
Armenian, Iranian officials discuss infrastructure projects

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[Presenter] Armenian National Security Council Secretary Artur Baghdasaryan has discussed ambitious regional infrastructure projects with his Iranian counterpart. Armenia can become a transit country for an international highway stretching from Georgia to Iran, and then - to the West as well. In addition to this, Artur Baghdasaryan has discussed the construction of the Iran-Armenia railway with the Iranian political leadership in Tehran. The Iranian officials did not hide their interest in the matter of constructing a petroleum refinery in Armenia.

[Correspondent speaking over video of meetings] The national security council secretary of Armenia discussed with his Iranian counterpart a dozen of issues very important for the two countries. Those are of political, economic and strategic significance. According to Artur Baghdasaryan, one of the key points of the negotiations was the construction of the Iran-Armenia railway.

[Baghdasaryan speaking in Armenian to a correspondent] In this regard an ad hoc committee will be set up in the security councils of Armenia and Iran, which will coordinate solving this and other key matters.

[The Iranian secretary of the Supreme National Security Council, Sa'id Jalili, speaking in Farsi with voiceover Armenian translation] I should say that we have had quite a long and substantial consultation; we have discussed numerous issues which are extremely important for our countries. I received an invitation of a return visit from Artur Baghdasaryan, and I hope that many of our arrangements will have been implemented at the time of this visit.

[Correspondent] By saying other key matters, Artur Baghdasaryan implied Iran's interest in opportunities of building a petroleum refinery, and an international highway stretching from Batumi to Yerevan and then to Iran. The fate of these projects will be decided during discussions of the council that is to be set up. Political discussions are being held regarding an arrangement for specialist discussions and feasibility studies of the railway construction project. The railway and highway construction projects have also been discussed with [Iranian] President [Mahmud] Ahmadinezhad. The deputy foreign minister of Armenia, Gegham Gharibjanyan, said the visit was a successful one.

[Gharibjanyan speaking to a correspondent] I believe that a joint session of intergovernmental commissions will take place in Tehran immediately after the visit, and then a working group will introduce to Mr Baghdasaryan and Mr Jalili the points which they have been assigned and a next meeting will follow, and why not - mutual visits of the first persons.

[Correspondent] Gharibjanyan attaches special importance to the meeting with the Iranian president. According to him, Mahmud Ahmadinezhad fully backed the three major projects. During the visit Baghdasaryan also met representatives of the Armenian community in Iran, and visited Tehran's Armenian diocese. Hayk Hovhannisyan, Romik Khachatryan, Tehran, Haylur.
