



RSC Analytical Briefing Developments in Armenia and the Regional Perspective

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RSC Briefing Issues

- The status of Armenia-Azerbaijan negotiations & issue of constitution
- Resisting the Russian orbit
- Armenia-Turkey “normalization”
- Domestic political situation

Armenia-Azerbaijan Bilateral Negotiations



- NATO Summit 9-11 July Washington
- DC process resumes (since June 2023)
- Follows US Asst Sec of State O'Brien
Baku visit late last month

Prelude to Possible Breakthrough

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

Ceasefire Violations: Proposed Joint Investigation/Inspection

- Armenian proposal on 15 June to create “bilateral mechanism for investigation” of violations
- Proposal follows earlier offer of reciprocal partial withdrawal of forces
- Based on positive momentum from April border agreement

19 April Preliminary Border Demarcation Agreement

Strategic Significance

- First-ever agreement, no Russian role
- Delineation based on 1979 Soviet military map as reference point
- Demarcation based on 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration

Armenia's Constitution: A Prerequisite to Peace?

- PM Pashinyan on 19 January announces intent to change the constitution
- Pres Aliyev 10 days later demands changes to the Armenian constitutional
- But still not on agenda or component of draft bilateral peace treaty

Armenia's Constitutional Clash

- Contention over first paragraph of 1990 Declaration of Independence's reference to 1989 Armenia-Karabakh unification decision
- Pashinyan vision of “real” Armenia vs. “mythical” Armenia

Policy on New Constitution

- PM Pashinyan appoints body in January 2022 to issue recommended changes but not the Declaration of Independence
- Problematic process as civil society not consulted & opposition excluded
- Lack of clarity & coherence over goals

The Fallacy of the Issue

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

Resisting the Russian Orbit

- Pashinyan-Putin meeting, EU issue
- Trade with Russia
 - 2023: 35% share, \$7.1 billion volume
 - 1st quarter 2024: 46% share
- Western engagement
- US “strategic nuclear cooperation” with small modular reactors (SMRs)

Russian Border Guard Presence

- Agreement on withdrawal of Russian border guards from Yerevan airport and 17 points since 2020 (including facilities in Sisian and Goris)
- Armenian borders with Iran and Turkey defined by treaties & agreements; Russian base a lingering issue

Armenia-Turkey “Normalization”

- Vienna 2022 agreements reached, but not implemented
- Foreign Ministerial March 2024 & positive developments (June phone calls, Palestine recognition, etc.)
- Turkey waiting for cover, only after Armenia-Azerbaijan progress

Domestic Political Situation

- Protests in Tavush over border deal come to Yerevan 9 May



The New Face of Protests

- Tavush Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan emerges as new face of protests



The Role of the Church

- Assessing Galstanyan



Domestic Political Situation

- Protests remain marginal threat
- Church in danger of squandering popular image
- Politization of the Armenian Church
- Political inexperience & naivete
- Opposition's toxic embrace
- Absence of serious external support



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