

## THE MAJOR TRENDS IN ARMENIA'S FOREIGN POLICY- MAKING AND THE MACRO-REGIONAL PRIORITIES OF RUSSIA AND THE UNITED STATES: 2018-2020

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The article examines the main trends and transformations in the foreign policy of the Republic of Armenia in conjunction and within the context of the macro-regional interests of the U.S. and the Russian Federation and the influence of structural and situational factors upon the certain aspects of Armenia's foreign policy in 2018-2020. Particularly, the main focus is on the major drivers of the regional and macro-regional policies of the external players, its impact on the foreign policy priorities of Armenia as well as longer-term interests of Russia and the U.S. in a wider perspective of regional developments, including competing visions of these main regional actors with regard to the future-oriented changes in the post-Soviet space.

**Key words:** *RA, foreign policy, complementarism, USA, RF, South Caucasus, regional conflicts*

Several important shifts and changes have shaped the regional power equation since 2017-2018 onward impacting and transforming the both, (macro)regional playground within which the strategic policies of extra-regional actors have been implemented and the foreign policies of the regional states themselves. In this context, Armenia' foreign policy-making could not but to adjust its short- and mid-term goals and objectives to the transforming international and regional realities.

First, one of the most important factors that significantly bolstered its salient impact on the nature of the regional processes across the different regions worldwide since the 2010's and, specifically, after 2014 was the return of great power competition and progressing adversarial dynamics in relations between the main powers engaged in those processes. At the level of diplomatic discourse, this new reality was acknowledged in the warning remarks of Russia's deputy foreign minister in 2021: "Direct and rude interference into the internal affairs of the sovereign states to a great degree provoking crisis all along the Russia' border perimeters"<sup>1</sup>. This factor undoubtedly has impacted the foreign policy making capacities, priorities and prospects of the smaller regional states vis-a-vis the U.S., Russia, the EU as well as the regional powers, Turkey and Iran<sup>2</sup>. The second Karabakh war and the unfolding international politico-diplomatic activities during and after the military phase have attested the emboldened profile of raw force and power balance imperatives in the region.

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<sup>1</sup> Интервью заместителя Министра иностранных дел Российской Федерации А.Ю.Руденко газете «Известия», опубликованное 10 февраля 2021 года.

<sup>2</sup> Renewed Great Power Competition: Implications for Defense—Issues for Congress, August 3, 2021, Congressional Research Service, R43838.

Secondly, the novel coronavirus pandemic and the negative effects caused by the lockdown that deepened the vulnerabilities of the smaller states and affected the level of political “agency” of the smaller states in international politics, emphasized this new reality of existing structural dependency links between powerful and smaller actors in IR. The larger and stronger states managed to extract and channel more internal resources to foster and support the national sustainability efforts during the pandemic. This new global situation has deepened the asymmetrical dependency links in international arena while creating new impetus for interstate competition in the post-pandemic period.

Thirdly, the foreign policy process being a dynamic dialectical interplay between the external context and foreign policy behaviors of the individual states, in the case of the South Caucasus amplified a substantial increase in a scale and scope of interactions in a variety of domains extending from politics and economics to the more specific issues and problems such as human rights and ecology. In other words, the dimensions and scope of internationalization of the politics and policies in the South Caucasus, particularly in cases of Armenia and Georgia, were visibly increased. Moreover, if formerly the pattern of interactions with the major powers engaged in the local processes was mainly pivoted around the hierarchical mode of relations and political compliance practices, the new modes of bilateral and multilateral interactions of the regional states with major powers shifted now towards the new type of alignment and partnership schemes, with the emboldened demand for policy compliance and convergence necessities instead of the previously championed “policy coordination” approaches and complementarity<sup>3</sup>. Simultaneously, it should be noted that the domestic arena acquired higher profile in foreign policy-making process fostering a more conscious and integrated understanding of the complex processes in the region. To refer to R.Putnam’s two-level game model, the accelerated integration of the post-Soviet republics into the international affairs promoted a stronger linkage bonds between the domestic and external realms in those countries<sup>4</sup>.

In this context, Armenia’s foreign policy priorities towards its main international partners such as Russia, the U.S., China and France (EU) as well as the policies of the aforementioned states towards Armenia after 2018 have been structurally well placed within the path dependency logic and institutionally formed “algorithms”. Almost 30-year experience of foreign and international policy-making, the already established linkages and the patterns of interaction within bilateral as well as multilateral formats could not be changed overnight. The major conceptual backbone of Armenia’s foreign policy-making has been and continues to be (with some shifts in political and rhetorical emphasis after 2018) the so called complementarism; the term first coined by the former RA minister of foreign affairs V. Oskanyan (2008-2018).

The main rationale behind this doctrinal postulate which has been elevated

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<sup>3</sup> Vahagn Aglyan, Policy Convergence Issues within Hierarchical International Systems: on some aspects of the Russian-Armenian Defense and Security Partnership, «21st CENTURY», No 1 (19), 2016, pp. 23-37.

<sup>4</sup> Robert D. Putnam, Diplomacy and Domestic Politics: The Logic of Two-Level Games, *International Organization*, Vol. 42, No. 3 (Summer, 1988), pp. 427-460.

to the level of operational guideline and the official discourse idea was that Armenia's foreign policy and international posture should never be deduced to the ultimate and irrevocable selection of any single international partner (state, international organization or even international regime) at the expense of developing the ties and relations with the other poles and actors on international arena. The implicit political logic of the approach presupposes multifaceted policies or balancing strategies yet without elements of playing on the contradictions of the major powers in the region. Instead, the two objectives were put forward: first, it meant the positive cooperation with the win-win outcomes for the all protagonists involved and, secondly, the complementary approach aimed at securing the favorable to the national interests of Armenia regional balance and the configuration of the external involvement. Along with the effective flexibility, this complementary approach rests on the premise of providing a necessary predictability to the Armenia' mid- to long-term external relationships and policies. Armenia's most important policy principle in the international arena was and continues to be the rejection of a single-option foreign policy orientation; that is concentration on either region-wise or country-wise single direction while neglecting the others<sup>5</sup>.

In this context, in spite of the substantial transformations occurred in political elites composition and the structure of the political establishment after 2018 events and subsequent formation of the new RA government under N.Pashinyan's leadership, the foreign policy orientation and the structural "anchors" that held Armenia' foreign policies within the protracted "path dependency" logic proved their sustainability and persistency. Particularly, in the strategically important areas of security, economic and political integration, bilateral relations with the main external partners, namely Russia, the U.S. and the EU, Armenia' foreign policy held up its mainly conservative stance in the period since 2018 to the immediately after the 44-day war in Nagorno Karabakh, in 2020. Despite of initially voiced position to follow more pronounced pro-Western policies and the discourse on "equal relationships" hailed by the ruling establishment and the younger political generation as a manifestation of diversity and a kind of political emancipation, in practice the real activities yielded sober outcomes; in fact, more in line with the previously elaborated foreign policy postures and approaches.

In a nutshell, the new government' three main propositions formulated still at the initial stage of ascendancy to political power were: (1) capitalizing on the newly formed image of democratic state and the established form of effective democracy to reshape the relationships with the West and put Armenia on the new track of bilateral and multilateral partnership in politics and economics as well, (2) without changing or compromising the status of the Minsk Group, find some new avenues and change the previously molded logic of interactions, or to start the "conflict resolution process from the my point"<sup>6</sup>, including the well-known position that "only the leadership of Artsakh can speak on behalf of Artsakh", (3) rescaling the decades-old attitude towards the foreign policy-making

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<sup>5</sup> V.Aglyan, The Republic of Armenia (Chapter 2) in *The Foreign Policies of the CIS States: A Comprehensive Guide*, ed. D.Degtyarev, K.Kurylev, Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2019, pp.52-54.

<sup>6</sup> <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/29870090.html>, 09 April, 2019.

in Armenia as an exclusive field of high politics and loosening the “securitization” of politics inside Armenia as well as in the external relationships. Attitude towards Turkey remained the same as it had been, yet with not even slight allusion or implicit aside of potential improvement of bilateral relations, at least at the public discourse level; this position was in an obvious contrast to the former RA President S. Sargsyan administration’ decade-old experience when the two sides at least initiated some attempts to find compromise solutions in paving the way for establishing diplomatic relations and come to terms on Armenian genocide recognition and Karabakh problems.

Yet, on the other hand the regional and global strategies of Russia and the U.S. (to the lesser degree EU) and the global developments themselves have been changing the regional geopolitical landscape in the post-Soviet space, including the milieu within which the RA’ foreign and security interests were formulated. As some researchers noted, the increasing power competition in the world restricted the previously working mechanisms for effective implementation of the complementary foreign policy<sup>7</sup>.

In 2018-2020 (before the start of the second 44-day Karabakh war) several international events, bilateral meetings and negotiations took place, including the 35th Ministerial Conference of La Francophonie held in Yerevan in October 2018<sup>8</sup>, visit of Germany’ chancellor A. Merkel to Armenia<sup>9</sup> and the U.S. National Security Advisor J.Bolton negotiations with the Armenian top officials. On the discursive level, the proclaimed official stance of simultaneous expansion of the ties with the West has been mainly promulgated through the interpersonal relationships with the leaders of France and Canada, E. Macron and J. Trudeau. At the same time, some temporary political tension emerged between Moscow and Yerevan over the arrest of the general secretary of CSTO, general Yu.Khachaturov who was incriminated the constitutional order violation and the use of military force against the civic groups. Russia’s displeasure was mainly concerned the image of the Russian-led security alliance whose general secretary was the key official representing the organization and whose arrest without prior consultations and the Moscow’s consent evoked a negative reaction from RF<sup>10</sup>.

However, those “controversies” did not lead to any significant changes or transformations in Armenia’s stance with regard to security or military-technical cooperation schemes with Russia in practice. For instance, J.Bolton’s offer to consider the purchase or acquisition of the American armaments and weapons remained unfulfilled, while Trump administration’ business-like approach to the allies and partners in fact culminated in a significant decrease of the U.S. military aid to Armenia; in 2018-2019 the U.S. provided only \$7mln. for military needs, which was more than 14% less than the amount assigned to Azerbaijan. In general, the change of accents registered in Trump’s administra-

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<sup>7</sup> H.Paronyan, R.Elamiryan, Armenian Foreign Policy between Eurasian and European integration models, *Eastern Journal of European Studies*, vol.12, iss.1, June 2021, pp.270-271.

<sup>8</sup> [https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2018/10/09/cmf\\_yerevan/8611](https://www.mfa.am/en/press-releases/2018/10/09/cmf_yerevan/8611), accessed 12.09.2021

<sup>9</sup> Merkel Concludes Visit to Caucasus; During Armenia Visit Calls Ottoman-Era Killings Of Armenians ‘Heinous Crimes’, *The Armenian Mirror Spectator*, 30.08.20218

<sup>10</sup> В Ереване отозвались об обсуждениях отзыва генсека ОДКБ Хачатурова, 28.07.2018, <https://www.interfax.ru/world/622965>

tion foreign policy priorities with a greater emphasis on tangible and economically rational goals, overshadowed another traditional normative orientation of the U.S. foreign policy – promotion and protection of democracy and civil rights across the world. In that sense, refocusing the policy vector to the raw geopolitical apprehension of the regional realities and heightened security issues strained the traditionally well-balanced Armenian stance on Iran since the major policy emphasis was placed on geopolitical goals. If in the earlier periods a general understanding was formed and tacitly accepted by the U.S. that Iran was indispensable for Armenia’ external communication, the toughened position of Washington on Iran made this “balancing” for Armenia comparatively more difficult.

In this context, it should be noted that at the operational level the US policies in the region since 2016 on the one hand were geared by the traditional and well established modalities of dealing with the Iranian problem, including the already existing partnership schemes and frameworks, securing energy projects and blocking the major security threats to the U.S. national interests emanating from the wider region, yet, on the other hand faced the dynamically transforming macro-regional environment where Russia’ power projecting capabilities<sup>11</sup> became one of the major strategy planning variables.

In retrospect, the main parameters of the new regional “paradigm” have taken shapes after 2008 5-day war between Russia and Georgia, influencing the U.S. Caucasian region priorities. Several operational and political-level principles structured the modus operandi of Obama administration’s regional policies: at the macro-regional level containment of Iran remained the basic priority in relationships with the all of the South Caucasian republics, though without excessive and hard pressing on the smaller neighbors of Iran; some kind of “equilibrium” with Russia was achieved on working principles in the region within broader reset strategy. Specifically, agreement with Russia was reached for the military transportation via its territory. The overall stability and order emerged as a primary issue on the U.S.-Russia agenda. Down to the regional level, Obama administration shifted its working modus operandi from the intra-regional approaches towards fostering and prioritizing bilateral relations format with the partners. Moreover, significant differences were noted in terms of closeness, extensiveness and intensity of relations with the South Caucasian states; relationships with Tbilisi were prioritized as Georgia reinstated its status of the U.S. primary and longer-term partner in the region: Moreover, certain efforts were undertaken to provide a solid basis to these relationships: institutionalization of Georgia’s participation in programs under the umbrella of NATO, political engagement, trade and economic relations. Apparent shifts towards prioritizing the bilateral relationships in practice was aimed at achieving more concrete and measurable policy objectives within the broader political and economic strategy framework.

At the same time, as some experts noted, uncertain relationship with Moscow which had become a major issue in US domestic politics too left unan-

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<sup>11</sup> Russia: Foreign Policy and U.S. Relations, Congressional Research Service, April 15, 2021, p.25-29.

swered many questions about US policy toward Russia's neighbors including the South Caucasus<sup>12</sup>. The U.S. has important security and economic interests in the South Caucasus though none of them has been as vital as in case Europe or in cases of some other strategically important regions. Moreover, the South Caucasus was and now is not interesting and valuable for the US in isolation from a larger set of global and strategic interests whether these interests bear direct or circumstantial character<sup>13</sup>.

Regional stability and economic recovery were elevated to the major policy objective and the pre-requisite for the longer-term regional development. In difference to the previous period, the U.S. policy-making in the region has departed from the erstwhile Russia first policy to the more autonomous and independent approach to the South Caucasus as a separate chess ground. If earlier the regional dynamics had been comprehended as a derivative of the wider post-Soviet policy pivoted on Russia (to the certain degree), later on sub-regions of the post-Soviet Eurasia started to be viewed more as stand-alone geopolitical and geo-economic domains of the U.S. strategic interests.

Given the limited on-the-ground American presence in the region in the military and security fields, one of the policy options could potentially remain the previously elaborated patterns of managing the regional status quo ante, after 2020 fall war in Karabakh. And yet the text of Interim National Security Strategic Guidance (released in March 2021), an interim vision of national security under Biden administration, provides some insights as to how the new administration could potentially handle and address the emerged and emerging threats in different regions and subregions<sup>14</sup>. Specifically, the Document claimed that "we cannot just return to the way things were before. In foreign and national security, just as in domestic policy, we have to chart a new course". Following these postulates, the current power equilibriums were viewed not as sustainable as one would wish to see: "Promote a favorable distribution of power to deter and prevent adversaries from directly threatening the United States and our allies, inhibiting access to the global commons, or dominating key regions; [...]". Given the recent US and NATO activities in the Black Sea and enlargement of naval presence the US policies would most probably tilt more towards the power balance logic and rebuilding in some cases the alliance traditional patterns with an eye on more efficient and feasible balancing efforts, including through the military power and enforcement instruments. Another statement of the interim guidance, "lead and sustain a stable and open international system", might signal about some shift towards stronger and broader policy convergence with the EU. In the same vein: "The United States will never hesitate to use force required to defend our vital national interests" might testify about some synergy of hard and soft lines in the future US policies in the region, including the conflict resolution international platforms. For in-

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<sup>12</sup> E.Rumer, R.Sokolsky, P.Stronski, U.S. Policy Toward the South Caucasus: Take Three, May, 2017, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace [<https://carnegieendowment.org/2017/05/31/u.s.-policy-toward-south-caucasus-take-three-pub-70122>]

<sup>13</sup> S.Markedonov, M.Suchkov, Russia and the United States in the Caucasus: cooperation and competition, Caucasus Survey, 2020, Feb., pp.5-6.

<sup>14</sup> Interim National Security Strategic Guidance, The White House, March 2021, President J.R.Biden, Jr.

stance, after about a year since the large-scale hostilities in the zone of Karabakh conflict were terminated, the US Ambassador in Armenia L. Tracy explained the US stance towards the conflict: “We do not think that the status of Nagorno-Karabakh is resolved. We will continue to keep that on the agenda of the [OSCE] Minsk Group”<sup>15</sup>.

CIS and Russia’ “track” of Armenian foreign policy after the 2018 events exhibited a relative stability and consistency despite of rhetorical and sometimes political echoes across the political spectrum of Armenia, including the follow-up diversity of public interpretations. Specifically, any allusions of leaving the Russian-led regional organizations such as military-political block of CSTO (Collective Security Treaty Organization) or Eurasian Union were dashed away as “an inappropriate”, yet the major emphasis on expanding the scope and quality of the pro-Western tinge was mainly developed within the bilateral formats of relationships with the select group of countries, including France, Canada, the U.S. Still at the end of 2018, newly elected RA prime minister N. Pashinyan declared that his previously made statements in capacity of the opposition leader to reconsider Armenia’ membership in the Eurasian Union should not be treated as a blueprint or guideline for the Government and those statements had been made in the different contexts. A few years later he asserted, “that U-turns in foreign policy can often be very dangerous. And yes, today we are a member of the Eurasian Economic Union; last year Armenia was the presiding nation, and I personally chaired the Eurasian Economic Union, the presidency of the Eurasian Economic Union was quite effective, because we signed a number of new agreements. But we are cooperating with the European Union as well, since our democratic agenda has not changed at all”<sup>16</sup>. The National Security Strategy of RA published in July of 2020 reiterated that Armenia will continue to strengthen military-political, military and military-technical cooperation with Russia, while the focus of US-Armenian relations in defense and security field would be on the institutional reforms and upgrade of RA military forces capacity development<sup>17</sup>.

Given the structural security dependence of Armenia in the military and military-technical domains upon Russia’s security guarantees, Yerevan’s defense and security course towards further cooperation with Russia was sustained. One of the manifestations of this reality was the major military procurement contract that the Armenian MoD signed with Russia to acquire 4 Su30SM military jets with a reported total price of \$100mln. In addition to the warplanes, air defense systems were acquired from Russia to bolster the already functioning regional joint air defense.

Generally, the structure and the main directions of Armenia’ foreign policy have not been changed profoundly during the period of 2018-2020/21, yet the

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<sup>15</sup> Karabakh Conflict Still Unresolved, Insists U.S. Envoy, N. Ghalechian, 13.09.2021, <https://www.azatutyun.am/a/31458019.html>

<sup>16</sup> “World War III is on its way in the form of hybrid warfare” – Nikol Pashinyan’s Interview to German ARD TV Channel, accessed 12.09.2021, <https://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2020/11/07/Nikol-Pashinyan-interview-ARD/>

<sup>17</sup> National Security Concept of the Republic of Armenia, July 2020, p.18 [<https://www.mfa.am/filemanager/security%20and%20defense/Armenia%202020%20National%20Security%20Strategy.pdf>]

regional and global environment as well as the new regional realities after the second Karabakh war and the deployment of the Russian peace-keeping forces not only in the zone of former military face down but also in some territories along the southern borderland of Armenia transformed the milieu of policy-making and the strategic calculus of the regional and extra-regional powers. The peacekeeping operation in Nagorno Karabakh and the Russian military presence in the region have either directly or indirectly affected the current range of foreign policy priorities of RA.

Russia's strategies in the region on the eve and after the second Karabakh war revealed a set of features and variables that explicitly attested about the significantly raised capabilities of power projection at Moscow's disposal as well as about crucial political influence on the processes in the region of the South Caucasus. Strategically, Russia' regional policies in the South Caucasus have been mainly pivoted around the Karabakh conflict and its potential resolution modalities, while the major focus and the setting within which Russian-Armenian relationships have been developing concerned mainly the security, military-technical and military-political domains. In 2018-2020/21, Armenia's further integration into the Russian-led structures retained its traditional role in the bilateral agenda of the two countries.

Simultaneously, Russia's policy towards the region and conflict resolution strategies featured some new and important tenets that somehow differed from the formerly adopted practices. Moscow played a crucial role in November 10, 2020 ceasefire brokered between Armenia and Azerbaijan as well as in the subsequent meeting of the conflicting parties in Moscow on January 11, 2021. Deployment of 2000-strong peacekeeping contingent in Nagorno Karabakh and in the Lachin corridor connecting Karabakh to Armenia effectively provided Moscow additional military bridgehead in the region along with military presence in Armenia proper and recently established bases in the South Ossetia and Abkhazia. Moreover, Russia effectively took under its indirect control the regional security agenda-setting function through the tripartite agreement that comprised the provisions on reestablishing transport communication between Armenian and Azerbaijan under the Russian security guarantees. In this connection, the RF Ambassador in Armenia S.Kopirkin' remarks who visited the southern regions of Armenia in June of 2021, were called to reassert Russia's stance on the perspectives of the longer term regional presence<sup>18</sup> particularly in the light the RA government decision to transfer some territories in Syunik region of Armenia to the two Russian military outposts.<sup>19</sup>

Distinguishingly, Russia' current SOPs featured a fully-fledged showcasing of air deployment on short notice and power projection capabilities on par with the modern Western practices. Although not significant in scale and military operational reach, the Russian peacekeeping force was called to demonstrate the Russian flag and mainly carry out monitoring functions along the contact line.

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<sup>18</sup> Kopirkin: Russia' military presence in Syunik is strengthened, 12.06.2021, <https://armeniasputnik.am/20210612/syuniquim-rusakan-razmakan-nerkayutyunn-ujexacvac-e-kopirkin-27896967.html>

<sup>19</sup> Пашинян заявил об опорных пунктах российской военной базы на юге Армении, РИА Новости, 3 мая, 2021.



Yet, the specter of activities that these forces have been undertaking since then - ranging from de mining to water supply and schoolkids emergency trainings - proved that Russian presence aimed at longer horizon. Probably not by coincidence, Russian foreign minister S. Lavrov urged the Russian logistical and transportation companies to eye Nagorno Karabakh as an attractive infrastructure for investments: “It is important that the economic development of this part of our immediate neighborhood proceeds with active Russian participation”<sup>20</sup>. This call purpose was only partly aimed at the domestic audience, while political underpinning was to affirm Russia’ readiness to uphold the new situation under its control and redress the power balance in the region through its own engagement status. In summer 2021, Russian defense minister S. Shoigu confirmed to RA defense minister A. Karapetyan that Russia was starting the process of Armenian Army modernization with up to date armaments and technologies. The modalities of bilateral agreement remained hidden, yet some observers argued that deepening of military and security interoperability between the two countries in policies and patterns of military buildup as well as capability development would be based on the convergence logic.

Several structural factors, personal and situational features will guide and constrain the Armenian foreign policy in the mid-term perspective. Some of these factors will take the form of projections of the global political and geo-economic environment enacted upon the local dynamics whereas the others would be the emerging “variables” of the regional development. Domestically, despite of the overwhelming political predominance after the 2021 parliamentary elections, an uneasy brinkmanship with the political opposition would somehow restrict the latitude of the Government in foreign policy-making.

In August 2021 the Armenian government adopted a new strategic plan of development with a major emphasis on modernization of the armed forces, professionalization of the Army, creation of the specialized units, establishing the border troops as a separate structure. All these projections would require not just support in some areas, but also coordination and concerted efforts between the two countries as far as the institutional framework of bilateral partnership.

Political and economic relations with the U.S. and EU over 2018-2020/21 have been anchored strongly on the top of Armenia’s foreign policy agenda, yet the content, scope and directions of RA external strategy with regard to the collective West yielded some changes. Specifically, previously separated sectors of international relations that had been addressed by Yerevan as stand-alone directions of RA foreign policy-making by the end of the decade have been synergistically “merged” and interconnected. If not in terms of outcomes, but with regard to the process of making the decisions the political and, in some instances, security and economic aspects of relations with the US and EU were approached as part of the holistic and comprehensive foreign policy strategy; something that could diminish effectiveness of the previously established practices of policy-making as the separate arenas of Armenia’s foreign policy.

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<sup>20</sup> Russia asks its shipping companies to focus on transit potential of Nagorno Karabakh, Armenpress, August 17, 2021.

**ՎԱՀԱԳՆ ԱԳԼՅԱՆ – ՀՀ արտաքին քաղաքականության հիմնական միտումները Ռուսաստանի և ԱՄՆ տարածաշրջանային գերակայությունների համատեքստում (2018-2020 թթ.)** – Հոդվածում քննարկվում են ՀՀ արտաքին քաղաքականության ընդհանուր բնույթի փոխակերպումների ընթացքն ու գերակա միտումները 2018-2020 թթ. ՌԴ և ԱՄՆ տարածաշրջանային ռազմավարական գերակայությունների համատեքստում: Մասնավորապես, ներկայացված են ՀՀ արտաքին քաղաքականության մեջ շեշտադրումների փոփոխությանն էրը շարժառիթները, ինչպես նաև երկարաժամկետ արտաքին քաղաքական շահերի և հիմնական ուղեգծի հարատևության պատճառները՝ փոխկապակցված ՀՀ հիմնական արտաքին քաղաքական գործընկեր երկու պետությունների հետ: Ուշադրության դիտակետում են ինչպես կառուցվածքային գործոնների դերը, այնպես էլ իրավիճակային քաղաքական փոփոխականները ամերիկյան ու ռուսաստանյան գլոբալ և տարածաշրջանային քաղաքականության մեջ:

**Բանալի բառեր** – ՀՀ արտաքին քաղաքականություն, կոմպլեմենտարիզմ, ԱՄՆ, ՌԴ, Հարավային Չովկաս, տարածաշրջանային հակամարտություններ

**ВААГН АГЛЯН – Основные тенденции во внешней политике Армении в контексте макро-региональных приоритетов России и США: 2018-2020гг.** - В статье рассматриваются основные тенденции и трансформации во внешней политике Республики Армения в связке и в контексте макро-региональных интересов США и РФ, влияние структурных и ситуативных факторов на некоторые аспекты внешней политики Армении. В частности, отражены основные драйверы и структурные обстоятельства, которые преопределили сохранение и устойчивость долгосрочного внешнеполитического курса РА, при определенном смещении политических и дискурсивных акцентов в отношении с двумя крупнейшими игроками на Южном Кавказе. В фокусе внимания также некоторые проблемные аспекты, связанные с изменениями общих подходов России и США на постсоветском пространстве.

**Ключевые слова:** Армения, внешняя политика, комплементаризм, США, РФ, Южный Кавказ, региональные конфликты