

Armenia, Azerbaijan made ‘tangible progress on a durable peace agreement’, says Blinken



U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken (C), Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov (L) and Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan during a trilateral meeting in Arlington, VA, May 4, 2023.

Armenia and Azerbaijan have discussed some ‘very tough issues’ over the last few days and they’ve made ‘tangible progress’ on a durable peace agreement, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken said at the closing session of talks between Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov.

“I want to start by thanking our colleagues, both foreign ministers, their delegations for traveling here and for spending the time here in – at the Foreign Service Institute, and especially for their commitment to dialogue, and I think a recognition on the part of both Armenia and Azerbaijan that the only path to a lasting, durable peace is through dialogue. The United States is

very happy to continue to offer its support, its engagement, its good offices to host this discussion and any future ones toward an enduring peace. That is the objective,” Blinken said.

“The two sides have discussed some very tough issues over the last few days and they’ve made tangible progress on a durable peace agreement. I hope that they see – and I believe that they do, as I do – that there is an agreement within sight, within reach. And achieving that agreement would be, I think, not only historic, but would be profoundly in the interests of the people of Azerbaijan and Armenia, and would have very positive effects even beyond their two countries. I think the pace of the negotiations and the foundation

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On May 3 the trilateral meeting between Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan, National Security Advisor of the US President Jake Sullivan and Minister of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan Jeyhun Bayramov took place; Noyan Tapan was informed from MFA Armenia.

Issues related to regional security and stability, the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan were discussed.

Ararat Mirzoyan noted that the continuous aggressive policy of Azerbaijan towards Nagorno Karabakh, the occupation of the sovereign territories of the Republic of Armenia do not contribute to the efforts aimed at establishing stability in the region. Minister Mirzoyan stressed that Azerbaijan's actions against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, hate speech expressed at the highest level and open threats of use of force testify to Azerbaijan's intention and real threat to subject

Nagorno-Karabakh to ethnic cleansing.

It was emphasized that the withdrawal of the troops, the border delimitation between the two countries based on the Alma-Ata Declaration, as well as the addressing of the issues of rights and security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh within the mechanism of internationally guaranteed dialogue are key to a comprehensive settlement and establishing long-term stability in the region.

Armenian Parliament Speaker discusses the ban on overflights with Turkish counterpart

Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Alen Simonyan had a meeting with Mustafa Sentop, Speaker of the Parliament of Turkey.

Speaker Simonyan noted that Armenia is constructively involved in the process of normalization of relations with Turkey. He said certain achievements were recorded within the framework of the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey.

The head of the Turkish parliament emphasized that his country is trying to be neutral with all the member states within the framework of the presidency of the BSEC PA.

Referring to the closure of Turkish airspace for Armenian airlines, the Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly expressed hope that the meeting would contribute to the solution of the problem. In response, Mustafa Sentop stated that the opening of the "Nemesis" memorial in Yerevan is a sensitive and painful issue for them, and the ban is a response to the



unveiling of the monument.

Alen Simonyan noted that Armenia attaches particular importance to the opening of the Armenian-Turkish land border for citizens of third countries and diplomatic passport holders. He expressed regret that he was not able to cross the land border with a diplomatic passport to participate in the event.

"Despite the difference in the positions of Armenia and Turkey on a number of issues, we hope that this meeting will serve as a basis for establishing the Armenian-Turkish parliamentary dialogue and forming the necessary foundations to

ensure its continuity," said the head of the parliament.

According to Mustafa Sentop, Turkey seeks to normalize relations with Armenia. He believes that the possible early resolution of the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict is beneficial not only to the conflicting parties, but to the entire region.

Alen Simonyan reaffirmed that the Armenian side is guided by the peace agenda and will not deviate from that path. He stated that Armenia has no territorial claims against its neighbors, reaffirming that the goal of our country is the establishment of sustainable peace and stability in the region.

At the meeting, reference was made to Turkey-Azerbaijan allied relations, within the framework of which the Armenian National Assembly Speaker emphasized that Baku's approaches are not constructive. Issues related to the return of Armenian prisoners of war held in Azerbaijan and the post-war situation were discussed.

Czech PM calls for stronger ties with Armenia, reveals new cooperation project involving light aircraft production



Prime Minister of the Czech Republic Petr Fiala has called for enhancing the friendly and successful relations with Armenia.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is visiting the Czech Republic on an official trip May 4-5.

"I am very happy to once again welcome Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan here in Prague," PM Fiala said at a joint press conference with PM Pashinyan on May 4 in Prague.

PM Fiala mentioned that during his previous meeting with PM Pashinyan they concurred that the two countries bear the same democratic values.

"We must appreciate the role Armenia

has in the region. We must also appreciate the fact that in March of this year the European Parliament released a report saying that Armenia is leading in the region," the Czech PM said, calling for support to Armenia.

Armenia and Czech Republic seek to expand cooperation under a joint statement on diplomatic relations, he added.

PM Fiala said that Prague became one of the venues where a step forward in the Armenian-Azerbaijani relations was attempted by hosting the quadrilateral meeting between Pashinyan, Azeri leader Aliyev, French President Macron and the EU's Charles Michel.

Fiala further noted that Armenia is

among the primary countries in the Czech Republic's Transformation Cooperation Program aimed at supporting the civil society, human rights and independent media.

"Armenia and Czechia have friendly and successful relations, which we want to further enhance. We see additional possibilities for deepening cooperation in the economy, science, education, energy. For example, energy is highly important both for the Czech Republic and Armenia. Czech scientists are involved in the safety improvement works in Metsamor nuclear power plant. Our experts participate in the ongoing repair and this is an example of successful cooperation. The Czech Republic can also offer high quality technologies, such as in the area of smart cities," he said.

The Czech PM also mentioned cooperation in aviation.

"I am happy that our cooperation in aviation continues to enhance. There is a project whereby light aircraft could be manufactured in Stepanavan, Armenia, where an airport was built after the earthquake. The 6th session of the Czech-Armenian inter-governmental commission will take place in Prague, dealing with economic and industrial cooperation affairs. New areas of cooperation will be opened during that meeting, naturally," the Czech PM said.

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that our colleagues have built shows that we really are within reach of an agreement. The last mile of any marathon is always the hardest; we know that. But the United States is here to continue to help both of our friends cross the finish line.

And as I say, I think we're very much within reach of that. I have to say, finally,

that the leadership that we're seeing from both Armenia and Azerbaijan, and from my friends the foreign ministers, is inspiring. None of this is easy, but the commitment, the determination to move forward, to deal with the remaining challenging issues is real. And we feel, coming out of these few days, that, as I said, we've made very tangible progress. A final agreement

is within reach, and we're determined to continue to help our friends achieve it. So with thanks to both of you, to both of your delegations, as well as to Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev for sending you here. I thank everyone, and we look forward to continuing," the U.S. Secretary of State added.

U.S. Ambassador announces \$17.3 million investments in Armenia's media sector

On May 4, 2023, U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Kristina Kvien hosted a reception in honor of World Press Freedom Day for Armenian media representatives and other stakeholders. In her remarks, Ambassador Kvien underscored the important role a free press plays in democratic societies to inform the public and hold governments and those in power accountable.

"Media plays a critical role in facilitating an open exchange of information and ideas, keeping people informed, and holding those in power accountable, efforts that are vital in every democratic society," said Ambassador Kvien.

The Ambassador highlighted U.S. support for the Armenian media sector, including through USAID and Public Diplomacy Section (PDS) programming.



In March, USAID Armenia signed a \$15 million agreement to implement the "Media Program in Armenia" project with Internews Network, a U.S. organization, in collaboration with local media development NGOs, the Media Initiatives Center and the Yerevan Press Club, and an international group, the Zinc Network. The project will strengthen the information space in Armenia by enhancing journalistic standards and content quality,

catalyzing the competitiveness and financial viability of public interest media, and fostering the enabling environment for independent information flow.

The U.S. Embassy's Public Diplomacy Section announced it will make a \$2.3 million investment into a U.S. exchange program for journalists, as well as graduate-level journalism education in Armenia. The first project will be the "U.S.-Armenia Professional Partnership in Journalism," a U.S. exchange program for professional journalists. The second project will take the form of a U.S.-Armenia university partnership to establish a Center for Excellence in Journalism at an Armenia university. More details about these projects will be released by the Embassy later this year.

U.S. Hails "Progress" In Armenia-Azerbaijan Talks



A senior United States official has welcomed "progress" made by the top diplomats of Armenia and Azerbaijan that have

been engaged in marathon talks in Washington this week to try to hammer out an agreement to normalize relations between the two South Caucasus countries.

In a Twitter post after meeting the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan on May 3, National Security Advisor to the U.S. President Jake Sullivan wrote: "Good to host Ararat Mirzoyan and Jeyhun Bayramov together at the White House today. We welcome the progress Armenia and Azerbaijan have made in talks and encourage continued dialogue."

Sullivan said that "a sustainable and

just agreement will be key to unlocking opportunities for both countries and the region."

Earlier, Armenia's Foreign Ministry said that during the trilateral meeting Mirzoyan emphasized that Azerbaijan's "withdrawal from sovereign Armenian territories" and "addressing the issue of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh within a mechanism of internationally guaranteed dialogue" were key to a "comprehensive settlement and long-term stability in the region."

Kremlin says no alternative to agreements reached between Armenia, Russia, Azerbaijan

Assistance in resolving the situation between Armenia and Azerbaijan is welcome, but only on the basis of trilateral agreements reached with the Russian Federation, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters, adding that there is no alternative.

"The solution of the existing problems between the two countries and the possible development of some joint actions and steps aimed at reducing tension in the region are primarily possible on the basis of trilateral documents that were

signed together with Russia. So far, there is no other legal framework that would contributed to settlement. Therefore, so far these is absolutely no alternative to these tripartite documents," Peskov said.

Commenting on the meeting of US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken with the Foreign Ministers of Azerbaijan and Armenia, Peskov said: "Of course, any help that can help a settlement on this basis is welcome. But we also know that there are various attempts that blur the basis for a settlement, which in the future may fail

to produce results. Let's hope that in this case we are talking about the first case."



Turkey closed its airspace to Armenian flights heading to third destinations because of Nemesis monument, says Cavusoglu



Turkey has closed its airspace to Armenian flights heading to a third destination

in response to the unveiling of the Nemesis monument in Yerevan last week, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu said on May 3.

Cavusoglu said Turkey would take further steps if the monument is not removed.

The direct flights from Armenia to Turkey are unaffected by the move.

However, Cavusoglu said that “VIP

flights” will not be allowed. He said they made an exception for Speaker of Parliament Alen Simonyan, who is visiting Turkey for the PABSEC meeting, Anadolu reported.

Nemesis was unveiled in Yerevan on April 25 to honor the participants of Operation Nemesis, a 1920s program of assassinations of Ottoman perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide.

Artsakh should be linked to Armenia through 5km-wide Lachin Corridor, authorities tell new commander of Russian peacekeepers

Artsakh authorities held a meeting with Alexander Lentsov, the newly appointed commander of the Russian peacekeeping troops. Participating in the meeting were the President of the Republic of Artsakh, the Minister of State, the Ministers of Internal Affairs and Defense.

The officials reaffirmed the position of the Republic of Artsakh regarding the existing situation, Minister of State Gurgen Nersisyan informs. According to him, the position is that the settlement of the situation should be based on the tripartite statement of November 9, 2020. Point 6 of that statement stipulates that:

Artsakh should be connected with Armenia through the 5-kilometer-wide Lachin Corridor

The Lachin Corridor should be under the control of the Russian peacekeeping forces



Azerbaijan must guarantee the safety of the movement of citizens, vehicles and goods in both directions through the Lachin Corridor.

The commander of the Russian peacekeeping troops said he will have meetings with the Azerbaijani side in the coming days and will be able to address the issue and provide information at the end of the week, Gurgen Nersisyan said in a Facebook post.

He appealed to the citizens of the Republic of Armenia and the authorities to take all steps, all possible political and diplomatic measures to ensure the safety of the citizens of the Republic of Artsakh, to protect the right of self-determination of the people of Artsakh, and to ensure the fulfillment of the provisions of the Tripartite Statement.

He appealed to the international community to ensure the fulfillment of Azerbaijan’s commitment to unblock the corridor connecting Artsakh to Armenia. “The consequence of your inaction or passivity is the daily suffering of the residents of Artsakh,” the State Minister said.

He also appealed to Armenians around the world, saying “turn your face to Artsakh, see the people who are keeping Armenian Artsakh at the cost of suffering.”

Regional council of Hauts-de-France supports the full realization of the right to self-determination of Artsakh’s people

The Regional Council of Hauts-de-France supports the full realization of the rights of the people of Artsakh and, in particular, the right to self-determination, Xavier Bertrand, President of the regional council of Hauts-de-France, and Sergey Ghazaryan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Artsakh, signed a joint statement at the Artsakh Representative Office in Yerevan.

Officials who have arrived from France are calling on the international community to impose sanctions on the Azerbaijani

regime as long as Baku refuses to comply with the decision of the UN International Court of Justice to ensure the two-way movement of people and goods through the Lachin Corridor.

During the meeting, Xavier Bertrand emphasized that the aggression and other actions unleashed by Azerbaijan are unacceptable and must be stopped.

“No one has the right to set up a checkpoint, block a corridor, prevent hundreds of people from receiving treatment,

deprive children of the opportunity to get education, block the supply of gas and electricity. No one has given Azerbaijan such a right. I have to speak about this after returning to France,” he said.

According to the joint statement, the regime of Azerbaijan, both with the way of oppressing its own citizens and with its military ambitions towards Armenia and Artsakh, can only lead to war, destruction, misery and despair.

Deposits growth exceed increase in crediting – cenbank governor

Loans increased 16% and deposits grew “with progressive pace” in 2022, Central Bank Governor Martin Galstyan said at a press conference.

“During the year a growth of activeness was recorded in the crediting market, loans grew around 16%, which is comparable with the pace of the average growth of pre-COVID 19 years. At the same time, in conditions of high economic growth the deposits grew progressively against loans. Meaning, due to the entry of non-resident entities into



the Armenian financial market, we have a situation when the growth of deposits

has exceeded the growth of loans,” Galstyan said.

The growth in crediting was seen in all directions.

The profitability of the banking system “significantly improved” in 2022, Galstyan added.

He also said that deflation of goods is observed as a result of prices of food products falling globally. This could lead to the inflation in Armenia becoming lower than the projected 4%.

than the projected 4%.

PM Pashinyan holds meeting with Rosatom chief

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan held a meeting on May 2 with Russia’s Rosatom State Nuclear Energy Corporation General Director Alexei Likhachev.

The Prime Minister ‘attached importance to the cooperation between the Government of Armenia and Rosatom Corporation where a number of joint projects are successfully being implemented’, the Prime Minister’s Office said in readout.

Speaking about partnership in nuclear energy, PM Pashinyan noted the role of Rosatom in the extension of the lifecycle



of the second reactor of the Armenian NPP. Likhachev described working with Armenian partners as “productive” and

said that Rosatom is interested to continue the mutually beneficial partnership.

The current projects and prospects of new initiatives were discussed.

The extension of the Armenian NPP 2nd reactor’s lifecycle was discussed.

Pashinyan and Likhachev also exchanged ideas over the construction of a new nuclear power reactor in Armenia, possible partnership in nuclear medicine, as well as the disposal of the hazardous materials in the defunct Nairit Factory.

Armenia’s permanent population is 2,928,914, according to new census

Armenia’s permanent population is 2,928,914, according to the 2022 census conducted in October.

The preliminary results of the census were released earlier this week.

“The number of the permanent population includes the sum of the numbers of the population permanently (usually) residing in RA and present at the time of enumeration and temporarily absent at the time of enumeration. The number of temporary absences includes persons

permanently (usually) residing in RA, but absent from RA for a period of up to one year at the time of the census,” the Statistical Committee said in a [press release](#) on the preliminary data.

The current population, according to the census, is 2,638,917. This number “includes the sum of the number of the population permanently (usually) residing in RA and present at the time of enumeration and temporarily present at the time of enumeration. The number of temporary

presents includes persons who are in RA for no more than one year at the time of the census and persons who do not live permanently in RA.”

Armenian authorities conducted census twice before, in 2001 and 2011.

In 2001, the permanent population and current population stood at 3,213,011 and 3,002,598 respectively.

In 2011, the permanent population was 3,018,854, while the current population was 2,871,771.

Film producers to get up to 20% return of budget expenses in Armenia amid interest from India and U.S.

Member of Parliament Sisak Gabrielyan has authored a bill which seeks to create favorable conditions for filmmakers in filming motion pictures in Armenia.

Gabrielyan's bill proposes the government to return up to 20% of the expenditures made by film producers.

"Films have budgets, and this budget includes expenditures. We stipulate by law that film producers will receive up to 20% return in case of expenditures which are directly linked with film production," he said. The list of the products considered directly relating to film production will be envisaged by law.

Gabrielyan said that filmmakers have told him that this law will bring significant growth to filmmaking in Armenia.

"Filmmakers say that the climate and



nature in Armenia are one of the best. I also know that there is big interest from

India and the US for filming a movie in Armenia," the MP said.

Armenian government works towards launching second satellite, Minister says

The Armenian government is working towards launching a second satellite into space, High-Tech Minister Robert Khachatryan told reporters after the government sitting.

He said the work is in preliminary stage. "We are studying the market, assessing our potential and evaluating the offers," the Minister said.

He noted that the satellite will hardly



be launched this year, but the work is under way.

"We have a ground center and a receiving station. The first is fully equipped, as for the receiving station, we are waiting for certain equipment in the near future," Minister Khachatryan said.

Armenia launched its first satellite, the ARMSAT-1, on May 25, 2022 from Cape Canaveral on board a SpaceX rocket.

Prague hosts 6th session of Armenian-Czech Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation

The 6th session of the Armenian-Czech Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation was held on May 4 in Prague.

Czech Republic's Deputy Minister of Industry and Trade Edvard Kozusnik and Armenia's Deputy Minister of Economy Narek Teryan co-chaired the meeting, the Ministry of Economy said in a press release.

The meeting focused on a broad circle

of trade-economic issues, cooperation in industry and industrial cooperatives, high technologies, agriculture, transportation, scientific-technical and educational areas, culture, environment, tourism and other sectors, which will contribute to stronger economic ties between the two countries.

The sides signed a protocol based on the agreements reached during the session.

A number of meetings were organized



for businessmen participating in the event.

Armenia again calls for international fact-finding mission to Lachin Corridor and Nagorno Karabakh



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has emphasized the Czech Republic's support for the EU's decision on deploying a long-term monitoring mission to the border with Azerbaijan.

Speaking at a joint press conference with his Czech counterpart Petr Fiala, PM Pashinyan said that during their meeting

he presented the regional situation and the security issues. Pashinyan said that he noted that despite all efforts the situation remains tense.

"This is because Azerbaijan continues its policy of using force and the threat of force despite all well-known agreements, constantly escalating the situation on the border with Armenia, in Nagorno Karabakh and in Lachin Corridor," Pashinyan said.

PM Pashinyan called on the international community to give a targeted and clear assessment to the situation, especially because Azerbaijan's current actions are preparations for ethnic cleansing against the Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh.

Pashinyan said it is necessary to ensure access of an international fact-finding mission to Nagorno Karabakh and Lachin Corridor.

Despite all difficulties, the Armenian government adopted the peace agenda, Pashinyan added.

"We believe that there is no alternative to peace in our region. We are fully engaged in the negotiations process with Azerbaijan and we will continue to be engaged in the future, with the goal of achieving results and not simply negotiating for the sake of negotiations. In order to achieve this goal we hope that Azerbaijan will abandon its policy of using force and the threat of force," Pashinyan said.

US State Department "disappointed" by Turkey's decision to suspend Armenian airlines' overflight permissions

The US State Department has expressed concern over Turkey's decision to suspend flights of Armenian airlines.

"The United States strongly supports Armenia-Turkey normalization, which would be good for the entire region. We

noted with disappointment Turkey's announcement that it would suspend Armenian airlines' overflight permissions," the Department of State told [Public TV](#).

"The agreements previously reached between them to resume air connections

have been important confidence building measures. It is our sincere hope that Turkey and Armenia can continue to rebuild economic ties and open transportation links," the State Department said.

U.S. asks Armenia, Azerbaijan to 'consider how best to protect the rights and security' of Nagorno Karabakh population

The question of the rights and security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh is central to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the United States Department of State told ARMENPRESS in response to a query.

In written comments to ARMENPRESS, the State Department said that ensuring that the Nagorno Karabakh population "can feel secure in their homes and have their rights protected is the only way to guarantee a lasting settlement."

Furthermore, the United States has "asked the parties to consider how best to protect the rights and security of this population" during the ongoing foreign ministerial talks in Washington D.C.

"We are honored to host the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan as they work toward peace. The United

States remains committed to promoting a peaceful future for the South Caucasus region. Direct dialogue is key to resolving issues and reaching a lasting peace. The scope and nature of the agreement to normalize relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan is between the two



parties. Our goal is to provide a location where there can be bilateral discussions and the parties can undertake the real hard work together to make progress on

lasting peace. Specifics on what is – and is not – part of their agreement is a question for the parties," the U.S. State Department said.

It added that the U.S. "supports an agreement that is durable, sustainable, and lays the foundations for peace."

"The question of the rights and security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh is central to the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Ultimately ensuring that this population can feel secure in their homes and have their rights protected is the only way to guarantee a lasting settlement to a conflict that has lasted too long and cost too many lives. We have asked the parties to consider how best to protect the rights and security of this population," the U.S. State Department added.

New Poll Reflects Armenia's Souring Relations With Russia

(RFE/RL)- A new international survey in Armenia shows a continuing trend of "deteriorating" relations with Russia since the 2020 Armenian-Azerbaijani war in Nagorno-Karabakh, with most Armenians placing Tehran and Paris higher than Moscow as their main security partners.

The public opinion polls conducted on behalf of the International Republican Institute (IRI) in Armenia among over 1,500 permanent residents of the country aged above 18 in January-March 2023 reveal that while as many as 93 percent of Armenians in 2019 considered relations with Russia to be "good" and only 6 percent viewed them as "bad", that ratio has changed to 50 and 49 percent, respectively, this year.

The trend of the perception of "deteriorating relations" with Russia began after the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh in which, according to observers, Armenians largely felt Russia should have provided more support to Armenia, its strategic political and military ally in the region. The IRI poll shows that it continued in 2022, the year when Russia invaded Ukraine, as Armenians began to look more to other countries as their main security partners. According to the latest survey, while 54 and 52 percent of Armenians, respectively; consider Iran and France as their "most important security partners", only half of

them now view Russia as such.

France, Iran and the United States are also viewed as the top three "most important political partners for Armenia" by 75, 67 and 52 percent of respondents, accordingly, while Russia is only fourth in the list with 50 percent.

Interestingly, while Azerbaijan and Turkey, with which Armenia has had bad relations for decades because of Nagorno-Karabakh wars and other historical feuds, are still viewed as the "greatest political threat" to Armenia by most Armenians (93 and 89 percent, respectively), as many as 24 percent of Armenians said they also consider Russia, a formal ally, as such a threat. In contrast, according to the poll, only 3 and 2 percent of Armenians called the United States and the European Union, respectively, as the "greatest political threat" to their country, while 7 percent said that Ukraine posed such a threat.

While 5 percent of Armenians viewed relations with Turkey as "good" and 91 percent viewed them as "bad" in December 2021, a month before Yerevan and Ankara formally embarked on their latest attempt to normalize relations, the current ratio, according to the IRI poll, stands at 23 to 75 percent, respectively.

Generally, 52 percent of respondents in the poll said that they believed Armenia is heading in the "wrong direction," while 36 percent said the country was on the

right track.

A total of 60 percent of respondents in the poll named "national security" and "border issues" as the main problems Armenia is currently facing. Economy and unemployment was mentioned by only 27 percent of the respondents.

The survey also shows that the level of support for Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his ruling Civil Contract party remains almost as strong as a year ago.

A total of 14 percent of respondents named Pashinyan as the most trusted politician in Armenia, with only 2 percent naming ex-President Robert Kocharyan, Pashinyan's top rival in the 2021 early parliamentary elections, as such.

A total of 21 percent of respondents, compared to 25 percent in June 2022, said that they would vote for Civil Contract if national parliamentary elections were held next Sunday. The number of those ready to vote for Kocharyan's Hayastan (Armenia) Alliance has dropped from 8 percent last year to 5 percent today.

According to respondents of the poll, the biggest successes of the Pashinyan government during the last six months were "development of diplomatic relations" and "improvement of roads", while the biggest failures in the same period were the closure by Azerbaijan of the Lachin Corridor that links Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia and the "foiling of the Karabakh issue."

United States remains committed to promoting a peaceful future in the South Caucasus – State Department spox



The United States remains committed to promoting a peaceful future in the South Caucasus, State Department Principal Deputy Spokesperson Vedant Patel has

said when asked on the ongoing trilateral foreign ministerial talks in Washington D.C. involving Armenia and Azerbaijan.

"We remain committed to this process and remain committed to promoting a peaceful future in the South Caucasus. We believe that direct dialogue is key to resolving the issues, but I'm just not going to get ahead of the meetings themselves," Patel said, refusing to release updates on the meetings.

"But we obviously have had a number of officials from the U.S. side deeply engaged on this. Obviously, Senior Advisor

for Caucasus Negotiations Lou Bono has been deeply engaged in this not just through these meetings but through his continued engagement in the South Caucasus. You know that Secretary Blinken attended the plenary session yesterday morning and had the opportunity to host these ministers for a dinner Sunday night. And so it's something that we will continue to be deeply engaged on," he added.

Patel declined to comment whether or not Blinken has plans to hold another meeting with the foreign ministers.

Amb. Margaryan raises the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage by Azerbaijan at UN Security Council



Armed conflicts and military actions can have devastating impact on objects of cultural heritage, which are of irreplaceable value to the entire mankind as unique expressions of history, identity and cultural memory, Armenia's Permanent Representative to the UN Mher Margaryan said the UN Security Council Arrria-Formula Meeting "Protection of Cultural Heritage in Armed Conflict."

As such, their integrity and preservation must be upheld at all times, he stressed.

"In our region, we have first-hand experience going through the devastating loss of cultural property. The Armenian heritage was under heavy attack during the war in Nagorno-Karabakh launched by Azerbaijan in 2020. The Holy Savior Ghazanchetsots Cathedral of Shushi, for example, was deliberately shelled, twice within a few hours, resulting in the partial destruction of the Church," the Ambassador noted.

"Today, the millennia-old Christian Armenian sites in Nagorno-Karabakh are on the verge of total extermination,

targeted to promote the distorted narrative that the Armenian people are alien in the region. Armenia's deep concern in relation to the fate of the cultural property in Nagorno-Karabakh is also based on the previous history of total and intentional eradication of the Armenian heritage by Azerbaijan. In Nakhijevan, for example, thousands of monuments, including 89 medieval churches and more than 5,000 cross-stones were annihilated, in an effort to remove traces of the Armenian civilizational presence," he added.

He emphasized that Azerbaijan is yet to commit, in good faith, to the implementation of the Order on Provisional Measures issued by the International Court of Justice at the request of Armenia in December 2021, according to which Azerbaijan shall *"take all necessary measures to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration affecting Armenian cultural heritage, including but not limited to churches and other places of worship, monuments, landmarks, cemeteries and artefacts"*.

"Armenia has consistently requested

that a UNESCO fact-finding mission be deployed to Nagorno-Karabakh and the adjacent areas in order to help preserve the vast and unique cultural heritage of the region, yet, Azerbaijan continues to obstruct efforts of the international organizations for independent and impartial assessment of the facts on the ground, having opted, instead, for the policy of systematic erasure of the Armenian traces, putting into practice a pseudoscientific theory that denies the historical sites of their Armenian origin. Only today, the chairman of what is called the State Committee for Work with religious Organizations of Azerbaijan went on record saying that the Medieval Armenian Dadivank monastery "belongs to Caucasian Albania" and "sooner or later it will be controlled by the Albanian-Udi religious community"," Mher Margayn said.

"Destruction of the Armenian cultural heritage continues to be extensively monitored and reported, including through the use of modern technologies. I would like to recall, in this regard, that on 28 April, last Friday, Armenia hosted [a panel discussion](#) at the UN, which looked into the role of new technologies in preventing genocidal acts, such as cultural heritage destruction. The event featured a research project at the Cornell University entitled "Caucasus Heritage Watch", which relies on digital satellite technologies to monitor and document cultural heritage in the region, revealing large-scale damage and destruction in the territories under Azerbaijan's control," he added.

The Permanent Representative encouraged UNESCO to also utilize digital technologies to identify, monitor and act upon the facts of destruction of cultural heritage in any part of the world, and in our region in particular.

New Turkish Denial Tactic: Impeach Biden For Recognizing the Armenian Genocide!

BY [CA COURIER](#)

For over a century, successive Turkish governments have tried various tricks to deny the veracity of the Armenian Genocide. All of their attempts have miserably failed. Turkey exerted diplomatic pressure around the globe and spent tens of millions of dollars hiring high-priced lobbying firms to deny the undeniable. Contrary to post-war Germany which admitted its guilt in the Holocaust and made amends, the Turkish government, by continuing its denials, is labelled around the world as an unrepentant criminal regime. Turkey would have been better off coming clean by acknowledging and making restitution for the mass crimes of 1915 rather than perpetuating the disgraceful legacy of its barbaric past.

The latest ridiculous Turkish denialist tactic is claiming that Pres. Joe Biden, by acknowledging the Armenian Genocide, “violated four articles of the U.S. Constitution.” If genocide was not a gruesome subject, such an accusation would have been amusing. However, the comedy does not stop there. In an interview with Turkish journalist Ugur Dundar, published in several Turkish media outlets, former Turkish Ambassador to the United States, Sukru Elekdag, suggested that Turkish groups try to impeach Biden after he leaves the White House, even though a president cannot be impeached after he is no longer in office.

Amb. Elekdag is not a constitutional law expert. He studied economics in college and later became a diplomat. He knows nothing about the U.S. Constitution.

When the Turkish journalist asked Elekdag how can Turks sue Biden since he referred to the Ottoman Empire as the perpetrator of the Genocide, not the Republic of Turkey, the Ambassador foolishly pointed out that “there is no ethnicity called Ottoman. Ottoman is the name of a dynasty. Those who founded the Ottoman state are Turks and they are our ancestors and we are their descendants.” So, Elekdag

is suggesting that Turks sue Biden for accusing the Ottoman Empire of genocide. However, since Elekdag is associating the Republic of Turkey with the Ottoman Empire, then Turkey is naturally liable for the Ottoman crimes.

Elekdag’s falsely alleged that Pres. Biden violated Article VI, the Fifth Amendment, Article 1 (Section 9), and the 14th Amendment to the US Constitution.

Elekdag suggested that Pres. Erdogan of Turkey announce to the world that “Pres. Biden has committed a crime by violating the U.S. Constitution with his 24 April statements.” This is the most ridiculous part of the whole interview. Pres. Erdogan, who has committed massive crimes against hundreds of thousands of Turkish citizens, is the last person on earth to accuse anyone of committing a crime.

At the end of his interview, Elekdag stated that he had contacted the leaders of the Assembly of Turkish American Associations (ATAA) who told him that they will consider his accusations of Pres. Biden.

Elekdag suggested that an academic research be conducted on “whether or not to impeach and prosecute a former U.S. president” for his “constitutional offenses.” The ATAA is now planning to hold a symposium at an American university “with the participation of historians and lawyers.”

I received a copy of ATAA’s letter to Pres. Biden dated April 18, 2023, telling him that his previous two years’ April 24 statements “disregarded at least four articles and amendments of the U.S. Constitution.” Nevertheless, a week after receiving ATAA’s letter, Pres. Biden once again issued an Armenian Genocide statement on April 24, 2023, ignoring the Turkish warnings. The ATAA told Pres. Biden that his April 24 statements were “motivated solely to gain political popularity among the strong Armenian diaspora.”

At the end of its letter, the ATAA falsely claimed that there was an “initiative by the republics of Türkiye and Armenia to

establish a Joint Historical Commission, composed of historians and legal scholars to be selected by Ankara and Erivan.”

I would like to add a few thoughts to this Turkish onslaught of misrepresentations:

I will be greatly pleased if the ATAA takes legal action against Pres. Biden which will result in publicizing worldwide the crime of Genocide committed by Ottoman Turkey. The ATAA’s lawyers will be happy to enrich themselves by getting paid to file such a frivolous lawsuit.

If Elekdag was really a constitutional law expert, why didn’t he sue Pres. Ronald Reagan in 1981 and the U.S. House of Representatives in 1984, when they recognized the Armenian Genocide, while he was Ambassador in Washington, D.C.? Why didn’t the ATAA file lawsuits for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the House of Representatives in 1975, the Senate and House of Representatives in 2019, and all 50 U.S. states?

The ATAA can save a lot of money and effort by simply asking Google’s Artificial Intelligence website if Turks can sue Pres. Biden for acknowledging the Armenian Genocide. Here is AI’s answer:

“No, Biden did not violate the Constitution by recognizing the Armenian genocide. The Constitution does not explicitly prohibit the President from making such a declaration, and there is no precedent to suggest that it would be considered unconstitutional.... The Armenian genocide was the systematic extermination of Armenians by the Ottoman Empire during World War I. It is estimated that between 1.5 and 2 million Armenians were killed during the genocide. The Turkish government has long denied that the genocide took place, but there is overwhelming evidence to support the fact that it did. Biden’s recognition of the Armenian genocide was a long-overdue step in acknowledging one of the darkest chapters in human history. It is a powerful statement of America’s commitment to human rights and justice.”

Armenian Genocide Education Act introduced in US Senate



Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Bob Menendez (D-NJ) has joined with Senator Marsha Blackburn (R-TN) in introducing the Armenian Genocide Education Act (S.1329), a bipartisan Senate companion to a House measure to allocate \$10 million over five years to help educate American students about Ottoman Turkey's 1915-1923 Genocide of Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriac, Arameans, and Maronite Christians, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

"The ANCA joins with Armenians and allied Americans in New Jersey, Tennessee, and across America in thanking Senators Menendez and Blackburn for building upon U.S. recognition of the Armenian Genocide by helping to ensure that American school children have the opportunity to learn about the Armenian Genocide, its lessons for today, and the present day costs and consequences of its denial," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "We honor the past by ensuring that its horrors are not repeated – against Armenians or any at-risk population."

Chairman Menendez explained, "For far too long, the world closed its eyes and chose to ignore human suffering, ignore

persecution, and ignore the irrefutable facts of the Ottoman Empire's barbarous massacre of the Armenian people. Such denialism not only flew in the face of our basic commitments to root out hatred and advance human rights everywhere, but gravely undermined our efforts to ensure that such atrocities never happen again. As we introduce our bipartisan Armenian Genocide Education Act, we affirm our commitment to acknowledging the truth and to the Armenian community worldwide, including in Nagorno-Karabakh. Only through learning about the darkest moments of the past can we hope to secure a brighter tomorrow."

Sen. Blackburn concurred, noting "As the saying goes, 'Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.' The American people have a proud history of recognizing and denouncing the Armenian genocide and have provided relief and a new home to many who survived this campaign of mass extermination. Now, it's important that our next generation have access to educational resources that teach them about these horrors with the hope that we can work together to prevent similar suffering in the future."

ANC of Tennessee Chair Bearj Barsoumian welcomed Senator Blackburn's leadership on the education measure. "I'm so incredibly proud to see Senator Marsha Blackburn, my senator, join our strongest ally in the Senate and co-lead such an important piece of legislation," stated Barsoumian. "Not only is the Armenian Genocide Education Act an important piece of legislation, especially as our Nation witnesses genocide again, but her involvement truly drives home the importance of grassroots activism. The phone calls, the letters, the meetings – both and off Capitol Hill – can make a difference in engaging our elected leaders and in making strides to further our Cause."

Barsoumian and ANC Tennessee advocate Sarah Cohan met with Sen. Blackburn and the Tennessee Congressional delegation, advocating for Genocide education and broader pro-Artsakh/Armenia policies during the ANCA Eastern Region Advocacy Days in February.

The Armenian Genocide Education Act builds upon the 2019 passage of H.Res.296 and S.Res.150, both of which specifically rejected any official U.S. association with Armenian Genocide denial. It seeks to counter discourse and propaganda that claims that Ottoman Turkey's systematic and deliberate state-sponsored mass murder, national dispossession, cultural erasure, and exile of millions of Christians between 1915 and 1923 did not take place.

The House version of the Armenian Genocide Education Act (H.R.2803) is spearheaded by Representatives Anna Eshoo (D-CA), David Valadao (R-CA), Ted Lieu (D-CA), and Gus Bilirakis (R-FL). It currently has 54 cosponsors.

Senator Menendez asks Samantha Power why USAID isn't airlifting humanitarian supplies to blockaded Armenians in NK

United States Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman, Senator Bob Menendez has criticized the USAID for its slow responses.

Addressing USAID Administrator Samantha Power at a Senate hearing, he said that the agency 'moves slower than molasses' and asked why it hasn't airlifted humanitarian supplies to Armenians who are now blockaded in Nagorno Karabakh.

"Often times USAID moves slower than molasses. Case in point: The humanitarian crisis for Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh is only getting worse. Where are we? Why aren't we airlifting humanitarian supplies to those Armenians facing Baku's blockade? We need to respond to events quickly and we also need to address root causes," Menendez said.



Senator Menendez asked Power to comment on how much assistance Armenia and Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh will receive from the \$40,000,000 assistance program envisaged for Eurasia and Central Asia countries under the U.S. budget. He expressed concern that these funds won't reach the vulnerable Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh.

Power was unable to give an answer, noting that she 'doesn't have that figure of the top of my head'. "We've conducted two assessment missions to the region to look at the needs specifically in Nagorno Karabakh," she added. Menendez told Power to provide him a copy of the assessment. "I'd like to see the assessment. Particularly how you are going to be able to achieve delivering humanitarian assistance in the Lachin Corridor," Menendez said.

After the hearings, Menendez tweeted: "As I did at Senate Foreign Relations Committee's recent hearing on USAID's FY24 budget request, I will continue to call for relief for Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh. I will continue to condemn Azerbaijan's Lachin Corridor checkpoint. I will continue to speak out. We cannot be silent."

Armenian Genocide anniversary commemorated at Dublin's Christchurch Cathedral



On April 30th, Armenia's Ambassador to UJ Varuzhan Nersesyan participated in a service commemorating the 108th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide at Christchurch Cathedral, Dublin followed

by a wreath laying ceremony at the church's Armenian Khachkar.

In his speech, Ambassador Nersesyan underlined the significance of

international recognition of the Armenian Genocide as it sends a vital message that the international community will not tolerate the distortion of historical truth, nor will it allow for such crimes to be perpetrated again without consequence.

The Ambassador also reiterated the threat of Genocide and ethnic cleansing currently faced by Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, noting the dangers of the anti-Armenian rhetoric being propagated by the Azerbaijani leadership and also Azerbaijan's aim of depriving Armenians of their homeland.

The event was attended by the Chair of the Armenia-Ireland inter-parliamentary friendship group, Mr. Patrick Costello, the Most Revd. Dr. Michael Jackson, Archbishop of the United Dioceses of Dublin & Glendalough, Christian leaders of various denominations and members of the Armenian community.

Armenia climbs to 49th place in 2023 World Press Freedom Index

Armenia ranks 49th (up from 51st last year) in the [2023 World Press Freedom Index](#) released by Reporters without Borders on May 3

Georgia is 77th in the ranking, Russia is 164th, Turkey and Azerbaijan are ranked 165th and 151st respectively. Armenia's southern neighbor Iran is 177th on the list.

Norway, Ireland, Denmark, Denmark, Sweden and Finland are ranked as the countries with the highest degree of freedom for journalists.

According to the report, despite a pluralistic environment, the media remain polarized, the country is facing an unprecedented level of disinformation and hate speech, especially concerning the dispute between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The 21st edition of the World Press Freedom Index, compiled annually by Reporters Without Borders (RSF), sheds



light on major and often radical changes linked to political, social and technological upheavals.

According to the 2023 World Press Freedom Index – which evaluates the environment for journalism in 180 countries and territories and is published on World

Press Freedom Day (3 May) – the situation is “very serious” in 31 countries, “difficult” in 42, “problematic” in 55, and “good” or “satisfactory” in 52 countries. In other words, the environment for journalism is “bad” in seven out of ten countries, and satisfactory in only three out of ten.



Timeframes of Golden Apricot festival released

The 20th Golden Apricot Yerevan International Film Festival will be held on July 9-16, organizers announced on May 1.

Since 2023 marks the 100th anniversary of Armenian cinema,

and the Golden Apricot's 20th jubilee festival, this year's festival will pay tribute to these two anniversaries.

Renowned film stars and figures from around the world will arrive in Yerevan for the festival.

Organizers said updates will be issued soon.

Armenia participates in ATM Dubai 2023 expo

On May 1-4, Armenia participates in international tourist exhibition, ATM Dubai 2023 in Dubai.

The Tourism Committee of Armenia, with the 13 representatives from the tourism sector, presents Armenia as an

ideal tourist destination, introducing guests to tourist products and services of our country, including delicious Armenian dishes presented in the pavilion.



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Armenian Identity Card

The goal of the Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) non-profit organization is to unify Armenians worldwide in a common platform so that through contacts, queries and referenda they can express their views and positions regarding issues of general interest to Armenians around the world and issues of particular interest to Armenian communities in various countries.

Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) also makes it possible to establish business networks, the cardholder can participate in various charitable projects, and can obtain discounts from Armenian and non-Armenian businesses all over the world. Armenians should feel themselves to be full-fledged "citizens" of a reborn Armenia and the Armenian Identity Card is the «passport» for all Armenians.

The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) network is an effective environment where Armenians can implement various projects and pan-Armenian programs. At the heart of HyeID is the creation of an Armenian database which will become the reliable and objective basis to realize the potential of all Armenians around the world. Based on that database, it will be possible to implement various permanent and temporary initiatives through the Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) organization.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) worldwide network enables cardholders to elect and get elected to the leadership of The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) network structures.
- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can benefit from the possibility of discounts intended for HyeID cardholders when shopping for products and services in various countries of the world.
- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can participate in queries and referenda initiated by the HyeID network and vote on issues of national interest to Armenians.
- Ensure the security

and privacy of The Armenian Identification Card (HyeID) cardholders. The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders who live in the Diaspora intend to utilize the possibilities made available through HyeID to form a Diaspora representative body — Diaspora Armenian Parliament — through democratic elections.

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