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## 'Turkey Misses Diplomatic Goal'

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The visit of the President of Turkey, Abdulla Gul, to Yerevan to watch the football match between the teams of Armenia and Turkey was reported by the Presidential Administration on 6 September.

Although the Administration declares that the visit take purely sport character, it is emphasized that this step can open a way for the new possibilities between two countries in the future. It is reported that Gul's visit to Yerevan gives hope for softening of the tense situation, which recently appeared in Caucasus. However, the report conceals one of the main moments. Indeed one of the main culprits of the tension in Caucasus is precisely Armenia with its policy against the countries of region.

One of the basic reasons, where the West and the USA turn blind eyes on Turkey's action as a mediator in many tense points, is the desire to, in the future, use the `inclination' of Ankara toward the mediation for their political purposes. The policy pursued by the USA brought its real benefits; Gul will leave for Yerevan to watch the football match.

Already it is not secret that the visit will take place exactly under dictate of Washington because Gul's visit to Yerevan more corresponds to the interests of Armenia and the USA. Regarding the relations between Armenia and Turkey, Joseph Pennington, Charge'd' Affaires of the U.S. to Armenia, said the following: `Besides the USA, no country so actively mediate to develop the relations between Armenia and Turkey'.

Touching upon the present situation Armenia's border with Turkey, Pennington stated that opening the borders, which have been closed since 1993, in the near future and developing free trade between the two countries is very important.

Mentioning his attitude towards the relations of Armenia with Turkey, the U.S. Assistant Secretary of State, Daniel Fried, said the following: `The tense situation between the two states is advantageous for no one. The borders between Turkey and Armenia must be opened. The USA also supports the realization of trans-border dialogue, initiative of studies between Armenia and Turkey, co-operation on the realization of conferences and programs of exchange. Turkey must reconcile itself to the dark pages of its history'.

Fried's words give grounds to indicate that the Turkish diplomacy shook loose before the policy, pursued by the USA, and sooner or later Ankara will step back from its fundamental positions with regards to Armenia.

At the same time, Armenia with the impatience expect Gul's visit because the Armenians were completely prepared for the visit of the Turkish President to Yerevan.

Armenian President Sargsyan said to CNN: `One neighbour's visit to another neighbour is normal. The visit should not be taken as pressure on the sides. Although no official in Armenia has presented territorial claims for Turkey, there are structures in Turkey believing that there is no country named Armenia. In spite of a territorial problem between Turkey and Armenia, that is not an obstacle to construct diplomatic relations between the two countries. Russia, for instance, has territorial problems with China and Japan, but they also maintain official diplomatic relations.

Sargsyan's speech gives the ground to say that Armenian officials have the same territorial claims for Turkey as for other countries in the region. Through restoration of diplomatic relations with Turkey Armenia just tries to economically strengthen to fulfil strategic plans in future.

Taking into consideration Sargsyan's words 'recent events in Georgia affected Armenia's economy and a strong fuel crisis emerged in the country,' one can guess that establishment of diplomatic relations with Turkey will enable Yerevan to restore its shaken economy.

First of all, restoration of Armenia's economy requires opening of borders and Kars-Gumri railway. Armenian administration will initially put aside its principles for a while for the sake of country's economic development.

Such course of developments may generate domestic tensions in Turkey, for Gul's visit to Yerevan has not been taken as unambiguously in Turkey as in Armenia. Gul's visit may entail lost of votes of the governing party and intensify opposition's activity.

One of the moments worth attention is that it was Gul who criticized 15 years ago the then administration of Suleyman Demirel for Armenian officials' visit to Turkey.

Gul, who was then representing Rifah Party, said: 'Show me a country which meets with those who used to kill its brothers. How can one meet in Turkey with the people who say that Kars is Armenia's territory?' Certainly, Armenia has not changed its policy during recent 15 years.

Turks have one proverb which has been forgotten by the Turkish diplomacy - A soul thirsts neither for tea nor for tea-house. A soul thirsts for a talk and tea is just a pretext. Sargsyan needs neither football nor the match... Sargsyan needs opening of borders, and football is just a pretext.

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