

THREE BENEFITS FOR TURKEY IN THE PROTOCOLS

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By Harout Bronozian Glendale CA, 18 November 2009

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1. According to the agreement, Armenia has accepted to study historical archives and resigned from addressing history in a "one-sided manner".

The corresponding clause to this statement in the protocols, signed by the Armenian and Turkish Foreign Ministers on October 10, 2009 in Switzerland, is as follows: "The sub-commission on the historical dimension to implement a dialogue with the aim to restore mutual confidence between the two nations, including an impartial scientific examination of the historical records and archives to define existing problems and formulate recommendations, in which Armenian, Turkish as well as Swiss and other international experts shall take part."

2. The protocols protect the territorial integrity of Turkey within its present boundaries. This way, Armenia will not be able to make territorial claims in the future.

The corresponding clause in the protocols is as follows: "Confirming the mutual recognition of the existing border between the two countries as defined by relevant treaties of international law."

3. These agreements provide a strong promise for the return of Azerbaijani Karabagh lands.

The corresponding clause in the protocols is as follows: "Reconfirming their commitment, in their bilateral and international relations, to respect and ensure respect for the principles of equality, sovereignty, non-intervention in internal affairs of other states, territorial integrity and inviolability of frontiers."

It seems that Turks know very well what benefits they will garner from the protocols, while Armenia's ruling regime and some Armenians in Armenia and the Diaspora do not.

I suggest, that every organization in the Diaspora study these protocols carefully and in detail with its members, and then a delegation of each organization be sent to Armenia, to present their positions directly to the President, Prime Minister, Foreign Minister and people of Armenia. This is the only way the Diaspora can show its deep concern and bring positive change to these protocols.

The one-sided protocols should have been negotiated with more finesse by the Armenian side. Territorial reparations to Armenia should have been obtained and included in the protocols. For

example, the city of Ani, is right at the border with Turkey. Also Mount Ararat. Also the principle of the right of self-determination should have been included in the protocols in light of the Karabagh's future. Genocide recognition should also have been part of the territorial reparations. If these were not acceptable by Turkey, which is definitely the case, then the above three preconditions by Turkey should have been excluded from the protocols.

Those issues could have been evaluated and agreed upon by both sides after the establishment of diplomatic, commercial and human relations between the two countries and peoples (that includes the Armenian and Turkish Diasporas) in due time. Close relations could have clarified the above issues much better for both sides in the future. This way the Armenian Diaspora could have had a more active participatory role in the decision-making process between Armenia and Turkey, including repatriation to Armenia, Karabagh and Eastern Turkey, something that these protocols try to separate, divide and exclude.

If Serge Sargsyan accepted the above three preconditions thinking that Turkey will open the borders and Karabagh will not be lost, he is mistaken. Turkey wants the Karabagh issue to be solved in favor of Azerbaijan, as clearly indicated in the protocols (item 3 above) in their various declarations, and which fall within the national objectives of Turkey as well. And since the border with Armenia was closed in 1993 due to the Karabagh issue, it will not be opened until that problem is favorably solved for Turkey and Azerbaijan. Hence we are at a loss from both sides.

If Armenia and Turkey want to have a just and permanent peace, sacrifices have to be made by both sides. Short-term objectives and interests by the Sargsyan administration, as indicated in these protocols, should not overshadow our long-term interests upon which our future existence is based.

