



# FOREIGN POLICY AND PRACTICE ON GLOBAL ARENA OF THREE SOUTH CAUCASUS STATES

The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly



## FOREIGN POLICY AND PRACTICE ON GLOBAL ARENA OF THREE SOUTH CAUCASUS STATES:

The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly

by Leila Alieva, Tamar Patariaia and Ivane Kechakmadze

The paper was produced in the framework of the Project of the Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development Foreign Policy and Practice on Global Arena of Three South Caucasus States: the Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly' in partnership with the Regional Center for Strategic Studies (Georgia).

The project is supported by the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation and Robert Bosch Stiftung

**G | M | F** The German Marshall Fund  
of the United States  
STRENGTHENING TRANSATLANTIC COOPERATION

**Robert Bosch Stiftung**

The aim of the project is to identify prospects of cooperation between the three South Caucasus states in the area of foreign and security policy through fostering open debates between experts and academicians from the three states concerning the foreign policy decision making practice of these countries in the framework of international organizations of global and regional coverage – UN and the EU.

The publication has been produced by Zurab Cherkezishvili, publisher.  
Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development.

The content of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Caucasus Institute for Peace Democracy and Development and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the Black Sea Trust for Regional Cooperation and Robert Bosch Stiftung.

The authors bear sole responsibility for the views and arguments expressed in the final paper.

### *About the authors:*

**Leila Alieva** is the president of the Regional Center for Strategic Studies and the academic visitor of St. Antony's College in University of Oxford.

**Tamar Patariaia** is the head of the European and Euro-Atlantic Co-operation Program at the Caucasian Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development (CIPDD), Tbilisi, Georgia.

**Ivane Kechakmadze**, the statistical analyst, is an invited lecturer in statistics at Ilia State University and Ivane Javakhishvili State University

© Caucasus Institute for Peace, Democracy and Development/CIPDD, June 2016  
72 Tsereteli Ave., Tbilisi 0154 Georgia  
cipdd.org



# FOREIGN POLICY AND PRACTICE ON GLOBAL ARENA OF THREE SOUTH CAUCASUS STATES

## The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly

### *Introduction*

The paper explores the foreign policy of the South Caucasus (SC) countries and analyzes decisions made by the respective governments at global international forums, such as United Nations General Assembly (UN GA). In particular, the paper overviews the voting practice of the South Caucasus states at the UN GA and attempts to identify the foreign and security policies priorities of the SC states and their relevance to declared foreign policy objectives.

The results of the analysis of long-term statistical data from the UN GA voting records were examined and compared with that of other neighbor states and other nations with economic and political interests in the South Caucasus region. The paper presents a statistical analysis of a database of votes recorded by the committees at the UN GA. For this paper, 936 votes have been collected and analyzed, covering 13 years out of a 16-year period, from the UN Session #53 in 1998 to #69 in 2014. The database covered the recorded votes of 19 countries, including the South Caucasus states, their neighbours and countries that have close ties with them: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, China, France, Islamic Republic of Iran, Italy, Germany, Georgia, Japan, Kazakhstan, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, Ukraine and the US.

The following factors have been taken into account during the research: the voting behaviour of the members of different international organizations, such as the European Union (EU), NATO, and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); and the influence of national interests of individual UN members on their voting practices. In particular, the article reviews the influence of selected countries' national interests on the implementation of their foreign and security policy priorities during voting at the UN GA.

During the study it was also taken into account that UN GA resolutions are not legally binding and that their political power cannot be compared with the decisions of the UN Security Council. The resolutions adopted at the UN GA are only recommendations, though monitoring the voting practice for resolutions adopted at the UN GA could provide an indication of the level of foreign policy cohesion between countries. The voting practice of Georgia and its' neighbours, Armenia and Azerbaijan in particular, can provide insight into the countries' common values and principles, based on which decisions have been made and what tactics have been used. This, in turn, could help identify additional areas of cooperation between them in the field of foreign and security policy.

### *1. Literature Review and the main Hypothesis of the Study*

Studies exploring the voting practice of member states at the UN GA have been conducted since the 1950s in order to understand the specifics of a state's foreign policy or define the level of cohesion of foreign policy courses among the members of the UN<sup>1</sup>. These types of studies have used statistical methods to examine the resolutions adopted by the UN GA within a certain time period. Quantitative research methodology makes it possible to give a general picture of a state's behavior. The object is not to

1 Sydney D. Bailey, "Voting Tyranny of the Majority?" *the World Today*, 22,6, (June 1966). Keul B. Ray, "Foreign Policy and Voting in the UN General Assembly", *International Organization*, 26, 3 (Summer 1972), 589-594. Elisabeth Johansson-Nogues. "The Fifteen and the Accession Foreign Policy in the UN General Assembly: What Future for European Foreign Policy in the coming together of the 'Old' and 'New' Europe", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, Volume 9, Issue 1, Spring (2004).

define the policy at a single point in time, but rather to observe states' voting practices over a long period of time and identify changes in the relationship between the states. This is the first study to focus on the voting behaviour of the South Caucasus states and their regional neighbours and strategic partner states.

The voting in the UN is a complex process that may hide various strategies behind its particular patterns. It allows small states, like those in the Caucasus, to demonstrate their positions vis-à-vis its neighbors, as well as big regional and world powers whose policies have an impact on particular states and on the region as a whole. The tactics may include solidarity with states that share the same position on issues of vital significance for the SC state, or it could be a matter of diplomatic balance on the issues which are less significant for the interests of an individual country. The country voting may "compensate" its independent policies on critical issues of national interests<sup>2</sup>, similar to the tactics used by major powers. This diplomatic balancing is possible because the decisions are not binding for countries. It may also reflect various foreign policy strategies towards the big powers – such as "bandwagoning" "balancing" or "hiding". Voting may reflect the type of grouping and regional cohesion present on various issues, developing alliances, and the strategy used by the type of regime in power in the country. For instance, the voting may reveal a foreign policy driven by "buffer states" logic, which is caused by the necessity to soften contradictions between the big regional powers.<sup>3</sup> At the same time, on issues such as freedoms and human rights, as opposed to questions of security, voting reveals value-driven choices.

Although the South Caucasus states have some common attributes, i.e. their small size, geographic location and objectives of state and nation building, they have different foreign policies to address issues of survival. This is

<sup>2</sup> National interests are reflected in the national level strategic documents.

<sup>3</sup> Harun Yilmaz Presentation at SOAS, London: Geopolitics in the South Caucasus: A Historical and Contemporary Reassessment on 27 April 2016 (organised by Vostok Society, SOAS, (2016) available from: <http://qmul.academia.edu/HarunYilmaz>; George Mchedlishvili, "Changing Perceptions of the West in the South Caucasus: Adoration No More, Research Paper, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, (2016)

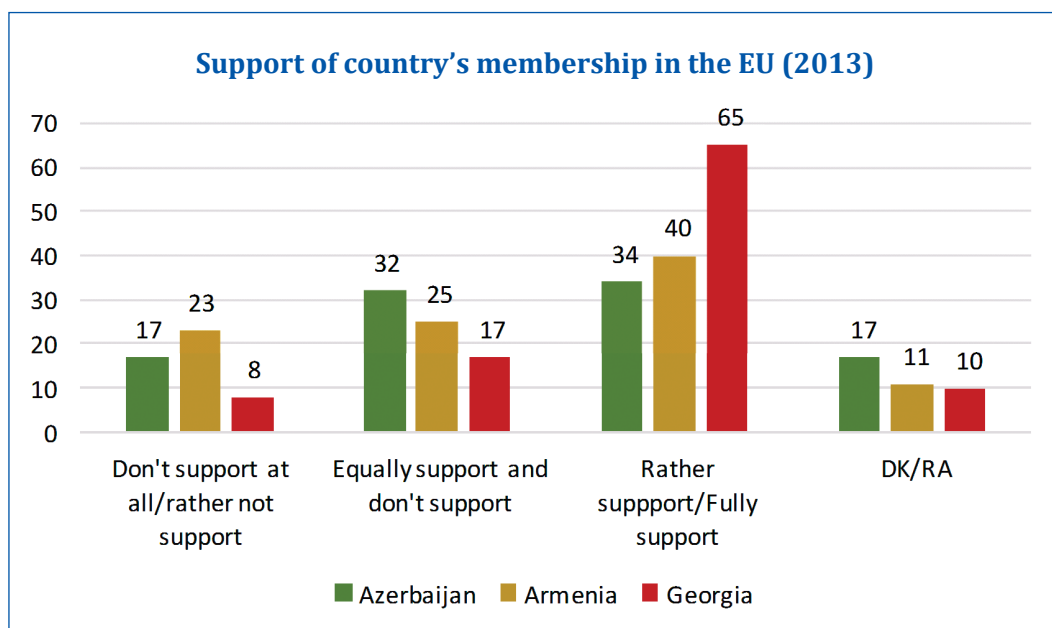
explained by the deep division in national interests related to security: two states, Azerbaijan and Georgia, prioritize territorial integrity, while Armenia prioritizes self-determination<sup>4</sup>. Respectively, the countries have different allies to address their security concerns. Georgia, Azerbaijan and Turkey have similar interests in the area of national security and energy security, while Armenia is oriented towards Russia and enjoys close economic cooperation with Iran. At the same time, Georgia and Azerbaijan respond to threats to their sovereignty differently. While Georgia has declared that its final goal is integration in NATO and the EU, Azerbaijan opted to join Non-Aligned Movement in May 2011. The factors behind this are both domestic – the type of regime and the external – the need to balance a regional threat.

This diversity is also seen in voting patterns on global issues in the various committees of the UN, which reflect the influence of several factors over national interests, such as the type of regime/political system; global security concerns and regional considerations /allegiances; role of international financial institutions; and economic interests. This paper argues the weight of these factors varies, depending on the importance of the resolution for the country's national interests.

The tendencies observed in how the South Caucasus states implement foreign policy on the international arena are also strongly reflected in their domestic public perceptions towards the EU integration process.

The 2013 poll conducted by the Caucasus Research Resources Center (CRRRC) in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia revealed differences in the public attitudes among citizens of the three states. During the poll the respondents from Georgian, Armenian and Azerbaijan were asked a question – "To what extent would you support country's membership in the EU?" As the Figure 1 shows, about 65 per cent of Georgian respondents said that they rather support or fully support the country's membership in the EU, compared to just 40 per cent of respondents in Armenia and 34 per cent of respondents in Azerbaijan.

<sup>4</sup> National Interests are reflected in the National Security Concept of Georgia, 2005, 2011.

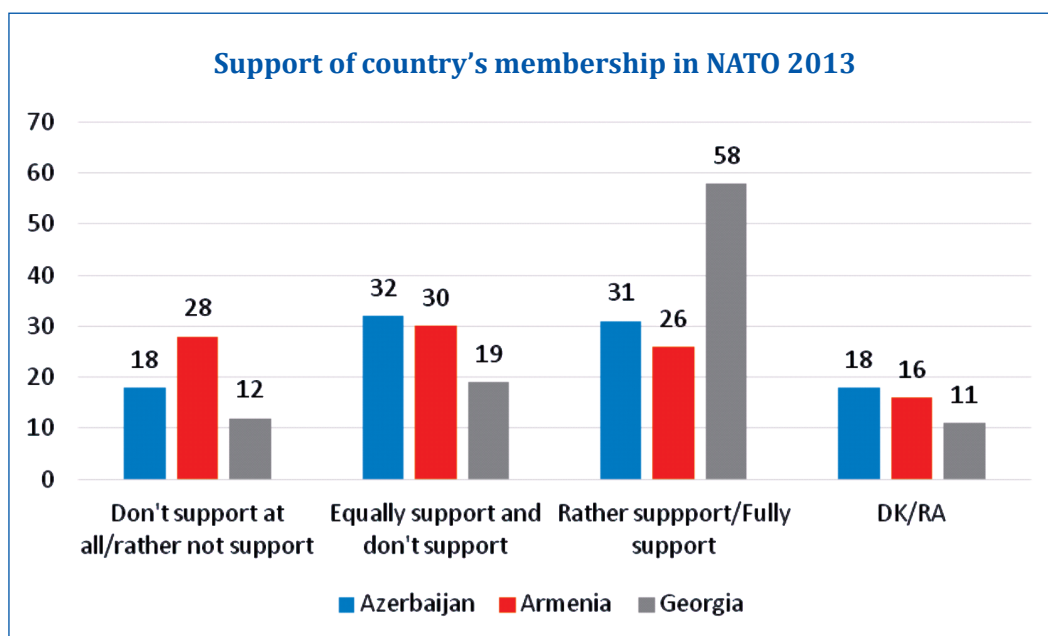


**Figure 1: Level of support of country's membership in the EU.**

Source: CRRC, Caucasus Barometer 2013 for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

There are also meaningful differences in public perceptions in all three countries towards the prospects of integration in NATO. The Georgian public supports the state's decision to join the alliance, while the Armenian public

seems reluctant to support the idea of potential NATO membership. Rather, it agrees with the government policy to develop close security ties with the Russia-led regional security organization SCTO.



**Figure 2: Level of support of country's membership in NATO.**

Source: CRRC, Caucasus Barometer 2013 for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.

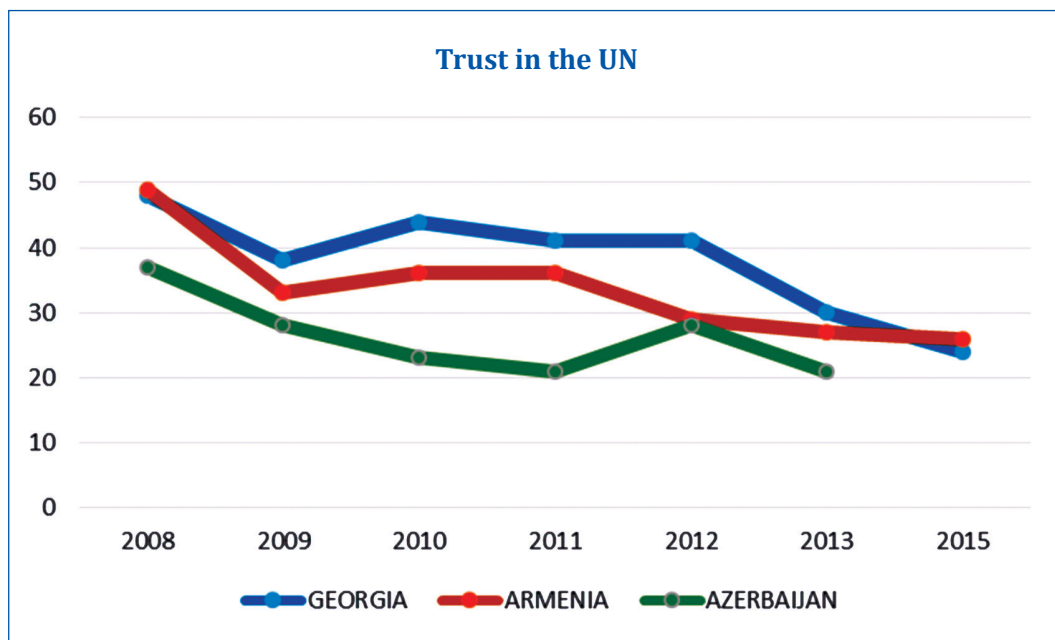
While reviewing public survey results, it is necessary to take into account that often the decisions of the state's political elite and its rhetoric do not fully coincide with public perceptions, and that the role of elites are decisive in influencing and directing perceptions of public. At the same time, the state's decision-making practice in international forums (whether it is the UN GA or statements made by the EU) are not very widely discussed topics in all three countries.

These public perception survey results can be extrapolated, with the help of the voting results of GA resolutions. On the basis of the data analysis presented in Figures 1 and 2, it is expected that Georgia's voting practice at the UN likely resembles that of EU and NATO members, while this factor is less distinctive for Armenia and Azerbaijan.

This is also strongly reflected in people's diverse attitudes towards other neighbour

states, powerful international partners, and global international organizations in the years 2008-2015 in all three South Caucasus states. In particular, a 2012 poll conducted by the Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC) asked 'Who is the biggest friend of your country?'. Among the respondents in Georgia, 62 per cent choose the United States and 5 per cent said the EU. However, 86 per cent of respondents in Armenia favoured Russia, while only 2 per cent favoured the United States and 10 per cent chose the EU<sup>5</sup>.<sup>6</sup> Statistics for Azerbaijan from the same 2012 poll reveal the extent of the country's disillusionment with both the West and Russia, with 99 per cent of those polled rejecting the United States, the EU and Russia in favour of Turkey.<sup>7</sup>

CRRC data also provides some insight into the issue of public trust in the UN among Armenian, Azerbaijani, and Georgian citizens.



**Figure 3: Public Trust in the UN in Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.**

*Source: CRRC, Caucasus Barometer 2013 for Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia.*

5 George Mchedlishvili, "Changing Perceptions of the West in the South Caucasus: Adoration No More, Research Paper, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, (2016)

6 Social Sciences in the Caucasus, 'Go West? Perceptions of the West in the South Caucasus', Caucasus Research Resource Centers (CRRC), 5 August 2013, <http://crcc-caucasus.blogspot.co.uk/2013/08/go-west-perceptions-of-west-in-south.html> (accessed on 5 June 2016)

7 George Mchedlishvili, "Changing Perceptions of the West in the South Caucasus: Adoration No More, Research Paper, Russia and Eurasia Programme, Chatham House, The Royal Institute of International Affairs, (2016)



As Figure 3 shows, the trust of the public of the South Caucasus states towards the UN has been gradually decreasing since 2008 and the dynamics are clearly visible in survey results conducted by the same study at the CRRC. This may be a reflection of the complicated security environment in and around the region in recent years: all three states experienced challenges and one, Georgia, fought a five day long war with Russia in 2008. The increased vulnerabilities of the regional states, coupled with Russia's aggressive policy, have limited opportunities for international organizations, such as the UN, OSCE, to be engaged in the solution of problems locally and improve the environment in the region, including worsened relationship between Russia and the West.

Analysts have predicted how South Caucasus states could behave on the international arena in the future, and how changes in the security environment could affect the decisions they make at international forums. In particular, Kevork Oskanian introduced his opinion about the firmness of Georgia's pro-Western orientation, including its NATO integration course and active participation in the EU-led Eastern Partnership policy<sup>8</sup>.

Oskanian particularly notes that Georgia currently follows "a "hedging strategy" towards Russia, which seems to be a natural reaction to a far more uncertain environment, compared to 2003-2012, when the balance of power was far less clear-cut. As a result, the future development of Georgia's foreign policy course depends on the perceived balance of power between the West and Russia in the region, as well as the domestic ideology of the current Georgian government.

The behavior of South Caucasus states at international forums reflects the dynamics in the positions adopted by the West and Russia, which is equally important in shaping the foreign policy of Georgia and other South Caucasus states.

To summarize, the present analysis is an attempt to explore and determine the level of

the states' commitment to their core national values, and the level of cohesion between the national values of different states. The study seeks to define Georgia's level of commitment to its Euro-Atlantic integration, and examine the foreign policy priorities and principles on which Georgia bases its voting behaviour. It also looks at the decisions made by the other South Caucasus states, Azerbaijan and Armenia, while voting at the UN GA. The result is an assessment of the "voting distance" that exists between Georgia, Armenia and Azerbaijan and their close partner states, and the "EU consensus". The study also defines the factors that explain the difference in the voting practices of various states (the explanation about the "EU consensus" see section 3).

During the analysis of the research results, it was taken into consideration that "the United Nations does not deal with every single issue in world affairs" which makes it quite difficult to generalize the outcomes of the study for the foreign policies of the SC states. "The GA passes relatively few resolutions on economic development, focusing more on international security and human rights. So voting in the UN General Assembly is not a comprehensive reflection of the full range of foreign policy concerns of all states, or of the balance of priorities of individual states. Nevertheless voting cohesion there is still a very good indicator of common positions on the widest range of global issues"<sup>9</sup>

This article also analyses different characteristics of voting cohesion, comparing the voting record of South Caucasus states at different times with that of the European Union member states, US and Russia. It also assesses the index of convergence among the South Caucasus states.

Before analyzing the voting records of South Caucasian states, it is necessary to outline some basic feature about voting patterns in the UNGA.

- 1) The analysis focuses only on votes on resolutions recorded by the committees and plenary at the UN GA.

8 Kevork Oskanian, The Balance Strikes Back: Power, Perceptions, and Ideology in Georgian Foreign Policy, 1992–2014, Foreign Policy Analysis, (2016), 0, 1-25. Foreign Policy Analysis Advance Access published on 11 April 2016

9 Peter Ferdinand, 2014. Foreign Policy Convergence in Pacific Asia: The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly, British Journal of Politics and International Relations, BJPIR: VOL 16, 662–679.

- 2) The article focuses on the outcomes of 936 resolutions, voted on in the period between 2003-2014 (#69 session), and during 1998 (#53 session). There are an average of 72 votes a year.
- 3) The data used pertains to split votes, and does not include resolutions that were passed unanimously and without a vote.
- 4) Overall the study explored about 17, 784 votes, each cast by individual state selected for the survey purposes.

## ***2. Domestic Ideological Factors Influencing Foreign Policy Decisions of the South Caucasus states***

All three South Caucasus states have openly expressed their desire to become a Western-style liberal democracy, although that remains a relatively distant goal. The three countries have had varying degrees of success in building democratic institutions, creating liberal markets, upholding the rule of law and ensuring the protection of human rights and universal freedoms. There are also significant differences in their development, in terms of foreign policy priorities, anti-corruption strategies, security sector reform, etc.

In comparison with other countries in the region, Georgia has successfully implemented a number of democratic reforms over the past several years, especially in terms of building state institutions and fighting corruption. While Georgia's progress has been recognised, Freedom House, an independent watchdog organization dedicated to the expansion of freedom and democracy around the world, still regards it as a partly free country. It has classified Georgia as a transitional government or hybrid regime that is still in need of vital reforms on its path towards democratisation. The areas that are most in need of government attention include the rule of law; freedom of the judiciary; reform of the public service; security sector; promoting democratic governance, human rights and media freedoms; and public sector governance.

Georgia continues to work towards integration with the EU: in 2014 it signed the EU Association Agreement (AA) and the agreement on Deep

and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA). Since then, several reform efforts have been intensified, including efforts to increase the independence of the judiciary, continue the fight against corruption, secure visa liberalization with the Schengen member states, and improve the protection of human rights and universal freedoms through the adoption of the national Human Rights Strategy and an Action Plan.

In addition, Georgia's foreign policy remains firmly committed to integration with the West, in particular the Euro-Atlantic security system and NATO.

The picture of the Azerbaijan's democratization process is different as is strongly affected by the political economy of oil.

Azerbaijan is one of the main energy producing and transporting countries in the Caspian region, and it has often expressed its readiness to fulfil an important role in implementing the EU's energy security strategy. The EU signed a memorandum of mutual understanding and strategic partnership in the energy sector with Azerbaijan in 2006.

In 2006-2007, Azerbaijan became one of the fastest growing economies in the world due to its energy resources and the price of crude oil. At the same time, international organisations have criticized the Azerbaijani government over the level of democratic norms and basic liberties in the country, including the absence of free and fair elections, as well as its general practices with regards to universal human rights. From 2007 to 2016, Freedom House assessed Azerbaijan as an unfree country, particularly with regards to freedom of speech, freedom of press, and its capacity to organise free and fair elections<sup>10</sup>. Between 2012 and 2015, the Azerbaijani government adopted stricter measures of control over civil society, virtually banning western donors from supporting local NGOs focused on democratic reforms.

The situation in Armenia has been strongly influenced by the country's close relationship with Russia. Like Georgia, Armenia intended to sign an Association Agreement with the EU. In 2013, however, it changed its policy, opting to

10 Freedom House, Azerbaijan 2016, Available from: <https://freedomhouse.org/report/nations-transit/2016/azerbaijan> (7 June 2016)



sign the Russian-led Eurasian Union. Currently the country is a member of the Russian-led security alliance, the Collective Security Treaty Organisation. Armenia continues to have limited relations with the EU.

Armenia has the lowest GDP of the three South Caucasus countries, and is categorised by Freedom House as a partly free country. Anti-corruption reforms in crucial areas, including the judiciary and law enforcement, have stalled. The 2014 constitutional amendments change the government from a presidential to a parliamentary system, which many perceive as an attempt by President Serzh Sargsyan to remain in power<sup>11</sup>. The Constitutional referendum was criticized by domestic and international observers for serious violations<sup>12</sup>.

All three South Caucasus states require intensive reforms to become a consolidated democracy: they need to create a free and autonomous civil and political society; introduce and strengthen the foundations of the rule of law; and create a professional and stable state bureaucracy, as well as an accountable government with the democratic control mechanisms.

The three countries also face significant security challenges. Russia has been classified as Georgia's primary security threat in all official documents adopted since the 2008 war.

Since then, Georgian and Russian interests have remained largely irreconcilable, particularly concerning the status of Georgian territories occupied by Russia; Georgia's declared foreign policy goal to integrate with the European Union and to join NATO; and the decision to sign the Association Agreement and establish free trade relations with the EU. In addition, Russia does not support Georgia's energy policy, which aims to join European Energy Community in 2016 and develop the country's potential as an east-west energy transit corridor.

The most severe threats emanate from Russia's overwhelming influence over security dynamics in the region, as well as the existence of

Russia-occupied territories in Georgia. Russia recognized the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia on 26 August 2008 and signed numerous agreements with them as sovereign states, including treaties on friendship, co-operation and mutual assistance. Under these agreements, military bases and offensive weapons have been deployed on the occupied territories, a fact that influences the threat assessment not only for Georgia but also its regional neighbours, Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Contrary to Georgia, Armenia has a strategic partnership with Russia, which is reflected military and financial aid from Moscow, in return for Russia controlling Armenia's main economic assets and energy infrastructure<sup>13</sup>. Armenia is also a member of the Russian-led military-security organization CSTO and is building an integrated security system with its partner.

Azerbaijan has opted for a more nuanced policy towards Russia. While its policies evolved into one to cultivate not spoiling relations with Moscow, it was also the first country among Soviet states to close all Soviet bases on its territory in 1993, and no Russian military infrastructure exists within its borders. It is a leading player in all the regional alternative energy projects, by passing Russia

The conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over Azerbaijan's breakaway Nagorno-Karabakh could also have a serious influence on stability in the region for all three countries. It would also be devastating on both countries; economic and political resources.

The conflict negatively affects regional cooperation and attracts the attention of different regional players to take an active role in conflict settlement.

For Armenia, Turkey's involvement is a threat. Yerevan sees Ankara as an antagonistic neighbour, and the two countries do not have diplomatic relations. Their borders also remain closed.

In response, Armenia relies on Russian political and military support, Russia is the main supplier of its energy needs and main provider of its security.

11 Marianna Grigoryan, (2015), 'Armenia: Who Benefits from Constitutional Reform?' Armenia EurasiaNet's Weekly Digest, November 4, 2015, Available from: <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/75891> (7 June 2016)

12 Ibid.

13 Tarkhan Mouravi, External Factors of Security in the South Caucasus, Armenia and Georgia in the Context of Current Political Development, New Challenges and Opportunities in the Realm of Regional Security, Tbilisi 2015.

Besides, Armenia also has close economic and trade ties with its another neighbour, Iran, and southern transit routes are vital to Armenia given the closure of its border with Turkey.

For Azerbaijan, however, Turkey is a source of military support. In fact, both Russia and Turkey seem to be ready to assist Azerbaijan in the event of a resumption of violence. The current diplomatic tensions between Moscow and Ankara after Turkish military shot down Russian aircraft in November 2015 close to Turkey-Syrian borders, could further complicate the situation, however.

For Georgia, the Karabakh conflict could create problems for its sovereignty and control over its own territory. First of all, the conflict can spill over to Georgia and cause the radicalization of Armenian and Azeri communities living in Georgia. Second, Azerbaijan could ask Georgia to call for a trade embargo against Armenia. In addition, Russia could use Georgia's transport infrastructure as a military supply route for Russian bases in Armenia, which would create additional tension and antagonism among SC states.

Consequently, all possible scenarios for the Karabakh conflict zone are apparently associated with "the tectonic changes in the regional geopolitics" and peace and security perspectives in the South Caucasus.

Terrorism is an additional security challenge for all three countries. This risk has increased due to the close geographic proximity of the conflict in Syria, and the military engagement of Georgia's neighbours (Turkey, Russia), as well as partner countries, in the conflict. Several Muslim extremists, citizens of SC states, have joined the fighting in Syria as part of the Islamic State. At this stage, however, the three governments have dismissed the threat of a terroristic act taking place in their respective countries<sup>14</sup>.

Russia's dispute with Turkey in the late 2015 has exacerbated security risks for the South Caucasus' energy transit potential<sup>15</sup>. Russia continues to try to use all possible means to secure a monopoly over the production and transit of Caspian energy resources. Presently

the South Caucasus East-West energy transit corridor, which passes through Turkey, Georgia, and Azerbaijan, faces additional challenges as it competes with Russia's north-south energy projects. It is in the interest of all three South Caucasus states to contribute to the security and stability of the South Caucasus' transit potential, which faces challenges from Russian monopolistic energy policy in the region, and is a need in active cooperation with the EU, which is the main consumer of the Caspian energy resources.

Corruption represents another issue hampering developments and democratization process in the South Caucasus states and, as the analysis shows over the past decade, the three countries have conducted substantially different reforms in terms of the intensity of efforts made to eliminate administrative corruption<sup>16</sup>.

The authors of the different research confirm that Georgia has shown considerable progress in fighting petty corruption and reducing corruption in all areas of public life. The Corruption Perception Index 2014 ranked Georgia 50th out of 175 states; according to the same index, Armenia and Azerbaijan rank 94th and 126th, respectively. The analysts have also argued that domestic political will and public support for anti-corruption policies are the key factors explaining variation in anti-corruption outcomes across the South Caucasus.<sup>17</sup>

Figure 4 below was developed based on the statistical data from the Freedom House scores for democracy<sup>18</sup> and the corruption ratings developed by Transparency International<sup>19</sup>. They were reviewed from 2014 on the basis of the standardized meanings of corruption and democracy. Both indexes were identified for the countries reviewed in the article. Aggregated data from previous years have not been reviewed as the methodology of the corruption index changed after 2012.

16 K. Gogolashvili, *State of the Fight against Corruption in the South Caucasus the Cases of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia*, Expert opinion #45, Georgian Foundation of Strategic and International Studies, 2015

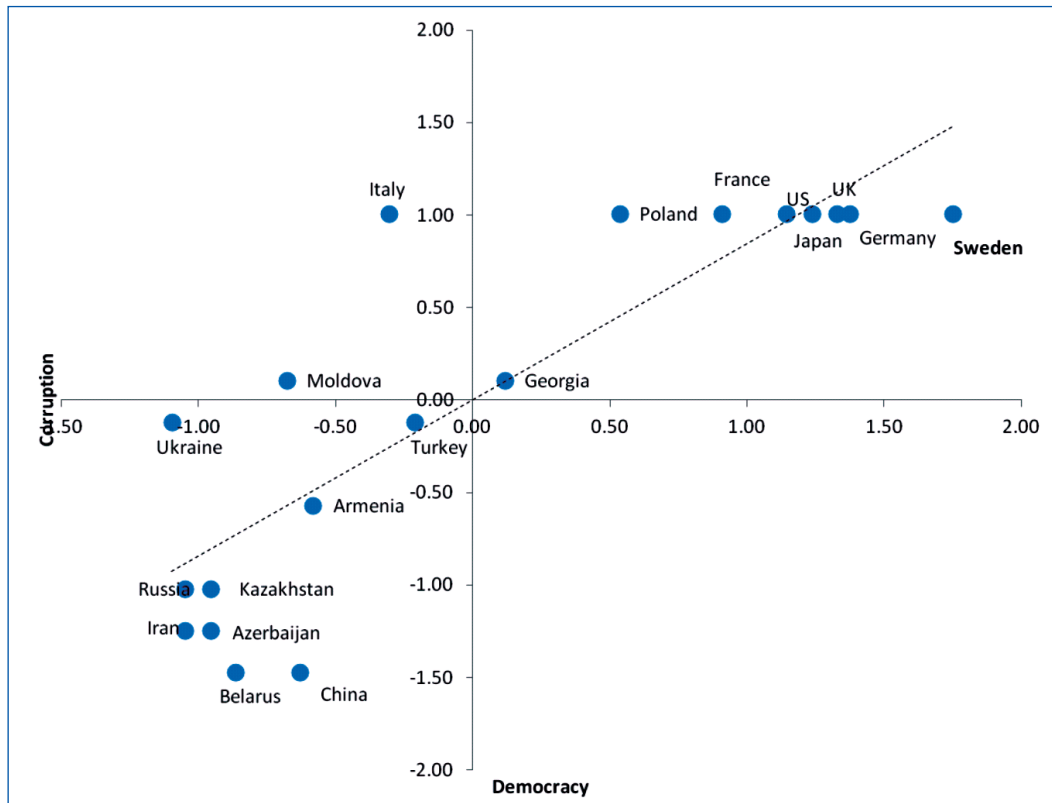
17 Ibid.

18 Freedom in the world: Freedom Rating, Political Rights, Civil Liberties: <https://freedomhouse.org>

19 Transparency International <http://www.transparency.org/research/cpi/overview>

14 Interview with the government official, May 2016, Georgia.

15 After Turkey downed a Russian Su-24 that had briefly intruded into its airspace in November 2015



**Figure 4: Mapping of states according to their scores on democracy and corruption index.**

The figure shows that positive and higher values in the democracy index means more democracy and less corruption, while corruption is rampant in countries that received negative values.

Georgia and Turkey represent countries with hybrid regimes and they are placed on the map close to the middle point. This indicates that Georgia is the best performer in fighting corruption, as well as democratic institution building in the region. In fact, Georgia enjoys a slightly better position than Turkey in terms of democracy and anti-corruption policy.

Armenia received negative points for corruption and democracy, but still scored higher than Azerbaijan. This indicates that corruption remains a major obstacles for Armenia's development, which hampers the state's democratic transition.

The graph places Azerbaijan near Kazakhstan, Iran, Russia in terms of corruption and democracy transformation, and all three states are grouped at a distance from democratic and developed countries like the US, members of the EU and Japan. The Caspian littoral states – Russia, Kazakhstan, Iran Azerbaijan

– distinguished by their oil and gas reach resources, enjoy close partnership and are characterized by the Freedom house estimates as 'Consolidated' or 'Semi/non-Consolidated Authoritarian Regimes'.

This paper addresses the countries' rankings and examines how they influence voting at the UN GA. Some scholars have analyzed the correlation between the voting behavior of a state at the UN GA and the quality of its democracy, exploring the hypothesis that the type of regime affects the behaviour of a state in general, and its voting practice in particular, which would reflect a liberal approach to foreign policy<sup>20</sup>. As a rule, this implies that democracies are able to agree on topics such as human rights, fundamental freedoms and economic liberalism, creating the moral foundation for peace. However, the analysis of the voting of the South Caucasus states reveals

20 Erik Voeten. "Clashes in the Assembly", *International Organizations* 54, no 2, Spring, (2000): 185-215. Jack Snider. *Myths, Modernization and the Post-Gorbachev World*. In *International Relations Theory and the End of the Cold War*, edited by Richard Ned Lebow and Thomas Risse-Kappen, (1995): 109-26. New York: Columbia University Press

a more complex strategy behind the countries' voting patterns, which incorporates both liberal and the realist policies.

### 3. Assessing voting cohesion in the UN General Assembly

The analysis of the voting data by selected states at the UN GA can be done using different graphs and figures, as well as various approaches on the development of statistical data. This section seeks to identify types of votes and their distribution pattern in voting at the UN GA. As the practice shows, overall, 68 per cent of the states voted "yes", 15 per cent

voted "no" and 18 per cent abstained during the 14 years under observation. It should be noted that, in general, the comparison of votes illustrates the general tendencies in the behavior of states at the GA during the voting and does not say anything about the principles and values that decisions are based on. At the same time, the data does not differentiate between statistical weight of voting "Yes" "Abstain" or "No"; all votes are equal and with the same relative weight. The data included in the survey can be generalized but no inference can be made regarding the main reasons why the decisions are made.

Figure 5 compares the voting records of individual states in terms of support for UN GA resolutions.

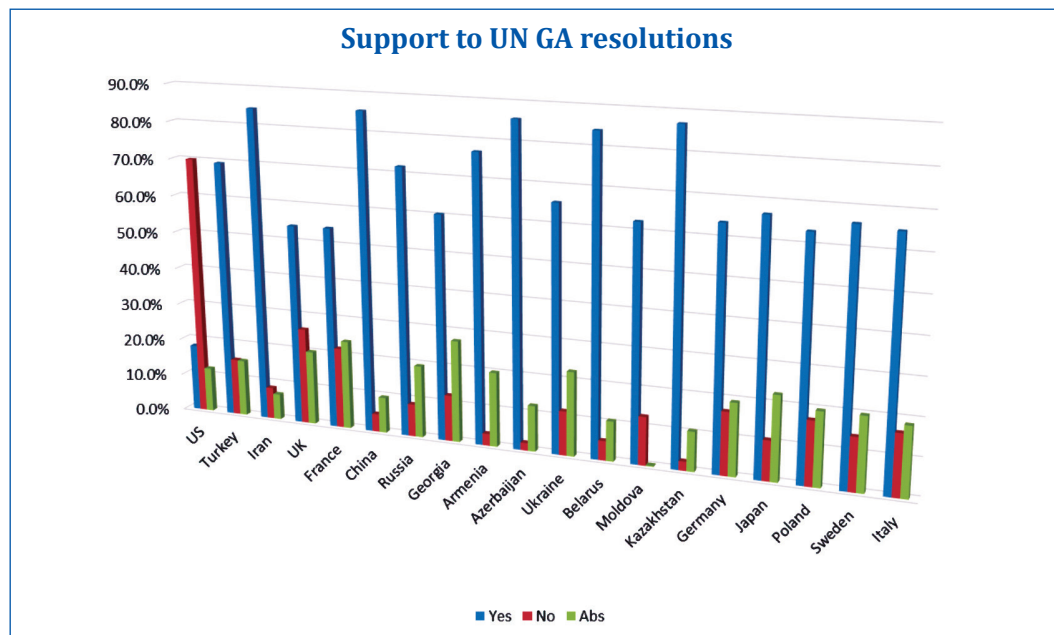
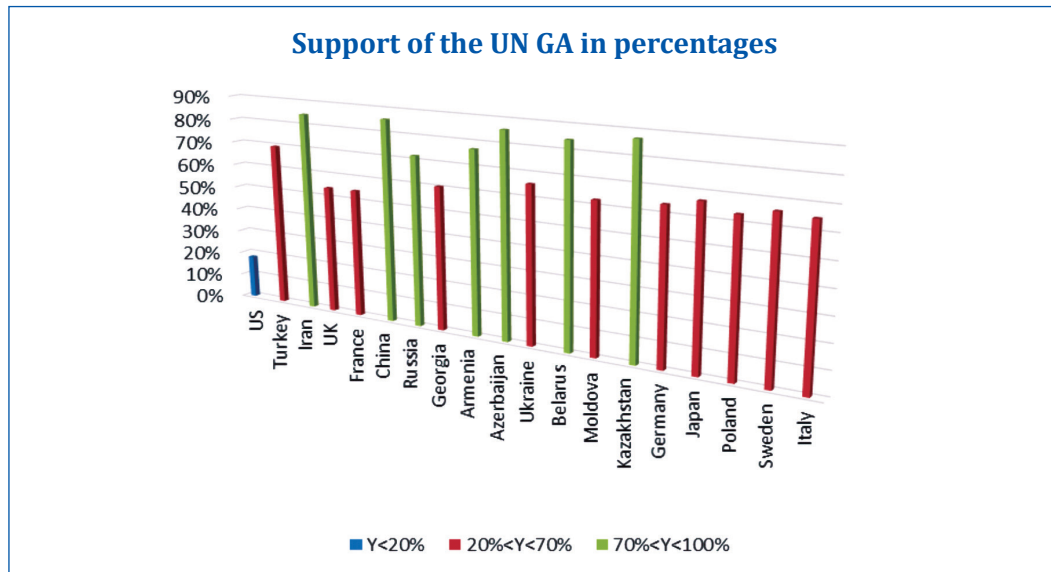


Fig 5: Support for UN GA resolutions

The Fig. 6 shows that the US voted "no" significantly more frequently than other countries (70 per cent). Several countries voted "yes" to more than 80% of the votes – Iran, China, Azerbaijan, Belarus Kazakhstan (during 1998,

2003-2014) – while Russia and Armenia voted "yes" for slightly over 70% of the resolutions. The data shows that Georgia, like a number of EU member states and other democracies, supported around 60% of the resolutions.



**Fig 6: Support for UN GA Resolutions in Percentages**

One possible hypothesis based on this data is that the states that view the UN as an important international institution – and a tool for their foreign policy – are more likely to vote “yes”.

This analysis of data presented in this report will serve to either prove or disprove this hypothesis. The initial conclusion is that Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Iran, Belarus, Russia, Armenia and China consider the UN to be an influential arena where they can promote their interests in the fields of peace and security, particularly in terms of foreign policy. But methodological constraints does not give us the right to limit ourselves with this statement, it is necessary to explore other factors influencing voting practice in the UN and apply statistical analysis methodology for data analysis from different perspectives.

The data analysis presented on Fig.2 and Fig.3 matches the official statistics on UN GA voting by the permanent members of the UN Security Council from 1974-2008 (in per cent), indicating a similar trend. (Table 1)<sup>21</sup>

	Yes	No	Abstain
China	88.1	2.8	9.1
France	43.9	20.6	35
USSR/Russia	75.1	8.9	16
UK	41.8	25.4	32.7
US	20.2	56.2	23.6

**Table 1: the official statistics on UN GA voting by Permanent Members of the UN Security Council, during 1974-2008**

The Table 1 data shows that the level of support of China, Russia, US, UK and France for UN GA resolutions has remained almost the same since 1974 (in terms of per cent) and this resemblance can be seen in other findings of scholarly articles.

In following sections of the paper the behavior of South Caucasus States are explored and the assessments on the level of cohesion between these states are made in accordance to the approaches used by different different scholarly article.

Scholars acknowledge that the GA represents the organized views of more governments on more subjects than any other international, reoccurring event<sup>22</sup>. The UN agenda always

<sup>21</sup> Briefing Paper, 2011, The positions of Russia and China, at the UN Security Council in the light of recent crises , Directorate-General for External Policies of the Union European Parliament,

<sup>22</sup> Smith, C. (2006a) Politics and Process at the United Nations: The Global Dance (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner).



addresses the difficulties from past years and the new issues that have emerged.

Besides, the UN does not deal with every single issue in world affairs, so generalizations based upon the voting there should be qualified. Nevertheless voting cohesion is still a very good indicator of common positions on a wide range of global issues<sup>23</sup>.

#### 4. Voting for the First and Third Committee Resolutions

The results of the statistical analysis provide a good background for identifying specifics in the voting behaviour of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia. The voting records of these three countries were compared to the voting records of EU member states, as well as the US, Russia, Iran and other influential players in the region.

In this analysis, the voting practice of EU member states is treated as a decision made by a homogeneous bloc. This decision was based on the EU's ambition to speak with 'a single voice' at international forums, in particular in the United Nations' General Assembly, which has become more pronounced since the inauguration of the Common Foreign and Security Policy (CFSP).<sup>24</sup> The term on EU consensus voting is usually applied to the so called 'hard core' of EU members states around which other member states group themselves – the Benelux countries (Belgium, Holland and Luxembourg) and Germany<sup>25</sup>. These states almost always cast consolidated votes at the UN.<sup>26</sup>

Therefore, the voting behaviour of the South Caucasus states have been measured compared

to that of the representatives of the EU consensus, such as Germany. The data analysis and observation shows that other EU member states, such as Italy, Poland, are almost always in the majority of the EU member states.

It is noteworthy to mention that this EU consensus group does not include France and the UK at the UN GA, in large part due to their status as nuclear weapons states. The voting records of the UK and France usually are reviewed and analysed separately:<sup>27</sup>

*"These two European countries (UK, France) are the ones most sensitive regarding issues such as decolonization, nuclear weapons and disarmament. France is especially sensitive on nuclear weapon issues, while UK has a soft spot for issues related to its colonial past., its status as a great power (nuclear weapons) and its special relationship with the U.S."*

In addition, this study takes into account the outcomes of a long-standing academic debate over the methodology on how to better evaluate the voting practice of the US at the UN GA. Articles studying how US foreign aid influences recipient countries' votes at the UN<sup>28</sup> maintain that, if there is any effect from receiving U.S. foreign aid on political outcomes in the UN, it is most likely to emerge in voting coincidence rates on the "important issues", i.e. topics that are prioritised in US foreign policy.

For instance, in 1980s the most important issues were calls for a withdrawal of foreign forces from Kampuchea (present day Cambodia), from Afghanistan, or for an end to foreign military assistance or foreign intervention; questions on Israeli delegation's credentials, or issues related to peace in the Middle Eastern such as Palestine refugees, or the Israeli occupation of Golan Heights; resolutions related to the Limited Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, which prohibited the testing of nuclear weapons in outer space, underwater or in the atmosphere, or the arms race in outer space; and concerns over human rights in Iran, Iraq, or Sudan. Resolutions commending the electoral assistance provided

23 Peter Ferdinand, 2014. Foreign Policy Convergence in Pacific Asia: The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly, British Journal of Politics and International Relations, BJPIR: VOL 16, 662–679.

24 Elisabeth Johansson-Nogues. "The Fifteen and the Accession Foreign Policy in the UN General Assembly: What Future for European Foreign Policy in the coming together of the "Old" and "new Europe", European Foreign Affairs Review, Volume 9, Issue 1, Spring 2004

25 Ibid

26 Ibid.

27 Ibid,

28 Niklas Potratke, Does government ideology influence political alignment with the U.S.? An empirical analysis of voting in the UN General Assembly, Published online: 5 August 2009, Rev Int Organ (2009) 244–268

by the UN or encouraging the development of entrepreneurship in all countries, are classified as other issues.

The Report of the Secretary of State to the Congress on voting practices in the United Nations, first published in 1985, identifies the most important resolutions for the U.S on an annual bases<sup>29</sup>. For research purposes, this paper does not differentiate important votes from less important ones despite the approach taken by the US government. A statistical analysis is made for all votes that took place during the UN GA in the periods of 1998 and 2003-2014.

Aggregated data from 1998-2014 shows the level of convergence of Georgia's vote with that of the EU was highest at 83 per cent. If the data is considered from a single year, the highest level of convergence between Georgian and EU votes was 100 per cent in 2009, which indicates that Georgia's policy choices primarily resemble those of the EU consensus. Contrastingly, convergence between Georgia and Russia's voting patterns is lower, averaging at 62 per cent. The analysis also shows a comparatively low level of convergence between voting by Georgia and by the U.S., which is understandable since the US's high number of "no" votes makes it an outlier within the dataset.

Armenia's voting choices at the UN indicate that the level of convergence between Armenia and the EU, on the one hand, and Armenia and Russia, on the other, differ from that of Georgia.. The level of convergence between Armenia and the US, as well as Azerbaijan and the US, is quite low, which once again underlines the special status the US has among UN members states.

Modern research on this topic shows that the core EU member states remain committed to multilateralism in international relations, and no dramatic change can be expected in their voting patterns.<sup>30</sup> In its voting, the core EU group supports global security institutions

and decisions taken by the United Nations, the central institution in the system of international relations<sup>31</sup>.

There are other regional organizations, for example, ASEAN, where a number of Pacific Asian states showed a consistently high level of cohesion throughout the period 1974–2008<sup>32</sup>, which suggests a coherent regional identity on the global stage.

South Caucasus states have not shown the same level of cohesion. In addition, the voting record of their neighbours, such as Iran, Turkey, or Russia, is characterized by a high level of divergence. This can be an issue for the South Caucasus and its neighbours, which significantly hampers the prospect of cooperation among regional countries.

For example, the dataset analysis shows that the most common source of voting divergence across the South Caucasus states and the EU is the issue of human rights. In particular, when the GA publicly criticize the human rights records of individual member states, the South Caucasus states and their neighbours lack a truly united position. ( see graphs in the section below).

According to foreign policy officials<sup>33</sup>, the decisions taken by Georgia at the UN GA depends on national interests, regional considerations and the principles of democracy, as well as (value based choices) human rights and equality and universal freedoms. The national interests in fact represent a synthesis of the realist and liberal strategy of voting – or a certain balance between value-based policy and regional considerations.

Economic development, such as external loans and relationships with international financial organizations, also has an impact on how states vote at the GA. For example, Georgian officials say the state tries to vote in a way to defend EU

29 The Report of the Secretary of State to the Congress on voting practices in the United Nations, available from: <http://www.state.gov/p/io/rls/rpt/index.htm>

30 Elisabeth Johansson-Nogues. "The Fifteen and the Accession Foreign Policy in the UN General Assembly: What Future for European Foreign Policy in the coming together of the 'Old' and 'New' Europe", *European Foreign Affairs Review*, 9, no 1, (2004)

31 Peter Ferdinand, 2014. Foreign Policy Convergence in Pacific Asia: The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, BJPIR: VOL 16, 662–679.

32 Ibid.

33 Interview with the representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, March 2016, Tbilisi, Georgia.

values and principles – with the exception of votes concerning Iranian human rights, as well as issues that some of Georgia's close neighbor states (and, at times, even Georgia) abstain from the voting on.

Officials also note that Georgia strives to vote like EU members as an extension of its general policy on integration with the EU. They acknowledge, however, that while the EU position on an issue is important, it is not decisive for Georgia, and the country does not feel obliged to follow all decisions in question<sup>34</sup>.

A similar strategy can be observed in the voting decisions made by Armenia and Azerbaijan. For example, the EU vote on the 2009 Karabakh resolution (not voting for the Azerbaijan-supported resolution) at the UN GA probably negatively influenced the practice of Azerbaijan and its interest to support the EU declarations and statements, along with its logic of cooperation dynamic, as EU was actively criticizing Azerbaijan over human rights violations at this period. Also, the practice of other countries, like Russia, which sometimes supports national interests of Azerbaijan, may influence voting decisions, though Azerbaijan itself does not seem to have problems working closer with Russia.

For this analysis, states' voting behaviour in the UN GA's first and third committees is of particular importance since it provides insight into the countries' main priorities in the area of foreign affairs and humanitarian issues, and can reveal the main values that determined the states' decisions.

The first committee approves resolutions that affect international peace and security and seeks solutions to the international security challenges<sup>35</sup>. The analysis of the voting practice of individual states can identify the differences that exist in the policies of member states in the area of international security and disarmament, which could affect alliances within UN activities. The General Assembly allocates agenda items related to a range of social, humanitarian affairs and human rights issues to the third committee.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid.

<sup>35</sup> <http://www.un.org/en/ga/first/index.shtml> <http://www.un.org/press/en/content/first-committee>

These resolutions address human rights issues, as well as the respect for international humanitarian law and norms by individual member states

The voting practice of selected states at the first and the third UN Committees during UN GA was analysed as part of this study. The correlation analysis conducted in the framework of the given research creates an opportunity to compare the results of the voting practice of several countries, and identify the level of convergence between pairs. The correlation can be measured based on aspects of global security, as well as human rights and universal freedoms.

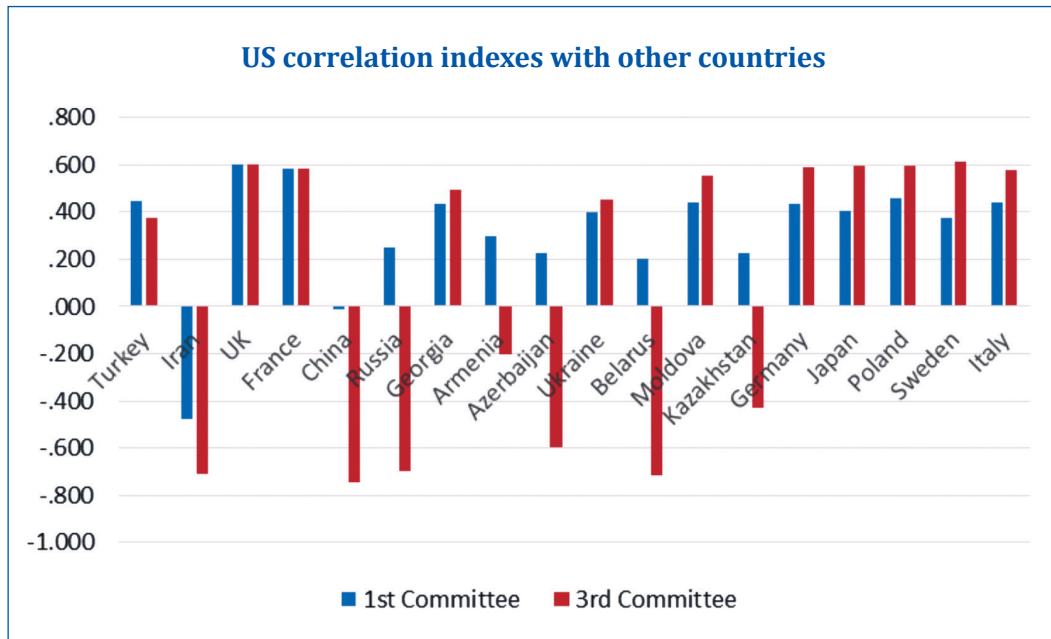
A number of countries consider respect for a state's sovereignty as the foundation of their foreign policies and acknowledge the principle of non-interference in internal affairs. They do not vote for resolutions supporting the protection of human rights issues against a specific country's internal affairs, such as disintegration threats (North Korea, China etc.)<sup>36</sup>.

## ***5. Results of correlation analysis among SC states: First and Third Committee Resolutions***

The outcomes of the correlation matrix of the first committee resolutions shows that the voting by Turkey, UK, France, Georgia, Ukraine, Moldova, Germany (as a representative of the EU consensus), Japan, Poland and Italy are characterized by a high level of cohesiveness with the voting practice of the US; these countries tend to vote in a similar way and reach a correlation coefficient with the US not less than 0.400.

Other countries – like China, Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus and Kazakhstan – tend to vote like the US on first committee resolutions but their voting practice is significantly different on the resolutions of the third committee, which relate to development and human rights.

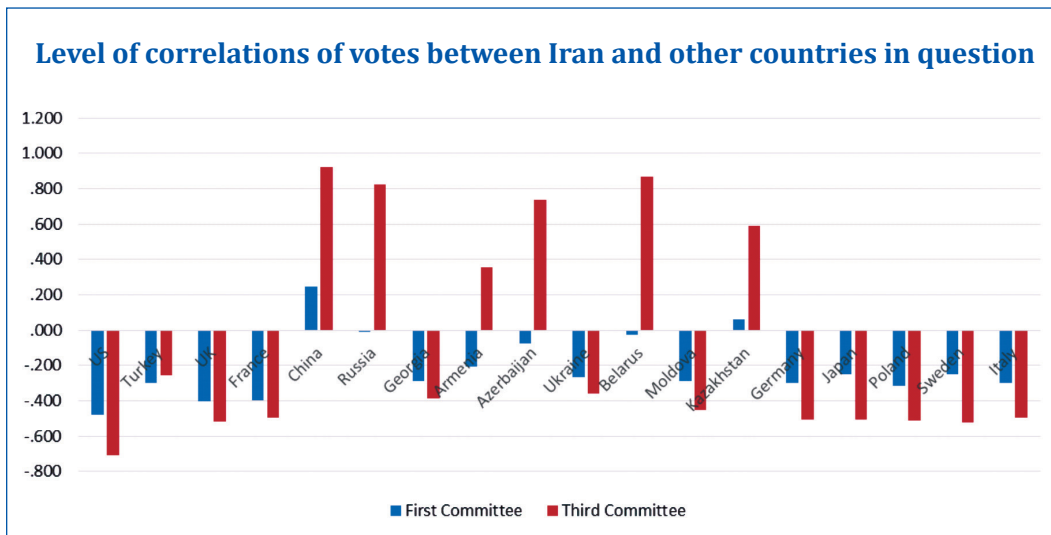
<sup>36</sup> Peter Ferdinand, 2014. Foreign Policy Convergence in Pacific Asia: The Evidence from Voting in the UN General Assembly, *British Journal of Politics and International Relations*, BJPIR: VOL 16, 662–679.



**Figure 7: US correlation indexes with other countries**

Figure 8 indicates there is a set group of states tend to vote like Iran in the third committee: China, Russia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan and, to a slightly lesser degree, Armenia, which

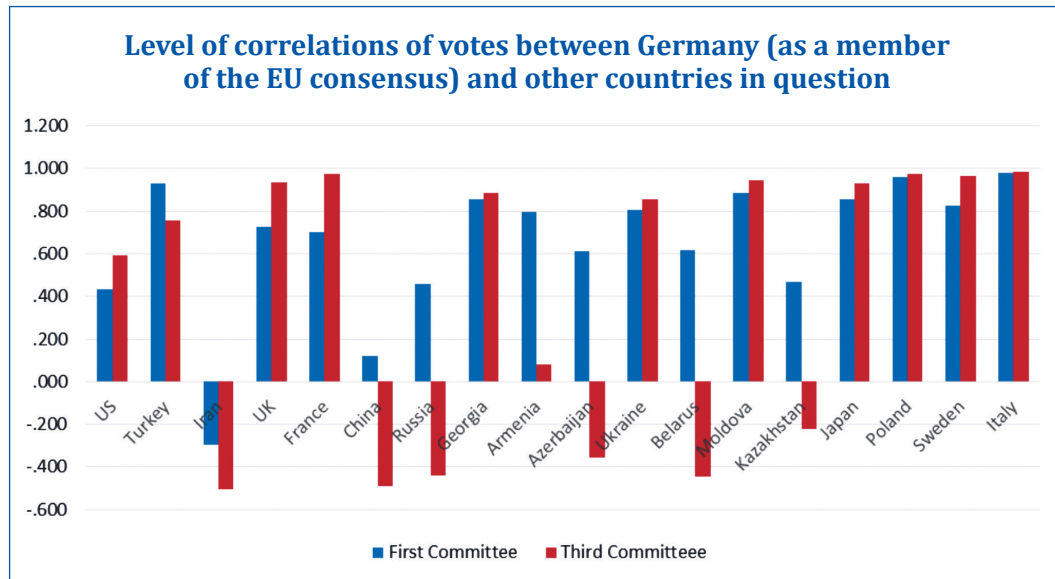
indicates a strategic partnership between these states (Armenia and Islamic Republic of Iran, Azerbaijan and Iran).



**Figure 8: Level of correlations of votes between Iran and other countries**

These voting patterns provided some insight into the motivation that drives states to vote in a particular way. For instance, Georgia's tendency to share a position with core EU member states shows its willingness to support value-based decisions, while Armenia and Azerbaijan appear to prioritise regional

security interests and the interests of neighbor states, particularly Iran and Russia. Azerbaijan partially shows its loyalty to the principle of sovereignty and acknowledges the principle of non-interference in the internal affairs of a foreign country, similar to the voting histories of China and Russia.



**Figure 9: Level of correlations of votes between Germany (as a member of the EU consensus) and other countries.**

The look at how countries' voting records compare that that of EU member states identifies the states that tend to oppose the EU on issues like human rights and fundamental freedom, namely Russia, China, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan. The level of divergence

is quite high, as the correlation matrix indexes dips into negative numbers. The data indicates that these states do not acknowledge human rights principles as the main foundation of their foreign policy.

Correlation cc		First Committee																	
Third Committee	US	Turkey	Iran	UK	France	China	Russia	Georgia	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Ukraine	Belarus	Moldova	Kazakhstan	Germany	Japan	Poland	Sweden	Italy
US	1	.446	-.479	.600	.586	-.010	.251	.433	.300	.227	.396	.201	.443	.228	.435	.405	.459	.372	.442
Turkey	.378	1	-.299	.767	.735	.184	.519	.868	.797	.625	.821	.654	.907	.529	.932	.807	.928	.779	.933
Iran	-.709	-.255	1	-.402	-.399	.244	-.012	-.288	-.205	-.075	-.265	-.028	-.286	.058	-.296	-.249	-.316	-.252	-.297
UK	.604	.713	-.516	1	.934	.137	.517	.738	.561	.415	.651	.434	.745	.355	.725	.656	.768	.635	.736
France	.584	.776	-.497	.922	1	.147	.548	.707	.514	.401	.610	.440	.711	.350	.702	.596	.743	.588	.705
China	-.747	-.246	.921	-.501	-.482	1	.305	.132	.179	.166	.185	.266	.223	.220	.123	.153	.145	.220	.128
Russia	-.696	-.225	.826	-.435	-.432	.862	1	.460	.446	.317	.331	.512	.449	.441	.456	.388	.505	.304	.474
Georgia	.493	.772	-.387	.863	.888	-.361	-.338	1	.723	.586	.806	.548	.860	.504	.857	.793	.863	.767	.855
Armenia	-.205	.156	.357	.037	.091	.354	.393	.137	1	.603	.684	.595	.754	.446	.798	.733	.782	.698	.793
Azerbaijan	-.598	-.134	.739	-.363	-.347	.751	.686	-.222	.390	1	.490	.544	.511	.672	.613	.563	.569	.480	.604
Ukraine	.450	.733	-.359	.796	.854	-.329	-.327	.885	.096	-.174	1	.511	.873	.397	.808	.720	.805	.792	.802
Belarus	-.717	-.226	.870	-.457	-.438	.840	.823	-.303	.383	.716	-.293	1	.553	.485	.617	.510	.597	.460	.625
Moldova	.553	.798	-.453	.893	.944	-.442	-.437	.919	.078	-.296	.907	-.398	1	.423	.884	.824	.883	.840	.887
Kazakhstan	-.427	-.006	.592	-.231	-.224	.568	.549	-.059	.525	.718	-.062	.645	-.168	1	.469	.377	.488	.416	.462
Germany	.593	.758	-.505	.935	.976	-.490	-.439	.886	.082	-.354	.854	-.446	.942	-.222	1	.858	.958	.824	.980
Japan	.596	.790	-.503	.916	.922	-.487	-.423	.874	.022	-.351	.818	-.443	.909	-.217	.932	1	.841	.774	.867
Poland	.597	.767	-.509	.942	.962	-.494	-.443	.905	.072	-.357	.845	-.450	.945	-.233	.976	.940	1	.806	.957
Sweden	.611	.767	-.521	.947	.952	-.505	-.439	.898	.047	-.366	.833	-.461	.934	-.231	.965	.959	.978	1	.817
Italy	.579	.773	-.493	.914	.970	-.478	-.436	.880	.086	-.344	.857	-.435	.952	-.213	.984	.920	.971	.955	1

**Table 2: Correlation coefficients in voting dataset among 19 countries for resolutions of the first and third committees. (The Pearson correlation coefficient was used as a measure of the linear correlation between two selected countries. The states have been given a value between +2 and 0 inclusive, where 2 is total positive correlation, 1 is no correlation, and 0 is total negative correlation).**



The three South Caucasus states have a largely similar voting record on first committee resolutions, which relate to the issues of global and international security. Georgia's votes are very similar to those of Moldova, Turkey, and EU members states, with correlation coefficient more than 0.8, while Georgia's levels of convergence with Armenia and Azerbaijan for the first committee resolutions are lower, approximately 0.7 and 0.6 respectively. It is also notable that Armenia and Azerbaijan have similar voting records on first committee resolutions, as their correlation coefficient exceeds 0.6.

1 <sup>st</sup> com	Georgia	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Armenia	0.723		0.603
Azerbaijan	0.586	0.603	
EU	0.857	0.798	0.613
US	0.433	0.300	0.227
Turkey	0.868	0.797	0.625
Iran	-0.288	-0.205	-0.75
Russia	0.460	0.446	0.317

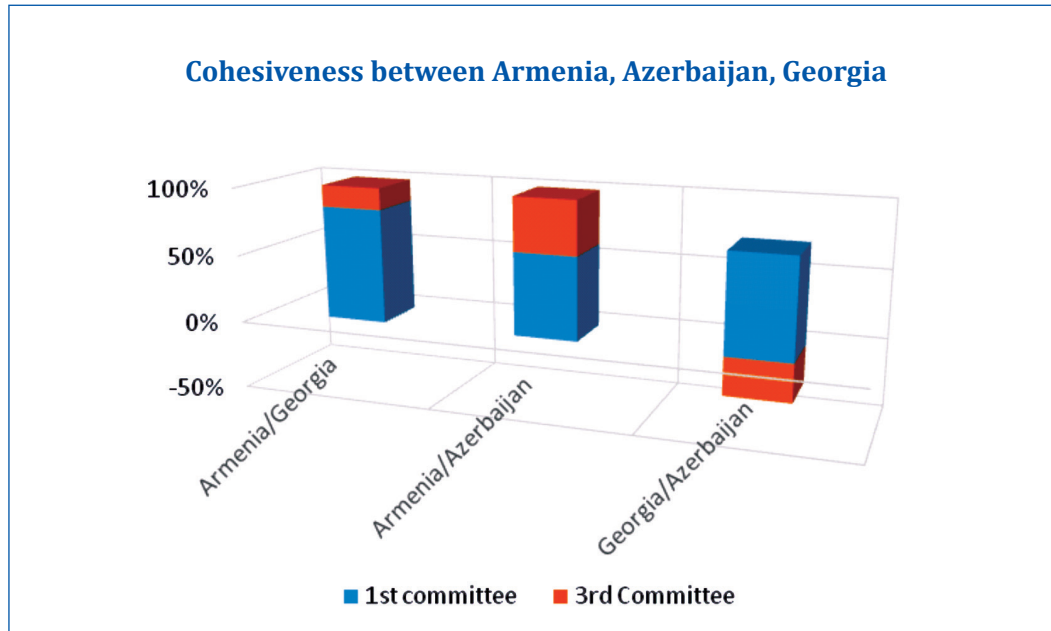
**Table 3: Correlation coefficients among Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan for the first committee votes**

Armenia's correlation coefficients are also high for EU, Turkey, and even Azerbaijan, while Azerbaijan tended to vote like Turkey and the EU.

3 <sup>rd</sup> Com	Georgia	Armenia	Azerbaijan
Armenia	0.137		0.390
Azerbaijan	-0.222	0.390	
EU	0.886	0.082	-0.354
US	0.493	-0.205	-0.598
Turkey	0.772	0.156	-0.134
Iran	-0.387	0.367	0.739
Russia	-0.338	0.393	0.686

**Table 4: Correlation coefficients among Georgia, Armenia, Azerbaijan for the third committee voltings**

Different tendencies were observed in the third committee resolutions however: stronger similarities have been observed for Georgia and Moldova, Ukraine, EU (above 0.8) and Turkey (above 0.7), while Armenia tended to vote like China, Russia, Kazakhstan, Azerbaijan, Iran, but with a lower level of cohesiveness (0.3-0.5). Azerbaijan's voting history was similar to Iran, Russia (0.6-0.7)



**Figure 10: Level of cohesiveness between Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia**

The comparison of the level of cohesiveness among the South Caucasus states shows the Georgia-Azerbaijan pair has almost no points of convergence over resolutions of the third committee, which are related to the development and human rights issues. For Armenia-Georgia and Armenia – Azerbaijan pairs, there are some similarities. These observations underline the differences in the approaches taken by South Caucasus states in GA third committee voting, indicating that Armenia and Azerbaijan consider human rights issues to be very sensitive and controversial. This means their decisions are not always driven by respective values, their votes lack consistency and are difficult to predict in the area of human rights.

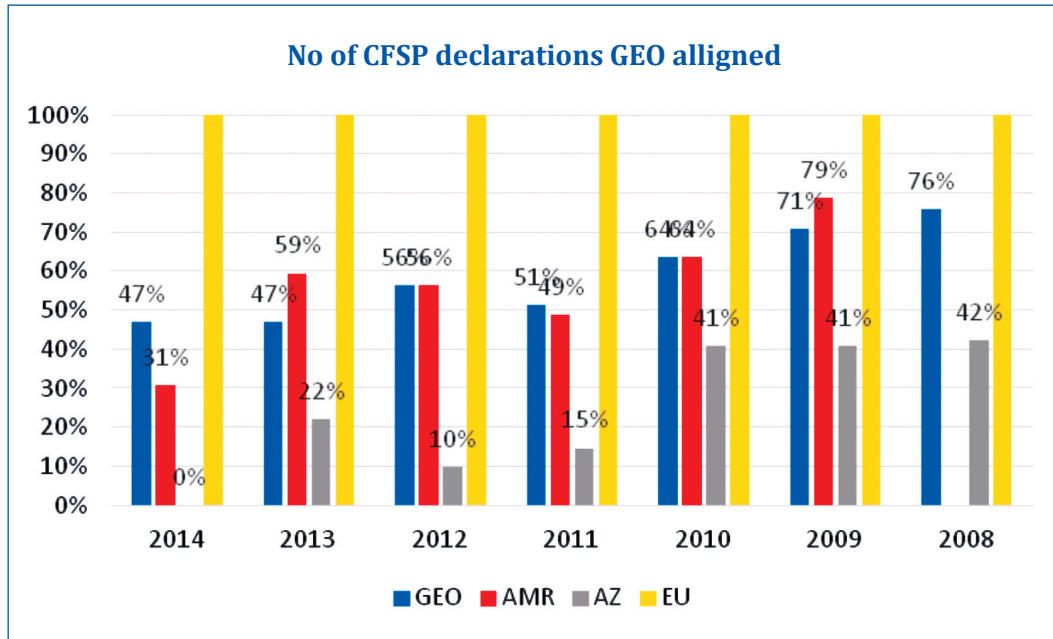
To summarize, for the South Caucasus states the first committee resolutions do not bear a direct and immediate impact on the country's interests and these resolutions are voted on based on the closeness of the political systems, loyalty to strategic partners, or in response to a strategy of diplomatic balancing.

The analysis of voting practices on third committee resolutions, which address human rights issues, show that the regime's interests play the most decisive role in how Azerbaijan and Armenia vote, and their voting history differs from that of EU and the US. The difference is significant, compared to the voting on first committee resolutions.

For the third committee resolutions Georgia's voting patterns most resemble that of the EU core group states (Germany), and Armenia and Azerbaijani votes are more similar to those of Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and China.

The topics discussed in the third committee resolutions are considered the most sensitive for many UN member states, especially for those that support democratic transition and are motivated to improve the practice of human rights protection internationally. Decisions made by Georgian government in the framework of its cooperation with the EU show that Georgia cannot remain immune to the problems of human rights on international arena and still has to work hard in order to achieve closer approximation with the policies and decisions of the EU member states.

In recent years the South Caucasus states have engaged with the European Union in dialogue and cooperation on human rights issues within the European Neighborhood Policy (ENP). This framework provided South Caucasus states with a good platform to improve standards at home; become more sensitive towards human rights issues and improve their practice on international arena. The fact that the South Caucasus states were invited to join EU statements and declarations in 2007 was seen as a way to increase the commitment of South Caucasus countries to meet European norms and values. It was also an attempt by the European Union to engage the South Caucasus states in cooperation and a political- and security dialogue. It involved including the South Caucasus countries in Common Foreign and Security Policy, as well as Common Security and Defence Policy ( CSDP) actions as ENP partners, as participation in CFSP declarations is one of the ways to participate in CFSP and ESDP.



**Figure 11: Number of the EU declarations and statements aligned by the South Caucasus States.**

The voting history of South Caucasus countries during 2008-2014 shows (Figure 11) that the level for Georgia's alignment with the EU has declined in recent years and fluctuates around 50 per cent, and, in some years, Armenia has supported more declarations and statements than Georgia. For example, in 2013 Armenian supported around 58 per cent of EU declarations, while Georgia voted for 47 per cent joint declarations.

Azerbaijan supported around 44 per cent of EU declarations and statements until 2010, but afterwards the level of support sharply declined, reaching just 10 per cent in 2012. The current dynamics show that the decline in support for EU declarations coincides with a period of tense relations between Azerbaijan and the EU, including when the EU did not support Azerbaijan's resolution on territorial integrity in 2009; an increase in EU statements that were critical of Azerbaijan; other international humanitarian organizations, and democratic states criticising Azerbaijan's government's poor human rights record; a crackdown on journalists, nongovernmental organizations and public activists in Azerbaijan, and the West's strained relationship towards Iran, Syria.

It is possible that the governments of the South Caucasus states made decisions that took into consideration the interests of their

neighbor states, such as Iran, Turkey, Russia. To test this hypothesis, it is worth reviewing the experience of Turkey and its record of joining EU declarations and statements.

The data shows that Turkey's alignment with the CFSP continued throughout 2003-2014, although during the later years, its participation in ESDP was not as intense as it had been<sup>37</sup>. For example, as it was mentioned in the European Commission Evaluations of Turkey's Alignment 2003-2014, Turkey has taken an enhanced role in regional stabilization and has had a high level of convergence with EU positions. However, since 2010 Turkish alignment with CFSP declarations has decreased. European analysts believe the Turkish government changed its position for several reasons: first, in 2006 Turkey opposed EU statements regarding Armenia, Cyprus and ESDP issues; second, in 2010, Turkey did not align with EU sanctions on Iran, Libya or Syria and abstained from making open statements against the governments in their neighbouring states.

This analysis indicates the level of alignment between the South Caucasus states and EU,

<sup>37</sup> The European Commission Evaluations of Turkey's Alignment 2003-2014

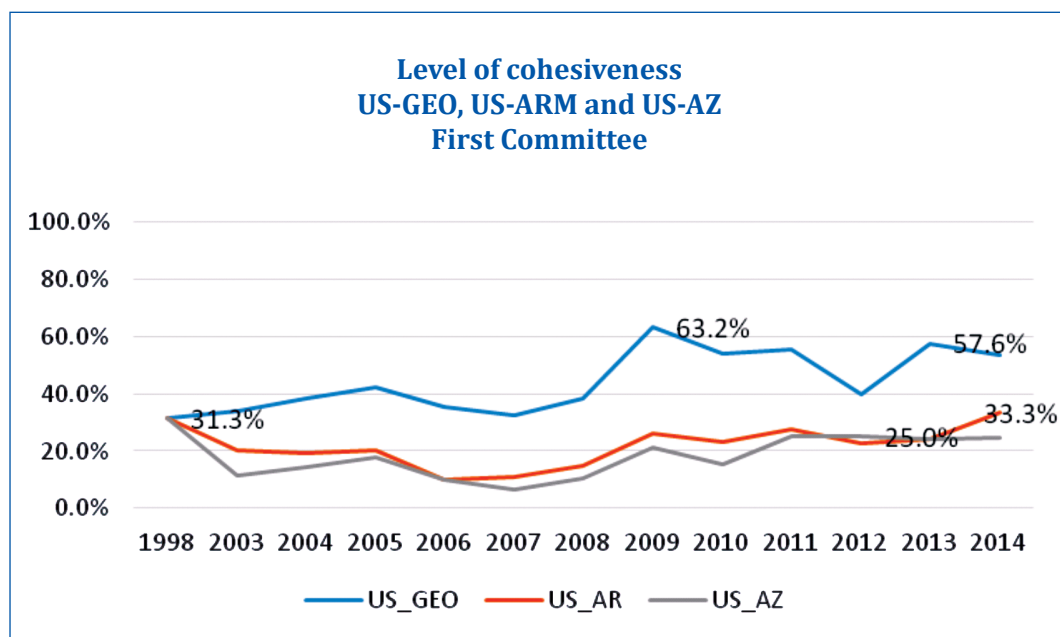
as well as that of Turkey and the EU, in the framework of cooperation with the EU's Common Foreign and Security Policy, has been declining since 2009. A separate analysis shows that one of the main reason for this change is the SC states' increased sensitivity towards criticizing human rights violation cases in their neighbor states, such as Syria and Russia. A moderately advanced level of cooperation exists in the areas of foreign and security policy between the South Caucasus states and the EU, although the level of their support for the EU statements and declarations has decreased.

## 6. Observing the voting practice in a dynamic: First Committee Resolution

The literature on UN voting suggests converging voting patterns do not necessarily mean comprehensively close foreign relations. Votes in the GA are not binding. They do not necessarily commit states to particular

actions. In interviews with government officials from South Caucasus states, they singled out several factors that influence voting decisions. Georgian officials mentioned universal values and principles, national interests and the interests of regional neighbours. Other factors, especially relations with international financial institutions and conflicting interests exacerbated by nationalist passions, are decisive for officials from Armenia and Azerbaijan.

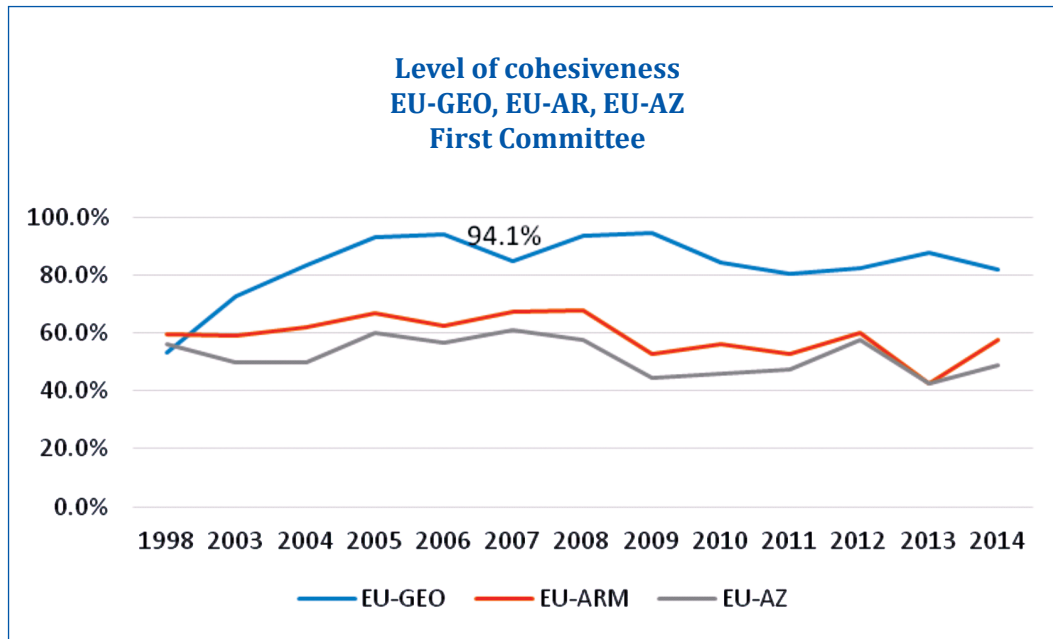
The figures presented in this section compare the data on voting behaviours of the South Caucasus states on first committee resolutions at the GA. The voting practice of each SC states have been compared to those of the US, EU member states, Russia and other states, while the data analysis can be seen over period of time. The results of the analysis show that the level of cohesiveness between Georgia and the US voting fluctuates, and differs from US- Armenia and US-Azerbaijan comparisons: while all three states started with 31 per cent in 1998, the level of US-Georgia cohesiveness increased but that of Armenia and Azerbaijan never exceeded 30 per cent.



**Figure 12: First Committee, level of cohesiveness between US-GEO, US-ARM, US-AZ**

The comparison between the SC states and the EU shows higher degree of cohesiveness, for fluctuating between 80 per cent and 94 per cent for Georgia, 60 per cent for Armenia and 50 per cent for Azerbaijan.

The comparisons between SC states voting history compared with Russia shows that Azerbaijan has the highest level of cohesiveness with 86 per cent in 2004, and Armenia has a maximum level of 75 per cent in 2003 (Fig 15).



**Figure 13: Level of cohesiveness between EU-GEO, EU-ARM, EU-AZ**

Figures (12 and 13) indicate similar arcs in the voting histories of all three South Caucasus states.

This could be explained by the level of convergence of US-Russia and EU-Russia voting practices.

The voting data of the EU, Russia and the US from 1998-2014 was reviewed as part of this study, and the level of coherence between choices made by these states was assessed. Previous research on the voting behaviour of UN members states has shown that, in the early 1990s, Russia's voting practice moved closer to that of the EU, as bipolar antagonism ended. This was especially visible while voting for the first committee resolutions at the UN GA. These tendencies were strengthened by a number of international agreements signed by the end of 1990s on arms control issues (Treaty on Conventional Armed Forces in Europe, Amendments to the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty of 1972 signed by the US and Russia in 1997).

Figure 14 shows that the level of cohesiveness between the US and Russia was quite high in late 1990s and, in early 2000s, it reached almost 50 per cent. But by 2003 it had dropped significantly, which might have been related to the 2002 US decision to withdrawal from

the 1972 -Ballistic Missile Treaty<sup>39</sup>. Russia, which increasingly viewed US policy post 9/11 as unilateral, was angered by the move<sup>40</sup>. The debate around missiles continued until 2007, when the US revealed its plan to place anti-missile interceptors in Poland and Czech Republic, which Russia perceived as a threat (even officially it was directed against Iran's quickly developing capabilities)<sup>41</sup>. In 2009, Russia and the US agreed to reset relations. The lack of a significant breakthrough in the area of nuclear disarmament, however, has had a negative effect on the bilateral cooperation between Russia and the US. Another point of tension was Russia assisting Iran's nuclear program, which was criticized by the US.

Figure 13 shows that, since the early 2000s, the level of cohesion between Russian and US voting has consistently decreased.

The level of cohesiveness between Russia and the EU also reached its height in 1998, with a 60

39 Timeline: US-Russia Nuclear Arms Control, 2016, Council fo Foreign Relations, Available from <http://www.cfr.org/nonproliferation-arms-control-and-disarmament/us-russia-arms-control/p21620> (8 June 2016)

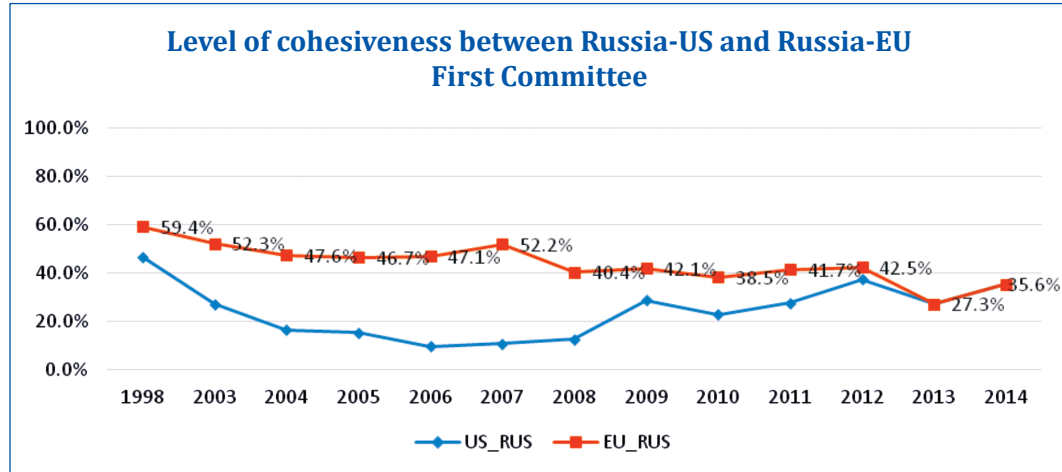
40 Ibid.

41 Ibid.



per cent of cohesion rate, and has been declining ever since. In 2013 it reaches its lowest point with 27 per cent, eventually increasing to 35 per cent in 2014. A comparison between US

–Russia voting and EU-Russian voting shows a similar level of cohesiveness in 2013-2014, which indicates the similar positions of the EU and the US.



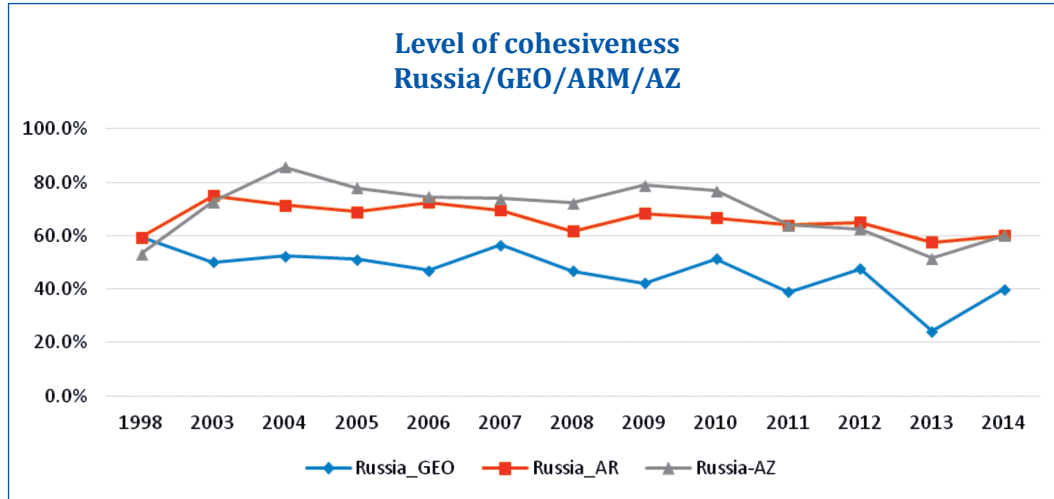
**Figure 14: Level of cohesiveness between EU-Russia, EU-US.**

Figure 14 also shows that the level of cohesion between the decisions made at the UN by the US, the EU and Russia is much lower than that between the EU and Russia. Besides, the overall level of consensus on resolutions submitted to the UN GA by the first committee significantly decreased towards the end of the observed period. Not a single resolution submitted by the first committee (focused on disarmament and international security) received the full support of all voting member states in 2013, compared to the situation in previous years, when it was typical for two to four resolutions to be approved unanimously.

Academic literature indicates that the greater convergence of EU and Russian votes in the early 2000s can be attributed to the end of the Cold War, the fall of the Soviet Union, and the adoption of a Western-style democracy and market oriented economy in Russia<sup>42</sup>. It also argues that the observable decline in the U.S.-EU convergence after the Cold War can be attributed both “to the European’s firm belief in multilateralism and support of the UN as a central institution to their vision of the international system, as well as Washington’s converse hesitancy to both”<sup>43</sup>.

42 Elisabeth Johansson-Nogues. “The Fifteen and the Accession Foreign Policy in the UN General Assembly: What Future for European Foreign Policy in the coming together of the “Old” and “new Europe”, European Foreign Affairs Review, Volume 9, Issue 1, Spring 2004

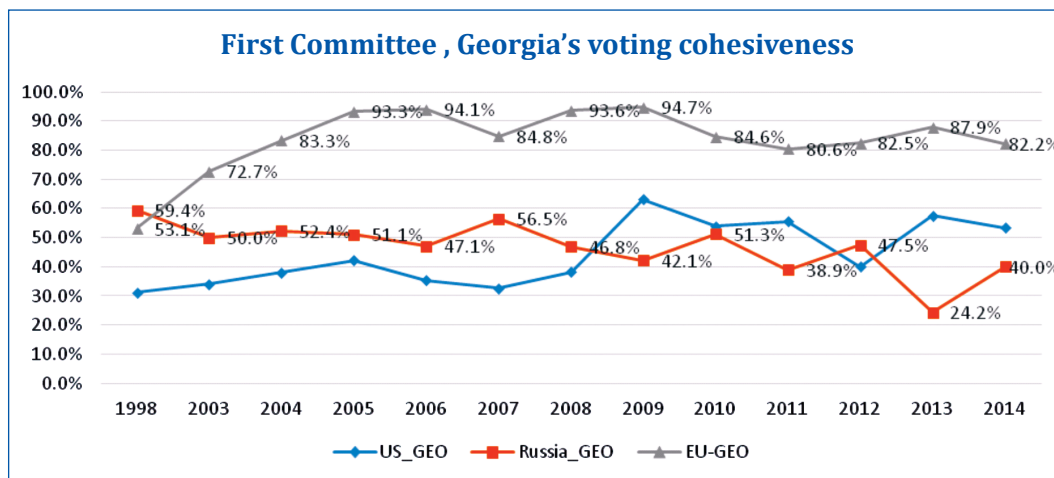
43 Ibid



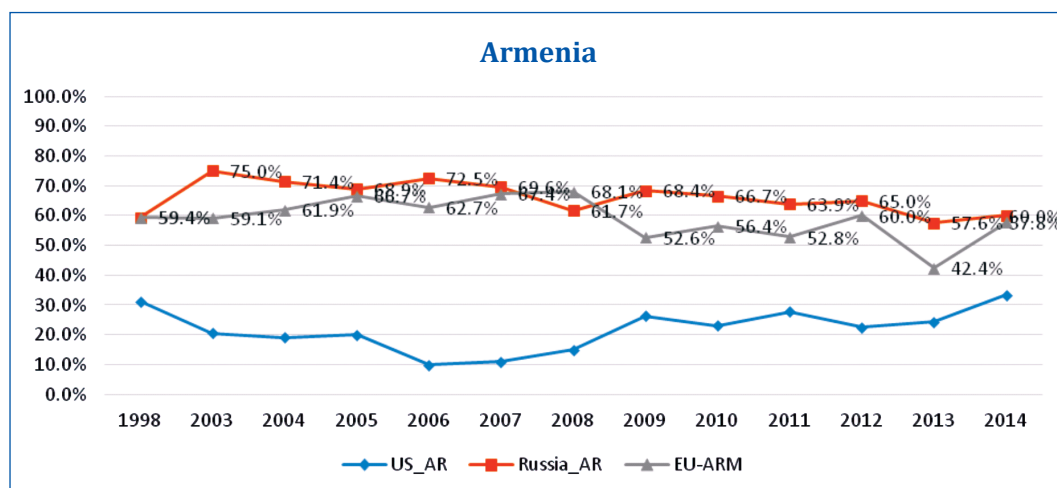
**Fig 15: Level of cohesiveness between Russia-GEO, Russia -Armenia, Russia - Azerbaijan**

The figure 16 illustrates the main tendencies observed in Georgia's voting history, in particular the figure helps identify countries with a similar voting history. EU members are come first, followed by the US, with Russia in third place. It is worth mentioning that

the dynamic of Georgia's cohesiveness with the US and Russia are directly related: when the level increases between Georgia and the US, it decreases between Russia and Georgia. These tendencies are visible throughout the observation period.



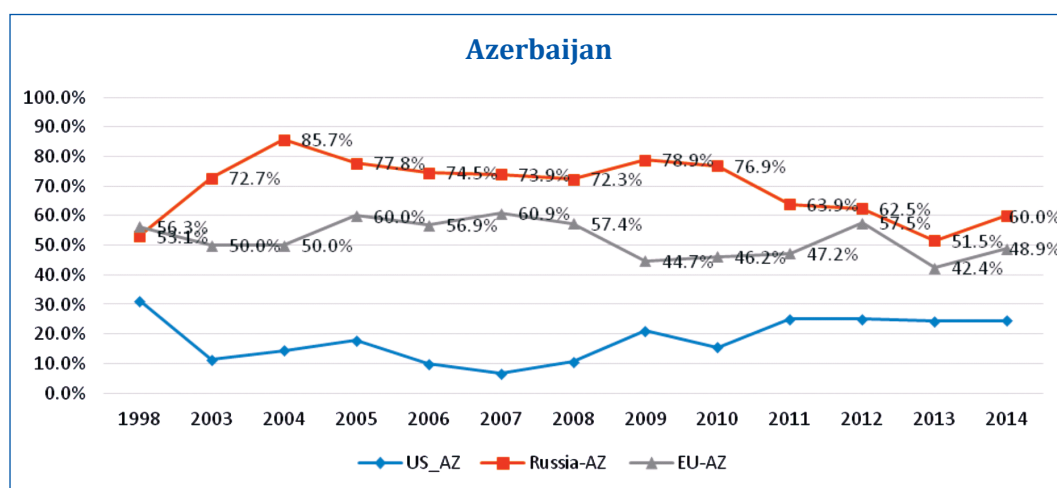
**Fig 16: 1st Committee, Georgia's voting cohesiveness**



**Fig 17: the level of cohesiveness Armenia-EU, Armenia Russia and Armenia US –**

In case of Azerbaijan, it is easy to observe the close proximity between Russia and Azerbaijan, as well as the EU and Azerbaijan (Figure 18). The maximum level of cohesion between EU and Azerbaijan was observed during a period of intensified cooperation on energy issues between two sides, in 2005-2008 (in 2006 Azerbaijan signed an energy cooperation agreement with the EU). After this period, however, it appears that Azerbaijan

was less interested in maintaining close contacts and cooperation with the EU in other sectors. According to Azerbaijani officials, the UN GA voting practice influenced the practice of Azerbaijan and decreased its interest to support EU declarations and statements during the following years. The EU's active protests and statements against human rights violations in Azerbaijan have also played a role since 2009.

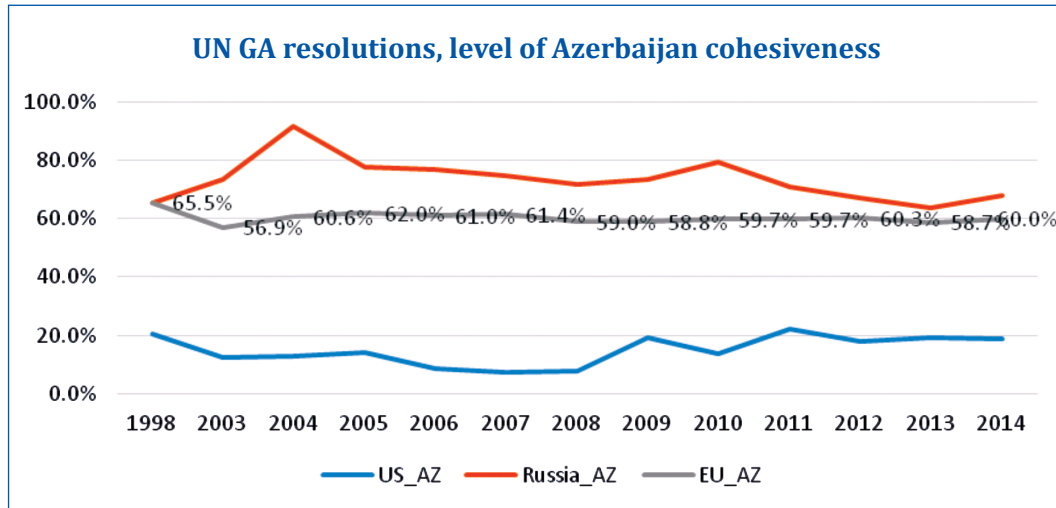


**Fig 18: Level of cohesiveness of Azerbaijan with the EU, US and Russia, first committee.**

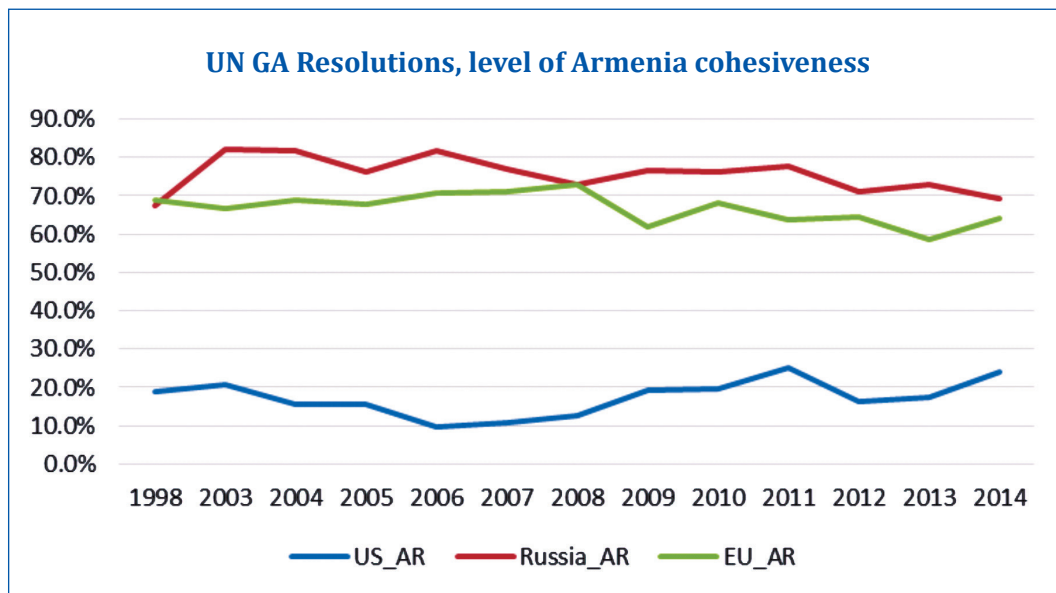
In a broader review that includes all types of resolutions, including plenary assembly resolutions, a different picture of Azerbaijan's relations with the EU, the US and Russia emerges.

Azerbaijan's level of cohesiveness with the EU is much higher – 60 per cent – over the

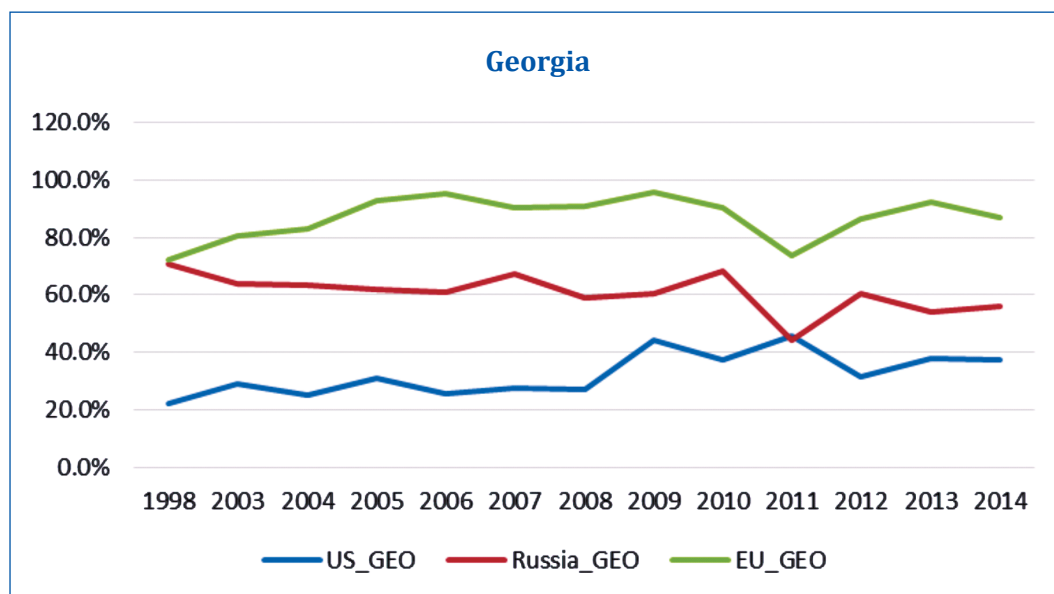
past 10 years (Figure 19). This indicates a more or less stable relationship between the EU and Azerbaijan, similar to US – Azerbaijan relationships, which has a stable rate of around 20 per cent, while ties with Russia appear to be more dynamic and less stable.



**Fig 19: All UN GA Resolutions, level of cohesiveness of Azerbaijan vote with the US, EU and Russia.**



**Figure 20: All UN GA Resolutions, level of cohesiveness of voting of Armenia with the US, EU and Russia.**



**Figure 21: All UN GA Resolutions, level of cohesiveness of Georgia voting with the US, EU and Russia.**

## 7. Voting around conflict issues on return of Internally Displaced Persons

The review of the behaviour of individual states can be best visualized when looking at their voting mean or “average” voting record and calculating each state’s distance from this figure.

States’ voting mean has been identified using their votes on seven GA resolutions on Georgia, which took place after the 2008 Russian-Georgian war until 2014.

If there is a full consensus between how the state and Georgia voted, it received a score of

0; if a state voted against it, it received a score 3 and the results fall in between those scores. The scores are presented in Table I (0=minimum divergence, 3=maximum divergence with the positions of Georgia).

The figure shows an overall convergence on the mean with the position of Georgia for a number of states: US, Azerbaijan, Poland, Sweden. The convergence with Azerbaijan is quite natural, as both countries are facing the challenge a secessionist conflict and third party involvement (Armenia) resulted in Baku losing control over the 20 per cent of its territory. Russia and Armenia were the states that showed the maximum divergence.





**Fig 22: Convergence of the positions of states on the resolution on the “Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia”, 2008-2014.**

Practice shows that Armenia votes against GA resolutions on Azerbaijan. The status of conflicts in the South Caucasus contributes to the divergence of national interest as well as policy orientations. Tensions over competing territorial claims can influence decisions over the common positions on global issues that are shared by most states in the EU.

In official policy documents in the area of foreign and security policies, Georgia and Armenia have declared that the peaceful and fair settlement of conflicts is a key priority. Accordingly, Georgia and Armenia share some foreign policy priorities, which are reflected in the main policy documents, such as national security concepts<sup>44</sup>, foreign policy visions, etc<sup>45</sup>. However, the main principles, based on which it could be possible to develop various options for conflict resolution, are fundamentally different.

The basic principles for the peaceful resolution of the conflicts in Georgia include the

recognition of the state’s territorial integrity, its de-occupation, and support the politics of non-recognition of territories occupied by Russia in 2008. While Azerbaijan has a similar position, Armenia’s approach towards the same priority is completely different. According to the official declared goals of the Armenian government, the main principle for peaceful conflict resolution is granting the right of self-determination to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. Therefore, the country supports the principle of self-determination, which is formulated in the United Nations Charter (Article I) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as well as other international documents, as a right of “all peoples”<sup>46</sup>. In contrast, Azerbaijan insists on the priority of internationally recognized borders. Armenia applies this principle selectively: while recognizing its own territorial integrity, it denies the same right to Azerbaijan.

44 Website of National Security Council of Georgia: [www.nsc.gov.ge](http://www.nsc.gov.ge)

45 Website of the Ministry of Foreign Policy of Armenia: <http://www.mfa.am/en/foreign-policy/>

46 The right to self-determination of peoples is recognized in many other international and regional instruments :the UN General Assembly in 1970, 2, the Helsinki Final Act adopted by the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe (CSCE) in 1975, 3, the CSCE Charter of Paris for a New Europe adopted in 1990, 5, and the Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action of 1993.

The differences in the underlying principles of the states' foreign policy priorities have influenced Armenia and Georgia's votes in the UN GA on resolutions related to the conflicts in the South Caucasus states.

A study of the two countries' voting history shows that Georgia and Armenia take opposing positions when the GA discusses resolutions on Georgia "Status of internally displaced persons and refugees from Abkhazia, Georgia, and the Tskhinvali region/South Ossetia, Georgia". They demonstrated different positions in 2008-2014 when the UN GA reviewed the resolution on Abkhazia. During the voting, the United States, EU member states, Azerbaijan, Iran, Moldova, Ukraine and other states supported Georgia's decision, while Armenia, together with Russia and Belarus, voted against the resolution. The outcome of the vote was similar on resolutions on the same topic in 2014, 2013, 2012, 2011, 2010, 2009 and 2008.

Meanwhile, in 2008, Georgia voted against the UN GA resolution on the right of Karabakh people to self-determination. This resolution was supported by Armenia and Russia, but not Georgia, and proved once more that, in the area of conflict resolution, Georgia and Armenia adhere to different principles; these two states are not expected to find common ground on the issue in the years to come.

Georgia and Armenia have not been so consistent in following their foreign policy principles on other UN GA resolutions, however..

For example, while discussing the UN GA resolution on the request of an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on whether the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo is in accordance with international law (8 October 2008, (A/RES/63/3) ) Georgia and Armenia abstained, alongside some members of the EU. Such a decision means that the two countries did not join either the group of states who voted in favour of self-determination, like the US (voted against the resolution) , or those who voted against self-determination, like Russia, in its vote for the resolution. Azerbaijani , however, supported the resolution, together with Iran, China, Russia, Belarus and Kazakhstan.

There were other occasions when, for instance, during the vote on Ukraine in 2015, Armenia voted against the UN General Assembly

Resolution 68/262 on "Territorial Integrity of Ukraine," along with 10 other countries. According to President Serzh Sargsyan, Armenia's vote supported Russian-Ukrainians' right to self-determination, echoing the defense of Armenians in Nagorny Karabakh. Most of the political parties in Armenia supported this move, with the notable exception of the Heritage Party, which opposed it.

On the basis of these observations, we can conclude that the behaviour of Georgia and Armenia during the voting at the UN GA on conflict-related issues is not based on strong commitment; rather it illustrates an indifference in pursuing their declared principles. Both Georgia and Armenia could abstain from expressing their position on controversial resolutions the way other countries do: Turkey, Kazakhstan, China. A similar approach was demonstrated by Armenia in 2008 when it abstained to vote in favour of the resolution on Kosovo. Azerbaijan expresses high level of loyalty to its declared national principles, and unconditionally supports the territorial integrity of a state.

## 8. Conclusions

This article reviewed decisions made by the governments of the 19 states at the international forum of UN GA and explored the voting practices of the South Caucasus states. It also compared them with the voting practices of their neighbours and regional powers. The paper studied the factors behind the South Caucasus states' voting history, including how their decisions at the UN GA compared with their declared foreign policy priorities; national interests; loyalty to the main principles of the international organizations they belong to; interests of strategic partners; influence of domestic ideology, etc.

The analysis of the statistical data reveals various strategies behind their voting practices:

- **Solidarity** among the states, i.e. sharing the same positions on issues of vital significance;
- **Diplomatic balancing** on issues which may be less significant for the national interests of the country;

- **Grouping and promotion of regional cohesion** on various issues, **developing alliances, and define choices made by the country on alignments;**
- Strategies **driven by the type of regime of the country.**
- **Loyalty to value-driven choices in voting** on the issue like universal freedoms and human rights, rather than security.

The study revealed that the South Caucasus states consider the following factors when making decisions during the UN GA voting: (1) Global and regional security considerations; (2) adherence to national interests; (3) principles of democracy, (value based choices) human rights and equality and universal freedoms ; and (4) economic development, such as external loans, relationships with the international financial institutions. Georgia also declares that the state tries to use its vote to support EU values and principles. Georgia also strives to integrate with the EU and votes like EU members. While the EU decision is important, it is not decisive for Georgia. Nevertheless, Georgia takes it into consideration, although it does not feel obliged to follow all decisions in question.

In general, the three SC states consider the UN to be an influential organization – they perceive it as very important, universal, and central to regional and international peace and security. For Azerbaijan, the UN represents the main platform to present issues concerning the Karabakh conflict to the world community, and the outcome of voting on this principle issue significantly influences the behaviors of the state, for example, the EU voting on Karabakh resolution in 2009 at the UN GA impacted how Azerbaijan voted on future resolutions: following 2009, Azerbaijan exhibited a decreased interest in supporting EU declarations and statements. Azerbaijani officials also admit that the position of other countries, like Russia, can have an influence their voting decisions.

Based on the analysis of the statistical data, several specific tendencies were identified in the voting practice of the SC states in the period under review. Specifically, voting on issues of nuclear disarmament and other arms control topics states show a high level of divergence. This topic also illustrated the opposing US and

Russia positions, a trend that emerged starting in 2003 (in particular, on ABM treaty, nuclear disarmament and Iranian nuclear program issues). In fact, even EU members could not reach a consensus on these issues. The widely diverse positions indicate that the South Caucasus states' voting record on disarmament issues do not have a direct and immediate impact on the country's interests and these resolutions were voted on based on political allegiances, as well as regional considerations to engage in diplomatic balancing. Accordingly, the results illustrated Georgia's proximity to the core EU group states (Germany) , while Armenia and Azerbaijan demonstrated their closeness to Russia, Kazakhstan, Belarus and China.

When resolutions dealt directly on issues that have an impact and are highly important for the security of the country, such as conflicts, voting was driven mainly by national interests. Azerbaijan always based its decisions on the declared national values and interests and never voted for the right of self-determination of nations; Azerbaijan supported resolution requesting for an advisory opinion of the International Court of Justice on whether the unilateral declaration of independence of Kosovo is in accordance with international law, which indirectly questioned the right to recognize Kosovo independence. For Armenia, there is a preference for voting for countries' right to "self-determination" rather than the principle of territorial integrity, although Armenia abstained to support the resolution on Kosovo in 2008.

The hypothesis that supports the liberal theory, which argues that the regime type and the elite's ideology affects the behaviour of a state in the international arena , can be applied to this study as well. The analysis of the voting practice on third committee resolutions addressing human rights issues shows that the regime's interests were the most decisive for Azerbaijan and Armenia. The study compared Armenian and Azerbaijani votes with the voting history of the US and the EU on resolutions from both the first and the third committees. The comparison indicated that Armenia and Azerbaijan are reluctant to strongly support human rights values during their voting on third committee resolutions at the UN GA.

However, the analysis of the dataset on UN GA resolutions can only partially connect the level

of democracy in any country, including Georgia, Armenia or Azerbaijan, to specific decisions made during the vote. The existing data makes it possible to observe similarities in the voting behaviour of Georgia, Azerbaijan and Armenia compared to that of the EU, Russia, the US and other countries, but cannot be used to evaluate how committed Georgia, Azerbaijan or Armenia are to democracy and liberal values for a number of reasons: the state of democracy in these states are characterized with different types of problems; their voting histories lack consistency with the officially declared policy; and their decisions are unpredictable. In addition, the results of the research demonstrate that diversified interests and the limited scope of common ground for states in the South Caucasus are reflected in the UN voting.

The factor analysis of the research data created an interesting visual tool, which can be used as a useful method for summarizing the outcomes of the research. It can also serve to interest other researchers to further develop the analysis and make deeper conclusions based on the existing data.

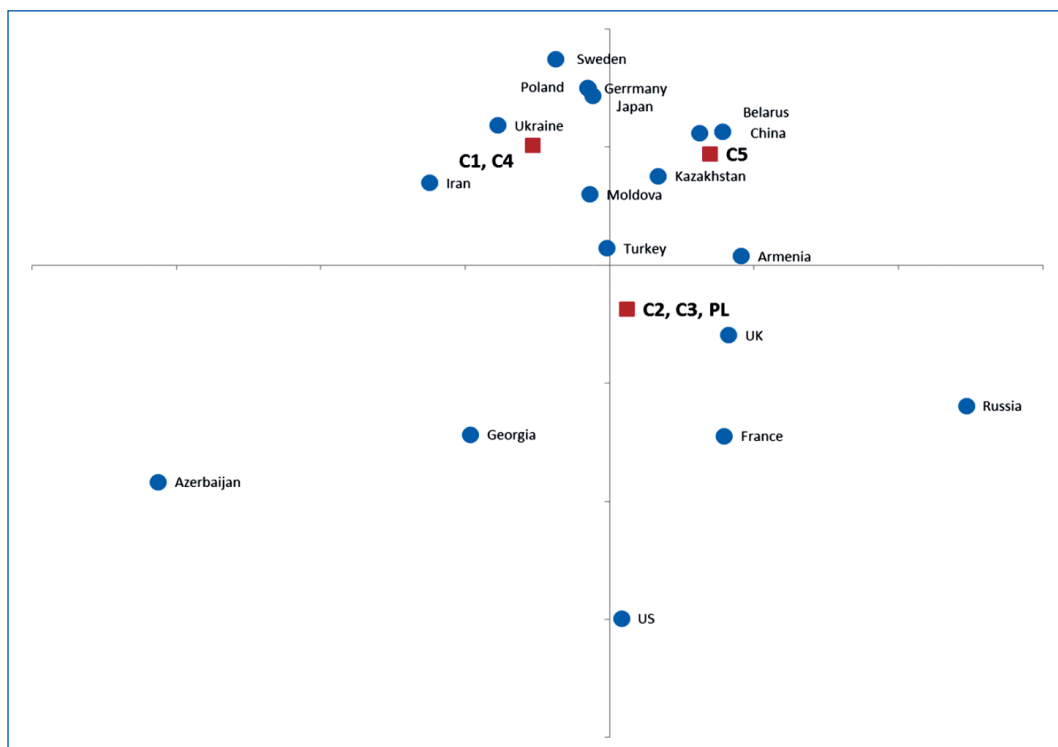
First of all, the factor analysis of all data made it possible to divide all resolutions, submitted

from all committees and plenary sessions, into three main groups and find commonalities in their main characteristics. The first and fourth committee resolutions were classified in a single group as they deal with disarmament and other issues related to international security, in addition to a variety of political aspects, including decolonization.

The second grouping addresses second and third committee and plenary resolutions concerned with economic, social, humanitarian, cultural and human rights issues, as well as the conflict-related issues discussed at plenary sessions. The third grouping includes only fifth committee resolutions, which covers the administrative and UN budget related issues.

It is also important to note that the factor analysis of the voting records of all states provided a distance for each state from the location of these three groupings on a plane. Figure 23 shows the placement of each state vis-à-vis these three groupings.

Overall, the following tendencies can be observed from the chart in Figure 23:



1. Figure 23 identifies three main, powerful states that can influence and determine the location of every other country vis-a-vis three groupings of resolutions, labelled in the Figure 23 as C1C2C3C4C5 and Pl Plenary. These three centers are the US, Russian Federation and EU core member states, such as Germany, Poland, Sweden, Italy. It is unsurprising that, when the results were graphed, the emerging picture underlines the important role of these states in the development of international politics and international security. Contrary to expectations, the figure supports the suggestion that other players and UN member states do not organize themselves around the politics of powerful states; they do not follow the US, Russia or the EU (united by CFSP framework); rather they make decisions under the influence of different factors, such as national interests, regional and international security considerations, interests of neighbor states, loyalty to the principles of the alliances they belong to; strategies driven by the type of regime in the country, etc.
2. Figure 23 also identifies the three main outliers of the statistical data: the US, Russia, and Azerbaijan. The distant placement of these states is an indication of the various tactics and positions they take into consideration while voting in the UN GA. Figure 23 also underscores the distances between the positions of China and Russia, an indication that they do not have common principles and values that impact their votes at GA.
3. Iran and Russia cannot be considered close partners either, due to the distance between them. Iran is located next to the first grouping, which covers resolutions on disarmament and international security, as well as decolonization. Iran's location indicates that these types of resolutions

are the most important for Iran, compared to other groupings, and that their voting has been consistent over the last 12 years. Also, EU members consider the same type of resolutions, together with UN budgetary issues, as critical to their interests; they remain loyal to their values and principles during the voting and give these resolutions a great deal of attention.

For Turkey, UK, France, Armenia and Georgia, the most important resolutions are those that pertain to economics, human rights and conflict issues. It is easy to notice that Georgia acknowledges the importance of the first and fourth committee resolutions, but is less interested in issues concerning the UN budget. Georgia's close position to the US influences its location and its distance from the first and second grouping. In sum Georgia came closer to the US location but clearly considers resolutions from the second grouping important. In contrast with Georgia, Armenia is closer to Russia in terms of its voting pattern, and it is located closer to Russia accordingly. Azerbaijan has distanced itself from Russia, Iran and Turkey by prioritizing a segregated approach, which does not limit it to value-based choices. Of the three South Caucasus states, Azerbaijan is best at balancing issues without displaying its preferences and priorities.

4. The location of the UK and France are mainly determined by the location of the human rights grouping (second grouping), and they to share common ground with both the US and Russia as nuclear states. In contrast, Ukraine, Belarus and Kazakhstan openly acknowledge the importance of the first committee resolutions; all three states inherited nuclear weapons from the Soviet Union in early 1990s but joined the nonproliferation treaty as a non-nuclear states soon after.







