

Iranian Ambassador to Armenia acknowledges diverging interests with Russia in the region



Iran’s ambassador in Armenia, Mehdi Sobhani, has acknowledged the diverging interests of Russia and Iran in the South Caucasus region in an interview with The New York Times.

In an article titled [Where Asia Meets Europe, Allies Become Rivals in a Tangle of Interests](#), The New York Times said “In the volatile Caucasus region, Russia and Iran, often seen as united in their aims, are vying to secure trade routes and influence.”

The article mentions the agreement between Armenia and Russia on border patrol at the Armenian-Iranian border: Starting January 1, 2025, Armenian Border Guards will start patrolling the border together with Russian Border Guards, while the border crossing point will be patrolled only by Armenian Border Guards.

“Here in the Caucasus, the mountainous region where Europe meets Asia, Russia and Iran are increasingly seen as rivals, while Western countries are — surprisingly — finding some common cause with Tehran,” the article says.

The article also features an interview with the Iranian Ambassador to Armenia, who acknowledged the diverging interests of Russia and Iran in the region. “We are not allies,” Mr. Sobhani said. “We have some differences, and we have some mutual interests. It doesn’t mean that we are allied.”

Sobhani reiterated that Iran cannot accept change of the international border.

Asked what would Iran do in the event of Azerbaijan attacking Armenia, the Ambassador said, “It will not happen.”

Touching upon the strategic importance of Armenia’s Syunik Province, the article underscores that the roads there are a key route north from the Persian Gulf and critical for exporting Iranian goods to Russia and to Europe.

“But it is also where Russia and Azerbaijan want to establish an east-west route toward Turkey that would be outside Armenia’s control — a route that Armenians fear Azerbaijan could take by force,” The New York Times said in the article.

Markus Ritter, the head of the EU monitoring mission in Armenia, told The New York Times that the Iranians “are here in the region, the best friends of the Armenians.” While Russia and Azerbaijan bristle at the European presence, he said, Iran seems to accept it. “It’s very complicated here,” he notes.

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Armenian, Swedish FMs discuss bilateral ties, EU partnership and regional security

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan's visit to Sweden started on November 11 with a meeting with Foreign Minister Maria Stenergard.

The Armenian and Swedish foreign ministers held a one-on-one meeting followed by an enlarged format luncheon.

The parties discussed prospects of enhancing the high-level political dialogue between Armenia and Sweden, enriching the bilateral agenda and deepening cooperation. The main directions of mutual interest were outlined for promoting sectoral cooperation, the foreign ministry said in a readout.

The Armenian FM said, "This is my third visit to Sweden, but the first one in a bilateral format. Thank you for the hospitality and productive discussions aimed at deepening partnership between our two countries in various directions,



based on democratic principles, common values and interests. I am convinced that through active joint efforts we can best utilize the opportunities for enhancing our partnership both bilaterally and with the EU, including with the goal of further promoting political dialogue, trade, business ties, and people-to-people contacts."

The current phase of Armenia-EU partnership, the recorded achievements and opportunities for development of the new ambitious agenda were comprehensive discussed.

The FMs exchanged views around regional security and stability. FM Mirzoyan underscored Armenia's vision for achieving sustainable peace in South Caucasus, including through normalization of relations with neighbors and promoting economic development in the region. Mirzoyan presented the efforts aimed at signing a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as well as the agreement between the two countries in the delimitation process based on the Almaty Declaration.

In the context of regional issues, the Armenian government's Crossroads of Peace project was touched upon. FM Mirzoyan said the implementation of this project will effectively increase regional interconnectivity through unblocking of transport infrastructures.

Armenian, Hungarian foreign ministries hold first political consultations since restoration of diplomatic ties

The foreign ministries of Armenia and Hungary have held the first political consultations since the restoration of diplomatic relations between the two countries.

The consultations were held in Budapest.

The Armenian side was represented by Deputy FM Paruyr Hovhannisyan, while the Hungarian side was represented by Péter Sztáray, Minister of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Trade.

According to a statement issued by the Armenian foreign ministry, the sides discussed opportunities for further development of bilateral agenda, regional issues, and underscored the necessity for expanding the bilateral legal-contractual framework and intensifying trade-economic, cultural, educational, tourism and other ties.

The efforts aimed at deepening Armenia's partnership with the EU and

cooperation with Hungary in this direction were comprehensively discussed.

Hovhannisyan touched upon the Armenian government's steps in the direction of establishing peace in the South Caucasus and the latest discussions in the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization process. He once again presented the Crossroads of Peace project developed by the Armenian government.

Armenian, French FMs commend dynamic development of bilateral relations

On November 15, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a telephone conversation with Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs of the French Republic, Jean-Noël Barrot.

The interlocutors discussed issues on the bilateral agenda. The Ministers commended the active dynamics of development of relations between Armenia

and France through high-level political dialogue and implementation of joint projects.

Ararat Mirzoyan and Jean-Noël Barrot agreed to continue the efforts aimed at further deepening of partnership between the two countries in all areas, including through close cooperation between the two ministries.

The Foreign Ministers of Armenia

and France exchanged views on regional issues.



Armenian proposals on unblocking connections stem from Crossroads of Peace project, says lawmaker

The proposals conveyed by Armenia to Azerbaijan regarding the opening of regional connections are in the spirit of the principles and concept of [Crossroads of Peace](#) project, Member of Parliament Sargis Khandanyan has said.

"I can't go into details, but generally the spirit of these proposals stems from the Crossroads of Peace project and the ideas that the Armenian government has been presenting over the course of the recent years," Khandanyan, a member of the ruling Civil Contract party and Chairman of

the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Relations, told reporters on Friday.

"The same principles are at the foundation of these proposals, that is, sovereignty and jurisdiction," he said.

The lawmaker said certain details were discussed during the Pashinyan-Aliyev meeting in Kazan, Russia, that imply the possibility of mutually-acceptable solutions. "These may become more material once we get the response," he added.

Asked whether the topic of unblocking

is included in the draft peace treaty, Khandanyan said that the part pertaining to unblocking has actually been separated from the peace treaty.

Khandanyan reiterated that the existence of any extraterritorial corridor would be unacceptable for Armenia.

On November 13, PM Nikol Pashinyan announced that Armenia has conveyed to Azerbaijan proposals on the reopening of regional connections. Pashinyan said these offers could be acceptable for both sides.

Armenian PM, German Ambassador discuss EU partnership, Azerbaijan peace process

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has met with Germany's new Ambassador to Armenia Claudia Busch.

Congratulating Ambassador Busch on taking office, the Prime Minister expressed hope that the multi-sector cooperation between Armenia and Germany will continue to develop and strengthen in the coming years, the Prime Minister's Office said in a readout.

Pashinyan lauded the active political

dialogue between the two countries. The Armenian Prime Minister attached importance to the implementation of joint programs in the economy, investments, infrastructures, tourism and other directions, as well as the involvement of new German companies in the Armenian market.

Ambassador Busch said she will make maximum efforts during her tenure for the expansion of bilateral partnership. The Ambassador said that the German

government attaches importance to the continuous strengthening of relations with Armenia, thus she will soon discuss with Armenian partners the possibilities for implementing mutually-beneficial projects.

The sides also discussed the Armenia-EU partnership, the latest developments in the discussions around the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty, the delimitation process and other issues.

Armenian interior minister, ICMPD head discuss partnership, prevention of illegal migration

Armenian Minister of Internal Affairs Vahe Ghazaryan met with Michael Spindelegger, Director General of the International Center for Migration Policy Development (ICMPD), during his visit to Hungary.

Armenia's Ambassador to Hungary Ashot Smbatyan and the Director of the Migration and Citizenship Service of the Armenian Ministry of Internal Affairs Armen Ghazaryan also participated in the meeting.

Attaching importance to the bilateral cooperation with the International Center for Migration Policy Development, Minister Ghazaryan expressed readiness to enhance the partnership, the ministry said in a readout.

The minister underscored the active involvement of the International Center for Migration Policy Development in the



work around building a new center for asylum seekers in Armenia, as well as the introduction of an electronic management system for citizenship affairs.

Minister Ghazaryan presented the

ongoing reforms in the ministry and attached importance to the role of international partners in the process, particularly the EU.

He lauded the launch of visa liberalization talks with the EU as an "important achievement."

The sides discussed issues pertaining to migration policy implementation, particularly management of migration flows, prevention of illegal migration and other areas.

Minister Ghazaryan invited Spindelegger to visit Armenia to participate in the opening of the new Center for Asylum Seekers.

The sides expressed readiness to continue productive partnership.

Constitutional Court cannot nullify Declaration of Independence, says chief justice

The Constitutional Court has not and cannot nullify the Declaration of Independence, chief justice Arman Dilanyan has said.

Dilanyan, the president of the Constitutional Court, commented on claims arguing that the high court, with its September 26 decision on the Armenia-Azerbaijan delimitation regulation, nullified the Declaration of Independence.

Dilanyan denied the claims during a press briefing on November 14.

“No one can nullify the Declaration of Independence. There is only one subject that can do so, it is the people,” he said.

Chief justice Dilanyan said he regrets that the opinions of the 8 justices were not covered by the media, unlike those of the 3 other justices.

“Around that decision I actually noticed everything but any serious legal criticism or arguments. I didn’t come across a legal



argument on why that decision is wrong, in their opinion,” the chief justice said.

He said the high court, in its decision, has said what has existed for thirty years. In addition, according to Dilanyan, a number of contradictions emerge in case of viewing the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence in the same legal dimension.

“The Constitution has been perceived

as a document of supreme legal force in Armenia, and the Declaration of Independence has never been part of the Constitution in its entirety. If we were to compare the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution in terms of its contents and try to fit them in the same dimension of legal force, I couldn’t imagine how you would resolve those contradictions,” he said, adding that the Constitutional Court simply looked into

the issue for the first time in detail and stipulated the existing reality.

On September 26, the high court ruled that the Armenia-Azerbaijan regulation on the joint activity of the border delimitation commissions complies with the Constitution. The decision also mentions the Declaration of Independence as a circumstance subject to clarification in the case, which caused criticism.

Aliyev’s statements undermine credibility of Azerbaijan’s COP29 presidency – Josep Borrell

President Aliyev’s allegations on the EU, France and the Netherlands are most regrettable, Josep Borrell, EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, said in a post on X.

“These unacceptable statements risk to undermine the conference’s vital climate objectives and the credibility of Azerbaijan’s COP29 presidency. We stand with France and the Netherlands,” Borrell said.

“The EU and its member states are the biggest contributor to global climate finance, supporting partners all over the world in the fight against climate change. We also reject Azerbaijani authorities’ attacks against media and NGOs facing the critical situation of human rights in

the country,” EU’s Foreign Policy chief said.

During the COP29 conference in Baku Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev used a gathering of island leaders to lambast France and the Netherlands for their “neocolonialism,” which he linked to climate change.

“The so-called overseas territories of France and Netherlands, particularly in the Caribbean and the Pacific, are among the most severely impacted” by climate change, Aliyev told the leaders’ summit of small island developing countries at COP29. “The voices of these communities are often brutally suppressed by the regimes.”

Aliyev claimed that France had caused

“environmental degradation” in the territories, which he described as “colonies,” citing the nuclear tests in French Polynesia and Algeria. He also accused French President Emmanuel Macron’s government of being responsible for the violent outbursts in New Caledonia earlier this year.



Office of Representative on International Legal Matters of Armenia welcomes ICJ judgments

The Office of the Representative on International Legal Matters of Armenia has welcomed the judgments of 12 November 2024 of the International Court of Justice, which have completely rejected all preliminary objections raised by Azerbaijan in the case concerning the Application of the Convention of the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia

v. Azerbaijan) and upheld Armenia's objections in the case of Azerbaijan v. Armenia.

The Court confirmed that the preconditions under Article 22 of the Convention were met, the Office of the Representative on International Legal Matters of Armenia said in a press release.

Specifically, it found that Armenia had engaged in genuine negotiations on the interpretation and application of the Convention and that these negotiations had



become futile by the date of Armenia's Application on 16 September 2021.

Furthermore, the Court dismissed Azerbaijan's objections regarding jurisdiction *ratione materiae*. It held that Armenia's claims fully fall within the scope of the Convention, including the claims with respect to the committed acts of murder, torture, and inhuman treatment against ethnic Armenians, as well as claims of arbitrary detention and

enforced disappearances of ethnic Armenians.

In the Azerbaijan v. Armenia case, the Court upheld Armenia's preliminary objections regarding jurisdiction *ratione temporis* and *ratione materiae*. As a result, Azerbaijan's claims related to alleged acts before 15 September 1996, i.e. during and in the immediate aftermath of the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, as well as claims of alleged environmental harm, have been dismissed in their entirety.

The Court has also addressed Armenia's preliminary objection *ratione materiae* concerning Azerbaijan's allegations of landmines and booby traps. The Court found that as Azerbaijan did not request the Court to determine that the laying of landmines in itself constitutes a violation of the obligations under the Convention, Armenia's preliminary objection on this matter is without object. Armenia will defeat those contentions at the merits stage.

Anne-Laurence Petel lauds Macron's decision to skip COP-29 in Baku

French politician Anne-Laurence Petel has said that President Emmanuel Macron has made the right decision to not participate in the COP-29 in Azerbaijan.

"He's made a right decision, because going to Baku contains the risk of shaking the hand of the dictator and legitimizing the explicit imitation, because Azerbaijan is absolutely not a country that participated in ecological transition," Anne-Laurence Petel said in an interview with Sud Radio. "Azerbaijan is a petro-dictatorship and a country where the human rights situation is disastrous. Emmanuel Macron has actively supported Armenia since 2020, when the war in Nagorno-Karabakh began. He has done a lot in order for Europe to support Armenia in withstanding Azerbaijan."

France is represented at COP-29 by Agnès Pannier-Runacher, Minister of Ecological Transition of France.

Asked whether Paris wasn't supposed to completely boycott COP-29, the politician said, "There's a difference between a complete boycott and sending technical experts or not political figures. I think if we want to participate from an ecological perspective, we can send specialists or experts, but I don't understand why we should have a political representation or participation of a cabinet member. I think we could have refrained from that presence. Today we must understand that Ilham Aliyev is the person who not only started a horrifying war in Nagorno-Karabakh in 2020 with the use of phosphorus

bombs, but is also a dictator in his own country, because there are 300 political prisoners there."

Anne-Laurence Petel accused Aliyev of interfering into French domestic affairs.

"Approximately 1,5 years ago, he created the so-called Baku Initiative Group, which is focused on uniting regionalists and separatists, be it in New Caledonia, Corsica or in other regions of France. Their goal is to create instability in the country. I'd like to stress that Aliyev's opponent who was in exile and was living in France was killed in October 2024 in Mulhouse. Today, opposition blogger Mahammad Mirzali is under French police protection, lives in France, and there've been several attempts on his life in France," Petel said.

Economic growth, high sense of security must turn back the wheels of emigration – finance minister

Increasing Armenia's economic and security resilience is a top priority for the Armenian government, finance minister Vahe Hovhannisyan has said.

Hovhannisyan presented the Pashinyan Administration's 2025 budget bill to parliament on Tuesday.

"The economy isn't spinning backwards, but by relying on the existing potential, it shifts to a new level of development and creates solid grounds for the sustainable progress of our country," Hovhannisyan told lawmakers. "This is a historic opportunity unseen since the global financial crisis. In this context we must preserve and create a favorable

environment for the further improvement of that potential. On the other hand, the current developments make us diversify and strengthen security systems. Thus, the increase of the country's economic and security resilience is a top priority," the finance minister said.

The Armenian economy has displayed high resilience despite the difficult challenges and the normalization of economic activity paces following the high growth of recent years.

The government projects 5,8% economic growth for 2024, and 5,6% for 2025.

As a testament to the high resilience

of the economy, the minister pointed out that the original projection of 4-4,5% potential growth was increased up to 5-5,5%. In this context, besides external factors, the government's policies of increasing investments in infrastructures, increasing competition in various product markets and improvement in the business environment played a role in this.

"Economic growth and the high sense of security must turn back the wheel of emigration. It must convey to our countrymen the confidence that their homeland is the best destination to enjoy the result of their work and realize their creative ideas," Hovhannisyan said.

Armenia must transform into manufacturing country from service-rendering, says high-tech industry minister

The fundamental research, ideas and dreams of Armenian scientists ought to be realized in Armenia itself and not elsewhere, Minister of High-Tech Industry Mkhitar Hayrapetyan has said.

Speaking in parliament at the 2025 government budget bill debates, Hayrapetyan said Armenia must transform into a manufacturing country from a service-rendering country.

He told lawmakers that innovation is important for rapid economic development, increase of the quality of life



in various sectors such as education, healthcare, as well as providing new

opportunities to the citizens.

"We believe that very soon Armenia must grow into a product manufacturing country from service-rendering country. And that should be the international brand, international representation in the technological world. We believe that the fundamental research, ideas and dream that the scientists and scientific-research teams have must be realized in Armenia itself, become prototypes, then pass into serial production and get exported," the minister said.

India ships first Akash air defense missile system battery to Armenia – The New Indian Express

India has shipped the first Akash weapon system battery to Armenia. This is the second missile system to have been exported, the [The New Indian Express](#) reports.

The Akash system, developed by the Defense Research and Development Organization is a surface-to-air missile (SAM) which can hit targets like fighter jets, missiles (cruise, air-to-surface), drones and other aerial assets to a range of 25km.



Manufactured by Bharat Electronics

Limited (BEL), each battery of Akash weapon system is accompanied by a single Rajendra 3D passive electronically scanned array radar and four launchers with three missiles each, all of which are interlinked.

According to the source, in 2022, Armenia inked a deal with India to procure 15 Akash missile systems worth around Rs 6,000 crore, thus becoming the first foreign country to buy this missile system.

Armenia participates with national and commercial pavilions at 2024 China International Import Expo

Armenian companies presented the country's industrial volumes and opportunities at the 2024 China International Import Expo from November 5 to 10 in Shanghai.

Armenia participated with two separate pavilions, national and commercial, emphasizing its industrial potential.

158 countries participated in the major

exhibition.

A number of important memoranda of cooperation were signed during the event, including between the Council of the International Business Relations Support and the Association of Armenian-Chinese Friendship Development. The ceremony was attended by the Armenian Ambassador to China Vahe Gevorgyan and Ministry

of Economy officials. The Chinese side was represented by various officials, including the chairman of the Association of Armenian-Chinese Friendship of Shanghai.

The memoranda are aimed at strengthening the Armenian-Chinese economic and cultural ties.

New cooperation and meetings are planned to take place in Armenia as well, in order to develop the partnership.

Armenia and China can closely cooperate in high technologies, says diplomat

Armenia and China can closely cooperate in the sector of high technologies, according to China's Chargé d'Affaires (a.i.) in Armenia, Chen Ming.

"We know that Armenia is currently attaching great importance to the development of high technologies, and China has many advantages in this regard," Ming told reporters during the China's Modernization: Armenia-China Relationship

international seminar at the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, touching upon the areas with most potential for development. "We are also happy to see electric vehicles imported from China in the streets of Yerevan and elsewhere in Armenia."

"We think that we can very closely cooperate in this context in the areas of high technologies, as well as green economy,"

the Chinese diplomat said, adding that other areas can also be considered.

He said it will be possible to further improve the standard of living of the Armenian and Chinese peoples through the cooperation.

"We also hope that leading Chinese organizations will participate in the cooperation in these areas," Ming said.

EIB Global signs €236 million loan to finance construction of Sisian-Kajaran road

The European Investment Bank's global arm (EIB Global) has signed a loan of up to €236 million with Armenia to co-finance the construction of the Sisian-Kajaran road, a crucial segment of the north-south transport corridor. This project is set to become a gamechanger for Armenia and the South Caucasus region, significantly improving transport connectivity between the European Union, Middle East and Asia.

This climate-resilient piece of infrastructure will contribute to climate change mitigation by reducing travel distances, vehicle operating costs and road accidents. Enhanced road safety is another key feature of the project, which will offer safer and faster routes for travellers and goods. The project will facilitate access to both domestic and international markets, and contribute to the sustainable socioeconomic development of the less well-connected Syunik province in the south of the country.

"This transformative project will become a major artery in the region's

transport network, providing Armenia with better access to global markets and helping to shape a more interconnected, resilient future," said EIB Vice-President Teresa Czerwińska, who is responsible for EIB operations in Armenia. "This is the largest ever finance contract between the EIB and Armenia. We are pleased to be supporting this project that will promote sustainability, boost economic resilience and strengthen connectivity between Europe, Asia and the Middle East."

Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia Ambassador Vassilis Maragos said, "This project is another example of Team Europe support under the EU's Economic and Investment Plan (EIP) for Armenia. Further mobilisation of funding under the EIP for sustainable investments with due care of climate change and road safety targets will be key as we prepare the ambitious new EU-Armenia Partnership Agenda".

Republic of Armenia Minister of Finance Vahe Hovhannisyan said, "Construction of the Sisian-Kajaran road will

be a major boost to Armenia's economic growth, strengthen both regional and international connectivity, improve transportation safety and efficiency, and play a crucial part in the country's broader infrastructure development objectives."

Republic of Armenia Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan expressed his "gratitude to the EIB for its participation in the construction of the Sisian-Kajaran road. This road is an integral part of the Government of Armenia's Crossroads of Peace Project, which aims to ensure sustainable connectivity and, consequently, cooperation and stability in the wider region".

As a flagship project of the EU Global Gateway initiative and the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership, the construction of the Sisian-Kajaran road will bolster economic growth, regional security and environmental resilience. It will also be a key link in the Trans-European Transport Network corridor.

Why Are There No Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh? International and Armenian human rights organizations publish joint report

Through an international fact-finding effort that included hundreds of witness interviews and open-source data, authors of the Why Are There No Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh? Special Report concluded that the forced displacement of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians in 2023 constitutes ethnic cleansing and the perpetrators must be held accountable.

The fact-finding report was jointly prepared by Freedom House, International Partnership for Human Rights (IPHR), a Ukrainian organization specializing in investigating international crimes and several Armenian and leading human rights organizations.

Armenpress Brussels correspondent Lilit Gasparian spoke with Simon Papuashvili, IPHR's Director for South Caucasus.

Papuashvili, touching upon the process of preparing the report, the conclusions and their next steps, said that they plan to apply to the International Criminal Court based on the gathered evidence, with a request to hold the perpetrators to account. Papuashvili gave a detailed explanation on the instruments through which it is possible to hold accountable in the international justice system the Azerbaijani leader and others involved in crimes against the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh.

Along with Freedom House and many other organizations, your organization prepared a fact-finding report. How and why have you decided to realize the report "Why are there no Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh?"

I represent "International Partnership For Human Rights" (IPHR), which is an international NGO headquartered in Brussels and we have regional offices in Georgia and Ukraine. We work across Eastern Europe, Russia, the South Caucasus and Central Asia. So, this is our target region and as an organization, our mandate is to support local human rights groups and organizations in fulfilling their mandate. We have long-established partnerships with several leading Armenian civil society organizations with whom we have been working for over a decade now.

We have been asked to conduct a project that would investigate international crimes that were committed in the context of the 2020 war, which we did. And then we have been monitoring the situation after the ceasefire agreement was signed and occasionally gathering evidence of large-scale clashes that happened in the

period of the ceasefire. We organized one fact-finding mission in October 2022 to document crimes that Azerbaijani forces perpetrated within Armenian borders in September 2020. Then we have also been monitoring the impact of the Lachin Corridor blockade on the population of Nagorno Karabakh. When the Azerbaijani takeover happened on the 19th of September 2023 our Armenian partners reached out to us and asked us to help them investigate what was happening in terms of displacement, forced displacement of population from Nagorno Karabakh. We sat down with our partners and helped them develop a methodology to investigate forced displacement or ethnic cleansing. We have also helped to train about 25 Armenian civil society representatives who have been working since November last year to interview persons who were displaced from Nagorno Karabakh.

Around 6 organizations were involved in this documentation project, including my organization, Freedom House, and a Ukrainian organization specializing in the investigation of international crimes, plus several Armenian and leading human rights organizations. Over 300 interviews were conducted with the persons displaced from Artsakh. And we have in parallel also been collecting open-source information, more specifically, information about the destruction of Armenian cultural heritage in Artsakh using satellite imagery analysis. We have been gathering also what we call linkage evidence or evidence. That helps us determine which Azerbaijani units were involved in different times that we have been investigating to understand their common structure and to do what we lawyers call attribution. So, attribution of crimes to particular persons. Based on the evidence that we have examined, we can conclude that the events in question amount to a crime against humanity or possible displacement of the civilian population.

The report calls what happened to Artsakh Armenians ethnic cleansing and considers the issue in the legal framework, especially from the point of view of international criminal, human, and humanitarian law perspectives. What are the conclusions you reached while preparing this report?

We have documented several systemic and gross human rights abuses and international crimes, including extrajudicial killings, torture, or displacement crime,

of course, displacement, destruction of cultural objects, and destruction of property. These were the key crimes that we have documented. What is important to note is that these crimes were widespread, systematic, and part of the state policy of Azerbaijan which was intended to cleanse the entire territory from ethnic Armenians.

Our investigation was not focusing just on what happened on the 19th of September or what happened in the days following, but also, we have taken into consideration how numerous ceasefire violations and numerous incidents have been happening throughout 2020, 2021, and 2022, have affected the sense of security of the population of Artsakh.

If you, for example, look into the elements of crimes under Article 7 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, it talks about the creation of a forcing environment as one of the elements. So again, based on the evidence that we have and based on hundreds of conversations that we had with displaced persons, we saw that people staying in Artsakh since 2020 did not feel secure and their sense of insecurity was a result of multiple acts of violence and affects their daily life, especially during the blockade. Everything, from the lack of medication to the feeling of isolation, contributed to that feeling, and then actually after the military operation on 19 September 2023 essentially did not leave any other choice to ethnic Armenians living in Nagorno Karabakh but to flee. And then we also looked into how this process of displacement happened and how it affected people. Our conclusion is that we're indeed dealing with ethnic cleansing.

While talking about ethnic cleansing, the next step for sure should be accountability. The report clearly shows that Azerbaijan depopulated Nagorno Karabakh in a planned manner and with intention. What is the toolkit with which Azerbaijan can be held accountable?

When we were designing this project or the documentation project, one of the reasons why we did it was to create historical memory, but that was not the primary purpose. We also wanted to initiate and engage with certain legal strategies that can help us close the impunity gap, which is very persistent, and also to find ways creatively to facilitate access to justice for ethnic

page 8 ➡ Armenians who have been forced out of their land and to facilitate the reparations. We have identified a number of legal instruments and mechanisms to this end.

One such instrument is the European Court of Human Rights. However, my organization is not involved in this because many skilled Armenian organizations are working with them to build and litigate cases before the European Court and also the Armenian government has brought a case against Azerbaijan to the European courts. But we are focusing more on individual criminal responsibility, so relying on the International Criminal Court, and to this end, we are considering pursuing opportunities that Armenia's ratification of the Rome Statute is opening to us. So, we are currently in the process of preparing so-called Article 15 communications to the International Criminal Court, one of those communications will relate to multiple ceasefire violations that have been accompanied by war crimes committed by Azerbaijan within Armenia itself, and then our second communication is focusing on the forced transfer, or ethnic cleansing that has taken place since 19 September 2023. We intend to demonstrate to the office of the Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court that these crimes that we have investigated are all within the jurisdiction of this Court and that it is in the interest of justice to open an investigation and prosecute those persons who are responsible for these crimes, because of their gravity and because of their scale. To make this happen and also to increase the chances or likelihood that the Court actually investigates, we are also talking to different countries that are parties to the Rome Statutes, mostly European countries but not only, to encourage them to make this so-called "State Party Referral", which is one of the ways to trigger an investigation by the ICC. For example, this was done by over 40 countries in early 2022, when Russia unleashed a full-scale war against Ukraine. This could be done now by one or several countries that are interested in supporting our cause of closing the impunity gap.

The other tool that we are considering pursuing is the so-called "Universal Jurisdiction Litigation"; what does 'universal jurisdiction' mean? It's a legal concept under which a country can prosecute an individual despite the nationality of this individual or despite where the crime has been committed. So, the idea is that some crimes are so serious by their nature that it is the obligation of civilized countries to prosecute those crimes. This is a

legal concept that is quite well developed and has existed already for decades, and most European countries have possibilities under their criminal legislation to initiate investigations about events like the ones that are taking place in Artsakh. So, typically these are war crimes, crimes against humanity or crimes of genocide, and also crimes of torture and forced disappearances that are subject to Universal Jurisdiction Litigation. As we gather more evidence about perpetrators that we can link with the crimes that we have investigated, we intend to build cases against these perpetrators in different European countries. Our targets will be the Head of State of Azerbaijan, as well as other senior Azerbaijani officials or who we can link with the crimes in question and who have been involved either in conceiving, ordering, or actually perpetrating these crimes. Universal Jurisdiction can be also used to enable reparations for the victims. As you probably know, the corrupt political elite of Azerbaijan invests stolen money in what they consider safe jurisdictions—which are mostly European jurisdictions—, so this money is kept in different types of assets including property, but also company shares and other holdings. We are now in the process of mapping out where these assets might be and we intend to initiate multiple criminal cases in different European jurisdictions, where we are hoping to have perpetrators convicted and also hoping that victims can be compensated using these accounts and assets.

And then the third quasi-legal mechanism that we intend to pursue is targeted sanctions. So, in the US it can be the Magnitsky Global Act, in the EU, it could be the Global Human Rights Sanctions Regime. The UK has its own sanctions regime. Once we have completed our evidence packages, we will be asking these different countries or blocks of countries to sanction perpetrators that we have identified. We're using all available legal and quasi-legal avenues to seek accountability for these gross human rights abuses. We're hoping that one or several of those strategies will bring the results and the results will be putting names to things, identifying perpetrators, and then also facilitating reparations for the victims.

Talking about legal obligations, that is possible and effective when it comes to countries or leaders who respect them. Contrary to many decisions of international courts, Azerbaijan continues its anti-Armenian and hateful, aggressive rhetoric and policy. How, or in general, is it possible to force official Baku to respect these decisions and the

rights of Artsakh Armenians?

Sure, there are limitations when it comes to the enforcement of international law, and these limitations are more evident when you are dealing with certain legal mechanisms like the ICJ (International Court of Justice) or the European Court of Human Rights, where they do not deal with individuals' or the perpetrators' criminal liability, but they deal with the state's responsibility. For example, when the European Court of Human Rights fines violations and asks the country to pay compensation to the victims, this money comes not from the pockets of the perpetrators, but it comes from the pockets of the taxpayers. It's paid from the state budgets. The impact of this is much more limited, but the accountability avenues that I have described are about individual criminal liability. So, let's say we succeed within the Universal Jurisdiction case in any of the European countries against senior Azerbaijani officials. These officials, in the best case, will not be able to travel to Europe, because if they do, then they will be arrested.

Plus, in many European countries, we can have in absentia trials, so these individuals can be prosecuted without their presence, without their appearance before the court, and potentially be convicted without their presence. And if we can successfully obtain convictions then we can use the assets that belong to them that are here in the West, not in Azerbaijan. We can confiscate those assets and give them to the victims. The same is true also for the International Criminal Court. When it comes to the International Criminal Court, the added value of this court is that this court can potentially go after heads of state and issue arrest warrants, like it did, for example, for Putin. And now Putin will never be able to come to Europe in his lifetime, because if he comes, he will be arrested. So, these are not bulletproof solutions, but they are legal strategies that can on one hand increase the cost for the wrongdoing of authoritarian leaders like Ilham Aliyev and can help us find ways to compensate the victims.

As you mentioned, the West didn't hesitate for a second to activate all mechanisms against Putin and his country just after the war in Ukraine was launched. What Azerbaijan did in Nagorno Karabakh is exactly the same as what Putin is doing in Ukraine. But the reaction of the collective West is quite different, there is always a kind of hesitation when it comes to Azerbaijan. When and how can they, if of course, they can, ➡ page 14

Azerbaijan, the Rogue State Hosting COP29 - Artak Beglaryan's Interview to Le Figaro

Artak Beglaryan, former State Minister and Human rights Ombudsman of Nagorno-Karabakh, gave an interview to the leading French magazine *Le Figaro* which was [published](#) in both print and electronic versions on November 9, before the launch of COP-29 in Baku.

The translation of the full article, released by Beglaryan's office, is presented below.

"The new climate summit opens in mid-November in Baku. Forced out of his country along with 100,000 compatriots, former State Minister of Nagorno-Karabakh, Artak Beglaryan, calls for pressure on President Aliyev's regime, which he accuses of genocide against Armenians.

"His face bears signs of hardship, but his voice is resolute. On September 19, Artak Beglaryan filed a complaint to the International Criminal Court (ICC), along with his compatriot Gegham Stepanyan. Their hope is that an investigation will be opened into the crimes committed by Azerbaijan in Nagorno-Karabakh. "It's genocide. Only politicians refuse to use this word. I'm certain that one day it will be recognized by the international community."

"The timing is not coincidental: on November 11, COP29, a major international climate conference, launches in Baku. And this is happening while at least 23 Armenian prisoners are officially still detained by President Aliyev's regime. "In reality, numerous signs suggest the number of prisoners is closer to 100. For most of them, we don't even know if they

are still alive."

"Artak Beglaryan has faced many hardships. Born in 1988 in Stepanakert, the capital of Nagorno-Karabakh, he recalls poems, songs and melodies from his childhood. He was only about four years old when his father was killed at the front by Azerbaijani soldiers. Two years later, while playing with friends in their yard, a landmine explosion left him blind. At 16, his mother died of a heart attack, leaving the young boy completely alone. Despite it all, he managed to study in Yerevan, Armenia's capital, and later at the prestigious University College London, where he was offered the chance to stay. "But I returned to Nagorno-Karabakh to serve my people. That's my life mission, which brought me home." He became the ombudsman—the equivalent of a human rights defender—then chief of staff to the President and later State Minister.

"In December 2022, with the beginning of a blockade orchestrated by Azerbaijan, life in Nagorno-Karabakh became increasingly unbearable. Essentials ran out: oil, grains etc. "For several weeks, my wife and I didn't eat bread so that we could give it to our two daughters." At the beginning of 2023, electricity and gas supplies from Armenia were disrupted: "In the dead of winter, we only had power for 12 to 16 hours a day. People had no heating, and schools were temporarily closed. Even water supplies became an issue."

"On September 19, 2023, when Azerbaijani troops fully invaded Nagorno-Karabakh, he learned that soldiers were

looking for him, too. He decided to flee with his family and his brother's family. "It took us nearly 27 hours to cover the roughly 50 kilometers to the Armenian border. I didn't even get out of the car; my relatives were afraid they would arrest or kill me."

"Today, Artak Beglaryan is a refugee with relatives in Yerevan. "I work part-time in a private organization to support my family. The rest of the time, I actively continue to advocate for my people's rights."

"Ahead of COP29, he calls for the release of all Armenian hostages held in Azerbaijan. He also wishes for Emmanuel Macron and the French government to support his complaint at the ICC. Filed by two French lawyers, Catalina de la Sota and François Zimeray, it stands little chance of success without the support of at least one of the Rome Statute signatories recognizing the ICC's authority. He also hopes for firm sanctions from the international community against those responsible for these crimes. "When political support is just beautiful words and empathy, it's not real support. Dictators, and particularly perpetrators of genocides, don't care about statements and words."

"Despite everything he has endured, the former State Minister maintains strong hope: "I have suffered greatly since childhood, but I have always managed to overcome these difficulties. If we combine our efforts, I believe that one day it will be possible to achieve peace and justice not only for my people but also for all of humanity."

Armenian Ambassador briefs British Foreign Policy Group on Crossroads of Peace project

On November 12th, the British Foreign Policy Group hosted a closed roundtable discussion with H.E. Ambassador Varuzhan Nersesyan on Armenia's Foreign Policy priorities and regional developments in the South Caucasus.

During the discussion, Ambassador Nersesyan highlighted Armenia's active pursuit of peace with Azerbaijan and reaffirmed the Armenian government's commitment to a diplomatic approach aimed at securing a durable settlement.

Emphasizing the importance of capitalizing on the present momentum, he noted that Armenia's vision of peace is rooted in mutual respect, cooperation, and sovereignty.

A key component of the dialogue was Armenia's "Crossroads of Peace" proposal, which seeks to unlock regional communications and promote cooperation based on reciprocity and equality, while ensuring that all transportation routes operate under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of

the countries they traverse.

Ambassador Nersesyan noted that this proposal is intended to foster a collaborative environment and enable all regional stakeholders to benefit from improved connectivity and economic opportunities, without compromising their sovereign rights.

Ambassador Nersesyan concluded by thanking British Foreign Policy Group for hosting the event.

Trump picks pro-Armenian Tulsi Gabbard for Director of National Intelligence

US President-elect Donald Trump said Wednesday he's selected former Democratic congresswoman-turned Trump supporter Tulsi Gabbard as his pick to be director of national intelligence, CNN reports.

Former Congresswoman and Lieutenant Colonel Tulsi Gabbard, a staunch supporter of Armenian issues, has been nominated as the new Director of National Intelligence (DNI) by President-elect Donald J. Trump. With a distinguished record of public service and military leadership spanning over two decades, Gabbard brings a fearless, mission-driven approach to safeguarding the nation's intelligence community, according to *Zartok Media*.

A four-term Congresswoman, 2020 presidential candidate, and NYT Bestselling Author, Gabbard has served with distinction in the U.S. Army Reserve, including three deployments to the Middle East and Africa. Currently a Lieutenant Colonel, she leads as Battalion Commander of the 1/354 Regiment.

Known for her bipartisan appeal and commitment to putting country before party, Gabbard's career is marked by a steadfast dedication to constitutional rights and national security. Entering politics at the age of 21 as a member of the Hawaii State House of Representatives, she enlisted in the Army National Guard



following the 9/11 attacks, serving with honor on multiple deployments.

During her tenure in Congress, Gabbard served on the Armed Services, Homeland Security, and Foreign Affairs Committees, championing the rights and well-being of veterans and service members. After leaving the Democrat Party in 2022 to become an Independent, she formally joined the Republican Party in 2024, inspired by President Trump's leadership.

In 2017, while serving as a Congresswoman, Gabbard was part of a team of U.S. lawmakers that visited the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh, facing criticism from Azerbaijan for her support of the region. She has publicly accused Turkey of inciting and encouraging the 2020 Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) war between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Gabbard co-signed a letter to Secretary of State Mike Pompeo expressing concern over Azerbaijan's renewed aggression against Artsakh and a

potential conflict with Armenia, stating, "The United States must urge Azerbaijan to immediately end their attacks, and Turkey to cease its involvement both directly through the use of its armed forces, and indirectly by sending Al-Qaeda associated proxies to wipe out Nagorno-Karabakh's Armenian population — a tactic Turkey used against Syrian Kurds."

In 2019, Gabbard co-sponsored the Armenian Genocide Resolution alongside several other U.S. Senators and House Representatives to establish official U.S. recognition and permanent remembrance of the Armenian Genocide. Speaking on the 1915 mass killings, Gabbard remarked, "The Ottoman Empire was attempting to cleanse itself of the Armenian and Christian populations, and the US became home to many survivors." Eventually, in 2021, President Joe Biden formally recognized the Ottoman-era mass killings of Armenians as a genocide.

President Trump expressed confidence in Gabbard's fearless leadership, emphasizing her dedication to championing constitutional rights and national security. He stated, "I know Tulsi will bring the fearless spirit that has defined her illustrious career to our Intelligence Community, championing our Constitutional Rights, and securing Peace through Strength. Tulsi will make us all proud!"

COP meeting “greenwashing” politicians and countries abusing human rights – Greta Thunberg

Swedish climate activist Greta Thunberg joined on Friday protest action near the United Nations office in Yerevan.

Speaking to reporters, she said "COP processes are failing us." Thunberg criticized the decision to hold the U.N. climate summit in countries with a poor record on human rights.

"I think we have to stop pretending that conferences like the COP that currently are not leading to any even closely meaningful actions that we need. For example, last year we saw an all time high of greenhouse gas emission and 2024 is set to be the hottest year ever recorded. These COP processes are failing us," she said.

"We need to stop pretending that these conferences that are being held, again, in countries with no respect for basic human rights. That these countries who get to set the agenda that their interests are people's

and planet's wellbeing. Of course that is bullshit," Thunberg stated.

"Having these conferences as greenwash platforms for politicians to pretend that they are taking action. Of course, it is also greenwashing the human rights abuses that these countries are committing. So it is both greenwashing the climate action and greenwashing their ethnic cleansing," the activist stated.

Thunberg skipped attendance of the COP29 event in Baku as a protest against holding the event in Azerbaijan which she has described as a repressive oil state planning to expand fossil fuel production.

This year's U.N. climate summit is struggling to focus minds on the health of the planet, with turbulent geopolitics, a confrontational host and the reelection of U.S. climate skeptic Donald Trump stealing the limelight.

The annual conference that aims to

produce global agreements to limit the warming which is tipping the world towards climate catastrophe is becoming a forum of frustration for negotiators seeking a finance deal in the Caspian Sea city of Baku.

On Friday, midway through the two-week summit, a group of former leaders, climate experts and scientists published an open letter calling for the COP process to be reformed, saying it "cannot deliver the change at exponential speed and scale, which is essential to ensure a safe climate landing for humanity."

Oil producer Azerbaijan, the host of this year's 29th Conference of the Parties, is tasked with the limited goal of rallying countries around a target for annual financial aid for developing nations facing the rising costs of climate change.

EU provides over €10 million to support energy efficiency renovations in Yerevan

The EU grant of more than €10 million will complement a €25 million EIB Global loan for energy efficiency improvements across Yerevan.

The EU investment grant will help the municipality of Yerevan to refurbish over 100 000 m² of public buildings.

The project will foster greener and, more sustainable development in Armenia.

EIB Vice-President Teresa Czerwińska, Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Vassilis Maragos Armenia's Minister of Finance, Vahe Hovhannisyan and Armenia's Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan announced an EU grant of over €10 million for energy efficiency improvements across Yerevan today.

This EU investment grant is designed to complement a €25 million EIB Global loan signed in November 2023. The municipality of Yerevan will use the funding to renovate over 100,000 m² of public buildings, focusing on reducing energy consumption and CO₂ emissions. Lessons from the city's initial energy efficiency project will guide these efforts, with planned refurbishments for six polyclinics and 32 kindergartens. Key measures include upgrading building envelopes, replacing windows, and installing efficient boilers, solar hot water systems, and

energy-saving lighting. These enhancements will not only improve energy efficiency but will also extend the lifespan of the buildings and provide greater comfort to their users.

"This EU grant accelerates the Yerevan municipality's efforts within this transformative project, advancing Armenia toward a greener, more sustainable future," said EIB Vice-President Teresa Czerwińska, who oversees EIB operations in Armenia. "The project will not only reduce Yerevan's energy consumption and carbon footprint but will greatly enhance the quality of life for children, educators, patients, and healthcare workers alike. With strong economic and environmental benefits, this initiative exemplifies the Team Europe's commitment to positive, impactful change in Armenia."

Head of the EU Delegation to Armenia, Ambassador Vassilis Maragos, said, "Since I arrived to Armenia one year ago I had the pleasure to visit several of the kindergartens that had been renovated also with EU assistance. Green Yerevan is a key pillar of our joint engagement to providing sustainable services to families and children, and we warmly welcome the signature today of the funding for the 36 additional municipal buildings. Energy efficiency and energy diversification and

security will continue to be a key element of our resilience and growth plan."

Republic of Armenia Minister of Finance, Vahe Hovhannisyan said "The project will support Armenia's long-term environmental and economic objectives by driving energy savings, cutting carbon emissions, and upgrading public infrastructure all while improving vital public services such as healthcare and education."

Republic of Armenia Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan remarked "It is encouraging to see that environmental awareness is on the rise in all countries. The green agenda is a key priority for us, as it has the potential to enhance the quality of life for our citizens, drive sustainable growth, and generate new job opportunities. The EU's support and the EIB's participation in this process will ensure our inclusive progress towards a low-carbon and green economy."

The initiative is aligned with the EU Economic and Investment Plan for the Eastern Partnership, specifically contributing to the "Investing in a Green Yerevan — Energy Efficiency" priority, and part of the EU's Global Gateway strategy. It marks a significant step forward in Armenia's resilience to climate change while sup

Armenian Deputy Speaker of Parliament hosts renowned scientists participating in Microelectronics International Forum

Deputy Speaker of Parliament Hakob Arshakyan has met with a group of renowned scientists who arrived in Armenia to participate in the Microelectronics International Forum.

The scientists arrived from the United States, China, Germany, Ukraine and Estonia.

The forum was organized at the initiative of the Union of Employers of Information and Communication Technologies.

Leading international microelectronics companies based in Armenia, as well as representatives of the sector from



leading countries made presentations at the forum.

Deputy Speaker Arshakyan attached importance to the event. He presented the

activities and significance of the Science and Technology Development Council under the Prime Minister.

The parliament's press service said Arshakyan spoke about the growing science funding in Armenia.

He said that the importance of microelectronics in Armenia is underscored by the presence of major international companies, such as Synopsys Armenia, Siemens, Nvidia, AMD, Microchip Technology and CISCO. The experts highly praised Armenia's scientific potential.

Infosys Limited founder Narayana Murthy receives Armenian state award for Global Contribution to IT



The 14th ceremony of awarding the State Award of the Republic of Armenia for Global Contribution to the Field of Information Technologies was held in the government.

The event was attended by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan, Deputy President of the National Assembly Hakob Arshakyan, members of the legislative and executive bodies, President of the Central Bank Martin Galstyan, President of Synopsys Armenia Yervant Zorian, Director of Synopsis Armenia, chairman of the annual educational awarding committee in the IT field Hovik Musayelyan, and others.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan presented the State Award for Global Contribution to the Field of Information Technologies to Narayana Murthy, the founder of Infosys Limited.

In his speech, the Prime Minister congratulated Narayana Murthy on receiving the State Award and expressed his satisfaction that such an award exists in the Republic of Armenia. According to Nikol Pashinyan, this award is a manifestation of respect and appreciation to the figures who made a revolutionary contribution to the development of the technological

sector.

“But I think that this award ceremony is also important for the Republic of Armenia. Why? Because I think that this award changes the way we look at the world and changes the way the world perceives the Republic of Armenia. This is important with the logic that we do not only expect appreciation or sympathy from the world, but we can also deliver appreciation and we can express our sympathy at such an important and valuable award ceremony,” the Prime Minister emphasized, adding that this award ceremony is also important for us from another point of view.

According to Nikol Pashinyan, when introducing the award winners, including today Mr. Murthy, the phrase “technological giant” is deservedly heard, and this is clearly the case, and today’s event is proof of that. The Prime Minister noted that in the context of this award ceremony, when presenting the award winners to our public, attention should be drawn to their biography. **“Its most essential feature is that they were not born giants, but they became giants, they became people making breakthrough investment. Of course, it is assumed that from the**

beginning the Lord drew a specific destiny and plan for their lives and activities, but it is obvious that without work, it is obvious that without education, and it must also be admitted that it is obvious that without failures it would not be possible to record these achievements. Why do I emphasize this? I hope that we can and will be able to use the opportunity of this award ceremony and the presence of award winners to present the life story of our esteemed award winners to especially our young people, students,”

the Prime Minister noted, adding that the life story of each award winner is something that is not only worth knowing, but also bears great energy and potential to give additional motivation, charge and enthusiasm to anyone who knows it.

According to Nikol Pashinyan, one of the motives for organizing this event is as follows. first of all, it is an expression of appreciation for the path of those people. **“We believe that drawing attention to their path can be useful not only for the youth of Armenia, but also for the youth of any country, who can be inspired by these examples. Of course, our award winners, in this case honorable Mr. Murthy, honor all of us, the Republic of Armenia, with their presence, and with this official event we honor the achievements and contributions of our award winners, in this case, honorable Mr. Murthy.**

Dear Mr. Murthy, once again accept the assurance of our deepest respect and our appreciation for your path, your contribution to the technology industry and your global impact.”

In his speech, Narayana Murthy thanked the Prime Minister for the high appreciation and emphasized that it was a great honor for him to receive the Award of the Republic of Armenia.

Iranian expert highlights Armenia's ties with Arab world in countering Azeri propaganda

Iranian researcher Ehsan Movahedian has highlighted Armenia's contacts with the Arab world from the security and political perspectives.

Ehsan Movahedian, international relations specialist, lecturer and Caucasus expert at the Tehran ATU University told Armenpress that through contacts with the Arab world, Armenia can withstand Azerbaijan's anti-Armenian propaganda in the Arab world itself.

"When you expand your cooperation with the Arab world, by doing so you can withstand Baku's propaganda generated against you in the Arab world," the Iranian expert said, speaking about the role and importance of cooperation between Armenia and Arab countries. "You can withstand this kind of propaganda also through Iran, first of all in the economy sector, then in the political and security sectors, and through working with other means." Movahedian attached importance to Armenia's recognition of the State of Palestine. He said Yerevan's recognition of Palestine was a very important step and gesture, which was widely covered



by Iranian and Arab media.

Speaking about the Iran-Azerbaijan relations and the role of the Israeli factor in these ties, the Iranian analyst said Tehran is very well aware of the ties and level of cooperation between Azerbaijan and Israel.

"It's that Azerbaijan is a neighboring country and a Muslim country. And we know that they have developed their relations with Israel highly. To some extent it is our mistake too, because we haven't paid sufficient attention to it. We believed that Azerbaijan is a Muslim country and Israel can't influence it. We thought it was not possible. We didn't think they could do something like that, but it did happen, and

the reason is perhaps that we didn't pay enough attention to neighboring countries, and now we have what we have. Now the Israelis are there, and they have influenced Azerbaijan. They are trying to influence the Baku government," the Iranian expert said, adding that there are two options to withstand this issue, the worst being direct confrontation.

"For example, Baku isn't responding well to you, but nevertheless you are doing everything possible to achieve peace. This is similar to the strategy that we have towards Azerbaijan. We know what they are doing and we know that the Israelis are in Azerbaijan, but we try to control and manage the situation, we try to influence them, speak and negotiate with them. To some extent Azerbaijan is a landlocked country, because while they do have access to the Caspian Sea, they don't have access to international waters. Therefore, they need us. Iran could use this to control them," Movahedian said, adding that any case requires caution, and that's why Iran tries to tolerate Azerbaijan's conduct and activities with Israel.

overcome this hesitation?

page 9 ➡ I think it's important to remember that sanctions are an inherently political tool. So, when decisions pertaining to sanctions are made, they take into consideration political, economic, and security assets. The reason why Europe and also the US were probably more committed and more prompt in terms of responding to a full-scale war of Russia against Ukraine is because they felt directly threatened. They felt that if they did not do something to constrain Russia and its ability to wage this war of aggression against Ukraine, they would be the next targets. That's why the political will among the Western political players was common. For Azerbaijan, unfortunately, you know and I agree, that if you compare the situation with Russia-Ukraine, and Azerbaijan-Armenia, Russia is three times bigger than Ukraine. So, it's Azerbaijan in comparison to Armenia. Azerbaijan's military resources are —in terms of proportional comparison— bigger compared to Armenia's, and so are Russia's compared to Ukraine, and then, we have seen with

our own eyes the brutality and cruelty of the Azerbaijan forces, including against civilian —not just military— men or women.

Unfortunately, Azerbaijan is not perceived as a threat by European nations or by the United States, and therefore there is less of a political will to confront Azerbaijan for its crimes. In the end, in the world in which we live, human rights, the rule of law, and good governance are things that are often used as lip service, and political security, and economic considerations override these considerations. But that's why our strategy is not to rely on political tools like sanctions, because you know we have to be realistic about the likelihood of sanctions being used against Azerbaijan, but when it comes to legal tools, like for example, the International Criminal Court, they can have more predictability and although ICC is also not 100% free from political influence, but relatively speaking and with the right approach we can succeed in our efforts to use this tool to bring human rights violating perpetrators to account.

And in the end, like every report,

this report also has recommendations for all parties, how do you summarize them? What are the main steps that will permit the Armenians of Artsakh to feel a positive change will happen?

Most of our recommendations pertain to justice and accountability, and what we consider necessary is to serve justice and serving justice means investigating these crimes by competent authorities internationally. Identifying and punishing the perpetrators and enabling compensations to the victims and also ideally providing necessary conditions for the return of the displaced ethnic Armenians. The last one is probably, and unfortunately, less realistic, probably given the current political situation, and the geopolitical situation, but we still insist that from the legal point of view, persons displaced have the right to return to their homes, to their land, and to continue their life peacefully.

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Armenia to participate in Spittelberg Christmas Fair in Vienna

Armenia will participate in the Spittelberg Christmas Fair in Vienna, Austria, from November 16 to December 23 with a separate pavilion with a view to promoting Armenia’s cultural heritage internationally.

The program is being implemented at the initiative of the Armenian Ministry of Education, Science and Culture, in cooperation with the Cultural Development Foundation and



the Hovhannes Sharambeyan Museum of Folk Arts SNCO.

The Armenian pavilion will showcase the handmade works of about 40 masters, including various samples of carpet weaving, pottery, doll making, and souvenirs.

The Spittelberg Christmas Fair has been held in one of the historical districts of Vienna since the 1970s. In 2023, Armenia’s first participation in the Strasbourg Christmas Fair was a success.

100th anniversary of Charles Aznavour celebrated in Greece

On November 14, the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia in Greece, in collaboration with the French Institute of Athens and the French Embassy in Greece, hosted a special event celebrating the 100th anniversary of Charles Aznavour.

The event began with the screening of a short film about Aznavour, followed by a video message from Nicolas Aznavour, co-founder and Chairman of the Board of Trustees of the Aznavour Foundation.

Tigran Mkrtchyan, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to Greece, and Alexandre Dibeau, Counselor at the French Embassy in Athens, delivered welcoming speeches.



“It is important to celebrate Aznavour’s memory in Greece as he has been the most popular French singer in Greece for the last several decades. When members of his Armenian family tried to escape the Turks in the 1920s, they managed to reach Thessaloniki and settle in Charilaou

district, where the residents welcomed them with love. Tributes to Aznavour have been organized in Greece by Megarons in Athens and Thessaloniki in the past, the French Institute together with Saro Zaven, our community organizations. This is the least we can do to perpetuate his timeless heritage,” Ambassador Mkrtchyan said.

The concert featured some of Aznavour’s most iconic songs, performed by Saro Zaven, whose interpretation included a choreographic presentation.

The event was attended by high-ranking officials from the Greek government and parliament, members of the diplomatic corps, spiritual leaders, and representatives of various community organizations.

The Franchise: Upcoming episode of HBO series to be set in Armenia

The upcoming episode of HBO’s THE FRANCHISE, which will air on Max on Sunday, November 17, 2024, will be set in Armenia, the [Armenian Film Society](#) informs.

The satirical comedy television series, which depicts the issues faced by a film crew in production on a superhero film, sees the production going on location in Armenia, though the episode was filmed in the United Kingdom. The episode will feature Armenian actors, for which Armenian Film Society provided support to the casting team.

Armenian writing on the crew’s hats and shirts can be seen in the Max preview. The episode description reads: “On location in Armenia, Eric is pushed over the edge by an article blaming Maximum Studios for the sorry state of modern cinema. With Dan in charge, Dag relishes the chance to play First AD... until a failed stunt leads to chaos.”

THE FRANCHISE is created by Jon Brown, and executive produced by Jon Brown, Armando Iannucci, and Academy Award-winner Sam Mendes. The series

stars Himesh Patel, Aya Cash, Jessica Hynes, Billy Magnussen, Lolly Adefope, Darren Goldstein, Isaac Cole Powell, Richard E. Grant, Daniel Brühl, and Ruaridh Mollica.



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