



Support to the Armenia-  
Turkey  
Normalisation Process  
  
European Union Initiative



*RSC Special Briefing*  
Study Visit Report: Assessing  
Armenia-Turkey “Normalization”

Richard Giragosian  
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# RSC Staff Study Trips

- *February 2024*: Istanbul & Ankara to support “normalization” between Armenia & Turkey; follows earlier visits in February & May 2023
- *March 2024*: New York & Washington to promote U.S. interest & investment in Armenia
- *April 2024*: Paris & Brussels to present policy recommendations for Armenia-EU relations; follows previous November 2023 study visit
- *June 2024*: Seminar on diplomatic negotiations & trade/transport “connectivity” with Azerbaijanis in Rome, sidelines of NATO Defense College

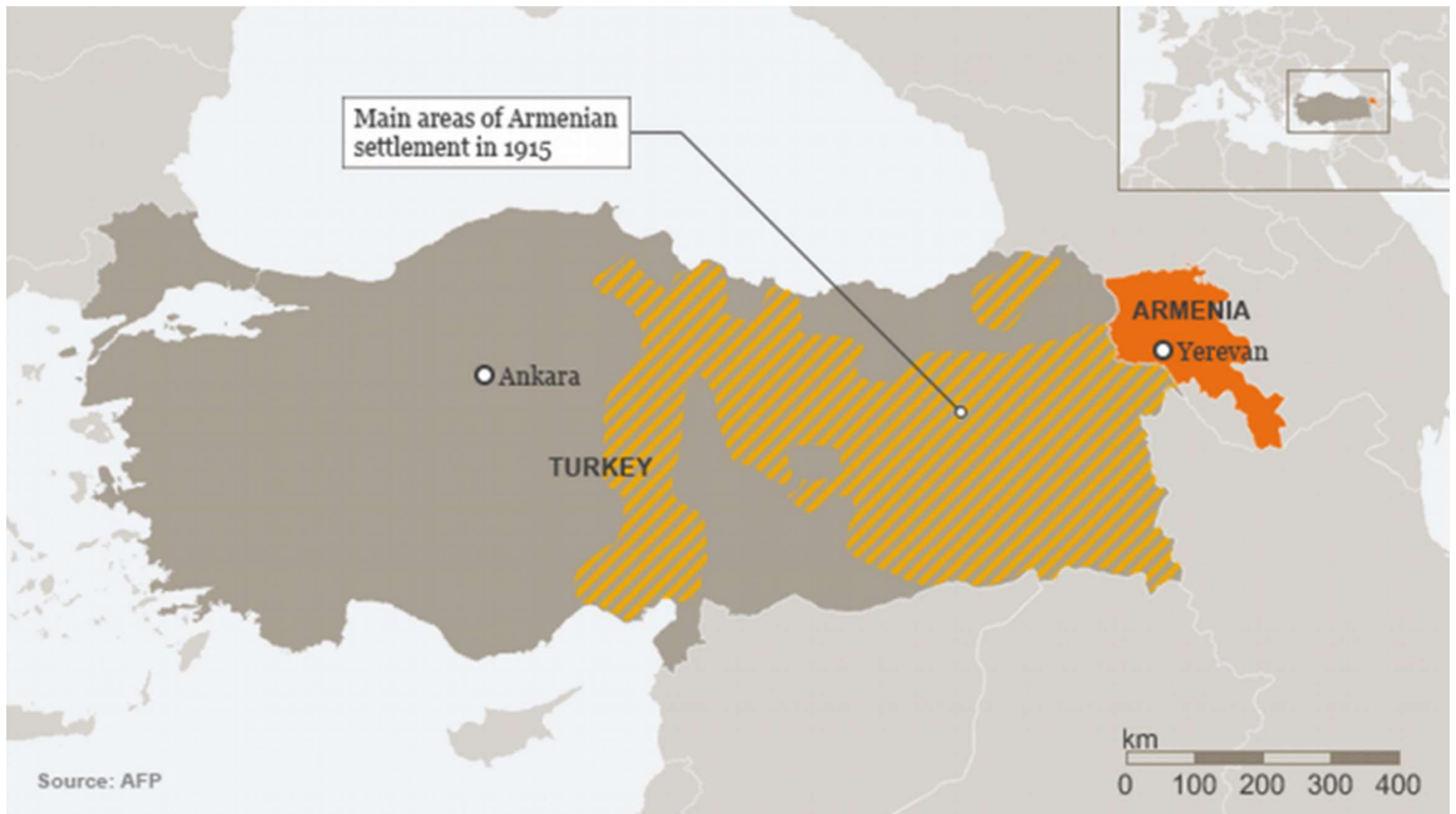
# The Broader Context: What is Armenia-Turkey Normalization?

- Normalization is not reconciliation
- Limited to more modest, practical objectives: re-opening the closed border & establishing diplomatic relations
- Based on a mutual policy of “no preconditions”
- Not new, but a new round of re-engagement
- Now based on new post-war reality

# Armenia-Turkey: Past Efforts

- 2001: “Turkish-Armenian Reconciliation Commission” (TARC)
- 2007: Swiss mediation process
- 2008-2009: “football diplomacy”
- October 2009: Signing of protocols

# Armenia-Turkey: Historical Context



# Armenia-Turkey: Asymmetry



# Armenia-Turkey: Diplomatic Engagement



## *Special Envoys*

Amb. Serdar Kılıç (Turkey)  
Deputy Parliamentary Chairman  
Ruben Rubinyan (Armenia)

# Armenia-Turkey Negotiations (2021-2022)

- December 2021: special envoys appointed
- January-February 2022: direct flights resume
- Direct talks 2022
  - January (Moscow): introductory session
  - February (Vienna): presentation of general negotiating points & positions
  - May (Vienna): launch of more in-depth discussions
  - July (Vienna): agreements on third-country nationals & air cargo)



# Additional Diplomatic Engagement



March 2022: Antalya  
Diplomatic Forum



October 2022:  
European Political  
Community (EPC)  
summit Prague

# “Earthquake Diplomacy”

## February 2023

- Immediately after 6 February earthquake strikes Turkey, Armenian government responds by extending help and offering aid
- Emergency responders dispatched and deployed by air
- Humanitarian aid sent by land as Turkey re-opens the closed border

# Armenia-Turkey Engagement (2023-2024)

- June 2023: Prime Minister Pashinyan attends President Erdogan's inauguration
- March 2024: Foreign Minister Mirzoyan & Special Envoy Rubinyan attend Antalya Diplomatic Forum
- Summer 2024: next meeting planned

# “Earthquake Diplomacy”



Five truckloads of humanitarian aid passes through the Alican border crossing in Turkey's Ugder district, last used when the Turkish Red Crescent delivered aid after the 1988 earthquake in Armenia

# “Earthquake Diplomacy”



# Armenia-Turkey Border Reopened (twice)



# Border Preparations



November-December 2022: initial technical preparations completed in joint operation

# Armenia-Turkey: The Outlook

- Earthquake diplomacy provided new impetus, as Turkey re-opened the border; yet a missed opportunity as Turkey closed the border again
- Positive media coverage of Armenian aid elevated political discourse (despite pre-election mood) and makes normalization less sensitive or toxic
- Signing of Armenia-Azerbaijan “peace treaty” as new Turkish-imposed pre-condition delays & defers implementation of normalization



# Armenia-Turkey

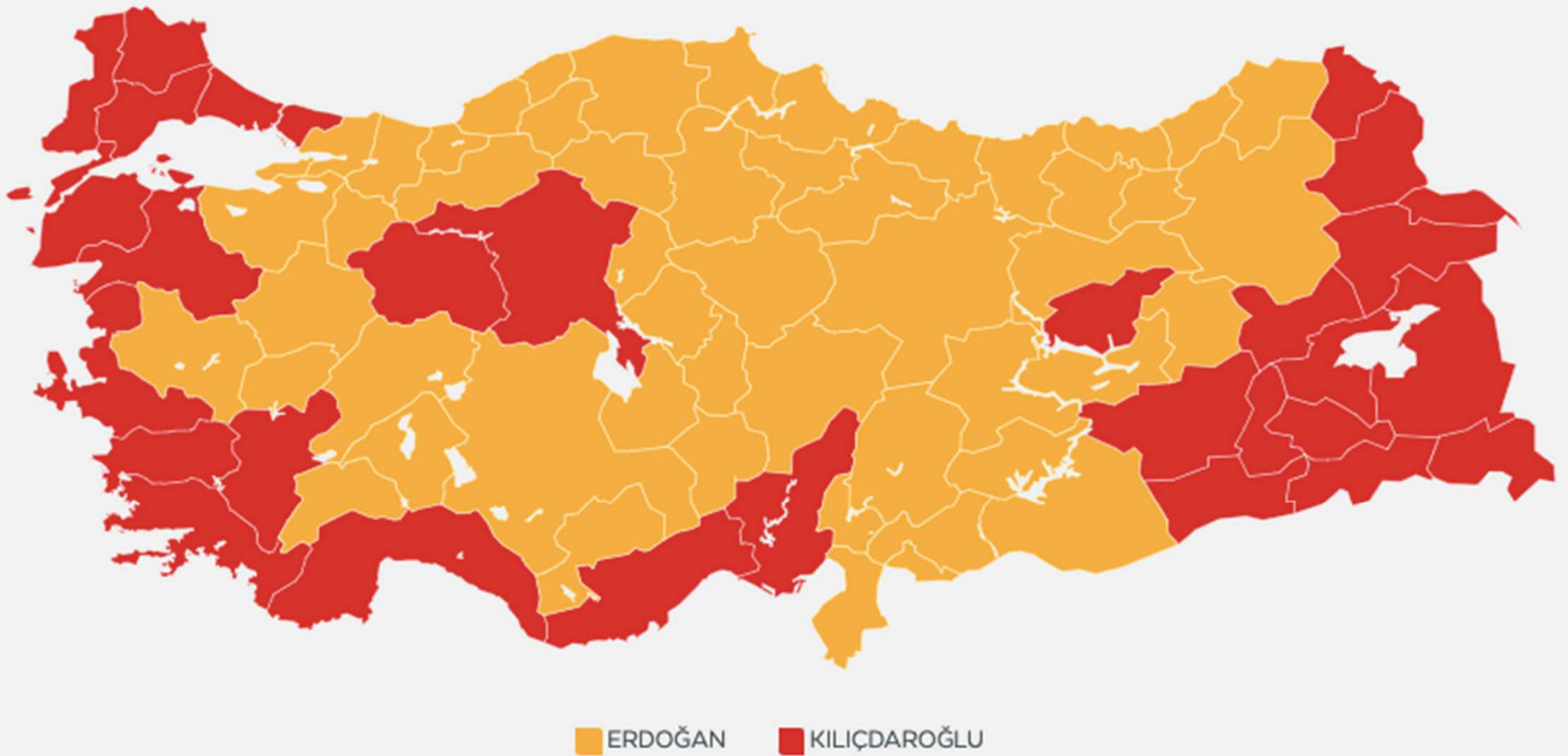
## What Next for Normalization?

- Re-election of President Erdogan allows diplomatic negotiations between Armenian & Turkish envoys to continue
- Increased economic pressure on Turkey enhances the importance of trade restoration and cross-border commerce; Armenia more attractive as platform for Turkish exports beyond and into new markets
- Likely conclusion of Armenia-Azerbaijan “peace treaty” expected as turning point

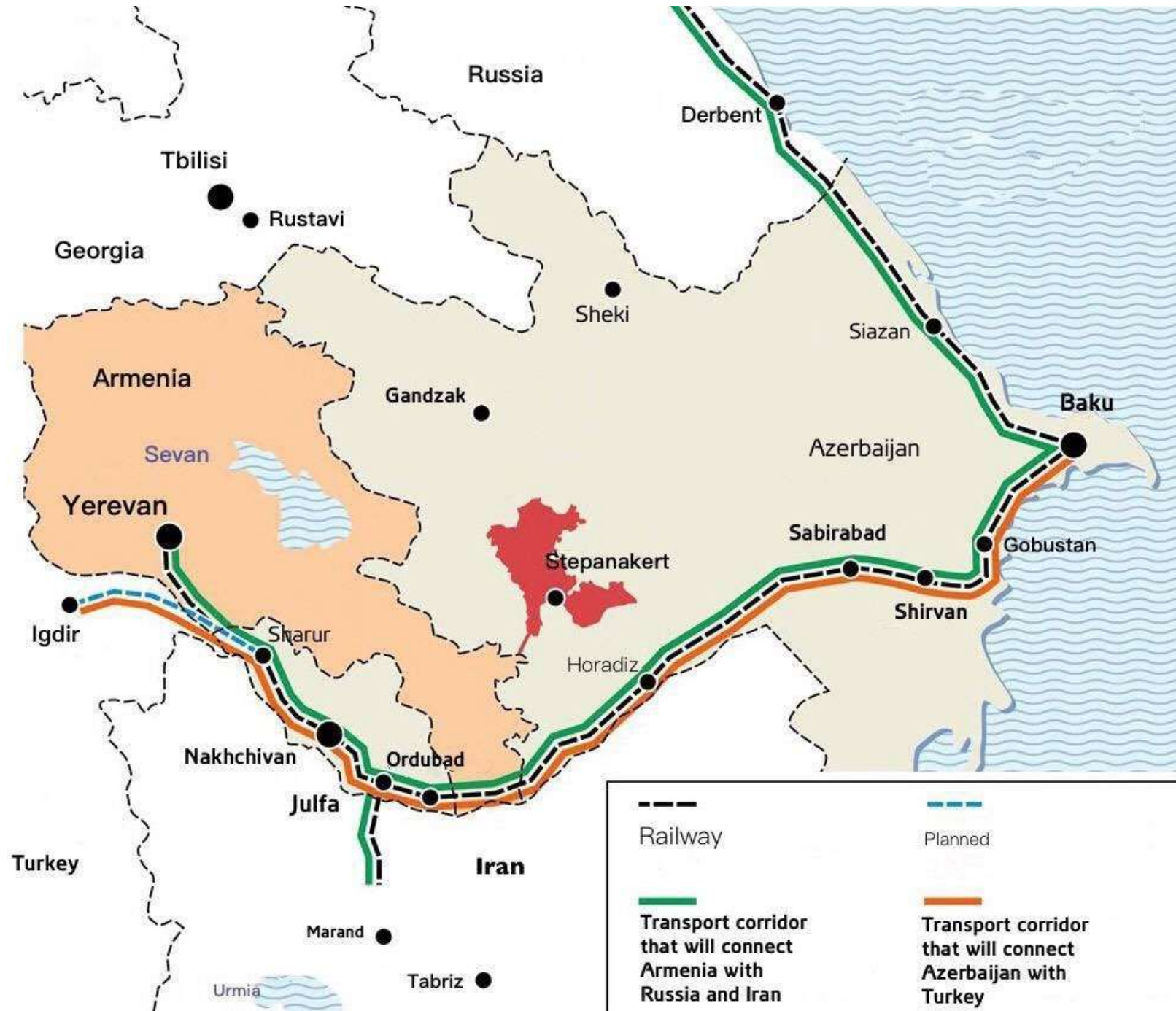
# Dangerous Precedents

- Azerbaijani victories seemingly vindicate use of force over diplomacy
  - Use of force validated by 2020 War, imposition of blockade & September 2023
- Apparent victory of authoritarian power over weaker democracy
  - Challenges Western values & may undermine confidence in democracy

# The Turkish Electoral Map (2023)



# Connectivity: Trade & Transport



## What Next?

- Meet expectations: maintain dialogue & continue negotiations
- Fulfill previous promises: partial border (re)opening & air cargo links
- Plan for the future: trade & tourism

# Conclusion

## Longer-Term Outlook

- Hostage to Azerbaijan
- Economic interdependence=deterrence
- Rare positive “game changer”



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