

THE STATUS OF THE SECURITY COUNCIL IN ENSURING NATIONAL SECURITY (COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS)

ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԽՈՐՀՐԴԻ ԿԱՐԳԱՎԻՃԱԿԸ ԱԶԳԱՅԻՆ
ԱՆՎՏԱՆԳՈՒԹՅԱՆ ԱՊԱՀՈՎՄԱՆ ԳՈՐԾՈՒՄ (ՀԱՄԵՄԱՏԱԿԱՆ
ՎԵՐԼՈՒԾՈՒԹՅՈՒՆ)

СТАТУС СОВЕТА БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ В ОБЕСПЕЧЕНИИ НАЦИОНАЛЬНОЙ
БЕЗОПАСНОСТИ (СРАВНИТЕЛЬНЫЙ АНАЛИЗ)

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Abstract – The Republic of Armenia has made significant progress in the establishment of the country's national security policy and security system, creating the necessary political-legal prerequisites and control frameworks for evaluating, reviewing, and further developing the effectiveness of the operations of state security bodies and processes occurring in areas of strategic importance to the state. However, it is important to note that the primary issue in these processes pertains to the level of coordination of security policy, which was somewhat differentiated in both functional and subject aspects, especially in the context of Armenia transitioning to a parliamentary governance model, subsequent developments in defence and security, and the conditions of active wartime processes. Inter-agency state bodies are the structures that develop the main directions for addressing internal and external strategic risks and threats to the country, as well as coordinate the activities of various state bodies in the relevant area. These structures have been formed and function in nearly all countries abroad. This article examines the status and scope of authority of similar bodies in the United States, the Russian Federation, Iran, Poland, Israel, and Georgia as potential models for improving the operational conditions of the Security Council in Armenia. The presented examples show that although the national security legislation in different countries share common goals, each of them stands out with its own political-legal definitions, formation and subordination, as well

as structural and functional characteristics. In the Republic of Armenia, the constitutional reforms 2015 stipulated that starting from April 2018, the Prime Minister would head the Security Council, which also defines the main directions of defence policy. The study of the practice of security coordination bodies provides valuable experience for the consistent development of procedures ensuring the full establishment of Armenia's security policy and its practical applicability.

Ամփոփում – Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունը զգալի առաջընթաց է գրանցել երկրի ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականության և ապահովման համակարգի կայացման ուղղությամբ՝ ստեղծելով անհրաժեշտ քաղաքական-իրավական նախադրյալներ ու վերահսկողական կառուցակարգեր՝ անվտանգության պետական մարմինների գործունեության արդյունավետության և պետության համար ռազմավարական նշանակության ոլորտներում տեղի ունեցող գործընթացների գնահատման, վերանայման և հետագա զարգացման նկատմամբ: Սակայն հարկ է նկատել, որ այս գործընթացներում ամենագլխավոր խնդիրը վերաբերում է անվտանգային քաղաքականության համակարգման մակարդակին, որը նաև որոշակիորեն տարանջատվեց թե՛ գործառությանին, թե՛ սուբյեկտային հայեցակետերով, հատկապես Հայաստանում խորհրդարանական կառավարման մոդելին անցնելու, հետագա պաշտպանական-անվտանգային զարգացումների պատերազմական ակտիվ գործընթացների պայմաններում: Վերգերատեսչական պետական մարմինները երկրների ներքին և արտաքին ռազմավարական հնարավոր վտանգի ու սպառնալիքների հիմնական ուղղությունները մշակող և տվյալ ոլորտում տարբեր պետական մարմինների գործունեությունները համակարգող կառույցներն են, որոնք ձևավորվել և գործում են արտասահմանյան գրեթե բոլոր երկրներում: Հոդվածում ուսումնասիրվել են նմանատիպ մարմինների կարգավիճակներն ու իրավասության շրջանակները ԱՄՆ-ում, Ռուսաստանի Դաշնությունում, Իրանում, Լեհաստանում, Իսրայելում, Վրաստանում՝ որպես ՀՀ-ում անվտանգության խորհրդի գործառնության նոր պայմանների բարելավման փորձի հնարավորություններ: Ներկայացված օրինակները ցույց են տալիս, որ, թեև տարբեր երկրներում ազգային անվտանգության քաղաքականությանը վերաբերող օրենսդրություններում առկա են ընդհանուր նպատակներ, սակայն միևնույն ժամանակ դրանցից յուրաքանչյուրն առանձնանում է իր քաղաքական-իրավական բնորոշումներով, կազմավորման ու ենթակայության, կառուցվածքային և գործառնությանին առանձնահատկություններով: Հայաստանի Հանրապետությունում 2015 թ. իրականացված սահմանադրական բարեփոխումներով նախատեսվեց, որ 2018 թ. ապրիլից վարչապետը գլխավորում է Անվտանգության խորհուրդը, որը սահմանում է նաև պաշտպանության ոլորտի քաղաքականության հիմնական ուղղությունները: Անվտանգության համակարգող մարմինների պրակտիկայի ուսումնասիրությունը արժեքավոր փորձ է Հայաստանի Հանրապետության անվտանգության քաղաքականության լիարժեք կայացման ու գործնականում դրա կիրառելիության ապահովման կառուցակարգերի հետևողական զարգացման համար:

Аннотация – Республика Армения достигла значительного прогресса в формировании политики национальной безопасности и системы безопасности страны, создав необходимые политико-правовые предпосылки и контрольные механизмы для оценки, пересмотра и дальнейшего развития эффективности деятельности государственных органов безопасности и процессов, происходящих в стратегически важных для государства сферах. Однако важно отметить, что основная проблема в этих процессах касается уровня коор-

динации политики безопасности, которая была несколько дифференцирована как в функциональном, так и в субъектном аспектах, особенно в контексте перехода Армении к парламентской модели управления, последующих изменений в оборонной сфере и в политике безопасности, а также в условиях активных военных действий. Государственные межведомственные органы разрабатывают основные направления по противодействию внутренним и внешним стратегическим рискам и угрозам стране, а также координируют деятельность различных государственных органов в соответствующей сфере. Подобные структуры сформированы и функционируют практически во всех зарубежных странах. В данной статье рассматривается статус и сфера полномочий аналогичных органов в Соединенных Штатах, Российской Федерации, Иране, Польше, Израиле и Грузии как потенциальных моделей для улучшения условий функционирования Совета безопасности Армении. Представленные примеры показывают, что, несмотря на наличие общих целей в национальном законодательстве о безопасности различных стран, каждое законодательство из них отличается своими политико-правовыми определениями, порядком формирования и подчиненности, а также структурными и функциональными особенностями. В Республике Армения конституционными реформами 2015 года предусмотрено, что с апреля 2018 года Совет безопасности возглавляет Премьер-министр, который также определяет основные направления оборонной политики. Изучение практики координирующих органов безопасности предоставляет ценный опыт для последовательного развития процедур, обеспечивающих полноценное становление политики безопасности Армении и ее практическую реализацию.

Keywords – security, subject, status, state, strategy.

Հիմնաբառեր – անվտանգություն, սուբյեկտ, կարգավիճակ, պետություն, ռազմավարություն:
Ключевые слова – безопасность, субъект, статус, государство, стратегия.

Introduction

In the structures responsible for implementing the security policy of any state, particular emphasis is placed on institutions specifically established for this purpose, which are tasked with developing and coordinating the country's security policy. These institutions primarily take the form of security advisory bodies (councils). The organisational and structural analysis of foreign countries' security coordination bodies, including their history of establishment, structure, objectives, and functions, holds significant value from a practical and scientific perspective. This analysis also provides an opportunity to incorporate elements of their best practices into the Republic of Armenia.

State-authority bodies responsible for or involved in ensuring national security elaborate on specific provisions of the state's security concept related to their respective fields of activity, in accordance with their designated objectives. The implementation and assurance of state security policy cannot be carried out solely by a single governmental body within a specific sector. Rather, its comprehensive coordination requires an institution endowed with the necessary authority, mechanisms, and influence – namely, the Security Council (Патрушева 2009, 11). This is also stipulated by the Law of the Republic of Armenia "On the Formation and Activities of

the Security Council", which defines the Security Council as the primary body responsible for developing the country's security and defence policy («Անվտանգության խորհրդի կազմավորման և գործունեության մասին» ՀՀ օրենք 2018).

Comparative Analysis of the Responsibility of State Authorities

Furthermore, the coordinated guidelines, regulatory provisions, and directives, which have undergone expert evaluation and have been approved by the relevant governmental authorities, typically constitute the doctrinal documents forming the substantive framework of state security policy.

Similar bodies operate in the United States, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom, Japan, Israel, Ukraine, Kazakhstan, Turkey, Georgia, and other countries. Research indicates that the political and legal status of these supraministerial bodies is determined by the form of government in each country. These institutions are referred to by different names across various states, including the National Security Council (United States, Russia, Georgia), the Security Council (Macedonia), the Supreme Council of National Security (Romania, Iran), the State Secretariat of the Security Council (Belarus), the National Defence Council (Lithuania), the National Security and Defence Council (France, Ukraine), and the Security Committee (Kazakhstan).

In some countries, the institutions responsible for coordinating security policy have been established in recent years or are still in the process of formation. For instance, in 2007, within the framework of constitutional reforms, British Prime Minister Gordon Brown announced the creation of the National Security Council. The council structure was modelled after the U.S. system, incorporating an advisory body of security experts attached to the Prime Minister. Some experts were also recruited from the House of Lords.

Organization of the Defence and National Security Council in Different Countries: A Comparative Analysis

As part of security system reforms, the President of France announced the establishment of the Defence and National Security Council in October 2008. Currently, the Council includes the Prime Minister, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Minister of the Interior, the Minister of Defence, and the Minister of Finance and Economy. Other ministers may participate in the Council's activities as needed. The authority of this body has been expanded compared to its predecessors – the Internal Security Council and the Defence Council. The Council's primary objective is to ensure the state's internal and external security.

The system of institutions ensuring national security in the United States was formally established in 1947 with the adoption of the National Security Act by Congress (The National Security Act of 1947). With the enactment of this law, the National Security Council (NSC) acquired the status of the highest coordinating and directing body within the U.S. national security system. In addition to its function of advi-

sing the President on national security matters, the law also assigned the NSC the responsibility of coordinating the activities of all federal departments and agencies dealing with national security issues.

At the same time, the law did not grant the U.S. President the discretionary authority to appoint additional members to the NSC from among federal executive officials. Instead, it established a fixed composition of permanent members, which included the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the Secretaries of Defence, the Army, the Air Force, and the Navy, as well as the Director of the National Security Resources Board.

In 1949, as a result of legislative amendments, the U.S. President was granted the right, with the approval of Congress, to include the heads and deputies of other federal departments, including security agencies, in the National Security Council (NSC), depending on the issues under discussion (National Security Act Amendments of 1949). This amendment also added the United States Vice President to the NSC.

In 1971, U.S. President Richard Nixon established an Intelligence Committee within the NSC to develop the general priorities for U.S. intelligence and counterintelligence activities. Additionally, "Committee 40" was created to oversee the coordination of covert operations conducted by U.S. intelligence services abroad.

It is important to note that the structure of the NSC has undergone changes at different times, depending on the discretion of the incumbent President. On February 13, 2009, a presidential executive order established the composition of the NSC, which included the President of the United States, the Vice President, the Secretary of State, the Secretaries of Defence, Energy, Treasury, Justice, and Homeland Security, the U.S. Representative to the United Nations, the White House Chief of Staff, the Assistant to the President for National Security Affairs, the Director of National Intelligence, and the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (Патрушева 2009, 142–144).

The U.S. National Security Council (NSC) is distinguished by its complex structure, which consists of regional committees, policy coordination committees, operational committees, and other bodies. The regional committees are overseen by the Assistant Secretaries of State and include:

- The Committee on European and Eurasian Affairs
- The Committee on Russian and CIS Affairs
- The Committee on Western Hemisphere Affairs
- The Committee on East Asian Affairs
- The Committee on South Asian, Middle Eastern, and North African Affairs
- The Committee on African Affairs (Иванов 2013, 14).

The operational committees are primarily led by the heads of divisions within the NSC staff. Some of the most significant committees include:

- The Counterterrorism Information Strategy Committee
- The Committee on Combating Transnational Organized Crime

- The Committee on the Prevention of the Proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and Homeland Security
- The Committee on Arms Control
- The Committee on Defence Strategy, Military Forces, and Force Planning
- The Committee on Democracy, Human Rights, and International Operations, among others.

The U.S. National Security Council (NSC) includes approximately 30 policy coordination committees, which function as interagency commissions composed of assistant department heads and departmental experts from relevant government agencies. It should be noted that these committees represent the lowest level within the NSC structure. They are also categorised into regional and operational committees or those specialising in specific issues (Council on Foreign Relations 2023).

In the national security system of the Russian Federation, the following structural elements can be identified:

- The President of the Russian Federation
- The Security Council, along with its interagency commissions
- The Federation Council and the State Duma
- The Government of the Russian Federation
- Federal executive bodies
- Executive bodies of the subjects of the Russian Federation
- Local self-government bodies of Russia (Кочетков 2015, 23).

The Russian Security Council differs significantly from the U.S. National Security Council in terms of political-legal status and structure. The Constitution of the Russian Federation, adopted through a referendum on December 12, 1993, established a provision mandating the formation and leadership of the Security Council by the President of Russia, as well as the definition of the Council's status through federal legislation (Конституция Российской Федерации 2020).

By its status, the Security Council of the Russian Federation (RF Security Council) is a collegial and advisory body under the President, responsible for implementing a unified state policy in the field of national security. Its constitutional status is characterised not only by the fact that its formation by the President is enshrined in the Constitution and regulated by a separate federal law, but also by its direct and primary function – ensuring the necessary conditions for the President to exercise his constitutional powers aimed at preserving Russia's independence, territorial integrity, sovereignty, and the protection of human and civil rights and freedoms. In this regard, the Security Council functions as a collegial advisory body under the President, executing a unified state policy in the field of national security.

The objectives of the Russian Security Council, as established and subsequently amended by Presidential decrees, include:

- Ensuring the conditions for the President of the Russian Federation to exercise his powers in the field of national security;

- Formulating state policy in the field of national security and monitoring its implementation;
- Forecasting, identifying, analysing, and assessing national security threats, including evaluating military risks and threats and developing measures for their neutralisation;
- Preparing recommendations for the President of the Russian Federation;
- Defining the main directions of the country's external military policy;
- Coordinating the activities of federal executive bodies and executive authorities of the subjects of the Russian Federation in implementing Presidential decisions related to national security;
- Assessing the effectiveness of federal executive bodies operating in the national security domain (Утверждено Указом Президента Российской Федерации 2020).

The Council consists of permanent members who have equal voting rights in decision-making and members with consultative voting rights. Additionally, since 2011, a Scientific Council has been established under the Security Council to provide scientific, methodological, and expert-analytical support for the activities of the Council, its working bodies, and its staff (Положение о Научном совете при Совете Безопасности Российской Федерации 2011).

The current National Security Council (NSC) system of Georgia is based on the conceptual principles of the U.S. National Security Council (NSC). The foundation of Georgia's national security is the integration of domestic, foreign, and military policies. According to Article 99, part 1 of the Georgian Constitution, the President of Georgia forms and chairs the National Security Council to organise the country's armed forces and defense (The Constitution of Georgia 2020). According to part 2 of the same article, the procedure for the formation and functioning of the National Security Council is defined by constitutional law.

After Georgia transitioned to a parliamentary republic model of governance, a number of legislative and sub-legislative acts were passed to define the scope of issues within the jurisdiction of the Council. These include:

- Developing Georgia's defence strategy
- Matters directly related to the improvement of defence and the formation of the armed forces
 - Issues related to armed attacks against Georgia and declarations of war
 - Matters concerning emergency situations
 - The adoption of orders equivalent to the law in case of wartime or emergency situations
- The planning of the armed forces formation and submission for Presidential approval
 - Appointments and dismissals of key commanders of the armed forces
 - Developing proposals related to international conflict zones

- Assessing the appropriateness of participation in security measures conducted outside the country in accordance with treaties ratified by Georgia
- Regulating matters related to the entry, movement, and exit of another state's armed forces in special cases defined by law
- Matters concerning the military preparedness of the armed forces (Alapishvili 2018, 205–206).

The Supreme National Security Council (SNSC) of the Islamic Republic of Iran was established in 1979 following the Islamic Revolution. The legal basis for the activities of this body is Article 176 of the Constitution, which assigns the following key functions to the Supreme National Security Council:

- Formulating policies related to the country's defence and security under the leadership's decision
- Coordinating military, political, economic, social, and cultural activities with the objective of securing the nation's defence and national security interests
- Utilising the Republic's material and spiritual resources to counteract both internal and external security threats (Розов 2006).

Currently, the Supreme National Security Council of Iran includes the Supreme Leader of the Republic (the head of the council) and 11 members: the President of the Islamic Republic of Iran (the chairman of the council), two representatives of the Supreme Religious Leader, the Speaker of Parliament, the Head of the Judiciary, the Minister of Defence, the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, and Information, the Chairman of the Committee on Planning and Administrative Organization, and the Secretary of the Supreme National Security Council.

The organisation and activities of the Supreme Council are based on territorial operational principles. Structurally, the distinctive feature of this body is the existence of two separate councils: the Security Council (regarding national security issues, which is not only advisory but also has a certain degree of executive authority, chaired by the Minister of Internal Affairs) and the Defence Council (an advisory body on military issues, chaired by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces).

In all territorial units of the Republic, local security councils operate, consisting of the provincial governor (as the chairman of the council), the representative of the Supreme Leader, the head of the local department of the Ministry of Information, the commander of the local Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), the heads of local law enforcement agencies, and the commander of the local military unit.

The Security Council is considered an advisory body and, to a certain extent, an executive body concerning national security issues. The Security Council performs the following distinct functions: reviewing and analysing crucial information related to security issues, promoting security, and engaging in a comprehensive discussion of political, social, economic, judicial, and cultural issues. It also proposes changes to the operations of various state bodies related to security issues in cases of inter-

nal political changes or the presence of external threats. Additionally, upon instruction from the Supreme National Security Council, the Security Council develops programmatic projects to ensure national security.

The Defence Council is an advisory body on military matters in Iran. Its activities cover the following areas: proposing draft decisions to the Supreme Commander on declaring war and concluding peace, recommending candidates for high-ranking military positions, defining forms and methods of interaction between the armed forces, the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), law enforcement agencies, and civilian authorities, as well as coordinating the collaboration of various departments and state bodies on military research, construction work, military technology, and armaments production (Supreme Defense Council (SDC)).

It should be noted that in recent years, with the intensification of Iran's nuclear issues, the role of the Supreme National Security Council of Iran has significantly increased. Currently, the Iranian leadership has delegated the primary responsibility for conducting negotiations with relevant international organisations and other countries on this matter to the Supreme National Security Council rather than to the Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Poland's National Security Council is the advisory body to the President of the Republic on both internal and external security issues (National Security Bureau of Poland, About the National Security Council). The main function of the NSC is to examine and form opinions on matters related to national security, particularly the general guidelines for state security, principles and directions of foreign policy, directions for the development of the armed forces, external security issues, and the neutralisation of threats directed at internal security and resources.

Currently, members of Poland's National Security Council *ex officio* include: the Speaker of the Lower House, the Speaker of the Senate, the Prime Minister of Poland, the Deputy Prime Minister-Economics Minister, the Head of the National Security Bureau, the Ministers of Foreign Affairs, National Defence, Internal Affairs, Administration and Digitization, as well as the leaders of political forces that have received a passing vote in the legislative body during a particular period.

Within the framework of the National Security Council (NSC) of the Republic of Poland, the National Security Bureau (NSB) operates. In general, the National Security Bureau assists the President of the Republic of Poland on security and defence matters, based on the President's obligations as the supreme representative of the Republic of Poland and the guarantor of the continuity of the state. The President is also responsible for the direct implementation of the Constitution, the protection of state authority and security, and ensuring the inviolability and territorial integrity of Poland. The tasks and duties of the NSB also stem from the President's constitutional functions as the Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (National Security Bureau of Poland).

Studying Israel's experience within the parliamentary system established in Armenia is important, as Israel is also situated in a geopolitically complex region and is constantly at risk of resuming military operations (Քոթանյան 2016, 10). Israel's National Security Council was established by Government Decision No. 4889 on March 7, 1999, and was enshrined in the National Security Council Law on July 29, 2008 (Israel Executive Branch: National Security Council, Israel Government Press Office). It functions as a coordinating, integrating, advisory, and supervisory body on national policy issues, working for the Israeli Prime Minister (the NSC is located next to the Prime Minister's residence in Jerusalem). The Council's head reports directly to the Prime Minister. In Israel, where the possibility of resuming military operations constantly threatens the state and its people, the government (Prime Minister) is supported by what is called the "Small Cabinet" (also known as the Political-Military Cabinet or Security Cabinet).

The National Security Council operates with a three-tier interdepartmental hierarchical system:

- The first tier is at the expert level, where security-related issues are raised through the coordination of deputy ministers.
- At the middle level, a consultative body is formed with the relevant ministries' first deputies to facilitate the maturation and thorough development of decisions related to defence policy, as well as internal and external security subfields.
- The highest body, the National Security Council, has two key functions. As a collegial body, it is headed by the Prime Minister, and it conducts consultations under the leadership of the National Security Council Secretary.

The main bodies governing the Armenian defence and security operational system and the hierarchical relationships between them are defined by the Constitution of the Republic of Armenia and the laws. The Constitution is the fundamental law of the state, which sets out the basic rules for the relationship between the individual and the state, as well as the organisation of state authority.

Formation, operational agencies and functions of the National Security Council of the Republic of Armenia

The legal and organisational formation of the National Security Council was completed in 2008 with the relevant legal acts issued by the President of the Republic of Armenia, which included the approval of the Council's statutes and those of its staff. The main directions of the National Security Council's activities were largely determined by the provisions of Armenia's national security strategy.

The working bodies of the National Security Council were the interdepartmental commissions, which were established to address the issues assigned to the Council. These commissions were created based on both functional and territorial characteristics. The interdepartmental commissions of the Council were responsible for

preparing proposals and guarantees to be presented to the Council, with their main focus being on internal and external political matters related to national security.

The constitutional reforms adopted by referendum on December 6, 2015, marked a significant departure from the changes made in 2005 (ՀՀ Սահմանադրության փոփոխություններ 2015). The reforms transitioned Armenia from a semi-presidential system to a parliamentary system of governance, which inevitably led to changes in the management of the defence sector. As a result of the shift in the governance model, the role of the President in the country's defence and security system was significantly reduced, while the Prime Minister was granted substantial new powers, in line with the essence of a parliamentary system.

From the strategic decision-making perspective, the constitutional reforms also expanded the role of the National Security Council (NSC) in managing the defence sector. The National Security Council is a state body responsible for making decisions on matters related to the main directions of defence policy. Decisions related to defence policy are signed by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Defence (decisions not related to defence policy are signed by the Prime Minister and the Secretary of the National Security Council).

The members of the National Security Council include:

- Prime Minister,
- First Deputy Prime Minister,
- Deputy Prime Ministers,
- Secretary of the National Security Council,
- Minister of Defence,
- Minister of Foreign Affairs,
- Director of the National Security Service,
- Chief of Police,

Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces («Անվտանգության խորհրդի կազմավորման և գործունեության մասին» ՀՀ օրենք 2018).

The National Security Council is tasked with strategic defence planning and review, approving the development of the Armed Forces, as well as the development of other armed forces, military mobilisation, and deployment plans, as well as the operational equipment for the defence of Armenia's territory and civil defence national plans («Պաշտպանության մասին» ՀՀ օրենք 2017).

Thus, the National Security Council holds exceptional importance as a body that supports the implementation of the functions of the guarantor of national security. First, the National Security Council is the only constitutional body (as stipulated by the fundamental laws), albeit of an advisory nature, which the state leaders are obligated to form and lead by the force of the Constitution. The formation and dissolution of all other advisory bodies are at the discretion of the country's leaders; however, this is not the case for the Security Council. It is a permanently functioning mandatory constitutional body.

Second, the head of state is required to personally preside over the National Security Council, which includes representatives of the highest state authorities (for example, according to the 1995 and 2005 Constitutions of the Republic of Armenia, the President of the National Assembly, the Prime Minister and Deputy Prime Ministers, the President of the Constitutional Court, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, and all heads of the law enforcement agencies, including the Minister of Defence, the Chief of Police, and the Director of the National Security Service). According to the 2015 Constitution and the Law on the Formation and Activities of the National Security Council, the members include the Prime Minister, the First Deputy Prime Minister, the Deputy Prime Ministers, the Secretary of the National Security Council, the Minister of Defence, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, the Director of the National Security Service, the Chief of Police, and the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces.

Third, the Council operates through sessions, which can be held either in open or closed sessions and are convened as necessary but at regular intervals. Decisions on the issues discussed by the Council are made and take effect upon approval by the President of the Council – the head of state. The organisational support of the Council's complex and multifaceted ongoing activities is carried out by the Council's Secretary, who is appointed and dismissed by the heads of state and is directly subordinate to them. To ensure the smooth functioning of the Council, a Secretariat (currently an office in the Republic of Armenia) has been established, which is managed by the Secretary of the Council.

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