
DCFTA: EU Demanded Introducing Customs Border With Karabakh?

PanARMENIAN.Net - 19/9/2013

The chair of the standing parliamentary committee on foreign relations Artak Zakaryan neither confirmed nor denied the reports that the EU-Armenia Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area (DCFTA) envisaged introduction of a customs border with the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, Novosti-Armenia said.

However, he gave a reason behind the unreleased texts of the Association Agreement and DCFTA: "in international practice, the documents are not published during negotiations and before the initialing. With the contents of the document likely to be reformulated or amendments introduced, it's unreasonable to publish a new paper every time it's done," Zakaryan said.

"The document contained a number of clauses protecting Armenia's interests, However, there were also some paragraphs which technically contradicted to the principles of the Customs Union, and now the European side is unwilling to initial the document in the agreed form," the parliamentarian added.

According to Panorama.am, a member of the Republican Party of Armenia executive body Gagik Minasyan believes that Armenia's accession to the Customs Union will lead to recognition of the NKR as the international entity.

"This is the reason why Azerbaijan, wary of the danger of the NKR's de facto recognition, takes every effort to undermined integration processes in the framework of the customs Union, involving Armenia," he said. The Armenia-EU ties have cooled down following President Sargsyan's voicing Armenia's readiness to join Customs Union, with further plans to be involved in formation of Eurasian Economic Union.

However, later the European Commission said that the Association Agreement (including a Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area) with Armenia can be compatible with economic cooperation with the members of the Commonwealth of Independent States.

When in St. Petersburg to attend the G20 summit, European Council President Herman Van Rompuy said that Armenia, Moldova, and, if possible, Ukraine will hopefully sign the Association Agreement at the Vilnius Summit in November 2013.

"This is a political agreement. The Agreement would allow Armenia to go through comprehensive change both politically and economically.

Therefore, after getting the news about Armenia's plans of joining the Custom's Union the EU expects to hear from Armenia what her further plans are. We have not received official explanations from Armenia, yet we don't think this is a zero sum game and the same refers to Ukraine. Some benchmarks will be necessary to meet. There are some outstanding issues but we hope to see results in Vilnius. We are still engaged with these countries and still expect to sign the Association Agreements," he said.

Meanwhile, a spokesman for Stefan Fule, the European Commissioner for Enlargement and European Neighborhood Policy, said that the European Parliament is not going to initialize either the Associated Agreement or the Deep and Comprehensive Free Trade Area with Armenia, as it's not compatible with membership in the Customs Union.

http://www.panarmenian.net/eng/news/170211/DCFTA_EU_demanded_introducing_customs_border_with_Karabakh
