

CHALLENGES TO ARMENIA IN THE GLOBALIZING WORLD¹

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In Arnold Toynbee's classical formulation, the viability of civilizations depends on their ability to adequately respond to challenges. In this sense it can be stated that for several millennia Armenia has been able to face (to various extent) its challenges. Globalization accompanied humankind since ages and at times took the shape and essence of so-called "local globalization/unification" [1, c. 80]. However, we shall examine the last wave of globalization, which resulted, *inter alia*, in collapse of the socialist system and the USSR. Undoubtedly, this phenomenon was a geopolitical, civilizational, humanitarian and economic catastrophe and as such, it was a serious challenge for Armenia. Nevertheless, Armenia adequately responded to the threats, won the war against Azerbaijan, liberated Artsakh, as it was the most accomplished state in the region (which above all, stemmed from our civilizational, state and military traditions and the spiritual, intellectual, scientific, technological and industrial potential created in the Second Republic).

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Armenia: the Most Accomplished State of the Region

As years passed, Armenia (RoA and NKR) maintained the status of the most stable state, and this is not just a statement. As known, *Foreign Policy*, a reputable magazine, and *Fund for Peace* annually publish the *Failed States Index* rankings. These are prepared with a special methodology based on assessments made using an evaluation toolkit, which are expressed in values of 12 indicators (see *Table 1*). According to this methodology, the lower the score for a country, the more stable/accomplished it is, i.e. the lowest ranking country is the most accomplished one. Results of the 2012 *Failed States Index* are shown in the *Table 2* below¹ (the numbered columns correspond to the indicators of *Table 1*). As seen, Armenia has considerably lower scores than its neighbors and is a regional leader with a wide margin, i.e. Armenia is the most accomplished state in the region, which has been traditionally the case for a number of years in this reputable international ranking system.

Table 1

<i>Social indicators</i>	
1.	Mounting demographic pressures
2.	Massive Movement of Refugees or Internally Displaced Persons
3.	Vengeance-Seeking Group Grievance
4.	Chronic and Sustained Human Flight
<i>Economic indicators</i>	
5.	Uneven Economic Development along Group Lines
6.	Poverty, Sharp and/or Severe Economic Decline
<i>Political indicators</i>	
7.	Criminalization and/or Delegitimization of the State
8.	Progressive Deterioration of Public Services
9.	Widespread Violation of Human Rights and Rule of Law
10.	Security Apparatus Operates as a "State Within a State"
11.	Rise of Factionalized Elites
12.	Intervention of Other States or External Political Actors

¹ http://www.foreignpolicy.com/failed_states_index_2012_interactive

Failed States Index 2012

Table 2

COUNTRY	RANK	SCORE	INDICATORS											
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
IRAN	34	89.6	5.8	7.6	8.6	6.4	6.7	6.4	8.8	5.3	8.9	8.3	9.3	7.4
GEORGIA	51	84.8	5.5	7.2	8.3	5.2	6.6	6.3	8.5	5.7	6.7	7.6	9.1	8.2
AZERBAIJAN	68	79.8	5.6	7.6	7.2	5.1	6.6	5.2	8.0	5.4	7.3	6.7	7.8	7.2
TURKEY	85	76.6	6.5	6.5	8.6	4.2	7.1	5.6	6.2	6.0	5.3	7.7	7.5	5.9
ARMENIA	102	72.2	6.8	6.8	5.7	6.3	5.9	5.6	6.8	4.7	6.8	5.2	7.0	6.1

The low value of the 8th indicator, “Progressive Deterioration of Public Services”, deserves special attention, as it signifies a developed state governance system, as compared to the neighbors.

At the same time *Table 2* indicates that Armenia faces serious problems in social and demographic dimensions (indicators 1-4), which will be discussed later while reviewing internal challenges of Armenia. It has to be mentioned that in an accomplished state every professional subgroup has to pursue its own professional functions, and in this sense one of the primary objectives of the analysts’ community is predicting the expected challenges and attempting to point out the opportunities to adequately respond to those.

Possible Disruption of the Regional Political and Military Balance

Under the above mentioned circumstances it is worthwhile to consider the known fact that the Greater Middle East is in so-called “turbulent”, unstable conditions resulting from developments around Iran’s nuclear program, war in Syria and ongoing processes in the context of “Arab Spring”. This new regional situation is a challenge not only to the Armenian communities, the very existence of which is currently threatened, and possible disintegration of which may radically change the shape and essence of the Armenian Diaspora. This instability poses a direct threat to the security of Armenia, since in some scenarios weakening of Iran¹ may disrupt the existing military and political balance in the region and lead to strengthening of Turkey, which may become a dominant regional power [2]. Attention needs to be paid also to the small value of the 12th indicator for this country, which points to low

¹ Scenarios of a potential nuclear war between Israel and Iran deserve a separate discussion (see [1, p. 178]).

dependence of Turkey on foreign countries and signifies its endeavor to act independently, without much regard to the senior NATO partners. Indoctrinated with neo-Ottoman ideology, the Turkish political elite is more than ambitious and aspires to build:

- an “Islamic NATO” and “Islamic Peacekeeping Forces” (thus reviving the agendas of former prime minister and radical Islamist Erbakan, who is Erdoğan’s ideological mentor);
- nuclear weaponry;
- economic zone of Turkish lira.

Emergence of a Turkey with such military, political and economic claims is a very serious challenge to Armenia. Undoubtedly, strengthening of Turkey, which has an uncompromising attitude in the NKR problem (with some analysts considering Turkey as a party to the conflict) and imposes blockade of our borders (equaling to an act of war), will toughen its stance against Armenia. Also, Turkey’s nuclear program deserves special attention, as its implementation is an extremely serious challenge not only to Armenia, but also to Israel and Greece [1, p. 247, 3-5].

Contemplating such scenarios implies complex approaches and in this context the scenario of “Turkey’s weakening and partition” [1, p. 179] has to be considered as well. It is no surprise that currently the analysts’ community actively discusses the “bad future” of not only Saudi Arabia and Qatar, but also Turkey. It is more than substantiated, because no signs of solutions for ongoing unrest in this country are visible on the horizon: the “Kurdish cause” is on agenda again and has been internationalized¹, whereas the so-called “identity crisis” deepens in the

¹ See for example: *Курдский лабиринт Турции*, <http://www.rodon.org/polit-121130105832>

society, leading to escalation of ethno-religious conflicts. In addition, the ideological/political standoff increasingly exacerbates between supporters of the current Islamic and formerly dominant secular development models. Some commentators note that the current neo-Ottomanism based aggressive foreign policy of Prime Minister Erdoğan contains considerable risks (see for example [6, 7]). However, it has to be considered that such seemingly desirable developments also pose a peculiar challenge to Armenia, an adequate response to which requires prior planning.

Armenia as a “frontier country” and “Global governance” scenarios

In any circumstances it has to be recognized that ongoing processes in the Middle East definitely integrate the *Islamic World* and detach it from the *Western, European World*. This is a problem for Armenia not only in the event if Turkey becomes dominant, but also in the opposite case, if it succumbs. Collapse of secular administrations in the Middle East and ongoing religious radicalization of societies destabilize the region, and hence, make it unpredictable in military and political terms.

Remarkably, possibility of such trend has been pointed out already in 2010 in a report titled *Global Governance 2025* prepared by the US National Intelligence Council (NIC), EU Institute for Security Studies (EUISS), as well as by a number of Russian, Chinese and Indian experts.¹ Among other predicted developments, the following scenarios deserve attention in this report:

1. Fragmentation
2. Concert of Europe Redux

¹ Global Governance 2025: At a Critical Juncture. National Intelligence Council, European Union Institute for Security Studies, September 2010, http://www.iss.europa.eu/uploads/media/Global_Governance_2025.pdf

According to the authors of the report, the pessimistic “Fragmentation” scenario implies that trends of “civilizational division” begin to dominate in the world, leading to various conflicts. In particular, Asia builds its own regional order (which is very much reminiscent of the current situation in the Middle East ensuing the “Arab Spring”), while Europe “turns its focus inward as it wrestles” with own problems. The second scenario is more optimistic, suggesting revival of Vienna Congress System¹ (a.k.a. “Concert of Europe”), although quite naturally in a new format. In other words, a powerful and unified Europe is established.

The experts who authored this report (2010) viewed the mentioned two scenarios separately, whereas the current trends leave an impression that such global developments can occur simultaneously. This is evidenced by:

- Political and economic systems integration processes of the EU member-states, which may result in establishing EU as a unified and full-fledged geopolitical structure [8];
- The decision made by presidents of Russia, Kazakhstan and Belarus to establish Eurasian Union (EAU) in 2013;
- The emergence of an idea among political and analyst communities of the leading European and post-Soviet states that EU and EAU countries should unite politically, so as to face the challenges of the “fragmenting” world (a larger-scale spinoff of the “Concert of Europe” scenario that implies “Greater Europe” from Lisbon to Vladivostok (EU + EAU)).

¹This system was formed by representatives of Great Britain, Russia, Austria and other European countries based on agreements they reached in 1815 Vienna Congress (in aftermath of the Napoleonic Wars). The system quite effectively ensured so to speak “collective security” of the European countries, until Crimean War broke out in 1853.

Against the backdrop of all of this it has to be acknowledged once again that Armenia is a frontier state to the Islamic World, which adds relevance to the task of putting our civilizational and geopolitical orientations in appropriate military/political formats. This political necessity prompts Armenia to actively participate in European and Eurasian integration processes, which would considerably improve the level of Armenia's security. However, it should be noted that in the Armenian analysts' community sometimes one may hear opinions that the format of the EU Eastern Partnership and the issue of EAU membership are mutually exclusive processes. Apparently, such approaches are anachronistic, as they reflect the misconception of the first years of post-Soviet era with regard to "escaping from the Russian Empire." Indicatively, in the political circles of Armenia (where issues are viewed in a more realistic manner) an approach begins to dominate that integration processes within European and Eurasian formats are complementary, rather than contradictory.

At the same time, the problem of "integration" is relevant in the regional dimension and it needs to be emphasized that Georgia is also located on the edge of a geopolitical and civilizational "fissure" and it is a "frontier state", too, although in a slightly more auspicious version. Potential coordination of efforts between these two regional neighboring countries would only contribute to integrating in the "Concert of Europe" in a more beneficial manner. Given the current changes happening in Georgia, it is not totally unlikely that such cooperation may make possible establishing a region with civilizational content stretching from Sukhumi to Stepanakert.

Internal Challenges to the Security of Armenia

As it is known, the cornerstone of national security for any country is first of all its internal resources. In this sense it is relevant to recall the words of Chinese strategist Sun Tzu: “Being unconquerable lies with yourself; being conquerable lies with your enemy.”

It is known that in the aftermath of the USSR collapse Armenia encountered numerous economic and social problems, the ramifications of which are yet to be overcome. Armenian society is particularly concerned about demographic problems. The situation in this area is reflected in the indicators of columns 1, 2 and 4 of the *Table 2*; demographic pressures, massive movement of refugees or internally displaced persons and chronic and sustained human flight, respectively. These indicators suggest high values for their corresponding quantitative numbers, which points to a poor situation in this area. What causes concern is not only the high numbers of population outflow from Armenia, but also the fact that the number of persons involved in “sophisticated work” (i.e. highly knowledgeable professionals in various fields) has drastically diminished (some sources suggest as high as tenfold decrease). Also it is characteristic that the Third Republic spends dozens of times less funds on science and technology than the Second Republic did.

The ensuing situation is directly related with the overall power of the state. There are different methods for quantitative expression of this concept (for instance, see [9]), but the formula by Ray S. Cline, a CIA analyst, seems most applicable [10]. We have added a new member D to this formula in order to reflect the factor of diaspora, which is relevant to the Armenian realities, with the resultant formula as follows:

$$P = (C + E + M + D) \times (S + W)$$

where:

P is the power of state;

C is the critical mass (population and territory);

E is the economic/industrial capability;

M is the military capability;

D is the overall resources of diaspora;

S is the strategic purpose;

W is the will to pursue national policy.

The formula suggests that a state's power depends not only on its population (*C*), but also on the country's intellectual and spiritual resources (*S*, *W*), because without those it is impossible to develop an effective national strategy, much less to attain the objectives of such strategy. Ostensibly, addressing such problems is impossible without mobilization of pertinent resources in both Armenia and Diaspora. It has to be also noted that our current understanding and knowledge about Diaspora's (and sometimes also Armenia's) spiritual and intellectual potential are from being comprehensive. In this regard it seems appropriate to refer once again to the responsibility of professional subgroups. We believe one of the primary missions of our experts/analysts community is keeping an inventory of spiritual/intellectual resources in Armenia and Diaspora, and organizing these resources in a coordinated effort towards development of national strategic programs. In particular, programs need to be developed on halting population outflow and significantly increasing the spiritual/intellectual resources.

Organizing such efforts is not an easy task. Admittedly, the scientific/R&D system of Armenia is rather disintegrated and there are no

tools and methods that would allow experts in Armenia and Diaspora to conduct effective activities. For attaining these objectives it is worthwhile to establish a Research Network Institute (RNI), which should be sponsored both by the Armenian government and Diaspora.

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