
Why Armenia Did Not Operate Iran-Armenia

By Nano Arghutyan

Lragir.am - 14/01/2009

Controversial information comes from neighboring Iran which has a short border with Armenia and a long border with Karabakh. The most interesting part is perhaps that connected with the escalation of the Israel-Palestinian conflict. Most experts thought that the military action of Israel is aimed not only at the neutralization of Hamas but also the involvement of Iran in the war, which illegally supports this organization. In this connection, information on the military action in Gaza was accompanied with information like "Iran promised to raze Israel to the ground", "in Tehran young men say ready to participate in the third Intifada", and so on. At the same time, the spiritual leader of the Islamic Republic Ayatollah Sayyed Ali Khamenei barred Iranian volunteers who wish to join the Palestinian movement of confrontation in the Gaza area from leaving the country to fight against Israel. "I am grateful to our pious and active young people who wish to go to the Gaza area (for the war with Israel), but it should be taken into consideration that our hands are tied," Ayatollah Khamenei announced in his address to the people of Kuma, the Shiite religious center of Iran.

The U.S. president elect Barack Obama who will be inaugurated on January 20 stated that the relations between the United States and Iran must be revised. Although in his good-bye press conference the leaving president of the United States George Bush again referred to Iran as a source of threat to the United States, obviously after Obama's inauguration the Iranian issue will stop being a cornerstone of the U.S. foreign policies.

The relations between Iran and the United States determine the relations of other countries with Tehran in the past years. Even the neighboring countries set up relations with Iran with their eyes on the United States.

The United States decided whom to "allow" and whom to forbid making friends with Iran. Armenia was allowed, for otherwise the United States would have to admit that Armenia is in complete international isolation.

Strangely Russia would not allow Armenia and Iran to be friends. For instance, the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline built in a record time (it is said to be financed from Western sources) was immediately seized by Moscow. The pipeline is still empty. Moreover, the Russians stated that the Iranian pipe will be empty as long as there is Russian gas. The Russians did not give money for the construction of the railway Iran-Armenia, explaining that it is not feasible. The United States did not give money either but judging by the logic of developments, it is not ruled out that soon the United States will say likely to fund this project.

In the meantime, yesterday the head of the staff of Armenia Karen Karapetyan met with the ambassador of Iran to Armenia Seyid Ali Saghayani. Karen Karapetyan underscored the energy programs, as well as the construction of the railway Iran-Armenia and the construction of joint water power plants on the river Arax.

The interlocutors underlined that the rates of trade between these countries are not high although there is possibility and resource for their growth, and these problems must be in the focus of the joint commission on economic cooperation.

Although Armenia did not use the chance to operate the gas pipeline Iran-Armenia when the transit of the Russian gas via Georgia to Armenia was interrupted, it does not mean that it will not use the next chance.
