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## **ARMENIA WANTS TO TRANSIT IRANIAN GAS TO EUROPE □□ WHOSE ACCOUNT AND WHAT WILL MOSCOW SAY?**

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By Elmira Tariverdiyeva – Trend.Az

Armenias President Serzh Sargsyan gave an interview to the Iranian newspaper Shargh on the eve of his visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran, where he plans to participate in the inauguration ceremony of Irans president-elect, which is scheduled for August 5, the Armenian media outlets report.

It is noteworthy to mention that, having touched upon the possibility of transit of Iranian natural gas to Europe through Armenia, Sargsyan pointed out that Yerevan has already expressed its readiness to participate in big projects. He added that the project may be implemented if, following the results of relevant discussions, it is beneficial to all interested parties, the reports say.

Yerevans readiness is not surprising; however, the realization of this project is realistic as much as of the Great Armenia. Georgia is not going to confirm the mythical agreements between Iran and Armenia and has repeatedly, at the highest levels, denied the information on the conclusion of an agreement, according to which the test export of Iranian gas will be carried out to Georgia through Armenia. As follows, this is impossible, because there is no a trilateral agreement.

The fact that there can not be such an agreement in principle is clear even without mentioning Georgia. Neither Iran, the economy of which may face a second wave of recession [due to sanctions], nor Armenia has the finances. Europe will never put investments in the project, which envisages transportation of Iranian gas through the territory of the Russian outpost □ through Russia to Europe. There are too many political risks, which make the proposal completely unprofitable. Moreover, the proposal wont contribute to the diversification of gas supplies to EU, but will create many opportunities for future blackmail of Europe, if the necessity should arise.

Furthermore, it is unlikely that Russia itself will be delighted with the emergence of another competitor on the EU gas market. In the context of consideration of Armenias total dependence on Russia, Moscow will unlikely enjoy the amplification of Armenia-Iran cooperation on one hand, and the possibility of sabotaging of its own interests on the EU market.

Therefore, Sargsyan can certainly travel to congratulate Hassan Rouhani, but it would be better for him to forget about his transit aspirations. It is obvious, that neither West nor Iran had ever seriously considered Armenia for the transit of natural gas to Europe and always relied upon the Azerbaijani-Turkish route of the Caspian gas.

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Kaynak/Source: