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Armenia government's repression of the Church violates constitution, alarms citizens

Yerevan, Armenia. – The National Defense Alliance Council (NDA), Armenia's largest pro-Western conservative political party, made the following statement regarding the tactics by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to undermine and repress the Armenian Apostolic Church:

“In recent days, we have been witnessing yet another series of dangerous steps by the current collaborationist regime, aimed at deepening systematic pressure on the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church.

“In particular, serious concern is raised by the suspension of the activities of clergy of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church within the system of the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia—those spiritual fathers who for many years have served servicemen, standing by them during the most difficult moments of service, throughout wartime and post-war trials. This step is a blow to the spiritual well-being of the soldier and will lead to a weakening of the moral and spiritual atmosphere within the army.

“At the same time, we consider the artificially initiated criminal cases to be highly condemnable, the obvious aim of which is to restrict the freedom of movement of senior clergy of the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church and to prevent their participation in the bishops' assembly scheduled to take place in Austria. This constitutes blatant interference in the internal governance of the Church and its canonical life.

“All of this fits within the broader policy directed against the Church, carried out by Nikol Pashinyan, who illegally occupies the post of Prime Minister. This policy is disguised under slogans of ‘church reform,’ but in reality seeks to deprive the Church of its independence, authority, and national mission, turning it into a government-controlled, ‘pocket’ structure.

“The Constitution of the Republic of Armenia clearly enshrines the principle of the separation of Church and State. The State is not authorized to interfere in matters of Church governance, internal discipline, or spiritual life. The current actions constitute a gross violation of the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and of internationally recognized principles of human rights concerning freedom of religion and its exercise.

“These steps aimed at weakening the Armenian Church objectively coincide with regional anti-Armenian agendas and serve forces that are interested in the erosion of the foundational pillars of

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“Armenian identity. For centuries, the Armenian Apostolic Church has been a central institution of the Armenian people’s survival, resistance, and identity, and any attack against it is an attack against the entire nation.

“We call upon civil society organizations and international partners not to remain silent and to provide a clear assessment of this dangerous policy being carried out against the Armenian Apostolic Holy Church.

“Armenian society must remain vigilant in the face of existing dangers and continue to remain faithful to the Apostolic Church and its leadership.”

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Over the weekend, Armenia Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan continued his repression of the Armenian Apostolic Church, interrogating bishops and preventing their free exercise of religion. His tactics include changing the constitution and squelching dissent as the 2026 election nears.

Attached is a statement by the National Democratic Alliance, a pro-western conservative party and the recent news related to the situation:

Two Archbishops were ordered to remain in the country and not travel to the Council's meeting planned to take place in Austria, following their interrogation by Pashinyan's prosecutors.

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=902665899018468&set=a.173596305258768&type=3&mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=6JzjGgE4M4EP7HVx&share_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F17xJGT1A3N%2F%3Fmibextid%3DwwXlfr#

Pashinyan moves to crackdown on any opposition as election nears.

<https://pace.coe.int/en/files/35803/html>

OC Media - The Armenian Parliament has adopted a draft law allowing authorities to revoke the accreditation of election observation missions that fail to maintain control.

www.facebook.com

https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=1462844429179773&set=a.727168102747413&type=3&mibextid=wwXlfr&rdid=Upr186EnhaMOBG10&share_url=https%3A%2F%2Fwww.facebook.com%2Fshare%2F1CEgMT5ZQG%2F%3Fmibextid%3DwwXlfr#