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ABSTRACT

of the dissertation for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

MILITARY CONFLICTS AND HUMAN SECURITY PROBLEM IN THE SOUTH CAUCASUS

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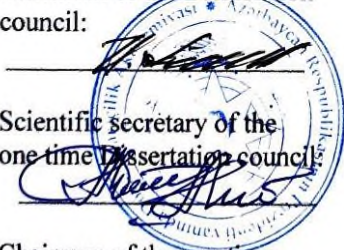
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I GENERAL CHARACTERISTICS OF THE DISSERTATION

Relevance of the topic and the degree of elaboration.

Historically, the concept of security has implied the protection of states' sovereignty and territorial integrity from external military threats. This national security paradigm dominated security policy formation until the 1990s. However, since the 1990s, global leaders have begun to view security in a broader, non-military context. By focusing on the individual as the main referent of security, the concept of human security challenged the traditional state-centered notion. Human security, therefore, emphasizes the protection of individuals rather than states. The human security concept emerged as an effort to expand and deepen the understanding of threats, influenced by ideas such as human development.

As a result, the concept of “human security”, which gained greater prominence in the 1990s, quickly developed through the works of numerous researchers and became a relevant global topic. This issue is equally relevant for both developed and developing countries of the world. Human security traditionally focuses on addressing the root causes and long-term consequences of conflicts, rather than merely reacting to problems.

Human security concept originated with the publication of the 1994 Human Development Report by the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The UNDP Human Development Report emphasized the importance of a human security approach that focuses on human life and dignity. Human security emerged as a result of the research conducted by Pakistani economist Mahbub ul Haq, who conceptualized the UNDP Human Development Report, in collaboration with a group of economists.

Thus, human security concept is focused on addressing all the global challenges the world faces today, including human rights violations, epidemics, unemployment, terrorism, depletion of energy resources, food shortages, environmental pollution, and climate change.

In this sense, security should now encompass all aspects of human well-being, including health, food, employment, living standards, education, public trust and social tolerance. Human security

is a broad conceptual approach that applies to all areas of development policy.

This integrated approach can accelerate positive actions to address threats such as pandemics and climate change, coordinate and accelerate the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals, and strength multilateral cooperation. The human security approach presents a new way of thinking about the challenges of the 21st century and how the global community should respond to them.

People today seek peace, human rights, democracy and social equality. The concept of human security is a reflection of these expectations. However, today's policies and priorities still do not meet these expectations.

Modern armed conflicts devastate infrastructure, hinder human capital development, cause death and disability, and reduce the economic opportunities of individuals, communities, and states. They are also a major cause of hunger and famine. Armed conflict restrict access to natural resources for resource-dependent individuals and communities.

It is certainly taking some time for human security to become universally accepted as a conceptual framework or policy tool by national governments and the international community. The links between military conflict, poverty, disease and environmental pollution are poorly understood and need to be clarified and elaborated.

It is widely accepted that the traditional concept of security, which focuses on state sovereignty, is no longer sufficient. The international community must develop new strategies to protect people from transnational threats in the era of globalization.

In this regard, based on the concept of human security, it is crucial to assess the state of this context in the South Caucasus region using additional indicators of human security in the dissertation, as well as to identify the causes of military conflicts and particularly sensitive areas during violent conflicts. The primary objective of the dissertation is to study the impact of military conflicts on human security in the South Caucasus.

Since the end of the 20th century, unresolved security problems in the South Caucasus have had a direct negative impact on human

security. Thus, military conflicts lead to ethnic cleansing, genocide, terrorism, drug trafficking, human trafficking, illegal arms trade, as well as massive human rights violations and humanitarian crises, while the region faces threats such as depletion of natural resources, mass migration, deportation, psychosocial problems, environmental pollution, etc. These factors make it necessary for the region states to identify security risks and take adequate measures to prevent and eliminate them.

The different approaches, as well as the different solutions proposed by region states especially the lack of mutual trust and compromises between them, indicate that the problems in the South Caucasus will continue in the future. President İlham Aliyev, touching upon the importance of regional security issues, noted: *“We must look at security and cooperation in our region from the perspective of today and tomorrow. Without security, there can be no talk of cooperation and economic benefits.”*¹

The relevance of the topic is justified by a number of other factors:

- Today's global events are increasingly interconnected, influencing one another more than ever before. Global challenges such as military conflicts, terrorism, climate change, pandemics, and others require a unified approach aimed at ensuring people's security and well-being. Human security enhances state security by reinforcing human rights and promoting development. It aims to protect individuals from a wide range of threats.
- Ensuring comprehensive well-being in the South Caucasus, preventing violence and conflicts, promoting development, protecting human rights, strengthening global interconnectedness, and addressing issues from a human security perspective make this topic particularly relevant in terms of the safety of civilians.
- Military conflicts in the region have not only posed a physical threat to people but have also led to social, psychological, and economic consequences. Additionally, competition over natural resources exacerbates existing tensions and negatively impacts the

¹ İlham Əliyev ADA Universitetində “Cənubi Qafqaz inkişaf və əməkdaşlıq” mövzusunda keçirilən beynəlxalq konfransda iştirak edib: [Elektron resurs] / President.az.-Bakı, 2022. – URL: <https://president.az/az/articles/view/55909>

living standards of the local population, further emphasizing the relevance of human security in the South Caucasus.

- The South Caucasus region faces various challenges that make human security particularly relevant. Issues such as smuggling, human trafficking, and other illegal cross-border activities pose significant threats to people's safety.
- As human security covers multiple areas, it plays a crucial role in ensuring safety within both bilateral and multilateral relations. Regional cooperation and conflict resolution are key components in addressing human security challenges in the South Caucasus. Consequently, the necessity of exploring the opportunities and prospects created by the new geopolitical reality in the region further underscores the relevance of this issue.

Azerbaijan has always been a supporter of peace and cooperation in the region. As national leader of the Azerbaijani people, Heydar Aliyev, emphasized: *“We want peace. We want peace in the whole world, we want peace in our region, we want peace and friendly relations in all neighboring states.”*²

The significance of this dissertation is underscored by the limited research focusing on human security and conflicts in the South Caucasus. While existing studies address security concerns in the region, they often emphasize geopolitical and military aspects, leaving a gap in understanding the human-centric dimensions of these conflicts. Various aspects of the research topic have been studied by researchers from Azerbaijan and other countries.

Azerbaijani researchers have examined various aspects of the research topic in their studies. Among them, H.Babaoğlu's works have significant importance in analyzing the historical evolution of human rights and freedoms within international and political contexts. Additionally, his other works cover topics such as the history of world politics and fundamental principles of modern international relations.³

² Əliyev, H. Müstəqilliyimiz Əbədidir dördüncü kitab / H.Əliyev.- Bakı: Azər nəşr, - 1997. 332 s.

³ Babaoğlu, H. İnsan hüquqları və azadlıqları; tarixi təkamülü, beynəlxalq və politoloji aspektlər, Azərbaycan təcrübəsi / H.Babaoğlu. - Bakı: Elm, - 2006.- 241 s.; Babaoğlu, H. Azərbaycan beynəlxalq münasibətlərin aktoru kimi / H.Babaoğlu. - Bakı: Elm, - 2007. - 515 s.; Babaoğlu, H. Azərbaycan Respublikasının müasir dünya

In addition, E.Nasirov has made significant contributions by analyzing Azerbaijan's bilateral relations with the United States. His research delves into the phenomenon of international terrorism, examining the essence, content, and form of the U.S. doctrine in both bilateral and multilateral efforts to combat such asymmetric threats. Nasirov's work also studies the application directions and implementation mechanisms of this doctrine, providing a comprehensive understanding of its impact on global security dynamics. The book provides a political analysis of the steps taken by the United States in response to the terrorist acts of September 11, 2001, as well as other anti-terrorist war operations. The issues of Azerbaijan's participation in the international anti-terrorist coalition are also examined through scientific analysis.⁴

In his published scientific works, E.Ahmadov critically examines Armenia's territorial claims against Azerbaijan, emphasizing incidents of ethnic cleansing and civilian casualties-including women and children-during the late 20th century, which violated all principles of international law.⁵ The human security factor also draws attention to the fact that, starting from the end of the 20th century, as a result of Armenia's military aggression against Azerbaijan, as well as during the Second Karabakh war, civilians were targeted and deliberately killed by Armenia with prohibited weapons.⁶

siyasətində yeri və rolu / H. Babaoğlu, - Bakı, - 2009. - 328 s.; Babaoğlu, H. Dünya siyasəti və beynəlxalq münasibətlər / H.Babaoğlu. – Bakı: Çinar-Çap, - 2019. - 690 s.; Babaoğlu, H. Xarici siyasət / H.Babaoğlu. - Bakı: Elm, - 2019. - 324 s.

⁴ Nəsirov, E. Azərbaycan-ABŞ münasibətləri. 1991-1997-ci illər / E.Nəsirov. – Bakı: Qanun, - 1998. - 136 s.; Nəsirov, E. ABŞ və dünya 11 sentyabrdan sonra / E.Nəsirov. – Bakı: Adiloğlu, - 2003. - 262 s.; Nəsirov, E. Amerika Birləşmiş Ştatlarının antiterror doktrinası və onun tətbiqi mexanizmləri / E.Nəsirov. – Bakı: Elm və Təhsil, - 2010. - 392 s.; Nəsirov, E. ABŞ və beynəlxalq terrorizm problemi 2001-2010-cu illər / E.Nəsirov. – Bakı: TEAS Press, - 2018. - 344 s.

⁵ Əhmədov, E. Ermənistanın Azərbaycana təcavüzü: təhlili xronika (1987-2011) / E.Əhmədov. - Bakı: Letterpress, - 2012. - 912 s.; Əhmədov, E. Ermənistanın Azərbaycana təcavüzü: Etnik təmizləmə, soyqırım, terror, işğal. II kitab. / E.Əhmədov. - Bakı: Letterpress, - 2015. - 408 s.; Ahmedov, E. Ermenistan'ın etnik temizlik, soykırım ve işgalçılık politikasının sonuçları // Orta Doğu Araştırmaları Dergisi. Karabağ Özel sayısı, - 2013. №2. - s.73-85.

⁶ Əhmədov, E. Ermənistanın etnik təmizləmə, soyqırımı və işğalçılıq siyasətinin nəticələri // Xalq.-2011, 26 fevral.-s.4.; Əhmədov, E. Xocalı soyqırımının

E.Jamilli has examined ethnic conflicts in the South Caucasus, including the "Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict", the "Ossetian conflict" and the "Abkhazian conflict", as threats to the regional security environment. He also analyzed the events that led to the aggravation of contradictions between the conflicting parties in the 21st century and the measures taken towards their resolution.⁷

V.Omarov has analyzed Azerbaijan-Georgia relations, emphasizing the importance of strategic cooperation between the two countries, which has evolved into a significant partnership.⁸

A.Nagi's book titled "A Short History of the Karabakh War" provides information about the roots, causes, course, and consequences of the Armenian-Azerbaijani war.⁹

In his monograph, S.Habibbayli examines the position of the Republic of Azerbaijan in the Abkhazian and Ossetian conflicts, Georgia's perspective on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict, and the steps taken by Azerbaijan and Georgia toward forming strategic alliance.¹⁰

G.Pashayeva analyzed the Georgian-Abkhazian and Georgian-Ossetian conflicts, as well as the causes of the Russian-Georgian war. Her research also examines the European Union's policy toward the South Caucasus.¹¹

The book, co-authored by R.Novruzoglu and Y.Oguz, titled "Karabakh: Uncontrolled Zone," presents a detailed examination of

beynəlxalq aləmdə tanınması // Xalq.-2014, 26 fevral.- s.8.; Əhmədov E. Ermənistanın təcavüzkarlıq siyasəti və ATƏT // - Bakı: Diplomatıya aləmi, - 2009. №25, - s.33-44.

⁷ Cəmilli, E.M. XXI Əsrdə Etnik Münaqişələr Cənubi Qafqazın regional təhlükəsizlik mühitinə təhdid kimi // - Bakı: Bakı Universitetinin Xəbərləri, Humanitar elmlər seriyası, - 2015. №2, - s. 131-138

⁸ Ömərov, V. Azərbaycan – Gürcüstan münasibətləri: sınaqlardan çıxmış əməkdaşlıq: [Elektron resurs] / - Bakı, 2017. URL: <https://caucasusstudies.az/e-kitabxana/elmi-meqale/88-azerbaycan-gurcustan-munasibetleri.html>

⁹ Nağı, A. Qarabağ müharibəsi. Qısa tarix / A.Nağı. - Bakı: Azərbaycan Respublikasının Prezidenti yanında Qeyri-Hökumət Təşkilatlarına Dövlət Dəstəyi Şurası, - 2014. - 121 s.

¹⁰ Həbibbəyli, S. Azərbaycan Respublikası- Gürcüstan münasibətləri / S.Həbibbəyli. - Bakı: Parlaq İmzalar,-2024.-304 s.

¹¹ Paşayeva, Q.Ə. Avropa İttifaqı və Cənubi Qafqaz Münaqişələri // - Bakı: Bakı Universitetinin Xəbərləri, Sosial-siyasi elmlər seriyası, - 2013. №3, - s.120-131.

Armenian terrorism, positioning it within the broader context of international terrorism. The publication is based on collected facts, documents, and research materials. It is a significant resource for security studies.¹²

S.Mammadova's monograph examines global environmental challenges and their consequences on a political level. It delves into the priority directions and prospects of Azerbaijan's environmental policy, focusing on the protection of existing ecosystems.¹³

Among foreign authors, N.Shavrov, a Russian public and political figure during the late 19th and early 20th century, provides us with useful information on the history of the resettlement of Armenians to Azerbaijani territories.¹⁴

In his article, J. Gierszewski emphasizes that security threats primarily arise from the political and military situations of states, rather than from individuals.¹⁵

I.Kirova examined the public diplomacy and soft power strategies applied against Abkhazia and South Ossetia. She examines how Russia and European Union actors utilize public diplomacy to influence conflict dynamics and pursue their policy objectives.¹⁶

B.Buzan in his book, co-authored with L.Hansen, discusses the diversification of the security concept since 1945, emphasizing the necessity of considering all its elements collectively. Buzan argues that defining security requires expanding beyond the traditional military sector to include economic, political, societal, and environmental sectors.¹⁷

¹² Novruzov, R. Qarabağ: Nəzarətsiz zona.... / R.Novruzov, Y.Oğuz, - Bakı: Ozan, - 2002. - 252 s.

¹³ Məmmədova, S. Azərbaycan Respublikasının ekoloji siyasəti / S.Məmmədova. – Bakı: Sabah, - 2014. - 312 s.

¹⁴ Шавров, Н.Н. Новая угроза русскому делу в Закавказье: предстоящая распродажа Мугани инородцамъ/ Н.Н.Шавров. – Санкт-Петербург:Типография Редакций периодических изданий,-1911. - 78 с.

¹⁵ Gierszewski, J. Personal Security within the Human Security Paradigm. // Security Dimensions. International & National Studies, - 2017, (23), p. 51–66.

¹⁶ Kirova, I. Public diplomacy and conflict resolution: Russia, Georgia and the EU in Abkhazia and South Ossetia. - Los Angeles: Figueroa Press, - 2012. - 85 p.

¹⁷ Buzan, B. The Evolution of International Security Studies / B.Buzan, L.Hansen – Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, - 2009. - 384 p.

The 1994 UNDP Human Development Report serves as a key source for this dissertation. It examines both national and global challenges to human security. The report addresses both national and global challenges to human security and proposes a new paradigm of sustainable human development.¹⁸

The research utilized a diverse range of sources, including electronic resources and press materials obtained from the official websites of state bodies and international organizations.

Object and subject of the study. The object of the study is human security, its primary indicators, challenges and prospects. The subject is the impact of military conflicts on human security in the South Caucasus.

Goals and objectives of the study. The purpose of the research work is to study the impact of military conflicts on human security in the South Caucasus since 1990s. To achieve this goal, the scientific and theoretical study of the following issues has been defined as specific tasks:

- to study the concept of human security and examine it within the framework of fundamental scientific approaches;
- to analyze the modern dimensions and parameters of human security;
- to identify the internal factors that contributed to the emergence of military conflicts in the South Caucasus;
- to analyze the interests of external forces as a threat to human security in the context of military conflicts in the region;
- to assess the benefits of regional cooperation in ensuring human security, the importance of joint use of the region's geostrategic opportunities and advantages for the regional states, and at the same time to provide a comprehensive overview of the obstacles to cooperation;
- to identify threats to the political dimensions of human security;

¹⁸ Human Development Report 1994: [Electronic resource] / United Nations Development Programme. - 1994. URL: <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/hdr1994encompletenostats.pdf>

- to analyze socio-economic aspects of human security by examining various threats and challenges faced by people in the region in their daily lives, with a focus on their well-being;
- to analyze the environmental dimensions of human security in the region.

These tasks encompass all the key components analyzed within the framework of the dissertation. In short, as a result of fulfilling the listed tasks, human security and its various types, conflicts in the South Caucasus and their threats to human security, new threats emerging against human security due to globalization, and the prospects for cooperation in the South Caucasus from the perspective of human security were researched and analyzed from a scientific and theoretical standpoint.

Research methods: The research is based on specific historical facts and analyses. In the dissertation, along with the analysis of events and processes, cause-and-effect relationships have also been examined. A comprehensive approach was used in the study of the topic. The action method was applied to examine the development of conflicts in the region as a series of processes with successive stages. The comparative method was used to analyze military conflicts in the South Caucasus, identifying their similarities and differences. The comparative method was applied in the study of human security to gain insights into the diversity of approaches, successes, and challenges in promoting the well-being and security of individuals and communities. Regarding the applied methods, the study of documents was mainly applied. Primary sources such as legislative acts, state programs, international conventions were used.

The main provisions of the defense are:

- The call for human security in the South Caucasus is a response to new opportunities for promoting development, preventing conflicts and addressing multiple threats in the post-conflict period;
- Both internal and external forces are involved to some extent in the violation of human security in the region;
- A human-centered approach to security facilitates the implementation of peacebuilding initiatives in the South Caucasus;
- Political, socio-economic, and environmental factors are the key parameters for assessing human security in the South Caucasus.

Scientific innovation of the research. Although some studies by local and foreign researchers have addressed individual aspects of human security in the South Caucasus, no comprehensive research has been conducted on this issue within the field of political science. The scientific novelty of this dissertation work is characterized by the novelty of the problem under study and the research objectives set. Scientific novelty is determined by several directions mentioned below:

- For the first time in the South Caucasus, threats arising from military conflicts have been examined specifically within the framework of human security.

- The impact of geopolitical interests of external actors on the effectiveness of ensuring human security in the region has been analyzed;

- In addition to geopolitical tensions, regional initiatives such as cooperation and integration in the South Caucasus were examined within the framework of human security;

- The causes of the emergence of military conflicts in the South Caucasus and their primary impacts on human security were identified;

- The concept of human security was studied and analyzed within the framework of fundamental scientific approaches;

- The contemporary dimensions and key parameters of human security were examined;

- The interests of external forces were specifically analyzed as a threat in the impact of military conflicts on human security in the region;

- The necessity of regional cooperation in ensuring human security, obstacles to cooperation in the region were examined;

- The political, socio-economic and environmental dimensions of human security were studied, considering various threats and challenges.

Theoretical and practical significance of the research. The conducted research and the obtained scientific results are significant from both theoretical and practical perspectives. The findings of the dissertation, along with the scientific provisions put forward and substantiated by factual evidence, can be utilized in research studies

on modeling within the field of political theory. In order to ensure the reliability of the presented data, statistical data provided by UN agencies and the State Statistical Committee were widely used. The scientific-theoretical and practical significance of the dissertation is related to two special factors. The first of these is that the dissertation is one of the first scientific-research works in the field of human security in Azerbaijan. Another significant factor is that for the first time, ensuring human security during conflicts is studied exclusively from the perspective of its impact on the South Caucasus region. This dissertation can be widely used in future research on human security in the South Caucasus, the development of methodological guidelines, and the preparation of lecture materials.

Approbation and application. The main provisions and results of the dissertation are reflected in the author's articles and conference materials. The author's works on the topic have been published both in Azerbaijan and abroad. The main provisions have been approbated in speeches and reports at national and international scientific conferences, seminars, and published in scientific journals. Overall, the published articles and conference materials cover the general content of the dissertation.

The name of the institution where the dissertation work was completed. The dissertation was carried out at the Department of International Relations and Foreign Policy of the Academy of Public Administration under the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Structure and scope of work. The dissertation consists of an introduction, three chapters, eight paragraphs, a conclusion and a list of references. The total volume of the dissertation is 241.865, Introduction – 19.346, Chapter I – 47.284, Chapter II – 76,323, Chapter III – 82,148, Conclusion – 16.764 characters.

II THE CONTENT OF THE DISSERTATION

The **Introduction** substantiates the relevance of the topic, outlines the goals and objectives of the research, presents key proposals, and highlights the scientific novelty and practical significance of the obtained results.

Chapter I titled “**The problem of human security in the context of military conflicts**”. The first paragraph titled “**Scientific and Theoretical Approaches to the Issue of Human Security**”, notes that in 1994, UNDP introduced the concept of human security to the world, expanding the scope of security to include economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community, and political security. Two main components of human security are emphasized: “freedom from fear” and “freedom from want”.¹⁹ In a broader sense, human security also encompasses freedom from fear, freedom from want and freedom to live in dignity. Four key aspects of the human security concept are examined. The Frankfurt, Paris, Wales, and Copenhagen schools have played a significant role in the development of new, critical approaches to security. Additionally, the main ideas of the human rights-based approach, including the liberal and institutional approaches, are analyzed.

The **second paragraph of Chapter I**, titled “**Military Conflicts and the Main Parameters of Human Security**”, highlights that international theories such as realism and liberalism have been widely referenced in various analyses of conflicts resolution. Military conflicts have a significant impact on human security. International humanitarian law establishes legally binding standards that regulate all aspects of warfare. These standards are outlined in the four Geneva

¹⁹ Boer M.d, *The Viability of Human Security*, / M.d, Boer, J. Wilde, - Amsterdam University Press, - 2008.- p. 151-182.

Conventions of 1949, which are the primary sources of international humanitarian law. International humanitarian law is a set of rules designed to limit the effects of armed conflict for humanitarian purposes. It protects people from hostilities and restricts the means and methods of warfare.²⁰

According to the UNDP Report, the analysis of human security should consider its universality, the interdependence of all its components, the necessity of implementing preventive measures earlier rather than later, as well as helping people.²¹ The list of threats to human security is extensive, however, most of them fall into seven main categories: Economic security, food security, health security, environmental security, personal security, community security, political security.²²

Each of these dimensions highlights the interplay of political, social, economic and environmental factors in promoting comprehensive human security. International humanitarian assistance, peacebuilding initiatives and conflict resolution efforts are crucial to mitigating these impacts and restoring human security in post-conflict settings.

The first paragraph of **Chapter II**, titled **“Factors Leading to the Emergence of Military Conflicts and Human Security Problems in the South Caucasus”**, is titled **“The Emergence of Military Conflicts in the South Caucasus”**. This paragraph examines the influence of political and religious factors on the orientation of the peoples of the South Caucasus towards foreign powers. Historical hatred, different identities, religions and cultures existed between the peoples. The lack of a common origin, shared

²⁰ Petrin, S. Human Security in U.S. Military Operations: A Primer for DOD: / Peacekeeping and Stability Operations Institute (PKSOI). – June, 2021. URL: https://pksoi.armywarcollege.edu/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/HumanSecurityPrim4DoD_v16Jun21.pdf

²¹ Gierszewski, J. Personal Security within the Human Security Paradigm: [Electronic resource] –March, 2017. URL: https://www.researchgate.net/publication/323684711_Personal_security_within_The_Human_Security_Paradigm

²² Human Development Report 1994: [Electronic resource] / United Nations Development Programme. - 1994. URL: <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/hdr1994encompletenostats.pdf>

culture and sense of solidarity and its impact on regional processes, peace and stability is analyzed.

At the same time, the causes of the military conflicts in the South Caucasus, such as the “Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict”, the “Ossetian conflict” and the “Abkhazian conflict”, during the collapse of the USSR, are analyzed. The South Caucasus region has been plagued by ongoing conflicts over the past three decades. Ethnic tensions, economic collapse, and ineffective domestic policies stemming from the collapse of the Soviet Union have led to instability, war, and poverty, and have hindered trade relations to this day.

The second paragraph, titled **“External Factors in the Impact of Military Conflicts on Human Security in the Region”**, highlights the significant influence of the international context and external actors on events affecting human security in the region. With the end of the Cold War, the nature of security has also changed and become more complex and multifaceted.

Multilateral security measures are crucial in the South Caucasus region due to its complex geopolitical dynamics and overlapping security challenges. Several factors highlight the importance of multilateral security in the region. For example, the international environment surrounding the region complicates regional issues.

The South Caucasus has become a strategically significant region due to its geographical location and energy resources. Its connection between Europe and Asia, along with its role as a key route for exporting Caspian energy resources to the West, has heightened geopolitical interest in the region.²³

The security risks faced by South Caucasus countries are multifaceted, making them difficult to predict and assess. Therefore, using various dimensions beyond the region has become essential in explaining the importance of the human security concept.

²³ Svante E.C. Regional Security in the South Caucasus: The Role of NATO: [Electronic resource] / E.C.Svante, R.N.McDermott, W.D.O'Malley [et al.] Central Asia-Caucasus Institute. - 2004. URL: https://www.silkroadstudies.org/resources/pdf/SilkRoadPapers/2004_cornell-et-al_regional-security-in-the-south-caucasus.pdf

The third paragraph is titled **“Regional cooperation in Ensuring Human Security”**. It argues that regional cooperation is crucial for addressing the complex challenges of human security in the South Caucasus. Building trust, strengthening institutions, and pursuing common interests can build the framework for a more secure future in the region.

The first trilateral cooperation formats initiated by Azerbaijan is the Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey cooperation. Azerbaijani-Turkish military cooperation remains consistently relevant. As regional tensions rise, the importance of military cooperation becomes even more significant. The Azerbaijan-Georgia-Turkey cooperation axis was officially established in June 2012 with the Trabzon Declaration, which expanded existing partnerships through the implementation of a ministerial platform aimed at strengthening political dialogue and promoting mutual projects.²⁴

Another regional cooperation format, “3+3” initiative, was first proposed by the leaders of Turkey and Azerbaijan after the Second Karabakh War. This grouping includes the three South Caucasus countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia) along with the region's three key neighbors (Russia, Turkey, and Iran). Four of the six countries promptly welcomed the initiative, while Armenia and Georgia remained hesitant. For now, Georgia has declined to participate in this platform, instead proposing an alternative “3+2” format (South Caucasus countries + EU and United States). Although Tbilisi refers to its counter-proposal as the 'Neighborhood for Peace Initiative,' it has yet to take concrete steps to implement it. As a result, the “3+3” format can be viewed as a long-awaited regional initiative

²⁴ Frappi, C. Patterns for Cooperation in The Southern Caucasus Area, Azerbaijan, Georgia and Turkey - Triangular Diplomacy in the shadow of energy strategy: [Electronic resource] / C.Frappi, M.Valigi, ISPI Working Paper. – July, 2015. URL: https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Carlo-Frappi/publication/281546929_PATTERNS_FOR_COOPERATION_IN_THE_SOUTHERN_CAUCASUS_AREA_AZERBAIJAN_GEORGIA_AND_TURKEY_TRIANGULAR_DIPLOMACY_IN_THE_SHADOW_OF_ENERGY_STRATEGY/links/55ed3daf08ae65b6389f44de/PATTERNS-FOR-COOPERATION-IN-THE-SOUTHERN-CAUCASUS-AREA-AZERBAIJAN-GEORGIA-AND-TURKEY-TRIANGULAR-DIPLOMACY-IN-THE-SHADOW-OF-ENERGY-STRATEGY.pdf

for the Caucasus.²⁵ Another example of regional cooperation is the Zangezur corridor. All countries in the region will benefit from the corridor.

Chapter III, titled “Political, Socio-Economic, and Environmental Aspects of Military Conflicts and Human Security in the Region”, begins with the paragraph **“Political Aspects”**, which analyzes the political, community, and personal security dimensions of human security. Political security emphasizes the protection of human rights, the prevention of political repression, and promoting good governance. Political security is essential for protecting people from abuses and ensuring their freedom to participate in decision-making processes that affect their lives.²⁶

Community security encompasses the protection of traditional values and cultures, languages and shared beliefs. It also includes the elimination of ethnic discrimination, the prevention of ethnic conflicts and the protection of indigenous peoples.²⁷ Personal security aims to protect individuals from physical violence by the state and other institutions. Threats to personal security range from interstate war and military conflict to political violence, crime, and domestic abuse.²⁸

Political security in the South Caucasus is influenced by geopolitical instability. The region, encompassing Armenia, Azerbaijan, and Georgia, is shaped by complex geopolitical tensions, historical conflicts, and ethnic divisions. Personal security in the region is profoundly influenced by both historical and contemporary factors. The political, personal, and community dimensions of human

²⁵ Huseynov, V. 3+3 and the Prospects for Pax Caucasia? The 3+3 Regional Cooperation Initiative: [Electronic resource] / Baku Dialogues. – 2022. URL: https://bakudialogues.ada.edu.az/media/2022/04/11/bd-v5-n3-spring-2022_huseynov.pdf

²⁶ Enhancing Human Security through Local Climate Actions: [Electronic resource] / United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). - 2020. URL: <https://www.undp.org/nepal/publications/enhancing-human-security-through-local-climate-actions>

²⁷ Human Development Report 1994: [Electronic resource] / United Nations Development Programme. - 1994. URL: <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/hdr1994encompletenostats.pdf>

²⁸ Gierszewski, J. Personal Security within The Human Security Paradigm // Security Dimensions. International & National Studies, - 2017, 23 (23), - p.54

security in the South Caucasus are closely interconnected. A comprehensive analysis of these challenges is crucial for a deeper understanding of the problems that hinder regional stability.

The second paragraph, titled “**Socio-economic aspects**,” analyzes the increase in organized crime, economic problems, forced displacement, and other threats in the South Caucasus countries. As a result of military conflicts, the issue of refugees and forced displacement has become a major concern impacting human security in the South Caucasus. This paragraph examines the food, health, and economic aspects of human security in the region. Food security is considered a key element not only of economic security, but also of environmental and political security.²⁹

It is evident that the problems in the South Caucasus have had an impact on food security. The ongoing crisis, both during and after the military conflicts, has severely impacted local and regional food systems, as well as people's access to food. Additionally, the South Caucasus has been facing a profound political and economic crisis.

The region's wars, ethnic tensions, crime, rape, domestic violence, child abuse, suicide and self-harm such as drug addiction have threatened people's well-being in the region. Mental health issues have been widespread among populations affected by military conflict, particularly among refugees and internally displaced people. The countries of the region have lost significant economic opportunities due to military conflicts. Efforts to rebuild infrastructure and provide psychological support to war victims have been hindered by insufficient funding and political instability. Analysis of these aspects of human security reveals that military conflicts directly impact the well-being, health and development of the population living in the region.

The third paragraph, titled “**Ecological Aspects**”, analyzes the ecological security dimension of human security. The aim of ecological security is to protect people from both anthropogenic and natural threats such as water scarcity, air pollution, and global

²⁹ Human Development Report 1994: [Electronic resource] / United Nations Development Programme. - 1994. URL: <https://hdr.undp.org/system/files/documents/hdr1994encompletenostats.pdf>

warming.³⁰ The environmental impacts of military conflicts are deeply interconnected with human security, and their consequences affect long-term recovery and development.

It should be noted that Armenia's acts of vandalism in the occupied Azerbaijani territories over the past 30 years are also ecological terrorism. Unfortunately, as a result of Armenia's military aggression has been caused to the severe damage to nature, biodiversity, water resources, and the overall ecology of the occupied Azerbaijani territories. Armenia has also committed ecological crimes, posing a serious threat not only to the occupied territories, but to the entire region.

The environmental problems that emerged in the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia, as well as during the 2008 Russo-Georgian war, have had severe consequences for both the environment and human security. The environmental impact of the conflict cannot be measured solely by the number of hectares of burned forests or the level of pollution in rivers and the Black Sea. All armed forces must comply with the principles and rules of international environmental and humanitarian law to which the parties are bound. Natural and cultural resources should not be plundered under any circumstances.³¹

The lack of control over the occupied territories has not only negatively impacted the natural environment of the South Caucasus but also the overall security of the region's states. Addressing these challenges requires comprehensive post-conflict recovery strategies that support environmental restoration, foster regional cooperation, and ultimately contribute to long-term peace and human security.

The **“Conclusion”** section provides a summary of the research findings through generalizations. Based on these findings, suggestions and recommendations of both theoretical and practical significance were proposed. It was noted that in the traditional concept of security,

³⁰ Gierszewski, J. Personal Security within The Human Security Paradigm // Security Dimensions. International & National Studies, - 2017, 23 (23), - p.54

³¹ After August 2008: Consequences of the Russian-Georgian Wars, [Electronic resource] / The Caucasus Institute For Peace, Democracy And Development. - September, 2008. URL: https://www.files.ethz.ch/isn/105102/2009_AfterAugust2008-eng.pdf

the primary reference object is the state, whereas in the development of human security, the focus shifts to the individual. Human security encompasses a broader range of threats, through a multi-sectoral analysis, including economic, food, health, environmental, personal, community and political security. It also examines ways to address these threats by identifying their underlying causes.

Human security in the South Caucasus remains relevant. Tensions arising from territorial and ethnic disputes within the region have led to armed conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Georgia and Ossetia and Georgia and Abkhazia. In addition to internal factors, external forces and geopolitical competition have also contributed to the emergence of ethnic-territorial conflicts.

Military conflicts in the region have deeply impacted all seven dimensions of human security identified by UNDP, both during and after fighting. As a result, millions have experienced violence, displacement, economic hardship, environmental degradation, and severe psychological trauma. Peacebuilding efforts, military conflict resolution and regional cooperation are crucial for addressing these challenges.

Achieving a human security paradigm should be based on multilateral dialogue and solutions, with a single overarching goal: common security. For the security paradigm to be sustainable, there must be an environment of mutual trust. The new security paradigm should strive for a comprehensive and fair system. That is, if countries seek to ensure their own security, they must also be interested in the security of other countries.

As a result, military conflicts in the South Caucasus have had a significant impact on human security, creating complex problems for the affected population and hindering the region's development. In this regard, ensuring human security is crucial for supporting stability and regional development in the South Caucasus. However, the consistent failure of regional cooperation attempts further proves that achieving this goal will not be easy. The long-term consequences of military conflicts will continue to affect the lives of people in the region. However, by prioritizing human security and safeguarding individuals, the countries of the region can overcome the numerous

crises they face and move towards a more stable, secure, and prosperous future for all residents.

The main content of the dissertation has been published in the following articles and theses by the author:

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