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PASHINYAN'S STATEMENTS REGARDING 'WESTERN ARMENIA' AND PUBLIC OPINION REALITIES

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Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan published a statement on his social media account in response to Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev's West Azerbaijan discourse that was highlighted in an interview.

In his statement, Pashinyan touched upon the issues of Western Armenia and Western Azerbaijan point-by-point, expressing that the borders of Western Armenia are Armavir, Talin, Maralik and the borders of Eastern Armenia are Ijvan, Berd, Chambarak, Vardenis, Jermuk, Goris, Kapan, Nerkin Hand, Nrnadzor. He explained that there is no Eastern and Western Armenia beyond these borders.[1]

While Pashinyan's statements seem quite reasonable and in line with international law, the term Western Armenia calls into question the fake political entity called Republic of Western Armenia, which tries to legitimize itself by maintaining its existence through a website. In its resolution on the elections of deputies to the National Assembly of Western Armenia on 14 September 2018, the so-called entity defined Western Armenia as comprising 27 regions, including Bitlis, Sasoun, Moush, Van, Tigranakert (Diyarbakir), Harput, Hemşin, Trabzon, Ordu, Sebastia (Sivas), Karin (Erzurum), Kars, Ardahan, Ani, Iğdır, Harput, Cilicia, Sis (Kozan), Adana, Şanlıurfa, Malatya, Hnus (Hınıs), Tunceli, Taron (Muş), Javakhq (located in Georgia) and others.[2]

As can be seen, these regions are located within the borders of present-day Türkiye and are integral parts of the Republic of Türkiye. The fake political entity in question is openly claiming rights over the territorial integrity of another country, in complete contradiction to the basic principles of international law. It bases its claims on the 1920 Treaty of Sevres, which has never entered into force and has been consigned to the dustbin of history.

On 29 August 2022, Yulia Gyuloyan, the supposed minister of culture of the entity, wrote

an open letter to UNESCO Director-General Azoulay, making rather bold statements by describing the regions within the borders of the Republic of Türkiye as Armenian plateaus. Moreover, Gyuloyan claimed that the archaeological sites in regions such as Şanlıurfa and Kars, which are within the borders of today's Republic of Türkiye, belong to the Republic of Western Armenia, that illegal excavations are carried out over there, and that the historical heritage in Anatolia should be protected.[3]

Since 2018, the fake political entity has published statements declaring that it has applied to the UN four different times for various reasons, including for membership. Nonetheless, it has not been taken into consideration by the UN.[4] Lastly, in 2019, the Government of Western Armenia published another text declaring that it had applied to the UN for the redrawing of the Armenia-Azerbaijan border.[5] This text also did not yield any results on the level of the UN, international organizations, or international public opinion.

When the names in the supposed parliament of the fake entity are analyzed, their connections to France stand out. It is stated on their website that the founding declaration of the parliament of the entity was declared in France.[6] It is also known that this entity organized many events and meetings in France.

As can be seen, this fake entity, which seems to be supported by France, makes baseless territorial claims on the regions within the borders of the Republic of Türkiye and tries to influence public opinion by acting against international agreements and law. For this purpose, it declares that it has applied to various international organizations on several occasions and attempts to justify its unfounded demands. It should be kept in mind that the Treaty of Sevres, which has never been put into effect, cannot constitute a legal basis for any international demand.

Armenia, whose Constitution (the preeminent legal text in domestic law) contains baseless claims against the Republic of Türkiye and its unjust territorial claims against Azerbaijan, continues to delay the promised process of amending the its Constitution. This naturally raises questions regarding the sincerity of Armenias policies concerning the peace process. Although Pashinyan has legitimately drawn the borders of Eastern and Western Armenia in his social media post, it is not possible to ignore the discourse of the so-called Republic of Western Armenia, which continues its attempts to influence public opinion, albeit unsuccessfully, especially as long as irredentist statements are included in the Armenian Constitution.

[1] Pashinyan Calls on Baku to Mutually Abandon Escalatory Narratives and Sign Peace Treaty, *ArmenPress*, January 9, 2025, https://armenpress.am/en/article/1209055.

[2] DECISION of the Central Election Commission on the election of deputies of the Parliament of Western Armenia, 14.09.2018, *Obtaining citizenship of the Republic of Western Armenia*, September 14, 2018, https://citizenship-western-armenia.info/en/archives/943

[3] Open Letter to the Director-General of UNESCO, Ms. Audrey Azoulay, *The Goverment of the Republic of Western Armenia*, August 29, 2022, https://gov-wa.nt.am/?p=7484&lang=en.

[4] Application for Membership of the Republic of Western Armenia (The State of Armenia) in the United Nations, *Obtaining citizenship of the Republic of Western Armenia*, May 25, 2018, https://citizenship-western-armenia.info/en/archives/11355.

[5] Batı Ermenistan Hükümeti Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Sınırının Tekrar Çizilmesi İçin BMe Başvurdu, *Obtaining citizenship of the Republic of Western Armenia*, August 8, 2019, https://citizenship-western-armenia.info/tr/archives/1494.

[6] Declaration of Formation of the National Assembly (Parliament) of Western Armenia, *The Goverment of the Republic of Western Armenia*, May 24, 2013, https://gov-wa.nt.am/?p=391&lang=en.

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