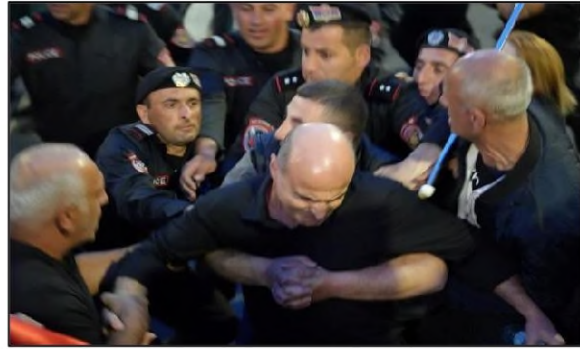


National Democratic Alliance Briefing: Police Brutality

On April 24, 2024, Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day, Armenian [police brutally](#) assaulted and arrested, without cause, 96 peaceful protesters in Yerevan, Armenia. The protesters were members of the National Democratic Alliance of Armenia (NDA), Armenia's largest pro-Western political party. One of the 96 people detained included senior [NDA leader Garegin Chugaszyan](#).



Caption: NDA Supporters Protecting Senior NDA Leader Vahe Gasparyan From Being Assaulted By Armenian Police

Of those detained, seven are still in custody and are being criminally investigated for peacefully protesting in front of the wife of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Anna Hakobyan, during commemorative events earlier in the day at the Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex. Ms. Hakobyan had been shown in videos and media footage to be visibly angry at the protestors. Moreover, in a separate incident this week, Armenian police beat an anti-government protestor in the Armenian village of Tigranashen [so badly that he had seizures](#).

The outrageous conduct of Armenia's police has become a national controversy in Armenia, and widely reported by the Armenian media. Furthermore, Taguhi Tovmasyan, a prominent politically-independent member of the Armenian parliament who sits on the Armenian parliament's human rights committee, visited the NDA members detained by the police. Parliamentarian Tovmasyan issued an official statement describing the actions of the Armenian police against the peaceful NDA supporters as a "public disgrace" and accused Prime Minister Pashinyan of using the Armenian police force for "family revenge" due to his wife's alleged annoyance at the NDA protesters at the Armenian Genocide Memorial Complex. It should be noted that Parliamentarian Tovmasyan has no political ties to NDA and, in fact, used to be part of Prime Minister Pashinyan's "Civil Contract" political party.

Earlier this month, Freedom House reduced Armenia's Democracy Score went down from 3.11 to 3.07 (with 7 being the highest score possible), citing the Armenian government's consolidation of power. Freedom House also specifically highlighted police brutality by Armenian police and law enforcement as a major issue.

It is urgent that the United States government hold Prime Minister Pashinyan accountable for his anti-democratic actions, and realize he is not the "democratic reformer" that he has claimed to be since he came to power. The US government should assist NDA and deter the Armenian government's aggression towards pro-Western political parties and their protestors – not only to uphold American values but also American interests. Currently, the factions protesting on the Armenian streets against the actions of Prime Minister Pashinyan consist of the pro-Western opposition, led by NDA, and the pro-Russian political sect, led by Kremlin-aligned former President of Armenia Robert Kocharyan and his son and political heir, Levon Kocharyan. If the Armenia's pro-Western protestors are not protected, it could allow Kocharyan's pro-Russian political alliance to coalesce all the anti-government sentiments on the 'Armenian street'. This could then lead to a Kocharyan takeover of the Armenian government if Pashinyan's regime collapses, which would be a catastrophe for the people of Armenia, a blow to US interests, and a win for Putin's Russia.