
‘Armenia is a small tool that was once used against the EU and the Ukraine.’

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Hovhannes Igityan about the role and place in Armenia in CU

‘Perhaps, this question should be addressed to those Republican party MPs, who once were saying how we can sign the agreement on establishment of a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area, if we do not know what it is. Now, it can be assumed that they do not know what they are saying, or do not know at all what is going on even in the Customs Union,’ said the former President on RA NA Foreign Affairs Hovhannes Igityan in the interview with ‘Aravot’ in response to our question, yesterday, regarding the draft decision signed in Minsk, according to which Armenia will join the Customs Union and the Common Economic Area.

To the point, on this issue, Republican faction leader Galust Sahakyan stated at the parliamentary briefing that he is not well informed as to especially what provisions are there in this document, the President will return and give them the information, at the same time adding, ‘There is a road map that must be considered to ensure our interests during the process of joining as well. With respect to the Customs Union, we need to work properly to create favorable conditions for us.’ Also, this, another expression of ignorance by Galust Sahakyan, according to Hovhannes Igityan, shows that before going to somewhere Serzh Sargsyan's politically close team does not know what he was going to sign there. ‘I guess it will always be so with the Customs Union. Any representative, be it Serzh Sargsyan or lower, will be going and a paper will be ‘put forward’, which they must sign. And they will sign. I can not think of any government official that will not sign the paper ‘put forward’ by Moscow,’ said Hovhannes Igityan, adding that from now on after Serzh Sargsyan's each step, the team will begin to justify it. In fact, later, ‘Liberty’ radio station announced that the document signed in Minsk pledged Armenia to refrain from any statement or action contrary to the interests of the Customs Union. Given Armenia's desire to join the Customs Union and the legal contractual base of the Common Economic Area and later to become a full member of the Eurasian Economic Union, the parties reached a number of mutual agreements. This document entitles Armenia to obtain the documents adopted by the supreme body of the Eurasian Economic Union, except for documents that contain confidential information.

Hovhannes Igityan also draws attention to the statements of Presidents of the CU member states that follow each other in recent days, according to which Armenia will have to go through the whole process, and should not be easy to enter the Union. But interestingly that no one knows what it means, because it's not that the rest of the countries have gone through some process. Igityan implies that the matter refers to all documents adopted by the Eurasian Commission, which Armenia must adopt unconditionally, with no exceptions. No less significant are recent statements of the CU expansion, which, according to Igityan, clearly shows that the expansion is political,

no one is talking about economic issues, and even it was loudly voiced that they would show the world that the Eurasian Union is not the former USSR, hence, they are talking about membership of Turkey and India. 'I do not know whether Turkey or India has applied. Is it good or bad for Armenia? In general, it is very difficult to look at the economically virtual organization from the prospective of economy, where everyone is distinctly saying that it is political. It is not clear what problem the body solves, and what Armenia's role is over there, in general, and why it is going. My point of view is that Putin put pressure or a request (Putin's request is already a pressure) on Armenia not to go to Europe and to weaken the position of Ukraine in terms of the European integration. I think this is the main target, and it is apparent,' opines Hovhannes Igityan.

To the point, our interlocutor has recently been in Ukraine and still believes that there are quite interesting processes are going on there. 'I think that RF went beyond all bounds that, with regard to the Euro-integration process, even the ones who consider themselves pro-Russian forces are now united around President Yanukovych. I've felt the process of joining in Ukraine, and if it continues, Ukraine should be grateful to Putin that through pressures it contributed to elimination of differences between the eastern and western parts and to the process. The most important thing in all this is that merging is going on not around the person but the values. The anti-government forces state everywhere, post flyers that they support the President Yanukovich in the process of European integration.' Hovhannes Igityan highlights the active processes directed to public awareness in Ukraine, both in economic and political, and social aspects on the way to joining the EU and CU, and they are generally held through open debates. 'RF's pressure is felt, many producers appeared in bad shape due to famous 'roadway gate' opening - closing Gennady Onishchenko, who one day suddenly decides that the Ukrainian milk, chocolate or charcoal are harmful, and so on. It is apparently seen, and the people realize it very well that Soviet bureaucratic, official manner of work will be functioning in the CU, which will bring no benefit to anyone,' concludes Hovhannes Igityan. In this context, our interlocutor does not feel the presence of the political or economic team, which will constantly discuss and give advice to Serzh Sargsyan on what Armenia should do even in the CU. The political team that was formed in the EU negotiations, today, according to our interlocutor, is in hesitation because of the responsibility placed on them to change the position and introduce economic grounds regarding a body, which is absolutely not economical. 'In other words, the team has to be changed. This team functioning by economic criteria has nothing to do in the CU discussions. But, the chance that we had before September three, is no more available. Armenia has lost the trust, but it is not that it gained new confidence by the CU member countries. The tone and formulations that the officials of countries who consider themselves founders of the CU allow towards Armenia, is already clear that Armenia will never have an equal partner there. Armenia is a small tool that was once used against the EU and Ukraine. It is clear that Armenia will be an element over there constantly disturbing under the feet, especially when they talk that the interests of Azerbaijan should be considered in Armenia's joining process. They are talking about Turkey. In this situation, Armenia has no future there.' Recently, the European Parliament, in a resolution adopted regarding Armenia, has addressed to the Karabakh issue, where there was a reference to the four resolutions adopted by UN Security Council in 1993. Regardless of what they are talking that there have been breaches of the voting process, that pro-Azerbaijani Italian MPs forged the votes, and there should be reviewing, however, there is the fact. To note that during these years Azerbaijan has always tried to involve these decisions in the European resolutions, but it failed. In response to our question whether it is a coincidence, Mr. Igityan said that there are no random questions in the international diplomacy. 'This is not

a casino, a roulette, it is a serious process in which Armenia is leading the process of losing its trust and reputation for a long time. The peak, of course, was the final step of Armenia, where it showed that Armenia is not only a reliable partner, but also has nothing to do with European values. Under these circumstances, the `debate' between Armenia and Azerbaijan in the international arena proceeds not in favor of Armenia. So far, the entire counterbalance of statements on oil, lobbying, the Muslim League had been Armenia's being a bit more democratic to Azerbaijan, direction to European standards. If we become equal with Azerbaijan in democracy, then, of course, all the rest advantages of Azerbaijan are becoming more practical. And, it is not accidental that today Azerbaijan managed to bring the UN resolutions into the European resolutions. To the point, these resolutions are not so bad, but unfortunately, Azerbaijan managed to present them as a non-pro-Armenian. In fact, with these resolution, Armenia was to use its influence on Nagorno-Karabakh to cease the war, which happened in 1994, and we can say that from that moment these resolutions lost their actuality. Now, these resolutions are presented in a different way, and Armenia's diplomacy, today, is probably very busy with CU issues and is unable to avert it.'

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