

BEWARE OF THE UNKNOWN

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By **Ashod Mardigian**, Ontario, 6 July 2021

Observations about developments surrounding RoA

Following the “forty-four-days war” and the signing of the November 9, 2020 agreement, some observers maintained that the Republic of Armenia (RoA) was left with substantial loss of *de facto* sovereignty. They even doubted whether RoA independently would be capable to forge its own future. Furthermore, the January 2021 tripartite meeting between Putin, Pashinyan and Aliyev in Moscow amplified these concerns about sovereignty. It is alleged that all the details of the agreement and the meeting are not yet fully published.

Some opine that opening a “corridor” between Nakhichevan and Azerbaijan through Meghri is already a done deal; all what remains is construction of the passageway and posting of Russian peace forces to monitor it. Azerbaijan continues to claim that Zankezour (Syunik) is Azeri territory. Many incursions in the area and elsewhere are practically manifestations of this claim. It is very telling that the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) did not intervene on behalf of RoA in violation of its charter to protect a member state when attacked. It considered these intrusions as secondary border concerns to be peacefully resolved between the involved parties, like the situation when hostilities broke out between [Tajikistan and Kyrgyzstan](#) in 2014. CSTO overlooked the fact that they both were members, whereas Azerbaijan was not, having left the security alliance in 1999.

Meanwhile, RF, Turkey and Azerbaijan continue to propagate the idea of reorganizing the communication routes in the region. It is assumed that the newly to be formed RoA government will follow suit. That of course includes the plan to establish the corridor through Meghri. Iran is opposed to the presence of any third-party military forces neighbouring the border between itself and RoA. It is a “red line”. However, Iran's stand is moot regarding construction of the corridor. Bearing in mind that it is in favour of an overall “regional integration” then it is deduced that opening the corridor *per se* is not objected.

Apart from the postulates of the tripartite agreements, Turkey is actively promoting the notion of “regional integration”. It involves Turkey, Azerbaijan, Iran, RF, Georgia and RoA. The western media is awash with articles “discussing” this option. It leads us to believe that the US State Department and leaders of EU tacitly if not openly are in favour of it. These moves are reminiscent to the [2009 “Protocols”](#) -- an expanded and more radical version. So far RF, Georgia and RoA have not issued an official stand regarding this measure.

It is within the context of this web of complementary proposals we need to look at EU's motion to invest 2.6 billion Euros in RoA. This “generous” offer raises serious questions that need not be overlooked.

For starters, why is EU now an active player? Is it to “compensate” for the terrible destruction that

was inflicted on Karabagh and RoA partly due to EU's ineffectiveness during the war? In politics it is largely assumed that you make an offer if you have an interest. What's EU's?

Some, in private conversations, with unfounded optimism have hailed EU's move as a [mini-Marshall plan](#). They postulate that it will provide an opportunity to RoA to revive its economy, bring prosperity, establish stability in the region and secondarily promote peace. Alarmists, however, see it differently.

No "relief" of this magnitude is submitted freely. It does not come by without preconditions which may not be apparent now. Is this the carrot to entice RoA to agree to the "regional integration" which involves ceding part of Zankezour to open the "corridor"? While RoA has just gone through a snap election and has not put its house in order, and the citizenry still in shock and depressed, there are ample reasons for people to [leave the country](#). The EU's move will open wider the door to Europe. Won't it accelerate the exodus? What about Turkish economy competing with the indigenous enterprises right within RoA's borders? What about the overarching concern of RoA and Armenians being encircled by their genocidal archenemies, Turkey and Azerbaijan?

Beware of the unknown. It is incumbent on the new leaders of RoA to think twice before being bought into the plan of "regional integration", EU's lavish assistance and the preconditions that come with them. They could pave the way to loss of our economic independence and already compromised sovereignty. Armenia and "Armenian Cause" may be forever lost in one fell swoop.

Comments



HyeFanat - 2021-07-25 06:01:29

It is interesting that Mardigian states the EU assistance is the carrot to cede Zangezur, in most likelihood it is the carrot not to cede Zangezur and leave the transport/'communication' lines open. The article asks what is in it for Europe. Europe does not want Tu/Az to connect to each other and to Ru, raising prices for EU and obtaining more power. It is in their best interest that the North/South route remains open should they wish to partner with Iran/India in case the relations with Tu/Az go South in the near or distant future...