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# NATO Summit And Armenia

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Armenian official delegation headed by the President elect Serge Sargsyan, is going to participate in regular NATO Summit, in Bucharest on April 2-4.

Chair of the Committee on Defense, National Security, and Internal Affairs Arthur Aghabekyan introduces the prospects of the cooperation between Armenia and Euro-Atlantic Military Political Union in his interview with the correspondent of "Hayots Ashkharh" daily.

"Mr. Aghabekyan what agenda issues is going to be discussed in the NATO Summit in Bucharest and with what expectations will Armenian side participate in the military political gathering of more than sixty countries?"

"The peculiarity of NATO Bucharest Summit will be the participation of the countries which have great desire to become members of this military political structure. Many of these states however, will unavoidably appear in the focus of the collapse of the interests of NATO member countries. And they will have to overcome lots of obstacles to make their desires come true.

Armenia is going to participate in NATO Summit as a partner. The foundation of our cooperation format is the general program "Partnership for Peace". With the years' effective partnership we have recorded essential progress, we jointly implement the program "Individual Partnership Action", which can be considered a serious achievement. This individual program clarifies the goals of the cooperation between Armenia and NATO, which is based on the provision of security for our country and our people. The cooperation assumes implementation of joint actions, not only with this powerful military political structure but also with the member countries in separate."

"Are they planning to discuss issues regarding South Caucasus and particularly Armenia?"

"Georgia is trying to pave the way towards NATO by means of implementing individual programs. But the expectant stance of many European countries and internal problems will surely prevent Georgia to achieve its end. Georgia intends to solve its territorial problems by means of cooperation with NATO or becoming NATO member country. The participation of The Russian President Vladimir Putin in the Summit in Bucharest prompts that this time the issue of Georgia's membership won't be included in the agenda.

>From all the agenda issues Armenia is mostly interested in discussions around "the challenges of the 21st century". NATO Secretary has already announced that on 2009 they are going to elaborate the new strategy of the military political union. This strategy will derive from the exact evaluation of the challenges of the 21st century, which will be outlined during the forthcoming Summit.

The cooperation with NATO is one of the components of Armenia's security. That is why it is very important what extension tactics will NATO adopt during the coming five years to overcome the challenges.

We have already carried into circulation the new draft on "Security", which is mainly aimed at transforming the cooperation from tactical to strategic level. Our peacekeeping division in Kosovo proved that we could be integrated in the multi-national subdivision."

"Current year NATO is planning to hold unprecedented military trainings in Armenia. What does this testify to?"

"Armenia expressed readiness to host similar military trainings two years ago. Many military staffs from NATO member and partner countries will participate in the military training called "Joint Bow". The Conference on planning and final arrangements is in process. The same way as in 2003, when Armenia managed to prove that the latter is NATO's loyal partner and can provide the implementation of the military trainings to the best of its abilities, this time also we will prove the same.

Whereas in 2004 Azerbaijan didn't find strength in itself to meet the demands vested with the member countries and for the first time in its history NATO was obliged to cancel the military trainings.

For Armenia the aim of these developments and reforms is absolutely not in becoming NATO member country. We have underscored many times that we haven't got similar issue in the foreign policy agenda. Our principal goal is to have armed forces, which can confront the challenges of the 21st century. We must always consider the fact that with time the challenges, the targets, and the demands are also changed.

I must also underscore that each country decides its foreign policy, evaluates the danger jeopardizing the country and the people and chooses the ways to confront them, on its own."

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