

AMERICAN UNIVERSITY OF ARMENIA

**OPENING EMBASSIES AFTER CLOSING THE EMBASSY: POST- SOVIET
COUNTRIES' MOTIVES IN LATIN AMERICA**

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AGBU - Armenian General Benevolent Union

CIA – Central Intelligence Agency

CNA - Consejo Nacional Armenio

FARC - Fuerzas Armadas Revolucionarias de Colombia

LACB – Latin America and Caribbean Basin

NGO – Non-governmental organization

OAS - Organization of American States

OSCE – Organization of Security and Cooperation in Europe

RA – Republic of Armenia

RF – Russian Federation

SU- Soviet Union

USSR – Union of Soviet Socialist Republics

US- United States

UN - United Nations

UNSC - United Nations Security Council

ABSTRACT

Before 1991, the former Soviet Union (SU) had embassies in a number of Latin American countries. After the collapse, the former Soviet republics, now independent states, separately established diplomatic relations with the Latin American countries. However, only few of them, with the exception of Russia, opened embassies to formalize the relationship. The interests of SU and its successor Russian Federation (RF) have been subject to thorough analyses however such analyses of motives of other post-Soviet countries in Latin America don't exist yet.

With this in mind the immediate objective of this essay has been to assess the motives of post-Soviet countries behind opening embassies in South and Central America, to discuss the determinants of their respective policies towards Latin America, the objectives they pursue through their respective diplomatic representations with a special focus on Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh and the way it is reflected in their respective policies towards the countries of the region.

The essay provokes series of yet unanswered questions of how the embassies of SU were transformed into Russian ones, whether other countries were claiming for equal rights, etc. This might become a fertile ground for a future research. Additionally, the anti-Armenian lobbying by Azerbaijan in the region is gaining strong momentum threatening Armenia's standing in international arena hence the issue is of pivotal importance for Armenia that demands a special study.

INTRODUCTION

It is already more than twenty years since post-Soviet countries² have begun to open embassies in Latin America. With very different motives they managed to engage in political, economic, social and cultural life of the region and pursue their policies in accordance with their national interests. Table 1 shows the list of the embassies of post-Soviet countries' in Latin America.

Table 1: The list of the embassies of post-Soviet countries' in Latin America and years of their establishment.

	Armenia	Azerbaijan	Belarus	Estonia	Georgia	Kazakhstan	Kyrgyzstan	Latvia
Argentina	√ 1993	√ 2010	√ ----					
Belize								
Bolivia								
Brazil	√ 2011		√ 2010		√ 2010			
Chile								
Colombia								
Costa Rica								
Cuba		√ 2007	√ ----					
Dominican Republic								
Ecuador								
El Salvador								
Guyana								
Guatemala								
Haiti								
Honduras								
Jamaica								
Mexico		√ 2007						
Nicaragua								

²The study focuses on those post-Soviet countries that have opened embassies in Latin America. These include Russia, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine. Lithuania, which has one embassy in the region, as well as the rest of the post-Soviet countries which do not have any embassies are excluded.

Panama								
Paraguay								
Peru								
Saint Kitts and Navis								
Saint Lucia								
Suriname								
Uruguay								
Venezuela			√ 2007					

Table 1: Continuation

	Lithuania	Moldova	Russia	Tajikistan	Turkmenistan	Ukraine	Uzbekistan
Argentina	√		√ 1946			√ ----	
Belize							
Bolivia			√ 1945				
Brazil			√ 1961			√ 1995	
Chile			√ 1990				
Colombia			√ 1968				
Costa Rica			√ 1944				
Cuba			√ 1960			√ 1994	
Dominican Republic							
Ecuador			√ 1945				
El Salvador							
Guatemala			√ 1945				
Guyana			√ 1970				
Haiti							
Honduras							
Jamaica			√ 1975				
Mexico			√ 1942			√ ----	
Nicaragua			√ 1944				

Panama			√ 1991				
Paraguay			√ 1992				
Peru			√ 1969			√ ----	
Saint Kitts and Navis							
Saint Lucia							
Suriname							
Uruguay			√ 1943				
Venezuela			√ 1970				

Source: Based on publications of Ministries of Foreign Affairs of respective countries.

Russia's recent quest for influence throughout Latin America began in 1997 when Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov began to revive Russia's standing in Latin America as a global power. Since then Russia's goals have remained remarkably consistent, as have the instruments of its policy: trade, arms sales and political support for governments in order to contain United States' (US) preponderant influence.

The relations of Armenia with Latin America and Caribbean Basin (LACB) countries have been active since the first communities arose in the region in the early twentieth century, as a result of flow of immigrants who had survived the Armenian Genocide. In the beginning of 90s, when the geopolitical and geostrategic map of the Caucasus wasn't well formed yet and Turkey in concert with Azerbaijan put Armenia in a situation of blockade, the creation of diplomatic relations with different countries was of vital importance for Armenia. Latin America with its powerful Armenian communities provided new horizons and new opportunities to Armenia for successful cooperation.

Beginning with the last decade Azerbaijan, with no any previous interests in terms of trade, cooperation, etc. and without any Diaspora in the region, began to create diplomatic institutions both in Central and South American countries. The primary aim of establishing diplomatic relations serves the creation of a counterweight to the Armenian lobby in the region, the presentation of Baku's standpoint regarding Khodjalu massacres and via representation of falsified facts the fight of the efforts towards recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh's independence and Armenian Genocide.

Strengthening multifaceted relations with Latin American states and the region's major integration associations is in line with long-term interests of Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine. Latin America is important for these countries as one of the springboards for integration into the world trade and economic networks.

The comparative approach is used to address post-Soviet countries' motives both in South and Central Americas. The weakness of Latin American Studies in the post-Soviet countries, the lack of connections between the two academic worlds, as well as the absence of any kind of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, which makes access to some important governmental decrees and state adopted reports unavailable to Armenia, poses significant challenges to the work.

The first chapter of the essay analyzes the relations of SU with Latin American countries, thus preparing ground for the second chapter, which discusses the Russian motives in LACB. The third and fourth chapters proceed, exploring Armenian and Azerbaijani relations with Latin America respectively, giving an idea of their motives in the region. The last chapter reveals the interests of Georgia, Ukraine and Belarus in Latin America.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The study proposes the following research questions:

Research question 1: What were the motives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia in opening embassies in Latin American countries after the fall of the Soviet Union?

Research question 2: What objectives do they pursue through their diplomatic representations?

Research question 3: How the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict is reflected in their respective diplomacies in Latin America?

METHODOLOGY

This study can be viewed both as descriptive and exploratory. The methodology developed for this study is driven largely by the objective of revealing the motives that Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia had when deciding to open embassies in one or more Latin American countries. The investigative task looks also at the objectives the diplomacies of each of these countries have implemented in the same region with a special focus on the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict and the way it is reflected in their respective relationships with Latin American countries.

The methodology of the study consists of a critical inquiry to both primary and secondary data. Primary sources include official documents of Foreign Ministries' reports, international agreements and other texts. Secondary sources include books, researches, journal articles, press releases, and in-depth interviews with key players such as former Ambassadors.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Since the very creation of SU its relations with LACB and the motives behind maintaining those relations have always been the concern of Soviet as well as US and European analysts. An extensive literature exists on the relations of the Soviet Union and Russian Federation (RF) with Latin America and their mutual multidimensional interests. However there is limited literature on post-soviet countries' foreign policy towards Latin America.

Following World War II, and especially after the Central Intelligence Agency (CIA)-funded overthrow of Jacobo Arbenz in Guatemala in 1954 and the Cuban alignment with Union of Soviet Socialist Republics (USSR) in the beginning of 60s, the role of Moscow in Latin America became more active than before. According to Blasier and Vacs, the interest of Latin American governments to establish and maintain diplomatic ties with USSR was mainly derived from their desire of diversifying the character of their international relations, improving their relative position in international arena and effectively inserting themselves in it.³

The Soviet presence and purposes in Latin America were a matter of great controversy. Nicola Miller's work demonstrates that the existing heavily 'geo-political' accounts distort the real nature of Soviet activity in the area, closely constrained by local political, social and geographical factors. In his book *Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959-1987*, Miller argues that American counter-influence apart, enormous physical and communicational barriers obstruct

³ Blasier, C. and C. A. Vacs, "América Latina frente a la Unión Soviética", *Foro Internacional*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (94), 1983, pp. 199-211

Soviet-Latin American relations and that the lack of economic complementarity imposes a natural obstacle to trading growth.⁴

With the end of the Cold War, major changes occurred in Latin America. With Prime Minister Vladimir Putin's visits to Latin America in 2008, the first concrete steps were made in laying the cornerstone of a new geopolitical order based on multilateral values.

Analyzing the motives of Russia in South America, Stephan Blank states, that Russia's involvement in Latin America reflects its long-term aspirations to assert itself as a global power. It is a geopolitical approach, directed against US with an economic component rather than an economic approach to foreign policy with strategic objectives. Blank asserts that the only way in which Russian policy truly threatens the US and Latin America is its military and intelligence support for Chávez and other similar leaders which help insurgents and drug traffickers of Colombia to destabilize pro-American regimes while strengthening Chávez and his allies.⁵ In line with Russia's desire to strengthen its stand in international arena via acquiring the already strong support of Latin American states, there is also a coincidence of goals in the foreign policy, which include the formation of a new polycentric international system and the deepening of integration processes on the regional level.⁶

During the recent decade Azerbaijan has been actively trying to expand its focus on Latin American region. Since mid-2000s three Azerbaijani embassies have been opened in Latin America: In Mexico, Argentina and Cuba.⁷ During an interview, Mammad Ahmadzada, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic stated that since Ilham Aliyev has an aim

⁴ Miller, N., "Soviet Relations with Latin America, 1959-1987", Cambridge, Cambridge University Press, 1989, 22-30

⁵ Stephan Blank, "Russia in Latin America: Geopolitical Games in the US' Neighborhood," IFRI Paper, *Russie.Nei. Visions*, No. 38, 2009, pp. 1-26

⁶ Yuri Paniev, "Russia Turning On Latin America", *Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations* – v.1 n.1, Jan/Jun.2012, p. 41

⁷ Bilateral Relations of Azerbaijan. Retrieved on 24 June, 2012, from <http://mfa.gov.az/>

at strengthening country's international standing, Azerbaijan views its ties with Argentina as offering enormous opportunities for greater cooperation in many fields, and considers this country as a gateway to the whole South American region. There is a solid foundation for political dialogue between Azerbaijan and Argentina. The principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are considered by Azerbaijan to be the basis for the development of the relations between the two countries. The embassy is planning to continue the public diplomacy to promote "Azerbaijani reality", including the position of Baku regarding the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.⁸ Later Elmar Mammadyarov during one of his interviews has clearly emphasized that Baku has an aim at ending what is viewed as "an aggressive policy by Armenia" there and to expand economic ties with the countries of the region⁹.

As for Armenia, the relations of it with Latin America have always been warm with no any turbulence. Strong, organized and active Armenian communities exist in Argentina, Brazil, Uruguay and Mexico.¹⁰ In line with the issue of the recognition of Armenian Genocide, the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has found its reflection in the policies of Latin America towards both Armenia and Azerbaijan. According to the official documents of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, the majority of the countries in the region claim that the conflict should be resolved in the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group in a peaceful way through negotiations.¹¹ According to Heritage Party member Stepan Safarian, countries of Latin America are potential countries which can recognize Nagorno-Karabakh's independence since there are

⁸ An Interview with MammadAhmadzadaAmbassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic. Retrieved on June 20, 2012 from <http://ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/vol3no23/20110129033600828.html>

⁹ All of Actions of Khojaly in US were productive. Retrieved on June 20, 2012 from <http://www.news.az/articles/politics/55778>

¹⁰ Zubelzu, G., "Argentina: Policy and Business in Central Asia. Why there?" Marco Polo Magazine, ed. Marco Polo Institute, Venecia, Italia, 2002, pp.31-38

¹¹ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 140, 229, 332

no geopolitical constraints for them.¹² The notorious fact is that in 2009, the Uruguayan Foreign Minister Luis Almagro, expressed his positive attitude towards the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh and its possible reunification with Armenia.¹³

MULTIDIMENSIONAL RELATIONS OF SOVIET UNION WITH LATIN AMERICA

Diplomatic Relations

Soviet-Latin American diplomatic relations date back to 1923, to the immediate aftermath of the creation of USSR.

Supported by many trade union leaders and the part of the national bourgeoisie the movement of solidarity with the Soviet Union took a considerable extent in Latin American region. In face of Soviet Russia working masses of Latin American countries saw an example of a struggle for national independence¹⁴. In June 25, 1924, the Argentine newspaper *La Nación* published an interview with the People's Commissary for Foreign Affairs G. V. Chicherin:

"We would be very pleased - said Chicherin in the interview- with the resumption of relations with Argentina and with all countries of South America. Initiatives from any South American country in this direction would receive mutual understanding and support on our part."¹⁵

From both Soviet's and Latin American standpoint the relations that several countries of the region established with the USSR appeared to have promising prospects in certain levels of

¹² An interview was conducted with the Heritage Party member Stepan Safaryan by the author on June 11, 2012.

¹³ Uruguay May Recognize Nagorno-Karabagh Republic. Retrieved on June 19, 2012, from <http://www.armenianweekly.com/2011/09/09/uruguay-may-recognize-nagorno-karabakh-republic/>

¹⁴ USSR History Archive | Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 8, p. 77

¹⁵ Ibid. vol. 7, p. 391.

development. At the same time, however, some aspects of these bilateral relations were problematic and difficult to resolve in the framework of existing relationship between the parts.

Mexico was the first country to step on the path of establishing diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union and diversify the range of its international relations. Negotiations between two countries began in summer 1923, when a special Soviet envoy Krestinsky¹⁶ met the Mexican Ambassador in Germany, Del Castillo, in Berlin.¹⁷ Diplomatic relations were established but by the end of the decade a number of problems arising between the Mexican government and the local Soviet-oriented communists determined the already deteriorated climate of the relations and eventually these were broken in 1930. The relations were reinitiated only in 1943 and remained stable, despite some minor incidents, until the collapse of the SU.¹⁸

The second country to establish formal diplomatic relations with USSR was Uruguay. Exchange of telegrams on the subject was held on 21-22 August 1926. The creation of Soviet-Uruguayan diplomatic ties contributed greatly to the development of trade relations between two countries. In December 1935, however, the Uruguayan government suspended the relations.¹⁹

A great interest in establishing political and economic ties with the Soviet Union has also shown Argentina. Through their foreign diplomatic representatives the Soviet and Argentine Governments have repeatedly confirmed the readiness to take practical steps in establishment of diplomatic relations. However, the parliamentary committee for foreign affairs of Argentina

¹⁶ N. N. Krestinsky was a Russian Bolshevik revolutionary, a Soviet politician, Responsible Secretary of the Russian Communist Party.

¹⁷ USSR History Archive | Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 6, p. 478.

¹⁸ Gromyko, A., History of Foreign Policy of USSR in 1917-1980: USSR and Latin American Countries, (Istoriya Vneshney Politiki SSSR 1917-1980: SSSR I Strani Latinskoy Ameriki, Russian: История внешней политики СССР 1917-1980 гг: СССР и страны Латинской Америки)

¹⁹ USSR History Archive | Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 7, p. 391.

announced steps "premature". The reasons for this policy of Argentina were frankly explained by Argentine Charge d'Affaire in Berlin:

"In this regard, Argentina, - he said – doesn't take an independent position, and will follow in the footsteps of North American United States".²⁰

The diplomatic relations were reestablished in 1946, a few days after President Peron came to power. Relations have remained uninterrupted since then. In fact, the Islas Malvinas/Falkland Islands' conflict, during which the Soviet's friendly attitude contrasted with pro-British position of the United States, promoted further rapprochement of two nations.

Brazil established diplomatic relations with USSR in 1945 as a result of the participation of both countries in the fight against the Axis, but cut them in 1947 after a series of incidents. They were resumed only in 1961 during Goulart's ²¹ government and have remained stable during the years of military regime, emerged from the 1964 coup²². Brazilian foreign policy had been showing signs of increasing independence from the United States and the realignment of its international position had resulted in closer ties with USSR and socialist countries than it would have been reasonable to expect given the political characteristics of the military regime.

Concerning Cuba, although Soviet Union recognized Castro's government on January 11, 1959, it did not establish formal governmental contact until February 1960, when Politburo member Anastas Mikoyan²³ visited Havana. During that same year Cuba and Soviet Union exchanged ambassadors and Castro gained Soviet and Czechoslovak agreement to provide arms

²⁰ USSR History Archive | Soviet Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 8, p. 119.

²¹ João Belchior Marques Goulart was a Brazilian politician and the 24th President of Brazil until a military coup d'état deposed him on April 1, 1964.

²² Blasier C. and A. C. Vacs, *América Latina frente a la Unión Soviética*, Foro Internacional, Vol. 24, No. 2 (94), 1983, pp. 199-211

²³ Anastas Mikoyan was an an Old Bolshevik and Soviet statesman, a member Politburo ceaselessly during Stalin's, Khrushchev's and Brezhnev's era.

to resist an expected U.S. - supported invasion.²⁴ In responding to Cuban overtures during the winter of 1959-1960, Soviet Union selected trade as an effective means of assisting Castro's government without unduly provoking United States. According to Evanson, USSR employed trade to strengthen Cuba's growing independence in a manner that was relatively safe politically. It also appears that Soviet leaders were attracted principally by the prospect of an independent, nationalistic regime in Havana, rather than by Castro's policies of domestic development. They also may have been impressed by the incorporation of Communists into his regime.²⁵

Venezuela has also used its relations with Soviet Union as an instrument of diversification of its international policy. These relationships have been essential not only as means to balance the U.S. influence, but also as an important aspect of efforts to transform the powerful Venezuelan economy into means to achieve a leading position among Latin American countries and the Third World. In this sense, the opening of stable communication channels with USSR was a necessary condition to ensure the possibility of a foothold in the proposed role.²⁶

Peru and Bolivia during the stages of populist governments' predominance also tried and, to some extent, succeeded in strengthening their relations with SU, in order to balance the preponderant position of the United States and counteract the economic pressures they endured.

Countries with revolutionary governments like Nicaragua, Grenada, Guyana and Suriname maintained cordial relations with Soviet Union that didn't necessarily depend on the political and ideological sympathies, but primarily from the need to neutralize U.S. pressure and to have a political support.

²⁴ Gonzalez, E. "Castro's Revolution, Cuban Communist Appeals, and the Soviet Response." *World Politics* 21, 4 (October), 1968, 39-68.

²⁵ Evanson K. R, "Soviet Political Uses of Trade with Latin America", *Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs*, Vol. 27, No. 2 (Summer, 1985), Center for Latin American Studies at the University of Miami, pp. 99-126.

²⁶ Blasier, C. and C. A. Vacs, "América Latina frente a la Unión Soviética", *Foro Internacional*, Vol. 24, No. 2 (94), 1983, pp. 199-211

The vast majority of Latin American countries maintained diplomatic relations with USSR with exception of Chile, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Guatemala, Panama and Paraguay.²⁷ In four of the cases mentioned Chile, El Salvador, Guatemala and Paraguay showed disinterest in establishing relations and hostility towards ideological - political type of the SU. Besides, these countries could obtain very few economic advantages through the maintenance of trade and economic relations with it.

The interest of Latin American governments to establish and maintain diplomatic ties with USSR was mainly derived from their desire of diversifying the character of international relations, improving their relative position in international arena and effectively inserting themselves therein. Since the US was the only great power in the hemisphere and was exercising its preponderant influence over the countries in the region, Latin American states have been motivated not only to try to form common fronts, but also to try developing extra-hemispheric relations aimed at balancing the situation.²⁸ Establishing relations with Soviet Union, which was a rival superpower to United States, represented an obvious alternative, designed at braking current and potential US hegemonic tendencies. However, such evaluation did not necessarily imply that Latin American governments were pro-Soviet, in fact, the vast majority of the countries viewed distrust towards Soviet intentions at the international level, disapproving also the activities of local Communist parties, whose relations with the USSR and their strategies and tactics seemed objectionable.

²⁷ Soviet Union: Diplomatic Relations, Retrieved on 24 March, 2012 from <http://www.country-data.com/cgi-bin/query/r-12669.html>

²⁸ Other industrial powers such as Germany, France, Britain and Japan, were closely linked to the United States by economic, political and military ties, and in this sense, relations with them were inadequate to fulfill the function of effective counterweighing

But even so, the relations with the Soviet Union were considered to provide a right to deploy an independent foreign policy, serving to national interests and acquirement of more room for maneuvering. Last but not least, relations with the Soviets in most cases lead to beneficial economic exchanges.

Trade

Although the relations between the majority of Latin American countries and the Soviet Union hadn't been established, the latter was maintaining fairly extensive trade relations with number of countries in the region. Until the end of 1927 trade operations in South America were conducted by the South American branch of the Amtorg Trading Corporation²⁹. At the end of 1927 however the "Yuzhamtorg" Corporation was formed in Buenos Aires³⁰, which managed to build trust in Latin America and contributed to the development of trade relations between SU and the countries of the region.

Assessing the importance of Soviet economic activities in Latin America, prior to 1960s, trade with Soviets was quite modest, although Soviet initiatives in the Third World resulted in significant increases in trade later, with Peron's Argentina in the mid-1950s and with Brazil in 1959.³¹ The big breakthrough came after the Cuban revolution, when the USSR began to fill the gap created by the loss of US markets for Cuban sugar and other products. Since that time the number of Soviet trading partners in Latin America has grown steadily. The Soviet Union was

²⁹ Amtorg Trading Corporation, also known simply as Amtorg, was the first Soviet trade representation in the United States, to serve as buying and selling organization in trade between the USSR and the USA. From Russian: "Амторг".

³⁰ Yuzhamtorg (South American trade) was a joint stock company. From Russian: "Южамторг".

³¹ Evanson, K. R., Soviet Economic and Military Trade in Latin America: An Assessment, World Affairs, Vol. 149, No. 2, 1986, pp. 77

regularly exchanging goods with Mexico, Costa Rica, Nicaragua, Guatemala and Honduras. It was also trading regularly with Cuba, Jamaica, the Dominican Republic, and Trinidad and Tobago, and carrying out at least irregular trade with a number of the smaller island states of the Caribbean³².

Latin America's share of Soviet Third World imports was high because of large imports of Argentine grain. The Soviet Union had become the largest buyer of Uruguay's wool, and copper from Chile.³³ As Soviet Union's main grain supplier, Argentina was its most significant import partner in the Third World in 1980, 1981, and 1983, while other countries such as Brazil, Peru and Uruguay increased their sales prospects which so far had been representing a small proportion of total exports. However, because of \$11 billion trade deficit with Argentina that Soviet Union had amassed from 1980 to 1985 and the successful Soviet harvest of 1986, the Soviet Union cut its grain imports from Argentina drastically³⁴.

Castro's Cuba has been perhaps the clearest beneficiary of Soviet trade designed for political ends. Late in 1959 Castro apparently decided to break sharply with the United States and court support of the Soviet bloc. He intensified his anti- US rhetoric and improved relations with Cuban Communists, who, in turn, pressed the USSR for active support of the Revolution.³⁵ Mikoyan's trip to Havana in 1959 resulted in a trade agreement in which USSR pledged purchases of 5 million tons of Cuban sugar over a five-year period and granted \$100 million in

³² Evanson, K. R., *Soviet Economic and Military Trade in Latin America: An Assessment*, World Affairs, Vol. 149, No. 2, 1986, pp.80

³³ Latin America: Economic Overview, to the 1960s Retrieved on 26 February, 2012 from <http://www.fsmitha.com/h2/ch24v.html>

³⁴ Mark N. Katz, "The Soviet Union And The Third World", *Current History*, 1986, 1-5

³⁵ Baklanoff, E., "International Economic Relations", in C. Mesa-Lago(ed.) *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*. Pittsburgh, P A: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971, p p. 251-276

credit for acquisition of Soviet machinery and industrial materials.³⁶ In return for this assistance, SU gained a strategic base, a military and political proxy in the Third World, and a model of Latin American independence from the United States.³⁷

Once Soviet Union determined it would assist the survival of Castro's regime, the US-sponsored trade embargo drove the cost ever higher and made trade the principal instrument of support. Soviet bloc countries, and particularly the USSR itself, became the major Cuban trading partners, while US trade declined from 70% of Cuban trade in 1958 to zero after 1963.³⁸ Table 2 presents in alphabetical order the USSR's thirteen largest Latin American trading partners in 1985.

Table 2: The USSR's Largest Trading Partners in Latin America, 1985

Country	Imports from USSR Exports to USSR (in millions of dollars)	Exports to USSR Exports to USSR (in millions of dollars)
Argentina	35 ^a	1330 ^a
Bolivia	4	10
Brazil	91	495
Colombia	4	21
Costa Rica	0	7
Cuba	6,448	5,374
Dominican Republic	0	8
Ecuador	1	8
Jamaica	3	31
Mexico	7	7
Nicaragua	39	10

³⁶ Blasier, C. "The Elimination of United States Influence," pp. 43-80 in C. Mesa-Lago(ed.) *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*. Pittsburgh, P A: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971, pp. 59-60.

³⁷ Goure, L. and J. Weinkle, "Soviet-Cuban Relations: The Growing Integration" in J. Suchlicki (ed.) *Cuba, Castro and Revolution*. Coral Gables, FL: University of Miami. 1972, pp. 162-165,

³⁸ Baklanoff, E., "International Economic Relations", in C. Mesa-Lago (ed.) *Revolutionary Change in Cuba*. Pittsburgh, P A: University of Pittsburgh Press, 1971, p.259

Peru	2	8
Uruguay	25	64

Sources: International Monetary Fund, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook 1985 (New York: IMF, 1985); U.S. Department of State, 1987.

^aFigures were given in Cuban pesos and converted to U.S. dollars at the official conversion rate as of September 1985.

The principal Soviet economic goals in Latin America were to buy certain metals, food stuffs, and other consumer items, and to expand the sales of their own products, particularly manufactures, in local markets. The Soviets seldom had trouble in finding sellers because Latin Americans needed to export as much as possible.

The reason why the Soviet contribution to economic development of Latin America has to some extent been limited is that the economic relations between the parties have only begun to expand in the last decades of the existence of the USSR, despite the Soviet interest in promoting them much earlier, at least in regard to countries of big importance in the region. However it is necessary to stress that the political aspect continued to have considerable weight in an economic context. Trade helped SU to establish a permanent presence, both economically and politically. Soviet economic assistance has been crucial to the financial and political survival of Marxist-Leninist regimes in the region. But from the viewpoint of Soviet contribution to development of Latin America, the relations with SU were representing positive aspects in terms of expanding export opportunities, diversifying market placements and providing greater ability to negotiate in international market³⁹.

³⁹ Cole Blasier and Aldo C. Vacs, América Latina frente a la Unión Soviética, Foro Internacional, Vol. 24, No. 2 (94), 1983, pp. 204-208

Political and economic goals almost always happen to be intertwined in every state's foreign policies, and Soviet behavior in Latin America was of no difference. However, the trade relations with some countries had clearly been guided primarily by economic motives and would persisted regardless of the political implications. Mexico would appear to fall in this category, since Soviet-Mexican diplomatic relations already were quite good.⁴⁰ Trade breakthroughs often have followed political shifts in Latin American states' foreign and domestic policies. In many cases, the USSR had launched a trade initiative at least partly for political reasons, but the relationship has evolved into one of simple economic benefit.

Soviet's Involvement in Domestic Affairs of Latin American Countries

Another important aspect in the existence or absence of relations of Latin America with the SU is the latter's contributing factor in ensuring or threatening the stability of political regimes in several Latin American countries.

In addition to aiding Soviet efforts to establish a long-term presence in Latin America, trade has also been used to lend political, economic, and military support to Latin American governments. Soviet Union's and its Cuban and East European allies' vital economic, military, and organizational support for the Sandinista regime in Managua is a proof of aforesaid.

Arm shipments were an important part of Soviet trade with Latin America, which grew from \$0.6 billion in 1973-1976 to \$2.1 billion in 1977-1980 and \$3.6 billion in 1981-1984.⁴¹ Unlike economic trade, however, Soviet military trade was basically confined to only few countries: Cuba, Nicaragua, and Peru. The Soviets have been selling weapons to these three

⁴⁰ Chernomoskaya, L. "Latin America and the Socialist World: Economic Ties" International Affairs, Moscow 1973, June 6, 68-71.

⁴¹ ACDA (U.S. Arm Control and Disarmament Agency). Occasional reports. World Military Expenditures and Arms Transfers. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Arms Control and Disarmament Agency, 1979-1985. p.44.

countries, training military personnel in USSR and stationing military advisers in Cuba, Nicaragua and Peru for training and equipment maintenance.⁴² Table 2 shows the amounts of Soviet military support to three Latin American countries: Cuba, Nicaragua and Peru.

Table 3: Soviet military support to Latin America.

	Cuba	Nicaragua	Peru
Tonnage of arms shipped from USSR:	68,000 metric tons (1982)	11,000 metric tons (1983)	Unknown
Soviet advisors:	2,500 military 6-8,000 civilian	100 military 3-3,500 Cuban military 9,000 Cuban civilian	150 military 200 civilian (family included)
Type of Soviet equipment supplied:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small arms - Tanks - Armored vehicles - Field artillery - Rocket launchers -Surface-to-air missiles - Koni type frigates - Attack submarines - Amphibious landing craft - Torpedo boats - Attack boats - Naval combat and surveillance aircraft - MIG jets - Helicopters -Troop transport aircraft -Other support equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Small arms - Tanks - Armored vehicles - Field artillery - Rocket launchers - Anti-tank guns - Mortars - Patrol boats - Landing crafts - Helicopters -Troop transport aircraft -Other support equipment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> -Tanks - SU-22 aircraft Helicopters -Other support equipment

⁴² Dominguez, Jorge I. 1986. U.S., Soviet, and Cuban Policies Toward Latin America. In East West Tensions in the Near East, ed. by Marshall D. Shulman. New York: W. W. Norton and Co., p.73.

Source: DOD Annual reports. 1985-1987. Soviet Military Power. 4th, 5th, and 6th eds. Washington, D. C: U.S. Department of Defense.

Soviets' foreign policy had two aspects: the formal or governmental relations, maintained on a state-to-state level, and the informal or extra-governmental relations maintained by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union with fraternal parties in different countries. Soviets had long time aspirations to establish socialist governments, preferably of Marxist-Leninist orientation worldwide, including Latin America, but the appropriate methods to achieve this objective have been varying according to the circumstances in each country.⁴³

In small countries, with strong communist parties and revolutionary movements where the possibility of armed struggle existed, the USSR's support to overthrow dictatorial regimes and establish revolutionary governments was big. This relates to Nicaragua, where there was a political and moral support to Sandinista movement.⁴⁴ The Soviet Union had a number of intergovernmental agreements with Sandinista government offering trade, loans and economic and technical assistance. Tanks, planes, artillery and other weaponry Nicaraguan armed forces had, were obtained from Soviet Union through Cuba. In fact, the Soviet influence in Central America was mainly indirect. Without the support of the USSR it would have been difficult for Cuba to act in Nicaragua, and without the support of Cuba difficulties might have for Nicaragua in supporting the rebels in El Salvador.⁴⁵ In this regard the Soviet Union played a destabilizing role in Central America. At another level, the Soviet Union was eager to establish diplomatic and economic relations with those countries who tended to distance themselves from the United

⁴³ Hidalgo,N.,“Soviet Military Assistance to Latin America”,USAF, p.101

⁴⁴ Edelman, M.,“Lifelines: Nicaragua and the socialist countries. Nacla Report on the Americas, 19(3)(May/June), 1985, pp.33-53.

⁴⁵ English, D., “We are Sandinistas: conversations with Nicaragua's embattled leaders”, Mother Jones, August/September 1985, pp.22-29.

States.⁴⁶ From this point of view one can say that Soviets' alignment with these countries was beneficial for them in terms of internal political stability and economic well-being, albeit being costly for the USSR.

As it is seen from aforesaid, the establishment of diplomatic relations with Latin American countries was rather difficult, it became easier only after WWII for obvious reasons; Latin American countries were not enthusiastic with the 1917 Revolution and Communism in 1920s and 1930s.

An important aspect in relations of the Soviet Union with Latin American governments was related to the idea that the existence or inexistence of consistent links between these two might have been to some extent a guarantee for stability or might have represented a factor of instability on domestic level. But even so, relations with the Soviet Union were considered to provide the region more room for maneuvering and a right to deploy an independent foreign policy, serving at national interests. Last but not least, relations with the Soviets in most cases lead to beneficial economic exchanges. However, willingness of establishment of diplomatic relations and development of trade and economic relations didn't necessarily depend on the political and ideological sympathies, but primarily from the need to neutralize U.S. pressure, to have political support, and to strengthen the stands of both parts in international market.

The value of establishment of diplomatic relations with the USSR for Latin American countries was primarily related to the diversification of policies at the international level, expansion of maneuverability abilities and provision of platform for counterbalancing U.S.' presence in the region. Soviet Union on its turn succeeded to establish itself as a decision making

⁴⁶ These countries include Mexico, Venezuela, Peru, Brazil and Argentina.

body in the region via economic and military assistance thus counterbalancing U.S.' influential presence.

RUSSIA'S NEW TURN IN LATIN AMERICA

With the collapse of the SU, RF's presence in South America entered into a low – influence phase. The change of geopolitical situation in connection with the ending of the era of confrontation was reflected in the termination of the support that SU had been giving to the revolutionary guerrilla movements, communist and workers' parties of Latin America, as well as the exclusion of Cuba from the number of privileged allies of Russia led to a significant weakening of latter's foreign policy's Latin American direction.

However in 1997 Russian Prime Minister Yevgeny Primakov began to revive Russia's stand in Latin America as a global power.⁴⁷ But because of the economic crisis which has reduced Russia's and Latin American states' capabilities for joint action, the scope of Russia's preponderance in Latin America now is somewhat diminished compared to early 2000s' grandiose perspectives. As a result of the collapse of the state sector of Latin American countries' economy and the termination of centralized exports from Russia a weakening of trade and economic ties has occurred.⁴⁸ Thus, the *modus operandi* of Russian - Latin American relations has undergone a serious testing.

Geographical remoteness of Latin America from Russia, serious economic difficulties experienced by both, as well as the weakness of socio-political base of the Russian policy in

⁴⁷ Vladimir A. Mihailov, "Russia and Latin American Countries", in *Geopolitics*, Russian Academy of State Service, Moscow, 2010, pp. 290-315 (in Russian)

⁴⁸ Dmitry G. Maslov, "Integration of Developing Countries of South America", in *World Economy*, Perm State University Press, Perm, 2004, pp.85-93 (in Russian)

Latin America contributed to the change of Russia's active foreign policy towards the latter. That change was expressed in the refusal to participate actively in the affairs of the region, particularly in Central America and the Caribbean vis-à-vis the revision of the concept of "strategic importance" of Latin America for the SU.⁴⁹

Despite of the weakening of interest towards each other and the uncontrolled collapse of the old system of Russian-Latin American relations, Moscow, as a whole, managed to keep the main prerequisite for later revival and further development of the legal framework for cooperation. This refers to Russian diplomatic missions in Latin America, the number of which irrespective of aforementioned circumstances extended. All the Soviet embassies were transformed into Russian embassies. So if at the time of the collapse of the SU diplomatic relations with the exchange of embassies were established with only 16 countries of LACB, later there was a normalization of relations between the Russian Federation with the Dominican Republic, Haiti, Paraguay, and Guatemala.⁵⁰ Countries with which diplomatic relations exist, but where there are no diplomatic representations of Russia include Antigua and Barbuda, Barbados, Belize, Haiti, Honduras, Dominican Republic, El Salvador, Suriname, Saint Lucia and Trinidad and Tobago.⁵¹

In addition, in April 1992 Russia was granted a permanent observer status in the Organization of American States (OAS).⁵² Since mid 90s contacts were established with "Rio Group" which was turned into an effective mechanism for political consultation and coordination on major international issues and problems of the Latin American continent, comprising 12 Latin

⁴⁹ Dmitry G. Maslov, "Integration of Developing Countries of South America", in *World Economy*, Perm State University Press, Perm, 2004, pp.85-93 (in Russian)

⁵⁰ Vladimir A. Mihailov, "Russia and Latin American Countries", in *Geopolitics*, Russian Academy of State Service, Moscow, 2010, pp. 290-315 (in Russian)

⁵¹ See also Table 1.

⁵² Organization of American States. Retrieved on June 25, 2012 from http://www.oas.org/en/ser/dia/perm_observers/information.asp

American countries.⁵³

Nowadays Russian analysts predict a new "golden age" for Russian - Latin American cooperation. The former has diplomatic relations with all 33 countries in the region. According to Vladimir Davydov, the director of the Institute of Latin America, the unprecedented intensity of Russian-Latin American dialogue is due to the fact that Russia's leaders have realized the strategic importance of Latin America⁵⁴. Nowadays Russia has the concept of its foreign policy, approved on July 12, 2008, which directly reflects Moscow's desire to build up political and economic cooperation with LACB, to expand cooperation with them in international organizations, promote exports in the region of high-tech industrial products, carry out joint projects in energy, infrastructure, high technologies, including those that make part of the plans, developed by the regional integration associations⁵⁵. Talking about factors conducive to the rapprochement of Russia with Latin America, Russia's foreign minister Sergey Lavrov noted the similarity of views on key international problems.⁵⁶

The trade and economic relations also began to stabilize. Chemical products, including mineral fertilizers, polyethylene, technical alcohols as well as power equipment, heavy construction equipment, agricultural and transport aircraft, river vessels, vehicles, etc. and later semifinished products (fertilizers, timber, cement, metals, etc.) are of high demand in Latin

⁵³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, Russia and the Rio Group, Factsheet. Retrieved on June 3, 2012, from <http://www.in.mid.ru/bl.nsf/5d5fc0348b8b2d26c3256def0051fa20/aa733cbd1302246f4325699c003b633b?OpenDocument>

⁵⁴ "Gazeta", Moscow, 21-23.11.2008 (in Russian)

⁵⁵ The Concept of Foreign Policy of the Russian Federation. Retrieved on June 3, 2012 from <http://www.mid.ru/ns-osndoc.nsf/> (in Russian)

⁵⁶ Sergey Lavrov, "Russia-Latin America: Establishing partner relations", América Latina, N1, in Russian, Moscow, 2006

American region.⁵⁷ In their turn, LACB companies are important suppliers of different agricultural and food products to Russia, including plantains (96% of total imports in 2008), raw sugar (92%), beef (80%), horse meat (64%), pigs (31%), soybean oil, tropical fruits, fruit concentrates, beverages and flowers. Russia has become one of the main buyers of Brazilian and Colombian soluble coffee, as well as Colombia's and Ecuador's flowers.⁵⁸ Table 3 shows the trade statistics of Russia with Latin America from 1992 to 2010.

Table4: Trade: Russia and LACB countries, in millions of dollars

Countries	1992	2000	2008	2010
<i>The Whole Region</i>	1330,3	5669,7	15935,0	12260,0
Argentina	150,5	122,9	1975,9	1124,1
Brazil	146,8	645,9	6711,2	5874,5
Venezuela	22,1	67,7	957,8	165,3
Cuba	832,1	385,2	265,1	276,0
Mexico	19,0	156,7	1230,9	768,8
Peru	19,2	35,7	327,6	328,0
Chile	22,4	19,5	364,7	356,6
Ecuador	14,9	185,2	935,7	974,1

Source: Federal Customs Service of the Russian Federation. Customs, foreign trade statistics for the respective years.

The dynamically developing Latin American market has big promises to Russia in the sphere of high technology. Venezuela in its turn has been ready to cooperate with Russia in the field of mining and refining since 90s, Brazil and Argentina - in the field of nuclear energy.⁵⁹

⁵⁷ Dmitry G. Maslov, "Integration of Developing Countries of South America", in *World Economy*, Perm State University Press, Perm, 2004, pp.85-93 (in Russian)

⁵⁸ RF Customs Statistics, 2009

⁵⁹ Georgiy N. Vachnadze, et al., "19 Latin American Countries and Russia: Trade and Investments", PikViniti, Moscow, August 2008, pp. 11-15

Special mention should be made on Brazil, with which Russia has developed partnership within the framework of BRICS coalition.

Since LACB is a strategic region also according to Russia's energy view, a promising dimension of investment relations is hydrocarbons. A still unexploited part of LACB energy reserves has awakened the interest of big Russian companies like Gazprom, Rusneft, Lukoil, Gazpromneft, and TNK-BP, that are already operating in some countries in the region.⁶⁰ Plans also include the development of gas pipeline infrastructure with Bolivia.⁶¹

Russia's Relations with Several LACB Countries

Diplomatic relations between Russia and Brazil date back to 1828. In October 1917, Brazil has suspended diplomatic relations with Soviet Russia, however on April 2, 1945, they were restored, but after the fall of the Soviet Union, the subsequent birth of the Russian Federation and the end of the confrontation era talks between the two nations began in mid 90s, which led to the *Brazil-Russia Cooperation Treaty* signed on November 21, 1997.⁶² Brazil was one of the first countries (December 26, 1991) to recognize the Russian Federation as an independent state.⁶³

June 22, 2000 was a landmark in the history of Russian-Brazilian economic relations. On that day a meeting of the Russian-Brazilian high-level commission on cooperation took place in Moscow: important documents were signed, regulating the relations between the two countries

⁶⁰ Stephen Blank, "Russia's Second Wind in Latin America", Strategic Studies, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, August 18, 2011, pp. 1-6.

⁶¹ Rusia apuntala con Bolivia su desembarco en América Latina. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.diarosur.es/20090216/mundo/rusia-apuntala-bolivia-desembarco-20090216.html>

⁶² Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Brazil. Retrieved on 20 June, 2012 from <http://www.itamaraty.gov.br/>

⁶³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.ln.mid.ru/ns-rlat.nsf/601debeef6efe270432569dc002f680c/dd5d49bc1a8e9f6fc3256f5c00417fd4?OpenDocument>

until present.⁶⁴In 2001, a high-level committee headed by the former Vice-President of Brazil, Marco Maciel, and the Prime minister of Russia, Mikhail Kasyanov, established several long-term bilateral treaties, initiating a strategic partnership between two countries, and creating the *Brazilian-Russian Governmental Commission*. Continuing that path, the former Vice-President of Brazil, José Alencar, traveled to Moscow on September 2003, to meet with Russian President Vladimir Putin and his senior cabinet members. Two countries signed the *Brazil-Russia Military Technology and Transfer Pact*, an important agreement in the area of space technology, missile defense, and military weapons transfer. On October 18, 2005, during a state visit of President da Lula to Moscow, the bilateral *Brazil-Russia Strategic Alliance* was signed. On November 26, 2008, during a state visit of President Dmitry Medvedev to Brazil, two countries signed agreements on visa exemption, and cooperation in the aerospace, nuclear and defense industries.⁶⁵

As depicted on Table 3, Brazil ranks first in Russia's trade with Latin America. Due to the pragmatic approach Russia's main partner is Brazil, rightfully considered to be a "regional superpower" as Paniyev states.⁶⁶ The similarity between the countries, as Paniyev notes, applies both to the size of the territory and population and main macroeconomic indicators. Russia and Brazil occupy similar positions in the international division of labor acting as importers of advanced technologies and capital. There is also a coincidence of goals in the foreign policy,

⁶⁴ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.ln.mid.ru/ns-rlat.nsf/601debeef6efe270432569dc002f680c/dd5d49bc1a8e9f6fc3256f5c00417fd4?OpenDocument>

⁶⁵ Alexandra Koval, "Contemporary Perspectives and Trends in Russian-Brazilian Relations" Russian Analytical Digest No. 91, St. Petersburg, 14 February 2011, pp. 8-10.

⁶⁶ Yuri Paniev, "Russia Turning On Latin America", Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations – v.1 n.1, Jan/Jun.2012, pp. 37-50

which include the formation of a new polycentric international system and the deepening of integration processes on the regional level.⁶⁷

Diplomatic relations between Russia and Argentina were established in 1885, suspended in October 1917 and resumed in 1946. In December 1991 the Argentine government recognized Russia as a successor state of the Soviet Union.⁶⁸

There is a solid legal base for successful cooperation between the countries. Most significant agreements include the *Agreement on the Principles of Relations between Russia and the Argentine Republic*, *Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for Holders of Diplomatic or Official Passports*, *Agreement on Mutual Visa Exemption for Russian and Argentine citizens*, *Agreement on the Promotion and Reciprocal Protection of Investment*, *Agreement on Trade and Economic Cooperation*, *Agreement on Cooperation and Mutual Assistance in Customs Matters*, *Agreement on Air Communication*, *Agreement on Military-Technical Cooperation*, *Agreement on Cooperation and Legal Assistance in Civil, Commercial, Labor and Administrative Cases*.

There is an actively developing political dialogue between the countries, at the core of which lies the proximity of two countries' positions on key issues. As Argentina is one of Russia's strategic partners in the Latin American region, the range of relations between them is very broad, encompassing politics, economics, scientific and technical cooperation. A particular feature in bilateral relations is the development of direct regional links. There are currently eight conventions in force among diverse subjects of the RF and the Argentine provinces.⁶⁹

⁶⁷ Yuri Paniev, "Russia Turning On Latin America", Austral: Brazilian Journal of Strategy & International Relations – v.1 n.1, Jan/Jun.2012, pp. 37-50

⁶⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.mid.ru/ns-rlat.nsf/601debeef6efe270432569dc002f680c/2a9070c1cc631e2fc3256e8b00425b66?OpenDocument>

⁶⁹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Argentine Republic. Retrieved on June 11, 2012 from <http://www.mrecic.gov.ar/>

Argentina is also one of the oldest leading trade partners of Russia in Latin America. In 2004-2008 Argentina became the second largest supplier of merchandise to the Russian market among the LACB countries. And by the end of 2011 the trade turnover made about two billion dollars.⁷⁰

Talking about Russia's present-day key partners in Latin America, one shouldn't forget about its closest geostrategic allies – Cuba and Venezuela. This is where the dominance of geopolitical aims emerges strongly in Russian foreign policy towards two of its strategic partners in Latin America vis-à-vis other interests.

Diplomatic relations with Venezuela were established on March 14, 1945.⁷¹ Strong relations with Venezuela are being maintained under Hugo Chávez's presidency, much due to the cooperation in military domain; since 2005, according to the Center for Analysis of Global Arms Trade, the cost of Russian arms and military equipment purchased by Caracas is estimated at \$ 4.4 billion and since 2008, both countries have been holding joint naval exercises in the Caribbean⁷².

In November 2008, Venezuela and Russia discussed 46 potential cooperation agreements during an Intergovernmental Commission, during which Venezuelan Foreign Minister Nicolas Maduro claimed that "the unipolar world is collapsing and finishing in all aspects, and the alliance with Russia is part of that effort to build a multipolar world." Two countries discussed the creation of a bi-national investment bank, the opening of a direct air route between Caracas and Moscow, building of an aluminum plant, the construction of a gas platform off the Venezuelan coast, plans for automobile production, and Venezuela's acquisition of Russian

⁷⁰ RF-Argentina trade turnover 2011. Retrieved on June 9, 2012 from <http://www.uaindex.net/en/news/12070>

⁷¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.mid.ru/ns-rlat.nsf/601debeef6efe270432569dc002f680c/b9f4dc279d168151c3256e8b00411a30?OpenDocument>

⁷² Rear Admiral Alvaro J. Martinez, "A Maritime Strategy for the South Atlantic," Taylor Ed., 2008, pp. 5-6

planes and ships. Russia supports the Venezuelan development of nuclear energy and explorations for finding uranium and an alternative nuclear fuel, thorium.⁷³ According to Putin he is ready to discuss the cooperation in military and technical sphere, explaining that "Latin America has become an important chain-link in creating a multipolar world, and Russia will pay more attention to this sector."⁷⁴

According to Stephen Blank, the main feature of Russo-Venezuelan cooperation is Venezuela's aspiration to put this alliance into the context of anti-US discourse, which creates totally different geopolitical environment in LACB.⁷⁵

An important place still occupies the Russian-Cuban relations. In 1902 Russia recognized the Republic of Cuba, and established diplomatic relations with it (interrupted in 1952, restored in 1960). After the drastic change in Moscow's foreign policy, accompanied by a hasty departure from Cuba in the early 90s, the intergovernmental negotiations in 1992 resulted in the signing of important agreements that have introduced the new character of Russian-Cuban relations. They are based on generally accepted principles of interstate relations, supposing a strict parity, balance, mutual benefits in trade, economic, cultural and military-technical relations.⁷⁶

The volume of trade between the countries has increased significantly, reaching \$ 900 million by the beginning of 21th century. Russia again took a leading place among the trading partners of Cuba. The lion's share of trade relations accounts for the exchange of Russian oil to the Cuban raw sugar. The ongoing blockade of Cuba by the United States in its place facilitates

⁷³ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia. Retrieved on 25 June, 2012 from <http://www.mid.ru/ns-rlat.nsf/601debeef6efe270432569dc002f680c/b9f4dc279d168151c3256e8b00411a30?OpenDocument>

⁷⁴ Venezuela ranked top importer of Russian arms. Retrieved on June 9, 2012 from <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/library/news/2011/12/mil-111227-rianovosti01.htm>

⁷⁵ Stephen Blank, "Russia's Second Wind in Latin America", Strategic Studies, United States Army War College, Carlisle Barracks, PA, August 18, 2011, pp. 1-6.

⁷⁶ Mervyn Bain, "A new era in Russian-Cuban relations?", International Journal of Cuban Studies, 2010, p.39

the consolidation of Russia's position on Cuba and finally, the significant Russian community in Cuba, with about three thousand people is also of great importance.⁷⁷

During the 59th meeting of UN General Assembly in 2004 Sergey Lavrov made a series of agreements with several countries in the region. For example, with Nicaragua an *Agreement on Cooperation in Combating Illegal Drug Circulation and Consumption* was signed. During the meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Colombia, Maria Carolina Barco Isakson favorable political circumstances were designed to promote Russian-Colombian trade and economic relations. A series of meetings were held with Foreign Ministers of the Central American Integration System, comprising Belize, Costa Rica, the Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and San Salvador where the issues of combating terrorism were discussed.⁷⁸

The presence of Russia in Latin America is being interpreted in many different ways. As it is seen from aforesaid the motives of Russia to be better represented in Latin America are as diverse as the nature of its relations with countries of the region.

After the collapse of the Soviet Union, Latin American countries recognized Russia as a successor of Soviet Union, after which Soviet embassies were transformed into Russian ones. Via its diplomatic representations Moscow established permanent roots in Latin America and now is using these contacts as bases for political influence. However its presence can be dangerous in case it creates instability in the region by following: first, the armaments that Venezuela purchases may be purposed to help the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia (FARC) and other similar groups, second arms race may occur in the region very easily, third the

⁷⁷ Mervyn Bain, "A new era in Russian-Cuban relations?", *International Journal of Cuban Studies*, 2010, p.39

⁷⁸ Santos Villarreal G. M., "Rusia En América Latina" Centro de Documentación, Información y Análisis, Subdirección de Política Exterior, March 2010, p.5

temporary bases for Russian naval and air forces in Cuba, Venezuela and recently in Bolivia create tenseness not only among Latin American countries, but also with US. Hence the Cold War rhetoric still continues to resonate with Russia's influence in Latin America as a response to US' presence in the Caucasus.

One of the reasons Russia prioritizes the Latin American region, is that the majority of these countries are Russia's potential partners in geo-strategic and geopolitical terms, having coinciding interests in the formation of a multipolar world. The common interest in creating multipolar world order is the basis of coincidence of strategic objectives of Russia and Latin America. Both sides are aware that only the existence of several "centers of power" can counteract Washington's hegemonic ambitions and its tendency towards unipolar world.

Latin America is rapidly becoming a new area of fast economic development, so there is a great potential for trade, economic and scientific-technical cooperation and Russia plans to participate in that process.

In line with providing greater autonomy to Latin American countries, Russia has furnished the region with investments in energy infrastructure, strengthened military capabilities, and provided means to combat drug trafficking. As Argentine president Cristina Fernández de Kirchner aptly stated, "...the world has changed, Latin America is nobody's backyard."⁷⁹ Thus, Latin America, which is becoming a very influential center of the emerging multipolar world and an important regional actor in the new world order plays very important role in enhancing Russia's stance in world politics, and in its economic growth. Extension of cooperation with countries in the region contributes greatly to the strengthening of Russia's position in the

⁷⁹ El viaje de Medvédev a Argentina. Retrieved on 24 June, 2012 from <http://actualidad.rt.com/actualidad/view/10194-Dmitri-Medv%C3%A9dev-Rusia-ha-vuelto-a-Am%C3%A9rica-Latina>

international political and economic organizations on pivotal issues of regional and global security, successfully resolving them in accordance with its long-term national interests.

ARMENIA AND LACB: LONG TIME PARTNERS

The Armenian community in South America arose in the early twentieth century, as a result of flow of immigrants who had survived the Armenian Genocide. Although they settled in various parts of the continent, the majority went to Argentina, Brazil, and Uruguay, with some moving to Venezuela and Mexico. Unlike their compatriots who had emigrated to Europe or other parts of Asia, Armenians in the Americas had no previous connections, commercial or cultural, to aid them in acclimatizing to such a different culture. But, by the 1940s, thanks to the economic boom in the region, each of these countries already had many affluent Armenian inhabitants. Their economic successes prompted other Armenians to relocate there from Greece and the Middle East and by the end of the 1980s there were nearly 70,000 Armenians in Argentina, 20,000 in Brazil, and 15,000 in Uruguay, concentrated in Buenos Aires, Sao Paulo, Rio de Janeiro, and Montevideo respectively⁸⁰.

Since political relations are part of political security and channels to make countries' problems raised and seek for solution of them, it was vital for a landlocked country like Armenia to establish as much diplomatic relations as possible at the dawn of its independence. Latin America with its cohesive Armenian community provided new horizons and new opportunities for successful cooperation. Especially in the beginning of 90s a strong backing from LACB was

⁸⁰Home of the extended Armenian Family. Retrieved 2 June, 2012, from http://www.agbu.org/publications/article.asp?A_ID=530

vital for Armenia in terms of support in international organizations regarding key issues, as well as powerful Armenian communities' donations to Motherland.

Latin American countries were the ones not having any geopolitical gains in Caucasus while establishing diplomatic relations in the region in 90s. As Stepan Safaryan noted during an interview, Brazil is considered to be a country whose diplomacy is “ecologically clean”, meaning not constrained by any facts and based solely on values. According to him the motives behind opening an embassy were to establish as much diplomatic relations as possible, since during wartime it was of pivotal importance to have international community's support in international organizations and in general.⁸¹

Among all Latin American countries Argentina is known for its very cohesive Armenian community, characterized by a persistent dynamism, originated in a deep link with the Motherland. The core of the population came from Cilicia, Syria and Lebanon.⁸² Existing strong and influential Armenian community contributes greatly to the development of Armenian-Argentine friendly relations. The existing community organizations and individuals are creating per se a cultural bridge for Argentine Republic and Armenia. The latter being the bearers of Armenian culture promote the awareness of it not only in Argentine society but also in neighboring countries.

⁸¹ Interview conducted with Member of Heritage Party Stepan Safaryan by the author on June 11, 2012.

⁸² Graciela B. Zubelzu, “Argentina: Policy and Business in Central Asia. Why there?” Marco Polo Magazine, ed. Marco Polo Institute, Venecia, Italia, 2002, pp.31-38

Argentina

Argentina recognized the independence of the Republic of Armenia (RA) in 1991. On January 17, 1992, diplomatic relations were established between the countries: just two weeks after the formal dissolution of the USSR and five months later Armenian President Levon Ter - Petrosyan visited Argentina - actions that reflect the influence of 130.000 strong Armenian Diaspora in that country.⁸³

The embassy of Armenia in Buenos Aires has been operating since 1993, being a bridge in creating relations with other South American countries.

Relations between Armenia and Argentina have always been maintained in an atmosphere of mutual understanding and mutual trust accompanied with high level bilateral visits. For Armenia Argentina is seen as a trusted partner with which the development and deepening of multifaceted ties in all spheres is very important. Argentina was among the countries to recognize the Republic of Armenia in 1918 during the Presidency of Hipólito Yrigoyen. In 2006 Argentina voted a bill recognizing the Armenian Genocide which became a law in 2007. It is the only country where a justice court recognized the Genocide in 2011 after a case was made ten years before.

It is of no coincidence that after the independence the first Armenian embassy opened in South America was in Buenos Aires.

Argentina is also an important economic partner of Armenia however the trade level between two countries for number of reasons does not coincide with existing high level of political relations. Notwithstanding the created legal basis for the development of trade and economic cooperation, there is no sufficient interaction in that field, explained mainly by the

⁸³ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 175

remoteness of the countries.⁸⁴ Armenian imports from Argentina in 2011 were mainly electrical equipment, refined corn oil, and chicken. By the volume of investments in Armenia's economy, Argentina is in third place, due to the Argentine businessman Eduardo Eurnekyan's big financial investments.⁸⁵

Effective cooperation in international organizations exists, where, based on the principle of reciprocity, the views on mutually pressing issues are either supported or positive neutrality is demonstrated.⁸⁶

Important agreements signed between Argentine Republic and Republic of Armenia include *General Agreement on Cooperation between Armenia and Argentina*, *Agreement between Armenia and Argentina on Encouragement and Mutual Protection of Investments*, *Agreement between the Governments of Armenia and Argentina on Trade Cooperation*, *Agreement between the Governments of Armenia and Argentina on Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Use of the Nuclear Energy*. Argentina and Armenia are also cooperating in science and technology, culture and education, in the field of healthcare tourism seismic protection and agroindustry.⁸⁷

⁸⁴ Paulo Botta, "Argentina and the Caucasus since 1991", Vol. IV, No. 5, Institute for International Relations National University of La Plata, Argentina, March 1, 2011

⁸⁵ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Retrieved on 25 June 2012, from the website www.mfa.am

⁸⁶ In 2004 during UN General Assembly's 59th session on resolution on "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" Argentina abstained in the vote.

⁸⁷ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Retrieved on 25 June 2012, from the website www.mfa.am

Oriental Republic of Uruguay

Armenians settled in Uruguay in the beginning of 20th century, but the community was formed in 1920s. Armenians of Uruguay came mostly from Cilicia and Middle East, The number of them fluctuates between 12-15 thousands, who live mainly in Montevideo.⁸⁸

Uruguay recognized the independence of the Republic of Armenia on December 26, 1991. Diplomatic relations were established on May 27, 1992. Since 1996 the Armenian embassy in Buenos Aires has been accredited to operate also in Uruguay.⁸⁹ The Oriental Republic of Uruguay was the first country to recognize the Armenian Genocide in 1965 officially. Each year on April 24, the Uruguayan parliament convenes an extraordinary session to honor the memory of genocide victims.

The Oriental Republic of Uruguay and the Republic of Armenia are engaged in active and effective cooperation within the framework of the UN. Many times during the voting within the framework of UN, Uruguay has refrained from voting on anti-Armenian resolutions, which served for the benefit of Armenia.⁹⁰

The first visit to Uruguay was Levon Ter-Petrosyan's official visit in 1992, during which negotiations were held on political, economic and cultural cooperation and the creation of an appropriate legal basis for them. In 1994 during the Armenian Foreign Minister's visit to Uruguay an *Agreement on Cooperation between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs* was signed.

⁸⁸ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 84

⁸⁹ Ibid.

⁹⁰ E.g.in 2004 during UN GA 59th session's voting on resolution of putting "the issue of occupied territories of Azerbaijan" on the agenda, Uruguay has abstained from voting.

During 2002's President Kocharian's visit agreements on cooperation in the field of healthcare, agricultural industry, trade, economy and defense were signed.⁹¹

Uruguay's position on the resolution of the Nagorno –Karabakh conflict is that the conflict should be resolved within the framework of OSCE Minsk Group via negotiations and in peaceful manner. In 2011 the Uruguayan Foreign Minister Luis Almagro expressed his personal opinion on the issue:

I am personally convinced that Nagorno-Karabagh is part of historic Armenia and it must be independent and in a short while be unified with Armenia. This is the only resolution to the Artsakh [Karabagh] issue.”⁹²

Almagro was speaking at a conference in Uruguay's capital organized by Consejo Nacional Armenio (CNA) of South America and the Uruguay-Armenia parliamentary group marking the 20th anniversary of the Armenia's independence and highlighting Uruguay-Armenian relations.

Brazil

Armenians settled in Brazil in the middle of 20th century and gradually began to establish themselves in social, economic and political life of the country. Among renown Armenians of Brazil are the former Member of Parliament Fernando Gasparian, the Senator of Mato Grosso do Sul Pedro Pedrossian, the first mayor of the city's of Osasco Hrant Sanazar and others. After their settlement in Brazil, Armenians were primarily engaged in retail trade, textile industry, then in trade, engineering and construction sectors. Although a significant place of their main occupation still occupies the footwear trade, with years they began to be involved in intellectual

⁹¹ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Retrieved on 25 June 2012, from the website www.mfa.am

⁹² Uruguay May Recognize Nagorno Karabagh Republic. Retrieved on June 16, 2012, from <http://www.armenianweekly.com/2011/09/09/uruguay-may-recognize-nagorno-karabakh-republic/>

and cultural circles also. Among them are businessmen, bankers, doctors, military men, diplomats, politicians, etc. After the 1998's establishment of a diplomatic representation in Sao Paulo, Brazilian Armenians noticeably intensified their activities, gathering around it. The previously existing interparty and interpersonal discrepancies were smoothed and the community began to keep strong and regular contacts with Motherland.⁹³

The Armenian community comprises 30-35 thousand people, the main part of which is concentrated in São Paulo, Rio de Janeiro and Brasilia.⁹⁴ Nowadays the Armenian community actively participates in assistance programs, directed at Armenia's development, including the active participation in Armenia-Diaspora dialogue, in various events, conferences and meetings, taking place in Armenia within the framework of Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU). With community's donations various buildings in Armenia, e.g. Nork-Marash infectious hospital, were subjected to major repair.

The Federative Republic of Brazil recognized the independence of Republic of Armenia in 1991. Countries established diplomatic relations on February 17, 1992.⁹⁵ During an interview with the first Ambassador to Argentina, Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan, it was stated, that in 1997 Brazilian government gave its consent to open a Consulate General in São Paulo, without establishing an embassy in Brasília. The consulate began operating on March 1998. After the establishment of the Consulate General there were organized many cultural and scientific events, including the joint ones.⁹⁶

⁹³ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 301.

⁹⁴ Interview conducted with the former Armenian Ambassador to Argentina, Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan by the author on May 25, 2012

⁹⁵ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 175

⁹⁶ Interview conducted by author with Armenian Ambassador to Argentina, Vahan Ter-Ghevondyan on May 25, 2012

Armenian-Brazilian relations have always been constructive because of a good basis for cooperation in various spheres. Brazil was the first Latin American country to establish its diplomatic representation in South Caucasus region until recently. In 2002 during the RA president's visit to Brazil, an agreement was signed to allot a land for the construction of an Armenian Embassy. In 2011 the embassy was opened in Brasilia. In 2010 Ashot Eghiazaryan had already been appointed as Armenian Ambassador to Brazil.⁹⁷

Although Caucasus is not within the immediate economic and political interests of Brazil, the latter demonstrates willingness to cooperate in this field.

Table 5: The trade volume with Brazil in 2008-2012, in thousands of U.S. dollars.

Year	Export	Import
2008	151.8	58305.9
2009	0.7	54741.4
2010	7.0	51778.7
2011	1.1	83345.3
2012 January	-	3565.4

Source: MFA of Armenia, Department of Central and South America.

Armenian imports from Brazil mainly comprise meat, sugar, coffee, tobacco and other agricultural goods. The trade balance is exclusively in favor of Brazil, which is typical to the case of Caspian and Caucasus region, Russia and former Soviet republics. Brazil from times to times imports molybdenum concentrate, equipments, textile products, chloroprene rubber and

⁹⁷ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 175

other chemical products from Armenia. An effective cooperation exists in the field of viticulture.⁹⁸

Effective cooperation in international organizations also exists, where based on the principle of reciprocity, the views on mutually pressing issues are either supported or positive neutrality is demonstrated.⁹⁹

Chile, Ecuador, Paraguay, Mexico, Venezuela

Diplomatic relations between Armenia and Chile were established in 1993. Since 2000 the Armenian embassy in Buenos Aires has been accredited to operate also in Chile. At the same time it should be noted that there is no accredited Ambassador of Chile in Armenia.

With the 2011's creation of Chilean-Armenian inter-parliamentary group the relations between countries gained new momentum. However, unlike in Argentina and Uruguay, the Armenian community in Chile is small. As of 2009 in Santiago, Valparaíso and Viña del Mar, there are around 100-150 Armenians.¹⁰⁰

Armenia and Paraguay established diplomatic relations on July 2, 1992. However Armenia doesn't have an accredited Ambassador in Paraguay. Two countries are cooperating only within the framework of international organizations. It should also be noted that there is no Armenian community in Paraguay.¹⁰¹

⁹⁸ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Retrieved on 22 June 2012, from the website www.mfa.am

⁹⁹ In 2008 during UN General Assembly's 62nd session on resolution on "The situation in the occupied territories of Azerbaijan" Brazil had abstained during the vote.

¹⁰⁰ Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy vol. 336

¹⁰¹ Ibid. vol. 456

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Ecuador were established in 1997. However again like in case of Paraguay there is no Armenian community in the country.¹⁰² In his interview RA President Serzh Sargsyan underscored that Armenia is interested in the development of relations with Ecuador and expressed hope that after the creation of the legal field between the two countries, establishment of close relations between the business communities and exchange of information on the economies of two countries, it would be possible to unfold mutually beneficial cooperation in different areas.¹⁰³

Diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and United Mexican States were established on January 14, 1992. Table 6 represents the trade amount between Armenia and Mexico.

Table 6: Bilateral trade between Armenia and Mexico, in thousand US dollars

Year	Export	Import
2009	0.1	2.7

Source: The website of Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Department of Central and South America, available at www.mfa.am

Main imported goods are coffee, tea, dried fruits and alcoholic beverages.

The Armenian Community in United States of Mexico is not big. In his article “Armenians in 1930s Mexico City and April 24 Commemorations” Carlos Antaramian identifies 3 reasons why the Armenian *kaghut* was created in Mexico. First Mexico was not an immigration destination for genocide survivors, and as a result of it the strength of the displacement of refugees led to a more open view of possible destinations. The second condition is related to the United States, since most of the Armenians were looking for refugee there, and

¹⁰² Armenian MFA Archive | Documents on Foreign Policy, vol. 213

¹⁰³ S. Sargsyan: Armenia is interested in the development of relations with Ecuador. Retrieved on 15 June, 2012 from <http://times.am/?l=en&p=8444>

as U.S. restrictions were implemented after 1921, many Armenians chose alternative destinations in Latin America. Finally, the Mexican openness to immigration in 1922-1928 was the third condition to contribute to the establishment of a small Armenian community in the country.¹⁰⁴ Among many nations that have opened their doors to the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, Mexico stands out as being a pluralistic state that has appointed an Armenian-Mexican diplomat Arturo Sarukhan, to its most important ambassadorial post, the one in the United States.¹⁰⁵

However it should be noted that diplomatic institutions exist neither in Mexico nor in Armenia since the former has set a precondition to have a trade turnover of more than 10 million of U.S. dollars in order to establish them.

Republic of Armenia and Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela established diplomatic relations in 1993, on October 30. Since the end of 2004, Marco Zariqyan has been the Honorary Consul of the Republic of Venezuela. The Armenian community of Venezuela however is not large, of about 3 thousand people.

Since bilateral relations with Venezuela are still on a low level and comprised within the framework of international organizations, the cooperation between the countries is the expected support in various organizations and agencies, taking a favorable position on twofold important resolutions during voting in UN. On July 14, 2005 the National Assembly of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela passed a resolution condemning the Armenian Genocide, with a special request to the European Union to suspend Turkey's accession process until it recognizes the Armenian Genocide.¹⁰⁶

¹⁰⁴ Carlos Antaramian, "Armenians in 1930s Mexico City and April 24 Commemorations", *Journal of the Society for the Armenian Studies*, 19:1, 2010, pp. 45-60

¹⁰⁵ Mexico's Ambassador to US Arturo Sarukhan Courageously Acknowledges "1915 Genocide by Turkey". Retrieved on June 18, 2012, from <http://www.keghart.com/node/512>

¹⁰⁶ Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Retrieved on 22 June 2012, from the website www.mfa.am

As it could be concluded from the aforesaid, the relations of Armenia with Latin American countries have been of pivotal importance for Armenia during all times. They had been active since the first communities arose in the region in the early twentieth century, as a result of flow of immigrants who had survived the Armenian Genocide. Among all the regions and countries that have given a shelter to Armenian immigrants during the history, Latin America differs in a way that the relations of it with Armenia had been one of the warmest with no any turbulence throughout the times.

The existence of powerful Armenian communities in Latin America was a strong basis for the establishment of trustful, long-lasting relations. The support, obtained from these countries in wartime was needed to have the problems of Armenia raised in international organizations. Latin America with its cohesive Armenian community provided new horizons and new opportunities for successful cooperation. Powerful Armenian communities' donations to Motherland helped greatly Armenia both during wartime and in the aftermath of the 1988's earthquake.

The objectives that Armenian diplomatic institutions in LACB pursue are the following: to maintain close ties with the Armenian community living in the region based on the interests of the Armenian government and the Armenian community living in the region, which also includes *hayrenadardzutyun* and *hayapahpanutyun*, to promote the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and Nagorno-Karabakh independence and to enhance trade and economic relations.

AZERBAIJAN IN LATIN AMERICAN REGION: MOTIVES AND CONSEQUENCES

Beginning with the last decade Azerbaijan, with no any previous interests in terms of trade, cooperation, etc. and without any Diaspora in the region, began to open diplomatic institutions in both Central and South American countries.

During an interview conducted with Mammad Ahmadzada, Ambassador of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic, it was stated that, starting from the mid 2000's, Azerbaijan had begun to build closer ties with Argentina and other South American countries, as a part of a strategy under the leadership of the President of the Republic of Azerbaijan¹⁰⁷. Ilham Aliyev has an aim at strengthening the country's international standing. Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov in his place during a visit to Argentina in 2006 has emphasized that one of the main priorities of Baku's policy toward Argentina was "to end what many viewed as an aggressive policy by Armenia there and to expand economic ties."¹⁰⁸

Diplomatic relations between Argentina and Azerbaijan were established in 1993 but contacts between two countries in 1990s and early 2000s remained sporadic. However, recently relations have begun to expand rapidly. In August 2010, Azerbaijan opened its embassy in Argentina: Baku's first and only diplomatic mission in South America so far.

Another milestone was the visit that Deputy Foreign Minister of Argentina, Alberto D'Alotto, made to Azerbaijan in November 2010. During his visit, a variety of bilateral cooperation agreements were signed, including one calling for continuing political consultations.

¹⁰⁷ An Interview with MammadAhmadzada, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from <http://ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/vol3no23/20110129033600828.html>

¹⁰⁸ Botta, Paulo, "Argentina and the Caucasus since 1991", Vol. IV, No. 5, Institute for International Relations National University of La Plata, Argentina, March 1, 2011

Argentina doesn't have an embassy in Baku yet and interestingly enough the embassy in Buenos Aires has not been opened based on the principle of reciprocity, as it was done in case of Cuba, but just after Argentina established its diplomatic representation in Armenia. This fact demonstrates, Azerbaijan, assessing the negative consequences of its weak foreign policy towards Latin America began to create diplomatic representations in order to rectify these shortcomings by counterbalancing the strong Armenian Diaspora.

After the opening of the Azerbaijani embassy in Buenos Aires, Argentina has shown great interest in deepening of bilateral relations with Azerbaijan. The Embassy is planning to continue the public diplomacy to promote "Azerbaijani reality", including the position of Baku regarding the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, misinterpretation of facts regarding Khodjalu events in 1992 and fight the efforts of recognition of Armenian genocide. With these covert and overt aims, the embassy will work towards creating more understanding of Azerbaijan in Argentina and in Latin American region in whole, as well as fostering friendship and cooperation, as it is becoming clear from the interview with Ahmadzada.

The recent warming up of Argentine-Azerbaijani relations is also explained by the fact that the latter was elected as a United Nations Security Council (UNSC) non-permanent member and Buenos Aires expects its support in the emerging conflict with Great Britain over Islas Malvinas/Falkland Islands. During the meeting with Ilham Aliyev, the Argentine Foreign Minister Hector Timerman noted that Argentina supports the restoration of territorial integrities of countries within the framework of UN resolutions via negotiations.¹⁰⁹ An exchange of views on regional issues has taken place during the meeting of Timerman with his Azeri counterpart Elmar Mammadyarov and as the official release of Azerbaijani MFA notes, "...[t]he information

¹⁰⁹ President Ilham Aliyev meets Argentina's Foreign Minister. Retrieved on June 11, 2012 from <http://85.132.58.5/en/node/948390>

was provided to the Argentinean side of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, on refugees and displaced persons."¹¹⁰

According to Ahmadzada, Azerbaijan views its ties with Argentina as offering enormous opportunities for greater cooperation in many fields, and considers this country as a gateway to the whole South American region. There is a solid foundation for political dialogue between Azerbaijan and Argentina. The principles of independence, sovereignty and territorial integrity are considered by Azerbaijan to be the basis for the development of the relations between two countries¹¹¹.

As of trade and economic relations, commercial statistics show a growing but still modest presence of Azerbaijan in Argentine foreign trade from 2006 onwards (see Table 7). While the imbalance remains, as in the Armenian case. The opening of the embassy in Buenos Aires serves at the broadening of the contacts between businessmen from two countries. Bilateral trade between two countries consists mainly of Argentine exports of pharmaceutical products, soybean oil, sugar, other agricultural products and food stuff, and some Azerbaijani exports of chemical products¹¹².

Table 7: Azerbaijani-Argentine trade flow 2000-2010 in thousands of US dollars.

Year	Exportations from Argentina	Importations from Argentina
1998	102	0
1999	-	1

¹¹⁰ MFA of Azerbaijan. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from mfa.gov.az

¹¹¹ An Interview with Mammad Ahmadzada, Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the Argentine Republic. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from <http://ada.edu.az/biweekly/issues/vol3no23/20110129033600828.html>

¹¹² Merchandise Exports To Developing Economies In Latin America & The Caribbean. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from <http://www.tradingeconomics.com/azerbaijan/merchandise-exports-to-developing-economies-in-latin-america--the-caribbean-percent-of-total-merchandise-exports-wb-data.html>

2001	543	-
2002	287	-
2003	118	-
2004	373	1
2005	782	64
2006	981	121
2007	3,306	99
2008	3,424	70
2009	3,385	115
2010	2,121	46

Source: The table is derived from the website of *Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración* (ALADI, Latin American Integration Association), <http://www.aladi.org>.

Given the influence of the Armenian community in Argentina, and as it is recognized by Azerbaijani decision makers, one of the best investments Azerbaijan can make will be an expansion of its public diplomacy effort in Buenos Aires. It should be noted that the development of Argentine - Azerbaijani relations is representing a big importance for Armenia, since there are similarities in the settlement of Islas Malvinas conflict and the conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh.

Azerbaijan and Mexico, lacking any historical ties, located very far from one another and being at very different points in their national development, would seem to have little reason to become strategic partners. But as soon as Azerbaijan decided to expand its focus on Latin America, it chose Mexico as a target point to begin the dissemination of public hatred towards Armenian people in the whole region of Latin America.

Despite their differences, Azerbaijan succeeded to find commonalities with Mexico and set ground for further effective collaboration in different spheres. In January 2007, the embassy of Azerbaijan opened its doors in Mexico City¹¹³.

¹¹³ Official opening of the embassy of Azerbaijan in Mexico. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from http://www.azembassy.mx/index.php?option=com_content&view=article&id=182%3Aofficial-opening-of-the-embassy-of-azerbaijan-in-mexico&catid=53%3Anews&Itemid=134&lang=en

There is a common economic situation in two countries which Baku effectively stresses: both are major oil producers and perhaps the more important for the development of future ties is the fact that both Azerbaijan and Mexico cooperate in the hydrocarbons sector. And on the basis of these alone, the strategic cooperation has become possible as well¹¹⁴. The results of such cooperation and Azerbaijan's enduring anti-Armenian lobbying which includes the "Justice for Khodjaly" international campaign didn't give a long wait and in December 2011 Mexican Senate recognized the events of 1992 in Khodjalu as "genocide".¹¹⁵ Following the Senate, the Khodjalu events were recognized as "genocide" also by the Chamber of Deputies of the Congress of Mexico. Some Mexican and even Argentine politicians are already supporting the "territorial integrity of Azerbaijan" and claiming Nagorno-Karabakh dispute to be resolved on the basis of the "territorial integrity."¹¹⁶

The next country to pass a decision condemning the "Armenian occupation of Azerbaijani land" and classifying the Khojalu events as "genocide" was Colombia, on April 2012. The decision says that more than one million Azerbaijanis have become refugees and internally displaced people, condemns the violence committed against the Azerbaijanis and violation of their rights. The crimes committed in Khojalu are referred to as "genocide" in the decision. Prior to this, the decision was discussed at the Colombian Senate's Second Committee on Foreign Affairs and Defense Issues. Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry spokesman Elman Abdullayev told a briefing:

¹¹⁴ Julio Alejandro Espinoza Álvarez and Angulo, O.V., "How Azerbaijan And Mexico Could Become Strategic Partners" Vol. II, No. 24, Azerbaijan Diplomatic Academy, December 15, 2009

¹¹⁵ Recognition of the Khodjaly massacre in Mexico. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from http://garabagh.net/content_281_en.html

¹¹⁶ Khojaly Genocide Recognized by Chamber of Deputies of Mexican Congress. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://www.khojaly.org/following-senate-khojaly-genocide-recognized-by-chamber-of-deputies-of-mexican-congress/>

“The decision, which was passed unanimously, is another successful step of Azerbaijani diplomacy towards a legal political assessment of the Khojaly genocide by the international community. We will continue to work on this. This is very important for us.”¹¹⁷

Azerbaijan and Uruguay established diplomatic relations in 1995. In 2007 a *Memorandum of Understanding on Cooperation between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs* was signed between two countries. The trade velocity between Azerbaijan and Uruguay amounted to \$ 260.5 million in 2008.¹¹⁸

When in 2009 Uruguayan Foreign Minister Luis Almagro offered up an enthusiastic endorsement of Karabakh’s independence, along with his backing for the territory’s eventual union with Armenia, it raised big discontents in Azerbaijani diplomatic circles. Azerbaijan is in a vulnerable situation, since it has no embassy in Uruguay, and the two governments are not known to have active ties. Uruguay is not even on the list of 160 countries with which Azerbaijan has a trade turnover. Without strong diplomatic ties or trade, Baku lacks levers to influence Uruguay. In addition, Montevideo does not need Azerbaijan’s support in international organizations. There are deep concerns in Azerbaijan that “Montevideo really is considering some anti-Azerbaijan steps.”¹¹⁹

Brazil and Azerbaijan established diplomatic relations in 1991. Since 2009 Brazilian Embassy is operating in Azerbaijan with Paulo Pineira Punton as resident Ambassador. Although Azerbaijan had announced that an embassy would be opened in Brazil in 2011 it did not happen. As Brazilian Ambassador to Azerbaijan has noted, Brazil supports the implementation of the set

¹¹⁷ Colombian Senate assesses Khojaly massacre as genocide. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://www.khojaly.org/colombian-senate-assesses-khojaly-massacre-as-genocide/>

¹¹⁸ Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI, Latin American Integration Association). Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://www.aladi.org>

¹¹⁹ Azerbaijan, Armenia: New Front in Karabakh Conflict Opens in Latin America. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://www.eurasianet.org/node/64182>

of 4 resolutions approved by the United Nations Security Council about the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, and highlights the need to guarantee adequate protection to the rights of refugees and internally displaced persons of all sides.¹²⁰

An Agreement on Cooperation between Azerbaijan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Brazilian Ministry of Foreign Affairs was signed between the two countries in 2006. In 2010, the trade turnover between Azerbaijan and Brazil amounted to 314.556 million of U.S. dollars.¹²¹

In 1991 Cuba recognized the independence of Azerbaijan. Diplomatic relations were established in 1992. The embassies are currently operating in both countries.

In 2010 the Cuban delegation headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Trade and Foreign Investment visited Azerbaijan: the purpose of the visit was to intensify trade and economic relations, as well as to sign agreements with the Azerbaijani side in the field of investments in tourism, mining, oil, alternative energy development, etc.¹²²

Diplomatic relations between Azerbaijan and Chile were established in 1994. In 2011 Azerbaijani Ambassador to Argentine Republic Ahmadzada was accredited to operate also in Chile and Paraguay. During his visit to Chile, Ahmadzada discussed prospects of cooperation between countries, exchange of visits, development of legal framework, measures aimed at enhancing trade and economic relations, as well as other issues of mutual interest.¹²³

Concluding the chapter, Azerbaijan, assessing the negative consequences of its passive diplomacy towards Latin America in mid 2000s began to create diplomatic representations in

¹²⁰ Ambassador of Brazil to Azerbaijan: Brazil supports the Minsk Group efforts and the implementation of the set of 4 resolutions approved by the United Nations Security Council about the conflict. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://en.apa.az/news.php?id=170289>

¹²¹ Asociación Latinoamericana de Integración (ALADI, Latin American Integration Association). Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://www.aladi.org>

¹²² MFA of Azerbaijan. Retrieved on June 11, 2012, from mfa.gov.az

¹²³ President of Chile voices interest in cooperation with Azerbaijan. Retrieved on June 9, 2012, from <http://abc.az/eng/news/58954.html>

Latin American region in order to counterbalance the strong Armenian Diaspora. Through its diplomatic representations in LACB Azerbaijan affects the Latin American policy towards Armenia by developing its strategy of promoting “Azerbaijani reality”, which includes the position of Baku regarding the resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict over Nagorno-Karabakh, misinterpretation of facts regarding Khodjalu events of 1992, fight the efforts of recognition of Armenian genocide and promotion of trade and economic relations. Embassy works towards creating more understanding of Azerbaijan in Argentina and in Latin American region in whole, as well as fostering friendship and cooperation.

Such actions turned to be very fruitful in result and the Mexican and Colombian Senates recognized the events of 1992 in the town of Khodjalu as “genocide” establishing the fact of occupation of Azerbaijani territories by Armenian armed forces, and emphasizing the importance of the release of the land and “return to displaced persons and refugees to their homes”. Such achievements of Azeri lobby in the region have big chances to pave the way for other countries, which do not have any relations with Yerevan and no serious ideas of what has happened in reality, to do the same. Even if the number of such countries would not be large, it is a very negative development for Armenia.

GEORGIA, BELARUS, UKRAINE AND THEIR POLICIES IN LATIN AMERICA

Since Latin American countries' stand on the international stage is being continuously strengthened and the region's crucial role in the system of international economic relations is increasing, many post-Soviet countries began fostering multifaceted relations with Latin America. Strengthening multifaceted relations with Latin American states and the region's major integration associations is in line with long-term interests of Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine. Latin America is important for these countries as one of the springboards for integration into the world trade and economic networks.

Belarus maintains diplomatic relations with 31 out of 33 Latin American countries. It has Embassies in Argentina, Brazil, Venezuela and Cuba.

An important factor to achieve convergence of positions of Belarus and Latin American countries on the international stage is a perceived need for a multipolar world. Belarus and most Latin American countries have similar positions regarding the place and role of United Nations (UN), as well as principles of its reform. In these circumstances, the relations between Belarus with LACB countries are dynamically expanding; constantly maintained is the process of forging and strengthening a political dialogue with the region's major players.¹²⁴

In 2011, trade turnover of Belarus with Latin American countries made up \$3,498.2 million, with Belarusian exports exceeding \$1,737.5 million, imports amounting to \$1,760.7 million. The largest share in Belarusian exports belongs to fertilizers and high-tech products.¹²⁵

Strategic partnership between the Republic of Belarus and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is gaining momentum. Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez paid an official visit to

¹²⁴ MFA of Belarus. Retrieved on 10 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.by/en/>

¹²⁵ Ibid.

Belarus in July 2006, and made working visits to the country in June 2007, July 2008, September 2009, and October 2010. The visits resulted in agreements at the highest level on joint implementation of cooperation projects in economic, scientific, technical, and other areas.¹²⁶

Fruitful Belarusian-Venezuelan cooperation led to the establishment of representative offices of Belorusneft, Belgorkhimprom, Belzarubezhstroy, joint enterprises on oil extraction PetroleraBeloVenezolana, etc. Joint Belarusian-Venezuelan High Level Commission and Intergovernmental Belarusian-Venezuelan Joint Commissions on Trade and Economic Cooperation and on Science and Technology have been established and are working actively.¹²⁷

Deeper interstate engagement with Brazil is in line with strategic interests of Belarus. In March 2010, the President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko paid his first official visit to the Federal Republic of Brazil. The opening of embassies in Brasilia at the end of 2010 was the result of the agreements achieved during the meeting of the two presidents.

Brazil has traditionally been among the most important trade partners of Belarus in Latin America. Positive dynamics of mutual trade with Brazil in 2010, made trade turnover to exceed \$862.6 million. In 2011 the trade turnover exceeded \$ 1,589.2 million.¹²⁸

Strategic cooperation with Cuba enjoys steady development. Active efforts are being taken to enhance mutually beneficial cooperation with Cuba, primarily in economic sphere. Two countries have enlivened bilateral cooperation on the international arena – within UN, Non-Aligned Movement and other international organizations.

Lately, an interest by Georgia in Latin American countries had awoken. Georgiy Baramidze, vice-prime minister of Georgia, made a statement:

¹²⁶ Venezuelan President to arrive in Belarus on one-day working visit July 23. Retrieved on 2 June, 2012, from <http://krasнопolie.gov.by/en/news/republic?id=760>

¹²⁷ MFA of Belarus. Retrieved on 2 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.by/en/>

¹²⁸ Ibid.

“The issue of mutual relations with Latin America became for Georgia especially important after the August war in South Ossetia and the recognition of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by one of the region’s countries - Venezuela.”¹²⁹

Although Nicaragua was the first one to recognize Abkhazia, Caracas had become the one to be chosen as a target for Georgian government’s accusations.

Among Latin American countries with which Georgia has established diplomatic relations, an embassy exists only in Brazil. The Georgian Embassy in Nicaragua was closed after Nicaragua’s recognition of Abkhazia.

Georgia and Brazil established diplomatic relations in 1993. On April 26, 2010, bilateral meeting between the representatives of the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Georgia and Brazil were held in Brasilia. Within the framework of the meeting the prospects of political, economic and cultural relations between Brazil and Georgia were discussed and specific spheres of cooperation were defined. In July 2010 the embassy of Georgia was opened in the Federative Republic of Brazil.¹³⁰

On 26 August 2011, during his official visit to the Federative Republic of Brazil, Georgian Foreign Minister Grigol Vashadze met his Brazilian counterpart Antonio de Aguiar Patriota, where the following agreements were signed: an Agreement on the Holding of Political Consultations Between the Ministry of External Relations of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Georgia, a major Agreement on Technical Cooperation between the Government of the Federative Republic of Brazil and the Government of Georgia etc.¹³¹

¹²⁹ Latin America: Georgia plays by the rules of Abkhazia. Retrieved on 8 June, 2012, from <http://abkhazworld.com/articles/analysis/558-latin-america-georgia-plays-by-the-rules-of-abkhazia-by-levon-galustian.html>

¹³⁰ MFA of Georgia. Retrieved 8 June, 2012, from <http://mfa.gov.ge>

¹³¹ Ibid.

The diplomatic relations between Georgia and Uruguay were established in 1994. On 6 October 2011, political consultations were held in Montevideo between the Foreign Ministries of the Republic of Uruguay and Georgia. The meeting was focused on the development of political, legal, cultural and trade-economic relations and as well as on cooperation within the international organizations.¹³²

Georgia and Chile established diplomatic relations in 1993. On 4 October 2011, bilateral political consultations were held between the Foreign Ministries of the Republic of Chile and Georgia in Santiago. The meeting was focused on the development of political, economic, legal and cultural relations between Chile and Georgia as well as on the cooperation within the international organizations.¹³³

Among the post-Soviet countries, Ukraine's presence in Latin America was also one of the enduring ones. The former is a strategic partner with many of the states in the region. Ukrainian Embassies operate in Argentina, Brazil, Cuba, Mexico and Peru.¹³⁴

Brazil recognized Ukraine's independence on December 26, 1991, and bilateral relations were established on February 11, 1992. However, high level dialogue began in 1995, when President Leonid Kuchma made the first official visit to Brazil. President Fernando Henrique Cardoso repaid the visit in January 2002, becoming the first Brazilian President to visit Ukraine.¹³⁵

¹³² MFA of Georgia. Retrieved 8 June, 2012, from <http://mfa.gov.ge>

¹³³ Ibid.

¹³⁴ MFA of Ukraine. Retrieved on 14 June, 2012 from <http://www.mfa.gov.ua>

¹³⁵ The Political Dialogue between Ukraine and Brazil. Retrieved on 14 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/brazil/port/18150.htm>

A big Ukrainian Diaspora with approximately 500,000 inhabitants exists also in Brazil. The cities with the largest number of Ukrainians are Prudentópolis, Curitiba and União da Vitória.¹³⁶

As of Argentina, it was the first Latin American country to recognize Ukraine's independence on December 5, 1991. Diplomatic relations between two states were established on January 6, 1992. The Embassy of Ukraine in Argentina was opened on March 1993. Traditionally Ukrainian ambassadors in Argentina exercise the functions in Paraguay, Uruguay and Chile concurrently.¹³⁷

In a relatively short period of time Ukraine, through its embassy managed to insert itself in the South American region, establishing multifaceted relations with Argentina. In the political sphere, a continuous dialogue at the highest level was made possible. Due to the efforts of the Embassy agreements were signed on direct linkages between different provinces of Argentina and Ukraine, Kyiv city and Buenos Aires.¹³⁸

Given the importance of relations with Argentina for Ukraine's development in economic sphere, the Embassy of Ukraine devoted particular attention to this issue. It should be noted that today almost 35% of Argentina's electricity is produced with Ukrainian teams. Embassy of Ukraine pays much attention to the humanitarian relations between the two countries also.¹³⁹ A big Ukrainian Diaspora exists in the country. The number of Ukrainians estimates from 305,000 to 500,000 people. Currently, the main concentrations of Ukrainians in Argentina are in

¹³⁶ The Political Dialogue between Ukraine and Brazil. Retrieved on 14 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/brazil/port/18150.htm>

¹³⁷ Relaciones políticas con Argentina. Retrieved 14 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.ua/argentina/sp/23672.htm>

¹³⁸ Ibid.

¹³⁹ Ibid.

the Greater Buenos Aires area, the province of Misiones and the province of Chaco with at least 30,000 Ukrainians.¹⁴⁰

A solid ground for energy and aerospace cooperation exists also with Venezuela. In 2010 President Hugo Chavez met with Viktor Yanukovich, during which two leaders signed an agreement opening Venezuelan oil and gas fields for development by Ukraine's state-owned energy companies, and confirmed that Ukraine would act as transit route for Venezuelan oil shipped to Belarus.¹⁴¹

Latin America is important for all these three countries, in sense that it strengthens their stand in international arena. Belarus and Ukraine maintain their relationships in the region based on the common economic interest, cooperation in different fields, mutually beneficial engagement within international organizations, etc. In case of Ukraine the existence of big Diaspora plays a big role in rapprochement of the sides, whereas Georgia has a major aim to contain the recognition of the independence of Abkhazia and South Ossetia by LACB countries.

Political efforts of Belarus, Georgia and Ukraine in LACB are focused on consolidating long-term relationships with the countries of the region, expanding political dialogue, strengthening legal framework, promoting interests of their enterprises, including the establishment of joint production, opening trading facilities and representative offices, exchanging business visits, intensifying multilateral engagement within major international organizations.

¹⁴⁰ Wasyluk Mykola, "Ukrainians in Argentina" in *Ukraine and Ukrainians Throughout the World*, edited by Ann LencykPawliczko, University of Toronto Press: Toronto, 1994pp. 420-443

¹⁴¹ MFA of Ukraine. Retrieved 17 June, 2012, from <http://www.mfa.gov.ua>

CONCLUSION

The essay set out to examine the motives of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia in opening embassies in Latin American countries after the fall of the Soviet Union, to determine the objectives they pursue through their diplomatic representations and assess the scope to which the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is reflected in their respective diplomacies in Latin America.

Nowadays Russia is maintaining diplomatic relations with 33 Latin American countries, in 18 of which it has Embassies. It was made clear from the study that in line with fostering trade and economic cooperation, as well as promotion of ties in different spheres, RF uses its diplomatic representations as channels for strengthening its influence in Latin American region, thus creating a counterbalance to US' presence. At the core of this cooperation lie the coinciding views of RF and some LACB countries of creating a multipolar world.

Gone are the times when the relations of Armenia and Latin American countries were the issue of concern of themselves solely. Since the recent decade Azerbaijan is actively trying to assert itself as a decision making element in the region and to affect the Latin American policy towards Armenia. Beginning from 2007 Azerbaijan has managed to open embassies in three Latin American countries and use them as effective means for achieving their long-time aspirations. With its mixed motives and quite successful anti-Armenian lobbying Azerbaijan represents a feasible threat to Armenia in Latin America. The determined actions of Azerbaijani diplomatic representations resulted in passing of resolution on recognition of Khodjaly events as genocide by Mexican and Colombian Senates. With its "Justice for Khodjaly" international campaign Azerbaijan uses Mexico as a gateway to the whole Latin American region to disseminate hatred and false perceptions towards Armenian people. In case of Argentina

Azerbaijan counts on former's inability to express its views in favor of Armenia because of Islas Malvinas/Falkland Island issue.

In the beginning of 90s, at the dawn of its independence and during a wartime Armenia tried to established as much diplomatic relations, as was possible and Latin America was a region where the powerful Armenian Diaspora had its say in domestic politics. The motives to establish diplomatic ties were the acquirement of the support from those countries in international organizations and material aid from Diaspora, as well as fostering friendship and cooperation with the countries of the region. The goals that Armenian diplomatic institutions in LACB pursue are the following: to maintain close ties with the Armenian community living in the region based on the interests of the Armenian government and the Armenian community living in the region, to promote the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and Nagorno-Karabakh independence and to enhance trade and economic relations.

Azerbaijan is increasingly active in Latin America both on its own and in cooperation with Turkic Diasporas in defending its interests and promoting its ideas. With this in mind, Armenian government, Armenian Diaspora, RA Ministry of Diaspora, RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Armenian Embassies in Latin America should call for more active actions to defend the historical truth. For the purpose of keeping the Armenian moral image high, fostering the efforts of recognition of Armenian Genocide and independence of Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, and combating further expansion of the number of countries that in any time might recognize Khodjaly events as genocide,

- RA Ministry of Foreign Affairs should try to open as much embassies and consulates in Central and South Americas as well as in the countries of Caribbean Basin, with

which there were no diplomatic relations yet, as possible. This will allow Armenia to be better represented in the region.

- Individual representatives, organizations and institutions of Armenian communities of Latin America should ensure their integration and involvement into social, political and economic life of their respective countries. The Oriental Republic of Uruguay can be seen as starting point for Armenian officials to lobby in Latin American countries which can recognize Nagorno-Karabakh's independence. Armenian diplomacy should work in this direction.
- Individual representatives, organizations and institutions of Armenian communities of Latin America should cooperate with legislative and judicial bodies of their respective countries for the latter to set a legal ground for punishing the presenters of falsified facts of history and adopt Armenian genocide denial laws. Due to its most cohesive Armenian Diaspora, Argentine Republic can be seen as a gateway to the whole Latin American region.
- Government of Armenia in collaboration with Armenian business people should ensure the stable trade velocity between Armenia and the region for further development and promotion of economic ties, which will strengthen even more the relations of Armenia with Latin America.

A general conclusion made from the study is that Latin America is a region of vast opportunities for post-Soviet countries, irrespective of the motives behind their realignment with the countries of the region. Parallels can be drawn between policies of Armenia and Ukraine, who basically use their diplomatic representations as means of maintaining close ties with their Diasporas and fostering friendship and cooperation. While Russia, as SU successor and inheritor

of SU policies tries to assert itself as a decision making body in the region, counterbalancing US' influence, Azerbaijan in its place tries to counterbalance the strong Armenian regional lobby.

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