
TER-PETROSIAN URGES MULTI-PARTY TALKS ON SNAP ELECTIONS

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Former President Levon Ter-Petrosian urged Armenias leading political groups on Thursday to reach an agreement on fresh general elections, saying that they are vital for ending what he sees as a continuing political crisis.

Ter-Petrosian said the newly appointed Prime Minister Nikol Pashinian will have trouble governing the country because the Armenian parliament is still controlled by Serzh Sarkisians Republican Party (HHK).

Until now Pashinian has imposed his will on the parliament through the popular protests and revolt, something which the international community understood as a manifestation of democracy, he said in written remarks posted on Ilur.am. But can he keep influencing the parliament with the same method? Its obvious that he cant because that resource has been exhausted.

Ter-Petrosian said foreign powers will not tolerate similar pressure on the National Assembly that could be exerted by Pashinian in his new capacity not least because they recognized the legitimacy of the last Armenian parliamentary elections held in April 2017.

The only way to end this situation extremely dangerous for the country is to radically amend the Armenian Electoral Code and hold snap elections, said the 73-year-old ex-president whose Armenian National Congress (HAK) party has been in opposition to the Sarkisian government.

Lets hope that in order to overcome legal obstacles to pre-term parliamentary elections resulting from the current complicated constitution, influential political forces will * find a way out of this difficult situation threatening our statehood through negotiations, dialogue and mutual understandings, he added.

Pashinian and parliamentary minority factions supporting him have also repeatedly called for such elections since massive protests led by Pashinian forced Sarkisian to resign as prime minister on April 23. But they have so far avoided speculating about possible election dates.

It remains unclear whether Sarkisians HHK will agree to the parliaments dissolution and the conduct of snap polls in the coming months. Ter-Petrosian suggested that HHK lawmakers fear they would not be reelected in that case.

Pashinian, 42, was a prominent and influential member of Ter-Petrosians opposition movement

until falling out bitterly with the latter in 2012. This might explain why the ex-president did not congratulate his erstwhile ally on being elected prime minister by the parliament on May 8.

On May 6, Ter-Petrosian issued a stern warning that seemed primarily addressed to Pashinian. He claimed that the ongoing political transition in Armenia may be marred by a violation of the countrys constitution. Ter-Petrosian pointed to the resignations of two lawmakers who broke ranks during an earlier parliament vote on Pashinians bid to become premier.

<https://www.azatutyun.am/a/29219121.html>

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