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# Europe and We

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Hayots Ashkharh, Armenia - 18/8/2007

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Armenia's integration to European processes in the recent years has reached a refuge when the bilateral relations and the political, economic, and religious-cultural relations with Europe has become a topic of common discussion and needs a pithy observation.

The main reason of such a demand are the restrictions in these relations, that are usually heard in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe as well as during the regular visits of the representatives of European structures to Armenia. Our perception of the European structures as dictating and obliging bodies has become so deeply rooted that it has turn into an unwritten law for us. But if we can't distinguish Strasburg from the former Soviet center, then why should the Europeans distinguish Armenia from our direct neighbors. After all to recognize the people close to them in the sense of civilization, Europe has to be confident that we Armenians are loyal to those traditions.

Whereas sometimes it looks as if the process of Armenia's integration to the European structures is not a strategic priority but an obligatory - volunteer event to which we participate just to be far from trouble.

As a result a situation is created in Armenia-Europe relations that doesn't match neither with the history of the bilateral relations nor with the concrete matter of wide opportunities in separate spheres.

It is obvious that by now neither Armenia managed to introduce itself to Europe with its real face - European civilization, nor has Europe deeply perceived us like that. This is the reason why by now the advantage of Armenia, in essence the only Republic in the region that has apparent European cultural priority towards its neighbors is not yet manifested.

If we really want to become an accomplished European country and benefit from all the opportunities created in the region we should swiftly overcome the policy of being guided by inertia. Moreover the different European structures in Armenia must be overflowed with the proposals of cooperation made by Armenia.

The same is about our passive attitude towards the intentions of different European institutions to have representations in the region. Armenia must try to rouse interest for these institutions, the bearers of new governing experience that have different skills to build a modern state.

At present Europe is far not the regular conqueror entering the region. Being a complex system of democratic countries and institutions, the European family creates a huge domain for mutual cooperation. To benefit from this opportunity we should perceive Europe as an environment consisting of cordial countries, with which we have if not common roots at least common edges beginning from our cultural and religious heritage to economy and politics.

All this contributes to mutual understanding and creates opportunities for mutually beneficial cooperation.

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