

## EDITORIAL / BAŞYAZI

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## FACTS AND COMMENTS

(OLAYLAR VE YORUMLAR)

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**Abstract:** *This article covers the period of June-November 2025 on the internal developments in Armenia, foreign dynamics shaping its international relations, the process of signing the peace agreement with Azerbaijan and the bilateral relations of Türkiye and Armenia in the light of the process of normalization of their relations.*

*Ahead of the elections to be held in June 2026, internal tensions have surged in Armenia and the accusations and adversity of the opposition towards Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan have intensified. The opposition has been led mainly by the Apostolic Church with the backing of Russia and the Diaspora, with the most prominent support coming from the Dashnak party's US-based lobby organization ANCA. As Pashinyan personally targeted the head of the Church and its hierarchy, Catholicos Karekin II has in return openly taken political initiative and introduced religion as a major force in politics, encouraged by the surge of Christian nationalism in the West.*

*Rapid and positive developments have taken place in the peace agreement negotiations process between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Following the highlevel talks in Abu Dhabi between the parties (one on one and with*

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*delegations), their first ever direct talks without an intermediary, the two sides met in Washington D.C. on 8 August with the participation of the US President, where it was pompously declared that the parties had agreed on the peace agenda. One of the two impediments to concluding the peace agreement, the Zangezur corridor issue, was overcome with the proposed formation of “TRIPP”. As regards the change of Armenia’s constitution, Pashinyan has promised to look into the matter after the elections.*

*In foreign relations, the adopted “balanced and balancing” as well as “multivector” foreign policy lines have provided the justification to expand ties in an extremely broad spectrum from the US to China, EU to SCO, to India, Russia, and Iran, conjuring the perception that foreign bonds are being put on auction.*

*Noteworthy, substantial developments have taken place in Türkiye-Armenia relations as well. Upon the invitation of Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Pashinyan paid an official visit to Türkiye, the first of its kind. Special representatives of the normalization process met for the first time, in their sixth meeting, without an intermediary and in a capital city of their own, as the Turkish delegation crossed the closed border to reach Yerevan. The two sides acknowledged that they are ready to fully implement the normalization of their relations. It is understood that the timing is geared with the signing of the peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan.*

**Keywords:** Pashinyan, Mirzoyan, Karekin II, Dashnaktsutyun (ARF), Diaspora, Erdogan, Azerbaijan.

**Öz:** Bu incelemede Haziran-Kasım 2025 tarihleri döneminde Ermenistan’daki iç gelişmeler, dış ilişkiler, Azerbaycan ile barış anlaşması imzalanması süreci ile devam eden normalleşme sürecinin ışığında Türkiye-Ermenistan arasındaki ilişkiler ele alınmaktadır. Ermenistan’da Haziran 2026’da yapılması öngörülen seçimlerin öncesinde iç politikada gerginlik artmış, muhalefetin Başbakan Nikol Paşinyan ve yönetimine yönelik suçlamaları ve karşıtlığı şiddetlenmiştir. Muhalefetin öncülüğünü Diasporanın (özellikle de Taşnak partisinin ABD merkezli lobi örgütü ANCA’nın) ve Rusya’nın desteğini alan Apostolik Kilise üstlenmiş, Paşinyan’ın Kilisenin üst düzey hiyerarşisini hedef alması sonucu Katolikos Karekin II öncülüğünde din, Hristiyan milliyetçiliğin Batı’da giderek ön plana çıkmasının da verdiği cesaretle, siyasette önemli bir unsur olarak ön plana çıkmıştır.

*Azerbaycan ile barış anlaşması sürecinde hızlı ve olumlu gelişmeler yaşanmıştır. Tarafların bir aracı olmadan Abu Dabi 'de ilk kez üst düzey ikili ve heyetler arası doğrudan görüşmelerinin ardından, 8 Ağustos'ta Vaşington'da ABD Başkanının katılımıyla yaptıkları görüşme sonrası iddialı bir şekilde barış penceresinin açıldığı ilan edilmiştir. Anlaşmanın önündeki iki engelden biri olan Zengezur koridoru "TRIPP" adı ile giderilmiş, Ermenistan'da anayasa değişikliği konusunda ise Paşinyan seçimlerden sonra bu konuda adım atacağı vadinde bulunmuştur.*

*Dış ilişkilerde benimsenen "dengeli ve dengeleyici" ve "çok vektörlü" dış politika anlayışı ABD'den Çin'e, AB'den, ŞİÖ'ye Rusya'dan İran'a, Hindistan'a çok geniş bir yelpazeye yayılmış, adeta dış bağlantıların açık artırmaya çıkarıldığı görüntüsünü vermiştir.*

*Türkiye-Ermenistan ilişkilerinde de dikkat çekici gelişmeler, ileri adımlar kaydedilmiştir. Cumhurbaşkanı Recep Tayyip Erdoğan'ın daveti üzerine Paşinyan'ın Türkiye'ye yaptığı resmi ziyaret ile bir ilk yaşanmıştır. Normalleşme süreci özel temsilcileri de ilk kez ikili görüşmelerini aracısız ve kendi başkentlerinden birinde, Erivan'da yapmış, Türk heyeti kapalı olan kara sınırından geçiş yapmıştır. Tarafların ilişkilerin tam normalleşmeyi sağlamaya hazır oldukları kaydedilmiş, zamanlamanın Ermenistan-Azerbaycan barış anlaşmasının imzalanması ile bağlantılı olduğu anlaşılmıştır.*

**Anahtar Kelimeler:** Paşinyan, Mirzoyan, II. Karekin, Taşnaksutyun (EDF), Diaspora, Erdoğan, Azerbaycan.

## 1. Domestic Developments in Armenia

Small in numbers but well funded and vociferous opposition against Prime Minister Pashinyan and his administration has continued without losing pace or intensity. However, the traditional opposition, represented in parliament and led by the two former presidents, has lost credibility and trust among the public and has been unable to achieve unity among its own ranks. As a consequence, the opposition's leadership has been taken over by shady and extremist groups, fuelled by the support of radical and revanchist parties of the Diaspora, and the increasingly politicized Patriarchate-Apostolic Church. The Pashinyan-Church contention has reached extremes, with Catholicos Karekin II himself becoming a target.

Pashinyan's welcome by the Apostolic Archbishop during his visit to Estonia on 27 April and his statement "*Prime Minister, I pray for the success of your plans for peace and reconciliation with Armenia's neighbours*" was criticized by the Etchmiadzin, reminding the Archbishop that Catholicos Karekin II and the higher hierarchy opposed Pashinyan's policy.<sup>1</sup>

During his term, Pashinyan has made serious accusations against senior clergy both on social media and in parliament. He has accused them of breaking their vows of chastity and of paedophilia. He has also claimed that the Catholicos has an illegitimate child and has called for him to resign.<sup>2</sup> On 2 June, the Catholicos called senior clergy to an emergency meeting. In a statement, the accusations against the senior clergy were vehemently condemned, and it was expressed that this shameful campaign was being carried out to silence the Church and reduce its influence on public opinion, and it was also alleged that this was being done in line with Azerbaijan's demands.<sup>3</sup> During this period, when constitutional amendment debates were also ongoing, the Church's stance against the government appeared to be based on the suspicion that Pashinyan was engaged in a covert effort towards secularism by establishing a "coordination council" within the Church administration to keep the Church away from state affairs.

In response to reactions from the revanchist, radical, extremist sections of the

1 Gayane Saribekian, "Armenian Church Rebukes Pro-Pashinian Archbishop", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, April 29, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33400384.html>.

2 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Pashinyan Suggests that the head of the Armenian Church Has a Child", *OC Media*, June 2, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/pashinyan-suggests-that-the-head-of-the-armenian-church-has-a-child/>.

3 "Armenian Church Slams Pashinian's 'Shameful Campaign'", *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, June 2, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33432106.html>.

Diaspora in favour of the Church and against Pashinyan, High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Sinanyan stated on 5 June, “*Some fully agree with the Prime Minister’s statements, while others have expressed bewilderment. The Church is made up of its people, not just its hierarchy, and real harm comes from those within who violate its codes of conduct. It is a crucial stage in Armenia’s state-building process, where all institutions must be accountable to the people*”.<sup>4</sup> During this period, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) Dashnak Party and the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) have led the opposition against Pashinyan and support for the Church in the Diaspora.

Pashinyan outlined the principles of how he envisions the real Armenia, not the historical one, in his speech at the commemoration ceremony for the founding of the first republic on 28 May:

- Our identity is our state, our state is our identity.
- Armenia’s internationally recognized territory comprises 29,743 square kilometers territory.
- Let us not repeat the mistakes of the last 450 years in pursuing the ideal of historical Armenia.
- The security guaranteed by foreign forces is deceptive.<sup>5</sup>

In a speech delivered at Yerevan State University on 2 June, Pashinyan stated that Armenia had become more sovereign and strengthened its independence following the loss of Nagorno-Karabakh. In this context, he noted that, as of 1 March, border crossing points were now under the sole governance of Armenian forces.<sup>6</sup>

A Russian dimension has been added to Pashinyan’s conflict with the Church and the Catholicos. Samvel Karapetyan, a wealthy businessman with dual citizenship, visited Etchmiadzin on 17 June, accusing Pashinyan of attacking the Church and declaring his readiness to do what was necessary in the

4 “The Church is Not a Hierarchical Elite, The Church is The People. Everyone Needs a Report to the Armenian People in Respect of Their Responsibilities, Zareh Sinanyan”, *Tert*, June 5, 2025, <https://tert.am/en/news/2025/06/05/zareh-sinanyan/4233293>.

5 “‘Today We Are More Sovereign and Independent Than Ever Before,’ Pashinyan’s Address”, *ArmenPress*, May 28, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1220828>.

6 Shoghik Galstian, “Pashinian Said to Call Loss of Karabakh Blessing For Armenia”, *Azatutyun Radiokayan*, June 3, 2025, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/33433114.html>.

Church's defense. He was arrested on 18 June on charges of conspiracy.<sup>7</sup> The Church protested and condemned this arrest. Interestingly, the Patriarch of the Jerusalem Orthodox Church also criticized Karapetyan's arrest.<sup>8</sup> In a statement made on this occasion, Pashinyan expressed that certain "Russian circles" could be behind the "hybrid war" being waged in Armenia and that he was fighting against the loss of the Church's sanctity.<sup>9</sup> Kremlin spokesperson Peskov announced on 20 June that they were monitoring the situation, that Karapetyan was a Russian citizen from their point of view, that they had no intention of interfering in Armenia's internal affairs, but that they were, of course, closely monitoring any developments concerning a Russian citizen.<sup>10</sup> On 27 June, Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs called on Armenia to respect religious sentiment and the principles of religious freedom.<sup>11</sup> On 30 June, Mirzoyan responded to Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov's statement that attacks against the Church in Armenia were alarming, accusing Moscow of interfering in Armenia's internal affairs.<sup>12</sup>

Karapetyan, has been compared to Vardanyan, also with dual citizenship, who was brought into power in Nagorno-Karabakh at the time and is currently detained in Azerbaijan. During his detention, Karapetyan has continued his discourse against Pashinyan and the government, distanced himself from former opposition leaders, and on 15 August announced through his nephew that he would establish a party called "Our Way" and participate in the 2026 elections.<sup>13</sup>

The Armenian Investigative Committee announced on 23 June that a movement called the "Holy Struggle" had been established with the aim of committing terrorist acts and forcibly overthrowing the government, and that Archbishop Galstanyan was leading it. Galstanyan and 14 of his associates were arrested

7 "Business Magnate Samvel Karapetyan Jailed", *ArmenPress*, June 19, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222714>.

8 Shoghik Galstian, "Karabakh War Report Classified Without Parliament Debate", *The California Courier*, October 7, 2025, <https://www.thecaliforniacourier.com/karabakh-war-report-classified-without-parliament-debate/>.

9 "Pashinyan Doesn't Rule Out "Some Circles" in Russia Could Be Behind "Hybrid War"", *ArmenPress*, June 18, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222633>.

10 "Russia "Closely Monitoring" Tycoon Samvel Karapetyan's Case, Says Kremlin", *ArmenPress*, June 20, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222878>.

11 "TASS: Russian Foreign Ministry Urges Armenia to Respect Religious Sentiments and Principles of Religious Freedom", *News.am*, June 27, 2025, <https://news.am/eng/news/891183.html>.

12 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Armenia Urges Russia not to Interfere in its Internal Affairs", *OC Media*, June 30, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/armenia-urges-russia-not-to-interfere-in-its-internal-affairs/>.

13 "New Opposition Group Forming in Armenia to Challenge Pashinyan in 2026 Elections; 'Our Way' Says It Will Not Work With Former Leaders", *The Armenian Report*, August 15, 2025, <https://www.thearmenianreport.com/post/new-opposition-group-forming-in-armenia-to-challenge-pashinyan-in-2026-elections-our-way-says-it>.

on 25 June.<sup>14</sup> The Supreme Spiritual Council, chaired by the Catholicos, issued a statement on 25 June expressing deep concern regarding the proceedings against Galstanyan and his associates, noting that the government's stance to date did not guarantee a fair process and that this created a false pretext for the authorities' anti-Church campaign.<sup>15</sup> Pashinyan stated on his social media account, "*Law enforcement prevented a major and despicable 'criminal-oligarchic-clerical' plan to destabilize the Republic of Armenia and usurp power.*"<sup>16</sup>

The World Council of Churches (WCC) expressed "deep concern" on 8 July over the Armenian government's campaign against the leadership of the Armenian Apostolic Church and the arrest of two archbishops. Aram I, the Catholicos of Antelias in Lebanon, stated, "*Its a shame. I will come to Armenia, meet with Karekin II and the Prime Minister to find solutions to the current situation.*", but no such visit took place during that period.<sup>17</sup> The European Union has noted that the matter is an internal affair of Armenia.

On 26 June, a judicial investigation was launched against Archbishop Ajapahyan for stating in an interview that "A military coup d'état must be carried out in Armenia."<sup>18</sup> Tensions arose when security forces attempted to arrest him at the Catholicosate in Etchmiadzin. The following day, Ajapahyan turned himself in and was arrested. On 3 October, he was sentenced to two years in prison on charges of attempting a coup.<sup>19</sup>

The 198th anniversary of the battle and victory, commemorated at the Monument to the "Heroes of Oshakan" near Etchmiadzin, where Russian troops and Armenian volunteers defeated the larger Iranian army on 17 August 1827 and liberated the "holy Etchmiadzin" from occupation, was reported in the press.<sup>20</sup>

14 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Armenia Raids Opposition Homes and Detains Archbishop Galstanyan for 'Plotting Coup'", *OC Media*, June 25, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/armenia-raids-homes-of-opposition-figures-and-detains-archbishop-galstanyan-for-plotting-terrorist-attacks-and-coup/>.

15 "Supreme Spiritual Council Issued a Statement", *Armenian Apostolic Holy Church Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin*, June 25, 2025, <https://www.armenianchurch.org/en/news/supreme-spiritual-council-issued-a-statement/11864>.

16 "'Criminal-Oligarchic-Clerical' Coup Plot Thwarted, Says Pashinyan", *ArmenPress*, June 25, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1223240>.

17 "Aram I Calls for Ending 'Unhealthy Atmosphere' in Armenia", *ArmenPress*, July 9, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1224382>.

18 "Senior Clergyman Under Investigation for Advocating Overthrow of Government", *ArmenPress*, June 26, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1223395>.

19 "Archbishop Mikayel Ajapahyan Sentenced to Two Years in Prison", *ArmenPress*, October 3, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1231279>.

20 Marianna Mkrtchyan, "Tribute Paid to Memory of Oshakan Battle Heroes in Armenia", *Arminfo*, August 18, 2025, [https://arminfo.info/full\\_news.php?id=93925&lang=3](https://arminfo.info/full_news.php?id=93925&lang=3).



Following a warning from the State Ethics Committee, Pashinyan apologized on 17 August for certain remarks he had made regarding the head and leaders of the Church.<sup>21</sup> In a statement on 28 August, he reiterated that he had not abandoned his efforts to secure the resignation and removal from office of the head of the Church.<sup>22</sup>

On 23 August, marking the 35th anniversary of the adoption of the Declaration of Independence, which is part of the Constitution and contains expansionist and revanchist statements, Armenia's President Khachaturyan published an emotional and laudatory congratulatory message.<sup>23</sup> The Dashnak Party also made a comprehensive statement defending the importance of the declaration and emphasizing that it should be preserved in its entirety.<sup>24</sup> On the other hand, Pashinyan once again criticized the declaration, which was adopted 35 years ago under Soviet rule, explaining that this document contained contradictions that threatened Armenia's sovereignty.<sup>25</sup>

With the cabinet reshuffle on 27 August, Arsen Torosyan was appointed Minister of Labor and Social Affairs, replacing Narek Mkrtchyan, who was appointed ambassador to the United States.<sup>26</sup> On 17 July, Hambardzum Matevosyan was appointed Minister of Environment.<sup>27</sup> The new ministers took office on 16 September after being sworn in at the Presidential Palace.

When journalists asked Pashinyan for his opinion on Israel's Prime Minister recognizing the "Armenian genocide," he responded on 27 August: *"The recognition of the Armenian Genocide by other countries does not provide Armenia with any dividends and does not serve the interests of the country. The statement had nothing to do with the interests of Armenia or its people."*

21 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Pashinyan Apologises to the Public for Insulting Church and Opposition", *OC Media*, August 18, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/pashinyan-apologises-to-the-public-for-insulting-church-and-opposition/>.

22 "Pashinyan Demanded the Resignation of the Catholics of All Armenians from His Post", *Izvestia*, August 28, 2025, <https://en.iz.ru/en/1944450/2025-08-28/pashinyan-demanded-resignation-catholics-all-armenians-his-post>.

23 "President Khachaturyan Congratulates on 35th Anniversary of Declaration of Independence", *ArmenPress*, August 23, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1227904>.

24 "ARF of Armenia Statement on 35th Anniversary of Declaration of Independence", *Asbarez*, August 25, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/arf-of-armenia-statement-on-35th-anniversary-of-declaration-of-independence/>.

25 "Prime Minister Issues Statement on 35th Anniversary of Declaration of Independence", *ArmenPress*, August 23, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1227902>.

26 "The Prime Minister Introduces Newly Appointed Minister Arsen Torosyan to the Staff of the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, August 28, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/08/28/Nikol-Pashinyan-28-08/>.

27 "The Prime Minister Introduces Newly Appointed Minister of Environment Hambardzum Matevosyan", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, July 17, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/07/17/Nikol-Pashinyan-Minister-of-Environment/>.



*And, in general, we need to understand: do we want the recognition or non-recognition of the Armenian Genocide to be a geopolitical pawn in the hands of others, which has nothing to do with the interests of our state and the interests of the people? Do we want the Armenian Genocide to be something expressed in an interview as a result of coincidence or confusion? I do not want us to put our martyrs in such a status. We must focus on the interests of our state.*"<sup>28</sup>

At the government's 11 September meeting, it was decided to remove the symbol of Mount Ararat from the stamps used for border crossings in passports, and it was announced that the new stamps would be issued on 1 November.<sup>29</sup> The opposition launched a campaign emphasizing the sanctity of Mount Ararat in Armenian identity and its place in Armenian consciousness, viewing and opposing the decision as a new concession to Türkiye.<sup>30</sup> In his statement on 18 September, Pashinyan denied that there was any connection between the change in passport stamps and the normalization process with Türkiye.<sup>31</sup>

In a speech at a security forum in Yerevan on 15 September, Pashinyan stated that the armed forces were a last resort for the country's security, that essentially maintaining a balance of power against a potential enemy was not the main issue, and that there were many other measures and precautions that could be taken before resorting to military action.<sup>32</sup> This statement provoked a reaction from the opposition, and Pashinyan was accused of appeasement.

On 16 September, the opposition party led by former President Sargsyan made a second attempt to pass a vote of no confidence against Pashinyan's administration, which, like the previous one, was unsuccessful.<sup>33</sup>

28 "Armenia Has Not Gained Any Dividends from International Recognition of Armenian Genocide, Pashinyan Says", *Asbarez*, August 28, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/armenia-has-not-gained-any-dividends-from-international-recognition-of-armenian-genocide-pashinyan-says/>.

29 "Ermenistan, Ağrı Dağı Simgesini Pasaportlardan Kaldırma Kararı Aldı", *Hürriyet*, September 15, 2025, <https://www.hurriyet.com.tr/dunya/ermenistan-agri-dagi-simgesini-pasaportlardan-kaldirma-karari-aldi-42949575>.

30 Ruzanna Stepanian, "Armenians In Uproar After Removal Of Mount Ararat From Passport Stamps", *Asbarez*, September 20, 2025, <https://www.rferl.org/a/mount-ararat-passport-stamp-removal-armenia-turkey/33533794.html>.

31 "Armenian PM Denies Link Between Border Stamp Change and Türkiye Normalization", *ArmenPress*, September 18, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1229974>.

32 "One of the Pillars of Security Should be Legitimacy: Prime Minister Participates in the "Comprehensive Security and Resilience 2025" International Conference", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, September 15, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/09/15/Nikol-Pashinyan/>.

33 "Opposition Faction Proposes No-Confidence Motion Targeting Pashinyan", *Civilnet*, September 16, 2025, <https://www.civilnet.am/en/news/974652/opposition-faction-proposes-no-confidence-motion-targeting-pashinyan/>.

In a declaration released on 20 September at its seventh congress, Pashinyan's Civil Contract Party declared that establishing the Fourth Republic in Armenia was a strategic task. The declaration outlined the coalition government's program for the 2026 elections in nine articles. The second article stated that if they secured a majority in the elections, they would initiate the process of adopting a new constitution. During his speech at the congress, Pashinyan described the new constitution as "the reform of reforms," criticized Catholicos Karekin II once again, and insisted on his dismissal.<sup>34</sup> In a vote at the congress, Pashinyan was re-elected as party chairman, receiving 758 votes out of 917 delegates.<sup>35</sup>

Pashinyan underlined his proposal for a "Fourth Republic" in his speech at the congress. In a video message released on 8 October, he explained the differences between the fourth republic and the current regime as follows: *"Many people ask what the difference is between the third republic and the fourth republic. The difference is this: the third republic was founded on the logic of conflict, while the fourth republic is founded on the logic of peace. In the third republic, the idea that the constitution was adopted through the free will and vote of the people is highly questionable. In the fourth republic, there should be no such doubt at all. In the third republic, the notion that power belongs to the people is relative and formal; in the fourth republic, it must be clear and indisputable. And finally, the third republic was about dreaming of a homeland, searching for a homeland — searching for the homeland of our dreams. The fourth republic is about recognizing that the Republic of Armenia is the homeland of our dreams — and that there is no need to search for another."*<sup>36</sup>

On 21 September, the 34th anniversary of the Republic of Armenia's independence, Pashinyan issued a written message. Relevant sections of the message, which highlighted the need to establish the Fourth Republic, are the following:

*"On September 21, 1991, the following question was put to a referendum: 'Do you agree that the Republic of Armenia should be an independent democratic state outside the USSR?' and 94 percent of our people, voters, answered 'yes' and thus the Third Republic of Armenia was founded. Unfortunately, the life*

34 "Civil Contract Declares Establishment of 4th Republic of Armenia as an Upcoming Strategic Task", *ArmenPress*, September 20, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230150>.

35 "Prime Minister Pashinyan Re-Elected Chairman of the Board of Civil Contract Party", *ArmenPress*, September 22, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230222>.

36 "Pashinyan Outlines Ideological Vision for 'Fourth Republic'", *ArmenPress*, October 8, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1231567>.

*of the Third Republic did not turn out like that with the peace established on August 8, 2025, that dream has once again filled the Republic of Armenia, Having gone through suffering and sacrifice, today, here we are, we have reached this point, and this is what the agenda for establishing the Fourth Republic is about, about never missing the opportunity to fulfill a dream again.*"<sup>37</sup>

While Independence Day messages expressed confidence in the developments recorded at the governance level and for the future, former leaders and the opposition voiced grave concern regarding the country's current situation.

On 25 September, Parliament Speaker Simonyan was asked whether his Civil Contract Party would be able to secure a majority in the 2026 elections. Simonyan answered by saying: *"If I used to think in the past that we would definitely get 51%, now I am sure of it. Especially after the August 8 Washington agreement, and considering the steps that have been taken — and will be taken — before the election, we will garner far more votes than we did in the 2021 election."*<sup>38</sup> (In the 2021 elections, the Civil Contract received 54% of the votes and won 71 seats in the 107-member parliament.)

On 13 October, Pashinyan congratulated the Mayor of Yerevan on the celebrations organized to mark the 2807th anniversary of the founding of "Erebuni-Yerevan".<sup>39</sup>

On 15 October six priests were detained with the accusation of plotting coups against the government in another episode of the adversity with the Apostolic Church hierarchy politically opposing the Pashinyan administration. Addressing journalists on 16 October, Pashinyan rejected the opposition allegations of constitutional amendments linked to foreign policy and any connection between the clergy arrests and the peace process with Azerbaijan.<sup>40</sup>

37 "Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Congratulatory Message on the 34th Anniversary of the Independence of the Republic of Armenia", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, September 21, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2025/09/21/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech/>.

38 "Speaker of Parliament Confident of Landslide Victory in Next Year's General Election", *ArmenPress*, September 26, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230649>.

39 "'A Celebration of Life and Peace': Pashinyan Applauds Yerevan's 2807th Anniversary Events", *ArmenPress*, October 13, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1231947>.

40 "Six Priests Detained in Armenia as Investigation into Church Figures Widens," Reuters, October 15, 2025, ; PSCR team, "The Church, the Kremlin, and Armenia's Tug-of-War with the Past," BESA Center Perspectives Paper No. 160, October 23, 2025, Begin-Sadat Center for Strategic Studies, <https://besacenter.org/the-church-the-kremlin-and-armenias-tug-of-war-with-the-past/>

The Dasnaks (ARF), very much hand in hand with the Apostolic Church policies, made an announcement on 17 October accusing Aram I, the Catholicos of Antelias, for sending an emissary to Pashinyan, expressing strong indignation both in the homeland and in the Diaspora.<sup>41</sup>

The Mayor of Gyumri, known to be an ally of the pro-Russian opposition, was detained on 20 October on bribery charges. The Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs criticized Armenia as the new accusations against the Mayor also included his calls for closer ties between Armenia and Russia, inquiring why no one has been charged for advocating Armenia's accession to the EU.<sup>42</sup>

A priest favoured by Pashinyan was defrocked by the leadership of the Apostolic Church on 21 October.<sup>43</sup>

The Supreme Spiritual Council of the Apostolic Church, meeting on 4-7 November in Etchmiadzin under the presidency of Catholicos Karekin II, condemned "illegal pressures" and "unlawful persecution" targeting the Church and its clergy. While the meeting was going on, Pashinyan again accused Karekin II of illegitimacy on 6 November and said "the Armenian Apostolic Church has no Catholicos".<sup>44</sup>

On 7 November, American TV commentator T. Carlson hosted detained Russian-Armenian billionaire entrepreneur, fierce opponent of Pashinyan, Karapetyan's nephew and blasted Pashinyan's dispute with the head of the Apostolic Church and Karapetyan's imprisonment as a global assault on Christianity in line with the radical elements of the Armenian Diaspora, linking the surging Christian nationalism with Armenian internal political issues.

The Statistical Committee of Armenia reported that, as of 1 October 2025, the permanent population of Armenia, according to current estimates based on the 2022 census, was 3,090,500 people.<sup>45</sup>

41 "The Church, the Kremlin, and Armenia's Tug-of-War with the Past."

42 Protests in Armenia's Second-Biggest City as Mayor Detained for Bribery," Reuters, October 20, 2025, <https://www.reuters.com/world/asia-pacific/armenian-opposition-mayor-detained-after-prime-minister-vows-crackdown-2025-10-20/> ; Russia Calls Gyumri Mayor's Arrest Internal Affair of Armenia," Caliber.Az, October 22, 2025, <https://caliber.az/en/post/russia-calls-gyumri-mayor-s-arrest-internal-affair-of-armenia>

43 Defrocked Priest at Center of Crackdown in Armenia's Apostolic Church," Caliber.Az, October 20, 2025, <https://caliber.az/en/post/defrocked-priest-at-center-of-crackdown-in-armenia-s-apostolic-church>

44 "Armenian Authorities Crack Down on the Church, Again," OC Media, October 15, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/armenian-authorities-crack-down-on-the-church-again/>

45 "Armenia's Permanent Population Increases by 14,300 in 2025," Armenpress, November 6, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1234715>

During this period, Armenia's economic difficulties and need for foreign aid have increased. With Russia cutting off diamond and gold exports, Armenia's foreign trade volume dropped by 53% in the first four months of 2025 compared to the same period in 2024, reaching \$6.3 billion. In 2024, Armenia imported \$7.4 billion worth of precious stones and jewellery and exported around \$8 billion. This accounted for almost half of the approximately \$30.2 billion foreign trade volume. Russia remained Armenia's largest export destination with \$1.3 billion worth of goods. The United Arab Emirates ranked second with \$1.1 billion in exports. China came third with \$288 million worth of goods. Precious and semi-precious stones and minerals ranked the highest among export goods with approximately \$1.3 billion. Machinery and equipment ranked second with \$551 million, followed by processed food with around \$550 million.<sup>46</sup>

According to an agreement with the United Arab Emirates announced on 8 October, the "Emarat" oil company, in partnership with the Armenian company "Mega Trade", has acquired the concession to establish and operate petrol service stations throughout Armenia.<sup>47</sup>

## 2. Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Agreement Process

During this period, the peace agreement process entered a positive phase with bilateral high-level talks and developing dialogue. The amendment of the Armenian Constitution remains as the only obstacle to its signing.

Armenia's Prime Minister Pashinyan held a bilateral meeting with the President of Azerbaijan Aliyev on 16 May at the sixth summit of the European Political Community held in Tirana.<sup>48</sup> The meeting, the details of which were not disclosed, signified the positive development of the bilateral dialogue. Pashinyan afterwards emphasized on various occasions that peace would now prevail in the region. On the other hand, in a speech to parliament on 5 June, Mirzoyan contradicted his Prime Minister, stating that there was still

46 "Armenia's Foreign Trade Turnover Decreased by 52.9% in 4 Months, to \$6.3 Billion. China Ahead of the UAE in the Top Three", *Arka News Agency*, June 5, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/economy/armenia-s-foreign-trade-turnover-decreased-by-52-9-in-4-months-to-6-3-billion-china-ahead-of-the-uae/>.

47 Justin Varghese, "Emarat Expands into Armenia Through Partnership with MegaTrade", *Gulf News*, October 8, 2025, <https://gulfnews.com/business/retail/emarat-expands-into-armenia-through-partnership-with-megatrade-1.500299188>.

48 "Nikol Pashinyan, Ilham Aliyev Meet in Tirana", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, May 16, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/05/16/Nikol-Pashinyan-meeting-ilham-aliyev/>.

a slight risk of a new military conflict with Azerbaijan and that the risk of escalation would always exist without a peace agreement with Azerbaijan.<sup>49</sup> The Armenian National Committee-International (ANC-I) also expressed in its 16 June action plan statement that Azerbaijan could invade Armenia to open a land corridor to Nakhchivan, taking advantage of the Iran-Israel conflict, citing opposition leaders in Armenia as a source.<sup>50</sup>

As per a decision adopted by Switzerland's parliament, an international conference was held in Bern on 26 May, hosted by the Christian Solidarity International (CSI) and initiated by Swiss parliamentarians, with the aim of protecting the rights of the Karabakh Armenians. The statement issued at the end of the meeting, which was also attended by two Armenian Catholicos', Karekin II and Aram I, called for urgent coordinated international action to protect Armenian religious and cultural heritage and human rights, and to ensure the future security of the Armenian people.<sup>51</sup> The Archbishop of York, head of the Church of England, also expressed his concerns about the Armenian-Christian historical heritage in Karabakh on 29 May.<sup>52</sup>

At the 51st session of the Council of Foreign Ministers of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) held in Istanbul on 21-22 June, five resolutions concerning Armenia and the peace process were adopted. The resolution entitled "The Right to Return of Azerbaijanis Forcibly and Systematically Expelled from Current Territory of Armenia" was brought to the agenda for the first time. The other resolutions adopted were titled: "Solidarity with the Victims of the Khojaly Massacre of 1992", "Elimination of the Consequences of the Aggression of the Republic of Armenia Against the Republic of Azerbaijan", "Economic Support to the Republic of Azerbaijan" and "Destruction and Desecration of Islamic Historical and Cultural Monuments and Traces in the Territory of the Republic of Azerbaijan as a Result of the Aggression of the Republic of Armenia". In addition to these resolutions, the "Istanbul Declaration" was published, which welcomed the progress made

49 Shoghik Galstian, "Armenian FM Won't Rule Out Fresh 'Escalation' With Azerbaijan", *Azattyun Radiokayan*, June 5, 2025, <https://www.azattyun.am/a/33435010.html>.

50 "Statement by the Armenian National Committee-International Concerning the Imminent Threat to Armenia's Syunik Province Amid Regional Escalation", *Horizon Weekly*, June 16, 2025, <https://horizonweekly.ca/en/statement-by-the-armenian-national-committee-international-concerning-the-imminent-threat-to-armenias-syunik-province-amid-regional-escalation/>.

51 "Swiss Peace Initiative for Nagorno Karabakh Launched in Bern", *Asbarez*, May 27, 2025, <https://asbarez.com/swiss-peace-initiative-for-nagorno-karabakh-launched-in-bern/>.

52 Francis Martin, "Armenian Christian Heritage in Nagorno-Karabakh is Under Threat, Conference Hears", *Church Times*, May 29, 2025, <https://www.churchtimes.co.uk/articles/2025/30-may/news/world/armenian-christian-heritage-in-nagorno-karabakh-is-under-threat-conference-hears>.



in the process of normalizing relations between Azerbaijan and Armenia, called on Armenia to remove the political and legal obstacles to the signing of a peace treaty, and expressed support for Azerbaijan's efforts to demine the lands where the population forcibly expelled by the Armenian attack lives and make them habitable. It also deemed Armenia's refusal to engage in dialogue with the Western Azerbaijan community "worthy of condemnation".<sup>53</sup>

In a statement issued by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, "deep disappointment" was expressed at this approach, described as "extremely one-sided", and it was emphasized that there is no place called "Western Azerbaijan" within Armenian territory and that there cannot be.<sup>54</sup> The opposition press noted that the statement was published hours after the Erdoğan-Pashinyan meeting in Istanbul on the same day. Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson stated on 30 June that they did not approve Azerbaijan's claim to "Western Azerbaijan" as stated in the Organization of Islamic Cooperation's statement.<sup>55</sup>

On 4 July, Pashinyan sent a congratulatory message to US President Trump on the occasion of Independence Day, expressing his confidence that the US would play a decisive role in ending the conflicts in the South Caucasus.<sup>56</sup> President Khachaturyan also attended the celebration hosted at the residence of the US Ambassador. For some time, the US press and leading think tanks had been reporting that the Trump administration had proposed in May that border and customs controls for the transit of people and goods via the Nakhchivan route be handed over to an American company. The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs had refrained from denying this. In an interview on 10 July, the Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs finally stated that Armenia was not opposed to appointing foreigners and an international company to ensure regional outreach.<sup>57</sup>

53 "Istanbul Declaration Adopted by the 51st Session of OIC Council of Foreign Ministers (Under the Theme: the OIC in a Transforming World) (21 – 22 June 2025) (25th – 26th Dhu'l-Hijjah 1446H)", *OIC 51st Meeting of the Council of Foreign Ministers*, Accessed: October 22, 2025, <https://cfm51.oic-oci.org/2025/06/23/istanbul-declaration-adopted-by-the-51st-session-of-oic-council-of-foreign-ministers-under-the-theme-the-oic-in-a-transforming-world-21-22-june-2025-25th-26th-dhu%-CA%BBI-hijjah-1446h/>.

54 "Armenia "Deeply Disappointed" with "Distorted" Formulations in OIC Declaration - Foreign Ministry", *ArmenPress*, June 23, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1223096>.

55 "Iran Rejects OIC Statement Criticizing Armenia, Denounces "Western Azerbaijan" Language as Inappropriate And Suggestive of Azerbaijani Territorial Claims", *Zartong*, June 30, 2025, <https://zartongmedia.com/2025/06/30/iran-rejects-oic-statement-criticizing-armenia-denounces-western-azerbaijan-language-as-inappropriate-and-suggestive-of-azerbaijani-territorial-claims/>.

56 "Prime Minister Pashinyan Sends Congratulatory Message to US President", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, July 4, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/congratulatory/item/2025/07/04/Nikol-Pashinyan-Congratulations/>.

57 Akbar Novruz, "Armenian Deputy FM: Yerevan Open to Outsourcing Zangazur Corridor's Control to int'l Organization", *Azernews*, July 10, 2025, <https://www.azernews.az/karabakh/244480.html?>.



News reports that the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan would meet soon had been circulating in the press for some time and were not officially denied. Pashinyan and Aliyev did meet in Abu Dhabi, a “neutral” location, on 10 July. Without a mediator, the first direct bilateral and delegation-level talks lasted about five hours, and after the meeting, the parties issued the same statement. The statement indicated that the parties discussed various aspects of the normalization agenda between them, agreed that bilateral negotiations were the most efficient method for addressing all issues related to the normalization process, and agreed to continue such productive dialogue. Moreover, the leaders noted the progress made in the border demarcation process, instructed officials to continue working in this direction, and stated that they agreed to continue bilateral negotiations and confidence-building measures.<sup>58</sup>

The US Secretary of State announced on 9 July, one day before the meeting, that the two countries could reach a peace agreement “very soon.” After the meeting, Kremlin Spokesperson Peskov expressed that Moscow welcomed the establishment of direct dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan.<sup>59</sup> The Western press headlined this first direct meeting as a new chapter in the Caucasus and a historic rapprochement. The Armenian opposition press interpreted the main message from Abu Dhabi as meaning that there would be no war at this stage.

The steps taken to bring the two countries closer yielded results on 8 August in Washington. Azerbaijan’s President Aliyev and Armenia’s Prime Minister Pashinyan met on 8 August at the invitation of US President Trump. Following a trilateral meeting, two documents were signed under Trump’s mediation:

- Aliyev and Pashinyan signed a joint declaration consisting of seven articles. Its essence is the confirmation of both countries’ commitment to peace in line with the spirit and understanding of the Washington meeting.
- The 17-article “Agreement on the Establishment of Peace and Interstate Relations,” which the two countries agreed upon in March, was initialed by the parties for later ratification.

58 “Foreign Ministry Presents Details on Pashinyan-Aliyev Meeting”, *ArmenPress*, July 10, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1224523>.

59 “Russia Says it Welcomes Armenia-Azerbaijan Direct Talks”, *ArmenPress*, July 10, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1224519>.

- The meeting also approved an agreement on the transportation route known as the Zangezur Corridor, now called the “Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity” (TRIPP), which connects Azerbaijan to Nakhchivan, and on entrusting the route to a US company for 49 or 99 years, but no details were disclosed. Responding to questions in Parliament on 10 September, Pashinyan explained that the agreement provided Armenia with access to the latest border and customs technologies and that the TRIPP project was only a matter of discussion between Armenia and the US.<sup>60</sup>
- At the meeting, the two countries agreed to submit a joint written request to the OSCE Secretariat for the dissolution of the Minsk Group.

Within the framework of this historic meeting, three memoranda of understanding (MoU) were signed between Armenia and the US:

- The first concerns Armenia’s “Crossroads of Peace” project. It states that the US, with full respect for Armenia’s independence, territorial integrity, and inviolability of its borders, is interested in investing in the Crossroads of Peace project. Pashinyan presents the TRIPP agreement in this context.
- The second is related to cooperation in technological developments and artificial intelligence.
- The third is titled “Energy Security Partnership” and covers nuclear energy and power plants, as well as electric battery technology.<sup>61</sup>

The Washington meeting and the agreements reached have been positively received worldwide. The contentment expressed by Türkiye’s President and Minister of Foreign Affairs has been conveyed. The statement published by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is as follows:

60 Siranush Ghazanchyan, “Full Text of Armenia–Azerbaijan Joint Declaration Released”, *Public Radio of Armenia*, August 9, 2025, <https://en.armradio.am/2025/08/09/full-text-of-armenia-azerbaijan-joint-declaration-released/>.

61 “Memorandums of Understanding Signed Between the Republic of Armenia and the United States”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, August 29, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/08/29/Nikol-Pashinyan-memorandum-08-08-2025/>.

*“We welcome the progress achieved towards establishing a lasting peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the commitment recorded in Washington today (8 August) in this regard.*

*At a time when international conflicts and crises are intensifying, this step constitutes a highly significant development for the promotion of regional peace and stability. We commend the contributions of the US Administration in this process.*

*A historic opportunity has emerged for the South Caucasus to attain peace and prosperity. As Türkiye, we will continue to contribute to the efforts aimed at realizing this opportunity and support the dedicated endeavors of our brotherly Azerbaijan.”<sup>62</sup>*

Russia’s balanced and positive approach, characterized by “cautious optimism”, has been particularly noteworthy. Russia’s Deputy Prime Minister Overchuk stated that Moscow supports Armenia’s agreement with Azerbaijan on TRIPP, saying that the agreement is “an important contribution to strengthening peace in our greater Eurasian region”. Additionally, he explained “We view this issue in the following context: Armenia is our strategic ally and if Armenia believes that something is good for them, then we, of course, support Armenia here.”<sup>63</sup> On the other hand, Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov stated in an interview afterwards that the agreement does not necessarily mean that the long-standing conflict between the two South Caucasus states will be resolved. Lavrov expressed in his statement, “*We need to see how the agreements will work, because all the enthusiastic reviews that were heard in the first few days after the meeting in Washington then somehow changed to skeptical assessments when the document was published. It turns out, not everything has been agreed upon there.*”<sup>64</sup>

Naturally, there have been exceptions to this. The most vocal objection came from Iran. In addition to the statement issued by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expressing concern, a prominent political advisor made threatening and harsh remarks. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Tashnaksutyun

62 No: 167, 8 August 2025, Regarding the Peace Process Between Azerbaijan and Armenia, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye*, Accessed: October 22, 2025, [https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_-167\\_-azerbaycan-ve-ermenistan-arasindaki-baris-sureci-hk.en.mfa](https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-167_-azerbaycan-ve-ermenistan-arasindaki-baris-sureci-hk.en.mfa)

63 “Russian Deputy PM: Initialled Azerbaijan-Armenia Agreement to Strengthen Regional Peace”, *Caliber*, September 4, 2025, <https://caliber.az/en/post/russian-deputy-pm-initialled-azerbaijan-armenia-agreement-to-strengthen-regional-peace>.

64 “Russia Says Implementation of Armenian-Azerbaijani Initialed Deal ‘Remains to be Seen’”, *ArmenPress*, September 8, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1229071>.

(ARF) issued a statement on 9 August, describing the agreement as a blow to Armenia's sovereignty and listing a series of criticisms in its familiar revanchist and destructive attitude.<sup>65</sup> Similarly, the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) made a statement along the same lines and launched an initiative to influence the administration through its lobbyists and supporters in Congress.<sup>66</sup> Catholicos Aram I of Antelias also indirectly expressed his discontent, suggesting that the Washington Agreement be presented to the public.<sup>67</sup> The Lemkin Institute was quick to join the revanchist bandwagon.<sup>68</sup>

O'Brien, who served as Special Representative for the South Caucasus under US President Biden, also shared in the press his claim that the agreement gained nothing for Armenia, could not resolve the conflict with Azerbaijan, and placed Armenia in a more vulnerable position. Pashinyan condemned these statements, declaring that the Biden administration was weak and that Biden had failed to achieve what Trump had accomplished.<sup>69</sup>

On 1 September, the OSCE Secretariat announced that 57 member countries, including the US, Russia and France, had unanimously decided to terminate the "Minsk process and its related structures". The closure process will be completed on 1 December.<sup>70</sup> The statement issued by Türkiye's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on this matter is as follows:

*"We welcome the decision on the closure of the OSCE Minsk Process and related structures, taken by the OSCE Ministerial Council on 1 September 2025.*

65 "Statement from the ARF-Dashnaksutyun Bureau", *Armenian Weekly*, August 9, 2025, <https://armenianweekly.com/2025/08/09/statement-from-the-arf-dashnaksutyun-bureau-2/>.

66 "ARF Eastern Region Condemns August 8 Agreements as Historic Betrayal", August 10, 2025, *Armenian Weekly*, <https://armenianweekly.com/2025/08/10/arf-eastern-region-condemns-august-8-agreements-as-historic-betrayal/>.

67 "Washington Agreement Must be Presented to Public – Aram I", *Alpha News*, August 18, 2025, <https://alphanews.am/en/washington-agreement-must-be-presented-to-public-aram-i/>.

68 "Statement on the Armenia-Azerbaijan Joint Declaration: This is No 'Peace Deal'", *Lemkin Institute of Genocide Prevention and Human Security*, August 31, 2025, <https://www.lemkininstitute.com/statements-new-page/statement-on-the-armenia-azerbaijan-joint-declaration-%3A-this-is-no-%E2%80%9Cpeace-deal%E2%80%9D>.

69 Arshaluys Barseghyan, "Pashinyan Accuses Biden Administration of Failing to do What Trump Achieved", *OC Media*, August 28, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/pashinyan-accuses-biden-administration-of-failing-to-do-what-trump-achieved/>.

70 "OSCE Ministerial Council Ends Minsk Process Activities", *Caucasus Watch*, September 3, 2025, <https://caucasuswatch.de/en/news/osce-ministerial-council-ends-minsk-process-activities.html>.

*This historic decision, made possible through the joint efforts of Azerbaijan and Armenia, constitutes an important milestone in the peace process between the two countries.”<sup>71</sup>*

The revanchist and radical elements of the Diaspora, ANCA and the Armenian National Council-International (ANC-I) have harshly condemned the dissolution of the Minsk Group. The Armenian Revolutionary Federation-Tashnaksutyun (ARF) also claimed that Armenia’s approval of this decision was invalid under international law.<sup>72</sup>

A US State Department official visiting Armenia announced on 11 September that they would contribute \$145 million in the first phase for TRIPP.<sup>73</sup>

Following the Washington Agreement, TRIPP terminology became a subject of ongoing debate between Aliyev and Pashinyan. Pashinyan strongly opposed Aliyev’s designation of this route as the Zangezur Corridor, emphasizing on various occasions that the corridor concept would be interpreted by Azerbaijan as being outside Armenia’s control and sovereignty, and that it was impossible for them to accept this. During his visit to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe on 29 September, Pashinyan responded to a press question about whether the EU could participate in the TRIPP project, stating, “*TRIPP is being discussed in an Armenia-U.S. bilateral format. Any third party around whom Armenia and the U.S. reach an agreement can be involved. The EU is a reliable partner for Armenia. And we are keen for more and more reliable partners to be involved.*”<sup>74</sup>

In his speech at the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) Council of Heads of State in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, on 10 October, Pashinyan stated that the peace achieved with Azerbaijan was based on the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration, which is also the founding document of the organization, but that establishing peace did not mean that all issues had been resolved. He stated that the parties still needed to establish mutual commercial, economic,

71 No: 180, 2 September 2025, Regarding the Closure of the OSCE Minsk Process and Related Structures, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye*, Accessed: October 22, 2025, [https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_-180\\_-agit-minsk-sureci-ve-bagli-yapilarina-son-verilmesi-karari-hk.en.mfa](https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-180_-agit-minsk-sureci-ve-bagli-yapilarina-son-verilmesi-karari-hk.en.mfa)

72 “ANCA Condemns Dissolution of OSCE Minsk Group; Urges U.S. Leadership to Hold Azerbaijan Accountable”, *Armenian National Committee of America*, September 1, 2025, <https://anca.org/press-release/anca-condemns-dissolution-of-osce-minsk-group-urges-u-s-leadership-to-hold-azerbaijan-accountable/>.

73 “Armenian Transit Corridor Gets Initial Financial Infusion”, *Eurasianet*, September 12, 2025, <https://eurasianet.org/armenian-transit-corridor-gets-initial-financial-infusion>.

74 “Discussions on Trump Route Project Have Already Begun – Pashinyan”, *Arka News*, September 29, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/politics/discussions-on-trump-route-project-have-already-begun-pashinyan/>.

political and cultural ties and resolve humanitarian issues. He expressed his belief that although these were not easy tasks, they could be resolved over time with the confidence that peace provided.<sup>75</sup>

Pashinyan held bilateral talks with the President of Azerbaijan on the sidelines of the meeting. According to press reports, the two leaders had a very cordial meeting and discussed further steps on peace and security issues, as reported by the Secretary General of the Organization.<sup>76</sup>

On 13 October, Pashinyan and Azerbaijan's President Aliyev had a short meeting during the Sharm el-Sheikh International Peace Summit in Egypt. Speaking back in Yerevan, Pashinyan said on 31 October that *"the peoples of Armenia and Azerbaijan are still trapped in mutual mistrust and 'eternal enemy' narratives that reflect outdated geopolitical constructs. We must free ourselves from a worldview imposed on us by Soviet KGB agents. We have lived too long inside the mental boundaries others drew for us. It is time to think freely and peacefully about our place in the region"*.<sup>77</sup>

On 9 November, Pashinyan reflected on the 44 day war with Azerbaijan and stated "I made a mistake not to recognize Karabakh as belonging to Azerbaijan earlier. It was likely that war would not have broken out". Responding to criticism from his predecessors over his handling of the issue, Pashinyan announced on 10 November that documents related to negotiations over the "Nagorno-Karabakh" issue would be made public before the end of the year.<sup>78</sup>

### 3. Armenia's Foreign Relations

During the period, Armenia appeared to widely implement a balanced and stabilizing, multi-vector foreign policy approach. While visibly leaning toward the West, it has sought to project an image of not neglecting its relations with the East, North, and South.

75 "TRIPP Project Opens New Export and Import Opportunities for CIS Countries as Well: Pashinyan's Speech at CIS Council Meeting", *First Channel News*, October 10, 2025, <https://www.1lurer.am/en/2025/10/10/TRIPP-project-opens-new-export-and-import-opportunities-for-CIS-countries-as-well-Pashinyan-s-speech/1395287>.

76 "Yerevan, Washington Start Work to Implement TRIPP Project in Armenia," *Interfax*, November 17, 2025, <https://interfax.com/newsroom/top-stories/114855/>

77 "Pashinyan blames Soviet KGB for shaping Armenians' view of Turks and Azerbaijanis," *Eurasia Daily Monitor*, OC Media, November 3, 2025, <https://oc-media.org/pashinyan-blames-soviet-kgb-for-shaping-armenians-view-of-turks-and-azerbaijanis/>

78 Emil Avdaliani, "With the TRIPP Turkey Is Set to Benefit Most in the South Caucasus," *Turkey Analyst*, October 19, 2025, <https://turkeyanalyst.org/publications/turkey-analyst-articles/item/738-with-the-tripp-turkey-is-set-to-benefit-most-in-the-south-caucasus.html>

Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan paid a working visit to Brussels on 14 May and met with EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas. The parties discussed opportunities for developing and deepening EU-Armenia relations and enhancing cooperation in specific areas. In a statement issued by the EU, it was said that EU-Armenia relations are deepening at an “unprecedented pace”.<sup>79</sup>

A delegation led by the Minister of Defense paid an official visit to Germany on 12 May and attended the UN Peacekeeping Ministerial meeting in Berlin.

Secretary of the Security Council Grigoryan visited Iran to attend the International Security Forum on 17 May. He met with his Iranian counterpart, as well as the President and the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and visited the Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS).<sup>80</sup>

Pashinyan and Mirzoyan attended the sixth summit of the European Political Community held in Albania on 19 May in Tirana.

On the occasion of the decision by Armenia and the Greek Cypriot Administration of Southern Cyprus (GCASC) to open resident embassies in each other's capitals, the Speaker of the GCASC House of Representatives paid a visit to Armenia on 18-21 May. During her meeting with Mirzoyan, the strengthening of mutual cooperation on international platforms was discussed. During his meeting with his Armenian counterpart Simonyan, they agreed to elevate relations to the level of a strategic partnership.<sup>81</sup>

One month after the first joint military exercise between the two countries, the Iranian Minister of Defense paid an official visit to Armenia on 20 May.

In response to Mirzoyan's visit to Moscow on 21 January, the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Lavrov visited Yerevan on 20-21 May. On 21 May, the two ministers signed the 2025-2026 Program of Consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the two countries.<sup>82</sup> The Russian Ministry

79 “Foreign Minister Mirzoyan, EU Top Diplomat Discuss Deepening Armenia-EU Partnership” *ArmenPress*, May 15, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1219644>.

80 Armenian Security Council Secretary, Iran's Foreign Minister Discuss Bilateral and International Issues”, *ArmenPress*, May 17, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1219911>.

81 Deputies of Inter-Parliamentary Committee on Cooperation between RA National Assembly and House of Representatives of Cyprus meet with delegation led by Annita Demetriou”, *Aravot*, September 19, 2025, <https://en.aravot.am/2025/05/19/359853/>.

82 Meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Russia”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, May 21, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/05/21/Mirzoyan\\_Lavrov/13240](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/05/21/Mirzoyan_Lavrov/13240).



of Foreign Affairs issued a press release on 22 May summarizing Lavrov's visit to Armenia. After the meetings, the parties held a joint press conference and answered questions from the press. Both ministers noted that although disagreements on some important issues remain, Armenia and Russia are allies. Lavrov said, *"In accordance with the instructions of our leaders, we are discussing very openly not only the issues positively perceived by both capitals that contribute to building mutually beneficial projects, but also the topics on which we have differing views."* They did not hesitate to disclose some of the issues on which they disagreed in front of the press, but gave the impression that these did not pose an obstacle to relations. In this context, Lavrov recalled that efforts were also underway to open a consulate in Kapan, on the southern border with Iran. No progress has been made on this issue during this period. On the other hand, France opened its honorary consulate in Kapan on 2 June.

Lavrov emphasized regional integration, making a specific reference to the development of diplomatic relations, the importance of economic cooperation, and the 3+3 Platform. By mentioning the EU and France by name, he criticized the West's unconstructive interest and expressed the necessity of Russia's continued military presence in Armenia. It was remarkable that Lavrov did not directly criticize the US in his remarks.

Lavrov spoke and answered questions at a meeting on 21 May at the Armenian-Russian Slavic University, attended by numerous students, faculty members, representatives from various universities and NGO's. Within nearly three hours, in the context of a comprehensive discussion, Lavrov did not hesitate to express his views against the "Real Armenia" concept put forward by Pashinyan administration, and stated *"I am delighted that our meeting began with the national anthems of the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia. It is really important for us to always feel an emotional connection to our roots and to what unites us. Motherland embodied in the national anthem and the coat of arms is not just a symbol. In fact, this is an important part of upbringing, particularly in younger generations. ... We have a saying: 'Let bygones be bygones.' The past never has the result that would be important today, but it should not be forgotten: not the history and the legacy of our ancestors, the feats they made for their homeland, their people, or their faith. This memory must live in our hearts and guide the way we raise our children and grandchildren."*<sup>83</sup> Lavrov went to the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier and

83 Russia Warns Against Western Hegemony, Reaffirms Support for Armenia", *Aravot*, May 23, 2025, <https://en.aravot.am/2025/05/23/359958/?s=Russia+Warns+Against+Western+Hegemony%2C+Reaffirms+Support+for+Armenia+>.

laid a wreath with a ceremony, while a wreath was sent to the “genocide” Memorial.

Lavrov’s visit to Yerevan marked the first occurrence of an anti-Russian protest, during which a pro-Western group of activists hung anti-Putin banners near the Russian Embassy and on a bridge at the city’s entrance. Underneath a picture of Putin in handcuffs, the word “murderer” was written in Armenian, Russian, and English. Russian officials immediately condemned the protest, calling it provocative and demanding that those responsible be punished to the fullest extent of the law.

In his speech briefing the parliament on 5 June, Mirzoyan emphasized that relations with Russia are healthy and partnership-oriented. He stated that, indeed, not everything is “smooth” and “cloudless,” but that there are many areas where agreement has been reached and normal cooperation is taking place despite some disagreements. The 10th Armenia-Russia Interregional Cooperation Forum was held in Yerevan on 6 June with the participation of the speakers of both countries’ parliaments.<sup>84</sup> At a press conference held on 11 June, Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs stated that the removal of the Russian military base in Armenia was not on the agenda. Pashinyan also confirmed this on 13 June.

At the beginning of July, a serious crisis erupted between the two countries due to Russian TV channels broadcasting against Armenian leadership. On 4 July, Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs summoned the Russian Ambassador and expressed strong dissatisfaction with “openly unfriendly and very often hostile propaganda aired on Russian state television channels against the Armenian government.” On 8 July, Russia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs, in turn, summoned the Ambassador of Armenia and stressed the need to prevent further escalation in relations.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia held the second international Yerevan Dialogue meeting on 26-27 May. The Prime Minister of Slovakia and the Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Montenegro and France participated in the meeting.

The US Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for International Nuclear Policy visited Armenia on 2 June with a delegation.<sup>85</sup>

84 “10th Armenia-Russia Interregional Cooperation Forum Held in Yerevan”, *ArmenPress*, June 5, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1221562>.

85 “Armenia and US Discuss Cooperation in the Field of Peaceful Nuclear Energy and Mining”, *Arka News*, June 5, 2025, <https://arka.am/en/news/economy/armenia-and-us-discuss-cooperati-on-in-the-field-of-peaceful-nuclear-energy-and-mining/>.

Mirzoyan went to Marseille on 12 June to attend the first “Raisina Mediterranean” meeting, which was held with participants from India and France. He participated in a panel titled “The Next Special Relationship: Deepening the Strategic Partnership between the Indo-Pacific and Europe” with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of India.

Mirzoyan paid an official visit to the People’s Republic of China from June 24 to 27.<sup>86</sup> The Chinese Minister of Foreign Affairs warmly welcomed Mirzoyan on his first official visit, praised his active cooperation in relations between the two countries, and stated that both countries are ancient civilizations with rich history and deep cultural roots. He pointed to the partnership in the Belt and Road Initiative, saying, “*We are ready to work with Armenia to strengthen our friendship, deepen mutual trust, and expand cooperation for the benefit of both countries’ development.*” In an interview with CGTN television, Mirzoyan said his visit was “timely” in terms of assessing what had been achieved and determining the roadmap for the future, pointing to the increasing trade volume and the direct flights that had begun between Yerevan and Urumqi.

Mirzoyan also had a meeting with the Secretary General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) and expressed his willingness to further develop relations with the organization under the status of dialogue partnership.<sup>87</sup> On 3 July, the Armenian Government announced that Armenia plans to apply for membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Pashinyan participated in the SCO summit held in the Chinese port city of Tianjin on 31 August. According to a report by Chinese state television CCTV, during the meeting between the leaders of the two countries, a strategic partnership was established between China and Armenia, and a joint statement was issued on this matter. China’s President Xi Jinping told Pashinyan that the two countries should strongly support each other and deepen cooperation in all areas.<sup>88</sup> It was also announced that a Confucius University would be opened in Yerevan. Pashinyan later attended the 80th anniversary celebrations of Victory Day in Beijing with 26 other heads of state. At a press conference

86 “Meeting of the Foreign Minister of Armenia with the Foreign Minister of China”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, June 26, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/26/Mirzoyan\\_Wang\\_Yi/13337](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/26/Mirzoyan_Wang_Yi/13337)

87 “Meeting of the Foreign Minister of Armenia with the Secretary-General of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, June 27, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/27/Armenia\\_SCO/13339](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/27/Armenia_SCO/13339).

88 “(SCO Tianjin Summit) China, Armenia Establish Strategic Partnership”, *The State Council The People’s Republic of China*, August 31, 2025, [https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202508/31/content\\_WS-68b3ca13c6d0868f4e8f5330.html](https://english.www.gov.cn/news/202508/31/content_WS-68b3ca13c6d0868f4e8f5330.html).

on 18 September, Pashinyan said that the most important outcome of his visit to China was the establishment of a strategic partnership between the two countries, adding that this provided a positive political signal for business circles to develop cooperation in the economy and all other areas.

The Armenian Minister of Defense visited China on 17–19 September to attend the “Xiangshan Forum” in Beijing. The forum, which was established in 2006, is envisaged as a subsidiary of the Asia-Pacific security dialogue.

The EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kallas visited Armenia on 30 June. Following the meeting, Mirzoyan announced that negotiations on a new partnership agenda with the EU had been successful and that a partnership agreement had been signed, stating that Armenia-EU relations had never been this close and comprehensive before.<sup>89</sup> Kallas used the same statement.

In a statement released on June 30, the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that Mirzoyan would not attend the upcoming meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Council of Ministers in Kyrgyzstan, and therefore, there was no change in Armenia’s decision to refrain from participating in the Organization’s meetings.

On 4 July, the Greek press raised the idea of establishing a “West Asian QUAD” involving Greece, the Greek Republic of Southern Cyprus, India, and Armenia as a counterbalance to Türkiye.

The “Eagle Partner-2025” joint military exercise between the United States and Armenia was held for the third time between August 12 and 20. At the opening ceremony of the exercise, Chief of the General Staff and First Deputy Minister of Defense Lieutenant General Asryan, and the Ambassador of the United States were present. The exercise was attended by units from the U.S. Army, Europe and Africa Command, as well as elements of the Kansas National Guard. Commentators noted that the exercise was driven more by political considerations than by its military nature. On 27 August, an Armenian unit was transferred to Kosovo aboard a U.S. military aircraft, accompanied by a U.S. Department of Defense official and the Embassy’s military attaché, to serve in the KFOR peacekeeping force.

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89 “Meeting between Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan and EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, June 30, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/30/Mirzoyan\\_Kallas/13346?](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/06/30/Mirzoyan_Kallas/13346?)

Armenian officials engaged in intensive diplomatic contacts with Iran, which openly opposed the Washington Agreement and considered it as a threat, in order to alleviate its concerns. As a result, President Pezeshkian, accompanied by a high-level delegation, visited Armenia on 19 August to discuss the presence of the US in the region and to sign several fundamental agreements.<sup>90</sup> Prior to the visit, the Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that the visit would focus on ensuring that no changes are made to the geopolitical map of the South Caucasus and emphasized that Iran firmly opposes any border changes or the presence of foreign military forces in the region.

Following the Pashinyan-Pezeshkian meeting, a comprehensive joint statement was issued. The statement, which addressed bilateral relations in a multidimensional manner, set a target of increasing mutual trade volume to \$3 billion, emphasized the corridor extending from the Persian Gulf to the Black Sea and referred to the 3+3 Platform within the framework of developing regional cooperation mechanisms. Ten agreements covering a wide range of issues were signed by high-level officials in the delegations. The Iranian Minister of Foreign Affairs stated that Armenia had assured Iran it would never allow any threat to be directed towards Iran from its territory. At a joint press conference following the meetings, Pezeshkian highlighted that peace and stability in the Caucasus is a strategic priority for Iran and stressed that the region should not be an arena for geopolitical competition. Comments on the extent to which Iran's concerns were alleviated after the visit were generally not optimistic. After returning from Armenia, Pezeshkian held a phone call with Putin, expressing the Iranian government's discomfort with Armenia's decision to open a US-managed transit corridor on the Iranian-Azerbaijan border, reiterating that the 3+3 Regional Platform would be a more appropriate mechanism.<sup>91</sup>

On 29 August, Secretary of the Armenian Security Council Grigoryan visited Iran, where he met with Iran's new Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Larjani. Grigoryan stated that the signing of a comprehensive strategic partnership document between the two countries was a necessary step for strengthening peace in the region.<sup>92</sup> He was also received by the

90 "Armenia Reassures Visiting Iran Leader it Will Control Azerbaijan Corridor", *Al Jazeera*, August 19, 2025, <https://www.aljazeera.com/news/2025/8/19/armenia-reassures-visiting-iran-leader-it-will-control-azerbaijan-corridor>.

91 "Ermenistan Başbakanı ile İran Cumhurbaşkanı'nın Ortak Bildirisi Yayımlandı", *Armenian Public Radio*, August 20, 2025, <https://tr.armradio.am/2025/08/20/ermenistan-basbakani-ile-iran-cumhur-baskaninin-ortak-bildirisi-yayimlandi/>.

92 "Larjani: Iran-Armenia Strategic Ties Agreement 'Vital and Necessary'", *Press Tv*, August 31, 2025, <https://www.presstv.ir/Detail/2025/08/31/754096/Supreme-National-Security-Council-Ali-Larjani-strategic-partnership-document-Armenia-Armen-Grigoryan->.

President, during which Pezeshkian emphasized the importance of ensuring that no foreign power is allowed to undermine the friendly and strategic relations between Iran and Armenia. Pezeshkian also addressed the subject of not having foreign forces in the region, stating that his concerns on this matter had been largely alleviated by the information and assurances provided by Armenian officials.

At the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit held in Tianjin on 31 August, the leaders of Armenia and Pakistan agreed to establish diplomatic relations between the two countries.

On 5 September, Pashinyan visited Japan to attend the “Expo 2025” exhibition in Osaka.<sup>93</sup>

Mirzoyan paid a working visit to the Netherlands on 17-18 September. On this occasion, he also attended Armenia’s accession session to the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague.<sup>94</sup> On 22 September, he went to New York for the 80th session of the UN General Assembly and delivered a speech at the G-20 Ministerial Meeting, where he introduced the Crossroads of Peace project and the opportunities offered by TRIPP.

In the second week of September, a delegation headed by the U.S. Department of State’s Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs visited Armenia to discuss the implementation of the Washington Agreement, with a particular focus on the realization of the TRIPP Project.<sup>95</sup>

Pashinyan went to Moscow on 24 September to attend the World Atomic Week Forum. When asked who would build the new nuclear power plant in Armenia, he avoided giving a clear answer and made no commitments.<sup>96</sup> After the forum, he held a bilateral meeting with Putin on 25 September. This meeting was the second between the two leaders within a short period,

93 “Prime Minister Pashinyan to Leave For Japan on a Working Visit”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, August 29, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/08/29/Nikol-Pashinyan-will-leave-for-Japan>.

94 “Remarks by Foreign Minister of Armenia at the Event Marking Armenia’s Accession to the PCA”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, September 18, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/09/18/Mirzoyan\\_PCA/13457](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2025/09/18/Mirzoyan_PCA/13457).

95 “US Delegation Discusses Key Transit Route in Yerevan”, *Hürriyet Daily News*, September 14, 2025, <https://www.hurriyetaidailynews.com/us-delegation-discusses-key-transit-route-in-yerevan-213573>.

96 “The Safe Operation of the Armenian Nuclear Power Plant is a Strategic Priority for the Government of the Republic of Armenia. Prime Minister”, *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, September 25, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/press-release/item/2025/09/25/Nikol-Pashinyan-conference-World-Atomic-Week>.

following their talks at the SCO Summit in Tianjin on 31 August. Although Putin spoke positively about bilateral relations and ties, it is known that there are several points of disagreement, particularly Armenia's attempts to join the EU and its stance on the Collective Security Treaty Organization. One indication of this was the Russian authorities' decision to allow a protest by around 100 Armenians, including priests, in front of the Embassy of Armenia, voicing anti-Pashinyan slogans.

In his remote address to the UN General Assembly on 27 September, Pashinyan emphasized that peace had been established with Azerbaijan and devoted considerable attention to the developing relations with Türkiye. He harshly criticized the President of Azerbaijan's discourse on the Zangezur Corridor, announced that Armenia would host the 8th Summit of the European Political Community in May 2026, and also referred to the 3+3 Platform in his speech.<sup>97</sup>

On 30 September, Mirzoyan attended the Warsaw Security Forum and delivered a speech at the session titled "From Lisbon to Yerevan: Envisioning Europe's Strategy for the Wider Neighborhood". In his remarks, he emphasized the significance of peace with Azerbaijan for the broader region, including the EU.<sup>98</sup>

On 10 October, Pashinyan attended the Commonwealth of Independent States summit held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan. Afterwards, upon the invitation of the President of the United States, he participated in the Sharm el-Sheikh Peace Summit in Egypt on 13 October, which was organized to end the Israel-Palestine (Gaza) war.<sup>99</sup>

Pashinyan paid a working visit to Belgium on 8-9 October and also participated in the second "World Gateways" international conference. He said Armenia's Crossroads of Peace Project had the potential to change the dynamics of not only the South Caucasus but the broader region and claimed that Armenia was ready to bridge South Caucasus and Europe.<sup>100</sup>

97 "Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan's speech at the 80th session of the UN General Assembly", *The Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia*, September 27, 2025, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/statements-and-messages/item/2025/09/27/Nikol-Pashinyan-Speech>.

98 "Remarks by the Foreign Minister of Armenia at the Warsaw Security Forum", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, September 29, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/09/29/Mirzo-yan\\_WSF/13516](https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/09/29/Mirzo-yan_WSF/13516).

99 "Meeting of the CIS Council of Heads of State," press release, Commonwealth of Independent States, Dushanbe, October 10, 2025, <http://en.kremlin.ru/events/president/news/78183>

100 "Armenian premier heads to Brussels for Global Gateway Forum," *Calibre*, October 9, 2025, <https://caliber.az/en/post/armenian-premier-heads-to-brussels-for-global-gateway-forum?ysclid=mi8lvr-rp1x299015932>



On 14 October, the Minister of Defense Papikyan went to Washington D.C. to discuss issues within the framework of the US-Armenia defense partnership.

The Queen of Belgium arrived in Armenia on 14 October as an advocate for the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

Pashinyan visited the Vatican on October 18-20 to attend a mass for the canonization of an Armenian Catholic Archbishop. On this occasion, he met with Pope Leo XIV. The Prime Minister's Office stated in a press release that "*His Holiness warmly welcomed Prime Minister Pashinyan*".

On 20 October, the Minister of Foreign Affairs Mirzoyan attended the ministerial meeting on Cross-Regional Security and Connectivity organized by the EU in Luxembourg and also met with EU Foreign Affairs chief to discuss issues related to the finalization and adoption of the new Armenia-EU Partnership Agenda.<sup>101</sup>

Pashinyan went to Tbilisi on 21 October to attend the Silk Road Forum where he also held a bilateral meeting with his Georgian counterpart.

Mirzoyan visited Paris on 22 October to attend the 4th Ministerial Conference on Feminist Foreign Policy. Pashinyan visited France on 29-30 October to attend the Paris Peace Forum and also met with the President of France.

A delegation of NGO's and think-tanks from Azerbaijan visited Yerevan on 23 October, which was the first of such an encounter.

Bilateral defense consultations between Armenia and Germany were held on 28-29 October in Yerevan.

Speaking at the "Orbeli Forum 2025" in Yerevan on 5 November, Mirzoyan made the following remarks: "*We have a strategic partnership with the United States, a strategic dialogue with the United Kingdom, we are working to elevate the level of our partnership with the UK and with several EU member states as well. We are significantly deepening our relations with the EU and we have a strategic partnership with the Russian Federation. We have repeatedly emphasized the great importance we attach to our relations with immediate neighbors. We have excellent relations with Georgia and Iran, peace with*

101 "Cross-Regional Security and Connectivity Ministerial Meeting, Luxembourg – Remarks and Readouts," European External Action Service, October 20, 2025, <https://newsroom.consilium.europa.eu/events/20251020-cross-regional-security-and-connectivity-ministerial-meeting-october-2025>

*Azerbaijan has been established and we are working to further detail it. We have very intensive dialogue with Türkiye and I am very optimistic that we can gradually achieve tangible results there. We have also declared a strategic partnership with China*". He also stated that there was no contradiction in Armenia's efforts to deepen ties simultaneously with both the Shanghai Cooperation Organization and the European Union.<sup>102</sup>

The 11th round of the India-Armenia Foreign Office Consultations was held in Yerevan on 7 November.

Amid growing estrangement between the two countries, the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson expressed in a press interview on 10 November that Russia was ready to discuss Armenia's possible concerns regarding bilateral relations in various formats.

#### 4. Relations with Türkiye

Tangible and positive outcomes of the normalization process have been observed during this period, and notable developments have given momentum to the process.

In his comprehensive speech on Armenia's foreign policy delivered on 20 May at a seminar organized for the EU ambassadors accredited to Eastern Europe and Central Asia, Mirzoyan stated the following regarding relations with Türkiye: *"Armenia's commitment to peace and stability in the region is further demonstrated by the steps our country has taken in the normalization process with Türkiye. High-level dialogue continues, including meetings between the Prime Minister of Armenia and the Turkish President, as well as my discussions with the country's Foreign Minister. We firmly believe that full normalization — establishing diplomatic relations and opening borders — would unlock significant opportunities for both our countries and the wider region."*<sup>103</sup>

102 "Armenia's Multi-Vector Foreign Policy after the Washington Agreement," Caspian Post Policy Brief, November 8, 2025, <https://caspianpost.com/armenia/mirzoyan-armenia-azerbaijan-and-georgia-can-collaborate-on-various-platforms>

103 "Keynote Speech by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Regional Seminar of The European Union Ambassadors to the Countries of Eastern Europe and Central Asia", *Mission of the Republic of Armenia to the European Union*, May 20, 2025, <https://eu.mfa.am/en/news/2025/05/20/keynote-speech-by-the-minister-of-foreign-affairs-of-armenia-regional-seminar-of-the-european-union/14418>.

At the “Yerevan Dialogue” forum on 26 May, Mirzoyan participated in a panel where he was asked whether a possible peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan could serve as a stepping stone for the development of Armenia-Türkiye relations. In response, he said: *“To put a long story, yes. We have launched our dialogue with Türkiye, having in mind and publicly saying, both we and our Turkish colleagues, that this process should take place without any precondition. Now, I want to say that we are happy to see that the Turkish-Armenian dialogue is not that problematic as one could assume”*. He also stated that the only obstacle remaining to the establishment of diplomatic relations, the opening of the border, and the resolution of transportation issues is the fact that negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan have not yet been concluded.<sup>104</sup>

The Armenian press prominently featured and provided detailed coverage of President Erdoğan’s remarks to the media on 29 May, made aboard his return flight from Azerbaijan. It was particularly noted that he emphasized the importance Türkiye’s attached to ensuring stability, peace, and prosperity in the South Caucasus, underlined the necessity of signing a lasting peace treaty between Azerbaijan and Armenia as soon as possible, and stated that Türkiye and Armenia are pursuing a careful normalization process, which serves the interests of all countries in the region. That he also referred to the Zangezur Corridor, noting that it would serve as a bridge not only between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan but also for the entire Turkic world.<sup>105</sup>

On 5 June, Prime Minister Pashinyan called on President Erdoğan to extend his greetings on the occasion of Eid al-Adha. Erdoğan, in turn, congratulated Pashinyan on Armenia’s upcoming hosting of the European Political Community Summit in the spring of 2026. During the conversation, bilateral relations, as well as regional and global issues, were discussed, and both sides agreed on the importance of continuing the positive dialogue between their two countries.<sup>106</sup>

On 5 June, Mirzoyan stated in his speech at the parliament, *“While not having official diplomatic relations with Türkiye, we have far more active and effective dialogue than many other countries who do have diplomatic ties. Of*

104 “Speech by the Foreign Minister of Armenia at the Panel Discussion within the Framework of the “Yerevan Dialogue” International Forum”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia*, May 26, 2025, [https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/05/26/Mirzoyan\\_YD\\_Panel/13246](https://www.mfa.am/en/speeches/2025/05/26/Mirzoyan_YD_Panel/13246).

105 “Erdogan Calls for Swift Signing of Armenian-Azeri Peace Treaty”, *ArmenPress*, May 29, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1220936>.

106 “Pashinyan, Erdogan Discuss Armenia-Turkiye Relations and Regional Developments”, *ArmenPress*, June 5, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1221484>.

*course, anyone who'd say it's time for that dialogue to have its tangible results on the ground would be right. If someone were to say this, I would agree.*"<sup>107</sup>

Speaking at the GLOBSEC 2025 Forum on 13 June, Prime Minister Pashinyan stated that in recent years they have developed an active dialogue with Türkiye, noting that while they previously needed the mediation of a third party, they can now establish direct contact. He said, *"We've had several meetings with Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, and those meetings were constructive. True, we don't have tangible results on the ground yet, but we do have important progress. Three years ago, for example, when Armenia wanted to find out Türkiye's stance about any issue, it had to ask for a third country's mediation. Today we have a direct communication with our neighbors and even daily contact."*<sup>108</sup> Pashinyan expressed hope that this development would lead to the establishment of diplomatic relations, the opening of borders, and the strengthening of economic ties, emphasizing that it is only a matter of time. He concluded his speech by saying, *"This is linked with the broader economic agenda of the region, but as I already said we are consistently moving forward with the agenda of establishing peace. This is our duty, and we are determined to achieve this. We also see Türkiye's readiness, as well as Azerbaijan's desire to achieve peace. Of course there are some nuances that need to be addressed, but I am sure we will succeed."*

Speaking at the APRI 2025 Forum on 13 June, Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia Grigoryan said, *"Normalization of relations with Türkiye is among our agenda priorities, and we continue to work to normalize relations and achieve opening of borders. Although not everything is ideal, progress is visible in the normalization process."*<sup>109</sup>

In a statement released by the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 16 June, it was reported that Deputy Minister Kostanyan met with his counterpart Ekinci in Ankara, and the parties discussed bilateral and regional issues.<sup>110</sup>

Prime Minister Pashinyan visited Istanbul on 20 June at the invitation of President Erdoğan. His delegation included Minister of Foreign Affairs

107 "Mirzoyan: Ermenistan ve Türkiye Aktif Bir Diyalog İçinde", *Armenian Public Radio*, June 6, 2025, <https://tr.armradio.am/2025/06/06/mirzoyan-ermenistan-ve-turkiye-aktif-bir-diyalog-icinde/>.

108 "Pashinyan Highlights Direct Contact, Active Dialogue with Türkiye", *ArmenPress*, June 13, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222263>.

109 "Armenian Official Sees Progress in Normalization with Türkiye", *ArmenPress*, June 13, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222217>.

110 "Armenian, Turkish Deputy Foreign Ministers Meet in Ankara", *ArmenPress*, June 16, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222443>.

Mirzoyan, Deputy Minister Kostanyan, Deputy Speaker of Parliament and Special Representative for the Normalization Process Rubinyan. This was the first official visit from Armenia at this level and was described as a historic one. In addition to official meetings, Pashinyan met with representatives of the Armenian community and visited the Armenian Patriarchate Church, an Armenian school, and the Sultanahmet Mosque.

During the meeting held at the Presidential Working Office in Dolmabahçe Palace, the parties discussed bilateral relations, the normalization process, Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty negotiations, and regional developments.<sup>111</sup> President Erdoğan underlined the importance of concluding the ongoing peace talks and stated that Türkiye would continue to provide full support for regional development efforts based on a win-win approach. No joint statement was issued after the meeting, the parties made their own statements. In line with Pashinyan's pre-meeting statement that "I think our expectations should be aligned with reality," there were no unexpected developments, but the visit itself represented a significant milestone in the normalization process. In a message later posted on his social media account, Pashinyan stated that he had held "in-depth" exchange of views with President Erdoğan, that they had discussed "the process of normalizing Armenian-Turkish relations, emphasized the importance of continuing a constructive dialogue and achieving concrete results," and reaffirmed Armenia's commitment to building peace and stability in the region.

During his meeting with representatives of the Armenian community, Pashinyan stated that the two countries' views on regional issues are quite similar. He noted that, unfortunately, tensions still exist in the region, and that the main purpose of such visits and contacts is to discuss how the region can become more stable, peaceful, and secure. Pashinyan also mentioned that he would personally invite President Erdoğan to the 8th Summit of the European Political Community, which will be held in Armenia in the spring of 2026.

While representatives of the Armenian Catholic and Armenian Protestant communities were present, no clergy from the Armenian Patriarchate attended the Prime Minister's meeting with the community. Pashinyan stated, "*If they didn't come to me, I'll go to them.*" However, when he visited the church, no clergy members greeted him. Patriarch Sahak II Mashalian cited his

111 "Cumhurbaşkanı Erdoğan ve Ermenistan Başbakanı Paşinyan Görüşmesine İlişkin Açıklama", *Directorate of Communications of the Presidency of the Republic of Türkiye*, June 20, 2025, <https://www.iletisim.gov.tr/turkce/haberler/detay/cumhurbaskani-erdogan-ermenistan-basbakani-pasinyani-kabul-etti-20-06-25>.

absence by saying that he was abroad, in the US.<sup>112</sup> (During his visit to the US, the Patriarch also met with the Greek Orthodox Archbishop. His Greek counterpart spoke highly of the brotherly relations between the Greek and Armenian churches and emphasized that solidarity among the Orthodox Armenian, Syriac, and Coptic churches under attack in the Middle East is more vital than ever.)

The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul clearly took a stance against Prime Minister Pashinyan, who was in Türkiye as an official guest. This attitude undoubtedly stemmed from the Etchmiadzin's conflict with Pashinyan. The condemnation of the Archbishop who had welcomed Pashinyan during his visit to Estonia is remembered. The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul appeared to face a difficult dilemma, on one hand adhering to the protocol requirements of the country to which it belongs and of which it is a citizen, and on the other taking sides in the political conflict of a spiritual center. The choice became evident. In response to the reactions, the Patriarchate released a statement on 25 June, recalling, "the incidents between Prime Minister Pashinyan and Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, the spiritual leader of Armenians worldwide," and stated, "*The Patriarchal Throne has deemed it appropriate to demonstrate its fair reaction to the Prime Minister and note that the current tense situation has given created a negative atmosphere and a stream of discontent not only in Armenia, but also in the Diaspora.*"<sup>113</sup>

Patriarch Mashalian held a meeting with the Armenian press in the Patriarchate Hall on 3 July, where he reiterated in detail the reasons for his actions from his own perspective, saying, "...Already, Mr. Pashinyan is smarter than the Armenians of Istanbul and understands very well what is happening". Regarding his visit to the US, he said "My observation is that Christian communities in the Middle East are shrinking, but they are growing in the United States. The U.S. is the center of the diaspora, and about one and a half million Armenians live there. However, they also face the problem of dispersion. The United States is a vast continent, and Armenians who move there have limited opportunities to gather together. This opens the doors to assimilation. In the third generation, they struggle to form a strong Armenian identity. They are opening new churches and schools in Los Angeles and California. The bishops there are working hard and actively; they present a

112 "Türkiye Ermenileri Patrikliği'nden Paşinyan'ın İstanbul ziyaretinde Patrikhane'nin Kapalı Olmasıyla İlgili Açıklama", *AGOS*, June 25, 2025, <https://www.agos.com.tr/tr/yazi/34013/turkiye-ermenile-ri-patrikligi-nden-pasinyan-in-istanbul-ziyaretinde-patrikhane-nin-kapali-olmasiyla-ilgili-aciklama>.

113 "Pashinyan Plans to Invite Erdogan To European Political Community Summit in Yerevan", *ArmenP-ress*, June 21, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1222981>.



*positive image. Here, Armenians are evaporating — they turn into clouds, go to America, and bring blessings there. They are doing significant work over there.*"<sup>114</sup>

On 14 October, Patriarch Mashalian also gave an interview to the Armenian Press Agency on behalf of the Turkish Armenian community. The news was published under the title "The Turkish-Armenian Community Supports Normalization with Armenia." In the interview, the Patriarch stated that *"Our community supports the process of normalizing Armenian-Turkish relations. We want these relations to become closer. This should also ease the burden placed on our shoulders. Over the past 100 years, Armenian-Turkish relations have been so strained that here, the word 'Armenian' is practically considered an insult. And in Armenia, the word 'Turk' has the same connotation. Therefore, if these relations improve, the heaviest burden will be lifted from our shoulders. We need to be able to breathe in a more friendly atmosphere. If today we are 35,000–40,000, in 25 years we will be down to 10,000–15,000. Our community's institutions were built for 125,000 people. We have 50 churches in this city — 33 Apostolic, 12 Catholic, and 4 Protestant. But we can no longer fill them. Once, we had 50 Armenian schools; now only 17 remain.*"<sup>115</sup>

On 27 June, the Armenian Minister of Regional Administration and Infrastructure met with the Turkish Minister of Energy and Natural Resources in Istanbul. The Armenian press reported on the meeting by citing Minister Alparslan Bayraktar's social media post: *"We met with Armenia's Minister of Regional Administration and Infrastructure, Mr. Davit Khudatyan, in Istanbul. During the meeting, we assessed the potential for cooperation between Türkiye and Armenia in the energy sector"*.<sup>116</sup>

On 5 July, in response to a question about President Erdoğan's remarks made during his interview with journalists on his return flight from Azerbaijan, in which he stated that Armenia had adopted a more flexible stance on transport corridors, the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs Spokesperson stated that Armenia has always supported the expansion of regional connectivity and the promotion of economic development. Referring to the Crossroads of Peace

114 "Patrik Maşalyan: "Başbakan Paşinyan'a Sessiz Protestomuzu Gösterdik"", *HyeTert*, July 3, 2025, <https://hyetert.org/2025/07/03/patrik-masalyan-basbakan-pasinyana-sessiz-protestomuzu-gosterdik/>.

115 Araks Kasyan, "Turkish-Armenian Community Supports Normalization with Armenia, Says Sahak II", *ArmenPress*, October 14, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1232012>.

116 "Türkiye ve Ermenistan Enerji İş Birliği Görüşüldü", *HyeTert*, June 26, 2025, <https://hyetert.org/2025/06/27/turkiye-ve-ermenistan-enerji-is-birligi-gorusuldu/>.



project, the Spokesperson emphasized that all roads within Armenia would remain under the full control of the Republic of Armenia.<sup>117</sup>

On 11 August, Pashinyan called on President Erdoğan to inform about the Washington Agreement. President Erdoğan congratulated Pashinyan on the agreement reached with Azerbaijan, stating that peace is essential for regional stability and that this step must be transformed into concrete actions. On that occasion, President Erdoğan also noted that technical-level talks would continue to develop the Türkiye-Armenia normalization process and that efforts in that direction would be pursued persistently.<sup>118</sup>

On 22 August, the Armenian press gave extensive coverage to the groundbreaking ceremony for the 224-kilometer Kars-Dilucu railway construction, with comments linked to TRIPP. President Erdoğan's statement on this matter also stood out: *"The 224 km Kars-Igdir-Aralik-Dilucu railway line will become the backbone of the Zangezur Corridor. It will be double-tracked, electrified and equipped with signalling. This line will transport 5.5 million passengers and 15 million tons of cargo per year. With the commissioning of this project worth €2.4 billion, the international trade route from China to Great Britain will become more efficient."*

On 28 August, in an interview, Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan stated that the agreements reached in Washington have created a very positive outlook for the region, that Azerbaijan has consulted with Türkiye regarding the Washington meeting and the agreements, that Türkiye's stance on the Zangezur Corridor is based on mutual trust and involves close cooperation with Azerbaijan, and that there is nothing concrete yet regarding the Zangezur Corridor, with the parties set to discuss how the situation will develop.<sup>119</sup>

On 1 September, President Erdoğan held a meeting with Prime Minister Pashinyan on the occasion of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Tianjin.<sup>120</sup> In the meeting, which Pashinyan also shared on his social media with a video, the two leaders discussed steps to promote peace in the region,

117 "Armenia's Vision of Unblocking Anchored on Sovereignty and National Jurisdiction: Foreign Ministry Responds to Erdogan", *ArmenPress*, July 5, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1224157>.

118 "Ermenistan Başbakanı, Türkiye Cumhurbaşkanı ile Telefonda Görüştü", *ArmenPress*, August 11, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/tr/article/1226970>.

119 "Dışişleri Bakanı Sayın Hakan Fidan'ın TGRT Haber'e Verdiği Mülakat, 28 Ağustos 2025", *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye*, August 28, 2025, <https://www.mfa.gov.tr/disisleri-bakanı-sayın-hakan-fidan-ın-tgtr-haber-e-verdiği-mulakat--28-ağustos-2025.tr.mfa>.

120 "Erdoğan, Şanghay İşbirliği Örgütü Zirvesi'nde Ermenistan Başbakanı Paşinyan ile Görüştü", *Son Dakika*, September 1, 2025, <https://www.sondakika.com/dunya/haber-erdogan-sanghay-isbirligi-organizu-zirvesi-nde-ermen-19001006/>.

emphasized the importance of maintaining a constructive approach, and agreed to continue bilateral dialogue. Afterwards, in an interview with the press, President Erdoğan stated that he had discussed with both leaders about the Zangezur Corridor, that there was no disagreement between them, and that both sides shared a common vision.

As part of the normalization process, Türkiye's Special Representative Ambassador Serdar Kılıç and his delegation went to Armenia by land on 12 September. They were welcomed at the Alican Border Gate by the Special Representative of Armenia and Deputy Speaker of Parliament Ruben Rubinyan, and together they reached Yerevan. This sixth meeting of the process carried particular significance and importance as it was the first time that it was held in the capital of one of the parties, crossing a closed border, and conducted without an intermediary. No joint statement was issued at the end of the meeting, but similar announcements were released by both Ministries of Foreign Affairs.<sup>121</sup> A group from the ARF, known for its record of revanchist and dark acts, protested the arrival of the Turkish delegation and the ongoing process in front of the government building and issued a protest statement on behalf of the party.<sup>122</sup>

At the meeting, the parties reaffirmed their commitment to continue the normalization process “without pre-conditions” and agreed to accelerate the implementation of the previously reached agreement on border crossings. The special representatives reviewed the issues they had previously agreed upon to achieve full normalization, discussed the implementation of the July 2022 Agreement on border crossings, and emphasized the importance of technical work by the relevant authorities of both countries on the renewal and reactivation of the Kars-Gyumri railway line as well as on the electricity connection. Among other agreed points were the enhancement of cooperation in cultural and academic fields, including scholarship programs for higher education students and the joint restoration of the historical Ani Bridge on the Silk Road. The parties also agreed to facilitate air travel and increase flight frequency between Türkiye and Armenia, enabling multiple airlines to operate routes starting from the next summer season.<sup>123</sup>

121 “No: 186, 12 September 2025, Regarding the Sixth Meeting of the Special Representatives for the Normalization Process between Türkiye and Armenia”, *Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Türkiye*, September 12, 2025, [https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no\\_-186\\_-turkiye-ermenistan-normallesme-su-reci-ozel-temsilcilerinin-altinci-toplantisi-hk.en.mfa](https://www.mfa.gov.tr/no_-186_-turkiye-ermenistan-normallesme-su-reci-ozel-temsilcilerinin-altinci-toplantisi-hk.en.mfa).

122 Arshaluys Barseghyan, “Armenian and Turkish Special Envoys Hold Talks in Yerevan”, *MirrorSpectator*, September 16, 2025, <https://mirrorspectator.com/2025/09/16/armenian-and-turkish-special-envoys-hold-talks-in-yerevan/>.

123 “Rubinyan ve Kılıç Hangi Antlaşmalara Vardı?”, *HyeTert*, September 12, 2025, <https://hyetert.org/2025/09/12/rubinyan-ve-kilic-hangi-anlasmalara-vardi/#>.

Armenian press highlighted the statement made by Minister of Foreign Affairs Hakan Fidan during his speech at the Institute of International Affairs in Rome on the same day, where he noted that the final steps on the peace agreement had not yet been taken and that the signing of the agreement was expected to take place in the first half of next year. His remark, *“As soon as the agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan is finalized, we will quickly normalize relations with Armenia,”* was particularly emphasized.<sup>124</sup>

On 18 September, the spokesperson for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Russia responded to a question regarding the normalization of relations between Türkiye and Armenia, stating, *“Russia firmly supports prompt reconciliation of Armenia and Türkiye. You recall how many times our nation, along with Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov personally, has engaged in international discussions focused on this matter. It is not by chance that the first round of negotiations between Armenia and Türkiye in recent years occurred on January 14, 2021, in Moscow. The normalization of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Türkiye is viewed as a fundamental requirement for establishing enduring peace and facilitating sustainable development in the South Caucasus. We are prepared to continue supporting the endeavours of our Armenian and Turkish partners in this regard, including through the 3+3 regional cooperation platform. We anticipate that the realities on the ground and the long-term interests of our neighbours in the South Caucasus will be appropriately considered when formulating agreements between Ankara and Yerevan. To achieve this, it is crucial to avert destructive interference from external regional influences in the already challenging negotiation process.”*

Speaking at his party congress on 19 September, Pashinyan also addressed relations with Türkiye, stating that he expects the border, which has been closed since 1993, to be opened and that a road connection will be established in the near future.<sup>125</sup>

In his speech at the UN General Assembly on 23 September, President Erdoğan stated that process of normalizing relations between Türkiye and Armenia is progressing. He also spoke highly of the Washington Agreement of 8 August,

124 “Fidan: Normalleşme, Ermenistan ile Azerbaycan Antlaşmasına Son İmzalar Konulur Konulmaz”, *Armenian Public Radio*, September 15, 2025, <https://tr.armradio.am/2025/09/15/fidan-normallesme-ermenistan-ile-azerbaycan-anlasmasına-son-imzalar-konulur-konulmaz/>.

125 “Paşinyan ‘Diyalog’ Sürecinden Umutlu: Türkiye Üzerinden Avrupa’ya Açılacağız”, *Türkiye Gazetesi*, September 20, 2025, <https://www.turkiyegazetesi.com.tr/dunya/pasinyan-diyalog-surecinden-umutlu-turkiye-uzerinden-avrupaya-acilacagiz-1147353>.

congratulated the parties, and stated that this would establish stable peace between Azerbaijan and Armenia.<sup>126</sup>

At the United Nations General Assembly on 27 September, Pashinyan spoke positively about the developing relations with Türkiye, saying, *“I am pleased to note that in recent years, an unprecedented positive dialogue has been established between Armenia and Türkiye. My meetings with President Erdoğan are regular, with a continuously growing level of trust. This is an achievement that I highly value and am confident will bring positive results in the foreseeable future, namely the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and Türkiye and the full opening of the interstate border.”* Pashinyan also noted that, in addition to Azerbaijan and Türkiye, Armenia’s relations with Iran and Georgia have become increasingly visible, and that these relations are of great importance for ensuring the South Caucasus becomes a peaceful, stable, and prosperous region. In this context, he emphasized the value of the 3+3 Platform, which is crucial for establishing dialogue with regional countries and for strengthening Armenia’s traditional dialogue with Russia.<sup>127</sup>

The Minister of Family and Social Policies Mahinur Özdemir Göktaş held a bilateral meeting with Armenia’s newly appointed Minister of Labor and Social Affairs in the margins of a meeting they attended in Belgrade on 30 September, and exchanged views on matters within the scope of their ministries.<sup>128</sup>

Armenia’s Minister of Economy Papoyan expressed strong support on 13 October for Turkish investments in Armenia, highlighting their potential to foster sustainable peace between the neighboring countries.

Speaking at the Tbilisi Silk Road Forum on 22 October, Pashinyan talked about the Türkiye-Armenia normalization and stated the following: *“The positive dialogue between Armenia and Türkiye gives hope that the parties may open the borders in the near future. We are ready, not only politically but also technically, starting today, to ensure the transit of freight trucks through Armenian territory from Türkiye to Azerbaijan and from Azerbaijan to Türkiye. Both the roads and border infrastructure within Armenia are*

126 “Erdogan Says Process of Normalizing Relations with Armenia Continues”, *ArmenPress*, September 23, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230410>.

127 ““Long Live Diplomacy, Long Live Peace”: Full Text of PM Nikol Pashinyan’s UNGA Speech”, *ArmenPress*, September 27, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230757>.

128 “Armenian, Turkish Ministers Hold Meeting”, *ArmenPress*, September 30, 2025, <https://armenpress.am/en/article/1230960>.

*prepared for this. We are also politically prepared to enable railway transit between Türkiye and the Nachivan Autonomous Republic and the main part of Azerbaijan in both directions. However, technically, we are not yet ready due to the lack of infrastructure”.*<sup>129</sup>

On 30 October, on the sidelines of the 8th Paris Peace Forum, Pashinyan expressed *“We have a very constructive dialogue with Türkiye. I believe the establishment of diplomatic relations and the opening of the border are just a matter of time, since there are no significant obstacles now”.*<sup>130</sup>

In his address to the parliament on 31 October where he remarked that Armenia’s relations with Azerbaijan and Türkiye were undermined by the Soviet KGB, he also criticized the one sided approach and said, *“When we say ‘a Turk remains a Turk’, Turks can also say ‘Armenians remain Armenians’. Listen, we must get rid of the stereotype”.*

Answering questions at the Orbeli Forum in Yerevan on 4 November, Pashinyan announced that he has officially invited Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan to attend the European Community Summit to be held in Yerevan in May 2026 and said *“I hope the invitation will be accepted. President Erdoğan and I have met frequently in recent years. During my last visit to Türkiye I invited President Erdoğan to attend the European Community Summit in Yerevan in May 2026. It would be wrong to comment on the possibility of President Erdoğan’s visit”.*

At the same forum, Mirzoyan announced that Türkiye and Armenia agreed to increase the number of mutual flights connecting the two countries. He added: *“For decades, with the borders closed, people have traveled and visited each other and trade was quite significant-the problem was that this trade went through third countries. Flights have existed and still do. There is an agreement to increase flights to Yerevan, Gyumri and Turkish cities such as Istanbul, Ankara and others. The issue with Türkiye is that the border is closed and there are no diplomatic relations”.* He further noted that political dialogue with Türkiye is very intensive and substantive and other confidence-building measures are also being discussed to compensate for the lack of diplomatic relations and closed border. He also called on a Turkish reporter

129 Assel Satubaldina, “How Armenia–Azerbaijan Deal Reconfigures Eurasia’s Connectivity Balance of Power,” The Astana Times, October 7, 2025, <https://astanatimes.com/2025/10/how-armenia-azerbaijan-deal-reconfigures-eurasias-connectivity-balance-of-power/>.

130 “Armenia Balances Between the TRIPP and Zangezur Corridor,” Eurasia Daily Monitor (Jamestown Foundation), November 4, 2025, <https://jamestown.org/armenia-balances-between-the-tripp-and-zangezur-corridor/>

attending the forum to refrain from using the term “corridor” while referring to the Trump Road for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) because the term “corridor” could imply extraterritoriality, while the project envisages no such thing.

Armenian press reported widely on 8 November that President Erdoğan praised Pashinyan’s “courageous steps” toward Armenia-Azerbaijan reconciliation.

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