

Armenia and Germany sign joint declaration on strategic partnership agenda



Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Friedrich Merz have signed a Joint Declaration on the Strategic Agenda for Bilateral Partnership between Armenia and Germany, marking a new phase in relations between the two countries.

The declaration reaffirms the long-standing and friendly ties between Armenia and Germany and expresses the

mutual intention of both sides to deepen bilateral partnership and cooperation. The parties underscore the trust established between them and the convergence of interests across multiple fields.

Armenia and Germany reiterate their shared commitment to the promotion and protection of freedom of expression, democracy, human rights, the rule of law, and a rules-based international order. The declaration also emphasizes respect for

the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of all states, in line with the principles of the UN Charter, the Helsinki Final Act, and other international legal instruments aimed at promoting peace and security.

The sides refer to the framework provided by the EU–Armenia Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), as well as the priorities set out in

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A meeting between Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and Federal Chancellor of the Federal Republic of Germany Friedrich Merz took place in Berlin.

During the meeting, the parties reaffirmed the long-standing friendly and

partnering relations established between Armenia and Germany, emphasizing their readiness to continuously deepen cooperation based on mutual trust, common values, and interests.

Prime Minister Pashinyan and Federal Chancellor Merz highlighted the recent increase in trade turnover, expressing hope that it will continue to develop at a more dynamic and progressive pace.

During the meeting, the parties touched upon the strategic agenda of the Armenia-EU partnership, emphasizing the importance of developing political dialogue, security cooperation, combating cyber threats and disinformation, as well as deepening economic, cultural, and scientific cooperation.

The German side welcomed the strengthening of Armenia's ties with the European Union and the wider family of democratic states.

Federal Chancellor Merz highlighted the recent positive developments in the process of normalizing relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan as an important step towards establishing lasting peace in the region. It was emphasized that the successful progress of the process, as well as the full normalization of relations between Armenia and Türkiye, open up new opportunities for a peaceful and prosperous South Caucasus.

Discussions focused on bilateral cooperation, as well as regional security challenges and the future agenda.

EU Foreign Affairs Council: Armenian FM details key topics of talks

Armenia will welcome the EU's possible involvement in South Caucasus infrastructure projects, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan told reporters in Brussels after a meeting held within the framework of the EU Foreign Affairs Council.

"It is a pleasure to be back to Brussels, just two weeks after a very successful EU -Armenia Partnership Council, where we adopted the Armenia-EU Partnership Strategic Agenda, thus elevating our relations to a new level. Today, at the Foreign Affairs Council format, chaired by High Representative Kaja Kallas, together with the member states, we discussed all the major achievements



of the Armenia-EU partnership—from the economy and stronger resilience to security-related issues, including hybrid threats and the assistance provided under the European Peace Facility. We covered all the topics that are

currently of great importance in the relations between Armenia and the European Union. We also assessed the progress in the visa liberalization process, a topic that is very important for the citizens of the Republic of Armenia and from the perspective of bringing Armenia closer to the European Union. Of course, there is also the bigger picture—regional developments, the opening of communications between the countries of the South Caucasus, and the opportunities lying therein. We discussed and welcomed the potential involvement of the EU in infrastructure projects," he said.

Deputy FM meets with High Representative for United Nations Alliance of Civilizations

On December 15, in Riyadh, on the sidelines of the 11th Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Robert Abisghomonyan had a meeting with Miguel Angel Moratinos, High Representative of the UNAOC.

The parties discussed the ongoing projects within the UNAOC framework and the engagement of Armenia therein, the foreign ministry said in a readout. They exchanged views on issues of advancing the preservation and protection of cultural

heritage, as well as promoting intercultural dialogue and youth engagement across various sectors of public life.

Touching upon recent regional developments, the Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized the importance of further consolidating and institutionalizing the peace. The importance of implementing the "Crossroads of Peace" initiative of the Government of Armenia and its key component "TRIPP" project on the basis of the sovereignty, territorial integrity, and jurisdiction of the states was underscored,

aimed at advancing regional unblocking and transport connectivity.



Church officially pledged to adopt new Canon Law but failed for 14 years, says PM, warning of ‘deliberate uncanonical situation’

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan highlighted the need for the Armenian Apostolic Church to adopt a new Canon Law as part of reforms he has proposed.

In a video posted on social media, Pashinyan said that the Armenian Apostolic Church had officially intended to develop a Canon Law as early as 2011, but never did so.

He again referred to Catholicos Karekin II by his secular name, Ktrich Nersisyan, because Pashinyan accuses him of holding office illegitimately.

“After the removal of Ktrich Nersisyan, the second point of the roadmap I proposed for the reform of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church concerns the adoption of the Church’s Canon Law. This agenda has been officially recorded by the Mother See itself. In November 2011, the Statute of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church was registered with the Ministry of Justice of Armenia, which stated that in the near future, a Canon Law (Constitution)

of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church would be drafted, serving as the fundamental framework for its entire hierarchical structure. But now, 12 years after Ktrich Nersisyan assumed the position of Catholicos, a comprehensive Statute—the complete Canon Law—still does not exist,” emphasized Pashinyan. He added that the fact that the Church, led by Karekin II, has been unable to develop a Canon Law for 14 years speaks volumes.

He accused the Church leadership of deliberately creating an “uncanonical situation” so that there would be no clear understanding or perception of any existing rules, allowing events to unfold as they have.

“Therefore, it is very important that the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church, immediately after the removal of Ktrich Nersisyan and the election of a locum tenens, proceed with the drafting and adoption of a new Canon Law, in which clear and

transparent rules will operate—rules that will be visible not only to the clergy but also to the public. This will make it clear to all of us what values the Church upholds and what mechanisms exist for public and internal oversight,” Pashinyan said.

Last week, Prime Minister Pashinyan presented a [plan](#) he described as a “roadmap for reforming” the Armenian Apostolic Church after Catholicos Karekin II steps down—something the latter has so far refused to do. Pashinyan has accused Karekin II of illegitimately holding office, alleging that the church leader broke his vow of celibacy by fathering a child while already a bishop, and was ultimately elected Catholicos in 1999 in violation of Church rules. Pashinyan suggested that after Karekin II is “removed,” the Church should elect a locum tenens to oversee the adoption of a new Canon Law, ultimately leading to the election of a new Catholicos.

Armenia rejects Azerbaijan’s claims on EU Partnership Agenda, says it supports regional peace

The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has dismissed claims by Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry that the newly signed Armenia–European Union Strategic Partnership Agenda contradicts the peace process between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

In a comment to [Armenpress](#), MFA Spokesperson Ani Badalyan stressed that the Armenia–EU Strategic Partnership Agenda reflects the evolving and deepening bilateral relations between Armenia and the European Union, based on shared values and mutual interests.

She noted that the document not only mirrors the European aspirations of Armenian citizens, but also the EU’s commitment to supporting Armenia’s sovereignty, territorial integrity, democracy, and



socio-economic resilience. According to Badalyan, these factors directly contribute to further consolidating peace efforts in the region.

Badalyan further emphasized that negotiations on the Armenia–EU Strategic Partnership Agenda had, in principle, been completed as early as June. The agenda, she said, also outlines a shared vision for the future, including a common commitment to strengthening stability, prosperity,

and peace in the region.

She also pointed out that on the same day, the Armenia–EU Partnership Council adopted a joint statement welcoming what it described as a historic milestone achieved by Armenia and Azerbaijan at the Peace Summit held in Washington in August this year. This included the initialing of the “Agreement on Peace and the Establishment of Interstate Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan.”

In the joint statement, the European Union reaffirmed its strong support for the continued strengthening and institutionalization of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Badalyan added.

Pashinyan offers Azerbaijan to simultaneously drop the return of Armenians to Karabakh and the ‘western Azerbaijan’ narratives

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has proposed to Azerbaijan that they simultaneously drop the issues of the return of Armenians to Nagorno-Karabakh and the so-called ‘western Azerbaijan’ narrative.

Pashinyan made the remarks at a press briefing in Germany, reacting to the Azerbaijani foreign ministry’s criticism of the Armenia-EU strategic partnership agenda, because it mentions “Karabakh Armenians displaced following Azerbaijan’s military operation.” The Azeri criticism has been [rejected](#) by the Armenian foreign ministry.

Pashinyan emphasized that he sees a situation in which, on the one hand, Azerbaijan continues to use the so-called ‘western Azerbaijan’ narrative, and on the other hand, it complains that the wording ‘Karabakh Armenians displaced following Azerbaijan’s military operation’ was



included in the Armenia-EU strategic agenda document.

Pashinyan recalled that he has numerous said that the topic of the return of Armenians to Karabakh is a dangerous subject.

“Now I want to make an open and public proposal to Azerbaijan, because as much as they have problems with these topics, we have problems as well. I propose that we adopt a joint roadmap

aimed at simultaneously putting these two issues to rest. I have also told our people from Karabakh that their return is not realistic. If we continue to maintain the agenda of return, it means we are once again restarting the Karabakh movement — but I have said that we must not restart the Karabakh movement. The Karabakh movement has come to an end, and attempts to revive it are not useful. But on the other hand, in Armenia we also see that Azerbaijan constantly uses the incomprehensible term ‘western Azerbaijan.’

Now it is necessary to understand what causes what — what is the cause and what is the consequence. So, I am making a direct proposal: let us sit down and develop a roadmap for how we remove this issue, because removing this issue means, from a long-term strategic perspective, eliminating any potential conflict situation,” Nikol Pashinyan said.

page 1 ➡ the Armenia-EU Strategic Partnership Agenda. They welcome Armenia’s aspiration to further strengthen its ties with the European Union and the broader community of democratic states. The declaration highlights the importance of ongoing political dialogue, development cooperation, security assistance, joint efforts against cyber threats and disinformation, as well as established formats of economic, cultural, and scientific cooperation.

The parties positively assess the initialing of the “Agreement on Peace and Establishment of Interstate Relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of Azerbaijan” and welcome recent developments in the normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations. They agree that the full normalization of relations both between Armenia and Azerbaijan and between Armenia and Turkey could create opportunities for a peaceful and prosperous South Caucasus region.

Under the declaration, Armenia and Germany intend to cooperate in a wide range of areas, including political and

diplomatic relations through regular consultations and high-level visits; economic and trade cooperation by promoting bilateral trade and investment, including cooperation in energy, connectivity, infrastructure, technology, transport, tourism, and biodiversity, notably in the context of the COP17 conference to be held in Yerevan.

The agenda also foresees cooperation in development and capacity building through technical and financial assistance programs and training initiatives, covering sustainable economic development, vocational education, renewable energy and energy efficiency, climate and environmental protection, water resource management, good governance, municipal development, justice and constitutional reforms, and the rule of law.

Further areas of cooperation include culture, education, language, and people-to-people contacts through academic partnerships, scholarships, cultural exchanges, youth and sports programs; as well as science, technology, and innovation

through joint research projects and collaboration in digital transformation and emerging technologies. Security and defense cooperation will include dialogue on regional and global security issues, nuclear and cyber security, countering disinformation, security sector reforms, and the exchange of best practices.

The declaration specifies that it is not an international treaty and does not create legally binding rights or obligations under domestic or international law. Its implementation will depend on the availability of resources and the relevant laws and regulations of both sides. The document may be amended by mutual written consent, and either party may terminate cooperation under the declaration with six months’ prior written notice.

The signing of the joint declaration reflects the shared ambition of Armenia and Germany to elevate their partnership to a strategic level and to expand cooperation across a broad spectrum of political, economic, and societal fields.

Armenian FM holds meeting as part of EU Foreign Affairs Council

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan, at the invitation of EU partners, participated in a meeting within the framework of the EU Foreign Affairs Council format.

EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy and Vice-President of the European Commission, Kaja Kallas, European Commissioner for Enlargement, Marta Kos, and foreign ministers and representatives of EU member states participated in the breakfast-format meeting.

Significant achievements in the development of the Armenia-EU partnership were lauded, and discussions were held



on upcoming actions, the Foreign Ministry said in a press release.

Ararat Mirzoyan praised the support

and consensus formed in implementing the Armenia-EU strategic partnership agenda and various joint initiatives. During the discussions, EU member states expressed their support for Armenia's democratic development, strengthening resilience, and countering hybrid threats. In the context of regional developments, partners from EU member states expressed their support for the process of unblocking connectivity and efforts aimed at further consolidating peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Foreign Ministry added.

Countering hybrid threats part of ongoing Armenia–EU cooperation: Foreign Ministry

Cooperation between Armenia and the European Union in various areas, including countering hybrid threats, is ongoing and hasn't started recently, Foreign Ministry Spokesperson Ani Badalyan said, commenting on a [statement](#) by EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy Kaja Kallas.

According to Kallas, Armenia has requested EU assistance in combating hybrid threats ahead of the 2026 general elections.

Badalyan emphasized that Armenia–EU

cooperation aimed at strengthening Armenia's resilience, including in countering hybrid threats, has been developing for some time. In parallel with the deepening of the partnership, various initiatives to enhance Armenia's democratic and economic resilience are being discussed, developed and approved.

She cited the Resilience and Growth Plan, which is currently in active implementation, as well as the decision to deploy the EU mission in Armenia, as examples of this approach.

The spokesperson added that cooperation and EU support to counter potential hybrid threats, aimed at ensuring electoral processes align with democratic standards, are also part of this broader framework, drawing on the experience and tools of the EU and its member states.

Badalyan noted that several initiatives have been formed as a result of joint discussions in this area, and the public will be duly informed once relevant decisions are made.

Armenian Ambassador briefs Iranian Supreme Leader's advisor on Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process

Armenian Ambassador to Iran Grigor Hakobyan met with Ali Akbar Velayati, Advisor on International Affairs to the Supreme Leader of Iran, the Armenian Embassy in Iran has said in a statement.

The meeting highlighted the historical and strategic nature of Armenia-Iran bilateral relations. Both sides reaffirmed their mutual commitment to further strengthening ties.

Ambassador Hakobyan briefed Ali Akbar Velayati on the latest developments in the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process. Velayati welcomed the ongoing efforts

to normalize relations between the two neighboring countries and to stabilize the region.

Regarding the unblocking of regional communication routes, Ambassador Hakobyan noted that the "Trump Route" would be implemented based on the principles of territorial integrity, sovereignty, jurisdiction, and reciprocity, creating significant opportunities for regional interconnection and economic development.

The Armenian Ambassador also reaffirmed Yerevan's appreciation for Tehran's clear position on respecting these

principles and emphasized that Armenia takes into account Iran's security and political sensitivities.

Both sides stressed the importance of maintaining continuous dialogue on regional issues.



Armenia ranks among global leaders in digital asset adoption, placing 14th in Crypto Adoption Index



Armenia is rapidly emerging as one of the world's leading countries in digital asset adoption, ranking 14th globally in the Crypto Adoption Index. According to Binance's Marketing Manager for Central Asia and CIS countries, Stanislav Delyonok, *one in every ten residents of Armenia is already a Binance user*. He shared these insights during the Binance Community MeetUp held in Yerevan.

More than 400 participants attended the event, including Binance users, representatives of the crypto and business communities, students, and journalists. Discussions centered on the development of the crypto market in Armenia and worldwide, the growing acceptance of digital assets in the country, and the strengthening of the local crypto community.

Delyonok noted that Armenia is *"on the front line of crypto development,"* actively integrating digital assets into various sectors of daily life. He highlighted Binance's priorities in Armenia, which include the localization of products in Armenian, expansion of educational programs in cooperation with universities, and the development of crypto payments and services based on Binance solutions.

"All these efforts aim to make working with digital assets more understandable, familiar, and accessible for as many people in Armenia as possible," he added.

Kirill Khomyakov, Binance's Regional Head for Central Asia, Central and Eastern Europe, and Africa, emphasized the importance of consistent and systemic cooperation with Armenia to support the country's developing crypto ecosystem.

"We see enormous potential in Armenia's crypto ecosystem and place great value on initiatives that make digital assets more understandable, safe, and accessible for users. It is essential for us that innovation benefits people, expands their opportunities, and strengthens trust in technology. Binance will continue investing in

advanced solutions, developing educational programs, and supporting users and partners throughout their crypto journey," Khomyakov said.

Participants of the meet-up were also introduced to opportunities for monetizing activity on Binance through various creator tools, content creation and promotion features, and programs designed to support local opinion leaders and strengthen the crypto community.

In addition to product-related discussions, speakers addressed critical issues of cybersecurity and financial literacy. They emphasized the importance of two-factor authentication, strong passwords, caution when clicking links or communicating with unknown individuals, and relying only on Binance's official communication channels and trusted sources.

The event concluded with an open Q&A session, where participants asked about the prospects for crypto regulation in Armenia, opportunities for local startups, Binance's new educational initiatives, and plans for developing the country's crypto community.

Armenia expects more grain shipments via Azerbaijan

More grain shipments through Azerbaijan are expected to reach Armenia, Minister of Economy Gevorg Papoyan said on Monday.

On November 6, Russian grain was shipped to Armenia by rail via Azerbaijan and Georgia. Days later, Kazakh grain (1000 tons) also arrived via Azerbaijan and Georgia.

Asked if more grain shipments are expected, Papoyan responded, "It continues, there are new batches on the way now." He did not elaborate on the country of origin and said he would provide details once the grain arrives.

Armenia and Azerbaijan lifted all restrictions on the transit of goods

between their countries after initialing a peace agreement in August. The first shipments under the new arrangement were the Russian and Kazakh grain cargos. Russia has said it will send 132 more wagons of grain via the same route, following the arrival of 15 wagons carrying 1,000 tons on November 6.

Deputy Minister of High-Tech Industry receives World Bank delegation

Deputy Minister of High-Tech Industry of Armenia Ruben Simonyan received representatives of the World Bank mission working on the development of a new growth and employment policy for Armenia, the ministry said in a readout.

The Deputy Minister highlighted the programs and initiatives implemented by the World Bank that contribute to

Armenia's economic development and progress.

Léa Hakim, Senior Country Economist for Armenia at the World Bank, noted that the mission aims to define, through discussions with relevant state institutions, the framework of reforms required for the launch of the new program, as well as to present the expected outcomes and the

main stages of its implementation.

During the meeting, details of the new World Bank program were presented. WB Digital Development Specialist Himmat Singh Sandhu also shared his observations through online participation.

A wide range of issues related to the development of the planned program for Armenia were discussed.

State claims to be top investor in tourism sector - Minister Papoyan



The Tourism Committee of the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia held its annual year-end event, during which Minister of Economy Gevorg Papoyan delivered an opening speech highlighting the sector's achievements and future plans.

Papoyan described 2025 as a year of significant progress, noting that these achievements were the result of joint efforts by the legislative and executive authorities, the Tourism Committee, ambassadors accredited to Armenia, international organizations, academic circles,

and the business community.

"The year's success is also reflected in statistical indicators. The number of tourists visiting Armenia over the past six months is unprecedented," Papoyan said. "We are continuously setting records, which reflects sustained growth in the sector. This is highly important for tourism."

The Minister added that the Armenian government has approved a strategic tourism plan, enabling targeted actions over the next five years. He also highlighted a loan program in cooperation with the National Assembly, which will allocate €120.5 million for infrastructure improvements and sector development. "Through this program, the state claims to be the number one investor in tourism," Papoyan said.

He emphasized the government's focus on strengthening Armenia's position in existing markets while exploring new ones, noting that international cooperation

remains essential.

Special attention was given to medical tourism, with efforts underway to integrate digitalization tools in close cooperation with the Ministry of Health.

Papoyan also addressed regional developments, referring to the peace agreement initialed between Armenia and Azerbaijan during a U.S.-brokered summit in Washington, D.C., on August 8, 2025. "Peace has been established, and the international community recognizes this reality. This opens new opportunities for Armenia and will bring greater momentum to the sector in the future," he said.

He concluded by stressing Armenia's large tourism potential and the need to continue promoting its assets. "We will work to create a predictable, supportive and partnership-oriented environment for the sector in close cooperation with all stakeholders," Papoyan added.

High-Tech Industry Minister, Supermicro delegation discuss investment opportunities in Armenia

Minister of High-Tech Industry of Armenia Mkhitar Hayrapetyan met with a delegation led by Nancy Lee, Vice President for Business Development at Supermicro, the minister said in a social media post.

The discussion focused on Supermicro's potential investment opportunities in Armenia, including the expansion of its operations, the implementation of investment programs within the country's technological ecosystem and possible cooperation in the application of artificial intelligence.

Hayrapetyan emphasized Armenia's interest in attracting high-tech companies



and implementing investment initiatives. He noted that he presented the

government's ongoing efforts and strategic approaches toward the development and application of artificial intelligence, as well as the work already underway and upcoming tasks.

The minister also introduced the newly adopted legislative package providing seven-year state support aimed at promoting job creation, investments in the education sector, and programs contributing to the development of research and development (R&D).

Both sides emphasized the importance of continuing discussions and strengthening bilateral cooperation.

Armenia to host 2026 Concours Mondial de Bruxelles

Armenia will host the 2026 Concours Mondial de Bruxelles international wine competition.

Armenia outbid Georgia, Romania, and Moldova in the selection process.

The government approved funding for the event at the Cabinet meeting on December 11.

The total budget for the event amounts to 883.76 million drams, of which 684 million will be allocated by the government

from the state budget, while the remainder will be covered by sponsors and international partners.

Vinopres S.A., under a contract signed with the government, will cover around 250 million drams of expenses, including travel and accommodation for 400 participants, as well as funding for the technical and organizational teams.

The event is expected to promote Armenian wines internationally, boost tourism

and business ties.

Thirty years of experience have enabled the competition to become a benchmark amongst international wine competitions. Reputable judges, internationally renowned for their ability to assess wine are rigorously chosen for the competition.

The Concours Mondial de Bruxelles is split in 4 different sessions so that each type of wine can be judged professionally depending on their specific characteristics.

‘India stands with Armenia,’ – exclusive comments from MEA spokesperson Randhir Jaiswal



The relationship between Armenia and India is marked by centuries of friendship and has reached a new strategic level, particularly in recent years. Regional developments, connectivity projects, and deep historical ties serve as the foundation for the continued expansion of cooperation between the two countries.

Armenia-India Historical Ties

India views Armenia not only as a bilateral partner and part of a broader West Asia-Caucasus-Europe connectivity vision, but also in terms of its deep historical ties.

Randhir Jaiswal, the Spokesperson of the Ministry of External Affairs of India, in an interview with Armenpress, CivilNet, and NEWS.am journalists during a visit to New Delhi, highlighted the “centuries and millennium of engagement and interaction” between Armenia and India.

“So, when it comes to Armenia, we have a historical sense of a country and of a people. Because what binds us together is centuries and millennium of engagement

and interaction that we’ve had. I would like to recount one story when one of your leaders [First President Levon Ter-Petrossyan], when he came here, after [Armenia] gained independence, when he came down the stairs of the aircraft, he kissed the earth. He said, ‘this land has been so special to us’. Now, we reciprocate the same sentiment,” the spokesperson said.

Randhir Jaiswal said that the friendship between Armenia and India is “very special.”

“So, I will not say that we look at it from bilateral perspective or we look at it from the larger regional perspective. We look at it from a very cultural, strong people to people perspective. A historical depth to this relationship. And that is what makes it so special,” Mr. Jaiswal said.

Regional Alliances and India’s Position

At the same time, against the backdrop of the deepening economic and military cooperation between Türkiye, Azerbaijan,

and Pakistan, as well as the ongoing changes and developments in the South Caucasus, the relations between Armenia and India are continuously evolving, encompassing various sectors.

“So, as far as we value a partnership with Armenia, we want to strengthen these ties further. And we support Armenia in several ways. We have strong bilateral ties. We have political ties. We have very strong defense relations now. And we want to see your country prospering further,” the Indian Ministry of External Affairs spokesperson said.

He declined to directly comment on a question about the emerging regional military alignments involving Türkiye, Azerbaijan and Pakistan, as well as implications for India’s regional engagement. Both Türkiye and Azerbaijan have publicly declared support for Pakistan on the Kashmir issue. The spokesperson stated that India is striving to overcome all existing challenges. “So, you know, we want to strengthen our position, there are countries who want to come together to undermine certain interests, so obviously we’ll try to engage with our partner and see how best we can handle those challenges,” he said.

Regarding the political and security developments in the South Caucasus, particularly the Armenia-Azerbaijan normalization, Randhir Jaiswal said that India is ‘very closely’ following these developments and that “India stands with Armenia.”

Defense Cooperation

Randhir Jaiswal also  page 9

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spoke about the defense co-operation between Armenia and India.

In recent years, India has significantly developed its defense industry, quickly transforming from a country that imports weapons to a major exporter of arms. Various types of weapons produced in India—ranging from missiles, radars, artillery, and armored vehicles to air defense missiles—are exported to around 100 countries.

According to the Indian Ministry of Defense data, during the 2024-2025 financial year, the country exported weapons worth 2.76 billion USD, which is a 12.04% increase compared to the figures for the 2023-2024 financial year.

“India has so much to offer today to Armenia and to the world when it comes to defense engagement. And what you see, whatever is happening to India and Armenia today is part of that particular strength or convening strength that we have. India today, our defense exports have zoomed significantly across the world. A lot of countries today are interested in what we have to offer. We are making cutting-edge platforms. And we want that we engage with countries so that they can also benefit from what we are doing,” he said.

Armenia’s Role in Regional Connectivity

India also places great importance on regional connectivity through Iran’s Chabahar Port and the International North–South Transport Corridor.

Chabahar Port, which is part of the International North–South Transport Corridor (INSTC), holds strategic significance

for India. It provides a crucial maritime and land route to Afghanistan and Central Asian countries, bypassing Pakistan.

At the same time, Armenia plays a significant role in this context, as it is one of the transit countries in the North-South Transport Corridor, which connects India to Europe through the Persian Gulf, Iran, the Black Sea, and Georgia.

“Connectivity projects are very important for us. Whether it is the Chabahar port or whether it is the INSTC corridor, or several other connectivity projects that we today are pushing in several parts of the world. Connectivity brings prosperity and prosperity brings happiness among people. More prosperity, more progress, and that is our message. Through connectivity projects, we want to drive economic growth. We want to enhance export and import linkages. We want movement of goods and services, of technology, and prosperity in general,” Randhir Jaiswal said.

In response to a question about Armenia’s role in the North-South International Transport Corridor, Jaiswal stated that every country should be involved, as it will bring prosperity to all. Regarding Azerbaijan’s role in this context, the official said, “All countries who can contribute towards it must come forward.”

Cooperation with Armenia in Other Sectors

The spokesperson of the Indian foreign ministry said that India seeks to develop cooperation with Armenia in all sectors, including in the economy, culture, education, tourism, etc. He said the two countries should work to increase trade and tourism.

“For any relationship to be balanced, you have to have each and every segment of it equally strong. So we have good historical ties, we have good cultural ties, we have good people-to-people ties, there should be more trade between the two countries, our defense relations are good, there should be more tourism between the countries, Indian people going to Armenia, Armenian people coming to India, our students going there, your students coming here, youth exchanges, etc., so that we can have a diversified relationship, because once you diversify the relationship, then the solidity, real solidity in the partnership comes,” Jaiswal said.

The Dynamics of Bilateral Engagement as a Guarantee for the Development of Relations.

Referring to the large number of high-ranking Armenian delegations visiting India in 2025, the spokesperson stated that this dynamic, in itself, speaks volumes.

“I would say that each day, India-Armenia relations are becoming stronger. There are so many exchanges of delegations happening, at the political level, at the level of trade, economy, culture, etc. And that is happening because we have a lot of comfort in our ties. You know, we are very comfortable with each other. We have trust in our relationship. And that is what is driving this partnership, this friendship,” Randhir Jaiswal said.

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Current peace process is for “generations to come,” Armenian, Azerbaijani top officials tell Euronews



Armenia and Azerbaijan representatives revealed to [Euronews](#) in an exclusive interview in Doha how the peace process started, and a joint future both countries should now look forward to.

For the first time ever, the key representatives of both countries' leaderships sat down in a joint, exclusive interview with Euronews in Doha to reveal how the peace process started between the two former foes and how both countries have kept adding “another brick in the wall of trust”, moving on towards a vigorous economic cooperation that is reshaping the Eurasian space, now that they have put the tragic chapter of the wars behind them.

Hikmet Hajiyev, assistant to the president of Azerbaijan and Armen Grigoryan, secretary of Security Council of Armenia, told Euronews they started their talks in 2020, after the last confrontation between the two countries, supported by the European Union and culminating with the historic peace agreement between Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan secured by US President Donald Trump.

Sitting next to his counterpart for the first time in a public interview, Hajiyev

said the two sides had “a good chance to meet” in Brussels after which the two countries' leaderships decided to move towards peace and “put aside disagreements that we had together”.

Grigoryan continued by telling Euronews that “the leaderships have been thinking about how to bring peace and stability to the region” which then led to the discussions on “how to institutionalise the peace and move forward”.

“The success is great and we are celebrating it,” the Armenian representative told Euronews.

‘Peace is like a strategic commodity’

“In all conflicts, sides don't trust each other. But we have been working towards this. As the famous song said, it's another brick in the wall, in the positive sense of that quote. We have been working towards that, trying to build that wall of trust, trying to move in that direction,” Grigoryan added.

Azerbaijan's representative added that the joint peace process is a “success story, in the global context of conflicts and wars.” As “this chapter of the conflict is closed, with real peace on the ground,” Azerbaijan and Armenia are embarking together on a massive economic expansion of the region

for the common benefit of the two nations.

“We are sure that the implementation of regional economic projects will increase interdependency and strengthen peace and also economic benefits for both societies,” Armenia's representative said.

“We are moving in that direction and the proof of that also is that me and Hikmet are sitting together in your studio here in Doha,” Grigoryan told Euronews.

Both speakers underlined that the current peace process is for “generations to come”, that peace is “irreversible”, and that both countries are working on what they both called “confidence-building measures” for both nations to engage, even if “it requires a lot of hard work from both countries and societies” after decades of war.

The transformation of the region is now both countries' objective, as “peace is like a strategic commodity,” they agreed.

“The big, beautiful deal reached in Washington”, as Grigoryan called it, will bring the implementation of the so-called Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) between the two countries which “will completely change the transport map of the Eurasian continent”, Hajiyev said.

Grigoryan said the project implementation is now being intensively discussed with the United States.

“I hope it will be very soon. And after that the whole technical process will start and we will work on that direction to unblock the region to open the trip, which is a very huge and very important historical project in our region. So we continue to work on that direction,” the Armenian representative said in the Euronews exclusive interview.

The two representatives concluded that the war was over, that peace must be “eternal” for future generations, and that both countries should now look toward a joint future.

Russia offers to host Armenia and Azerbaijan for signing of initialed peace treaty

A senior Russian Foreign Ministry official said that Moscow seeks “stability and prosperity” in the region and is ready to provide a platform for Armenia and Azerbaijan to formalize the initialed peace treaty.

Mikhail Kalugin, director of the 4th CIS Department at the Russian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, said that Russia’s fundamental interest in the Caucasus is peace and development. Moscow wants stability and prosperity in the region in order to cooperate with the countries there, unlock the region’s potential, and strengthen good-neighborly relations, he said, according to RIA Novosti.

“Russia’s interests in the South Caucasus are unwavering. Our main concern there is to maintain a zone of stability and prosperity so that we can cooperate with the countries of the region, unlock its potential, and strengthen good-neighborly relations. Russia’s fundamental interest in

the Caucasus is peace and development, preventing it from descending into chaos,” the Russian official added.

Kalugin said that Russia is not merely a neighboring country for the South Caucasus, but a Caucasian power itself.

“We are united with the peoples on the southern side of the Caucasus mountain range by centuries of friendship, shared glorious chapters of history, civilizational affinity, and millions of familial and kinship ties. For a long time, we lived as part of a single state. At one time, closer ties with Russia allowed the peoples of the region to preserve their identity. The formation of the state foundations of the South Caucasus republics took place during the Soviet era,” Kalugin said.

He added that the “unique relations” between Russia and the countries of the Caucasus are not affected by time or external pressure, and that events in the region have always had a direct impact

on Russia’s foreign and domestic security interests as well as its economy.

Commenting on the process of normalizing relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, the Russian diplomat said: “Today, Baku and Yerevan are conducting mainly direct dialogue without mediators. The foreign ministers of the two republics have initialed the text of an agreement on establishing peace and interstate relations. Considering the contribution of the Russian side, and personally of Russian President Vladimir Putin, to the process of normalizing Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, we would be pleased to host our partners on our platform for the signing of the final document.”

Armenia and Azerbaijan initialed a peace agreement during a U.S.-brokered summit in Washington, D.C., on August 8, 2025. Lauding the establishment of peace, Armenia has expressed its readiness to formalize the treaty as soon as possible.

11th UNAOC Global Forum: Armenia reiterates commitment to advancing normalization processes in the region

On December 14, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Robert Abisoghomonian participated in the 11th Global Forum of the UN Alliance of Civilizations, convened in Riyadh, and within its framework delivered remarks at the UNAOC Group of Friends High-Level Meeting.

In his remarks, the Deputy Foreign Minister emphasized that advancing the culture of peace and non-violence, anchored in tolerance and mutual understanding, constitutes a key prerequisite for conflict prevention, restoration of trust between societies, and the protection of the dignity and identity of all communities, according to a press release by the foreign ministry.

In this vein, the Deputy Foreign Minister noted that Armenia actively contributed to global efforts aimed at countering hate speech, racial and ethnic discrimination and xenophobia, including across UNESCO, UNAOC and the Council of Europe.

The Deputy Foreign Minister touched upon the engagement of Armenia in the restoration of the documentary heritage of

Iraq through UNESCO’s “Revive the Spirit of Mosul” initiative, in the Blue Shield International projects in Lebanon, as well as established cooperation with the State of Palestine aimed at safeguarding its endangered documentary cultural heritage. Robert Abisoghomonian also presented the resolution initiated by Armenia and unanimously adopted at the 16th Meeting of the High Contracting Parties to the 1954 Hague Convention, aimed at enhancing the protection and restoration of cultural heritage through new and emerging technologies.

The Deputy Foreign Minister particularly stressed the priority of Armenia to empower youth and promote diversity and inclusivity. In this context, Robert Abisoghomonian drew the attention of the participants to the 10th International Francophonie Games, to be hosted in Armenia in 2027.

In his remarks, the Deputy Foreign Minister also highlighted the priority Armenia attaches to the prevention agenda, referring to the resolution on the “Tenth

anniversary of the International Day of Commemoration and Dignity of the Victims of the Crime of Genocide and of the Prevention of This Crime,” tabled by Armenia and adopted by consensus at the United Nations General Assembly on September 5, 2025.

Touching upon the regional developments, Deputy Foreign Minister Robert Abisoghomonian reiterated the commitment of Armenia to further advancing the ongoing normalization processes in the region. In this vein, the importance of implementing the agreements reached in Washington on August 8 was emphasized, with a view to consolidating the peace established in the South Caucasus and fostering a more sustainable and cooperative environment. The implementation of the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative of the Government of Armenia and its key component, the “TRIPP” project, was underscored, aimed at promoting peace and strengthening trust through people-to-people contacts.

Armenian interior minister holds high-level talks in Belgium

Armenian Minister of Internal Affairs Arpine Sargsyan held several bilateral meetings during her visit to Belgium.

Minister Sargsyan met with Moldova's Minister of Internal Affairs, Daniella Misail-Nichitin, to discuss cooperation in combating organized crime, hybrid threats, and cybercrime, according to a press release issued by the ministry. The need for capacity building to uncover cryptocurrency-related crimes was especially emphasized. Issues pertaining to partnerships between educational institutions of the two ministries of internal affairs were also discussed.

Sargsyan also met with the Executive Director of the European Border and Coast Guard Agency (FRONTEX), Hans Leijten. The Armenian minister stressed the importance of active dialogue with the European Union and presented ongoing reforms within the framework of

visa liberalization. A number of issues related to border control and security were discussed.

Referring to efforts toward the introduction of a biometric system, Minister Sargsyan emphasized its strategic importance within the framework of Armenia-EU relations. She highlighted the multifaceted cooperation with FRONTEX and expressed readiness to expand it.

Hans Leijten, thanking Minister Sargsyan for the visit, highly appreciated the effective cooperation with the Ministry of Internal Affairs. The parties agreed to continue mutual visits.

Arpine Sargsyan also met with Belgium's Minister of Security and Interior, Bernard Quintin. Minister Sargsyan stressed the importance of strengthening and continuously developing the partnership established between the two countries. During the meeting, issues related

to the expansion of bilateral cooperation were discussed, particularly effective interaction between various police units and capacity building in the field of education.

Minister Sargsyan also held discussions with the Executive Director of Europol, Catherine De Bolle, as well as with counterparts from a number of other countries.

Sargsyan participated in the 2025 International Conference of the Global Alliance to Counter Migrant Smuggling in Brussels. The conference was convened by the President of the European Commission, Ursula von der Leyen, and the Commissioner for Internal Affairs and Migration, Magnus Brunner. Eighty delegations participated in the event. Earlier, Sargsyan also held a [meeting](#) with Magnus Brunner.

Armenia becomes 54th ILO member state to ratify the Convention on Violence and Harassment

Ambassador Hasmik Tolmajian, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Armenia to the UN Office and other International Organisations in Geneva, formally deposited the instrument of ratification of the ILO Convention No. 190 on Violence and Harassment to ILO Director-General Gilbert Houngbo, Permanent Mission to UN Office said in a statement.

Following the ceremony, a bilateral meeting was held during which Ambassador Tolmajian emphasized that this milestone reflects Armenia's unwavering commitment to dignity, equality, and safety in the world of work. She underlined that no worker should face violence or harassment, and that protecting people from such practices is essential for building

inclusive and fair societies.

Ambassador Tolmajian further stressed that by embracing this landmark Convention, Armenia reaffirms its dedication to advancing gender equality, safeguarding fundamental rights, and fostering workplaces where respect and justice prevail. She noted that Armenia looks forward to working closely with the ILO and other international partners to translate this commitment into meaningful action and to promote a global culture of decent work for all.

ILO Director-General Gilbert Houngbo warmly welcomed Armenia's ratification, stating: "By taking this important step, Armenia is sending a clear message that violence and harassment have no place in

the world of work. This ratification will strengthen protection for all workers and other persons in the world of work. The ILO stands ready to continue supporting the Government of Armenia, together with employers' and workers' organizations, to ensure the effective implementation of this landmark Convention."

Adopted in 2019, Convention No. 190 provides the first international framework to prevent and eliminate violence and harassment in the world of work, including gender-based violence and harassment, and to protect the dignity and rights of all workers and other persons in the workplace. Armenia becomes the 54th ILO Member State to ratify Convention.



Imprisoned Archbishop to be transferred to Yerevan hospital for surgery

surgical procedure, his lawyers announced Thursday.

Archbishop Mikayel Ajapahyan, the Prelate of the Diocese of Shirak of the Armenian Apostolic Church, will be transferred to the Izmirlian Medical Center in Yerevan for the unspecified surgery. The lawyers said they were officially notified by the penitentiary's medical service that the transfer has been approved.

Ajapahyan was jailed without bail in June on charges of advocating the violent overthrow of the government. The charges stem from a television interview in which he called for a military overthrow of the government, according to prosecutors. Ajapahyan has denied the accusations, arguing that his remarks do not constitute a criminal offense. He was found guilty and sentenced to two years in October.

A senior archbishop of the Armenian Apostolic Church serving a two-year prison sentence for calling for a coup will be taken to a Yerevan hospital for a

2nd Conference of Armenian Studies Centers opens in Poland

The 2nd Conference of Centers for Armenian Studies in Foreign Universities has opened at Adam Mickiewicz University (AMU) in Poznań, Poland.

The event is organized with the support of the Embassy of Armenia to Poland and the Armenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport.

The opening was attended by Armenian Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport Artur Martirosyan; Ambassador of Armenia to Poland Alexander Arzoumanian; AMU Vice-Rector Professor Przemysław Wojtaszek; Director of the AMU Mkhitar Gosh Center for Armenian Studies Professor Adam Pomieciński; and other officials and guests.

Welcoming the participants and congratulating them on the opening of the conference, Deputy Minister Martirosyan noted that science, culture, and education have always been and remain the pillars upon which the future of the Armenian people is built. In this context, he stressed that Armenian Studies centers operating in foreign countries are of paramount importance, as their main mission is to ensure the sustainable development of Armenian Studies in all directions, in step with the achievements and challenges of global science.

Martirosyan emphasized that, recognizing the importance of developing Armenian Studies, the Republic of Armenia implements a program—funded by the state budget—to teach the Armenian language and Armenian Studies subjects in foreign countries. He noted that the Ministry currently cooperates with 15 universities and research institutions in 13 countries, and that this number continues to grow.

“The presence of Armenia’s rich cultural and literary heritage in foreign countries is a significant resource for conducting Armenian Studies research and serves as a foundation for the establishment and development of Armenian Studies centers, particularly in terms of expanding the scope of research,” Martirosyan said.

According to him, Armenia’s State



Program for the Development of Education through 2030 envisages increasing the number of Armenian Studies centers to 23, conducting 12 research projects annually, and organizing eight international Armenian Studies conferences as well as various educational and cultural events.

“This conference can become a platform where Armenian Studies centers present their achievements and experience, raise the challenges facing the development and dissemination of Armenian Studies, discuss solutions, and form new cooperation programs and ideas. Within the framework of this exceptional event dedicated to the development of Armenian Studies, we are summarizing the path we have taken while outlining new visions for the future. In this regard, the establishment of a network-based Armenian Studies university is particularly noteworthy, as it would make it possible to unite the capacities already developed within Armenian Studies centers and define concrete steps aimed at strengthening them,” Martirosyan stressed.

The Deputy Minister also highlighted the importance of the fact that this conference of Armenian Studies centers operating at foreign universities is being held for the second time. He noted that a five-year science development strategy has been drafted, with special emphasis placed on the advancement of Armenian Studies.

According to Martirosyan, the main areas of the network-based Armenian Studies university include the creation of mechanisms to promote academic mobility for students and faculty, the introduction of innovative educational

technologies, and the formation of a unified educational space in Armenian Studies for the development and implementation of joint academic programs. A key objective is also to create new opportunities and formats for dialogue and cooperation between academic institutions in Armenia and abroad, and to consolidate the potential of educational institutions in the field of Armenian Studies.

“Armenian Studies, as a sustainable unity of science and culture, is based on the preservation, development, and promotion of Armenian national identity. In this regard, the role of Armenian Studies centers operating at foreign universities is difficult to overestimate: they not only disseminate Armenian culture and history in different countries, but also serve as bridges for intercultural dialogue. I am confident that through joint efforts we will be able to preserve the traditions of Armenian Studies while also breathing new life into them in the context of scientific innovation, digital technologies, and global scientific developments,” the Deputy Minister said.

Martirosyan added that the conference is a unique opportunity to bring together representatives of Armenian Studies centers from around the world, study and value their experience, and discuss new directions for the development of the field.

Participants were also welcomed by the Ambassador Arzoumanian. He emphasized the importance of the activities of the Mkhitar Gosh Center for Armenian Studies, which opened last month, expressing confidence that it will become one of the key centers at Adam Mickiewicz University in Poznań and serve as an important link in educational and cultural cooperation between Armenia and Poland.

The conference program includes panel discussions and presentations on a range of topics, including strategic directions for the development of Armenian Studies, partnerships in the field, and the formation of an academic network, among others.

Armenian Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport meets Ukraine's Charge d'Affaires

Armenian Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Zhanna Andreasyan held a meeting with Ukraine's Charge d'Affaires in Armenia, Valerii Lobach.

Deputy Minister Artur Martirosyan also participated in the meeting.

During the meeting, Andreasyan emphasized the importance of the established partnership between Armenia and Ukraine, highlighting the development of bilateral cooperation in the fields of education, science, culture, sports, and youth, the ministry said in a readout.

The parties exchanged views on legal



and contractual matters related to cooperation in the fields of education and science, specifically discussing the signing of agreements on cooperation in higher education, science, and technology.

Valerii Lobach expressed gratitude for the reception, emphasizing the need

to deepen cooperation with Armenia. He praised the reforms being implemented by the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports in the areas of education, science, culture, sports, and youth, and expressed readiness to expand cooperation in these fields. Issues related to the operation of Armenian schools in Ukraine were also discussed. At the end of the meeting, both sides reaffirmed their willingness to deepen cooperation and emphasized the importance of continued communication and practical steps in areas of mutual interest.

Armenian students learn to tackle online risks at Cybersecurity Awareness event attended by High-Tech Industry Minister

Minister of High-Tech Industry Mkhitar Hayrapetyan attended a year-end wrap-up meeting of the Cybersecurity Awareness Campaign at Dilijan Central School in Dilijan, Tavush Province.

More than 300 school students from Dilijan, Hovk, Teghut, Haghartsin, and Gosh took part in the event.

Students answered a series of questions through a special test designed to assess their

understanding of cybersecurity, phishing attacks, and various online risks, the ministry said in a press release.

Presenting current challenges and trends in the field, Minister Hayrapetyan spoke about the risks and opportunities arising from the use of artificial intelligence, the impact of the spread of deep-fakes, and tools for combating disinformation. He emphasized the importance of developing digital skills, noting that they have become an integral component of modern education and safe online behavior.

During the event, personal data



protection expert Gevorg Hayrapetyan presented effective mechanisms for ensuring the security of personal data online and spoke about the capabilities of the "CyberChat" platform, which is designed to support children and teenagers.

This was followed by presentations from experts at AM-CERT (the National Cyber Emergency Response Team), who introduced prepared informational materials and delivered talks. Interactive discussions, games, and puzzles were conducted with student participation.

In the second part of the event, Fab Lab Armenia demonstrated how creative

approaches and technological thinking can be applied in the field of cybersecurity. Students were shown the "USB Shield" project, a device designed to protect computers from malicious USB drives.

Examples of the positive use of AI tools in the education system were also presented. Participants learned how to identify AI-generated content and became familiar with online tools that help distinguish fake materials.

At the conclusion of the meeting, students answered questions related to the topics discussed, making it possible to assess the knowledge and skills they had acquired and how well they had mastered the fundamental principles of cybersecurity.

The Cybersecurity Awareness Program is being implemented as a joint initiative of the Ministry of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia and the Information Systems Agency of Armenia, with the aim of fostering a safer, more informed, and more responsible online environment for both schoolchildren and adults.

Levon Aronian wins Freestyle Chess Grand Slam South Africa

Levon Aronian won the 2025 Freestyle Chess Grand Slam tournament in Grootbos, South Africa, on Thursday. The grandmaster defeated Magnus Carlsen (Norway) 1.5–0.5 in the Grand Final, winning the first game and securing the title with a draw in the second.

Aronian earned the \$200,000 winner's prize and completed four days without a single loss. Carlsen, who had already secured the overall Grand Slam Tour title earlier in the week, took second place.



Vincent Keymer claimed third place after defeating Javokhir Sindarov 2–0. In the first game Keymer broke through with a tactical sequence, and he converted the second as well, sealing a strong finish to his South Africa run. Sindarov ends the event in fourth place.

Fabiano Caruana secured fifth place with a 1.5–0.5 victory over Arjun Erigaisi. In the match for seventh place, Hans Niemann completed a comeback by beating Parham Maghsoodloo in the tiebreaks.

From world stages to Yerevan: Virtuoso violinist Ara Malikian returns with Intruso World Tour

Lebanese-Armenian virtuoso violinist Ara Malikian, ranked among the world's top violinists according to Ranker polls, is set to return to Yerevan with a highly anticipated concert as part of his *Intruso World Tour*. The concert will take place on February 15 at the Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concert Complex.

Renowned for his electrifying performances and sold-out halls across the globe, Malikian last performed in Yerevan twice, leaving audiences with lasting impressions. This time, he returns with new emotions, new ideas, and a new program that blends classical mastery with contemporary expression, promising audiences an experience that is beautiful, unexpected, and striking.

Sharing the stage with Malikian will be longtime collaborators with whom he has performed on prestigious international stages: pianist Iván "Melón" Lewis, double bassist Iván Ruiz Machado, drummer Georvis Pico Milán, and guitarist Dayan Abad. The same ensemble performed alongside Malikian in Yerevan in 2023 and 2024, delivering unforgettable concerts.

At the heart of the Yerevan performance is Malikian's *Intruso* album, which he will present to Armenian audiences. More than a diverse and compelling musical work, the album is deeply



autobiographical and socially reflective. Through its compositions, Malikian tells the story of a life spent moving from one country to another, exploring themes of identity, displacement, and belonging.

Born in Lebanon, Ara Malikian has lived and worked in Spain for many years. His exceptional talent emerged at an early age, despite the hardships of growing up during the Lebanese civil war, when he was often forced to live and study in bomb shelters. He gave his first major concert at the age of 12, and two years later, with the support of conductor Hans Herbert Jöris, received a scholarship from the German government to study at the Hanover University of Music and Drama. Malikian later continued his education at London's Guildhall School of Music and Drama and studied under world-renowned professors.

In 2015, in collaboration with Madrid's Royal Theatre, Malikian reissued an

album marking the 15th anniversary of his settlement in Spain. One of his major recent tours, *15*, achieved significant success with audiences and critics alike, drawing more than 175,000 spectators across over 150 concerts.

With his subsequent album, *The Incredible Story of the Violin*, Malikian embarked on a global tour, performing on some of the

world's most prestigious stages in cities including London, Paris, Rome, Moscow, Buenos Aires, Mexico City, Lima, Santiago de Chile, Beijing, Hong Kong, Istanbul, Madrid, Lisbon, and Berlin.

In 2019, Malikian launched the *Royal Garage* world tour alongside the release of the album of the same name, collaborating with acclaimed artists such as Andrés Calamaro, Enrique Bunbury, and Serj Tankian. This was followed by the *Petit Garage* tour, born out of the pandemic period and the previous tour's legacy, featuring intimate violin-and-piano performances in smaller venues—from the Dubai Opera to Mexico's Michoacán and Madrid's Royal Palace.

Malikian's return to Yerevan is expected to be a major cultural event, reaffirming his deep connection with Armenian audiences and bringing the spirit of global music back to the Armenian capital.



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