

Beat: Local

PART II, Second anniversary of the signing of the Eurasian Economic Union Treaty

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USPA NEWS - President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan :

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First, I would like to thank President of Kazakhstan Nursultan Nazarbayev for organising this meeting of the Eurasian Supreme Economic Council.

The EAEU has approached this summit with the experience it gained while working under difficult global economic conditions over the past 18 months. It has established a large contractual foundation, and is working on an integration algorithm, which together should facilitate the socio-economic development of our countries and help our economies become more competitive and involved in the global economic system.

Economic integration requires a higher level of macroeconomic coordination of our economies. In this context we attach much importance to the consistent implementation of the main goals of the macroeconomic policy of the EAEU members in 2016-2017 and the development of new and efficient mechanisms for integrating our economic potential. This helps us stabilize our economies and overcome the consequences of negative economic developments.

We should do everything we can to make our integration an attractive model of economic partnership that will be open to broad cooperation with any interested party against the general background of the increasing role of regional organisations for global politics and the economy.

The free trade zone agreement signed with Vietnam within the EAEU format is in the final stage of ratification. It will be ratified literally next week.

We also welcome the outline of a legal framework for cooperation with ASEAN members Cambodia and Singapore, as well as all similar documents (more than 20 in all) signed with the governments of individual countries and international organisations.

Armenia supports the decision to start talks on coordinating trade rules with Serbia.

Concerning the advancement of the EAEU-EU dialogue, I think we are all unanimous in the belief that cooperation between the two integration associations should be aimed at achieving common goals with regard to free movement of goods, labour, services and capital. This should contribute to building a common space with no dividing lines. In this context, we attach great importance to the interaction of the Eurasian Economic Commission with the European Commission.

The Yerevan meeting of the Intergovernmental Council approved the guidelines for negotiations with China. I hope that at the next meeting the Commission will report on the start of the negotiation process aimed at creating the legal basis for our close cooperation as the ultimate goal we would like to achieve. At the same time, we should continue the dialogue with China, as well as with other interested states, Iran and India, with regard to aligning the Eurasian Economic Union and China's Silk Road Economic Belt. This alignment would provide for an additional opportunity for building global value chains.

It would also help expand trade, restructure the economy, attract investment to major infrastructure projects, and diversify the logistics capabilities.

Colleagues, the decisions we make, including the ones adopted today, should make a tangible difference for our citizens and for the business environment, for each and every buyer of goods and customer of services who needs to feel the benefits of integration. This goal is possible to achieve through coordinated efforts towards minimising the burden on businesses, eliminating technical barriers, and creating the conditions for companies to enter the common EAEU markets.

In this context, allow me to emphasise the importance of adopting the general concept of the formation of common markets for natural gas, oil and petrochemical products. The implementation of these decisions will contribute to strengthening the EAEU economic potential, because the energy market is an important factor in the production chain, and its predictability often affects sustainable economic growth. Hydrocarbon prices across the EAEU should enhance the competitiveness of products manufactured in our entire common space.

Colleagues, integration associations can only operate and develop successfully in a safe environment. Security is the fundamental principle for the economic development and prosperity of our countries.

I attach great significance to the fact that the member states of the Eurasian Economic Union are simultaneously members of the Collective Security Treaty Organisation, which aims to ensure comprehensive security in our common space.

The escalation of tensions by Azerbaijan along the contact line where the Nagorno-Karabakh borders with Armenia in early April has become a major security challenge for the EAEU. The risks involved are obvious: either our international partners see the EAEU space as a zone of economic development, stability and security where they can invest their money and implement long-term plans, or everyone will ultimately see it as a permanent area of tension and conflict. I do not believe that the latter would be in the interests of our countries.

Armenia will not remain aloof if Azerbaijan takes aggressive actions towards Nagorno-Karabakh. Of course, the Karabakh self-defence forces have restored order and regained control over the situation. At Azerbaijan's request, Russia played a major role in restoring the ceasefire regime.

A meeting has been held in Vienna with the mediation of the co-chairs of the OSCE Minsk Group, during which the sides agreed to take confidence-building measures and to establish a system for monitoring the situation along the contact line and to investigate any incidents occurring there.

Armenia intends to consistently work towards implementing these agreements and will continue to seek a peaceful solution based primarily on the right of the Nagorno-Karabakh people to decide their future and their right to self-determination. Armenia fully agrees with the co-chairs of the Minsk Group that this principle, along with the principles of territorial integrity and the non-use of force or threat of force, remain key elements in the settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

Thank you.

Nursultan Nazarbayev: I now give the floor to President of the Republic of Belarus Alexander Lukashenko.

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