

ՌԱԶՄԱՎԱՐԱԿԱՆ ԵՒ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ
ՀԵՏԱԶՈՏՈՒԹՅՈՒՆՆԵՐԻ
ՀԱՅԿԱԿԱՆ ԿԵՆՏՐՈՆ (ՌԱՀՀԿ)

Armenian Center for National and
International Studies (ACNIS)

Richard Giragosian
Ռիչարդ Կիրակոսյան
ՌԱՀՀԿ տնօրեն

6 July 2010

Assessing the Azerbaijani Armed Forces

- Years of neglect
- Defense spending sparks “arms race”
- Sole threat to regional security
- Tension expected to rise
- Threats becoming reality?

Azerbaijan: Problems at the Top



- Cult of personality, no warrior ethos
- Politics & military
- Civil-Military relations
- Keeping the oil and gas (and profits) flowing

Azerbaijani Tactical Weaknesses



- Threat misperception
- Low morale & over-confidence
- Inadequate preparation and training
- Poor posture
- “teeth to tail” imbalance

Azerbaijani Leadership



Azerbaijani Tactical Command



Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense



- Institutional corruption
- Incompetent leadership
- Longest serving Defense Minister; loyalty over competence

Azerbaijani Ministry of Defense



- Corruption in procurement
- Safety standards
- Poor conditions
- Lack of real reform

Armenian Superiority



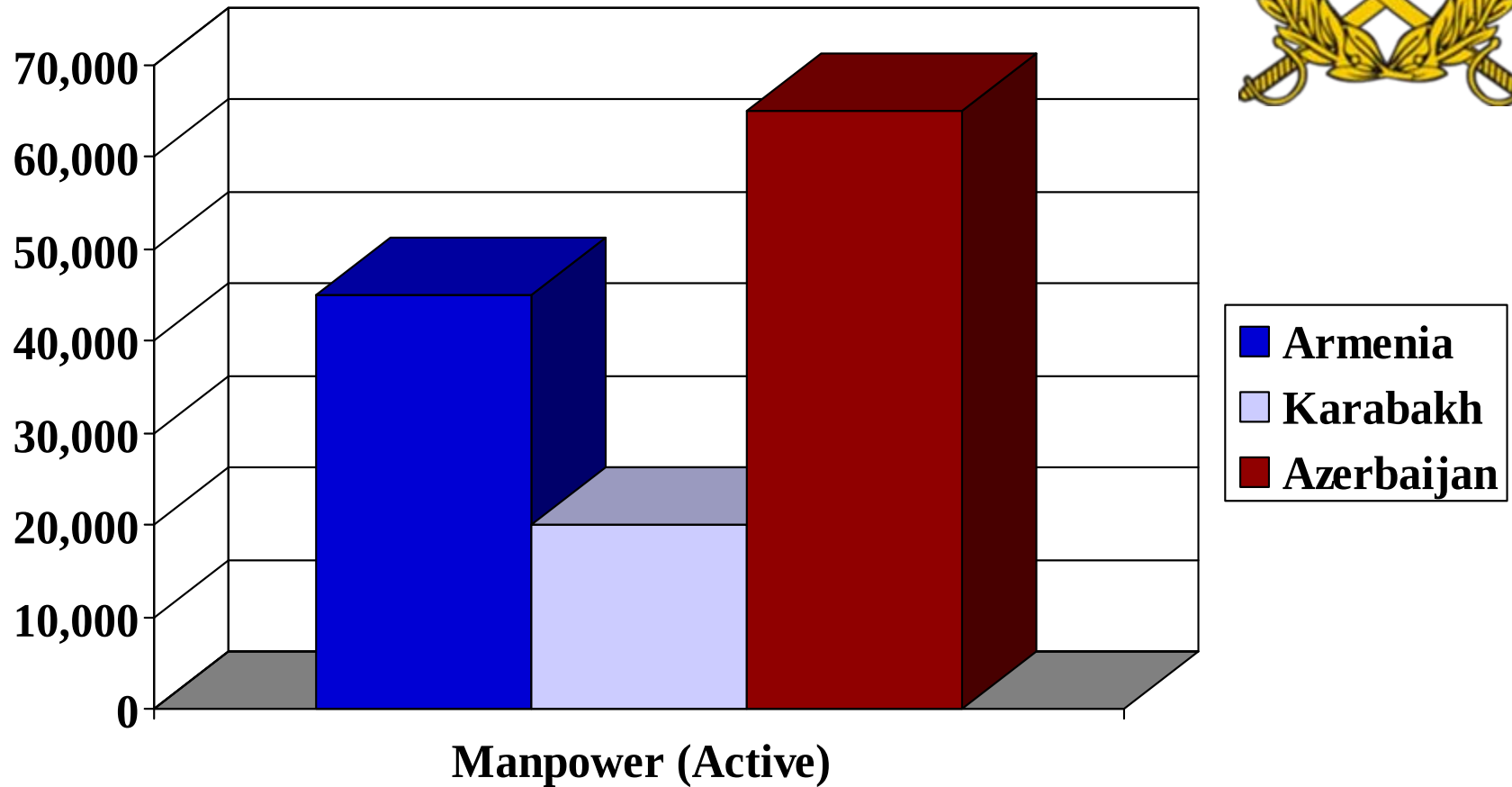
- Combat readiness
- Training and advanced exercises
- Command & Control
- Combat morale
- Tactical experience

Armenian Advantages



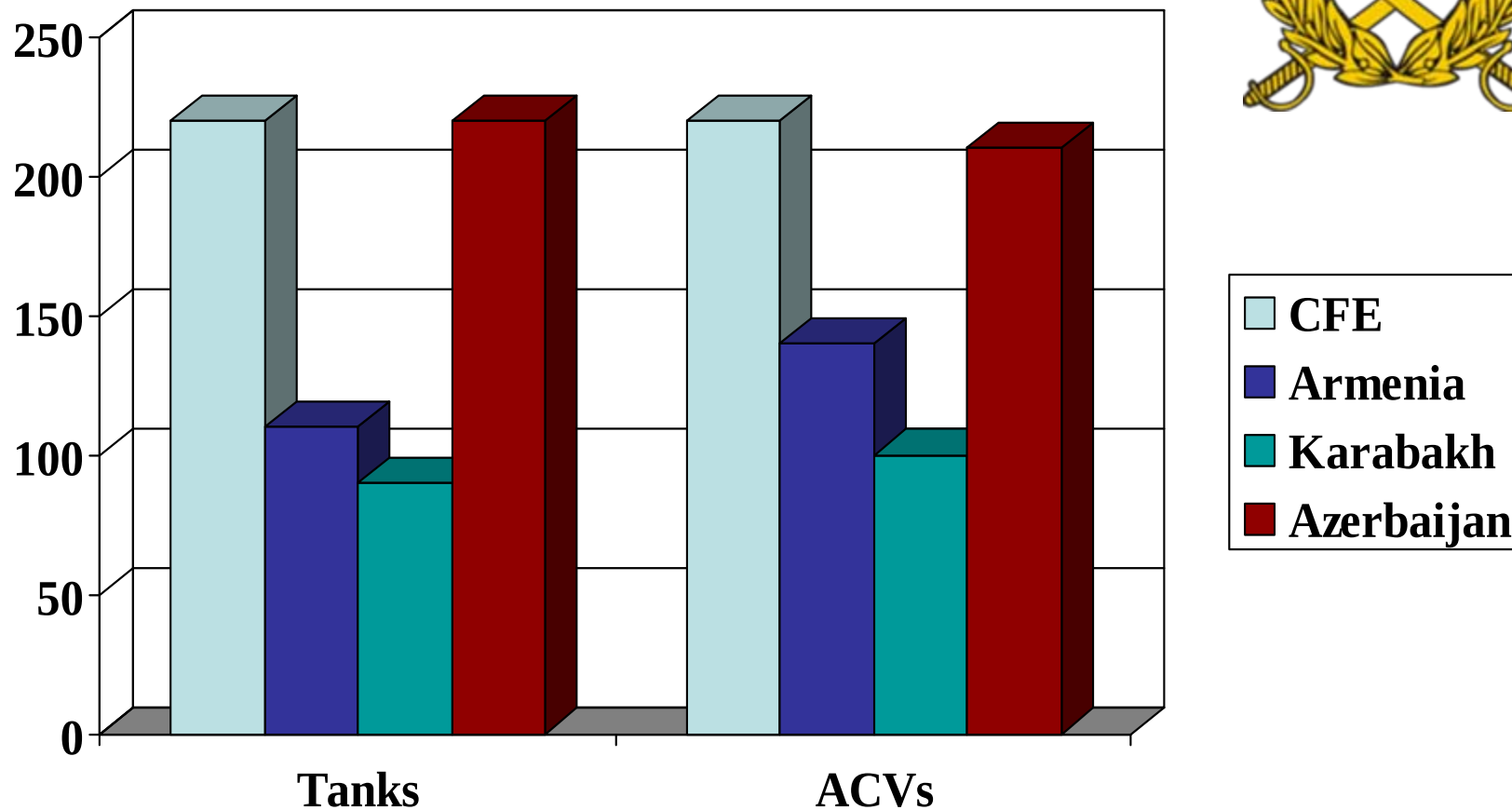
- Defensive dominance & defensive fortifications
- Force protection & perimeter defense
- Maximum use of terrain & topography
- Command & Control
- Combat morale

Azerbaijani Army: Active Manpower



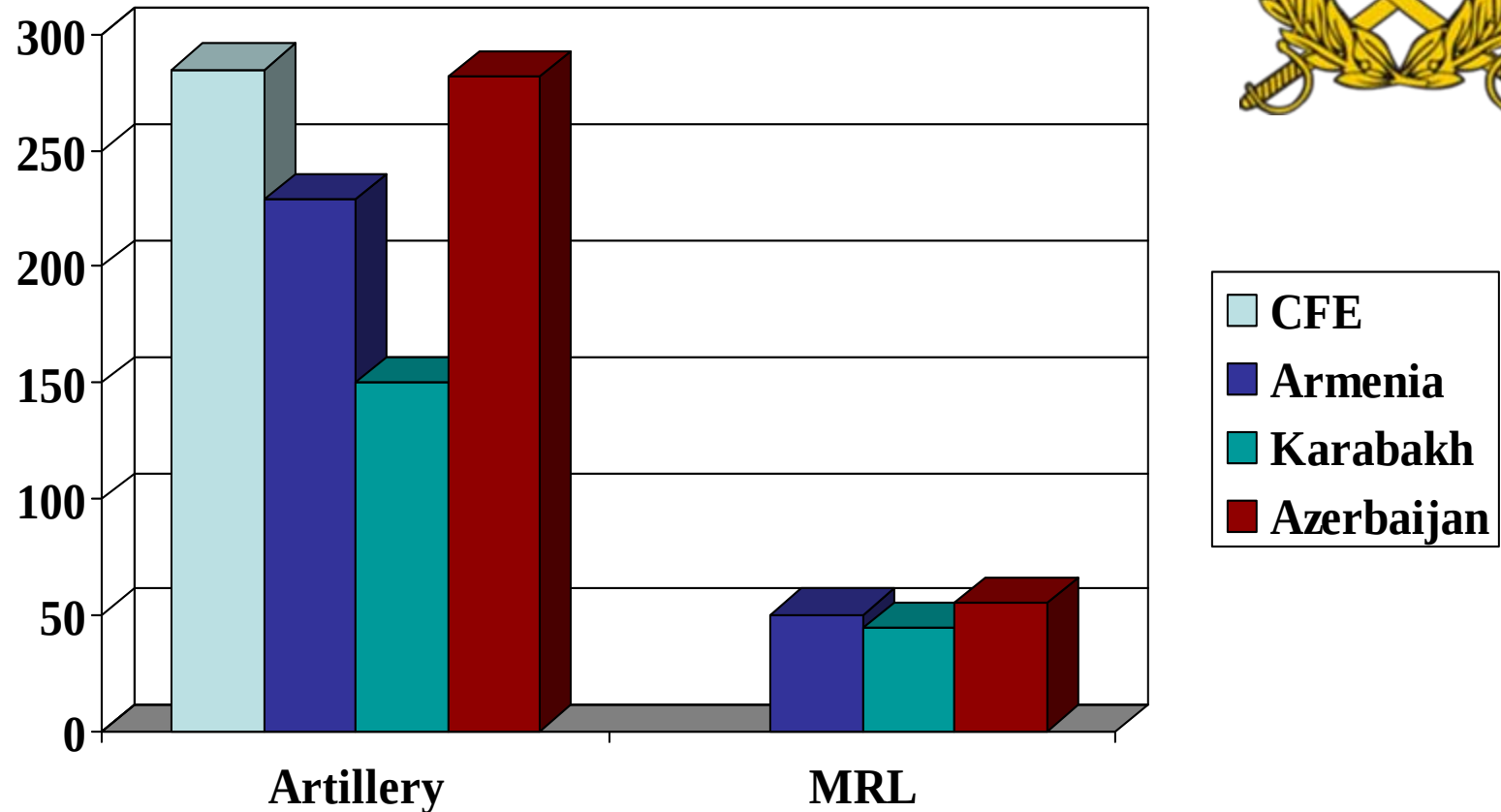
Armenia and Karabagh total approximately 65,000

Azerbaijani Armor

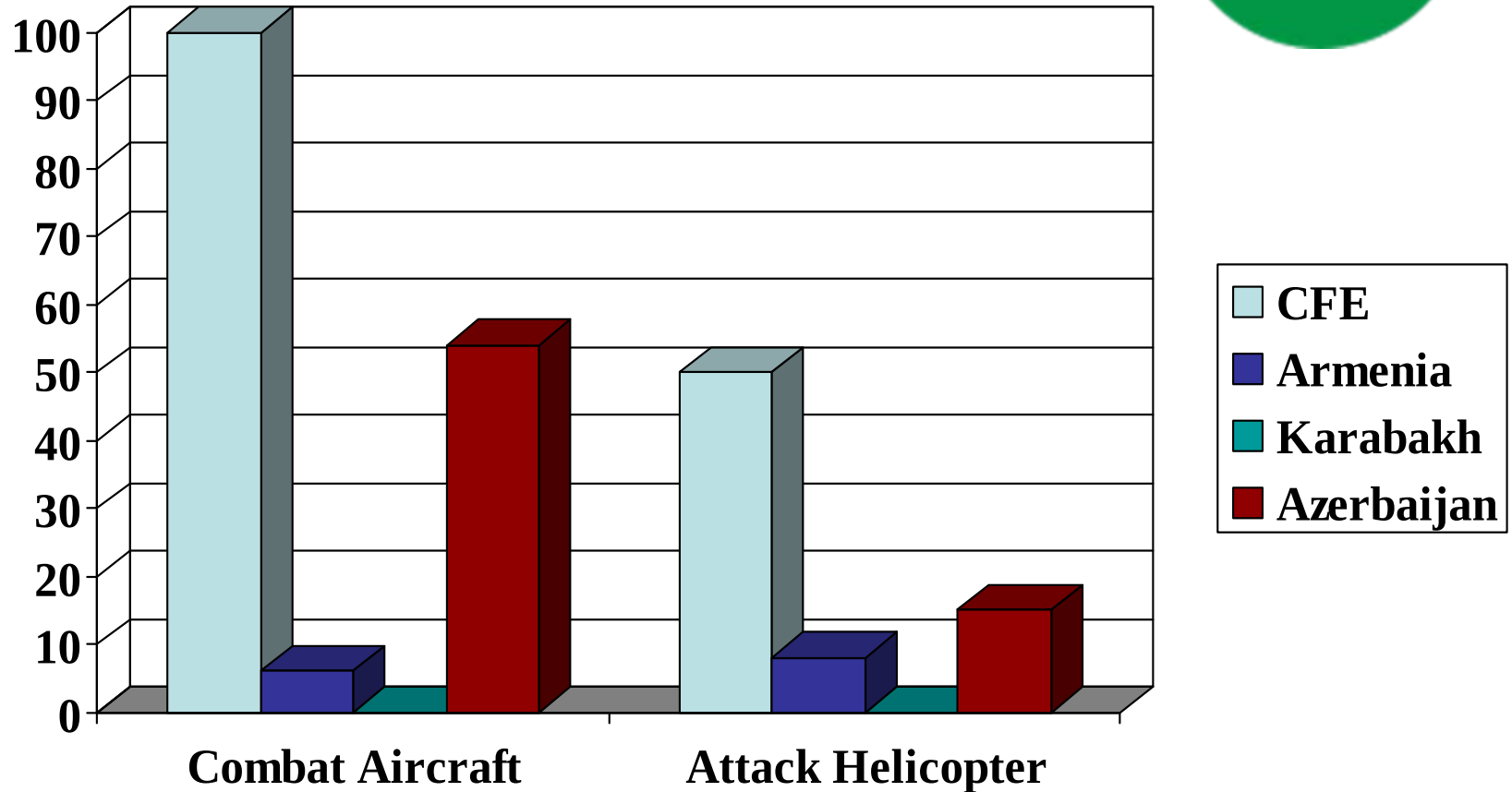


Armenia and Karabakh total approximately 200 tanks and 240 ACVs

Azerbaijani Artillery

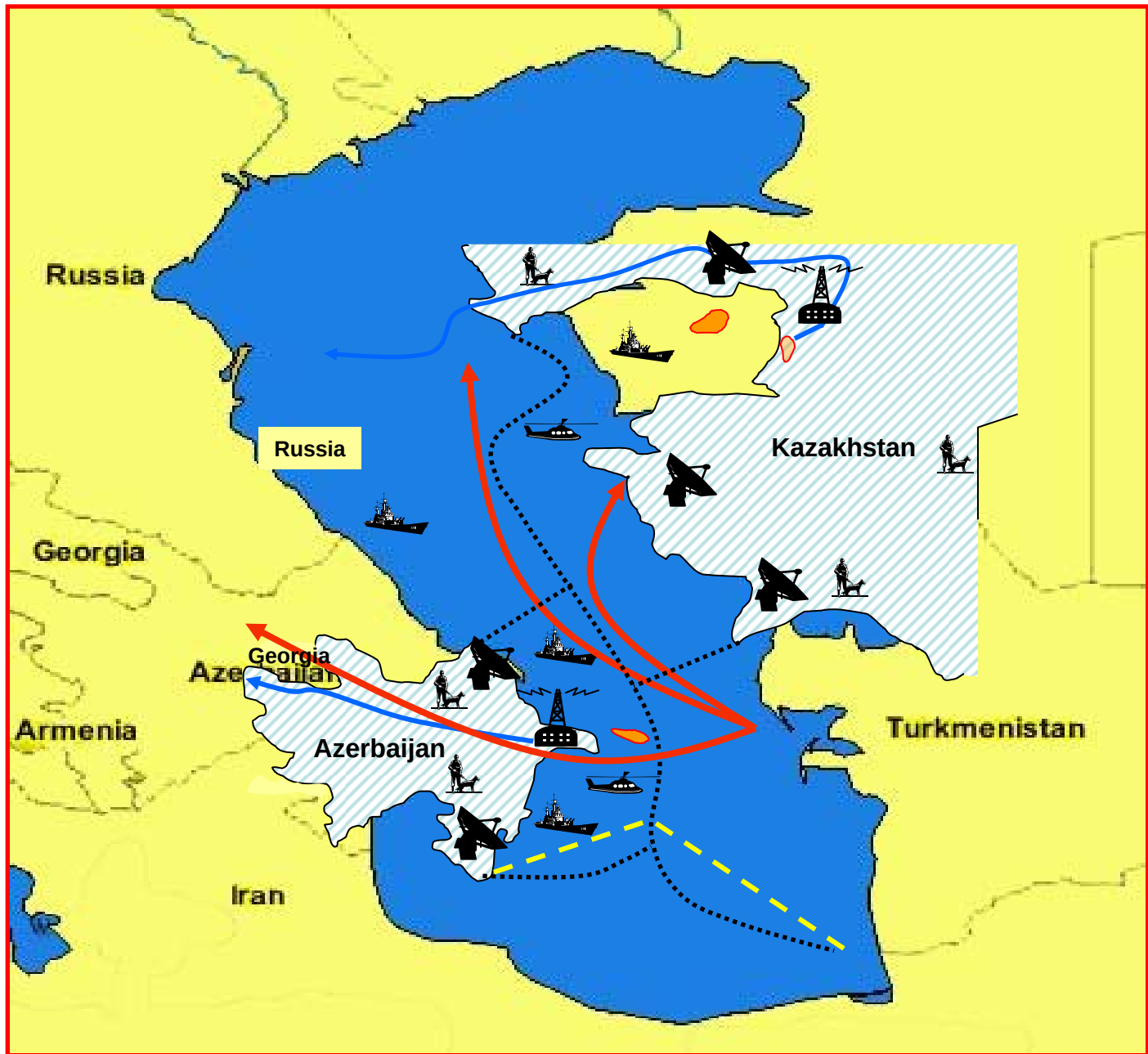


Azerbaijani Air Force



Azerbaijani Navy





General Operational Characteristics

- With the exception of Georgia, land-locked
 - Sea, air, road mix of transportation possible
 - Air is most responsive entry mode
- Poor infrastructure
 - Few adequate airfields - both physical characteristics & operational dimension
 - Few roads, questions of security, and only limited support infrastructure along the way
 - Poverty and low living standards outside of cities
- Question of government control
 - Protection of LOCs, logistics hubs, and troop concentrations

Implications of the Operational Environment

- Nature of regional threat environment and terrain favor small unit operations - low signature
 - Limited high-speed mobility
 - Limited long-range fires
- Terrain provides plenty of places to hide
- Tactical reconnaissance and intelligence key
 - Must be tied to good C3
- Air mobility & firepower essential for a reaction force

Common characteristics of military development

- Building from a **legacy Soviet force**
 - Tailored for large-scale conventional operations
 - Tactics and training continue to reflect Soviet focus
 - Stationing of forces weighted toward external Soviet borders
- Economic & political transition received priority
 - **Military generally low priority**
- States slowly adapting to new security environment
 - Hard to establish a political consensus
 - **Few trained or experienced cadre to support transition**
 - Difficulty recruiting & maintaining officers & developing NCO corps
 - **Doctrine & strategy remains generally Soviet**
 - Just beginning to adopt realistic national security strategies

Common characteristics of military development (2)

- Reform, restructuring, restationing, and retraining of the force is just beginning
 - Soviet equipment-base is now 10+ years older and poorly maintained
 - Programs are being generally discussed and selectively initiated to improve professionalization, readiness and combat capability
 - contract soldiers, NCO corps, improved pay - conscription remains base = ~70 percent enlisted troops
 - training academies and exposure to Western schools & techniques
 - Some force restructuring and restationing is ongoing
 - downsizing overall force
 - building smaller, lighter, and more mobile formations
- Few elite formations are combat capable and ready

Country specific characteristics

- All militaries are in transition, but where they are in the process differs dramatically
- Military professionalism and capability varies widely across the region
 - Azerbaijan- struggling w/professionalism, wide-scale corruption and readiness
 - Armenia is the most capable military in the Caucasus
 - Armenia can still militarily dominate its regional neighbors
 - Combat systems generally newer and better maintained
 - Limited air force capability - susceptible to airpower
- Limited experience w/US & NATO military tactics, techniques and procedures
 - Georgia & Azerbaijan are seeking to expand assistance links, i.e., PfP, Turkish and US training and assistance

Conclusion

- Weak, unpredictable Azerbaijani armed forces poses a different but serious threat
- Azerbaijan is the only threat to regional security
- Baku using military force for political ends
- Prepare for the unexpected, expect the worst- rising tension, more attacks
- Danger of “war by accident”