

## IRAN - ARMENIA: RELATIONS AND INDICATORS



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### ABSTRACT

Since the development of relationships between the subjects of the international system (between states, between states and international organizations, between international organizations, etc.) is necessary and certain evaluation criteria (indicators) should be determined. Researchers, who examine the relations between various states, often describe the relations as "developing relations" if there are no acute (sharp) crises in the chronological framework.

However, in cases of serious crisis does not occur, such relationships can develop or weaken due to various factors. In this respect, it is imperative to determine indicators (evaluation indicators of international relations) to evaluate the periods of development and decline of relations with scientific methods between states, including participants (subjects) of the international relations system. For the first time, it has been tried to determine these indicators in the science of international relations and to apply them in the example of the relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

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## İRAN - ERMƏNİSTAN: MÜNƏSİBƏTLƏR VƏ İNDİKATORLAR



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### Açar sözlər:

İndikatorlar  
Nəzəriyyə  
Münasibətlər  
İran  
Ermənistan

### ANNOTASIYA

Beynəlxalq sistemin subyektləri arasında (*dövlətlər, dövlətlər və beynəlxalq təşkilatlar, beynəlxalq təşkilatların özləri arasında və s.*) əlaqələrin inkişafını təyin etmək üçün müəyyən qiymətləndirmə meyarları (*indikatorları*) müəyyənləşdirilməlidir. Müxtəlif dövlətlər arasındakı münasibətləri araşdıran tədqiqatçılar, xronoloji çərçivədə kəskin (kəskin) böhranlar olmadığı təqdirdə əlaqələri tez-tez "inkişaf edən münasibətlər" kimi xarakterizə edirlər.

Bununla birlikdə, ciddi böhran halları baş vermədikdə belə dövlətlərarası münasibətlər müxtəlif amillər səbəbindən inkişaf edə və ya zəifləyə bilər. Bu baxımdan elmi metodlarla beynəlxalq münasibətlər sisteminin iştirakçıları (subyektləri) olan dövlətlər arasında əlaqələrin inkişaf və tənəzzül dövrlərini qiymətləndirmək üçün göstəricilərin (beynəlxalq münasibətlərin qiymətləndirmə indikatorlarının) müəyyən edilməsi vacibdir. Məqalədə dövlətlərarası münasibətlərin inkişaf səviyyəsinin müəyyən edilməsi üçün indikatorların müəyyənləşdirilməsinə və Ermənistan Respublikası ilə İran İslam Respublikası arasındakı münasibətlərin timsalında tətbiq edilməsinə çalışılmışdır.

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## ИРАН-АРМЕНИЯ: ОТНОШЕНИЯ И ИНДИКАТОРЫ



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### Ключевые слова:

Индикаторы  
Теория  
Отношения  
Иран  
Армения

### АННОТАЦИЯ

Поскольку развитие отношений между субъектами международной системы (между государствами, между государствами и международными организациями, между международными организациями и т. д.) необходимо определить определенные критерии (индикаторы) оценки. Исследователи, изучающие отношения между различными государствами, часто описывают отношения как «развивающиеся отношения», если нет острых (острых) кризисов в определенный хронологический период

Однако в случаях, когда серьезного кризиса не происходит, такие отношения могут развиваться или ослабевать из-за различных факторов. В связи с этим необходимо определить индикаторы (индикаторы оценки международных отношений) для оценки периодов развития и упадка отношений с научными методами между государствами, в том числе участниками (субъектами) системы международных отношений. Впервые в науке о международных отношениях предпринята попытка определить эти показатели индикаторы и применить их на примере отношений между Республикой Армения и Исламской Республикой Иран.

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## INTRODUCTION

Since the development of relations between the subjects of the international system (between states, between states and international organizations, between international organizations, etc.) is a process, there is a need to define certain evaluation criteria- indicators. Researchers, who examine the relations between various states, mostly describe the relations as "developing relations" if there are no sharp crises in the relations in the concrete chronological framework. However, when serious crises do not manifest, such relationships can develop or weaken due to various factors. In this respect, it is imperative to determine indicators - evaluation indicators of international relations in order to evaluate the periods of development and stagnation of relations between states, including the participants (subjects) of the international relations system. Some researchers, as well as Russian researchers M.A. Timopheyeva (Тимофеева 2005, 14), M.G. Vlasova (Власова 2015, 35), N.V. Derugin, N. Bistrov, R. Vexman and others have mentioned about the importance of indicators intelligence and prognosis of international relations. In his study on the application of mathematical methods in the study of international relations, I. Mikheyev analyzed the methods of indicators (Михайлович 1997, 1-312). M.G. Vlasova defined the concept of indicator as follows: "*Indicators are events that are observed as an indicator of the movement of a particular process or scenario.*" (Власова 2015, 35). However, Indicators spoke more about security and defense than indicators of interstate relations.

Research allows to define the following concrete definition for the concept of indicator in interstate relations: "Indicators that allow to evaluate the movement of relations between the subjects in the system of international economic relations within a specific time frame".

## I. THE KINDS OF INDICATORS

Sometimes researchers compare relations between the two states with those existing with third countries to determine the level of development of interstate relations. For example, it is possible to come across the relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and the Islamic Republic of Iran with the Iran-Armenia relations or the relations between the Republic of Azerbaijan and Israel with Armenia-Iran relations. In any case, such comparisons cannot be regarded as objective indicators to determine the development or end of relations between two states. It is possible to have up to an average of hundred indicators used to evaluate the movement of interstate relations. However, grouping these indicators is one of the important conditions for conducting a systematic analysis. In this sense, it is possible to divide the indicators used to determine the direction of action of interstate relations into three groups:

1. Political indicators;
2. Economic indicators;
3. Social indicators.

The most important indicators for determining the movement of relations between states are political indicators. During the main political indicators, we can specify a number of factors between the two countries. These are as follows: the number of mutual visits, the number of high-level visits, the number of signed agreements, the intensity of passing intergovernmental commission meetings, the intensity of the processing of joint projects between various government institutions, the comparison of the identity indicators of the authorities in the documents adopted within the framework of international organizations, etc.

During important economic indicators, we can specify the interstate trade turnovers, the volume of investments invested by one country in the economy of another country, the

indicators of the volume of imports and exports, and the intensity indicators of economic projects.

Social indicators are also important indicators for determining the direction of movement of relations between states. The important social indicators are the relations between non-governmental organizations, religious institutions, mass media, mutual proximity relations of the citizens of the two countries (cooperation, kinship etc.), the mutual expeditions of the citizens, the scale of the activities of the diaspora and lobby groups. For example, the citizens of one country are educated in another country, they are working, the investments and bank accounts are available, and the existence of kinship relations can have a positive effect on the relations of the states.

## **II. POLITICAL INDICATORS**

The direction of development and decline of relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran in the political arena is determined by using the following indicators:

1) The number of reciprocal visits at the level of heads of state and government within the taken chronological framework;

2) The number of meetings held by the senior representatives of the two countries in foreign countries and within the framework of the meetings of international organizations;

3) Number and rate of mutual expeditions of managers of institutions responsible for foreign policy and number of discussing ideas;

4) Overlapping of the authorities in the decision making process in international organizations and supporting the proposed projects;

5) The number, scope and place of the documents signed between the two countries in the state administration system.

6) Level of inter-parliamentary relations and approval frequency (amplitude) of bilateral agreements signed.

7) Paying special attention to the other country in the government's activity programs.

In order to determine the direction of movement (development, decline or persistence) of the relations between the two countries, chronological frameworks - periods, stages, etc. should be determined in back relations without applying any indicators. This is necessary in order to be able to compare the statistics in a certain chronological framework with other periods. As noted above, in some cases the comparison takes with a third state to determine the level of development of interstate relations, which does not allow objective scientific conclusions and leads to subjective opinion. First of all, according to him, the stages of bilateral relations between the three states received fall chronologically. Second, the factors (geographic neighborhood, historical traditions, language, religion, etc.) that base the relations between states may not be the same. In this respect, the first indicator - The number of reciprocal visits at the level of heads of state and governments can be compared in certain chronological frameworks. For example, the number of visits to the Islamic Republic of Iran from Armenia at the level of heads of state and government between 1991 and 1997 is 4 (3 at the level of President, 1 at the level of prime minister), but from IIR to Armenia 1. In total, this figure was limited to 5 trips. In 1998-2008, the number of such visits from Armenia to the Islamic Republic of Iran was 2 (at the President level), and the number of visits from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia was 3 (at the President level). In general, the number of high level mutual visits between the two countries was 5 during this period. However, it is observed that Armenia was interesting in strengthening relations with Iran in

the first period, and Iran was acting with caution in the new international environment. This issue was also related to the fact that Iran attaches more importance to establishing relations with the Republic of Azerbaijan and strengthening its authority here during the first months of the independence Caucasian countries. The issue of discussion of the majority of high-level visits from Armenia to the Islamic Republic of Iran between 1991-1997 was related to the Nagorno-Karabakh problem, which occurred as a result of the occupation of the Azerbaijani lands by Armenia. As a general indication, it is understood from the comparisons made since 1991 that the person who paid the most attention to establishing relations with Armenia was the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mahmut Ahmednejat. From the side of Armenia, Serj Sargsyan's years of domination are especially preferred in this respect. The government of Ahmadinejad, well aware of the secret Jewish hatred of some Armenian politicians, tried to take advantage of this issue. For example, in October 2005, Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad spoke out against the United States, Israel, and the Jews at the World Without Zionism Conference. Regarding Armenia's position on this issue, one of the archival documents said: "Armenian officials also expressed their views on the tensions surrounding the statements of Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad about Israel and the United States at the conference on" A World Without Zionism. "Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian said during a meeting with the teaching staff of Yerevan State University that "this statement will not affect Iran-Armenia relations."

It should be noted that during this period, geopolitical processes have led to closer ties between the two countries. The exclusion of both countries from large-scale projects in the region has led to claims by these countries to implement alternative projects. One of the

most important events in the history of Armenian-Iranian economic relations took place during the visit of the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Mahmoud Ahmadinejad to Yerevan in March 2007. On March 19, 2007, a gas pipeline was opened between the two countries. The Armenian side called the project a "great success" in the field of "energy diplomacy".

Or, it is possible to talk about the salience of relations and debates in the political arena of Armenia during the first three years of the domination of the President of the Iranian President Hasan. During this period, there were no presidential trips from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia. However, in August 2013, President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan paid a working visit to the Islamic Republic of Iran and attended the inauguration ceremony of the newly elected President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani. Hassan Rouhani, who has a better understanding of geopolitical realities and is known in the Islamic Republic of Iran as the "Sheikh of Diplomacy," is known for his reformist stance and, unlike Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, did not confuse foreign policy with racist slogans.

At the beginning of 2014, relations between Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran became even more tense. The point is that in late 2013, Armenia and the Russian Federation signed an agreement on gas imports. The signing of this agreement meant that the Russian Federation did not want Iranian gas to be an alternative to European markets via the Iran-Armenia-Georgia route and generally tried to prevent the export of Iranian gas to Armenia. In return, the Iranian side stated that there was no need for energy imported from Armenia, and that this was Iran's friendly assistance to Armenia. Then, President of the Islamic Republic of Iran Hassan Rouhani post-

poned his planned visit to Armenia. The Iranian side even issued a statement blaming Armenia for the construction of the Iran-Armenia railway, which is being discussed at a very high level. As a result, the construction of the Mehri Hydroelectric Power Station, the Iran-Armenia railway, the oil refinery and the third high-voltage power line between Iran and Armenia, the most important project in 2015, remained unfinished.

It is also important to make comparisons about the negotiations between the high level representatives of the two countries in foreign countries and within the framework of the meetings of international organizations in order to learn the directions of bilateral relations. It also allows us to identify trends in relationships. For example, until 2018, representatives of the Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia held bilateral meetings, mainly within the framework of UN meetings and international events and meetings in various CIS countries. After the "Velvet revolution" in Armenia in 2018, it is seen that the views tend to focus more on the organization during the meetings held in Western countries, which was related to Armenia's aspirations to create a western oriented image. In fact, Nicol Pashinyan, who was eaten by the Prime Minister as a result of the "Velvet revolution", had his first high-level view with the Islamic Republic of Iran, Hasan Ruhani, in New York in the USA. Analyzes show that this was mostly about Armenia's desire to give the USA the message, "We are building relations with Iran under your control." (*Kəlbizadə et.al 2019, 157-58*)

The number and level of consultation of the mutual expeditions of the managers of the institutions responsible for foreign policy are of particular importance, both in the form of interstate high-level visits, and in obtaining principal agreements on important foreign policy issues. It is especially important to confirm the details of the documents to be signed and

the negotiations to be held before the presidents' expeditions. Thus, the statistic comparison of the mutual expeditions of the rulers of foreign policy leaders can be accepted as important indicators for determining intensity in bilateral political relations. Between 1991-1997, Armenia's foreign ministers visited the Islamic Republic of Iran 5 times, 6 times between 1998-2007 and 7 times between 2008 and 2018. The number of visits from the Islamic Republic of Iran to Armenia at the level of Foreign Minister was 4 in 1991-1997, 4 in 1998-2007, and 5 times in 2008-2018 (Mfa.am. 2019).

The overlapping of the authorities in the decision making process in international organizations and the support of the proposed projects can also be considered as one of the main Indicators for determining the level of relations between the two countries. The analysis of the relations between the Islamic Republic of Iran and Armenia shows that the approach in this regard has changed at various times. For example, Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno Karabakh problem is one of the important threats for the security of the Caucasus region, but also the northern part of the Islamic Republic of Iran. The role of the Islamic Republic to this problem changed from negotiator to neutrality, then from neutrality to supporting the rightful position of the Republic of Azerbaijan at the official level.

But of course, these changes occurred at the level of official-diplomatic statements. In general, when we took it, the fact that Armenia's foreign policy was shaped by the influence of the Russian Federation during the period of declaration of independence, while Russia and the Islamic Republic of Iran were on the anti-Western front resulted in the overlapping of positions on many issues within the framework of international organizations.

Another indicator that we can identify when analyzing the political relations between

the RA and the İİR is the number of documents, coverage and place and authority of the signatories between the two countries in the state administration system. Naturally, there can be numerous reciprocal visits and discussions between countries that are geographically neighboring and have similar interests in a number of issues. The indicator that determines the usefulness coefficient of these visits and discussions are the signed documents. The signed documents should be analyzed not only in numbers but also in scope and the place and influence of the institutions that signed them in the state management system. One of the points we should not forget while carrying out the analyzes regarding this indicator is the issue of the number of documents signed at the initial stage of political relations between states. Of course, signing a large number of documents to establish relationships in all areas often coincides with the initial stages. In this respect, when comparing the indicators, it is imperative to pay attention to the degree of materiality, not the number superiority of the documents signed in the next stages. Comparative analysis shows that 19 documents were signed between the Republic of Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran within the framework of the views of the heads of state and government. 34 documents were signed between 1998-2008 and 10 documents between 2009-2011. On average, there are 4 documents per year in the first chronological frame, 3 per year in the second chronological scope, and 3 documents in the third chronological frame.

The level of inter-parliamentary relations and the ratification frequency (amplitude) of the signed bilateral documents can also be used as one of the Indicators to learn the level of bilateral political relations. Generally, heads of state and government, who have to follow diplomatic protocols, send the signed documents to parliament for approval. The ex-

isting political system in both the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Armenia does not allow parliament to be fully independent from other jurisdictions and to decide. The situation in Armenia is somewhat different if it is about the state system and tradition in the Islamic Republic of Iran. Especially in the 1998-2018 stage, the "Karabakh clan", which seized power in Armenia, was able to weaken the parliamentary domination by various means, especially by terrorism, and turned this institution almost into a purposive institution. During periods of stagnation or crisis in interstate political relations, parliaments generally extend the approval process of documents in various ways or do not approve signed documents. For example, after the street expeditions and administrative changes in Armenia in 2018, after the Nicol Pashinyan, who came to power, showed "a cold position" against the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Iranian side tried to extend the ratification of a number of documents signed on the most important joint projects. For comparison, on the eve of Nicol Pashinyan's visit, Theiranproject.com published a report on the export potential of the Islamic Republic of Iran. According to the Main State Customs Office of Iran, in the first 9 months of 2018, Italy was the first country to import goods from Iran, followed by Azerbaijan. During that period, the Republic of Azerbaijan received products from Iran in the amount of 502 million 128 thousand 355 dollars. Armenia imported only \$ 160 million worth of goods from Iran.

For comparison, in previous years, Armenia was second only to Italy in terms of imports from the Islamic Republic of Iran. Naturally, Nicol Pashinyan's negative attitude towards Iran and "fear of the United States" were the reasons for the decline in imports from Iran. On the other hand, this situation shows that the Armenian economy is in a deep crisis, and the purchasing power of the population has



fallen sharply. So, in fact, the issue of approval of the Prime Minister of Armenia Nicol Pashinyan with the Islamic Republic during the trip to the Islamic Republic of Iran in February 2019 was one of the main issues (Armeniasputnik 2019). Armenia instead promised to support the early ratification by the parliaments of the free trade agreement signed between the Eurasian Economic Union and the Islamic Republic of Iran. This issue was discussed at the meeting of Nicol Pashinyan with the Speaker of the Assembly of the Islamic Republic of Iran Ali Larijani. At that time, the chairmanship of the organization by Armenia created a desire in the Islamic Republic of Iran to seize this opportunity and speed up the process.

Whether governments include steps to be taken against the other country in their activity programs when examining interstate relations. For example, Armenia noted that, for the years 2008-2012, the foreign policy issues were agreed with the Armenian President from the program of the Prime Minister Tigran Sargsyan, but that he did not address any issues related to the relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran (Republic of Armenia Government Program 2008, 55).

Two issues related to the relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran were addressed in the government program adopted in Armenia in 2016. In the half section of the program called "Energy infrastructure and natural resources" of the "Continuous Economic Development" section, the high voltage power line was drawn between Armenia and Iran in 2019 (8 paragraphs) (Programme of the Government of the Republic of Armenia 2016, 23). In the section called "Foreign policy, diaspora, defense, security, emergency, human rights, fight against justice and corruption", the development of relations with neighboring countries such as Iran and Georgia was highlighted as one of the foreign policy priorities.

Nicol Pashinyan, who came to power with the slogans integrated to Europe and Asia in 2018 in the Republic of Armenia, understood the necessity of normal relations with the Islamic Republic of Iran after facing the current realities in the administration and expanding relations with regional neighbors Georgia and Iran in the government program, approved in June 2018, were registered during the main tasks.

### CONCLUSION

Thus, the above analysis shows that it is possible to successfully apply the indicator method in the side of learning interstate relations in modern conditions. Only in this case, the theses put forward to develop, maintain or decline interstate relations can be considered scientifically objective.

A few points need to be clarified here. First of all, there should be indicators to determine the nature of the movement of interstate relations (development and decline). Second, these indicators should be applied to interstate relations in a concrete time frame. Third, evaluations for the indicators received can show the character of the movement, the progress and decline only if the researcher has the opportunity to compare the same demonstrators with data set in another time frame.

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