WHY WOULD PASHINYAN ABANDON THE ARMENIAN CAUSE?

Posted on December 15, 2024 by Keghart



Category: Opinions

Keghart.org Editorial by Khajag Aghazarian, 10 February 2022

> ***In light of recent blunders of Pashinyan and that of his colleagues regarding the Genocide of the Armenians by the Ottoman Turks, "Keghart" redistributes an editorial it published more than two years ago. The content is as relevant today as it was then.***

In his most recent interview (Jan. 24, 2022) Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated three alarming positions regarding the Armenian Cause that require meticulous review and clarification from the Republic of Armenia (RoA) government:

> 1. While answering a question regarding Armenia/Turkey negotiations to normalize relations, Pashinyan stated that the Armenian Cause does not mean border issues between the Republic of Armenia and Turkey. The statement requires a more comprehensive analysis. For example, it is important to highlight that Armenians have never accepted the outcomes of the Treaty of Lausanne according to which Western Powers approved the establishment of modern-day Turkey with expanded territorial dominion that included, besides other territories, Western Armenia (known as the Six Vilayets in the Ottoman era). As well, the borders of the current Republic of Armenia do not compel the legitimately defined borderlines of "Armenia" by the League of Nations and the Wilsonian Doctrine that covers 160,000 sq. km.

If the RoA does not have territorial claims on Turkey, why is Turkey insisting on the recognition of territorial integrity as a precondition for negotiations with Armenia? Pashinyan must clarify why Armenians should quit from demanding the resolution of their pending territorial issues with Turkey while Ankara has never accepted its existing borderline with the RoA.

> 2. The second alarming Pashinyan statement is that recognition of the Armenian Genocide was never part of the political agenda of the RoA government. This statement is simply wrong. The Armenian Genocide is at the core of the National Security Strategy of the Republic of Armenia ratified and signed by Pashinyan in 2020. One of the seven National Goals that are included in this strategy is the "International recognition of the Armenian Genocide, overcoming and eliminating its consequences." Point 5.19 of the same document specifies that: "Turkey's recognition of the Armenian Genocide and the rights of its victims and their descendants shall form the necessary basis for overcoming the consequences of the Armenian Genocide." In a separate section of the strategy, it is stated: "Turkey's policy towards Armenia is unneighbourly. It continues its blockade of Armenia, refusing to establish diplomatic relations without preconditions, denying and, in certain instances, justifying the Armenian Genocide."

Obviously, Turkey is defined by the RoA as a genocidal state that persists not to recognize the Armenian Genocide. Nor did Turkey take any action to return the lost rights of its millions of victims and their descendants that constitute the basis to overcome the consequences of the Genocide. The only change that we can detect is on the side of the current government of the RoA. Turkey did not change any of its denialist policies and attitudes.

3. The third appalling statement made by Pashinyan was that recognition of the Armenian Genocide had always been pursued mainly by diaspora organizations. This is a half-truth. The three consecutive Armenian republics have always demanded recognition of the genocide. What is alarming in this statement is the connotation that the RoA does not have to pursue this existential cause. Pashinyan has to explain to Armenians why the RoA would change its attitude towards a central and vital unresolved national cause.

Like other nations, the Armenian national identity is carved through the collective experiences of the Armenian people, their traumas as well as achievements. The Armenian Cause is an intrinsic element of the modern Armenian national identity that has been shaped during the past 200 years. This identity element is not referred to any fraction in the nation, nor any authority have mandate over its course. As such, changing its status must be approved by all Armenians. Moreover, that may happen only after Turkey recognizes the Genocide of Armenians and agrees on just compensation.

Armenians have the right to know what geostrategic, security and economic benefits is the RoA government expecting in return of abandoning the Armenian Cause. If the talks are aimed at normalizing relations between the two states, then the Armenian counterpart should refuse to include the Armenian Cause on the agenda of negotiations. The RoA government should immediately separate the Armenian Cause from any negotiations between the RoA and Turkey.

Of all the controversial acts and policies undertaken by Pashinyan, his above comments regarding the Armenian Cause are the most damaging to the Armenian nation. At best, his words reflect an abominable *naiveté* and at worst a treachery that will forever hound the Armenian nation and cause its irreversible decline.

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Comments



Vahe H Apelian – 2024-12-17 00:35:36
Apparently Keghart.com editorial board, has not read the comments that were made when it first posted this editorial. Or it could be that the editorial board has read the comments but has resorted to willfully ignore them or dismiss the comments and post the editorial again. Either case, the editorial board did act properly. IN A NUTSHELL. The current understanding of the term Armenian Cause is the recognition, restoration, and reparation of the Armenian Genocide and the return of the Armenian lands that are now part of Turkey, to its rightful owner, the Armenian nation. Is that not the Armenian Causse we understand presently? But the Armenian Cause started long before and after much agony, it resulted in the creation of the first republic of Armenia on May 28, 1918, which henceforth evolved into the Soviet Socialist Armenia and as of September 21, 1991, into the present day Republic of Armenia. After May 28, 1918, the Armenian Cause ceased to be an instrument of the Armenian State policy. The first republic did not make it an instrument of its policies. The Soviet Socialist Republic did not nake it an instrument of its policy.. The post September 21, 1991 Republic of Armenia did not pursue it. Its presidents Levon Der Bedrossian, Robert Kocharian, Serzh Sargsyan did not make the Armenian Cause an instrument in their policies. And after adopting parliamentary system of governance, its short-lived PM Serzh Sargsyan and subsequently PM Nikol Pashinyan did not and is not pursuing the Armenian Cause as a component of its foreign policy. In a nutshell, none of them made claim for the Armenian lands, or laid claim for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide and that policy remains in force.



Vahe – 2022-02-15 22:21:10
In response to V.A. Titling the article "Will Pashinyan Abandon the Armenian Cause?" implies that successive governments of Armenia pursued Armenian Cause, i.e. Hay Tahd, and this PM will or may abandon it over the normalization issue with Turkey. I pointed the reality is that Armenia never pursued Hay Tahd, that is to say never demanded Turkey recognize the genocide, and hence never demanded Turkey make amends by restitution and reparation for this PM to abandon pursuing it. Had the article been titled "Will Pashinyan pursue the Armenian Cause?" I would not have commented.



V.A. – 2022-02-13 13:53:08
Here we have Hayorti and Vahe degenerating discussion into unproductive polemic.. What kind of example do you think you are setting for the rest of us frequenting this board for productive discussion and collegiality, let alone kinship? Do you really think your causes are being furthered at all by the amount of disdain you display to one another? It's a far-cry from the comments of Mesrob above, wishing for solidarity amongst Armenians, among Diasporans. Where one falls on this issue, is to large extent determined by geography. For Disporans, Pashinyan's actions are interpreted against ideal notions of what is Armenian, what Armenia should stand for, and justice for past wrongs. Whereas for Hayastantsis, these comments are much more relatable -- responding to Mesrob's queries above -- for inherently implicating an impending end to the republic of Armenia.



Hayorti – 2022-02-12 08:29:33
Reply to Vahe. Your badly constructed, haphazardly punctuated, and interminable sentences (35 words) do not promote comprehension. Please make an effort to be understood. You also come across as a smart alec when you try to be witty. To be witty, one has to have a sense of humor.



Vahe – 2022-02-11 09:48:20
In response to Hayorti Reiterating my statements First: PM NP correctly states that no Armenian government has made "Hay Tahd" a component of Armenia state policy. Second: Yes, there is no need to take cover in the horrors of the genocide and project an image of "Holier than thou". when It simply is a matter of making a statement summing your understanding. But, respectfully I am at a loss concluding your rebuttal to my comment. Are you implying that the Armenian governments preceding NP government made "Hay Tahd" a component of the Armenia state strategy? Or Ar you implying that, contrary to the preceding governments, the NP government should make "Hay Tahd" a component of Armenia state strategy? Which of the two, are you stating? Thank you



Hayorti – 2022-02-10 23:45:17
Vahe's quote ("to take cover in the horrors of the Armenian Genocide...") is something genocide-denying Turk would pipe. Re his "holier than thou" crack, since when has advocating justice become the object of cheap ridicule? Methinks Vahe likes to see himself as politically sophisticated, oh so unlike the Armenian rabble that just can't forget what the Turk did and continues to do. But then again, our greatest brain (Krikor Zohrab) had coffee with genocidier Talaat the night before the Turkish goons arrested the parliamentarian-lawyer-novelist.



Vahe – 2022-02-10 19:45:56
In response to H. Yes, NP is correct. No Armenian government has made "Hay Tahd" a component of the Armenia state strategy. I invite you to substantiate the contrary. Whether NP government, contrary to the previous governments, should make "Hay Tahd" a component of the Armenia state strategy, is entirely different matter. I quote: "The Republic of Armenia will continue its efforts towards recognition of the Armenian Genocide and prevention of crimes against humanity, in line with the Government Action Plan, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said during the Q&A session at the National Assembly today." But that does not constitute making "Hay Tahd" an Armenia state strategy. On a friendly note. There is no need to take cover in the horrors of the Armenian goncide and project an image of "holier than thou".



Mesrob – 2022-02-10 18:39:23
Since I have not read every article about the Armenia/Turkey negotiations, I don't have the whole picture. One of the important facts I may have missed is the rationale of the Armenian side: why is Armenia negotiating? Is Turkey forcing us, threatening us? Or does Pashinyan think it will be beneficial for Armenia although conceding to Turkey's demands will dynamite Our Cause and permanently lock Armenia into its present stamp size and at the mercy of its genocidal Turkic neighbors? Does Pashinyan think Turks have changed? Is he deaf to Turkic Azerbaijan's terror, destruction, and sacrilege in Artsakh?



Bob Okhikian – 2022-02-10 13:22:57
If Armenians will not be united, they will lose a lot. Union is strength. Please be united for your own sake. Zohrab



H – 2022-02-10 12:49:39
Excellent article Mr Aghazarian. Thank you Responding to Vahe, “Rightly claims”? Sound like the person planted as prime minister of Armenia because he claims to be pragmatic and not ignorant of our history. The question is: are you a nation loving Armenian who is a survivor’s son from the Turkish Genocide? Or like Nicole, claiming to be pragmatic with an Armenian name.



Armineh – 2022-02-10 07:27:02
Very dangerous and disappointing comments. I think he must immediately correct himself. If he really believes in those comments then he cannot represent Armenians, whether in Armenia or in Diaspora. This saddened me greatly



Vahe – 2022-02-10 06:34:44
PM Nikol Pashinyan rightfully states that no Armenian government made "Hay Tahd" a component of Armenia state strategy, and much like the predecessor governments, his government will also not demand Turkey recognize the genocide of the Armenians and will not demand Turkey reparation and restitution for the damages Turkey inflicted on the Armenians in Ottoman Empire.



Harry Avanessian – 2022-02-10 01:56:50
Illegitimate Nicole is a criminal that deserves to be kicked out of power he already has made so many terrible decisions and humiliate Armenians who wanted to prevent Turks from taking over and decimating their land and people.



Joseph Matossian – 2022-02-10 01:35:56
I am glad Mr. Aghazarian is not in charge of Armenia's negotiating team with Turkey. The Armenian government is reiterating the unconditional approach for negotiations as a sane and flexible first step with an adversarial neighbor which is militarily and industrially larger and more powerful. To quote PM Pashinian "the time has come to cease toasts" and be pragmatic.



Tavit – 2022-02-10 00:36:00
This is an excellent article that poses important questions which need non-evasive answers from Pashinyan and his cabinet. An educated guess is that he is throwing away all leverage that Armenia has in his quest to give in to Turkish and Azeri demands and to "normalize" relations. Pashinyan thinks he can forget the past - not just the Genocide but war by Azerbaijan and Turkey in 2020. We saw this when apparently one of his education officials wanted to remove the Armenian Genocide from school curricula. If that was true, it is downright sick. Armenian policy is a matter not just of military strength but of will, commitment, and courage. Armenian citizens need to protest and take to the streets.