



# RSC Analytical Briefing

## Developments in Armenia and the Wider Region

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# RSC Briefing Issues

- The status of Armenia-Azerbaijan negotiations
- Assessing the outlook for Armenia-Turkey “normalization”
- Assessing Armenian domestic politics

# Armenia-Azerbaijan Negotiations

## Three Core Issues



- Bilateral peace treaty
- Border demarcation & delineation
- Connectivity: the restoration of road/rail transport & transit

# Prelude to Possible Breakthrough

- Apparent Azerbaijani “climb down” from maximalist position & return to diplomacy may signal prelude to breakthrough
- Armenian delegation to visit Baku for UN Climate Change Conference COP29
- November could offer venue/platform for conclusion of bilateral treaty

# Sustaining Positive Momentum

- April: First-ever post-war agreement on border demarcation
- May-July: Positive momentum from implementation of border agreement
- August: Azerbaijan removes linkage between peace treaty and connectivity

# Armenia-Turkey “Normalization”

- 30 July: meetings resume between Armenian & Turkish envoys

## **Fifth meeting of the Special Representatives of Armenia and Türkiye**

On July 30, Special Representatives for the normalization process between Armenia and Türkiye, Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly of Armenia Ruben Rubinyan and Ambassador Serdar Kılıç held their fifth meeting on the Margara–Alican crossing on the border of the two countries.

They reconfirmed the agreements reached at their previous meetings.

Furthermore, they agreed to assess the technical requirements to enable functioning of Akhurik/Akyaka railroad border gate in line with the regional developments as well as to simplify their mutual visa procedures for diplomatic/official passport holders.

Finally, they reemphasized their agreement to continue the normalization process without any preconditions towards achieving the ultimate goal of full normalization between their respective countries.

**30 July, 2024**



# Armenia-Turkey “Normalization”

- Vienna 2022 agreements reached, but not implemented
- Focus on Armenia-Turkey rail connectivity first
- Turkey waiting for political cover from Armenia-Azerbaijan progress
- Tension between Ankara & Baku



# Domestic Political Situation

- Protests over border deal





# Church & State

## Tavush Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan



# Protests in Armenia

- Protests remain marginal threat, not serious challenge
- Politization of Armenian Church threatens to squander popular image
- Political inexperience & naivete
- Opposition's toxic embrace
- Unable to sustain momentum

# The Armenian Constitution: A Prerequisite to Peace?

- A potent preamble? From historical footnote to diplomatic football
- Origins of the issue: Pashinyan's vision of "real" Armenia vs. "mythical" Armenia
- The current state of play

# The Origins of the Issue

- Armenian PM Pashinyan on 19 January 2024 announces his intention to change the Armenian constitution
- Azerbaijani President Aliyev 10 days later demands changes to the Armenian constitutional preamble's reference to 1989 Armenia-Karabakh unification decision

# The Fallacy of the Issue

- A new & novel demand from Baku; what comes next?
- Still an internal matter & no logical linkage to peace treaty draft
- Amending the Armenian constitution is neither a guarantee of deterrence nor a gain for Azerbaijani security



# Conclusion

- Coming months as crucial test
- Not enough attention to the “day after”
- Armenia’s pivot to the West & strategic diversification
- Resisting the gravity of the Russian orbit
- Outstanding obstacles in domestic reform and democratization



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