



AGBU ARMENIA NEWS BULLETIN

Tuesday, March 30, 2010

TRANSLATIONS FROM YEREVAN NEWSPAPERS AND OTHER NEWS AGENCIES

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POLITICS

1. **Serzh Sargsyan: Armenian side may consider return of territories surrounding Karabakh to Azerbaijan as compromise, while retaining corridor linking Karabakh with Armenia [Noyan Tapan, 03/27/10]**

During his three-day official visit to Syria, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan gave an interview with Al Watan newspaper. At the request of the reporter, in addition to discussing Armenian-Syrian relations, the president also spoke about Armenian-Turkish normalization and the Karabakh conflict settlement, armradio.am reported. When asked what influence the adoption of the Armenian Genocide resolution under discussion at the U.S. Congress would have on the Armenian-Turkish normalization process, Serzh Sargsyan said:

"The resolution under discussion at the U.S. Congress is an internal affair of that country, and we do not interfere, despite the moral importance of the issue. We did not make the recognition of the Armenian Genocide a precondition for establishing normal relations between Armenia and Turkey because our principled stance is to improve Armenian-Turkish relations without any preconditions. I consider as incorrect the attempts to link this process with recognition of the Armenian Genocide by other countries. One thing is obvious to me: the longer the process of normalizing our relations takes place, the more countries will adopt such resolutions".

Speaking about the economic consequences of the closed border for Armenia, S. Sargsyan noted that the price of the closed border is much higher in the political dimension. "The blockade is nothing else but a means of using force," he underlined.

As for a compromise version of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement and those concessions that Armenia is ready to make, President Sargsyan said: "To resolve a conflict, it is necessary to seek its solution in the area of its causes rather than consequences. The people of Nagorno Karabakh tried to solve the decade-old injustice in a legal way, but it met with brutal force. A security zone was formed around Karabakh in order to strengthen Artsakh's security, and we neither populate nor use this zone. When the people of Karabakh receives a real opportunity to exercise their right to self-determination and some practical mechanisms of security and development are created, the Armenian side may consider the return of these territories surrounding Karabakh to Azerbaijan as a compromise, while retaining the corridor linking Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia.

I have repeatedly stated this. However, mutuality is the key idea in the notion of compromise, and it is necessary to understand that unilateral concessions in such a situation will only deepen the existing dangers and threats".

2. **Turkish Prime Minister again threatens to deport Armenians [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]**



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Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan repeated his threat of deporting from the country Armenians illegally living there, this time in his interview to the Schpigel German magazine.

Erdogan, in particular, declared: "Armenians, both citizens and illegal residents, live in Turkey. We had not raised the issue of illegal residents before but if the Armenian Diaspora continues its pressures we will have to do it," CNN Turk reported.

3. Bako Sahakian reiterates that Artsakh's independence and security are not subject to bargaining [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]

On March 28, NKR President Bako Sahakian met with OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs Robert Bradtke (U.S.), Yuri Merzliakov (RF), Bernard Fassier (France) and persons accompanying them who had arrived in NKR. According to NKR President's Press Office, issues related to the current stage and prospects of Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict settlement were discussed at the meeting.

B. Sahakian once more declared that the conflict cannot be settled finally and comprehensively without NKR's complete participation. He mentioned that Azerbaijan's deconstructive and bellicose approaches, as well as continual rejection of the initiatives aimed at establishment of mutual confidence are the biggest obstacles of the conflict settlement. Confirming NKR's loyalty to conflict's peaceful settlement within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group B. Sahakian reiterated that Artsakh's independence and security are not subject to bargaining and any attempt to return the past is fraught with unpredictable consequences.

The Co-chairs also mentioned that the variant of settling the conflict by force is absolutely inadmissible.

Speaking about Armenia-Turkey relations the NKR President said that it is not connected with the settlement of Azerbaijan-Karabakh conflict, and the attempts to link them with one another have a negative impact on the two processes leading them up a blind alley.

NKR Foreign Minister Georgy Petrosian, Personal Representative of OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk took part in the meeting.

4. There are no disputable issues between Armenia and China to hinder deepening of cooperation [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]

China is a friendly country for Armenia, and Armenia is interested in deepening its relations with China in all directions. Secretary of the RA National Security Council Artur Baghdasarian declared it on March 29 receiving newly appointed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of China to RA Tian Changchun.

The sides agreed that there are no disputable issues between the two countries to hinder deepening and strengthening of cooperation. The Ambassador expressed readiness in any way possible to assist further strengthening and development of traditional friendly relations.

According to the RA NSC Secretary's Press Office, at Tian Changchun's request A. Baghdasarian presented National Security Council's functions. Possibilities of cooperation between the RA National Security Council and State Council of the People's Republic of China were discussed.

5. According to Ruben Safrastian, Turkish diplomacy has no tactics of long-term policy [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]

Though the Turkish diplomacy managed to lead the process of ratification of the protocols up the blind alley, the Armenian side appeared in a favorable situation under the condition of deadlock. Director of the RA National Academy of Sciences Institute of Oriental Studies, Turkologist Ruben Safrastian expressed such an opinion at a March 29 press conference. "We showed the world that we treat seriously the protocols we had signed," he said mentioning that we managed to put on the Armenian-Turkish negotiations table protocols signed without preconditions.

The current normalization process of Armenian-Turkish relations showed that the Turkish diplomacy has no tactics of long-term policy. According to R. Safrastian, with such policy the Turkish diplomacy will not manage "to come out of the formed situation unscathed and to lay the blame on Armenia."

And overcoming the deadlock, according to R. Safrastian, depends on Turkey's further steps. He mentioned that we should not yet draw final conclusions and show haste in the issue of ratification of the



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Armenian-Turkish protocols: under the circumstances the Armenian side has no need to ratify the protocols the first. "It will be wrong if we are the first to ratify the protocols," R. Safrastian said.

6. President of the Artsakh Republic Bako Sahakyan sent a condolence letter to the President of the Russian Federation [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]

On 29 March President of the Artsakh Republic Bako Sahakyan sent a condolence letter to the President of the Russian Federation Dmitry Medvedev in connection with the terrorist act at the Moscow metro.

The letter runs as follows:

"On behalf of the people and authorities of the Artsakh Republic I express my deep condolences and support to You and the fraternal people of Russia in connection with the treacherous terrorist act at the Moscow metro claimed dozens of innocent lives. In the hour of nationwide grief we share with You all the bitterness of the loss and wish tenacity and courage to the relatives and friends of the deceased".

BUSINESS

7. Armenian prime minister and World Bank representatives discuss expansion of cooperation [Noyan Tapan, 03/27/10]

Armenian Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan received on March 26 the World Bank Mission on Development Policy Lending Program, led by program coordinator Pedro Rodriguez and head of the World Bank Yerevan Office Aristomene Varoudakis.

The RA Government Information and Public Relations Department reports that the sides discussed a number of issues related to further expansion of cooperation between the Armenian government and the World Bank and the implementation of joint projects.

DIASPORA

8. ANC Orange County host fourth annual Walk for Remembrance [Noyan Tapan, 03/27/10]

The Armenian National Committee of Orange County (ANC OC) will host its 4th annual Walk for Remembrance on Saturday April 17, 2010.

According to the Armenian National Committee, the day's event will begin at Forty Martyr's Armenian Apostolic Church in Santa Ana, CA with a requiem service. The five mile Walk commences at 1:00 pm passing through portions of Santa Ana, Garden Grove, Westminster, and Fountain Valley. The Walk will conclude with a short commemorative program featuring local community leaders.

ARTS

9. The Sipan Dance Ensemble of Hamazkayin Cultural and Educational Association's Cyprus "Oshagan" Chapter will present its 10th Annual Performance [Noyan Tapan, 03/29/10]

Educational Association's Cyprus "Oshagan" Chapter will present its 10th Annual Performance at Strovolos Municipal theatre on 10 April. The Concert will be under the Patronage of his Excellency Mr. Andreas Demetriou, Minister of education and culture, and Mr. Vartkes Mahdessian, Armenian Representative in the House of Representative.

RELIGION

10. Armenian churches of Georgia are in shameful state, Paata Zakareishvili says [Noyan Tapan, 03/27/10]

The Armenian churches of Georgia are in a shameful state, analyst Paata Zakareishvili, head of the peace and chauvinism related studies in Georgia, said during the March 25 round-table organized by the Caucasus Institute. In his opinion, those churches which used to be Armenian ones before the revolution should be given back to the Armenian Apostolic Church.



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P. Zakareishvili said that in Georgia the rights of Armenians are protected more frequently than violated. It is another matter that Georgia does not properly fulfill its obligations to the Council of Europe, in particular, with respect to ratification of the documents on ethnic minorities. According to him, although there has been some progress in solving the problems of ethnic minorities, including Javakheti Armenians, the authorities should be more resolute when dealing with these problems. P. Zakareishvili often visits Javakheti and believes that the demands of Javakheti Armenians are well-founded.

In his words, there is a widespread opinion in Georgia that the country will suffer from the Armenian-Turkish normalization because after the opening of the Armenia-Turkey border, Armenia will lose its interest in Georgia as a transit country for its goods. He did not share that opinion, saying that the whole region would benefit in case of progress in the normalization process.

The Georgian analyst said that although the Russian component is extremely important in the Georgian-Ossetian and Georgian-Abkhazian conflicts, the establishment of direct ties may play a decisive role in the settlement of these conflicts. Zakareishvili said that the NATO-Georgia relations have frozen somewhat: Georgia's membership of the NATO is "so far that it is almost unreal".

SOCIAL

11. Transferring Western Knowledge to Armenia Yerevan State Medical University and University of Southern California to Sign Agreement on Academic Partnership [Noyan Tapan, 03/27/10]

A tripartite agreement establishing an academic partnership between Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) and the University of Southern California (USC) will be signed between the two universities and the USAID-funded Competitive Armenian Private Sector (CAPS) Project on March 29.

The initiative aims to upgrade and re-align pharmaceutical education curricula to be more responsive to the employer market, offer modern teaching methods and form long-term professional relationships to transfer knowledge from western institutions to those in Armenia. Developing linkages between U.S. and Armenian Universities will help improve the overall quality of pharmaceutical education in Armenia.

According to a report provided to NT, in the context of the partnership agreement, Michael Wincor, Associate Dean, Globalization and Continuing Professional Development and Associate Professor of Clinical Pharmacy at the USC School of Pharmacy and Medicine, will conduct a needs assessment of the program. This initial visit will entail a review, evaluation of and recommendations on course offerings in the existing Master's Program in Pharmacy.

"The CAPS Assessment of Skills and Knowledge Needs in the Pharmaceutical Industry has revealed a gap between the skills and knowledge that exist versus what is required within the pharmaceutical sector. It is anticipated that the academic partnership initiative will eventually bridge the knowledge gap and substantially reduce labor migration." Anush Shahverdyan, CAPS Workforce Development Specialist suggested.

YSMU Vice-Rector of Professional and Continuing Education Dr. Gevorg Yaghjian is sure that the present project will contribute to the development and implementation of the Master's program in Pharmacy.

Produced by AGBU Armenian Representation

Established in 1906, AGBU (www.agbu.org) is the world's largest non-profit Armenian organization. Headquartered in New York City with an annual budget of \$36 million, AGBU preserves and promotes the Armenian identity and heritage through educational, cultural and humanitarian programs, annually touching the lives of some 400,000 Armenians on six continents.