationality” came to be referred to as “national minorities”, so that the word “nationality” gained almost exclusively the meaning of status, while the belonging to a nation or people the term “nationality” was used. Иван Тошевски, *Нација или Нација?*, МИ-АН, Скопје, 2003, Стр.136
- 49 According to 1981 statistics, Serbs represent 2.3% of the population, while according to statistics from the disputed 1991 census, their percentage has decreased minimally to 2.1%.
- 50 On this issue in 1993, the government signed an agreement with representatives of the Democratic Party of Serbs, pledging to guarantee their constitutional recognition and the granting of greater language rights and access to the media. On the other hand, the political representatives of this party undertook to oppose any action against the Macedonian state. Alice Ackermann, *Making peace prevail, preventing violent conflict in Macedonia*, Syracuse University press, 2000, p. 87

use of the Albanian language and its alphabet, national and religious symbols, adequate national participation of Albanians in exercising power, consocial resolution of issues of interethnic relations and others⁵¹. Dissatisfaction with the unfulfilled demands was later manifested through an illegal referendum (initiated by the PDP and NDP on 11 January 1992) on the political and territorial autonomy of the Albanians in Macedonia⁵² and the threat of a repeated boycott of the 1994 census, after the failure in 1991⁵³. The next move, also declared unconstitutional and illegal, was the opening of the University of Mala Rechica with Albanian language of instruction. Although from 1993/1994 the Government provided 10% of the state quota for enrollment in the universities, the Albanians insisted on a state university (and self-initiated the one in Mala Rechica⁵⁴), which according to the then leader of the Party for Democratic Prosperity of Albanians, Arben Xhaferi: was important for promoting the development of the culture of Albanians in Macedonia⁵⁵. Contrary to his position, the Macedonian political representatives considered that the institution would be a cultural and linguistic barrier that could lead to ghettoization of the Albanian nationality in relation to the other citizens of Macedonia⁵⁶. The opening of the university followed the rejection by the Government of the request to establish a university in Albanian (December 12, 1994), but although it was closed, it

51 Мирјана Малеска, *Етнички Конфликт и прилагодувањето*, Култура, Скопје, 1997, p.90

52 The question that Albanians were to vote on in this referendum was: "Are you in favor of political and territorial autonomy of the Albanians in Macedonia?" Ризван Сулџемани, *Консоцијална демократија поделба на моќта во Македонија*, in *Поделба на Влада и спроведување на Охридскиот Рамковен Договор*, Фондација Фридрих Еберт, Скопје, 2008, p.198 (23.06.2020) Retrieved from <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/skopje/06358.pdf>

The Parliament will assess this referendum as unconstitutional and without grounds to produce legal actions, but despite this decision, in April of the same year the Albanians will declare the formation of an autonomous republic of Ilirida. Regarding the idea of Ilirida, Ismet Ramadani, MP and member of the PDP leadership, commented that: the Albanians in that period needed some political capital in the sense that if someone decides to unite with another republic, the Albanians should have that capital, that is, the freely expressed will, that we do not belong there (referring to the second part of the question which was part of the referendum of 08.09.91 "with the right to unite with another"). He explains that: "the atmosphere at that time was that, whatever happens, the Albanians will not accept to be in a common state with that Yugoslavia where the Milosevic regime dominated." If they had listened to the PDP in 1991, there would have been no conflict over a framework agreement, says Ismet Ramadani. Сакам да кажам.мк, Оп.Сит.

53 The main reasons for this behavior of Albanians are related to certain provisions of the Law on Citizenship (subsequently explained in the text), due to the claim that they will be intentionally shown as less and due to the disagreement of the majority of the Assembly on the use of national languages in the census in municipalities where they are in majority, or in a significant numbers. From the notes of Victor Friedman, the 1991 census was conducted from 1 to 15 April (within the SFRY) but was boycotted by all Albanians in Yugoslavia, and most of the Albanians in Macedonia led by the Party for Democratic Prosperity (PDP) and the smaller but louder radical People's Democratic Party (NDP), which claimed they would be deliberately portrayed as less. Regarding the 1994 census, at a meeting between members of the Expert Group and PDP members, Aliti, who later became chairman of the PDP, noted that the census had a political dimension and if he and his party openly called for support for the census, they would be deleted from the political map, so what his party can do most is promise not to call for a boycott, but will not seek support for the census. Aliti made it clear that he understood the situation and wanted the census to be successful, but also said he saw no point in the radicals ruining his political career. Victor Friedman, *Observing the Observers: Language, Ethnicity, and Power in the 1994 Macedonian Census and Beyond*. Toward Comprehensive Peace in Southeastern Europe: Conflict Prevention in the South Balkans, ed. by Barnett Rubin. New York: Council on Foreign Relations/ Twentieth Century Fund. 1996. 81 105 & 119 126, (21.06.2020) Retrieved from <http://www.newbalkanpolitics.org.mk/item/Observing-the-Observers:-Language,-Ethnicity,-and-Power-in-the-1994-Macedonian-Census-and-Beyond/mk#.YNH33GgzbiW>

54 On June 4, 1994, the founding assembly was held in Tetovo and the cornerstone of the University was laid; on September 26 of the same year the second assembly is held at which a decision is made to declare the formal foundation (the start of the academic year was declared on December 17, in front of the Assembly in Tetovo, and on January 15, 1995 in front of the building of the University in Mala Rechica, in the presence also of an American delegation, witnessed by 100 000 citizens, and the following day, on January 16 and on January 18 the Macedonian police tried to prevent the holding of classes, event where one person lost his life), from the speech of Sali Ramadani, at the fifth session of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia on 14.11.1995, Shorthand notes, from the fourth continuation of the twenty-fifth session of the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia held on 14.11.1995, (21.06.2020) Retrieved from <https://www.sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/25sed4prod14noe95god.pdf>

55 Alice Ackermann, *Op.cit.*, стр. 69

56 Vladimir Ortakovski, *Inter-ethnic relations and minorities in the Republic of Macedonia*, in *Southeast European Politics*, Vol.2, n.1, pp. 24-25, May 2001, стр.37

continued to operate illegally until its official legalization (in 2004)⁵⁷, even though in the meantime a Law on the languages in which the teaching is performed at the Faculty of Pedagogy⁵⁸ and the Law on Higher Education were adopted⁵⁹. Regarding other rights, the requirements were set within the Law on citizenship, the Law on local self-government, the Law on flags, as well as greater representation of Albanians in state and political institutions. Namely, the law on citizenship set a condition for a stay of fifteen years, which excluded the biggest recent wave of Albanian immigration from Kosovo, due to which during the debates on this law, Albanian politicians pressed to reduce the period to five years, because longer period would exclude Albanians who came to Macedonia from Kosovo⁶⁰. Regarding the Law on Local Self-Government, the issue that was the cause of disagreement between the Macedonian parties (late 1991 and early 1992) and between the coalition partners of the ruling elite of 1994, was the degree of autonomy of the Albanian minority, i.e. the degree of decentralization⁶¹. Regarding the law on flags, the protest by the Albanians culminated with the events of July 1997 (when there was an incident, with several injured and three victims) during the police intervention to remove the Albanian flag in front of the municipal building in Gostivar⁶². The Law on the Use of the Flags through which the members of the nationalities in the Republic of Macedonia express their identity and national specificities, was adopted during these events, but the Decree for promulgation of this law and the law itself were repealed in 1998⁶³. Regarding the issue of greater representation of Albanians in state institutions, the request arose

57 *Law on the Establishment of the State University in Tetovo*, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia No. 8/2004 from 23.02.2004

58 According to this law, the teaching of the study groups for preschool education and for grade level teaching, in addition to Macedonian, was planned to be conducted in the languages of the nationalities, as well as for the subjects contained in the curricula. Among other things, departments of literature in Albanian and Turkish were opened at the Faculty of Philosophy, and at the Faculty of Dramatic Arts certain subjects were taught in these languages as well. *Law on the languages in which the teaching is performed at the Faculty of Pedagogy*, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, Macedonia, No. 5/97 of February 6, 1997

59 Article 95 of the Law on Higher Education stipulated that teaching in private higher education institutions may be conducted in the languages of members of nationalities or in foreign languages. *Law on Higher Education*, Official Gazette of the Republic of Macedonia, No. 64/2000 dated 03.08.2000

60 Victor Friedmen, *Op.Cit.*

61 The Law on Local Self-Government could not be adopted because it was blocked by the government itself, due to disagreement by both Albanians and Macedonians in the government. Mirjana Maleska, *Op.Cit.* 100-101

62 The Council of the Municipality of Gostivar on February 14, 1997, issues a decision in accordance with the Statute (Article 140) of the municipality, stipulating that the Albanian and Turkish flags should be displayed together with the Macedonian flag in front of the City Assembly. On March 14, the Government submitted a request before the Constitutional Court to initiate a procedure to assess the constitutionality of this act, and on May 21, it adopted a temporary measure to ban the use of flags in Gostivar, i.e. suspended the decision of the Council. On May 24, the mayor of Gostivar organized a rally in response to the Constitutional Court's decision, and two days later informed the Court that they would not abide by its decision, and on June 6 warned the Constitutional Court that the interim measure would lead to ethnic clashes. On June 11, the Constitutional Court revoked the decision of the Council of Gostivar with the explanation that the municipality exceeded its authority by displaying foreign countries flags. On July 9, police removed the flags, followed by riots in the city resulting in 196 people injured and three deaths. Slagjana Dimishkova, *The Use of Flags in Front of Local Public Buildings*, in the Ohrid Framework Agreement, Case Studies, Macedonian Center for International Cooperation, Skopje, August 2011, pp.51-52

63 The revocation was made following a procedure initiated by the Constitutional Court to assess the constitutionality of these acts, at the initiative submitted by VMRO-DPMNE, the Liberal Democratic Party, the Democratic Party of Macedonia, the League for Democracy, the Macedonian People's Party, VMRO-DP and the World Macedonian Congress. In the decision of the Constitutional Court of 18.11.1998 (Decision U.no.141 / 97 and U.no.146 / 97) among other things, the Court assessed that the provision of Article 48 of the Constitution, guaranteeing the right of members of nationalities to express, nurture and develop their identity and national specificities refers to nurturing, expressing and developing their customs, culture, language and traditions, through cultural and artistic institutions, scientific and other associations, which does not mean that the rights of state symbols of home countries such as coat of arms, flag and anthem can be included in this group. Therefore, the constitutional guarantee for protection of the ethnic, cultural, linguistic and religious identity of the members of the nationalities cannot be extended by giving an opportunity, i.e. enactment of special laws for the use of the flags. *Decision of the Constitutional Court of 18.11.1998* (21.06.2020) Retrieved from <http://ustavensud.mk/?p=7259>

from the factual situation. Namely, the social sector data from 1986 show that by ethnicity of the employees, Macedonians are 85%, Albanians are 7%, Turks are 1.8%, Serbs are 2.4% and 3.8% are other. The situation is similar in 1991, when the assessment of workers in the Republic of Macedonia according to declared ethnicity is as follows: Macedonians 80.6%, Albanians 10.4%, Turks, 2.3%, Roma 1.6%, Vlachs 0.6%, Serbs 2.3% and 2.3% members of other ethnic groups⁶⁴.

In August 1994, the new PDP leader, Aliti, stated that the party's new goal was integration (not federalization of Macedonia), which meant proportional representation of Albanians in all political, state and other institutions⁶⁵. However, after the coalition between SDSM and PDP did not bring the expected results for the representatives of the Albanians in power, at the rally in Debar held in October of the same year, Aliti said that the option for autonomy of the Albanians in Macedonia was not cast away⁶⁶. As far as this issue is concerned, the implementation of informal policy started, through the employment of members of nationalities in the Ministry of Interior, the Ministry of Defense, the Military Academy, within the ranks of cadets, officers, as well as in the Constitutional and Supreme Courts⁶⁷.

All these events, protests and unfulfilled demands culminated in an armed conflict, launched in February 2001 by the so-called National Liberation Army (NLA), to which the state security forces responded, and ended again with the mediation of the international community. To avoid and prevent what failed in the war in Bosnia and Herzegovina, the international community, namely NATO mediated in the evacuation of NLA troops from Arachinovo (one of the sites of the conflict) and were later involved in the process of its disarmament⁶⁸. The international community, through representatives from the USA and the EU (James Pardew and Francois Leotard), participated in the signing of the Ohrid Framework Agreement (OFA), together with the leaders of the two largest Macedonian and two largest Albanian parties, and the engagement of the EU was foreseen in the

64 Славко Милосавлевски, Мирче Томовски, *Албанците во република Македонија 1945-1995, легислатива, политичка документација, статистика*, НИП Студентски збор, Скопје, Декември 1997, стр. 317-318

65 Мирјана Малеска, *Op.Cit.*, p. 92

66 *Ibid.*, p. 923

67 At the beginning of the 1990s, in the Ministry of Interior, members of minorities represented 3% of the total number of employees, and in 1996 it increased to 8.7%. There is also an increase among civil servants in the Ministry of Defense, from 16% to 22%. In the military sector, the number of Albanian cadets in the Military Academy increased from 2% to 12% and the number of officers from 0.1% in 1993 to 3% in 1995. In the Constitutional Court, out of a total of 9 judges, two are members of the Albanian nationality, and in the Supreme Court, out of a total of 16 judges, four are members of Albanian nationality. Alice Ackermann, *Op.cit.*, P. 91

68 Mark Laity, *Preventing war in Macedonia, Pre - Emptive Diplomacy for the 21 st Century*, RUSI Кралски институт на заедничките служби, 2009, p. 84; (translation: Марк Лејти, Спречување војна во Македонија Превентивна дипломатија за 21 век, Вајтхол труд, Фондација Институт отворено Општество-Македонија, 2009) (02.05.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.fosm.mk/CMS/Files/Documents/Sprecurvanje-vojna-vnatresni-mark-lejti.pdf>

coordination and implementation of the OFA, in cooperation with the Council of Europe and the European Commission, as well as the OSCE and the UNHCR⁶⁹.

What are the results of the international community's involvement in the conflict in Republic of Azerbaijan and Republic of North Macedonia? While previous agreements on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict have so far been signed on a ceasefire and with the hope of further co-operation to find a peaceful solution, what has been achieved with the latest agreement is the return of the occupied territories to Azerbaijan. This means that the conflict not only ended, but was resolved in favor of Azerbaijan, to the great dissatisfaction of the Armenian public, which does not give certainty that the conflict will not continue where it left off. In the Macedonian case, the OFA guarantees that: the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Macedonia and the unitary character of the state are inviolable and must be preserved and that there are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues. The key to the solution was the basic principle that the multiethnic character of Macedonian society must be preserved and reflected in public life. Namely, with the implementation of the OFA, constitutional and legal changes were made which: promote the civic concept, remaining ethnically colored (Macedonia is constituted by the citizens of Macedonia, and they are by ethnicity: the Macedonian people, part of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serbian people, the Roma people, the Bosniak people and others living within its borders)⁷⁰; it responded to specific requests (in the administrative and political spheres) that correspond to those, which are subject to the political interpretation of multiculturalism⁷¹; multireligiousness and multilingual society are emphasized, and multicultural municipalities were created⁷². Things set up in this way have led to stability, which is important not only for the political, economic and social development of the country, but also for the stability of the region and the smooth development of international relations.

69 The participation of the international community in the implementation of the Agreement is set out in Annex C, titled Implementation and Confidence-Building Measures. Assistance was provided for monitoring the census and subsequent elections, for the implementation of the OFA in the field of higher education, revision of municipal boundaries, financial support and assistance in measures to strengthen local self-government and revitalization and reconstruction of the areas affected by the clashes, return of refugees and displaced persons, assistance in the preparation and implementation of an action plan for the revitalization and reconstruction of areas affected by hostilities, as well as in ensuring the proper deployment of police services with a composition that would reflect the distribution of the population. This and the training and police assistance programs were the responsibility of the OSCE, the EU and the US. *Ohrid Framework Agreement*, (07.02.2021) Retrieved by https://www.pravdiko.mk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/ramkoven_dogovor-3.pdf

70 The term nationalities was replaced by parts of the peoples in the Preamble and by communities in the constitutional articles. The last amendment to the Preamble, made in 2019, introduced a new item in the name of the state (Amendment 33) and provided for the deletion of the words "living within its borders" (Amendment 34) and hence the final content of the Preamble today reads: "Citizens of the Republic of Northern Macedonia, the Macedonian people, part of the Albanian people, the Turkish people, the Vlach people, the Serbian people, the Roma people, the Bosniak people and others".

71 Provisions that correspond to the political interpretation of multiculturalism (which provides for the realization of the requirements for administrative and political rights by ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities within the nation state) are contained in the fundamental value of adequate and equitable representation of citizens (Amendment 6, amending Article 8) and the Badinter Rule (Amendment 10 replacing Article 69). The political interpretation of multiculturalism is explained in: Andrea Semprini, *Multikulturalizam*, CLIO, Beograd, 2004, p.35

72 Besides the Macedonian Orthodox Church, the constitution also lists the Islamic religious community in Macedonia, the Catholic Church, the Evangelical Methodist Church, the Jewish community and other religious communities and religious groups. With the new territorial division, the results of the census and the constitutional amendment amending Article 7 (according to which, in addition to the Macedonian language and its Cyrillic alphabet which remains the official language of the state and in international relations, the official language will be the language spoken by at least 20 % of the citizens) 31 multicultural municipalities were created in which the languages of the non-majority communities are used, and in those where they are a majority or more than 50%, their flags are displayed. In addition, the first state university in Albanian language was opened in Tetovo.

From a geopolitical point of view, a stable region suits the international community, but it suits it even more if it controls it based on its own interests. In case direct control cannot be exercised, the policy of the state through which it can exercise its own interests is supported. In this regard, the interests of the international community regarding Azerbaijan and Macedonia are further elaborated, in order to see if they have influenced the adoption of conflict resolution policies.

The geopolitical interests of the international community in relation to the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Republic of North Macedonia

When we talk about factors or characteristics that make a country geopolitically attractive, it is inevitable to say that it is the location and what it has, in terms of resources (water and energy), mineral resources, population, armaments, labor, etc. Today, energy security as a real daily need, make energy resources, along with location, factors that influence the adoption of policies to achieve their own interests. From a geopolitical point of view, the attractiveness of the Caucasus region is due to its geographical location, giving it the epithet bridge between the East and the West, and to its rich amount of energy resources located in the waters of the Caspian Sea. Since the end of the 19th century this region has been attracting international attention with its oil production, taking place primarily in the area of Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan⁷³. It is estimated that today there are about 75 billion barrels of oil and 6.9 trillion cubic meters of gas at the bottom of the Caspian Sea. Thanks to the resources, location and good energy infrastructure of the BTC (Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan), BTE (Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum) oil pipelines and the Southern Gas Corridor (consisting of the South Caucasus Pipeline, Trans-Anatolian Pipeline and Trans Adriatic Pipeline), Azerbaijan is the central hub for the East-West energy corridor, which allows bypassing Russian routes to the north and Iranian routes to the south⁷⁴. Hence, the energy security that Azerbaijan provides to the West is one of the fundamental interests of the policy pursued by its countries. Going back to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and the results of the Minsk Group's mediation so far, it seems that the status quo suits its co-chairs better than finding a lasting solution that would satisfy both sides. In this context, the question arises: *what would be the interests of international actors in not /resolving the status of Nagorno-Karabakh?*

⁷³ Data from that period (in 1897) show that 45% of the world's oil was produced there, and that Russia in the period from 1898 to 1902, thanks to this region, sets the primacy in world production. Comparing that period to the time of the collapse of the USSR, the oil extracted from this region represented only 3% of world production and most of it was supplied from Azerbaijan. Bülent Gökay, *Petrolio e geopolitica nel bacino del Mar Caspio, Volume IV / Economia, politica, diritto degli idrocarburi*, (07.02.2021) Retrieved by http://www.treccani.it/portale/enciclopedia/handle/4047/exporturi=/export/sites/default/Portale/sito/altre_aree/Tecnologia_e_Scienze_applicate/enciclopedia/italiano_vol_4/423-430_x8.2x_ita.pdf

⁷⁴ Trans Adriatic Pipeline TAP is an 870 km long gas pipeline from the Meridian Energy Gas Corridor that would be drawn from Shah Deniz and then pass through Georgia and Turkey, via the Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum Pipeline and TANAP (Trans Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline.) via Greece and Albania to Italy and Northern Europe. Idem, p. 212-213

The most influential actor from the Minsk Group in the events in Nagorno-Karabakh is Russia, which has a long-standing historical connection with the region and is geographically closest to it. Russian influence in the region is made possible through Armenia, where Russia, in addition to its military presence (military bases 102 and 3624), has key infrastructure and industrial investments and a monopoly on gas supplies⁷⁵. On the other hand, Russia is not willing to disrupt relations with Azerbaijan, one of the regular buyers of weapons (paying at full price, which is not the case with Armenia, having a privileged treatment on this issue). Although pro-Armenian, Russia's economic interests, given its military and economic co-operation with both countries, are more in favor of balancing the conflict than in its lasting resolution in favor of Armenia⁷⁶. Russia participated directly in the conclusion of ceasefire agreements between Armenia and Azerbaijan in 1994, 2016 and 2020, and in the next five years its peacekeeping forces will participate directly in the control of Nagorno-Karabakh. The subsequent agreement reached by Russia with Turkey on its participation in the peace process was sharply criticized by France, also opposing the Turkish military support that Azerbaijan received in the 2020 conflict. Russia, on the other hand, although it was said that it could protect Armenia through the Collective Security Treaty, it did not do that, so as not to damage relations with Turkey, also based on good economic deals, the last related to the Turkish Stream⁷⁷. In this context, in order not to damage relations with Armenia, i.e. so it would not feel abandoned, Russian President Putin said that Russia should not have gotten involved in the conflict, because no one had invaded the territory of Armenia, i.e. no party of the agreement had committed aggression on its territory⁷⁸. On the other hand, France's failure to take sides in the conflict has been criticized in France, having in mind the fact that 400,000 to 600,000 Armenians live there⁷⁹. Subsequently, the French Senate passed a resolution (consultative) urging its parliament to recognize the independence of the Republic of Arzakh, to which Azerbaijan asked the OSCE to expel France from the Minsk Group for failing to maintain neutrality. Namely, Turkey, although not part of the Minsk Group, is much more interested in the conflict and is directly involved through the moral and military support it gives primarily to Azerbaijan. This inclination is due to: the desire to establish good neighborly relations with the Turkophone former Soviet countries and peoples, as well as the energy and economic interests that link it to Azerbaijan (the Trans-Anatolic gas pipeline). The United States, on the other hand, member of the Minsk

75 Anna Hess Sargsyan, *Nagorno - Karabakh: obstacles to a negotiated settlement*, CSS Analysis in security policy n.131, Center for security studies, April 2013 Zurich, (10.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://css.ethz.ch/>

76 Sergey Markedonov, *Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: a careful balancing*, 12.03.2018, Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale, (10.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/russia-and-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-careful-balancing-19832>

77 For more details see <https://turkstream.info/>

78 *Putin si esprime sulla status giuridico del Nagorno Karabakh*, 24.11.2020, Sicurezza internazionale, Luis Osservatorio sulla sicurezza internazionale, (26.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://sicurezzainternazionale.luiss.it/2020/11/24/putin-si-esprime-sul-nagorno-karabakh/>

79 Chiara Gentilli, *Nagorno-Karabakh: Francia teme il ruolo della Turchia*, 21.11.2020 Sicurezza internazionale, Luis Osservatorio sulla sicurezza internazionale, (10.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://sicurezzainternazionale.luiss.it/2020/11/21/nagorno-karabakh-francia-te-me-ruolo-della-turchia/>

Group, is not “fiercely” involved in the Nagorno-Karabakh case, and in some ways has limited interest and influence. Although it maintains good relations with both warring parties, it has greater cooperation with Azerbaijan due to economic relations, logistical support provided by Azerbaijan during the conflict in Afghanistan and Iraq, as well as its location as a buffer zone between Russia and Iran⁸⁰. On the other hand, Armenia is seen as an instrument of pressure on Turkey, and the American recognition (in 2019) of the Resolution on the Recognition of the Armenian Genocide from 1915-1917 can be assessed in that context. Iran, on the other hand, although it has historical, religious, and cultural ties with Azerbaijan that date back to the Persian Empire, supports Armenia in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict in order not to incite irredentist aspirations on the part of the Azerbaijani minority living in Iran and also because of Azerbaijan’s cooperation with the Israelis. Israel, on the other hand, supports Azerbaijan militarily, and in return is given the use of Azerbaijani airports and infrastructure for the ultimate purpose of gathering information on Iranian security⁸¹. The European Union has taken a neutral stance on the conflict in all these developments, and its only reaction to the recent conflict has been to call for an end to attacks on civilians and resume peace talks, announcing half a million euros in humanitarian aid. Its neutrality is, in some respects, ambiguous given the fact that in 2006 the Action Plan signed with Azerbaijan recognized the importance of respecting the territorial integrity of states, while in the one with Armenia it emphasized the importance of self-determination of nations⁸². In essence, the interests of the EU member states are based on the geopolitical interests in the region, which can be defined as: “a stable region, secure delivery of energy resources” that come to the EU from Azerbaijan.

Unlike Azerbaijan, Macedonia is a landlocked country with no land resources and no energy resources that would arouse the interest of the international community. Its geopolitical attractiveness is due to its territorial location, which occupies the central part of the Balkans, a crossroads between the former trade routes: east-west (Via Egnatia) and north-south (Via Militaris) and through which energy routes from the Caucasus can but not necessarily have to pass. In the past years we have witnessed strategies and competition in spheres of influence again between Russia, the EU, America, and even Turkey, but this time on the map of energy transport. However, in order to understand the international interests in the region and specifically in Republic of North Macedonia, let us return to the 2001 conflict and its resolution. If we look at the events suspiciously, then we may say that the interest of some great powers was realized with the very destabilization of the region, an instrument that will provide assistance for its

80 Zafer Yıldırım, U.S. Foreign Policy towards Azerbaijan: From “Alliance” to “Strategic Partnership”, Alternatives Turkish journal of international relations, (28.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/19299>

81 Giuseppe Gagliano, *Come si destreggia Israele tra Armenia e Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh*, Start Magazine, (10.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.startmag.it/mondo/come-si-destreggia-israele-tra-armenia-e-azerbajjan-in-nagorno-karabakh/>

82 Lorenzo Ferrari, *Nagorno – Karabakh: la prudenza dell’UE*, 30.10.2020 (10.02.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Azerbaijan/Nagorno-Karabakh-la-prudenza-dell-UE-205860>

future stabilization, in other words means for control and maneuver. Therefore, from a geopolitical point of view, it can be said that the interest of the international community in resolving the conflict in 2001 was stabilization through which control would be established⁸³. But how would destabilization affect the interests of the international community? The Macedonian question on the international scene is not new and is part of the ideologies for greater states of its neighbors. Its opening or destabilization would mean destabilization of the whole region. According to analyst Schulte, events in Macedonia have raised concerns about the possible escalation of clashes and the emergence of large numbers of refugees, which would seriously destabilize the region and jeopardize US interests in European security⁸⁴. The conflict in 2001 reached Macedonia as a domino effect from Kosovo and it suited the international community to stop it there and start a period of stabilization in which a country in need of support can easily be conditioned. The support came through the strengthening of KFOR control along the border, facilitators in the OFA signing negotiations, and later support through the NLA disarmament process.

The conflicts in Kosovo and Macedonia were an opportunity for the EU to do what it failed to do in the other conflicts in former Yugoslavia, but despite its involvement through the facilitator in the negotiations, some analysts believe that these conflicts have once again proved the role and the importance of NATO, and through it of the United States, in ending conflicts in the region⁸⁵. As a result of the well-completed "mission" in this area, the United States received space for their physical strategic location both in Kosovo (where the US base, along with the Great Wall of China are the only ones visible "from the moon"⁸⁶) and in Macedonia (where the US Embassy has a strategic location in the city). This way the United States and NATO are one step away from the Eurasian space from where they can act in all directions. In addition, the United States is at the Gate to the East from where it can prevent Russian turmoil, and at the same time control the Moravian-Vardar crossing, which has been on the geopolitical agendas of the great powers for centuries. In line with this are Veljanovski's conclusions that through the diplomatic engagement of the USA and NATO in the Balkan wars, including the 2001 conflict, the US has strengthened its position in the Balkans, completely marginalized the presence of Russia, reaffirmed US leadership role in the international arena, and NATO effectiveness in ending ethnic conflicts⁸⁷ Regarding the Russian diplomacy in the 2001 conflict, it can

83 In this context we can mention the views of the American professor Chosudovski, according to whom: the basis of the modern expansionist strategy of the USA is only the reincarnation of the old Roman-maxima - divide and rule, and the view of the Macedonian professor Shkaric according to whom: the Albanian secessionist movement suited NATO and the United States, because when the Balkans are divided into a number of weak and small ethnic states, they have the power to govern more successfully. In: Sasho Veljanovski, *Op.Cit.*, P. 140

84 *Ibid.*, 157

85 According to Brzezinski, Europe is a de facto military protectorate of the United States, while Senator Biden expresses doubt that the EU can deal with the crisis in its own backyard. See: *Ibid.*, 159

86 Aleksis i Zhil Trud, *Razaranje Balkana, kako su razbili Jugoslaviju*, Xenia, Metella, 2013, p.26

87 Сашо Вељановски, *Op.Cit.*, p. 191

be mentioned that at the very beginning of the crisis Russia accused NATO of failing to destroy the terrorist activities in Kosovo, southern Serbia and Macedonia and called on the international community to take urgent steps, including the use of force to prevent the escalation of the conflict in the Balkans⁸⁸. In contrast to its diplomatic engagement on the Kosovo issue in Serbia, as well as its cultural and historical ties with Serbia and Greece, Russia has had almost no comment on the political situation in the country since the end of the 2001 riots, and Macedonia has failed to attract its attention⁸⁹. The events related to the South and Turkish Streams can be taken as examples. Namely, the plan was to connect Macedonia to the Russian South Stream through a branch, but due to European and American policies that were reflected in Bulgaria, Russia stopped the construction of the South Stream and decided to build a new one, the Turkish Stream. The new stream passes through Bulgaria, Serbia and Hungary and this time Republic of North Macedonia is not connected by a branch, which shows its marginal role on energy routes. The latest news is that Macedonia will be involved in the construction of a liquefied natural gas terminal near Alexandroupoulos in Greece, the support being approved by the United States. In terms of EU involvement, unlike the United States, the EU again failed to resolve the conflict on its own, but was involved in the negotiations and the signing of the OFA through its representative, as well as in the financial and technical support for its implementation.

What do the actions of the international community have in common in these two conflicts? In both the Azerbaijani and Macedonian cases, the international community is committed to territorial integrity in resolving conflicts. This means that: Nagorno Karabakh cannot be separated from Azerbaijan, although it is inhabited by a majority of Armenians, who are committed to the right to self-determination, while in Macedonia it means that there are no territorial solutions to ethnic issues and for consolidation of the unitary character of the state decentralization and a new model of multicultural society were introduced. In the first case only the Azerbaijani side is satisfied, while in the second the unity of the state is guaranteed, but the demands of the initiators of the conflict are also met. Namely, the international community allowed itself a deeper “interference” in the internal affairs of Republic of North Macedonia, taking into account its Euro-Atlantic orientation⁹⁰. As early as 1998, the International Commission for the Balkans, in its conclusions and recommendations published in “Unfinished Peace”, stated that the primary goal of external influence should be to encourage the Albanian investment in

⁸⁸ *Russia calls for Balkans intervention*, Op.Cit.,

⁸⁹ *Macedonia: a pawn in the Russian geopolitical game?*, DW, 26.05.2015, (25.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.dw.com/en/macedonia-a-pawn-in-the-russian-geopolitical-game/a-18476013>

⁹⁰ From the very beginning of independence, Macedonia expressed its interest in Euro-Atlantic integration, an interest which then resulted in the adoption of: The decision to join NATO in 1993, then the signing of the Partnership for Peace in 1995, the establishment of full diplomatic relations between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Community in December 1995, launch of the PHARE program in support of reforms in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe, signing of the Agreement on Cooperation between the Republic of Macedonia and the European Community in 1997, Agreement in the field of transport and textiles, obtaining candidate status for NATO membership in 1999, as well as the signing of the Stabilization and Association Agreement of 2001, which launched the implementation of CARDS programs (assistance program for countries that are part of the Stabilization and Association Process).

the Macedonian state, (by creating Macedonian-Albanian relations in a unitary state, to be achieved through the application of a high degree of decentralization and constant political restraint on both sides); UNPREDEP, which provides a high degree of tranquility at a relatively low cost and risk, should be sustained until substantial progress is made in resolving the Kosovo problem; and that steps should be taken to reduce tensions around the University of Tetovo and establish a Southern European University⁹¹. With the outbreak of the conflict, extremism will be verbally condemned, KFOR will be called upon to continue to stop the unauthorized movement of illegal arms shipments across the region, and the international community will nominate its own representatives to facilitate the negotiations. The latter was assessed by some domestic analysts as direct interference in the internal affairs of the country, and the need for such interference was justified in order to make certain unpopular decisions⁹², or as the Macedonian professor Tupurkovski will point out, the war in Macedonia is a complex product of the subtle geopolitical logic of the key international factors, which have a strong interest in strategically controlling the Balkan constellations⁹³.

In the case of Azerbaijan, even at the time of independence of the Caucasian republics in 1991 and in accordance with the then norms of secession and independence, it has been established that Nagorno-Karabakh has no legal basis for secession from Azerbaijan or establishment of independence. However, given that the conflict has persisted for decades and different practices have been applied in similar cases (the case of Kosovo), the international community has been and still is very cautious, as Azerbaijan not only has a priority place in their (energy security) policies, but are to some extent dependent on its policies.

Conclusion

Taking into account the multicultural aspect of the Macedonian and the Azerbaijani society, certain problems related to the dissatisfaction of the minorities in these two countries attracted international attention and became part of the agenda of the great powers. Although with a different nature of ethnic conflict, what these two countries have in common is the involvement of the international community in finding a solution to the conflicts. Starting from the purpose of the research, to see what are the results, role and interests of the international community in resolving multicultural issues, i.e. in resolving ethnic conflicts, we would first point out the similarities and differences between the two

⁹¹ Sasho Veljanovski, *Op.Cit.*, p. 161

⁹² Veljanovski points out that: it would be unserious not to interpret the international mediation in the crisis in the Republic of Macedonia as direct interference in the internal affairs of the country, but of course would agree with the statement of prof. Maleski that "this interference should be understood as a necessity, because domestic politicians would have most certainly avoided making the difficult and unpopular political decisions without international pressure and intervention" *Ibid.*, P. 155-156

⁹³ *Ibid.*, p. 146

cases that are subject to analysis and comparison in this paper. While in the Azerbaijani case the conflict involves two states and a self-proclaimed one, in the Macedonian case the conflict was of an internal nature (between the state security forces and the Albanian paramilitary formation NLA). In both cases there was an armed conflict, which is why the international community intervened.

If we take the general definition of ethnic conflict (which relates to political, economic, social, cultural or territorial issues, and define it as ethnic conflict, when what precedes it and possible solutions are perceived along ethnic lines), we can say that the conflicts in both cases are of ethnic nature. In the Azerbaijani case the reason for the conflict is the self-declaration of independence by a part of the population (Armenians) on a territory (which according to the constitution is a constituent part of Azerbaijan), in which they represent a majority, while in the Macedonian case although there are several views (that the conflict was the result of an “spillover effect”, of “accumulated dissatisfaction of Albanians”, “staged”, that “the conditions indicated it”, that the goals were “territorial”) in the context of the definition and taking into account the solutions (contained in the OFA) for its termination, it can be said that the conflict was of ethnic nature and erupted due to the unfulfilled demands of the Albanians.

There was validity in the demands in the Macedonian case, if we take into account the fact that the Albanians lost their constitutive status in the country, (and their demands and dissatisfaction were manifested from the very beginning of the constitution of an independent Macedonia), but contradictory to this it can also be said that there is no validity if the situation is analyzed from the aspect of protection of minorities and minority rights (nationalities in the 1991 constitution) which according to the Macedonian constitution were in line with international standards for protection of minorities and received a positive rating by the Badinter Commission. In the case of Azerbaijan, on the one hand there is validity in the demands because the right to self-determination and secession is provided, but the same cannot be achieved in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh, because it is a constituent part of Azerbaijan.

In the Macedonian case, the international community has found a quick and lasting solution⁹⁴, with a comprehensive promotion of multiculturalism, in the case of Nagorno-Karabakh the settlement of the status is prolonged without a lasting solution that will satisfy both parties. The paper compared the constitutional order for the promotion and guarantee of multiculturalism in both societies; and a full analysis of the ethnic conflicts and the role of the international community in resolving them, with particular emphasis on specific geopolitical interests that could be considered factors for non-problem solving. From the research we can conclude the following: despite the fact that

⁹⁴ Through the methods of “shuttle diplomacy”, the EU High Representative for the Common Foreign and Security Policy, Solana and NATO Secretary General Robertson, managed to achieve two important goals: to put pressure on the Macedonian authorities not to declare martial law and to allow the creation of Government of national unity. *Ibid.*, P. 155

Azerbaijanis represent 91.6% of the total population, the Azerbaijani constitution is based on and promotes the civil principle, while in the Macedonian case the constitutionality of the state was guided by the national principle, i.e. *national state of the Macedonian people*, which excluded 33% of the population. Hence, this constitutional set-up in the Macedonian case proved to be a problem for the Albanians and it turned into an armed conflict. However, it should be noted that unlike the Azerbaijani constitution, the Macedonian constitution mentions other nationalities living within its state and provides a range of rights for free expression, nourishment and development of the identity and the national specificities. To the question whether such constitutions (referring to the national and civil principle on which the constitutions are based) were a cause for conflict? In the Macedonian case yes, in the Azerbaijani case no, because in the conflict with Nagorno-Karabakh the problem was not minority rights or a constitutive element, but a challenge to the right to self-determination. Hence in the Macedonian case the conflict was resolved quickly with amendments to the constitution aimed at promoting multiculturalism by expanding the rights of minorities, while in the Azerbaijani case the right to self-determination is not supported by the international community either. The question that arises here is: why did the international community manage to influence quickly and deeply in resolving the conflict in Macedonia, and not in the case of Azerbaijan? The answer most certainly lies in the geopolitical interest. From the above examples of involvement, the case of Nagorno-Karabakh shows that economic interests are stronger than even the “brotherly” ones (Slavism, Christianity, Islam, etc.). Iran is on the side of Armenia, Israel is on the side of Azerbaijan, Russia has more gain from Azerbaijan than from Armenia, and in this case it does not oppose Turkey either. Although many analysts have likened the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict to the Kosovo conflict, in the Azerbaijani case the “Kosovo” solution was not taken as an option by the international community, as Azerbaijan would lose, which would have a negative impact on the interests of the international community. In the Macedonian case, it is Macedonia that depends on the international community (Euro-Atlantic policies and support for their implementation), and not vice versa, so it had the opportunity to “interfere” internally and “dictate” the rules.

The overall summary of the data in this research once again proves that geopolitical interests are stronger even than international standards and that the geopolitical attractiveness of countries plays a big role in how they will be treated on the international stage.

Finally, it should be noted that in this research a comparison was made between two countries that may not seem to have much in common, but their multicultural societies are always a good reason for comparison of the policies for their promotion and may be taken as examples from which one or the other could learn something. Of course, the focus of the research, apart from the multicultural aspects, was on how the international community intervenes in ethnic conflicts and whether and why different



policies are pursued. Although in this case the conflicts differ from each other, the idea of the research was to see if the international community starts from its own interests in resolving a particular conflict or from the real needs of those who cause conflicts, for which reason the Macedonian and the Azerbaijani case is a good example of such analysis and reflection.

Bibliography

1. *Актите на првото заседание на АСНОМ*, Парламентарен институт на Собранието на Република Македонија, <https://www.sobranie.mk/>
2. Alice, Ackermann, *Making peace prevail, preventing violent conflict in Macedonia*, Syracuse University press, 2000
3. *Breve storia del Nagorno-Karabakh tra diritto internazionale e legge del più forte*, 2.11.2020, Filodiritto, Quotidiano di cultura, diritto e società, Bologna, <https://www.filodiritto.com/breve-storia-del-nagorno-karabakh-tra-diritto-internazionale-e-legge-del-piu-forte>
4. Laurence Broers, *Armenia – Azerbaijan conflict: Why Caucasus flare-up risks wider war*, 30 September 2020, VVC News, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-54356336>
5. Bucharest Summit Declaration, 03 April 2008, NATO, https://www.nato.int/cps/en/natolive/official_texts_8443.htm
6. Државен завод за статистика, *Попис на населението, домаќинствата и становите во РМ*, 2002, <http://www.stat.gov.mk/PrikaziPoslednaPublikacija.aspx?id=54>
7. Encyclopedia Britannica, Inc. <https://www.britannica.com>
8. Giusppe Gagliano, *Come si destreggia Israele tra Armenia e Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh*, Start Magazine, <https://www.startmag.it/mondo/come-si-destreggia-israele-tra-armenia-e-azerbaijan-in-nagorno-karabakh/>
9. Chiara Gentili, *Nagorno-Karabakh: Francia teme il ruolo della Turchia*, Sicurezza internazionale, Luis Osservatorio sulla sicurezza internazionale, <https://sicurezzainternazionale.luiss.it/2020/11/21/nagorno-karabakh-francia-teme-ruolo-della-turchia/>
10. Киро Глигоров, *Македонија е се што имаме*, ТРИ, Скопје, 2000
11. Bülent Gökyay, *Petrolieo e geopolitica nel bacino del Mar Caspio*, Volume IV / Economia, politica, diritto degli idrocarburi
12. Александар Христов, Јован Донеv, *Македонија во меѓународните договори 1875-1919*, Архив на Македонија, Матица Македонска, Скопје, 1994
13. Branimir Jovanovic, *The EU should resolutely after the Bulgarian veto*, *The Vienna Institute for international Economic studies*, 15 December 2020, from <https://wiiw.ac.at/the-eu-should-act-resolutely-after-the-bulgarian-veto-n-476.html>
14. Lorenzo Ferrari, *Nagorno – Karabakh: la prudenza dell'UE*, <https://www.balcanicaucaso.org/aree/Azerbaijan/Nagorno-Karabakh-la-prudenza-dell-UE-205860>

15. Mark Laity, Preventing war in Macedonia, Pre - Emptive Diplomacy for the 21 st Century, RUSI Кралски институт на заедничките служби, 2009, <https://www.fosm.mk/CMS/Files/Documents/Sprecurvanje-vojna-vnatresni-mark-lejti.pdf>
16. Охридски Рамковен Договор, https://www.pravdiko.mk/wp-content/uploads/2013/11/ramkoven_dogovor-3.pdf
17. Одлука на Уставниот Суд од 18.11.1998. (21.06.2020) Retrieved from <http://ustavensud.mk/?p=7259>
18. *Од патот по Македонија, „Глигоров е жив доказ дека војната во Југославија можеше да се избегне“* Извадоци од книгата на Предраг Матвејевиќ, „Граници и судбини(1)“, 17.03.2015, MKD, (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.mkd.mk/makedonija/od-patot-po-makedonija-gligorov-e-zhiv-dokaz-deka-deka-vojnata-vo-jugoslavija-mozheshe-da>
19. Мирјана Малеска, Етнички Конфликт и прилагодувањето, Култура, Скопје, 1997
20. Sergey Markedonov, *Russia and the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict: a careful balancing*, Istituto per gli studi di politica internazionale, <https://www.ispionline.it/it/pubblicazione/russia-and-nagorno-karabakh-conflict-careful-balancing-19832>
21. *Macedonia: Country Background and recent conflict*, Congressional Research Service, Novembre 7, 2001- March 28, 2002, <https://www.everycrsreport.com/reports/RL30900.html>
22. Дејан Маролов, Оливер Митев, Создавање на независна Република Македонија, внатрешни состојби и надворешни политики, Универзитет Гоце Делчев-Штип, 2016
23. Михајло Миноски (editing and comments), *Македонија во билатералните и мултилатералните договори на балканските држави 1861-1913, документи*. Архив на Македонија, Филозофски факултет, Матица македонска
24. Меѓународна соработка, Република Македонија на патот кон ЕУ, Собрание на РСМ <https://www.sobranie.mk/r-makedonija-na-pat-kon-eu.nspх>
25. *Nagorno Karabakh conflict: EU allocates additional 10 million euro to support those affected*, European Commission, 17 May 2020 https://ec.europa.eu/commission/presscorner/detail/en/IP_21_2462
26. Gabriele Natalizia, Daniele Pommier Vincelli (a cura di), *Azerbaijan, una lunga storia*, Passigli Editori, 2012, Firenze, https://www.researchgate.net/publication/264542999_Azerbaijan_Una_lunga_storia
27. Vladimir Ortakovski, *Inter-ethnic relations and minorities in the Republic of Macedonia*, in Southeast European Politics, Vol.2, n.1, May 2001
28. *Охридски Рамковен Договор, Студии на случај*, Македонски Центар за меѓународна соработка, Скопје, август 2011
29. *Поделба на Влада и спроведување на Охридскиот Рамковен Договор*, Фондација Фридрих Еберт, Скопје, 2008, <http://library.fes.de/pdf-files/bueros/skopje/06358.pdf>
30. *Peace agreement data base*, <https://www.peaceagreements.org/view/310>
31. Duncan M. Perry, *The politics of terror, Macedonian liberation movements 1893-1903*, Скопје, Мароп, 2001

32. *Premio Mediterraneo di Pace 1998 a Kiro Gligorov*, 5 gennaio 1998, Fondazione Laboratorio Mediterraneo (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <https://www.fondazionemediterraneo.org/index.php/comunicati-stampa/20153?id=313>
33. *Putin si esprime sullo status giuridico del Nagorno Karabakh*, Sicurezza internazionale, Luis Osservatorio sulla sicurezza internazionale, <https://sicurezzainternazionale.luiss.it/2020/11/24/putin-si-esprime-sul-nagorno-karabakh/>
34. *Resolution 795, Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia*, 11 December 1992, UNSCR, (16.06.2021) Retrieved from <http://unscr.com/en/resolutions/795>
35. Јан Рихлик, Мирослав Коуба, *Историја на Македонија*, Македонска Реч, Скопје, 2009
36. Barnett Rubin, (ed. By) *Toward Comprehensive Peace in Southeastern Europe: Conflict Prevention in the South Balkans*, New York: Council on Foreign Relations/Twentieth Century Fund. 1996. 81 105 & 119 126 <http://home.uchicago.edu/~vfriedm/Articles/105Friedman96.pdf>
37. *Russia calls for Balkans intervention*, The Guardian, 23 март 2001, <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2001/mar/23/balkans4>
38. Nano Ruzin, looking forward to a Balkan Big Mac, <https://www.nato.int/docu/review/2003/issue2/english/special.html>
39. Сакам да кажам.мк, *Да ја слушаа ПДП во 1991, немаше да има конфликт за рамковен договор, вели Исмет Рамадани, Сакам да кажам. Мк, 7 септември 2016*, <https://sdk.mk/index.php/neraskazhani-prikazni/da-ja-slushaa-pdp-vo-1991-nemashe-da-ima-konflikt-za-ramkoven-dogovor-veli-ismet-ramadani/>
40. Anna Hess Sargsyan, *Nagorno - Karabakh: obstacles to a negotiated settlement*, CSS Analysis in security policy n.131, Center for security studies, April 2013 Zurich, <https://css.ethz.ch/>
41. Andrea Semprini, *Multikulturalizam*, CLIO, Beograd, 2004
42. Славко Милосавлевски, Мирче Томовски, Албанците во република Македонија 1945-1995, законодавство, политичка документација, статистика, НИП Студентски збор, Скопје, Декември 1997
43. Службен Весник на СРМ, бр.29 од 26.07.1989 <https://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/245BBB86D1354148B0725DC74D5D893A.pdf>
44. Blerim Shala, *Fyrom: Removing the causes of war*, (BCR N. 272 17 -Aug.-2001), Blerim Shala is editor-in-chief of the Pristina-based daily Zeri. <https://reliefweb.int/report/former-yugoslav-republic-macedonia/fyrom-removing-causes-war>
45. John Shea, *Македонија и Грција, битката за дефинирање нова балканска нација*, Скопје, Макавеј, 2002
46. Sarah Wilson Sokhey, Danilo Gjukovikj, This is why the West should pay attention to the drama in Macedonia, Washington Post, 29 May 2017, <https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2017/05/29/this-is-why-the-west-should-pay-attention-to-the-drama-in-macedonia>
47. Statistical Yearbook of Azerbaijan 2020, The state statistical committee of the Republic of Azerbaijan, https://www.stat.gov.az/menu/6/statistical_yearbooks/?lang=en
48. Statement by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries, <https://www.osce.org/mg/51152>

49. Стенографски белешки, од четвртото продолжение на дваесет и петата седница на Собранието на РМ одржана на 14.11.1995 година, <https://www.sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/25sed4prod14poe95god.pdf>
50. Стенографски белешки од 26-тата седница на Собранието на РМ одржана на 17.11.1991, Собрание на Република Македонија, Скопје ноември 1991, <https://sobranie.mk/WBStorage/Files/26sed17noem91god.pdf>
51. The Constitution of the Republic of Azerbaijan, https://www.legislationline.org/download/id/5748/file/Azerbaijan_Const_1995_am2009_en.pdf
52. The minority languages in Azerbaijan, Worldatlas, <https://www.worldatlas.com/articles/what-languages-are-spoken-in-azerbaijan.html>
53. The State Committee on Religious Associations of the Republic of Azerbaijan, http://www.dqdk.gov.az/en/view/pages/306?menu_id=83
54. The world Factbook, country Azerbaijan, CIA, <https://www.cia.gov/the-world-factbook/countries/azerbaijan/>
55. *Summary of Conclusion*, Helsinki Additional Meeting of the CSCE Council, 24 March 1992 <https://www.osce.org/files/f/documents/3/9/29121.pdf>
56. Иван Тошевски, *Нација или Нација?*, МИ-АН, Скопје, 2003
57. Aleksis I Zhil Trud, Razaranje Balkana, Kakos u razbili Jugoslaviju, Xenia, Metella, 2013
58. Turk stream, <https://turkstream.info/>
59. Устав на СРМ од 25.02.1974, Службен весник на СРМ, бр.7, год.XXX, 25.02.1974, <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/0AF2E0456C964935B7705FB5BF6F31F9.pdf>
60. Устав на Република Македонија од 17.11.1991, Службен весник на РМ, бр.52 од 22.11.1991, <http://www.slvesnik.com.mk/Issues/19D704B29EC040A1968D7996AA0F1A56.pdf>
61. Biljana Vankovska, The role of the Ohrid Framework agreement and the peace process in Macedonia, Stefano Bianchini et al (eds.), Regional Cooperation, Peace Enforcement, and the Role of the Treaties in the Balkans, 2007, https://www.academia.edu/1267906/The_role_of_the_Ohrid_framework_agreement_and_the_peace_process_in_Macedonia
62. *Во Фебруари 1994 година Грција вовеле целосно трговско ембарго кон Македонија*, Македонска Нација, 03 ноември 2010, <http://www.mn.mk/aktuelno/2855-Vo-februari-1994-godina-Grcija-vovede-celosno-trgovsko-embargo-kon-Makedonija>
63. Сашо Велјановски, *Геополитиката на САД во конфликтите на Балканот (1990-2001)*, Балкански форум за безбедност, Скопје, 2007
64. Zafer Yildirim, U.S. Foreign Policy towards Azerbaijan: From "Alliance" to "Strategic Partnership", Alternatives Turkish journal of international relations, <https://dergipark.org.tr/en/download/article-file/19299>
65. Закон за основање на Државен универзитет во тетово, Службен весник на Р.М. бр.8/2004 од 23.02.2004 година
66. Закон за високо образование, Службен Весник на РМ, бр.64/2000 од 03.08.2000 година