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Armen Sarkissian Elected New Armenian President

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian parliament voted on Friday, March 2, to elect Armen Sarkissian, a former prime minister who has long resided in Britain, Armenia's new and largely ceremonial president.

Sarkissian was nominated for the post by the outgoing President Serzh Sargsyan (no relation) and the ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) in January. He was also endorsed by the HHK's junior coalition partner, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation



President Armen Sarkissian

(Dashnaksutyun), and businessman Gagik Tsarukian's alliance, which is officially in opposition to the government.

The opposition Yelk alliance, the fourth political group represented in the National Assembly, has rejected Sarkissian's candidacy. Yelk, which holds nine seats in the 105-member parliament, has also questioned his eligibility to serve as head of state.

see PRESIDENT, page 2



David Ignatius moderating the Aurora Dialogue panel, featuring Marguerite Barankitse, Lieutenant William Keegan and John Prendergast

From Pain to Healing Aurora Dialogues in Heart of September 11 Tragedy

NEW YORK – In the shadows of where the Twin Towers once stood as symbols of American pride and under the reflective gaze of the Statue of Liberty

By Taleen Babayan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

that represents equal opportunity for all those seeking a better life, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative hosted its Aurora Dialogues on Thursday, March 1, at the National September 11 Memorial and Museum.

A visionary initiative that launches Armenians onto the world humanitarian platform, the Aurora Initiative hosted the dialogues, titled "Solidarity Beyond Borders: Stepping Up When Others Step Back," to discuss and champion the tireless efforts of individuals around the globe who strive to create positive change in the face of adversity, much like those who came to the rescue of Armenians during the Genocide over a century ago.

Featuring Aurora Prize finalists Marguerite Barankitse (2016) and Dr. Tom Catena (2017), alongside retired Port Authority Police Department Lieutenant and Special Ops Lt. Bill Keegan and John Prendergast, founding director of the Enough Project, the evening's panel, moderated by David Ignatius, associate editor and columnist for the *Washington Post*, explored the issue of heroism.

see AURORA, page 10

New Yorker Boyajian Makes His Case for Congress

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

CAMBRIDGE, N.Y. – Congressmen of Armenian descent are a rare commodity. At present, there are only two, but a third can-



Don Boyajian

didate, thirty-three-year-old Donald G. Boyajian ("Don"), is vigorously making his case in the Democratic primary for New York State's rural northern 21st Congressional district, which includes the Adirondack Mountains and Thousand Islands regions.

Boyajian's paternal grandfather, originally with the last name of Nersesian, came to Saratoga County in upstate New York from Aintab, with his name being changed to Boyajian by the American authorities out of a misunderstanding. He arrived during the period of the Armenian Genocide. Boyajian's maternal grandparents came to Providence from Palu.

Boyajian pointed out, "Since both sides of my family are 100 percent Armenian, I grew up going to the Armenian Apostolic Church, doing ACYOA [Armenian see BOYADJIAN, page 20



Noted Poet Diana Der-Hovanesian Dies

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Diana Der-Hovanesian, poet and long-time president of New England Poetry Club, died on March 1, 2018. She was the author of 30 books of poetry and translations, several plays, and was twice a Fulbright professor of American Poetry.

see DER-HOVANESSIAN, page 8

NEWS IN BRIEF

Yerevan Scraps Turkish-Armenian Protocols

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia on March 1 formally annulled the 2009 protocols to normalize its relations with Turkey, citing Ankara's continuing refusal to implement them unconditionally.

President Serzh Sargsyan signed a relevant decree immediately after chairing a meeting of his National Security Council which discussed and approved his long-anticipated move.

"I am asking the foreign minister [Edward Nalbandian] to notify Turkey about our decision, after which no obligation stemming from those agreements will be legally binding for us," he said.

The two protocols signed in Zurich in October 2009 committed Turkey and Armenia to establishing diplomatic relations and opening their border. Shortly after the signing ceremony, Ankara made clear that Turkey's parliament will ratify the deal only if there is decisive progress towards a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict acceptable to Azerbaijan.

The Armenian government has rejected preconditions. The United States, the European Union and Russia have likewise repeatedly called for their unconditional implementation.

Sargsyan insisted on Thursday that signing the protocols was worth it because the international community has no doubts now that the onus is on Turkey, not Armenia, to normalize Turkish-Armenian relations.

Sargsyan also made clear that despite walking away from the deal Yerevan remains committed to unconditionally improving its ties with Ankara. "If there are [relevant] proposals tomorrow or the day after, we will be ready to discuss those proposals," he said.

Premier Meets with Lyon Mayor

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan on March 6 received Lyon Mayor Georges Képénékian.

Karapetyan praised Armenian-French relations and noted one of the most important components of the relations is cooperation at local levels. Karapetyan welcomed the cooperation between Yerevan and Lyon, in particular, in the fields of urban development, economic cooperation and tourism.

He also expressed hope that Lyon businesspeople will attend the conference which will be held in Yerevan within the framework of the International Organization of La Francophonie in October.

Karapetyan expressed confidence that the launch of Yerevan-Lyon direct flight from April 19 will further create closer ties.

Képénékian agreed and hoped for increased cooperation.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Financial Times Gives 'Heritage Tourism' Award to Yerevan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – fDi Intelligence, a service from the Financial Times, has recognized Yerevan with a special award for "Heritage Tourism."

"The capital of Armenia, Yerevan has been recognized with a special award for Heritage Tourism. Many opportunities exist in the city for investors in the areas of heritage tourism and leisure facilities. One such opportunity is the restoration of Erebuni, a historical archaeological museum reserve. The city has also been commended for its International Outreach, in its efforts to put itself on the map for foreign investors. Yerevan co-operates with more than 50 cities globally, and is a member of eight international organizations. Initiatives are in place to expand international ties with sister and partner city agreements."

French Mayor, NKR Foreign Minister Meet

STEPANAKERT (Public Radio of Armenia) – On March 5, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh Masis Mayilian received the delegation from Bouc-Bel-Air, France, headed by Mayor Richard Mallié.

Mayilian welcomed the guests and expressed gratitude to Mallié for his consistent stance on the establishment and development of decentralized cooperation with the town of Askeran.

Mayilian noted that the cooperation between Askeran and Bouc-Bel-Air is one of the important examples of the policy of the Republic of Artsakh on the development of international relations. In this context, Mayilian stressed the importance of the development of Francophonie in Artsakh.

Mallié expressed readiness to expand the relations between the two peoples. In this context, the sides exchanged views on the practical aspects of cooperation and the implementation of projects of mutual interest.

The Declaration of Friendship between Askeran and Bouc-Bel-Air was signed on November 19, 2014.

Artsakh National Assembly Marks Sumgait Anniversary

STEPANAKERT (Public Radio of Armenia) – On March 2, at the initiative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh, the statement by the National Assembly of the Republic of Artsakh on the 30th anniversary of the massacre of the Armenian population of the town of Sumgait was disseminated as an official document in the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE).

The statement says, in part, "On 27-29 February 1988, atrocities against and forced deportation of the Armenian population was carried out by the Azerbaijani authorities in Sumgait, just 30 kilometers from Baku. Hundreds of Armenians, mostly women, children and elderly people, fell victim to a pre-planned massacre; thousands of Armenians were forcibly deported and their property and plundered. The crime committed in Sumgait was another manifestation of the policy of discrimination, ethnic cleansing and expulsion of Armenian people, which, following the example of Nakhichevan, was carried out with impunity by the Azerbaijani authorities during the Soviet period. It later continued in Baku, Gandzak (Kirovabad) and other Armenian settlements of Northern Artsakh."

It continued, "The National Assembly of the Artsakh Republic condemns any manifestation of discrimination, xenophobia and intolerance, believes that official Baku continues to pursue a policy of genocide, the latest evidence of which were crimes committed against the civilian population of Artsakh in April 2016, reaffirms that the Artsakh Republic will be consistent in restoring and protecting the rights of Azerbaijani Armenians who were exposed to violence and deportation, urges parliamentary structures and international human rights organizations, on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of mass pogroms and atrocities against the Armenian population of Sumgait, to condemn the genocidal acts committed by Baku against the Armenians of Azerbaijan.

Armen Sarkissian Elected New Armenian President

PRESIDENT, from page 1

Sarkissian was elected in secret ballot by 90 votes to 10. He gave a short speech in the parliament moments after the announcement of the vote results.

"I want to thank those who voted for me and those who voted against me," he said. "I will invest my long experience and knowledge and my entire energy in properly performing the duties of Armenia's president and properly serving the Republic of Armenia, its citizens and our people."

"And I certainly expect your and our citizens' support for and participation in our future important victories," added the president-elect.

Only seven Yelk deputies cast ballots on Friday, suggesting that three other lawmakers affiliated with the HHK, Dashnaktsutyun or the Tsarukian Bloc secretly broke ranks to vote against Serzh Sarkisian's preferred successor. It was not clear who they are.

Yelk's parliamentary leader, Nikol Pashinian was quick to pounce on that fact. He declared with sarcasm that there are "hidden Yelk members" in the ruling party's ranks.

Armen Sarkissian will be sworn in on April 9 immediately after Serzh Sargsyan completes his second and final term in office.

The outgoing president is widely expected to become prime minister later in April. With Armenia switching to a parliamentary system of govern-

ment, he would remain the country's most powerful man in that case.

Under sweeping constitutional changes controversially enacted by Serzh Sargsyan, the new president of the republic will have largely ceremonial powers. In particular, he will appoint members of the government, Armenian ambassadors abroad and the Armenian army's top brass. But all of those officials will have to be nominated by the prime minister first.

Sarkissian, 64, has repeatedly stated in recent weeks that despite the lack of executive powers he intends to play a major role in Armenia's political and economic life. He has pledged, among other things, to strive to heal what he sees as serious divisions existing within the Armenian society.

A physicist and mathematician by education, Sarkissian worked at the Cambridge University when he was appointed as newly independent Armenia's first ambassador to the United Kingdom in 1991. He served as prime minister for four months in 1996-1997 before being again named ambassador in London.

His second ambassadorial stint was cut short in 1999 by then President Robert Kocharian. Sarkissian stayed in Britain and made a fortune there in the following decade, working as an advisor and middleman for Western corporations doing business in the former Soviet Union. He was appointed as Armenian ambassador to Britain for a

third time in 2013.

Russian President Vladimir Putin promptly congratulated Armen Sarkissian on being elected Armenia's new president on Friday.

In a congratulatory message reported by the Kremlin, Putin expressed confidence that Sarkissian will contribute to a "further development" of Russian-Armenian relations and "deepening of Eurasian integration to the benefit of the brotherly peoples of the two countries."

Sarkissian has avoided detailed public statements on foreign policy issues since being nominated for president by the outgoing President Serzh Sargsyan in January. But he did stress the economic importance of Armenia's membership in the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) when he addressed the parliament on Thursday.

"Armenia joined the EEU, which is an important and significant fact for the simple reason that a republic of three million people cannot be of much interest to a large investor," said the 64-year-old former scholar. Tariff-free access to the markets in Russia and other EEU member states makes Armenia far more attractive to investors, he added.

Sarkissian, who has lived in Britain for nearly three decades, at the same time praised Armenia's Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) with the European Union signed in November.

Georgian PM Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Georgian Prime Minister Giorgi Kvirikashvili met with Armenia's leaders on Friday during an official visit to Yerevan which focused on economic issues, including energy and transport.

"We discussed both our bilateral relations and regional issues," Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan said after talks with Kvirikashvili.

"We spoke about possible areas of our cooperation," Karapetyan told a joint news briefing. "That includes the Meghri free economic zone [on the Armenian-Iranian border.] We spoke in detail and will continue to talk later today and agreed how we will be moving forward in the energy and transport sectors."

"We can conclude we have emerged from the negotiations in a fairly good mood," he added.

Kvirikashvili also mentioned the two areas of Georgian-Armenian economic cooperation but, like Karapetyan, did not give any details. "We should utilize our economic potential and I think that our meeting today will contribute to that," he said in his opening remarks at the talks.

The Georgian premier met with President Serzh Sarkisian later in the day.

An Armenian government statement on Karapetyan's talks with Kvirikashvili said the two men stressed the importance of "developing energy cooperation in bilateral and multilateral formats." Armenia is currently building new electricity transmission lines that will connect it to Georgia and Iran. They are due to

be completed next year.

Kvirikashvili most probably also discussed in Yerevan the possible opening of new transport corridors between Georgia and Russia that would facilitate cargo shipments to and from Armenia. Most of Russian-Armenian trade is currently carried

Tbilisi agreed to hire a Swiss company to operate special customs checkpoints to be set up on the administrative boundaries of South Ossetia and Abkhazia.

Despite their lingering political disagreements, the two sides seem to have slowly but steadily made



Armenian Prime Minister Karen Karapetyan (R) and his Georgian counterpart Giorgi Kvirikashvili are pictured after holding talks in Yerevan, 2 March 2018.

out through the sole Russian-Georgian border crossing at Upper Lars. Traffic along that mountainous road is frequently blocked by blizzards in winter months.

The two other roads connecting Georgia and Russia pass through the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. They were closed even before the 2008 Russian-Georgian war. In 2011, Moscow and

progress towards the implementation of that agreement. The Georgian government signed a relevant contract with a Swiss company on December 19. A senior Russian diplomat said in January that Moscow will likely follow suit "in the coming months."

Armenian leaders have repeatedly expressed hope that the 2011 Russian-Georgian deal will be implemented.



ARMENIA

Dean Cain, Montel Williams Receive Medals for Producing Film on Armenian Genocide

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – President Serzh Sargsyan on March 6 received producers of the documentary “Architects of Denial,” Dean Cain and Montel Williams, and their families.

The President shared his impressions from the film that premiered at Moscow Cinema on March 5, emphasizing its importance in the international recognition and condemnation of genocides, including the Armenian Genocide.

Sargsyan noted that although there is much discussion on the topic in scientific circles, there is a lack of documentaries, and the “Architects of Denial” fills the gap.

“The parallels between today’s reality and the events of 100 years ago are very important,” Serzh Sargsyan said. He pointed to the parallels between the Armenian Genocide and today’s developments in Nagorno Karabakh.

Sargsyan awarded Cain and Williams with Orders of Honor for their contribution to the international recognition of the Armenian Genocide and prevention of genocides and crimes against humanity.

The producers voiced hope that the film would help change perceptions of the issue not only in the US, but also worldwide.



President Serzh Sargsyan with Dean Cain and Montel Williams



President Serzh Sargsyan with Dean Cain



President Serzh Sargsyan with Montel Williams

National Gallery to Hold Exhibition of Minas Avetisyan Paintings

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Just days after the major exhibition dedicated to the 200th anniversary of the birth of renowned painter Ivan Aivazovsky ended, the National Gallery of Armenia is planning to organize an exhibition dedicated to acclaimed painter Minas Avetisyan’s 90 anniversary of birth.

National Gallery Director Arman Tsaturyan said on February 22 it has been a while since a large-scale Minas exhibition had been organized. He said they want to organize a “splendid and inclusive” exhibition, comprising paintings of the great artist from both the gallery and private collections. A significant part of paintings by Avetisyan are kept by private collectors and Tsaturyan said he is negotiating with the individuals to include the paintings in the upcoming exhibition. “We will try to display paintings which have never been displayed before,” he said.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian Receives Medal for Services To Armenia

ECHMIADZIN – A meeting of the Armenian Church’s Supreme Spiritual Council convened on February 20 at Holy Echmiadzin, under the presidency of Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

Among the agenda items at the four-day meeting are issues relating to the Armenian Patriarchate of Constantinople, effective church management, the centennial of the Battle of Sardarabad and Armenia’s 1918 republic, and the church’s mission to young people.

The members of the Supreme Spiritual Council were received by Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan. In the course of the gathering, where he endorsed the idea of drawing up a constitution for the Armenian Church, Sargsyan conferred hon-



Archbishop Khajag Barsamian with President Serzh Sargsyan

ors of distinction on three of the attending archbishops.

Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of

the Eastern Diocese, was honored by the President with the “Medal for Services to the Motherland, First Degree.”



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Paylan Launches Petition To Resume Patriarch Election Process

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – Turkish-Armenian lawmaker Parliament Member Garo Paylan initiated a petition aimed at resuming the election process of the Armenian Patriarch which has been suspended by the Istanbul Governor's Office last week, Diken reports.

"There are 12 million Armenians around the world and all of them are from Anatolia in their origins. They look at the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul, but at the moment the status quo is in the hands of powers with a status of hostage," Paylan said.

Thousands have signed Paylan's initiative, which is titled "Patriarchal elections right now."

The Istanbul Governor's Office responded to a letter sent months before in regards to the election of the Armenian Patriarch, stating that it doesn't recognize Archbishop Karekin Bekjian as a patriarchal locum tenens. The letter, signed by Istanbul deputy governor Ismail Gultekin, stated that Istanbul's Armenian Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan is still alive and therefore there are no necessary conditions for electing a new patriarch. The Istanbul Governor's Office said health problems are not enough to declare the patriarchal position as vacant, thus, Archbishop Aram Atesyan continues his post of the patriarchal vicar.

Foreign Minister Meets with UN Geneva Director

GENEVA (Armenpress) – Armenian foreign minister Edward Nalbandian, while on a working visit to Geneva, met with Michael Møller, director-general of the United Nations Office at Geneva.

During the meeting both officials expressed satisfaction over Armenia's active engagement in the UN's and its structures' activities.

Nalbandian and Møller exchanged views on the 37th session agenda of the UN Human Rights Council, Armenia's initiative on preventing genocides and crimes against humanity. In this context Nalbandian said Armenia, on the occasion of the 70th anniversary of the Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, came with an initiative to adopt a new resolution of the Human Rights Council containing concrete action proposals and the activity of the UN and its member states concerning the prevention of genocides. He noted that Armenia will hold the third global forum "Against the Crime of the Genocide" on the International Day of Commemoration of Genocide Victims on December 9 which will be dedicated to the prevention of genocides through education.

The meeting also touched upon the summit of the International Organization of La Francophonie which will be held in Yerevan in October 2018.

President Meets with New Cyprus Ambassador

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – On March 6 Ambassador of Cyprus to Armenia Leonidas S. Markides (residence in Moscow) presented his credentials to President Serzh Sargsyan.

Sargsyan stressed that efforts should be made to promote the high-level Armenian-Cypriot relations and build on the centuries-old ties of close friendship between the two peoples.

Sargsyan hailed the ongoing active Armenian-Cypriot dialogue and the close contacts entertained on both bilateral interstate and inter-party levels, as well as within international organizations.

As regards the cooperation on international platforms, the President referred to the 17th Summit of La Francophonie to be held in Yerevan on October 11-12, noting that he had sent an invitation to Cyprus President Nicos Anastasiadis to take part in this important event. Serzh Sargsyan highlighted the role of inter-parliamentary diplomacy in promoting bilateral relations and expressed satisfaction with the ongoing close cooperation between the respective legislatures.

Markides said, "Our relations could not have been better, but I agree with you, Mr. President, that we have to take additional steps to advance them."

Educators and Parliamentarians In Talks on Education

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BERLIN – Berlin played host last week to a group of teachers from Armenia and Georgia, who had come to learn more about the education system in the German Federal Republic. Their visit was arranged by the German-Armenian Forum (Deutsch-Armenische Forum), an initiative launched in May 2015 by Albert Weiler, a Christian Democratic Union (CDU) member of the Bundestag (Parliament), along with more than 30 private individuals, MPs and representatives of business, scientific and cultural institutions. As noted in a press release at the time, the members of the Forum's executive body are "individuals familiar with issues related to the southern Caucasus, who pursue the aim of promoting German-Armenian relations at various levels. The Forum should support Armenia in its democratic development, strengthen economic relations, promote cultural and scientific exchange and build new bridges between the two societies."

In this spirit, the forum has fostered political education and places great value on exchanges in the field of education and science. In the context of a regional program of the Konrad Adenauer Foundation, called "Political Dialogue in the South Caucasus," mid- and long-term projects in the school sector were launched in

2017 in Georgia and the Republic of Armenia respectively. In Armenia, currently a textbook for social studies is being revised and reissued in close cooperation with the Ministry of Education.

During their fact-finding visit, the university and school teachers from Georgia and Armenia hoped to gain new insights into the education sector in Berlin. They were received in the Bundestag on March 3 by Frank Heinrich (CDU) and forum president



Albert Weiler, a CDU member of the Parliament, with the visiting teachers

Weiler. In the course of their discussions, Weiler reported on the activities of the forum and explained the characteristic features of the German educa-

tional system. The teachers were particularly interested in exchange programs between schools and heard from their host about such projects that the forum has organized thus far.

"I enjoyed this exciting exchange of ideas very much," Weiler stated. "Good teachers are extremely important for good education. We are following the developments in Armenia in this sector with great interest and are convinced that both sides will further profit from our bilateral dialogue."

The presence of the delegation in Berlin follows a visit by Weiler last November to Yerevan where, on the invitation of the Konrad Adenauer

Foundation, he participated in a round table discussion on the partnership agreement between the European Union and Armenia.

Germany Will Review Turkey's Request To Extradite Kurdish Leader

By Andrea Shalal and Leo Rinke

BERLIN (Reuters) – Germany on March 6 said it would review Turkey's request for the extradition of a Syrian Kurdish leader on constitutional grounds as the two NATO allies continued to try rebuild frayed ties.

German Foreign Minister Sigmar Gabriel assured Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, who is visiting Berlin to attend the Berlin ITB, the world's largest tourism fair, that both the request to extradite Saleh Muslim and Turkey's push for relaxed travel guidance would be carefully examined.

Muslim, who formerly headed the PYD, Syria's main Kurdish party, spoke at a demonstration in Berlin on Saturday after being detained and then released in Prague.

"We have in fact received a verbal note from the Turkish foreign ministry, and we will send this request, as always, to the (German) justice ministry and they will examine it on constitutional grounds," Gabriel told reporters at a joint news conference with Cavusoglu before their meeting.

Turkey says Muslim is linked to two bombings in Ankara and has vowed to pursue him "wherever he goes." On

Monday Ankara said it had asked Germany for Muslim's extradition.

Ankara considers the PYD and its YPG armed group extensions of the outlawed Kurdistan Workers Party, which has waged a three-decade insurgency in Turkey's largely Kurdish southeast.

Muslim has said the allegations against him are false. He has also said he will remain in European Union territory and cooperate in any further proceedings.

Cavusoglu said he would ask Gabriel at their meeting to revisit travel advisories that have angered Ankara by referring to a risk of arrests, especially for people with both German and Turkish passports.

"I believe the German foreign ministry needs to reevaluate its travel advisory for Turkey," he told reporters. "It would be beneficial for the German foreign ministry to revise this."

Gabriel said the foreign ministry had not advised people to avoid traveling to Turkey, but had pointed out heightened risks after the July 2016 attempted coup and given the continuing state of emergency and the arrests of German citizens.

He said he would ask Turkey when it planned to lift the state of emergency. "Turkey will slowly want to return to a normal state of affairs, and that will automatically have consequences for

our travel advisories," he said.

Tourists, a major source of financing for Turkey's wide current account deficit, are starting to return to the country after attacks blamed on Islamic State and Kurdish militants and an attempted coup scared them away for a couple of years.

Summer bookings to Turkey by German holidaymakers have doubled from a year ago, but remain far from the levels seen a few years ago, German market researcher GfK said last month.

Turkey last month released German-Turkish journalist Deniz Yucel, removing a key irritant in ties between the two allies, but German officials remain deeply concerned about Turkey's military operations in northern Syria.

Gabriel told reporters Berlin wanted to see a ceasefire implemented in all of Syria.

"We want to hear what our Turkish colleagues have to say about this. For our part, the German government favors reaching a ceasefire everywhere in Syria," he said.

Cavusoglu said Turkey's continuing military operations in Syria's Afrin were permitted under international law since it was fighting terrorism.

"We are fighting in Afrin against the PYD and the YPG, those are terrorist organizations, and our operations there are in line with international law and the rules of the United Nations."



INTERNATIONAL

38 Nobel Laureates Protest Turkey's 'Wrongful Conviction Of Writers And Thinkers'

LONDON (*The Guardian*) – On February 28, the Guardian newspaper published a letter addressed to Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, written by 38 Nobel Laureates, protesting the conviction of writers and editors to life sentences.

The letter is published below:

Dear President Erdogan,

We wish to draw your attention to the damage being done to the Republic of Turkey, to its reputation and the dignity and wellbeing of its citizens, through what leading authorities on freedom of expression deem to be the unlawful detention and wrongful conviction of writers and thinkers.

In a Memorandum on the Freedom of Expression in Turkey (2017), Nils Muiznieks, then Council of Europe commissioner for Human Rights, warned:

Turkey sentences journalists to life in jail over coup attempt

“The space for democratic debate in Turkey has shrunk alarmingly following increased judicial harassment of large strata of society, including journalists, members of parliament, academics and ordinary citizens, and government action which has reduced pluralism and led to self-censorship. This deterioration came about in a very difficult context, but neither the attempted coup, nor other terrorist threats faced by Turkey, can justify measures that infringe media freedom and disavow the rule of law to such an extent.

“The authorities should urgently change course by overhauling criminal legislation and practice, redevelop judicial independence and reaffirm their commitment to protect free speech.”

There is no clearer example of the commissioner's concern that the detention in September 2016 of Ahmet Altan, a bestselling novelist and columnist; Mehmet Altan, his brother, professor of economics and essayist; and Nazli Ilıcak, a prominent journalist – all as part of a wave of arrests following the failed July 2016 coup. These writers were charged with attempting to overthrow the constitutional order through violence or force. The prosecutors originally wanted to charge them with giving “subliminal messages” to coup supporters while appearing on a television panel show. The ensuing tide of public ridicule made them change that accusation to using rhetoric “evocative of a coup.” Indeed, Turkey's official Anatolia News Agency called the case “The Coup Evocation Trial.”

As noted in the commissioner's report, the evidence considered by the judge in Ahmet Altan's case was limited to a story dating from 2010 in *Taraf* newspaper (of which Ahmet Altan had been the editor-in-chief until 2012), three of his op-ed columns and a TV appearance. The evidence against the other defendants was equally insubstantial. All these writers had spent their careers opposing coups and militarism of any sort, and yet were charged with aiding an armed terrorist organisation and staging a coup.

The commissioner saw the detention and prosecution of Altan brothers as part of a broader pattern of repression in Turkey against those expressing dissent or criticism of the authorities. He considered such detentions and prosecutions to have violated human rights and undermined the rule of law. David Kaye, the UN special rapporteur on freedom of expression, concurred and dubbed the legal proceedings a “show trial.”

Turkey's own constitutional court concurred with this criticism. On 11 January this year, it ruled that Mehmet Altan and fellow journalist Sahin Alpay's rights were being violated by pre-trial detention, and that they should be released. Yet the first-degree courts refused to implement the higher constitutional court's decision, thus placing the judicial system in criminal violation of the constitution. Mr President, you must surely be concerned that the lower criminal court's defiance and this non-legal decision was backed by the spokesperson of your government.

On 16 February 2018, the Altan brothers and Ilıcak were sentenced to aggravated life sentences, precluding them from any prospect of a future amnesty.

President Erdogan, we the undersigned share the following opinion of David Kaye: “The court decision condemning journalists to aggravated life in prison for their work, without presenting substantial proof of their involvement in the coup attempt or ensuring a fair trial, critically threatens journalism and with it the remnants of freedom of expression and media freedom in Turkey.”

In April 1998, you yourself were stripped of your position as mayor of Istanbul, banned from political office, and sentenced to prison for 10 months, for reciting a poem during a public speech in December 1997 through the same article 312 of the penal code. This was unjust, unlawful and cruel. Many human rights organizations – which defended you then – are appalled at the violations now occurring in your



Tigran Mansurian

Premiere of Mansurian's *Requiem* in Riga Dedicated to Sumgait Pogrom Victims

RIGA, Latvia (Armenpress) – By the initiative of the Armenian Embassy in Latvia an event was held in Riga's oldest church, St. John's Church, on March 1 dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Sumgait Pogrom, the Armenian Foreign Ministry reported.

The orchestra of Latvian radio and Sinfonietta Riga performed Armenian renowned composer Tigran Mansurian's *Requiem* at the event.

The Armenian Apostolic Church in Riga also provided assistance for organizing the concert.

The program was attended by ambassadors, diplomats, lawmakers and ministers, journalists, cultural figures, the Armenian community representatives and Mansurian.

In his welcoming remarks Armenia's Ambassador to Latvia Tigran Mkrtchyan said Mansurian's *Requiem*, which is dedicated to the memory of the Armenian Genocide victims, today is dedicated to the memory of the innocent victims of Sumgait. The Ambassador stated that the *Requiem* is also a call against hatred, use of force.

During the concert works of Komitas were also performed.

country. Amnesty International, PEN International, Committee to Protect Journalists, Article 19, and Reporters Without Borders are among those who oppose the recent court decision.

During a ceremony in honor of Çetin Altan, on 2 February 2009, you declared publicly that “Turkey is no longer the same old Turkey who used to sentence its great writers to prison – this era is gone forever.” Among the audience were Çetin Altan's two sons: Ahmet and Mehmet. Nine years later, they are sentenced to life; isn't that a fundamental contradiction?

Under these circumstances, we voice the concern of many inside Turkey itself, of its allies and of the multilateral organizations of which it is a member. We call for the abrogation of the state of emergency, a quick return to the rule of law and for full freedom of speech and expression. Such a move would result in the speedy

acquittal on appeal of Ms Ilıcak and the Altan brothers, and the immediate release of others wrongfully detained. Better still, it would make Turkey again a proud member of the free world.

• Full list of Nobel laureate signatories:

Svetlana Alexievich, Philip W Anderson, Aaron Ciechanover, JM Coetzee, Claude Cohen-Tannoudji, Elias J Corey, Gerhard Ertl, Albert Fert, Edmond H Fischer, Andrew Z Fire, Andre Geim, Sheldon Glashow, Serge Haroche, Leland H Hartwell, Oliver Hart, Richard Henderson, Dudley Herschbach, Avram Hershko, Roald Hoffmann, Robert Huber, Tim Hunt, Kazuo Ishiguro, Elfriede Jelinek, Eric S Maskin, Hartmut Michel, Herta Müller, VS Naipaul, William D Phillips, John C Polanyi, Richard J Roberts, Randy W Schekman, Wole Soyinka, Joseph Stiglitz, Thomas C Südhof, Jack W Szostak, Mario Vargas Llosa, J Robin Warren, Eric F Wieschaus

Australian New South Wales Premier Berejiklian Visits Washington

WASHINGTON – The Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) welcomed on February 26 for New South Wales (NSW) Premier Gladys Berejiklian during her visit to Washington, DC as part of Australia's largest ever trade delegation to the United States.

During her official visit, Berejiklian made time for a leadership meeting with the ANCA in their national headquarters, a community reception at the Aramian House, home to the ANCA's youth training and career placement programs, and interviews with Voice of America and Armenian television stations.

In her remarks to a capacity crowd she said, “I am here in my capacity as the Premier of New South Wales, but I'm also here with you as someone who shares a common heritage of our Armenian culture and history. I want to thank you for the work you do on the ground here in Washington, DC, thank you for the warm reception you've given me this morning, and please know that communities like yours all around the world support your activities. We often look to DC and take great strength from what you're doing to support Armenian communities around the world.” She closed with an invitation to the gathered youth to

visit Australia, gain valuable international foreign policy experience as interns with her office, and maybe even volunteer for her re-election campaign.”

“We were honored to host Premier Berejiklian, a great leader in both the Australian and Armenian traditions,” said ANCA Communications Director Elizabeth Chouldjian. “Her visit to the ANCA reminds us, in very powerful and personal ways, that – as Armenians, diverse and dispersed across the globe – we remain informed by our common history, inspired by our shared values, and united in our enduring devotion to the future of the Armenian nation.”

The granddaughter of Armenian Genocide survivors, Berejiklian grew up an active member in Australia's vibrant Armenian community.

Berejiklian joined the Liberal Party in 1993 and was first elected to represent Willoughby in the NSW Parliament in 2003, becoming NSW Transport Minister in 2011, Treasurer in 2015 and ascending to the position of NSW Premier in 2017, only the second woman to hold that post.

Alongside her successes in each of these



Premier Gladys Berejiklian with the ANCA leadership

positions, she has been instrumental in representing Australian Armenian community concerns, advocating for state and federal recog-

ognition of the Armenian Genocide, supporting Republic of Artsakh freedom, and expanding Australia-Armenia ties.

Community News

Armenia's UN Ambassador Looks to Raise Armenia's Profile

By Taleen Babayan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

NEW YORK – The current Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations, Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, has served the Armenian government at home and abroad for the past three decades. Armed with rich diplomatic experience, he possesses a strong set of principles and vast knowledge of many national and international issues.

Erudite and forward thinking, Mnatsakanyan has elevated the image of Armenia in the global arena and advanced the interests of his country during his four-year tenure at the United Nations.



Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan

In an exclusive interview, Taleen Babayan met with Mnatsakanyan at the Armenian Mission in New York City to discuss recent issues, including the complex issue of Artsakh and modality of its peaceful resolution, the annulment of the Armenia-Turkey Protocols, as well as U.S.-Armenia relations.

Taleen Babayan: Let's start with the most recent developments regarding Armenia-Turkey relations. Yesterday [March 1, 2018] Yerevan scrapped a peace agreement it signed with Turkey on October 10, 2009 to normalize relations between the two countries. This agreement understandably was hammered under heavy pressure by then US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton. From day one, it didn't produce any positive outcome. Why was the annulment decision taken at this specific point in time?

Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan: The question of normalization of Armenia-Turkey relations has been on Armenia's agenda since day one. It is an important issue for the security of the entire region. With the present administration and the current President Serzh Sargsyan, the process has acquired a certain momentum from 2008, the time when the current president assumed his post. Amongst his first actions he initiated this process of normalization of relations without preconditions. The president's initiative and defense of this policy manifested his commitment to the vision for a secure region. The Zurich Protocols were signed in 2009. Since the very beginning, Armenia entered into this process in good faith. Armenia has remained faithful to the Zurich Protocols, to its letter, spirit and agreed steps of implementation. We have taken them to the Parliament for ratification, according to the agreement. But on the part of Turkey we have seen the total stepping back from the agreements with absolutely no effort to materialize them.

Armenia has been patiently waiting for nine years. The term of the current president is coming to an end and he closes that page. I think there is very little for me to add because the president of Armenia has been absolutely eloquent and elaborated quite extensively about both the entire process and the reasons for the

AMBASSADOR, page 9



Lucine Mardirosian Harvey

Lucine Mardirosian Harvey Receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor

WASHINGTON – How can one describe Lucine Mardirosian Harvey? A human dynamo, keenly intelligent with a generous heart, Harvey is a gourmet cook, a manager, mother to countless hundreds of children in Armenia and in Orlando, Fla., chauffeur, negotiator extraordinaire, newsletter editor, truck driver, teacher, extraordinary seamstress, choir director not to mention ambassador of the Armenian Community, one of the founders of Soorp Garabed Armenian church of Orlando, Florida now called Soorp Haroutiun.

Harvey has baked, cooked, kept the church books, created choir gowns, sewn garments for visiting clergy, she has taught Armenian to children and teens from her home, she is a successful real estate deal maker and has made several very successful ones for St. Garabed.

She has made countless trips to city hall in preparation for property purchases and sales, zoning changes, building permits, etc. She has also been sidewalk supervisor during the building of the Soorp Haroutiun church which she started in 1985 with the blessing of the late Jerusalem Patriarch Torkom Manogian. She purchased and sold properties and started the church building in 2009, served Armenian home-cooked meals to the construction workers once a week and made sure that all is going according to plans. Her experience in the workplace overseeing 3,200 employees as a human resource director certainly equipped her with the ability to manage all the tasks she has been called to do, or usually just volunteered to do. She has also attended to the many other needs of the community the elderly, the ill, the dying, grieving, the visiting hierarchy or the church and neighborhood needs.

She also has turned her attention to Armenia since 1988, after the devastating earthquake. She collected funds for Armenia many times and forwarded them to the Diocese. In 1992 she was asked by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian to go to Armenia as a chaperon with a youth group where she witnessed the devastation and the needs of the children. In 1994 she joined the HAVAD group at the request of Fr. Vertanes Kalayjian, the late pastor of St. Mary Armenian Church of Washington, DC, and met with the children in a health center in Dilijan, and children in a summer camp in Yeghegnatzor. After spending four weeks she observed the need of these children. In 1998 she became involved with the Nork-Marash Mangadoon. Ever since, she has collected, sewed, purchased, packed and shipped many containers through United Armenia Fund.

see HARVEY, page 7

Program to Raise Funds To Combat Domestic Violence in Armenia

WATERTOWN – The Boston Armenian community will have a chance to gather to raise funds for the Women's Support Center and raise awareness on the status of women in Armenia.

The executive director of Women's Support Center (WSC), Maro Matosian, will speak on Friday, March 16, from 7 to 9 p.m., at the Papken Suni Agoump in Watertown.

The WSC is a full-service domestic violence center based in Yerevan, Armenia with services that include a 24-hour hotline, counseling, safe houses, legal assistance, professional training, and education and advocacy programs for women and girls. WSC's mission is to combat and prevent domestic violence through the protection and empowerment of the victim; the rehabilitation of family members; advocacy regarding social and legal reform to prevent intimate partner and family violence; and awareness raising about domestic violence and its consequences.

Maro Matosian, executive director of the Woman's Support Center will discuss the status of women in Armenia and government policies to combat domestic violence. Matosian will also share impact stories related to the work of the Women's Support Center (WSC). Violence against women and especially domestic violence is a pervasive and alarming public health and societal problem in Armenia, with one in four women experiencing domestic abuse.

Tax-deductible donations are \$50. Tickets can be reserved via email at lenna.garibian@gmail.com.

All proceeds will go directly to the Women's Support Center in Yerevan. This event is being organized by the Friends of the Women's Support Center. For more information, visit <http://www.womensupportcenter.org/>.



Maro Matosian

Armenian Studies Program At Fresno State to Hold 30th Annual Banquet

FRESNO – The Armenian Studies Program of California State University, Fresno, will hold its 30th Annual Banquet on Sunday, March 18, at the Fort Washington Country Club.

The banquet will feature Fresno State President Dr. Joseph I. Castro as one of the main speakers.

Castro was appointed the eighth president of Fresno State in 2013. He has been a consistent supporter of the Armenian Studies Program and was a leader in support of the construction of the Armenian Genocide Monument on campus.

"The 30th Annual Banquet will highlight the growth of our Program," said Armenian Studies Program Coordinator Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdchian. "Our Program is a center for interaction between the community, the students, and the university."

More than 40 student recipients of Armenian Studies scholarships and grants for 2017-2018 will be recognized at the banquet, together with students who are graduating with a Minor in Armenian Studies.

The Armenian Studies Banquet brings together Fresno State students, faculty, administrators, and the community, to celebrate the achievements of the Program and its students.

The reception will begin at 5 p.m. followed by the banquet at 6 p.m.

Tickets are available at \$50 per person, with a special price of \$25 for Fresno State students and Fresno State faculty.

For more information, visit fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Cruising the Caribbean with Armenian Song and Dance

By Barbara Haroutunian

The 21st Armenian Heritage Cruise sailed from Fort Lauderdale, Florida on January 20-28, 2018 on Royal Caribbean's premiere ship, the gorgeous Freedom of the Seas. Armenians from all over the world represented many countries such as: Argentina, Australia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, England, France, Germany, Lebanon, Turkey, Venezuela and many states within the United States.

For eight days, Armenians were given the opportunity to interact with old friends and make new connections with fellow Armenians. What brings over together over 1,000 Armenians from all over the world on the Armenian Heritage Cruise is a common desire to meet new and old friends, attend cultural events, visit new places, and dance to Armenian music, while cruising on the "Hye Seas."

The destinations this year included St. Kitts & Nevis, Antigua, Puerto Rico, and Labadee.

On each island visitors enjoyed exotic secluded beaches, where they could swim, listen and dance to Armenian music, eat good food and have fun in the tropical weather.

Bishop Nareg Berberian, the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Brazil, was on board.

Every day started with daily Armenian Church Service. For those guests who needed a little help on the dance floor, Margo Kaftajian taught basic Armenian dances. Her classes were packed with enthusiastic dancers looking to learn new dance moves.

For some friendly competition Antranig Boudakian, John Jerikian and Hampar Vartanian supervised the annual Tavlou and Belote tournaments.

The Hairenik Bookstore was open each day where guests had the opportunity to purchase unique Armenian books, CD's, videos and souvenirs.

The first night there was a welcome reception hosted by Maria Tavitian and Margo Kaftajian highlighting the week's activities.

Harout Pamboukjian, accompanied by his band from California, captivated his audience during his performance and truly created an atmosphere of energy, excitement, and dancing. The "All Star Kef Band" featuring Jim Kzirian, Steve Vosbikian, Richard Berberian, Antranig Kzirian and Vik Momjian performed. Harout Artin Bedrossian also joined the line-up for a truly amazing combination of entertainers. Sibil from Istanbul, Turkey performed two concerts singing her newest songs which delighted everyone.

The Akh'Tamar Dance



Harout Pamboukjian dances with fans.



Sibil performs on board.

Ensemble from New Jersey dazzled the audience under the artistic directorship of Sylvia Asadourian. They performed traditional Armenian folk dances dressed in authentic costumes.

For the second year in a row, Maria Tavitian, Dr. John P. Bilezikian and Dr. Raffy Hovanessian organized and introduced special Medical Programs for Health Care Professionals where ACCME, CDE and CPE Accreditation were received.

On Wednesday evening the chefs aboard the "Freedom of the Seas" prepared a special Armenian dinner. The ACAA and TravelGroup International served complimentary wine for the guests along with dinner. On the same evening was a Cocktail Party featuring Harout Pamboukjian sponsored by ACAA and TravelGroup.

Robert Avetisyan, the Permanent

Representative of Nagorno Karabakh to the US presented a talk on "The Current situation in and around Artsakh, the conflict settlement process, as well as the economic process in the rebuilt and investment opportunities."

Raffi Hamparian, chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA), discussed "The Armenian Cause: Today, Tomorrow and into the Future."

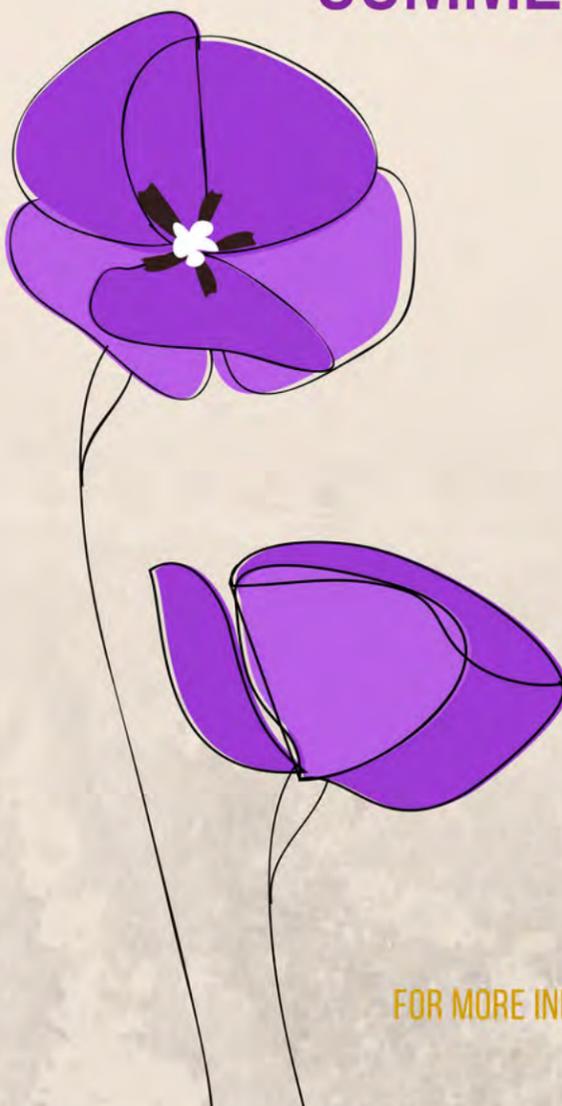
Shahen Mirakian, the president of the Armenian National Committee of Canada (ANCC) discussed "International Recognition of Artsakh: The Legal Case."

Robert Haig Setrakian discussed "An Overview of the Armenian Banking System: A Bright Spot in Armenia's Economy."

Bishop Berberian discussed Armenians in Brazil.

Next year's cruise will take place January 20-27, aboard the Royal Caribbean's Allure of the Seas. Our appreciation is extended to the Armenian Cultural Association of America for making the cruise possible. For more information or to book a reservation on Armenian Heritage Cruise XXII contact TravelGroup International.

103RD ARMENIAN GENOCIDE COMMEMORATIVE WEEKEND



STATE HOUSE COMMEMORATION

FRIDAY APRIL 20, 2018
9AM-12:30 PM

*Reception to follow

COMMEMORATION AT THE PARK

SATURDAY APRIL 21, 2018
3-5 PM

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT FACEBOOK OR EMAIL:
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Lucine Mardirosian Harvey Receives Ellis Island Medal of Honor

HARVEY, from page 6

She and her volunteer friends travel to Armenia at their own expense, spend weeks on the premises and pass the gifts directly to the children every year. She has helped the needy, the elderly and the soldiers in border areas of Armenia or on the roads. She has donors coast to coast and her contributions to Armenia have passed the million-dollar mark and is still going on. With the donations she has renovated buildings, built a barn, provided heat for the elderly and purchased farm animals for the children to have milk, eggs and meat.

Her creative skills, the loving heart, the tireless body, the steel trap brain, the diplomacy, the generous giving of money and self over the years, has been with God's guidance. She has looked at every opportunity as a miracle from heaven and accepted it graciously. She is always grateful to God, her supporters and to her volunteer friends. Her 2018 trip plans are taking shape nowadays, for another humanitarian trip.

The Soorp Haroutian church building is a testimony to her endless efforts and accomplishments.

The Ellis Island Medals of Honor are awarded annually to distinguished American citizens who exemplify a life dedicated to community service. These are individuals who preserve and celebrate the history, traditions and values of their ancestry while exemplifying the values of the American way of life and who are dedicated to creating a better world for all.

-Diramayr Anahid Kalayjian



COMMUNITY NEWS

Hundreds Gather to Celebrate 11 Outstanding Educators

BURBANK, Calif. – Hundreds gathered on February 24, to celebrate and honor 11 outstanding educators for their dedication to teaching the Armenian Genocide in California public schools at the second annual Armenian Genocide Education Awards Luncheon, hosted by the Armenian National Committee of America - Western Region's Education Committee. The event took place in Burbank at De Luxe Banquet Hall. Included in the 250

Colleges and author; Zaruhi "Sara" Chitjian Armenian Genocide Education Award Recipients Vivian Ekchian and Interim Superintendent of LAUSD Taline Krikorian Arsenian, president of the Glendale Teachers Association.

The Armenian Genocide Education Award Recipients were: Alicia Gorecki, Pasadena High School, PUSD; Amber McLeod, Crescenta Valley High School, GUSD; David Wright, Selma High School, SUSU; Evelyn Seubert, Cleveland Charter High School, LAUSD; Ian McFeat, La Cañada High School, LCUSD; Reiner Kolodinski, Glendale High School, GUSD; Sandra Garcia, Theodore Roosevelt Middle School, GUSD and Sean Mispagel, La Cañada High School, LCUSD.

"This award will help cement my commitment to the victims and survivors of the Armenian Genocide, to share their stories with all my future students, friends and family," said honoree Sandra Garcia, who deeply moved everyone and expressed her sincere feelings. Evelyn Seubert, the video film teacher from Cleveland Charter High School noted, "We are striving to develop young people who will not be silenced, who will learn to speak against injustice. My students will never forget the Armenians."

"Educating students about the Armenian Genocide provides the opportunity to teach about courage, hope, resilience and persistence. Studying genocides provides our students a window into the past. We must all gather the courage to stare through this window, never blinking at the horrors we find. Once that pain of the past starts to become blinding – only then can we see clearly where we must go in the



Mistress of Ceremonies, Veronica Miracle of ABC7 News

guests were elected officials, superintendents, dignitaries, educators from all across the state and especially the outstanding honorees with their friends and family.

The goal of this event is to celebrate educators who have creatively taught the Armenian Genocide within their school communities, across different courses such as social science, English language arts, music, art, theater and film. The honored educators this year were:

Armenian Genocide Education Legacy Award Recipient Dr. Kay Mouradian, Professor Emerita from the Los Angeles Community



Group photo of the 11 honorees at the Armenian Genocide Education Awards Luncheon

future, never allowing atrocities like this to occur again," stated honoree Vivian Ekchian, Interim Superintendent of the LAUSD, the second largest District in the US.

In addition, to the heartfelt remarks expressed by all honorees, the special treat of the afternoon was having Veronica Miracle, an ABC7 News Reporter as the mistress of ceremonies.

The program consisted of several performances. The Areni Dance Group, performed the traditional Armenian "Tamzara." In a special musical performance, Hayk Davtyan played the duduk while the kanon was played by Nareh Der Hartounian. Finally, the Crescenta Valley High School Theater Arts Department closed the event by performing a special scene from their upcoming stage play based on Dr. Kay Mouradian's novel, *My Mother's Voice*.

Other memorable moments included the recognition of Taline Krikorian Arsenian, president of the Glendale Teachers Association, who fought for years to have April 24 declared a day of commemoration for the Glendale Unified School District. "I have a responsibility to my community to educate all my students about

the historical significance of the Armenian Genocide and the impacts that the systematic denial by the perpetrators has on its survivors, whose descendants are sitting among them in class, including their teacher," expressed Krikorian Arsenian.

Mouradian, a longtime advocate and tireless worker on behalf of Genocide Studies, moved the audience by promising to continue her work and making sure textbooks used in schools contain the true story of the Genocide. "If the Armenian Genocide is not taught in history classes, it will fade away into history as if it never happened. I especially want to acknowledge Sen. Anthony Portantino, Congressman Adam Schiff, and Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian who have extended their political efforts to bring the Armenian Genocide to the attention of California Department of Education and textbook publishers," said Mouradian.

The program proved to be a moving and inspiration event, as attendees requested that the award program continue annually. Many attendees also promised to nominate educators from their districts and to support next year's luncheon.



The 11 honorees featured with members of the ANCA-WR Board and Education Committee

Noted Poet Diana Der-Hovanesian Dies

DER-HOVANESSIAN, from page 1

She received awards from the National Endowment for the Arts, Poetry Society of America, PEN/Columbia Translation Center, National Writers Union, Armenian Writers Union, Paterson Poetry Center, Prairie Schooner, American Scholar, the Armenian Ministry of Culture, and others too numerous to list.

Her work has appeared in *Poetry*, *AGNI*, *Nation*, the *New York Times*, *CDM*, *Paris Review*, etc.

She was a graduate of Boston University and did graduate work at Harvard. She worked as a poet in the Massachusetts schools as well as a visiting poet and guest lecturer on American poetry, Armenian poetry in translation, and the literature of human rights at various universities both here and abroad. She served for over 30 years as the president of the New England Poetry Club. She worked tirelessly to educate the public about the Armenian Genocide.

Her husband, James Dalley, preceded her in death.

She leaves two daughters, Maro Dalley and husband James Johnson of Hanna, Wy.; Sonia Dalley and husband Mark Tisserand of Cambridge; three grandchildren, Maggie Johnson and Daniel and Helen Tisserand of Cambridge; sister, Helen Pahigian of West Newton; nieces, Melanie and Shushan Pahigian, Diana Madden, Mara and Nita Der Hovanesian of New York and Florida; nephew Anthony Pahigian in Washington, DC. The funeral service was at Holy Trinity Church, 147 Brattle St., Cambridge on Tuesday, March 6th. In lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Armenian EyeCare Project, the Armenian Missionary Association of America, or the Armenian Tree Project.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenia's UN Ambassador Looks to Raise Armenia's Profile

AMBASSADOR, from page 6

decision and all of that is public. The records of the National Security Council are available and also worth noting is the speech of the President of Armenia in the United Nations General Assembly in September 2017.

TB: Armenian communities have historically been well regarded and respected in Arab countries as productive and loyal citizens. This has indeed helped to forge cultural and economic ties with a host of Arab countries, from the Gulf States to Lebanon, Syria, Egypt and beyond. Yet, when the thorny issue of Artsakh is on the agenda of an Islamic Conference or Arab League Summit, we don't see much support, if any, to Armenia's position. What diplomatic tools does Armenia's Foreign Ministry possess to rectify this?

ZM: Different international organizations have different methods of work, different procedures and different practices of negotiating their documents. Such methods may be more open or less open to abuse of membership. We observe instances of such abuse by Azerbaijan, when the substance and content of the negotiations on the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is taken out of context, totally distorted and inserted in a totally different document within a totally different organization, which has no international mandate for the peaceful resolution of the conflict. What they effectively do is present wishful thinking as a reality.

Two things are clear. First, the only internationally-mandated format within which the negotiations for the peaceful resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is taking place is the OSCE [Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe] Minsk Group co-chairmanship of France, Russia and the US. The international community has delegated this function to the above countries within the above format and over years these countries have been consistently and effectively engaged in the mediation of the peaceful resolution. This format is fully supported by the United Nations [UN] system, the United Nations Security Council [UNSC], an excellent example of cooperation between the UNSC and regional organizations. This format is fully supported by the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

Those three countries have all the necessary political leverage, diplomatic skills and expertise and have generated the necessary knowledge and understanding of the background and the realities of the conflict and its historical background. The leadership of the mediating countries is directly involved in the process, as is evident, for example from numerous meetings and joint statements at the level of Presidents and Foreign Ministers of France, Russia and the United States.

The three mediating countries remain fully consolidated in their efforts, which represents an excellent example of their cooperation and working together. They have formulated workable and realistic compromise proposals for the strictly peaceful resolution of the conflict. Their proposal is not Armenia's proposal, but we recognize this as a workable compromise and are committed to work within those parameters. Unfortunately, Azerbaijan has been consistently failing to demonstrate the necessary political will and commitment to accept the three basic principles and respective elements, which constitute the basis of the solution as an integral whole. Their failure has been most evident on numerous occasions, such as, for example in Kazan, Russia in 2011. The failure to commit to the peaceful resolution manifests in many ways, including by way of flaring up tensions in the region, outright escalation and aggression, as was the case in April 2016, consistent warmongering rhetoric, also failure to live up to the agreements, reached in St. Petersburg and Vienna in 2016, as well as the Geneva agreements in October 2017 at the level of presidents (not to mention the level of foreign ministers) to strengthen the cease-fire regime, to establish an investigative mechanism for the cease-fire violations and to expand the office of the special representative of the OSCE Chairperson-In-Office (CIO) for strengthening of the monitoring capacity of the cease-fire regime.



Armenia's primary focus has been and remains on the mainstream negotiating process within the internationally agreed format.

In the context of your question, and that brings me to my second point, their failure to commit to the peaceful resolution of the conflict also manifests in what we call forum shopping, attempts to create parallel platforms, or to create the illusion of parallel platforms. Those attempts are counterproductive, they do not contribute to progress in the peace process and they have in effect no value.

Armenia maintains very close relations with the overwhelming majority of the countries in the organization you referred to, given, not least, the strong and tested close historical, cultural and civilization interactions between our peoples. It is absurd, to say the least, to attach a religious connotation to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as Armenia's experience of living together with the nations of the Muslim world and mutually enriching each other goes far beyond the history of Azerbaijan. Those relations and historical experience is duly manifested in shared mutual interests, cooperation and partnership with those countries in the present times. Therefore, so far as those documents are concerned, their value and relevance should be placed in a context. This is not to say we are complacent, as we are consistently alert on these matters and insist on the consistency of our partners to support what they support anyway, that is the internationally mandated negotiating format of the OSCE co-chairmanship and the proposals therein. That is to say, we insist on just and lasting peace and the strictly peaceful resolution of the conflict.

For Armenia and Artsakh the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has been and remains a question of physical security for very real people and a question of freely determining their destiny, that is to say exercising their inalienable right to self-determination, which will be defended at any cost. No document of the OIC will alter that resolve. Both Armenia and Artsakh will continue to pursue this existential goal by strictly peaceful means.

TB: At the UN General Assembly on December 21, 2017, Armenia, along with 127 other countries voted against the Trump administration's decision to move the U.S. Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, thus effectively recognizing the Holy City as the capital of Israel (resolution A/ES-10/L.22 until title "Status of Jerusalem") How does this vote serve the foreign policy objectives of Armenia? And given the fact that Armenia is the recipient of generous aid from the US and the public warning by the US President that countries voting against this move may lose American financial aid, how does this weigh in on Armenia's decision?

ZM: Armenia explained its vote in the General Assembly, it is in the records of the meeting.

The status of Jerusalem is one of the most important issues on the international agenda and should be solved through the negotiations within the context of the acceptable solution for the parties to the Israeli-Palestinian con-

flict. This can pave the way for the establishment of a lasting peace and security.

Jerusalem has a centuries-old Armenian presence, a rich Armenian historical and cultural heritage. The Armenian Apostolic Church is one of the major guardians of the Christian Holy Places. Therefore, we attentively follow all developments with regard to Jerusalem.

We took note of the recently expressed positions on Jerusalem recognizing that they do not prejudice the determination of the final status of Jerusalem through negotiations.

Armenia is a long-standing partner of the United States on many regional and international issues. Armenia has been working closely with the US within different platforms and formats; Armenia is a security contributor by way of participation in peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, Kosovo and previously Iraq. The United States has been and remains a significant contributor to Armenia's reform agenda, institution building and strengthening of democratic foundations, the state and the civil society of Armenia have been benefiting from the support of the United States and from sharing values. An important component of our relations is the presence of the strong Armenian Diaspora, who over centuries have become part of the very fabric of the American society, committed citizens of the United States, contributing to the wealth of this nation. As such they are collectively an important bridge of forging common agenda, friendship and cooperation between our two nations, the tendons of such relations. Relations between the US and Armenia are solid and tested overtime. I am not convinced that their foundations can be easily disturbed.

TB: With President Trump's stated goal of "America First" and pulling the U.S. back from the world stage, it seems that the world today is rapidly becoming less uni-polar, with China emerging as an economic powerhouse and Russia reasserting itself on the world stage with modernized armed forces. Does a multi-polar world cause more or fewer challenges to Armenia?

ZM: There are indeed many disturbing developments in the international agenda, which heighten the sense of security among nations. In the case of smaller nations, this is particularly acute. Given the fragilities of our region, Armenia's sense of security is equally sharpened. In the present globalized world no country can be immune from the security challenges in any part of the globe, whether in the Middle East, East Asia or elsewhere, whether the problems are of political, economic, environmental or other nature. This is why we believe there is ever-growing importance for international cooperation and dialogue within different sub-regional, regional and international formats. There is of course an obvious necessity for a stronger role of the United Nations.

Armenia's foreign policy has been very consistent in identifying and forging partnerships based on mutual interests and mutual respect. Armenia has been firmly rejecting any such method in its foreign policy, which would seek benefits based on disagreements or conflicting interests of its partners. Often one would find the formulation of "both/and" as opposed to "either/or" in the method and practice of our foreign policy. Such policy has been consistently receiving the respect and recognition of all our partners. One might want to admit that implementation of such policy perhaps requires significant effort, but it is an effort absolutely worth making.

TB: You have held many positions in public office with extensive diplomatic experience. Do you consider this position to be the most challenging?

ZM: I am very privileged to serve my nation in the United Nations. Professionally, of course, it is challenging. But let me put it this way. I started this job 27 years ago, serving in the Armenian diplomatic service. This is my job, my career and my profession and I have been treating every position and posting as important, interesting and challenging.

'Multiple Identities and Memories of the Armenian World' Topic of Demoyan Talk

FRESNO — Fulbright Scholar Dr. Hayk Demoyan will give a lecture, "Multiple Identities and Memories of the Armenian World," on Monday, March 19, at 7:30 p.m., in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191 on the Fresno State campus. The presentation is part of the Spring Lecture Series of the Armenian Studies Program and is funded through the Leon S. Peters Foundation.

Demoyan's presentation will analyze and discuss modern aspects of identity and memory politics in Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora,

taking particular note of the instrumentalization of history and historical markers — old and new symbols, heroes, historical events, etc. For a long time, such questions were considered as taboo within the official rhetoric of both the Armenian state and certain diasporan circles.

In fact, in different diasporan circles there are contradictory views towards Armenia and its status as "homeland." At the same time, the institutionalization of Artsakh as a separate political entity, contrary to the initial policies of unification and merging, as well as the development of parallel diasporas, create further

challenges.

Demoyan, a visiting Fulbright Scholar at the Davis Center for Russian and Eurasian Studies of Harvard University, is researching the identity transformation processes in the South Caucasus. He has been the director of the Armenian Genocide Museum and Institute (AGMI) in Yerevan, Armenia since 2006. Demoyan is head of the Scientific Council of the AGMI. He is also a chief editor of the *International Journal of Armenian Genocide Studies*.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



Dr. Hayk Demoyan



COMMUNITY NEWS

From Pain to Healing: Aurora Dialogues in Heart of September 11 Tragedy

AURORA, from page 1

"Tonight we will focus on the best of what people can do," said Ignatius. "The spirit of heroism and sacrifice that leads people, as happened on 9/11, to step forward, take risk and responsibility for others and make the generous commitment that Aurora is honoring."

In her welcoming remarks, Alice Greenwald, president and CEO of the National September 11 Memorial and Museum, said that the evening's panelists are individuals "who chose, in time of grave danger, to step up in humane ways."

"Against the backdrop of grief we tell stories of courage that testify to human decency," she continued, recognizing the site of the 9/11 Museum, where guests had the opportunity to take a special guided tour. "Stories that offer a powerful reminder that in times of darkness, we do shine the brightest."

She urged the audience to reflect on what kind of society to leave for future generations and to engage in acts of public service and volunteerism while living in an interconnected world.

In his remarks, Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York, elaborated on the focus of the Aurora Initiative and how it is a byproduct of the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923, when many international organizations came to the aid of the Armenian victims, particularly those from the US. He remembered and thanked former US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire Henry Morgenthau, who was the first to alert the U.S. and the world that Ottoman authorities "had issued a death warrant against Armenians."

"We are here to thank America and Americans for rescuing remnants of the Armenian Genocide and for defending the Armenian Republic," said Gregorian, co-founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and Board Member of the September 11 Memorial and Museum.



Lieutenant William Keegan and John Prendergast

Gregorian noted that Americans efficiently responded to the Armenian Genocide and formed the National Armenian Relief Committee, which later became the Near East Relief Foundation, raising \$100 million, the largest philanthropic effort in US history at that point in time. "That is why we are here today, to show that sacrifice matters and that human beings matter."

Speaking of the Aurora Prize, which awards \$100,000 to one recipient a year, along with \$1 million to the recipient's charity of choice, Gregorian said it was created to "give back" and "continue the cycle of giving."

"We no longer mourn the Armenian Genocide," in a traditional way, said Gregorian. Instead, "We have a nation and major forces in

the Diaspora who are trying to give back to those who rescued us."

"That's a wonderful thing coming from a small nation that has no resources but has the heart and the will to rescue others," continued Gregorian. "To stand against persecution and injustice, but most importantly to awaken the conscious of humanity."

Dr. Philip Zimbardo, founder and president of the Heroic Imagination Project, spoke about transforming memory into positive action.

A lifelong New Yorker, Zimbardo was president-elect of the American Psychological Association when 9/11 occurred and provided treatment to families who lost loved ones and to those who survived the tragedy.

"Moral courage, not bravery, is the core of heroic action," said Zimbardo, professor emeritus at Stanford University. He noted that heroes are those who are aware of risks but act on behalf of others in need or in defense of moral causes.

The Heroic Imagination Project, a non-profit Zimbardo established in 2010, inspires youth in schools across the country to become everyday heroes and "teaches people to stand up, to speak out, and to take action in order to change the world."

Zimbardo presented case studies and emphasized the power of one and the importance of

country of Burundi during its civil war. A teacher, Barankitse had adopted seven children of different backgrounds to demonstrate the possibility of living together in unity. In the face of violence she sought to rebuild on harrowing sites, including "a swimming pool to wash away the sinners."

"I want to show we don't want revenge," said Barankitse, who witnessed the massacre of close to 100 people in her hometown. "We stand up and we will say we refuse the hatred because love will always win."

Founder and president of HEART 9/11, a non-profit organization of first responders who help rebuild and recover natural and man-made disasters, Bill Keegan was on duty at the World Trade Center when the initial attack on the Twin Towers occurred in 1993 and found himself at the same devastating site on September 11, 2001. Although he and his team were highly trained in rescue, they quickly realized they had to transition to recovery, "which was hard for us to accept."

His team soon repurposed itself because "the need shifted to recovery and we repurposed ourselves to the other needs out there in the world."

He spoke of the "moment of collective love" when, after months of physical and emotional draining on-site 9/11 recovery efforts, the Port Authority officers raised the steel-beam cross that became the site's symbol.

John Prendergast, who works in crisis areas in Congo, Rwanda and Darfur, spoke of the positive role celebrities can play in preventing and shining light on genocide. He highlighted Darfur, which "has no strategic interest for the US or Europe" and the influence of George Clooney to the region.

"We said never again to the Armenian Genocide, to the Holocaust, but here it is happening again," he said as he cited Darfur as the first genocide of the 21st century.

He commended Clooney for taking an active interest in not only bringing attention to the matter but also trying to find a way to help on the ground, such as implementing satellite imagery to bring more awareness to an area where journalists and human rights organizations couldn't enter. They began building dossiers and turning them over for the international community to take a step forward in helping resolve the crisis.

"George is a great example of the evolution that can take place when someone is given a chance to go from bystander to upstander," said Prendergast.

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Dr. Vartan Gregorian, Co-Founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative

extending compassion. His program has been implemented in several US states and across the world, including in Hungary, Australia, Iran and Poland, among others, where students learn to be wise and effective heroes.

During the panel discussion, Ignatius asked each guest to share his and her personal stories.

Aurora Prize Laureate Marguerite Barankitse, founder of Maison Shalom, a children's center, discussed the violent conflict between two warring tribes in her home

In his video address, 2017 Aurora Prize Laureate Dr. Tom Catena, physician at the Mother of Mercy Hospital in the Nuba Mountains, the only surgeon in those parts of Sudan, said "all lives have inherent worth and value" and that "all of us have the capability and potential to do heroic things."

Viewers had the opportunity to see Catena's work in the mountains, where he is on call 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, tending to patients

continued on next page



COMMUNITY NEWS



Aurora Humanitarian Initiative co-founder Ruben Vardanyan and Anna Afeyan

from previous page

who have been harmed by the violence there or in need of surgery or other medical attention.

In his closing remarks, co-founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, Noubar Afeyan, explained the reasons why he and his fellow co-founders, Ruben Vardanyan and Gregorian, embarked on creating this organization, which was established on the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

"During the centennial, we asked ourselves, as survivors, what we can do to take the memory of the Armenian Genocide and turn it to good," said Afeyan, who along with Vardanyan, spent 17 years working in Armenia, encouraging its economic and social growth as the country emerged from Soviet rule.

"We went through the process of merely surviving to reviving and now thriving and we became strong enough to think about gratitude," continued Afeyan. "For us, Aurora is about second chances and finding meaning in a movement that allows survivors to revive and thrive."

The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative seeks to empower modern-day saviors to offer life and hope to those in urgent need of basic humani-



Aurora Humanitarian Initiative co-founder Noubar Afeyan

tarian aid. Every year the Aurora Prize, (named after genocide survivor Aurora Mardigian who spent her life raising awareness) is awarded to an individual who has the courage and commitment to fight against injustice and violence.

The Initiative hosts the Aurora Dialogues, an international platform where leading humanitarians, academics, philanthropists and members of civil society come together to discuss some of today's most pressing humanitarian challenges.

For more information visit www.auro-raprize.com and 911memorial.org.

NFL Reporter Field Yates Guest Speaker at Trinity Men's Union Dinner/Meeting

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The Trinity Men's Union of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston will have Field Yates, who reports on the National Football League (NFL), as guest speaker at their dinner/meeting on Monday, March 12. Yates will be speaking about everything and anything NFL. All are welcome to attend.

The dinner/meeting will be held in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St. The social hour begins at 6 p.m., and dinner at 7 p.m. Donation for the Lenten Dinner of baked shrimp scampi is \$15 per person. RSVP is requested by March 10 by emailing tmuhtaac@gmail.com.

Yates writes for the insider pages of



Field Yates

ESPN.com and ESPN.Boston, and he appears on Fantasy Football Now, NFL Live and SportsCenter. He joined ESPN in 2012 and also makes regular appearances on ESPN Radio and co-hosts the Fantasy Focus podcast with Matthew Berry.

Yates is a former NFL employee who spent two seasons with the Kansas City Chiefs and interned for four summers with the New England Patriots. During his time in Kansas City, he worked on both the scouting and coaching staff, and split his four summers in New England with coaching and scouting duties as well.

Prior to joining ESPN, Yates contributed as a football writer to a number of sites and authored a blog entitled Thoughts from the Field.

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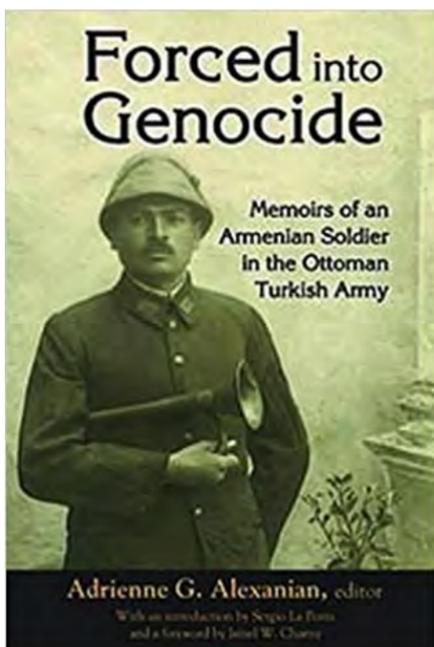
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Arts & Living

Forced into Genocide Book Presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian On March 18

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army*, will present her father's memoirs on Sunday, March 18, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston in the Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St. The book presentation will begin at 12:30 p.m., and be followed by a book signing and reception. Books will be available for purchase.

Forced into Genocide is the riveting memoir of Yervant Edward Alexanian, an eyewitness to the massacre and dislocation of his family and countrymen in Ottoman Turkey during World War I. Incredibly, Alexanian experienced the Armenian Genocide as a conscript in the Turkish army. His memoir is a one-of-a-kind insider's account, documenting the Genocide's astonishing cruelty — but also its rare, unexpected acts of humanity. No comparable account exists in the literature of the Armenian Genocide. This edition, translated from Alexanian's hand-written chronicle, includes rare documents and photos that the author preserved, a scholarly introduction, translator's

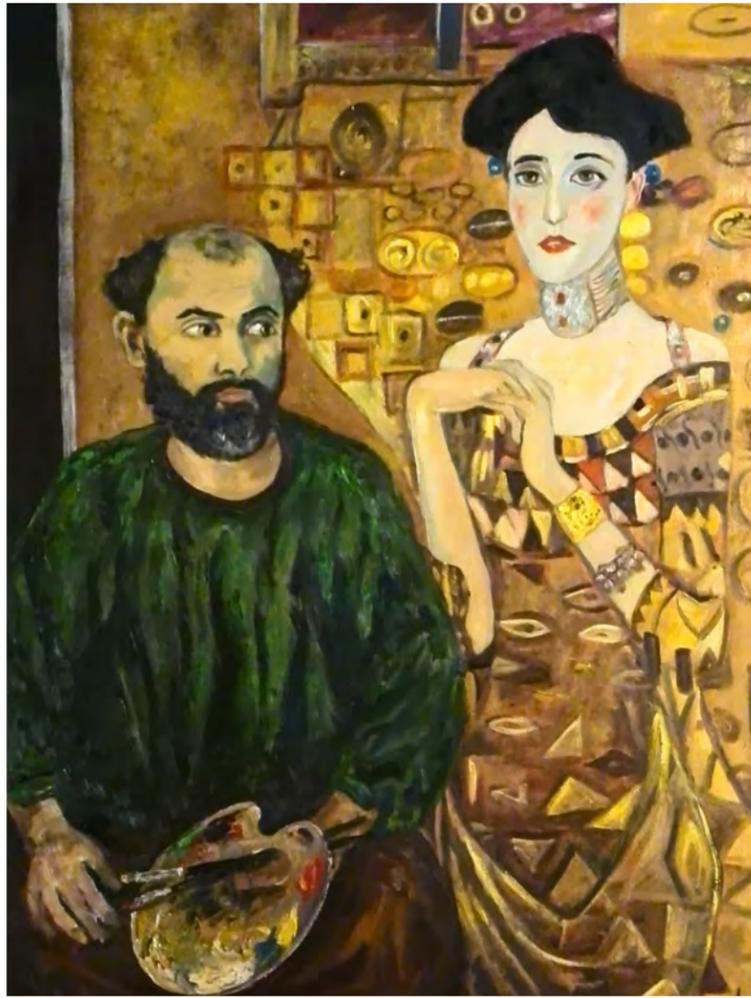


note, and other supportive matter.

Born in Sivas, Turkey, Yervant Alexanian survived the Hamidian massacres as an infant to later fight for survival as a conscript in the Ottoman Turkish Army during the Armenian Genocide of 1915. He fled to America in 1920, where he spent his life advocating justice for his people.

Fr. Vasken A. Kouzouian, pastor of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, states: "Our grandparents' first-hand memories filled family gatherings with messages we were to embrace and pass on to the generations of tomorrow. They shared from the pain in their hearts about the darkest days surrounding the Armenian families and villages of 1915. The Armenian Genocide survivors are few and far between now. And so, we become their voice. And we retell their stories, our greater family stories. We have an opportunity to turn back time on March 18, and once again hear the words of a survivor. Yervant Alexanian quietly kept his memoirs as an Armenian soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army. His handwritten diaries and notes tell his story in his voice. His daughter, Adrienne Alexanian, brings those notes and her father's voice back to us in a very real way. I encourage everyone to join us on Sunday, March 18, at 12:30 p.m., to hear a voice from the generation of our grandparents. The more we hear their voice, the more we will be able to pass on their story, our greater family story."

Adrienne G. Alexanian, Yervant's daughter, spent years preparing her father's manuscript for publication. She is an educator and a 2010 recipient of the Ellis Island Medal of Honor.



Andrey Allakhverdov's painting of Gustav Klimt and his "Portrait of Adele Bloch Bauer"

Paying Tribute to Artists' Pain

By Alin K. Gregorian
Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN — Painter Andrey Allakhverdov not only appreciates the talents and styles of various artists, but he wants to pay homage to those artists the best way he knows: through painting. The hallmark style of Allakhverdov is including a likeness of artists in an immediately identifiable work of theirs.

"Painters' lives are very tragic. Many died at a young age," he said in a recent interview.

"My idea was to take the work of the artistes to include the artist," he said through a translator.

It was ironic, he said, that there are artists, such as Arshile Gorky who have lived longer through their art than in actual years.

Allakhverdov was born in Baku in 1947 to a family originally from Shushi, Karabakh. Eventually, he moved to Moscow.

He received his bachelor's degree in art from the Moscow State Art University. He has been a member of Moscow Art Union since 1979 and a member of Art Union of Soviet Union since 1988.

He was an apprentice and later a good friend of noted Soviet Armenian painter Dmitri Nalbandyan. He has had numerous exhibitions both in Russia and overseas.

For the past four years, he has divided his time between Boston and Moscow, with the majority of his time spent in the US. He does, however, have a studio in central Moscow.

His family is similarly in both locations. He has three children; two are in the US and one in Moscow.

Allakhverdov said that one of his major goals is to bring together artists from the US, Russia and Armenia, not only in person but through introducing them through his paintings.

see ARTISTS, page 14



Arshile Gorky and his famous painting of him as a child with his mother

BOOKS

Rev. Dr. Abel Manoukian Publishes New Book on Swiss Humanitarianism During Genocide

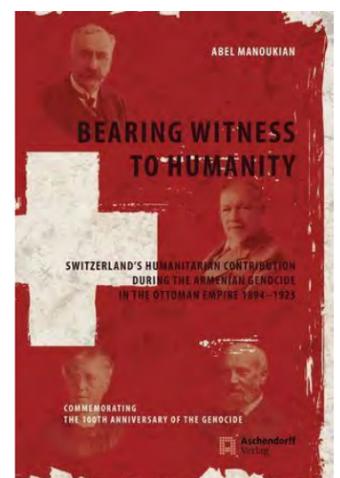
GENEVA — A new book by Rev. Dr. Abel Manoukian, titled *Bearing Witness to Humanity: Switzerland's Humanitarian Contribution during the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire 1894-1923*, pays tribute to the Swiss people's unprecedented solidarity with the Armenians in their most trying times.

After providing a comprehensive overview of Armenian history and the events leading to the massacres and genocide perpetrated against the Armenians, the author explains how it came to be that the Swiss people took a stand alongside their Armenian brothers and sisters in the Christian faith. The period under consideration ranges from the time of the first American Protestant missionaries in the orient to the assumption and continuation of their work by Swiss missionaries.

A stark contrast emerges between the merciless policy of annihilation implemented by the Ottoman Empire and the shining examples of selflessness provided by aid workers from



Rev. Dr. Abel Manoukian



Abel Manoukian, *Bearing Witness to Humanity: Switzerland's Humanitarian Contribution during the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire 1894-1923*, Münster: Aschendorff Verlag, 2018, 606 pp.

Switzerland, who as doctors, nurses and educators, gave the Armenian people formidable assistance in the most adverse of circumstances. Their efforts were supported by an unabating flow of monetary donations from many people in their home country, including

see SWISS, page 14



ARTS & LIVING

AIWA Celebrates Ellis Island Medal Recipient Joan Agajanian Quinn with Gala

LOS ANGELES – It was a sellout, sold out, smashing success and still have people talking about the banquet honoring Joan Agajanian Quinn, recipient of the 2017 Ellis Island Medal of Honor. Hosted by the Los Angeles Affiliate of the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) on January 27, 2018 at the famous Mr. C Hotel in Beverly Hills, over 250 guests filled the Rooftop Ballroom to honor Joan Agajanian Quinn in recognition of her enduring and continuing contributions to both the Armenian and American communities.

The Ellis Island Honors Society sponsors the Ellis Island Medal of Honor, established in 1986, and is presented annually to American citizens who have distinguished themselves within their own ethnic groups, while exemplifying the values of the American way of life.

Nicole Nishanian, president of AIWA-LA, welcomed the guests and thanked them for participating in this well-deserved tribute. Nishanian expressed her deep appreciation for Joan's continued service on the Executive Board of AIWA-LA and, particularly, for her dedicated service as their NGO representative for the United Nations.

Before the official program began, guests were surprised by the twin daughters of Joan, Amanda Quinn Olivar and Jennifer Quinn Gowy, and her two granddaughters, Paloma and Georgia, singing You are My Sunshine, My Only Sunshine, reflecting their joy and happiness in honoring their mother and grandmother. Guests joined in singing this rousing song.

The program was skillfully lead by Andrea Fehring, Mistress of Ceremonies, first calling upon Rev. Dr. Scott Colglazier, First Congregational Church of Los Angeles, for the Invocation. In his remarks, Rev. Colglazier, movingly recalled his years of friendship with Joan and her family and his pride in her distin-



Joan Agajanian Quinn and Archbishop Vatche Hovsepien

guished philanthropic career. In addition to the art exhibits she curated at the church.

Fehring referred to Joan's reputation as a visionary who, for more than 50 years has inspired more than 200 artists to print or sculpt her image. She introduced the following artists/celebrities, including Edith Bauman, Billy Al Bengston, Cheryl Bookout, Michael Chearney, Laddie John Dill, Stephen Douglas, Chris Hartunian, George Herms, Joyce Kierjczyk, Lisa Kitchen, Carla Khachatourian, Carol Tikjian, Paul Ruscha, Sharon Weiner, Gary Wood and star architect Frank Gehry.

Fehring then invited Dame Zandra Rhodes, internationally known innovative fashion designer and artist from the United Kingdom and close personal friend of Joan's. In honor of Joan and to celebrate this occasion, she created a special limited edition of prints for each guest; the prints are titled, signed, dated and numbered. Dame Rhodes regaled the audience with tales of their long friendship, travels and adventures together.

Remarks were also made by Larry Balakian, focusing on Joan's steadfast commitment to the California Arts Council and the art loans that the Quinns were always willing to share; and Antranik Kasbarian of the Women's Support Center (WSC) in Yerevan, Armenia, who spoke of Joan's involvement with the Tufenkian Foundation and US Ambassador Marie Yovanovitch in establishing the WSC as a safe haven for abused women and her dedication and long-term support of this project.

The entertainment extended from country music to operatic arias. Dennis Agajanian,

award winning musician Guitarist, played and sang tender country songs on his guitar that touchingly moved the audience. The operatic arias were sung by Artur, famously known, as Mr. X, in a homage to our honoree and her love of the opera. Artur concluded his singing with an Armenian aria, cheerfully joined by members of the audience.

Presentations were then made in recognition of Joan Agajanian Quinn's prominent service to the Armenian International Women's Association, as well as a journalist, curator, arts advocate, and her leadership in the support of many global activities to benefit diverse communities. The first presentation was made by Ani L. Kharajian, International AIWA, President, who journeyed from AIWA headquarters in Boston, Massachusetts, to express her congratulations "for this well-deserved accolade to a selfless contributor and a true nation builder and to participate in honoring her for the difference she has made in Armenian women's lives."

Presentations and acknowledgements by government officials were recognized by Senator Anthony Portantino and his aide Taline Manigoglu. They presented proclamations and Certificates of Appreciation from the California Legislature, including Senator Kevin De Leon and Assemblyman Adrin Nazarian, Sheila Kuehl, Chair of the Board of Supervisors, Paul Krekorian, Los Angeles City Council member, and Lily Bosse, Mayor, Beverly Hills City Council. In his remarks, Senator Portantino commended Joan for her leadership, and her passionate commitment to the arts and her consistent support of the creative talents of others.

The program concluded with remarks by honoree Joan Agajanian Quinn, who stated "Thank you to AIWA, Chair Lily Balian and her able committee, who made this afternoon possible, and to my family and to my friends from near and far. I dedicate this afternoon to my husband Jack who was always the wind beneath my wings and continues to be my guiding angel. My mother Faye Agajanian used to bake a seven-layer cake, a delicious cake, you, each of you in this room make up the layers of that cake, all of you have been instrumental in helping me in my efforts to give back to a community that I love."

The benediction was given by Archbishop Vatche Hovsepien, former Primate of the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church of North America, who spoke of his longtime relationship with Joan and her husband Jack Quinn and noted his unwavering support and pride in all her endeavors. As a couple, they strongly believed in supporting the need to acknowledge victims of domestic violence in Armenia through the Women's Support Center in Armenia. He spoke lovingly of Joan's achievements and outstanding contributions which serve as an inspiration to all. He stated "I knew Jack, a noble man who was married to this wonderful woman, they worked together for the betterment of society."

For further information regarding the Los Angeles Affiliate of the Armenian International Women's Association please contact www.aiwaLA.org.



Group picture of Executive Committee of LA Armenian International Women's Association, (Joan is in the center) presenting flowers to Mistress of Ceremonies Andrea Fehring and Lily Balian, Chair of the event.

Rev. Dr. Abel Manoukian Publishes New Book on Swiss Humanitarianism During Genocide

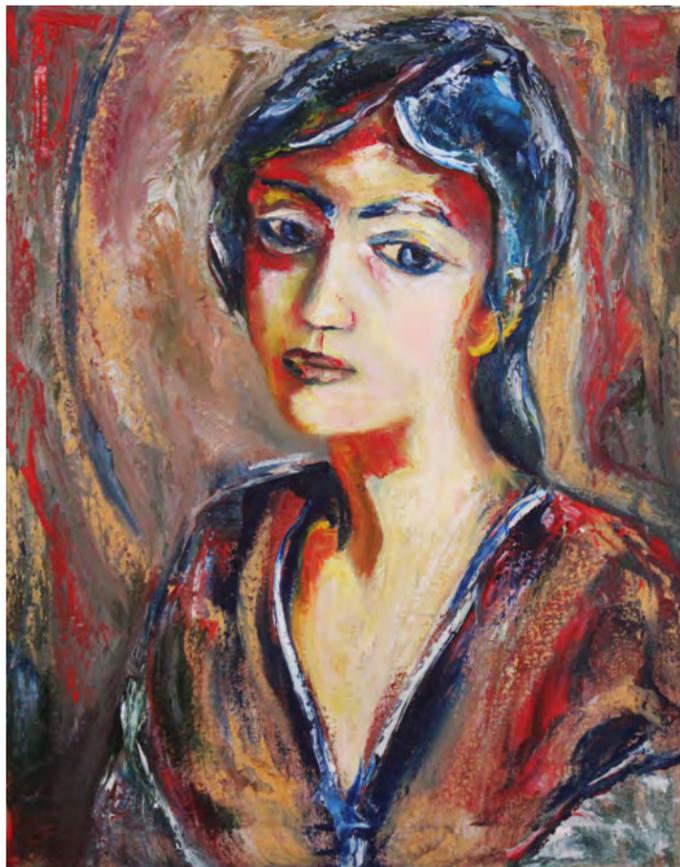
SWISS, from page 13

those who were less wealthy. This surge in people's willingness to help was made possible and sustained by a massive solidarity movement in Swiss society.

Two examples, among many, should be mentioned – Sister Beatrice Rohner (1876–1947), from Basel, who suffered a mental breakdown following all the horror she experienced as a teacher and director of an orphanage, and Jakob Künzler (1871–1949), from Walzenhausen, a cabinet-maker by profession, who – driven by profound faith – worked tirelessly, first as a medical orderly, then subsequently as an ingenious general practitioner and highly inventive organizer, from 1899–1922 in Turkey and thereafter in Lebanon. Having been acquainted with Künzler, while Swiss vice-consul in Jaffa, Carl Lutz found him to be a great inspiration for his own heroic efforts saving Jews in Budapest in 1944.

The author of this book endows his Swiss "witnesses for humanity" with a lively voice, without any loss of scholarlyness, as is demonstrated by copious footnotes and references. His extremely wide-ranging research integrates previously unseen material from Swiss archives for the first time and forms the basis of this comprehensive work, which constitutes a significant enrichment of the subject.

Paying Tribute to Artists' Pain



A portrait by Andrey Allakhverdov



A village scene

ARTISTS, from page 13

"I want to help bring together the Armenian, Russian and American genres. Many don't know each other's art," he said.

Allakhverdov was born in Baku to a family originally from Shushi, Karabakh. Eventually, he moved to Moscow.

For Allakhverdov, style takes a back seat to his goals of bringing together art and artists. Still, he does prefer realism, but uses other genres too.

"I have an internal calling and movement that make me work," he said.

His works are currently on sale through his website. To see more of his paintings or to contact him, visit www.allakhverdov.com



ARTS & LIVING



Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Cold Cucumber Beet Soup with Mint

INGREDIENTS

3 cups cucumbers, peeled, seeded, cut into chunks
 1 cup cooked fresh beets, chopped
 1/2 medium onion, chopped
 4 cups plain low-fat white yogurt or sour cream
 2 cups low-sodium chicken or vegetable broth
 2 cloves garlic, minced
 3 tablespoons chopped walnuts
 2 tablespoons olive oil
 2 tablespoons lemon juice or wine vinegar
 1/2 teaspoon sea or kosher salt (to taste)
 Black pepper, Aleppo pepper, celery salt (to taste)
 Chopped mint, dill, or chives as garnish
 Thin sliced cucumber or eggs as garnish

PREPARATION:

With a food processor or electric blender, swirl the cucumbers, beets, onions, and garlic for 60 seconds, do not puree. Add broth, yogurt or sour cream, and walnuts, and swirl 20-30 seconds longer until smooth. Add more broth at this point if soup is too thick.

Transfer to a glass bowl, stir in olive oil, lemon juice, salt, black pepper, Aleppo pepper, and celery salt, cover, and chill for 4 hours or overnight.

Garnish chilled soup with thin sliced cucumber, eggs, or sour cream; top with mint, dill, or chives, and serve. May be made 2 or 3 days in advance of serving; store in a covered container in the refrigerator.

Serves 4.

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

A Look at Armenian-American History from the Beginning

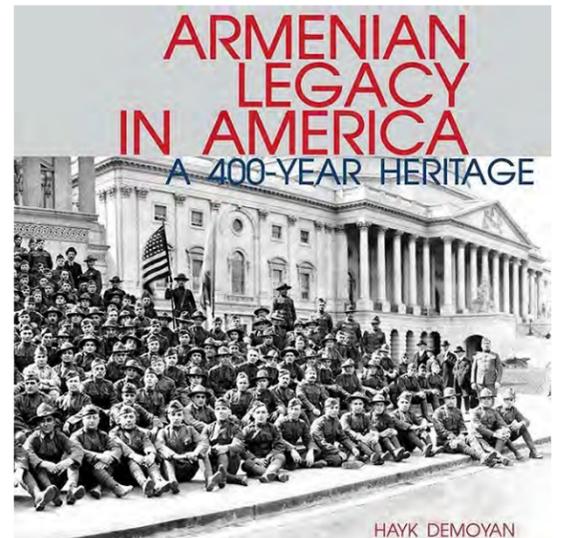
MISSION HILLS, Calif. — The Ararat-Eskijian Museum (AEM), the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute (AGMI) in Yerevan, Armenia, and the California State University Northridge Armenian Studies Program, announce an upcoming conference dedicated to the 400th anniversary of the arrival of “Martin the Armenian,” to America. This conference will focus on the legacy of the Armenian-American community and its significant accomplishments from very humble beginnings.

This landmark anniversary has inspired numerous scholars and cultural figures from diverse backgrounds to share their studies and perspectives on the rich Armenian-American heritage. In conjunction with the conference, a special exhibition prepared for the occasion will be on display featuring Armenian-American heirlooms and historical artifacts from the Ararat-Eskijian Museum and the private collection of Dr. Hayk Demoyan, director of the AGMI.

The conference begins Friday, March 16, 6 to 10 p.m., with a reception, the opening of the special exhibition, and the launching of Demoyan's new publication, *Armenian Legacy in America: A 400-Year Heritage*, along with a musical program, a short documentary film on Armenian-American achievements in politics,

and a brief play. The conference will continue on Saturday, March 17, from 9:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., with four scheduled sessions.

The conference will take place at the George Deukmejian Community Center on the grounds of the Ararat Home of Los Angeles,



15105 Mission Hills Road, Mission Hills, Calif., 91345.

The conference is open to the public with free admission.

For additional information, program and time of the events, or live streaming, visit Ararat-eskijian-museum.com or e-mail eskijian@ararat-eskijian-museum.com.

Hai Guin Prepares for Fashion Show on May 19

BELMONT, Mass. — The Hai Guin Scholarship Association, under the direction of Gladys Partamian, president, is preparing for the May 19 annual luncheon and fashion show. This year's fashions will be presented by Soft Surroundings of Chestnut Hill, specializing in designer clothing for women, petites and tall.

Busy women of all ages are Soft Surroundings' customers, especially those who need to be reminded to put themselves at the top of their “To Do List.” Soft Surroundings is dedicated to making their customers look and feel their best. They design the majority of their quality fashion in St. Louis. Their goal is to ensure that their customers maintain their unique sense of style without sacrificing comfort.

Margaret Atamian and Carol Yeghiayan, luncheon and fashion show event co-chairs, are working with their committee which includes: Lisa Dorian, Becky Hintlian, and Marilyn Takvorian, ticket reservations; Karen Martin,

donations; Pamela Gechijian, publicity; Joyce Jones, modeling agency; Joyce Guleserian, Ida Kolligian, and Mary Kupjian, centerpieces; Sandra Aghababian, program booklet; and Karen Martin and Linda Abkarian, raffles.

Proceeds from this event fund scholarships for students who are Massachusetts residents, are of Armenian descent and attend a college or university in the US. Candidates must have completed one year at the school for which the scholarship is requested. Scholarships awarded are based on merit and need.

Applications are available upon request by writing to: Hai Guin Scholarship Association, 23 Bradley Road, Arlington, MA 02474, Attn: Scholarship Chairman. All application requirements are due by October 25, 2018.

The Hai Guin Scholarship Association annual luncheon and fashion show will be held at Montvale Plaza, Stoneham, at 11:30 a.m. Call members of the committee for tickets.

St. James Armenian Church

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8:00PM

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Seated left to right are: Carol Yeghiayan and Margaret Atamian, luncheon and fashion show event co-chairs; Gladys Partamian, president; Standing left to right are: Pamela Gechijian, Joyce Guleserian, Mary Kupjian, Linda Abkarian, and Marilyn Takvorian. Missing from photo are: Lisa Dorian, Becky Hintlian, Karen Martin, Joyce Jones, Ida Kolligian, and Sandra Aghababian.

Read News in Armenian at:

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ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

CALIFORNIA

MARCH 16- 17 — Conference, "Celebration of 400 Years of Armenian-American Heritage, 1618-2018," at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Mission Hills. Co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum (AEM), the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR), Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute (AGMI) in Yerevan, Armenia, and the California State University Northridge Armenian Studies Program.

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20-27, 2019 — Armenian Heritage Cruise XXII Western Caribbean Cruise aboard Royal Caribbean's Allure of the Seas. Traveling to Nassau/Cozumel/Roatan/Costa Maya. Cabin rates starting from \$949 per person based on double occupancy, including port charges and ACAA registration fee. Government taxes of \$137.45 are additional. Armenian entertainment, cultural presentations, festival day, tavlou and belote tournaments and much more. Call Travel Group International 561-447-0750 or 866-447-0750 ext. 108. Contact person Jaïne.

ILLINOIS

APRIL 15 — Book presentation by Adrienne Alexanian (editor) on her father's memoir Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army, Sunday, 3 p.m. sharp. The Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center 9603 Woods Drive Skokie, IL 60077—RSVP (847) 967-4800. There are no other books in literature on this aspect of the Genocide. The book also contains rare documents and pictures which will be shown during a power point presentation. Book signing during reception.

MASSACHUSETTS

MARCH 8-11 — The Global Cinema Film Festival of Boston (GCFB) announces its 2018 Official Selections. The 3rd annual global event will be held at the Studio Cinema, 376 Trapelo Road, Belmont, MA. Festival kicks off on March 8, at 6 p.m. with Red Carpet Event and film screenings until 10 p.m. Film screenings will continue from Friday, March 9, through Sunday, March 11, 2018 from 12 to 11 p.m. March 11 panel discussion with Tamara Stepanyan, Aram Arkun and others after the film "Those From the Shore," starting at 3.30 p.m. For info visit @ www.worldwidecinemaframes.com. globalcinema-filmfestival@gmail.com

MARCH 11 — "Jazz and Art for YerazArt" Sunday, 6 p.m., at anoush'ella saj kitchen, 35 W. Newton St., Boston. Reception and open bar, featuring Oriental Trio (Mina Cho on piano, Vasilis Kostas on Laouto and George Lernis on world percussion and drum-set) and art sale to benefit YerazArt programs. Parking available at adjacent BU Dental School Parking (720 Harrison Avenue, Boston MA 02118). Tickets: \$125 per person. To purchase, visit: www.yerazart.org

MARCH 12 — Trinity Men's Union Dinner and Meeting, 6 p.m., Social Hour, 7 p.m., Dinner, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Guest Speaker: Field Yates, ESPN Reporter, who will speak about everything and anything NFL. All are welcome. Donation for Baked Shrimp Scampi Dinner is \$15 per person. RSVP requested by March 10 to tmuhtaac@gmail.com or call David Dorian, 617.501.4300. For further information, log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/548/>

MARCH 13 — Armenian Business Networking (ABN) Winter Business Networking event, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., the Sheraton Commander in Cambridge. Stephen Demirjian guest speaker from The Achieve Institute shares methods on creating greater personal and work life success. This event is free of charge. RSVP: armeniambusinessnetwork@gmail.com

MARCH 16 — Program to combat domestic violence in Armenia, Papken Suni Agoump, 76 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, 7 to 9 p.m. Maro Matosian, executive director of the Women's Support Center, Armenia. Advance RSVP required Email Lenna.garibian@gmail.com. This

fundraising event is sponsored by the Friends of the WSC. Donations to the WSC will be made via the Tufenkian Foundation and are tax-deductible. Learn more at www.womensupportcenter.org.

MARCH 18 — Book Presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, Forced into Genocide, Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army, Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. This book is a riveting memoir of Yervant Edward Alexanian, an eye-witness to the massacre and dislocation of his family and countrymen in Ottoman Turkey during WW I, while he served as a conscript in the Turkish Army. Reception and Book Signing to follow Presentation. All are welcome! Log onto <http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/527/> for further information.

MARCH 22 — 7:30 p.m.: Siobhan Nash-Marshall, "The Sins of the Fathers: Turkish Denialism and the Armenian Genocide," Thursday, at the NAASR Center, 395 Concord Ave., Belmont. The program is open to the public. Contact: hq@naasr.org or 617-489-1610.

MARCH 23 — Sayat Nova Dance Company of Boston (SNDC) is honored to share the stage with world renowned and beloved singer from Armenia Sirusho, appearing live for the first time in Boston, at the prestigious Berklee Performance Center, 136 Mass. Ave., Boston. Start time: 8 pm. Tickets may be purchased online at www.berklee.edu/events/Sirusho or by calling 617-747-2261. To avoid online fees, you may also purchase your tickets in person at the Berklee Box Office, 10 am – 6pm. For more info or questions, email sirushoboston@gmail.com. You may also follow us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/events/162986714315959/ Reserve your tickets for this memorable cultural evening of Armenian song and dance.

APRIL 8 — Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Sunday, 7 am Rain Date: Sunday, April 15

APRIL 11 — A recap on the status of the documentary project "Neighbors in Memory," accompanied by a panel of community members shedding light on the state of Armenian-Turkish relations as they live and witness it. Wednesday, 7 p.m., Capitol Theatre, 204 Mass. Ave., Arlington. Screenings, discussions and refreshments. For more information: gonca59@gmail.com

APRIL 14 — Saturday, St. James Great Gatsby Gala! A Roarin' 20s Celebration! Live Jazz & Armenian Music, Passed Hors D'oeuvres, Mezza and Dessert Stations and more. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, 8 p.m., Tickets \$100. Purchase online at www.stjameswatertown.org or contact info@stthagop.com.

APRIL 20-21 — Commemorating the 103rd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, first at the State House, on Friday, April 20, 9 a.m. to 12.30 p.m., Boston. A free reception will follow. Then on Saturday, April 21, a Commemoration at the Park, 3 to 5 p.m. Further details will follow. For more information, visit bostonagcc@gmail.com.

MAY 5 — Saturday, Kentucky Derby Watch Party, Fun and festivities to support Armenia Tree Project, At the elegant/historic Gore Place in Waltham. Details to follow.

MAY 5 — Save the date! Annual Meeting, Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA). Details to follow. Contact: info@aiwainternational.org or 617-926-0171.

May 5 — Celebrate Public Art during Artweek on Saturday at the Park, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, 1 p.m., World Labyrinth Day: Walk As One in peace & harmony with people in cities and towns worldwide including the labyrinth in Gyumri. At 12:45 p.m., introduction to Walking a Labyrinth, 1:30 pm - Reception to View the 2018 Configuration of the Abstract Sculpture. Remarks: Sarah Baker, editor-in-chief, Art New England magazine. Introduced by Lucas Cowan, Public Art Curator, Rose Kennedy Greenway Conservancy. Tea & Desserts, hosted by MEM Tea Imports & Eastern Lamejun Bakers. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

MAY 6 — "Celebrating 400 Hundred Years of Armenian American Heritage: 1618-2018" Exhibition and the launching of Armenian Legacy in America: A 400-Year Heritage by Dr. Hayk Demoyan in an illustrated talk. Other speakers include Robert Mirak, Barbara J.

Merguerian and Nubar Afeyan. Sunday, 3 p.m. Admission free and open to the public. Book sale and reception to follow. Organized by Armenian Cultural Foundation, co-sponsored by the Amaras Art Alliance, and National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, 441 Mystic Street (Route 3), Arlington. Tel. (781)-646-3090 armeniancultural.fdn@gmail.com

MAY 11 — Welcome His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholics of All Armenians, to Celebrate with Rev. Father Mampre A. Kouzouian on the 60th Anniversary of his Ordination to the Priesthood. Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Hrshapar Service in the Sanctuary followed by a Celebration in the Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall. Details forthcoming.

JUNE 6 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Wednesday, 5-6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

JUNE 28 — Under a Strawberry Moon, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Thursday, 8:30– 9:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Moonlit Labyrinth Walk. Enjoy chocolate-dipped strawberries, hosted by Vicki Lee's and Ice Teas, hosted by MEM Tea Imports. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

JULY 18 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday, 5- 6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

AUGUST 15 — Tea & Tranquility, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Wednesday, 5-6:30 p.m. Meet & Greet! Enjoy Tea & Desserts hosted by MEM Tea Imports and The Bostonian Hotel. Walk the Labyrinth. For first-time walkers introduction to walking a labyrinth at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 16 — Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families & Friends. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway. 2-4 p.m. Enjoy Boston Hye Guys Ensemble with Ron Sahatjian, clarinet; Joe Kouyoumjian, oud; Art Chingris, percussion. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

MICHIGAN

MARCH 22 — Talk by Adrienne Alexanian on her father's memoir, Forced into Genocide: Memoir of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army. Thursday, 7 p.m., Holocaust Memorial Center Zekelman Family Campus, 28123 Orchard Lake Road Farmington Hills, MI 48334. The book presents a unique account of the Armenian genocide and was translated from the Armenian and edited by Adrienne Alexanian. RSVP by March 20. 248-553-2400x112 or rsvp@holocaustcenter.org. Free with admission or membership. Book signing during reception.

NEW JERSEY

MARCH 13 — 7:45 p.m.: Ohannes Kılıçdagi, "The Armenian Community in Istanbul and Crisis facing the Patriarchate," at St. Leon Armenian Church/Charles & Grace Pinajian Youth Center, 12-61 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn. Co-sponsored by AGBU Ararat, Constantinople Armenian Relief Society (C.A.R.S.), Esayan-Getronagan Alumni Inc., NAASR / Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation Series on Contemporary Armenian Issues, St. Leon Armenian Church, and Tibrevank Alumni Inc.

NEW YORK

MARCH 18 — 6 p.m.: Armenian film screenings in Socially Relevant Film Festival, "Armenians of the World" (Director: Carmen Labaki) and Hot Country, Cold Winter (Director: David Safarian). At Cinéma Village 22 E 12th St, NY, NY. Co-sponsored by AGBU Performing Arts, NAASR, St. Leon Armenian Church, and SOAR. Click here for more information and to purchase tickets.

CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



ARTS & LIVING

Armenian Museum Of America Appoints Jennifer Liston Munson As Executive Director

WATERTOWN, Mass. – The Board of Trustees at the Armenian Museum of America announced on February 28 the appointment of Jennifer Liston Munson as the Armenian Museum’s next executive director.

Liston Munson’s association with the organization first began in 2011 when she was introduced to the museum by portrait photographer Yousuf Karsh’s widow, Estrellita Karsh. It was at that time that Liston Munson, one of the professionals from the Museum of Fine Arts (MFA), Boston, along with her colleague Keith Crippen, transformed the first floor of the



Jennifer Liston Munson

Museum in preparation for the Karsh: Celebrating Humanity and Highlights from the Collection exhibitions.

Following this transformational project, the Executive Committee at the Museum contracted Liston Munson for a number of other projects. Her work has always been of the highest caliber and has brought a new level of excellence and awareness to the Armenian Museum. She designed the Simourian Family Galleries which feature the exhibition Objects That Transcend, a display of newly-acquired metalwork, and the Adele and Haig Der Manuelian Contemporary Galleries, where she curated and designed Scars of Silence, an installation of video and photography by Nubar Alexanian that explores the subconscious suppression of loss by three generations of Armenian-Americans. In 2017 she worked with graphic designer Andrew Wollner to create the rebranding and identity program for the museum, which draws from an expressive symbol of eternity carved on a 12th-century Armenian monastery to form a distinctive logo that, combined with the tagline art, culture and eternity, sets the tone for the reinvention of the museum.

“During Jennifer’s association with the Armenian Museum, she developed a great love and passion for Armenian art, history and culture. One of her many goals will be to develop programs and exhibitions to expand visibility of the museum to a wider audience within both the Armenian and non-Armenian communities,” the museum’s Board of Trustees said in a statement. “The Board feels extremely fortunate to have someone with her extensive experience and creativity leading the museum at this pivotal time in the organization’s history.”

Liston Munson received her MFA from the School of the Museum of Fine Arts, Boston and Tufts University, and a BFA from Massachusetts College of Art and Design and Loughborough College of Art and Design in England. Prior to her work as a senior member of the Exhibitions and Design Department at the MFA, she was a 2001 Traveling Scholar at the MFA. Jennifer maintains a professional art practice. Her work is held in many corporate and private collections.



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18th Anniversary

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Mail your check with this form to:

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NEW YORK

MARCH 28, 6:00 p.m.: Taner Akçam, “Killing Orders: Talat Pasha’s Telegrams and the Armenian Genocide,” at Columbia University. Co-sponsored by the Columbia Armenian Center and NAASR. (Venue TBA.) Further details to follow.

APRIL 21 - MAY 13 — Off-Broadway production by Pan Asian Repertory Theatre of Joyce Van Dyke’s play, “Daybreak:” the lyrical story of two Armenian women friends, survivors from 1915, who are transported with their families into the 21st century future. Starring Lorraine Serabian as Victoria. Performances at the Beckett Theatre, 410 W. 42nd St., New York, Tuesdays through Sundays; weekend matinees; discount tickets for seniors, students and groups. For tickets and information: Telecharge: www.telecharge.com or call (212) 239-6200. Or contact the theatre: info@panasianrep.org, (212) 868-4030.

PENNSYLVANIA

APRIL 28 — Join the Armenian Assembly of America for its Philadelphia Celebration at the National Constitution Center on Saturday, starting at 6 p.m. The Armenian Assembly will be honoring longtime members and Life Trustees Peter and Irene Vosbikian. The evening’s entertainment will feature Kevork Artinian Entertainment and his Band. To learn more, visit www.aimhye.com. RSVP by Monday, April 16.

RHODE ISLAND

MARCH 16 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church Cultural Committee presents: New and exclusive screening, Armenian Film Festival. The Nation’s Past and Present “Our Yerevan – Capital of Armenia” (Matenadaran, Museums, Kaskad, “Ani Plaza” hotel, modern architecture, Vernisazh,...) Presented in English, Friday, 7 p.m. In Egavian Cultural Center 70 Jefferson Street, Providence, RI 02908

WASHINGTON, DC

MARCH 10 — Saturday, 6:30 p.m. Benefit theatrical presentation for the teachers of Knights of Vartan School in Armenia. Taleen Babayan’s “Where Is Your Groom? II” At Northern Virginia Community College, Annandale Campus, Ernst Community Cultural center, 8333 Little River Turnpike, Annandale. Tickets \$30. By credit card go to paypal.me/DaughtersofVartanUS or call Takuhi at (301) 219-4041.

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 no later than Mondays at noon.

COMMENTARY

No Crime but Punishment

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan is his own worst enemy. He was smart enough to pretend before the rest of the world that his mission was to move his country from the Middle Ages to the modern democratic era. Even Western leaders began to refer to Turkey as a role model for the Islamic world, combining democratic values with Islamic institutions and other Islamic nations were urged to emulate it.

That piece of make-believe allowed Erdogan a lot of latitude to further build up his armed forces through NATO and to develop Turkey's economy at a dramatic pace.

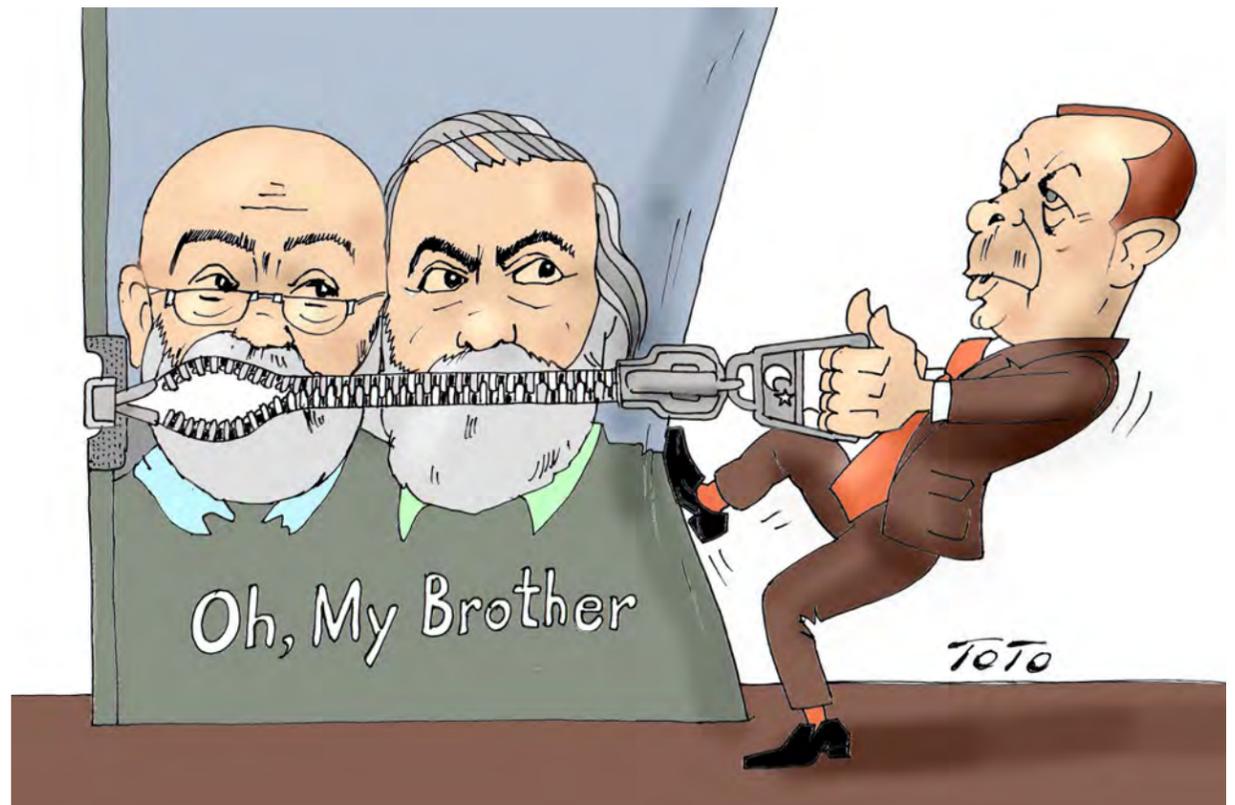
But it did not take too long for him to reveal his true face by undoing Mustafa Kemal Ataturk's secular reforms, bringing back the veil to women and the Koran to the new madreses popping up everywhere.

The Europeanized segment of Turkish society was caught off guard, becoming alienated in its own country. Writers like Nobel

paper in the West. He is also a novelist who ironically had written a work where his hero is jailed like Kafka's protagonist, without understanding his crime. After his conviction, he wrote an essay from Silivri prison, where he states, "I am going to Hades. I walk into darkness like a god who wrote his own destiny. My protagonist and I disappear into the darkness together." (See the column, originally published in the *New York Times*, on the next page.)

Altan and his brother are not alone. There are already 100 journalists in jail, 50,000 citizens are detained and 250,000, including judges and police officers, fired from their jobs. Turkey is descending into a somber future. Intellectuals like the Altans were out to put a human face on Turkey. When Altan had visited the US six years ago, he not only recognized the Armenian Genocide, but he said he also believed that Turkey had changed for the better. "You must change your perception of Turkey. Maybe you can help Turkey change."

The late Hrant Dink had also brought that same message to the outside world. Despite Hrant's tragic end, Ahmet Altan still believed that Turkey was on a positive path. His message tried



Prize-winner Orhan Pamuk and internationally celebrated novelist Elif Shafak found themselves out of place. Erdogan and his AKP party did not mind that alienation as long as they could garner the 51 percent vote from the Anatolian peasants to push back Turkey to the Middle Ages.

Intoxicated by his newly-acquired power, Erdogan began to entertain his Ottoman dreams, domestically repressing the population and internationally bullying allies. However, he painted himself into a corner, where he could only solicit the help of similar authoritarian powers, those in Russia, China and Iran.

Turkey's tilt towards a pariah status helped Armenia in the Western world but not necessarily among old friends, namely Russia and Iran. Germany, the Netherlands and Chile passed resolutions recognizing the Armenian Genocide; at one point, even Egypt and Israel toyed with the idea. These were all gifts to Armenia courtesy of Mr. Erdogan.

At this stage, Turkey is at a turning point, alienated from the West and tenuously held by the East, but still believing in its power to pull itself out of the quagmire.

Shafak, who was taken to court because of her recognition of the Armenian Genocide along with Pamuk, portrays modern Turkey in the following terms: "It is an unhappy country that hates its public intellectuals. Turkey, my motherland, is one such place. Increasingly today, intellectuals are demonized in pro-government media, trolled on social media, accused of being 'traitors' or 'collaborating with western powers,' put on trial, imprisoned or exiled."

One such Kafkaesque trial sentenced prominent novelist and editor Ahmet Altan and his brother, Mehmet Altan, an economics professor and political commentator, to life imprisonment without the possibility of parole on February 28. Their guilt was their appearance on a television program hosted by Nazli Ilicak a day before the coup attempt in July 2016. They, as well as Ilicak, are accused of having emitted "subliminal messages" announcing the coup. There is no other explanation to this harsh verdict other than a chilling witch hunt.

Ahmet Altan is a left-leaning intellectual who was a founding editor of *Taraf*, which was regarded as a highly credible news-

to humanize Turkey's image. He was sincere when he stated during one of his public speeches: "Turks have hearts and consciences, believe me. We need to proceed to overcome the bloody line of 1915."

The irony is that Turkey's "conscience" did not spare him, let alone his target audience of Armenians.

When the attempted coup was botched, Erdogan was ecstatic. He said this was a "God-sent gift to us." Indeed, that pretext gave him the opportunity to settle scores with all his enemies and sink the country into a dungeon. His arch enemy, Fethullah Gulen, is blamed for all the ills of Turkey and one of the problems which he has with the US administration, namely that Washington has refused to extradite Gulen to Turkey where he is to stand trial. Erdogan wants to believe that the US judiciary can operate arbitrarily, just as it does in Turkey, so that the US will pack up Gulen and deliver him to Ankara.

The fallout between the former allies, Erdogan and Gulen, is a blessing in disguise. Because the latter has a much more suave and discreet method of promoting Islam. Islam is permeated in the US through hundreds of charter schools run by Gulen's Hizmet Society at the expense of US taxpayers. The same kind of operation extends to many countries. At least, their antagonism cancels out each other's efforts to proselytize a brand of Islam which seems more moderate but it may degenerate into violence. Anywhere and anytime politics and religion mix, the result can be combustible.

Erdogan has proven to be the necessary evil to perform the dirty work of the west in the Middle East. But while performing that task, he has also betrayed his selfish agenda which is to cater to the Islamic ambitions of his administration.

Holding prisoner 80 million citizens and juggling with the world powers of the East and West will eventually prove too much to handle for this modern Sultan.

Ahmet Altan laments his destiny after the verdict is pronounced by writing: "We will never be pardoned and we will die in a prison cell."

Erdogan's untenable policy will certainly precipitate the demise of his rule and disprove Altan's prophesy.

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

The Terminated Armenia-Turkey Protocols Should Be a Lesson for Armenia's Leaders

Finally, the President of Armenia officially declared null and void the infamous Armenia-Turkey Protocols during a meeting of the National Security Council last week. President Sargsyan had made several announcements since 2009, warning that he would remove the Protocols from the Parliament's agenda unless Turkey ratified them shortly. Sargsyan's most recent such warning was made last September, during his remarks at the United Nations General Assembly, stating that he would declare the Protocols null and void before the spring of 2018.

The Protocols were signed by Armenia's Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian and Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu on October 10, 2009, in Zurich, Switzerland. Also present at the signing ceremony were the Foreign Ministers of Russia, France, Switzerland, US Secretary of State, and high-ranking officials of the European Union.

The lengthy text of the Protocols called for the opening of the borders between Armenia and Turkey, and establishment of diplomatic relations between the two countries. The Protocols also included many other unrelated matters, such as recognizing the existing Armenian-Turkish border and the establishment of a historic commission to examine problems between the two countries – meaning the Armenian Genocide.

As a result, there was a worldwide outcry against adoption of the Protocols with protests both in Armenia and many Diasporan communities. Shortly before the signing of the

Protocols on October 10, 2009, President Sargsyan embarked on a worldwide tour of major Armenian communities in Paris, New York, Los Angeles, Beirut, and Rostov-on-Don (Russia) ostensibly to listen to their concerns regarding the Protocols. However, it was clear from his remarks at these meetings that he had made up his mind to go ahead with the Protocols, and the intent of the tour was to persuade Diaspora Armenians to give up their objections. During his visits overseas, President Sargsyan was greeted with angry protests and confrontations making his propaganda tour a failure.

During his stop in Los Angeles on October 4, 2009, he met with leaders of 60 Armenian organizations with the overwhelming majority criticizing the pending Protocols, while thousands of Armenians demonstrated outside the hotel where the meeting was taking place.

In my remarks at that meeting, I cautioned the president that Ilham Aliyev, Azerbaijan's President, by objecting to the Protocols, would block their eventual ratification by Turkey. Ironically, such an outcome would mean that Azerbaijan's President, not Armenia's President, would be inadvertently defending Armenia's interests.

It was clear to many Armenians, both inside and outside of Armenia, that Turkey had no intention of opening its mutual border. The Protocols were a Turkish ploy to pressure Armenia to make territorial concessions to Azerbaijan on Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh).

In fact, the signing ceremony in 2009 was delayed by several hours when it became known that Turkey's Foreign Minister, in his remarks, would link the unrelated subject of the Karabagh conflict to the Protocols. Only the last-minute intervention by US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton temporarily resolved the dispute and the two sides proceeded to sign the Protocols.

However, in the years following the signing ceremony, the Turkish leaders made repeated statements that they had no intention to ratify the Protocols unless Armenia made concessions on Artsakh. Indeed, Azerbaijan had vigorously protested the signing of the Protocols and warned Turkey not to proceed with ratification. Azerbaijan intended to pressure Armenia to make territorial concessions on Artsakh by keeping Armenia's borders with Turkey closed.

Armenia's leaders had allowed major foreign powers to

pressure them into making a decision that was contrary to the Armenian people's interests. As a small state, it is understandable that Armenia could not act like its larger and more powerful Turkish neighbor, which repeatedly flaunts the wishes of the international community. Nevertheless, Armenia's leaders could at least make an effort to keep foreign intervention to a minimum.

Another lesson Armenia's leaders should learn from the Protocols' debacle is that before they embark on initiatives that affect Armenian interests worldwide, they should hold serious consultations to make sure that the majority of Armenians in Armenia and the Diaspora are on board with their decisions. Naturally, internal matters affecting those living within Armenia's borders are their prerogative, however, issues that affect all Armenians, such as the Armenian Genocide, Armenian territorial demands from Turkey, and the final settlement of the Artsakh conflict, are major concerns to all Armenians. Long before signing any documents on these subjects, Armenia's leadership should ensure that most Armenians agree with them. Otherwise, we shall see the repetition of ugly confrontations in Armenia and the Diaspora with Armenian authorities.

I raise these concerns in response to President Sargsyan's two statements last week:

"When we started the negotiation process, we naturally predicted two outcomes – positive or negative."

"If we get proposals tomorrow, or the next day, we will be ready to discuss them."

Sargsyan's statements indicate that Armenia's leaders have not recognized their mistaken approach to Armenian-Turkish issues. It is not true that Armenia did not lose anything. Turkey manipulated the Protocols to ensure that no foreign country meddled in the Armenian Genocide issue. In fact, US President Obama also exploited the Protocols to refrain from using the term Armenian Genocide in his April 24 statement of 2009 and in the subsequent seven years.

Furthermore, President Sargsyan's statements indicate that Armenia is apt to make the same mistake again. For years, he had been declaring that Armenia is ready to ratify the Protocols the same day that Turkey ratifies them. Fortunately, Turkey never ratified the Protocols, preventing Armenia from taking an action contrary to its own national interests.

'I Will Never See the World Again.'

Editors' note: On Feb. 16, a Turkish court sentenced Ahmet Altan, a novelist and former newspaper editor; his brother, Mehmet Altan, an economics professor and political commentator; Nazli Ilicak, a prominent journalist; and three media employees to life imprisonment without parole for involvement in the July 15, 2016, coup attempt in Turkey.

The Altan brothers had appeared on a television program hosted by Ms. Ilicak a day before the coup attempt. Turkish prosecutors claimed that they gave "subliminal messages" announcing the coup on the program.

Turkey says that a network led by Fethullah Gulen, an Islamist cleric based in the United States, orchestrated the coup, which included an attempt on President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's life, the bombing of the Parliament and the deaths of more than 270 people. In the purge by the Turkish government that followed, more than 150,000 people have been fired from their jobs, detained or arrested.

Mr. Altan wrote this essay about his imprisonment and sentencing, and about fiction and reality, in his prison cell in the city of Silivri, on the outskirts of Istanbul. It was published originally in the *New York Times* on February 28. This essay was translated by Yasemin Congar from the Turkish.

Altan had spoken to the Armenian community in Watertown in 2012 about the need to recognize the Armenian Genocide [<https://mirrorspectator.com/2012/02/02/altan-captivates-large-audience-with-message-of-hope-at-alma/>].

By Ahmet Altan

SILIVRI, Turkey – They sit on a bench that is two meters high. They wear black robes with red collars. In a few hours they will decide my destiny. I look at them. They have loosened their ties out of boredom.

Every weekday, get thought-provoking commentary from Op-Ed columnists, the *Times* editorial board and contributing writers from around the world.

The chief judge, sitting in the middle, splays his right arm across the bench like a piece of wet laundry and fiddles with his fingers. He has a long, narrow face. His eyes are hidden under swollen half-closed eyelids. Every now and then he looks at his cellphone to read his messages.

When one of my co-defendants says he is about to undergo heart bypass surgery, the chief judge pulls the microphone toward him and speaks in a mechanical voice. "The hospital told us there were no circumstances preventing your stay in prison," he says.

As defense lawyers talk about the most crucial matters, his mechanical voice orders: "You have two minutes. Wrap it up." I remember what Elias Canetti said about such people: "Being safe, at peace and in splendor, and then to hear a person's pleas while determined to turn a deaf ear ... could anything be more vile than that?"

While the defendants and their lawyers speak, the chubby, skew-eyed judge to the chief's right leans back in his chair and

looks up at the ceiling. The lines of pleasure moving across his face suggest he is daydreaming. When he doesn't seem to be daydreaming he leans his head on his hand and sleeps. The judge on the left busies himself with the computer in front of him, continuously reading something.

Around noon they tell us they will withdraw for deliberations. We are surrounded by gendarmes. They are wearing RoboCop gear with black plastrons and kneepads. A gendarme takes each of us by the arm and walks us between two rows of guards and down narrow stairs.

They put us in a tiled holding cell with iron bars. We are five men. The sixth defendant, a woman, is taken elsewhere because of her gender.

The Supreme Court had examined the evidence against us and ruled that "no one could be arrested based on such evidence." This has made the journalists on trial with us optimistic. I am not.

We pace the holding cell nervously from one end to the other. The minutes go by, now faster, now slower, depending on the tempo of our conversations. When the minutes slow down, we feel wounds opening inside us. We hide this from one another. The minutes passed in a holding cell as you wait to hear whether you will be sentenced to life in prison are torture.

I encounter with some embarrassment flickers of hope and dreams beneath my pessimism. A man freezing inside cannot abandon hope and its warm glow. I daydream in the cell: I leave the prison, a deep breath, the first embrace, words of joy, the smell of happiness and a wide sky above.

As I dream, three men with ties loosened out of boredom deliberate my destiny. Perhaps they have already made their decision. I suddenly remember a passage from my novel "Like a Sword Wound," which is set in the last days of the Ottoman Empire. One of my characters is arrested and he is in a room waiting for the verdict.

I wrote of him: "The gap between the moment that a person's destiny changed and the moment the person realized this seemed to him to be the most tragic and frightening aspect of life. The future became clear, but the person continued to wait for another future with other expectations and dreams without realizing that the future had already been determined. The ignorance during that wait was horrible and to him was humanity's greatest weakness."

I remember those sentences and shiver. I am living what I wrote in a novel. Years ago as I was wandering in that unmarked, enigmatic and hazy territory where literature touches life, I had met my own destiny and failed to recognize it. I am now under arrest like my protagonist. I am waiting for the decision that will determine my future as he had. My life imitates my novel.

What else that I wrote will come true? I feel I am being dragged into a vortex where my fiction and my life are entangled, where what is real and what is written imitate each other. What kind of destiny had I chosen for my protagonist? What was his fate?

Suddenly, I hear gendarmes' boots. "Come on," says a voice, "the decision has been made." At once, I remember: My protagonist was convicted – that was the destiny I chose for him.

I know I, too, will be convicted. Because that is what I wrote. The gendarmes take us upstairs. We enter the courtroom and sit down. The judges come in and don the black robes they had left on their chairs.

The chief judge, the one with eyes hidden beneath swollen eyelids, reads the decision: "Life without parole."

We will spend the rest of our lives alone in a cell that is three meters long and three meters wide. We will be taken out to see the sunlight for one hour a day. We will never be pardoned and we will die in a prison cell.

That is the decision. I hold out my hands. They handcuff me. I will never see the world again. I will never see a sky unframed by the walls of a courtyard.

I am going to Hades. I walk into the darkness like a god who wrote his own destiny. My protagonist and I disappear into the darkness together.



New Yorker Boyajian Makes His Case for Congress

BOYDJIAN, from page 1

Church Youth Organization of America], and eating Armenian food two or three times a week (my mother is an amazing Armenian cook). We grew the grape leaves right on the fence at our house, and she makes yalanchi and sarma all the time from the leaves. It was a big part of my life growing up, both in the upstate community and visiting my mother's family in Rhode Island." He understands a little Armenian, and says that though he has not been to Armenia, and has not taken time to travel in general, it is "high on my list of things to do."

Armenian connections continued to play an important role in Boyajian's life. He graduated from Colgate University in 2007 with a degree in environmental biology and geography, and then served as a legislative aide in the US Congress, focusing on agriculture, natural resources, and energy policy. He also he met a lot of friends and colleagues during this period through the Armenian Assembly and the Armenian National Committee of America. He remembers seeing the Armenian Genocide resolution fall short while he was a staffer in Congress, and feels that "there are so many untold stories of genocide and racial injustice." Acknowledging and confronting these issues, whether historical or current, he said, "is the only way to prevent such things happening in the future." Aside from the Armenian Genocide issue, he would work in Congress for foreign aid parity with rest of the region and protecting our churches in the Middle East.

Boyajian went from working in Congress to Cornell Law School, and after graduating in 2012, clerked in the office of the United States District Court for the Northern District of New York, where the District Attorney was Judge Richard S. Hartunian (2010-2017), the first US Attorney of Armenian descent according to the Armenian Bar Association. Boyajian also clerked in the New York Office of the Attorney General (Environmental Protection Bureau) and the Securities and Exchange Commission.

After becoming a lawyer, Boyajian soon joined the law firm founded by his father, Dreyer Boyajian. Here he pursued cases with political and environmental implications.

The firm represented the Mohawks in a case involving PCB contamination of the St. Lawrence River. Boyajian said that in general the US should "be honest about our history,"

and teach and rectify the injustices of the past. He said, "We need to elect a Congress committed to advocate for Native Americans and tribal communities, to improve the lives of people in those communities."

His firm also worked on the opioid epidemic. Boyajian said, "We need a comprehensive approach. We need funds for treatment, education prevention, and criminal justice reform.



The Boyajian family circa 1908 in (Western) Armenia: Don's grandfather, Joe, is the young boy in the front

Anywhere you go in my district, you will meet people affected by this health crisis."

Boyajian explained why he wants to serve in Congress as follows: "I always have been primarily a policy driven person...I saw a lot of trends in my home community that I did not like, a lot of young people leaving, a lot of stores closing...I said I have to do something about this." He said his experience at the federal, municipal and state level will be very helpful, along with his bipartisan approach. He stressed, "We need to elect policy makers not politicians. This is a public service job."

"Having the right message, the best team, and being somebody able to get results," Boyajian said, he is confident of his chances in both the primary and the general election. He declared, "We have gotten support all over the country from a diverse array of groups who care about having a strong democracy, fighting for the middle class, and commitment to civil justice," adding that there are many people in public service throughout New York State and throughout the country who provide him with good mentorship and good advice.

Economic development is an important part of his platform. He said, "I think it is much more complex than any one facet would suggest, and there never can be a silver bullet solution for economic development." However, he supports conservation development regionally, and in general, said, "We need a huge reinvestment in infrastructure, with a bipartisan infrastructure bill." He said he would like to sit on the committee on infrastructure if elected to Congress. His nuanced understanding of trade and our strategic relationship with Canada will be useful, he added.

Boyajian backs "a tax framework that is committed to providing true middle class tax relief," unlike the recent tax bill, cutting back on the local and state tax deductions, which "will send people running to the hills outside of New York State." It is, he said, "a handout to the millionaires and billionaires" and a "tax scam which will cripple us in debt." He wants to create good paying middle class jobs instead.

In addition, he said that as someone that worked extensively on the Dodd-Frank Wall Street Reform and Consumer Protection Act of 2010, he was disheartened to see it weakened, and emphasized, "We need financial regulation that is protective of consumers, protective of the people on main street. We cannot let Wall Street gamble with our savings and retirement funds – we need a firewall between them."

Boyajian favors comprehensive campaign finance reform. He said, "I took a pledge early in our campaign not to accept any donations from corporate interests or PACs. I am proud to say that our average donation is under \$200. We need a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United." He is at present, he said, leading the field financially with a grassroots fundraising effort – despite, or perhaps because of, this pledge.

Boyajian said that unfortunately the legislative process has devalued science recently, so it is crucial to have members of Congress with science backgrounds. He said that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the Clean Water Act, the Clean Air Act, were all created in the 1970s to help save our communities, especially in the Northeast, and it is good for

the economy to be good stewards of the environment. Therefore, he said, "I vehemently oppose efforts to weaken the EPA." He also is against weakening the Consumer Protection Bureau, as, he said, protection of consumers is necessary.

He said, "Health care is a right as far as I am concerned. There should be a lower entry age for Medicare at 55, and ultimately a move toward universal coverage."

Though Boyajian is a lifelong gunowner and sportsman, he declared, "Enough is enough. It is sickening to see Congress' inability to enact any number of commonsense reforms that almost any responsible gunowner would agree upon."

There may be as many as nine candidates in the Democratic primary right now, but, as Boyajian explained, the number is in flux, and may go down to two or three after petitioning is completed. Among Boyajian's opponents at present in this primary is former MSNBC anchor Dylan Ratigan, a commentator for the online show "The Young Turks" (whose founder Cenk Uygur publicly denied the Armenian Genocide as late as 1999, but shifted his position in 2016). Uygur praised Ratigan, declaring to the *Hollywood Reporter* (<https://www.hollywoodreporter.com/news/msnbc-anchor-dylan-ratigan-running-congress-1086884>) on February 21 that Ratigan will be a "great" candidate. If Boyajian wins the primary, he will face incumbent Rep. Elise Stefanik, a Republican.

Sheriff Peter Koutoujian of Middlesex County is one of Boyajian's supporters in Massachusetts. He stated: "Don Boyajian is a true public servant, having spent his career fighting against corporate polluters on behalf of small towns across upstate New York. I am proud to support a young Armenian who has decided to put his values first and run for public office. As I have always said, whether a candidate's name is followed by a 'R' or a 'D,' the most important letters are 'ian.'"

There will be a Boston area fundraiser on March 21 at Phnix Grill (628 Trapelo Road, Belmont) for Boyajian with Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, Harry Haytayan, Raffi Festekjian, Steve Mesrobian, Judy Saryan and Victor Zarougian at 5:30 p.m.

For more information, contact Sam Parker (Sam@Don2018.com) or visit www.don2018.com.

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