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AVRASYA İNCELEMELERİ MERKEZİ
CENTER FOR EURASIAN STUDIES

# ARMENIA CAUGHT BETWEEN DIASPORA AMBITION AND STATE MEMORY - 14.09.2026

Aygün ATTAR

Blog No: 17
14.09.2026

**Prof. Dr. Aygün ATTAR (14 September 2026)**

*Abstract*

The Armenian diaspora has historically played a significant role in the formation of modern Armenian political identity and in the internationalization of the Armenian question. In particular, the organized lobbying capacity developed in the United States, France, and the broader European political arena has generated a wide field of activity ranging from keeping the events of 1915 on the international agenda to parliamentary initiatives concerning Türkiye, and from the Karabakh question to political pressure and sanctions-oriented demands directed at Azerbaijan. Yet the geopolitical reality that emerged in the South Caucasus after the Second Karabakh War of 2020 has increasingly exposed a divergence between the historical political paradigm maintained by certain organized diaspora circles and the contemporary state interests of the Republic of Armenia. This article conceptualizes that divergence as the state-bearing diaspora paradox. It comparatively examines Armenian-American lobbying surrounding Section 907, parliamentary politics in France, European Parliament resolutions concerning Türkiye and Azerbaijan, and selected examples of Western media framing. The media analysis distinguishes factual error, omission of legal context, historical symmetrization, threat framing, and contextual displacement. The final sections examine the commercial movement emerging between Azerbaijan and Armenia in 2026, together with the prospective consequences of Zangezur connectivity and the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), through the transition from a conflict economy to a peace

economy and from diasporic dependence to regional interdependence. The central argument is that although the historical achievement of the Armenian diaspora lay in internationalizing the Armenian question, the continued reproduction of an unchanged conflict paradigm may now generate diplomatic and economic costs not only for Türkiye and Azerbaijan but also for Armenia itself as Yerevan seeks normalization with both states.

Keywords: Armenian diaspora, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Türkiye, Karabakh, Armenian lobby, Western media, European Parliament, United States, France, Zangezur, TRIPP, normalization, peace economy.

# *INTRODUCTION: WHO SPEAKS FOR ARMENIA?*

In the modern political history of the Armenian question, the diaspora has performed a function extending far beyond that of an ordinary migrant community. Through a network ranging from churches and political organizations to foundations, cultural institutions, academic circles, media outlets, and lobbying structures, the organized diaspora has both helped preserve Armenian identity abroad and contributed to maintaining the Armenian question as a continuing item on the international political agenda.

The historical development of this structure has been examined in detail in my earlier work on the emergence and politicization of the Armenian question. Karabağ Sorunu Kapsamında Ermeniler ve Ermeni Siyaseti analyzes the historical development of Armenian political movements in the Caucasus and Karabakh, while Genel Hatlarıyla Bir Modernite Sorunu Olarak Ermenicilik examines the transformation of Armenism along the axes of modernization, politicization, violence, state-building, and globalization.

The establishment of the independent Republic of Armenia in 1991 theoretically produced a fundamental change. An internationally recognized sovereign Armenian state now existed. The central question therefore also changed: Who is the ultimate political subject of Armenian politics □□□□ independent Republic of Armenia, or diaspora structures organized across different centers of the world?

A substantial part of diasporic political identity was formed during a historical period in which no independent Armenian state existed. The diaspora therefore did more than preserve cultural memory; it also assumed a de facto function of political representation on behalf of a stateless community. The establishment of independent Armenia required this relationship to be redefined. That transformation, however, did not occur at the same pace.

Armenia has a state; yet the boundaries of the authority to speak politically on behalf of Armenia and Armenians remain contested.

This situation may be described as the state-bearing diaspora paradox. The distinction has become particularly significant since 2020. For some organized diaspora circles, the preservation of inherited political narratives remains a matter of identity security; for the Republic of Armenia, state security means sovereignty, internationally recognized borders, economic development, transport connectivity, and sustainable relations with its neighbors. Diaspora identity security and Armenias state security therefore do not necessarily produce identical political priorities.

## *THE INSTITUTIONALIZATION OF HISTORICAL ANTAGONISM*

It would be analytically inaccurate to treat the Armenian diaspora in its entirety as a homogeneous anti-Türkiye political structure. The diaspora encompasses diverse political, cultural, religious, and social tendencies. Nevertheless, within certain organized diaspora circles, historical antagonism toward Türkiye has become a durable instrument of political mobilization.

The issue is not merely the preservation of the past. More consequential is the capacity to translate historical narratives into parliamentary resolutions, electoral campaigns, demands for sanctions, media discourse, and foreign-policy pressure. In this sense, historical antagonism has become institutionalized within particular organizational structures and has been transformed into a form of political capital capable of intergenerational transmission.

In this article, the concept of the institutionalization of historical antagonism is used not as a cultural attribute assigned to Armenians as a whole, but as an analytical category for examining the political practices of identifiable organized actors. The purpose is to trace the relationship among institutions, discourse, political decisions, and consequences rather than to rely on ethnic or societal generalization.

## *THE UNITED STATES: SECTION 907 AND THE DIVERGENCE BETWEEN STATE INTERESTS AND DIASPORA DEMANDS*

One of the most visible arenas of organized Armenian-American political influence has been the United States Congress. Organizations such as the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) and the Armenian Assembly of America have long conducted explicit lobbying activity within the American political system. Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act of 1992 constitutes one of the most important historical examples of this relationship.

The preservation of the provision restricting certain forms of U.S. government assistance to Azerbaijan became a major political objective of Armenian-American organizations. ANCAs appeal to President George W. Bush on 1 October 2001 provides direct documentary evidence of the organizations mobilization in defense of Section 907.

After 11 September 2001, however, American strategic priorities changed. Operations in Afghanistan, counterterrorism, energy security, and the geopolitical significance of the Caspian basin increased Washingtons interest in cooperation with Azerbaijan, leading the U.S. administration toward the presidential waiver mechanism for Section 907. The episode demonstrated that diaspora demands and the geopolitical requirements of the state in which the diaspora operates do not necessarily coincide.

The political priorities of a diaspora do not invariably coincide with the strategic interests of the state in which that diaspora lives.

The Armenian lobby in the United States is therefore better understood not through sweeping claims of control over American foreign policy, but as an organized interest network capable of exercising substantial influence in specific policy domains while remaining subject to the constraints of broader U.S. strategic priorities.

# *FRANCE: THE DOMESTICATION OF MEMORY POLITICS*

France presents a different configuration. The Armenian community has long maintained strong ties to French political and cultural life. As a result, the Armenian question has moved beyond the realm of foreign policy and has become an element of French domestic politics and memory politics.

A resolution adopted by the French Senate on 15 November 2022 called for sanctions against Azerbaijan and for the withdrawal of Azerbaijani forces from Armenian territory. Of 296 valid votes, 295 were cast in favor and one against. A further Senate resolution adopted on 17 January 2024 condemned Azerbaijans military operation in Karabakh, renewed calls for sanctions, and addressed demands concerning the return of Karabakh Armenians. It was adopted by 336 votes to one.

The French National Assembly likewise adopted a resolution on 30 November 2022 demanding an end to what it described as Azerbaijans aggression against Armenia and calling for lasting peace in the South Caucasus. The measure passed with 256 votes in favor and none against. Such broad parliamentary consensus demonstrates the extent to which support for Armenia has become embedded as a normative position across significant segments of the French political class.

Yet this also creates a foreign-policy paradox for France. A state seeking influence in the South Caucasus and aspiring to play a role in peace processes may find its mediating capacity constrained when its impartiality is questioned by one of the parties to the conflict. This may be conceptualized as the normative support [redacted] capacity paradox.

# *THE EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT: THE SUPRANATIONAL POLITICAL ARENA*

The European Parliament constitutes a third important arena for examining diaspora politics. The trajectory from the 18 June 1987 resolution on a political solution to the Armenian question to the centenary resolution of 15 April 2015 demonstrates that the Armenian question has become embedded in the institutional memory of the European Parliament.

After 2020, Azerbaijan became an increasingly prominent subject of European Parliament resolutions. The resolution of 5 October 2023, entitled Situation in Nagorno-Karabakh after Azerbaijans attack and the continuing threats against Armenia, is a clear example.

The more significant analytical question is how organized diaspora advocacy interacts with this supranational arena. The relevant chain of influence may be traced through diaspora demands, contacts with parliamentarians, motions and draft resolutions, discursive parallels, voting behavior, and post-vote organizational mobilization. Examining this sequence makes it possible to move beyond assertion and toward a documented analysis of political influence.

The underlying question is whether the European Parliament applies the same legal and normative standards consistently to Türkiye, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and other comparable actors. The political significance of its resolutions is best assessed through such comparative scrutiny.

# TRANSFERRED ANTAGONISM: FROM TÜRKİYE TO AZERBAIJAN

A further transformation became visible in diaspora politics after 2020. Elements of an antagonism historically centered on Türkiye expanded toward Azerbaijan as the Türkiye [illegible] strategic partnership deepened. This process may be described as transferred antagonism.

Where the historical pattern operated through the sequence 1915 → anti-Türkiye mobilization → diaspora activism → Western political institutions, the post-2020 period added another line: Karabakh → anti-Azerbaijan mobilization → the presentation of Türkiye and Azerbaijan within a single continuum of threat → demands for sanctions and international pressure. In this way, the Türkiye [illegible] and Azerbaijan [illegible] disputes, which emerged from distinct historical and legal contexts, can be merged within a single political narrative.

This transfer became particularly visible in efforts to interpret the 2020 war through the memory of 1915. Türkiyes political and military support for Azerbaijan was presented in some narratives not simply as a contemporary alliance relationship, but as the continuation of a historical threat directed against Armenians. Such framing can displace the internationally recognized legal status of Karabakh and the territorial dimension of the post-Soviet conflict from the center of analysis.

# WESTERN MEDIA: FROM REPORTING TO FRAMING

The media constitute one of the principal arenas in which this political contest is reproduced. The most revealing evidence lies in the published texts themselves: the selection of facts, the hierarchy of causes, the terminology used to describe territorial status, the actors granted narrative authority, and the historical analogies through which contemporary events are interpreted.

Problematic media narratives can be examined through several distinct categories: factual error, omission of legal context, historical symmetrization, contextual displacement, and threat framing. These categories allow the analysis to distinguish between inaccurate reporting and narratives in which individually correct facts are arranged in ways that alter the readers understanding of causality and legal status.

Modern information struggles do not operate solely through demonstrably false statements. The placement of one fact at the center of a story and another at its margins

may be sufficient to reshape public understanding. Media analysis must therefore examine not only factual accuracy but also the hierarchy of causation and the legal and historical context supplied to the reader.

## *David Ignatius and the Existential Threat Frame*

David Ignatiuss article in The Washington Post on 29 September 2020, Two strategically sensitive countries are on the verge of war  and Trump is missing in action, offers a revealing example. Ignatius devoted substantial attention to his conversation with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and relayed the Armenian portrayal of Türkiye as a source of regional instability and a security threat.

The article also reported the Armenian allegation that a Turkish F-16 had shot down an Armenian Su-25 aircraft. The allegation originated with the Armenian side and was rejected by Türkiye and Azerbaijan. More consequential than the provenance of the claim, however, was the broader interpretive frame within which the war was presented.

By making the memory of 1915 a central interpretive context for the 2020 Karabakh War, the article encouraged a reading of the conflict primarily as an extension of the historical confrontation between Türkiye and Armenians, rather than as a conflict also rooted in the internationally recognized territorial status of Azerbaijan and the long-standing military control of territories beyond the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast. The key analytical question is therefore not only whether individual claims were true or false, but which facts were placed at the center of the narrative and which were pushed to its margins.

## *Jason Rezaian and Historical Symmetrization*

Jason Rezaians 9 October 2020 Washington Post commentary, Without the U.S., there will be no peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan, provides a different example of framing. The article presented the dispute as one in which both sides advanced historical claims to Karabakh, while also acknowledging that Armenian forces had exercised control over territory within Azerbaijans internationally recognized borders since the 1994 ceasefire.

Presenting Karabakh as a geography in which Azerbaijan and Armenia possess equivalent historical claims may appear balanced, yet it obscures both chronology and legal status. Armenian political claims of historical entitlement and autochthony in Karabakh cannot be assessed independently of the population movements and settlement policies pursued under the Russian Empire in the nineteenth century. In particular, the Armenian migrations into the South Caucasus following the Treaty of Turkmenchay of 1828 and the Treaty of Adrianople of 1829 formed part of the demographic transformation of the region under imperial rule. The retroactive conversion of demographic presence created or

strengthened through such historical processes into evidence of an ancient and exclusive sovereign entitlement therefore requires critical historical scrutiny.

At the level of the modern international system, moreover, Nagorno-Karabakh lay within the internationally recognized borders of Azerbaijan. Historical symmetrization thus refers here to the uncritical elevation of an Armenian political claim of historical entitlement to the same plane as Azerbaijans historical and internationally recognized legal position, thereby transforming unequal categories into the appearance of two equivalent sovereign claims.

## *A COUNTEREXAMPLE: WESTERN MEDIA ARE NOT MONOLITHIC*

A monolithic characterization of Western media would itself weaken the analysis. In the same Washington Post environment, Gerard Toal, John OLoughlin, and Kristin M. Bakke wrote on 2 October 2020 that Armenian forces had captured not only the former Nagorno-Karabakh Autonomous Oblast during the 1992 □□□□ war but also substantial Azerbaijani territories beyond it.

This counterexample is methodologically important. The issue is not to construct a homogeneous category called Western media, but to identify how selective frames are produced in particular reports and commentaries, how they overlap with political narratives, and how they influence public understanding. Media criticism can thereby move from polemic to verifiable scholarly analysis.

# *THE LOBBY–PARLIAMENT–MEDIA CYCLE*

Taken together, the cases of the United States, France, and the European Parliament, alongside the media sphere, reveal a political communication mechanism in which organized diaspora actors, politicians, parliamentary discourse and resolutions, media coverage, public opinion, and renewed political pressure can reinforce one another.

The power of a diaspora cannot be measured solely by financial capacity or population size. A more durable form of influence lies in the ability to generate concepts and place them into international political circulation. Terms such as annexation, existential threat, ethnic cleansing, and historical right therefore require scrutiny in relation to the legal and historical contexts in which they are deployed.

The significance of this cycle becomes clearest when institutional contacts, organizational statements, parliamentary texts, media frames, and timing are examined together. Such an approach makes it possible to identify not merely parallel rhetoric, but the mechanisms through which a political narrative may move from organized advocacy into

parliamentary and media circulation.

## ARMENIAS RETURN TO STATE RATIONALITY

Statements by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in 2023 provide some of the clearest evidence of this shift. Pashinyan stated that Armenia and Azerbaijan had mutually recognized one anothers territorial integrity as 29,800 km² and 86,600 km² respectively, and in an interview with POLITICO Europe on 13 September 2023 explicitly confirmed that Azerbaijans 86,600 km² included Karabakh.

This statement indicates Yerevans movement away from the political and territorial claims previously maintained with regard to Karabakh and toward the principles of interstate law and mutual recognition of territorial integrity. For Armenia, the central question is no longer the continuation of a claim of historical entitlement over Karabakh, but the construction of a sovereign, secure, and economically sustainable state future within its internationally recognized borders. Such a reorientation requires Armenia to redefine its relations with Türkiye and Azerbaijan not through the conflict-centered political narratives of the past, but through sovereignty, mutual recognition of borders, peace, and regional cooperation.

This transformation does not eliminate the importance of the diaspora. It does, however, alter the standard by which diaspora politics should be judged. The continuation, in Armenias name, of maximalist claims beyond the borders explicitly recognized by Yerevan may deepen the tension between diaspora activism and the interests of the Armenian state.

## TÜRKİYE–ARMENIA NORMALIZATION

The second pillar of this transformation is the normalization process with Türkiye. At the fourth meeting of the Special Representatives for the normalization process, Ambassador Serdar Kılıç and Ruben Rubinyan, held in Vienna on 1 July 2022, the parties agreed to enable the crossing of the land border by third-country nationals at the earliest possible date and to commence direct air cargo trade. They also reiterated that the ultimate objective was full normalization and confirmed their agreement to continue the process without preconditions.

The process has not yet been completed in all its dimensions, but its historical significance is considerable. Armenias simultaneous pursuit of peace with Azerbaijan and

normalization with Türkiye indicates a shift in state rationality in the South Caucasus. This new axis increasingly conflicts with an older paradigm centered on closed borders, international isolation, and the perpetuation of regional confrontation.

## *THE POLITICAL ECONOMY OF PEACE: THE NEW LANGUAGE OF TRADE*

Trade data from 2026 offer one of the most tangible indicators of change. Reports based on data from Azerbaijans State Customs Committee stated that Azerbaijans exports to Armenia reached USD 11.273 million in January □□□ 2026, including USD 1.627 million in May, while indirect imports originating from Armenia remained at only USD 960 over the same period. PanARMENIAN.Net reported the same figures on 17 June 2026.

More recent data available by September 2026 indicate that the trend continued: Azerbaijans exports to Armenia reached USD 17.372 million in January □□□□ 2026. The volume remains small in relation to total foreign trade and the relationship is highly asymmetric. Its political significance, however, exceeds its present economic scale.

The emergence of goods flows between two states that for more than three decades defined one another primarily through war, occupation, and security may be interpreted as an early and measurable sign of a transition from a conflict economy to a peace economy. Trade cannot by itself guarantee peace, but by generating material interests it can raise the economic cost of renewed confrontation.

As economic contact develops between Baku and Yerevan, to what extent do maximalist demands in Washington, Paris, or Brussels for the political and economic isolation of Azerbaijan correspond to Armenias emerging economic interests?

## *ZANGEZUR □□□□□□ FROM A GEOGRAPHY OF DEAD ENDS TO A GEOGRAPHY OF TRANSIT*

The economic dimension of Azerbaijan □□□□□□□ normalization cannot be understood without considering the proposed connections through Zangezur and the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP). The terms Zangezur Corridor and TRIPP are not legally or politically identical. Nevertheless, both debates center on restoring connectivity between mainland Azerbaijan and the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic and,

more broadly, on rebuilding east–west transport links across the South Caucasus.

The U.S. □□□□□□□ TRIPP Implementation Framework announced in January 2026 envisages uninterrupted multimodal transit connectivity through Armenian territory, linking mainland Azerbaijan with Nakhchivan while forming an important component of the Trans-Caspian trade route. The framework also explicitly emphasizes sovereignty, territorial integrity, jurisdiction, and reciprocity. For Armenia, the stated objectives include strengthening its role as a regional transit and economic hub, attracting foreign investment into infrastructure, opening new markets for exports, and advancing normalization.

The framework agreement published in May 2026 envisages TRIPP as contributing to regional peace, stability, prosperity, and integration, while generating economic benefits for Armenian businesses and preserving Armenias full sovereignty, territorial integrity, and jurisdiction over the relevant project areas. The agreement was signed in June 2026, and the Armenian government launched the ratification process on 16 July 2026.

The Zangezur □□□□□ debate therefore extends far beyond a transport link between Azerbaijans western regions and Nakhchivan. What is at stake is a reconfiguration of the economic geography connecting Türkiye, the South Caucasus, the Caspian basin, and Central Asia. Paradoxically, Armenia itself could become one of the beneficiaries of this transformation.

After decades in which closed borders and regional disputes excluded Armenia from major transit routes, new connectivity could allow the country to move from a geography of dead ends to a geography of transit. An Armenia connected through Türkiye to Europe and the Mediterranean, and through Azerbaijan to the Caspian basin and Central Asia, would gain more than railways and roads: it could gain access to a new geo-economic order based on trade, investment, logistics, energy, fiber-optic connectivity, and regional interdependence.

If implemented on a sound legal and political basis, the Zangezur □□□□□ route could become one of the historic opportunities capable of transforming Armenias adverse economic geography.

# *CONSTITUTIONAL GUARANTEES AND THE IRREVERSIBILITY OF PEACE*

For economic normalization to become durable, political normalization must rest on legal guarantees. Azerbaijans objections concerning Armenias constitutional order should be understood in this context. From Bakus perspective, the issue is not only whether the present Armenian government recognizes Azerbaijans territorial integrity, but whether a legal framework exists that prevents that recognition from being reopened to dispute after future changes of government.

The Pashinyan governments explicit recognition of Azerbaijans territorial integrity of 86,600 km² □□□□□□□□□ Karabakh □□□□□□□□□□□ an important political shift. Yet lasting peace must rest not on individuals or temporary governmental preferences, but on a clear and uncontested interstate legal foundation.

Armenias resolution, through its own sovereign constitutional mechanisms, of legal ambiguities that could be interpreted as conflicting with a future peace settlement should therefore be viewed not merely as compliance with an Azerbaijani demand, but as part of constructing a peace order resistant to future revisionist interpretation. The essential principle is not externally imposed constitutional change, but the harmonization of domestic law with a durable interstate peace.

The same logic applies to regional connectivity. The opportunity costs of repeatedly postponing transport projects will not be borne only by Azerbaijan and Türkiye; Armenia will bear them as well. Trade routes can find alternatives, while capital, energy, and logistics flows are not obliged to wait indefinitely for political disputes to be resolved.

## *FROM DIASPORIC DEPENDENCE TO REGIONAL INTERDEPENDENCE*

The full opening of the Türkiye □□□□□□□ border, the expansion of Azerbaijan □□□□□□□ economic relations, and the activation of South Caucasus transport connections could transform Armenias economic geography. This does not mean that the diaspora will cease to matter. It can continue to provide Armenia with capital, investment, cultural ties, humanitarian support, and international networks.

Its function, however, can change: from an actor that internationalizes conflict to one that internationalizes peace. This may constitute the most consequential transformation of the new period. The process can therefore be conceptualized as a transition from diasporic dependence to regional interdependence.

Regional interdependence does not require the erasure of the past. It requires a more mature political order in which identity narratives and state interests can be distinguished. The diaspora may preserve its historical narratives, but it should not substitute itself for the economic and diplomatic relationships that the Armenian state must build with its neighbors.

## *AS ARMENIA CHANGES, CAN THE DIASPORA CHANGE?*

As Yerevan recognizes Azerbaijans territorial integrity, seeks to institutionalize a peace process with Baku, pursues normalization with Türkiye, begins to experience the first signs of economic contact, and confronts new opportunities through projects such as TRIPP, the unchanged continuation of an older conflict paradigm within some organized diaspora circles creates an increasingly visible contradiction.

Yerevan is seeking normalization with two neighboring states while some external actors claiming to act on Armenias behalf continue to seek their punishment within the international system.

The costs of such a policy would not be borne solely by Türkiye and Azerbaijan. Armenias own economic and diplomatic room for maneuver may also be affected. As regional trade and transport links expand, policies aimed at the permanent isolation of Armenias neighbors are likely to conflict ever more visibly with Armenias everyday economic interests.

The diasporas most consequential contribution to Armenia may therefore lie not in binding it to the conflicts of the past, but in facilitating its participation in a new regional order in which it can live in peace with Türkiye and Azerbaijan. Such a transformation would not abolish the diasporas role in preserving historical narratives; it would bring that role into closer alignment with state rationality.

## *CONCLUSION: FROM MEMORY TO STATE RATIONALITY*

The historical achievements of the Armenian diaspora should not be underestimated. During periods in which Armenians lacked an independent state or possessed limited political capacity, the diaspora played a major role in preserving identity, building international organizational capacity, and keeping the Armenian question on the world

political agenda. Historical success, however, does not require the indefinite preservation of an unchanged political paradigm.

Today an independent Armenia exists: a sovereign state with borders, neighbors, economic needs, and state interests. The central issue is therefore no longer whether the past will be remembered, but to what extent inherited political narratives will determine contemporary state policy.

The Section 907 experience in the United States demonstrated that diaspora demands and the strategic interests of major powers do not always coincide. Parliamentary politics in France illustrate how intense normative alignment can complicate diplomatic capacity. The European Parliament shows the importance of examining the relationship between organized advocacy and supranational institutions through documentary evidence. Selected Western media examples, meanwhile, demonstrate that information struggles operate not only through factual inaccuracy but also through historical symmetrization, threat framing, and contextual displacement.

Yet another reality is emerging in the South Caucasus of 2026. Economic contact is developing between Baku and Yerevan. Türkiye and Armenia continue to seek normalization. Mutual recognition of territorial integrity has entered Armenias official discourse. TRIPP has moved regional connectivity from the realm of abstraction into agreements and implementation mechanisms.

Armenias future will therefore be measured less by how many resolutions against Türkiye and Azerbaijan can be secured in Washington, Paris, or Brussels than by the extent to which Armenia can build a secure, sovereign, economically sustainable state capable of living in peace with its neighbors in the South Caucasus.

Peace does not erase the past. Normalization does not require the abandonment of memory. Statehood, however, requires the capacity to build a future alongside memory. Armenias historical choice is therefore becoming increasingly clear: to overcome the political tutelage of inherited conflict narratives without erasing the past; to move from a geography of conflict to a geography of peace, and from diasporic dependence to regional interdependence.

Will the diaspora confine itself to defending the past in Armenias name, or will it also contribute to building a future in which Armenia can live in peace with Türkiye and Azerbaijan? That may well be the most important question confronting Armenian politics in the twenty-first century.

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About the author:

To cite this article: Aygün ATTAR. 2026. "ARMENIA CAUGHT BETWEEN DIASPORA AMBITION AND STATE MEMORY - 14.09.2026." Center For Eurasian Studies (AVİM), Blog No.2026 / 17. September 14. Accessed October 28, 2026. https://www.avimbulten.org/public/Blog/ARMENIA-CAUGHT-BETWEEN-DIASPORA-AMBITION-AND-STATE-MEMORY-14-09-2026

Süleyman Nazif Sok. No: 12/B Daire 3-4 06550 Çankaya-ANKARA / TÜRKİYE
**Tel**: +90 (312) 438 50 23-24 • **Fax**: +90 (312) 438 50 26
@avimorgtr
https://www.facebook.com/avrasyaincelemelerimerkezi
**E-Posta**: info@avim.org.tr
http://avim.org.tr

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