

COMMENTARY

EU LAW vs UK LAW The Primacy of EU Law over National Law: Great Britain's Response *by Dr Sharifullah Dorani*

COVID-19 Crisis Deepening in Azerbaijan *by Javadbay Khalilzada*

All the President's Tweets: Trump's Twiplomacy amidst the Coronavirus Crisis and the Way Ahead for the American Foreign Policy *by Maria (Mary) Papageorgiou*

INTERVIEW

Interview with Professor Adeeb Khalid *by Dr Ozgur Tufekci & Dr Rahman Dag*



Preparedness for an Uncertain Future

“The Only Thing We have to Fear is Fear Itself”

by Professor Mark Meirowitz

International Think-tank www.cesran.org

Consultancy

Research Institute

CESRAN International is headquartered in the UK

CESRAN International is a member of the United Nations Academic Impact (UNAI)

CESRAN International is a think-tank specialising on international relations in general, and global peace, conflict and development related issues and challenges.

The main business objective/function is that we provide expertise at an international level to a wide range of policy making actors such as national governments and international organisations. CESRAN with its provisions of academic and semi-academic publications, journals and a fully-functioning website has already become a focal point of expertise on strategic research and analysis with regards to global security and peace. The Centre is particularly unique in being able to bring together wide variety of expertise from different countries and academic disciplines.

The main activities that CESRAN undertakes are providing consultancy services and advice to public and private enterprises, organising international conferences and publishing academic material.

Some of CESRAN's current publications are:

- The Rest: Journal of Politics and Development (biannual, peer reviewed)
www.therestjournal.com
- Journal of Conflict Transformation and Security (biannual, peer reviewed)
- Political Reflection Magazine (quarterly) www.politicalreflectionmagazine.com
- CESRAN Paper Series
- CESRAN Policy Brief
- Turkey Focus Policy Brief

CESRAN International also organises an annual international conference since 2014, called **International Conference on Eurasian Politics and Society (IEPAS)**

www.eurasianpoliticsandsociety.org

- **Ranked among the top 150 International think tanks**



Political Reflection Magazine

Established in 2010

Chairman: *Dr. Ozgur Tufekci*

Executive Editor: *Dr. Rahman Dag*

South Asian Studies | Editor: *Dr. Sharifullah Durrani*

American Foreign Policy | Editor: *Dr. Mark Meirowitz*

Applied Economics | Editor: *Dr. Hakan Uslu*

Middle Eastern Studies | Editor: *Dr. Rahman Dag*

Research Assistants:

Ebru Birinci

Emrah Atar

Submissions:

To submit articles or opinion, please email:

Rahman.dag@cesran.org

or

editors@cesran.org

Note:

The ideal **PR** article length is from **1000** to **2000** words.

©2020

By

the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis.

All rights reserved. Political Reflection and its logo are trademarks of the Centre for Strategic Research and Analysis, which bears no responsibility for the editorial content; the views expressed in the articles are those of the authors. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form without permission in writing from the publisher.

VOL. 6 - NO. 3

JULY
AUGUST
SEPTEMBER
2020

PLITICAL REFLECTION

“ADVANCING DIVERSITY”

Contents

05 - 14 **World News**
by Ebru Birinci

**Preparedness for an
Uncertain Future
“The Only Thing We Have to
Fear is Fear Itself”**
by Professor Mark Meirowitz

25 - 39 **EU LAW vs UK LAW
The Primacy of EU Law
over National Law:
Great Britain’s
Response**
by Dr Sharifullah Dorani

**Interview With 41 - 46
Professor Adeeb Khalid**
*by Dr Ozgur Tufekci
&
Dr Rahman Dag*

49 - 53 **COVID-19 Crisis
Deepening
in Azerbaijan**
by Javadbay Khalilzada

**All the President's 55 - 57
Tweets: Trump’s
Twiplomacy amidst the
Coronavirus Crisis and
the Way Ahead for the
American Foreign
Policy**
*by Maria (Mary)
Papageorgiou*

COVID-19 Crisis Deepening in Azerbaijan

Javadbay Khalilzada*
jkhaliz@kent.edu

Development of the Crisis

Unexpectedly, the COVID-19 pandemic hit the world severely and most countries were unprepared. Like major powers, small states were also stumbling to take necessary measures. Azerbaijan, located in the South Caucasus, is one of the countries that failed to manage the crisis deepening in the country. Although the country has comparatively more economic resources than the nearby Armenia and Georgia, government corruption has resulted in a poor response to the pandemic in Azerbaijan. Furthermore, in a recent speech, President Ilham Aliyev stated that the disruption caused by the virus would last well into the fall, and education centers would likely remain closed for the rest of 2020 (AZERTAC, 2020).

Initially, Azerbaijan downplayed the virus. However, when Iran was hit by the virus severely, Azerbaijan closed its borders to its neighbor; but later than other states did, when Georgia and Belarus reported that they found the COVID-19 passengers traveling from Azerbaijan. On March 2, the government closed schools and universities and transitioned to distance education. However, education centers were not ready for that. WhatsApp was used more than any other method to keep education going on, and the spring period ended in chaos. In early March, officials banned the Nowruz celebrations, public gatherings, funerals, weddings, and even limited entrance to the capital Baku and Sumgait from the regions of the country.

The Operational Headquarters under the Cabinet of Ministers of the Republic of Azerbaijan, established to control the coronavirus crisis on 16 January 2020, extended the general quarantine regime until August 1 and strict quarantine regime from June 21 to July 4 in big cities and the most impacted regions, like Baku, Sumgait, Absheron, Ganja, Yevlakh, Jalilabad, Lankaran and Masalli. The government enforced a curfew at weekends in the regions that the virus infected the most. Indeed, this is not new for Azerbaijanis. The government in Azerbaijan launched a special quarantine regime in the country from the 24 of March until the 20 of April, and from the 5 of April citizens were only allowed to go out for a limited amount of time and permission from the security forces was required.

However, the Azerbaijani government mismanaged the crisis. On April 27 the government eased strict quarantine restrictions, on May 4 it repealed permission requirements and on May 18 the government abolished the

* Ph.D. Student
and Graduate
Assistant,
Department of
Political
Science, Kent
State
University

quarantine regime when there were more infected people than in March when the government declared the quarantine regime, and the numbers were increasing as can be seen in the graph. These mistakes happened due to political, economic, as well as social factors.



Graph 1: COVID 19 Infected people by days and months in Azerbaijan, source <https://koronavirusinfo.az/az/page/statistika/azerbaycanda-cari-veziyyet> [Accessed 25 June 2020].

Why the Azerbaijani government failed to manage the crisis?

As can be seen in the graph 1, in May, there were more infected persons than in March, which was the month the government declared the quarantine regime. The quarantine regimes throughout the world have negatively impacted the Azerbaijan economy because less travel has resulted in declining oil prices. In addition, the rivalry between Russian and Saudi Arabia over production of oil in early March disproportionately impacted Azerbaijan, given its dependence on oil exports. Crony state capitalism in Azerbaijan does not allow the development of a private business sector and the economy is under the control of the state, which prevents diversification of the economy, and the state becomes vulnerable to fluctuations in oil prices (Khalilzada, 2019). The decrease in remittances flowing from Turkey and Russia is another factor that impacted the economy badly (Mammadov and Mammadli, 2020). Moreover, the government also mishandled social aid of \$110 for the unemployed. The process has illustrated that there are more unemployed people in the country than official statistics showed. Corrupt government officials did not distribute the money to people properly, and in some regions, local administrators bribed social aids sent by the government for their own gain. Social package policies for low income individuals and businesses were insufficient. This increased social tension in the society as people demanded

an end to the quarantine regime so that they could return to work and earn money to feed their families.

The second factor that decreased the trust of the people in the government about its policies on the coronavirus and quarantine regime was due to the crackdown of the dissidents. In his address to the nation for the Nowruz holiday, President Ilham Aliyev announced that the government would crack the fifth column that existed in the country, which resulted in suppression and arrest of a member of opposition parties and civil society organizations (Kuchera, 2020). Security forces used indiscriminate violence towards people who just went out from their houses to smoke. The behavior of the government and security forces decreased public trust in their government and the COVID-19 response. There has been some conjecture on social media that the government declared the quarantine regime not to stop the spread of the virus but to use it as a pretense to arrest those who disagreed with government policies.

Other important factors that decreased social trust in the government during the pandemic were the ineffective health system, poorly educated health workers, insufficient hospitals, and the implementation of the quarantine regime. For instance, the representatives of the Operational Headquarters are not trustworthy. The spokesperson of the headquarters is a former news editor of the state channel who was mocked among people due to his attempts to discredit the West and its standard of living. Moreover, the country's representative of the World Health Organization shares her holiday photos in her social media while instructing people to stay at home. According to the Global Health Index, Azerbaijan is the region's least ready country to face an epidemic, despite its rich natural resources and prosperity in the Caucasus. The State Agency for Mandatory Health Insurance (TƏBİB) is responsible for managing the crisis but the Minister of Health does not appear in daily briefings and does not take responsibility seriously. The government could increase trust by following the example of Turkey, where the health minister has become one of the most popular politicians during the pandemic because of his regular communication with the public.

Conclusion

Overall, the loosening of quarantine restrictions at the beginning of May resulted in more deaths from COVID-19 in Azerbaijan. According to the data on June 25, there are close to 15 thousand infected people in Azerbaijan, the daily rise of infected people above five hundred, and 180 people have died from the virus. It seems that the numbers are currently increasing and the government is not controlling the crisis. In a June 20 briefing, the representative of the TƏBİB reported that they did not get the expected results from the weekend curfews, because citizens fled from the cities to the towns due to complete closure (Meydan TV, 2020).

Thus, in order to prevent deterioration of the current situation and change the trend in a positive direction, the government has to reassess its crisis management policies. Instead of suppressing the dissidents, it should find

ways to collaborate with them because opposition parties and civil society NGOs offered policies to manage the crisis. Collaboration with and assignment of individuals that are respected by society in order to increase the reliability of the government's policies might help the current situation to improve. Providing social aid to vulnerable groups in order to address their anger over quarantine policies, which worsened their living standards, and support business sectors —then they could help to overcome the crisis like most states have done. Most state officials use the pandemic to steal state resources, which, needless to say, negatively affect crises management. Instead the government has to be transparent and provide citizens with economic needs; to those who had to quit their jobs due to the quarantine regime. It seems that if the government does not reassess its crisis management strategies, the virus will continue to spread in the country and it could lead to political upheavals.

Bibliography

- AZERTAC., 2020. Prezident İlham Əliyevlə “Microsoft” Şirkətinin Vitse-Prezidenti Və Digər Nümayəndələri Arasında Videokonfrans Keçirilib YENİLƏNİB VIDEO. [online] Azertag.az. Available at: https://azertag.az/xeber/Prezident_Ilham_Aliyevle_Microsoft_sirketinin_vitse_prezidenti_ve_diger_numayendeleri_arasinda_videokonfrans_kechirilib_YENILANIB_VIDEO-1513757 [Accessed 25 June 2020].
- Khalilzada, J., 2019. Modernization and Social Change in Azerbaijan: Assessing the Transformation of Azerbaijan through the Theories of Modernity. *New Middle Eastern Studies*, 9(2). pp. 167-188.
- Kuchera, J., 2020. Azerbaijan's President Suggests Coronavirus May Require A Crackdown On Opposition. [online] Eurasianet. Available at: <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijans-president-suggests-coronavirus-may-require-a-crackdown-on-opposition> [Accessed 25 June 2020].
- Mammadov, R. and Mammadli, O., 2020. Azerbaijan's Response To COVID-19 - Gulf State Analytics. [online] Gulf State Analytics. Available at: <https://gulfstateanalytics.com/azerbaijans-response-to-covid-19/> [Accessed 25 June 2020].
- Meydan, TV., 2020. Vəkil: Hökumət Əhalidən Üzr İstəməlidir. [online] Meydan.TV. Available at: <https://d9mc3ts4czbpr.cloudfront.net/az/article/vekil-hokumet-ehaliden-uzr-istemelidir/?fbclid=IwAR3W1mszq6t6PT2IJnmwFaYRMuURLVUEMJGSW7UPbD4GkbMzZWDhkdizlmk> [Accessed 25 June 2020].

CONFERENCE
DATES

23-25
September

IEPAS2020
7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society
23 - 25 September 2020
Lisbon (Portugal)



WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE
PROFESSOR **HUSEYIN BAGCI**
AS ONE OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
JOINING **IEPAS2020**

IEPAS2020

7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society

23-25 September 2020 | Lisbon (Portugal)

CONFERENCE
DATES

23-25
September

IEPAS2020
7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society
23 - 25 September 2020
Lisbon (Portugal)



WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE PROFESSOR
MARK MEIROWITZ
AS ONE OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
JOINING **IEPAS2020**

CONFERENCE
DATES

23-25
September

IEPAS2020
7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society
23 - 25 September 2020
Lisbon (Portugal)

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE
PROFESSOR **LUIS TOMÉ**
AS ONE OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
JOINING **IEPAS2020**

IEPAS2020 7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society
23-25 September 2020 | Lisbon (Portugal)

CONFERENCE
DATES

23-25
September

IEPAS2020
7th International Conference on
Eurasian Politics & Society
23 - 25 September 2020
Lisbon (Portugal)

WE ARE DELIGHTED TO ANNOUNCE PROFESSOR
NUNO SEVERIANO TEIXEIRA
AS ONE OF THE KEYNOTE SPEAKERS
JOINING **IEPAS2020**