

REPUBLIC OF ARMENIA'S GROWING CRISIS AND THE MEANS TO CONFRONT

Posted on November 25, 2021 by Keghart



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Keghart.org Editorial, 25 November 2021

The [newest Azerbaijani provocations](#) against Republic of Armenia (RoA) came just 5 days after the meeting between Foreign Ministers of the RoA and Azerbaijan hosted by the French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian on November 11 in Paris. According to French media and diplomatic sources, the Armenian counterpart reiterated his country's position that Nagorno-Karabakh issue is not resolved, and that Armenia never committed itself to giving Azerbaijan a "corridor" that connects it with Nakhichevan through Syunik.

Paris meeting was held after RoA aborted a trilateral heads-of-state meeting that was scheduled to be held virtually on November 9 between Putin, Aliyev and Pashinyan. A new date is assigned for an in-person heads-of-state meeting on November 26 in Sochi. Although reliable information is not available regarding the contents of the ongoing behind-the-scenes talks between RoA, Azerbaijan and Russia, we can still depict an analytical picture of the current conflict and what Armenians should consider.

1. Isolation of the RoA in the region is intensifying. There are ongoing bilateral and multilateral negotiations among countries in that region, each seeking to improve its position through manoeuvring, provocations and threats. RoA must stay firm during these negotiation cycles, show prowess and determination to promote its interests.
2. New interests and actors are drawn into the conflict and on its sidelines mainly through the negotiation processes. Currently we can at least name the following parties: Turkey, Iran, Israel, China, India, Central Asian states and UAE. RoA might create opportunities to push forward its national interests by engaging with these new actors and influencing their interests. To attain success, RoA must show utmost resolve to minimize its losses and try to enhance its position in any negotiations and/or final settlements of issues.
3. Syunik and consequently RoA is the subject of this newly formed regional conflict of interests. Fate of this Armenian land is totally being decided by foreign parties. To confront effectively RoA must develop an unprecedented active diplomacy considering the potentials that Armenian diaspora lobbying organizations and activists have and can contribute to that cause. These diplomatic efforts must focus on a single agenda: expose Azerbaijan's aggressiveness to the world and demand that border demarcation and delimitation between RoA and Azerbaijan be conducted under the auspices of OSCE (Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe).
4. Observers report that many border areas are vulnerable and easy targets for the enemy. It is incumbent on the government to immediately identify those areas and militarily fortify them as necessary.
5. ROA's internal political dichotomy is unprecedented. In its severity and intensity, it reminds us of the internal strife over the Sovietization of Armenia also that of the Church crisis in the '50s and '60s. In the aftermath of these historical phases when the nation was horizontally divided, it

could still overcome the crises and heal its wounds. Today however this internal dichotomy will result in only adverse outcomes because the surrounding environment has changed. The current internal dichotomy will be the main cause to lose in any upcoming negotiations and of course in any military conflict. Armenian parties or political leaders cannot score any internal political gains by prioritizing their political agenda to overthrow the current government while the borders of the Republic are threatened. It is political shortsightedness to seek political change in Armenia based on the developments in the conflict with Azerbaijan. This dichotomy only weakens the position of the RoA institutions and its foreign policy *vis-à-vis* the ongoing negotiations and the political processes. As such, internal political debates must be postponed, and the nation must unite for one single political agenda: confront Azerbaijani provocations and aggression. There is no denial of many grievances against the regime; however, while the administration has not exhausted its potentials it's a dangerous game talking about regime change and it is irrelevant.

6. The political chaos and level of depression in the Armenian diaspora(s) are also unprecedented. These already divided and struggling communities show increased levels of abstention, despair and hopelessness since November 2020. Nowadays Armenians around the world feel alienated from their traditional institutions and abstain from political activism.

Diaspora Armenians must be politically realigned, and their activism must be revived towards one single agenda: expose Azerbaijani aggression against RoA. The demonstrations, debates, arguments and any type of political activism in the Diaspora over RoA internal political issues must cease such that they can be united towards this single political aim.

The Armenian lobby in US should approach the Armenian friendly congressmen to demand from President Biden to declare that RoA's sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be violated. Furthermore, the sizable Armenian French community can and should approach the candidates of the upcoming French presidential election and make a similar demand.

*"When there is no way out
Crazy people find an art"*
Barouyr Sevag

*"Երբ չի մնում ելք ու ճար
Խենթերն են գտնում հնար"*
Պարոպր Սևակ

Comments



Levon – 2021-11-26 20:53:36

Let's not be blind and let's admit it. The mutual security agreements with Russia and CSTO are not worth the paper they are written on. Furthermore, Republic of Armenia is hamstrung because of them and not capable (may be not willing) to look at alternatives to protect its territorial integrity.



Tavo – 2021-11-26 20:42:15

I agree with you, Mardiros, about Russia and the CSTO's betrayals of Armenians. The war conducted against Armenia and Artsakh in 2020 was nothing less than a Russian war carried out by Putin. This is so obvious that it's embarrassing to have to point it out. Now, Russia continues to try to shaft Armenians in every way possible such as by turning a blind eye to Azeri assaults and Turkish and Azeri threats against Armenians. This is sick, sick Russian stuff. It's a rerun of the 1920s where Russia shafted Armenia and gave Armenian land to Turkey and Azerbaijan. Russians themselves are either so intimidated, clueless, or chauvinistic that they are not stating the obvious: Russia is losing everywhere in the world, including in the Caucasus. Yet very few Armenians, even in the Diaspora, have publicly discussed these things in the media. May I ask what's going on?



Mardiros – 2021-11-26 01:59:08

Thank you for this concise summary of the challenges that Republic of Armenia and the Diaspora face today. Whether the present administration will be able to overcome them is highly questionable. One wonders why the negative role that CSTO plays is not included in the list of challenges. CSTO supposedly is an ally of Armenia, yet two of its members praised Azerbaijan at the gathering of the Turkic states in Istanbul instead of condemning its aggression. Russia's present politics in the region remains an enigma too. Why it conducts all its dealings in the region under a cloak? There is no transparency, and people in both Republic of Armenia and the Diaspora have the right to question this absence of forthright open diplomacy. Is it any wonder why so many who not too long ago considered Russia a reliable partner have turned away in droves?



Bedros Kojian - 2021-11-25 15:26:46

I agree, these are excellent thoughts and suggestions. Following the 44 day war there have been similar expressions and suggestion in some way or other, and they continue to be expressed. But who is listening? Now if the Turks and Azeris continue with Russia's consent rather encouragement, and I don't see why not, there will be a good chance that Armenia will lose its independence and Pashinyan his position. Maybe these facts may force him to come to his senses and listen to others' opinions and act accordingly, (դանակը ոսկորին հասեր է) but unfortunately I still have my doubts.



Minas Tanielian - 2021-11-25 14:12:09

The quote from Barouyr Sevag is great. However, the word "hnar" in Armenian is more properly translated as "invention" not "art". So, it should read, "When there is no way out, crazy people will invent a way...", which is very relevant to the current situation. Minas