

# Armenia's Going for Broke by Attacking Azerbaijan's Ganja

By [Andrew Korybko](#)

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*The Armenian missile strike on Azerbaijan's second largest city of Ganja outside the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone shows that the landlocked state is going for broke out of desperation to internationalize the war as soon as possible since it knows how much it stands to lose if it can't successfully generate more support.*

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## Going For Broke In Ganja

The Nagorno-Karabakh Continuation War will likely intensify after Armenia's missile strike on Azerbaijan's second largest city of Ganja. The targeted location is outside the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone and Baku has already [reaffirmed its right](#) to adequately respond to this latest act of aggression. What's so disturbing about this development is that it shows how desperate Armenia has become to internationalize the war as soon as possible. It's going for broke by provoking the war's expansion beyond the occupied territories in a last-ditch effort to win support for its cause. Being in violation of four UNSC Resolutions ([822](#), [853](#), [874](#), [884](#)) demanding its military withdraw from universally recognized Azerbaijani territory, Armenia is openly flouting international law and the rest of the rules-based system of contemporary International Relations through its actions. This makes it the definition of a "rogue state" in every sense of the word.

## Armenian Strategic Aims

Nevertheless, Armenia believes that it can pressure members of the international community (whether Russia and/or the West by playing them off against one another) into taking its side in the interests of "peace", thus formalizing the the status quo occupation of Azerbaijani territory in violation of international law. Some countries might wrongly believe that such a scenario is the "least costly" so long as it "appeases" Armenia into not threatening the international pipelines and trade corridors located on Azerbaijani territory, as well as its critical infrastructure such as the [Mingachevir Dam](#) whose destruction could be catastrophic for the country's people downstream. If they submit to its bullying, however, then they'd only embolden Armenia, not appease it. They might then be compelled by inertia into supporting more future acts of Armenian aggression against Azerbaijan out of the mistaken belief that this would "keep the peace for just a little bit longer".

## An Inarguable Act Of Aggression

Regardless of however one feels about Armenia's narrative in this conflict, it must be objectively recognized that its actions are illegal under international law, aggressive, and

characteristic of a “rogue state”. They also threaten a multitude of other countries’ interests as well whereas Azerbaijan’s counteroffensive poses no such risks. Armenia wouldn’t resort to any of this if it felt confident in its ability to defeat the Azerbaijani forces in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict zone without any international support. For this reason, Armenia’s actions must be seen as having been undertaken from a position of weakness and desperation, keenly aware of how much it stands to lose if it can’t successfully generate more support. Instead of taking the impending loss that it brought upon itself, Armenia wants to drag the rest of the region down with it in a so-called “Samson Option” eerily reminiscent of what [“Israel”](#) has threatened to do if it’s ever about to be pushed out of Palestine.

### The Turkish Tripwire

Armenia’s latest act of aggression makes it more likely that Azerbaijan will request Turkish military assistance in accordance with its [legal right](#) to do so. That might be precisely the escalation ladder that Armenia wants Azerbaijan to climb, however, since Yerevan might be gambling that this would prompt Moscow to rush to its assistance in response via the CSTO mutual defense agreement between them. Russia, however, has proven itself reluctant to intervene thus far, with even Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan describing his country’s formal ally as “[totally neutral](#)” in remarks that he gave to the BBC last Tuesday. That pragmatic stance is possibly due to what the author recently wrote concerning the “[Five Ways That An Azerbaijani Victory Over Armenia Would Advance Russian Interests](#)”. Even if that’s the case, then it only advances the author’s present argument that Armenia’s strategy of going for broke by attacking Azerbaijan’s Ganja is intended to provoke a wider war.

### France vs. Turkey?

If this scheme is unsuccessful in drawing Russia more formally into the conflict (irrespective of potential Turkish involvement but increasingly more likely if that tripwire is crossed), then Armenia might pivot towards the West by requesting its military assistance instead. France would probably be more than happy to rush troops, equipment, and other aid to Armenia via an air bridge across NATO-aspirant Georgia. Turkey is intensely competing with France for influence across the Levant, the Eastern Mediterranean, and North Africa (Lebanon, Cyprus & Greece, and Libya respectively) so opening a new front of rivalry in the Caucasus as a result of Armenia’s request for emergency French military assistance should Russia fail to intervene in its support would be perfectly natural from Paris’ perspective. It would also help the Western European country formalize the emerging anti-Turkish regional alliance that’s taking shape and position itself as the indisputable leader.

### A Risky Gamble

Of course, Armenia’s plan might completely backfire too. It might not end up requesting French military assistance for whatever reason, be it because Russia takes its side first or possibly because Russia and/or Turkey somehow makes this option much too costly for everyone involved. Azerbaijan might also respond in such a manner, symmetrically or otherwise and irrespective of whether it does so unilaterally or in coordination with Turkey, that the war might soon end before that scenario could materialize in any meaningful way. It’s much too difficult to predict exactly what will happen though the range of options discussed in this article are intended to present a realistic summary of the most likely courses of action for the reasons that were earlier explained. It’s almost impossible at this point to convincingly claim that the conflict will remain contained to the Nagorno-Karabakh

conflict zone (which includes the seven other occupied districts) after Armenia's missile attack on Ganja unprecedentedly expanded it, which is why everything might get much more chaotic real soon.

### Concluding Thoughts

To wrap up the author's main points in this piece, Armenia attacked Azerbaijan's Ganja out of a desperate position of weakness intended to expand this local conflict into a wider war for the purpose of pressuring more countries to take its side in more consequential ways after Russia remained "totally neutral". Turkey might very well be requested by Azerbaijan to aid it in removing the occupying Armenian Army from its territory, though this might unintentionally be the tripwire that Yerevan was hoping would be crossed in the aftermath of the Ganja attack in order to either pressure Russia to respond symmetrically per the CSTO or rapidly replace it with French assistance instead. Everything seems to be approaching a climax, one which could have been avoided had Armenia simply abided by the four UNSC Resolutions demanding its military withdraw from universally recognized Azerbaijani territory. After attacking Ganja, though, everything might soon spiral out of control.

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*Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent contributor to Global Research.*

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### About the author:

Andrew Korybko is an American Moscow-based political analyst specializing in the relationship between the US strategy in Afro-Eurasia, China's One Belt One Road global vision of New Silk Road connectivity, and Hybrid Warfare. He is a frequent

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