

## MEPs adopt resolution on closer ties between Armenia and EU



**Members of the European Parliament voted 504 to 4 with 32 abstentions to adopt a resolution on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia.**

**The resolution:**

1. Recognizes and welcomes the fact that Armenian has strongly emphasized its desire to enhance and prioritize relations with the European Union; believes that the European Union should respond positively and take full advantage of this potential geopolitical shift and help Armenia anchor itself more strongly in the community of democracies;

2. Calls for the sustained implementation of the newly agreed EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda, emphasizing the need to actively pursue and achieve the ambitious joint priorities for co-operation; believes that a substantial partnership between the EU and Armenia is a logical step in aligning with Armenia's choice in favor of democracy, the rule of law, the fight against corruption and respect for the international rules-based order;

3. Welcomes Armenia's commitment to implementing CEPA and the progress it has made in implementing the CEPA roadmap; welcomes the fact that the Armenian Government recognizes CEPA as a strategic blueprint for key reforms in Armenia; encourages the Commission and the Member States to start working on a roadmap to achieve an ambitious upgrade to the EU's relations with Armenia; believes that the experience stemming from the Association Agreements / Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Areas with Ukraine, Georgia and the Republic of Moldova should serve as a good basis, in particular in relation to a gradual sectoral integration with the single market, which should bear tangible benefits on a macro and micro scale for Armenia;

4. Reiterates that, pursuant to Article 49 of the Treaty of European Union, any European state may apply to become a member of the European Union provided that it adheres to the Copenhagen criteria and the principles of democracy, respects fundamental freedoms and human and

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## Swiss Armenian businessman Vahe Gabrash briefs PM Pashinyan on upcoming initiatives



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Swiss-Armenian businessman and philanthropist Vahe Gabrash.

The Prime Minister commended Mr. Gabrash's economic and other activities in Armenia, adding that the government is ready to discuss the progress of the projects and contribute to the implementation

of new ones.

Vahe Gabrash expressed gratitude for the reception and support, stressing that he will continue the activities in Armenia. The businessman presented details about the programs implemented in different directions and referred to upcoming initiatives.

## Armenian FM, US official discuss security situation in the South Caucasus

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and US Senior Adviser on Caucasus Negotiations Louis Bono have discussed the security situation in the South Caucasus.

During a meeting in Yerevan reference was made to the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the discussions on the peace treaty. Minister Mirzoyan briefed his interlocutor on the latest developments, emphasizing Armenia's positions on key issues.

In particular, the importance of



adherence to the mutual recognition of territorial integrity based on the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration and the further process of demarcation based on the Alma-Ata

Declaration, maps with strong legal basis were emphasized. In the context of unblocking regional communications Minister Mirzoyan reaffirmed Armenia's consistent approach to implementing the process on the basis of well-known principles – sovereignty, jurisdiction, reciprocity and equality.

Ararat Mirzoyan and Louis Bono also exchanged views on the agenda of Armenia-US bilateral political dialogue, upcoming events and further development of partnership

## Armenia, Kazakhstan have a chance to open new page in bilateral relations – FM

Armenia and Kazakhstan have a chance to open a new page in bilateral relations for the benefit of the two countries, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at a press conference in Yerevan alongside his Kazakh counterpart Murat Nurtleu.

“Indeed, we are expanding the bases of our cooperation, the high level of our political dialogue testifies that the necessary prerequisites are there. Our trade and economic relations are developing dynamically,” Minister Mirzoyan

said, emphasizing that there is still a huge untapped potential.

During a tête-à-tête meeting earlier on March 18 the sides expressed willingness to develop the relations and make use of the untapped potential.

Ararat Mirzoyan stressed that Armenia is interested in developing bilateral relations with everyone – from the American continent to East Asia.

“Of course, the relations with Kazakhstan play an important role in this vision, and I'm glad to see the same interest from

the Kazakh side. Today we reached concrete agreements on the development of these relations,” the Armenian Foreign Minister said.



## Armenian willing to continue working towards closer ties with EU – PM

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has reiterated willingness of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to continue working towards further deepening and development of Armenia-EU relations.

Speaking at the Government sitting on March 14, the Prime Minister welcomed the [resolution](#) adopted on March 13 by the European Parliament on the need for closer ties between the European Union and Armenia and the peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

“This document, supported by all factions, was adopted with 504 votes in favor, 4 against, and 32 abstentions. The resolution expresses unwavering support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and independence of the Republic of Armenia based on the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration, and also supports peace efforts between Armenia and Azerbaijan,” PM Pashinyan said.

“With this resolution, the European

Parliament recorded the achievements of the Republic of Armenia in the field of democracy, rule of law, fight against corruption, which is extremely important for the international perception of our country,” he noted.

“The resolution quoted the statement I made last year on October 17 at the European Parliament that Armenia is ready to be as close to the European Union as the European Union deems it possible, noting that if the Republic of Armenia wants to submit an application to become a candidate for European Union membership, the institutions of the European Union should support that move,” the Prime Minister said.

Saluting this resolution of the European Parliament, PM Pashinyan stressed that it should become a subject of public discussion in Armenia.

“This is another opportunity to discuss the vision of the future of the Republic of



Armenia, and I hope that the political forces of the Republic of Armenia, non-governmental organizations, different layers of society, citizens will express their attitude towards this message from the European Parliament, because such messages need a much wider response than at the level of just the government or the parliamentary majority,” he said.

At the same time, he expressed the will of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to continue working towards the further deepening and development of Armenia-EU relations.

## US warns that Baku’s land corridor demand ‘elevates risks’ of armed conflict

The United States has warned that Azerbaijan’s continued demand for a “land corridor” through Armenia to Nakhichevan will elevate the risk of armed conflict, saying that relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan will likely remain tense, *Asbarez* reports.

This assessment, made by the US intelligence community, was made in the annual [Worldwide Threat Assessment](#) report presented to Congress on March 11 by the leaders of the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, the CIA, FBI, the Defense Intelligence Agency and the National Security Agency.

“Relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan are likely to remain tense,”

the report said.

“Nevertheless, the lack of a bilateral peace treaty, the proximity of their military forces, the lack of a cease-fire enforcement mechanism, and Azerbaijan’s readiness to use calibrated military pressure to advance its goals in talks with Armenia will remain,” the report added.

“The transition of Nagorno-Karabakh governance from ethnic Armenians to Azerbaijanis and Azerbaijan’s demand for access to a land corridor linking Azerbaijan to its exclave will elevate the risk of armed confrontation,” the report emphasized.

Azerbaijan’s attack on Artsakh in September, that forced the mass exodus of its

Armenian population, was also addressed in the report, with the U.S. intelligence agencies saying that “the rapid exodus of most of the region’s ethnic Armenian population and the planned self-dissolution of the government allowed Baku to advance plans to integrate the region with Azerbaijan, effectively removing this longstanding issue from the bilateral peace agenda.”

“Azerbaijan’s retaking of Nagorno-Karabakh has reduced volatility, and a military confrontation probably would be limited in duration and intensity,” the report added.

## Armenia looks into prospects of further deepening the partnership with EU – FM



Armenia looks into prospects of further deepening the partnership with the European Union, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said in a post on X.

He welcomed the adoption by the European Parliament of a resolution on closer Armenia-EU ties and the need for Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Treaty.

“We look into prospects of further

deepening our partnership, with strong commitment to democracy, development and building lasting peace in the region,” FM Mirzoyan said.

Members of the European Parliament voted 504 to 4 with 32 abstentions on Wednesday to adopt a [resolution](#) on closer ties between the EU and Armenia and the need for a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

## In 2023, Armenia-EU political dialogue deepened significantly- Deputy Foreign Minister summarizes the year

In 2023, the Armenia-EU political dialogue significantly deepened, significantly raising the level of political dialogue and including new components, including in the field of security, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Paruyr Hovhannisyan said at the session of the Standing Committee on European Integration of the National Assembly.

He reminded that on January 23, 2023, the EU Council adopted a decision to deploy a long-term civilian mission in Armenia for a duration of two years.

The Deputy Foreign Minister said that mission activities commenced on February 20, 2023.

“The agreement regarding the



mission’s status was signed on November 20, 2023, and on December 11, the EU Foreign Affairs Council adopted a decision to expand the composition of the EU mission in Armenia,” said Hovhannisyan.

The Deputy FM mentioned that the dialogue on political and security issues between Armenia and the EU started in

2023. The first session was held in Yerevan on January 26, and the second session took place in Brussels on November 15.

“The institutional framework of the partnership established by the Armenian-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement continued to operate effectively throughout 2023 and in the first quarter of 2024,” noted Hovhannisyan.

The Deputy Minister also highlighted the humanitarian assistance provided by the EU to meet the needs of compatriots forcibly displaced from Nagorno-Karabakh. Additionally, special attention was given to initiating dialogue on the liberalization of visas between Armenia and the EU during the reporting year.

## Deepening of Armenia’s relations with EU not directed against anyone – FM

The deepening of Armenia’s relations with the West, particularly the EU, is not directed against anyone, including the Russian Federation, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at the sitting of the National Assembly’s Standing Committee on Foreign Relation.

“I officially declare that the Republic of Armenia is not involved in any project against anyone. The deepening of our relations with the West, for example with

the EU, is not directed against the Russian Federation, it does not aim to destroy these relations,” the Foreign Minister said.

He further noted that this is not even directed against neighbors, adding that the deepening of those relations pursues one goal – to strengthen the level of Armenia’s security.

“As for neighbors, our vision is as follows – full normalization of relations with Turkey, normalization of relations

and peace process with Azerbaijan. Once again, not directed against anyone,” Minister Mirzoyan stated.





## Adjustment of the border in Tavush will ensure the security of Voskepar and Kirants villages – Prime Minister



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visited Tavush region. In Voskepar, the Prime Minister met the local resident, as well as the residents of Baghanis, and then visited Kirants village. Nikol Pashinyan referred to the border delimitation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In his speech in Voskepar, the Prime Minister said: “As we previously agreed, I said that when there are practical problems to be solved with your settlement, I will come and discuss and talk with you personally. What practical matter have I come to discuss with you? The problem is that the process of delimitation and demarcation between Armenia and Azerbaijan is entering the practical stage. What does delimitation and demarcation mean in general, and specifically in the case of the Republic of Armenia? It means to go and locate on the ground where the Republic of Armenia begins. We all know, you know better than me where it starts or where it ends, it’s the same thing, no matter which way you look at the Republic of Armenia.”

The Prime Minister showed the sketch of Armenia to the audience and noted that

it is the Republic of Armenia which we all know. “The delimitation and demarcation process is as follows. the delimitation commissions should go and decide on the spot where the Republic of Armenia begins, and that should become the state border between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Why are we referring to this section and why have we come to discuss this issue with Voskepar specifically? Because there are some issues that we need to discuss. We note the following: we see that we can start a real process of delimitation and demarcation in this section from Baghanis to Berkaber.

What’s special here? You know that Azerbaijan is talking about 4 villages, it’s about the 4 non-enclave villages. You know we are talking about 31 villages. We raise this issue; they raise that issue. And when we want to move forward in these discussions, even if we rely on the logic that we have 31 settlements in a problematic situation, while Azerbaijan has less, Azerbaijan uses such an argument that the actual territory of none of the settlements of the Republic of Armenia is under the control of Azerbaijan. that is, the residential area of the village is not under the control of Azerbaijan. What do they say? They say: let’s mutually free the territories of the settlements, then discuss and talk about the vital areas of the villages and settlements.

Of course, we bring counter arguments, we say that the village is not only the village administration, the village is

also its vital areas, I mean, during those discussions, we bring all the arguments, and those arguments are fair. Our policy is that we must not allow war, we must not allow war to start. And this is also the reason why we have decided to adjust the border of the Republic of Armenia in these areas and we are doing it not only for the sake of the Republic of Armenia, but also specifically for the village of Voskepar, the village of Kirants, in order to ensure the security of these villages,” said the Prime Minister.

Next, the Prime Minister answered many questions of residents, which were related to delimitation and demarcation, infrastructure, possible problems and their solutions. The Prime Minister noted that all the questions and considerations raised will be taken into account.

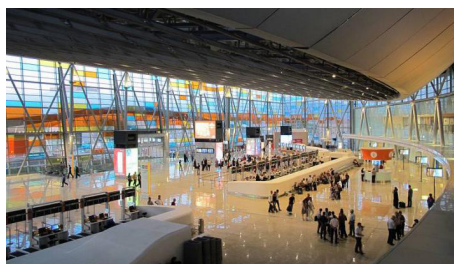
An agreement was reached that the representatives of Voskepar and Kirants settlements will meet regularly with the members of the Committee on Border Delimitation and Border Security to share information about the process and discuss existing issues.

A consultation was held in Tavush regional administration under the leadership of the Prime Minister, during which the issues raised in the meetings with the residents and the further steps towards their solution were discussed. Nikol Pashinyan gave relevant instructions to the officials, emphasizing the need for a full solution of infrastructure and other problems.

## Armenian border guards have enough experience to carry out service at Zvartnots Airport

Armenian border guards have enough experience to carry out service at Zvartnots Airport, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said at a press conference on March 12.

He said the Border Guard Troops of the Republic of Armenia have addressed a letter to the Russian Border Troops in Armenia, expressing gratitude for having carried out service at Zvartnots International



Airport since independence, for support in ensuring security.

“They have informed that given that the state institutions in our country are developing, the border guard troops, namely at Zvartnots Airport, now have enough experience, skills and capacity to carry out border service without the support of the Russian side,” the Prime Minister said.

## Austrian Space Agency starts “Mars Mission” in Armenia

The Austrian Space Forum in cooperation with the Armenian Space Agency kicks off its AMADEE-24 Mars analog simulation in Armenia on Tuesday, March 12.

Six analog astronauts – two women, four men from Austria, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands and Spain will work in isolation from March 12 to April 5, 2024 to prepare future astronautical Mars missions. Over 200 scientists from 26 countries are involved in this international endeavoring.

The six analog astronauts will live and work in a habitat specially designed for them. They will only leave the habitat wearing the OeWF’s Mars suit prototype. For the duration of the mission communication with the Mission Support Center in Vienna, Austria will only be possible with a 10-minute delay in order to simulate the distance from Earth to Mars. Conducting the experiments in the areas of human factors, robotics and geology, the analog astronauts will use a drone and robotic vehicles – so-called rovers – to explore and map their environment, take soil samples and transport heavy loads.

During the mission, the analog astronauts will be cut off from the outside

world and will thus have to rely solely on their team to complete their tasks and solve emerging problems. They will be supported on site by a team of specialists who will ensure the safety of the crew and take on any necessary repair work without directly interacting with the analog astronauts.

The Austrian Space Forum will broadcast the last hour before the mission start live from the test site in Armenia and the Mission Support Center in Vienna, Austria. Scientists and mission members will shed more light on the goals and purpose of analog research and the special features of AMADEE-24. The highlight of the live broadcast will be the start of the mission, when the analog astronauts enter their habitat and close the door.

Simulating Mars human-robotic surface activities in terrestrial analogs has evolved into an efficient tool for developing exploration mission architectures. They facilitate to understand the advantages and limitations of future Human planetary missions, becoming an added value for the development of remote science operations, helping to understand

the constraints and opportunities of the technology and workflows.

The test site in the province of Ararat was selected for their geological and topographic similarity to Mars. The AMADEE-24 mission presents an excellent opportunity to:

Study equipment behavior involving the simultaneous usage of instruments with the option of humans-in-the-loop (via two high-fidelity spacesuit simulators, portable system, etc.)

The development of platforms for testing life-detection or geoscience techniques, robotic support tools for human missions and concepts for high situational awareness of remote support teams.

Studying the analog as a model region for its Martian counterparts.

Serving as a catalyst to increase the visibility of planetary sciences and human exploration.

Evolving the know-how of managing human missions to Mars deploying a realistic model for a Mission Support Center – Astronaut actions and the encompassing decision-making framework.

## India establishes air corridor to Armenia to handle exports of strategic importance

HALCON, a joint working group (JWG) formed by Hindustan Aeronautics Limited (HAL) and Container Corporation India (CONCOR), has embarked on a significant endeavor by entering the realm of handling strategic air cargo exports to Armenia, *Indian Defense Research Wing (IDRW)* reports.

The inauguration of the flight, presided over by Shri Saket Chaturvedi, CEO of the MiG Complex at HAL, marks a pivotal moment in India’s logistics infrastructure and strategic export capabilities.

The collaboration between HAL and CONCOR signifies a concerted effort to capitalize on opportunities in the global market, particularly in regions with



strategic significance such as Armenia. As geopolitical dynamics evolve, there is an increasing demand for reliable and efficient logistics solutions to facilitate international trade and commerce.

By venturing into the business of handling strategic air cargo exports, HALCON

aims to position itself as a key player in India’s logistics landscape. The partnership leverages HAL’s expertise in aerospace and defense technology alongside CONCOR’s proficiency in containerized cargo transport and logistics management.

Armenia, with its strategic location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia, presents a lucrative market for Indian exports. The country’s burgeoning economy and growing trade ties with India underscore the immense potential for collaboration and mutual benefit. HALCON’s entry into Armenia air cargo market not only strengthens bilateral trade relations, but also enhances India’s presence in the region.



## Switzerland launches 10-year forest restoration project in Armenia with 10 million CHF



The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC), together with partners Armenian National Agrarian University (ANAU) and Swiss Federal Institute for



Forest, Snow and Landscape Research (WSL) launched a 10-year development project "Forest Restoration and Climate Change in Armenia" (FORACCA).

Hosted by the Armenian National Agrarian University (ANAU), the FORACCA launch event was attended by a large audience of development practitioners and specialists. They were welcomed by Werner Thut, the Deputy Head of Mission of the Embassy of Switzerland in Armenia, equally responsible for the Swiss Cooperation Program in Armenia, Hambarzum Matevosyan, Senior Adviser to the Prime Minister, Aram Meymaryan, Deputy Minister of Environment of Armenia, Levon Azizyan, Director of Hydro-meteorological and Monitoring Center, Hrachya Zakoyan, Acting Rector of the ANAU, and Marco Pütz, Research coordinator at the WSL. The opening remarks were followed by a workshop with active participation of stakeholders from relevant state bodies, academic

institutions as well as interested specialized non-governmental organizations.

In his opening remarks, Werner Thut recalled a number of alarming scientific facts and concluded: "Against this background, there is obviously a need for action on a large scale; and action must be taken urgently. This sense of urgent action is also clearly reflected in the Armenian

promotes climate-smart practices in rural areas and forests. Eventually, it shall allow evidence-based policymaking for climate adaptation and efficient forest management.

The project clearly goes beyond planting trees. Rather, it tests new methods for restoring forest landscapes and assesses the value and role of forests in economic



Government's priorities."

The project budget amounts to 10 Mio. CHF (around 11.5 Mio. US\$) for the period 2023-2033, if the financial situation of the SDC allows it over time. FORACCA's three primary objectives are to advance the scientific understanding of Armenia's climate change-related challenges and develop capacities to address them. Moreover, it

terms and for climate protection policy. Fundamental for better management practices and policies, it improves forest monitoring.

FORACCA intends to achieve this by bringing in cutting-edge scientific knowledge from Switzerland, building on no less than a hundred years of collective experience in forest, landscape and climate research. The project consistently takes a local approach: it will work closely with Armenian non-governmental organizations and local communities, as well as governmental institutions such as the Ministry of Environment and the Armenian Hydromet-service. Finally, FORACCA seeks close coordination and, direct cooperation with other international partners such as the World Bank project ResiLand.



page 1 → minority rights and upholds the rule of law; considers that, should Armenia be interested in applying for candidate status and continuing on its path of sustained reforms consolidating its democracy, this could set the stage for a transformative phase in EU-Armenia relations; calls on the Commission and the Council to actively support Armenia's desire for increased cooperation with the EU, not only in the area of economic partnership but also in political dialogue, people-to-people contacts, sectoral integration and security cooperation;

5. Supports Armenia in its continuous efforts to implement reforms and strengthen democracy, the rule of law and good governance; underscores the important role of civil society in the implementation of the reforms; calls on Armenia to continue cooperating with the EU in this regard and calls for the EU to increase support in these areas, in particular technical support and the exchange of expertise; encourages Armenia's active engagement in the Eastern Partnership policy as a means of fostering good unneighborly relations in the South Caucasus;

6. Recognizes that the Russian Federation's influence on the Armenian economy remains high, encourages Armenia to exert vigilance on possible EU sanctions circumvention taking place in the country; is fully aware of the level and diversity of threats that the Russian Federation might try to use against Armenia to punish it for its independent political and strategic choices; believes that the EU needs to be ready to provide rapid assistance to Armenia to mitigate the negative consequences of any such unfriendly steps;

7. Notes that over the last 10 years, the volume of Armenia-EU bilateral trade has been increasing; encourages Armenia, the EU and its Member States, as well as European companies and investors, to take the necessary steps to further enhance their economic and trade relations; commends the success of the Economic and Investment Plan and encourages the EU and Armenia to continue leveraging both

public and private investments to promote sustainable development in Armenia;

8. Recognizes the urgent need to strengthen the cooperation between the EU and Armenia in the field of security and defence while Armenia reconsiders its membership of the CSTO; calls for the EU to respond favorably to Armenia's request for support via the European Peace Facility and to provide support to the Armenian military; notes the added value of regular EU-Armenian Political and Security Dialogues, as an umbrella platform for all security related matters; calls for the launch of a hybrid threat assessment survey, which will help Armenia to identify key vulnerabilities and devise targeted solutions; welcomes the actions undertaken by several Member States to provide defensive military support to Armenia and urges the Member States to consider similar initiatives;

9. Welcomes Armenia's decision to suspend its participation in the CSTO, following its failure to assist Armenia against military aggression, and to seek a more reliable security architecture; supports Armenia's official request for the Russian Federation to withdraw its Federal Security Service border guards from its international airport;

10. Recognizes the untapped potential of people-to-people contacts between the EU and Armenia; calls for the progress achieved by Armenia in implementing the agreements on visa facilitation and readmission to be acknowledged; believes that it is time to launch a visa liberalization dialogue with Armenia;

11. Welcomes the conclusion of the agreement between the EU and the Republic of Armenia, which will enable the transfer of operational personal data between Eurojust and Armenia's competent authorities as part of judicial cooperation in criminal matters; underlines the importance of continuing to deepen the cooperation between the EU and Armenia in fighting crime and terrorism and protecting the security of the Union for mutual benefit;

12. Expresses its support for the

activities of EUMA and underscores the important role it plays; calls for its mandate to be extended beyond 2025 and its staffing to be further increased; reiterates its disappointment at Azerbaijan's refusal to allow the mission to operate on its side of the border and the repeated smear campaigns originating from Azerbaijan against EUMA; deplores the fact that Russian border guards stationed in Armenia blocked EUMA from reaching the village of Nerkin Hand where four Armenian soldiers were recently killed at the hands of Azerbaijan on 13 February 2024, following the alleged injury of an Azerbaijani soldier; condemns the inflammatory rhetoric deployed by Azerbaijani officials against the EU, its Member States, EUMA and the Armenian authorities;

13. Underscores that the EU should be ready to impose sanctions on any individuals and entities that threaten the sovereignty, independence and territorial integrity of Armenia;

14. Calls on Azerbaijan to genuinely engage in a comprehensive and transparent dialogue with the Karabakh Armenians to ensure respect for their rights and guarantee their security, including their right to return to and live in their homes in dignity and safety under international presence, to access their land and property rights, to maintain their distinct identity and fully enjoy their civic, cultural, social and religious rights; calls on Azerbaijan to release and commit to broad amnesty for all the inhabitants of Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia who continue to be in Azerbaijani custody; calls for the full, immediate and effective implementation of all the ICJ orders in the case on the Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (*Armenia v Azerbaijan*);

15. Reiterates its condemnation of the Azerbaijani military incursions into the internationally recognized territory of Armenia and ongoing occupation of parts of it; reiterates its demand for the withdrawal of Azerbaijan's troops from the entirety of the sovereign territory of Armenia; rejects and → page 9



page 8 expresses its grave concern regarding the irredentist and inflammatory statements made by the Azerbaijani President and other Azerbaijani officials threatening the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Armenia, including those in connection with demanding the extraterritorial corridor linking Azerbaijan to its exclave of Nakhchivan; warns Azerbaijan against any potential military adventurism against Armenia proper; highlights that Azerbaijan's connectivity issues with its exclave of Nakhchivan should be resolved with full respect for the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Armenia;

16. Reiterates the European Union's unequivocal support for the sovereignty, territorial integrity and inviolability of the borders of Armenia; strongly supports the normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan based on the principles of mutual recognition of territorial integrity and inviolability of borders based on the 1991 Almaty Declaration, border delimitation based on relevant USSR General Staff maps that have been provided to both sides, and the unblocking of regional communication based on respect for the sovereignty and jurisdiction of both countries, on the basis of reciprocity and equality;

17. Expresses its support for the resumption of talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan on all pending issues, with the aim of concluding a peace treaty, and calls on both parties to remain fully committed

to a lasting and peaceful settlement of the long-standing dispute, through dialogue and negotiations; believes that this agreement needs to be negotiated in good faith and be based on the recognition of sovereignty, territorial integrity and non-use of force; calls for a stronger EU commitment to continue facilitating a comprehensive, sustainable peace for the benefit of all the people of the region; calls on Türkiye and other allies of Azerbaijan to refrain from fuelling bellicose behavior from Baku and to exert their influence in favor of a swift conclusion to the peace negotiations;

18. Strongly disagrees with the tone of some recent statements by leaders of the Commission and the European Council congratulating President Aliyev for his re-election without mentioning the absence of democracy in Azerbaijan and misleadingly qualifying Azerbaijan as a reliable partner; affirms that these statements do not reflect the position of the European Union and should never have been made in the light of the ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh by Azerbaijan; urges the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and the European External Action Service to continue the negotiations for a renewed partnership agreement conditionally, if Azerbaijan has demonstrated its genuine readiness to respect the rights and security concerns of the Karabakh Armenians and has contributed to substantial progress towards

a comprehensive and sustainable peace agreement with Armenia;

19. Expresses serious concern about the failure to safeguard the cultural, religious and historical heritage of the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, in violation of the ICJ Order of 7 December 2021; condemns all cases of the destruction, vandalism and desecration of all sites recalling the centuries-long Armenian presence in Nagorno-Karabakh; calls on the Azerbaijani authorities to preserve, protect and promote the rich and diverse heritage of the region; urges UNESCO to take immediate action to preserve and protect Armenian cultural heritage at risk in Nagorno-Karabakh; calls for the cooperation between Armenia and the EU to be reinforced, concerning the monitoring of the systematic destruction of Armenian cultural heritage (churches, monasteries, cemeteries, monuments, palaces, etc.) by Azerbaijan, most notably through the involvement of the EU Satellite Centre;

20. Instructs its President to forward this resolution to the Council, the Commission, the Vice-President of the Commission / High Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Armenia and the President, Government and Parliament of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe, the United Nations and the Council of Europe.

## Armenian Ambassador, Chair of Flemish Parliament discuss perspectives of cooperation

On March 11, Ambassador of Armenia in Brussels Tigran Balayan had a meeting with the Chair of the Flemish Parliament Liesbeth Homans.

During the meeting Ambassador Balayan thanked the Flemish Parliament for the adoption of resolutions on Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh during the previous year and emphasized the importance of the implementation of the provisions of the resolutions by the executive bodies.

The sides exchanged thoughts on



regional issues, in particular, the current situation of peace negotiations between

Armenia and Azerbaijan, the ethnic cleansing of Artsakh, the challenges that Armenia is facing, and future goals and perspectives.

At Ambassador's request, Liesbeth Homans presented the arrangement of political forces at different levels in Belgium and the possible results of the electoral processes.

The cooperation between Armenia and Flanders in the economic, cultural and educational spheres was also discussed.

## “Armenia Faces Threats Amid Uncertainty: Readiness for Major Steps Questioned”

At the recent discussion on Noyan Tapan’s “Urgent Issues,” esteemed guest political analyst Boris Navasardyan delved into the pressing topic of Armenian-Russian relations. With rumors swirling about the withdrawal of Russian border guards from Zvartnots airport, Navasardyan provided valuable analysis on the potential implications of this development.

In recent times, the dynamics between Armenia and Russia have been under scrutiny. One pressing issue is the extent to which these relations will evolve. Confirming longstanding rumors, Armen Grigoryan recently announced the official notification from Yerevan to Moscow regarding withdrawal of its border guards from Yerevan’s Zvartnots international airport.

This development, while not entirely surprising, underscores a recurring pattern where Armenian expectations, even within the framework of the CSTO, often fall short. According to political analyst Boris Navasardyan, this could be seen as a political maneuver, albeit with symbolic significance. Navasardyan suggests that while the move may signal shifts in Armenian-Russian relations, its practical implications remain minimal.

Navasardyan posits that the decision may provide psychological reassurance to visitors to Armenia, who may perceive the absence of Russian border guards as a form of comfort. However, he emphasizes that substantively, this change is unlikely to substantially alter the bilateral relationship.

The analyst contends that despite numerous declarations in Yerevan asserting that the anticipated support from Russia is unwarranted, and advocating for Armenia to seek alternative avenues for security and urban cooperation, mere rhetoric will not suffice. He asserts that substantive changes are imperative, beyond mere discourse with foreign media outlets. Regrettably, there has been scant progress at both the administrative and practical levels. The analyst perceives that our leadership has recognized this stagnation and is endeavoring to instigate change. Anticipating the next course of action, the analyst predicts potential disruptions in the broadcasting of Russian TV channels. This would signify another tangible measure, potentially involving the annulment of bilateral intergovernmental agreements or imposing stricter conditions. However, it appears that Armenia remains hesitant to undertake more significant measures. Pertinent matters such as formal membership in the CSTO and

the presence of Russian border guards, let alone the presence of the Russian military base, remain conspicuously absent from the agenda.

The analyst asserts that while Armenia maintains a vested interest in its relationship with Russia, maintaining the status quo without formal changes is no longer tenable. There is a growing acknowledgment that the ongoing uncertainty surrounding bilateral relations cannot persist indefinitely. The analyst urges Armenian authorities to recognize this evolving reality, as the geopolitical landscape within which official relations between Yerevan and Moscow were forged has undergone significant transformations. However, the imperative to clarify these relations does not imply a complete absence of ties, given Russia’s enduring significance for Armenia and the broader region. Procrastination only exacerbates the uncertainty, posing a potential threat to Armenia’s security amidst the region’s challenges. As such, it becomes increasingly imperative to address and stabilize the situation before the uncertainties escalate further.

Following mutual accusations, the CSTO must undergo significant changes in its activities to dissuade Armenia from continuing the freeze on its membership. However, according to the analyst, while there is potential for change within the CSTO, such changes are unlikely to materialize. In reality, Armenia’s participation in the CSTO has effectively been reduced to a formal status, with little substantive engagement. The analyst emphasizes the importance of Russia and Armenia delineating areas of continued cooperation within the framework of the CSTO, as the absence of such clarity only perpetuates uncertainty.

Regarding the possibility of Armenia withdrawing from the CSTO, the analyst distinguishes it from potential exits from the EAEU and the CIS. The CSTO’s failure to fulfill its obligations toward Armenia, coupled with Armenia’s reciprocal non-compliance, has eroded trust over an extended period. However, the complexities of the EAEU, particularly its procedural intricacies involving customs services and international trade, render a swift withdrawal unfeasible. The analyst warns that disregarding these procedures could precipitate economic upheaval, leading to the collapse of the entire economic system.

Russia’s primary accusation is that Armenia has been lured by promises from the West and is tilting towards Western alliances. This sentiment was underscored

during a meeting between the Defense Minister of Armenia and the Defense Minister of Iran, where the latter emphasized the importance of direct negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan for fostering peace and stability in the region, without the interference of external actors. The analyst identifies three potential avenues for resolving Armenian-Azerbaijani relations.

The first approach aligns with Azerbaijan’s pursuit, emphasizing peace on its terms, as repeatedly articulated by Aliyev. This entails imposing Azerbaijan’s demands and conditions on Armenia through forceful pressure. The second option involves the involvement of robust mediators who wield influence over both Baku and Yerevan, ensuring the compliance with any agreements reached. According to the analyst, this represents the most pragmatic pathway forward. Lastly, direct negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan without intermediaries or coercive tactics constitute the third option. However, this approach hinges on the existence of mutual trust, a quality currently absent in the relationship.

Azerbaijan’s current geopolitical orientation is clearly defined. It exhibits a bias towards leveraging its power advantage to regulate relations, displaying a reluctance to involve influential external actors. However, Azerbaijan must acknowledge prevailing realities, as it too stands to benefit from strategic collaborations in the region. This includes addressing the pressing need for substantial resources to rebuild and develop territories under its control, necessitating partnerships and potential compromises. Ultimately, Azerbaijan may find it advantageous to engage in certain compromises aligned with its interests, particularly in mitigating the risks of further conflict and fostering regional stability.

In conclusion, the discussion emphasizes the importance of clarity and proactive steps in Armenian-Russian relations. It highlights the need for pragmatic approaches to resolve tensions with Azerbaijan, stressing the role of mediators and mutual trust. Additionally, it underscores Azerbaijan’s evolving geopolitical stance and the potential for strategic partnerships in the region. Overall, a delicate balance of assertiveness and cooperation is essential to secure peace and stability.

Translated by Liana Sargsyan



## “Peaceful Coexistence or War? Samvel Meliksetyan’s Insights”



“Analyzing Azerbaijan’s Geopolitical Moves: A Conversation with Samvel Meliksetyan”

In a recent interview with Noyan Tapan, political scientist and translator Samvel Meliksetyan delves into the intricacies of Azerbaijan’s concerns regarding reforms in the armed forces of Armenia. Meliksetyan poses a thought-provoking rhetorical question raised by Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan during his dialogue with France 24 TV channel: Why does Azerbaijan actively cooperate with France while conspicuously remaining silent about its substantial investments in weaponry?

Meliksetyan boldly asserts that armed blackmail has emerged as Azerbaijan’s primary tool in recent years. The fear of losing this potent leverage, coupled with concerns over potential Armenian retaliation, has woven a complex geopolitical narrative. He underscores the lasting impact of the 1992-1994 defeat on the Azerbaijani identity, contending that this historical trauma significantly influences their present actions and attitudes.

According to Meliksetyan, the Azerbaijani leadership’s approach is short-sighted. Despite holding advantageous positions, they could choose a peaceful resolution to regional issues, including the contested Zangezur corridor. Meliksetyan envisions a scenario where regional integration involving Armenia, Georgia, and Azerbaijan could yield agreements on economic cooperation, fostering freedom of movement without resorting to military tactics.

Critiquing the Azerbaijani leadership’s reliance on military blackmail, Meliksetyan argues that it obstructs the potential for constructive dialogue. He delves into the personal complexities within Azerbaijan’s leadership, highlighting President Ilham Aliyev’s desire to assert himself in the shadow of his father’s legacy. This

constant need for affirmation, stemming from a pathological trauma, is seen as a significant impediment to productive diplomacy.

It can be argued that Azerbaijan’s demand for the delimitation and demarcation of Armenia’s borders may be perceived as a continuation of President Aliyev’s aggressive stance against Armenia, with the goal of acquiring additional territories. This perspective gains strength when considering the occupation of sovereign Armenian territories today, alongside historical losses in the 1990s.

The situation becomes more complex when examining the motives behind Azerbaijan’s demands. If framed as a form of forceful blackmail, where demands are made without reciprocal offers, it deviates from diplomatic norms. The absence of principles guiding delimitation and demarcation, as articulated by the Armenian leadership, further complicates the situation. The insistence on a return to old borders or equitable compensation for changes reflects a desire for a fair resolution.

The challenge lies in Azerbaijan’s potential difficulty in moving away from a militaristic approach and forceful blackmail tactics. The refusal to adopt a more diplomatic stance may push Armenia toward seeking new alliances, fortifying its defenses, and preparing for the possibility of war rather than peace with Azerbaijan. The expectation that continued blackmail will lead to Armenian concessions may, in turn, fuel sentiments within Armenian leadership and society that see no alternative but to prepare for a new conflict. This notion is gaining traction, indicating a growing belief in Armenia that the only viable response to Azerbaijan’s approach may be readiness for war rather than diplomacy.

It seems evident that Pashinyan’s shift from evasive to firm answers in recent interviews may be linked to his trip to France and subsequent discussions with the French Minister of the Armed Forces. The agreements reached during these visits, whether disclosed or undisclosed, likely provided Armenia with new resources and options.

When Armenia possesses resources, it becomes less inclined to make extensive concessions and adopts a firmer stance. This change in approach may be a strategic response to the perceived lack of appreciation from the Azerbaijani side for Armenia’s prior flexibility and willingness to compromise. The mutual distrust between the two nations contributes to the challenge of negotiations, with both sides striving for maximum, sometimes unrealizable, outcomes.

Aliyev’s main strategy appears to be grappling with the decision of which mediator to choose for negotiations, highlighting the shifting dynamics in regional relations. While the Russian platform offers a formal agreement, it also maintains an undercurrent of mutual distrust among all parties involved. Despite fewer conflicts with Russia currently, Aliyev’s political immaturity and the desire for internal affirmation seem to guide his focus on continuing the conflict rather than seeking a fair and peaceful resolution.

As for the Russian military base in Armenia, its role has evolved over time. Originally established to protect Armenia from the Turkish threat in the early ‘90s, it has lost its direct function. The current dilemma lies in its unclear purpose, as attempts to remove it pose a potential threat to Armenia’s security. The base, once a guarantor of security, has transformed into one of the sources of security concerns for Armenia. This complex situation forces Armenian authorities to grapple with the challenges posed by the evolving role of the Russian factor, which has shifted from providing security assurance to becoming a potential source of threats for both Armenia and Artsakh.

The fear in Azerbaijan regarding a potential change in leadership in Armenia, particularly if a figure more directly aligned with Moscow were to emerge, underscores historical complexities and the delicate balance of relations. The concerns about a Russian-designated leader potentially reviving conflicts and reigniting Artsakh issues reflect the intricate dynamics at play.

Azerbaijan’s dilemma is partly influenced by  page 12

page 11 ➔ its own political approach. A more open and constructive dialogue with Armenia, especially with a leader like Pashinyan, who has expressed a willingness to resolve conflicts favorably, could have yielded different outcomes. The current situation, where Azerbaijan has achieved significant territorial control in Artsakh, presents a paradox — having attained more than initially envisioned, the challenge lies in digesting these gains and managing new aspirations.

The notion of a fight for leadership in the Southern Caucasus involving the West, Russia, and using Armenia and Azerbaijan as instruments reflects the broader geopolitical struggles between major powers. Historically, the West and Russia have engaged in a tug-of-war for influence, with shifting dynamics and varying forms.

Until recently, the West had generally ceded influence over Soviet-style regions to Russia. However, events like the Ukrainian war have reshaped this landscape. The West now faces internal challenges, with isolationist tendencies in the United States and crises within Europe. France, in particular, appears to be seeking a revival of its historical role, emphasizing its unique mission and cultivating a cult of strong leaders.

The evolving role of Europe, particularly France, in international affairs, and the shift in power dynamics with Russia, presents a complex geopolitical landscape. Europe, with France taking a leading role, is attempting to assert itself more actively.

This is evident in France's involvement and influence in regions like Ukraine, signaling a desire to shape its role and impact.

The ongoing struggle for influence and the fixation on power politics, as observed in Russia, risks creating a deep crisis without clear benefits for the country. Europe's potential emergence as a more significant player in global affairs is a positive development. European civilization has historically contributed significantly to the world, offering advancements in safety, comfort, literature, and other essential aspects of modern life.

However, the concern lies in the potential distortion of international relations through power-based approaches, particularly in Russia and Azerbaijan, where traditional regimes with tendencies toward authoritarianism persist. The delicate balance between political and cultural forces is crucial for maintaining a civilized world order. If international relations devolve into violence and power politics, it risks pushing humanity back toward a state of barbarism, eroding the progress made over centuries.

As the world faces new challenges and disruptions, it becomes imperative to preserve the principles that foster cooperation, understanding, and progress. The emergence of aggression and hatred in contemporary geopolitics, exemplified by certain players like Russia, raises concerns about the potential rollback of civilization. It is essential to navigate these complexities carefully to ensure the continued

advancement of a global society founded on shared values and collaboration.

The resolution of conflicts often involves a complex interplay of emotions, propaganda, and the deep-seated fear that underlies hostilities. The exhaustion from war and the loss of loved ones can push communities towards accepting a solution, even if it means making compromises. Propaganda and negative attitudes toward the enemy are powerful tools that influence individuals' perceptions, creating an atmosphere of fear and animosity.

Delving into the psychology of conflict, the fear that the other side wishes harm is a significant factor. This fear often stems from the belief that if the enemy isn't defeated, they pose a threat to one's own existence. External forces can exploit these fears and contribute to the perpetuation of conflict, fueling the internal dynamics.

Stopping a conflict becomes especially challenging when a younger population is involved and identities are still forming. The threat to identity, as seen in the case of Armenians in Azerbaijan, can lead to a disproportionate attachment to the conflict. The creation of an artificially drawn enemy, fueled by radicalism and historical misconceptions, further complicates the resolution process.

Addressing historical grievances is a crucial aspect of finding common ground. In the case of Azerbaijan, acknowledging historical facts and dispelling misconceptions can contribute to a more informed and ➔ page 13

## Conference on 'Armenia and the EU After the Depopulation of Nagorno-Karabakh' held at Free University of Brussels



A conference titled "Armenia and the EU after the depopulation of Nagorno-Karabakh" was held at the Free University of Brussels (ULB), organized by the 'Nairyan' Union in collaboration

with the UN community at the Free University of Brussels.

The speaker at the conference was Tigran Balayan, Armenia's Ambassador to Belgium and Head of the Armenian Mission to the EU.

According to Armenpress Brussels correspondent, the Ambassador presented to the students the events that occurred between 1988 and 2023, covering the history of Nagorno-Karabakh in all its facets: the movement, wars and negotiations.

He also touched upon Armenia's views on the peace process between Armenia

and Azerbaijan, bilateral relations with the EU, deepening cooperation and future joint plans.

"The Armenian foreign policy is neither a turn towards the West nor a turn towards the East. Armenia foreign policy is a turn towards the state interest of Armenians," said Ambassador Balayan.

Many of the students were interested to learn about Armenia's possible candidacy for EU membership. Tigran Balayan noted that Armenia is ready to be as close to the European Union as the European Union deems it possible.



## Jean Monet Winter School: European students embark on educational journey in Armenia

The Jean Monnet Winter School “EU External Relations in the Times of Geopolitical Turbulence: the Case of the South Caucasus” started on March 14 at Eurasia International University. More than 30 students from Oxford, Leipzig, Berlin Humboldt, Dresden, and other leading European universities have arrived in Armenia within the framework of the two-week educational program.

The program includes interactive classes by leading scholars and practitioners, training sessions on humanitarian and development project design and implementation assessment, study visits to the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia, the meetings with the representatives of the EU Delegation to Armenia and the Governmental Office of the Representative in International Legal Matters, discussions with the experts of the EU-funded projects, as well as rich cultural program.

Prof. Suren Ohanyan, Rector of EIU,



warmly welcomed the participants, emphasizing their choice to explore Armenia’s culture, heritage, and academic offerings in Political Science and Legal Studies. “We’re excited to have you here and are confident that our dedicated team will make these learning days truly rewarding. Here’s to a successful journey ahead!”

Professor Ashot Aleksanyan, DAAD Ambassador and Head of the Department of Political Science at Yerevan State University, expressed his gratitude for the initiative and highlighting the importance of the Armenian-German friendship and cooperation. “It is an honor to see our

European friends joining us here. Welcome to Eurasia International University where, I am sure, you will feel at home and which you will leave as strong advocates of our friendship.”

During the opening ceremony, Dr. Ruben Markosyan, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs at EIU, wished all participants a fruitful two-week scholarly and cultural dialogue.

Parsa McJacob, Head of the EIU International Relations Center, praised the school’s initiative as a testament to the University’s commitment to international cooperation.

Dr. Anna Khvorostyankina, academic coordinator of the Winter School and Head of the EIU Jean Monnet Chair in EU Legal Studies and Legal Europeanization, presented the planned academic and socio-cultural agenda for the next two weeks.

The school is co-funded by the Jean Monnet Module “EU, Security and Fundamental Rights” and the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD).

## “Discovering Armenia: Culture, Nature, Civilization, Heritage” conference held at the European Council

“Discovering Armenia: Culture, Nature, Civilization, Heritage” conference was held at the European Council. The aim of the conference was to introduce Armenia to the employees of European institutions.

One of the main European civil service unions, the European Civil Service Federation (FFPE), was one of the organizers of the conference. Following the events that affected the Armenian people, especially the Artsakh Armenians, the Federation, being highly sensitive to humanitarian issues, sought to express its support through this conference to ensure that the human tragedy does not become a victim of politics and is not forgotten.

According to the Armenpress Brussels correspondent, the main speaker of the forum was the Belgian André Malaise, who, according to his own words, knew nothing about Armenia before the covid pandemic. During the conference, André Malaise provided a brief yet comprehensive overview

of Armenia’s history, language, culture, and ontological challenges faced by the Armenian people and the country.

André’s first visit to Armenia coincided with the second Artsakh war. The widespread indifference to what happened to Artsakh Armenians, international political inaction, and injustice forced André to visit Armenia 10 times in the last four years. Each time with a new initiative of assistance and support, but always with his son.

During the conference, André Malaise mentioned that during his first visit, his son was 4 years old; now he is 7 years old.

“During these three years, he has gained a lot and learned a lot thanks to our friends from Artsakh and Armenia. It’s surprising that he already knows how to read some words in Armenian,” said André proudly. He added that supporting Armenia and Armenians is important to him because, over the past 3 years, many

Armenians from Artsakh and Armenia have become like brothers and sisters to him.

“It’s as if they are part of my family. I am always pleased to have the opportunity to make the voices of my Armenian friends from Artsakh and Armenia heard in Europe, so I am fulfilling my promise to them,” André concluded.

André Malaise has founded the Via-Via organization, aimed at providing humanitarian aid. He has implemented several programs for the forcibly displaced Artsakh Armenians in Armenia, and this summer he is organizing a concert with the participation of children from border villages.

At the end of the conference, several dozen attendees had the opportunity to taste some of the most famous dishes and desserts of Armenian cuisine, as well as wine and cognac.

## Eurovision 2024: Armenia's song for Malmö released

Ladaniva have premiered the music video for 'Jako', the song that will represent Armenia at the 68th Eurovision Song Contest.

"I will dance and you will watch" ... Well, we don't need to be told twice!

Ladaniva have dropped the invigorating video for their equally energetic song *Jako*, ahead of their trip to Malmö in May. There, the duo will be representing Armenia at the Eurovision Song Contest, performing in the First Half of the Second Semi-Final.

*Jako* is the nickname of Ladaniva's own Jaklin. With this song, the artist asserts her right to think freely and to be whoever she wants to be.

Jaklin criticises the imposition of artificial rules and restrictions by the society, which she believes lead girls to forget their true selves as they are constantly dictated on how to behave and who to be. She explains:

"They used to call me 'Jako' when I was little. Growing up I have always been told that girls should behave, be humble, dress normally, not talk too much, not do crazy things."

The song is a message to herself and to all the little Jakos in the world to be true to their real, wild, unapologetic selves, and to find their true calling – just like she did through her art. It's an invitation to 'get



up and dance', no matter what people say.

Armenia's Head of Delegation, David Tserunyan, remarks that *Jako* is the best representation of Ladaniva's musical diversity and creativity:

"The song touches upon a very important matter, but in a cheerful and playful manner. We hope to inspire people all over the world to embrace their inner Jakos and join this empowering dance of freedom!"

Ladaniva is a multicultural mix of ethnic sounds, unique experiences and authenticity. The duo is constantly on the go, and they unite all the spices and colours from different parts of the world in their music – delivering it through an Armenian perspective.

Like almost all of their songs, *Jako* has musical influences from various cultures. For this one, Jaklin and Louis have been strongly influenced by melodies and sounds inspired by Armenia, the Balkans, India and other diverse cultures.

Louis from the duo, tells us more about the music of Ladaniva:

"We have been very much inspired by the local music of the French Island Reunion. It's one of our favorite destinations and we were surprised to have found out that their rhythms are very similar to the rhythms found in Armenian songs. When we play songs with these grooves, everyone dances – in Armenia and all over the world"

Artur Manukyan, the director of the music video, reflects on the story behind it:

"In the video, we tried to preserve the authenticity that has endeared Ladaniva to their audience. This time, in honor of the renowned Armenian filmmaker's centenary, we seized the opportunity to showcase Ladaniva's unique, cross-cultural artistry in the spirit of Parajanov – making sure that every detail in the video is Armenian. The elements and mood inspired by Parajanov complement the musical density and multi-layeredness of the band, preserving the free and natural style of Ladaniva's clips."

The song has been composed by Jaklin Baghdasaryan, Louis Thomas and Audrey Leclercq, and the lyrics have been written by Jaklin Baghdasaryan and Louis Thomas.

Artur Manukyan is the director of the video, while costume design and styling have been done by Mary Stepanyan and Astghik Samvelyan.

page 11 ➔ constructive dialogue. It is essential to overcome the barriers created by propaganda and work towards a more nuanced understanding of the shared history between conflicting parties.

There seems to be a division within Azerbaijan, with some factions, particularly influenced by aggressive propaganda and younger generations, expressing a desire for war. However, this aggressive stance is not representative of the entire population, especially among city residents and Christians. The more aggressive and one-dimensional perspective aligns with a portion of the population, influenced by a less complex Azerbaijani identity and historical internal conflicts. Azerbaijani society appears more homogeneous, with a tendency towards a

one-dimensional worldview. While some may want war due to deeply ingrained existential enemies in their worldview, it doesn't necessarily represent the entire population's sentiment.

It appears that while some individuals in Azerbaijan may recognize the negative aspects and exhaustion from the ongoing situation, the challenge lies in the lack of significant forces capable of actively opposing a pro-war stance. Even if a considerable portion of the population is against war, the absence of a substantial movement or influence might hinder their ability to prevent the escalation of hostilities.

In summary, the discussion with the political scientist and translator Samvel Meliksetyan shed light on the complexities of the geopolitical landscape in the

South Caucasus, particularly focusing on Azerbaijan's approach to regional issues. Meliksetyan highlighted concerns about Azerbaijan's reliance on armed blackmail, stemming from a historical trauma, and suggested that a peaceful resolution could be achieved through open and equal dialogue. The interviews touched upon various aspects, including Armenia's evolving responses influenced by international engagements, the dilemma of the Russian military base in Armenia, and the intricate dynamics shaping Azerbaijan's strategies and societal attitudes. The conversations revealed the multifaceted nature of the conflicts, intertwined with historical narratives, identity politics, and the influence of external actors in the region.

Translated by Liana Sargsyan



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 URL: [www.nt.am](http://www.nt.am)

**Address in Armenia:**  
 28 Isahakian Str., Yerevan, 0009, RA  
 Tel.: (+374 60) 35-11-22 (+374 60) 35-11-24

**Address in France:** Masion De L'Armenie,  
 Paris 17e-95, Bld. Gouvion, France  
 Tel.: (+33) 01 43 59 66 72

**Address in USA:** 1146 E. Lexington Dr., #112,  
 Glendale, CA, USA, 91206  
 Tel.: +1 (818) 646 10 72

Հասցե՝ Իսահակյան 28, Երևան, ՀՀ, 0009