

Editor's Note

The current issue of the *Caucasus International* (CI) journal entitled “*Nuclear Security in the Caucasus and in the World*” is dedicated to the nuclear threats to the South Caucasus region, the evolving nuclear strategies of the World’s nuclear powers that have to certain extent an influence over the security of the South Caucasus region. While analyzing the nuclear aspects of the regional security, the authors also reflected their views on the impact of nuclear issues over the bilateral relations of these countries with other international/regional actors.

The issue starts with the article of **Ravan Mehdiyeva** titled “Nuclear Security of the South Caucasus” which analyzed the risk factors driving the region’s concerns about Metsamor, and examined the possible effects of an accident through comparison with Chernobyl. The issue continues with eleven more articles. **Licinia Simão’s** “Nuclear Security in the EU’s vicinity: Challenges of the Metsamor Nuclear Power Plant” analyzed the ways in which the EU’s previous experience using conditionality on nuclear issues with the Central and Eastern European countries can provide valuable insights on the lack of EU leverage over Armenia in this regard. **Nina Miholjic’s** “Russia-Armenia Nuclear Energy Cooperation and the Metsamor Power Plant” examined how Russian-Armenian nuclear cooperation influences regional security in the South Caucasus and entrenches Russian dominance in the region. **Elena Andreea Bordea’s** “EU public diplomacy and the Iran nuclear problem post-JCPOA” assessed the use of public diplomacy tools between the European Union and Iran after signing JCPOA. **Hamed Kazemzadeh’s** “Nuclear Deal and Iran-Azerbaijan Economic Ties” provided an overview of economic relation between Iran and Azerbaijan following the Nuclear Deal and discusses the prospects for high-level cooperation.

Azad Garibov's "The US's Post-9/11 Nuclear Strategy and its Security Implication for Russia" outlined the changes that were introduced in the US nuclear strategy by the Bush Administration after 9/11, explaining why and how they were perceived as security threats by Russia. **Heinz Gärtner's** "The Ban on Nuclear Weapons, Negative Security Assurances, and NATO States" analyzed the alternative proposals by the nuclear-armed states which could satisfy the non-nuclear weapon states, at least for the time being. **Hassan Beheshtipour's** "Relations between Iran and the EU in the Post-JCPOA Era" assessed the positive outcomes of the JCPOA on economic cooperation, along with the potential challenges in Iran-EU relations at the aftermath of the US's withdrawal [from the agreement] in the post-JCPOA era.

The journal also contains three commentaries regarding the recent political developments in Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia. **Farhad Mammadov's** "Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev Addresses New Messages Through His New Cabinet" delivers the post-election changes in Azerbaijan with implications for the future prospects of the country. **Amanda Paul's** "Armenia's "Velvet Revolution" The Next Chapter" tried to respond to the question of what is next for Armenia after the so-called "Velvet Revolution". **Aleksandre Kvakhadze's** "Georgia Before the Presidential Elections: The General Overview" narrated the latest intra-government changes in the Georgia's domestic politics. In addition, **Ayaz Rzayev's** "The EU's Ambiguous Stance on Separatism Lessons from Catalonia, Kosovo, and Nagorno-Karabakh" assesses whether the EU's stance on these issues has been consistent so far and whether the EU has, perhaps unintentionally, enabled separatist movements.

The current issue also includes a comprehensive review

of Alexandros Petersen’s “Eurasia’s Shifting Geopolitical Tectonic Plates: Global Perspective, Local Theaters” reviewed by **Polad Muradli**. The book reads about the geopolitical rivalries in the Eurasia continent. Last, but not least, the CI journal presents readers with reviews of recently published books on the South Caucasus countries, Soft Power and Security issues in the region, role of religion in the Central Asia and Caucasus, the EU’s policy on the Eastern neighborhood, Azerbaijan-Iran cooperation, role of identity in the foreign policy.

Finally, on behalf of the CI team, we hope this issue provides food for thought and contributes to and enriches the discussion.

Sincerely,

Javid Valiyev, Editor-in-Chief

Ilgar Gurbanov, Deputy Editor-in-Chief