
TBILISI: Georgian, Armenian Premiers Discuss Ties, Sign Cooperation Accords

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[Presenter] The Georgian and Armenian prime ministers signed two agreements today after the meeting of the intergovernmental commission on Georgian-Armenian economic cooperation. One document pertains to free trade and the other envisages cooperation in the sphere of culture. [Georgian Prime Minister] Grigol Mgaloblishvili and [Armenian Prime Minister] Tigran Sargsyan also discussed other issues in bilateral relations. The Armenian prime minister paid a one-day visit to Tbilisi today together with a governmental delegation consisting of members of the economic team.

[Mgaloblishvili, in Georgian, addressing a joint briefing] The document on introducing amendments in the free trade agreement between Georgia and Armenia signed on 14 August 1995 has been signed, as has an accord on the cultural cooperation programme between our countries between the years 2008 and 2010.

[Sargsyan, in Armenian with Georgian translation superimposed] Armenian-Georgian relations are very important for us. It is our duty to boost friendly neighbouring relations between Georgia and Armenia. There are no issues on which we cannot reach an agreement, and the agreements that we have signed prove this.

[The two also discussed the dispute over Tbilisi's defunct Norashen church, which is claimed by both by the Georgian Orthodox and Armenian Apostolic Churches, Kavkas-Press news agency reported at 1137 gmt. The agency said Sargsyan refused to comment on the issue at the briefing, while it quoted Mgaloblishvili as saying that he hoped the issue would not be "politicized". Kavkas-Press also reported that both sides were working to mobilize funds for the construction of a road connecting Yerevan and Georgia's Black Sea port of Batumi. Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili and his Armenian counterpart Serzh Sargsyan reached a preliminary agreement on the project on 30 September.
