
Armenia On The Regional Plane

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Hayots Ashkharh Daily Newspaper - 22/8/2007

Political analysts, American-Armenian Richard Kirakosyan, and Lebanese-Armenian Aspet Kochikyan introduced their evaluations and predictions regarding the current events in Near East, Turkish internal political developments and Armenian -Turkish relations, in "Urbat" club yesterday.

Professor of the department of political sciences and international relations of Florida University Aspet Kochikyan firstly clarified his attitude regarding Armenia-Diaspora relations, " For 17 years Armenia has become a modern, up-to-date state, but it is still facing a problem of accomplishing the statehood. Yes, we have Diaspora, that is part of Armenia and Armenians, but we should take into consideration the fact that the approach of the state and the nation towards the same phenomenon is usually of different nature. It is not always that the interest of the nation and the state match."

The speaker said we don't manage to make effective use of the Diaspora potential. The role of financial, material assistance is of course great but to make Armenia a competitive state in the region it is especially important to change the mentality of the nation, and the level of social, cultural relations. For the last 8 months, after the law on dual-citizenship has been passed, the question of the role of Diaspora in Armenia is being discussed in Diaspora Colonies and to what extent they can be citizens.

Diaspora is tired and there is no power to stimulate them." A. Kochikyan says.

Richard Kirakosyan, that has great work experience in various US military and political institutions, has expert and analytical skills abstained from touching upon internal political issues and relations with Diaspora. He preferred to value Armenia's regional role. He believes Armenia has established stronger, multi-nature, and deeper relations with Iran than Azerbaijan has at presents. "Azerbaijani - Iranian relations are not only chaotic but also problematic, while Armenia underestimates its importance for the Russian Federation and mainly Iran. Armenia must pin its hope on its military, economic, cultural, and scientific potential and never on West, East, or anyone else. " Before evaluating the present state of Armenian -Turkish relations Aspet Kochikyan considered it important to record that the interstate relations between the two countries are not normal because of the close border. We should take into consideration that present-day Turkey is far not the same as it used to be 60 or even 7 years back. In former Turkey they used to carry out internal political and military coup d'État on every occasion. There are political powers in present-day Turkey that should be used for the benefit of Armenia. Our principal challenge is the fair solution to Karabakh issue. In the context of this reality official Ankara can't ignore the strong pressure from Baku. But in case Armenian-Turkish border opens Armenia will negotiate with Azerbaijan and all the other powers, from comparably better positions."

R. Kirakosyan believes it is not simple governmental changes but rather profound alterations that Turkey intends to make through the presidential elections that is connected with Turkey and the identification of the Turks.

Today Turkey is facing East - West alternative and it has to choose between democracy and pan-Turkism.

"Turkey's membership to the European Union can be a security guarantee for Armenia. But the latest events that took place in this country bear out that official Ankara denies Western course. And the main reason for this is the process of establishing Kurdish independent state in Northern Iraq by the assistance of the USA. I'm sure; in the near future Turkey will clarify its attitude. That is why Armenia must be ready to withstand any possible danger expected from Turkey," the analyst states.

Touching upon the failure of Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Guile to become a president A. Kochikyan said, " Turkey, as a collectivity, was confused when the ruling party in Turkey nominated Guile's candidacy to presidency. Even the army gave signs to interfere in politics. But during the parliamentary elections 45% of the electors voted for Islamic pro-governmental party. However Guile persistently states that he is going to be not pro-Islamic but the president of all Turks. Eventually he will become a president. And though this position is mainly formal we shouldn't overlook the fact that it envisages the right of veto.

Should Turkey abandon West and choose East Guile-president will have to bargain with Turkish generals and the people. Should the army doesn't reach an agreement on this issue it will use all the levers against Guile. I don't think that matters will take such a turn that they will carry out a coup. Pro-Islamic powers represent the essence of Turkish people, which is very far from Europe both in psychological and cultural terms."
