

Yerevan hosts capstone meeting of Armenia-US Strategic Dialogue



Opening remarks by Foreign Minister of Armenia at the U.S. Strategic Dialogue Capstone Meeting

At the start of the Capstone meeting of the Armenia-US Strategic Dialogue, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia gave opening remarks:

“Assistant Secretary O’Brien,
 Dear colleagues,

It is with great pleasure that I welcome you and the whole US delegation here in Yerevan, to hold the 2nd Capstone Meeting of the Armenia-U.S. Strategic Dialogue.

Today’s meeting is yet another expression of high-level political dialogue between our two countries that will give another impetus to the evolving partnership between Armenia and the United States.

The strong commitment to democratic principles is at the very core of our partnership. Despite the fact that democracy is threatened globally, including in our region, despite the security challenges and emerging hybrid threats, the Government

of Armenia is decisive to follow the democratic choice of its people, to strengthen the relevant state institutions to ensure the rule of law and strong protection for human rights. In this context, our active participation in the Summit for Democracy in recent years is one of the vivid manifestations of Armenia’s commitment and engagement towards building a more robust democracy, resilient enough to face and overcome all these difficulties. I do believe that our like-minded partners and namely the USA fully support and stand with us to prove that democracies are capable of delivering.

And here, in order to succeed, we should be deepening multidimensional and multisectoral cooperation, including but not limited to economy and energy, defense and security, high technologies and cyber security, justice and the rule of law. The bilateral agenda continues to expand and include dimensions critical for the resilience and sustainable development of

Armenia. In this context, I want to recall the high-level Armenia-US-EU meeting held on the 5th of April, 2024 in Brussels and the arrangements indicated in the joint press statement.

We also believe that our enhanced partnership, along with the continued U.S. support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia, holds the potential to contribute to the establishment of durable and dignified peace in the South Caucasus.

In this context, I want to reiterate that Armenia remains strongly committed to the normalization of relations with Azerbaijan and border delimitation based on the mutual recognition of territorial integrity in accordance with the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration. We believe there is a real opportunity, a historical momentum to finalize the draft peace treaty, the signing of which could open the door for lasting peace in the region.

As part of the peace agenda and vision for regional development, Armenia is also strongly interested in unblocking all regional communications based on full respect for countries’ sovereignty and jurisdiction and the principles of equality and reciprocity, as underpinned by our Government’s initiative of “Crossroads of Peace”.

Dear colleagues,

Coming to the agenda of today’s meeting, we have a wide array of concrete steps and plans to discuss ranging from economic and energy diversification to defense and justice reforms.

We have been efficient ➡ page 4

Armenian PM, Finnish President discuss bilateral relations, regional issues

p. 2

Ambitious agenda of Armenia-EU partnership discussed in Yerevan

p. 4

Shanghai Cooperation Organization interested in expanding relations with Armenia

p.3

CSTO hopes Armenia will clarify prospects for its relations with the structure – Tasmagambetov

p. 5

Armenian PM congratulates India's Modi on election win



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan sent a congratulatory message to the Prime Minister of the Republic of India, Narendra Modi, on the occasion of the successful national parliamentary elections and the crucial victory of the National Democratic Alliance. The message reads as follows,

“I warmly congratulate you on the

successful general elections held in the Republic of India and on the crucial victory of the National Democratic Alliance under your leadership.

These historic elections re-affirmed the commitment of the Indian people to democratic values, ensuring and strengthening the continuous dynamic development and achievements of the friendly country of India in various spheres. I am confident that during your upcoming tenure, following the declared principle of “Vasudhaiva Kutumbakam” India will continue to share its achievements in the fields of economy, technologies, education, health and space research for the sake of global good.

I am pleased to note that in recent

years we have jointly succeeded in bringing the historically friendly relations between our peoples to a qualitatively new level, thus creating a sound basis for developing a strategic dialogue. Armenia is ready to exert every effort for further strengthening and advancing this dialogue.

I believe we will have the opportunity to meet in the near future and share our vision on further promoting the Armenia-India bilateral agenda.

I wish you good health and ever-new achievements, and I wish lasting peace and prosperity to the friendly people of India.

Please accept, Your Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration”.

Armenian PM, Finnish President discuss bilateral relations, regional issues

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan had a telephone conversation with the President of Finland, Alexander Stubb.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to the further development and expansion of Armenia-Finland relations. In particular, the implementation of consistent steps towards the expansion of economic cooperation



was emphasized.

Nikol Pashinyan and Alexander Stubb touched upon the deepening of cooperation between Armenia and the European Union, the democratic reforms implemented in our country, as well as the issues related to the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process and regional security.

Mirzoyan, Siebert address Armenia-EU relations and regional security

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan on June 4 received Michael Siebert, Managing Director of Russia, Eastern Europe, Central Asia, OSCE at the European External Action Service, the foreign ministry said.

The interlocutors discussed a number of issues of the comprehensive and ambitious agenda of the Armenia-EU partnership.

According to the source, ideas were exchanged on the new partnership agenda.

“We fully hope that this new agenda will include all the key components and

tools in line with the dynamics and goals of partnership development, as well as the direction of democratic reforms in Armenia,” Minister Mirzoyan said. The continuation of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, as well as the maximization of the opportunities available beyond it, were highlighted.

Among other issues, Ararat Mirzoyan and Michael Siebert referred to the EU monitoring mission in Armenia, steps towards enhancing Armenia's resilience, and issues of cooperation in the economic

sphere. It is noted that issues related to regional security were also discussed.

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia presented the latest developments in the process of normalizing Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, including discussions around the draft peace treaty. Ararat Mirzoyan emphasized the importance of continuing the process of border delimitation based on the Alma-Ata Declaration of 1991.

The Foreign Minister stressed that it is necessary to use the existing real opportunity to achieve lasting peace.

Shanghai Cooperation Organization interested in expanding relations with Armenia

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received the delegation led by Zhang Ming, Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

The Prime Minister welcomed Zhang Ming's visit to Armenia and emphasized the development of cooperation with the organization. Nikol Pashinyan noted that Armenia is interested in deepening broad regional cooperation and referred



to the "Crossroads of Peace" project of the Armenian government in that regard.

Zhang Ming emphasized the interest of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization Secretariat in expanding mutually beneficial relations with Armenia.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the activities of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and further cooperation.

Discussions on tax sector improvement held under the leadership of Prime Minister

A consultation was held under the leadership of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, during which the package of bills adopted by the National Assembly in the first reading was discussed, which propose revising the turnover tax rates.

According to the PM's Office, the discussion specifically addressed the turnover tax system, existing problems, and possible solutions. Issues of tax policy were also discussed.

It was noted that the Prime Minister



stated that it is necessary to formulate the motivations correctly and emphasize that

the government has adopted a policy to completely abandon the turnover tax in Armenia, as it distorts the economy, the tax system, and creates an unhealthy economic environment. According to Nikol Pashinyan, it should be implemented in a phased manner, moving towards a unified single tax system.

As a result of the discussion, the PM instructed to

continue the necessary steps to improve the tax sector.

Iran was among the first to welcome Armenia's "Crossroads of Peace" project - Deputy FM

Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vahan Kostanyan does not see and does not imagine any step back in Armenia-Iran relations, given the nature of these relations and the interests that both countries have



in the region, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Vahan Kostanyan said during the discussion of the annual report 'On the Execution of the Republic of Armenia 2023 State Budget' at the joint session of the National Assembly Standing Committees.

"I can't even imagine any step back, regardless of the composition of the governments in Armenia or Iran at that moment," he added.

"Armenia and Iran are jointly implementing a number of large economic and infrastructure projects. The Islamic Republic of Iran was one of the first to

welcome the "Crossroads of Peace" project and today they are involved in the realization of the "Crossroads of Peace" on the ground.

We are talking about a 32-kilometer section of the Agarak-Kajaran road, which is being built by Iranian companies; the Meghri checkpoint is also being modernized by an Iranian company. The Iranian companies also actively participate in those tenders for the construction of roads, which are approved by the Republic of Armenia," concluded Kostanyan.

Ambitious agenda of Armenia-EU partnership discussed in Yerevan

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan received Michael Siebert, the Managing Director for Russia, Eastern Partnership, Central Asia, Regional Cooperation and OSCE of the European External Action Service.

The interlocutors discussed a number of issues of the comprehensive and ambitious agenda of the Armenia-EU partnership.

Views were exchanged on the new partnership agenda. Minister Mirzoyan emphasized: "We are hopeful that this



new agenda will include all the key components and mechanisms in line with the dynamics of development and goals of our

partnership, as well as the democratic path taken by the Republic of Armenia."

Both the continuous implementation of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement, and the realization of the opportunities available beyond it to the maximum extent, were highlighted.

Ararat Mirzoyan and Michael Siebert, among others, touched upon the EU monitoring mission in Armenia, steps towards strengthening Armenia's resilience, as well as economic cooperation.

Moscow confirms readiness to support reconciliation between Yerevan and Baku – Deputy FM



Moscow confirms its readiness to support the reconciliation of Yerevan and Baku, Russian Deputy Foreign Minister Mikhail Galuzin said in an interview

with [TASS](#).

As the Deputy Minister noted, the Russian side positively assesses the meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan, Ararat Mirzoyan and Jeyhun Bayramov, held in Kazakhstan on May 10-11.

"It gave the parties the opportunity to move forward on the path to peace and stability in the South Caucasus. Another important step has been taken in this direction," Galuzin emphasized.

"Moscow has already hosted rounds

of peace negotiations between Baku and Yerevan twice – in May and July 2023. We are ready to continue to provide full support for the reconciliation of the two fraternal peoples for Russia, to promote the search for mutually acceptable and balanced solutions in order to ensure the security and prosperity of all countries in the region," he noted.

The diplomat also highly appreciated the role of Astana, which provided a platform for Armenian-Azerbaijani contacts.

page 1 ➡ in utilizing three working groups under the auspices of Armenia-US Strategic Dialogue and holding relevant meetings in 2023. Considering the growing nature and dynamics of bilateral relations, we are hopeful to upgrade our Strategic Dialogue to a Strategic Partnership Commission that could further enhance the structured approach to our multifaceted cooperation.

On sectoral cooperation:

With the participation of our relevant agencies, we will have a chance to review growing **economic cooperation**, including in the framework of the Armenia-US Trade and Investment Framework Agreement and further trade liberalization, that could bring more prosperity, development and opportunities for the Armenian

economy and make it more resilient. I believe there are additional mechanisms and effective tools to support economic diversification and we will discuss how to make the best use of them.

Given the current challenges, **energy diversification** is also an important part of our agenda, and we will review the work already done and look into perspectives, including in the fields of nuclear energy and renewables.

In defense cooperation: it is with satisfaction that I note the holding of the Eagle Partner exercise in 2023. We are interested in further exploring possibilities for cooperation for Armenia's defense transformation.

I would also like to stress **justice and**

public sector reforms and Armenia's commitment to strengthen democratic institutions, aimed at building a stronger, more secure, and advanced environment for our citizens. We have made significant progress, the results are tangible and visible.

Dear colleagues,

These are our today's main priorities while the interest to enhance our cooperation goes beyond the sectors I mentioned. We have a comprehensive agenda before us, and I look forward to a fruitful and productive session. I am confident that our discussions today will further solidify our partnership and advance our shared vision of a democratic, peaceful, and prosperous future."

CSTO hopes Armenia will clarify prospects for its relations with the structure – Tasmagambetov



of the republic will clarify the prospects for its relations with the CSTO. This would be to the benefit of all participants in our association, primarily for the full planning of future joint activities,” he said.

At the same time, the Secretary General noted that “over the past year, colleagues from Armenia have significantly reduced

their participation in the organization’s events.”

“Nevertheless, the main mechanisms of interaction are functioning. The Republic of Armenia remains a full member of the organization, all obligations towards this country are preserved in full,” Tasmagambetov emphasized.

US troubled by continued arrests of members of Azerbaijani civil society – State Dept. Spokesperson

US is troubled by continued arrests of members of Azerbaijani civil society and calls for their immediate release, State Department Spokesperson Matthew Miller said at a press briefing.

While addressing the recent arrest of another prominent economist and journalist, Farid Mehralizade, as part of the investigation on Abzas Media, Miller said that those who exercise their fundamental freedoms should not face arrest for doing so.

“So we are deeply troubled by the

continued arrest of members of Azerbaijani civil society. Those who exercise their fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression, should not face arrest for doing so. And we continue to urge the Azerbaijani Government to immediate release – immediately release all individuals who are unjustly detained and to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all,” Miller said.

Farid Mehralizade was arrested for 3 months 20 days as part of the investigation on Abzas Media. A group of Azbas

Media employees are accused of currency smuggling as part of an organized group.



Arayik Harutyunyan meets with the delegation of the “Open Government Partnership” Initiative

Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister’s Office and Open Government Partnership-Armenia Coordinator Arayik Harutyunyan received the delegation of “Open Government Partnership” Initiative, the Information and Public Relations Department of the Prime Minister’s Office said.

Arayik Harutyunyan stressed the importance of cooperation with the OGP Initiative in Armenia in increasing the level of transparency, accountability and introducing innovation.



Arayik Harutyunyan noted that within the process, effective mechanisms have been implemented in the areas of combating corruption, efficient management

of public resources, public participation, and the introduction of innovative solutions.

Regional Coordinator of the OGP for the Eastern Partnership countries, Peter Varga, highly appreciated the efforts and determination of the Government of the Republic of Armenia to increase transparency, accountability of institutions, and public participation. Peter Varga noted that

the OGP is ready to continue supporting the implementation of the reform agenda of the Government of the Republic of Armenia.

The EU will provide budgetary support to Armenia

The financing agreement “EU support for education in Armenia” was signed between Armenia and the European Commission, by which the European Union will provide budgetary support to Armenia on a grant basis.

The agreement, which entered into force on September 12, 2023, is aimed at increasing the competitiveness of the educational system of Armenia, implementing the educational reforms defined by the 2021-2026 Government program, in particular, the state plan for the development of Armenian education until 2030 and the resulting action plan. The European Commission transferred 5 million euros to the Government in December 2023, and



1.5 million euros in May 2024.

The “EU support for education in Armenia” agreement envisages the creation of renovated and equipped STEM laboratories in all 330 schools of Ararat, Kotayk and Gegharkunik regions of Armenia, as well as the training of teachers using modern methodology.

It is also planned to build 13 educational complexes in Syunik region, 7 of them in Kapan, and 6 in Goris. The design budget documents of 13 school-educational complexes of Syunik region have been approved, the construction works of some schools have already started.

In addition to the component of building, renovating, and creating laboratories, the program includes support for improving the national system for evaluating student learning outcomes.

Additional technical assistance will be provided to the ESCS to ensure the effective implementation of the state development plan of Armenian education until 2030 at all levels.

Eurosatory 2024 to welcome Armenia for first time

Armenia will be represented for the first time at Eurosatory, the No. 1 world exhibition for defense and security on the ground and in the air, which will be held from 17 to 21 June in Paris and will welcome more than 1,800 exhibitors from 90 countries, with 98,000 visitors and professionals expected, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry France Armenia

informs.

The Armenia pavilion will host a delegation of member companies of the CCI France Armenia and an integral part of the Armenian military-industrial complex.

This will be the first opportunity for these Armenian companies to exhibit their technologies and solutions at an international trade fair in

Europe, with the aim of signing contracts. Several major events will be organized during the exhibition week.



Proposal to create Milk Producers Union: Working discussion held in Armenian Parliament

On June 6, on the initiative of the Armenian National Assembly Standing Committee on Protection of Human Rights and Public Affairs Rustam Bakoyan work debate was organized on the theme The freedom of economic activity and the guaranteeing of economic competition as basic human right and in this context the problems facing the agricultural holdings, the Parliament said in a readout.

A few days before this debate the problems related to the milk consumption were debated during other debate organized by Rustam Bakoyan. Today, the guest came up with proposals: On behalf of the Cheese Producers Union of Armenia the Chairman Armen Gigoyan proposed



to create Milk Producers Union, where milk producer-provider specialists will be engaged. The proposal was accepted. Before creating the Union, a working group-commission, which will be engaged in the works of creating a Union.

Representatives of private, public, legislative, executive bodies will be involved in the work group to be formed for organizing the works of creating Milk Producers Union.

Representatives of the RA Ministry of Economy, directors of the Cheese Producers Union, Hye Kat Milk Producers Union, private enterprises and farmers took part in the debate.

During the debate the attendees raised issues related to the problems of milk consumption, price, quality and quantity of milk, breeds of cows, underscored that the problems were not new, which during the years were not solved, though they were regularly been voiced.

Armenian Defense Minister attends “HEMUS 2024” international exhibition in Plovdiv

On the sidelines of his working visit to Bulgaria, Armenian Defense Minister Suren Papikyan attended the “HEMUS 2024” international exhibition in Plovdiv.

Minister Papikyan participated in the official opening ceremony of the exhibition.

Following the ceremony, Minister Papikyan toured the exhibition pavilions, reviewed the displayed weaponry exhibits, and engaged in discussions with the leaders and representatives of various military-industrial companies.



Switzerland deploys specialists to flood-affected areas in Armenia



Heavy rain has caused flooding in northern Armenia, leading to considerable loss of life and destruction of property. Water and mud levels reached almost two meters in some areas and destroyed a large number of homes and infrastructure. At the request of the Armenian authorities, Switzerland is deploying specialists from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit to the affected areas. In particular, they will be responsible for assessing the structural soundness of bridges and other infrastructure. Switzerland has earmarked up to CHF 500,000 to support efforts on the ground.

Flooding caused by heavy rainfall has led to considerable loss of life and destruction of property in several areas of

northern Armenia. More than 400 people have had to be evacuated and a wide range of infrastructure has been damaged or destroyed, including roads, bridges and gas and water pipes. In some villages, buildings collapsed and mud and water levels reached almost two meters. In view of the scale of the disaster, the Armenian authorities have requested assistance through the European Union Civil Protection Mechanism (EUCPM), with a particular emphasis on civil engineers.

Switzerland immediately responded by offering assistance in this area, and the Armenian authorities have now confirmed their acceptance and interest. The Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation (SDC) is deploying an seven-strong team from the Swiss Humanitarian Aid Unit (SHA) that includes structural engineers and technicians. The team left Switzerland for Armenia last night and will support the Armenian authorities in assessing the structural soundness of bridges and other damaged infrastructure.

The SDC, which is already active in Armenia and other parts of the South

Caucasus, has earmarked up to CHF 500,000 to support the emergency response in the affected areas, which are among the most disadvantaged in the country. Switzerland is also monitoring the flooding situation in Europe, particularly in neighboring states. It stands ready to offer its assistance to countries that request it.

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan had a telephone conversation with Ignazio Cassis, the Head of the Federal Department of Foreign Affairs of Switzerland.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the bilateral agenda between the two countries and upcoming plans.

The interlocutors touched upon the situation in Lori and Tavush regions of Armenia following the heavy floods. Ignazio Cassis conveyed his condolences for the loss of lives and underlined the support of Switzerland for the assessment of the damages. Ararat Mirzoyan expressed his gratitude to his counterpart for the quick response and support already provided.

Issues of regional security and stability were also discussed.

Armenian PM thanks Lithuanian counterpart for support after heavy floods

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has expressed gratitude to his Lithuanian counterpart

Ingrida Simonyte for unwavering support after heavy floods hit Armenia.

“Thank you Ingrida Simonyte for your unwavering support during these challenging times. Lithuania’s solidarity is truly appreciated. Together, we will overcome



these difficulties and rebuild stronger than ever,” PM Pashinyan said in a post on X.

On June 5 the Lithuanian government announced EUR 100 000 in humanitarian aid to Armenia to mitigate consequences of devastating floods.

“In times of challenge, you are not alone,” PM Simonyte said in response to Nikol Pashinyan.

Armenia, Azerbaijan must approve work regulations by July 1, proceed with delimitation of other sectors - Gor Tsarukyan



After the border delimitation work between Armenia and Azerbaijan, border guard troops from both countries have been deployed on each side of the border line. According to the statement adopted by the border delimitation commissions on April 19, these commissions must develop and submit work regulations for approval by their respective governments by July 1 of this year. Afterwards, they will proceed with the delimitation of other parts of the border.

Gor Tsarukyan, Director of the “Public Relations and Information Center” of the Armenian Prime Minister’s Office, made these remarks during an interview with the Public Television Company, in response to a question about the current stage of the border delimitation process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Tsarukyan mentioned that the commissions, led by the deputy prime ministers of the two countries, have already completed the first stage of delimitation concerning the respective parts of four villages in the Tavush region.

Responding to the claim that the border delimitation process was imposed on Armenia and lacks any legal force, Gor Tsarukyan called it manipulation and noted that the main and primary beneficiary of the border delimitation process is the Republic of Armenia.

He also added that no side has forced Armenia to delimit borders, but at the same time, he emphasized that Azerbaijan insisted on the return of those four well-known villages. Regarding the observation that Azerbaijan even threatened war, Gor Tsarukyan confirmed that such formulations were made publicly.

“Azerbaijan insisted on the return of the villages without any delimitation process, without defining the border. They simply insisted: return the villages, period. As a result of the Armenian side’s counter assertions, this delimitation process took place, through which it was possible to clearly define and delimit the legally valid border line that existed at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, and to have a state border based on the Alma-Ata Declaration,” he said, emphasizing that there was a demand from Azerbaijan to return these four villages, but the demand for the delimitation was made by Armenia.

“Touching upon the assertion that the border delimitation process is not legal because it contradicts the Constitution of Armenia and international treaties,” Gor Tsarukyan said, noting that the legal bases for delimitation are the international legal contractual bases, according to which state borders are recognized at the international level.

“Armenia and Azerbaijan have a solid international legal basis, based on which they have begun and, I hope, will continue the delimitation. The first is the well-known Alma-Ata Declaration, approved by the parties in 1991, based on which the Minsk Agreement was signed, approved, and ratified.

“In paragraph 5 of the Minsk Agreement and paragraph 3 of the Alma-Ata Declaration, as well as in the corresponding provisions of the CIS Charter, it is clearly established that the parties recognize each other’s borders and territorial integrity with the border line that existed at that time and had legal force, and they have no territorial claims against each other,” he said, adding that these documents went through the proper ratification process in both countries, which means that both countries have a solid legal basis to initiate the delimitation process.

“It is necessary to note first and foremost that as a result of legal and expert examinations, it has been substantiated that the existing and legally justified border line between the Soviet republics at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union is presented on the maps of the General Staff of the Soviet Union from 1974-1978, the validity and legal force of which are also argued by the fact that these maps bear the seals and signatures of the heads of the State Geodetic Transcaucasian Regional Inspection of the Soviet Union” said Tsarukyan.

He noted that all this confirms that today’s border line fully corresponds to the border line approved by the presidencies of the Supreme Councils of Soviet Armenia and Soviet Azerbaijan in 1969.

Tsarukyan, in his conclusion and discussion of the next steps, stated that the commissions of Armenia and Azerbaijan should submit the work regulations to their respective governments by July 1.

“Subsequently, these regulations should undergo approval. Following this approval, the delimitation process is expected to proceed,” he said.

Armenian Opposition demands Parliament debate on Pashinyan's resignation



(RFE/RL) - Amid continuing anti-government protests in Yerevan, the Armenian opposition moved on June 10 to force an emergency parliament debate on its demands for the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his cabinet.

The opposition Hayastan and Pativ Unem alliances petitioned the leadership of the National Assembly to convene such a session as protesters led by Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan occupied a section of the city's Marshal Bagramyan Avenue adjacent to the parliament building. They set up a tent camp there early in the morning after security forces prevented them from marching through another street located closer to the building.



The opposition lawmakers want the parliament to debate and approve by June

17 a resolution saying that Pashinyan's government must quit because it "has failed the defense, security and territorial integrity" of Armenia, left the country's sovereignty "under immediate threat" and must be replaced by experienced professionals trusted by the public. Hayastan's Artsvik Minasyan stressed that the proposed measure is not a vote of no confidence in the government which was demanded by Galstanyan at the start of his month-long campaign for regime change.

The parliament leadership dominated by pro-government lawmakers rejected the initiative later in the day. Speaker Alen Simonian insisted that Pashinyan and his political team still enjoy popular backing.

The parliamentary statutes stipulate that an emergency session must take place if it is demanded by at least 27 members of the 107-seat legislature. Hayastan and Pativ Unem collected 33 signatures in support of the debate, meaning that it has to be scheduled for June 17 at the latest. However, the parliamentary majority

can scuttle the debate by boycotting it and preventing the National Assembly from making a quorum. Hayk Konjoryan, the parliamentary leader of Pashinyan's Civil Contract party, made clear that he and his pro-government colleagues will do just that.

Opposition lawmakers said that despite the parliamentary majority's stance they hope to succeed in forcing the debate.

"Many things will happen before June 17," said Hayk Mamijanyan, the Pativ Unem leader.

For his part, Minasyan said Armenians should take to the streets in large numbers in order to force the ruling majority to obey "the will of the people."

"It's important that the people's demand be so powerful that they show up for



that session," he told protesters camped out on Marshal Bagramyan Avenue.

Galstanyan discussed his further actions with these and other opposition leaders who reaffirmed support for his protest movement. The outspoken cleric announced afterwards that the street sit-in will continue and culminate in a major rally in the same location on Wednesday. It will be an "extremely important day," he said, urging supporters to turn out in force.

"With our presence here on June 12, we can change a lot in our life," the protest leader added without elaborating.

The parliament is due to hold regular sittings, including a question-and-answer session with Pashinyan and government ministers, on Tuesday and Wednesday.

Türkiye has highest incarceration rates; Armenia shows lowest rate in South Caucasus, Council of Europe Report reveals



Prison overcrowding continues to be an acute and persistent problem in a significant number of European prison administrations, according to the Council of Europe's Annual Penal Statistics on Prison Populations ([SPACE I](#)) for 2023, released on June 6. In countries with over 500,000 inhabitants, twelve prison administrations reported having more inmates than places available in January 2023.

For **Armenia**, the total number of inmates was 2,357 persons.

Incarceration rates (number of inmates per 100,000 inhabitants)

From 31 January 2022 to 31 January 2023, the median incarceration rate grew by 2.4% in countries exceeding one million inhabitants.

The countries with the highest incarceration rates were Turkey (408 inmates per 100,000 inhabitants), Georgia (256), Azerbaijan (244), the Republic of Moldova (242), Hungary (211), Poland (194), the Slovak Republic (183), Albania (179), Czechia (176), Lithuania (174) and Latvia (172). Other countries with high incarceration rates were Montenegro (168), Serbia (162), Estonia (151), North Macedonia (142).

Not taking into account countries with less than 500,000 inhabitants, the lowest incarceration rates were found in the prison administrations of Finland (52), the Netherlands (52), Norway (55), Germany (67), Slovenia (68), Denmark (71), Switzerland (73), **Armenia (79)**, Sweden (80) and Ireland (85).

In countries with over 500,000 inhabitants, the prison administrations where the incarceration rate grew the most as

compared to the previous report were the Republic of Moldova (+52.1%), North Macedonia (+25.5%), Cyprus (+24.8%), Turkey (+15%), Azerbaijan (+12.5%), Ireland (+11.7%), Montenegro (+11.3%), **Armenia (+10.6%)**, Croatia (+10.4%), Hungary (+8.7%), Northern Ireland (UK) (+8.3%), Georgia (+8.2%), Bulgaria (+8.1%), Austria (+6.8%), Italy (+5.7%), and Sweden (5.1%).

Of the prison administrations of countries with a population exceeding 500,000 inhabitants, only those of Lithuania (-8.9%), Estonia (-8.8%) and Greece (-5.2%) reported a noteworthy decrease in their incarceration rates.

In other 23 prison administrations, the prison population rates remained stable (with small increases or decreases): Finland (+4.7%), Serbia (+4.2%), Portugal (+3.5%), UK (England and Wales) (+3%), Slovenia (+2.1%), Poland (+1.8%), Switzerland (+1.7%), Albania (+1.6%), Belgium (+1.4%), Denmark (+1.1%), Czechia (+0.8%), Romania (0.0%), Latvia (-0.4%), Germany (-0.5%), France (-0.5%), Spain (State administration) (-0.8%), Ukraine (-0.9%), Spain (-1.3%), Norway (-1.3%), Slovakia (-1.8%), Scotland (UK) (-1.9%), Netherlands (-2.6%) and Spain (Catalonia) (-4.1%).

Prison density - overcrowding

Overall, in Europe, median prison density decreased by 2% from January 2022 to January 2023 from 91.6 to 93.5 inmates per 100 places available in the 37 prison administrations that participated in both years' surveys.

Seven prison administrations reported a prison density of more than 105 inmates per 100 places, an indicator of severe overcrowding: Cyprus (166 inmates per 100 places), Romania (120 inmates per 100 places), France (119), Belgium (115), Hungary (112), Italy (109) and Slovenia (107).

Other prison administrations with very high prison density were Greece (103 inmates per 100 places available), Sweden

(102), North Macedonia (101), Croatia (101), Türkiye (100), Ireland (99), Portugal (98), Finland (97), Denmark (97), England and Wales (UK) (97) and Azerbaijan (96).

In prison administrations of countries exceeding 500,000 inhabitants, prison density was the lowest in Ukraine (48 inmates per 100 available places), **Armenia (53)**, Spain (State Administration (60), Estonia (68), Bulgaria (69), Lithuania (69). Other prison administrations had the prison density was the following: Luxembourg (71), Germany (78), Montenegro (78), Spain (Catalonia) (78), Norway (80), Georgia (82), Poland (83), Northern Ireland (UK) (85), Slovakia (85), Albania (87).

Women inmates

As of 31 January 2023, 5 out of 100 inmates in Europe was a woman. The prison administrations of countries with more than 500,000 inhabitants where the proportion was the highest were Cyprus (9.2%), Czechia (8.5%), Latvia (7.7%), Finland (7.7%), Hungary (7.4%), and Spain (State administration) (7.2%), Slovak Republic (7.2%) and Portugal (7.2%).

The prison administrations where the percentage of women inmates was the lowest were Albania (1.3%), Croatia (1.9%), **Armenia (2.6%**, 61 female prisoners), Azerbaijan (2.9%), France (3.2%) and Georgia (3.4%).

Foreigners

Overall, in Europe - on 31 January 2023 - 27% of the prison population were foreigners (the European average). Prison administrations with the highest proportions of foreign inmates in countries with over 500,000 inhabitants were Luxembourg (78%), Switzerland (71%), Greece (57%), Cyprus (55%), Austria (51%), Belgium (42%), Germany (40%), Slovenia (34%), Estonia (33%), Italy (32%), Spain (30%) and Denmark (29%).

Prison administrations with the lowest percentage of foreign inmates were Romania (1.1%), Republic

page 10 of Moldova (1.5%), Azerbaijan (1.9%), Ukraine (2.1%), Latvia (2.4%), Poland (2.6%) and Albania (2.8%).

There were 177 foreigners (male and female) among inmates in **Armenia** (6.2% of all the prison population).

Pre-trial detainees

On 31 January 2023, on average, almost one third of inmates in European prisons was in pre-trial detention. In countries with over 500,000 inhabitants, the prison administrations with the highest proportions of pre-trial detainees were Albania (55%), **Armenia (53%)**, Luxembourg (49%), Switzerland (46%), the Netherlands (45%), Montenegro (42%) and Northern Ireland (41%).

The prison administrations with the lowest percentages of pre-trial detainees were Czechia (7.5%), Poland (11.4%), Lithuania (11.2%), Romania (12.1%), North Macedonia (12.3%), Slovak Republic (14.6%), Spain (State Administration) (15.9%) and Estonia (16.8%).

Length of imprisonment

In 2022, the median average length of imprisonment in European prison

administrations was 10.1 months. Prison administrations from countries with more than 500,000 inhabitants with the highest average length of imprisonment were Portugal (30.2 months), Azerbaijan (27.2), Ukraine (26.1), Republic of Moldova (25.3), Romania (24), Czechia (22), Lithuania (20.5), Spain (State Administration) (19.7), Estonia (19.2), Greece (18.4) and **Armenia (18)**.

The prison administrations from countries with over 500,000 inhabitants which had the lowest average length of imprisonment were Switzerland (2.1), Luxembourg (3.7), North Macedonia (3), Netherlands (4.2), Germany (4.4), Northern Ireland (UK) (4.9).

Suicides

The median suicide rate in European prisons in 2022 was 5.3 suicides per 10,000 inmates. The prison administrations in countries with over 500,000 inhabitants with the highest suicide rates were Latvia (21.7), Switzerland (20.2), France (19.1), Scotland (UK) (18.9), Spain (Catalonia) (16.8), Italy (15), Belgium (14.3), Luxembourg (14.2) and Slovenia

(13.9).

In **Armenia** in prison administrations the suicide rate was **(12.7 per 10,000 inmates)**

Offences

On 31 January 2023, drug-related offences continued to be the most common main conviction among prisoners; these offenders constituted 18.5% of the prison population, followed by homicide or attempted homicide (12.8%), theft (11.5%), robbery (7.7%), assault and battery (6.7%), sexual offences excluding rape (4.6%), rape (4.3%), economic or financial crimes (3%) road traffic offences (3%) in the 45 prison administrations that provided this data.

In nine countries over 500,000 inhabitants, more one quarter or more of all inmates had been convicted for drug-related offences: Latvia (42%), Azerbaijan (42%), Türkiye (34%), Italy (31%), Belgium (29%), Serbia (29%), Denmark (27%), Sweden (25%) and Malta (25%).

There is no information in the report about the breakdown of inmates by offences in **Armenia**.

Armenian delegation in the Slovenian Parliament reaffirms commitment to establishing peace in the region

As part of the official visit to Slovenia, the delegation led by Armenian National Assembly Speaker Alen Simonyan on June 4 met with members of the Slovenia-Armenia Friendship Group and the Foreign Relations Committee of the Slovenian Parliament.

According to the readout issued by the Armenian Parliament, the meeting was attended by the Chair of the Standing Committee on Foreign Relations of the National Assembly



Sargis Khandanyan, and member of the "Civil Contract" faction, member of the Armenia-Slovenia friendship group, Lena Nazaryan.

According to the source, the parties emphasized the role of active interaction between friendship groups in expanding Armenian-Slovenian relations

Addressing the security situation in the South Caucasus, the Armenian delegation reaffirmed Armenia's commitment to establishing peace in the region and noted that Armenia counts on Slovenia's support on international platforms in the regulation of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations.

During the meeting a wide range of issues related to the expansion of inter-parliamentary relations, as well as the security situation in the South Caucasus and Europe were touched upon.

Australian lawmakers unanimously slam Azerbaijan, call for pro-Armenian measures



On June 3, members from the Australian House of Representatives debated a historic first-ever motion on the Republic of Artsakh, and the MPs unanimously slammed Azerbaijan's 24-hour military attack against Artsakh and called on Azerbaijan to implement several pro-Armenian measures, reported the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC-AU).

The motion, championed by Member for Bradfield and Co-Chair of the Australia-Armenia Inter-Parliamentary Union, the Hon. Paul Fletcher MP, was debated in the Australian Parliament's Federation Chamber with four speakers, including Member for Bennelong Mr Jerome Laxale MP, Member for Beam Mr David Smith MP, and Member for Mackellar, Dr Sophie Scamps. All speakers supported the motion.

All four speakers spoke in favour of the motion during the 20-minute debate, unequivocally calling out Azerbaijan's 24-hour military assault and urging Azerbaijan to release all Armenian political prisoners, allow the right of return for Armenian refugees to Artsakh under international guarantees, to protect Armenian cultural heritage, and for Azerbaijan to withdraw from the sovereign borders of the Republic of Armenia.

In commencing the debate, Mr Fletcher said, "I rise to express my support for the rights to self-determination of the Armenian people in Nagorno Karabakh and the

Republic of Artsakh. I condemn the unconscionable attack by Azerbaijan in September 2022, which has caused untold misery and has driven almost all Armenians who formerly lived in Nagorno-Karabakh from their homes."

Mr Fletcher called on Australia to take a firmer stance to "call for the removal of Azerbaijani troops from the sovereign borders of Armenia, the right of return for Armenians to Artsakh, the right of return of all Armenian citizens and for Azerbaijan to cease its erasure of the Armenian presence in the region".

Jerome Laxale, who seconded the motion and is representative of the largest Armenian-Australian community in the country, spoke strongly in support of the motion and said: "The actions of Azerbaijan are ongoing, senseless and unprovoked. They have and continue to cause immense suffering and displacement, and they need to know the world is watching."

He added, "Political prisoners need to be released, internationally recognized border must be respected, and ancient cultural sites must be preserved. These are not unreasonable asks."

Dr Scamps, who called the actions of Azerbaijan "ethnic cleansing", referenced the work of scholars, experts in genocide prevention and human rights advocates to make her case and said: "The inaugural prosecutor of the International Criminal Court has labelled the ethnic cleansing of the Artsakh Armenians as the second Armenian Genocide, encouraged by the inaction of the international community."

The final speaker, Mr David Smith, who spoke about the issue of Artsakh on the floor of Parliament for the first time, said, "Azerbaijan wilfully ignored their

obligation to ensure the population of Nagorno Karabakh was denied food and other essential medications" when discussing the blockade.

Mr Smith importantly acknowledged the work of the Australian Government, which has rightfully called out Azerbaijan on two separate occasions. Smith said, "For the second time now, an Australian Government has recognised Azerbaijan's belligerent actions first in November 2022, acknowledging Azerbaijan as the responsible party for a specific series of crimes against Armenian prisoners of war and the desecration of Armenian cultural and religious sites and secondly as the instigator of an illegal blockade in violation of international law."

ANC-AU Executive Director, Michael Kolokossian praised the historic motion and thanked all speakers for their support in debating this issue.

"It is only fitting that the first Federal parliamentarian to speak about the rights of the people of Artsakh back in 2010, Mr Paul Fletcher, championed the first ever motion and debate in the Federal Australian Parliament, slamming Azerbaijan and calling on Azerbaijan to implement several pro-Armenian measures that would ensure the rights and security of Armenians," Kolokossian said.

"We thank all speakers in this debate who unanimously endorsed the motion, which signalled a clear rejection of Azerbaijan's genocidal policies against Armenians," added Kolokossian. "This motion clearly articulates that Australia and our Parliament stand with Armenian-Australians and the Republic of Armenia in calling out Azerbaijan's ongoing belligerent actions."

Famous American chefs participated in the Yerevan Wine Days 2024 Festival

By Eliza Zakharyan



about 10 days, besides participating in the festival; they will travel, visit the south and north of the country, get acquainted with the culinary traditions of Armenia and share their experience with their Armenian colleagues.

When asked by the correspondent what Armenian wine and dish is preferred by Deputy Ambassador Ch. Laitinen, he answered: "It is difficult to answer this question regarding wines, all Armenian wines are very good, perhaps we should mention 'Hin Kamurj' (Old Bridge) wines, which our team at the Embassy likes very much, and Armenian cuisine is again very tasty and appetizing, and if something is to be singled out, it's a "bread with jingyal" (jingyalov hats).

Touching upon the organizational activities of the festival, the U.S. Deputy Ambassador to Armenia noted that the number of participating companies, participation of local residents and tourists proves that the festival is very well organized.



most colorful festivals, which wanted to participate and present American cuisine.

"I am in Armenia for the 3rd year and I see that this festival is gaining new momentum every year, and we would like to participate with the involvement of our guests from California and present American cuisine within the framework of this



Famous American chefs Lenora Moran and Mary Sue Milliken, cookbook author, restaurant business expert and founder of Mundo Hospitality Group, arrived in Yerevan for the Yerevan Wine Days 2024 festival within the framework of the Culinary Diplomacy program of the U.S. Embassy in Armenia.

As Chip Laitinen, Charge d'Affaires of the U.S. Embassy in Armenia, noted in a conversation with "Noyan Tapan" reporter, "Yerevan Wine Days" is one of the

festival," he said.

According to him, American chefs Milliken and Morani will stay in Armenia for



Armenia, Georgia to submit joint bid to host 2029 FIFA U20 World Cup

Armenia and Georgia will submit a joint bid to host the 2029 FIFA U20 World Cup.

Presidents of the Football Federations of Armenia and Georgia Armen Melikbekyan and Levan Kobiashvili made the announcement at a joint press conference in Yerevan.



“Given the good-neighborly relations between the Football Federations of Armenia and Georgia, and the brilliant cooperation in a number of fields, the Federations have decided to submit a bill to host the 2029 FIFA U20 World Cup,” Armen Melikbekyan said.

500-year-old Armenian Church in Diyarbekir to be renovated

The 500-year-old Surp Sarkis Armenian Church in Diyarbekir will soon undergo major renovations, Anadolu Agency reports.

One of the historical Armenian churches in Diyarbekir, it is located in the Sur district and is owned by the Surp Giragos Armenian Church Foundation.

It had fallen into disrepair due to a lack of congregation and sustained damage during the twin earthquakes on Feb. 6, 2023.

The renovation project, approved and funded by the Turkish Culture and Tourism Ministry, aims to revive the church and will officially begin this month.

Speaking to Anadolu, Cemil Koc, head of the Culture Ministry’s Directorate of Surveying and Monuments in Diyarbekir, said the church is classified as a first-class monumental structure.

It is the second-largest Armenian



Church in Diyarbekir, after the Surp Giragos Armenian Church, Koc added.

“The structure consists of five naves parallel to the apse, featuring wide arches and a wooden-beam, earth-covered roof. The women’s gallery, known as the last congregation area, has suffered damage to its columns and arches due to recent earthquakes and human factors.”

“Our renovation work aims to revive

the church and contribute to the tourism of our region and country,” Koc said.

He added that the renovation project began in 2021, with comprehensive surveys, renovation, structural, mechanical, and electrical plans approved by the conservation board in 2022.

However, after the earthquakes, the church was found to have sustained severe damage, Koc said.

“In response, the ministry provided a grant 5 million Turkish lira (\$154,000) for this year. This will initiate the renovation process. Subsequent renovation will be supported by the Armenian community’s resources and additional contributions. This initial phase marks the first step toward the church’s revival,” he added.

Turkey’s Armenian patriarch is set to visit the site.

Snoop Dogg’s Yerevan concert possibly set for August this year

Well-known rapper Snoop Dogg’s concert in Yerevan may take place in August of this year, announced by the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Zhanna Andreasyan in the National Assembly, answering the question of Arsen Torosyan, deputy of the Civil Agreement faction of the National Assembly.

The minister reminded that Snoop Dogg’s concert was scheduled to take place in Yerevan in September 2023, but it was postponed for known reasons. “During this year, we are waiting for an offer from the



organization. The organization should offer three dates for holding the concert, from which we should choose the most expedient one,” Andreasyan said.

She explained that they are waiting for the proposals from the concert organizing company, although they have a preliminary impression that the concert might be held in August of this year.

The concert of the well-known rapper Snoop Dogg, which was scheduled to take place in Yerevan in September 2023, was postponed due to the aggression of Azerbaijan against Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Armenian government allocated about \$6 million to the “Doping Space” company for the organization of Snoop Dogg’s concert in August 2023.

ARMENIA

Yezequelian Hotel & Residence



In the Green Park
Near Congress Hotel
24 Studios and Apartments
€250 Per Week
(Payment Upon Arrival)

In the Center
of Yerevan



Warm Welcome
24/7 Security
Free Cafe & Bar



Kitchen, Refrigerator
Safe, TV, Internet



Modern
Rest Rooms

All Conveniences
Air Conditioned
Apartments

RESERVATIONS:

011 374 91 57 01 70
011 374 91 73 91 91

Yezequelian@aol.com

Paris Office: 34 Avenue des Champs Elysees
Phone: 011 33 1 43 59 66 72
Yerevan Address: 8, Khorenatsi St.

Subscribe and watch Noyan Tapan programs on Noyan Tapan TV, and Noyan Tapan YouTube Channels.



Noyan Tapan introduces: "Discussion" Welcoming Hovsep Khurshudyan, Chairman of "Free Citizen" NGO and Analyst.



<https://www.youtube.com/@Noyan-TapanTV> (in Armenian)

<https://www.youtube.com/@NoyanTapan> (in Russian)

<https://www.youtube.com/@NoyanTapanLiveTV> (Special)

You can also watch them on our social pages on Facebook
Call us for advertisement and PR through +374 55 509050 or +1 818 967 5677.



AZAD Pharma AG AZAD Pharmaceutical Ingredients AG

Switzerland

AZAD Pharmaceutical Ingredients AG

Durachweg 15
CH-8200 Schaffhausen
Phone No: +41 52 632 09 10
Fax: +41 52 632 09 11

AZAD Pharma AG

Bahnhofstrasse 9
CH-3125 Toffen
Phone No: +41 31 810 40 10
Fax: +41 31 810 40 11

Canada

AZAD Fine Chemicals Ltd.

1895 - 55th Avenue
Dorval, Qc H9P 1G9
Phone No: +1 514 636 19 99
Fax: +1 514 636 75 55

Atlit Inc.

16 Westminster Ave.,
Suite 306A
Montreal, Qc H4X 1Z1
Phone No: +1 514 369 25 91
Fax: +1 514 369 81 67

China

Hangzhou Representative Office of AZAD Pharmaceutical Ingredients AG

Room 801-087, Lixin Plaza,
#102 Moganshan Road
310051 -Hangzhou China

Phone +86-571-8761 5336
Mobile +86-153-5505-0903
Fax: +86-571- 8895 8963

Germany

AZAD Pharma GmbH

Fritz-Reichle-Ring 6a
DE-78315 Radolfzell
Phone No: +49 7732 939101510
Fax: +49 7732 9391016

Armenia

AZAD Pharmaceuticals LLC

Vanahovit 8, Proshian
Asharak Ave., Kotayk Maiz
Phone No: +374 93 40 40 62
Fax: +374 93 40 34 40



The publisher: NT Holding LTD
Լրատվական գործունեություն իրականացնող
ՆՏ Հորիզոն ԲԻՐ

Ծավալը՝ 2.25 մամուլ, տպաքանակը՝ 1500
Circulation: 1500 print copies and
15600 copies by e-mail list in PDF format

Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993

President of the NT Media Holding:
TIGRAN HARUTYUNYAN
Editor-in-Chief of the Media Holding:
GAYANEH ARAKELYAN
Director of the weekly:
MARINA HARUTYUNYAN
Chief Correspondent: **GOURGEN KHAZHAKIAN**
Computer Design: **Ashot Khalapyan**

Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ.Հարությունյան

ISSN 1829-0604

Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝
03ԱՑՑՑ368, տրված՝ 11.01.2013թ.
Registration certificate and the date:
273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

E-mail: contact@nt.am
URL: 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