

# THE SPEAKER

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## AN ANALYSIS OF ARMENIA'S INTERNAL POLITICAL SITUATION

# TEEGRAN TOROSSYAN Deputy Chairman of the Armenian National Assembly

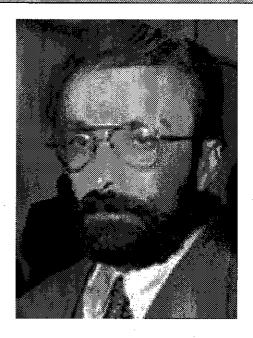
Before speaking about the current internal political situation in Armenia, I would like to say a few words about the years that preceded it. A national idea existed during the Artsakh war: there was an essential problem that united the nation and, despite the suffering that our nation had to go through in that period, the idea-and the nation's devotion to it-remained. It ultimately brought success. In 1994, when the war stopped, it seemed we would have to choose a different path. In order to have a developed and powerful fatherland and a free nation, confident about its future, Armenia would have to take the same path that numerous countries had already taken. Unfortunately, this did not happen. Why?

First of all, no one found an idea that would become a nation-wide objective to unite the whole nation again. This, indeed, is unfortunate. It seemed obvious that this idea might be the economic development of the country. However,

following unsuccessful attempts to spread this idea properly and, because appropriate measures were not planned and taken, there was just one thing to do: to declare democracy as the fundamental idea. Of course, this is one of the main ideas in modern countries and societies.

but in Armenia, democracy was declared to be the fundamental idea -- by both government and opposition.

Nevertheless, experience proved that these were merely words. It was necessary to make a long journey, and this required mutual respect and a clear vision. Unfortunately, this did not take place. The basis that was necessary for a civic society (or at least to attempt to build one) was not created in Armenia. Instead, a multi-elite society was created. This consisted of various groups having different interests. As a matter of fact, countries that have found themselves in similar situations go through this natural path. Ultimately, they enter a phase characteristic of



developed countries only if one condition is met: the president of the country -- or a group having enough power -- must be able to ensure balance and stability amongst the various groups that may exist in the country. Later, they must follow a certain path and form a multi-party political

system. This is the normal course of action that many countries have already experienced.

Unfortunately, this did not happen.

Although several dozen new parties appeared on the political scene in Armenia, only a few had clearly formulated

ideas and programs. To be honest, I must say that many parties simply served to satisfy the personal and group ambitions of some individuals.

The logical follow-up to this situation was that from late 1995 to early 1996, the country entered a phase in which there were no clear goals: economic policy and fundamental economic ideas lacked focus. Finally, the country failed in the 1996 elections. The existing conflict between the authorities and the opposition sharpened. All the bilaterally proposed values were ignored, and the country ultimately found itself in chaos.

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Following the presidential elections in 1998, which were preceded by rather tough confrontations among various authority groups, it seemed that the country would soon be entering a new era. This would fill the gap that Armenia had been trying to fill since peace had been restored in 1994. The country could finally go through the same stages as Poland, Hungary, and the Czech Republic. There was an effective necessity for an additional step -- parliamentary elections -- that would ensure a complete change in authority. However, the parliamentary elections were preceded by extremely important measures, and the impact of these measures will continue to be significant for the country in the future.

The late Vazgen Sargsyan is usually thought of as the leader and founder of the Armenian Army. Of course, he had done a great deal in this area and this is worthy of acknowledgement. In 1998, he initiated a process that was of great significance to finally return the country's political life to a phase of stability. What he did was to announce,

following several meetings with the authorities of the "Hanrapetakan" party in spring of 1998 (this announcement was reaffirmed and supported by the "Hanrapetakan" party itself) that the process of unifying the powers in the country would be initiated. This was an obviously positive step aimed at clearing

up internal political life and bringing about an acceptable atmosphere.

As a matter of fact, a great deal of work in this direction was already accomplished by November 1998. A significant portion of the "Yerkrapah Kamavorakan" (National Defence Volunteers) Union had already joined the "Hanrapetakan" party. The objective was set out quite clearly: political issues in Armenia had to be resolved by political forces within the political field. Those individuals or groups that wished to play a role in politics would have to be members of parties: the natural structures to conduct political activities. I am convinced that this first step was of great importance for the future as well.

This, though, was not the end. In the spring of 1999, another step—the creation of the "Meeasnootyoon" ("Unity") alliance—was initiated. This would, in fact, finally stabilize the internal political situation during (and following) the parliamentary elections. It would enjoy the confidence and respect that people had for the two leaders of the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance. It seemed as if everything was moving along quite nicely after the parliamentary elections.

Why? Because, as everyone later confessed, these elections were much better organized and were much fairer than the previous ones. Nobody complained about their outcome at all. Of course, there were drawbacks, but this is a different topic for discussion directly related to the elections.

Immediately after the elections, when the Government and the governing bodies of the National Assembly were formed, it became obvious that the Government has taken a path that has the previously mentioned goal of economic rehabilitation and development. This was the objective that would become fundamental at the national level. Moreover, the economic and political borders were drawn. The concept of solving political issues in the political field by political forces was further developed. It was made clear that, though the economy was in an extremely difficult situation, there were steps which, if taken, would help significantly improve the situation and create the bases for development. The

main steps were the battle against corruption (the late Prime Minister Vazgen Sargsyan announced this several times), the proper regulation of the economy, and the establishment of the rule of law. For the first time, the overall state and the economic and budgetary situations were presented simply and straightforwardly. A

budget-restructuring plan was presented, and the National Assembly soon adopted it. One might think that all the preconditions for things to begin to move in the right direction were created. This could be proved by the work that had been started in the National Assembly, as well as the natural course of relationships between the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance and the other parties.

This is when the dreadful events of October 27 came about. This tragedy cut short this new course. It left the job that had been started, unfinished. This work was extremely important for the future of our country: it was to "legitimize" political life in Armenia. This job aimed at having all the political forces act and making all the political processes work in their field. It seems that there were groups for whom this was not beneficial. These were groups that operated backstage. They were interested in re-distributing the economic levers in the country and dragging the political processes backstage again. As a result, the tragic events of October 27 took place.

Of course, the events that followed proved that this action was one with clear political goals. They also showed



Teegran Torossyan was born in Yerevan in 1956. From 1973 to 1978, he studied at the radioelectronics faculty of Yerevan Polytechnic Institute. After graduating, he worked in the Mathematical Machines Research and Development Institute of Yerevan.

From 1988 to 1995, he worked as department chief and was a leading scientist. In 1990, he defended his thesis and received the degree of Candidate of Technical Sciences. He is the author of several dozen scientific papers and has ten patents to his name.

Teegran Torossyan has been a member of the "Hanrapetakan" ("Republican") Party of Armenia since 1993. He has been the Deputy Chairman of the Board of the Party since 1998.

From 1996 to 1998, he worked as a member of the Elections Central Committee.

From 1997 to 1998, he was the chief editor of the official newspaper of the "Hanrapetakan" party of Armenia, the Hanrapetakan.

On 1999 05 30, he was elected to the National Assembly of Armenia, and on 1999 11 02, he was elected Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly.

He is married and has one daughter.

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that people and groups that try to change the form of the political field and, naturally, the economy, remain — and continue to act. This was proved by everything that followed October 27. Unfortunately, attempts to politicise the investigation of the criminal case surrounding the assassinations have been noticed.

Now, Armenia finds itself at a very important point. Either the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, that has real power, will

be able to return the political processes to the political field (anybody not representing a political organization will not be able to play a role in this); or divisions will again take place in both the political and economic fields. Afterwards, I think that Armenia will not be able to come out of this situation for a long time, and it will be extremely difficult to

prevent a worsening of the problems it may create. Why? Because I am sure that as a result of the breaking up of the political field into many small pieces, no political majority will be formed in the next parliamentary elections (regardless of whether these are regular or special ones). In such situations, however, only having a majority in the National Assembly can stabilize the situation. Naturally, the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance will be required to make a great effort, not only to ensure stability in the political field, but also to obtain agreement on numerous principles and concepts. This is necessary to avoid economic shocks.

Over the four to five months that have followed October 27, the situation has become several times more acute. At each time the situation worsened, it was clear that it had taken place behind the scenes. This is obvious proof that there are groups interested in seeing a sharp worsening in the situation. They also seek the break-up of the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, and the deterioration of the overall situation in the country. These are the particular objectives of the forces that have lost power in government. They are perhaps seeking the only way back to further harming the situation in the country, breaking the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, and ruining the economy. Then they will be able to compare those ruins with the situation in 1995, 1996, or 1997, and claim that the situation was much better back then.

These forces are not the only ones, though. There are other groups and forces that either willingly or unwillingly came out into the open. It is obvious that there are forces that have the objective of re-distributing the economic and political levers, and altering the political field. Currently, the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance has found itself in an extremely complicated situation. I apologize for referring to this alliance so much, for the problem relates not only to it. In this situation, any political force with a majority in the national Assembly would find itself in the same condition. The future development of the country would depend on the integrity of that force.

I must point out with regret that neither the political organizations nor the mass media seriously understand the dangers involved in this situation. As a matter of fact, there is currently a struggle taking place in the absence of any rules or laws. The forces involved in this struggle will not stop at anything. Another sad fact is that certain information sources have joined the struggle. The situation kept getting worse

until late March. It might sound strange, but the announcement made by the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance on March 3 had some serious drawbacks. As they say, "there is no evil without good". Time showed that this announcement had relieved stress. Everything that has happened in the past 20-25 days seems to be moving towards a stabilization of the situation (although during the last few days, it seems as if some attempts have been made to make the October 27-

related situation more tense). Nonetheless, I must confess that there do not seem to be any shocks, and the outcome will most likely be different this time.

This is the essential problem that the Armenian political forces currently face. Will Armenia's political forces and, most importantly, the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance find the

strength to overcome this crisis? There are certain preconditions for it, but several clear steps are required. Firstly, the political forces should refrain from acting behind the scenes and they should not enter into any deals. Unfortunately, even experienced politicians have not been able to resist this temptation during the last few months. They have attempted to take inappropriate steps and have failed to do so. There is another issue. Armenia's political forces must accept the fact that parties here are still in the initial phase of their formation. Only one or two political parties have clear programs and ideologies. In this respect, the only requirements are new forces. Numerous politicians wasted their potential throughout the last ten years in various parties. New people, new faces and, what is more important, new ideas and programs are needed. Unfortunately, there have been very few changes in the administration of parties. This also proves that Armenia is facing a crisis in political thought. and this is more than a simple political crisis.

Often, comparisons are drawn between Armenia and Russia. Unfortunately, there is almost no political or economic thinking in Armenia. In Russia, however, powerful political and economic centers exist. The creation of such thinking would be one of the guarantees that Armenia may come out of this situation.

Being a representative of "Meeasnootyoon", which is a political majority, I realize that the solution of the aforementioned problems primarily depends on the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, since the latter has a majority in the National Assembly and it has formed the current government. When seriously assessing the situation, however, one must point out that the other political organizations, as well as the mass media, also have important roles to play.

Will we be able to overcome this situation or not? I hope that we will. It will require political will and clear efforts from a lot of people — day in and day out. This is something that has hardly be noticed in Armenia over the past few months. There is no day-to-day work, no clear programs, and no indicators. The National Assembly must plan its actions towards setting order in the legal field. Such a plan must naturally comply with the three-year program of the Government, which the Government has promised to present in the upcoming one to two months. This program must contain not only macro-economic indicators, but also clear

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and concrete indicators that refer to real life. If Armenia's political forces and the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, in particular, can fulfill these objectives in terms of maintaining internal stability, then I think that it will be possible to attain success in Armenia.

This success will not come about in ten, fifteen, or twenty years, as is often promised. Each political force is responsible for the period it has been elected for. In this

case, only the next three years can be currently taken into consideration. I am sure that with discipline in the economy and in our lives, if the battle against corruption, nepotism, and patronage enters a practical phase, and if the political forces are the ones to solve political problems in the political field, then we will be able to attain our goals. One year is quite enough to establish

trends and to prove that the country is moving in the right direction. I am convinced that if this happens, the people will have the confidence we often speak of. The lack of confidence is choking the country, but corruption, nepotism, and patronage are even more

destructive phenomena. Clear objectives should be set. Officials must clearly perform their functions regardless of what force or political party they represent. If they do not perform their functions, then there should be a clearly defined attitude towards them—they will have to leave.

Currently, our country faces another difficulty. Many thousands of employees, including numerous government officials, who have gone through the path that promotes

corruption, nepotism, and patronage are now used to that lifestyle. Now, they oppose reforms. What can be done in this respect? Naturally, the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance is against firing all such people, as some people have recommended from time to time. Those experts who have experience and are currently government officials must accept new approaches and new

principles. Discipline and accountability should become the main guarantee for those people's jobs. Only then will it be possible for them to keep their jobs. This is a difficult problem in our lives. If this and the other problems do not get solved, the crisis will continue. Our country has neither the time nor the capacity to endure any more shocks.

#### **QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS**

-What do you think is the idea that can unite the nation and become the basis for national unity?

-This is the idea that was going to be formulated and implemented in late 1994: rehabilitating and strengthening the economy.

-Do you think that the political right wing has been established in Armenia? If so, what parties are the practical representatives of that wing?

-Unfortunately, the only representatives of the right wing in Armenia are those that are extreme rightists, and we were able to see the outcome of their activities during the six to seven years that followed independence. It is obvious that such an ideology does not exist in any other country. The most painful thing is that right wing ideology (independence, privatization, as well as a number of other tools that our country needed to enter a developmental stage) all lost their reputation.

There is another factor involved here. As representatives of that ideology, we can picture parties that essentially represent the conservative wing, if assessed on the basis of pure political terminology. In particular, the "Hanrapetakan" ("Republican") party can be seen as one of these parties because the main values of this party (which I consider to belong to the conservative side) are freedom and independence of the nation and state, as well as free economic relations and a strong family base. I believe that any party that considers itself to be right-wing, supports the same values.

As for economic relations, I already mentioned that we support a free economy. We try, however, not to go to extremes and forget the main objectives. We believe that the state should necessarily play a clear regulatory role. This role should be attained first of all by means of drafting and adopting legislation: laws ultimately regulate our life.

-is it true that all the profitable sectors of the Armenian economy are in the hands of the mafia, and that it is because of the mafia's avoiding paying taxes that the state cannot afford to pay salaries?

-I would not say so. As I mentioned before, a multi-elite society, rather than a civic or multi-party one, was unfortunately formed in Armenia. What is called "elite" is often understood as something typical of a group with positive aspects, which is actually not so. Multi-elite groups are those that have differing interests and influence different sectors. Unfortunately, this has been so for a long time now, and we travelled a long path without noticing that the roles in the economy were being distributed under such conditions.

The reason that people do not receive their salaries is not so much because of the large shadow economy in our country or because there are groups that think they have the right to avoid the payment of taxes, but because there are numerous other problems in the economy. One problem that has often been spoken about recently, and is very real, is the privatization of the electricity distribution companies. The distribution companies are currently state-owned, and there is a desire to privatize them. I would like to mention that only last year, we provided the equivalent of 35 million USD from the state budget to pay for the amounts owing to the distribution companies. Those were mainly debts of other stateowned enterprises such as "Nayreet", the irrigation sector, and so on. Having such a small state budget and providing 35 million USD for such purposes will obviously cause us to default on pensions, benefits, and salaries. This is the reality. Unfortunately, some are currently trying to change it in the wrong direction.

Your question partially refers to the electricity distribution companies, as well. If we look at things carefully, we will often come across top officials and very rich people among those who do not pay for electric power. Thus, when discussing any issue (and the issue of the distribution companies, in particular) problems should be linked to the question you asked concerning why pensions, benefits, and salaries do not get paid, and why it is impossible to increase them. It is obvious that that the current amount of pensions and benefits is not sufficient to solve any problems for anyone. It only looks like an ethical step taken by the state for the benefit of its citizens.

-Do you think that pushing the Russian companies out of the electricity distribution companies' privatization process is a step initiated by foreign policy interests?

-As I already mentioned, our main drawback is that problems are not solved in the fields in which they ought to be solved: political problems have to be solved in the political field, while economic problems have to be solved in the economic field. As a matter of fact, some are trying to shift this economic issue towards the political field. I am sure that this has nothing to do with the excellent relationships between Armenia and Russia. The fact that the Russian company was left out of the tender process can be very easily explained. There are criteria that have to be met. This has to be one of the rules of our political and economic life. If rules and conditions have been defined, then they have to be met and satisfied. No exceptions should be made for anyone.

-Are there any conflicts between the two wings of the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance? If yes, what are they, and how deep are they?

-There are some difficult issues, and they should not be hidden. There is an ideological difference which we knew very well when we were creating the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance. To be honest, the main guarantors of reconciling the different approaches at that time were Vazgen Sargsyan and Karen Demeertshyan, who could do so because of their enormous reputations. Unfortunately, they are not with us today, but the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance still carries the same responsibility. I hope that no matter how much the various approaches differ, we will be able to find common solutions through discussions and preserve the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance. It must remain not only as "Meeasnootyoon", but also as the political majority for the future of our country.

-What are the basic provisions of the economic program of the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance? Do you think that "Meeasnootyoon" is strong enough to survive the current political crisis? If yes, how would you justify it?

-In general, the basic economic approaches are as follows. First, our country will not have a future without the development of free economic relations. In order to attain this goal, we must solve two extremely important problems: we must ensure the right conditions for the efficient performance of businesses and for investments. The most important thing is that we must turn Armenia's economy into a clearly export-oriented one. Our market is way too small, and so we can ensure efficient domestic production only in food products and one or two other sectors in which there is daily or frequent consumption. As for the goods that are consumed over a longer period of time (goods that cannot be sustained in large amounts in Armenia) their production can be efficient only if appropriate conditions are ensured for their production and sales in our neighboring countries. Only in this case will Armenia have the opportunity to have the necessary volumes of production and, consequently, the appropriate budget and so on.

-Do you think that the current qualitative composition of the National Assembly is acceptable? What do you think are the chances for precipitated parliamentary elections?

-Of course, it is desirable that the deputies in the National Assembly have a real calling to be deputies, so that they can be useful in the National Assembly. We must also consider that after the last elections, the National Assembly has been turned into a professional one. Unfortunately, however, the National Assembly is not really professional. A number of deputies have nothing to do with being parliamentarians. This should not be an obstacle to the efficiency of our activities. It is very good to dream of immediately having a perfect National Assembly, a rapidly developing economy, and a decent life. Unfortunately, these can so far only be dreams. think that the current National Assembly is a reflection of our reality, and I am sure that there is no need for precipitated parliamentary elections because it would not improve the work of the National Assembly at all. Moreover, I am sure that there are a number of deputies in the National Assembly who can really facilitate its performance through their serious and efficient efforts. The shock of

October 27 seems to have left us, and the National Assembly is entering a phase of quite efficient performance.

-Who do you think are the organizers of the October 27 crime? Who are the people and forces, besides the formerly ruling political power, which are willing to transform the political and economic fields?

-Naturally, I cannot link the former authorities with the October 27 events because these things have nothing in common. Moreover, I cannot tell you who were the organizers. It is a very difficult question. I can tell you one thing for sure: having been in the parliament building from October 27 to the morning of October 28, and having seen the people there, it is obvious that they were quite carefully selected. They were really people who were capable of committing such a crime. It is the job of the judiciary to find out who the organizers were.

As for those who try to transform reality, the answer is yes, there are such people, and many of them appeared after the October 27 events. Directly after murdering Vazgen Sargsyan, Nayree Hoonanyan approached his body and said: "Was this the one you were all afraid of? Now you are free, do as you like!" Perhaps there were people who were really afraid of the late Prime Minister, and now they are free to do as they wish. Unfortunately, there are also such individuals and groups among those who stand close to the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance. I do not want to give any names. I believe that this phenomenon itself is the most important issue here. If we see something like that and we battle it by not letting it accomplish its goals, then names are not important. I think that the names will become clear some day.

-Was the reason for the murders of Vazgen Sargsyan and Karen Demeertshyan their resolve to legitimize political life?

-Undoubtedly, the desire to legitimize our political life and the battle against corruption were the two main reasons. They were also the factors that could bring about economic development. I am sure that the cause for these murders was their decisiveness to shift everything into the legal field and clear the political and economic sectors. These were the two main objectives of the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, and it became clear after a few months that decisive steps had been being taken in this direction. Perhaps crime was the only way to impede these steps.

-What practical measures can be implemented in order to decrease bribery, nepotism, and patronage?

-There are many steps. Recently, much is being said about the law on corruption, and some naïve people think that if we adopt this law, then all the problems in the country will be solved. It is not quite true. Corruption is a phenomenon that exists in all areas of our life. Corruption actually consists of three elements: bribery, nepotism, and patronage. They have been flourishing for years now. Establishing accountability and the rule of law are some other measures that need to be taken. There are a number of other issues that remain unsolved. Only complex solutions will allow us to dispose of this harmful phenomenon, which is choking our economy and our country, in general.

-Constitutional reforms seem to be delayed. Is this question also going to be solved in the political field?

-Setting time periods for constitutional reforms would be quite pointless. It has been announced several times (and especially by "Meeasnootyoon") that such a process has already been initiated, and quality is the most important factor here. During the last five years, imperfections have been noticed in our Constitution, but a constitution is a very complicated document. It is the main law of a country, and it should be amended very carefully. An interesting point is that when we were originally trying to draft amendments to made through a complex approach. The concept paper of these amendments has already been developed, and it will soon be discussed. The Venice Commission assists European and newly independent states during the process of amending or adopting constitutions. Discussions had been held in this area, after which the work on specific chapters continued.

#### THE NEWSLETTER OF THE LECTURE SERIES PROGRAM

The first constitutional reforms committee was established by the President and headed by Parooyr Hayreekyan. Then, a second committee was created, and it is currently operating under the supervision of the Minister of Justice, Daveet Harootyoonyan. An agreement has been reached to unite the efforts of this committee and the "Meeasnootyoon" alliance, and to accelerate work in this direction. Time is not an issue; the quality of the work is what is most important here. Constitutions cannot be amended every day or every year. This is very serious work.

-You mentioned in your speech that the National Assembly must clearly plan its program and its activities. Please, elaborate on why this has so far not been done in the National Assembly. It seems you are not working efficiently because you do not yet have a program.

-There are a number of measures that can be taken to increase the efficiency of the performance of the National Assembly. The National Assembly is currently discussing the Law on the Charter of the National Assembly. Adoption of this law will create the appropriate conditions. Moreover, certain specific steps have already been taken. The staff infrastructures of the National Assembly should also be defined. When I was elected as the Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly and I tried to work with the staff, I noticed that there were many people on staff who did not even know what their roles, positions, or functions should be. We initiated a new stage of activities in cooperation with the staff, and we tried to bring everything to a point at which the performance of the National Assembly could be more efficient. The reason I am specifically pointing out the problems related to the staff is because deputies do not actually have assistants or advisors, and the subdivisions and departments of the National Assembly do the main work. Numerous problems have accumulated. Moreover, the regulations concerning the National Assembly, which were adopted on the basis of the Constitution, contain several provisions that were inserted to define a range of authorities for specific individuals and specific cases.

Currently, they need to be reviewed. A number of issues need to be resolved both through the Constitution and the Charter of the National Assembly.

-Before economic prosperity can be achieved, how exactly can migration be stopped?

-In order to stop migration, the rule of law must be established in Armenia, so that our society can finally see that the country is living lawfully. People are first of all unhappy because of the lack of legality. People cannot envisage their future without any legality. Another cause for migration is the loss of faith in the future.

Various measures must be taken to establish the rule of law and justice and ensure the implementation of public measures. It is necessary to report at least some trends since we cannot attain great success. People must see that positive measures are being implemented. I am sure that even if there are small trends, people will again start believing in their future and in the future of our country, and nobody will leave it. I am sure that the majority of those who are leaving the country are doing so with a great amount of pain in their hearts.

-Nowadays, the internal political balance in Armenia is determined by the way in which the Artsakh conflict will be resolved. What can you say about the meetings between Kocharyan and Aleeyev and about the outcome of these meetings, if any?

-It is the opposite: stability in political life and economic success will bring about a reasonable solution of the Artsakh conflict. As for the meetings between Kocharyan and Aleeyev, these were important steps that had to be taken, considering that relationships had been broken. When the Artsakh crisis took place in 1997, many people, especially the former authorities, claimed that Armenia would soon find itself in a political and economical blockade. However, this did not happen. The meetings between the two presidents set the bases for re-starting the process of negotiations. Unfortunately, the tragedy of October 27 proved to be a great obstacle. Bilateral meetings have begun again, and we should continue to hope that if the meetings move ahead in a normal way, they will finally turn into real negotiations.

#### THURSDAY, 25 MAY

LECTURE SERIES PROGRAM

Mr. Ruben Shugaryan

Deputy minister, Armenia's Foreign Affair

Presents a lecture on

#### **Armenian Lobby Abroad**

Thursday, 25 May; At 6:00 PM American University of Armenia Small Auditorium, 5th floor

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### The SPEAKER

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#### American University of Armenia Extension Program

LECTURE SERIES PROGRAM

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By

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### Deputy Minister, Foreign Affairs Ministry

Thursday, 2000 05 25 18:00

American University of Armenia,

Small Auditorium, 5th Floor

The lecture will be given in Armenian with simultaneous translation into English

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