

# افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم و بر زنده یک تن مباد  
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

[www.afgazad.com](http://www.afgazad.com)

[afgazad@gmail.com](mailto:afgazad@gmail.com)

European Languages

زبانهای اروپایی

Farzad Bonesh

02.01.2025

## ***Relations between Iran and Armenia: Key Factors and Prospects***

Despite economic constraints and the lack of proper transport infrastructure, the prospects for trade growth are bright within the framework of Iran's prospects and the four-year plan of the Armenian government for 2021-2026.



The relations between Armenia and Iran have a rich history of several millennia, and deep cultural and linguistic ties of more than 2,500 years. The relations between Armenians and Iranians date back to ancient times and the era of empires such as the Achaemenid, Parthian, and Sasanian.

Armenia is neighbored by two actors: Iran and Turkey, and two smaller countries: Georgia and Azerbaijan.

Iran's national interests are seen in strengthening the independence of the Republic of Armenia

Since establishing diplomatic relations between Armenia and Iran in February 1992, the opening of bilateral embassies, and the closure of the Azerbaijani and Turkish borders with Armenia, Iran has been a strategic path for Yerevan.

All three previous leaders of Armenia enjoyed close relations with Iran, and some kind of agreement and alliance between Tehran, Yerevan and Moscow played an important role in stability in the South Caucasus.

### **Effective variables, prospects**

In recent years, apart from the increase in diplomatic and consular relations, such as the establishment of the Iranian Consulate General in Kapan on October 20, 2022, there has been an increase in visits and meetings between high and middle-level officials of Armenia and Iran.

In the past year, apart from the visit of Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan to Tehran in [July 2024](#), Nikol Pashinyan's visit in May 2024 was important for the passing of Iranian then President, Ebrahim Raisi.

These meetings became more prominent with the emphasis of Iranian Leader Ayatollah Khamenei on the [strategic importance](#) of Iran-Armenia relations and strengthening relations with Armenia.

In September 2024, the foreign ministers of the two countries [met](#) in New York, and apart from Armenia's emphasis on achieving lasting peace in the region, the importance of Iran's strong position on unconditional respect for the territorial integrity and sovereignty of Armenia was emphasized.

Iran's preparations to strengthen relations and explore new opportunities for cooperation between the two countries were also emphasized, while more than 190 international treaties, agreements, memorandums of understanding and protocols cover areas of mutual relations.

In recent years, friendship groups, and joint commissions, have helped to develop cooperation. In fact, despite the absence of territorial differences, Armenia in the 2026-2021 [five-year plan](#), the lack of ideological-political and historical conflicts (such as the issue of the Armenian Genocide and conflict between Armenians and the Turks), the signing of important documents, agreements, notes, and protocols between the two countries is an essential opportunity for the growth of Tehran-Erevan relations in political and geopolitical fields.

While Armenia is more eager than ever to pursue a strategic partnership with Iran, the geopolitical and strategic importance of the South Caucasus for Iran has become more

prominent. Relations with Tehran are strategic in Yerevan's foreign policy orientation. At the same time, Iran is strengthening its position.

Tehran considers any instability in the South Caucasus a threat to its national security, and by supporting the talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan, is pursuing a policy of cooperation with its neighbors.

But Iran has shown that it cannot be a spectator of the encirclement of Armenia, the loss of ties with Armenia, the connection of Turkey to Central Asia, and the strengthening of NATO's presence in the region.

That means, Iran's national interests are seen in strengthening the independence of the Republic of Armenia, ensuring Armenia's internal stability and not eliminating the 44-kilometer border with Iran, preserving Armenia's territorial integrity, and Armenia's control over the Syunik region in southern Armenia bordering Iran (between Azerbaijan and Nakhchivan).

Opposing any border changes, Tehran considers the *"Zangezur Corridor" program to be against its interests and a kind of support for Armenia's territorial integrity. As the Iranian ambassador to Armenia [stated](#) in January 2023: "Armenia's security is Iran's security."*

In this area, Tehran does not want the aggressive efforts of Turkey and Baku, the spread of the ideology of Pan-Turkism, and the complete defeat of Armenia.

While Armenia seeks a security umbrella with other actors against Turkey and Azerbaijan, Tehran continues to support the 3+3 format (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Georgia plus Iran, Russia, and Turkey) for regional cooperation. It has a positive view of Armenia's long-term multilateral integration with Iran, Russia, China, and India in the region.

Iran-Armenia security and regional cooperation relations have intensified since 2020. Besides increasing its role and opening its consulate in southern Armenia in October 2022, Iran appears to have accelerated intelligence cooperation, and close military, training, and military-defense ties with Armenia since 2023.

From a geopolitical perspective, apart from shared security interests and concerns, joint military exercises, exchange of bilateral meetings, military-technical cooperation, training, etc. could continue to increase.

The trade relations between the two sides grew more after the establishment of the Iran-Armenia gas pipeline, the establishment of the Aras Free Zone in Iran, and the Armenian Free Economic Zone near the border with Iran.

In recent years, cooperation between Iran and Armenia has grown, especially in the trade, energy, and defense sectors. Azerbaijan, with its policy of maximum pressure, wants a

corridor that can cut the border between Armenia and Iran. However, Tehran and [Yerevan](#) believe that any corridor should be under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the respective country.

The western route of the North-South International Transport Corridor (INSTC) passes through the South Caucasus. The volume of rail transport along the INSTC has increased. India also signed a 10-year agreement with Iran on Chabahar, which allows India and Armenia to further connect with Eurasia and Europe through Iran at the INSTC.

In recent years, the completion of the North-South Corridor, the construction of roads by Iranian companies, and the creation of the “Persian Gulf-Black Sea” international multipurpose transport corridor (connecting Iran to Europe via Armenia, Georgia, and the Black Sea) have been on the agenda of both sides.

Despite Armenia’s [interest](#) in connecting to the markets of South Asia and the Middle East via Iran, opening an Armenian representative office in Iran’s Chabahar port would facilitate access to the Persian Gulf and the Indian Ocean.

Iran also has vast hydrocarbon resources, and extending the gas and electricity swap agreement until 2030 could be seen as a step in the field of energy diplomacy in cooperation with Armenia.

The trade turnover between Iran and Armenia has reached \$1 billion, and Iran has invested \$200 million in infrastructure projects in Syunik province.

The opening of the Iran Trade Center in Yerevan, Armenia, on October 1, 2024, and agreements such as expanding bilateral cooperation, providing business opportunities, and improving the investment climate are seen as part of the Iran-Armenia roadmap to increase trade relations to \$3 billion and expand trade with the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Cultural and educational relations are another important aspect of Iran-Armenia relations. The Iranian community in Armenia and the Iranian Armenian diaspora have played a vital role in strengthening people-to-people ties.

In recent years, the signing and implementation of cultural agreements, scientific and academic cooperation, and the annual presence of Iranian tourists from Armenia has been another part of the bilateral relations between Iran and Armenia in the field of culture and civilization.

### **Outlook**

Iran’s relations with Armenia are not free of challenges. Tensions between Baku and Yerevan, especially over territorial and ethnic claims, pose challenges for Iran. International sanctions against Iran also pose significant obstacles to cooperation.

Although Yerevan does not [see](#) Armenia and the West as cooperating against third countries, especially Iran, Tehran does not like the West's increasing influence in the region through increased political and security cooperation with the European Union and NATO, the United States, and France.

However, the mutual needs and various ties between Iran and Armenia are so extensive that they can overcome periodic differences and challenges in relations.

The Republic of Armenia is Iran's only Christian neighbor, and the Armenian Church and most Armenian nationalist and conservative leaders also have a positive attitude towards relations with Iran. Also, despite economic constraints and the lack of proper transport infrastructure, the prospects for trade growth are bright within the framework of Iran's prospects and the four-year plan of the Armenian government for 2021-2026.

It seems that many actors in the West and East do not have an opposing view on the expansion of relations between Armenia and Iran. In the meantime, creating new geopolitical, security, and political opportunities will cause the two countries to pay more attention to the future expansion of cooperation in the short and medium term.

[Farzad Bonesh](#), January 01, 2025

***Farzad Bonesh – geopolitical and geoeconomic analyst, researcher and writer***