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Armen Ayvazyan: Armenia on Verge of War: It Is a Reality to Be Counted With

The coming Washington meeting of co-chairs of the OSCE MG on settlement of the Karabakh conflict, especially after the Rambouillet failure, becomes a central topic of discussion of politicians and media. Azerbaijan increases anti-Armenian propaganda, especially during Vladimir Putin's stay in Baku, trying to gain Moscow support in settlement of the Karabakh issue. Director of Pan-Armenian Commonwealth NGO, Doctor of political science Armen Ayvazyan comments on the situation and some aspects of Armenia's national security at the instance of a PanARMENIAN.Net reporter.

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Can anything specific be expected from the meeting of the OSCE MG co-chairs in Washington if such is nevertheless held.

One should not expect much of the forthcoming meeting of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs in Washington. Even if they agree on the meeting of the FMs and then the Presidents, it will hardly change anything. The 1 or 2-page document that can be signed by the Presidents will not be implemented since it will determine the principles of the settlement only and will not clarify the details. The Karabakh conflict belongs to a kind of conflicts where each tiny detail, like location of a block at the contact line has the same importance as the NKR status, for example.

Signing of a Big Treaty between the conflicting parties is impossible. Azerbaijan's demands will be maximal. Armenia and NKR will not make concessions. It will result in international community's pressure on Armenia and this pressure will become the sword of Damocles for us. Neither the Armenian, nor Azeri society is ready for compromise. Moreover the resistance of Karabakh leadership and population is inevitable in case of signing a Big Treaty.

The format and content of the talks on settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict are imitation or unpardonable pliability of the Armenian party. Azerbaijan is going to solve the conflict by means of force and thus refuses from any concessions. They want everything and at once. Armenia does not have the right to shut its eyes to the preparation of the war. The international community is ready to the solution by force owing to efforts of Azeri propagandists and we cannot hope for their censure.

We, if this can be said, are happy at the European Parliament Resolution on destruction of Old Julfa Armenian cemetery. Does the Armenian party have cause for optimism of the kind?

The European Parliament considers demolition of Old Julfa Armenian cemetery separately from the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, while its sources should be sought in Azerbaijan's genocide policy against Armenians and the Armenian state. The European Parliament resolution denouncing Azerbaijan's actions in Nakhichevan, which inspired the Armenian party, does not solve anything.

The resolution can have an effect only if we attain a break-through in the information war. By the way, the resolution calls on both parties «not to demolish historical monuments.» What does it mean – again a sign of equality between Armenia and Azerbaijan – kind of political correctness? I have to emphasize that all resolutions recognizing the Armenian Genocide are vague – they do not specify the responsibility for the crime, sanctions against Turkey. On the whole, it is clear Azerbaijan pursues a purposeful genocide policy against Armenia at the state level.

What is your opinion on NKR President Arkady Ghukasyan's statement that Armenia should give up talks with Baku?

NKR President Arkady Ghukasyan is right to say that Armenia should quit the negotiation process with Azerbaijan. I fully agree with the NKR President. Armenia should have quitted the negotiation process after the murder of the Armenian officer in Budapest or at least after the destruction of the Armenian cemetery in Julfa. Armenia should introduce the above mentioned incidents in the negotiation format. This is a well-known device applied in diplomatic practice – to refuse form participation in order to return with new proposals. It is impossible to stay on the same position all the time.

What has Armenia acquired during 18 years of the Karabakh movement?

During recent 18 years the people of Nagorno Karabakh proved that they can win and develop while Armenia proved to be capable to secure its borders stretching for 42 thousand square km. Armenia's economy not only survived but also moves forward. The Armenian strategic thought already influences upon both the public opinion and the decision-making by the powers. I am convinced that time works for us, since the development of strategy on the national security will allow to raise the level of state governance, struggle against corruption and staff issues. After all it will give start to the formation of true patriotic political elite.

What do you forecast for the coming prospects?

We are on the verge of a war. Unfortunately, this is reality that should be taken into account. It is not so much important whether the war will be now or in five years. It is just a second in history. A war can be avoided only in one case – attaining strengthening statehood, army military efficiency, building a fully formed national security system, so as Azerbaijan is never sure that the planned aggression will succeed. This conclusion demands a fundamental change of the course of state building: personnel, information, ideology. The heavy moral and political climate of Armenia should be improved. Unfortunately, Armenian political beau monde is not used to discussing the topic of a war as if not to spread panic among the population. However, any citizen of Armenia should think of a war tomorrow just for it not to take place. Our strategic depth and human resources imply that in case of an unfavorable outcome of the war Armenia will stop existence as a state and nation.

If Azerbaijan unleashes a war, it will be a short one this time – from a week to few weeks. Like the Seven-Day War between Israel and Egypt. However, just those days will decide the fate of the nation, thus we will not have time to fundamentally reform anything during hostilities. We should aim at a victory exclusively. A victory means territorial acquisitions, as owing to lack of defense depth and to avoid losses and destruction the only right strategy of waging the future war is transferring it to the territory of the adversary. We need not worry in the moral aspect – the territory up to the natural border, the River Kura – is a genuine Armenian land. In a word, if you want peace, prepare to a war.

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