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## Karabakh Warns Baku After Azeri Shelling

STEPANAKERT (RFE/RL) – Nagorno-Karabakh's army threatened "painful" retaliation on Monday, October 23, as it accused Azerbaijani forces of shelling its frontline positions for the first time in two months.

The Defense Army claimed that they fired five mortar shells and one anti-tank rocket in northeastern Karabakh on Sunday. It released video footage purportedly showing two such shells exploding in a field and the Israeli-made Spike rocket flying over a Karabakh military facility and hitting the ground.

In a statement, the Karabakh army warned that it will retaliate in a "disproportionate and quite painful" fashion if the Azerbaijani side continues such "deliberate provocations."

Another statement issued later in the day said Azerbaijani forces fired another Spike rocket at a different section of the line of contact around Karabakh on Monday afternoon. It said Karabakh Armenian troops again did not shoot back "in order not to deepen tension" on the frontlines.

The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry dismissed the first Karabakh statement as "slander." It said that the Armenians themselves resorted to a "provocation" by killing an Azerbaijani soldier on Sunday. The ministry did not specify the frontline section where the soldier, identified as Jabbar Zeynalov, died.

The truce violations were reported one week after a meeting of Armenia's and Azerbaijan's presidents held in Geneva. In a joint statement issued there, their foreign ministers and international mediators said Serzh Sargsyan and Ilham Aliyev "agreed to take measures to intensify the negotiation process and to take additional steps to reduce tensions on the Line of Contact."

Just three days after the Geneva summit, an Armenian soldier was killed in Karabakh by Azerbaijani sniper fire. Armenia responded by accusing Baku of "trying to walk away" from the understandings reached in Geneva. Still, Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian made clear on Friday that Yerevan will not avoid further talks with Baku.

The joint statement released in Geneva said the US, Russian and French mediators co-chairing the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group will soon hold follow-up "working sessions" with Nalbandian and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov.



## World Music for a Global Program At Mirror-Spectator Gala, Nov. 3

NEWTON, Mass. – The Black Sea is a world away from lands where Salsa music originated. But building a bridge connecting them is Black Sea Salsa, created right here and led by Dan Teager.

As the group's website says, the band offers "six horns, five rhythms, four vocals and one great sound."

The Black Sea Salsa will perform their infectious rhythms on Friday, November 3, at the 85th anniversary gala of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator at the Boston Marriott Newton Hotel.

The 15-piece band performs a mélange of music from Latin to Jazz and Middle Eastern.

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## Ecumenical Leaders Offer Prayers For Christians in the Middle East

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach  
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – Among the hundreds of commemorative events organized to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the Reformation over the past year – "Luther year" in Germany – was a special gathering from October 18 to 21 in Berlin. On the invitation of the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), four of the highest representatives of the Eastern Orthodox churches met in the capital for a series of meetings and religious services dedicated to the situation of Christians in the Middle East today.

Joining Catholicos Karekin II were the Syrian Orthodox Patriarch Ignatius Aphrem, Coptic Pope Tawadros and the Indian-Orthodox-Syrian Catholicos Baselios Marthoma for a five-day visit which included a meeting with the German

see PRAYERS, page 5



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II

## Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian Elected President Of Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association

MEDFORD, Mass. – Middlesex Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian was recently elected by his peers to serve as president of the Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association.

"From Berkshire County to Essex County and beyond, each day sheriffs across the Commonwealth are making a difference in the lives of those we serve in our communities," Koutoujian said. "Over the next two years I will work with my colleagues to support their efforts, while striving to better engage the public about our collective roles and responsibilities, as well as sheriffs' work in tackling the factors that lead to criminal behavior, including substance use and mental illness."

Appointed sheriff by Gov. Deval Patrick in January 2011, Koutoujian won election to office in 2012 and re-election in 2016. Prior to assuming office, he see SHERIFF, page 20

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### FAST Creates Angel Network for Startups

YEREVAN (itel.am) – The Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST) announced recently the creation of an Angels Network. The official announcement took place on October 19, at the gala dinner dedicated to the "Machine Learning for Discovery Sciences" workshop, which was organized by FAST and the US National Science Foundation.

Angels Network members Ruben Harutyunyan and Igor Khalatian reported that the initiative unites 15 Armenian entrepreneurs, who will provide financial and consulting assistance to Armenian startups.

FAST NextGen Council was also presented during the gala dinner. The council comprises 15 young Armenian scientists and engineers. FAST signed three memorandums of understanding with the Ministry of Education and Science of Armenia; University of Southern California and Hamburg University of Technology.

### Meghri Free Trade Zone Gets Support

YEREVAN (Arka) – The Russian Export Center signed a number of agreements on the margins of the II Eurasian Partnership forum in Yerevan last week, envisaging the participation of Russian companies in the Armenian free trade zone in the southern Meghri on the border with Iran, in the development of cooperation in the field of communications and agriculture.

Russian Export Center leader Pyotr Fradkov said the group wants to promote Russian-Armenian economic projects both in other member states of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) and in third countries in the field of information and communication technologies.

### Philanthropist Levon Hayrapetyan Dies at 68

MOSCOW (Armenpress) – Businessman and philanthropist Levon Hayrapetyan died on October 18 after battling a long disease, writer Zori Balayan announced.

Hayrapetyan was born in 1949 in Vank in Nagorno Karabakh's Martakert region. He was one of the largest investors in the modern history of Karabakh. Hayrapetyan financed the reconstruction of the renowned Gandzasar monastery in 2000-2002. On October 16, 2008, he organized a mass wedding ceremony in Shushi and Gandzasar for 700 couples.

Hayrapetyan was arrested in Russia in July 2014 and sentenced to four years for embezzlement of \$700,000. In October 2014, he was placed under house arrest. His defense attorney asked the court to release him, citing health problems.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## President Presents Medal to Philanthropist Eurnekian

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — On October 12, Argentine-Armenian philanthropist Eduardo Eurnekian received the title of National Hero of Armenia at the Presidential Palace of Armenia, during which President Serzh Sargsyan presented the Order of Motherland to the philanthropist for his services to the country.

Sargsyan received Eurnekian before the ceremony and discussed opportunities for new investment projects in Armenia. Eurnekian expressed his readiness to continue his activities there. During the ceremony of presenting the nation's highest title, Sargsyan referred to the past path of Eurnekian and his initiatives, praising his activities and expressing conviction that he will continue doing that thankful work with the same enthusiasm.

"There is no need to introduce Mr. Eduardo Eurnekian. Not only in Argentina but in different continents of the world Mr. Eurnekian enjoys a great reputation due to the large-scale works done by his leadership," Sargsyan said, adding that as a really devoted Armenian he also created a large business in Armenia. Serzh Sargsyan also noted that apart from being a successful business, Eduardo Eurnekian is also a great philanthropist. "Despite the fact that he never speaks out about his charity programs, we are aware of the size of those programs," Sargsyan said.

## Premier Attends Opening of Renovated Street in Gyumri

GYUMRI (Armenpress) — Prime Minister of Armenia Karen Karapetyan visited Gyumri on October 18 during which he attended the opening of Rustaveli street which has been renovated within the frames of Kumayri historical center development program.

During the tour Karapetyan got acquainted with the results of the renovation works. He stressed the importance of the development program, the restoration of historical-cultural values of Shiraz and Rustaveli streets and the improvement of infrastructures. Within the framework of the program centers for art, crafts, entertainment will be created, different business programs will be implemented, attractive conditions will be created for tourists in Gyumri's historical center.

He told reporters that he liked the renovated street very much, and the next street will be the Shiraz street which will be renovated under the same program. It is planned to launch the construction works in March, 2018.

"We will definitely complete the Kumayri historical center's program. Our main goal is to maintain Gyumri's uniqueness," he said.

The residents of Gyumri thanked the PM for implementation of the program and for always keeping Gyumri in spotlight.

Later Karapetyan visited the newly-opened information center for visitors of Gyumri, got acquainted with its services provided.

## Armenian Violinist Sets World Record

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Renowned violinist Nikolay Madoyan has set a Guinness World Record for an uninterrupted performance which lasted 33 hours, 2 minutes and 41 seconds.

The performance was held February 11-12, 2017 in the Komitas Chamber Music Hall in Yerevan. Madoyan said he dedicates the record to the country and for the heroes of the four-day war of Artsakh.

"I selected 59 famous and rather difficult violin pieces of music to set the record. I also included four Armenian works, three from Komitas and one from Edvard Baghdasaryan," the violinist said.

Madoyan has set another record, which has been submitted for approval by the Guinness Record office, but they haven't yet responded. The record was set by playing Nikolay Rimski-Korsakov's Flight of the Bumblebee in just 46 seconds

# Armenians Urged to Value Their Women As Abortions of Girls Skew Population

By Anna Pujol-Mazzini

GAVAR, Armenia (Thomson Reuters Foundation) — When Karina Aghalaryan discovered she was going to be the mother of a baby girl, the 35-year-old Armenian was ecstatic.

Her family was altogether more lukewarm.

Talk swiftly turned to what the baby clearly wasn't: a boy.

When Petrosyan got pregnant with a second girl the following year, there were no celebrations. Instead, her mother-in-law marched her to the doctor for an abortion.

"My husband and my mother-in-law forced me to figure out if it was a boy or a girl. When they found out it was a girl, they made me have an abortion," said Aghalaryan, whose name was changed to avoid being stigmatized in her community.

"I had no words to say in that situation," she told the Thomson Reuters Foundation in Gavar, 100 kilometers (62 miles) from Yerevan.

For Armenian families, giving birth to at least one boy is a must, to continue the family line and carry forward the surname in a society where daughters often marry and move away.

As the economy worsens — nearly a third of the country lives below the poverty line — Armenians see sons as a way to ensure financial stability in old age but aborting girls is causing a potential shortage of women that authorities want to address.

"People think that for a boy it's easier to earn money and become more economically sustainable than a girl," said Armine Hovakimyan, president of the Goris Women's Resource Center.

"That has a very big impact especially in remote areas, they want to have boys more than girls."

Typical of many Armenian towns, Gavar is a ramshackle, industrial city in decline. Its Soviet-era factories have faded along with the rest of a once-robust economy, which stalled when the small Caucasian country won independence in 1991.

Some new industries are taking root, seeking to replace the old, highly centralized economy, but unemployment remains high.

Because of the high numbers of unemployed women, and a widespread belief that women should stay home and take care of family, Armenian women on average earn half of what the men do.

Therefore, women who get pregnant with girls face a dilemma: giving birth to enough children that one of them will end up being a boy — or having abortions until one of them is male.

Worldwide, biologically 102 to 106 boys are born for every 100 girls on average, according to the United Nations.

In 2012-2013, 114 boys were born in Armenia for every 100 girls, according to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) — this is the third highest sex-selective abortion rate in the world after China and neighboring Azerbaijan.

As a result, UNFPA estimates that in Armenia, nearly 93,000 women will be missing by 2060 if the country's high prenatal sex selection rate remains unchanged, driving young, single men to leave the country in search of a partner.

But for now, a lack of opportunities has caused thousands of young, educated men to move out of the country in search of better-paid jobs, according to the United Nations — and the "brain drain" has balanced out the female shortfall.

In a bid to curb the gender imbalance, the government outlawed sex-selective abortions last year as part of a wider crackdown on abortions.

Abortion has been legal in the ex-Soviet republic since 1955 and a woman can have an abortion up to 12 weeks of pregnancy.

### Cultural Change

A lack of widely available, affordable contraceptives and a common fear that contraceptives might cause health problems means abortion remains the main method of family planning in the country, researchers say.

Almost 40 percent of Armenian women have had at least one abortion, according to UNFPA. Women's rights

campaigners say some of the women they work with have two or three abortions in one year alone.

Under the new law, aimed at reducing the rate at which women are aborting girls, patients must leave three days of "reflection" between their initial bid for abortion and the procedure and attend a counseling session.

Doctors can be fined for performing sex-selective abortions, but it is unclear how many have been prosecuted.

Government officials told the Thomson Reuters Foundation it was difficult to measure the impact of the law alone on the declining rate of sex-selective abortions but the legal change alongside awareness raising campaigns played a big part.

"It takes a long time to change mindsets," Gayane Avagyan, head of the maternal health division at the Armenian ministry of health, said in an email.

"I think there is a change because huge work has been done to raise the level of public awareness."

But aid groups and campaigners say cracking down on aborting female fetuses does not address one of the main drivers behind the crisis: a deep-seated gender inequality in the country.

"Only by changing legislation, it will not be possible to change the attitude and perception toward the problem," Garik Hayrapetyan, the head of UNFPA in Armenia, told the Thomson Reuters Foundation. "(Changing) the value of the girl, and women's equal status in society is the key to overcome this harmful practice."

Many aid groups have launched programs aimed at tackling domestic violence and dismantling cultural views about the role women should have in society — with the ultimate goal of getting families to embrace having daughters.

"You can see the difference in communities in how the girls are raised and how the boys are raised," Sevan Petrosyan, who manages a project aimed at tackling gender inequality for World Vision in Armenia, said in an interview in the capital. "The way they are raised to be mothers, and how boys are raised to be fearless and powerful."

## Bill Outlawing Domestic Abuse Stirs Debate in Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Bruises have covered much of her body, attesting to the abuse she has suffered at the hands of her husband over two decades. Even while carrying his child, he continued to beat her.

"I was pregnant when he once kicked me and I fell from my bed," says the 43-year-old from the Armenian capital of Yerevan, adding that she now suffers from chronic health problems.

Requesting anonymity for fear of being targeted by more violence, she says she has nowhere to turn.

Family members discourage her from divorcing, fearing it would bring shame on them in Armenia, where traditional, conservative values hold sway in this mainly Christian country.

"I was probably not very strong," she says, "But the main factor was my parents' honor."

Plus, she adds, she wouldn't be able to afford to raise her three children alone if she left her husband.

The case is far from an anomaly in this nation of nearly 3 million.

The Coalition to Stop Violence Against Women, a grouping bringing together local NGOs, says 5,000 women called their special hotline this

year complaining of spousal abuse.

Other victims may have never gotten the chance.

### Dire Statistics

According to the Armenian NGO, at least four women have died at the hands of their partners or family members in the first six months of 2017 alone. Overall, it says, at least 50 women have been killed as a result of domestic violence in Armenia over the last five years.

Despite the dire statistics, Armenia has no law criminalizing domestic violence. It is also just one of only two Council of Europe member states that has failed to join the Istanbul Convention on Prevention and Combating Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence.

However, the National Assembly, Armenia's national parliament, appears set to finally overcome obstacles to a bill that would criminalize domestic abuse and protect its victims.

"This law is essential, and a shame that it hasn't been passed [already], despite repeated promises and lots of advocacy from local groups, and [that] victims of domestic violence continue

to suffer unprotected from the state," says Giorgi Gogia, the South Caucasus director of Human Rights Watch.

However, critics say the proposed legislation would be an unnecessary intrusion by the state on the rights of the family. They also contend it is being pushed by "foreign governments" and lacks public backing inside Armenia.

A leading NGO in Armenia suspects such groups are receiving support from the Kremlin, which is wary of Armenia, a close ally, steering from Moscow's orbit and closer to the West.

The Kremlin conducted a similar "smear campaign" in 2012 when Armenia's parliament pushed to pass a gender-equality bill, according to one analyst.

### 'Nonexistent Conspiracy'

Justice Minister Davit Harutunian, who penned the proposed legislation, denies Yerevan has come under foreign pressure to pass the bill, saying the government views the issue of domestic abuse as a top priority.

Harutunian says some opponents wrongly believe the legislation will make it easier for the government to see ABUSE, page 3



## ARMENIA

## UNSEEN ARMENIA: Khachik Village, The Grasseaters Monastery and Gata

By Hovsep Daghdigian

**KHACHIK, Armenia** – Khachik is a village about 21 kilometers south of Areni, the village famous for its ancient wine production and where the oldest known shoe was found. From Areni a well-paved though winding road heads south to an altitude of about 2 kilometers (about 1.25 miles). The view of Areni from above is superb.

Khachik is near the border with Nakhichevan. Though a historically Armenian region which was rich in culture and history, Nakhichevan was given to Azerbaijan by Stalin during the Sovietization of the Caucasus. The Azeri government has since endeavored to erase every trace of the ancient Armenian presence there; there are virtually no Armenians left in Nakhichevan.

Approaching Khachik, to the right and across a pasture, there appears the significant remains of the Karkopi Monastery, also known as the Khodagerats (“Grass-eaters”) Monastery, dated to 911 A.D. Some suspect that there was an even earlier church at the site, but that remains to be investigated. Historian and cleric Hovsep Orbelian (1250-1305), in his *History of Sisakan* (Syunik), wrote of the establishment of the monastery.

Orbelian describes the early Karkopi site as being inhabited by unkempt vegetarians, some of whom lived in caves, small cells, or out in the open scattered throughout the valley. They maintained silence while sustaining themselves on seeds and vegetables. Mass was conducted on Sundays. Somewhere in the valley they erected a holy structure called “The Vegetarian’s Cross.” Following the destruction of the region and its depopulation, Syunik’s Prince Ashot I and Lord Hovhannes III, the Bishop of Syunik, ordered a new monastery built on the site. After Prince Ashot’s death and the subsequent destruction of the monastery by an earthquake, Prince Ashot’s widow, Lady Shushan, ordered the monastery rebuilt. It was consecrated by



Khotagarats monastery 911 A.D.



Slicing giant *gata* to dancing and music

Catholicos Hovhannes. A lengthy plea was inscribed on the church memorializing Lord Ashot and Lady Shushan, pleading for the salvation of their souls and for the blessing of their descendants. Though the church is dated to 911, the gavit was constructed later in the 13th century.

The dome of the church is collapsed. Renovations began during the Soviet era but ceased with the collapse of the Soviet Union. Remaining structures include the church, minus the dome, and parts of the gavit.

The remnants of a small church, “Hngazard”, dated to either medieval times or the 18th century (sources don’t agree) exists in the mountains a few km outside Khachik. It is easily accessible via a dirt road but it’s best if a villager shows visitors the way. The name may mean “hing” (“five”) and “zard” (“decoration”); that is the church of “five decorations,” though given the current state of the church it is difficult to ascertain what the five decorations are. The church may have been established to serve villagers who, during the spring and summer, established camps in the mountains where they remained to graze their livestock. From this church the village of Khachik in the valley below is clearly visible. Music from a festival in the village could easily be heard. The nearby slopes and hilltops in Nakhichevan are patrolled by Azeri soldiers. While there, we met two Armenian soldiers who, having finished their patrol of the Armenian side of the border, were hiking back to their military base in Khachik. We gave the Armenian soldiers a ride back to their base.

In Khachik the church of Soorb Astvatsatsin, 1681, is in fine shape and is operational. Khachik, like many villages in Armenia, has issues including the efficient

transportation of their produce to the market, and people leaving the village. Many of the young men leave for “contract” service in the army, or go elsewhere for employment. Villagers here, and just about everywhere, claim they do not receive adequate compensation for their products despite the high prices for their products in Yerevan and elsewhere. In an Armenia Now article on September 23, 2015, one villager, referring to the war with Azerbaijan which is just kilometers away from the village, “.wonders why people wouldn’t go [i.e. did not leave the village] when they had to physically defend their community from Azerbaijanis in the early 1990s, but leave now when despite the closeness of the border [the] ceasefire is largely observed.” The reason is often lack of work, insufficient prices for farm products, and poor infrastructure to get products to market.

While in Khachik we had the pleasure of attending the Khachik *Gata* Festival. As the folks in Khachik claim, and who can prove otherwise, Khachik has the largest and the best “gata” in the world. *Gata* is a layered pastry, typically a foot or so in diameter and about an inch or two thick. It is sometimes known as *nazook*. During the festival, booths sold food, locally grown apples for which Khachik is justifiably famous, wine, and an improvised tavern served beer. And of course there were perhaps a dozen booths selling a number of different *gatas* made by various cooks. Singers and dancers were accompanied by musicians playing authentic traditional instruments. The highlight of the event was the cutting of the giant *gata*, perhaps 10-12 feet in diameter, accompanied by music and dance. Slices of the giant *gata* were then handed out to attendees who came from across Armenia. I’ve no idea how they could bake such an immense *gata*, but I guess that secret will remain in Khachik.

To top off our visit, during our descent from Khachik towards Areni, we encountered a brief rain shower followed by a spectacular rainbow curving down in front of Areni’s beautiful stone cliffs.

## Bill Outlawing Domestic Abuse Stirs Debate in Armenia

ABUSE, from page 2  
take children away from their parents.

“The thing that is clear from what critics have said is that they either don’t understand the legislation or haven’t read it,” claims Harutiunian.

The passion the bill has stirred was evident during a public debate in Yerevan on October 9.

Representatives of several obscure groups claimed the West, and the European Union in particular, were forcing Armenia to pass the legislation in order to weaken the rights of families.

One of them, Hayk Nahapetian, questioned official statistics on domestic-abuse fatalities, claiming the problem is grossly exaggerated by pro-Western civic groups.

A high-ranking clergyman of the Armenian Apostolic Church, part of the Orthodox community, disagreed.

“Even if there is some foreign intervention or a desire to please some foreign forces...why

should we see a nonexistent conspiracy?” said Mikael Ajapahian. “I personally don’t see any conspiracy.”

“If I have a normal family, if I am a loving father, a loving husband, or a loving son, if I love and am loved, which article of this law on prevention of domestic violence could harm me?” the archbishop went on. “So do not create imaginary monsters, do not fight against imaginary monsters, and be tolerant toward each other.”

Hasmik Khachatryan, a young woman who was abused by her husband for almost a decade, also made a case for the bill’s passage during the discussion. She said it would protect victims of domestic violence and spare them “the kind of obstacles that I have encountered.”

Echoing statements by law enforcement officials, Deputy Justice Minister Vigen Kocharian told parliament on October 17 that Armenia’s existing criminal and family codes do not sufficiently empower relevant authorities to tackle the problem.

“About 47 percent of cases of sexual abuse of minors take place in family settings,” the official said. “Some people may not be concerned about this problem, but we are concerned.”

### Vague Wording?

Some critics have pointed to what they con-

sider vague wording in the legislation, which defines four types of domestic abuse: physical, sexual, psychological, and economic.

Some lawmakers on October 17 pressed Kocharian to clarify what that means, sparking heated exchanges.

One leading Armenian NGO has claimed that some, if not most, of the groups opposed to the bill appear to have connections to the Kremlin.

The Union of Informed Citizens said late last year that their research uncovered that the main organizations, political parties, and movements opposed to the legislation – including the Pan-Armenian Parental Committee, Stop G7, the Yerevan Geopolitical Club, For Restoration of Sovereignty, and Sputnik Armenia – either were pro-Russian in orientation or even deeply dependent on Russian funding.

According to the Union of Informed Citizens, two of the most vocal critics of the proposed law are Arman Boshian and Hayk Ayyazian.

Boshian leads the Pan-American Parental Committee, which has informal links to the All-Russian Parents’ Resistance movement founded by Sergei Kurghinian, an ethnic Armenian living in Russia. Kurghinian has been a big supporter of the Russia-backed separatists in eastern Ukraine, according to the NGO.

Boshian is also reportedly active with the

group Stop G7, which, according to Union of Informed Citizens, has railed against the domestic-violence legislation on social media, mainly Facebook.

Also connected to Stop G7, according to the Armenian NGO, is Ayyazian, who has peddled the canard that Washington has been manufacturing biological weapons in US-funded laboratories in Armenia. The US Embassy in Yerevan has refuted that claim.

At least one observer sees parallels with the campaign that the Kremlin allegedly coordinated in 2012 when Armenia tried to pass gender-equality legislation. Social media then became the tool for Moscow’s “smear campaign,” according to Maro Matosian.

“Identical video clips and articles – all in the Russian language – appeared in Armenia, Moldova, Ukraine, and other states that sought to align themselves with European standards,” Matosian wrote in an op-ed for the US-based *Asbarez* newspaper. “The well-organized campaign had individuals paid by Russian organizations spread misinformation and lies among the population as a scare tactic.”

The gender bill was eventually approved by parliament in May 2013. A vote in parliament on the domestic-abuse legislation is expected soon.



## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Armenia's Civil Aviation Chief, Italian Executives Discuss Launching Helicopter Flights

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Sergey Avetisyan, director of Armenia's General Department of Civil Aviation held a meeting October 18 with Alessandro Giulivi, CEO of Elitaliana, an Italian helicopter company founded in 1964.

During the meeting the Italian delegation presented the company's activities and services, and mentioned their interest on rendering helicopter services in Armenia.

Avetisyan welcomed Elitaliana's interest and mentioned the ongoing steps for the development of civil aviation and stressed the existing need of helicopter flights in Armenia.

The aviation department chief also proposed his readiness in assisting further works.

## Three Armenian Chess Players Receive FIDE Grandmaster Title

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Three chess players of Armenia's youth team have been awarded with the Grandmaster title by FIDE. Hayk Martirosyan, Manuel Petrosyan and Arman Michayelyan have been awarded the Grandmaster title during the 88th FIDE Congress.

Rafayel Bakunts was given the International Master title, and Sona Asatryan received the women's international master title for winning the European U18 championship.

## Armenian MP Calls for PACE to Disclose Hungary-Azerbaijan Corruption Deal

STRASBOURG (Armenpress) — Naira Zohrabyan, a member of the Armenian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), called on the members of the Council of Europe to reveal the involvement of their lawmakers in the recent corruption scandals linked with the Assembly, reports Armenpress. The Armenian MP also urged the representatives of Hungarian delegation at PACE to find out how Hungary released convicted murderer Ramil Safarov to Baku for \$7.6 million.

Zohrabyan delivered her remarks at the PACE autumn plenary session touching upon the resignation of Pedro Agramunt and the recent corruption scandals involving European lawmakers and the need to disclose them. "Pedro Agramunt, known as 'Don Corruption,' resigned on October 6 after calls by his political handlers. I congratulate those PACE lawmakers who didn't allow the PACE name to be identified with corruption where someone can buy, sell, resell a lawmaker and force to serve his country's authoritarian agenda. But whether putting an end on Pedro Agramunt is enough to clean up the corruption cobweb from the PACE face? It becomes clear that different European figures are involved in the famous corruption scandal who for years have received huge amount of money from the Danske Bank Estonia branch. I hope our colleagues of the Hungarian delegation will address a question to their country's political leadership over the scandalous disclosure according to which Hungary has sold murderer Ramil Safarov for \$7.6 million who killed Armenian officer Gurgen Margaryan with an axe while he was sleeping. I think our Hungarian colleagues will be interested in how millions of dollars have been transferred to a bank account opened by Metastar Invest in the Hungarian MKB bank and how these bank accounts are linked with Hungary's political leadership," Zohrabyan said.

The Armenian lawmaker said during the PACE June session they have supported the creation of independent investigative body which impartially investigates all corruption cases linked with the Assembly's activity.

# A Legacy of Lebanon's War: 'Land Mines' Left by Beirut's Dogs

By Anne Barnard

BEIRUT (*New York Times*) — Ask anyone here about canine excrement and the conversation moves quickly to concepts of citizenship, nationhood, belonging, Lebanon's sectarian political system and ultimately the civil war that reshaped the country from 1975 to 1990.

Civic activists say those years of sectarian violence and lawlessness, and the ensuing mistrust, destroyed Lebanon's sense of shared public space, whether physical or political.

During the civil war, "people were afraid of the streets and the sidewalks," said Jad Chaaban, a university professor who is a member of Beirut Madinati — Arabic for "Beirut, My City" — a group that made a stir last year by taking the radical step of running in municipal elections on a platform of improving public services.

After the war, reconstruction was carried out with "almost total disregard" for public streetscapes, he said.

"People don't feel that they own anything," he said. "They don't own the street. They don't belong. The sidewalk is a very nice metaphor for the Lebanese situation."

In spite of that, or because of it, a loose-knit coalition — an underdog movement, dare we say — has sprung up to battle the problem of soiled streets. It includes just a few people: Babikian and other neighborhood boosters, animal rights activists, a veterinarian and the politician son of an assassinated president.

What they shared, at first, was a tenuous hope that dog droppings — unlike, say, government corruption or the war in neighboring Syria — might be a problem small enough to solve. What they found instead was that it contained nearly every classic Lebanese problem.

Lebanon's weak government has failed to deliver public goods that it should be able to afford, like sewage treatment, clean water, consistent law enforcement or reliable electricity. Clean sidewalks are not even on the agenda.

So about two years ago, Babikian and several other advocates, all of whom

had gotten used to feces-free streets while living abroad, took matters into their own hands. Parallel efforts began in the largely Christian east side of Beirut and the largely Muslim west, a divide that itself is a legacy of the war.

On both sides, they hit fierce resistance.

Babikian said officials told her neighborhood group, Achrafieh 2020, which pushes for pedestrian-friendly streets in east Beirut, that working with it might anger people in the west. That exasperated the activists, who wondered, why not work with both?

A brief collaboration with trash collectors died during a contract imbroglio that left mountains of garbage nationwide in 2015.

And advocates struggled to enlist foreign domestic workers, often underpaid and overworked, who do much of the dog walking in a city where pets are largely a luxury.

"It was a total fiasco," said Dr. Maher Yehyia, 42, a veterinarian who had started his own campaign in western Beirut. I had found his number on a box on a lamppost. It was supposed to contain free plastic gloves for dog walkers, but it was empty.

When Dr. Yehyia returned in 2006 from Canada, where he had moved as a child during the war, he set about picking up after his Chihuahua.

"People thought I was crazy," he said.

He did not proselytize much at first. Fouled streets were a bigger issue in the Christian east, since most traditional Muslims do not keep dogs in their homes. Veterinary patients on the west side are 80 percent cats, he said, while in the east they are 80 percent dogs.

But with growing secularism and returning expatriates, the number of dogs in his practice tripled, a trend he saw reflected underfoot.

So, Dr. Yehyia started to clear the "land mines" outside his clinic. Then he hung 300 glove dispensers around town. Fellow vets started calling — not to join him, but to accuse him of self-promotion for printing his clinic's name and number on the boxes.

A city official arranged a meeting, then canceled. The gloves vanished; Dr. Yehyia saw vendors on the seafront using them to hand out roasted corn.

For the veterinarian, the whole episode was a reminder of why there is no law requiring cleaning up after dogs in the first place: the lax enforcement and rampant use of bribes and connections that doomed other recent public-minded laws, like those requiring seat-belt use and banning smoking in restaurants.

"The war made it so no one respects the laws," he said. "If you stop at the red light, they will shout at you and say, 'Do you think you are in Europe?'"

He did find sympathy in one quarter: Babikian's group. They had added poop to their agenda as they held street fairs promoting walking and biking.

Her group has more political connections, and a bit more traction. It was founded by a member of Parliament, Nadim Gemayel, the son of the assassinated president.

The neighborhood group released ads on social media showing a bearded hipster, first cursing, "I stepped in it," then holding his head high on a cleaner street.

Lately, Beirut's city government has posted some signs urging people to scoop the poop. But Babikian has pushed in vain for "a real campaign" — sustained, high-profile, on television.

The most obvious solution — a fine, like the one that transformed New York City's sidewalks in 1978 — would be pointless here. Those for smoking and traffic violations are routinely ignored.

Another problem, said Gaby Ferneine, a city council member, is that Beirut has no real city police, only a tiny municipal guards force.

But there was a glimmer of hope in Sioufi, the district where Nawfal walked his German shepherd. The next pair to pass were Josine Pacaro, 46, and Bruno, a miniature Doberman. Pacaro, a house worker from the Philippines, wore a pink uniform and plastic gloves.

Asked if she scooped, she said: "Yes, of course. We are the ones to step in it!" She became a convert after a single misstep "on the *kaka*."

"Enough," she said. "I pick it up." She gazed down a line of dog deposits, of various vintages, leading to one of the city's few public parks. Flies hovered, gleaming in the sunset.

"I try to convince them," she said. "But, you know — stubborn people!"

## Russian Premier Medvedev Arrives in Armenia

YEREVAN — President Serzh Sargsyan received on Tuesday, October 24, the premier of the Russian Federation, Dmitry Medvedev, who was paying an official visit to Armenia.

Welcoming Medvedev, the president stressed that the Russian Premier's visit came in the 25th year of establishment of diplomatic relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia, and noted with satisfaction that huge amount of work had been done ever since.

"Our relations are distinguished by sustained political dialogue at all levels along with broad coordination of foreign policy, good work on international and regional platforms, fruitful interaction in the economic, military and military-technical spheres and specifically in the field of mutually beneficial trade. Last year we boasted a 15-percent growth, while the growth in trade turnover proved slightly more than 23 percent for the past eight months of this year, which is encouraging. I am confident that your official visit will be another important step towards the further-

ance of our relationship," President Sargsyan pointed out.

Medvedev thanked his Armenian host for the reception and conveyed the warm greetings and best wishes of Russian President Vladimir Putin. Medvedev noted with pleasure that the rise in bilateral commodity turnover was even greater — almost 30 percent — than the figure mentioned by Sargsyan.

"This is good news that I want to share with you. Thank you for the opportunity to meet. We are partners and friends indeed; we have strongly developing ties in all areas. A short while ago, we held intergovernmental negotiations, signed key documents and stated that our relations are developing.

Moreover, in practice, there is no sphere left out of the range of interaction. For example, very good dynamics have been recorded in the field of agricultural supplies, and Armenia is now very well poised on the Russian market. Nevertheless, it is obvious that we can build on these trends ahead.

The other sectors are developing, too, including high technologies, coopera-

tion in security and defense and investments. We discussed the possibility of working in the free economic zone to be set up in cooperation with Iran and a number of other large-scale projects. In a word, we will work and cooperate," Medvedev said.

Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan welcomed his Russian counterpart at Zvartnots airport.

Dmitry Medvedev's delegation is composed as follows: First Deputy Prime Minister Igor Shuvalov, Minister of Telecom and Mass Communications Nikolay Nikiforov, Energy Minister Alexander Novak, Transport Minister Maxim Sokolov, Minister of Agriculture Alexander Tkachev, Saratov Governor Valery Radayev, Head of Federal Service for Environmental, Technological, and Nuclear Supervision Alexei Aleshin, Chairman of Gazprom's Management Committee Alexey Miller and other officials.

After the official welcoming ceremony, the Russian Prime Minister headed for Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex to pay tribute to the memory of the Armenian Genocide victims.



## INTERNATIONAL

# Ecumenical Leaders Offer Prayers For Christians In the Middle East

PRAYERS, from page 1

president and participation in a conference organized by the EKD on the future of Christians in the Near East. The visit culminated in an ecumenical mass at the historic Berlin Cathedral, during which the leaders of the four churches joined with German Catholic and Protestant leaders to pray for Christians in the Middle East and for peace.

On October 18, the four visiting church leaders were received by German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier. The following day they met with representatives of the Bundestag (Parliament) factions and on October 20, they visited the Evangelical Center for Social Welfare and Development. Following the conference was the ecumenical church service.

In addition to the joint events, Catholicos Karekin II presided at a welcoming ceremony with the Armenian community at the Evangelical Luisenkirche on October 18, in a Hrshapar service, blessing all Armenians. On October 21, he laid a wreath at a *Khatchkar* (cross stone) which had been erected on the initiative of the German-Armenian Society (DAG) and ceremoniously dedicated on April 23, 2016, in memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide. At the conclusion of his Berlin visit, Karekin II was at the St. Camillus Catholic Church to celebrate Divine Liturgy with Bishop Armash Nalbandyan, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Damascus, and accompanied musically by the women's choir of Geghard monastery. In addition to Nalbandyan, accompanying him on his visit were the Very Rev. Shahe Ananyan, director of the Ecumenical Relations Department of Mother See, Rev. Ghevond Saghatelian, dean of the Harichavank Turpanjian Theological High School, who served as staff bearer, Rev. Markos Mangasaryan, director of the Social Services Department of Mother See and Tamara Shakaryan, member of the Legal Advisor Committee of Mother See.

## Fate of Christians in the Holy Land

At the center of the visit was the shared commitment to intervene in defense of the Christian community in the Middle East, whose very continued existence there is severely threatened. As discussed during the conference, Christians have been subjected increasingly to persecution, their sacred

eliminated in Syria. Therefore, the pleas on the part of the Orthodox religious leaders for churches in Germany, whom they thanked for helping so many refugees, to mobilize further to make it possible for Christians to remain in their lands of origin, and to live there in peace and security.

Regional Bishop Heinrich Bedford-Strohm, chairman of the

communities, a universality manifest in the articulation of prayer, each speaking in his own language, and in the harmony of music, sung by choirs of the four Eastern churches. The common message was that of Christ in his sermon on the mount. Catholicos Karekin II stressed how important it is to reflect, inspired by the Beatitudes, on the situation of



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II, fourth from left, with German President Frank-Walter Steinmeier, sixth from left, and the rest of the Eastern Rite church leaders

EKD Council, expressed his gratitude for the participation of the visiting church leaders, noting that there are about 250,000 Christians belonging to these Orthodox communities who live in Germany. "Many of them," he said, "have left their homeland in the Middle East, fleeing from war or civil war, from political or religious persecution, or from state repression." Members of these communities in Germany have proven crucial in helping newly arrived refugees to integrate into society. They have also, it was said, contributed the fruits

Christians in the world today, "especially our Christian brothers and sisters in the Near East." The words of Christ in this sermon, he said, are abiding and immortal for our modern world, in which "human suffering and sorrow, persecution and social catastrophes have become everyday occurrences."

He said that the blessings, or Beatitudes, from the beginning have symbolized the similarity of Christ and Christians, in the pledge to take Christ as an example. They have come to identify Christians, and all churches, whether Eastern Orthodox or others, have "built the spiritual house of their faith in light of the message of the Beatitudes." Through this message, Christians are to resemble Christ as meek in spirit, in seeking the riches of heaven; as those in mourning, having prayed for the renewal of the world and destruction of evil; as those thirsting and hungering for justice; as pure of heart, through mercy and brotherly love; and as peacemakers, even if persecuted for their faith.

Blessed, he said, are those who do not forget spiritual richness, those who do not forget the suffering and persecuted, who find God in every human being, who make peace in the world, who pray for the unity of Christians and religious tolerance in the world.

The message of this sermon, he said, has always remained the same, opening the path to love and likeness to God. "When today in the Near East religious intolerance and conflict have become integral parts of everyday life for innocent people there; when murder and persecution as a result of religious intolerance belong to the ideology of fundamentalists; when the destruction of religious cultural values thousands of years old, and the violent expulsion of people from places that are the cradle of Christianity are justified by a falsified and corrupted message of religion, then the Beatitudes give us once again reason – independent of religious affiliation and political tendency – to renew our readiness to proceed together along the path shown by our Lord Jesus Christ towards holiness and bliss."

He concluded by asking all to pray together, to receive the invitation "that is addressed to us all, whether in the Near East, in Europe, in America or in the Far East." All are invited to spread this message, "which is engraved not in tablets of stone but in spiritual tablets in our hearts and souls."



Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II blessed the bread and salt.

buildings, churches and monasteries, have been bombed to smithereens, and individual Christians have been driven out of their homes and murdered. In Egypt, the Copts have been victims of killings, their churches bombed even during mass. In Syria 85 churches have been destroyed, and about half of the Christians have left the devastated country. There is a very real danger that Christian culture and tradition will be

of their experience in inter-religious dialogue. The history of this dialogue, as was discussed in the conference, stretches back to the beginnings of the Protestant Reformation.

## Sermon on the Mount

The ecumenical service in the Berlin Cathedral, lasting well over two hours, was a profoundly moving ceremony which expressed the community of faith among the very distinct

(Material for this article has been drawn from press releases issued by the Evangelical Church in Germany (EKD), the Working Group of Christian Churches in Germany (ACK), and a German translation of the remarks by Catholicos Karekin II during the ecumenical service kindly made available by the German-Armenian Society (DAG). Translations into English are by the author.)

# Community News

## Armenian Assembly Submits Testimony to Helsinki Commission On Karabakh

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America submitted testimony on October 19 to the Helsinki Commission Briefing titled, “Averting All-Out War in Nagorno-Karabakh: The Role of the U.S. and OSCE.” The panelists featured were former Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chair (1999-2001) Ambassador Carey Cavanaugh, former OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair (2013-2016) Ambassador James B. Warlick, and International Crisis Group’s Europe and Central Asia Program Director Magdalena Grono.

“President Aliyev has plainly not abided by what he and his country agreed and we are grateful that this year the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs in two statements already have begun to identify Azerbaijan as the cause for the loss of innocent lives. The false equivalency that so many observers and actors try to apply to this conflict does not square with effective conflict resolution or American values,” the Assembly stated in its testimony.

During the Commission Briefing, Warlick stressed the importance of peace in the region, and noted that all the points of the Madrid Principles are interrelated, of which the entire panel agreed there needs to be respect for the principles of self-determination, territorial integrity, and the non-use of force.

The Assembly also highlighted Azerbaijan’s cease-fire violations along the Line of Contact, which, since 2014, were more than 77,000 times, and over 1.4 million shots fired. Azerbaijan continues to fire at several kindergartens, targeting young children in Armenia’s Tavush region.

“Instead of negotiating in good faith, Azerbaijan’s president has made it clear that he intends to continue to escalate hostilities in order to force concessions,” the Assembly continued. “The breadth and scope of the violations demonstrate a systematic pattern that must be addressed, and that is the reason why the Assembly strongly supports the agreements brokered by the Minsk Group Co-Chairs and reached by the Presidents of Armenia and Azerbaijan to reinforce respect for the 1994 cease-fire agreement signed by the governments of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh.”

In its testimony, the Assembly called for confidence building measures (CBMs) to help reduce tensions and build a path toward a just and peaceful resolution, which was supported by all of the panelists during the briefing.

“While Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) have repeatedly agreed to confidence building measures, Azerbaijan has consistently rejected such initiatives. Earlier this year, despite US objections, Azerbaijan unilaterally forced the closure of the OSCE office in Yerevan, Armenia because of its humanitarian de-mining activities,” the Assembly statement read.

Cavanaugh mentioned the exceptional work that The Halo Trust continues to do clearing land mines in Artsakh, and commended them for their efforts. He pointed out that it is in the best interests for Azerbaijan to cooperate with this organization for mine clearance, which would ultimately benefit everyone in the region.



California State Assembly Member Laura Friedman and Co-Host Louis Gill Martirosyan

## Armenian American Orphans Fund Holds 18th Annual Telethon

LOS ANGELES — Ovanes Balayan has been in the public eye for many years now. He published his first satirical magazine named *Kach Nazar* 42 years ago. The 42 years that his magazine was published, he was helping people the less



Ovanes Balayan and City Council Member Paula Devine

fortunate find help through the magazine. He advocated for many organizations and eventually started his own non-profit organization. For the past 18 years, Glendale resident and TV show host Balayan has raised money to help disadvantaged children in Armenia by organizing the Armenian American Orphans Christmas Telethon.

Balayan first began the telethon in 1999 with the help from a wealthy partner who was interested in raising money for underprivileged children in Armenia. With these funds, he aimed to hold Christmas events

and pass out gifts to orphaned and disabled children throughout the country. The Armenian American Orphaned Children’s Fund (AAOCF) passed out approximately 245,000 gifts all over Armenia to families in need. Gifts were not the only thing the AAOCF focused on. Over the span of 18 years, Balayan and his supporters have successfully raised roughly \$1.9 million hosting the see TELETHON, page 10



Answering phones at the telethon

## SAS Conference on ‘Transmitting Western Armenian to the Next Generation’ Co-Sponsored By Gulbenkian Foundation

WASHINGTON — An international conference, titled “Transmitting Western Armenian to the Next Generation,” will take place from noon to 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 18. The conference, co-sponsored by the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) and the Armenian Communities Department of the Gulbenkian Foundation, will be held in the Virginia B (L) room of the Marriott Wardman Park Hotel, in Washington, DC.

The Society for Armenian Studies will also hold its 44th Annual Meeting at 3 p.m. on Saturday, November 18, immediately following the conference in the same venue. All members are welcome to attend the Annual Meeting, which is being held in conjunction with the Middle East Studies Association (MESA) Annual Meeting.

The conference will consist of two sessions and is open to the public. The first session is “Teaching Armenian in a Diasporan Context” and will have three presentations. Ani Garmiryan (Senior program officer for the promotion of Western Armenian language and education, Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation) will speak on “It Takes a Village to Raise a... Language.” She will be followed by Sylvia Kasparian (Université de Moncton), “For a Multilingual Approach in Teaching Modern Western Armenian in the Diaspora” and Jesse Arlen (UCLA), “An Innovative Method for Teaching Western Armenian in the Diaspora.”

The second session is titled “Creative Literacy and Heritage Language: The Case of Western Armenian” and also features three presentations: Hagop Gulludjian (UCLA), “Promoting ‘Creative Literacy’”; Shushan Karapetian (UCLA), “Eastern Armenian Speakers as Potential Western Armenian Learners: Reflections on Second Dialect Acquisition”; and Elizabeth Mekhitarian (UCLA), “To Create and Belong: A Case Study of Creative Writing in Heritage Language Instruction.”

In addition to the conference, the Society of Armenian Studies is sponsoring two panels as part of MESA. The first panel, organized by Owen Miller and Ümit Kurt, and titled “The Great Fear of 1895: Armenian Reform, Rumor and Violence Across the Ottoman Empire,” will take place 8 a.m. to 10 a.m. on Sunday, November 19. Four papers will be given: Owen Miller (Emerson College), “George Perkins Knapp of Bitlis and Massacres of 1895”; Emre Can Daglioglu (Clark University), “Reform and Violence in the Hamidian Era: 1895 Anti-Armenian Riots in Trabzon”; Ümit Kurt (Harvard University), “Theaters of Violence in the Ottoman Periphery: Tracing the Local Roots of Hamidian Massacres in Aintab”; and Ugur Peçe (Bard College), “The Year of Rumor: Crete in the Shadow of the Armenian Massacres of 1895.” The discussant for the panel will be Edhem Eldem (Bogaziçi University).

The second panel, “Humanitarianism in the Ottoman Empire During World War I,” is organized by Stacy Fahrenthold and will take place from 1 to 3 p.m. on Tuesday, November 21. It is chaired by Barlow Der Mugrdchian (California State University, Fresno), and includes papers by Melanie S. Tanielian (University of Michigan), “Nourishing Bodies and Souls: The Maronite Church’s Relief Effort in Mount Lebanon during the Great War”; Stacy Fahrenthold (California State University, Stanislaus), “American Relief and Émigré Politics in the Syrian Mahjar”; Asya Darbinyan (Clark University), “Can Refugees Speak? Humanitarian Crisis at the Ottoman-Russian border (1914-1917)”; and Khatchig Mouradian (Columbia University), “Not like a Lamb to the Slaughter: Humanitarian Resistance during the Armenian Genocide.”

see SAS, page 9



## COMMUNITY NEWS

## AEF Friends of the Foundation Donor Appreciation Dinner

LOS ANGELES – On Sunday September 10, Al and Diane Cabraloff hosted the Armenian Educational Foundation's Friends of the Foundation Donor Appreciation Dinner at their Pasadena home with more than 120 guests in attendance. The purpose of the gathering was twofold; for AEF to express its appreciation and gratitude to the invited guests for their continued support through sponsorships and donations for the various AEF programs, and to honor Neshan Peroomian for his immense contributions to AEF's renovation projects.

Vahe Hacopian, AEF board president, was the MC. He thanked the guests for the \$175,000 pledges in sponsorships leading up to the evening, and briefly described the ongoing programs that were to benefit from the funds raised. He specifically thanked Bobken and Hasmik Amerian, the night's \$25,000 Diamond sponsors, for their continued contributions year after year to support AEF programs. The Amerians have been longtime AEF members and Bobken Amerian has served on the Board of Directors.

Neshan Peroomian was honored with the AEF Life Time Achievement Award, for his more than 40 years of outstanding contributions to the Armenian Educational Foundation as a member, 36 years of which he has served as a board member, and past president. He was recognized for his efforts over the past 20 years in leading the 200 renovations projects of schools in the border villages of Armenia, Artsakh and Javakhk.

Also, the guests viewed a touching short video from Armenia, prepared by a group of students from the 235 AEF scholarship recipients who attend various universities and colleges. These very articulate students expressed their deepest gratitude to their sponsors for giving them a college education and more importantly, for giving them hope.

For 67 years, AEF has provided financial support to Armenian students and educational institutions. Since 2000, AEF has disbursed \$7.2 million for various education related programs and projects in the United States, Armenia, Artsakh, Javakhk, Syria and Lebanon.



Vasken Yacoubian, president of AGBU Armenia, and Gayane Hovhannisyian, head of Military Medical Department of Armenia's Armed Forces, exchange copies of the agreement.

## AGBU to Donate Medical Equipment to Military Hospital in Armenia

NEW YORK – On October 9, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Armenia and the Ministry of Defense of the Republic of Armenia signed an agreement to which AGBU will donate two ventilators for artificial respiration and a defibrillator monitor to the Medical Department of Armenia's Armed Forces to upgrade the intensive care unit of the Central Military Hospital in Yerevan. The donation is part of the AGBU #HelpArtsakh campaign and is made possible by the generous support of the Cherkian Family Foundation and AGBU Marseille.

"Upgraded capacity and professionalism are the essential preconditions for the Armenian Armed Forces' ability to deter aggression and promote peace. Together with the Ministry of Defense, we are proud to have the joint responsibility of strengthening Armenia's preparedness level and cultivating leadership. AGBU welcomes all types of support from individual donors and institutions to accomplish this very important mission," said Vasken Yacoubian, AGBU Armenia president and AGBU Central Board member.

After the four-day war in April 2016, AGBU, as part of its long-

standing humanitarian mission, launched #HelpArtsakh campaign, aiming to provide aid to the people of Armenia and Artsakh and the Armenian Armed Forces. To help the Ministry of Defense provide urgent and effective medical service, AGBU donated two mobile digital X-ray machines to military hospitals in Yerevan and Stepanakert, compressing equipment and intensive care devices customized for air transportation. AGBU also provided financial aid to families affected by the war.

In addition to medical assistance, AGBU has been helping to enhance educational capacities of the Armed Forces since 2012. It provides scholarships to cadets and officers taking leadership and English language courses at the extension program of the American University of Armenia (AUA). Earlier this year, AGBU donated 1,000 kindles, each with over 160 books, including non-fiction and professional literature, to graduating officers and cadets.

To contribute to the AGBU #HelpArtsakh campaign, please visit [www.agbu.am/en/help-artsakh](http://www.agbu.am/en/help-artsakh).



### Robert Fisk

Journalist, Middle East Correspondent for *The Independent*  
Seven-Time Recipient of British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year



### David Barsamian

Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio



### Philip Terzian

Senior Editor at *The Weekly Standard* and Pulitzer Prize finalist



## The Armenian Mirror-Spectator

SYMPOSIUM ON ARMENIAN ISSUES IN THE INTERNATIONAL PRESS

### Journalism and "Fake News": Armenian Genocide and Karabakh

Aram Arkun, Moderator

Journalism is changing at a rapid pace, including how the news is produced, distributed and consumed. Join *The Armenian Mirror-Spectator* along with a panel of internationally acclaimed journalists to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian case.

Thursday

**November 2, 2017**

Wellesley College, Alumnae Hall Ballroom  
106 Central St, Wellesley, MA  
Doors Open at 6:00 P.M. • Program: 7:00 P.M.  
Reception to Follow • Free Admission

### Amberin Zaman

Columnist for *Diken* and *AI Monitor*, former Turkey Correspondent for *The Economist*





## OBITUARIES

# Las Vegas Shooting Victim Remembered at Gandhi Event

FRESNO — In show of love, more than 100 people honored Kelsey Meadows, the former Fresno State student who became a victim of the Las Vegas mass shooting on October 1. The crowd gathered at the Peace Garden for the 27th annual Mahatma Gandhi birthday celebration on Wednesday, October 4.

A moment of silence for Meadows was led by Associated Students, Inc. President Blake Zante. His remarks highlighted the “unique bond” that Fresno State students and alumni hold.

University President Dr. Joseph Castro previously proclaimed Sept. 27 through Oct. 7 as “Stop The Hate, Stop The Violence Week: Build A Culture of Peace Commemoration.”

In the proclamation Castro said, “Each member of our community is asked to make a difference in the moral and social climate by participating in this effort to reduce hate violence and build a culture of peace throughout the year.”

And he said Fresno State will not condone or tolerate hate-related acts on campus. That senti-

ment was welcomed at an event honoring a former student killed in a violent mass shooting and remembering a man known for promoting peace.

In his 27th year of observance at the university, Fresno State professor Dr. Sudarshan Kapoor, founder of the peace and conflict studies program and professor emeritus of social work education, asked students from the program to make signs with their favorite Gandhi quote.

Some students chose classic Gandhian quotes such as “Be the change you wish to see in the world,” while other students chose quotes that may be lesser known.

Freshman victimology major Devin Hernandez chose the quote, “The weak can never forgive. Forgiveness is the attribute of the strong.”

In a news release, Kapoor described Gandhi as an apostle of peace and nonviolence, the father of human rights in the 20th century and patron saint of peace movements globally.

Hernandez said Gandhi’s teachings are “A good source of learning how to hold yourself in a peaceful status and a more positive lifestyle.”

Vice President of Administration Deborah Adishian-Astone, Kapoor and other members of the university administration held a garland made of red, white and yellow carnations and laid it on top of the statue’s base around the figurehead.

Professor and coordinator of the peace and conflict studies program Veena Howard told the audience about her experience in celebrating Gandhi’s birthday as a child growing up in India.

Similar to the garlanding ceremony at Fresno State, she said Indian children would place flowers around a statue or photo of Gandhi.

The crowd was given flowers to lay on the statue, as well. Audience members formed a line and took turns laying their flowers at the base.

As flowers were passed out, Howard paraphrased Gandhi: “If the hate is thrown towards you, respond with love and never lose sight of

justice, courage and nonviolence.”

Various speakers addressed the crowd. District 31 Assemblyman Dr. Joaquin Arambula spoke about Gandhi saying, “It is imperative that we learn lessons from him, and we celebrate his life so that we can honor his legacy.”

Arambula said he believed Gandhi would have joined in the fight for equal rights concerning contemporary issues of education and healthcare.

“For when we don’t have access to things like education and healthcare, we don’t live [a] long, productive life,” Arambula said.

Traditional songs and dances from India were performed in honor of Gandhi, as well as a moment for meditation led by Kapoor’s wife, Dr. Veena Kapoor.

By the end, crowd members arranged themselves in a circle of unity and lit candles. They said aloud a condemnation of hate.

The crowd said in part, “Hate crimes have no place in my future, not in my life. No way.”

## Khoren Nalbandian Pharmacist, Cofounder of AAHPO

PARAMUS, N.J. — Khoren Nalbandian, one of the founders of the Armenian American Health Professional Association (AAHPO), died in October.

He was a man of great vision, drive and perseverance. One of three AAHPO founders, Nalbandian worked relentlessly as a Board member along with his wife, Seta, for more than 23 years to see their dream of Armenian healthcare professionals helping Armenians in local communities, become a reality.

Visitation and funeral services took place at the Armenian Presbyterian Church, 140 Forest Ave., Paramus, on Thursday October 19.

“Khoren and his family are in our prayers,” said AAHPO President Lawrence V. Najarian, MD. “Khoren was an amazing friend and mentor to many of us. In a text message exchange only a few weeks ago he said, ‘I have faith in God. I have faith in my doctors. I have faith in my friends.’ He will be missed.”

“Albert Einstein said, ‘The value of a man should be seen in what he gives and not in what he is able to receive.’ In one word, Khoren was a man who gave,” said Raffy Hovanessian, MD, AAHPO and community leader and lifelong friend of Khoren. “He gave much to his work as a capable pharmacist, to his community at large, he was one of the founders of AAHPO who gave so much of his valuable time to the advancement of AAHPO. Khoren was a living proof of how fine a person can be. He was a loving husband to his wife Seta, a devoted father to his children Maria and Alex, his son-in-law



David, and to his grandchildren Raffi and Ani. He was a good boss to the people in his charge at the pharmacy. He was a very good friend to many of us, a great colleague and a mentor to many. The character of the life he lived might be summed up in a few words: He was a true Christian, he was very sincere, he was deeply loyal, he was extremely conscientious and a true visionary. AAHPO has lost one of its tripod pillars and he will be extremely missed. May he rest in peace. Amen.”

Born in Aleppo, Syria, Nalbandian was educated in Damascus and received his pharmacy license at the American University of Beirut. He taught there, along with Seta Loshkajian, who became his wife. After teaching at several Armenian institutions, they moved to Tenafly, NJ, where they lived for 40 years. They had two children, Maria Nalbanian Cafasso, and Alex Nalbandian, who survive him, along with two grandchildren, Ani and Raffi.

“Through the pharmacy Khoren owned with his wife, he helped thousands of patients, along with those he helped at New York University Medical Center. He helped countless others through his tireless work on behalf of AAHPO,” noted Dr. Najarian.

Nalbandian’s philanthropy extended beyond AAHPO. He held leadership positions in the Armenian Missionary Association of America, the Armenian Presbyterian Church of Paramus and was also a Board member of both the Armenian Nursing Home and the Armenian Medical Fund.

## Paul R. Jurigian Army Veteran

BELMONT, Mass. — Paul R. Jurigian of Belmont formerly of Waltham, died on October 18, 2017.

He was the husband of Sandra Lee (Kazanjian) Jurigian. In addition to his wife, he leaved daughters Paula Jurigian of Belmont and Lana Jurigian of Woburn and sister Mae Takoushian of Waltham.

He was a member of Simon W. Robinson Lodge, A.F. & A.M., Lexington, Aleppo Shrine, and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research.

He was also an Army veteran.

Services were held at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown on Monday, October 23. Interment followed at Highland Meadow Cemetery, Belmont.



## Robert Andrews Shepard

BOOTHBAY HARBOR, Maine — Robert Andrews Shepard, son of medical missionaries Lorrin Andrews Shepard and Virginia Moffat,

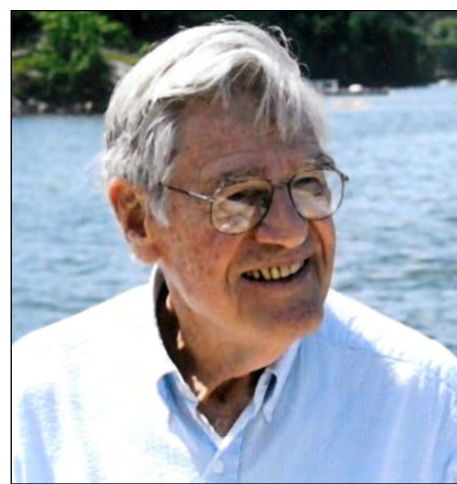
wife, in Boothbay Harbor. They married three years later.

In 1950, Shepard began teaching chemistry at Northeastern University in Boston, Massachusetts. He went on to head the Chemistry Department there and then became Dean of the College of Liberal Arts. His students always meant a great deal to him, some of them becoming life-long friends.

After retiring in 1986, he returned to the family homestead in Boothbay Harbor. An avid sailor, he enjoyed many summers of cruising the Maine coast with Eugenia and the family. With an excellent baritone voice, he sang for most of his adult life in church and community choirs, including the Sheepscot Valley Chorus in recent years.

Shepard was predeceased by his youngest child Alan and his older brother Frederick. He is survived by his wife of 68 years, Eugenia; daughter Virginia Rickeman and her friend Vicki Haugen; son Andrew and his wife Judy; daughter Jamie Knobloch and her husband Tom; his brother Barclay and sisters Connie Jolly and Alice Cary, as well as six grandchildren, nine great-grandchildren, and many nieces and nephews.

There was a celebration of his life on Saturday, August 12 at the Congregational Church of Boothbay Harbor.



was born in Gaziantep, Turkey in 1923. He died on July 26 in Boothbay Harbor, Maine. He was 94.

He attended school in Boothbay Harbor and Deerfield Academy. He earned a B.S. and a PhD in chemistry at Yale University. During WWII he enlisted in the U.S. Army and was stationed in Oakridge, Tennessee.

In 1946, he met Eugenia Melzar, his future

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Genocide Deniers Introduce 'Fake' Armenian Genocide Resolution

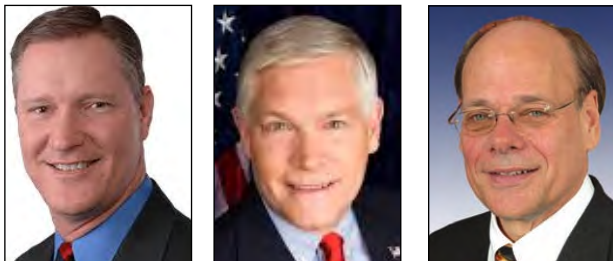
WASHINGTON – In a highly offensive political move aimed at derailing H.Res.220, a bipartisan genocide prevention measure drawing upon the lessons of the Armenian Genocide, three of the U.S. House's remaining enemies of Armenian Genocide remembrance have introduced "fake" legislation on Turkish-Armenian relations, controversially stripped of any mention of the Armenian Genocide, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

H.Res.573 was introduced by Ohio Congressman Steve Stivers (R-OH) with the support of Congressional Turkey Caucus Co-Chairs Pete Sessions (R-TX) and Steve Cohen (D-TN).

Sessions spearheaded a similar resolution in the previous Congress, by all accounts, at the urging of former Congressman Connie Mack, who, upon retiring, was retained by the Turkish Institute for Peace. That resolution secured a total of 2 cosponsors.

"A sick and cynical ploy: historically inaccurate and morally offensive. All the world knows

that any improvement in Armenian-Turkish relations will need to start with Ankara openly acknowledging the Armenian Genocide and accepting its modern-day responsibility for the



Steve Stivers (R-OH), Pete Sessions (R-TX), Steve Cohen (D-TN)

vast moral and material consequences of this still unpunished crime," said Aram Hamparian, executive director of the ANCA. "Representatives Stivers, Cohen, and Sessions, in stripping out language about the Armenian Genocide from a bill about Turkish-Armenian relations, are, effectively, carrying Turkish President Erdogan's water in Washington, advancing his shameful denial campaign even as he's doubling down on his government's anti-American actions and attitudes."

## Conference on 'Transmitting Western Armenian To the Next Generation' Co-Sponsored By Gulbenkian Foundation

SAS, from page 6

A reception, hosted by Grigor Hovhannissian, ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to the US, will be held at the Armenian Embassy, on Saturday, November 18.

Scholars will deliver a dozen other Armenian-themed papers during the course of the MESA conference, November 18-21. For a full program of their sessions, visit their website at

<http://www.mesana.org/pdf/17-preliminary-program-10-12-17.pdf>

The Society for Armenian Studies represents scholars and teachers in the field of Armenian Studies. It publishes the peer-reviewed Journal of the *Society for Armenian Studies*, available on its website: [societyforarmenianstudies.com](http://societyforarmenianstudies.com). For more information about the society, contact SAS President Barlow Der Mugrdchian at [barlowd@csufresno.edu](mailto:barlowd@csufresno.edu).

## ACYOA Juniors 'Rise Hye' at Fall Sports Weekend

FAIR LAWN, N.J. – The members of the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA) Juniors gathered over Columbus Day weekend at St. Leon Armenian Church of Fair Lawn for their annual Sports Weekend. The parish hosted 285 participants from 17 parishes across the Diocese under the theme of "Rise Hye, Live, Thrive."

The Rev. Diran Bohajian, pastor of St. Leon, and event co-chairs Serda Belekhdanian and Diane Zoraian worked alongside dedicated community members to ensure the success of the weekend. Events were held at the church's Charles and Grace Pinajian Youth Center, and participants were housed with local families.

Kathryn Ashbahian, of the Diocesan Youth and Young Adult Ministries department, was present throughout the weekend and offered an encouraging message during morning service before the kids broke off to play their Saturday games. Once the sports concluded for the day, participants headed home for dinner with their host family before heading to a Hollywood-inspired social and dance.

As part of a service project for the weekend, participants came loaded with items to donate for those who have experienced the devastation of the recent hurricane season. The ACYOA Juniors were asked to collect baby wipes, diapers, flashlights and batteries to donate to the "Empire State Relief Recovery Effort for Puerto Rico." JetBlue Airlines will fly the items to Puerto Rico for distribution to those who need it most.

On Sunday, Fr. Bohajian celebrated the Divine Liturgy, and the church pews were happily packed with the weekend's participants and parishioners. After finishing their final sports and games competitions, participants gathered at St. Leon Church for an awards ceremony and Hawaiian-themed banquet, where they danced to Armenian and American music. On Monday morning, everyone gathered for a farewell breakfast before heading back home.

### Awards

#### ADVANCED CHESS:

1. Garo Amerkianian, St. Thomas, Tenafly, NJ
2. Jacob Naroian, St. James, Watertown, MA

#### BEGINNER CHESS:

1. Armen Dervishian, St. Sahag & St. Mesrob, Wynnwood, PA
2. Michael Connors, Holy Resurrection, New Britain, CT

#### ADVANCED TAVLOO:

1. Chris Kapikian, St. Sahag & St. Mesrob, Wynnwood, PA
2. Jack Dadian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

#### BEGINNER TAVLOO:

1. Taline Janikian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2. Alina Kouzouian, Holy Trinity, Cambridge, MA

#### BOYS' PING PONG:

1. Michael Nargizian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2. Jake Khorozian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

#### GIRLS' PING PONG:

1. Adi Najarian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2. Adrena Sederian, St. James, Watertown, MA

#### CONNECT FOUR:

1. Shahe DerTorossian, St. James, Watertown, MA
2. Lauren Dadekian, St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

#### BOYS' BASKETBALL:

1. St. Leon (team A), Fair Lawn, NJ
2. St. Sahag & St. Mesrob, Wynnwood, PA

#### GIRLS' BASKETBALL:

1. St. Leon (team A), Fair Lawn, NJ
2. St. Mark, Springfield, MA & St. George, Hartford, CT (Regional Team)

#### CO-ED VOLLEYBALL:

1. St. Sahag & St. Mesrob, Wynnwood, PA
2. Holy Translators, Framingham, MA

#### SPORTSMANSHIP AWARDS:

- Albert Yildirim, St. James, Watertown, MA  
Isabelle Hagobian, Holy Martyrs, Bayside, NY

#### OVERALL CHAMPION:

- St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Church

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## Don Boyajian Seeks Nomination In House Race

GLEN FALLS, N.Y. (*Post Star*) – Don Boyajian, a lawyer from Cambridge, seeking the Democratic nomination in the 21st Congressional District announced fundraising totals in the first two months.

According to a news release, Boyajian raised \$208,000 for his campaign.

He launched his bid to challenge Rep. Elise Stefanik, (R-Willsboro), on August 1.

"I couldn't be more grateful for the outpouring of support. I look forward to bringing real representation to Upstate and the North Country," Boyajian said.

According to the news release, Boyajian built a campaign team, attended dozens of events, launched a website and built a social media presence to aid in fundraising.

"People are upset about Elise Stefanik's record and the inability of Congress to get things done. They are donating because they



Don Boyajian

are demanding change in Washington, starting with Stefanik," he said.

Boyajian is seeking the Democratic line in a crowded field against Katie Wilson of Keene, Patrick Nelson of Stillwater, Emily Martz of Saranac Lake, Ron Kim of Queensbury and Tedra Cobb of Canton.

Russell Finley of Lisbon will challenge Stefanik for the Republican line and Steve Krieg of Plattsburgh will seek the independent line.



COMMUNITY NEWS



# Armenian American Orphans Fund Holds 18th Annual Telethon

TELETHON, from page 6  
Armenian American Orphans Christmas Telethon. The organization has renovated and built nine orphanages, schools and kindergartens. There are more than 2,700 children safely attending and living in each of these places that we have built. This year's Telethon took place on Armenian Independence Day on September 21. The telethon received about 3,000 pledges and raised almost \$200,000. It also featured many guests in attendance rang-

phone.  
- Alex Kojababian Spokesman for the AAOCF, INC.  
Make your donations to: Armenian American Orphans Disabled Children Fund, INC. Non-Profit Organization, 626 W Colorado St, Glendale, CA 91204, Direct Deposit: Any Wells Fargo Bank Acc #1736835495 or Forourkids99@gmail.com.  
The organization is a tax-exempt 501 (c)3 charity.



Ovanes Balayan President and Founder of the Armenian American Orphans Christmas Fund, INC.



Glendale City Mayor Vartan Gharapetian, Mrs. Armine Gharapetian, and Co-Host Anahit Madoyan

ing from Glendale Mayor Vartan Gharapetian, Assembly member Laura Freidman, Councilmembers Paula Devine and Zareh Sinanyan, former sheriff Lee Baca and many more. The money that was raised is going to go to the fund's newest project which will be built in the city of Spitak, Armenia. The project consists of 3 parts: a basketball gymnasium, an elementary school and a recreation center. The project is going to give thousands of children a safe place to learn and grow into young adults.

The AAOCF fund is ongoing and raises money all year long and not only during the telethon. Anyone who wants to donate to the Fund may easily visit one of our drop-off locations, call for a pick up or contribute over the



Ovanes Balayan and City Council Member Zareh Sinanyan



Young volunteers dance at the telethon.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

85  
Years*The  
Armenian  
Mirror-Spectator*

BENEFIT

*gala*

Celebrating 85 Years

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Writer, Founder and Director of Alternative Radio

**Amberin Zaman**Columnist for Diken and Al Monitor  
Former Turkey Correspondent for *The Economist***Friday  
November 3  
2017****Reception, Meet the Awardees**  
6:30 P.M.**Dinner and Program**  
7:30 P.M.*Mistress of Ceremonies**Entertainment***Anaide Nahikian**Leader, Advanced Training Program  
on Humanitarian Action at Harvard  
Humanitarian Initiative**Black Sea Salsa**



## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Armenian Women's Welfare Association to Hold 41st Annual Luncheon/Auction

WATERTOWN – The Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA), will be hosting their 41st Annual Luncheon/Auction Saturday, November 18, at the Oakley Country Club. This year, the group will showcase several live auction baskets full of delicious items: a tailgating basket with sports tickets, overnight hotel accommodations, restaurant gift cards and more; a basket for noshing on the North Shore includes round-

trip tickets on the ferry from Boston to Salem, and upon arrival, a series of restaurants and excursions to enjoy; another basket includes a huge selection of exotic coffees, teas, chocolates, and biscotti for those of you who enjoy the after dinner treats; for the holidays, a basket complete with an array of Armenian pastry requirements.

There are also two beautiful oil paintings from Armenia this year and much more.

The Raffle this year is a SuperMarket Special: First Prize is a \$1,000 gift card to Market Basket, second prize is a \$500 gift card to Stop & Shop, and the third prize is a \$250 gift card to Whole Foods. If interested contact Susan Deranian to purchase raffle tickets and tickets for the Luncheon/Auction can be purchased online at [www.awwa.us](http://www.awwa.us).

The Luncheon/Auction is the group's major fundraiser for the year, which helps support its mission and initiatives, the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain, and the Hanganak NGO Clinic in Stepanakert, both of which provide healthcare to elderly people in need. Beneficiaries in Stepanakert obtain monthly healthcare assistance along with provisions and in the coldest months,

For more information, visit [www.awwa.us](http://www.awwa.us).



A woman at the Hanganak NGO Clinic in Stepanakert



Two women at the Hanganak NGO Clinic in Stepanakert

## SOAR Boston Gala to Honor Memory of Bob Semonian

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – The Boston chapter of the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR) will be hosting a fundraising gala and auction to honor the late Bob Semonian's years of service to SOAR. The event, titled "Our Promise: An Evening for the Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief," will feature special guests Mark Geragos, Esq., and Carla

Garapedian, associate producer of the film "The Promise." The evening will include a reception, dinner and a silent and live auction.

The event will be held at the Hyatt Regency in Cambridge on Saturday, November 18, beginning at 6 p.m.

Tickets are \$150 per person and can be reserved by emailing Amy Harrington at [alhar-rington@gmail.com](mailto:alhar-rington@gmail.com). Tables seat 10 and can be secured by check.

Through the efforts of a global network of volunteers, SOAR provides humanitarian assistance to children, as well as adults with disabilities, living in orphanages and other institutions in Armenia, Artsakh, Javakhk, Syria, Lebanon, and Turkey. In addition to providing critical goods and supplies, SOAR also offers mentoring and education programs, and conducts research to better understand the needs of the populations it serves.



Carla Garabedian and Mark Geragos

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

*Congratulations to the  
Armenian Mirror-Spectator  
for 85 Years of Service  
to the Armenian Community*



armenian  
museum  
of america

art  
culture  
eternity

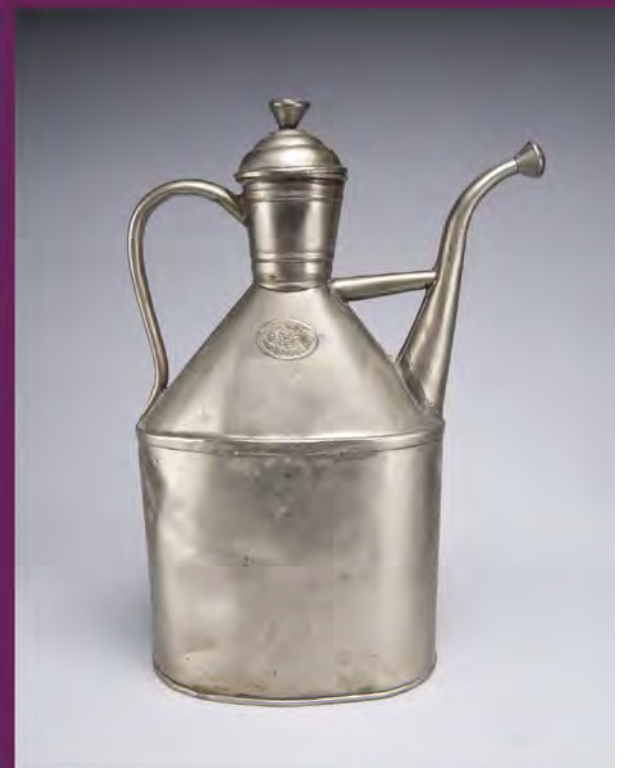
*Discover the Armenian Museum!*



Ceramic flask,  
18th century



Liturgical crown, 18th century



Ewer made from recycled can,  
19th century

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[armenianmuseum.org](http://armenianmuseum.org)

# Arts & Living

## Armenian Museum Of America to Present Program On Komitas

WATERTOWN – The Armenian Museum of America and the Institute of Art of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences are proud to present the legacy of Komitas as a composer and his influence on international and Armenian music. The lecturer is Dr. Mher Navoyan of the Art institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences and the piano performance, of the works of Komitas, by Prof. Lilit Karapetian-Shugarian of New England Conservatory on Sunday, November 5, at 2 p.m.

This program is free and funded by a grant from the Dadourian Foundation.

Komitas was an Armenian priest, musicologist, composer, arranger, singer, and choirmaster, who is considered the founder of Armenian national school of music. He is recognized as one of the pioneers of ethnomusicology.

To quote him, “Armenian music is not mild and sad, but fierce and vital, inside itself it nourishes philosophy and the spirit of its nation, as music is the purest mirror of the nation.”

Navoyan is the best-known authority on Komitas. In 1993 Navoyan graduated from the Komitas State Conservatory in Yerevan as an orchestral performer and in 1994 as a musicologist. Since 1995 he has been a professor at Yerevan State Conservatory, teaching history of Armenian music, eastern classical music, Armenian sacred music, world music history, etc. Since 2000, he has been the supervisor of a specialized course for students in



Dr. Mher Navoyan

the Musicological Department. Since 2011 he has been the pro-rector for research affairs and since 2015 the head of the scientific council at Komitas Museum-Institute.

Navoyan has participated in numerous local and International conferences. Has lectures and reports at Central European University (Budapest, 2000), Institute of Eastern languages in Paris (2003), World Cultures Institute in Paris (2009), in Universities of Helsinki and Joensuu (Finland, 2005), in Church music Department of Sibelius Music Academy in Kuopio (Finland, 2005), J. Grotowski Institute in Wroclaw (Poland, 2008), Humboldt University in Berlin (Germany, 2012), Tubingen University (Germany, 2012), Marktoberdorf Music Academy (Germany, 2012), Sheremetev Palace in St. Petersburg (Russia, 2014), etc.

Karapetian-Shougarian has performed extensively in her native Armenia and the former Soviet Union, as well as internationally. Her solo appearances and frequent contributions to a number of ensembles have won acclaim from the renowned authorities in the musical world.



Prof. Lilit Karapetian-Shugarian

Karapetian-Shougarian graduated with honors from the graduate piano class of Prof. Lev Vlasenko and Mikhail Pletnev at the Moscow Conservatory. Among the highlights of her performing and teaching career are the prize at the Transcaucasian Music Competition in 1981 and the professorship at the Yerevan State Conservatory, where she taught a piano class and also the methods of piano teaching from 1988 to 2005. From 1986 to 1988 she also assisted Professor Lev Vlasenko in his piano class at the Moscow Conservatory.

In September 2009, she joined the faculty of the New England Conservatory Preparatory School.



Cover of an Armenian manuscript

## Armenian and Jewish Artifacts on Display Side-by-Side in Detroit

DETROIT (*Detroit Jewish News*) – Real-estate developer James Melikian, who majored in history years ago at Arizona State University, maintains a strong commitment to the subject central to his academic pursuits.

A big fascination is artifacts, many reaching back to ancient times. He believes they give an authentic and beautiful sense of cultural roots, a belief he shares with his wife, Ana.

In 2004, Melikian decided he wanted to become a collector and contacted antiquities dealers. He came across some early printings of Armenian books and bought them to have artifacts relevant to his own Christian heritage. So, satisfied with that acquisition, he sought more through many dealers and web-auction outlets, always consulting experts before making a purchase.

As his search expanded, Melikian came across artifacts from other religions, found them fascinating as well and made additions to his holdings, now reaching 4,000 items. As a real-estate developer, he is never satisfied with a limited number of places and so began showing his artifacts in many places near and far.

For the first time, Melikian is giving almost equal attention to items representing the faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church and Judaism through an exhibit, “The Melikian Collection: Celebrating & Preserving Our Cultures.”

Showcasing 31 individual items or groupings, the display can be seen November 1 through January 15 at the Alex and Marie Manoogian Museum, located on the campus of the Armenian Cultural Complex in Southfield, where there was an invitational preview October 26.

The exhibit originally was going to have 30 items or groupings – 15 Jewish and 15 Christian – but that changed just before Rosh Hashanah, when Melikian offered a winning bid for medals won by Gerda Gottlieb, a pentathlon and swimming champion in 1930s Austria.

“Gerda was victorious in the Maccabi Games of 1935,” explains Melikian, 62, who also will be showing a silver-mounted Torah case (likely from 1923 Jerusalem) once held by the late multimillionaire jeweler Shlomo Moussaieff, a handmade brass Chanukah lamp (made in Syria or nearby during the early part of the 20th century) and a first edition of the Hebrew Bible in Braille.

“The medals are very impressive and include five consecutive gold medals issued to Gerda in Vienna as winner of the 1933-37 National Pentathlon,” Melikian says. “Because of the rising influence of Nazism, Gerda’s achievements are particularly important.”

ARTIFACTS, page 15

## Arpa Film Festival Lineup Includes Joe Berlinger’s ‘Intent to Destroy’ and French Biopic ‘Dalida’

HOLLYWOOD – Arpa International Film Festival (AIFF) has unveiled the full lineup of films being showcased this year at the Egyptian Theatre from November 3 to 5. This year’s 20th anniversary highlights include a diverse range of films that explore themes such as genocide, war and LGBTQ issues. The festival will also present thought-provoking shorts, as well a critically acclaimed thriller and a French masterpiece on the life of pop icon Dalida.

Opening night on Friday, November 3 will kick off with a special reception and screening of “Dalida,” a biopic intimately capturing the true story of acclaimed Egyptian-born music icon who gained celebrity in the 1950s, singing in French, Spanish, Arabic, Hebrew, German, Italian. Her dazzling 30-year career was marked by tragic events, capped by her suicide in 1987 which forever immortalized her iconic image as a diva and renowned singer.

Saturday evening’s centerpiece program and reception will showcase Academy Award-nominated and Emmy-winning director Joe Berlinger’s powerful documentary “Intent to Destroy,” partially shot on the set of Terry George’s epic film “The Promise” (starring Oscar Isaac, Christian Bale, and Charlotte Le Bon). Berlinger’s film takes an unwavering look at the Armenian Genocide. Historians, scholars, and high-profile filmmakers come together in this cinematic exploration of the tangled web of responsibility that has driven a century of denial by the Turkish government and its strategic allies. Director/screenwriter Eric Nazarian will moderate a question-and-answer after the screening, with Joe Berlinger, Serj Tankian and Eric Esraillian.

Following “Intent to Destroy” on Saturday night will be a screening of Stephen C. Sepher’s (“The Heist”) “Dead on Arrival,” starring Emmy-nominated Billy Flynn (“Days of Our Lives”). “Dead on Arrival,” inspired by the 1950 classic noir thriller “D.O.A.,” exposes audiences to a dark world of sex, corruption and murder with Flynn’s character struggling to stave off certain death in only 24 hours. The cast includes actor Nazo Bravo of “Vigilante Diaries” and “Southland.”

Other noteworthy films being featured throughout the day on Saturday include Nikolay and Sergey Sarkisov’s “Krasny,” a Russian-Georgian production set in the south of post-revolutionary Russia. The film tells the story of a noble woman, a red commissar and a Cossack whose paths intertwine in a most unexpected way. Earlier in the day, festivalgoers will have the opportunity to see “Pinsky,” a film about a young woman who loses her girlfriend and her grandfather in the same day and moves back in with her authoritarian Russian grandmother who is determined to marry her granddaughter off to a nice Jewish boy. The lead character, Sophia Pinsky, ultimately finds her way to a weekly open mic night, where on a whim she gets on stage and discovers there’s actually an audience for her Queer-Russian-Jewish-American sense of humor. The film captures the struggle between Sophia and her grandmother in an effort to define loyalty and love.

Two additional films being screened on Saturday are “The Liberation of Skopje” and “H.O.M.E.” The first tells the story of cruelty of war, poverty and suffering during the occupation and liberation of what is modern-day Macedonia’s capital city during World War II. The horrors of war are portrayed through the eyes of an 11-year-old boy whose father is away fighting in the partisan army, while his mother develops a special relationship with a German officer. “H.O.M.E.” is a film woven of two stories exploring urban alienation and meaningful

see ARPA, page 15



ARTS & LIVING

# Armenian and Jewish Artifacts on Display Side-by-Side in Detroit



One of the Jewish religious works of art

Jewish works have been exhibited at the Phoenix Art Museum, Arizona Center for Medieval and Renaissance Studies in Tempe and the Sylvia Plotkin Judaica Museum at Congregation Beth Israel in Scottsdale.

“I moved on to items from religions besides my own because I like learning new things,” says Melikian, whose parents, Greg and Emma Melikian, have been supporters of the arts through board memberships with the Arizona Opera and Phoenix Art Museum.

“When viewers connect with artwork – and there’s great artwork among the religions – they get to understand the spirit of various groups of people.

“I think one of the most impressive historic groupings coming to Michigan from my collection will be Jewish children’s books from around the world. I’ve found that there are more Jewish collectors than Armenian collectors, and they are very connected to their roots.”

Lucy Ardash, director of the Manoogian Museum, also is impressed with the books and looks forward to arranging the entire exhibit as part of the celebration of the 25th anniversary of the museum.

ARTIFACTS, from page 14

Armenian artifacts include a white marble Armenian church cornerstone, an Armenian silver chalice dated 1642 and the second Bible printed in Armenian.

Melikian enjoys offbeat and unusual items. In his rare Bible collection, he has the one given

“Both the Armenian people and Jewish people went through tumultuous events, and now people in Michigan can see some of the antiquities that survived,” Ardash says. “We hope visitors learning about the Melikian holdings will read about them, and we also hope they will walk through the rest of the museum.”



Sculpture symbolizing the right hand of God

The Manoogian Museum opened in 1992 and is spread out across 12,000 square feet. It was founded by industrialist Alex Manoogian as both an artistic endeavor and an attempt to reconstruct the history of the Armenian people.

The facility showcases 1,500 items divided among eight galleries and includes illuminated manuscripts, early printed books, rugs and

by Donald Trump to second wife Marla Maples. This collector also enjoys sharing items with the public and has brought 10 exhibits to various museums.

carpets, sacred vessels and vestments, textiles and embroidery, ceramics, metalwork, paintings, practical and personal objects, ancient and medieval coins and objects from Urartu, the

ancient kingdom that flourished in the Armenian Highlands from the ninth to the early sixth century B.C.E.

This will be the first time that items from the James and Ana Melikian Collection will be featured in Metro Detroit. The couple connected with the museum through Elizabeth Brazilian, a family friend who is active with the Manoogian Museum and was interested in providing something special for the anniversary celebration.

“Although the exhibit coming to Michigan focuses on Armenian and Jewish heritage, I hope people representing all faiths will take a look and find out more about the history of these two cultures,” said Melikian, who visited the Southfield museum in 2007 to gain additional insight into Armenian antiquities.

“I have met many people of different cultures who share my interest in how artifacts give insights into ethnicities, and I have developed a special friendship with Rabbi Darren Kleinberg, formerly of Phoenix and now working in California. Each of my days is enriched by gaining more knowledge about a vast range of history, centuries-old and recent.”

All visits are by appointment with special events and evening tours available. Visit [manoogianmuseum.org](http://manoogianmuseum.org) or at [melikiancollection.com](http://melikiancollection.com).



A Torah case

## Arpa Film Festival Lineup Includes Joe Berlinger’s ‘Intent to Destroy’ and French Biopic ‘Dalida’

ARPA, from page 14

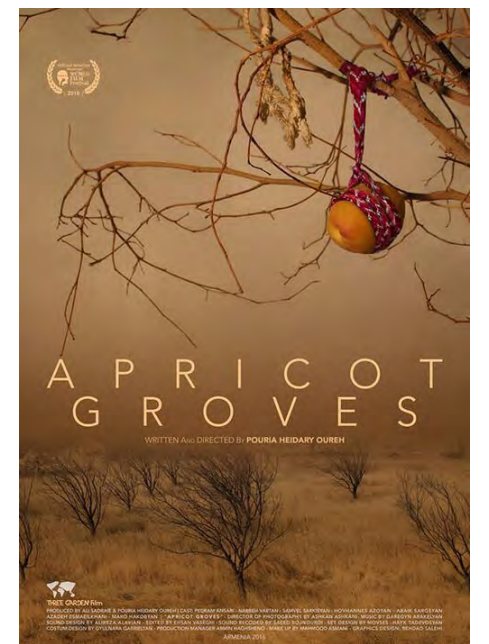
encounters through the lens of a disconnected city in constant motion. One story revolves around a young man with Asperger’s Syndrome who seeks refuge in the underground labyrinth of New York City. The other follows a gambling Ecuadorian livery driver and a Chinese woman desperate to get home to her sick child.

Highlights from Sunday’s lineup include three social-impact films – “Apricot Groves,” “Helena’s Law” and “The Heart of Nuba” – all of which bring awareness to LGBT issues, atrocities in the Nuba Mountains of Sudan and the essence of good and evil. “Apricot Groves” is a beautiful LGBTQ-inflected film about family, faith, brotherhood, and love. The debut feature was written and directed by Tehran-based Pouria Heidary Oureh, who masterfully tells the story of a transmasculine young man by the name of Aram who travels to Armenia from the United States where he has lived all his life. Aram finds himself in Armenia to propose marriage to an Armenian girl he met in America. He and his brother hit the road between Armenia and Iran, with the film skillfully layering subtle hints among their words, looks and deeds.

“Helena’s Law” is a Czech documentary focusing on a police officer, as well as other key players in a case. The resulting film is a mosaic that says less about the case or its background

herself acting in her movie, leading her to consider questions related to the essence of crime and of good and evil in general.

Kenneth A. Carlson’s masterpiece, “The



Heart of Nuba,” profiles the courageous and selfless efforts of Dr. Tom Catena, the sole doctor for a million patients in the war-torn Nuba Mountains of Sudan. Last June Catena was recognized as one of *Time* magazine’s Top 100 Most Influential People. The film’s executive producer is Maria Shriver.

Nominated films from this year’s festival will be recognized at the 20th Annual Arpa International Film Festival Awards Gala being held at the Loews Hollywood Hotel on Sunday, November 5. The star-studded evening will also honor Academy Award-winning director Terry George, acclaimed actor Carl Weathers, Academy Award-winning screenwriter Alexander Dinelaris and late music icon Chris Cornell with special awards and tributes. The evening will feature special performances by theremin virtuoso Armen Ra and vocalist Mister X.

In addition to tickets to individual screenings, AIFF is offering All-Access Passes for festival-goers, allowing them entry to all screenings throughout the 3-day film festival, as well as to the receptions on Friday and Saturday. For more information and tickets to the 20th Anniversary Film Festival and Awards Gala, visit [www.arpafilmfestival.com](http://www.arpafilmfestival.com) or email [haig@arpafilmfestival.com](mailto:haig@arpafilmfestival.com)

Arpa Foundation for Film, Music and Art (AFFMA) is a non-profit 501 (3) (c) organization.

TCA MHER MEGERDCHIAN THEATRICAL GROUP

# THE UNEXPECTED GUEST

by Agatha Christie

**- SAVE THE DATE -**  
OCTOBER 28 & 29



than it does about the people who exist on the edge of the law, and about their thoughts and motivations. Filmmaker Petra Nesvacilová finds

# Tufenkian Fine Arts Hosts Exhibit at New Location

LOS ANGELES – Tufenkian Fine Arts will open its new space at 216 S. Louise St. in Glendale with an inaugural exhibition, “A Retrospective: Garo Z. Antreasian,” featuring selected works by artist Garo Antreasian that span from 1981 to the present. The exhibition kicked off on October 22 with a reception. The exhibit will remain an opening reception on Sunday, October 22, from 2pm to 5pm, and will remain on view through November 11.

Antreasian has had a prolific career. Today, at the age of 95, he continues to produce new works – some of which are included in the upcoming exhibition. The wonderfully rhythmic architectural, geometric, and ornamental

Adams to begin Tamarind Institute, which is affiliated with the University of New Mexico. His contributions to the technology of lithography is well documented and has pioneered on many fronts. The Tamarind Book of Lithography: Art and Techniques co-authored by Antreasian and Adams serves as a comprehensive guide for lithography.

Antreasian’s career, artworks, and contributions to Western art are an inspiration to generations of artists. He pushed the boundaries of the lithography world, and, as a revered artist, his consistent inclusion in printmaking discourse influenced young and old printmakers.

Antreasian’s work has been widely exhibited



“The Emir’s Favorite,” 2012. Acrylic on wood. 35 3/8 x 74

shapes and colors of these pieces draw from Geometric Abstraction, American Southwestern, Middle Eastern and Mediterranean influences. As a comprehensive representation of Antreasian’s creative output, the wood-constructed artworks, paintings, drawings, and lithography featured in the exhibition point to the dazzling breadth and diversity of his body of work.

In the 1960s, a time when lithography was a dying art, Antreasian helped pioneer the revival of lithography through the Tamarind Lithography Workshop, which he helped launch in Los Angeles with June Wayne and Clinton Adams. In 1970 Antreasian moved to New Mexico with Associate Director Clinton

and is part of the permanent collections of numerous museums including Norton Simon, LACMA, Guggenheim Museum, and the Smithsonian Institute. His work and contributions to the early days of lithography in Los Angeles were highlighted in the exhibition titled “Proof: The Rise of Printmaking in Southern California” at the Norton Simon in 2011, as part of the Getty Pacific Standard Time initiative.

“A Retrospective: Garo Z. Antreasian” and related programming will spearhead the Tufenkian Fine Arts mission of presenting excellence in modern and contemporary art. It is with deep gratitude that we launch this exhibition, and look forward to a long, enriching relationship with the art-loving public.



“Black Trees, Green Ground,” 2001. Charcoal and pastel on paper. 41 1/2 x 30



## Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian

### Lamb and Spinach Soup

#### INGREDIENTS

1 1/2 pounds ground lamb  
1/2 cup white rice  
1 large white onion, finely chopped  
1 egg, beaten  
2 stalks celery, finely chopped  
2 carrots, peeled and finely chopped  
1/2 green or red bell pepper, seeded and minced  
1 (6 oz.) can tomato paste  
Juice of 2 or 3 lemons (to taste)  
2-3 cloves garlic, minced  
2-3 tablespoons chopped parsley  
6-8 cups low sodium chicken broth or vegetable broth  
2 cups chopped fresh spinach, arugula or escarole (to taste)  
Flour  
Sea or Kosher salt, black pepper, dried basil  
Cayenne pepper, Aleppo pepper, paprika or crushed red pepper flakes  
Olive oil or sunflower oil  
Lemon wedges, chopped fresh basil

#### PREPARATION:

Sauté the onions, celery, carrots, bell pepper, and garlic in a few tablespoons of oil until the onions are lightly browned.

Add the sautéed vegetables to the chicken broth, tomato paste, and lemon juice in a large pot, stir, bring to a full boil, and simmer on medium heat for a few minutes.

Combine the ground lamb with the rice, egg, parsley, and choice of spices, and roll into small meatballs. Roll the meatballs in flour, and add to the hot broth a few at a time; cook over medium heat for 25-30 minutes or until the rice is tender. Before serving, add the chopped spinach and cook a few minutes longer. Serve soup with fresh lemon on the side, and garnish with fresh basil or crushed red pepper flakes, if desired.

Serves 4-6.

\*Extra meatballs may be frozen to use another time. You may add a handful of crushed vermicelli or 1/4 cup of fine or medium bulgur to this soup, if desired.

\*Christine's recipes have been published in the *Fresno Bee* newspaper, *Sunset* magazine, *Cooking Light* magazine, and at <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>



armenian  
museum  
of america | art  
culture  
eternity



#### DISCOVER THE ARMENIAN MUSEUM

##### Komitas's Life & Legacy

Lecture by Dr. Mher Navoyan

Piano Performance by Professor Lilit Karapetian-Shougarian

Adele and Haig Der Manuelian Galleries, 3rd Floor

November 5, 2017 2:00 pm

Funded by a generous Grant from the Dadourian Foundation

The Armenian Museum of America and the Institute of Art of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences are proud to present the legacy of Komitas as a composer and his influence on international and Armenian Music. The lecturer is Dr. Mher Navoyan of the Art Institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences and the piano performance, of the works of Komitas, by Professor Lilit Karapetian Shougarian of New England Conservatory.

“Armenian music is not mild and sad, but fierce and vital, inside itself it nourishes philosophy and the spirit of its nation, as music is the purest mirror of the nation”. Komitas Vardapet





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## CALIFORNIA

**NOVEMBER 14 — Tuesday, Forced into Genocide, Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army** by Yervant Alexanian, presented by his daughter, Adrienne G. Alexanian. She has spent years preparing her father's manuscript for publication. She is an educator and recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Introduction by Sergio La Porta, Foreword by Israel W. Charny. Presented by the Armenian Studies Program, Fresno State, AGBU Greater Fresno Area and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research. Books will be available for purchase. Book signing during reception. 7:30 p.m., Fresno State University Business Center, Room 191, 5245 N. Backer Ave., Fresno.

**NOVEMBER 15 — A presentation of Forced into Genocide, Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier** in the Ottoman Turkish Army by Yervant Alexanian, presented by his daughter, Adrienne G. Alexanian. She has spent years preparing her father's manuscript for publication. She is an educator and recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Introduction by Sergio La Porta, Foreword by Israel W. Charny. Wednesday, St. Leon Armenian Cathedral, 3325 North Glenoaks Blvd, Burbank. Presented by the Ladies Auxiliary of the Western Diocese. AGBU, Armenian International Women's Association, Ararat-Eskijian Museum, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Knights of Vartan. Book signing during reception. 7:30 p.m. RSVP (310)277-4490.

**NOVEMBER 18 — Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its 25th Anniversary Gala** at 6:30pm at the Balboa Bay Club in Newport Beach. The organization will honor Founder Dr. Roger Ohanesian for 25 years of dedicated service to Armenia in the field of eye care. The fun-filled evening includes an authentic Armenian dinner, roving entertainers, a silent & live auction, Tom Bozigian & his band and Artur's Armenian Dance Troupe. To RSVP or for more information, call 949-933-4069, email [leslie@eyecare-project.com](mailto:leslie@eyecare-project.com) or visit [eyecareproject.com/25th-anniversary-gala/](http://eyecareproject.com/25th-anniversary-gala/)

## MASSACHUSETTS

**NOVEMBER 2 — Thursday: Symposium on Armenian Issues in the International Press. "Journalism and "Fake News": The Armenian Genocide and Karabakh.** Journalism is changing at a rapid pace. Join the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* along with Robert Fisk from Beirut, Lebanon, David Barsamian, Philip Terzian and Amberin Zaman to discuss the issues facing journalism today and their impact on the Armenian Case. Wellesley College, Alumnae Hall Ballroom, 106 Central Street, Wellesley. Doors open at 6:00 pm, Program starts 7:00 pm. Reception to follow, free admission.

**NOVEMBER 3 - 85th Anniversary Benefit Gala of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator**, the first English-language Armenian newspaper in the United States. Boston Marriott Hotel, 2345 Commonwealth Ave. Newton, MA. Reception, Meet the Awardees |6:30 PM; Dinner and Program, 7:30 PM. 2017 Lifetime Achievement Award to Robert Fisk, Journalist, Middle East correspondent for *The Independent* of London based in Beirut, seven time recipient of British Press Awards' Reporter of the Year; 2017 Excellence Awards to David Barsamian, founder and director of Alternative Radio, and Amberin Zaman, columnist for *Diken* and *Al Monitor*, former Turkey correspondent for *The Economist*. Mistress of Ceremonies Anaide Nahikian, Leader, Advanced Training Program at Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, Entertainment, 12 Musicians of Black Sea Salsa. For Reservations please call Aram Arkun (917) 743-9005 (cell), Email: [tcadirector@aol.com](mailto:tcadirector@aol.com).

**NOVEMBER 3-4 — 61st annual St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church Bazaar.** Friday and Saturday. Come with family and friends for delicious chicken, beef and losh kebab, kuftah and kheyma dinners, pastries and specialty gourmet items. Handmade arts and crafts, White Elephant table and ever popular silent and live auction items. Visit the church's website, [www.soorpstepanors.org](http://www.soorpstepanors.org) for menus, pastry and gourmet items. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, 47 Nichols Ave., Watertown. Admission is free.

**NOVEMBER 3 and 4 — Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe**, at our new location 1280 Boston Road, (Rte 125) Bradford MA, Friday 12 – 7 pm and Saturday 12 – 7 pm. Lamb, Losh, Chicken Kebab and Kheyma. Dinners served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift baskets, raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit

**On November 2, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator will present a symposium titled "Journalism and 'Fake News': The Armenian Genocide and Karabakh," featuring Robert Fisk, David Barsamian, Amberin Zaman and Philip Terzian, at 7 p.m., Wellesley College Alumnae Hall Ballroom, 106 Central St., Wellesley. A reception will follow the program. Free and open to the public.**

[menianchurch.org](http://menianchurch.org) or call (978) 372-9227.

**NOVEMBER 5 — Sunday, Lecture: "The Legacy of Komitas as a composer and his influence on International and Armenian music."** Speaker: Dr. Mher Navoyan Musicologist, pro-rector of Komitas Conservatory, Yerevan, with Piano Performance by Prof. Lilit Shougarian of New England Conservatory, works by Komitas (arr. Prof. Villy Sargsyan), Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main Street, Watertown, 2 p.m. Cosponsored by the Art Institute of the Academy of Sciences (Yerevan, Armenia) and funded by a grant from the Dadourian Foundation.

**NOVEMBER 10 — Benefit dinner for Armenia Tree Project's 100th anniversary living memorial** to General Dro and the Battle of Bash Aparan, Friday, presented by ATP and the Kanayan Family. Armenian American Social Club, Watertown. 7:30 p.m. \$75 per person. Call (617) 926-8733 or [info@armeniatree.org](mailto:info@armeniatree.org) to reserve your seat.

**NOVEMBER 12 — From Armenia to Boston for the first time. Beloved singer RUBEN SASUNCI**, live in concert with the Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC). Sunday, at 4 p.m. at Shaw Auditorium - Watertown High School, 50 Columbia St. Tickets: \$45 and \$35 to be reserved from front to back, in the order calls are received. For tickets and info, please call Mike Demirchian (617) 240-8266 or Vrej Ashjian at (339) 222-3429.

**NOVEMBER 18 — The Armenian Women's Welfare Association's 41st Annual Luncheon/Auction** will be held at the Oakley Country Club, 410 Belmont Street, Watertown on Saturday, at 11 a.m. Ticket price is \$75. Proceeds to benefit the mission of the AWWA, which include the Armenian Nursing & Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain and the Hanganak NGO Clinic in Stepanakert, N-K, Armenia. For more information about this event, please call Stephanie Ciccolo at 617-522-2600.

**NOVEMBER 19 — The Westin Waltham Boston Hotel, Project SAVE will celebrate** with a Thanks Giving brunch event to honor Founder Ruth Thomasian's vision and 42 years of service and to acknowledge the many volunteers, photo donors and supporters who have contributed to Project SAVE. An event for the community to come together and celebrate as we look ahead to the future. For more information call 617-923-4542 or email: [archives@projectsave.org](mailto:archives@projectsave.org).

**DECEMBER 10 — Christmas Holiday Concert, Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra**, 7 p.m., Sunday, Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. This year's concert, under the direction of Composer Konstantin Petrossian, music direc-

tor and conductor, will open with the Arlington High School Madrigal Singers and feature the vocal quartet the Bostonians. The program will consist of traditional Armenian and Western sacred and holiday music. The public is invited to attend this complimentary concert which is a gift to the community. For further information, call the Church office, 617.354.0632.

**DECEMBER 17 — Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway**, Boston, 4:30 – 6 pm. Quiet holiday reflection and celebration. Tie a ribbon with your wish on the Wishing Tree. Hot Chocolate & Cookies, hosted by The Bostonian Hotel Boston All are invited. RSVP appreciated, please email [hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

## MICHIGAN

**DECEMBER 2 — Nor Keghi Kef Time III Pagharch Dinner and Dance Fundraiser for Nor Keghi School in Armenia**, 6.30 p.m. St. John Armenian Church Hall, Southfield. Continuous music by an assembly of Detroit's All-Star Armenian Musicians will again entertain attendees to the third "Pagharch" feast that residents of the historic Armenian district dined on for centuries at the start of the winter season in mountainous Keghi district. The government of Armenia on Feb. 1962 renamed the region of Ashdarag to Nor Keghi to honor the history of Keghizees of historic Western Armenia. Funds raised will help in development of the school's multi-purpose auditorium.

## NEW JERSEY

**NOVEMBER 18 — Save the date. Gala banquet celebrating the 70th anniversary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association.** At the Terrace at Biagios. 299 Paramus Road, Paramus. Featuring Elie Berberian and his band from Montreal.

## NEW YORK

**NOVEMBER 16 — Join Armenia Tree Project and Paros Foundation** for a fundraiser to support kitchen renovations, beautification and environmental education at the school in Rind, Vayots Dzor. Featuring live performance by singer/songwriter Hooshere and silent auction featuring fine art and luxury gift items. Almayass Restaurant, 24 E 21st Street, New York. 7:00 pm to 10:00 pm. Donation: \$100 in advance, \$125 at door. For more information, [info@armeniatree.org](mailto:info@armeniatree.org).

## NEVADA

**NOVEMBER 10-12 — Association of Armenian Church Choirs**, 2017 Convention & Assembly, Las Vegas. Saint Geragos Armenian Apostolic Church, Contact: website: [www.aaccwd.com](http://www.aaccwd.com) • email: [events@aaccwd.com](mailto:events@aaccwd.com). The AACCCWD is an organization of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America.

## RHODE ISLAND

**SEPTEMBER 13, 2017-MARCH 14, 2018 — Armenian Film Festival "The Nation's Past & Present"** Sponsored by Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, in Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. Wednesday, October 11, , at 7 pm, "Garni, Geghard" Wednesday, November 15, 2017, at 7 pm, "Armenia" (Yerevan, Echmiadzin, Khor Virap, Zvartnots, Sevan, Dilijan, Lori) Wednesday, January, 24, at 7 pm "Country of Armenian Kings - 2" (Ani, Kars, Edesia, Musaler) Wednesday, February, 21, at 7 pm, "Country of Armenian Kings - 3" (Cilicia, Kharbert, Adana, Zeytoun) Wednesday, March, 14, 2018, at 7 pm. All presented in English, donation of \$10.

**NOVEMBER 4, 5 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Annual Food Fair & Bazaar. Saturday**, 11:30 a.m.-10 p.m., Sunday, noon – 6 p.m. Shish Kebab, Kufta, Kheyma, Choreg, Yalanchi, Losh Kebab, Armenian Pastries, midia, Vosbov Kheyma, etc. Daily Raffle, Silent Auction Kids activities & Balloon Man, and much more. Cash, Check, Visa & Mastercard accepted. Call 401-272-7712 for further info.

*Calendar items are free. Entries should not be longer than 5 lines. Listings should include contact information. Items will be edited to fit the space, if need be. A photo may be sent with the listing. Items should be sent no later than Mondays at noon.*

# Mirror Spectator



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## COMMENTARY

# Iran a Bedrock for Armenia's Stability

By Edmond Y. Azadian

An exhibition opened on October 17 at the National Museum of Tehran to celebrate historic and cultural relations between Armenia and Iran since time immemorial. The show is called "Iran and Armenia: Memory of a Realm." The exhibition will run through January 17, 2018 and features 100 ancient artifacts from Armenia and 200 from Iran.

Archaeological excavations date back 5,000 years into history of the close relations between the two nations. The current exhibition focuses mostly on the Bronze and Iron Ages, when the Urartian civilization flourished around Lake Van.

Armen Amirian, minister of culture of Armenia, joined hands with Ali Asghar Mounesan, director of Iran's Cultural Heritage to cut the ribbon at the exhibit's opening. On this occasion, Mounesan outlined Iran's policy towards its neighbors: "The message of peace and friendship that the Iranian government pursues as its cultural diplomacy."

Relations between the two nations have been more friendly than not over the centuries, except perhaps during the Vartanants War (451 AD), when Armenians fought to preserve their newly-found Christian faith. During the reign of the Shah of Iran, the Armenian community there enjoyed a privileged position and prospered. Contrary to the big guns of news media to vilify Iran, Armenians remained a respected minority and the Iranian government took special care of Armenian monuments, churches and institutions, unlike neighboring Turkey.

Perhaps the most significant era of relations between Armenia and Iran was during the reign of Shah Abbas (1571-1629), the strongest ruler of the Safavid Dynasty in Persia.

Iran has fought many wars with the Ottoman Empire and Armenia has changed hands during the ebb and flow of those conflicts. In the year 1604, Shah Abbas forced 250,000 to 300,000 Armenians from their native land and moved to New Julfa (Nor Jugha); whether this resettlement was out of admiration of the Shah for the Armenians' creative skills or because of his scorched-earth policy toward the more powerful Ottoman forces at the time, we may not be able to tell, especially as there was a significant number of Armenian casualties crossing the Arax River.

His ruthless measures define the actions of a ruler who imprisoned his own father and killed his own son.

Once settled on the Persian territories, Armenians were offered special privileges to keep their mayors and judges and develop trade in the country and were able to extend it all the way to the Far East and Europe.

In recent years, Armenia's reliance on Iran has grown by necessity, given the blockades put in place by Turkey and Azerbaijan with Georgian collusion. It has been a risky relationship since Iran has been under international sanctions and as a result trade has been growing at a slower pace. Once those sanctions were eased, Armenia's exports to Iran jumped to \$54.8 million from January to August 2017, a net increase of 11 percent.

Recently Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan visited Tehran to sign a number of agreements in the areas of electricity, gas, agriculture, conversion industries, transportation, science and culture. Iranian gas, especially, will allow Armenia to have an alternative, so that it can be weaned from the single

source of Russian gas running through the unfriendly territory of Georgia.

During a joint press conference with Karapetyan, Iran's First Vice President Eshagh Jahangiri stressed the need to remove obstacles for closer economic relations and "take advantage of Armenia's bonds in the Eurasian Union in addition to its relations with the European Union."

Armenians had been complaining that the country did not benefit much from joining the Russian-centered Eurasian Economic Union. Now, within the context of regional developments, the value of that membership will be further enhanced by Iran signing an agreement with the EEU. The relationship may counteract attempts by Turkey, Azerbaijan and Georgia to isolate Armenia both economically and politically.

Iran maintains a balanced relationship with Armenia and Azerbaijan, always advocating for a peaceful solution to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, which may spill over into Iran in case of a full-scale war. Another reason is not only concern for peace in the region but fear that the Azeri republic in war mode will also make a play for the province of Azerbaijan in Iran. Iran's 80-million population is not homogeneous. There are 9 million Iranian Azeris that live in the north of Iran, in the province of Azerbaijan, which was claimed once by former Azeri President Abulfaz Elchibey.

In Neocon plans for Iran, Iranian Azerbaijan is considered to be situated on an ethnic fault line, which can be a convenient breakup line for potential enemies. The Iranian leadership is similarly wary about Israeli plans and activities in neighboring Azerbaijan.

For now, it seems that relative peace has been restored in the region with Iran's nuclear deal. But the unpredictable President Trump has begun to threaten to unilaterally back out of the deal despite the fact that Russia and Europe are fellow signatories to the agreement. President Trump considers the agreement to be a bad deal, although there is no proof that Iran is not holding up its end of the bargain.

The Paris Climate Agreement was also similarly scuttled by Trump, though his fellow international signatories remain in place. The US president does not give a hoot and might similarly decertify the Iran deal.

But this time around, his administration seems to be split; Secretary of State Rex Tillerson and Secretary of Defense James Mattis do not seem to be in agreement with the president. Also, Frederica Mogherini, the foreign affairs commissioner of the European Union, has bypassed the White House, appealing to the US Congress to maintain the agreement.

Should the US administration get its act together and decertify the Iran nuclear deal, not only will it generate instability in the region, but will have far bigger consequences and ramifications worldwide.

When sanctions were in place, the State Department was tolerant towards Armenia's relations with Iran after the Islamic Revolution, realizing the country offered Armenia the only outlet to worldwide markets.

Should turmoil resume, Armenia may still be safe, but its business activities will remain restrained and its economy will continue to suffer.

Iran serves as a bedrock for Armenia's stability. Any pressure on Iran will impact Armenia by limiting its access to worldwide markets and hamper its prospects for economic development.

# Russia Makes Friends with Turkey, Saudi Arabia,

By Tom O'Connor

Russia is set to close major arms deals with two nations, Turkey and Saudi Arabia, once vehemently opposed to Moscow's presence in the Middle East.

In a historic visit to Moscow, Saudi Arabia's King Salman bin Abdulaziz Al Saud met with Russian President Vladimir Putin early in October to discuss oil, Iran's growing sphere of influence in the Middle East and the ongoing conflict in Syria, in which Moscow and Riyadh back opposing factions. In addition to an exchange of kind words between former bitter foes, the meeting produced a deal for Saudi Arabia to purchase Russia's advanced S-400 Triumf missile defense system, according to Saudi news channel Al Arabiya, as well as promises of a rapprochement that could reshape the region.

"This is the first visit by a Saudi Arabian

monarch in the history of our relations, and that in itself is a landmark event," Putin said, welcoming Salman in a grand ceremony, according to Al Jazeera. "I'm sure your visit will boost the ties between our countries."

"We aim to strengthen our relations in the interests of peace and security, in the interests of developing the world economy," Salman responded.

While Russia and Saudi Arabia managed to smooth out disagreements over their commitments to cut energy production in order to reduce oil prices, it's less clear if they found any common ground on Syria. Saudi Arabia was an early supporter of opposition groups trying since 2011 to oust Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, but Russia's 2015 intervention on Assad's behalf turned the tides of the conflict. Syria's armed forces have since regained much of the territory the government once lost to rebels and jihadis.

The Syrian government's comeback occurred not only thanks to Russian air support but also because of a massive mobilization of majority-Shiite militias supported by

Iran. Iran and Saudi Arabia have fought proxy wars over influence in the Middle East for decades, but Iran's recent victories in Iraq and Syria may have tipped the competition in Tehran's favor, compelling Riyadh to position itself closer to the U.S.-Israeli alliance.

Nevertheless, the meeting proved that Saudi Arabia was willing to seriously engage with Moscow's vision for the region, and it wasn't alone.

The week before, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan received his Russian counterpart in Ankara to boost relations, align their positions on Syria and secure a contract for the S-400 Triumf missile defense system. Like Saudi Arabia, Turkey has supported Syrian rebels trying to overthrow Assad, and its backing for the insurgents has rocked Turkey-Russia relations in the past.

Shortly after Russia's entrance into the Syrian conflict, a Turkish F-16 fighter jet shot down a Russian Sukhoi Su-24 that allegedly crossed into Turkish airspace near northern Syria in November 2015. Syrian rebels shot

*continued on next page*



## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## European Court Finds Catholicosate's Suit Inadmissible; And Could not Be Appealed

The Armenian Catholicosate of Cilicia (headquartered in Antelias, Lebanon) filed a lawsuit on April 25, 2015, against the government of Turkey seeking the return of its historic seat in Sis (present-day Kozan district of the Adana Province) which was confiscated in 1921.

The first-of-its-kind lawsuit was filed in the Constitutional Court of the Turkish Republic because the claim raised issues of property rights that lower courts would not have jurisdiction to overturn the maze of laws adopted by Turkey in 1915 and succeeding years. At the recommendation of the Justice Ministry of Turkey, the Constitutional Court referred the Armenian Church lawsuit to the lower courts. The lawyers for the Catholicosate of Cilicia, however, decided to appeal the case directly to the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in Strasbourg, France, on December 8, 2016.

The issue of sidestepping submission of the Catholicosate's lawsuit to a lower court in Turkey is critical in view of the requirements of the European Court of Human Rights that before any case is brought to the ECHR, all local legal remedies must first be exhausted, starting with the lowest court

and ending with the highest court of the country being sued.

On October 19, 2017, addressing the conference of the Armenian Cause in the European Parliament in Brussels, His Holiness Catholicos Aram I of the Great House of Cilicia criticized the single judge from ECHR who had rejected the Armenian Church's lawsuit finding it inadmissible. Until this announcement, there was no news about the status of the lawsuit. I contacted the ECHR headquarters in Strasbourg inquiring about the Armenian Church's claim. I was informed that a single judge indeed has the authority to reject any lawsuit, which in this case was not first submitted to a lower court in Turkey in order to exhaust all local remedies, and that the letter of rejection was sent to the Catholicosate in March 2017. More ominously, I was told by ECHR that the judge's decision could not be appealed.

I then contacted Payam Akhavan, a member of the Catholicosate's legal team and professor of international law at McGill University in Montreal, Canada, inquiring why no announcement was made earlier by the Catholicosate regarding the rejection of the lawsuit six months ago. Prof. Akhavan explained that the ECHR judge had sent the letter to the wrong address. The Catholicosate then wrote to that judge "expressing serious concern on miscarriage of justice; that a single judge could throw out what was clearly a well-argued case, and waited until recently for a standard response that there is no appeal, and the decision is final."

In his Brussels speech on October 19, 2017, Catholicos Aram the First harshly condemned the ECHR for rejecting the Church's lawsuit: "Why would the European Court of Human Rights so easily reject our case knowing that no lawyer would dare to bring such a case before the Turkish courts? How could a single judge throw out a 900-page Application, historically and legally well substantiated by some of the best international lawyers? Why was our legal team not given a chance for a hearing? Is everybody now

afraid to confront Turkey's appalling record of human rights violations? We are astonished and, in fact, deeply disappointed at this miscarriage of justice, particularly at this crucial juncture of modern history when Europe is expected, in faithfulness to its values and principles, to consider justice above geopolitical interests... Europe is essentially a community of values, not merely political and economic interests. Therefore, I still hope that the European Court of Human Rights will reconsider the admissibility of the case on the basis of justice and human rights. In spite of the denial of justice, the Armenian people will continue to struggle for justice."

Akhavan called the ECHR judge's decision "scandalous." He then added in his email to me: "By the measure of several highly experienced ECHR lawyers, this decision is totally unacceptable. It shouldn't be forgotten that our counsel was Tim Eicke QC [Queen's Counsel], who is now the British judge on the ECHR. He of course is conflicted from involvement in the case, but there is a sense among many that the Court is too afraid of confronting post-coup Turkey with such controversial cases."

Akhavan also stated that the next steps for this lawsuit "are either to re-submit the case with some new facts such as the impossibility of going back to the Turkish courts under current circumstances, or to go back to the Turkish courts, waste a lot of resources, and come back to the ECHR once again. It is a ludicrous decision because everybody knows that is exactly what will happen. It is a hot potato the ECHR doesn't want to handle..."

In conclusion, I would suggest that the Catholicosate of Cilicia make public the complete files of its lawsuit, including the 600-page submission to the Turkish Constitutional Court and its response, and the 900-page filing to the European Court of Human Rights and its response. After all, this is not a private lawsuit, but one dealing with the Armenian nation's property demands from Turkey.

## Russia Makes Friends With Turkey, Saudi Arabia, Former Foes

from previous page

and killed the pilot as he descended by parachute. The resulting fallout led to months of diplomatic and military tension between Russia and Turkey until Erdogan expressed his condolences in June 2016 in a letter that Russia took as an apology.

The following month, authorities reportedly arrested the two Turkish pilots involved in the shoot-down incident. The pair were reportedly detained in connection with a July 2016 coup attempt against Erdogan, according to local media and an official cited by Agence France-Presse.

That year saw widespread gains by the Syrian military and its allies, who ultimately retook Aleppo, once Syria's most populous city and a commercial center, from rebels in December 2016. As Syrian troops closed in on the city, Turkey cut a landmark deal with Russia and Iran to transfer rebels who refused to lay down their arms to the northwestern province of Idlib, which remains a rebel stronghold to this day.

Turkey also joined Russia and Iran in establishing talks between the Syrian government and the opposition in Kazakhstan's capital city, Astana. In May, the three countries agreed to establish de-escalation zones throughout Syria, and during last week's meeting between Putin and Erdogan, the pair announced they would deploy personnel to implement this plan.

While the Syrian opposition in Astana is represented by rebel fighters, the Saudi-Arabia High Negotiations Committee that represents the opposition in simultaneous peace talks in Geneva is formed mainly of politicians. Through Russia's sponsorship, the Syrian government has solidified its position in both peace processes, and many Western leaders have abandoned calls to remove Assad as a necessary condition to end the conflict.

Russia has successfully reached out to other U.S. allies as well. In July, Iraqi officials turned to Moscow for greater defense and economic support, with Iraqi Vice President Nouri al-Maliki saying he sought to "balance" U.S. influence after more than 14 consecutive years of military presence.

(This analysis originally appeared in *Newsweek* on October 7.)

## Armenia: With EU Deal, Romancing Both Brussels and Moscow

By Giorgi Lomsadze

**M**OSCOW appears angling to reinforce Armenia's shaken commitment to the Russia-centric economic space, the Eurasian Economic Union, ahead of a key deal between Armenia and the European Union.

On October 11, Russian President Vladimir Putin gathered together in Dushanbe with leaders from nine post-Soviet countries, including Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan, to discuss goings-on in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), a trade community cobbled together by Moscow as a response to the EU. Russian Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev is expected to get deeper into the details of this communal economy during a visit to Armenia scheduled for sometime this month. Medvedev will be discussing ways to simplify the movement of goods between Armenia, Russia and the rest of the EEU.

Some see these discussions as part of a Russian campaign to reassure doubting Armenia that it made the right choice in 2015 to align itself economically with Russia instead of the EU. From the kickoff, the economic benefits of the EEU relationship have fallen short of Armenian expectations.

To counter disenchantment with the pact, Russian media has added its voice to the Kremlin's efforts. Moscow's state-financed Sputnik news service this week described the EEU as a chance, courtesy of Russia, for Armenia to restore its Soviet-era prosperity.

Moscow is making its moves just before Armenia plans to make a significant step toward the West. Next month, President Sargsyan is expected to visit Brussels to attend a summit of the EU with its Eurasian partners – Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Moldova and Ukraine. If not at the summit itself, but

likely later this year, the EU and Armenia are expected to sign a Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement.

Described as "ground-breaking," the deal is, in fact, a compromise on an earlier, failed Association Agreement about political integration and free trade. Pressure from Russia, which is reluctant to see its satellites drift westward, is believed to have led to the Association Agreement's last-minute collapse in 2013. Heavily reliant on Moscow for security, trade and investment, Yerevan pretty much fled the altar and soon tied the knot with Russia and its EEU.

Coming after a four-year chill or, as some put it more charitably, a "strategic pause," in relations between Brussels and Yerevan, this latest compact is sometimes described as an "Association Agreement lite." Still a work-in-progress, the treaty reportedly contains the original provisions on political reform and is meant to make sure the EU and Armenia share democratic values, if not an economy. The agreement contains clauses on cooperation between economic sectors, though EEU rules for Armenia will still apply.

Russia has not commented publicly on the agreement, but some non-Russian observers believe that it does not object to the deal. In a recent review of Armenia-EU ties, scholars Hrant Kostanyan and Richard Giragosian conjecture that the EEU may try "to leverage Armenia as a potential new platform to engage the EU."

Russia has other ways to exert influence on Armenia's EU ambitions as well. Economic ties aside, Moscow still acts as the security guarantee for Armenia, sandwiched between foes Azerbaijan and Turkey. Indeed, a new, \$100-million export loan for Armenia to purchase Russian weapons is now in the offing.

Against that backdrop, Armenia may appear unlikely to move meaningfully toward Western integration. In Dushanbe, President Sargsyan said he is happy with the EEU and wants more of it.

But even though Sargsyan's government has not embraced calls to quit the EEU, lest it anger Moscow, it clearly wants to keep its options open.

As Armenia's second largest trade partner after Russia, the EU, of course, is ready to oblige. Its Commissioner for European Neighbourhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations, Johannes Hahn, called the accord with Armenia a "blueprint for possible new relationships."

Yet Kostanyan and Giragosian urge caution. The implementation of Yerevan's EU deal, they warn, could be "as daunting as the negotiations, and perhaps even more difficult."

(This commentary originally appeared in the Eurasia.Net blog.)

MOSCOW'S STATE-FINANCED SPUTNIK NEWS SERVICE THIS WEEK DESCRIBED THE EEU AS A CHANCE, COURTESY OF RUSSIA, FOR ARMENIA TO RESTORE ITS SOVIET-ERA PROSPERITY.



## World Music for a Global Program at *Mirror-Spectator* Gala on November 3

SALSA, from page 1

Teager began studying the trumpet at the age of 7 and still continues to be enthusiastic about the instrument and its capabilities. After graduating from Princeton University, he went on to study electronic music composition at the New England Conservatory with Robert Ceely. Teager was introduced as a young artist by the Armenian Renaissance Association in 1989, and has performed as a featured soloist in venues ranging from the Massachusetts State House to the historic 12th Baptist Church in Roxbury.

As a teacher, Teager has taught both trumpet and recorder to students as young as 5, as established as 80, and most ages in between.

In addition to teaching at the Winchester Community Music School, freelance work, and Black Sea Salsa, Teager also directs the Youth Choir at the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church in Cambridge.

In 1996, he founded Black Sea Salsa with the idea of creating an original sound by fusing elements of Middle Eastern music with Latin Jazz and blues. Since its first concert, the group has gone on to establish itself as one of Boston's premier festival bands, performing up and down the East Coast. Black Sea Salsa has recorded two CDs, and played at venues such as Boston Harborfest, Steppin' Out Boston and Philadelphia's Arts on the Main Line. As its director, writer, and arranger, Teager has been recognized with awards from the Massachusetts Arts Council and the Armenian Foundation for Film Music and Art.

Led by Teager, featuring John Baboian on guitar with a five-piece rhythm section, Lance Martin on flute with the wall 'o sound horns, and Ron Murphy on vocals with the Salsettes, it's a powerhouse of a group that's bound to put everyone in a good mood. Come celebrate the Rhythmic Equinox with the Boston's only Armenian Salsa Band.

Their music can be heard at <https://itunes.apple.com/us/album/crimean-dance-party/id291543155>

To purchase tickets to the gala, which will feature award-winning journalists Robert Fisk, David Barsamian and Amberin Zaman, and mistress of ceremonies Anaide Nahikian of the Harvard Humanitarian Initiative, call Aram Arkun at (917) 743-9005 or email [tcadirector@aol.com](mailto:tcadirector@aol.com)

## President Sargsyan Receives Legate for Mekhitarist Congregation Archbishop Levon Zekiyan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan on October 23 hosted Papal Legate for the Mekhitarist Congregation of Venice, Primate of the Armenian Catholic Diocese in Turkey Archbishop Levon Zekiyan who arrived on the sidelines of events dedicated to the 300th anniversary of the establishment of the Mekhitarist Congregation in the island of San Lazzaro.

The events were held in Yerevan October 20-24.

Welcoming the guest and his delegation, Sargsyan congratulated the Mekhitarists Congregation on their 300th anniversary, highlighting its irreplaceable and significant role which made it as a spiritual, educational, literary and scientific-cultural center.

The President noted that three centuries ago since the moment of starting its activity the institution founded by Mkhitar Sebastatsi had an exclusive significant contribution in the preservation of Armenian identity the vivid proofs of which are the numerous manuscripts and records of the Armenian cultural heritage being kept in the monastery complex of the Mekhitarist Congregation. Serzh Sargsyan said during his visits to Italy and Austria he tries not to miss the chance to visit the Mekhitarist Congregations of Venice and Vienna. He stated that the Congregation should continue its productive activity, adding that any difficulty, problem is possible to solve only through Armenia-diaspora close cooperation for which both sides are ready. The Armenian President highly

appreciated Archbishop Levon Zekiyan's activity aimed at making the spiritual, cultural heritage of the Armenian people recognizable to the world, preserving the Armenian identity and educating the generations.

Zekiyan thanked the president for warm and encouraging words, stating that always feeling the support of the Fatherland is very important. He warmly remembered the President's visits to Congregation's institutions and expressed hope there will be such chances in future as well. "The Congregation together with its members and friends, as well as under the auspices of you, Honorable President, and Your Holiness, must make efforts to properly celebrate the jubilee year of the 300th anniversary", he said. During the meeting the sides also discussed issues relating to the Armenian Catholic community of Turkey.

HayPost issued a special stamp to mark the anniversary.

## Mexican Parliamentary Delegation Visits Armenia

YEREVAN – Mexican MPs Blanca Margarita Cuata Dominguez, Maria Cristina Teresa Garcia Bravo, Carlos Hernández Mirón visited the Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Sunday, October 22, accompanied by Vice-Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Edward Sharmazanov.

The Mexican parliamentarians laid flowers at the eternal fire and paid tribute to the memory of the Armenian genocide victims with a moment of silence.

At the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute the guests got acquainted with the documents proving the Armenian Genocide, observed the exhibits and left a note in the guestbook.

The head of the Mexico-Armenia Friendship Group Blanca Margarita Cuata Dominguez noted: "It was an honor for me to visit this great country, get to know a heroic nation that enjoys great respect in the world. I already love Armenia."

Maria Cristina Teresa Garcia Bravo noted: "We express our sympathy and solidarity to the Armenian people."

"Hatred is the road to failure," Carlos Hernández Mirón said and added that the mankind supports and pays tribute to the Armenian people.

## Koutoujian Elected President Of Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association

SHERIFF, from page 1

served as an assistant district attorney in the Middlesex District Attorney's Office and went on to serve 14 years in the Legislature representing the cities of Waltham, Watertown and Newton.

As a member of the Legislature, Koutoujian chaired the Joint Committee on Public Health and later the Joint Committee on Financial Services. He has also been deeply involved in efforts to address the opioid epidemic, chairing the first Massachusetts OxyContin and Other Drug Abuse Commission in 2005.

Since assuming office in 2011, Koutoujian has worked with the Legislature to pass legislation allowing for greater continuity of medical care for individuals leaving incarceration and created the Commonwealth's only unit for incarcerated military Veterans. The Middlesex Sheriff's Office has also been designated as a Center of Innovation by the National Institute of Corrections for its medication assisted treatment program for individuals with opioid use disorders.

Recognized this year as a "Champion of Justice Reform" by the Coalition for Public Safety, Koutoujian is a member of both the National Sheriffs' Association and Major County Sheriffs' Association, as well as a founding member of Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration.

Koutoujian will begin his two-year term as MSA president in January.



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