
NEW ARMENIAN OPPOSITION GROUP HOLDS RALLY IN YEREVAN

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A newly established opposition group held its first rally in the Armenian capital on March 10.

Supporters of the Front for the State of Armenia group gathered in Liberty Square in Yerevan, where they called for the creation of a provisional government and the release of political prisoners.

The groups leaders called on opposition political parties to join hands and prevent outgoing President Serzh Sarkisian from retaining power after his second and final term expires in April.

Armenias parliament on March 2 elected Armen Sarkisian, who has no relation to his predecessor, as the countrys next president.

Following a referendum in December 2015, Armenia changed its form of government from a semipresidential to a parliamentary republic.

As a result, presidential veto powers are being stripped from the post and the presidency is being downgraded to a figurehead position elected by parliament every seven years rather than a direct popular vote.

The constitutional reforms coming into effect also limit an Armenian president to a single seven-year term.

Skeptics see the constitutional reforms as a way for outgoing President Sarkisian to maintain political control in Armenia by becoming prime minister when the mandate for his second five-year presidential term expires on April 9.

<https://www.rferl.org/a/new-armenian-opposition-group-plans-weekend-rally-drastic-reform-martirosian-heritage-party/29089932.html>