

# TURBULENT FOUR DAYS IN ARMENIA

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Category: [Opinions](#)



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The Iskander 'Conspiracy'... a failed attempt to dismiss the Chief of the General Staff of the army... accusations of 'coup attempt'... President Sarkissian rejects Pashinyan's decision... public gathering in support of Pashinyan.

Round One: On Feb. 16, former President Serzh Sargsyan states "Iskander should have been used on the fourth or fifth day of the war, when Azerbaijan had accumulated a huge amount of manpower, military equipment in Horadiz and other parts. Iskander is for that." It is reported that the Deputy Chief of the General Staff, Lieutenant-General Tiran Khachatryan had "[laughed noting that this is not serious](#)" when asked about Pashinyan's claim that the "[Iskander missile had not exploded or exploded only at 10%](#)."

Round Two: Pashinyan dismisses the Deputy Chief for mocking Pashinyan's critique of Iskander's reliability.

Round Three: Led by the chief of the general staff of the armed forces, Onik Gasparian, senior military leaders demand the resignation of Pashinyan and his government.

Round Four: Pashinyan accuses military leaders of a coup attempt and asks his supporters to attend a public gathering at Yerevan's Freedom Square. A huge number of people respond to his call and gather at the square. Pashinyan demands President Armen Sarkissian sign Pashinyan's request for the dismissal of the chief of the general staff of the armed forces, Onik Gasparian.

Round Five: On Feb. 27, President Sarkissian sends the document back to Pashinyan without signing it and encloses his [response](#). Pashinyan sends the document back to President Sarkissian who has three days to sign the document or submit it to the [Constitutional Court for Review](#).

Meanwhile... The President of the Republic of Artsakh, Arayik Harutyunyan, expressed concern and called for restraint while offering his services as mediator... Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov called for calm and described the military's demand for the prime minister's resignation as Armenia's internal affair.

The Americans then got into the act. [U.S. Department of State spokesman Ned Price](#) said there has not been a determination confirming a "coup attempt" and stated : "The United States has been a steadfast supporter of the development of democratic processes and institutions in Armenia. We continue to support Armenia's democracy and its sovereignty, and we urge its leaders to resolve their differences peacefully while respecting the rule of law, Armenia's democracy, and its institutions."

Foreign minister of Sweden, Ann Linde expressed concern, stating: "[The situation must be resolved without violence](#)". She was followed by PACE co-rapporteurs who found the general staff action "unacceptable."

Then the always-brazen Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu condemned [the alleged coup attempt](#) while President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev stated: "Armenia has never been in such a bad and miserable situation. The administrators in Armenia are responsible for this situation".

Opposition protests continued in Yerevan.

An online discussion about the above developments was held with a small group of Keghart.org readers. We present selected sections for your reaction:

- We all want a democratic Armenia. But something far more important than that is the security and territorial integrity of Armenia. Pashinyan must resign since he blundered even before the war, continued his suicidal policies, and has expressed no grand plan to revive Armenia. We don't even know the final version of the ceasefire document.
- Re the chief of staff's protest that the PM wouldn't allow him to use Iskander missile: The military guy must have forgotten that Medzamor is a great target for the Azeris.
- I have contempt for the 15 plus 2 political parties. They are a bunch of opportunists and hooligans. They also don't have a credible candidate. I would hate to see Kocharyan/Sargsyan return to power through these corrupt politicians. I believe President Armen Sarkissian should tell the military to cool it meanwhile persuade Pashinyan to get ready to resign. He would defuse the tension if he announces the date for the early election. Pashinyan has no place in Armenian politics or in Armenia. His very presence is a reminder of our great loss and the wrong-headed policies Pashinyan pursued before, during, and after the war. He should go into exile. A Boy Scout with a Messiah complex is dangerous to have as a leader of a country.
- Most contemporary political science theorists consider free elections, orderly transition of power, rule of law, presence of an independent press, separation of religious institutions from the state... as some of the basic elements of a democratic society though not necessarily in that order. None of the existing democracies fulfill all these elements, they are not perfect and not without flaws. Republic of Armenia has failed in all aspects except for very brief periods and limited to one or at most two aspects despite popular craving to establish a democratic society. Today, more than ever RoA is threatened to fail. Democracy grows through establishing traditions. Orderly transition of power is a fundamental institution on its own. At all cost, Armenia should adhere to preserve it. Imposing the will of a minority, coup d'etat and storming the symbols of the state are not the way. If it succeeds, then goodbye to our dreams of democracy for the foreseeable future. The gang of 15 plus 2 has been agitating for three months now, yet the vast majority of people has stayed put. That tells something about that gang's unpopularity. It does not mean that people are all happy with the present administration and the prime minister. Probably people fear precipitating in a chain of events that could lead to chaos and civil strife. Coup d'etat is not the answer if people in Armenia want to preserve whatever semblance of democracy has been left. Traditions to build democracy are crucial.
- How do you explain Pashinyan's popularity among Yerevantsis? Is the perception that he is the

- number-one culprit for our capitulation not recognized by his supporters? Do his supporters blame others for last fall's debacle? His supporters know he is to blame but think the alternative (Kocharyan, for one) would be worse. His supporters believe punch-drunk Armenia needs stability. His supporters have always been critical of the heavy-handed military.
- I have been watching the situation unfold with apprehension and spoken with friends and family in Armenia as well. The mood and morale of everyone I know is dim. I am further disappointed in Pashinyan's call to the people to the streets, creating a potential for a civil strife. The longer these two camps create chaos the more they put our country at risk. Pashinyan carries the responsibility to create space for dialogue and why is he not doing that...?
  - Միակ լուծումը բոլոր կողմերու միջև երկօսութիւնն է, բայց այդ մէկը պիտի ըլլա՞յ, նախագահը ի պաշտօնէ այդպիսի բան մը պիտի կարենա՞յ կամ պիտի ուզէ՞ ընել: Արցախի նախագահը Երեւան է եղեր եւ յայտարարեց որ պատրաստ է կողմերու միջև միջնորդութեան, յուսանք կը յաջողի:
  - Այս խառն ի խուռն ամիսներուն, երբ ամբողջ ազգը կ'ապրի հիմնականին մէջ նախկիններուն եւ Փութինեան Ռուսաստանի սարքած կամ մանրամասնօրէն ծրագրուած մեր խայտառակ պարտութեան վիշտը, ԲԱՅԱՐՁԱԿԱՊԵՍ անժամանակ կը գտնեմ 17 կոչուածներուն («Ազգային փրկութիւն» ինքնայոյջորջ կոմիտէ) ամբոխավարական արարքները՝ ցոյցերը, մարտական յայտարարութիւնները, զէնքի ուժով ու բռնութեամբ օրինաւոր իշխանութիւն վար առնելու ազգավնաս կոչերը: Ասիկա, կը կրկնեմ, երբեք չի նշանակեր թէ «ուշքս կ'երթայ» կամ «խենթ կ'ըլլամ» Ն.Փ.ին համար: Հաւատացած եմ որ այս ամբողջ բեմադրութեան ետեւ կը տեսնուի Կրեմլինեան ձեռագիրը: Առ այժմ ՌԴ-ի իշխանութիւնները իրենց ամբողջ կատաղութիւնը կը բանեցնեն ՀՀ-ի պէս պարտուած ու ջախջախուած երկրի մը ժողովուրդին վրայ, որպէսզի աչքը վախցնէ Պելորուսիայի պէս համեմատաբար պզտիկ երկիրներու: Ամբողջ եութեամբ դատապարտելի կը նկատեմ ՌԴ այսօրուան փութինա-լավրովեան բռնատիրութեան վարած քաղաքականութիւնը «փոքր» ազգերու հանդէպ եւ կը կարծեմ թէ բացի իր լայնատարած իշխանութիւնը պահպանելու ցանկութենէն, կը նախընտրէ իր մի քանի միլիարդներու շահերուն համար «բարեկամանալ» տասնամեակներով պատերազմի մէջ մտած իր ոխերիմ թշնամիներէն մէկու՝ Թուրքիայի հետ, հոգ չէ թէ հինաւուրց ժողովուրդ մը եւ Ռուսաստանի համար տասնեակ հազարաւոր զոհեր տուած ազգ մը մատնուի պատմութեան թատերաբեմէն ջնջուելու վտանգին:

**Photo** Recent gathering of 15+2 opposition at the parliament.

## Comments



**Vahakn** – 2021-03-02 23:12:16

Dear Aline, I enjoyed reading your interesting letter. Thank you. I would like to raise a small point which might not be so small. You refer to "Great Britain" meaning the United Kingdom when you mention London's veto at the UN Security Council regarding Artsakh independence. Britain hasn't been great since, at least, the 1930s. It was mauled in WWI. It would have been occupied by Germans had it not been for the Soviet Union and the U.S. But even when it was "Great Britain" it wasn't great for its "greatness" was based on exploiting a quarter of the world population and their resources. As well, when it was "great" it created traps whose consequences still torment the world. I am referring to the indentured laborers Britain sent from India to East Africa, Fiji, Guyana, and Trinidad and Tobago thus creating permanent tension, even civil war, between the imported Indians and the locals. I am referring to its mendacity in promising Palestine (which didn't belong to London) to the indigenous Arabs and to settler Jews. I am referring to Cyprus and Britain's creation of Kuwait as a permanent irritant/threat to Iraq. The list of British crimes is long. I am waiting for Scotland to leave the United Kingdom. Wales will not leave because it's a welfare state and a financial burden on the English. The departure of the Scots might force the English to give up their occupation of Northern Ireland. Welcome to the fogbound little island northwest of Europe "ruled" by a dysfunctional family and a hirsute loudmouth. Vahakn



**Paren** – 2021-03-02 20:08:58

Փաշինեանի փոխարէն 15+2 կուսակցութիւններու յաջողութեան պարագային Նախկին օլիգարխներու վերադարձի վտանգ կայ: Այսուհանդերձ Նոր ընտրութիւններ անհրաժեշտ են: Փաշինեանը այս վիճակին մէջ չի կրնար երկար մնալ: Նոր մանդատ անհրաժեշտ է ընտրութեանց միջոցով: Ժողովուրդը ազատ ընտրութեամբ պետք է որոշէ թէ ովքեր պիտի ըլլան պետական յաջորդ ղեկավարները: Ամէն պարագայի ինչ ալ տեղի ունենայ Հայաստանի ապահովութիւնը չափազանց վտանգուեցաւ պատերազմին պարտութեան պատճառով: Հայաստան de facto կորսնցուց իր գերիշխանութիւնը: Այսօր Հայաստանը շատ անելի Փութինի պարտադրութեան տակ է քան երբէէ: Փութին կ'ըսեմ եւ ոչ Ռուսաստան: Ռուսաստան յղի է բազմաթիւ խնդիրներով: Թէ ինչ պիտի պատահի եւ ապագայ Ռուսաստանը ինչ դիրք կը բռնէ Թուրքիոյ Նկատմամբ՝ մեծ հարցական մըն է: Փութինն ու զօրակիցները իրենց անձնական շահերէն մեկնելով զոհաբերեցին Հայաստանը:



**Drow** – 2021-03-02 11:00:30

I don't think that Pashinyan's resignation is connected with Kocharyan coming back on board. We should do everything to come up with an alternative solution that doesn't include both of them and is mainly national-democratic. I completely agree with all those points underlined in the article and Keghart should be proud to have such readers who have found analytical skills.



**Aline Dedeyan** – 2021-03-01 23:31:30

The Turkish/Azeri invasion of NK/Artsakh was brewing, preplanned and to be expected given the democratic turn over of Pashinian's governance, pro-UN, Human Rights EU and Western democracies. A threat to dictatorial and corrupt regimes of its ultra nationalist neighbors. Pashinian believed and trusted the UN since the NK conflict has been on international agendas ever since 1991 -1994. Even if inexperienced like most Armenians in RoA, lack of professionalism in international diplomacy, he expected justice and the immediate recognition of Artsakh by the Security Council, while a juicy deal previously negotiated between Azerbaijan and Great Britain made GB TO VETO the Security Council. Yes and for the first time GB - a Western democracy putting a veto to the SC resolution for the accession of Artsakh to its very legitimate right to independence, defeating the corrupt Turkish/Azeri claims and stop the war. And right before the horrendous Sackur interview on BBC to belittle and destabilize Pashinian and his straightforward rule of the law positions. Leave the Iskender and the army out of this conflict. Pashinian is not to be blamed . There is no reliable and professional opposition in Armenia. First of all world media has to be informed of the truths and the real facts of the war. They have been distorted and silenced intentionally. Civil society has been hushed up under Turkish/Azeri pressures (and money). Secondly, get high-level diplomats and lawyers to open up a trial against criminal acts contravening all international HR instruments. If only Poutine can deal with RT Erdogan regime the millions of Diaspora Armenians can become political actors and mobilize themselves backed by Western democratic states to claim and negotiate, via lawful means, international institutions and courts, the legitimate Armenian rights. NK/Arsakh is not only a local conflict but a world issue implying fighting for fundamental human rights against dictatorship, corruption and lack of freedom. The world is changing fast. Mindsets should follow to create new political avenues and understandings involving each and every world citizens. Aline Dedeyan - Swirzerland



**Keghart.org** – 2021-03-01 17:20:13

Dear Ms. Asdghik, Note that the article is an account of opinions expressed by a handful of Keghart readers and does not necessarily reflect Keghart opinion.



**Astghik** - 2021-03-01 04:52:39

So the "Boy Scout with a Messiah complex" should go and let the KGB-corrupt Putin cronies and criminal mafia clan of murderers like Kocharyan and Sargsyan come to power and finish off all hope for Armenia??? Didn't expect such an emotional and myopic analysis from you... if the Khocharyan clan comes to power, and that's almost sure to happen if Pashinyan just leaves, then you can kiss good bye not only to entirety of Artzakh but also to Armenia.