QUEST FOR A NEW ORDER AND UNITY IN EURASIA WITH RUSSIA IN THE LEAD

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Following the disintegration of the Soviet Union, eleven newly independent states of the Soviet geography established a group in December 1991 called Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). The annual summit of this group, at the present also with eleven members including Turkmenistan and Ukraine whose internal approval procedures have not yet been completed, is expected to be held next month in Ashkhabad, Turkmenistan.

It has transpired over time that the level of cooperation that desired and is needed by this group was not sufficient, thereby Russian President has declared in October 2011 his proposal for a Eurasian Union (EAU) which is understood to be inspired by the European Union model. It is expected for the CIS Ashkhabad summit to be a turning point where the proposal to establish EAU as the new model of a union in the future could be endorsed.

The Ashkhabad summit could also be a junction for Armenia or at least a demanding difficult time of decision at this stage. It is well known that for some time, Russia has been exerting pressure on Armenia to announce its decision to join the EAU. On the other hand, it seems that Armenia is attempting to keep open the option to have a place in NATO and the EU in the future. Armenia is also under pressure by the West in making a choice. It has recently been reported in the press that during a seminar of EU-Armenia Integration, Head of political, economic, press and information section of the EU delegation that visited Armenia has said that joining the Eurasian Union is an attempt to return to the USSR period. Armenia must be aware of its interests. Armenia must decide on either being there or here.

It appears that Armenias ambiguity has caused strains in its relations with Russia. According to the press reportings, the announced official visit of the Russian President was delayed twice, and finally it was cancelled. Under the circumstances, it should be possible for the presidents of both countries to meet during the Ashkhabad summit. It is understood that the Russian side will expect Armenia to declare its definite stance and final decision concerning the Eurasian Union during this meeting. When taking into consideration also that the Presidential elections will be held in Armenia on 18 February 2013, time pressure on Armenia about its decision is building.

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