AVİM Commentary • No: 2016 / 9 •

ASALA WANTS TO HAVE A SAY IN ARMENIAN POLITICS

Hazel ÇAĞAN ELBİR

Analyst

Hazel ÇAĞAN ELBİR

Analyst, AVİM

In this period in which terrorism is on the rise, it is seen that architects of terrorism do not shy away from revealing their identities.

We live in period in which attacks on World Trade Center, Charlie Hebdo, Suruç, Paris, Lebanon, the plane Crash in Sinai Peninsula, the Ankara and Sultan Ahmet attacks and numerous similar terrorist incidents occurred.

Terrorism is as old as birth of communities. As for global terrorism, it came into prominence in the recent period. Turkeys war on global terrorism began in the 1970s with the assassinations of Turkish diplomats and attacks against Turkish mission buildings by Armenian terrorist organizations. Failure to take necessary precautions and especially many countries inability to protect Turkish diplomats, although it was these countries duty to do so, gave rise to a long and painful process and led to the deaths of Turkish diplomats and their family members. We should also bear in mind that apprehended Armenian terrorists did not receive necessary punishments following their trials.

Terrorist acts against Turkish diplomats by Armenian terrorist organizations, especially by ASALA, did not go beyond being covered in the media. Although these acts were not supported, they were also not openly condemned in the media. The media even became a means to give voice to Armenian genocide allegations. Thus, the Western media, mostly unknowingly, became a means for Armenian propaganda.

On July 15, 1983, the bomb exploded in front of the Turkish Airlines check-in counter in the Paris Orly Airport caused the death of 8 people and injured 60 people. The fact that 6 of the victims were non-Turk led the Western world to change its stance and gave rise to criticisms against Armenian terrorism. This led Armenian terrorist organizations, especially ASALA to limit and, within several years, to cease their terrorist acts.

Armenia, which gained its independence in 1991, tried to distance itself from ASALA and

other Armenian terrorist organizations, which was an attitude also maintained by the Armenian diaspora. Thus, an effort was put to distract people into forgetting Armenian terrorism and was successful to a great extent. On the other hand, it is known that Armenia received many terrorist, gave them shelter and jobs but did not allow them to operate. Only ASALA was able to celebrate each year its anniversary of establishment but wasnt able to draw much attention from the media.

However, this long-standing situation seems to have changed this year. In a statement released on January 10, ASALA indicated that strategy of the Armenian authorities amid the geopolitical processes that directly affect Armenia fell short. ASALA stated that the reason behind the Armenian people's defeats has always been its internal shortsightedness, not the might of the enemy, and declared that ASALA sought to achieve success in motherland. These words proves that ASALA, benefitting from the anticipated constitutional changes in Armenia, is preparing to get a foothold in Armenia, in other words, to engage in politics.

It is very hard to predict to what degree ASALA will become successful in politics. Although an important majority of the Armenian media ignores ASALA, it is seen that ASALA is respected and appreciated by the nationalist portion of the Armenian public. The fact that, during a ceremony held at the Yerablur Memoraial Cemetery on January 20, 2016 on the occasion of the 41st anniversary of ASALA, Armenian soldiers carried ASALA flags and that a priest, after his prayer, made a vilifying speech against Turkey mentioning the names of Abdülhamid, Enver Pasha, Atatürk and President Erdoğan, is a great example of the sympathy towards ASALA by the far right as well as the Church.

About the Author :

Hazel Çağan-Elbir is an analyst in AVİM. Çağan-Elbir continues her studies in Political Economy doctorate program at Atılım University.

To cite this article: ELBİR, Hazel ÇAĞAN. 2026. "ASALA WANTS TO HAVE A SAY IN ARMENIAN POLITICS." Center For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Commentary No.2016 / 9. January 28. Accessed October 30, 2026. https://avim.org.tr/en/Yorum/ASALA-WANTS-TO-HAVE-A-SAY-IN-ARMENIAN-POLITICS

AVİM
AVRASYA İNCELEMELERİ MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR EURASIAN STUDIES

Süleyman Nazif Sok. No: 12/B Daire 3-4 06550 Çankaya-ANKARA / TÜRKİYE
Tel: +90 (312) 438 50 23-24 • **Fax**: +90 (312) 438 50 26
@avimorgtr

https://www.facebook.com/avrasyaincelemelerimerkezi
E-Mail: info@avim.org.tr
http://avim.org.tr

© 2009-2025 Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM) All Rights Reserved