

H.E. Eduard Nalbandian
Minister of Foreign Affairs
The Republic of Armenia

Yerevan

Budapest, September 6, 2012

Your Excellency,

I have learned with regret that the Government of the Republic of Armenia has decided to suspend its diplomatic relations with Hungary. This decision has taken the Hungarian public opinion by surprise, since our peoples are connected by traditionally friendly bonds going back to centuries. My country has offered refuge to Armenians who wanted to settle down, and who often went on to become honored and greatly respected members of the Hungarian nation.

In the past few years the relations between Hungary and the Republic of Armenia have started to strengthen in a much welcome way. In November 2009 President Serzh Sargsyan paid a visit of historic significance to Budapest, during which our relations in the field of signing agreements were also widened. In May 2011 the Speaker of the Hungarian National Assembly visited Yerevan. We were also looking forward to the visit of the Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly planned for September this year.

The suspension of diplomatic relations is a grave decision, entailing incalculable consequences which, I am convinced, does not serve the interests of the Republic of Armenia and the Armenian people. Hungary has always made efforts to maintain balanced relations with all the peoples of the Southern Caucasus, and has, according to her capabilities, contributed to the peaceful resolution of conflicts, through taking into consideration the interests of all the parties concerned, and to preserving the security of the region.

No country in the region is interested in the escalation of the tension in the Southern Caucasus. We support the co-chairs of the Minsk Group of the OSCE in their efforts to find the framework of a negotiated settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh issue on the basis of the „Madrid principles”.

I would like to take this opportunity to underline in the most emphatic way: the extradition of Ramil Sahib Safarov, an Azeri citizen, to the Republic of Azerbaijan so that he could serve the remaining part of his life sentence, is in conformity with the international legal norms in force today, and corresponds with the practice that Hungary generally adopts in similar cases. This is a bilateral, purely legal matter which was not directed against Armenia, and can in no way be regarded as an insult to the Armenian people. Hungary disapproves of the subsequent Azeri procedure, and has repeatedly voiced her disapproval.

Your Excellency,

I would like to assure You that Hungary continues to be interested in developing our relations. I am convinced that the best way to serve the prosperity of our countries would be if, on the basis of the Christian values that have established a bond between the Hungarian and Armenian people for a thousand years, we jointly tried to find the way that could lead us back to further strengthening the friendly relations between Hungary and the Republic of Armenia.

Yours Sincerely,

János Martonyi