

OPENING OF THE BORDER BETWEEN TURKEY AND ARMENIA DIRECTLY DEPENDS ON THE FINALIZATION OF THE ARMENIAN-AZERBAIJANI PEACE AGREEMENT - STEM - 11.07.2025

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Interview conducted by Tamilla Mammadova

STEM presents an interview with Mehmet Oguzhan Tulun, a Turkish political scientist, expert in international relations and history, and analyst at the Center for Eurasian Studies (AVİM).

- How do you assess Pashinyan's course towards political concentration of power? Given the recent arrests of prominent figures, how stable is his control over state institutions?

- I would characterize Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyans control over state institutions as being normal within the context of Armenias politics. However, Pashinyan inherited from his predecessors a political system riddled with conflicting agendas between Russia sympathizers, the irredentist Karabakh clan, Diaspora-linked actors, and West sympathizers. This conflict severely damaged Armenias long-term perspective on foreign policy and caused the country to become isolated in the South Caucasus. Pashinyans harsh methods to consolidate power for the Armenian government in order to battle against these conflicting forces is inevitably causing political controversy.

- Can we talk about the growth of authoritarian tendencies in Armenia? Or are

political situation?

- I consider Pashinyans steps to be justified when considering just how irrational and destabilizing the traditional actors in Armenian politics can be. Azerbaijans victory over Armenia during the Second Karabakh War, and Azerbaijan regaining full control over Karabakh is a devastating blow to the collective Armenian psyche that was shaped by unrealistic and unjustified assumptions. Armenia is now faced with the stark reality of regional isolation. To get out of this, Armenia must mend ties with Azerbaijan and Türkiye, distance itself from Russia, and build strong ties with the West. This is going to be a delicate balancing act for Armenia, but Pashinyan seems to approach this job with the force of a sledgehammer instead of the precision of a scalpel, which is shocking for Armenian society.

- What is Pashinyan's real support within the country today? Is there a stable social base, or could the growing protest develop into a serious political crisis?

- There is a no stable social base for Pashinyans government, because Armenian society is politically fractured and still going through the trauma of losing to Azerbaijan in the Second Karabakh War. However, Pashinyan is acting with the assumption that the Armenian opposition is divided, and that they represent the old ways of Armenian politics that dug the country into a political ditch. As such, the opposition does not offer any meaningful ways for Armenia to build a better tomorrow. The Armenian electorate is fully aware of this, and so generally supports Pashinyans government because there is no viable alternative. Pashinyans sledgehammer approach, however, could push the Armenian people to act in emotional ways, which could jeopardize his political future.

To read the rest of the interview, please click: https://stem-lab.az/en/article/otkrytie-qranitsy-mezhdu-turtsiei-i-armeniei-napryamuyu-zavisit-ot-finalizatsii-armyanoazerbaidzhanskoqo-mirnoqo-soqlasheniya-1839

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