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**Sent:** Tuesday, May 4, 2021 1:22 PM  
**To:** Tavlarides, Mark <mtavlarides@bgrdc.com>  
**Subject:** Azerbaijan Update

Good afternoon,

The Embassy of Azerbaijan wanted me to share the below information with you.

### **Russia's two new military strongholds in Armenia**

On April 29, 2021, the Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan declared that Russia has two new military sites in the southern part of Armenia near the border with Azerbaijan. In his address to the Parliament, he noted that “Two strongholds of the 102<sup>nd</sup> Russian military base was established in the Syunik region.”<sup>[1]</sup>

The intention to expand the Russian military base and to seek bigger Russian military presence on the territory of Armenia was first announced by the Armenian Defense Minister Vagharshak Harutyunyan in February 2021.<sup>[2]</sup>

On August 21, 1992, Russia and Armenia signed the “Treaty on the Legal Status of the Armed Forces of the Russian Federation Located on the Territory of the Republic of Armenia” which created the legal basis for the Russian military presence in the country. According to the treaty Russian military is meant to safeguard the security of Armenia “along the external border of the former USSR.”<sup>[3]</sup> Since 1992 Russia's Border Guards troops under the command of the Border Guard Directorate of Russia's Federal Security Service (FSB) also deployed in Armenia to protect the borders of Armenia with Turkey and Iran.

Currently, Russia has two military bases in Armenia. When the Soviet Union collapsed, the 127<sup>th</sup> Motor Rifle Regiment stationed in Gyumri turned into the 102<sup>nd</sup> military base on June 21, 1994. The “Treaty Between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia on the Russian Military Base on the Territory of the Republic of Armenia” was signed on March 16, 1995. The 3624<sup>th</sup> air base, stationed at Yerevan's Erebuni military airport, joined the command of the base in May 1996. On August 20, 2010, Armenia and Russia signed an agreement extending the treaty until 2044.<sup>[4]</sup>

The size of the Russian military personnel of the 102<sup>nd</sup> base is estimated to be around 5,000.<sup>[5]</sup>

**Such an expanded presence demonstrates that Armenia will never become a fully sovereign nation unless it would be open to normalize relations with neighbors and sign a peace agreement with Azerbaijan.**

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/russian-military-armenia-reinforce-areas-near-azeri-border-agencies-2021-05-03/>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/armenia-seeks-bigger-russian-military-presence-its-territory-2021-02-22/>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.evnreport.com/politics/russia-s-increasing-military-presence-in-armenia>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/102-military-base.htm>

<sup>5</sup> <https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/22/medvedev-secures-long-term-foothold-in-armenia-a796>

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Please let me know if you have any questions.

Best,  
Mark

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<sup>[1]</sup> <https://www.reuters.com/world/russian-military-armenia-reinforce-areas-near-azeri-border-agencies-2021-05-03/>

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<sup>[4]</sup><https://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/russia/102-military-base.htm>

<sup>[5]</sup><https://www.themoscowtimes.com/2010/08/22/medvedev-secures-long-term-foothold-in-armenia-a796>