

EDITORIAL / BAŞYAZI

To cite this article: Alev Kılıç, “Facts and Comments”, *Review of Armenian Studies*, Issue 48 (2023): 9-62.

Received: 04.12.2023

Accepted: 06.12.2023

FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

Alev KILIÇ*

Abstract: *This article covers the period of June-November 2023 of the internal developments in Armenia, the international standing and relations of Armenia, the progress in concluding the peace agreement following the establishment of full sovereignty of Azerbaijan in Karabakh and the bilateral relations of Türkiye and Armenia in the light of the process of normalization of their relations.*

During the period, the main concern and strive of Armenia was focused on the availability of modifying the cease-fire agreement of 9 November 2020 that ended the Second Karabakh War (44-day War), through a peace agreement to its favor to the extent possible. The third party to the cease-fire agreement and supervisor of the implementation of the agreement, Russia's weakening interest and impact in the region stemming from its war with Ukraine on the one hand and the strategy of the West to distract Russia on a second front as well as its initiative to align Armenia on its side with a view to reducing the influence of Russia in the South Caucasus has received a positive response from Armenia.

Prime Minister Pashinyan, who was elected on a pro-West platform has given the green light to this initiative of the West at the expense of alienating Russia, whereby peace agreement negotiations with Azerbaijan have

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

primarily moved on to Brussels and Washington D.C., leaving Moscow at a secondary status. When this process encouraged by the West started initially in a balanced manner, but inherent in its nature and possibly due to promises made to Armenia, deviated to a biased pro-Armenian course, it has caused Azerbaijan to keep its distance and eventually to refuse to attend the invitations.

The 24-hour military operation of Azerbaijan on 19 September which brought the end of the separatist administration in Karabakh and established its full sovereignty on the whole territory of Karabakh has thus removed the major hurdle before the peace agreement. However, three points of dispute; the demarcation of borders and a sub-item under this heading, the enclaves within Armenia, the return of refugees to their homelands on a reciprocal basis, and the opening of the transport corridor of Zangezur have kept their places in the agenda. The “Crossroads of Peace” Project Armenia announced in November has raised the optimism that a solution to the transport issue could be at hand.

However, the double discourse on part of Armenia, on the one hand alleging that Azerbaijan committed ethnic cleansing by forced migration of Karabakh Armenians and also alleging that Azerbaijan is planning an assault to “Western Azerbaijan”, disparaging Azerbaijan with false accusations at all international forums, yet on the other hand presenting itself as the only party whose singular desire and aim is to establish peace; has dimmed chances for an early conclusion of a peace agreement.

Relations with Türkiye have kept their positive impetus in line and tandem with the development in the peace process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Keywords: Pashinyan, Mirzoyan, Grigoryan, Asriyan, Putin, Erdogan, Lavrov, Fidan, Blinken, Michel, Karabakh, Zangezur corridor, Crossroads of Peace, ICJ, CSTO.

Öz: *Bu incelemede Haziran-Kasım 2023 tarihleri döneminde Ermenistan'daki iç gelişmeler, dış dinamikler, Azerbaycan'ın Karabağ üzerindeki egemenliğini sağlaması sonrası barış anlaşması sürecindeki gelişmeler ile Türkiye-Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkiler ve normalleşme sürecinin seyri ele alınmaktadır.*

Dönem içinde Ermenistan'ın başlıca uğraşı ve kaygısı İkinci Karabağ Savaşı (44 Günlük Savaşı) sona erdiren 9 Kasım 2020 ateşkes anlaşmasını olabildiğince lehine çevirebilecek bir barış anlaşması arayışı içinde geçmiştir. Ateşkes anlaşmasının üçüncü tarafı ve uygulanmasının gözetimini üstlenen Rusya'nın Ukrayna savaşı nedeniyle bölgeye ilgisinin ve etkisinin zayıflaması, Batının ise Rusya'ya ikinci bir cephe açmak, Rusya'nın güney Kafkaslardaki

nüfuzunu azaltmak üzere Ermenistan'ı yanına çekme girişimleri Ermenistan'da olumlu karşılık bulmuştur.

Esasen Batı yanlısı bir platformla yönetime gelen Başbakan Paşinyan Batının bu yaklaşımına, Rusya'yı karşısına almak pahasına, yeşil ışık yakmış, Azerbaycan ile barış anlaşması görüşmeleri, Moskova'nın ikinci plana düştüğü, Brüksel ve Vaşington odaklı yürütülmeye başlanmıştır. Batının başta dengeli olarak başlattığı bu süreç, doğası icabı ve muhtemelen Ermenistan'a bulunulan vaatlerden dolayı, Ermeni yanlısı bir çizgiye girince, Azerbaycan Batının girişimlerine tavır koymaya ve davetlerine katılmamaya başlamıştır.

Azerbaycan'ın 19 Eylül'de 24 saatlik bir askerî harekât ile Karabağ'daki ayrılıkçı yönetime son vermesi ve Karabağ'ın bütünü üzerinde egemenliğini tesis etmesi, barış anlaşması önündeki en büyük engeli ortadan kaldırmış, ancak üç sorunlu konu: sınırların tespiti ve bunun bir alt başlığı olarak Ermenistan içindeki anklavlar, göç eden nüfusun karşılıklı olarak geri dönmeleri ve Zangezur ulaşım koridoru konusu gündemdeki yerini korumaya devam etmiştir. Ermenistan'ın Kasım ayında geliştirdiği "Barış Kavşakları" projesi ulaşım sorununun da çözülebileceği iyimserliği uyandırmıştır.

Bununla beraber, Ermenistan yetkililerinin iki yüzlü söylemi, bir yandan Azerbaycan'ın Karabağ Ermenilerini göçe zorlayarak "etnik temizlik" yaptıkları ve Azerbaycan'ın "Batı Azerbaycan"a saldırı planları içinde olduğu yolunda sahte suçlamalarla bütün ikili temaslarında ve uluslararası forumlarda Azerbaycan'ı kötülemesi, diğer taraftan barış havarisini kesilerek, barışı isteyen ve hedefleyen tek taraf olduklarını ileri sürerek, kısa zamanda bir barış anlaşmasının imzalanması ümitlerini soldürmüştür.

Türkiye ile ilişkiler barış anlaşması sürecindeki gelişmeye bağlı ve paralel olarak olumlu beklenti anlayışını sürdürmüştür.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Paşinyan, Mirzoyan, Grigoryan, Asriyan, Putin, Erdoğan, Lavrov, Fidan, Blinken, Michel, Karabağ, Zangezur koridoru, Barış Kavşakları, UAD, KGAÖ.

1. Domestic Developments in Armenia

The peace agreement process and this process' problematic sub-headings, Karabakh and the the status of Karabakh Armenians, mutual claims over border demarcation with Azerbaijan, the Lachin corridor link, transportation from the Zangezur corridor, and the status of the Armenian population that fled from Karabakh were key issues that occupied Armenia's internal political agenda during this period and mobilized the opposition against the government.

Tensions between the Armenian Administration and Armenian Apostolic Church flared up once again during the beginning of this period. Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan sternly warned the Church, which continues to criticize the administration's actions, not to interfere in politics. The Church officials, on the other hand, did not relent and reiterated that they would continue to state what they knew to be true. A statement was made on 8 June at the regular meeting of the Supreme Spiritual Council chaired by the Catholicos of Etchmiadzin Karekin II, criticizing Pashinyan's peace agreement process. Additionally, claims were made that the honor of the state was disgraced and that the nation was humiliated. It was noted that the right to self-determination of the illegal, self-proclaimed state of "Artsakh" cannot be renounced under any circumstance.

Similar anti-administration protests and declarations by the opposition, which were evoked by the Dashnaksutyun (Armenian Revolutionary Federation-ARF) party, displayed a tendency to intensify from the beginning of the period. During a speech on 13 June, the ARF leader called on the opposition to engage in joint demonstrations and actions throughout the summer. The ARF additionally escalated its oppositional activities against Pashinyan and the administration within the Armenian Diaspora as well. Consequently, some ARF Diaspora militants were prevented from entering Armenia and sent back from Yerevan airport.

Prime Minister Pashinyan's meeting with President Vahagn Khachaturyan at the end of May was covered in detail in the press. It was expressed that the administration is united, that there is no disorder. The President made the following statement:

"First of all, Mr. Prime Minister, I want to once again express my support to you and the Government regarding the policy that you implement together with the government, which is aimed at establishing peace in the region. In connection with this, last week was important for our political life, starting with the meeting in Brussels, after which you clearly expressed the view of the government of the Republic of Armenia, according to which we recognize the territorial integrity of

Azerbaijan and expect the same from Azerbaijan. I think this was a very important statement. [...] ¹

In turn, the Prime Minister stated the following: “In this regard, I can testify that a very constructive cooperation has been established between the president-parliament-government trio, which is very important especially in this period.”

On 15 June, a former education minister and a mayor were arrested within the scope of ongoing corruption charges against former executives.² The former Armenian Defense Chief, who was arrested on corruption charges, was denied release and the court ordered his continued detention on 30 August.³

Against the backdrop of the war with Azerbaijan, ongoing tensions due to failure to sign a peace agreement, small-scale clashes on the border from time to time, the Karabakh Armenians issue dominating the agenda, and the escalation of demonstrations and protests against the Pashinyan administration, the municipal elections in the capital Yerevan on 17 September have been reliable and essential political indicators. The two main opposition parties decided not to participate in the elections and the turnout was very low (only %28.46). None of the candidates secured the required majority of votes. Although the ruling party was far ahead of its closest contender, it lost its majority with only 24 members in the 65-seat Municipal Council because of its %32.5 vote percentage. Thus, it had to form an alliance for its candidate to be elected as mayor. As a result, ruling party candidate Tigran Avinyan was elected as mayor on 10 October. The main opposition, which has abstained from the democratic contest for power against the Pashinyan administration, commented on the election results that the ruling party fell short by having only 80,000 votes this time, while it received 294,092 votes in the 2018 elections.

Upon Azerbaijan establishing sovereignty over all of Karabakh on 19 September, large-scale demonstrations and protest attempts started in Yerevan. Police intervention led to clashes. The migration of Karabakh Armenians to Armenia constituted the most important and prioritized subject and problem in the country during the period. Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson announced on 4 October that the number of people coming from

1 “Prime Minister Pashinyan Meets with President Khachaturyan”, *Prime Minister of Armenia*, May 29, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/05/29/Nikol-Pashinyan-met-with-Vahagn-Khachaturyan/>

2 Grisha Balasanyan, “Yerevan Police Arrest Former Education Minister for Money Laundering”, *Hetq*, June 15, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/157170>

3 Artak Khulian, “Former Armenian Defense Chief To Remain In Jail”, *Azatoryun*, August 30, 2023, <https://www.azatoryun.am/a/32571274.html>

Karabakh was 100,632.⁴ Given Armenia's track record of manipulating numbers, these figures should be noted with "caution" at this stage. On one hand, a high number could strengthen Armenia's and its supporters' pervasive allegations of "ethnic cleansing". On the other hand, it could create justification for an increase in the requested foreign aid to the refugees. Azerbaijan, which keeps a record of those who have left, has not made a statement regarding the figures. The reason for this caution stems from the possible accusations that Azerbaijan may face in the case of a low number of departures, taking into account the narrative of 120,000 indigenous Armenian population in Karabakh, which is generally accepted by Armenia and its supporters.

The Armenian administration stated that the fact that Armenians from Karabakh hold Armenian passports does not mean that they are entitled to Armenian citizenship and that they can only be granted migrant status under temporary protection. It was even declared that they would not be able to benefit from the social assistance and payments made to them while they were in Karabakh, amounting to approximately 30 million US Dollars a month. However, this decision was reversed. It is understood that the reason for this approach of the administration is to force these refugees to return. Intense pressure on Azerbaijan in this context has already been instigated by Armenia's Western supporters. In principle, Azerbaijan invites these people to stay in their homes as Azerbaijani citizens, but does not prevent them from leaving voluntarily. However, at this stage of events, it is understood that Azerbaijan will demand "retaliation in kind" for the Azerbaijanis, who were forced to leave and are wishing to return to their homes and homelands in Armenia.

In December 2022, the law on the establishment of a new "Foreign Intelligence Service" within the security and intelligence system of Armenia was adopted. With the appointment of Kristine Grigoryan as the head of this service on 4 October, the institution became operational.⁵

On 30 October, during the budget talks in the parliament, Pashinyan stated that the defense budget for 2024 will be significantly increased, with a %125 increase compared to the 2018 budget.⁶

In early June, Pashinyan appointed a thirteen-member high-level working group to address the issue of building a new nuclear power plant to replace the

4 "Number of Forcibly Displaced Persons from NK Stands at 100,632", *Armenpress*, October 4, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121185.html>

5 Naira Bulghadarian, "Armenia's First Foreign Intelligence Chief Named After 'Training'", *Azatutyun*, October 5, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32624669.html>

6 "Armenian PM Says Increasing Defense Spending is for Preparing for Peace", *Arka.am*, November 16, 2023, https://arka.am/en/news/politics/armenian_pm_says_increasing_defense_spending_is_for_preparing_for_peace/

Metsamor nuclear power station. Providing about 40% of Armenia's power generation, it has been operational since 1980 and has an extended lifespan until 2036. The Russian company Rosatom, which recently upgraded the plant's 420-megawatt reactor, has shown interest in the issue. On the other hand, the US has also taken a close interest in the matter. As part of the "Strategic Nuclear Cooperation" memorandum of understanding signed by Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ararat Mirzoyan during his visit to the United States (the US) in May 2022, the US NuScale Power Corps offered to renovate the plant with small modular reactors (SMRS).⁷ This initiative also aims to reduce Armenia's energy dependence on Russia.

The International Monetary Fund Board of Governors completed its preliminary examination on 13 June, in accordance with the Stand-By agreement. As a result, Armenia will be able to receive a further 18.4 million more of SDR (Special Drawing Rights). This brings the total SDR received to 36.8 million (approximately 49 million Dollars).

On 13 June, the Central Bank announced 6.9% growth for 2023.⁸ The Armenian Minister of Finance, on the other hand, announced on 30 October that growth of at least 7.2% will be achieved in 2023, and a 7% growth is predicted for 2024.⁹

The noteworthy activity in Armenia's economy has been linked in particular to the increase in trade transactions with Russia and Iran. Exports from Armenia to Russia tripled in 2022 and in January-May 2023.¹⁰ These exports mainly consisted of goods produced in third countries and exported through Armenia to Russia, which is under sanctions due to the Ukraine war. Likewise, according to Iran's official data, Iran's exports to Armenia increased by 38.4% in the 21 March-21 June quarter compared to the same period of the previous year. Iran's non-oil exports to Armenia increased by 62.5% in one year, amounting to 478 million Dollars.¹¹ Having the need to intervene in this situation, the US, in the framework of its developing close multilateral relations, sent the Head of the Office of Sanctions Coordination of its

7 Robert Zargarian, "Armenian Task Force To Explore Nuclear Plant Options", *Azattyun*, June 8, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32450621.html>

8 "Armenian Central Bank Raises 2023 Economic Growth Forecast to 6.9%", *Interfax*, June 13, 2023, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/91398/>

9 "Armenia's Economy will Grow by 7.2% in 2023 and by 7% in 2024 - Finance Minister", *Arka News Agency*, October 30, 2023, https://arka.am/en/news/economy/armenia_s_economy_will_grow_by_7_2_in_2023_and_by_7_in_2024_finance_minister/

10 "Armenia Sees Continued Surge In Trade With Russia", *Azattyun*, July 12, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32500512.html>

11 "Export from Iran to Armenia Increases over 38% in Q1", *Tehran Times*, July 25, 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/487237/Export-from-Iran-to-Armenia-increases-over-38-in-Q1>

Department of State to Yerevan at the end of June and initiated an evaluation of this situation.¹²

2. Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Agreement Process

Three years after the cease-fire agreement signed in Moscow in November 2020, the fact that a peace agreement has still not been signed continued to be an obstacle that affects and restricts regional relations as well as Armenia-Azerbaijan bilateral relations, and going beyond this, becoming a global agenda issue. The regional countries Russia and Iran, which the US Department of State spokesperson once described as “unreliable partners”, had no complaints about the perpetuation of the impasse and made efforts to keep away non-regional countries. Both these factors also contributed to the prolongation of the process. The problem regarding the status of Karabakh and the Armenians living there, which was the most critical obstacle to a peace agreement, was resolved gradually over the period, and finally on 19 September, by a 24-hour military intervention by Azerbaijan.

During a press conference in Yerevan on 22 May, Prime Minister Pashinyan announced in crystal clear terms that he had agreed to recognize Azerbaijan’s sovereignty in Karabakh through the peace agreement being worked on between the two countries.¹³ Thus, the territorial integrity pillar of the problem was clarified. The issue of the status of Armenians living in Karabakh remained as the other pillar awaiting a solution. Therefore, this case was concluded on 19 September. As expected, Pashinyan’s announcement was harshly condemned by the opposition. Moreover, Karabakh Armenians expressed their anger and frustration even more vigorously, claiming that this decision constituted a violation of the Declaration of Independence and the Armenian constitution. Critics believed that such an agreement would be devoid of legal basis. The leader of the Dashnaksutyun (ARF) party, which is leading the opposition and known for its radical actions and rhetoric, declared that they would utilize every means to scuttle this plan, which meant the surrender not only of Karabakh but also of Armenia.¹⁴

The two highest ranking Armenian clergymen, the Catholicoses of Etchmiadzin and Cilicia (situated in Antelias/Lebanon), issued separate statements in which

12 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Head of US Sanctions Coordination Office, Ambassador James C. O’Brien Visits Armenia”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/head-of-us-sanctions-coordination-office-ambassador-james-c-obrien-visits-armenia/>

13 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Head of US Sanctions Coordination Office, Ambassador James C. O’Brien Visits Armenia”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/head-of-us-sanctions-coordination-office-ambassador-james-c-obrien-visits-armenia/>

14 Astghik Bedevian, “Armenian Opposition Signals Protests Against ‘Karabakh’s Surrender’”, *Azatutyun*, May 22, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32424296.html>

they described Pashinyan's statement as "unacceptable". Additionally, they made provocative statements that the right to self-determination of the illegal Karabakh Armenian administration, which they defined as the "Artsakh Republic", could not be given up.¹⁵ Following this, publications began widely circulating in Christian media outlets, regardless of whether they were Catholic, Evangelical, or Orthodox, evaluating and supporting the subject and the problem on the basis of a clash of religions. The severity of such publications increased during the period, reaching to claims that "Ancient Christian Enclave Faces Genocide by Starvation",¹⁶ and that "Armenians were subjected to genocide for the second time". This group also recruited Luis Moreno-Ocampo, the shady former Chief Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court (ICC), and used his report of 7 August, which stated that Azerbaijan's actions amounted to genocide, as legal evidence.¹⁷

Immediately following the meetings held in Washington DC and Brussels in May, a third trilateral meeting was held in Moscow on 25 May, at the invitation of President of Russia Vladimir Putin, to discuss a peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. Putin, who also met bilaterally with the leaders of the two countries, said that the differences between the two countries were "purely technical" and "surmountable" and that the deputy prime ministers of the two countries should find solutions to them.¹⁸ Ultimately, no concrete progress was made there either.

The US Special Envoy to the region, Louis Bono, visited the two countries on 25-26 May and held high-level talks, signaling the US's continued interest and determination to play a leading role.¹⁹ It was noteworthy that Bono's title included the designation of US Co-Chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, which is de facto obsolete.

As a result of the negative response, as well as the conditions put forth to Azerbaijan's invitation, which was forwarded to the representatives of the Karabakh Armenian population to meet for a discussion of the other Karabakh conflict pillar awaiting a solution, Azerbaijani President İlham Aliyev issued a warning on 28 May. He stated that they could be pardoned only if the

15 "Armenian Church Again Warns Against 'Humiliating' Peace Deal," *Azattyun*, June 12, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32455807.html>

16 Gina Christian, "Ancient Christian Enclave Faces 'Genocide by Starvation,' Says Armenian Catholic Bishop", *CNEWA*, September 11, 2023, <https://cnewa.org/ca/ancient-christian-enclave-faces-genocide-by-starvation-says-armenian-catholic-bishop/>

17 "Exclusive: Nagorno-Karabakh Exodus was Genocide, says Former ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo", *Armenpress*, November 9, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1123809.html>

18 "Putin Hosts Fresh Talks Between Pashinian, Aliyev," *Azattyun*, May 26, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32428164.html>

19 "US Envoy Again Visits Armenia, Azerbaijan," *Mirror Spectator*, June 1, 2023, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2023/06/01/us-envoy-again-visits-armenia-azerbaijan/>

“parliament” was dissolved, the “president” surrendered, and all “ministers”, “deputies”, and other officials resigned.²⁰ Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted to this warning, claiming that Azerbaijan was not only threatening the Karabakh Armenians with “ethnic cleansing” but also preparing for a new attack.²¹ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan rejected these allegations and stated that Azerbaijan intended to take all necessary steps to reintegrate the local Armenian population in Karabakh. A US Department of State spokesperson announced on 30 May that they welcomed Aliyev’s declaration of amnesty.²² The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressed indignation at the US praise for Aliyev’s declaration. The illegal administration of Karabakh also voiced deep disappointment and astonishment.²³

On 6 July, the Karabakh separatist administration also rejected Azerbaijan’s call to demobilize its armed forces. A senior official stated that it was essential to maintain the defense army at a crucial time for the country’s survival. The President of the National Assembly of Armenia, Alen Simonyan, stated that some EU partners had applied to the “European Peace Fund” to purchase military equipment but received no positive response.²⁴

On the occasion of the second meeting of the European Political Community in Chisinau, Moldova, on 1 June, President of the European Council Charles Michel organized a five-party meeting between the parties, attended by the President of France and the Chancellor of Germany. After the meeting, Michel said that it was a good preparation for the next meeting in Brussels on 21 July.²⁵

The trilateral meeting of Ministers of Foreign Affairs that was planned to be held in Washington on 12 June was postponed at the last minute. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson stated that the meeting was postponed at the request of Azerbaijan.²⁶ No statement was made by Azerbaijan

20 “Azerbaijani President Gives Ultimatum to Karabakh Authorities,” *Eurasianet*, May 30, 2023, <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijani-president-gives-ultimatum-to-karabakh-authorities>

21 “EU Urges Dialogue Between Azerbaijan, Karabakh Armenians,” *Azattyun*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32435480.html>

22 “Continued Peace Talks Between Armenia and Azerbaijan,” *U.S. Department of State*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/continued-peace-talks-between-armenia-and-azerbaijan/>

23 “Karabakh ‘Deeply Disappointed’ By U.S. Statement”, *Azattyun*, June 1, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32438800.html>

24 “EU Has Denied Military Aid to Armenia”, *Asbarez*, July 5, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/eu-has-denied-military-aid-to-armenia/>

25 “Remarks by President Charles Michel after his Meeting with the Leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, France and Germany”, *European Council*, June 1, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/06/01/remarks-by-president-charles-michel-after-his-meeting-with-the-leaders-of-armenia-azerbaijan-france-and-germany/>

26 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “New Round of Talks Postponed at the Request of Azerbaijan – Armenia MFA”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 8, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/08/new-round-of-talks-postponed-at-the-request-of-azerbaijani-sidd-armenia-mfa/>

or the US. The US Department of State spokesperson explained that the postponement was due to a scheduling problem and that they hoped that a new date would be set as soon as possible.²⁷ On the other hand, the remarks made by the US Ambassador to the OSCE at a plenary session on 6 June caused serious discomfort on the Azerbaijani side according to the press. Azerbaijan demanded an explanation from Washington and Brussels and stated that it would decide from now on whether to continue the talks hosted by these parties depending on the response it receives.

In a televised speech broadcast on 3 June, the US Ambassador to Armenia stated “we believe and hope that it is possible” regarding whether Armenians in Karabakh could live under Azerbaijani rule. This was rigorously criticized and rejected by the Karabakh Armenian administration. The head of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), which is known for its intensive lobbying activities in the US, especially towards members of the US Congress, has also taken the lead in this endeavor and issued a detailed statement targeting the US administration.

The postponed Washington trilateral meeting was held on 27-29 June. On the opening day of the meeting, Karabakh separatists opened fire on Azerbaijani troops. This incident signaled discontent with the possible realization of a peace agreement and was an attempt to undo the peace efforts. This meeting once again demonstrated that the US-sponsored peace agreement initiative brought together Russia, the Church, the separatists in Karabakh and the Dashnaksutyun party, which leads the radical opposition, on the same front. In his closing remarks after the meeting, US Secretary of State Blinken emphasized that much work remains in order to reach a final agreement. In a statement released by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 30 June, the Ministry reiterated that the two main issues on which no agreement could be reached were the demarcation of borders and the establishment of a dialogue between the Karabakh Armenian administration and Azerbaijan, and that the rights and security of Armenians in Karabakh should be guaranteed within the framework of an “international mechanism”.

When the trilateral talks with the EU failed during this period, the US invited the parties for a new trilateral meeting on 20 November. On 15 November, a Department of State official made a speech in the US Congress that was pro-Armenian and accusatory against Azerbaijan. On 16 November, the US Senate voted to cut off all military aid to Azerbaijan, prompting Azerbaijan to officially announce that it would not attend the meeting due to US bias.²⁸ The US

27 “U.S. Looks Forward to Rescheduling Postponed Armenia-Azerbaijan Talks in Washington”, *Armenpress*, June 14, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1113208/>

28 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Azerbaijan Accuses US of Bias, Refuses to Participate in a Meeting with Armenian FM in Washington”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, November 16, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/11/16/azerbaijan-accuses-us-of-bias-refuses-to-participate-in-a-meeting-with-armenian-fm/>

Department of State spokesperson confirmed this in a statement on 17 December, expressing that the US supports the continuation of the negotiation process, whether here or elsewhere, wherever it takes place, and will continue to support the resolution of the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia through peace talks.²⁹

On 9 June, Prime Minister Pashinyan held a bilateral meeting with Putin in Sochi, on the occasion of the Commonwealth of Independent States leaders' summit. This was the second meeting in 15 days, following a bilateral and trilateral meeting with Putin in Moscow on 25 May on the occasion of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council meeting, where bilateral issues and the Armenia-Azerbaijan conflict were addressed.

In a written statement on 16 June, Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson criticized the EU's decision to open three more observation centers in Armenia, claiming that the EU observation mission's main goal was to exclude Russia from the region. In its response, the EU observation mission recalled that it had been planned from the beginning that the 103-member mission would operate from six centers.³⁰

On 24 May, during a parliamentary session, Pashinyan conveyed that there was also an enclave issue with Azerbaijan, that there were some small villages and territories of this kind in the territory of both countries, and that they had not yet decided how to resolve this issue, whether to exchange or find another solution.³¹ This issue emerged as a sub-issue of the border demarcation work, which constituted another obstacle to a peace agreement during the period.

On 15 June, Armenia blamed the Russian peacekeepers for the clash that broke out at the checkpoint set up by Azerbaijan on the Lachin road next to the border with Armenia, when Azerbaijani border guards raised the Azerbaijani flag on the other side of the bridge adjacent to the checkpoint within the view range of the Russian peacekeepers, and accused them of remaining silent concerning the intervention in Armenian territory. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson described this criticism as "completely unjustified" and stated that the incident occurred because the Armenian-Azerbaijani borders had not yet been demarcated. The Armenia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Russian Ambassador to Armenia and expressed its discontent. On the other

29 "Washington Reaffirms Support for Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Talks", *Azattyun*, November 17, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32688496.html>

30 "EUMA: From Very Beginning European Union Mission in Armenia is Fully Transparent about Its Plan", *News.am*, June 15, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/765530.html>

31 "Armenia, Azerbaijan Have Reciprocally Recognized the Existence of Enclaves", *Armenpress*, May 24, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1111678.html>

hand, in the aftermath of the conflict, Azerbaijan began to block the transportation of aid supplies to Karabakh through this route.

On 22 June, the governor of the US state of Kansas and a commander of the Kansas National Guard visited Armenia and were received by Pashinyan.³² Armenia's military ties with the US have been maintained through a partnership agreement signed in 2003. Armenia's Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant General Edvard Asriyan, visited the US on 17-18 July on the occasion of the 13th anniversary of this partnership and to hold talks.³³

The trilateral meeting scheduled for 21 July by European Council President Michel was brought forward and held in Brussels on 15 July. After this sixth EU-sponsored meeting, Michel announced in a press conference that the following issues were discussed:³⁴

- Sovereignty and territorial integrity: The Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders once again fully reconfirmed their respect for the other country's territorial integrity and sovereignty. Based on the understanding that Armenia's territory covers 29.800 km² and Azerbaijan's 86.600 km².
- Border delimitation: Both leaders reconfirmed their unequivocal commitment to the 1991 Almaty Declaration as a political framework for the delimitation.
- Connectivity: The work on this issue is ongoing.
- Humanitarian supplies: We discussed the situation of the Karabakh Armenian population and the situation around the Lachin corridor. The current state of affairs is clearly not sustainable and is in no one's interest.
- Rights and security: The population on the ground needs reassurances, first and foremost regarding their rights and security. In this context, I expressed the EU's encouragement for direct dialogue between Baku and representatives of Armenians living in the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast.

32 "The Prime Minister Received the Governor of Kansas and the Commander of the National Guard", *Radar Armenia*, June 22, 2023, <https://radar.am/en/news/politics-2574825954/>

33 "Chief of General Staff of Armenian Military Visits United States", *Armenpress*, July 18, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115663/>

34 "Press Remarks by President Charles Michel Following Trilateral Meeting with President Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Prime Minister Pashinyan of Armenia", *European Council*, July 15, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/07/15/press-remarks-by-president-charles-michel-following-trilateral-meeting-with-president-aliyev-of-azerbaijan-and-prime-minister-pashinyan-of-armenia/>

- Detainees: We also discussed the issue of detainees. The leaders reconfirmed their commitment to the gentlemen’s understanding that the release of soldiers who inadvertently cross to the other side would be facilitated.
- Follow-up: We agreed that our teams will remain in close contact to ensure concrete follow-up on what has been discussed today. I also reiterated my intention to invite the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders for another meeting in Brussels after the summer, as well as for another pentilateral meeting, with the participation also of the leaders of France and Germany, in Granada in the margins of the next European Political Community Summit.”

Statements made by Armenia and Azerbaijan following the meeting indicate that both sides continue to have different stances and priorities. Pashinyan expressed on 20 July that “no concrete results” could be achieved.³⁵

Russia did not hide its dismay with the EU-sponsored talks. In a statement released by the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 15 July, it was stated that Armenia’s recognition of Nagorno-Karabakh as Azerbaijani territory in the EU-sponsored talks held last October and May further complicated the problems in the region. In this context, the Ministry stated;

“We respect the sovereign decision of the leadership of Armenia, but it radically changed the fundamental conditions under which the declaration of the leaders of Russia, Armenia and Azerbaijan was signed on November 9, 2020, as well as the status of the Russian peacekeeping force deployed in the region”.

The statement also noted Russia’s readiness to organize a trilateral foreign ministers’ meeting in the near future, followed by a trilateral summit.³⁶

In a statement released by Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 17 July, it was reported that they had not received a meeting proposal from Russia. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan reacted to the Russian Foreign Ministry’s statement and emphasized the “unacceptability” of the attempt to impose interpretations and conditions on the fact that Karabakh is within the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Azerbaijan.

35 “Pashinyan: No Concrete Results From the Brussels Meeting”, *MassisPost*, July 20, 2023, <https://massispost.com/2023/07/pashinyan-no-concrete-results-from-the-brussels-meeting/>

36 “Russia Strongly Urges Azerbaijan to Unblock the Lachin Corridor”, *Armenpress*, July 15, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115533.html>

At the invitation of Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Sergey Lavrov, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Azerbaijan met in Moscow on 25 July and held bilateral and then trilateral talks with Lavrov. After the meeting, Lavrov expressed that the road to a peace agreement was not easy, that there were several complex and important issues to be resolved, and that he understood the need to persuade the Armenians in Karabakh to negotiate their rights with the Azerbaijani authorities as soon as possible within the framework of the rights recognized for ethnic minorities in international agreements. Thus, for the first time, Russia officially recognized Azerbaijan's sovereignty over the whole of Karabakh and that Karabakh Armenians stand under Azerbaijani rule. Russia also addressed the issue of the rights of Karabakh Armenians within the framework of existing international minority rights treaties, without mentioning any international mechanism. Lavrov noted that Azerbaijan was ready to recognize these rights on a reciprocal basis and that Armenia was ready to apply these agreements to its citizens. These statements led to speculation in the press as to whether Armenia was opening the door to the return of Azerbaijanis who had been forced to escape from there in the past. Lavrov also stated that there are plans to organize a trilateral summit of leaders later this year.³⁷

As part of their ongoing attitudes and statements against the Pashinyan administration, Armenians in Karabakh reiterated on 25 July their demand for the administration to abandon its rhetoric of recognizing Azerbaijan's territorial integrity and that they would not give up their right to self-determination. In a press conference on the same day, Pashinyan defended his decision to recognize Azerbaijan's territorial integrity, explaining that Armenia cannot protect Karabakh, is not in a position to "determine the fate" of the Karabakh people, and that the Armenian representatives of Karabakh themselves should be a party to negotiations with Azerbaijan, and that this should be done within the framework of an international mechanism.³⁸ Karabakh Armenians and Pashinyan's opponents in Armenia rejected this position, stating that the recognition of Azerbaijan's sovereignty would force Karabakh Armenians to leave the country. On 27 July, the Karabakh "parliament" also issued a call to United Nations member states to recognize its independence under the principle of the right to remedial secession.³⁹

37 Elena Teslova, "Armenian, Azerbaijani, Russian Foreign Ministers Discuss Karabakh Settlement", *Anadolu Agency*, July 25, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/armenian-azerbaijani-russian-foreign-ministers-discuss-karabakh-settlement/2954256>

38 "Armenia Cannot Decide Nagorno-Karabakh People's Fate, Representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh Should be a Party to Negotiations, Pashinyan", *First Channel News*, July 25, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/07/25/Armenia-cannot-decide-Nagorno-Karabakh-people-s-fate-representatives-of-Nagorno-Karabakh-should-be/967329>

39 "The Karabakh "Parliament" also Issued a Call to the United Nations Member States on July 27, Asking for Its Independence to be Recognized within the Scope of the Principle of the Right to Compensatory Secession", *Hetq*, July 27, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/158507>

The EU welcomed Azerbaijan's proposal to find a solution to the obstacles encountered on the Lachin road, for an alternative route through the Agdam province to deliver food and other humanitarian aid to Karabakh. Armenia and Karabakh Armenians rejected the alternative route and blocked the food and aid convoy that Azerbaijan wanted to send via the Agdam road by placing concrete blocks on the road. The mayor of Askeran, at the entrance to the Agdam road, stated that "We don't want to get anything from our enemy". On 30 August, Azerbaijan also blocked the convoy that France wanted to send through the Lachin road, under the auspices of the Mayor of Paris. The Mayor called on President of France Emmanuel Macron to take the issue to the UN Security Council.⁴⁰ On 1 September, European Council President Michel called for bold compromises and suggested that the Lachin corridor should become fully operational and the Agdam road should be opened.⁴¹ In a statement issued by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, it was conveyed that the Lachin corridor as a link between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh was an agreed condition and that there was no alternative. Moreover, it was expressed that other possible transportation routes could be decided in negotiations between the Azerbaijani and Karabakh authorities within the framework of an international mechanism.

On 2 August, a spokesperson for the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticized Pashinyan's 25 July press conference in which he said that Russia could no longer devote enough "energy and time" to the region due to the Ukraine war and questioned the continuation of the Russian peacekeeping force. The spokesperson stated that these remarks were far from reality, especially in light of the "series" of high-level meetings that Russia has organized recently. Calling Pashinyan's remarks on the Russian peacekeeping force "incomprehensible", the spokesperson said: "Does the Armenian leadership really think that this activity is not needed or not desirable? Do they want it to end? They must make up their minds. Unfortunately, we often see representatives of the Armenian leadership take an ambivalent position on several key issues. We wish there were no ambiguity on this issue."

On 30 August, the Russia's Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson lashed out at Armenia again, saying that the humanitarian crisis in Karabakh, which deepened after Azerbaijan blocked the Lachin corridor, was caused by Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan's recognition of Karabakh as Azerbaijan's territory. The spokesperson also recalled that this recognition

40 Tigran Hovsepiyan, "French Aid Convoy Barred From Entering Karabakh", *Azatutyun*, August 20, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32571631.html>

41 "Statement by the Spokesperson of Charles Michel, President of the European Council, Regarding Armenia and Azerbaijan", *European Council*, September 1, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/09/01/statement-by-the-spokesperson-of-charles-michel-president-of-the-european-council-regarding-armenia-and-azerbaijan/>

was formalized at the October 2022 and May 2023 meetings held under the auspices of the EU. Additionally, the spokesperson mentioned “We believe it’s inappropriate, wrong and unjustified to lay the responsibility for what happened on the Russian peacekeeping contingent”. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs reacted promptly, listing in detail Russia’s failure to fulfill its commitments, and stating that Russia’s comments “cause confusion and disappointment”.⁴²

On 31 August, the Armenian government ratified the “Agreement on the Status of the EU Mission in Armenia” signed between Armenia and the EU at Armenia’s request.⁴³

Arayik Harutyunyan, the President of the illegal “Artsakh Republic” in Karabakh, resigned on 31 August. In a statement, he explained that he had taken this decision in view of his contacts with local and foreign officials and the public.⁴⁴

On 1 September, the Pashinyan administration referred to parliament for ratification the Rome Statute on Armenia’s accession to the International Criminal Court (ICC), which Russia openly opposes and wants to see abandoned. On 5 September, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson announced that they had requested a statement from Armenia on this issue and that they would determine their next steps according to the response.⁴⁵ Russia described the parliamentary ratification of the Statute as a hostile act. On 14 October, the process was finalized with the approval of the President.⁴⁶

Pashinyan has adopted the method of publicizing his administration’s political approach, disposition and course through the international media channels which he considers well-known and close to him. In a long, comprehensive and detailed interview published in *La Repubblica* newspaper on 3 September, he stated that the security policy of relying on Russia was a “strategic mistake”, that his government was trying to “diversify its security arrangements”, and

42 “Russian MFA Rejects Accusations against Russian Peacekeepers over Lachin Corridor”, *TASS*, August 30, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1667621>

43 “Proposal to Sign an Agreement on Status of EU Mission in Armenia Approved”, *First Channel News*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/08/31/Proposal-to-sign-an-agreement-on-status-of-EU-mission-in-Armenia-approved/987018>

44 “Artsakh President to Resign”, *Asbarez*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.asbarez.com/artsakh-president-to-resign/>

45 “Russia Wants Armenia to Explain Ratification of ICC Rome Statute — Diplomat”, *TASS*, September 5, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1670155>

46 “Armenian President Approves Parliament’s Decision to Join the International Criminal Court”, *APNEWS*, October 14, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/armenia-icc-russia-putin-26612df6d4687d0fd7137144aff3ef9c>

reiterated his criticism of the Russian peacekeeping force.⁴⁷ On 4 September, the Russian side reacted harshly to these statements and the allegation that Russia was “unwilling or unable” to defend Armenia, calling Pashinyan’s statements “unacceptable” and warning Armenia against helping the West to “push Russia out of the region”. The Ministry spokesperson went even further and targeted Pashinyan personally.⁴⁸ Russian Presidential spokesperson Dmitry Peskov issued a statement on 5 September, stating that Russia is an integral part of the region, that Russia has no intention of turning its back on the South Caucasus, that they respect Prime Minister Pashinyan and appreciate the constructive relationship between him and Putin, but that they cannot agree with his statements in the interview, reminding that more Armenians live in Russia than in Armenia.⁴⁹

On 9 September, Pashinyan expressed a wide range of views in the same vein, this time in an extensive interview published in *Politico*.⁵⁰

The Karabakh “parliament” elected a new “president” on 9 September. The Azerbaijani Ministry of Foreign Affairs immediately condemned the election as “a gross violation of the Constitution and legislation of the Republic of Azerbaijan as well as norms and principles of international law” and noted that the separatist regime in Khankendi had “taken the path of provocation and escalating the situation”. The EU also promptly announced that it did not recognize the so-called presidential elections. The United Nations spokesperson responded to the question that the UN organization recognizes Azerbaijan’s sovereignty and territorial integrity and that Armenians in Karabakh should respect this.

On 8 September, the Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Armenian Ambassador in Moscow to protest “a series of unfriendly steps” taken by Armenia against Russia in recent days. These “steps” included the suspension of relations with the Common Security Organization (CSTO) and non-participation in joint manoeuvres for two years, joint military manoeuvres with the US in Armenia, the visit of the Prime Minister’s wife to Ukraine, sending aid to Ukraine, forwarding the statute of the ICC to the Armenian parliament for ratification, and “offensive statements” by the President of the

47 Andrew Osborn, “Armenian PM Says Depending Solely on Russia for Security was ‘Strategic Mistake’”, *Reuters*, September 3, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/armenian-pm-says-depending-solely-russia-security-was-strategic-mistake-2023-09-03/>

48 “Moscow ‘Dissatisfied’ with Armenian Prime Minister’s Statements about Russia — Diplomat”, *TASS*, September 4, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1669525>

49 “Russia Cannot ‘Turn Back on’ South Caucasus Region, No Such Plans Envisioned — Kremlin”, *TASS*, September 5, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1670081>

50 “Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Interview with POLITICO Europe”, *First Channel News*, September 13, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/09/13/Armenian-Prime-Minister-Nikol-Pashinyan-s-interview-with-POLITICO-Europe/994935>

National Assembly of Armenia Simonyan targeting the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson.⁵¹

Russian President Putin also blamed Pashinyan for the situation in Karabakh in a speech he delivered on 12 September in Vladivostok, during his visit on the occasion of the Economic Forum. He stated;

“The president of Azerbaijan is now telling me, ‘Well, you know that Armenia has admitted that Karabakh is ours, that the issue of Karabakh’s status is closed’. What should we say? There is nothing we can say. If Armenia recognized that Nagorno-Karabakh is part of Azerbaijan, then what are we talking about? This is the key component of the whole problem. The status of Karabakh was decided by Armenia itself”.⁵²

On 9 September, Karabakh Armenians opened the Aghdam road, which they had closed, to the aid convoy sent from Russia.⁵³

Azerbaijani armed forces launched an anti-terrorist operation against the separatists in Karabakh on 19 September⁵⁴ and reached their goal within 24 hours. Armenian representatives of Karabakh called for a cease-fire and requested a meeting. The Azerbaijani side invited Armenian representatives to meet in Yevlakh, Azerbaijan, but stated that the operation would continue if they did not dissolve the government and armed forces. Under these conditions, a cease-fire was declared on 20 September and negotiations started in Yevlakh on 21 September.⁵⁵ According to the cease-fire agreement, the Armenian side accepted:

- Surrendering all their weapons and heavy equipment,
- Armenian armed elements leaving the region,
- Accepted, on 21 September, the conditions of holding meetings in Yevlakh for the integration process, in accordance with the Constitution of Azerbaijan.

Azerbaijan’s limited military operation received intense reaction messages, especially from pro-Armenian Western countries and organizations. On this matter, the Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the following statement:

51 Emre Gürkan Abay, “Russia Summons Armenia’s Ambassador to Protest Yerevan’s ‘Unfriendly’ Steps”, *Anadolu Agency*, September 8, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/russia-summons-armenias-ambassador-to-protest-yerevans-unfriendly-steps/2986973>

52 “Russia Again Blames Pashinian for Karabakh Crisis”, *Azattyun*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32589437.html>

53 “Karabağ Rus Yardımının Ağdam’dan Girişine İzin Verdi”, *Agos*, September 9, 2023, <https://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/29098/karabag-rus-yardiminin-agdam-dan-girisine-izin-verdi>

“Due to the long-standing armed attacks and provocations directed against members of the Azerbaijani army and security personnel by illegal Armenian armed groups in the Karabakh region of Azerbaijan, the Azerbaijani army has launched today (19 September) an anti-terrorist operation which targets exclusively military elements.

Azerbaijan had to take the measures it deemed necessary on its own sovereign territory as a result of the fact that the legitimate and rightful concerns it has constantly expressed about the situation on the ground in the past three years since the end of the Second Karabakh War, have not been resolved.

We believe that result-oriented continuation of the comprehensive negotiation process that has been meticulously carried out between Azerbaijan and Armenia to date, is the only way for maintenance of peace, security, prosperity and lasting stability in the region.”⁵⁶

As the operation was completed in a short time and did not harm the civilian population in any way, the reactions did not go beyond the usual rhetoric, and the main concern soon focused on the situation and future of the Armenians in Karabakh. France invited the UN Security Council (UNSC) to an emergency meeting to discuss the issue. During the meetings held at the UNSC, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan claimed that Azerbaijan would use force against the civilian population if not prevented by global powers, and that Azerbaijan’s goal was to subject the Armenian population to ethnic cleansing. On the same day, Pashinyan’s statement “At this moment, our assessment is that there is no direct threat to the civilian population of Nagorno-Karabakh” put Mirzoyan in a difficult situation.⁵⁷ Azerbaijan’s Minister of Foreign Affairs accused Armenia of providing false information and stated that the operation was carried out against Armenian forces.

The French Minister of Foreign Affairs emphasized that the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan was not in question and that the issue was the possibility for the Armenian people to live in Nagorno-Karabakh with their rights respected. The Permanent Representative of the US to the UN noted that Azerbaijan had a responsibility to ensure that its forces strictly comply

54 “Statement by Azerbaijan’s Ministry of Defense”, *Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan*, September 19, 2023, <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/statement-by-azerbaijan-s-ministry-of-defense-49350.html>

55 Farid Zohrabov, “Meeting Between Azerbaijan, Karabakh Armenians in Yevlakh Underway - First Footage”, *Trend News Agency*, September 21, 2023, <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3800703.html>

56 “No:229, 19 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the Military Operation Launched by Azerbaijan in Karabakh”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 19, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-229_-azerbaycan-tarafindan-karabag-da-baslatilan-askeri-operasyon-hk.en.mfa

57 Fin DePencier, “Pashinyan Says Armenians Should Stay in Karabakh”, *Eurasianet*, September 22, 2023, <https://eurasianet.org/pashinyan-says-armenians-should-stay-in-karabakh>

with international law and that Azerbaijan also had international responsibilities and commitments to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of all individuals living on its territory. Russia's Deputy Permanent Representative to the UN stated that peace had to include clear and reliable guarantees for the respect of human rights and security of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh and that they believe in developing a gradual roadmap for the integration of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh into the constitutional order of Azerbaijan with clear guarantees for their rights and security. Türkiye's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs Burak Akçapar said: "Our primary goal should be for everyone, including Armenians, to live peacefully, side-by-side on Azerbaijani lands. We support the steps taken by Azerbaijan to protect its territorial integrity."⁵⁸

The recognition of Azerbaijani sovereignty in Karabakh prompted the anti-government forces in Armenia once again, leading to demonstrations and protests, including clashes with the police. On the other hand, the government accused the Russian peacekeepers again of not doing their duty and not preventing the attacks. In his nationally televised address to the nation, Pashinyan signaled Armenia's distancing from Russia. In his speech, Pashinyan stated that the country's current foreign security alliance was "ineffective and insufficient". He also underlined the importance of membership in the ICC, which Russia opposes.⁵⁹ He concluded his speech with a call for respect for Armenia's sovereignty. On 25 September, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs strongly condemned Pashinyan's statement.⁶⁰ Afterwards, on 5 October, at the Valdai Club meeting in Sochi, Putin reiterated his views from his Vladivostok speech and again blamed Armenia for Azerbaijan re-establishing sovereignty in Karabakh.⁶¹

In order to speed up the peace process and prepare for the summit to be held in Granada on 5 October, the Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia, Armen Grigoryan, and the advisor to the President of Azerbaijan, Hikmet Hajiyev, met in Brussels on 26 September with the participation of the political

58 "Latest Clash between Armenia, Azerbaijan Undermines Prospects of Peace, Speakers Warn Security Council, Calling for Genuine Dialogue to Settle Outstanding Issues", *United Nations*, September 21, 2023,

<https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15418.doc.htm>

59 "Armenia PM Signals Foreign Policy Shift Away from Russia", *Le Monde*, September 24, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/09/24/armenia-pm-signals-foreign-policy-shift-away-from-russia_6139059_4.html

60 "Russia Calls Pashinian's Criticism of Moscow over Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh 'Unacceptable'", *Radio Free Europe*, September 25, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-armenia-azerbaijan-pashinian-criticism/32608635.html>

61 "Vladimir Putin Meets with Members of the Valdai Discussion Club. Transcript of the Plenary Session of the 20th Annual Meeting", *Valdai Discussion Club*, October 5, 2023, <https://valdaiclub.com/events/posts/articles/vladimir-putin-meets-with-members-of-the-valdai-club-transcript-2023/>

advisors to the President of the European Council, President of France, and the Chancellor of Germany.⁶²

On 4 October, the President of Azerbaijan Aliyev announced that he would not attend the Granada summit.⁶³ As per the Azerbaijani APA news agency, Aliyev accused European leaders of being pro-Armenian and requested that the Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan also attend the meeting. But, when this request was not accepted, he decided not to attend.⁶⁴ The declaration issued after the quadrilateral summit, which Pashinyan attended, provided further evidence that Aliyev's accusation of bias was accurate. In the last paragraph of the declaration, the opening of all borders specifically referred to the Turkish-Armenian border.

On 29 September, Armenia applied to the International Court of Justice (ICJ) requesting Azerbaijan to take provisional measures to protect the rights and security of the civilian population in the disputed area between the two countries.⁶⁵ The ICJ announced that it would begin hearing the application on 12 October under the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination. The Court announced its decision on 17 November. Azerbaijan welcomed the Court's decision and noted that what the Court asked to be done was essentially in line with Azerbaijan's official statements and practice.⁶⁶

In a resolution adopted on 5 October, the European (Union) Parliament accused Azerbaijan of ethnic cleansing and strongly condemned the "threats and violence carried out by Azerbaijani soldiers".⁶⁷ The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye reacted to the EP's resolution with the following statement on 5 October:

62 "Brüksel'de Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Görüşmesi Başladı; Toplantının "Yapıcı" Geçtiği Vurgulandı", *T24*, September 26, 2023, <https://t24.com.tr/haber/bruksel-de-ermenistan-azerbaycan-gorusmesi-basladi-toplantinin-yapici-gectigi-vurgulandi.1131906>

63 "Breaking: Azerbaijan Opts out of Granada Summit", *ArmenPress*, October 4, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121173.html>

64 "Azerbaijan's President Refuses to Attend EU Talks with Armenia PM", *France 24*, October 4, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20231004-azerbaijan-s-president-refuses-to-attend-eu-talks-with-armenia-pm>

65 "Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia V. Azerbaijan) Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures", *International Court of Justice*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/180/180-20230929-pre-01-00-en.pdf>

66 "No:658/23, Press Release on the Decision of the International Court of Justice of November 17, 2023", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan*, November 17, 2023, <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/no65823>

67 "European Parliament Resolution of 5 October 2023 on the Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh After Azerbaijan's Attack and the Continuing Threats Against Armenia (2023/2879(Rsp))", *European Parliament*, October 5, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-10-05_EN.html#sdocta10

“The non-binding resolution titled ‘On the situation in ‘Nagorno-Karabakh’ after Azerbaijan’s attack and the continuing threats against Armenia’ adopted by the European Parliament (EP) today (5 October) is a symbol of irresponsibility, prejudice, bias and ignorance.

We condemn this resolution targeting our country based on the discourse of a group of populist and discriminatory EP members who are seeking for unfounded accusations and allegations against Türkiye for years.

European politics, within which populism, racism, Islamophobia, anti-multiculturalism and anti-integration sentiments are steadily gaining strength, displays itself within the current composition of the EP through all its excess. It is our wish for EU’s own future that the current EP, whose term of office is about to expire, would be renewed with a new composition comprising representatives who are constructive, inclusive and reasonable and committed to the fundamental values of the EU.

Türkiye exerts an intensive effort in establishing peace, stability and prosperity in the South Caucasus; conducts a normalisation process with Armenia; makes concrete contribution to the peace process between Azerbaijan and Armenia; mobilizes, within the framework of international law, all its capabilities to build peace, brotherhood and common interest throughout all conflict areas and humanitarian crisis, including the war in Ukraine; and stands as the key actor in this endeavour whose weight and efforts are sought under the leadership of our President.

We see it as a systemic weakness that those irresponsible texts that are taken seriously by nobody other than a few marginal sectors are recklessly laid before us as EP resolutions and therefore we do not take them seriously.”⁶⁸

On 3 October, Armenia condemned the UN delegation which visited the region to investigate Armenia’s allegations of ethnic cleansing and forced population displacement in Karabakh. The delegation reported that there was no evidence of violence against civilians and no damage to civilian public infrastructure in Khankendi.⁶⁹ Armenia accused the UN delegation of acquitting Azerbaijan.

During the President of Azerbaijan Aliyev’s visit to Georgia on 9 October, the proposal to continue the peace agreement process under Georgia’s mediation

68 “No: 245, 5 October 2023, Press Release Regarding the Resolution Titled ‘On the Situation in ‘Nagorno-Karabakh’ after Azerbaijan’s Attack and the Continuing Threats Against Armenia’ Adopted by the European Parliament”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, October 5, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-245_-_avrupa-parlamentosu-nun-kabul-ettigi---karar-hk.en.mfa

69 “UN Team Completes Mission to Karabakh”, *United Nations Azerbaijan*, October 2, 2023, <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/248051-un-team-completes-mission-karabakh>

was brought to the agenda. Azerbaijan conveyed that it was appropriate for three regional countries to take part in this process.⁷⁰ Pashinyan stated on 10 October that the process was being conducted in Brussels, that Aliyev was trying to step back from the principles agreed in Brussels by changing the platform, that he was not against any talks, but that he did not understand the logic of going beyond the framework of the agreed principles.

On 11 October, Azerbaijan accused Armenia of occupying 8 Azerbaijani villages. Pashinyan stated that the future of the disputed territories would be decided by the demarcation of the border between the two countries.⁷¹

At the 54th meeting of the UN Human Rights Council on 11 October, 34 countries issued a joint statement expressing extreme concern regarding the serious humanitarian and human rights crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh.⁷² All signatory states are Western.

Pashinyan was invited to address the opening session of the European Parliament on 17 October. In his 45-minute speech, Pashinyan emphasized democracy, blamed Russia, and stressed Armenia's aggrievement at the hands of Azerbaijan. He also stated that Armenia had been under siege by Azerbaijan and Türkiye for 30 years. He concluded his remarks by highlighting Armenia's readiness to approach the EU to the extent that the EU deems it possible.⁷³ Russia's reaction to the speech was revealed in a report by the *TASS* news agency citing a high-level source. The Russian official claimed that Armenia was on the fast track to become a new Ukraine after Moldova.⁷⁴

The second meeting of the 3+3 format, the first of which was held in Moscow in 2021, was held at the Foreign Ministers' level in Tehran on 23 October, hosted by Iran. Georgia did not attend this meeting due to its ongoing disputes with Russia. In the joint statement issued at the end of the meeting, the parties confirmed the inalterability of each other's borders. It was decided to hold the next meeting in Türkiye.⁷⁵

70 "Aliyev'den Barış Mesajı", *Cumhuriyet*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/dunya/aliyevden-baris-mesaji-2128012>

71 "Baku Steps Up Claims on 8 Armenian Villages 'Occupied By Armenia'", *Asbarez*, October 11, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/baku-steps-up-claims-on-8-armenian-village-occupied-by-armenia/>

72 "34 Countries Issue Joint Statement on Nagorno-Karabakh at UN Human Rights Council Session", *ArmenPress*, October 11, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121753.html>

73 "5. Formal sitting - Address by Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia", *European Parliament*, October 17, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2023-10-17-ITM-005_EN.html

74 "Pashinyan Follows in Zelensky's Footsteps by Quantum Leaps — High-Ranking Source in Moscow", *TASS*, October 18, 2023, <https://tass.com/world/1692799>

75 "Iran and Russia Denounce West over Caucasus Tensions", *France 24*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20231023-armenia-azerbaijan-join-iran-hosted-talks-aimed-at-reconciliation>

On 24 October, Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic Church (the Vatican) awarded Prime Minister Pashinyan one of the Vatican's highest honors for his contribution to the development of relations between the Vatican and Armenia.⁷⁶

The meeting of the European Council President with the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Brussels in October was reportedly postponed, but no new date was given.⁷⁷

On 25 October, Pashinyan reiterated his previous views and statements in an interview published in the *Wall Street Journal*. A noteworthy point this time was his statements on establishing close relations with Türkiye and the Turkish people.⁷⁸

3. Armenia's Foreign Relations

During the period, Armenia conducted intense diplomatic traffic. The main reason for such activity was the Karabakh conflict, in addition to, and indirectly related to, the Armenian administration's search for an alternative to Russia, its review of its ties with Russia, its efforts to get closer to the West, the EU and the US, and the West's encouragement and incentive attitude in this regard.

At a press conference on 22 May, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated "If Armenia decides de jure to leave the CSTO, it would happen only after Armenia establishes that the CSTO has left Armenia. This agenda exists should the CSTO become a non-functional organization. Then we would have to resolve our security issues on our own."⁷⁹ These statements kept the speculations about Armenia leaving the CSTO and the questions of when and how Armenia would leave the CSTO on the agenda.

The Armenian Minister of Defense opted out of the CSTO Defense Ministerial Council meeting in Minsk on 25 May, without revealing the reason of his non-participation.⁸⁰

76 "Prime Minister Pashinyan Receives the Medal Awarded by Pope Francis", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 24, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/10/24/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting/>

77 "Armenian-Azeri Brussels Summit Won't Take Place", *ArmenPress*, October 25, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122753.html>

78 "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Interview with the Wall Street Journal", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 25, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2023/10/25/Nikol-Pashinyan-Interview-The-Well-Street-Journal>

79 "Armenia to Leave CSTO if Yerevan Deems It 'Non-Functional Organization'— Prime Minister", *TASS*, May 22, 2023, <https://tass.com/world/1621147>

80 "Armenian Defense Minister Opts out of CSTO Council Meeting in Belarus", *ArmenPress*, May 25, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1111768.html>

On 23 May, Pashinyan received the special representative of NATO Secretary General for the South Caucasus and Central Asia Javier Colomina. According to a statement released by the Prime Minister's Office, issues related to Armenia-NATO partnership and cooperation were discussed.⁸¹

On 25 May, Pashinyan attended the 30th anniversary celebrations of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council in Moscow and delivered a speech.⁸² On 7 June, he travelled to Sochi for the Eurasian Intergovernmental Council meeting,⁸³ and had bilateral meetings with Putin on both visits.

On 22 June, Pashinyan received the Governor of the US state of Kansas and Director of Joint Staff of Kansas National Guard, who visited Armenia.⁸⁴

On 26 June, Pashinyan had a telephone conversation with the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran.⁸⁵ On 24 July, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ararat Mirzoyan visited Tehran to meet with his Iranian counterpart. Mirzoyan, who was also received by the Iranian President, described Iran as his country's "special partner".⁸⁶ At the joint press conference, Iran's Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that they were uncomfortable with the presence of foreign forces in the region, that Iran welcomed the 3+3 format and that they were ready to host this meeting. Following the escalation of tensions on the border with Azerbaijan, Pashinyan held a telephone conversation with the Iran's President on 9 September, as well as with the President of France, the Chancellor of Germany, and the US Secretary of State.⁸⁷ Armenia's Security Council Secretary Armen Grigoryan arrived in Tehran on 1 October to discuss the situation following Azerbaijan's military operation in Karabakh on 19 September, and met with high-level officials, including the President.⁸⁸ On 3

81 "Prime Minister Pashinyan Received the Special Representative of NATO Secretary General Javier Colomina", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, May 23, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/05/23/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting/>

82 "Meeting with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan", *President of Russia*, May 25, 2023, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/71206>

83 "Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in Sochi: How Meeting of Eurasian Five Heads of Government Held", *Official Information Source of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan*, June 9, 2023, <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/reviews/eurasian-intergovernmental-council-in-sochi-how-meeting-of-eurasian-five-heads-of-government-held-24410>

84 "PM Pashinyan Receives Kansas Governor and Director of Joint Staff of Kansas National Guard", *ArmenPress*, June 22, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1113912/>

85 "Prime Minister Pashinyan Holds Telephone Conversation with President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, June 26, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/pressrelease/item/2023/06/26/Nikol-Pashinyan-Telephone-Conversation/>

86 "Armenian FM Visits Iran", *Azattyun*, July 24, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32517144.html>

87 "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and The President of the Republic of Iran Hold Telephone Conversation", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, September 9, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/09/09/Nikol-Pashinyan-Telephone-Conversation-3/>

88 "Armenian Security Council Secretary Arrives in Tehran", *News.am*, October 1, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/784376.html>

October, Iranian Army Chief of Staff, Major General Mohammad Bagheri, offered to deploy military observers to the Armenian-Azerbaijani border amid the lingering risk of renewed fighting there.⁸⁹ Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan visited Tehran on 23 October and met with the Iranian President.⁹⁰ An Armenian delegation led by the Minister of Labor and Social Affairs of Armenia went to Tehran on 31 October to participate in the forum on the development of economic cooperation between Iran and Armenia.⁹¹ On 13 November, Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia Grigoryan met with Iran's Supreme National Security Council Secretary Ali Akbar Ahmadian. In a statement, Grigoryan's office said the sides discussed "the prospects of developments of the Armenia-Iran economic relations."⁹²

The head of the US Department of State's Sanctions Coordination Office went to Armenia on 29 June to discuss Armenia's position on sanctions against Iran and Russia.⁹³ An official from the United Kingdom (the UK) Foreign Office in charge of the same issues accompanied his US counterpart on the same dates. The EU special representative on sanctions recently visited Armenia for the same purpose.

On 3 July, political consultations between Armenian and Indian Ministries of Foreign Affairs were held in Yerevan.⁹⁴

On July 3, Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia Grigoryan went to the US for meetings. On 7 July, Grigoryan met with US National Security Advisor Jake Sullivan,⁹⁵ and later met with USAID Head Samantha Power and Director of National Intelligence Avril Haines.

89 "Iran Offers to Send Observers to Armenian-Azeri Border", *Azatutyun*, October 4, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32622882.html>

90 "Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia with the President of Iran", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/23/mirzoyan-raisi/12288>

91 "Armenia's Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Attends Armenian-Iranian Business Forum", *ArmenPress*, 31 October 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1123232.html>

92 "Secretary of Security Council and Secretary of Supreme National Security Council of Iran had Telephone Conversation", *1Lurer*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/11/13/Secretary-of-Security-Council-and-Secretary-of-Supreme-National-Security-Council-of-Iran-had-teleph/1029269>

93 Siranush Ghazanchyan, "Armenian PM, Head of US Department of State's Sanctions Coordination Office Discuss Regional and International Processes", *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/armenian-pm-head-of-us-department-of-states-sanctions-coordination-office-discuss-regional-and-international-processes/>

94 "Political Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, July 3, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/07/03/Arm_Ind_Consultations/12073

95 "Armenia Security Council Secretary Meets White House NSA in Washington, D.C.", *ArmenPress*, July 7, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114883.html#:~:text=YEREVAN%2C%20JULY%207%2C%20ARMENPRESS..regional%20security%20situation%20and%20challenges>

Lieutenant General Edward Asryan, Chief of the Armenian General Staff and First Deputy Defense Minister, visited the US on 17-18 July.⁹⁶ Asryan attended the 30th anniversary celebrations of Armenia's partnership with the Kansas National Guard and met with the Minister of Defense and Chief of the General Staff of the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCASC). Later, Asryan met with Admiral Christopher Grady, Vice Chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff and General Charles Brown, Chief of Staff of the Air Force. During the meeting, the US-Armenia "defense partnership" and the resulting "joint military exercises" were discussed.

On 11-20 September, Armenia and the US organized a joint military exercise in Armenia "in preparation for Armenia's participation in international peacekeeping missions". 85 American and 175 Armenian soldiers participated in the military exercise called "Eagle Partner 2023". Armenian Lieutenant General Asryan also observed the exercise.⁹⁷ US observers included Major General Anderson and Brigadier General Ellis. Although there was nothing remarkable about the military aspect of the exercise, its political message was very remarkable. The fact that Armenia, which has not participated in CSTO maneuvers for some time, held a military exercise with the US near the capital Yerevan for the first time in its history and in the shadow of Russian military bases and troops can be described as a political earthquake.

On 3 November, Asryan travelled to Stuttgart to visit the US European Command Headquarters and two training centers and met with the Deputy Commander, Lieutenant General Basham.⁹⁸

Trilateral defense consultations between Armenia, Greece, and GCASC were held in Nicosia on 5 July. At the end of the meeting, an annual program of trilateral defense collaboration was signed.⁹⁹ Special forces of Armenia, Greece and the GCASC held military exercises in Attica region of Greece on 6-10 November within the framework of the 2023 international cooperation plan. The exercise, in which real bullets were used, focused on maneuver action planning and the development of sharp-shooting strategy.¹⁰⁰

96 "Chief of General Staff of Armenian Military Visits United States", *ArmenPress*, July 18, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115663/>

97 "US Completes Joint Military Exercise in Armenia", *Aljazeera*, September 20, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/9/20/us-completes-joint-military-exercise-in-armenia>

98 "Lieutenant General Edward Asryan Visited the US European Command Center", *Ministry of Defence of Armenia*, November 6, 2023, <https://www.mil.am/en/news/11848>

99 "Armenia-Greece-Cyprus Trilateral Defence Consultations", *Ministry of Defence of Armenia*, July 5, 2023, <https://mil.am/en/news/11612>

100 "Special Forces of Armenia, Greece and Cyprus Hold Joint Drills", *ArmenPress*, November 13, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1124037.html>

Pashinyan paid a working visit to Georgia on the 8 July.¹⁰¹

On 8 July, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan attended the Dubrovnik Conference, where he met with EU External Relations Chief Josep Borrell¹⁰² and the Secretary General of the Council of Europe.¹⁰³

President of the National Assembly of Armenia Alen Simonyan accompanied by a delegation went to Paris on a working visit between 10-13 July.¹⁰⁴

On 11 July, as part of his five-day visit to the region, the Vatican's senior cardinal, Secretary of State P. Parolin, visited Armenia after Azerbaijan and Georgia, and was received by the President and Prime Minister. On 13 July, he met with Catholicos Karekin II in Etchmiadzin.¹⁰⁵ In a speech, Parolin reiterated the genocide claim, as the Pope did during his visit in 2016, and said he was honored to visit Armenia and commemorate the victims of the "Armenian Genocide". This previously unannounced and low-profile visit was mainly intended to remind the Pope's interest to the region and to give a new impetus to the peace process.

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan paid an official visit to Portugal on 13-14 July. On this occasion, he also visited the Gulbenkian Foundation.¹⁰⁶

On 13 July, Deputy Speaker of Parliament Ruben Rubinyan was received Minister of State Tobias Lindner at the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Rubinyan expressed his satisfaction with the rapidly developing and deepening relations with Germany, and in his capacity as the special envoy for the normalization of relations with Türkiye, he provided information on this issue.¹⁰⁷ On 17 July, Rubinyan met with Matthias Lüttenberg, Political Director

101 "The Prime Minister will Leave for Georgia on a Working Visit", *Prime Minister of Armenia*, July 7, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/07/07/Nikol-Pashinyan-visit-to-Georgia/>

102 "Ararat Mirzoyan, Josep Borrell Discuss Armenia-EU cooperation", *ArmenPress*, July 8, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114993.html>

103 "Mirzoyan Meets with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe within the Framework of the Dubrovnik Conference", *ArmenPress*, July 8, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114980.html>

104 "The Delegation Led by Alen Simonyan Leaves for Paris", *ArmenPress*, July 10, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115084.html>

105 "His Eminence Pietro Parolin Cardinal Secretary of State Visits Armenia (11-13 July 2023)", *Apostolic Nunciature in Armenia*, accessed November 20, 2023, <https://vaticanarm.org/en/archives/7286>

106 "Armenia's Foreign Minister Visit to Portugal", *Embassy of Armenia to the Holy See*, July 14, 2023, <https://vatican.mfa.am/en/news/2023/07/14/fmvisitportugal14072023/11844>

107 "Rubinyan Presented the Process of Regulating Armenia-Turkey Relations", *Radar Armenia*, July 13, 2023, <https://radar.am/en/news/politics-2578510420/>

for Eastern Europe, South Caucasus, and Central Asia Affairs at the German Ministry of Foreign Affairs.¹⁰⁸

On 19 July, Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan met with the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs and on 20 July he addressed a special session of the OSCE Permanent Council convened at Armenia's request.¹⁰⁹

Armenian President Kachaturyan left for Italy on 23 July for a three-day visit to participate in a forum of think tanks, starting his visit with a meeting with Mekhitarists on the Armenian island of San Lazzaro degli in Venice.¹¹⁰

The Mayor of Paris travelled to Armenia on 30 August to personally lead an aid convoy through Lachin.¹¹¹ The French Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Armenia on 3 October and declared that France would provide military assistance and arms sales to Armenia.¹¹² The Armenian Defense Minister signed a military memorandum of understanding with his French counterpart in Paris on 23 October. Accordingly, France committed to strengthen Armenia's air defense system, provide military training, and assist in the reform of the armed forces. In addition, in the signed "letter of intent", France agreed to provide short-range ground-to-air Mistral missiles.¹¹³ France quickly started implementation and sent a large number of armored personnel carriers to Armenia via Georgia in early November.¹¹⁴ The French Minister of Foreign Affairs also proposed Armenia to benefit from the "European Peace Facility" funds at the EU Council of Foreign Ministers meeting on 13 November. This fund, which Armenia had previously applied for and been rejected, is intended for the purchase of military equipment.¹¹⁵

108 "Ruben Rubinyan Receives Political Director for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia of MFA of Germany", *ILurer*, July 17, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/07/17/Ruben-RubinyanReceives-Political-Director-for-Eastern-Europe-Caucasus-and-Central-Asia-of-MFA-of-G/963691>

109 "Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Delivered Remarks at the OSCE Special PC Meeting", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, July 20, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2023/07/20/PC_Mirzoyan/12102

110 "President Khachaturyan Visits Italy, Meeting With Sergio Mattarella Expected", *ArmenPress*, July 24, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1116016.html>

111 "Mayor of Paris Accompanies Humanitarian Cargo on Its Way to Nagorno-Karabakh", *ILurer*, August 30, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/08/30/Mayor-of-Paris-accompanies-humanitarian-cargo-on-its-way-to-Nagorno-Karabakh/986137>

112 "Fransa'dan, Ermenistan'a Askeri Teçhizat Sevkiyatına Onay", *EuroNews*, October 3, 2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/10/03/fransadan-ermenistana-askeri-techizat-sevkiyatina-onay>

113 "Armenia, France Sign Military Cooperation Agreement", *Asbarez*, October 23, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/armenia-france-sign-military-cooperation-agreement/>

114 Hoory Minoyan, "French Weapons Arrive in Armenia through Georgia", *The Armenian Weekly*, November 13, 2023, <https://armenianweekly.com/2023/11/15/french-weapons-arrive-in-armenia-through-georgia/>

115 "Armenia-Azerbaijan Situation 'On Agenda' of EU Foreign Ministers' Meeting", *Azattyun*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32683039.html>

On 5 September, Armenia sent humanitarian aid to Ukraine for the first time.¹¹⁶ On 28 October, Armenia participated for the first time in the meeting on a peaceful solution to the Ukrainian war, which was held in Malta and attended by 65 countries. Armenia was represented by the Secretary of the Security Council Grigoryan. On this occasion, Grigoryan discussed Armenia-Ukraine bilateral relations with Andriy Yermak, Senior Advisor to the President of Ukraine. The spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Russia considered Armenia's participation in the Malta conference as a "demonstrative anti-Russian gesture". The spokesperson called the Armenian leadership "Russophobic" and claimed that "Those in Yerevan should be aware that this is demonstrative flirting with those who aggressively oppose Russia."¹¹⁷ On 3 November, the President of the National Assembly of Armenia rejected this criticism, stating that "Moscow does not want Yerevan to communicate with partners on multilateral platforms and is trying to maintain Armenia's existential dependence on Russia". Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan explained that the Armenian government hoped to mend fences with Moscow and "move on like partners" but that "not everything depends on one side", saying that the fault does not lie solely with Armenia.¹¹⁸

The statement of the spokesperson of the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 9 November that Armenia did not open the border with Azerbaijan for travel and trade despite Armenia's agreement to do so in the cease-fire agreement, again strained the atmosphere and triggered a new debate. The spokesperson also criticized Armenia's decision to set up a separate security unit for passengers, items, and other goods in transit, claiming that according to Article 9 of the agreement, Russian border guards were authorized to control the transportation of people, vehicles and goods between Nakhchivan and Azerbaijan. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson strongly rejected this claim and emphasized that there is no document that Armenia has given up its sovereign rights over its territory.¹¹⁹ Iran, on the other hand, officially confirmed its proposal for an alternative transportation route through Iran on 9 November, and an Azerbaijani official announced that they now preferred Iran over the Armenian route. Upon this development, Turkish

116 "Armenia Sent First Aid to Ukraine since Russia's Full-Scale Invasion", *European Pravda*, September 5, 2023, <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2023/09/5/7168844/>

117 "Armenia's Participation In Conference on Ukraine in Malta Anti-Russian Gesture — MFA", *TASS*, November 2, 2023, https://tass.com/politics/1700761?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com

118 "Armenian Leaders Hit Back at Moscow", *Azattyun*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32669928.html>

119 "Moscow, Yerevan Trade More Barbs", *Azattyun*, November 9, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32678237.html>

President Erdoğan warned Armenia to hurry up and fulfill its promise to Azerbaijan.¹²⁰

At a press conference on 16 November, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs spokesperson once again accused the West of trying to tear Armenia away from Russia. The spokesperson stated; “The West has a beastly grip on Armenia after it failed its policy in Ukraine”. Moscow considers recent statements and steps of the Armenian leadership, including the refusal of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to participate in the upcoming session of the CSTO meeting in Minsk, the expansion of supplies of Western weapons to Armenia, and Armenia’s sudden friendship with Ukraine as links in one chain, a chain of enslavement.¹²¹

On 17 October, Armenian Minister of Economy Vahan Kerobyan travelled to China to attend the 3rd international meeting of the “Belt and Road” project and discussed the possibility of Armenia joining the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank with its vice president.¹²²

On 23 October, Pashinyan travelled to Georgia to attend the 4th Tbilisi Silk Road Forum. In his speech at the forum, Pashinyan described the “Crossroads of Peace” project and listed its principles:

- All infrastructures, including roads, railways, airways, pipelines, cables, and electricity lines, will operate under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the countries through which they pass.
- Each country will ensure border, customs control, and security of all the infrastructures, a special unit will be created within Armenia’s law-enforcement system.
- These infrastructures can be used for both international and domestic transportation.
- All countries will use all the infrastructures on the basis of reciprocity and equality.¹²³

120 “Iran Reaffirms Support for Alternative Transport Link for Azeri Exclave”, *Azattyun*, November 9, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32678110.html>

121 Elena Teslova, “Russia Warns Armenia Against ‘Trying to Sit on Two Chairs’”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, November 16, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/russia-warns-armenia-against-trying-to-sit-on-twochairs-/3055192>

122 “Armenia Considers Membership in Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank”, *ArmBanks*, October 17, 2023, <http://www.armbanks.am/en/2023/10/17/151100/>

123 “Prime Minister Pashinyan Presents the “Crossroads of Peace” Project and Its Principles at the Tbilisi International Forum”, *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 26, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2023/10/26/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech/>

On 24 October, Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the German Parliament Michael Roth held high-level talks in Armenia and emphasized his solidarity with Armenia.¹²⁴ On 3 November, the German Minister of Foreign Affairs met with Mirzoyan in Yerevan and, at their joint press conference, pledged Germany's support for Armenia's desire and efforts for rapprochement with the EU.¹²⁵ On the second day of his visit, the German minister went to the border with Azerbaijan and was briefed by the deputy head of the EU border monitoring mission. He later said that the two-year cost of the mission amounted to about 31 million Euros, that he was in favor of its further expansion and that Germany was ready to become more involved. On 13 November, EU Ministers of Foreign Affairs agreed to expand the Armenian border inspection mission.¹²⁶

The Canadian Minister of Foreign Affairs paid a solidarity visit to Armenia and opened the Canadian Embassy in Yerevan on 25 October,¹²⁷ a first for Canada in the South Caucasus. The Canadian Minister also announced that Canada would send observers to the EU observation mission on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, the first non-European country to do so.

On 27 October, the Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs visited Armenia to restore relations, which Armenia froze in 2012 following the extradition to Azerbaijan and pardon of an Azerbaijani officer convicted of killing an Armenian officer in Budapest in 2004. The Hungarian Minister, who also met with Prime Minister Pashinyan, emphasized that both countries share a common Christian base.¹²⁸

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan officially visited the UK on 13 November and met with the Minister for European Affairs. The talks took place within the framework of the "strategic dialogue" established between the two countries.¹²⁹

124 "No Alternative to Peace in The South Caucasus, Says Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman", *ArmenPress*, October 23, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122605.html>

125 "Germany's Baerbock Presses Peace Hopes in Yerevan on First Leg of Caucasus Trip", *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/germany-baerbock-eu-expansion-geopolitical-necessityukraine/32669098.html>

126 Heghine Buniatian, "EU Foreign Ministers Approve Expansion of Border Monitoring Mission in Armenia", *Azatutyun*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32683155.html>

127 "Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Canada", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 25, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/25/arm_canada/12299

128 "Hungarian Foreign Minister Says Armenian Church had Very Important Role in Restoration of Relations with Armenia", *ArmenPress*, November 27, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122959.html>

129 "The Meeting between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and the UK Minister for Europe", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, November 13 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/pressreleases/2023/11/13/GB_Mirzoyan/12322

The 21st autumn meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly was held in Yerevan on 18-20 November. The theme of the conference was “OSCE in Times of Crisis: Role of the Parliamentary Assembly in Responding to Internal and External Challenges”.¹³⁰

4. Relations With Türkiye

In an interview with the press before the May elections in Türkiye, Prime Minister Pashinyan said that he hoped that relations with Türkiye could be restored after the elections, that normalization would develop naturally and that this issue was a priority on the agenda. Pashinyan congratulated Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on his 28 May election victory and wrote on social media “Congratulations to President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan on his re-election. Looking forward to continuing working together towards full normalization of relations between our countries.”¹³¹

Pursuant to President Erdoğan’s invitation, Prime Minister Pashinyan arrived in Ankara on 3 June and attended the official reception of the new presidential term.¹³² Pashinyan was accompanied by Ruben Rubinyan, the special envoy for the normalization process. Pashinyan’s acceptance of the invitation was intensely and harshly criticized by the opposition in Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora. A former Minister of Foreign Affairs also took the lead in this criticism, claiming that his participation was met with confusion and anger in Armenia and the Diaspora. On the other hand, President Erdoğan praised Pashinyan’s acceptance of the invitation, telling reporters on the plane on his return from a visit to Azerbaijan on 14 June, “Pashinyan’s acceptance of our invitation was an important step. Mr. Pashinyan attended our ceremony despite many obstacles caused by the opposition in his country. We had a short meeting and I thanked him for accepting our invitation.” Expressing his appreciation for Pashinyan’s recognition of Azerbaijan’s territorial integrity, Erdoğan also touched upon the Zangezur corridor, saying that Iran’s approach to the issue was disappointing and that, unlike Iran, Armenia did not oppose this transportation line.

On 7 June, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan called Türkiye’s new Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hakan Fidan, to congratulate him. During the meeting, the sides discussed steps to normalize bilateral relations.¹³³

130 “2023 Autumn Meeting”, *OSCE*, accessed November 21, 2023, <https://www.oscepa.org/en/meetings/autumn-meetings/upcoming-autumn-meeting>

131 Diyar Guldogan, “Armenian Premier Pashinyan Extends Congratulations on Turkish President Erdoğan’s Victory”, *Anadolu Ajansı*, May 28, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/armenianpremier-pashinyan-extends-congratulations-on-turkish-president-erdogans-victory/2908381>

132 “PM Nikol Pashinyan Attends Inauguration of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan”, *ArmenPress*, June 3, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1112489.html>

133 “Ararat Mirzoyan had a Phone Conversation with Newly Appointed Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan”, *News.am*, June 7, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/764270.html>

On 28 June, Pashinyan congratulated President Erdoğan concerning Festival of Sacrifice (Eid al-Adha). During the phone call, the parties also touched upon the ongoing process of normalization of bilateral relations to establish diplomatic relations and open the border.¹³⁴

The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), one of the leading organizations of radical Armenian views, launched a campaign on 2 July with insults and hate speech to stop Disney from showing the TV series based on the life of Mustafa Kemal Atatürk on the big screen. This initiative provoked reactions from the Turkish public, media, and civil society organizations.

Armenian airlines started flights between Yerevan and Istanbul on 2 July. It was reported that there would be two flights per week.¹³⁵ In response to a written parliamentary question, the Armenian Ministry of Interior and Communications stated that Turkish language classes would be offered in 12 schools during the 2022-2023 academic year.¹³⁶

In response to a question on relations with Türkiye, Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan said at a press conference after his meeting with the Austrian Minister of Foreign Affairs in Vienna on 18 July that there had been a pause in the normalization process, but that he thought this was due to the election atmosphere in Türkiye. Mirzoyan continued by stating;

“Now it is time to continue the talks on the normalization, and there are very concrete steps that already can be implemented by both sides to make sure that we are on the right track and the things are moving towards the final, comprehensive and holistic normalization of relations, opening the border between the two countries and establishing diplomatic relations. And here, of course, I primarily speak about opening the border between Armenia and Türkiye for third country nationals, but also Armenian and Turkish nationals with diplomatic passports, and there are some other projects which are being discussed as well.”¹³⁷

On 20 July, Armenian media reported that the Armenian government had awarded a tender to a private company to build a checkpoint and customs facilities at the Margara crossing on the border with Türkiye. The head of the

134 “Erdoğan Holds Phone Conversations with Pashinyan, Aliyev”, *Asbarez*, June 28, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/erdogan-holds-phon-conversations-with-pashinyan-aliyev/>

135 “Armenian Airlines Launches Yerevan–İstanbul Flights”, *ArmenPress*, July 3, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114602/>

136 “Azerbaijani Language is Taught in 4 Schools in Armenia”, *APA*, July 6, 2023, <https://apa.az/en/ciscountries/azerbaijani-language-is-taught-in-4-schools-in-armenia-407144>

137 “Mirzoyan: Now It is Time to Continue Armenian-Turkish Normalization Process”, *Mediamax*, July 19, 2023, <https://mediamax.am/en/news/foreignpolicy/51964/>

State Revenue Committee in charge of customs officially confirmed this development and stated that the construction would be completed in the near future.¹³⁸

Turkish Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan, briefing Azerbaijani Minister of Foreign Affairs Ceyhun Bayramov after his visit to Ankara on 31 July, said that the Lachin road was located on Azerbaijani territory and that criticism of Azerbaijan's establishment of a checkpoint there was unfair.¹³⁹ After receiving Bayramov, Turkish President Erdoğan emphasized the importance of signing a peace agreement between Azerbaijan and Armenia and the "immediate opening" of a "corridor" linking Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan.¹⁴⁰

Türkiye did not delay in reacting to the "presidential" elections of the illegal separatist forces in Karabakh. The statement made by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is as follows:

"The elections held in the territories of Karabakh region of Azerbaijan under the control of illegal Armenian forces, is a new manifestation of efforts to unilaterally legitimize the current situation in the region, which is contrary to international law. This step is a flagrant violation of international law including the UN Security Council resolutions and the OSCE principles.

We condemn and consider this election which is held in a period when Azerbaijan and Armenia strive to continue peace talks as a move to undermine them.

Türkiye does not recognize this illegitimate election which constitutes violation of Azerbaijan's sovereignty and territorial integrity. We call on the UN and international community not to recognize this election.

Türkiye supports the peace negotiations process between Azerbaijan and Armenia and still has the belief that signing of a lasting peace agreement soon, will make a major contribution to peace and stability in the region."¹⁴¹

138 Nane Shakiyan, "Armenia Building Checkpoint on Turkish Border", *Azatutyun*, July 20, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32512161.html>

139 "Lachin Road is Azerbaijan's Territory, Says Turkish Foreign Minister", *ANews*, July 31, 2023, <https://www.aneews.com.tr/world/2023/07/31/lachin-road-is-azerbaijans-territory-says-turkish-foreign-minister>

140 "Erdoğan Speaks For Prompt Signing Of Peace Treaty Between Baku, Yerevan", *InterFax*, July 31, 2023, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/93162/>

141 "No: 218, 9 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the So-Called Elections Held in the Territories of Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan Under the Control of Illegal Armenian Forces", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 9, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-218_-azerbaycan-in-karabag-bolgesinde-duzenlenen-sozde-secimler-hk.en.mfa

President Erdoğan called Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan on 11 September¹⁴² and stated that the elections held in Karabakh were unacceptable, that those who held them should step back and that they should act with caution for stability in the region. In a television interview on the same day, Pashinyan said, “The conversation with Erdogan was strictly official. I can say that the conversation was substantial and useful. There are a number of nuances, and it’s important for a constant conversation to take place around these nuances, positions and assessments.” In the official statements, the same language was used, bilateral and regional issues were discussed, it was noted that lasting peace and stability would contribute to the development and prosperity of all countries in the region, and the determination to continue diplomatic efforts in this direction was expressed.¹⁴³

On 17 September, regarding President Erdoğan’s proposal to organize a quadrilateral summit on Karabakh with the participation of Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Russia, Prime Minister Pashinyan commented; “There are the most various offers and ideas. I wouldn’t want to point out only one of those ideas. That’s not the only idea for me to express an attitude.”¹⁴⁴

After his day-long visit to Nakhchivan and his meeting with the President of Azerbaijan İlham Aliyev, President Erdoğan stated on 26 September that Türkiye did not and would not refrain from doing her part to establish lasting peace in the region. He said that the humanitarian approach of the Azerbaijani people to the Karabakh Armenians despite the oppression and massacre they have been subjected to for the last 30 years was above all praise, that the military operation was carried out with the utmost care to prevent any harm to the civilian population, that Azerbaijan made extraordinary efforts to deliver humanitarian aid to the region, that despite this, the allegations of some countries were nothing but nonsense and slander, and emphasized the importance of the Zangezur corridor becoming operational as soon as possible.¹⁴⁵

The Turkish Ministry of Foreign Affairs made the following statement on the explosion at a gas station in Khankendi, Karabakh on 25 September, which reportedly killed around 70 people:

142 “Erdogan, Pashinian Discuss Karabakh Tensions”, *Azattyun*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32588036.html>

143 “Armenian PM Describes Phone Call with Erdogan as ‘Substantial and Useful’”, *ArmenPress*, September 11, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1119262/>

144 “Pashinyan Comments on Erdogan’s Offer to Hold Armenia-Türkiye-Russia-Azerbaijan Summit”, *ArmenPress*, September 17, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1119688.html>

145 “Ankara Urges Yerevan ‘Not to Fall for Provocations’”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, September 27, 2023, <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/we-will-provide-technological-device-support-to-university-students-erdogan-186590>

“We learned with deep sorrow the explosion which happened on 25 September at a gas station in Khankendi, Azerbaijan, which claimed scores of lives, and left hundreds of people heavily injured.

We extend our condolences to the relatives of the victims of this tragic incident, and wish a speedy recovery to the injured.

Türkiye is ready to provide assistance if needed.”¹⁴⁶

On 23 October, on the margins of the 3+3 meeting held in Tehran, Turkish and Armenian Ministers of Foreign Affairs Fidan and Mirzoyan discussed regional and bilateral issues and confirmed their readiness to realize what had been agreed upon so far.¹⁴⁷

On 30 October, Pashinyan said in his speech at the parliamentary discussions of the draft state budget of the Republic of Armenia for 2024, “I have to record once again that our plans include signing an agreement of peace and normalization of relations with Azerbaijan and the normalization of relations with Türkiye, even though we realize that it will not be easy. But moving forward with such a program is in the state interests of the Republic of Armenia.” Regarding Türkiye, he said; “I also want to express my hope that in the near future we will have the implementation of the agreements reached as a result of the discussions and negotiations of the special representatives”. Pashinyan reminded that among the arrangements he mentioned was the opening of the border between the two countries for third country citizens and diplomatic passport holders, and stated that in addition to political arrangements, important infrastructural works were also being carried out.¹⁴⁸

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan also expressed hope for normalization of relations with Türkiye in his speech to the Parliament on 3 November. The Armenian press questioned this optimism, pointing to Turkish President Erdoğan’s praise and satisfaction for Azerbaijan’s recent Karabakh operation at the summit of the leaders of Turkic states in Kazakhstan and at a meeting of his party on 25 October, and his insistence on the Zangezur corridor issue, considering it as a precondition.¹⁴⁹

146 “No: 236, 27 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the Explosion at a Gas Station in Khankendi”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 27, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-236_-hankendi-de-bir-benzin-istasyonunda-meydana-gelen-patlama-hk.en.mfa

147 “Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Türkiye”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/23/arm-turkey/12290>

148 “Motherland is the State. If You Love Your Motherland, Strengthen Your State. Prime Minister’s Speech at the Discussion of the Draft State Budget 2024 During the Joint Session of the National Assembly Standing Committees”, *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 30, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2023/10/30/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech/>

149 Aza Babayan and Astghik Bedevian, “Armenia ‘Optimistic’ as Turkey’s Erdogan Insists on Corridor for Azerbaijan”, *Azattyun*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32669108.html>

Speaking at the autumn meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly in Yerevan on 18 November, President of the National Assembly of Armenia Simonyan stated that Armenia was also sincerely interested in settling relations with Türkiye, having open borders and transportation links in the region and engaging in negotiations without preconditions. He expressed that he had great hope that these negotiations would yield desirable results in the visible future.¹⁵⁰ Speaking at the same meeting, Pashinyan expressed the same hope and said;

“Armenia is in dialogue with Türkiye. We have never had such an active dialogue before, even though we have not made any progress in terms of establishing diplomatic relations. However, the normalization of relations between Armenia and Türkiye is the most important factor for the strategic vision of a peaceful, developing environment in the South Caucasus. I hope that the issue of opening the Armenian-Turkish border for citizens of third countries and persons with diplomatic passports will be resolved soon. This will be a very symbolic step.”¹⁵¹

In a detailed video presentation of the “Crossroads of Peace” project released by the Armenian government on 18 November, it was reported that five border crossings with Azerbaijan and two border crossings with Türkiye were envisaged and that infrastructure work had begun.¹⁵²

150 “Speech by RA NA President at Autumn Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly”, *ILurer*, November 18, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/11/18/Speech-by-RA-NA-President-at-Autumn-Meeting-of-the-OSCE-Parliamentary-Assembly/1032628>

151 “Pashinyan Says Normalizing Relations with Türkiye is Important for Armenia”, *Xalqgazeti*, November 18, 2023, <https://xalqgazeti.az/en/siyaset/148994-pashinyan-says-normalizing-relations-with>

152 “Ermenistan, Zengezur Koridoru’nu kabul etti”, *Kırım Haber Ajansı*, November 19, 2023, <https://www.qha.com.tr/turk-dunyasi/ermenistan-zengezur-koridoru-nu-kabul-etti-481632>

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- “2023 Autumn Meeting”. *OSCE*, accessed November 21, 2023, <https://www.oscepa.org/en/meetings/autumn-meetings/upcoming-autumn-meeting>,
- “34 Countries Issue Joint Statement on Nagorno-Karabakh at UN Human Rights Council Session”. *ArmenPress*, October 11, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121753.html>
- “5. Formal sitting - Address by Nikol Pashinyan, Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia”. *European Parliament*, October 17, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/CRE-9-2023-10-17-ITM-005_EN.html
- “Aliyev’den Barış Mesajı”. *Cumhuriyet*, October 9, 2023, <https://www.cumhuriyet.com.tr/dunya/aliyevden-baris-mesaji-2128012>
- “Ankara Urges Yerevan ‘Not to Fall for Provocations’”. *Hürriyet Daily News*, September 27, 2023, <https://www.hurriyetdailynews.com/we-will-provide-technological-device-support-to-university-students-erdogan-186590>
- “Application of the International Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Racial Discrimination (Armenia V. Azerbaijan) Request for the Indication of Provisional Measures”. *International Court of Justice*, October 29, 2023, <https://www.icj-cij.org/sites/default/files/case-related/180/180-20230929-pre-01-00-en.pdf>
- “Ararat Mirzoyan had a Phone Conversation with Newly Appointed Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan”. *News.am*, June 7, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/764270.html>
- “Ararat Mirzoyan, Josep Borrell Discuss Armenia-EU cooperation”. *ArmenPress*, July 8, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114993.html>
- “Armenia Cannot Decide Nagorno-Karabakh People’s Fate, Representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh Should be a Party to Negotiations, Pashinyan”. *First Channel News*, July 25, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/07/25/Armenia-cannot-decide-Nagorno-Karabakh-people-s-fate-representatives- of-Nagorno-Karabakh-should-be /967329>
- “Armenia Considers Membership in Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank”. *ArmBanks*, October 17, 2023, <http://www.armbanks.am/en/2023/10/17/151100/>

- “Armenia PM Signals Foreign Policy Shift Away from Russia”. *Le Monde*, September 24, 2023, https://www.lemonde.fr/en/international/article/2023/09/24/armenia-pm-signals-foreign-policy-shift-away-from-russia_6139059_4.html
- “Armenia Security Council Secretary Meets White House NSA in Washington, D.C.” *ArmenPress*, July 7, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114883.html#:~:text=YEREVAN%2C%20JULY%207%2C%20AR MENPRESS.,regional%20security%20situation%20and%20challenges>
- “Armenia Sees Continued Surge In Trade With Russia”. *Azatutyun*, July 12, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32500512.html>
- “Armenia Sent First Aid to Ukraine since Russia’s Full-Scale Invasion”. *European Pravda*, September 5, 2023, <https://www.eurointegration.com.ua/eng/news/2023/09/5/7168844/>
- “Armenia to Leave CSTO if Yerevan Deems It ‘Non-Functional Organization’ — Prime Minister”. *TASS*, May 22, 2023, <https://tass.com/world/1621147>
- “Armenia, Azerbaijan Have Reciprocally Recognized the Existence of Enclaves”. *Armenpress*, May 24, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1111678.html>
- “Armenia, France Sign Military Cooperation Agreement”. *Asbarez*, October 23, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/armenia-france-sign-military-cooperation-agreement/>
- “Armenia’s Foreign Minister Visit to Portugal”. *Embassy of Armenia to the Holy See*, July 14, 2023, <https://vatican.mfa.am/en/news/2023/07/14/fmvisitportugal14072023/11844>
- “Armenia’s Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Attends Armenian-Iranian Business Forum”. *ArmenPress*, 31 October 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1123232.html>
- “Armenia’s Participation In Conference on Ukraine in Malta Anti-Russian Gesture — MFA”. *TASS*, November 2, 2023, https://tass.com/politics/1700761?utm_source=google.com&utm_medium=organic&utm_campaign=google.com&utm_referrer=google.com

- “Armenia-Azerbaijan Situation ‘On Agenda’ of EU Foreign Ministers’ Meeting”. *Azatutyun*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32683039.html>
- “Armenia-Greece-Cyprus Trilateral Defence Consultations”. *Ministry of Defense of Armenia*, July 5, 2023, <https://mil.am/en/news/11612>
- “Armenian Airlines Launches Yerevan-İstanbul Flights”. *ArmenPress*, July 3, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114602/>
- “Armenian Central Bank Raises 2023 Economic Growth Forecast to 6.9%”. *Interfax*, June 13, 2023, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/91398/>
- “Armenian Church Again Warns Against ‘Humiliating’ Peace Deal”. *Azatutyun*, June 12, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32455807.html>
- “Armenian Defense Minister Opts out of CSTO Council Meeting in Belarus”. *ArmenPress*, May 25, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1111768.html>
- “Armenian FM Visits Iran”, *Azatutyun*, July 24, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32517144.html>
- “Armenian Leaders Hit Back at Moscow”. *Azatutyun*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32669928.html>
- “Armenian PM Describes Phone Call with Erdogan as ‘Substantial and Useful’”. *ArmenPress*, September 11, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1119262/>
- “Armenian PM Says Increasing Defense Spending is for Preparing for Peace”. *Arka.am*, November 16, 2023, https://arka.am/en/news/politics/armenian_pm_says_increasing_defense_spending_is_for_preparing_for_peace/
- “Armenian President Approves Parliament’s Decision to Join the International Criminal Court”. *APNEWS*, October 14, 2023, <https://apnews.com/article/armenia-icc-russia-putin-26612df6d4687d0fd7137144aff3ef9c>
- “Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Interview with POLITICO Europe”. *First Channel News*, September 13, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/09/13/Armenian-Prime-Minister-Nikol-Pashinyan-s-interview-with-POLITICO-Europe/994935>
- “Armenian Security Council Secretary Arrives in Tehran”. *News.am*, October 1, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/784376.html>

- “Armenian-Azeri Brussels Summit Won’t Take Place”. *ArmenPress*, October 25, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122753.html>
- “Armenia’s Economy will Grow by 7.2% in 2023 and by 7% in 2024 - Finance Minister”. *Arka News Agency*, October 30, 2023, https://arka.am/en/news/economy/armenia_s_economy_will_grow_by_7_2_in_2023_and_by_7_in_2024_finance_minister/
- “Artsakh President to Resign”. *Asbarez*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.asbarez.com/artsakh-president-to-resign/>
- “Azerbaijan’s President Refuses to Attend EU Talks with Armenia PM”. *France 24*, October 4, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/europe/20231004-azerbaijan-s-president-refuses-to-attend-eu-talks-with-armenia-pm>
- “Azerbaijani Language is Taught in 4 Schools in Armenia”. *APA*, July 6, 2023, <https://apa.az/en/cisountries/azerbaijani-language-is-taught-in-4-schools-in-armenia-407144>
- “Azerbaijani President Gives Ultimatum to Karabakh Authorities”. *Eurasianet*, May 30, 2023, <https://eurasianet.org/azerbaijani-president-gives-ultimatum-to-karabakh-authorities>
- “Baku Steps Up Claims on 8 Armenian Villages ‘Occupied By Armenia’”. *Asbarez*, October 11, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/baku-steps-up-claims-on-8-armenian-village-occupied-by-armenia/>
- “Breaking: Azerbaijan Opts out of Granada Summit”. *ArmenPress*, October 4, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121173.html>
- “Brüksel’de Ermenistan-Azerbaycan Görüşmesi Başladı; Toplantının ‘Yapıcı Geçtiği Vurgulandı’”. *T24*, September 26, 2023, <https://t24.com.tr/haber/bruksel-de-ermenistan-azerbaycan-gorusmesi-basladi-toplantinin-yapici-gectigi-vurgulandi,1131906>
- “Chief of General Staff of Armenian Military Visits United States”. *Armenpress*, July 18, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115663/>
- “Chief of General Staff of Armenian Military Visits United States”. *ArmenPress*, July 18, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115663/>
- “Continued Peace Talks Between Armenia and Azerbaijan”. *U.S. Department of State*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.state.gov/continued-peace-talks-between-armenia-and-azerbaijan/>

“Erdogan Holds Phone Conversations with Pashinyan, Aliyev”. *Asbarez*, June 28, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/erdogan-holds-phon-conversations-with-pashinyan-aliyev/>

“Erdogan Speaks For Prompt Signing Of Peace Treaty Between Baku, Yerevan”. *InterFax*, July 31, 2023, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/93162/>

“Erdogan, Pashinian Discuss Karabakh Tensions”. *Azattyun*, September 11, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32588036.html>

“Ermenistan, Zengezur Koridoru’nu kabul etti”. *Kırım Haber Ajansı*, November 19, 2023, <https://www.qha.com.tr/turk-dunyasi/ermenistan-zengezur-koridoru-nu-kabul-etti-481632>

“EU Has Denied Military Aid to Armenia”. *Asbarez*, July 5, 2023, <https://asbarez.com/eu-has-denied-military-aid-to-armenia/>

“EU Urges Dialogue Between Azerbaijan, Karabakh Armenians”. *Azattyun*, May 30, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32435480.html>

“EUMA: From Very Beginning European Union Mission in Armenia is Fully Transparent about Its Plan”. *News.am*, June 15, 2023, <https://news.am/eng/news/765530.html>

“Eurasian Intergovernmental Council in Sochi: How Meeting of Eurasian Five Heads of Government Held”. *Official Information Source of the Prime Minister of Kazakhstan*, June 9, 2023, <https://primeminister.kz/en/news/reviews/eurasian-intergovernmental-council-in-sochi-how-meeting-of-eurasian-five-heads-of-government-held-24410>

“European Parliament Resolution of 5 October 2023 on the Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh After Azerbaijan’s Attack and the Continuing Threats Against Armenia (2023/2879(Rsp))”. *European Parliament*, October 5, 2023, https://www.europarl.europa.eu/doceo/document/TA-9-2023-10-05_EN.html#sdocta10

“Exclusive: Nagorno-Karabakh Exodus was Genocide, says Former ICC Chief Prosecutor Luis Moreno Ocampo”. *Armenpress*, November 9, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1123809.html>

“Export from Iran to Armenia Increases over 38% in Q1”. *Tehran Times*, July 25, 2023, <https://www.tehrantimes.com/news/487237/Export-from-Iran-to-Armenia-increases-over-38-in-Q1>

- “Fransa’dan, Ermenistan’a Askeri Teçhizat Sevkiyatına Onay”. *EuroNews*, October 3, 2023, <https://tr.euronews.com/2023/10/03/fransadan-ermenistana-askeri-techizat-sevkiyatina-onay>
- “Germany’s Baerbock Presses Peace Hopes in Yerevan on First Leg of Caucasus Trip”. *Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty*, November 3, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/germany-baerbock-eu-expansion-geopolitical-necessityukraine/32669098.html>
- “His Eminence Pietro Parolin Cardinal Secretary of State Visits Armenia (11-13 July 2023)”. *Apostolic Nunciature in Armenia*, accessed November 20, 2023, <https://vaticanarm.org/en/archives/7286>
- “Hungarian Foreign Minister Says Armenian Church had Very Important Role in Restoration of Relations with Armenia”. *ArmenPress*, November 27, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122959.html>
- “Iran and Russia Denounce West over Caucasus Tensions”. *France 24*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.france24.com/en/live-news/20231023-armenia-azerbaijan-join-iran-hosted-talks-aimed-at-reconciliation>
- “Iran Offers to Send Observers to Armenian-Azeri Border”. *Azatutyun*, October 4, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32622882.html>
- “Iran Reaffirms Support for Alternative Transport Link for Azeri Exclave”. *Azatutyun*, November 9, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32678110.html>
- “Karabağ Rus Yardımının Ağdam’dan Girişine İzin Verdi”. *Agos*, September 9, 2023, <https://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/29098/karabag-rus-yardiminin-agdam-dan-girisine-izin-verdi>
- “Karabakh ‘Deeply Disappointed’ By U.S. Statement”. *Azatutyun*, June 1, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32438800.html>
- “Lachin Road is Azerbaijan’s Territory, Says Turkish Foreign Minister”. *ANews*, July 31, 2023, <https://www.anews.com.tr/world/2023/07/31/lachin-road-is-azerbajans-territory-says-turkish-foreign-minister>
- “Latest Clash between Armenia, Azerbaijan Undermines Prospects of Peace, Speakers Warn Security Council, Calling for Genuine Dialogue to Settle Outstanding Issues”. *United Nations*, September 21, 2023, <https://press.un.org/en/2023/sc15418.doc.htm>
- “Lieutenant General Edward Asryan Visited the US European Command Center”. *Ministry of Defence of Armenia*, November 6, 2023, <https://www.mil.am/en/news/11848>

“Mayor of Paris Accompanies Humanitarian Cargo on Its Way to Nagorno-Karabakh”. *ILurer*, August 30, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/08/30/Mayor-of-Paris-accompanies-humanitarian-cargo-on-its-way-to-Nagorno-Karabakh/986137>

“Meeting of Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Türkiye”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/23/arm-turkey/12290>

“Meeting of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia with the President of Iran”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 23, 2023, <https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/23/mirzoyan-raisi/12288>

“Meeting of the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Canada”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, October 25, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/10/25/arm_canada/12299

“Meeting with Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan”. *President of Russia*, May 25, 2023, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/71206>

“Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Delivered Remarks at the OSCE Special PC Meeting”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, July 20, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2023/07/20/PC_Mirzoyan/12102

“Mirzoyan Meets with the Secretary General of the Council of Europe within the Framework of the Dubrovnik Conference”. *ArmenPress*, July 8, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1114980.html>

“Mirzoyan: Now It is Time to Continue Armenian-Turkish Normalization Process”. *Mediamax*, July 19, 2023, <https://mediamax.am/en/news/foreignpolicy/51964/>

“Moscow ‘Dissatisfied’ with Armenian Prime Minister’s Statements about Russia — Diplomat”. *TASS*, September 4, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1669525>

“Moscow, Yerevan Trade More Barbs”. *Azatutyun*, November 9, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32678237.html>

“Motherland is the State. If You Love Your Motherland, Strengthen Your State. Prime Minister’s Speech at the Discussion of the Draft State Budget 2024 During the Joint Session of the National Assembly Standing Committees”. *The Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 30, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2023/10/30/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech/>

- “No Alternative to Peace in The South Caucasus, Says Bundestag Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman”. *ArmenPress*, October 23, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1122605.html>
- “No: 218, 9 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the So-Called Elections Held in the Territories of Karabakh Region of Azerbaijan Under the Control of Illegal Armenian Forces”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 9, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-218_-azerbaycan-in-karabag-bolgesinde-duzenlenen-sozde-secimler-hk.en.mfa
- “No: 236, 27 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the Explosion at a Gas Station in Khankendi”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 27, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-236_-hankendi-de-bir-benzin-istasyonunda-meydana-gelen-patlama-hk.en.mfa
- “No: 245, 5 October 2023, Press Release Regarding the Resolution Titled ‘On the Situation in ‘Nagorno-Karabakh’ after Azerbaijan’s Attack and the Continuing Threats Against Armenia’ Adopted by the European Parliament”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, October 5, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-245_-avrupa-parlamentosu-nun-kabul-ettigi-karar-hk.en.mfa
- “No:229, 19 September 2023, Press Release Regarding the Military Operation Launched by Azerbaijan in Karabakh”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Türkiye*, September 19, 2023, https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-229_-azerbaycan-tarafindan-karabag-da-baslatilan-askeri-operasyon-hk.en.mfa
- “No:658/23, Press Release on the Decision of the International Court of Justice of November 17, 2023”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Azerbaijan*, November 17, 2023, <https://mfa.gov.az/en/news/no65823>
- “Number of Forcibly Displaced Persons from NK Stands at 100,632”. *Armenpress*, October 4, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1121185.html>
- “Pashinyan Comments on Erdogan’s Offer to Hold Armenia-Türkiye-Russia-Azerbaijan Summit”. *ArmenPress*, September 17, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1119688.html>
- “Pashinyan Follows in Zelensky’s Footsteps by Quantum Leaps — High-Ranking Source in Moscow”. *TASS*, October 18, 2023, <https://tass.com/world/1692799>

- “Pashinyan Says Normalizing Relations with Türkiye is Important for Armenia”. *Xalqqazeti*, November 18, 2023, <https://xalqqazeti.az/en/siyaset/148994-pashinyan-says-normalizing-relations-with>
- “Pashinyan: No Concrete Results From the Brussels Meeting”. *MassisPost*, July 20, 2023, <https://massispost.com/2023/07/pashinyan-no-concrete-results-from-the-brussels-meeting/>
- “PM Nikol Pashinyan Attends Inauguration of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan”. *ArmenPress*, June 3, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1112489.html>
- “PM Pashinyan Receives Kansas Governor and Director of Joint Staff of Kansas National Guard”. *ArmenPress*, June 22, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1113912/>
- “Political Consultations between the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the Ministry of External Affairs of the Republic of India”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs Armenia*, July 3, 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2023/07/03/Arm_Ind_Consultations/12073
- “President Khachaturyan Visits Italy, Meeting With Sergio Mattarella Expected”. *ArmenPress*, July 24, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1116016.html>
- “Press Remarks by President Charles Michel Following Trilateral Meeting with President Aliyev of Azerbaijan and Prime Minister Pashinyan of Armenia”. *European Council*, July 15, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/07/15/press-remarks-by-president-charles-michel-following-trilateral-meeting-with-president-aliyev-of-azerbaijan-and-prime-minister-pashinyan-of-armenia/>
- “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and The President of the Republic of Iran Hold Telephone Conversation”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, September 9, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/09/09/Nikol-Pashinyan-Telephone-Conversation-3/>
- “Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s Interview with the Wall Street Journal”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 25, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2023/10/25/Nikol-Pashinyan-Interview-The-Well-Street-Journal>

- “Prime Minister Pashinyan Holds Telephone Conversation with President of Iran Ebrahim Raisi”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, June 26, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/pressrelease/item/2023/06/26/Nikol-Pashinyan-Telephone-Conversation/>.
- “Prime Minister Pashinyan Meets with President Khachaturyan”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, May 29, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/05/29/Nikol-Pashinyan-met-with-Vahagn-Khachaturyan/>
- “Prime Minister Pashinyan Presents the “Crossroads of Peace” Project and Its Principles at the Tbilisi International Forum”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 26, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2023/10/26/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech/>
- “Prime Minister Pashinyan Received the Special Representative of NATO Secretary General Javier Colomina”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, May 23, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/05/23/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting/>
- “Prime Minister Pashinyan Receives the Medal Awarded by Pope Francis”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, October 24, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/10/24/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting/>
- “Proposal to Sign an Agreement on Status of EU Mission in Armenia Approved”. *First Channel News*, August 31, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/08/31/Proposal-to-sign-an-agreement-on-status-of-EU-mission-in-Armenia-approved/987018>
- “Putin Hosts Fresh Talks Between Pashinian, Aliyev”. *Azatutyun*, May 26, 2023, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32428164.html>
- “Remarks by President Charles Michel after his Meeting with the Leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, France and Germany”. *European Council*, June 1, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/06/01/remarks-by-president-charles-michel-after-his-meeting-with-the-leaders-of-armenia-azerbaijan-france-and-germany/>
- “Ruben Rubinyan Receives Political Director for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia of MFA of Germany”. *1Lurer*, July 17, 2023, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2023/07/17/Ruben-RubinyanReceives-Political-Director-for-Eastern-Europe-Caucasus-and-Central-Asia-of-MFA-of-G/963691>

“Rubinyan Presented the Process of Regulating Armenia-Turkey Relations”. *Radar Armenia*, July 13, 2023, <https://radar.am/en/news/politics-2578510420/>

“Russia Again Blames Pashinian for Karabakh Crisis”. *Azatoryun*, September 12, 2023, <https://www.azatoryun.am/a/32589437.html>

“Russia Calls Pashinian’s Criticism of Moscow over Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh ‘Unacceptable’”. *Radio Free Europe*, September 25, 2023, <https://www.rferl.org/a/russia-armenia-azerbaijan-pashinian-criticism/32608635.html>

“Russia Cannot ‘Turn Back on’ South Caucasus Region, No Such Plans Envisioned — Kremlin”. *TASS*, September 5, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1670081>

“Russia Strongly Urges Azerbaijan to Unblock the Lachin Corridor”. *Armenpress*, July 15, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115533.html>

“Russia Wants Armenia to Explain Ratification of ICC Rome Statute — Diplomat”. *TASS*, September 5, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1670155>

“Russian MFA Rejects Accusations against Russian Peacekeepers over Lachin Corridor”. *TASS*, August 30, 2023, <https://tass.com/politics/1667621>

“Secretary of Security Council and Secretary of Supreme National Security Council of Iran had Telephone Conversation”. *ILurer*, November 13, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/11/13/Secretary-of-Security-Council-and-Secretary-of-Supreme-National-Security-Council-of-Iran-had-teleph/1029269>

“Special Forces of Armenia, Greece and Cyprus Hold Joint Drills”. *ArmenPress*, November 13, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1124037.html>

“Speech by RA NA President at Autumn Meeting of the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly”. *ILurer*, November 18, 2023, <https://www.ilurer.am/en/2023/11/18/Speech-by-RA-NA-President-at-Autumn-Meeting-of-the-OSCE-Parliamentary-Assembly/1032628>

“Statement by Azerbaijan’s Ministry of Defense”. *Ministry of Defense of Azerbaijan*, September 19, 2023, <https://mod.gov.az/en/news/statement-by-azerbaijan-s-ministry-of-defense-49350.html>

- “Statement by the Spokesperson of Charles Michel, President of the European Council, Regarding Armenia and Azerbaijan”. *European Council*, September 1, 2023, <https://www.consilium.europa.eu/en/press/press-releases/2023/09/01/statement-by-the-spokesperson-of-charles-michel-president-of-the-european-council-regarding-armenia-and-azerbaijan/>
- “The Delegation Led by Alen Simonyan Leaves for Paris”. *ArmenPress*, July 10, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1115084.html>
- “The Karabakh “Parliament” also Issued a Call to the United Nations Member States on July 27, Asking for Its Independence to be Recognized within the Scope of the Principle of the Right to Compensatory Secession”. *Hetq*, July 27, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/158507>
- “The Meeting between the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and the UK Minister for Europe”. *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia*, November 13 2023, https://www.mfa.am/en/pressreleases/2023/11/13/GB_Mirzoyan/12322
- “The Prime Minister Received the Governor of Kansas and the Commander of the National Guard”. *Radar Armenia*, June 22, 2023, <https://radar.am/en/news/politics-2574825954/>
- “The Prime Minister will Leave for Georgia on a Working Visit”. *Prime Minister of Armenia*, July 7, 2023, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2023/07/07/Nikol-Pashinyan-visit-to-Georgia/>
- “U.S. Looks Forward to Rescheduling Postponed Armenia-Azerbaijan Talks in Washington”. *Armenpress*, June 14, 2023, <https://armenpress.am/eng/news/1113208/>
- “UN Team Completes Mission to Karabakh”. *United Nations Azerbaijan*, October 2, 2023, <https://azerbaijan.un.org/en/248051-un-team-completes-mission-karabakh>
- “US Completes Joint Military Exercise in Armenia”. *Aljazeera*, September 20, 2023, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2023/9/20/us-completes-joint-military-exercise-in-armenia>
- “US Envoy Again Visits Armenia, Azerbaijan”. *Mirror Spectator*, June 1, 2023, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2023/06/01/us-envoy-again-visits-armenia-azerbaijan/>
- “Vladimir Putin Meets with Members of the Valdai Discussion Club. Transcript of the Plenary Session of the 20th Annual Meeting”. *Valdai Discussion*

Club, October 5, 2023,
<https://valdaiclub.com/events/posts/articles/vladimir-putin-meets-with-members-of-the-valdai-club-transcript-2023/>

“Washington Reaffirms Support for Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Talks”.
Azatutyun, November 17, 2023,
<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32688496.html>

Abay, Emre Gürkan. “Russia Summons Armenia’s Ambassador to Protest Yerevan’s ‘Unfriendly’ Steps”. *Anadolu Agency*, September 8, 2023,
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/world/russia-summons-armenias-ambassador-to-protest-yerevans-unfriendly-steps/2986973>

Babayan, Aza and Astghik Bedevian. “Armenia ‘Optimistic’ as Turkey’s Erdogan Insists on Corridor for Azerbaijan”. *Azatutyun*, November 3, 2023,
<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32669108.html>

Balasanian, Grisha. “Yerevan Police Arrest Former Education Minister for Money Laundering”. *Hetq*, June 15, 2023, <https://hetq.am/en/article/157170>

Bedevian, Astghik. “Armenian Opposition Signals Protests Against ‘Karabakh’s Surrender’”. *Azatutyun*, May 22, 2023,
<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32424296.html>

Bulghadarian, Naira. “Armenia’s First Foreign Intelligence Chief Named After ‘Training’”. *Azatutyun*, October 5, 2023,
<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32624669.html>

Buniatian, Heghine. “EU Foreign Ministers Approve Expansion of Border Monitoring Mission in Armenia”. *Azatutyun*, November 13, 2023,
<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/32683155.html>

Christian, Gina. “Ancient Christian Enclave Faces ‘Genocide by Starvation,’ Says Armenian Catholic Bishop”. *CNEWA*, September 11, 2023,
<https://cnewa.org/ca/ancient-christian-enclave-faces-genocide-by-starvation-says-armenian-catholic-bishop/>

DePencier, Fin. “Pashinyan Says Armenians Should Stay in Karabakh”. *Eurasianet*, September 22, 2023, <https://eurasianet.org/pashinyan-says-armenians-should-stay-in-karabakh>

Elena Teslova, “Armenian, Azerbaijani, Russian Foreign Ministers Discuss Karabakh Settlement”. *Anadolu Agency*, July 25, 2023,
<https://www.aa.com.tr/en/politics/armenian-azerbajjani-russian-foreign-ministers-discuss-karabakh-settlement/2954256>

Ghazanchyan, Siranush. “Armenian PM, Head of US Department of State’s Sanctions Coordination Office Discuss Regional and International Processes”. *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/armenian-pm-head-of-us-department-of-states-sanctions-coordination-office-discuss-regional-and-international-processes/>

Ghazanchyan, Siranush. “Azerbaijan Accuses US of Bias, Refuses to Participate in a Meeting with Armenian FM in Washington”. *Public Radio of Armenia*, November 16, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/11/16/azerbaijan-accuses-us-of-bias-refuses-to-participate-in-a-meeting-with-armenian-fm/>

Ghazanchyan, Siranush. “Head of US Sanctions Coordination Office, Ambassador James C. O’Brien Visits Armenia”. *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/head-of-us-sanctions-coordination-office-ambassador-james-c-obrien-visits-armenia/>

Ghazanchyan, Siranush. “Head of US Sanctions Coordination Office, Ambassador James C. O’Brien Visits Armenia”. *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 29, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/29/head-of-us-sanctions-coordination-office-ambassador-james-c-obrien-visits-armenia/>

Ghazanchyan, Siranush. “New Round of Talks Postponed at the Request of Azerbaijan – Armenia MFA”. *Public Radio of Armenia*, June 8, 2023, <https://en.armradio.am/2023/06/08/new-round-of-talks-postponed-at-the-request-of-azerbaijani-sidd-armenia-mfa/>

Guldogan, Diyar. “Armenian Premier Pashinyan Extends Congratulations on Turkish President Erdogan’s Victory”. *Anadolu Ajansı*, May 28, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/armenianpremier-pashinyan-extends-congratulations-on-turkish-president-erdogans-victory/2908381>

Hovsepian, Tigran. “French Aid Convoy Barred From Entering Karabakh”. *Azattyun*, August 20, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32571631.html>

Khulian, Artak. “Former Armenian Defense Chief To Remain In Jail”. *Azattyun*, August 30, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32571274.html>

Minoyan, Hoory. “French Weapons Arrive in Armenia through Georgia”. *The Armenian Weekly*, November 13, 2023, <https://armenianweekly.com/2023/11/15/french-weapons-arrive-in-armenia-through-georgia/>

Nane Shakiyan, “Armenia Building Checkpoint on Turkish Border”. *Azattyun*, July 20, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32512161.html>

Osborn, Andrew. “Armenian PM Says Depending Solely on Russia for Security was ‘Strategic Mistake’”. *Reuters*, September 3, 2023, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/armenian-pm-says-depending-solely-russia-security-was-strategic-mistake-2023-09-03/>

Teslova, Elena. “Russia Warns Armenia Against ‘Trying to Sit on Two Chairs’”. *Anadolu Ajansı*, November 16, 2023, <https://www.aa.com.tr/en/europe/russia-warns-armenia-against-trying-to-sit-on-twochairs-/3055192>

Zargarian, Robert. “Armenian Task Force To Explore Nuclear Plant Options”. *Azattyun*, June 8, 2023, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/32450621.html>

Zohrabov, Farid. “Meeting Between Azerbaijan, Karabakh Armenians in Yevlakh Underway - First Footage”. *Trend News Agency*, September 21, 2023, <https://en.trend.az/azerbaijan/politics/3800703.html>