

The reasons behind qabala radar station disagreement process argumentative essay ...

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Introduction

Azerbaijan, from the time of independence, usually led a successful foreign policy in the region with Russia. However, Moscow-Baku relations have varied

since the collapse of the Soviet Union time by time balancing or bandwagoning. In general Azerbaijan was able to achieve being renowned as the only former Soviet republic that is neither ' pro-Russian nor pro-Western'. The country has upheld cordial dealings with Moscow without sacrificing its economy, politics, and foreign policy to the Kremlin's demands. One more example of the independent decision-making of Azerbaijan is the recent disagreement between two countries of the leasing procedure of Russia of Qabala Radar Station. Azerbaijan displayed very constant and determined position on the conditions of the continuation of the lease of the radar station.

The radar station was built in 1985 when Russia and Azerbaijan were still part of the Soviet Union. For the past decade, Russia has paid Azerbaijan \$7 million a year in rent for the facility, along with other operational charges. With the lease set to expire, the two countries had been in protracted negotiations over new terms, with Azerbaijan demanding \$300 million a year.

Till the expiration day the political scientists and political journalists pronounced different versions about the possible scenarios waiting Azerbaijan-Russia relations. Why Azerbaijani side decided not to come to an agreement with Russia and did not compromise? What was it the result of bureaucratic politics or was it a rational choice? The Voice of Russia

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mentionsthatAzerbaijan till the extension day was waiting Russia to come up with the solution in favor of Nagorno Karabakh problem. Otherwise, Azerbaijan will not extend the lease of the Gabala radar station and join the NABUCCO project, a diplomatic source that requested anonymity told newsmen in the Azeri capital Baku.

Objectives of Research

Research Question

- Which theory is more appropriate to explain the causes of disagreement between Russia and Azerbaijan on Qabala radar station?

Methods

Review of Literature

The relations between Azerbaijan and Russia have been discussed and frequently written about by scholars such as Freni, Rousseau and others. The process on Qabala radar station has also been a common topic in various international and local media and academia such as the Central-Caucasian Institute of Research, Global Times , New York Time , Eurasia daily and others. The analyses that previously mentioned sources were based only on qualitative information and did not test the exact situations. My main contribution to this topic is that I will use two theories to test these two possible theories and to see which theory (mentioned above) is more successful in explaining the position of Azerbaijan and disagreement on the lease of Qabala Radar Station.

Once the decision has been take questions behind the decisions were left such as what happened for both sides to come to a disagreement. Why

Azerbaijani side within a short time period decided not to compromise to Russia? Was it a political decision taken within a nation-interest framework or was it the separate bureaucracies who influenced the decision? Perhaps it was nothing than a simple economical cost-benefit calculation made by Azerbaijani side .?!

Analysis

With the argument that the disagreement on Qabala Radar Station between Russia and Azerbaijan can be analyzed from two theories rational actor model (RAM) or bureaucratic politics model (BPM), the following analysis proves that the rational actor model best explains this situation convincingly.

The rational actor model treats foreign policy choices just as outcomes of the following sequence:

Presented with a particular problem, any rational decision maker will take into account the foreign policies and goals of the nation and uses the rational person to determine which ones take priority over others. After that, they identify the available options trying to trace all costs and benefits associated with each option. A careful estimation of the possible consequences follows: The options are ranked from the best preferred to the least preferred. The ultimate choice of the decision maker is usually the option ranked the highest. This is usually the optimal choice for the actor.

When dealing with the model in foreign policy analysis, there are two types of uncertainty that confront the actor: Environmental uncertainty arises when the actors have poor or inadequate information about the environment in which they operate. Strategic uncertainty occurs when the rational behavior of the various actors and can seriously confuse matters.

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The bureaucratic politics model on the other hand relies on three clear propositions as follows for valid foreign policy analysis: The first relates to the sources of the actors policy preferences, commonly referred to as stand-sit proposition. Another relates to the type of interaction among the actors during the decision making process (bargaining proposition) and the final proposition relates to the character of the decisions that are eventually adopted. (Resultant proposition). The BPM is however limited in its application on realistic matters of foreign policy analysis due to the fact that its propositions are crippled and plagued with ambiguity making the model not to be true to itself.

It does not specify the association and interplay between structural effects and motivations for specific agents on the formation of the actors' policy preferences. It also does not specify the conditions resultants are outcomes of the decision making process.

The rational actor model and the disagreement on Qabala Radar Station between Russia and Azerbaijan.

The model is best suited to explain the disagreement between Russia and Azerbaijan due to the differences in ideological grounds for each party. Both parties seek to derive maximum utility/benefit from the lease agreement of the station. The search for optimal position by Russia and Azerbaijan resulted in selfish interests on both parties thus spurring a bitter disagreement. In the case of rationality, competition is one ultimate outcome which no party can avoid. It usually arises when the parties coincidentally identify a common opportunity and go for it. In the case of Russia and Azerbaijan, V, the Russian defense minister in 2012, hoped that the lease agreement would be

extended upon its expiry. Russia was also setting up a new radar station in Armavir. The minister stated that the station would be put on full combat duty: this is a selfish way of treating Azerbaijan who are the hosts of the stations. Russia would be very ungrateful to set up a new station and put it under combat control just to hinder the Azerbaijanis from enjoying the services. The military cooperation between Russia and Azerbaijan was an express selfish interest for Russia whose commercial interests to sell weapons to Baku.

Rationality never intends to serve morality but the goals of the actor. All through out 2008, Russia made extensive weapons transfers to Armenia. This was however officially denied by the Russian foreign ministry until January 2009. Russia intentions were to benefit from such trade without involvement of the Azerbaijan. Upon that revelation, the lease agreement for the Qabala radar station was at a peril because it was the backbone of such trade. This way, Azerbaijan opted to salt the agreement due to the fact that she was not a beneficiary of the trade conducted via the station: another instance of conflict amid rationality.

As per the Azerbaijanis, the lease agreement was one designed to benefit Russia only at the expense of the Azerbaijanis. Rationality principle holds that each party seeks to derive the maximum benefits at the lowest costs and expect minimal consequences. Russia was using Azerbaijan as a stepping stone to reach greater heights of trading in arms (bargaining with the United States over the deployment of a NATO missile defense system in Eastern Europe) something which agitated Azerbaijan to disagree with the Russians over the lease.

The disagreement was also fuelled by the unfair Russian expert's proposal to shift the costly maintenance of the Qabala radar station onto Azerbaijan. This attempt sought to minimize the costs on the part of Russia hence put the weak Azerbaijan at an extra cost which meant increased government spending but reduced benefits, since the station was serving mostly the Russian interests of arms trade. The Azerbaijanis resented the scheming ideology of Russia and this fuelled more to the disagreement. This was an outright case of a rational conflict as each party to the lease was trying to win a better situation for her nation. According to the proponents of the rational actor Model, if an actor is behaving rationally, his choices are designed to achieve outcomes consistent with his goals. This is the usual cause of disagreements whenever two parties in any form of business resolve to adopt this model. As stated earlier, the rationality aspect converts all parties into disguised competitors with a great potential for rivalry. The frequent visits and talks with foreign countries by the Russian government officials are a clear indication of the country's rational actor approach. Despite the consequences suffered by the other parties of the arms trade like Mexico, Iraq and Azerbaijan, Russia is seen to put endless efforts in a deliberate attempt to sell its products such as missiles and other lethal arms. It is this trade which has seen the endless civil wars in some countries such as Iraq.

It is worthy to note that all rational activities do not necessarily have to be morally upright but they are all aimed at satisfying the goals of the actor who engages in such. Therefore all actions by Russia in the Qabala radar station were fuelled by the rational choices made by the Russian government

to sustain and protect her interests and part in arms trade.

The disagreement over the lease was also fuelled by the way Azerbaijanis nationals were treated in Russia. They were arguably subjected to undue discrimination due to their Caucasian appearance yet the Russian nationals in Azerbaijan were held and treated with dignity. The agreement initially sought to be mutually beneficial but Russia took the bigger share of the cake. She deployed her own citizens to work in the station and considered very few Azerbaijanis for the lowest technician jobs which were paid least. The top lucrative jobs in the radar station were preserved for Russians despite the initial agreement. This was also a result of rationality on the part of Russia despite being selfish.

Russia was not willing to let go the station even after the end of the lease. In 2012, the Russian defense minister anticipated for an extension of the lease after its expiry. This was accompanied by the selfish and rational plan by Russia to construct another station in Armavir and shift the maintenance costs of the Qabala radar station to the Azerbaijanis. This would contribute to great benefits for the Russians but the Azerbaijanis would be on the losing end. This occasioned another instance of a conflict amid rational considerations by both parties. It further served to make the deal sour.

In conclusion, the disagreement between Azerbaijan and Russia over the Qabala radar station can best be analyzed using the rational actor model. The rationality of both parties played a central role to plague the entire partnership and hence crippling the agreement. Russia was on the verge of serving her greed at the expense of the Azerbaijan who hosted the station. Azerbaijan eventually developed a sense of rationality and that spurred an

element of competition and culminated the start of problems in the agreement.

The two parties to the agreement opted to use the rational actor model a move which sparked off competition between the two countries. There resulted a tag of war over the resources at the station and Azerbaijan wanted to maximize the benefits. This debut conflicted with Russia's rational ideologies and the disagreement on the Qabala radar station came as a result.

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