
US-Russia-Turkey Triangle New Sign Of Strategic Development - Opinions

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US Secretary of State John Kerry's possible visit to Armenia might be linked, first of all, to the intensifying cooperation among Russia, Turkey and the United States, says Andrias Ghukasyan, a former presidential candidate.

It comes after US Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern said in recent comments to Haykakan Zhamanak that Mr Kerry would hopefully visit Armenia next year to demonstrate commitment to the development of the US-Armenia cooperation. The paper says that the US official had earlier given assurances on that to Armenia's foreign minister and president.

Speaking to Tert.am, Ghukasyan noted that international financial organizations will suspend assistance to Armenia in the present circumstances in case other countries decide against offering aid.

"2014 is the year that may see Armenia's default become a reality," the politician said, noting that Russia is now acting as a debt guarantor for Armenia instead of the European donors.

Ghukasyan said the Armenian authorities are very likely to agree to concessions over Nagorno-Karabakh in such a situation.

"Both the United States and Russia have a problem in terms of clarifying to what extent [President] Serzh Sargsyan is ready and able to offer concessions over Karabakh and hence- to what extent the opening of the Armenia-Turkey border is realistic," he added.

The former presidential candidate admitted that such a step by Armenia would fit Russia's interests given that the country has a concessionary railway operation agreement with Armenia and owns the country's major electric power plants.

"This is why the US-Russia-Turkey triangle has turned more active," he noted.

Commenting on Kerry's visit plan, the Free Democrats party's deputy leader, Anush Sedrakyan, said it is first of all a sign that Armenia is not a "lost partner" for the West. "Even if the visit doesn't take place, the forecasts alone are a sign that Armenia has other strategic development opportunities," she told Tert.am.

Sedrakyan pointed out to three possible signs of strategic development: the Open Sky initiative (which the analyst says is endlessly criticized by Russia), the Carrefour supermarket plan, and the possible natural gas purchase talks with Iran.

"If the reports are reliable, Armenia will try to ensure a certain balance," she noted.

Sedrakyan said the possible visit is quite understandable against the backdrop of the current national-liberalist campaign in Ukraine.

"Keep in mind that the world is boundless today; hence the context of the

Ukrainian acts [of protest] demonstrates that a campaign for freedom and independence can have its post-effect on another country.

I think Armenia fits into those frameworks," she noted.

Asked whether the US secretary's visit might have anything to do with the Armenian Genocide centennial, Sedrakyan answered, "The 100th anniversary may open absolutely new strategic prospects for Armenia in case we demonstrate a wise, prudent and brave behavior. As for Turkey, I think it can and is obliged and considers it wise to show certain gestures. That's my personal opinion," she added.

Such an alternative, Sedrakyan said, could be the unconditional opening of the Armenia-Turkey border, which would raise Turkey's political reputation, at the same time offering an advantageous alternative to Armenia.

<http://www.tert.am/en/news/2013/12/13/sedrakyan-ghukasyan1/>
