

Protests at Russian Embassy in Armenia Over Arms Sales to Azerbaijan

By [The Moscow Times](#)

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Protesters gathered outside the Russian Embassy in Yerevan to denounce Moscow's profiting from arms sales to their country's major foe — Azerbaijan, the Interfax news agency reported Wednesday.

Several dozen people gathered for the rally outside Russia's embassy in the Armenian capital, demanding that Moscow “fulfill its obligations as a strategic ally,” “respect in its decisions the security and national interests of Armenia,” and stop weapons sales to Azerbaijan, the report said.

Demonstrators threw coins and eggs at the embassy building, Interfax reported.

Armenia and Russia are military allies under the Collective Security Treaty Organization — a deal that also includes Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan. Azerbaijan is not party to the treaty, but has close trade ties with Russia, as does Armenia.

Following renewed violence earlier this month between Armenian and Azeri forces over the disputed region of Nagorno Karabakh, Yerevan urged Moscow to cease arms sales to Azerbaijan.

But Russian Deputy Prime Minister Dmitry Rogozin said this week that Moscow would continue weapons deliveries to both Armenian and Azerbaijan, and described the arms sales as a deterrent in the conflict, according to an interview with independent Ekho Moskvyy radio.

Azerbaijan spent about \$4 billion in recent years on Russian tanks, infantry fighting vehicles and artillery systems, amid other weapons.

Russia also announced an arms deal with Armenia early this year, saying Moscow will give Yerevan a \$200 million credit to buy Russian multiple-launch rocket systems, anti-tank missiles, and handheld antiaircraft missiles, among other military equipment.

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