











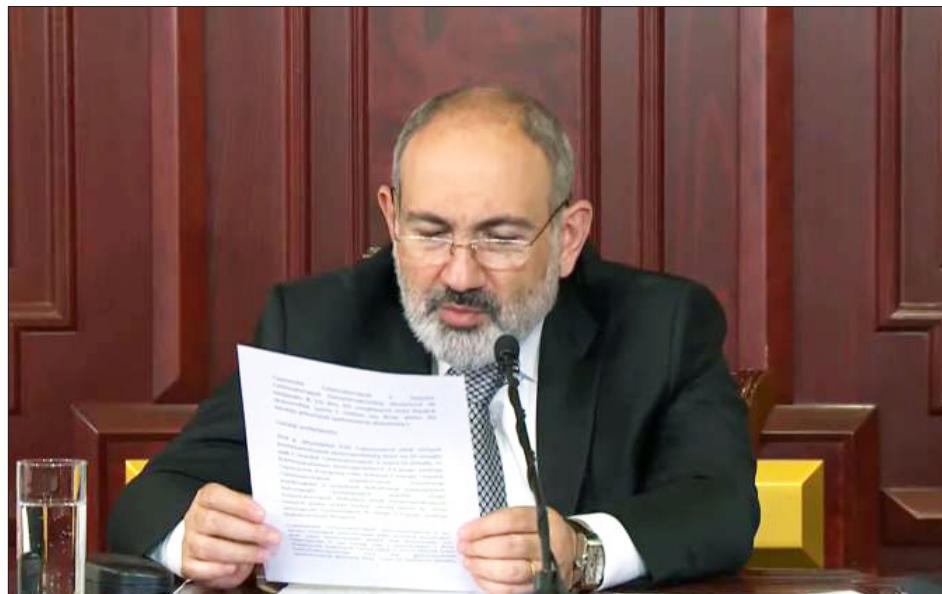


# massis Weekly

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## PM Nikol Pashinyan: Fall of Shushi Forced Us to Sign the November 9 Ceasefire Statement



YEREVAN — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has revealed the moment in 2020 when he realized that the only possible option for ending hostilities was to compromise. Speaking at the parliamentary select committee investigating the causes and course of the 2020 Second Karabakh War, Pashinyan emphasized the crucial role played by the fall of Shushi in the signing of the trilateral statement on November 9, 2020.

According to Pashinyan, the sig-

nificance of Shushi went beyond symbolism; it held strategic importance. After the fall of Shushi, Stepanakert would become the target, putting increased pressure on Martuni and posing a risk of approximately 25,000 Armenian troops being besieged.

Pashinyan explained that the ceasefire agreement on November 9, 2020, was the fifth attempt to end the war. The first conversation regarding this matter took place on October 7, when Pashinyan called

Russian President Vladimir Putin on his birthday. Putin attached importance to Pashinyan's willingness to compromise and expressed his desire to mediate for a swift end to hostilities.

"I agreed and asked Putin about the conditions for ending the hostilities. Our understanding was that the hostilities had to cease without pre-conditions, with both sides stopping at their current positions. Subsequently, negotiations would determine the compromises agreed upon by the parties. I found this option acceptable. Later that day, I had a second phone call with President Putin, who informed me that he had spoken with the President of Azerbaijan. However, the Azerbaijani President expressed his unwillingness to agree to a ceasefire, meaning he did not accept the establishment of a ceasefire," Pashinyan stated.

President Putin informed Pashinyan that he would speak with the Azerbaijani President again the next day.

The following day, Putin relayed to Pashinyan that Azerbaijan had a

## ACA-PAC Announces Endorsement of Imelda Padilla for Los Angeles City Council District 6 Seat



LOS ANGELES — At the conclusion of a discussion on several key issues facing the San Fernando Valley, the Armenian Council of America Political Action Committee (ACA-PAC) is pleased to announce our endorsement of Imelda Padilla for Los Angeles City Council District 6 in the upcoming special election on June 27, 2023.

"Los Angeles' 6th District is home to a large and growing Armenian American community," said ACA-PAC board member Mehran Katchadourian. "With the disappointments and divisiveness this community has experienced under previous leadership, it is

time we had a representative who will look out for the citizens and small businesses of the community, rather than just their own self-interests. Imelda Padilla is a person we can be proud to call our representative, and I urge everyone to vote for her as our next Council Member in the upcoming special election."

"I am deeply grateful for the trust and support that my campaign continues to receive from the Armenian-American community in District 6," said candidate Padilla. "It is an honor

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## US Embassy - Peace Must Include Protecting the Rights and Security of the People of Karabakh

YEREVAN—The United States of America welcomes any dialogue that will contribute to the protection of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, the US Embassy in Yerevan said, commenting on information published in Russian media and official Moscow statements.

According to Russian media, the US is trying to impose its mediation in the dialogue between Baku and Stepanakert, including through the threat of force. The Russian state news agency TASS was informed by the Russian Foreign Ministry that Moscow was concerned about these publications.

Citing its sources, Komso-molskaya Pravda wrote that the United States, in an ultimatum form, is forcing the representatives of Nagorno-Karabakh to hold a dialogue with Azerbaijan in a third country "under the supervision of American mediators."

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## Armenian, French Defense Ministers Discuss Regional Security Issues and Defense Cooperation



PARIS -- Armenia's Defense Minister Suren Papikyan met with his French counterpart Sébastien Lecornu in Paris on Tuesday for further talks on closer military ties between their countries.

The Armenian Defense Ministry said the two men discussed "the current state of implementation of understandings" reached by them during Papikyan's previous trip to France that took place last September. Security in the South Caucasus was also on the agenda of the talks, the ministry said without giving details.

A ceremonial welcoming Minis-

ter Papikyan took place with the participation of a military band and a guard of honor, the national anthems of the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of France were played.

A delegation of French defense officials visited Armenia in October, holding separate talks with Papikyan, Armenian army chief Eduard Asryan and High-Technology Minister Robert Khachatrian. The Defense Ministry in Yerevan likewise said at the time that they discussed the implementation of Papikyan's and Lecornu's "under-

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## France Condemns Azerbaijani Shelling of Civilian Areas in Armenian Territory

PARIS — France deplores the armed incidents that have taken place over the past 48 hours at several points on the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the shelling of civilian personnel in Yeraskh on Armenian territory, and calls for restraint, de-escalation, and the protection of civilians, the French Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

"France reiterates its support for the implementation of the decision of the International Court of Justice of February 22, 2023, on the restoration of traffic in the [Lachin] Corridor.

France is fully committed to a return to peace for the benefit of the entire population of the region. Negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan recently continued at the highest level on June 1 in Chisinau, on the sidelines of the European Political Community summit. The President of Azerbaijan, Mr. Ilham Aliyev, and the Prime Minister of Armenia, Mr. Nikol Pashinyan, held talks together with the President of the French Republic, the German Chancellor, Mr. Olaf Scholz, and the President of the European Council, Mr. Charles Michel. This meeting demonstrated the desire to make progress on



the various issues under discussion, which should be resolved exclusively through negotiations.

The Minister for Europe and Foreign Affairs, Mrs. Catherine Colonna, also visited Armenia and Azerbaijan in April to help the two countries progress towards a peace agreement. These efforts are carried out in close coordination with the European Union and the United States," the Ministry said.

This week, two Indian citizens were wounded by the shootings of the Azerbaijani side at the metallurgical plant under construction in Yeraskh, and as a result of the incident in the Lachin corridor, one soldier each from the Azerbaijani and Armenian sides was wounded.

## Armenian and U.S. Flags Raised at Yeraskh Smelter Plant Construction Site



YEREVAN -- Armenian and U.S. flags were raised to confirm the decision of the Board of Directors of GTB Steel that the company will not go anywhere, head of the company's Board of Directors Tiran Hakobyan told reporters on Tuesday.

The construction site in Yeraskh, a village 55 kilometers south of Yerevan, has come under cross-border fire on a virtually daily basis for the past week amid heightened tensions at various sections of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. Two Indian nationals working there were seriously wounded on June 14.

"We will continue building the plant. Of course, raising the flags does not give us some additional military protection," Hakobyan said.

According to him, the construction of the Armenian-American steel plant, estimated to cost \$70 million was permitted by the government.

"The Republic of Armenia has given us all the necessary permits. We have all the documents required by law for the construction of the plant," the

businessman said. When commissioned the plant is expected to employ about 1,000 people.

"We will carry on with the works regardless of whether or not they will shoot at us," Hakobyan told reporters. "At some point, they [the Azerbaijanis] will understand that we will not leave and will not play by those rules of the game."

Last week, Representatives of about 40 foreign diplomatic missions accredited to Armenia visited the community of Yeraskh. The diplomats were accompanied by representatives from the Foreign Ministry and the Armed Forces of Armenia.

Ambassadors, military attachés, and diplomats familiarized themselves with the consequences of the shelling carried out on the previous day and the day before from the Nakhichevan section of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. Among the foreign diplomats were the ambassadors of the European Union, France, Germany, China, and several other countries.

## Moscow's Ambassador Summoned to Armenian Foreign Ministry to Protest Russian Peacekeepers Action on Hakari Bridge

YEREVAN — Armenia's Foreign Ministry summoned the Russian ambassador in Yerevan on Friday to accuse Russian peacekeepers of being responsible for Thursday's shootout between Armenian and Azerbaijani border guards near the Lachin corridor.

The incident, which reportedly left one Azerbaijani border guard wounded, happened near an Azerbaijani checkpoint that was controversially set up in late April on the sole road connecting Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenian border guards deployed nearby opened fire to stop a group of Azerbaijani servicemen manning the checkpoint from advancing into Armenian territory and placing an Azerbaijani flag there.

A video of the incident suggests that the Azerbaijani servicemen were escorted and seemingly protected by Russian soldiers as they crossed a bridge over the Hakari river flowing through the Lachin district in order to hoist the flag. This fact raised eyebrows in Armenia, with many pointing out that Moscow too had criticized the Azerbaijani checkpoint as a violation of the 2020 ceasefire agreement.

Russian Ambassador Sergei



Kopyrkin was seen entering the Foreign Ministry building in Yerevan. He spent about an hour there.

In a written statement to RFE/RL's Armenian Service, the Foreign Ministry said afterwards that it conveyed to Kopyrkin Armenia's "strong discontent" with the Russian peacekeepers' actions. It said it urged Russia to "take all necessary steps to ascertain the circumstances of the incident and correct the situation."

A senior pro-government lawmaker, Artur Hovannisyan, indicated earlier in the day that Yerevan is seeking explanations from Moscow. "Naturally, there is a conversation with our Russian partners," he told reporters.

## Azerbaijan Continues to Block All Humanitarian Traffic Through Lachin Corridor

Azerbaijan did not allow relief supplies to and medical evacuations from Nagorno-Karabakh for the second consecutive day on Friday, aggravating a humanitarian crisis in the Armenian-populated region effectively cut off from the outside world since December.



Baku halted on Thursday the movement through the Lachin corridor of humanitarian convoys organized by Russian peacekeepers and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) following a shootout near an Azerbaijani checkpoint controversially set up there in late April.

Armenia's National Security Service (NSS) said that its border guards stopped a group of Azerbaijani servicemen manning the checkpoint from advancing into Armenian territory and placing an Azerbaijani flag there.

Only vehicles escorted by the Russian peacekeeping forces and the ICRC have been able to pass through the road for the last seven months. The peacekeepers have delivered food and other essential supplies to Karabakh while the Red Cross evacuated critically ill patients for further treatment in Armenian hospitals.

An ICRC spokeswoman in Stepanakert, Eteri Musayelian, confirmed that Red Cross vehicles car-

rying 25 Karabakh patients and their family members were turned away from the Azerbaijani checkpoint on Thursday. She said the Red Cross hopes to resume the evacuations soon.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on Friday condemned the complete blockage of humanitarian traffic through the Lachin corridor.

"Food does not enter Nagorno-Karabakh from the outside world, and citizens in need of urgent medical assistance are not allowed to pass through the Lachin Corridor," he said during a cabinet meeting in Yerevan.

While again accusing Azerbaijan of pursuing a "policy of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh," Pashinyan renewed his calls for a "dialogue between Baku and Stepanakert within the framework of an international mechanism." He also pledged to continue striving for a peace treaty between Armenia and Azerbaijan despite continuing ceasefire violations on the border between the two countries.

## Michael Rubin: Azerbaijan's Attack on American Company Should End Sanctions Waiver

YERASKH (AEI.org)—For most people, Yeraskh is just a rest stop on the road between Yerevan and southern Armenia. For those who look, however, the signs of conflict in the South Caucasus are evident. Less than 200 yards after the road ends is the border of Azerbaijan. Azerbaijani military posts overlook the town. Mount Ararat, long part of Armenia until the Turkish-led Armenian Genocide ethnically cleansed the region, dominates the horizon to the West. The Turkish frontier is just four miles away. Just a mile or so further is Iran's border. Just outside of town, a berm interspersed with bunkers built in the early 1990s rises between the road and the Azerbaijani border to protect drivers from Azerbaijani snipers. A Russian flag flaps in the wind at a memorial just a few hundred feet from the road where, just over two and a half years ago, an Azerbaijani soldier shot down a Russian helicopter on the last day of the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War.

I drove through Yeraskh just hours after Azerbaijan fired upon a vehicle carrying two Indian employees of a US-funded metallurgy company in the town. The attack was unprovoked.

It also highlights two realities. The first is that, contrary to the State Department's certification that Azerbaijan has foreseen military action to resolve its dispute with Armenia over Nagorno-Karabakh, it continues to use its military to terrorize.

The second is that Azerbaijan may use the Nagorno-Karabakh dispute as an excuse, but its target is Armenia proper. Yeraskh is Armenia proper, officially disputed by no other country. I continued along the road to Jermuk, an Armenian spa town dominated by a ski resort and natural spring, whose mineral-rich waters allegedly have healing properties. In September 2022, Azerbaijani forces launched a surprise attack on the town using drones, artillery, and sniper fire. The town is an economic hub, but has no



military base nor is it in disputed territory. Despite this, Azerbaijan continues to occupy over 23 square miles on the town's outskirts, putting most townsmen and visitors under imminent threat of sniper fire.

The State Department may tweet that it is "deeply concerned" but its words are meaningless and its actions increasingly in contravention of US law that prohibits allowing military assistance to Azerbaijan so long as Azerbaijan harbors military ambitions.

With Azerbaijan now attacking American interests within the sovereign territory of Armenia, it is now time for the Biden administration to revoke the waiver on Section 907 and immediately cease all military and other non-humanitarian assistance to Azerbaijan. Anything less would be an affront to Congress and will suggest President Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken are uninterested in defending American interests, American lives, or abiding by American law. To respond with rhetoric alone would also set back peace by convincing Azerbaijan that it faces no real consequences for continued aggression.

**Michael Rubin**, a former Pentagon official, is a senior fellow at the American Enterprise Institute, where he specializes in Iran, Turkey, and the broader Middle East.

## Stamp Dedicated to 850th Anniversary of Saint Nerses Shnorhali Put Into Circulation

YEREVAN -- On June 20th, 2023, a souvenir sheet with one postage stamp dedicated to the theme "850th Anniversary of the death of Saint Nerses Shnorhali" has been put into circulation.

The souvenir sheet with one stamp was cancelled by the First Deputy Minister of High-Technological Industry of the Republic of Armenia Gevorg Mantashyan, Secretary General of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Boris Sahakyan, Archbishop Nathan Hovhannesian, the Chief Executive Officer of "HayPost" CJSC Arayik Abrahamyan, the President of the Philatelists' Armenian Association Hovik Musayelyan.

The postage stamp of the souvenir sheet with the nominal value of 380 AMD depicts the great medieval thinker, poet, theologian and the Catholicos of All Armenians Nerses Shnorhali (Nerses



IV Clayetsi).

The souvenir sheet depicts the view of Rumkale fortress as well as the inscriptions "H.H. NERSES IV CLAYETSI" and "CATHOLICOS OF ALL ARMENIANS" and "Rumkale" in Armenian and English languages.

The bottom right part of the souvenir sheet depicts the logo of UNESCO as the 850th Anniversary of the death of Nerses Shnorhali is included in the UNESCO 2022-2023 calendar commemorating historic events and anniversaries of eminent personalities.

## French-Armenian Resistance Hero Missak Manouchian to Enter France's Panthéon



PARIS — Missak Manouchian, an Armenian genocide survivor who went on to become a French Resistance hero, will enter France's Panthéon mausoleum of revered historical figures next year, President Emmanuel Macron announced in a statement Sunday.

"Manouchian carries a part of our greatness", Macron said in the statement issued by the Élysée Palace, adding the French-Armenian poet and communist embodied France's "universal values" of liberty, equality and fraternity.

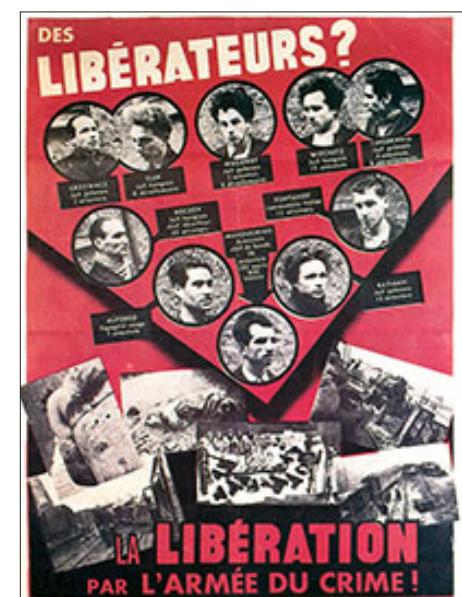
Macron said Manouchian will be inducted into the Panthéon — which already honors eight other French Resistance heroes, including Jean Moulin — on February 21, 2024.

According to the wishes of his family, his wife Mélinée will join him in the mausoleum, although she will not receive the "pantheonisation" of her husband — the rare tribute reserved only for those who have played an important role in French history, such as Victor Hugo, Voltaire and Marie Curie.

Manouchian arrived in France in 1925 as a stateless refugee after fleeing the Armenian genocide with his brother, and joined the country's communist Resistance movement in 1943 during World War II. He led a small group of fighters that carried out a string of successful attacks against the occupying Nazi forces.

### Arrest and red poster campaign

In 1944, the group, which in-



cluded a number of Jews, was put out of action when 23 of its members were rounded up and sentenced to death by a German military court.

Manouchian was shot by a Nazi firing squad on February 21, 1944.

The collaborationist Vichy regime later tried to discredit the group and defuse the anger over the executions in an infamous red poster depicting the dead fighters as terrorists.

By entering the Panthéon, Manouchian will become both the first foreign and communist Resistance fighter to be awarded the honor.

In his tribute, Macron also pointed to the "bravery" and "quiet heroism" of Manouchian and other foreign Resistance fighters.

## ACA-PAC Announces Endorsement

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to be endorsed by the Armenian Council of America PAC. As a Council-woman, I will work tirelessly to promote and protect the interests of all constituents, advocating for more investment in our local businesses, creating incentives for the construction of affordable housing and jobs, so that all our communities can thrive."

As a lifelong resident of the Valley, Padilla has firsthand experience of the challenges facing the city and has committed herself to tackling these issues head-on. Her experience as a community organizer and coalition builder demonstrates her commitment

to fighting for services and resources for the community at large.

The county registrar's office has begun sending out vote-by-mail ballots to registered voters in District 6 for the June 27th special election. Council District 6 sits in the San Fernando Valley, stretching from Sun Valley west past the 405 Freeway to Lake Balboa. One of 15 council districts, it includes heavily populated Armenian American neighborhoods such as Arleta, North Hollywood, North Hills, Panorama City, Van Nuys, and Sun Valley.

ACA-PAC encourages all Armenian Americans to exercise their civic duties and rights as citizens on June 27th and vote.

## Armenian-French Project for Preservation of Ererouyk Among Winners of 2023 European Heritage Awards



The European Commission and Europa Nostra have announced the winners of the 2023 European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards.

The annual EU prize for cultural heritage rewards 28 best initiatives and personalities from 20 European countries representing the latest developments and priorities related to heritage policy and practice in Europe.

The Armenian-French joint project ‘Scientific-Archaeological Studies for the Preservation of Ererouyk’ is among the winners of the ‘Research’ category. Ererouyk is an early Christian and medieval complex, located in Shirak province of Armenia. It consists of remains of a 6th-century basilica, ancient mausoleum and cemetery, ancient village and dam. The researchers succeeded in dating the basilica and conducting a detailed analysis of its carved decoration. Through comparative research, the project also highlighted the particularities of Armenian Christianity and funerary customs.

This research project was carried out between 2009 and 2021 by the Laboratory of Medieval and Modern Archaeology in the Mediterranean of Aix-en-Provence (LA3M), France, the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography of the Armenian Academy of Sciences, and the Shirak Regional Museum in Gyumri, Armenia, alongside several experts of different nationalities.

The Awards, funded by the Creative Europe programme of the European Union, are granted in five categories:

- Conservation & Adaptive Reuse;
- Research;
- Education, Training & Skills;
- Citizens' Engagement & Awareness-raising; and
- Heritage Champions.

Armenian-French Scientific-Ar-

chaeological Studies for the Preservation of Ererouyk won the award in the Research category.

This year’s impressive collection of award winners ranges from the true renaissance of the Royal Gardens of Venice (Italy), a most treasured green space in the heart of this unique heritage city, to the fascinating research project Safeguarding of the Artisanal Fishing Technique “Arte-Xávega” (Portugal), which helps secure the future of one the last examples of artisanal and sustainable fishing in Europe; from ACTA VISTA (France), an innovative heritage skills training programme which helps individuals marginalised from employment return to work, to the annual festival Budapest 100 (Hungary), which celebrates the built heritage of this World Heritage City; and the transfrontier network of volunteers of SUCHO: Saving Ukrainian Cultural Heritage Online (Ukraine/International Project), which web archived over 50TB of data from Ukrainian cultural institutions in the first months of the war in Ukraine.

The Award winners were selected by the Jury, composed of heritage experts from across Europe, upon evaluation by the Selection Committees that are responsible for examining award applications, which this year were submitted by organisations and individuals from 35 European countries.

Reacting to the announcement of the 2023 winners, Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President for Promoting our European Way of Life, who is currently in charge of Culture, stated: “Each winning achievement of this year’s European Heritage Awards/Europa Nostra Awards is the result of extraordinary skills and commitment, collec-

tive and individual, spanning heritage places and traditions across Europe. By honouring these achievements, we also reiterate our firm commitment to protecting our shared cultural heritage, because it is vital for our sense of togetherness as citizens and communities of Europe.”

Cecilia Bartoli, the world-renowned mezzo-soprano and President of Europa Nostra, stated: “I warmly congratulate this year’s winners of the European Heritage Awards / Europa Nostra Awards on their well-deserved recognition. They are inspiring examples which truly contribute to building a more beautiful, sustainable and inclusive Europe. Their success stories demonstrate how adversity can be overcome through pooling expertise, dedication, creativity and innovation. I look forward to meeting them in person and celebrating all the winners at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony in our beloved World Heritage City of Venice.”

The winners will be celebrated at the European Heritage Awards Ceremony on 28 September in the Palazzo del Cinema in Venice. This prestigious event will be honoured with the participation of Cecilia Bartoli, President of Europa Nostra. Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the European Commission, is also expected to attend this high-level event. During the ceremony, the Grand Prix laureates and the Public Choice Award winner, chosen from among this year’s winners and entitled to receive •10,000 each, will be announced. The ceremony will be a highlight of the European Cultural Heritage Summit 2023, organised by Europa Nostra with the support of the European Commission, on 27-30 September in the World Heritage City of Venice.

Heritage supporters and enthusiasts are now encouraged to discover the winners and vote online to decide who will win the Public Choice Award 2023, entitled to receive a monetary award of •10,000.

## Fall of Shushi Forced Us to Sign

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precondition for a ceasefire: they expected the surrender of Fizuli without a fight, and Armenian forces were required to retreat from the Araks River to the Khuda Aferin reservoir, allowing the reservoir to remain under Azerbaijani control for irrigation purposes. Additionally, Azerbaijan aimed to repatriate Guliyev and Askerov, two convicts serving prison terms in Nagorno Karabakh for kidnapping and murder, and was considering the option of prisoner exchange.

“Moreover, this would not declare an end to hostilities, but rather a humanitarian ceasefire for the burial of the dead, without any condition or obligation to refrain from resuming fighting afterward. I voiced my disagreement with these preconditions because the Russian President and I had agreed on establishing a ceasefire without preconditions. Furthermore, even if I were to agree to the withdrawal of troops, there was no guarantee that Azerbaijan would not continue its offensive during the retreat. Nevertheless, I showed some flexibility. I proposed the possibility of joint use of water from the Khuda Aferin reservoir, suggesting that Nagorno Karabakh could not obstruct Azerbaijani access to the reservoir. I also suggested discussing the condition for the return of Askerov and Guliyev if Azerbaijan specified how many Armenian captives it was prepared to return with Russian mediation. However, I found the precondition of surrendering Fizuli without a fight along the banks of the Araks River unacceptable. On the other hand, I fully accepted the proposal for a humanitarian ceasefire to bury the deceased,” Pashinyan explained.

Putin told Pashinyan on October 9 that Azerbaijan was ready to establish a ceasefire starting on October 9-

10. The foreign ministers of the two sides were invited to Moscow for discussions, and the exchange of captives and bodies of the dead was also supposed to be discussed. Pashinyan said he agreed to the offer.

Subsequently, the Kremlin published a statement, and a statement was issued after the foreign ministerial meeting. Following this statement, Pashinyan ordered the military to maintain the ceasefire. However, after brief pauses, Azerbaijan launched a more intense attack, bombarding the territory of the former NKAO, including Stepanakert, Martakert, and assaulting Hadrut.

“Of course, the troops were ordered to take every necessary action to stop the Azerbaijani attack, but simultaneously diplomatic efforts were underway to establish a ceasefire based on the Moscow document. The deployment of Russian military observers on both sides of the line of contact for monitoring the situation was being considered. However, Azerbaijan consistently avoided such a solution and intensified its military operations,” Pashinyan said.

The Armenian PM mentioned that he had several conversations with Putin in the following days on how to achieve a ceasefire.

“Analyzing the situation in our internal discussions, my conclusion was the following: Azerbaijan would not agree to a ceasefire until its advance was thwarted. This was essentially the balanced scenario for ending the hostilities. I realized that if such a scenario was impossible, and the situation on the battlefield was not optimistic, the only viable option was a compromised ceasefire. Other alternatives were not realistic because days had passed since the rather balanced ceasefire statement, yet it was impossible to establish a ceasefire,” Pashinyan said.

## US Embassy

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Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman Maria Zakharova said at a news briefing that she was familiar with the

publications on this topic, adding that if the facts are confirmed, the American side will be obliged to provide clarifications.

## Armenian, French Defense Ministers

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standings.”

No details of those agreements have been made public so far. It remains unclear whether France, which is regularly accused by Azerbaijan of making pro-Armenian statements, is ready to provide any military assistance to Armenia.

“We certainly support the peace talks that have started with Azerbaijan,

but France must help Armenia to defend and protect itself!” Christian Cambon, the chairman of the French Senate’s committee on defense and foreign affairs, tweeted after meeting with Papiyan on Monday.

The Armenian minister attended the opening ceremony of the Paris Airshow earlier on Monday. He visited exhibition booths of French military-industrial enterprises and met with company leaders.











