



ARMENIA: PRESSING AHEAD WITH A DRY PORT CONCEPT

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Brawley Benson

Armenian officials are hoping to mitigate the chill in Yerevans relations with Russia by creating a dry port that plugs the country into emerging international trade corridors.

The government plan seeks to transform Armenia into a transit, transport and export-focused manufacturing hub, according to a readout from a meeting of the countrys investment committee published earlier this year. The dry port concept rests on the establishment of a free-trade zone, featuring multi-modal air, rail and trucking facilities connected to warehouses and industrial parks.

First announced three years ago, officials are now touting the project as a potential golden goose for the state treasury. For Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, the dry port is a pillar of his Crossroads of Peace vision, an ambitious initiative to create a new reality in the Caucasus rooted in beneficial trade. Officials have already earmarked \$37 million in public funds for the dry port project which will be situated near the city of Gyumri, Armenias second largest city and the site of a Russian military base.

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