



2024 COUNTRY REPORT ARMENIA



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For Armenia, 2024 was a year defined by geopolitical efforts. Much of the country's docket was taken up by ongoing peace and normalization efforts with neighboring Azerbaijan as well as Yerevan's efforts to increase its relations with the West in the fallout from the final round of fighting over the Karabakh region in 2023.

Key Points:

- Throughout 2024, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan worked to normalize relations with Azerbaijan, even as factions within Armenian society opposed him. A final treaty has yet to be delivered.
- Key to the peace process is adopting a new Armenian constitution, which Baku sees as necessary. Pashinyan has accepted the idea, but a necessary public referendum on the issue may not be held until 2027 and polling suggests it might struggle to succeed.
- Yerevan tried to forge increased engagement with the West, gaining hundreds of millions of dollars' worth of European and American development funds over the course of the year. In defense, Yerevan moved to distance itself from Russia and Moscow's Collective Security Treaty Organization, turning to France and others for military equipment. Pashinyan also secured the departure of Russian troops from some portions of the country, although some remain.
- Economically, Armenia's trade and energy sectors remain reliant on Russia, with the Kremlin penalizing Yerevan's political decisions by banning

Armenian produce. Since 2022, Armenia has seen a dramatic increase in trade with Russia, more than doubling its trade turnover with Moscow.

Chronological Reporting:

Pashinyan Proposes Non-Aggression Pact with Azerbaijan

While speaking at a January 28 Army Day celebration in Yerevan, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan claimed that he had suggested forming a non-aggression pact with Azerbaijan upon the completion of a peace treaty with their neighbor. According to Pashinyan, Armenia had proposed “border demilitarization and a mutual control mechanism for weapons, as well as the signing of a nonaggression agreement.” Armenian and Azerbaijani forces have fought two wars and numerous small-scale border conflicts in recent years and are now engaged in talks aimed at long-term peace and normalization between the two countries.

Source: [France 24](#), [RFE/RL](#)

Pashinyan Says Armenia is not an Ally of Russia Regarding Ukraine

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated that Armenia is not an ally of Russia when it comes to the war in Ukraine in February. He noted that Armenia adheres to the Alma-Ata Declaration, which recognizes the independence and territorial integrity of the republics that became independent after the collapse of the Soviet Union.

Source: [Ukrainska Pravda](#)

French Defense Minister Travels to Armenia, Increasing Security Cooperation

On February 23, French Defense Minister Sebastien Lecornu visited Yerevan, Armenia, and met with his Armenian counterpart. The meeting focused on the purchase of surface-to-air defense capabilities, cooperation in military training and education, and the purchase of missile systems. In prior months, France had increased its security cooperation with Armenia, providing defense systems and equipment.

Source: [Politico](#), [RFE/RL](#)

Armenia Claims It’s Freezing Participation in Russian-led CSTO

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced that Armenia had “frozen” its participation in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization. “We have now in practical terms frozen our participation in this treaty. As for what comes next, we shall have to see,” Pashinyan stated in an interview with France24 in February. Although the Kremlin said it had not received official

confirmation that Armenia was leaving the alliance, Armenia had grown increasingly discontent with its ties with Russia in prior months.

Source: [Business Insider](#)

Armenia Appoints New Minister of Economy

On March 7, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced the appointment of Gevorg Papoyan as the new Minister of Economy. The new appointment followed the resignation of the previous Minister of Economy, Vahan Kerobyan, due to corruption charges.

Source: [Caucasus Watch](#), [Eurasianet](#)

Increased Discussion of Armenia-EU Ties, Possibly of Membership Application

On March 13 the European Union Parliament voted nearly unanimously to foster closer ties with Armenia. A portion of the resolution referenced the possibility of Armenia one day applying to EU membership, reading “Should Armenia be interested in applying for candidate status and continuing on its path of sustained reforms consolidating its democracy, this could set the stage for a transformative phase in EU-Armenia relations.” This came not long after Armenia’s foreign minister confirmed that the possibility of applying for EU candidacy was under discussion in Yerevan.

Source: [Asbarez](#), [RFE/RL](#)

Pashinyan States Demarcation of Armenia-Azerbaijan Border had Begun

While speaking in the border region of Tavush on March 18, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan stated that work had begun to demarcate the border between Azerbaijan and Armenia. The two countries have a joint working group devoted to the issue of border demarcation.

Source: [RFE/RL](#)

Armenia Agrees to Return Four Villages to Azerbaijan

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan of Armenia announced his country’s willingness to officially return four villages to Azerbaijan. The four villages had belonged to the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic during the Soviet era, but were occupied by Armenia after the outbreak of the first Nagorno-Karabakh war of the 1990s. Speaking on March 18, Prime Minister Pashinyan claimed the decision was made to avoid further violence with Azerbaijan, saying, “Our policy is that we must prevent a war – we must not allow a war to start.” Baku had long insisted on the unilateral return of these villages.

Source: [Reuters](#), [Politic](#)

EU and United States Announce Major Investments into Armenia

After a tri-lateral meeting between European Commission President Ursula Von der Leyen, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken, and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on April 5, Von der Leyen announced a four-year, €70 million investment package for Armenia aimed at strengthening “Armenia’s economy and society, making them more robust and stable in the face of shocks.” Von der Leyen also commended Armenia’s work against circumnavigating anti-Russia sanctions, stating, “This shows that the European Union and Armenia are increasingly aligned in values and interests.” The United States also announced an investment plan of \$65 million towards Armenia’s “democratic and economic resilience.” The moves came after months of Armenia publicly distancing itself from long-time ally Russia.

Source: [U.S. Department of State](#)

Protests in Tavush Region as Armenia Prepares Return of Villages to Azerbaijan

Local Armenians living in the district of Tavush protested the planned return to Azerbaijan of four villages that had been a part of Azerbaijan until the outbreak of the first Nagorno-Karabakh war in 1992. Local Armenians blocked roads around Tavush and protests spread to Yerevan as well. The decision to return the villages to Azerbaijan was supported by Azerbaijan, Armenia, the United States, and the European Union.

Source: [RFE/RL](#)

Armenia and Hungary Agree to Open Embassies

During a joint press conference between Hungarian Minister of Foreign Affairs and Trade Péter Szijjártó and Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ararat Mirzoyan in Budapest on May 6, it was announced that Armenia and Hungary agreed to open embassies in each other’s capitals. The two sides came to an agreement to restore diplomatic relations in December 2022.

Source: [Armenpress.am](#)

Largest Protests Against Pashinyan Take Place in Yerevan

On May 9, tens of thousands rallied in Yerevan, Armenia, to protest the decision by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to surrender four villages in the Tavush region to Azerbaijan as part of a peace agreement re-establishing Soviet-era borders between the two countries. Under the banner of “Tavush for the Homeland,” the rally was led by the Archbishop of the Diocese of Tavush, Bagrat Galstanian, who rose risen to prominence in prior weeks. The protesters demanded the resignation of Pashinyan.

Source: [Jam News](#), [RFE/RL](#)

Russia Withdrawing Some Troops from Armenia

Following a May 9 meeting between Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Armenia's Parliamentary Majority leader announced the withdrawal of hundreds of Russian border troops stationed in Armenia. The withdrawal was later confirmed by Kremlin Spokesman Dimitry Peskov. Russian troops remain on the borders with Iran and Türkiye, however. The decision came amidst shifting geopolitics in the region. Armenia is working to normalize relations with Azerbaijan, and it's shifting its affiliation from Russia towards Europe and the West.

Source: [Politico](#), [RFE/RL](#)

"Tavush for the Homeland" Protests Continue, Announces Archbishop Galstanyan as Prime Ministerial Candidate

Protests continued in Yerevan, Armenia, in response to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's decision to unilaterally hand over four border villages in the Tavush region to Azerbaijan. The villages had been part of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic until the first Nagorno-Karabakh war of the early 1990s. Residents of the region launched the "Tavush for the Homeland" protest movement in response and continue to gather thousands to the streets of Yerevan. The charismatic Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan led the movement and on May 26 was announced as the movement's Prime Ministerial candidate. Elections are slated for 2026.

Source: [JAM News](#)

Dozens Injured in Armenian Protests Over Peace Deal with Azerbaijan

On June 12, violent clashes broke out between Armenian protestors and security forces at Armenia's national assembly building, resulting in dozens of injuries. The protests were sparked by opposition to a peace deal with Azerbaijan and directly followed an announcement by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan that a deal was almost finalized.

Source: [EurasiaNet](#)

France Signs Deal to Provide Armenia with Howitzers

On June 18, France signed a deal to provide CAESAR self-propelled howitzers to Armenia. This deal came in the wake of the Armenian Prime Minister's recent comments about his country's withdrawal from the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) military alliance. Defense Minister Suren Papikyan called the deal a "new important milestone." France's supply of armaments to Armenia raised concerns from Azerbaijan, which described it as potentially disruptive to the progress of ongoing peace negotiations.

Source: [RFE/RFL](#)

Armenia Recognizes Palestinian Statehood

On June 24, the Armenian Foreign Ministry released a statement recognizing Palestinian statehood. The statement also outlined Armenia's support for an Israel–Palestine ceasefire resolution at the United Nations, as well as a two-state solution.

Source: [The Jerusalem Post](#)

Armenian Parliamentary Speaker Suggests Referendum on EU Ties

Alen Simonyan, speaker of Armenia's parliament, stated Armenia will likely hold a referendum on EU membership at some point, adding that members of parliament were already discussing the possibility. Armenia, a country that spent much of 2024 attempting to pivot from Moscow's sphere of influence toward Europe, remains a member of the Russian-backed Eurasian Economic Union, something incompatible with any long-term EU ambitions.

Source: [OC Media](#)

EU Works Toward Visa Liberalization with Armenia

Ambassadors from the European Union's 27 member states approved a European Commission proposal to ease existing visa requirements for Armenian citizens. The proposal moved to the European Council in what will probably be a lengthy and detailed process. The European Union will likely propose a series of internal reforms Armenia must take to ensure visa liberalization, such as anti-corruption or rule-of-law measures. The process could take several years before tangible results are achieved.

Source: [RFE/RL](#)

Armenia and the United States Hold Joint Military Exercises

Armenian defense forces held joint military drills with the United States July 15–24. The exercises were part of Exercise Eagle Partner 2024 aimed at improving “collective ability to conduct peacekeeping operations by performing gunnery and stability training, weapons familiarization, and range management.” This training allowed both countries to become familiar with the other's equipment. The last military exercise between the United States and Armenia took place in September 2023.

Source: [U.S. Army](#), [U.S. News and World Report](#), [Eurasianet](#)

Russian Border Guards Leave Yerevan Airport

After an agreement reached between Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Russian President Vladimir Putin in March, on July 31 Russian border guards departed Yerevan's Zvartnots international airport. Russia and Armenia have been deeply militarily integrated since the 1990s, with Russian troops stationed at several locations in Armenia.

Source: [RFE/RL](#)

Armenia's Central Power Plant Back on After Lighting Strike

The Armenian Nuclear Power Plant was reconnected to Armenia's electricity grid on August 31 after being shut off on August 30 due to a lightning strike. The plant, which is located at the town of Metsamor, was constructed over the course of the 1970s and generates 35-40% of Armenia's electricity.

Source: [RFE](#)

USAID Doubles Aid Package to Armenia

USAID doubled its five-year aid package from \$120 million to \$240 million. Armenia approved the amendment to the USAID-in-Armenia charter on September 5. The investment's stated aim was to improve governance, civil participation in democracy, and the management of natural resources. It also included support for "increasing the competitiveness of targeted sectors." Armenia remains economically reliant on Russia even as their bilateral relations have soured in recent years.

Source: [OC-Media](#)

Armenia Announces Decision to Attend BRICS Summit and 2025 CIS Summit

On September 3, Armenia's deputy minister of foreign affairs announced that Armenia would attend the October summit of BRICS, the intergovernmental organization named for its five founding members - Brazil, Russia, India, China, and South Africa - in Kazan, Russia, as well as the 2025 meeting of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Moscow. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan did attend the BRICS summit in November.

Source: [OC-Media](#)

Armenia and EU Sign €36 Million Road Construction Loan

On November 15, Armenia and the European Investment Bank's global division signed an agreement for a €36 million loan to co-finance the construction of a road linking the towns of Sisian and Kanjara. The road will improve north-south transport within Armenia, as well as potentially connecting Iran with Europe, and Russia. Officials have stated the goal of the project is to boost

regional trade and connectivity within Europe, Asia, and the Middle East.

Source: [European Investment Bank](#)

Six Armenian Cabinet Members Resign

Six major cabinet ministers in Armenia have resigned following Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's public comments on systemic governing failures. The ministers include Judicial Council President Karen Andriasyan, Anti-Corruption Committee President Sasun Khachatryan, Minister of Internal Affairs Vahe Ghazaryan, the chairman of the Investigative Committee Argishti Kyaramyan, the Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures Gnel Sanosyan, and the chairman of the State Revenue Committee Rustam Badasyan.

Source: [OC Media](#)

Armenian Parliament Ratifies OPEC Loan

On December 6 the Armenian Parliament ratified a November agreement to receive a 50 million euro loan from the OPEC Fund for International Development (OPEC Fund). According to Interfax, "The loan is provided for 18 years with a five-year grace period and carries an interest rate of six-month Euribor +1.56%." and will go toward covering the national spending deficit as well as social spending.

Source: [Interfax](#)

Armenian Defense Minister Meets with Lloyd Austin

On December 5, United States Secretary of Defense Lloyd Austin hosted Armenian Defense Minister Suren Papikyan for meetings at the Pentagon. The pair discussed U.S.-Armenia security cooperation, including the Eagle Partner joint-exercises, which were first launched in 2023. The visit is the first by an Armenian defense official of Papikyan's status.

Source: [U.S. Department of Defense](#)

Armenia and France Sign Defense Agreement

On December 9 in Yerevan, Armenia, French and Armenian officials signed a defense agreement for 2025. According to a statement released by the Armenian Ministry of Defense, the agreement "includes several dozen measures in almost all spheres of the armed forces."

Source: [Hetq](#)

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