ARF-DASHNAKTSUTYUN
INTERNATIONAL SECRETARIAT

BRIEFING NOTE

Armenia After the June 7, 2026 Parliamentary Elections: Democratic Governance Update

22 July 2026

Analysis and Context for Policymakers and the Public

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BRIEFING NOTE SERIES

About this Briefing Note

This briefing note is intended as a fact-based resource for policymakers and the public.

It provides an overview and analysis of legal, political, and security-related developments in Armenia following the parliamentary elections of 7 June 2026.

The document reflects concerns arising from publicly available information, official statements, legal proceedings, observer reports, and media coverage available as of 21 July 2026.

About the Issuing Organization

This publication was prepared by the International Secretariat of the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun Bureau.

ARF-Dashnaktsutyun is one of the two parties comprising the Armenia Alliance parliamentary faction in the National Assembly of Armenia.

Founded in 1890, the ARF-Dashnaktsutyun operates in approximately 30 countries and maintains an extensive international network of political, community, educational, youth, cultural, and advocacy organizations.

It has been a full member of the Socialist International (SI) since 1907 and is an observer member of the Party of European Socialists (PES).

The International Secretariat coordinates the party's international relations and engagement with governments, parliaments, international organizations, and political partners worldwide.

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Democratic Governance Update

More than six weeks after Armenia's parliamentary elections of **7 June 2026**, the post-election period has been marked by growing concerns regarding democratic governance, political pluralism, and the use of state institutions against political opponents. While international observers concluded that voters were offered a genuine choice, they also reported an increasingly polarized political environment, hostile rhetoric, and pressure on public-sector employees during the campaign.

Key Developments

Criminal proceedings against opposition figures

Several opposition leaders, parliamentary candidates, and local officials have become the subject of criminal investigations or prosecutions. Opposition parties describe these proceedings as examples of politically selective law enforcement, while the government maintains they are evidence-based and unrelated to politics. The arrest of Prosperous Armenia leader Gagik Tsarukyan, the state seizure of two of his companies, and the closure of his remaining enterprises have become among the most prominent examples cited by critics.

The case has also attracted international attention. The **International Olympic Committee (IOC)** has stated that it is reviewing the situation and exploring appropriate solutions to protect the **Armenian National Olympic Committee (ANOC)** as an institution and safeguard the interests of the Olympic Movement and athletes in Armenia following actions taken by the Armenian authorities against its president, Gagik Tsarukyan, including the seizure of the Committee's headquarters.

Election disputes and parliamentary representation

Seven political parties challenged the election results before the Constitutional Court, alleging procedural irregularities, unequal campaigning conditions, and misuse of administrative resources. The Constitutional Court upheld the results. However, controversy persisted over the Central Electoral Commission's decision to invalidate results in two polling stations without ordering repeat voting. Critics argue that the decision prevented a third opposition party, Prosperous Armenia—led by Gagik Tsarukyan—from entering parliament and enabled the ruling Civil Contract party to retain the three-fifths parliamentary majority required to adopt constitutional laws, though not the two-thirds majority necessary to amend the Constitution.

Restrictions on political participation

Parliament adopted new residency requirements for participation in future parliamentary elections and republic-wide referenda. Civil society organizations and constitutional experts

argue that the measure unnecessarily restricts voting rights, while the government presents it as protection against external electoral influence.

Institutional pressures

Critics have raised concerns over the growing concentration of executive power, increasingly confrontational official rhetoric toward political opponents, and tensions involving the judiciary, opposition-led municipalities, and the Armenian Apostolic Church, arguing that these developments have weakened institutional checks and balances.

International and Geopolitical Context

The post-election period has also been marked by continued external pressure on Armenia. Azerbaijan has maintained its demand that Armenia amend its Constitution despite the ruling party's loss of the parliamentary supermajority required for constitutional amendments. Azerbaijani officials have also continued promoting the "Western Azerbaijan" narrative, including demands relating to the return of so-called Western Azerbaijanis to Armenia. Meanwhile, appellate proceedings against Armenian hostages detained following the 2023 military offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) have continued, with Azerbaijani prosecutors repeatedly advancing allegations implicating the Republic of Armenia in terrorism and aggression.

Armenia has also continued advancing the **Transport Routes for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP)** initiative, while Azerbaijan has continued advocating for the so-called **"Zangezur Corridor,"** underscoring persistent disagreements over regional connectivity and the principles governing future transport arrangements.

The post-election period has likewise unfolded against a backdrop of intensifying geopolitical competition over Armenia's future orientation. Domestic political developments became increasingly intertwined with broader debates over Armenia's relations with Russia, the European Union, and the United States. Western partners continued to express strong political support for the Armenian government, reaffirming their backing for Armenia’s closer cooperation with Euro-Atlantic institutions, while the European Union announced additional measures to help offset the impact of Russian trade restrictions on Armenian exports. At the same time, relations between Yerevan and Moscow continued to deteriorate, with Russia expanding trade restrictions and political discourse increasingly shaped by competing accusations of Russian and Western influence.

Critics argue that the visible alignment between the incumbent government and its Western partners has reinforced perceptions that domestic political developments are increasingly influenced by geopolitical considerations. They further contend that the absence of public criticism by Western governments and institutions regarding alleged democratic backsliding before, during, and after the elections has weakened external democratic accountability, contributed to the consolidation of executive power, and fostered growing public

disillusionment with the credibility of Western democratic values. Western governments and institutions, for their part, continue to describe their engagement as support for Armenia's democratic development, sovereignty, and reform agenda.

Overall Assessment

Taken together, developments since the June 7 elections have raised growing concerns regarding:

- the use of criminal and administrative measures against opposition figures;
- decisions affecting electoral administration and parliamentary representation;
- restrictions on political participation;
- weakening institutional checks and balances;
- heightened political polarization and confrontational official rhetoric;
- growing external geopolitical influence on Armenia's domestic political environment; and
- the interaction of domestic democratic challenges with continuing regional security and geopolitical pressures.

While Armenia continues to hold competitive elections and maintain formal democratic institutions, the cumulative trajectory of post-election developments suggests a continued erosion of democratic resilience, political pluralism, and the rule of law.

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