

Normalizing relations between Turkey and Armenia

“Today is the Day of the peace, courage and day of the brains”, this was Turkish foreign minister Ahmed Davudoglu “missing” statement on the protocol between Turkey and Armenia

Last Saturday was a historical day for Turkey and Armenia. After a long period, Turkey and Armenia made a turn in their relations on Saturday night, signing a protocol on the normalization of the relations. The deal was signed on 10 of October in Switzerland by the Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu and his Armenian counterpart Edward Nalbandian after three hours delay. The signing was delayed because each side had objections to the wording of a final oral statement intended to be given after the signing. Finally neither the Armenians nor the Turks gave a closing statement after the signing. According to the agreement, Turkey and Armenia are to establish diplomatic ties and reopen their shared border. After signing the agreement Turkey foreign minister unveiled the protocol for the international community. The protocol states that the two countries signed the agreement because of their wish to develop good neighborly relations in political, economical, cultural and other areas which will serve the interest of two nations’ peoples. Turkey and Armenia confirm the principles of equality, sovereignty in bilateral and international relations, non-interference with the work of other countries, respect to the territorial integrity and the immunity of the principles of the borders of other countries.

It is also said in the protocol that the two countries commit to create and protect conditions for confidence and strengthened peace in to abstain from the use of force, to solve misunderstandings by peaceful means and to protect human rights.

Turkey and Armenia guarantee that they will not use any policy that does not coincide with good neighborhood relations.

The two countries reprobate all forms of terrorism, violence and will refrain from the agitation of such activities and they declare to collaborate in the fighting against these issues.

According to the Vienna declaration about diplomatic relations accepted in 1961, as soon as the protocol will come into force diplomatic relations will be recreated and both countries will open mutual diplomatic representations.

“The two protocols provide for a framework for the normalization of their bilateral relations within a reasonable timeframe. The political consultations will be completed within six weeks, following which the two protocols will be signed and submitted to the respective Parliaments for the ratification on each side. Both sides will make their best efforts for the timely progression of the ratification in line with their constitutional and legal procedures,” the foreign ministries of Armenia, Switzerland and Turkey said at the time in a joint statement which was released simultaneously.

Now the last accord will come from the parliaments of two states. Turkish parliament already stated already however, that they are not going to ratify the agreement before the Armenian withdrawal of the troops from all occupied territory. At the same time the Turkish prime minister and the foreign minister insisted that “we want all the borders to be opened at the same time.” But as long as Armenia has not withdrawn from Azerbaijani territory that it is occupying, Turkey cannot have a positive attitude on this subject.” As one of the Turkish officials told before “We are neither a part nor a side in

the Nagorno-Karabakh talks, but we would welcome any progress towards a comprehensive solution between Armenia and Azerbaijan".

Turkish-Armenian relations are often overshadowed by the dispute over the so called massacre of ethnic Armenians in the final days of the Ottoman Empire, more than 90 years ago.

Armenians accuse Ottoman Turks of committing genocide, killing more than a million Armenians beginning in 1915. Turkey vehemently rejects. A roadmap for normalizing relations between Turkey and Armenia was agreed on in April. Turkey closed its border with Armenia in 1993 because of its war with Azerbaijan over the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh.