
EUROPEAN UNION ISSUES STATEMENT ON ARMENIA AFTER PARLIAMENT FAILS TO ELECT PM

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The European Union has released a statement after the Armenian parliament failed to elect a Prime Minister on May 1.

On 1 May, a special session of the National Assembly of the Republic of Armenia did not result in the election of a new Prime Minister.

The Constitution provides for another session of the National Assembly to elect a new Prime Minister in seven days.

The European Union reiterates its support to Armenia in its efforts to build a prosperous and democratic society. It remains crucial that all parties involved, including the law enforcement agencies and those exercising their right of freedom of assembly and expression, avoid confrontation and show restraint and responsibility, as has been the case in recent days. The European Union continues to encourage all stakeholders, including civil society, to engage in a comprehensive dialogue, in view of the democratic formation of a new government in accordance with the Constitution and in the interest of all Armenians, the statement attributable to Spokesperson for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy/European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations Maja Kocijancic says.

After nearly 9 hours of debates on electing a Prime Minister on May 1, with opposition leader Nikol Pashinyan being the sole candidate, the Armenian parliament failed to make the election as 56 lawmakers voted against and 45 lawmakers voted in favor.

The only nominated candidate for Prime Minister was opposition leader Nikol Pashinyan, who spearheaded the latest protest campaigns which prompted the resignation of Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan on April 23.

Pashinyan was nominated by the opposition Yelk faction.

Two other factions – Tsarukyan and the ARF – have endorsed the opposition MPs candidacy.

Pashinyan needed at least 53 votes to be elected Prime Minister.

There are 4 factions in the Armenian parliament. The Republican Party (HHK) faction, the ruling party of Armenia, has 58 seats in the 105-seat unicameral parliament of Armenia — known as the National Assembly. The ARF faction — (Armenian Revolutionary Federation aka Dashnaktsutyun), has 7 seats. The Tsarukyan alliance has 31 seats, and the Yelk faction has 9 seats.

According to the Constitution, in case of failure to elect a Prime Minister in the parliament, a second round of election is held seven days later. In the second round, candidates nominated by at least one third of the total number of MPs are entitled to participate in the election. If a Prime Minister isn't elected in the second round also, the parliament is dissolved by virtue of law.

Pashinyan called on his supporters to resume demonstrations and civil disobedience campaigns.

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