

## EDITORIAL / BAŞYAZI

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# FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

Alev KILIÇ\*

**Abstract:** *This article covers the period of November 2024-June 2025 of the internal developments in Armenia, the foreign dynamics shaping its international relations, the ongoing process of signing the peace agreement with Azerbaijan and the bilateral relations of Türkiye and Armenia in the light of the process of normalization of their relations.*

*The Armenian government has passed through a turbulent period. Internally, the preparations for changing the constitution, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's statement that the international recognition of the “Armenian Genocide” is not a priority for the government as well as the fact that he questioned, even challenged the “genocide” discourse was heavily criticized by the small but vociferous opposition as treason to the country. In fact, the opposition's criticisms reached to such an extent that they denied the legitimacy of the government. The church also got actively involved in the campaign against the government. On the other hand, official words were not put into deeds as no concrete steps were taken to overcome the two major impediments to concluding the planned peace agreement with Azerbaijan: the changing of the constitution and the Zangezur corridor.*

\* ORCID iD: <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-5180-2896>  
Ambassador (R), Director of the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM)  
E-mail: [akilic@avim.org.tr](mailto:akilic@avim.org.tr)

*The two parties, Armenia and Azerbaijan, announced the conclusion of the final draft text of the peace agreement, meaning the text was ready for signing, which drew international acclaim as a positive development with the expectation that it would be signed and ratified shortly. However, it has been acknowledged that the signing will have to wait until the expressed impediments are overcome.*

*Developments have emerged in foreign policy where prudence and caution were needed for sustaining the policies of running with the hare and hunting with the hounds as well as trying to sit on two chairs faced challenges. The proclamation of a balanced and balancing foreign policy provided the justification of siding with the West, the EU, and the US, leading to the application for membership in the EU and signing of a strategic partnership agreement with the US. However, it soon transpired that relations with Russia should not be underestimated in view of the new US administration's approach to Russia, as well as the surfacing fragility of the EU. Hence, Pashinyan yielded to the necessity of attending the Victory Day parade in Moscow despite the disapproval of the West. Shortly after, Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs's welcome in Yerevan revealed the deep ties between the two states.*

*Relations with Türkiye have kept their momentum, leading to an active period in bilateral contacts. The sobriety of the commemoration of 24 April caused pessimism and depression particularly in the Diaspora. Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ararat Mirzoyan attended the Antalya Diplomacy Forum accompanied by officials and held a meeting with the Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan. The Armenian side underlined the need for opening the Türkiye-Armenia border for land and railroad connections and expressed dissatisfaction with linking the bilateral process of normalization with the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations.*

*At the Antalya Forum, three participating Foreign Ministers of the South Caucasus countries took part in a trilateral panel discussion, which inspired the initiation of a process of trilateral meetings.*

**Keywords:** Pashinyan, Mirzoyan, Papikian, Karekin II, Putin, Lavrov, Dashnaktsutyun, Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF), Diaspora, Erdoğan, Fidan

**Öz:** Bu incelemede Kasım 2024-Haziran 2025 tarihleri döneminde Ermenistan'daki iç gelişmeler, dış ilişkiler, Azerbaycan ile barış süreci ile Türkiye-Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkiler ve normalleşme süreci ele alınmaktadır.

Ermenistan yönetimi çalkantılı bir dönem geçirmiştir. İç politikada sayıca az fakat sesi gür çıkan muhalefet anayasa değişikliği hazırlığını, Başbakan Nikol Paşinyan'ın "Ermeni Soykırımı" tanıtımının öncelik olmadığı beyanını ve onun soykırım söylemini irdelleyen, hatta sorgulayan ifadelerini vatana ihanet suçlamalarıyla en ağır şekilde eleştirmiştir. Hatta muhalefet, eleştirilerini yönetimin meşruiyetinin bulunmadığı noktasına kadar getirmiştir. Diğer taraftan yönetimin ifadeleri söylemde kalmış, Azerbaycan ile öngörülen barış antlaşmasının önündeki iki temel engel olan anayasa değişikliği ve Zangezur koridoru konularında somut bir gelişme kaydedilmemiştir.

Barış antlaşması sürecinde nihai taslak üzerinde mutabakat sağlanmış, metin imzaya hazır hale gelmiş, bu olumlu gelişme uluslararası alanda övgüyle karşılanmış, metnin bir an önce imzalanması ve onaylanması beklentisi ifade edilmiştir. Ancak engeller giderilemedikçe, sürecin sonuçlandırılmasının vakit alacağı anlaşılmıştır.

Dış politikada devam eden tavşana kaç, taziye tut politikası ve aynı anda iki sandalyeye oturma gayretini sürdürebilmek zorlaşmış, hassas dengelerin dikkate alınması gereken gelişmeler ortaya çıkmıştır. Dengeli ve dengeleyici dış politika söylemi ile Batı'ya, AB'ye ve ABD'ye yaklaşılmış, AB'ye üyelik başvurusu girişimi başlatılmış, ABD ile stratejik ortaklık anlaşması imzalanmıştır. Ancak ABD yeni yönetiminin Rusya ile ilişkilere yaklaşımı, keza AB'nin ortaya çıkan zafiyeti karşısında Rusya ile ilişkilerin ihmal edilmemesi gereği ortaya çıkmış, Batı'dan gelen aksine telkinlere rağmen Paşinyan Moskova'da Zafer Günü törenine katılmak zorunluğunu hissetmiştir.

Türkiye ile ilişkiler hareketliliğini korumuş, karşılıklı temaslarda aktif bir dönem yaşanmıştır. 24 Nisan anma günü etkinliklerinin sönük geçmesi özellikle Diasporada eziklik hissi ve tepki yaratmıştır. Ermeni Dışişleri Bakanı Ararat Mirzoyan beraberinde bir heyetle Antalya Diplomasi Forumuna katılmış, Türk Dışişleri Bakanı Hakan Fidan ile ikili görüşme yapmıştır. Ermeni tarafı Türkiye-Ermenistan sınırının kara ve demir yolu ulaşımı için açılması üzerinde durmuş, normalleşme sürecinin Azerbaycan-Ermenistan ilişkilerinin normalleşmesine bağlanmasını eleştirmiştir.

*Antalya Forumunda üç Güney Kafkas ülkesinin dışışleri bakanları da ortak bir panel toplantısı yapmış, bu gelişme aralarında üçlü görüşme süreci başlatılmasına ilham vermiştir.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Paşinyan, Mirzoyan, Papikian, II. Karekin, Putin, Lavrov, Taşnaksutyun, Ermeni Devrimci Federasyonu (EDF), Diaspora, Erdoğan, Fidan

## 1. Domestic Developments In Armenia

Domestic developments in Armenia during the period were marked by the opposition's harsh, violent and excessive attacks and accusations against the government for allegedly jeopardizing the vital interests and existence of the state and nation for the sake of signing a peace treaty. The main issues of objection were the administration's proposal to amend the constitution, its emphasis on the concept of the "State of Armenia" instead of the "Armenian historical mythology" and the softening of the discourse on the 1915 events.

Claiming to be the new face and pioneer of the opposition, Archbishop Galstanian promised the demonstrators he gathered near the presidential palace on 25 October that he would continue to fight for regime change in Armenia, but he did not specify a plan for future actions and remained silent during the period. When asked why he had not renounced his Canadian citizenship, he replied, "*I do not aim to become Prime Minister.*" At a year-end press conference on 27 December, Galstanian apologized to his supporters for failing to oust Prime Minister Pashinyan<sup>1</sup>

In response to a question during the parliamentary debate on the 2025 budget on 31 October, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan stated "*The Armenian Genocide international recognition process is not our number one priority. Making a number one priority of studying the Armenian Genocide, the holes of tragic history, is certainly not in the agenda of the foreign ministry.*"<sup>2</sup> The opposition immediately accused the Minister of denialism, of internalizing Türkiye's priorities.

Prime Minister Pashinyan's contradictory statements on the constitutional amendment continued during the period. On 13 November, in response to a question in the parliament, Pashinyan again claimed that there is no provision on Karabakh in the Armenian Constitution, that Azerbaijan's claims regarding this issue are inaccurate, and that in fact there are statements in the Azerbaijani Constitution targeting the territorial integrity of Armenia.<sup>3</sup> A day later, on 14 November, he declared that he had read and analyzed the Declaration of Independence in the preamble of the Armenian Constitution several times and

1 Shoghik Galstian, "Armenian Protest Leader Admits 'Mistakes'", *The Mirror Spectator*, January 2, 2025, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2025/01/02/armenian-protest-leader-admits-mistakes/>.

2 "Soykırım da Artık Bir Öncelik Değil", *Ermenistan Kamu Radyosu*, October 31, 2024, [https://tr.arm-radio.am/2024/10/31/soykirim-da-artik-bir-oncelik-degil/?doing\\_wp\\_cron=1747218861.8346560001373291015625](https://tr.arm-radio.am/2024/10/31/soykirim-da-artik-bir-oncelik-degil/?doing_wp_cron=1747218861.8346560001373291015625).

3 "Paşinyan, Ermenistan'ın Azerbaycan'dan Anayasa Değişikliği Talep Etmemesinin Nedenini Açıkladı", *ArmenPress*, November 13, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/tr/article/1204830>.

came to the grave conclusion that the Republic of Armenia could not carry on with the content of the Declaration of Independence.<sup>4</sup> This was the exact opposite of his previous statements. The President of the Constitutional Court immediately reacted by stating that only the people can decide this.<sup>5</sup> On the other hand, a ruling party MP emphasized that the Declaration was adopted in 1990, before Armenia gained its independence, and that it was not suitable for today's conditions, therefore he supported the Prime Minister's approach.

At the 15 November cabinet meeting, Pashinyan complained about the inefficacy in law enforcement and stated that his patience was running out. On 18 November, Pashinyan announced that he had asked for the resignation of some senior officials on the grounds of necessity. On the same date, the Minister of Internal Affairs, the Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures, the Judicial Council President, the Anti-Corruption Committee President and the Chairman of the State Revenue Committee resigned.<sup>6</sup> A. Sargsian was appointed Minister of Internal Affairs and D. Khudatian was appointed Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures.<sup>7</sup>

In an extensive 90-minute interview with Armenian State Television on 22 November, Pashinyan again criticized the 1990 Declaration of Independence, including the call for "international recognition of the genocide of Armenians in Ottoman Turkey and Western Armenia". He pointed out that just as Azerbaijan's "Western Azerbaijan" discourse causes discomfort, it should be understood that the "Western Armenia" discourse can also cause discomfort. The opposition was quick to condemn and denounce this comparison and the parallelism. The Ambassador of France joined the chorus, stating that Western Azerbaijan is located in Iran.<sup>8</sup>

During his TV interview, Pashinyan stated that Armenia is now an independent state, that this state is "Real Armenia", that it should not be identified with "Historic Armenia" and that the future should be built on this reality. In this

4 "Pashinyan Calls Armenia's Declaration of Independence 'A Big Problem And Tragedy'", *Arka News Agency*, November 14, 2025, [https://arka.am/en/news/politics/pashinyan\\_calls\\_armenia\\_s\\_declaration\\_of\\_independence\\_a\\_big\\_problem\\_and\\_tragedy/](https://arka.am/en/news/politics/pashinyan_calls_armenia_s_declaration_of_independence_a_big_problem_and_tragedy/).

5 "Constitutional Court Cannot Nullify Declaration of Independence, Says Chief Justice", *ArmenPress*, November 14, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1204946>.

6 "Cabinet Members Resign Following Pashinyan's Criticism", *Mirror Spectator*, November 19, 2024, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2024/11/19/cabinet-members-resign-following-pashinyans-criticism/>.

7 "Pashinyan: Resignations in Armenia are Systemic, not Personal", *Arka News Agency*, November 22, 2024, <https://arka.am/en/news/politics/pashinyan-resignations-in-armenia-are-systemic-not-personal/>.

8 Shoghik Galstian, "Pashinian Under Fire For Another 'Pro-Turkish' Statement", *Azatutyun Radiokanyan*, November 25, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33215221.html>.

context, he reminded that Mount Ararat does not belong to Armenia and that the highest mountain in Armenia is Mount Arakads.<sup>9</sup> These statements caused a reaction in opposition circles and the Diaspora. Pashinyan was accused of shattering the dreams and aspirations of Armenian nationalists. An opposition MP claimed that “*Armenia, the Armenian character, and our national identity were born and formed in Western Armenia, particularly in Van*”.

The Armenian population migrating from Karabakh became a burden and a problem for Armenia during the period. By the end of November, 1,500 Karabakh Armenians had applied for citizenship, while around 90,000 refugees were granted temporary protection status.<sup>10</sup> The administration announced that it would cut down on residency assistance. After former presidents accused him on Karabakh, Pashinyan invited his respondents to an open debate on television and threatened to prove that they were responsible for the current situation with the documents he would disclose. In his speech to the parliament on 26 March, Pashinyan stated that the Karabakh movement must come to an end because it is being used against Armenia’s statehood.<sup>11</sup>

On 29 March, around 10,000 Karabakh Armenians organized a demonstration in Yerevan to defend their rights, claiming that their rights were not being safeguarded and protesting the declining support for them.<sup>12</sup> This caused a reaction and counter-accusations in the administration circles. Passport issuance was also a problem. The fact that passports issued by the Ministry of Interior listed Azerbaijan as the country of birth, as per international rule, was protested and led to the rejection of passports.

S. Galian, who was appointed on 5 November to replace the Minister of Justice who resigned in October, announced in early December that the government panel she chaired would carry out Pashinyan’s instructions to draft a new constitution by the end of 2026. On 14 January, the minister reiterated this announcement, this time in her capacity as chair of the Constitutional Reform

9 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Interview with Public Television”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, January 25, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2025/01/25/Nikol-Pashinyan-Interview-Petros-Ghazaryan/>.

10 Ani Avetisyan, “Armenia to Reduce Housing Aid for Nagorno-Karabakh Refugees”, *Eurasianet*, December 2, 2025, <https://eurasianet.org/armenia-to-reduce-housing-aid-for-nagorno-karabakh-refugees#:~:text=As%20of%20this%20November%2C%20only,secured%20jobs%20or%20started%20businesses>

11 “Karabakh Movement Must Not Continue,” Pashinyan Angrily Asserts”, *Asbarez*, March 26, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/karabakh-movement-must-not-continue-pashinyan-angrily-asserts/>.

12 Gayane Saribekian, “Thousands of Karabakh Armenians Protest in Yerevan”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, March 30, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33364015.html>.



Council established in 2022.<sup>13</sup> The issue of constitutional change remained on the agenda as a major obstacle to signing a peace treaty with Azerbaijan. The administration, led by Pashinyan and Mirzoyan, has attempted to circumvent this issue with various rhetoric and internal contradictions, but without success. Finally, Prime Minister Pashinyan announced publicly for the first time on 16 April that a new constitution was being prepared and that the 1990 Declaration of Independence would not be included in its text.<sup>14</sup>

The administration's friction with the Catholicos, the head of the Armenian Apostolic Church, continued during the period. This situation was once again observed by the public on the last day of the year. Traditionally, before midnight on 31 December, the patriarch would broadcast the New Year's message, followed by the message of the president or prime minister. This year Pashinyan wanted to take the lead, but Catholicos Karekin II refused, whereupon the Catholicos, contrary to his usual practice, broadcasted his message on a private TV channel instead of state television.<sup>15</sup> On 6 January, the administration boycotted the traditional Christmas service at Echmiatzin again this year. In his speech, the Catholicos stated that one of the problems facing Armenia was the "*lust for power*".<sup>16</sup> Pashinyan also spoke in Zurich, Switzerland on 24 January. In his meeting with representatives of the Armenian community, he emphasized the necessity of separating the church and state, explained that "*The state should not interfere in church affairs and the church should not interfere in state affairs*" and called for the Church to be more transparent.<sup>17</sup>

Catholicos Karekin II targeted Pashinyan anonymously in his speech at Easter mass on 20 April, condemning "*reprehensible attempts to deny or question the 1915 Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey*".<sup>18</sup>

13 Gayane Saribekian, "Government Signals Fresh Deadline for Drafting New Constitution", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, January 14, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33275637.html>.

14 "Pashinyan Believes New Constitution Must Not Contain Reference to Declaration of Independence, 'But It's Up To The People to Decide'", *ArmenPress*, April 16, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1217286>.

15 Astghik Bedevian, "Armenian Church Head to Shun State TV for New Year Address", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, December 26, 2024, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33253985.html>.

16 "Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin Bemoans Armenia's Ills in Christmas Message", *Mirror Spectator*, January 9, 2025, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2025/01/09/catholicos-of-all-armenians-karekin-bemoans-armenias-ills-in-christmas-message/>.

17 "Highlighting Separation of Church and State, Pashinyan Calls for Transparency", *ArmenPress*, January 25, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210425>.

18 "Catholicos Karekin II Condemns Armenian Genocide Denial at Easter Mass", *Asbarez*, April 21, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/catholicos-karekin-ii-condemns-armenian-genocide-denial-at-easter-mass/>.



At the 24 January meeting in Zurich, Pashinyan stated that it was time to revisit the Armenian Genocide within a historical framework, in particular, *“We must understand what happened and why it happened, how we perceived it and through whom we perceived. How is it that in 1939 there was no Armenian genocide [recognition] agenda and how is it that in 1950 the Armenian genocide agenda emerged?”*. He emphasized the need to reinterpret historical events to *“define identity”* and to deal with contemporary challenges. These remarks had a striking impact on the Armenian opposition and the Diaspora, and Pashinyan became the target of heavy criticism, being accused of denialism and defending Turkish views.<sup>19</sup> In his statement, Pashinyan explained, *“When you look at your tragedy with your own eyes, when you don’t need a mediator to mourn and face your tragedy, then the empire doesn’t have much to sell you.”* This statement was interpreted to mean that the Soviet Union and Russia were behind the effort to recognize the genocide.

In fact, the spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs made a statement on 6 February that inadvertently confirmed this interpretation. The spokesperson did not hide her surprise at Pashinyan’s statements and stated that they never expected that a position that had been formed and formulated over the years would undergo a policy change within Armenia, but emphasized that this development did not change anything for them and that they continued to adhere to the *“Armenian Genocide”* resolution adopted by the state parliament, the Duma, in 1995.<sup>20</sup> The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson later made the following statement on 24 April:

*“April 24 marks the 110<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the greatest tragedy of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the Armenian Genocide, and the Russian Federation has always perceived the grief of the brotherly Armenian nation as its own. In 1915, at the initiative of the head of Russian diplomacy, Sergey Sazonov, the international community actors described what had happened as a crime against humanity. According to historical accounts, in 1915, the Russian Imperial Caucasian Army, at the order of Nicolas II, opened the Russian-Turkish border and saved more than 350,000 Armenians... Russia was one of the first countries to officially recognize the Armenian Genocide. In 2015, President Putin visited Armenia for the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Armenian Genocide”*.<sup>21</sup>

19 Ruzanna Stepanian, “Pashinian Under Fire After Questioning Armenian Genocide”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, January 27, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33290488.html>.

20 “Russia ‘Stunned’ By Pashinian’s Armenian Genocide Comments”, *The California Courier*, February 6, 2025, <https://www.thecaliforniacourier.com/russia-stunned-by-pashinians-armenian-genocide-comments/>.

21 “Russia Always Perceived Armenian Genocide as Its Own Grief, Says Moscow”, *ArmenPress*, April 24, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1218063>.

The ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation - Dashnaktsutyun), with its known extremism and terrorist links, spearheaded the attacks, issuing a severely accusatory statement on 26 January. The ARF claimed “*We declare that by recklessly cowering to the demands and preconditions of the Turkish-Azerbaijani axis is a hostile policy that directly challenges our national security, jeopardizes the existence of our statehood, and the fundamental interests of Armenians around the world.*”<sup>22</sup> The Lemkin Institute did not fall behind, abandoning its appearance of academic respectability, joining in the harsh accusations and arguing that Pashinyan’s statement served to question the established historical fact of the Armenian genocide.

In the face of continuous pressure, Pashinyan stated at a press conference on 31 January that “*The Armenian genocide is an undeniable and indisputable fact, an integral part of the people’s identity*”.<sup>23</sup>

On 26 December, Sinanyan, the Prime Minister’s Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs, said on state radio that there was no break in relations with the Diaspora, on the contrary, there were now much more active contacts, and that the ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation - Dashnaktsutyun) was active in the Diaspora against the Armenian state. ARF officials reacted sharply to this and stated that the Pashinyan administration and Sinanyan excluded the Diaspora and did not give it a place in domestic politics. They claimed that they are the representatives of Türkiye and Azerbaijan, while the Dashnaks have stood by the interests of the nation and the state in their 130-year history.<sup>24</sup>

The Armenian administration’s approach, which is based on the perpetuity of the Republic of Armenia and the state, which takes a critical view of historical taboos, and which sees the Diaspora as supporting the state rather than directing it, has sparked a reaction in militant Diaspora organizations. It has been observed during the period that these organizations have put aside their differences and made an effort of solidarity towards a common goal. Representatives of the three traditional Armenian parties in the US; the Social Democratic Hunchak, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation

22 “ARF Supreme Council of Armenia Announcement”, *Asbarez*, January 27, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/arf-supreme-council-of-armenia-announcement-2/>.

23 “Armenian Genocide is Undeniable Fact - Pashinyan”, *ArmenPress*, January 31, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210874>.

24 “«Զարեհ Սինանյանը Պետք է Պատասխան Տա. Նույնիսկ Բացահայտ Թուրքամետ Օտարագրի Գործիչները Չեն Համարձակվել Այս Լեզվով Խոսել ՀՅԴ-ի Մասին». Նժդեհ Գարագալոյրյան”, *168.am*, December 26 2025, [https://168.am/2024/12/26/2146729.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawHbGORleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHREsI85IUqDkVfG4fkyAQmq7Fb2H-fQFhxEveDds-B42qjYdfCv1dAOnouQ\\_aem\\_mblxNvxbk74g8ncUhy3ndg](https://168.am/2024/12/26/2146729.html?fbclid=IwY2xjawHbGORleHRuA2FlbQIxMQABHREsI85IUqDkVfG4fkyAQmq7Fb2H-fQFhxEveDds-B42qjYdfCv1dAOnouQ_aem_mblxNvxbk74g8ncUhy3ndg).

Dashnaktsutyun and the Armenian Democratic Liberal-Ramgavar came together on 16 February at the ARF headquarters in Glendale (California) and issued a joint statement. In the statement, the need for unity in the face of recent developments was expressed and a call was made to organize the 24 April commemoration ceremonies more enthusiastically together.<sup>25</sup>

The 35<sup>th</sup> World Congress of the ARF was held in Yerevan on 26 February-6 March. The issues to be discussed at the congress were outlined as Armenia's security, internal and external threats to the country, problems faced by Armenians in the country and in the Diaspora, and the protection and promotion of the fundamental rights of "Artsakh" (Karabakh) Armenians.<sup>26</sup> The statement issued at the end of the congress included the international recognition of genocide and the issue of reparations among the priority issues. The declaration emphasized the need to change the government in order to realize its strategic goals.<sup>27</sup> In the municipal elections held in Gyumri, Armenia's second largest city, on 30 March, the ruling party received 36.8% of the votes, but since it failed to secure a majority, the mayor was replaced after the three other parties participating in the elections agreed on a common candidate, despite serious political differences among themselves.<sup>28</sup> The opposition presented this result as an indication of the decline in trust in Pashinyan.

However, two parliamentarians who defected from the ruling coalition tried to initiate a non-confidence vote to unseat Prime Minister Pashinyan but did not get the expected support from the opposition, revealing the feud between the two opposition leaders, former presidents, Kocharian and Sarkisian.

On 26 April, Pashinyan attended a ceremony organized by the National Security Service on the occasion of the Border Guard Serviceman's Day and stated in his speech that his policy goal was to gradually increase the presence of Armenian troops on Armenia's borders.<sup>29</sup>

25 "Statement by Three Armenian National Political Parties", *Asbarez*, February 18, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/statement-by-three-armenian-national-political-parties/>.

26 "35th ARF World Congress Convenes in Yerevan", *Asbarez*, February 26, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/35th-arf-world-congress-convenes-in-yerevan/>.

27 "ARF 35<sup>th</sup> World Congress Statement", *Oragark*, March 10, 2025, <https://www.oragark.com/arf-35th-world-congress-statement/>.

28 "No Outright Winner in Gyumri Municipal Election", *Hetq*, March 31, 2025, <https://hetq.am/en/article/173504>.

29 "The Border Guard is a Symbol of Peace and Security, And Our Policy is to Increase The Presence of Border Guards Along The Borders of The Republic of Armenia. Prime Minister", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, April 26, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/04/26/Nikol-Pashinyan/>.

The rift between the Government and the Church reached new highs in early June. During the official visit of Prime Minister Pashinyan to Estonia, the Archbishop of the Armenian church there praised his policies as he welcomed him on 27 April. The Armenian Apostolic Church criticized the Archbishop for praising Pashinyan whose policies are opposed by the Catholicos and the Church. Then on early June Prime Minister Pashinyan lambasted senior clergymen with obscene remarks in the parliament and in social media, accusing them of breaking their vow of celibacy as well as paedophilia, even alleging that the Catholicos had an illegitimate child and should give up his post. Ensuing reactions gave rise to speculations for the core reason of this conflict, bringing to the fore the challenge to the change of the constitution with the suspicion that it could entail the intent to curtail the status of the Church.<sup>30</sup>

On the occasion of the Republic Day on 28 May Pashinyan delivered a speech underlining:

- “our identity is our state, our state is our identity,
- our territory is 29,723 square kilometers,
- do not repeat the history of the last 450 years,
- security guaranteed by external forces is deceptive”<sup>31</sup>

The revision of the composition, lyrics and tempo of the national anthem was discussed and approved by the relevant parliamentary committee in January.<sup>32</sup>

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB), in a report published on 30 December, noted that a critical decline began in Armenia’s foreign trade and economy in November.<sup>33</sup> The main reason for this expected downturn was the decline in gold exports. It is noted that the gold exported last year under the guise of Armenian production was in fact imported from Russia and exported to the

30 “Pashinyan’s Clash with Armenian Church Escalates,” *Eurasianet*, June 4, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://eurasianet.org/pashinyans-clash-with-armenian-church-escalates>.

31 “Pashinyan Stresses Statehood, Territorial Integrity on Republic Day,” *Azatutyun*, May 28, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32913543.html>.

32 “Armenian Parliament Committee Endorses Bill to Amend National Anthem”, *MassisPost*, January 10, 2025, <https://massispost.com/2025/01/armenian-parliament-committee-endorses-bill-to-amend-national-anthem/>.

33 “EDB Names Reason Behind Armenia’s Economic Slowdown in November”, *Arka News Agency*, December 30, 2024, <https://arka.am/en/news/economy/edb-reason-for-armenia-s-economic-slowdown-in-november/>.

UAE, reaching \$4.9 billion, or 47% of Armenia's total exports last year. On 27 January, the international credit rating agency Fitch downgraded its growth forecast for 2025 to 4.8% and to 4.5% for 2026.

According to the January data, the total volume of foreign trade amounted to 1,425,500,000 dollars, down 37.9% compared to the same month last year. The breakdown of this amount is as follows: With the countries of the Eurasian Economic Union: 467,201,600 dollars, (53.8% decrease) - Russia's share was 455,498,400 dollars- (54.8% decrease), with the EU countries: 154,560,600 dollars, (9.9% increase) -Germany 26,999,400 dollars- (8.7% decrease), -Italy 24,507,900 dollars- (19.9% decrease), -Belgium 15,986,300 dollars- (14. 7% increase), -Netherlands 12,094,100- (63.9% increase), -France 9,399,200 dollars- (46.5% increase), while among other countries -China 199,528,800 dollars- (0. 2% increase), -UAE 138,832,800 dollars- (59% decrease), -Iran 48,489,600 dollars- (31.8% increase), -US 30,541,500 dollars- (40.6% decrease), -Iraq 24,535. 400- (fivefold increase), -South Korea \$17,093,400- (26.7% increase), -Switzerland \$15,707,400- (13.6% increase), -Georgia \$14,852,900- (24.3% decrease).

Data for February and March indicated that this trend continued. The February foreign trade volume totaled \$1 billion 379.8 million, down 3.2% compared to January and 60.7% compared to a year ago. March, on the other hand, totaled \$1 billion 674.8 million, up 21.4% from February, but down 31.8% from the same month last year.<sup>34</sup> The World Bank and IMF's first quarterly report on economic developments in Europe and Central Asia, published in April, noted that the annual growth of the Armenian economy would fall to 4% and the unemployment rate would increase to 12.4% in 2024.<sup>35</sup>

One of the most important inputs to the Armenian economy are the remittances sent by Armenians living or working outside the country. Between 1995 and 2020, this source accounted for an average of 14% of the GDP. In the period January-September 2024, remittances amounted to approximately 4 billion dollars. About 78% of this amount comes from two countries, Russia and the US. The largest share belongs to Russia. In 2024, more than \$2.57 billion came from Russia. Inflows from the US amounted to around \$500 million.

34 "Armenia's Foreign Trade Turnover Drops in First Quarter of 2025", *ArmenPress*, April 25, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1218203>.

35 Robert Zargarian, IMF, "World Bank Note Slowing Growth in Armenia", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, April 28, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33399140.html>.

The Minister of Economy announced on 13 January that 2,215,000 tourists visited Armenia in 2024, a 7% decrease compared to a year ago.<sup>36</sup> The number of tourists from Russia, which ranked first, decreased, while the number of tourists from India, UAE, Georgia, Iran, France, China and South Korea increased. The target for 2025 is projected at 2.5 million. On 21 February, it was announced that despite all the spending on New Year celebration decorations, tourist arrivals in January dropped to 139,500, with Russia leading the way with 39.5%, Georgia 13% and Iran 9.4%.

The International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) announced on 22 January that it had allocated \$40 million to Armenia to modernize its energy infrastructure.<sup>37</sup>

Alarm bells are ringing regarding Armenia's demographic data, as the population continues to decline. According to the data for the first eleven months of 2024, compared to the same period last year, births decreased by 7.8% and deaths increased by 5.4%, resulting in a 33.5% decrease in population growth.<sup>38</sup>

## 2. Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Agreement Process

Despite the positive statements and optimistic expectations that all articles of the Peace Agreement would be agreed upon and finally signed during the period, disagreements on several critical issues remained unresolved. Thus, the process of negotiations and talks continued, at times amid mutual accusations and coercion.

On 11 November, Armenia was invited to attend the international UN Climate Change Conference (COP29), which was hosted in Baku, with the hope that not only would international cooperation on climate change be further enhanced, but also the peace process in the South Caucasus would gain new momentum. However, Armenia's refusal to participate in this important international event, which is a source of prestige for Azerbaijan, by putting forward demands that it knew would not be accepted, and its attempts to undermine the conference

36 "About 2 million 215 thousand Tourists Visited Armenia in 2024: Number of Tourists from Russia Decreased", *Ilurer*, January 13, 2025, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2025/01/13/About-2-million-215-thousand-tourists-will-visit-Armenia-in-2024-the-number-of-tourists-from-Russia/1248562>.

37 "IBRD to Provide \$40 Million to Armenia for Energy Infrastructure Modernization", *ArmenPress*, January 22, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210103>.

38 "Armenia's Birth Rate Drops 7.8% in First 11 Months of 2024", *Arka News Agency*, January 13, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/society/armenia-s-birth-rate-drops-7-8-in-first-11-months-of-2024/>.

through its supporters, dealt a severe blow to the peace treaty process at the beginning of the period under review. This cast doubt on Armenia's goodwill and credibility. The alleged reason for non-participation was the non-release of 23 Karabakh Armenians under arrest.<sup>39</sup>

Even before the start of COP29, the World Council of Churches (WCC), centered in Geneva, with the Armenian Catholicos of Antelias Aram I as the head of the Eastern Orthodox Churches, demanded the release of former Karabakh Armenian officials on trial for war crimes in Azerbaijan, and declared Sunday, 10 November, the day before the opening of COP29, as a day of prayer for Armenia and "*Artsakh*" (Karabakh) Armenians in churches around the world.<sup>40</sup> Radical-militant Diaspora organizations, notably the ARF party, declared their support for this. In a press release issued on 11 November, the US-based "Freedom House" accused Azerbaijan of ethnic cleansing.<sup>41</sup> Statements of support were also made in the US Congress and the EU Parliament. The President of the EU Commission also did not attend the meeting, in a move indicating the EU's position. M. Grono, a Czech national appointed by the EU as Special Envoy for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia, took office on 1 November.

Catholicos Karekin II said at the Echmiatzin Mass on 10 November that in the churches of Armenia and the Diaspora, all Armenians pray for the protection of the rights of the Armenians of "*Artsakh*" (Karabakh), especially the military and political leaders of the "*Republic of Artsakh*" who were "abducted" by Azerbaijan and unjustly arrested on false charges.<sup>42</sup>

According to Azerbaijani sources, there are three problems with the signing of the agreement: Amendment of the Armenian Constitution, which includes territorial claims, an end to the "international legal war" and withdrawal of lawsuits by the parties, and an end to the EU Observer Mission stationed at

39 Astghik Bedevian, "Official Explains Armenian Boycott of COP29", *Azatutyun Radikayan*, November 21, 2024, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33211122.html>.

40 "His Holiness Catholicos Aram I Presides over the Prayer Service for the Restoration of the Rights of the Indigenous People of Artsakh in Antelias", *The Middle East Council of Churches*, (Accessed: May 15, 2025), <https://www.mecc.org/news-en/2024/11/12/his-holiness-catholicos-aram-i-presides-over-the-prayer-service-for-the-restoration-of-the-rights-of-the-indigenous-people-of-artsakh-in-antelias>.

41 "New Report: Azerbaijani Regime Ethnically Cleansed Nagorno-Karabakh According to International Fact-Finding Mission", *Freedom House*, November 11, 2024, <https://freedomhouse.org/article/new-report-azerbaijani-regime-ethnically-cleansed-nagorno-karabakh-according-international>.

42 "All-Armenian Prayer to Be Held for Armenian Prisoners in Baku on November 10", *Media Max*, November 7, 2025, <https://mediamax.am/en/news/society/56190/#:~:text=All%2DArmenian%20prayer%20will%20be,the%20Armenian%20and%20Diaspora%20dioceses>.



the common border. The “Zangezur Corridor”, a key issue for Azerbaijan, was not included at this stage. In his speech on 5 December, President of Azerbaijan Aliyev stated that not only the constitutional amendment was not enough, but also the return of around 300,000 Azerbaijani citizens who were forced to migrate from Armenia, where they lived until the 1980s, should be ensured and talks with the “Western Azerbaijani community” should start for this purpose. Aliyev also demanded that Armenia stop arming itself and halt arms purchases.<sup>43</sup> These demands caused a reaction in Armenia and brought to the forefront the allegations in all Armenian circles that Azerbaijan was not in favor of peace, that it was constantly making new demands and demanding concessions in order to undermine the peace treaty. On 25 December, in response to a question regarding criticism of Armenia’s armament, the US State Department spokesperson explained, “*The United States ensures that its security assistance to both Armenia and Azerbaijan is not used for offensive purposes and does not undermine or impede ongoing efforts for a stable and dignified peace process.*”<sup>44</sup>

In a press conference held on 7 January, Aliyev again criticized Armenia’s armament, demanded the end of “fascism” in Armenia, brought the Zangezur Corridor back to the agenda and stated that it should and would be opened.<sup>45</sup> Mirzoyan, on behalf of the administration, repeated Armenia’s known views and discourse, arguing that the “West Azerbaijan” narrative meant a direct territorial demand from Armenia. He reiterated that Armenia is not an obstacle or a wedge between Azerbaijan and Türkiye, as Azerbaijan claims, on the contrary, they want to be a link, but they do not accept the concept of a “corridor”.<sup>46</sup>

Prime Minister Pashinyan, in his speech in the parliament on 13 November, rejected Azerbaijan’s demands for constitutional amendments, claiming that there is no territorial claim in Karabakh in the Constitution.<sup>47</sup> In a TV interview

43 “To the participants of the Second International Conference on “The Right to Return: Advancing Justice for Azerbaijanis Expelled from Armenia”, *President of the Republic of Azerbaijan*, November 5, 2024, <https://president.az/en/articles/view/67466>.

44 “State Department Responds to Aliyev’s Claims of U.S. Arming Yerevan”, *Arka News Agency*, December 25, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/politics/state-department-responds-to-aliyev-s-claims-of-u-s-arming-yerevan/>.

45 Hoory Minoyan, “Aliyev Calls Armenia a “Fascist State””, *Armenian Weekly*, January 8, 2025, <https://armenianweekly.com/2025/01/08/aliyev-calls-armenia-a-fascist-state/>.

46 “ ‘Armenia Wishes to be a Link between Azerbaijan and Turkey’: Ararat Mirzoyan”, *Alpha News*, January 8, 2025, <https://alphanews.am/en/armenia-wishes-to-be-a-link-between-azerbaijan-and-turkey-ararat-mirzoyan/>.

47 “Pashinyan Explains Why Armenia Doesn’t Seek Azeri Constitutional Change”, *ArmenPress*, November 13, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1204830>.

on 22 November, he said that Armenia had offered to withdraw EU observers from the section where the border between the two countries was demarcated. An official of the EU Observer Mission explained on 25 November that their mandate would end on 19 February and that no decision had yet been taken to extend their mandate.<sup>48</sup> In the same interview, Pashinyan also drew the West Azerbaijan-West Armenia parallel, which caused a backlash.

In a 22 November TV interview, Pashinyan also emphasized the importance of a peace treaty with Azerbaijan, noting that the establishment of a strategic compromise in which the two countries will coexist peacefully in the long term is equally important.<sup>49</sup>

In a comprehensive interview published in ArmenPress on 19 December, Pashinyan particularly focused on the peace treaty, stating that 15 articles of the 17-article treaty had been agreed upon, that the treaty would be above domestic law, so there would no longer be any concern regarding territorial integrity, that Armenia was not in an arms race with any country, that the purchase of arms was solely for the purpose of protecting Armenia's borders and territorial integrity, that there was no objection to the abolition of the Minsk Group, and that this would essentially be realized with the signing of the treaty.<sup>50</sup>

The Spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated on 25 December that the Minsk Group could be disbanded and that the first step for this to happen would be for Azerbaijan and Armenia to make a joint request in this regard, and that the function of the Minsk Group co-chairs had de facto ended with Armenia's recognition of Karabakh's belonging to Azerbaijan at the Prague Summit in October 2022.<sup>51</sup> The legal aspect of the issue may cause problems, as OSCE resolutions require unanimity.

48 "Armenia Awaits EU Decision on Observer Mission Extension", *Caucasus Watch*, November 20, 2025, <https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/armenia-awaits-eu-decision-on-observer-mission-extension.html>.

49 "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Interview with Public Television", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, November 22, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2024/11/22/Nikol-Pashinyan-Interview/>.

50 "If Azerbaijan Doesn't Have Intentions to Attack Armenia The Likelihood of Escalation in The Region is Zero – PM Pashinyan Responds to Aliyev", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, December 19, 2024, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2024/12/19/Nikol-Pashinyan-Interview/>.

51 "Baku, Yerevan Can Jointly Initiate Dissolution of OSCE Minsk Group — Diplomat", *TASS*, December 25, 2025, <https://tass.com/politics/1893475>.

According to media reports, at the OSCE Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting in Malta on 5 December, the US Secretary of State proposed a new trilateral meeting, which Armenia welcomed and Azerbaijan rejected due to the “biased and unfair policy” of the Biden administration.<sup>52</sup> The US State Department conveyed on 3 January that it was ready to work at any level to ensure progress between the parties.

While relations remain fractured and mutual accusations continue, in a surprise statement on 11 March, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan stated “*Armenia and Azerbaijan, are very close to the finalization of the draft of the peace agreement between the two countries.*”<sup>53</sup> On 13 March, Azerbaijan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs Bayramov confirmed the completion of negotiations on the text of the peace treaty, with Armenia accepting Azerbaijan’s proposals on the last two articles.<sup>54</sup> On the same day, Pashinyan said that foreign forces would not be deployed on the borders after the signing of the peace treaty.

On that day, Aliyev expressed “*The level of trust in Armenia is close to zero. Therefore, we do not trust any of their words. Because these are not people we can trust, including today’s government. Again, whatever they say has no meaning for us. We need documents, we need papers. We need to make sure that there are no territorial claims to Azerbaijan in their constitution. They are still present there. We need the OSCE Minsk Group to be dissolved. This is our message to Armenia.*”. It was understood from this message that there are still obstacles to be overcome in the process of signing the treaty.<sup>55</sup>

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan stated on 14 March that after the agreement on the text of the treaty was reached, they did not accept the preconditions put forward by Azerbaijan, that they had been raised before but they never negotiated them, that they were ready to sign the treaty, and that they had proposed to the other side to hold consultations on the time and place.<sup>56</sup> In his speech to the parliament on the same day, he acknowledged that

52 “Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan Dışişleri Bakanlarının Malta’da Görüşmeme Nedeni Belli Oldu, *Oxu*, December 5, 2025, <https://oxu.az/tr/siyasett/azerbaycan-ve-ermenistan-disisleri-bakanlari-malta-da-gorusecekler-mi>.

53 “Mirzoyan: Armenia and Azerbaijan are Very Close to Finalizing Draft Peace Agreement”, *News.am*, March 11, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/871102.html>.

54 “Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan Arasında Barış Anlaşması Metni ‘İmzaya Hazır’”, *BBC News Türkçe*, March 13, 2025, <https://www.bbc.com/turkce/articles/ckgyklj618yo>.

55 Ruslan Rehimov, “Azerbaycan Cumhurbaşkanı Aliyev, Fransa’nın Ermenistan’ı Yeni Savaşa Sürüklediğini Söyledi”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, March 13, 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/azerbaycan-cumhurbaşkanı-aliyev-fransanın-ermenistani-yeni-savasa-surukledigini-soyledi/3508953>.

56 “Armenia Does Not Accept Azerbaijan’s Preconditions After Agreement of Peace Treaty Text”, *ArmenPress*, March 14, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1214463>.

there were still some issues that needed to be resolved and emphasized that peace was the only way for Armenia to survive.

Mirzoyan also made some statements regarding the content of the treaty, stating that the issue of the return of refugees to Karabakh was not included, that there was no room for a non-sovereign corridor, that there was no provision on the Constitution, and that no peace treaty could immediately bring countries and peoples together.

The news of the agreement on the text of the Peace Treaty was welcomed and praised internationally. Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson announced their readiness to host the signing of the treaty. The US and the EU called for the treaty to be signed as soon as possible. US Secretary of State Rubio said on 14 March *"Now is the time to commit to peace, sign and ratify the treaty, and usher in a new era of prosperity for the people of the South Caucasus"*.<sup>57</sup> The executive director of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) stated that Rubio's statement was untimely and that they do not want a false peace in which Armenia's security and sovereignty are surrendered, but a real peace that respects the rights of the Armenian nation and ensures the return of the "Artsakh" (Karabakh) Armenians.<sup>58</sup> Armenia's opposition parties and other radical Diaspora organizations have also expressed concern regarding Armenia's capitulation and warned for caution. The Republican Party, led by Kocharyan, went even further and declared that Pashinyan had no legitimacy to sign such a treaty on behalf of the Armenian people.

In response to a question in parliament on 26 March, Pashinyan explained *"We have proposed to Azerbaijan to start consultations. Of course, public proposals are also accompanied by those made through diplomatic channels, and some work is being done. It is not appropriate to discuss diplomatic efforts. When that work yields results, everyone will see it"*.<sup>59</sup> On 2 April, Aliyev reiterated his conditions for the signing of the treaty.<sup>60</sup>

57 "U.S. Secretary Of State: Now is Time for Azerbaijan And Armenia to Sign Peace Treaty", *Apa*, March 14, 2025, <https://en.apa.az/foreign-policy/us-secretary-of-state-now-is-time-for-azerbaijan-and-armenia-to-sign-peace-treaty-462940>.

58 "ANCA Calls For Actual Peace Amid Reports of A One-Sided Azerbaijan "Agreement" Being Forced upon Armenia", *ANCA*, March 14, 2025, <https://anca.org/press-release/anca-calls-for-actual-peace-amid-reports-of-a-one-sided-azerbaijan-agreement-being-forced-upon-armenia/>.

59 "Armenia Proposes Consultations with Azerbaijan on Venue and Timing of Peace Agreement Signing – PM", *ArmenPress*, March 26, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1215525>.

60 Ruzanna Stepanian, "Aliyev Again Rules out Unconditional Peace Deal with Armenia", *Azattyun Radiokayan*, April 2, 2025, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/33368783.html>.

Azerbaijan and Armenia's Ministers of Foreign Affairs met on the occasion of the 4th Antalya Diplomatic Forum and held a bilateral meeting on 12 April. In a statement to the press, Mirzoyan stated that a "historic and unprecedented" treaty was ready for signing, that there was "no need for this Minsk Group if there is no conflict" and that there was no provision in the Armenian Constitution that Karabakh was part of Armenia. Bayramov, on the other hand, reiterated that the Armenian Constitution contains territorial claims on Azerbaijan and should be amended, and that they also want the Minsk Group to be abolished.<sup>61</sup> In conclusion, the bilateral talks in Antalya which were followed closely and with interest, and the trilateral talks, in which the Georgia's Minister of Foreign Affairs also participated, did not yield any new initiative or discourse at this stage.

The two leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan met for a brief conversation as they attended the European Political Community meeting in Tirana on 16 May. No statement was made on the talks.<sup>62</sup> President Aliyev sent a written message to a West Azerbaijan conference on 21 May where he has made it clear that he prevails with his conditions. In this connection, Speaker of the Armenian Parliament spoke of, as regards the Western Azerbaijan narrative, a link with the activities of the "Nagorna" Karabagh leadership in exile in Armenia.<sup>63</sup>

Switzerland initiated a conference in Bern on 26 May to support a sustainable political solution to the conflict between Azerbaijan and the displaced Armenian population of "Nagorno" Karabagh. Next to organizing Swiss parliamentarians, the conference was attended by Armenian opposition figures, Armenian Apostolic Church dignitaries, Catholicos Karekin II and Aram I, World Council of Churches and Protestant church in Switzerland. This proved to be a very biased, one sided attempt, scratching the wounds of recent past, contravening not only the official stand of the Armenian government but the establishment of peace in the region in general.<sup>64</sup>

61 Ruslan Rehimov, Büşranur Keskinkılıç, "Azerbaycan ve Ermenistan Dışişleri Bakanları Antalya'da Görüştü" *Anadolu Ajansı*, April 12, 2025, <https://www.aa.com.tr/tr/dunya/azerbaycan-ve-ermenistan-disisleri-bakanlari-antalyada-gorustu/3536200>.

62 "Armenia, Azerbaijan Leaders Meet Briefly at European Political Community Summit," *TRT World*, May 16, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.trtworld.com/europe/armenia-azerbaijan-leaders-meet-at-european-political-community-summit-2025>.

63 "Armenian Parliament Speaker Links Western Azerbaijan Narrative to Exiled Karabakh Leadership," *News.am*, May 22, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/827280.html>.

64 "Swiss Conference on Nagorno-Karabakh Draws Criticism for Bias," *Daily Sabah*, May 27, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.dailysabah.com/world/europe/swiss-conference-on-nagorno-karabakh-draws-criticism-for-bias>.

### 3. Armenia's Foreign Relations

Armenia's foreign relations have been characterized by its opening to the West, its emphasis on multilateral relations without confronting Russia through a balanced foreign policy discourse, and its efforts to sit on two chairs or ride two horses at the same time, as we have described earlier, have continued with increasing difficulty.

The initiative to hold a referendum on EU membership exceeded the legally required 50,000 signatures and reached 60,000 by the end of October, paving the way for the issue to be added to the parliamentary agenda. On 9 January, Pashinyan officially announced that his government supported Armenia's EU accession process.<sup>65</sup> Russia reacted to this announcement and the Deputy Prime Minister warned that joining the EU could be perceived as the beginning of leaving the Eurasian Economic Union, that Armenia could not be a member of two organizations at the same time, and that this would have a huge economic cost for Armenia.<sup>66</sup> The EU Foreign Affairs Spokesperson stated that they would examine the draft law and discuss it with the Armenian authorities, that they were providing Armenia with 270 million euros in financial support for the period 2024-2027, and that EU-Armenia relations had never been as close as they are now.<sup>67</sup>

In response to Russia's warnings, Armenia's Minister of Economy stated on 13 January that Armenia has no plans to leave the Eurasian Economic Union yet, is not looking for a replacement, and is only in the process of diversifying its cooperation partners. Describing relations with the EU as a "parallel agenda", the minister said that Armenia wants to be a country whose economic stability is linked to the economies of other countries.<sup>68</sup> On the other hand, the Minister of Finance noted that the government is assessing the risks of a possible withdrawal from the Eurasian Economic Union.<sup>69</sup> Pashinyan also

65 "Armenia's Government Formally Takes Steps to Launch EU Accession Process", *The New Union Post*, January 9, 2025, <https://newunionpost.eu/2025/01/09/armenia-government-eu-accession-process/>.

66 "In Sign of Move Away from Moscow, Armenian Parliament Votes to Start EU Bid", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, March 26, 2025, <https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-russia-us-west-eu/33360738.html>.

67 "EU Announces New €270 Million Resilience and Growth Package for Armenia", *EU NeighboursEast*, April 5, 2025, <https://euneighbourseast.eu/news/latest-news/eu-announces-new-e270-million-resilience-and-growth-package-for-armenia/>.

68 Robert Zargarian, "Yerevan Has 'No Plans Yet' to Quit Russian-Led Trade Bloc", *Azatutyun Radiokanyan*, January 13, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33274100.html>.

69 "Finance Ministry: Armenia may Face Significant Challenges with EAEU Exit", *Report News Agency*, January 13, 2025, <https://report.az/en/region/finance-ministry-armenia-may-face-significant-challenges-with-eaeu-exit/>.

called Putin on 17 January to brief him on the situation. In a statement released by the Kremlin, it was expressed that “*Pashinyan explained the situation with Yerevan’s recent steps in its relations with the European Union. In response, the Russian President offered his comments and assessments*”. The Kremlin statement did not include Putin’s comments.<sup>70</sup> Afterwards, in response to a question, Pashinyan said that Russia has some concerns about Armenia’s EU accession process.<sup>71</sup>

On 26 March, the Armenian Parliament adopted a law endorsing the EU accession process.<sup>72</sup>

On the same day, Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister said, “*The country will have to decide and make this choice because it cannot sit on two chairs simultaneously.*”<sup>73</sup>

Armenia’s President Khachaturian went to Colombia on 29-31 October to attend the COP16 biodiversity meeting and then paid a visit to Peru.

On 7 November, Prime Minister Pashinyan visited Budapest to attend the fifth summit of the European Political Community, where his bilateral meeting with the President of France stood out among his bilateral meetings.<sup>74</sup>

On 15 November, the Parliament ratified for Armenia the free trade agreement signed in 2019 between the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and Iran.<sup>75</sup>

On 18 November, Pashinyan visited the Vatican and met with Pope Francis. There was no official or press statement from the Vatican regarding the meeting. Pashinyan praised Armenia’s “*special*” relationship with the Vatican.<sup>76</sup>

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70 “Telephone Conversation with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan”, *President of Russia*, January 17, 2025, <http://www.en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/76123>.

71 “Russia Concerned about Armenia EU Move, Says Pashinyan after Putin Call”, *ArmenPress*, January 31, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210902>.

72 Csongor Körömi, “Armenian Parliament Adopts Law to Launch EU Membership Process”, *Politico*, March 26, 2025, <https://www.politico.eu/article/armenia-adopts-law-launch-european-union-accession-process/>.

73 “Armenians Told To Choose Between EU, Russian-Led Bloc”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, March 27, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33361885.html>.

74 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Working Visit to Hungary”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, November 6, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2024/11/06/Nikol-Pashinyan-visiting-Hungary/>.

75 “Armenian Parliament Ratifies Eurasian Economic Union – Iran Free Trade Agreement”, *ArmenPress*, November 15, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1205062>.

76 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Working Visit to the Holy See (Vatican)”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, November 18, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2024/11/18/Nikol-Pashinyan-visiting-Vatican/>.



On his way to Baku for the COP29, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Armenia on 19 November and met with Mirzoyan.<sup>77</sup>

On 25 November, Mirzoyan announced that he would not attend the Collective Security Treaty Organization's (CSTO) Ministers of Foreign Affairs meeting in Astana. Pashinyan also did not attend the summit that followed on 28 November. In an interview with the press after the summit, the Russian President criticized Armenia's attitude towards the organization due to Karabakh, stressing that Armenia had not been subjected to external aggression and that the organization could take action if its members were subjected to external aggression.<sup>78</sup>

The Polish President paid an official visit to Armenia on 25 November.<sup>79</sup>

On 26 November, media reports, citing the Greek press, stated that Greece would hand its Russian-made S-300 missiles to Armenia and that this decision was taken in response to historical ties, common religion and Türkiye's support for Azerbaijan.<sup>80</sup>

On 28-29 November, Mirzoyan visited Helsinki at the invitation of Finland's Minister of Foreign Affairs. Afterwards, Mirzoyan represented Armenia for the first time at the Summit of States Parties to the Rome Statute establishing the International Criminal Court. Russia warned Armenia that its participation in these activities would harm relations between the two countries.<sup>81</sup> Mirzoyan attended the OSCE 31st Ministerial Council in Malta on 4-5 December.

While the year-end summit of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) was supposed to be held in Armenia as the current chair, Pashinyan announced that he would not be able to host the summit. It was subsequently announced that

77 Astghik Bedevian, "German FM Visits Yerevan En Route to Baku", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, November 20, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33209527.html>.

78 "Putin Denies Foreign Aggression against Armenia", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, November 28, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33219461.html>.

79 "President of Poland is on Three-Day Official Visit to Armenia", *ILurer*, November 20, 2025, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2024/11/25/President-of-Poland-is-on-a-three-day-official-visit-to-Armenia/1226389>.

80 "Greece may Hand Over Russian Air Defense Systems to Armenia – Enikos", *Arka News Agency*, November 26, 2025, [https://arka.am/en/news/politics/greece-may-hand-over-russian-air-defense-systems-to-armenia-enikos/?sphrase\\_id=2703928](https://arka.am/en/news/politics/greece-may-hand-over-russian-air-defense-systems-to-armenia-enikos/?sphrase_id=2703928).

81 "Yerevan's Participation in ICC 'Directly Harms Russia-Armenia' Ties, Moscow Warns", *Asbarez*, December 4, 2024, <https://asbarez.com/yerevans-participation-in-icc-directly-harms-russia-armenia-ties-moscow-warns/>.

the summit would be held in St. Petersburg, Russia on 25 December.<sup>82</sup> Press reports stated that the reason was that Pashinyan did not consider all member states as suitable partners for Armenia, and speculated whether Russia or Belarus was meant.

During his visit to the US on 5 December, Minister of Defense Papikyan met with his US counterpart Austin and the Armenian Minister stated that they discussed “strategic partnership”. Austin expressed “*We also discussed our growing strategic partnership through training and exercises, military education, and capacity-building*”. While in Washington, Papikyan also met with his Greek counterpart at the Greek Embassy. Additionally, Papikyan visited France on 16 December and met with his French counterpart and the military advisor to the French President. According to media reports, France would continue to provide defense assistance to Armenia, including air defense. On 6 May, Papikyan also paid an official visit to Greece and held bilateral and delegation talks with his Greek counterpart. During the same visit, Papikyan also met with his counterpart from the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus in Athens. These frequent contacts with Greece in the field of defense were interpreted in the press as being related to the transfer of S-300 and other Russian missiles. Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson reacted to these reports and stated that these missiles could not be transferred without Russia’s authorization and that there was no application to Russia in this direction.

The 64<sup>th</sup> Parliamentary Assembly of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (PABSEC) was held in Yerevan on 11 December.<sup>83</sup>

The second India-Iran-Armenia trilateral meeting was held in New Delhi on 14 December. A joint statement issued at the end of the meeting, which discussed the strategic importance of the International North-South Transport Corridor (INSTC) and the Chabahar Port, stated that the three countries discussed connectivity initiatives, action in multilateral forums and regional developments.<sup>84</sup>

82 Ruzanna Stepanian, “Pashinian Confirms Refusal to Host Eurasian Union Summit”, *Azattyun Radiokayan*, December 4, 2025, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/33226874.html>.

83 “64<sup>th</sup> plenary session of PABSEC General Assembly held in Yerevan”, *ArmenPress*, December 13, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1207458>.

84 “India, Iran, Armenia Hold 2nd Trilateral Consultations in New Delhi, Discusses Connectivity, Regional Cooperation”, *The Economic Times*, December 13, 2024, <https://economictimes.indiatimes.com/news/india/india-iran-armenia-hold-2nd-trilateral-consultations-in-new-delhi-discusses-connectivity-regional-cooperation/articleshow/116271744.cms?from=mdr>.

Pashinyan visited Moscow on 13 December to chair the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council.<sup>85</sup> The Kremlin statement indicated that no meeting with Putin was envisaged and that Pashinyan was expected to attend the traditional informal Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) summit in St. Petersburg. On 16 December, the Russian Ambassador to Armenia stated that Russia has a clear political will to maintain and raise relations with Armenia to a new level.

Pashinyan announced that he had precautionarily decided not to attend the Eurasian Economic Union and Commonwealth of Independent States summits in Russia, despite the fact that he had tested positive for COVID-19 on 23 December and negative on 25 December. He attended the Eurasian Union Summit, of which he is the current chairman, remotely via Zoom.<sup>86</sup> The Armenian opposition claimed that the illness was a pretext and that Pashinyan was humiliating Putin with this move.

On 19 December, Armenia-Greece bilateral and Armenia-Greece-Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus (GASC) delegation defense consultations were held in Athens. The parties signed the joint operational plan for 2025 and the Armenia-Greece military cooperation program.<sup>87</sup>

On 30 December, Pashinyan announced the end of Russian military control at the only border crossing between Armenia and Iran and the withdrawal of Russian guards at the crossing.<sup>88</sup>

During the period, warm relations and mutual visits with Iran took place, and raising the level to strategic cooperation was on the agenda. On 8 January, Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Ahmadian was hosted in Yerevan by Secretary of the Armenian Security Council Grigoryan.<sup>89</sup> Ahmadian, who was also received by Prime Minister Pashinyan, reiterated Iran's support for Armenia's southern road policy and indirectly responded to Azerbaijan's threat to open a corridor by force. Grigorian reciprocated the

85 "Pashinyan to Chair Eurasian Intergovernmental Council Session in Moscow", *ArmenPress*, December 13, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1207357>.

86 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "PM Pashinyan sits out CIS Summit after Testing Positive for COVID-19", *OC Media*, December 25, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/pm-pashinyan-sits-out-cis-summit-after-testing-positive-for-covid-19/>.

87 "Armenia-Greece-Cyprus Trilateral Defense Consultations Held in Athens", *ArmenPress*, December 20, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1207934>.

88 "Russian Border Guards Leave Armenia-Iran Checkpoint", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, December 30, 2024, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33258387.html>.

89 "Secretary of Iran's Supreme National Security Council Arrives in Armenia", *ArmenPress*, January 8, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1209013>.

visit on 16 May to hold further talks with his Iranian counterpart Ahmadian on the occasion of participating in the Tehran Dialogue Forum 2025. He was also received by the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs.

The Iran-Armenia Parliamentary Friendship Group visited Armenia on 12-15 January, receiving close attention and holding high-level contacts.<sup>90</sup> Armenia's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs, who was received by the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs in Tehran on 21 January, emphasized the special importance Armenia attaches to developing and deepening relations with Iran. Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs expressed that the new Presidential administration is committed to expanding bilateral relations with Armenia.<sup>91</sup> In a statement to the press on 6 February, the Iranian Ambassador to Armenia announced that the two countries are working on a comprehensive strategic partnership treaty.<sup>92</sup> On 24 February, the ministers of foreign affairs of the two countries held a meeting on the margins of the Conference on Disarmament in Geneva. The Iranian minister emphasized Iran's support for the security of the South Caucasus region.<sup>93</sup>

Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs paid an official visit to Armenia on 24 March and held a number of high-level contacts. The Iranian minister reiterated Iran's well-known views on transportation routes and the Zangezur Corridor, stated that tensions in the region were escalating, repeated Iran's opposition to any military action to resolve the problems, and emphasized the strategic importance of the South Caucasus region in Iran's foreign policy.<sup>94</sup> On 15 April, Iran's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the two countries have long-standing relations and should now focus on signing a document on strategic relations.<sup>95</sup>

90 Marianna Mkrtchyan, "Delegation of Iran-Armenia Parliamentary Friendship Group Arrives in Yerevan", *ArmInfo*, January 13, 2024, [https://arminfo.info/full\\_news.php?id=88323&lang=3](https://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=88323&lang=3).

91 "FM Araghchi: Iran Determined to Broaden Ties with Armenia", *Islamic Republic News Agency*, January 20, 2025, <https://en.irna.ir/news/85725564/FM-Araghchi-Iran-determined-to-broaden-ties-with-Armenia>.

92 "Ambassador: Iran and Armenia Work on Comprehensive Strategic Partnership Agreement", *Arka News Agency*, February 6, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/politics/ambassador-iran-and-armenia-a-work-on-comprehensive-strategic-partnership-agreement/>.

93 "Iran, Armenia FMs Meet on Sidelines of UN Conference in Geneva", *Islamic Republic of Iran Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, February 24, 2025, <https://en.mfa.ir/portal/newsview/762012>.

94 "Official Visit of the Foreign Minister of Iran to Armenia", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, March 25, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/03/25/Armenia\\_Iran/13143](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/03/25/Armenia_Iran/13143)

95 "Iran, Armenia Should Elevate Ties to Strategic Partnership", *Mehr News Agency*, April 15, 2025, <https://en.mehrnews.com/news/230588/Iran-Armenia-should-elevate-ties-to-strategic-partnership>.

Armenian and Iranian military units conducted joint military maneuvers along the common border on 9-10 April.<sup>96</sup> The maneuvers, which included heavy weapons and sniper units, were described as a clear message to those attempting to destabilize the region. On 20 May Iran's Defense Minister paid an official visit to Armenia to hold talks with his counterpart Papikyan, a month after a first-ever joint military exercise by the two states. He reiterated that Iran would not tolerate any attempts to strip it of its common border with Armenia. Iranian Ambassador in Yerevan told press on 22 May, "There will be no Zangezur corridor".<sup>97</sup>

The EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia visited Armenia on 10 January.<sup>98</sup> She visited once again in April and met with Mirzoyan on 3 April.<sup>99</sup>

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan visited the United States on 14 January and signed the "Strategic Partnership Agreement" with his counterpart Blinken, which had been rumored to be in the works for some time. In a statement, Blinken explained that the establishment of the US-Armenia Strategic Partnership Commission is an important milestone in the relations between the two countries, and that the Commission provides a framework for expanding bilateral cooperation in several key areas: economic issues, security and defense, democracy, justice, inclusion and people-to-people contacts.

Blinken said that the Commission is working to support Armenia in the area of security and defense, particularly in its efforts to preserve its independence and sovereignty over its territory. Additionally, he stated that next month, in the coming weeks, a team of customs and border guards will go to Armenia to work with their Armenian counterparts on improving border security so that they can protect their borders themselves, strengthening security cooperation, and enhancing Armenia's peacekeeping capabilities through maneuvers such as the bilateral "Eagle Partner" operation as carried out the past two years.

96 "Iran, Armenia Conclude Joint Military Drill Along Border", *Xinhua*, April 11, 2025, <https://english.news.cn/20250411/12baa69485e948199ed6d3f7f4519e43/c.html>

97 "Iranian Defense Minister Visits Armenia for Talks on Military Cooperation," *Tehran Times*, May 20, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/475123/Iranian-Defense-Minister-Visits-Armenia> ; "Iran's Defense Minister Warns Against Border Threats," *Press TV*, May 21, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/05/21/iran-armenia-border-threats>.

98 "Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia with the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, January 10, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/01/10/Mirzoyan\\_EU/13028](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/01/10/Mirzoyan_EU/13028).

99 "Meeting of the Foreign Minister of Armenia with the EU Special Representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, April 3, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/04/03/Mirzoyan\\_Grono/13165](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/04/03/Mirzoyan_Grono/13165).

Mirzoyan stated that the signing of the Strategic Partnership Agreement formed a strong framework and led to greater enthusiasm for cooperation, expressed his satisfaction that the United States was engaged in promoting lasting and sustainable peace in the South Caucasus region, and announced that they had begun negotiations with the United States on a nuclear cooperation treaty known as the “123 Agreement”.<sup>100</sup>

Russia’s reaction to the agreement was expressed by Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov, who stated that it is Armenia’s sovereign right to choose partners for cooperation, that Russia has partnership agreements with Western countries that do not include actions against third parties, and that in practice, implementation is more important than the framework.<sup>101</sup> The Kremlin Spokesperson, on the other hand, criticized US involvement in the Caucasus and accused the US of playing a destabilizing role in the South Caucasus.<sup>102</sup>

Armenian press commentaries cautioned against excessive expectations and warned that the agreement did not include security guarantees or military aid commitments to Armenia, but in any case, the treaty was a significant diplomatic success for Armenia.

The ARF (Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Dashnaktsutyun), on the other hand, played a different tune, and in a statement issued on 18 January, called for the strengthening of strategic alliance relations with Russia, which has common geopolitical goals and a direct interest in the existence of an Armenian state, as well as the formation of a military-political alliance with Iran.<sup>103</sup>

On 15 January, Prime Minister Pashinyan stated that Armenia’s balanced and counterbalancing foreign policy is achieving its main objective with the following data:

*“Our relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran are more substantive than ever before. These relations are based on natural interests, which is the most reliable basis for cooperation and guarantee for stability.”*

100 “U.S., Armenia Sign Strategic Partnership Agreement”, *Radio Free Europe*, January 15, 2025, <https://www.rferl.org/a/armenia-partnership-agreement-blinken-mirzoyan-russia/33276117.html>.

101 Arshaluis Mgdesyan, “Moscow Comments on Armenia’s Strategic Partnership with the U.S. and Plans to Join the EU”, *Business Media*, January 14, 2025, <https://bm.ge/en/news/moscow-comments-on-armenias-strategic-partnership-with-the-us-and-plans-to-join-the-eu>.

102 Aghakazim Guliyev, “Peskov: US Actions Undermine Stability in South Caucasus”, *Caliber*, January 14, 2025, <https://caliber.az/en/post/peskov-us-actions-undermine-stability-in-south-caucasus>.

103 “ARF: Azerbaijan and Turkey Impose Destructive Concessions on Armenia”, *PanArmenian*, January 18, 2025, [https://panarmenian.net/m/eng/news/318446?utm\\_](https://panarmenian.net/m/eng/news/318446?utm_).

*Our relations with Georgia are in the orbit of strategic partnership, opening new prospects and potential for development.*

*A visible basis for mutual understanding has been formed with Türkiye.*

*The Republic of Armenia has proposed constructive solutions to all existing issues in relations with Azerbaijan. Armenia has not merely introduced proposals, but solutions. In this context, all efforts to provoke escalations in the region lack legitimacy and basis, which means that attempts to escalate the region will not succeed.*

*Our relations with the Russian Federation are more pragmatic than ever before, focusing on concrete issues without emotional packaging. We are determined to develop these relations based on mutually beneficial cooperation and sovereignty.*

*Our friendship with France has strengthened and evolved.*

*Our relations with the European Union are closer than ever before, which is recorded also in Brussels.*

*A strategic partnership has been launched with the United States of America.*

*Our relations with India have gained new weight and meaning.*

*Our relations with China are evolving and deepening.*

*New opportunities for partnership have been created in the Middle East.*<sup>104</sup>

On 15-17 January, the Chief of General Staff of Armenian Army went to Brussels to attend the NATO Military Committee's meeting of the Chiefs of Staff with the participation of partner countries.<sup>105</sup> As part of the Kansas-Armenia cooperation program, a US military delegation led by a major general visited Armenia on 21-23 January and was received by the Armenian

104 Siranush Ghazanchyan, "Armenia's Balanced Foreign Policy Reaching Its Primary Milestone – PM", *Public Radio of Armenia*, January 15, 2025, <https://en.armradio.am/2025/01/15/armenias-balanced-foreign-policy-reaching-its-primary-milestone-pm/>.

105 "Chief of General Staff of Armenian Army Participates in NATO Meeting", *Report*, January 16, 2025, <https://report.az/en/region/chief-of-general-staff-of-armenian-army-participates-in-nato-meeting/>.



Chief of General Staff.<sup>106</sup> On 19 March, a delegation led by the Deputy Chief of General Staff of Armenian Army met with US military officials at the headquarters of the US European Command in Stuttgart.<sup>107</sup> This meeting was the second in a process initiated last year. On 20 March, a spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reported that Armenia had responded to Russia's request for clarification on media reports that 151 units of US military equipment were to be shipped from Germany to Armenia via Georgia that Armenia had not requested the transfer of military equipment from the United States.<sup>108</sup> On 28 April, it was reported that Armenia participated as an observer in the ten-day NATO military maneuvers that started in Georgia, in which Azerbaijan also took part.<sup>109</sup> In a press conference held on 6 May, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson said, "*NATO continues its course of drawing the South Caucasus republics into its sphere of influence,*" and described this as the expansion of the organization.<sup>110</sup>

Upon the invitation of the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mirzoyan visited Moscow on 21 January. In this first face-to-face meeting in more than a year, Lavrov stressed that 2024 was not an easy year for bilateral relations, that Russia is willing to honestly discuss all issues on the agenda, that Armenia is Russia's natural strategic partner, that they are trying to develop good neighborly ties, and that Russia is ready to support the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization. Mirzoyan stated that Armenia has always tried to take Russia's interests into account in international platforms and that they expect the same approach from Russia. Mirzoyan added that Russian border guards had temporarily guarded the border with Iran at Armenia's request, that this period had ended and that it was time to thank Russia for the service they had provided.<sup>111</sup> As of the beginning of January, the Russian guards at

106 "Kansas Military Delegation Visits Armenia: Cooperation Directions Discussed at the Ministry of Defense", *MassisPost*, January 23, 2025, <https://massispost.com/2025/01/kansas-military-delegation-visits-armenia-cooperation-directions-discussed-at-the-ministry-of-defense/>.

107 "Armenian, U.S. Military Officials Hold Talks in Germany", *ArmenPress*, March 19, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1214805>.

108 "Yerevan Responded to Moscow's Request for the Pentagon to Transfer Equipment to Armenia", *Eurasia Daily*, March 20, 2025, <https://eadaily.com/en/news/2025/03/20/yerevan-responded-to-moscows-request-for-the-pentagon-to-transfer-equipment-to-armenia>

109 "Armenia Joins NATO Drills in Georgia", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, April 28, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33399249.html>.

110 "Moscow Warns of Growing NATO Influence in Caucasus", *Asbarez*, May 6, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/moscow-warns-of-growing-nato-influence-in-caucasus/>.

111 "Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Statement and Answers to Media Questions Following Talks with Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan", *The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation*, January 21, 2025, [https://mid.ru/en/press\\_service/photos/meropriyatiya\\_s\\_uchastiem\\_ministra/1992316/](https://mid.ru/en/press_service/photos/meropriyatiya_s_uchastiem_ministra/1992316/).

the Armenian-Iranian border crossing had left and the duty was completely transferred to the Armenian border service.<sup>112</sup>

The delegations of the Presidents and Vice Presidents of the Parliaments of Nordic-Baltic Eight regional cooperation format countries visited Armenia on 22 January.<sup>113</sup>

Pashinyan attended the Davos World Economic Forum and in his speech on 25 January, he explained the balanced and stabilizing foreign policy they are implementing. He also met with the NATO Secretary General on the margins of the meeting and stated that NATO recognizes Armenia's sovereignty, territorial integrity and peace efforts.<sup>114</sup>

The President of Belarus, known for his verbal clashes and tense relations with Pashinyan, warned Armenia on 26 January about the dangers of flirting with the West and moving closer to the EU.<sup>115</sup>

The Georgian Prime Minister met with Pashinyan in Yerevan on 30 January, after which the two prime ministers chaired the 14<sup>th</sup> session of the Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation between Armenia and Georgia. At the joint press conference, Pashinyan said that they would reactivate the process of demarcation of the common border. The two countries' ministers of foreign affairs also met on this occasion and later held a joint press conference.<sup>116</sup>

The European Council decided to extend the European Union Mission in Armenia for two years until 19 February 2027, in accordance with the proposal of the Representative of the Union for Foreign Affairs. 44 million euros were allocated for this purpose.<sup>117</sup> Russia and Azerbaijan continue to object to this

112 "Russian Border Guards Leave Armenia-Iran Checkpoint", *Azattyun Radiokayan*, December 30, 2024, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/33258387.html>.

113 "Delegations of Presidents and Vice Presidents of Nordic-Baltic Eight Parliaments Arrive in Armenia", *ArmenPress*, January 22, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210180>.

114 "We Have Decided to Adopt a Balanced and Balancing Foreign Policy, Which Means That We Will Try to Balance Relations with the EU, Russia and Regional Powers, Prime Minister", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, January 23, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/01/23/Nikol-Pashinyan-Panel-discussion/>.

115 "Lukashenko Warns Armenia Against Flirting with the West", *Belta*, January 26, 2025, <https://eng.belta.by/president/view/lukashenko-warns-armenia-against-flirting-with-the-west-164953-2025/>.

116 "The 14th Session of the Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation Between Armenia and Georgia Took Place", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, January 30, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/01/30/Nikol-Pashinyan/>.

117 "Armenia: Council Extends the Mandate of the EU Civilian Mission for Two Years", *European Council*, January 30, 2025, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2025/01/30/armenia-council-extends-the-mandate-of-the-eu-civilian-mission-for-two-years/>.

mission. On 17 April, a spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs argued that EU countries see the South Caucasus as a new front in the global hybrid war, that European observers do not bring stability to the region, but on the contrary create new dividing lines, new centers of tension and new problems, and asked whether the interests of the Armenian people or NATO are the goal of France and the EU. Iran, which opposes foreign powers in the region, remained silent, and the Iranian Ambassador to Armenia even expressed their understanding of the presence of the EU mission.<sup>118</sup>

The Armenian press published an extensive interview with the head of the mission, who responded to the question *“Are there any plans to make any changes in the size and structure of the EU mission in Armenia in the near future?”* with the following answer: *“No, the second mandate will have the same tasks as the first mandate. This means, first, patrolling and reporting alongside the border and the line of confrontation. The second task is our so-called human security patrols to increase the feeling of safety and security for the local population in the conflict-affected areas. And the third is taking steps that contribute to building confidence.”*

Pashinyan went to Washington on 3-7 February to attend the National Prayer Breakfast as part of the International Religious Freedom Summit. On 3 February, he met with representatives of the Armenian community at the Armenian Embassy and made a speech at the Atlantic Council.<sup>119</sup> It is clear that Pashinyan’s main purpose in going to the US was to establish contact with the new administration. However, this was not realized, and no meeting was held with the new administration officials. Moreover, since the summit he attended was organized by representatives of radical Diaspora organizations, the Apostolic Church and opposition circles, he was criticized and even protested for his policies and discourses.

On 13 February, Armenian Minister of Defense Papikyan attended a military exhibition in India and met with his Indian counterpart. The two sides wished to further deepen the relations that have developed in recent years.<sup>120</sup> Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan went to India on 9-11 March to give a conference,

118 “EU Sees South Caucasus as Another Front of Hybrid Warfare — Russian MFA”, *TASS*, April 17, 2025, <https://tass.com/politics/1945299>.

119 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Working Visit to the USA”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, Accessed: May 15, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2025/02/03/Nikol-Pashinyan-visiting-Vashington/?ref=oc-media.org>.

120 4 “Armenia, India To Deepen Military Ties”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, February 13, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33313601.html>.

followed by bilateral and delegation talks with his Indian counterpart.<sup>121</sup>

Prime Minister Pashinyan attended the Munich Security Conference on 13-16 February and spoke at a roundtable discussion. On this occasion, Pashinyan held a number of bilateral meetings, including with the German Chancellor and the President of the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government. At the invitation of Minister of Defense Papikyan and the Chief of the General Staff of Germany, Chief of the General Staff Asryan also attended the Munich Security Conference.<sup>122</sup> The Armenian press commented on the participation in the Munich Conference that Armenia was seen as an independent country no longer under the influence of Russia, but as a country approaching France, the United States and India.

Chief of the General Staff Asryan visited Athens on 27 February upon the invitation of his Greek counterpart, and the bilateral and delegation talks focused on defense cooperation. The two sides also discussed cooperation within the trilateral Armenia-Greece-Cyprus format.<sup>123</sup> On 6 May, Minister of Defense Papikyan went to Greece on a working visit to hold talks with his Greek counterpart. It is reported that the two focused specifically on enhanced cooperation in the field of military education.<sup>124</sup>

Speaker of the parliament of the Greek Administration of Southern Cyprus (GASC) visited Armenia from 18 to 21 May on the occasion of mutually opening resident embassies. On 22 May Armenian Chief of General Staff paid an official visit to GASC where the two sides addressed cooperation within the Armenia-Greece-GASC trilateral format.<sup>125</sup>

The Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Netherlands visited Armenia on 12 March and a Joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership was signed after

121 "Visit of H.E. Ararat Mirzoyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia to India, *Ministry of External Affairs Government of India*, March 10, 2025, <https://www.mea.gov.in/press-releases.htm?dtl/39146>.

122 "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Working Visit to the Munich", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, Accessed: May 15, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2025/02/13/Nikol-Pashinyan-visiting-Munich/>.

123 7 "The Delegation Led by Edward Asryan is on an Official Visit to the Hellenic Republic", *Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Armenia*, February 27, 2025, <https://www.mil.am/en/news/12639>.

124 Hurriyet Daily News, "GASC Speaker's Visit to Armenia Marks New Diplomatic Chapter," May 20, 2025, Accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/gasc-speaker-visit-armenia-2025>.

125 Daily Sabah, "Armenia-Greece-GASC Trilateral Cooperation Discussed During Official Visit," May 24, 2025, Accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.dailysabah.com/politics/armenia-greece-gasc-cooperation-2025>.

the talks.<sup>126</sup>

Mirzoyan paid an official visit to Brazil on 19-20 March.<sup>127</sup>

The Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Georgia held the first trilateral meeting of the three South Caucasus states in Tbilisi on 17 April.<sup>128</sup>

The Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Armenia on 16 April.<sup>129</sup>

Pashinyan paid an official visit to Estonia on 28 April.<sup>130</sup>

The new Georgian president paid an official visit to Armenia on 28 April and held a joint press conference with Khachaturyan after bilateral and delegation talks.<sup>131</sup>

Pashinyan participated in the Victory Day celebrated in Russia on 9 May with a traditional ceremony and high-level international participation, and in a comprehensive statement issued on this occasion, he said, *“Today we also have the opportunity to make our contribution to the peaceful and prosperous future of our region. The draft Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan has been agreed upon and is awaiting signing, and we will follow that path. Our region has earned the right to live in peace and prosperity, and so it should be. Despite all internal and external provocations, there will be no war between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan, there will be peace.”*<sup>132</sup>

126 8 “Signing of the Joint Declaration on the Strategic Partnership Between the Republic of Armenia and the Netherlands”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, March 12, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/03/12/Armenia\\_Netherlands/13109](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/03/12/Armenia_Netherlands/13109).

127 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Armenian FM to Pay Official Visit to Brazil”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, March 19, 2025, <https://en.armradio.am/2025/03/19/armenian-fm-to-pay-official-visit-to-brazil/>.

128 “Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia Hold First-Ever Trilateral Talks”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, April 17, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33388513.html>.

129 “Slovenian Foreign Minister to Pay Official Visit to Armenia”, *Arka News Agency*, April 15, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/politics/slovenian-foreign-minister-to-pay-official-visit-to-armenia/>.

130 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Official Visit to the Republic of Estonia”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, Accessed: May 15, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/foreign-visits/item/2025/04/27/Nikol-Pashinyan-visiting-Estonia/>.

131 “President Vahagn Khachaturyan met with President of Georgia Mikheil Kavelashvili, who is on an Official Visit to Armenia”, *The President of the Republic of Armenia*, April 29, 2025, <https://www.president.am/en/press-release/item/2025/04/29/President-Vahagn-Khachaturyan-met-with-the-President-of-Georgia/>.

132 “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Message on the Occasion of May 9”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, May 9, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2025/05/09/Nikol-Pashinyan-Congratulations/>.

As is known, Pashinyan did not attend last year's Victory Day ceremony, despite being invited. Likewise, he did not attend the Commonwealth of Independent States summit held in Russia in December 2024, citing his illness as an excuse.<sup>133</sup> Although the EU boycotted the Victory Day ceremonies in Moscow and indirectly urged Pashinyan not to go, this time Pashinyan kept his promise to Putin. Pashinyan, who was also questioned in the parliament after confirming that he would go to Moscow, based his response on a balanced and stabilizing foreign policy discourse, emphasizing that being closer to the West does not mean being against Russia and that good relations with Russia will continue to be maintained.<sup>134</sup> In an environment where the US approach towards Russia remains uncertain and the EU's weakness has been revealed and it is understood that its assurances cannot be relied upon, Pashinyan's need to be more careful and sensitive towards relations with Russia has been an understandable development.

A corroborating event was the official visit of the Russian Foreign Minister Lavrov's two day stay in Yerevan on 20-21 May, following up Mirzoyan's visit to Moscow on 21 January. He also held talks with the President and the Prime Minister. In a rare PR exercise, Lavrov addressed the Russian-Armenian University faculty and students with an extensive Q&A session. The two ministers attended a joint press conference following their talks. On this occasion, Lavrov underlined Russia's unwavering commitment to strengthening bilateral relations with Armenia, criticized Western-led security arrangements, assessed Russian military presence in Armenia as fundamental, expressed his support for the regional 3+3 platform, in short, indicated Russia's inclination to increase efforts to undermine Western influence and to strengthen its cultural and military presence. Mirzoyan on the other hand, confirmed that Armenia would maintain its delicate balancing diplomacy, seek economic benefits from the EU and the West without compromising its security relationship with Russia.<sup>135</sup>

Minister Mirzoyan participated in the 134<sup>th</sup> ministerial session of the Council of Europe held in Luxembourg on 14 May.<sup>136</sup>

133 Oleh Pavliuk, "Armenian PM Decides not to Participate in Another Summit with Putin", *Pravda*, December 25, 2024, <https://www.pravda.com.ua/eng/news/2024/12/25/7490648/>.

134 Shoghik Galstian, "Pashinian Defends Trip To Moscow", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, May 7, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33407443.html>.

135 "Armenia Seeks Economic Ties with EU, Keeps Security Alliance with Russia," *EurActiv*, May 11, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.euractiv.com/section/global-europe/news/armenia-seeks-economic-ties-with-eu-keeps-security-alliance-with-russia/>

136 "Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan Participates in the 134<sup>th</sup> Session of the Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe in Luxembourg," *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, May 14, 2025, accessed June 16, 2025, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/05/14/coem/13231>.

Prime Minister Pashinyan and Foreign Minister Mirzoyan attended the 6<sup>th</sup> summit of the European Political Community held in Tirana on 19 May.<sup>137</sup>

The Yerevan dialogue conference, an international event, the second in a row, was held on 26 May, with an opening address by Prime Minister Pashinyan and keynote speech by Mirzoyan. It was attended by Slovakian Prime Minister, Hungarian, Montenegrin and French foreign ministers among others.<sup>138</sup>

#### 4. Relations with Türkiye

The ongoing normalization process started to yield concrete results with increased activities and contacts during the period. On 25 October, Special Representative Rubinyan stated that Armenia was ready to open the border and establish diplomatic relations “right away” and that the officials of the two countries would soon meet to discuss the Kars-Gyumri railway connection.<sup>139</sup>

Speaking in Parliament on 31 October during the budget talks for 2025, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan said, in response to a question, “*The Armenian Genocide international recognition process is not our number one priority. Making a number one priority of studying the Armenian Genocide, the holes of tragic history, is certainly not in the agenda of the foreign ministry.*”<sup>140</sup>

Likewise, in the same speech, in response to another question on “Artsakh”, without using this title, he said “*We are still working, and the title of our work is the organization of relations with Azerbaijan*”. The opposition announced this with the headlines that the government does not recognize the existence of the “Artsakh” issue and that the government repeats the opinion of the Turkish authorities and denies the genocide, as an understanding that we should forget the genocide and live in peace.

In the same speech, Mirzoyan gave the following information about the relations with Türkiye: “*We have dynamic dialogue with Türkiye, positive dialogue. Let me remind that the ministries of both countries worked around assessing the condition of the infrastructures on the border. Now this work*

137 “Armenian PM and FM Attend European Political Community Summit in Tirana,” *Armenpress*, May 19, 2025, Accessed: June 16, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1134260/>

138 “Yerevan Dialogue International Conference Kicks Off with Participation of European Leaders,” *News.am*, May 26, 2025, Accessed: June 16, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/827212.html>

139 “Yerevan and Ankara to Discuss Relaunch of Gyumri-Kars Railway”, *Arka News Agency*, October 25, 2024, [https://arka.am/en/news/politics/yerevan\\_and\\_ankara\\_to\\_discuss\\_relaunch\\_of\\_gyumri\\_kars\\_railway\\_](https://arka.am/en/news/politics/yerevan_and_ankara_to_discuss_relaunch_of_gyumri_kars_railway_)

140 “Armenian Genocide International Recognition Process not Foreign Ministry’s Top Priority, says FM Mirzoyan”, *ArmenPress*, October 31, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1203681>.



*is done and will be done in the direction of assessing the condition of the Kars-Gyumri railway. Our dialogue is first of all about the issues that the two countries must establish diplomatic relations, open the borders, have transportation and other connections and overall normalize their relations. It's no secret that to some extent Türkiye links its relations with Armenia with the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. In our assessment this is not a very constructive approach, and we have our dialogue with Türkiye without preconditions, we have concrete agreements, to open the border for citizens of third countries and diplomatic passport holders in the beginning. There are joint projects of smaller scale, for example pertaining to the cultural heritage of Ani. I'd like to say that there is dynamic dialogue here too. I'd like to again express optimism that we will have progress in the near future.”<sup>141</sup>*

On 6 November, the Armenian press reported that Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs H. Fidan had stated that Türkiye's relations with Armenia could improve only after the signing of a peace treaty between Azerbaijan and Armenia, thus signaling a change in Türkiye's previously accepted commitment to talks without preconditions.<sup>142</sup> In this context, attention was also drawn to President Erdoğan's statement<sup>143</sup> at the 11<sup>th</sup> summit of the Organization of Turkic States on the need to take into account Azerbaijan's historical achievement in the peace treaty.

News reports on 5-7 November stated that “Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople” S. Mashalian participated and chaired a session of the Supreme Spiritual Council<sup>144</sup> which convened under the chairmanship of Catholicos Karekin II. In addition to religious issues, the Council also discussed the extradition of prisoners held “illegally” in Azerbaijan, the protection of the rights of “Artsakh” Armenians, condemnation of Azerbaijan's “genocidal” actions and keeping the issue on the international agenda.

Kostanyan, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, said on 7 November to the press that Armenia hoped to achieve full normalization with

141 “Debate of State Budget 2025 Continues at Joint Sitting of NA Committees: Foreign Minister Presents Ongoing Work on Peace Treaty”, *Aravot*, October 31, 2024, <https://en.aravot.am/2024/10/31/354461>.

142 “Turkey Again Says Normalization with Armenia Depends on Yerevan-Baku Peace Process”, *ArmenPress*, November 6, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1204157>.

143 “Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan, Türk Devletleri Teşkilatı Devlet Başkanları Konseyi 11. Zirvesi'nde Konuştu”, *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Başkanlığı*, November 6, 2024, <https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/turkce/haberler/detay/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-turk-devletleri-teskilati-devlet-baskanlari-konseyi-11-zirvesinde-konustu>.

144 “Armenian Apostolic Church Supreme Spiritual Council Meeting Starts at Holy Etchmiadzin”, *News.am*, November 5, 2024, <https://news.am/eng/news/850946.html>

Türkiye, including the opening of the land border.<sup>145</sup> Speaking at the Manama Dialogue 2024 international forum, Kostanyan said on 7 December, “*We are sincerely interested to normalize relations with Türkiye. And we believe that the normalization of relations with Ankara can positively affect the normalization processes between Armenian and Azerbaijan as well. But also bearing in mind that Armenia is getting closer with our Western partners, here probably I should come back with a question to a distinguished colleague. Where does Türkiye see its foreign policy? Both in the region, but also with the European Union and with the West. It is clear that Armenia wants to get closer with the European Union, the people of Armenia have European aspirations. And with the opening of the border, Türkiye, which is also a member of the Customs Union, can become a bridge between Armenia and the EU.*”<sup>146</sup>

In an interview broadcast on state television on 22 November, Pashinyan again criticized the Declaration of Independence in the Constitution and drew a parallelism between the term “Western Armenia” in the Declaration and the discourse of “Western Azerbaijan”. Pashinyan called for stronger ties with Türkiye and emphasized that improving relations with neighbours was essential for Armenia’s stability, independence and economic development.<sup>147</sup> Pashinyan’s statements inflamed the opposition once again, and he became the target of accusations of pro-Turkish rhetoric, falling in line with Ankara and Baku, and undermining Armenia’s interests and dignity.

It was reported in the press that a study conducted in Germany in 2021 on the impact of the opening of the Türkiye-Armenia border on the Armenian economy was presented to the parliament. According to the study, if the border was opened in 2021, Armenia’s trade with Türkiye would increase from 1% to 12%. The opening of the border will affect not only trade with Türkiye, but also Armenia’s foreign trade structure. Trade with the EU would come first (20%), Russia would fall to second place (14%) and Türkiye would take third place (12%). Whereas the current situation is Russia (32%), EU (18%) and China (15%).<sup>148</sup>

145 “Armenia Hopes for Full Normalization with Turkey, says Deputy FM”, *ArmenPress*, November 7, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1204314>.

146 “Participation of the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia in the Panel Discussion at the “Manama Dialogue”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, December 7, 2024, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2024/12/07/participation-of-the-deputy-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-armenia-in-the-panel-discussion-at-the-%E2%80%9C12993>.

147 Hoory Minoyan, “Pashinyan Compares Western Armenia to “Western Azerbaijan”, *Armenian Weekly*, November 26, 2024, <https://armenianweekly.com/2024/11/26/pashinyan-compares-western-armenia-to-western-azerbaijan>.

148 “Opening of Armenia-Turkey Border: Trade Impact”, *German Economic Team*, Accessed: May 15, 2025, <https://www.german-economic-team.com/en/newsletter/opening-of-armenia-turkey-border-trade-impact/>.

Special Representative Rubinyan told the press that officials from the two countries met in November to discuss the technical needs for the operation of the Kars-Gyumri railway and the infrastructure needs of the Akhurik/Akiyaka railway border crossing. On 19 December, speaking at the 49th Meeting of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization's Council of Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan stated that the two countries had agreed to jointly assess the technical requirements for the operation of the Kars-Gyumri railway.<sup>149</sup>

During the period, it was observed that the Armenian press showed an increasing interest in “Kurdistan” and the Kurdish issue, especially the statements and activities of the Armenian elements operating in the north of Syria. In this context, the “Armenian Social Council”, which is said to represent Armenian elements in the region, issued a call for Kurdish political parties and movements to work towards Kurdish unity by resolving their differences. On 17 December, the commitment of the “Armenian Martyr Nubar Ozanyan Brigade” to defend Kurdish-led North and East Syria against attacks was reaffirmed, and solidarity was expressed.<sup>150</sup> The same brigade issued a statement on 24 April condemning the genocide and vowing that Armenian fighters in the autonomous northeast of Syria would continue to resist oppression and protect all peoples from genocide, occupation and imperialism. On 1 April, the Consulate General of the Republic of Armenia in Erbil told local media that Armenia is developing relations with the Iraqi Kurdistan Regional Government in key areas. On 3 April, the auxiliary bishop, representing the Armenian Archbishop of Aleppo, visited Mazloum Abdi, “Commander-in-Chief” of the YPG, and thanked him for his efforts to ensure security and stability in the region.

Armenian media reported that the two countries' Ministers of Foreign Affairs held a telephone conversation on 31 December and discussed bilateral and international issues of common interest, as well as the New Year greetings.<sup>151</sup> Mirzoyan informed the press on 8 January about the content of the meeting and said, *“We and the Turkish side have always expressed readiness on*

149 “Armenia Agrees with Turkey on Assessment of Requirements for Crossing the Border on Gyumri-Kars railway – Mirzoyan”, *Arka News Agency*, December 20, 2024, [https://arka.am/en/news/politics/armenia-agrees-with-turkey-on-assessment-of-requirements-for-crossing-the-border-on-gyumri-kars-rail/?sphrase\\_id=4250454](https://arka.am/en/news/politics/armenia-agrees-with-turkey-on-assessment-of-requirements-for-crossing-the-border-on-gyumri-kars-rail/?sphrase_id=4250454).

150 “Syrian Armenian Brigade Pledges to Defend Rojava Against Attacks”, *The California Courier*, December 19, 2024, <https://www.thecaliforniacourier.com/syrian-armenian-brigade-pledges-to-defend-rojava-against-attacks/>.

151 “Armenian Foreign Minister Holds Phone Call with Turkish Counterpart”, *ArmenPress*, December 31, 2024, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1208694>.

*establishing diplomatic relations and opening the border between Armenia and Türkiye. Regrettably, the Turkish side continues to link the Armenia-Türkiye normalization with the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization, and this is a public fact. In my opinion, starting from the other side, meaning the normalization of relations between Armenia and Türkiye, would have had positive impact on the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization, and would have made it a lot easier. But there is no such perception in Türkiye yet. We must continue dialogue on the level of ministers and special envoys, and if possible, on the level of the leaders of both countries,”*<sup>152</sup>

On 10 January, the Armenian press reported the following statement by Minister of Foreign Affairs Fidan at a press conference on the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace talks: *“We attach importance that Prime Minister Pashinyan has been sending positive messages in this direction. We take note that his stance in favor of peace contributes to the positive progress of the process. We continue to support the bilateral negotiations without mediators. The establishment of peace will bring unprecedented new opportunities for the development of our region. Türkiye is moving forward shoulder to shoulder with Azerbaijan in this process. The South Caucasus is a region of extreme importance for Türkiye. Just as the Balkans are our doors to Europe, the Caucasus is our door to Central Asia.”*<sup>153</sup>

On 20 January, the Armenian press reported that the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs welcomed Armenia’s cooperation in its statement on the arrest and extradition by Armenia of two people wanted by Türkiye with an Interpol red notice.

In a message posted on social media on 21 January, Pashinyan said, *“The tragedy at the ski resort in Bolu is shocking. My condolences to the victims’ families. I wish a speedy recovery for the injured.”*<sup>154</sup> Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs also posted a message on social media saying, *“Deeply saddened by the tragic fire in Bolu that claimed dozens of lives. Our thoughts are with the victims and their families. Wishing speedy recovery for the injured.”*<sup>155</sup>

152 “Armenia’s Mirzoyan Reveals Details of New Year’s Phone Conversation with Turkey FM”, *News.am*, January 8, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/860557.html>.

153 “FM: Turkey Hopes Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Agreement Will Be Signed in 2025”, *News.am*, January 10, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/860914.html>

154 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Armenian PM Offers Condolences to Families of Turkey Ski Resort Fire Victims”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, January 22, 2025, <https://en.armradio.am/2025/01/22/armenian-pm-offers-condolences-to-families-of-turkey-ski-resort-fire-victims/>.

155 “Armenian Foreign Ministry Extends Condolences Over Tragic Fire in Bolu, Turkey”, *ArmenPress*, January 21, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1210076>.

On 5 February during his visit to the US, Pashinyan said, “*I think that Armenia and Türkiye have never had such an active dialogue as they do now. In fact, there are no obstacles to communication with Türkiye and we are in constant contact. Our foreign ministers meet and communicate regularly and our representatives stay in constant touch. We are working very actively, and there is a shared understanding of what needs to be done. Of course, there are some nuances, and final steps are needed to achieve a real result. We hope that the outcome will be visible very soon.*”<sup>156</sup>

In his statement to the press on 27 February, the Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure of Armenia stated that the work on their side of the Margara-Alican border crossing had been completed and was ready for opening, and that Prime Minister Pashinyan had also visited the crossing and inspected it, but that there was no “clarification” as to when the border would be opened.<sup>157</sup> Pashinyan made a statement on 28 February and announced that the duties of the Russian border guards at the Margara border crossing have ended, and the control of the crossing is now under the responsibility of the Armenian border guards. Pashinyan thanked the Russian border guards for their service on this section of the Armenian-Turkish border and emphasized that as of 1 March 2025, only Armenian border guards will control the people entering and leaving the border crossing.<sup>158</sup> As is known, according to a treaty signed in 1992, Russia undertook the protection of Armenia’s borders with Türkiye and Iran. On 1 August 2024, the first exception was the transfer of the security of Yerevan International Airport from the Russians to the Armenian guards. A similar practice took place at the border crossing with Iran in January 2025. The third modification took place at the Margara-Alican border crossing. The answer to the question regarding the extension of this practice to the borders with Türkiye and Iran is that it is not yet on the agenda.

In an interview with the press on 4 March, Armenian Speaker of Parliament Simonyan claimed that Azerbaijan was obstructing Armenian-Turkish normalization: “*We have been working with Türkiye and will continue to do so. I regret that Azerbaijan has taken hostage the Armenia-Türkiye relations,*

156 “Türkiye-Armenia Dialogue Has Never Been So Active: Pashinyan”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, February 5, 2025, <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/turkiye-armenia-dialogue-has-never-been-so-active-pashinyan-205472>.

157 “Armenia Completed Work on Margara Checkpoint on Turkey Border, Condition Ready for Opening, Minister Says”, *News.am*, February 27, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/869030.html>.

158 “From March 1, Solely Armenian Border Guard Troops to Control All Entry and Exit Points of Armenia, Announces Pashinyan”, *ArmenPress*, February 28, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1213259>.

*the Armenian-Turkish border issue, the Armenian-Turkish normalization, and is attempting to have influence. This is very bad, and I think the respective Turkish officials also understand this”*.<sup>159</sup>

Patriarch Mashalian, the Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul, travelled to Armenia on 8 March to take part in the meeting of the Supreme Spiritual Council.<sup>160</sup>

Upon the invitation of the Armenian government, a group of ten journalists representing the Turkish press went to Armenia on 11-13 March to hold meetings and interviews with senior officials. The journalists met with Prime Minister Pashinyan, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan, Special Representative Rubinyan and other officials and were given first-hand information on Armenia's foreign policy, relations with Türkiye and expectations in a comprehensive framework. These interviews, particularly the interview with Pashinyan, were also widely published in the media outlets to which the journalists belonged. Pashinyan described his meeting with the Turkish press as “an unprecedented event”. It is possible to say that this initiative provided a successful PR activity for Armenia in terms of promoting Armenia's views and perspective.<sup>161</sup>

In his speech to the parliament on 14 March, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan reiterated that the normalization process with Türkiye remains in progress and pointed to the vital importance of the Kars-Gyumri railway, saying: “*In addition to establishing diplomatic relations, the opening of borders and relaunching transport infrastructures between us is crucial*”.

In order to enable Armenia to send humanitarian aid to Syria, the Margara-Alican border crossing was exceptionally opened for trucks during 21-31 March. The first application for such purpose was provided on 6 February 2023 for transportation of aid to the earthquake disaster.<sup>162</sup>

159 “Azerbaijan Hijacks Armenian-Turkish Normalization, Warns Speaker”, *ArmenPress*, March 4, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1213490>.

160 “Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople Visits Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin”, *Armenian Apostolic Holy Church Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin*, March 8, 2025, <https://www.armenianchurch.org/en/news/armenian-patriarch-of-constantinople-visits-mother-see-of-holy-etchmiadzin/11771>.

161 “Journalists Arriving in Armenia from Turkey Visited Armenian-Turkish Border”, *ILurer*, March 12, 2025, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2025/03/12/Journalists-arriving-in-Armenia-from-Turkey-visited-Armenian-Turkish-border/1278364>.

162 Xandie (Alexandra) Kuenning, “Armenia Turkey Checkpoint to Temporarily Open for Humanitarian Aid to Syria”, *OC Media*, March 20, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/armenia-turkey-checkpoint-to-temporarily-open-for-humanitarian-aid-to-syria/>.



In an extensive interview published in the local press on 20 March during his visit to Brazil, Mirzoyan, in response to the question “*Is there any prospect of normalizing relations between Armenia and Türkiye?*”, replied: “*We have a very constructive dialogue with Türkiye. Within this dialogue, there have been no preconditions set by either the Armenian or Turkish side. We have publicly stated that the goal of establishing diplomatic relations is the opening of the border between Türkiye and Armenia. The border was closed by the Turkish side 34 years ago. We have made some tangible progress, such as lifting the ban on air cargo transport. We also established direct flights, among other confidence-building measures. We agreed that, in a first stage, the border could be opened for citizens of third countries and Armenian and Turkish citizens holding diplomatic passports. This agreement has not yet been implemented. What we hear from our Turkish colleagues is that they are restrained from fully opening Armenia’s border until the final normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Although there is no formal precondition, we have seen that they link Türkiye-Armenia relations to Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. We believe that if we opened the border between Armenia and Türkiye first, it could have a very positive impact on our relations with Azerbaijan. Among the tangible measures achieved with Türkiye, we have started, bilaterally, border infrastructure work. Armenian and Turkish experts have begun examining the situation of the railway linking Gyumri to Kars.*”<sup>163</sup>

Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Archbishop Mashalian was also invited to the iftar ceremony organized by Turkish President Erdoğan on 28 March.<sup>164</sup>

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan, accompanied by a delegation, attended the Antalya Diplomacy Forum on 11-13 April and had a bilateral meeting with Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Fidan on 12 April. In his briefing to the press about his meeting with Fidan, Mirzoyan reiterated the views and assessments he had previously expressed to the press and said: “*We both have the understanding that the final goal, the aim is to fully normalize relations, including the establishment of diplomatic relations and including opening the whole border. Our dialogue is not only about merely establishment of diplomatic relations and formally opening the border. It’s about the huge trade that can take place between two countries. We (also) have discussed some*

163 “Speech of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan at Rio Branco Institute in Brazil”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, March 20, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/03/20/Mirzoyan\\_RioBranco/13131](https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/03/20/Mirzoyan_RioBranco/13131).

164 “Armenian Patriarch Sahag II Participates in Iftar Ceremony Hosted by Erdogan”, *ArmenPress*, March 28, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1215674>.



*joint energy projects and transit opportunities.*”<sup>165</sup> Mirzoyan also gave an in-depth interview to the Turkish NTV channel in Antalya.<sup>166</sup>

In an interview with an Armenian outlet, Mirzoyan noted that the most important of the contact opportunities created by the participation in the Antalya Forum were meetings with Turkish colleagues and representatives. He said, “*With Fidan, we specifically discussed the current state of the Armenia–Türkiye dialogue, the steps that have been taken, and the steps that can be taken*” and emphasized that such forums should not be missed. In response to the question of what has been achieved so far, he expressed that the ban on direct flights has been lifted, inspections of the Margara-Alican border infrastructure have been carried out, the Gyumri-Kars railway and other transport links have been assessed, and meetings between experts from various agencies have been held to discuss the restoration of the historic Ani Bridge.<sup>167</sup>

On the margins of the Forum, the Turkish and Armenian Special Envoys, S. Kılıç and R. Rubinyan also held bilateral meetings.<sup>168</sup> Likewise, Deputy Ministers of Foreign Affairs B. Ekinci and V. Kostanyan held bilateral meetings at the Forum.<sup>169</sup> Kostanyan announced on his social media account that the two countries discussed the normalization of relations and possible new directions of cooperation.

In response to a question at a press conference in Yerevan on 16 April following a meeting with the Slovenian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mirzoyan described his meetings with his Turkish and Azerbaijani counterparts at the Antalya Diplomacy Forum as generally positive and added, “*We can’t say that we have final solutions or agreements as a result of the meetings, contacts and conversations with the foreign ministers of Azerbaijan and Türkiye in Antalya, but we also can’t deny that nevertheless the meetings, discussions*

165 Elen Muradyan, “Armenian Foreign Minister Sees Broad Potential for Normalization with Turkey”, April 13, 2025, <https://www.civilnet.am/en/news/944691/armenian-foreign-minister-sees-broad-potential-for-normalization-with-turkey/>.

166 “Ermenistan Dışişleri Bakanı NTV’ye konuştu: Azerbaycan ile Barış Yakın mı?”, *NTV*, April 13, 2025, [https://www.ntv.com.tr/video/turkiye/ermenistan-disisleri-bakani-ntvy-e-konustu-azerbaycan-ile-baris-yakin-mi,Ev7MWG00M0C6quQqnBU\\_8w](https://www.ntv.com.tr/video/turkiye/ermenistan-disisleri-bakani-ntvy-e-konustu-azerbaycan-ile-baris-yakin-mi,Ev7MWG00M0C6quQqnBU_8w).

167 “‘There’s a Chance to Open New Era in Caucasus’ - Armenian Foreign Minister at Antalya Forum”, *JAM News*, April 14, 2025, <https://jam-news.net/armenian-fm-on-antalya-diplomacy-forum/>.

168 “Armenia and Turkey’s Special Envoys Rubinyan and Kılıç Meet in Antalya”, *MassisPost*, April 11, 2025, <https://massispost.com/2025/04/armenia-and-turkeys-special-envoys-rubinyan-and-kilic-meet-in-antalya/>.

169 “Dışişleri Bakan Yardımcısı Ekinci, ADF 2025 Marjında Görüşmeler Gerçekleştirdi”, *Hibya*, April 13, 2025, <https://hibya.com/disisleri-bakan-yardimcisi-ekinci-adf-2025-marjinda-gorusmeler-gerceklestirdi-574064>.

*and conversations make the parties more understandable for each other; topics, subtopics or new topics can be discussed from meetings to meetings, which are certainly effective in terms of the overall process.”*<sup>170</sup>

According to Armenian media reports, on 18 April, Special Representative Rubinyan briefed Russia’s Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Galuzin on his meeting with his Turkish counterpart Kılıç in Antalya and the latest developments in the field of Türkiye-Armenia normalization. According to the report, Rubinyan told his interlocutor that no new progress had been made, that Türkiye had tied the process to Armenia making further concessions to Azerbaijan, and that Türkiye was dragging its feet in implementing the July 2022 agreement on the opening of the border to third parties. The Russian side reaffirmed its readiness to continue facilitating the search for common ground between the two countries, as Turkish-Armenian relations are an important element of stability and sustainable development in the South Caucasus.<sup>171</sup>

The 24th of April, which Armenians have declared as a Remembrance Day in relation to the Law on Relocation and Resettlement of the year 1915, was also commemorated this year with various events in Armenia and the Diaspora. But the provocative power of the “genocide” characterization was weakened compared to last year due to the Armenian government’s statement that publicity would not be prioritized, Pashinyan’s questioning of historical events with a new perspective, the US, where the Diaspora is the strongest and most active, also abandoning this rhetoric in its official statement. This situation caused visible disappointment in the Armenian opposition and radical organizations of the Diaspora and pessimism in terms of their provocative ambitions. However, some third states, which continue to support the Armenian allegations for political reasons, reiterated their well-known rhetoric. In this regard, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the following statement:

*“We categorically reject the statements on the events of 1915, made in violation of historical facts and international law. Such attempts which clearly aim to exploit the pains of the past for political motives are totally null and void.*

170 “Armenian FM Says Meetings with Turkish, Azeri Counterparts Were Positive”, *ArmenPress*, April 16, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1217330>.

171 “Deputy Speaker Rubinyan Informs Russian Deputy FM of Recent Developments in Armenia-Turkey Normalization”, *ArmenPress*, April 18, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1217559>.

*Türkiye has always advocated the promotion of peace, dialogue, mutual understanding and common prosperity at the global level and in its region. With this understanding, Türkiye has opened its archives, and proposed the establishment of a Joint Historical Commission for a just and scholarly examination of the events of 1915.*

*We stress that the efforts of radical circles to draw animosity from history should not be encouraged and reiterate our call to support the ongoing normalization process between Türkiye and Armenia.”<sup>172</sup>*

On 24 April, Turkish President Erdoğan sent the following message to Armenian Patriarch of Istanbul Archbishop Mashalian:

*“Reverend Sahak Maşalyan, Armenian Patriarch of Türkiye,*

*Distinguished Members of the Armenian Community,*

*My Dear Citizens,*

*I salute you wholeheartedly with affection.*

*This year once again I remember with respect the Ottoman Armenians who lost their lives under the harsh circumstances of World War I, and extend my most sincere condolences to their descendants.*

*We still feel in our hearts the pain of the souls we have lost due to the rebellions, escalated gang violence, acts of subversion perpetrated by armed groups and epidemics, during the wartime that coincided with the final period of the Ottoman Empire. On the other hand, while believing that the present and the future should not be held captive by sad memories of the past, we are also aware that we, as 86 million people, altogether should build our own future.*

*Those, who tried to disrupt the deep-rooted and strong bonds between us by drawing animosity from history, have not been able to achieve their ambitions to this day.*

*Having lived together in this homeland for centuries, today, we continue*

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172 “No: 91, 24 April 2025, Regarding the Statements by Authorities of Some Countries on the Events of 1915”, Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye, April 24, 2025, [https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_91\\_bazi-ulkelerin-yetkililerince-1915-olaylarina-iliskin-yapilan-beyanlar-hk.en.mfa](https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_91_bazi-ulkelerin-yetkililerince-1915-olaylarina-iliskin-yapilan-beyanlar-hk.en.mfa).

*to share our joys and grief, as we have done in the past.*

*We did not allow even a single citizen of ours to be discriminated, alienated or marginalized for any reason whatsoever, and will never allow that either.*

*Like all our other citizens, tranquility, safety, and well-being of our Armenian citizens, who have made remarkable contributions to the cultural, artistic, political, economic, educational and social life of our country, will continue to be our priority.*

*Just as we have brought Türkiye to these days, once again altogether and shoulder to shoulder we will build the Century of Türkiye as well.*

*Under the tranquil and secure shadow of the crimson flag with crescent and star, we will live freely as honorable citizens of the Republic of Türkiye forever.*

*With these in mind, I reiterate that I sincerely share the sorrow of Armenian community's sufferings in the past, and once again commemorate with respect all Ottoman citizens who have lost their lives.*

*Recep Tayyip ERDOĞAN*

*President of Türkiye*<sup>173</sup>

Patriarch Mashalyan read and broadcast the President's message to the congregation at the service in Feriköy Church.

In his keynote speech at the regional gathering of the EU ambassadors to the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Mirzoyan said on 20 May the following regarding relations with Türkiye: "Armenia's commitment to peace and stability in the region is further demonstrated by the steps our country has taken in the normalization process with Türkiye. High-level dialogue continues, including meetings between the Prime Minister of Armenia and the Turkish President, as well as my discussions with the country's Foreign Minister. We firmly believe that full normalization -establishing diplomatic

173 "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan, Türkiye Ermenileri Patriği Maşalyan'a Mesaj Gönderdi", *Türkiye Cumhuriyeti Cumhurbaşkanlığı İletişim Başkanlığı*, April 24, 2025, <https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/turkce/haberler/detay/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-turkiye-ermenileri-patrigi-masalyana-mesaj-gonderdi-24-04-25>.

relations and opening borders- would unlock significant opportunities for both our countries and the wider region”.<sup>174</sup>

Speaking at the Yerevan Dialogue forum on 26 May, Mirzoyan was asked whether a peace deal between Armenia and Azerbaijan could serve as a stepping stone for improving Armenia-Türkiye relations. “If I were to answer briefly-yes” he said. “We have launched a dialogue with Turkey, with both sides publicly stating that the process should proceed without preconditions. I would like to note that we are pleased to see that the dialogue between Armenia and Turkey has not been as problematic as some might have expected” the Minister added. He concluded his answer saying that the only remaining obstacle to establishing diplomatic relations with Turkey, reopening the border and resolving connectivity issues is the unresolved status of negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.<sup>175</sup>

Armenian press, referring to the Turkish media, carried provocative headlines on 29 May: “Turkey’s Erdogan again calls for Azeri corridor through Armenia” quoting : “The Zangezur corridor is not only a land connection with Nakhichevan for Azerbaijan, but also a new integration line extending to the Turkic world from Turkey”. Nevertheless, news reporting included also “Türkiye is attaching great importance to the establishment of stability, peace and prosperity in the South Caucuses, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan has said, urging the signing of a permanent peace deal between Azerbaijan and Armenia at the earliest time”.<sup>176</sup>

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174 “Keynote Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Regional Seminar of the European Union Ambassadors to the countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia,” *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, May 20, 2025, Accessed: June 16, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/05/20/Armenia\\_EU/13235](https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/05/20/Armenia_EU/13235)

175 “Yerevan Dialogue 2025: Armenia Unveils Roadmap for Peace and Global Cooperation,” *Caucasus Watch*, May 27, 2025, Accessed: June 16, 2025, <https://www.caucasuswatch.de/en/news/yerevan-dialogue-2025-armenia-unveils-roadmap-for-peace-and-global-cooperation.html>

176 “Türkiye wants opening of Zangezur corridor ‘as soon as possible’: Erdogan,” *TRT World*, September 26, 2023, Accessed: June 16, 2025, <https://www.trtworld.com/turkiye/turkiye-wants-opening-of-zangezur-corridor-as-soon-as-possible-erdogan-15141613>

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