ARMENIA'S RED LINE

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Category: Opinions

By Margarita Krtikashyan (PhD Candidate), Yerevan, 12 March 2025

The discussions surrounding the so-called "Zangezur Corridor" have once again taken center stage in geopolitical debates concerning the South Caucasus. Azerbaijan's persistent demand for this "corridor" is yet another step in its expansionist policy, aiming to undermine Armenia's sovereignty, sever its border with Iran, and establish an uninterrupted link between Azerbaijan, Nakhichevan, and Turkey.

Since 2020, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has consistently pushed this demand, misrepresenting the November 9 ceasefire agreement to justify his claims. However, Azerbaijan itself has blatantly violated the terms of that agreement, making its claims baseless. In 2024, there were reports that Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to remove regional communication-related provisions from the peace treaty, yet Baku continues to escalate its rhetoric, reviving threats and military posturing.

Aliyev's demands go beyond mere transportation routes. His vision of a "Zangezur Corridor" implies an extraterritorial passage free from Armenian control, something that Armenia cannot and must not accept. The strategic importance of Zangezur for Armenia is undeniable—it is not only a historical Armenian land but also a vital link between Armenia and Iran, a crucial buffer against pan-Turkic expansionism, and an economic and security stronghold for the country.

Iran has strongly opposed Azerbaijan's ambitions, viewing any change in regional borders as a direct threat to its own interests. In 2024, tensions between Russia and Iran became apparent when Tehran accused Moscow of supporting Baku's corridor narrative, despite previous assurances. Iranian officials, including members of parliament and high-ranking diplomats, have explicitly rejected the so-called corridor, calling it a "red line" that will never be crossed. Iran's ambassador to Armenia reaffirmed that any dreams of establishing the corridor would remain fantasies.

Despite Aliyev's claims that the term "Zangezur Corridor" has gained some attention, the reality is that only Azerbaijan, Turkey, and some Turkic states use this terminology. No major international player, aside from occasional ambiguous Russian statements, has officially endorsed the Azerbaijani narrative. Even Moscow, after facing criticism from Tehran, backtracked and stated that it does not recognize such a concept.

Aliyev's rhetoric fluctuates between direct territorial threats and veiled warnings of isolating Armenia economically. His ultimate goal is clear: to dismantle Armenia's sovereignty step by step, a policy reinforced by his constant references to Armenia as "Western Azerbaijan" and his insistence on redrawing borders based on groundless historical claims.

The Armenian government, under Nikol Pashinyan, has failed to take a firm stance against these threats. Pashinyan's policies have repeatedly demonstrated weakness in negotiations, leading to territorial concessions and emboldening Azerbaijan's aggression. If the Armenian leadership

continues to submit to Turkish-Azerbaijani demands under the guise of "peace," Armenia risks not only losing control over Zangezur but also facing an existential threat to its statehood.

Zangezur is not just another disputed region—it is Armenia's historical, geopolitical, and strategic backbone. The fate of Zangezur will determine whether Armenia remains a sovereign nation or succumbs to external pressures designed to erase its presence from the region.

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Comments



Hayorti – 2025-03-14 06:06:44
While we talk about Azerbaijan's threats and Pashinyan's kowtowing to the dictator, we shrink from explaining the reason Armenia is submissive. Azerbaijan is stronger than Armenia. It's no contest even without Turkish and Israeli military support. Armenia's military purchases and the French support do not alter the equation. History, legality, justice, and morality have little weight, especially these days. Pashinyan's crimes are many, but the military rot began soon after Armenia's independence. We were more interested in hosting fading actress Claudia Cardinale, yesterday's pop singer Elton John, and has-been actor John Malkovich.. We thought we had arrived. Does anyone know the size and strength of Armenia's army? I saw hundreds of Armenia's soldiers at the Genocide monument. They impressed me as excellent parade soldiers....the Russian caps, the sharp-crease pants, and the goose step.



Mesrob – 2025-03-13 04:47:34
A superficial view would say any country which had a ruler of Pashinyan's ilk would have toppled its ruler long ago. That view would ignore several facts: the repeated defeats and loss of lands (Western Armenia, Nakhichevan, Artsakh, Azeri occupation of territory in eastern Armenia) have descended malaise upon the inhabitants of Armenia. Because they know no one will help Armenia (the much-appreciated French support is ineffectual against the Azeri-Turk-Israeli alliance), they have become catatonic and live day by day. The other fact about their "indifference" to Pashinyan's foreign policy is that they fear a revolution would invite Azerbaijan-Turkey-Israel-Pakistan to overrun Armenia while the world would spout token condemnation. There are 190 states at the United Nations. Who would care if one of them--a tiny and poor country--disappears, especially when the attackers have oil and gas (Azerbaijan), have the second-largest NATO army (Turkey), and one of them is the pet of the United States (Israel)?



Bedros – 2025-03-13 00:30:17

Kudos and praise to the author for explicitly writing "In 2024, tensions between Russia and Iran became apparent when Tehran accused Moscow of supporting Baku's corridor narrative...." This is a truth not often mentioned. One can only wonder at the 'wisdom' of Russia's support for the gifting of Artsakh to Azerbaijan. This action goes way beyond any presumptions that Russia wanted to punish Armenia for moving towards the West and the United States specifically. I applaud this author's courage. The last paragraph of the article is poignant, noteworthy, and precisely realistic and accurate in its characterization that the establishment of a Zangezur Corridor would spell the final death knell of Armenia. Armenians (and others) take heed. The incremental, incessant encroachment on, and eventual usurping of sovereign Armenian lands over the past 150 years is a shockingly stark pattern that seems to have had no effect in awakening the sense of alarm in Armenians. Beware. You won't get a chance to replay world events. There is no dress rehearsal.