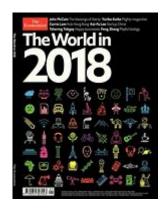


## The Economist nomme l'Arménie pays de l'année



LONDON — The Economist has chosen Armenia as "the country of the year for 2018" stating that it was a tricky choice.

"Our annual "country of the year" award goes not to the most influential nation, nor to the richest, nor to the one with the tastiest food (sorry, Japan). It celebrates progress. Which country has improved the most in the past 12 months?" the paper stated.

The article notes that "A stellar performance in one year is no guarantee of future success. Last year's pick, France, is now racked by riots. Myanmar, our winner in 2015, has regressed bloodily. In the end, the choice came down to three countries. In Malaysia voters fired a prime minister who could not adequately explain why there was \$700m in his bank account.

Ethiopia had an extraordinary year. The ruling party this year picked a reformist leader, Abiy Ahmed, who has released political prisoners, largely unmuzzled the media and promised to hold real elections in 2020.

Yet in Armenia that is exactly what seems to have happened. The president, Serzh Sarkisian, tried to dodge term limits by making himself into an executive prime minister. The streets erupted in protest. Nikol Pashinian, a charismatic and bearded former journalist and mp, was swept into power, legally and properly, on a wave of revulsion against corruption and incompetence".

The article concludes with a note of caution: "Armenia's nasty territorial dispute with Azerbaijan

has not been resolved and could ignite again. However, an ancient and often misruled nation in a turbulent region has a chance of democracy and renewal. For that reason, Armenia is our country of the year. Shnorhavorum yem!".

source: Massis Media