



**Azərbaycan Respublikasının
Belçikadakı Səfirliyi**

Haradan: SBRS

Haraya: MMXİ, MİHİ, MİƏİ

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Məsələyə dair: Karnegi Beynəlxalq Sülh Fondunun Brüssel nümayəndəliyinin Şərqi Avropa və Qafqaz üzrə eksperti Tomas de Valin (Thomas de Waal) Ermənistanda keçirilmiş referendumla bağlı dərc edilmiş tənqidi məqaləsinə dair

Səfir


Fuad İsgəndərov

İcraçı: Ş.Kərimova

Nəzərinizə çatdırmaq istərdik ki, Karnegi Sülh Fondunun Brüssel nümayəndəliyinin Şərqi Avropa və Qafqaz üzrə eksperti Tomas de Valin fondun rəsmi saytında cari ilin 6 dekabr tarixində Ermənistanda keçirilmiş konstitusiya islahatına dair referendumla bağlı *“Ermənistanda bütün dəyişikliklər (All change in Armenia)”* başlıqlı tənqidi məqaləsi dərc olunmuşdur. (<http://carnegieeurope.eu/strategiceurope/?fa=62215> əlavə olunur)

Məqalədə, Ermənistan prezidenti Serj Sarkisyanın Cənubi Qafqazda yerləşən ölkələrdə (Azərbaycan və Gürcüstanın adı çəkilərək vaxtilə bu ölkələrdə keçirilmiş bənzər referendumların guya eyni məqsəd daşdığına işarə olunur) son 5 ildə həyata keçirilmiş konstitusiya islahatları nümunələrini təkrarlayaraq özünün siyasi gələcəyini sığortalamaq məqsədilə belə bir yola əl atmasından bəhs olunaraq, ümumilikdə referendumun nəticələri təhlil edilmişdir.

Nəzərə alınması üçün diqqətinizə təqdim edirik.





Judy Dempsey's *Strategic Europe*

All Change in Armenia

Posted by: THOMAS DE WAAL

TUESDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2015 + PRINT PAGE

The headline from Armenia following a much-disputed referendum on December 6 is that the country has a new constitution and will soon have a parliamentary system of government. But more people are paying attention to the short-term politics than to the long-term implications of the vote.

That is hardly surprising. The new constitution adopted in the referendum is a massive overhaul of the previous 2005 version, with only two articles surviving intact. There was no obvious need for such a big change.

As in most of the post-Soviet space, Armenian politics is an elite game in which the leaders change the rules to suit themselves, and the members of the public are mere bystanders. In this instance, President Serzh Sargsyan's evident motivation for holding a referendum was to be able to change the game to secure his own political survival.

Over the past five years, the elites have changed the constitutions in all three South Caucasus countries. In Azerbaijan, there was no pretense that the change was about anything other than power preservation. President Ilham Aliyev followed the examples of the Central Asian states and Belarus in abolishing presidential term limits, enabling him to secure a third term as leader and rule more or less in perpetuity.

In Georgia, Mikheil Saakashvili changed the constitution to limit the powers of the president, just as his second and final term as head of state was ending. Many anticipated that he was planning to stay at the center of Georgian politics by making the transition to the newly strengthened post of prime minister. But that proposition was never tested. In 2012, Saakashvili lost a parliamentary election, and his whole power base crumbled.

Now, in Armenia, Sargsyan appears to be attempting a similar maneuver to ensure himself the chance of a political future after his final presidential term expires in 2018.

The changed constitution gives Sargsyan the opportunity to stay at the top of public life if he wants to, by becoming either prime minister or parliamentary speaker. From 2018, Armenia will have a new president with largely ceremonial powers who will be elected for a single seven-year term. Most executive power will devolve to a prime minister chosen by a slimmed-down 101-seat parliament elected by proportional representation.

The most controversial provision of the new constitution is Article 89, which stipulates that if no party secures a “stable parliamentary majority” in legislative elections, there may be a runoff vote to ensure a governing coalition is elected. Some critics, among them Robert Kocharian, a former Armenian president and erstwhile ally of Sargsyan, have argued that this is a dangerous recipe for one-party rule. (Other critics have said Kocharian is upset only because the changes thwart ambitions he may have had of returning for a third presidential term akin to that of Russian President Vladimir Putin.)

There was almost no public debate on the changes. A poll by the Yerevan-based Advanced Public Research Group found very little knowledge about what the changes meant, with 71 percent of those surveyed believing that the amendments would go through regardless of what happened on voting day.

There were grounds for cynicism. A three-person delegation from the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe was critical of the referendum, citing inaccurate voting lists, a skewed media landscape, and “allegations of large-scale organized vote buying and carousel voting as well as pressure on voters.”

But it would be wrong to describe the Armenian public as passive. The “no” campaign, opposed to the ruling elite, was not powerful enough to stop the changes, but it was vocal enough to kick up a fuss. Social media have disseminated numerous reports of electoral fraud. These include the allegation that a one-hundred-twenty-year-old man, born in the year 1895, was registered to vote.

Such criticism suggests that in 2018, when Sargsyan’s term ends, if he and his team do make a play to keep themselves in power, they will face a backlash.

The short-term dynamics are worrying. But in the longer term, Sargsyan may have done everyone a favor. The bigger picture is that Armenia, a small, well-educated country with a professional class (albeit much depleted by emigration), is much better suited to a parliamentary style of government than to the executive power vertical it has at the moment.

In Georgia, constitutional changes were initiated by one ruling party, the United National Movement, with one set of motives: to further party members’ own ambitions. The changes were inherited by another ruling party, Georgian Dream, and the effect has been mostly positive. Georgian’s parliament is stronger than it has been for years, and there is a real division of powers—often more like a contestation—between the prime minister and the president.

Eventually, Armenia could get to the same place. Even before that, the country’s 2017 parliamentary elections could be a lot livelier than anticipated. The new constitutional change frees the opposition from a straitjacket in which it has been struggling for years: its lack of a credible individual who could be its presidential candidate in 2018. Now, the opposition’s challenge is slightly less daunting: to build a proper party machine capable of taking on the ruling Republican Party in two years’ time.

- **NATO Membership for Montenegro but Not for Georgia**