
OPENING OF ZANGAZUR CORRIDOR CAN LEAD ARMENIA OUT OF CRISIS

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The opening of the Zangezur corridor can lead Armenia out of the crisis. In 2020, Armenia's GDP fell by 7.4%. In 2021, it is projected to grow from 5.2% to a maximum of 6.1%. This means that this year the Armenian economy will not be able to return to the pre-pandemic and pre-war levels.

Expert-economist, Member of Parliament Vugar Bayramov told Trend that Armenia can restore its economy, which is in the state of crisis by opening communications:

"The economic situation in Armenia before the war deteriorated sharply, and in the subsequent period it worsened even more. The credit ratings of this country have been downgraded by international organizations. This indicates the deterioration of the macroeconomic indicators of the Armenian economy and the continuation of the crisis. At the same time, the share of the country's external debt in GDP is more than 60 percent, foreign exchange reserves are quite small, and the fiscal capacity of the budget is limited".

The expert noted that in order to get out of the current situation, Armenia should be interested in cooperation with the countries of the region, the opening of communications, the creation of Zangazur corridor: "There are two paths ahead of Armenia today. One of them is the continuation of revanchist tendencies, and this will entail a further deepening of the economic crisis. Naturally, Azerbaijan is capable of responding to any revanchist challenges. The second way is the restoration of economic cooperation in the region, the opening of communications, including creation of the Zangazur corridor. Azerbaijan is interested in signing a peace agreement and establishing peace in the region as a whole. Therefore, the development of the Armenian economy also depends on the recognition of the territorial integrity of its neighbors and the desire to live in peace. From this point of view, the opening of the Zangazur corridor may be important for the Armenian economy. If Armenia wants to stop the economic downturn and gradually restore the economy, opening up communications is a special alternative for it. On the other hand, the opening of the Zangazur corridor will create new economic opportunities for the countries of the region as a whole. Including taking into account the fact that Turkey proposed a "platform of six", which can be considered as meeting the economic interests of three countries of the region (Azerbaijan, Georgia, Armenia) and three neighboring countries (Turkey, Russia, Iran)."

Expert-economist Rashad Hasanov also notes that the path to prosperity for Armenia lies through constructive behavior, as well as peace in the region:

"The consequences of the damage done in 2020 to the economies of many countries of the world, including Armenia, are yet to be overcome. And in Armenia the situation is completely deplorable. In 2020, the country suffered a great defeat in the Second Karabakh war. Political stability in this country was violated, despair arose in Armenian society. In the current situation, the path to prosperity for Armenia lies through constructive behavior. And here serious obligations fall on Armenia. One of them is the official recognition of the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan, the second is demonstration of a position towards the restoration of communications in the region in accordance with the trilateral statement. Restoring political and economic relations with such main and large neighbors as Turkey and Azerbaijan is one of the serious needs for Armenia."

Hasanov noted that the government and society of Armenia are already beginning to realize the realities prevailing in the region. There is a realization that the restoration of economic relations with Azerbaijan and Turkey will play great role in solving problems such as the current economic blockade: "The Zangazur corridor is more important for Armenia than for Azerbaijan, Turkey and Russia. Armenia can get quite serious advantages with the opening of this corridor. Development of communications will create favorable conditions for Armenia to enter European markets through Turkey".

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