

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXXIX, NO. 4, Issue 4548 \$ 2.00

The First English Language Armenian Weekly in the United States Since 1932



Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, on stage, right, with moderator Gev Iskajian at the Pacific Community Center, Glendale, Calif., July 30 (photo: Arkun)

New Diaspora Minister Visits US

Diaspora Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan Meets NY/NJ Armenians

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N. J. - Upon the request of Armenia's Ministry of the Diaspora and the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia to the United States, a town hall community meeting with Diaspora Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan was held on August 2 at the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) New Jersey Center. Donors, activists, public figures, artists and many immigrants from Armenia were present.

The minister was accompanied by Ambassador to the United States Grigor Hovhannissian, who came for this event directly from Washington along with Makar Melikyan, Vagharshak Hakobyan, assistant to Hayrapetyan, and Dr. Vahe Sahakyan, an advisor to the minister now living in Michigan. During his visit in New York the minister met with the leaders of various organizations.

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Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan speaks to the audience

New Diaspora Minister Speaks at Town Hall Meetings in Boston and LA

By **Aram Arkun**
Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN - The new government of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has been sending various representatives to meet with Armenians in the diaspora over the past several months. Diaspora Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan made a whirlwind tour of three American cities, Los Angeles, greater New York, and Boston, from July 27 to August 7, and held meetings with various organizations and groups as well as town hall meetings with the general Armenian public in each place. His presence elicited great interest, for it was the first occasion for most to meet with a representative of the Velvet Revolution.

In Boston, he held a public town hall meeting on August 4 and separately met with representatives of the Armenian Heritage Foundation, the Tekeyan Cultural Association, the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*, the Armenian Museum of America, the Armenian International Women's Association, ProjectSave, see VISIT, page 10



Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, at right, receives Tekeyan Cultural Association's gift from Aram Arkun

NEWS IN BRIEF

General Electric to Invest in Yerevan Thermal Power Plant Modernization

YEREVAN (PanArmenian.net) - General Electric will spend €18.8 million on a project designed to upgrade the Yerevan Thermal Power Plant, the Ministry of Energy Infrastructures and Natural Resources of Armenia said on Monday, August 6.

According to the ministry, the modernization activities are aimed at increasing the efficiency and reliability of the plant. The modernization includes renovation of the gas turbine and the MXL-2 air compressor, and is expected to increase the plant's capacity by 7 MW to 227 MW from the current 220 MW, and the specific fuel consumption will decrease from 258.1 g / kWh to 252.8 g / kWh, the efficiency of the power unit will increase by 1%, and the useful generation of electricity by 59.5 million kWh.

The Yerevan TPP was commissioned in 1965 and has not undergone major repairs since. It provides electricity to more than 1 million subscribers, generating 20% of the total electricity produced in the country

Restoring US Sanctions Puts Iran's Economy in Bad Situation

YEREVAN (Armenpress) -US President Donald Trump's decision to restore sanctions against Iran was expected, expert on Iranian studies Gohar Iskandaryan told Armenpress.

"The next step is expected in November when the US will further deepen the sanctions which will touch the realm of oil and gas. After Trump's statement. 150-200 Western companies, which were registered and were trying to conduct activities in Iran during this period, now are leaving the country and put the Iranian economy in a bad situation," she said. Iskandaryan said that although the European countries announce that they will not join the sanctions, European businesses also leave Iran. "They take that step since Trump has clearly stated that the companies which will work with Iran will not have an opportunity to carry out activities in the US," the expert said.

As for the consequences, the expert on Iranian studies said they are obvious: the sanctions will leave their effect on the Iranian economy. Iran's currency will depreciate and protests will be held in the country over the socio-economic situation. They will urge the Iranian authorities to suspend support to countries of the region and concentrate on the country's economic issues.

"The domestic complaints have always existed; they have just become more tense in the past year," the expert said, expressing hope that the Iranian authorities will try to solve the problem.

French Foreign Resistance Fighter Arsene Tchakarian Dies at 101

VITRY-SUR-SEINE, France (Deutsche Welle) - The Armenian tailor was the last surviving member of the Manouchian group, a World War II resistance cell made up of foreigners that carried out attacks in Nazi-occupied France. President Emmanuel Macron praised him as a "hero."

The last survivor of a famous group of immigrant workers that fought against the Nazi occupation of France during World War II died on Saturday, August 4, at the age of 101, French media reported.

Arsene Tchakarian, a tailor of Armenian origin, passed away at a hospital near his home in the Paris suburb of Vitry-sur-Seine, where he had lived since 1950.

He had dedicated his life to fighting "facism," French paper *Le Figaro* reported. After fighting in the legendary resistance group Manouchian, Tchakarian's historical and memorial tasks occupied him for the rest of his long life. He turned his home in an archival center, spoke at colleges and schools about the Nazi occupation of France, and campaigned for the recognition of the mass killings of Ottoman Armenians as a genocide.

"I'm sort of the last of the Mohicans, as they say," Tchakarian said, according to French newspaper *Le Figaro*.

French President Emmanuel Macron paid homage to Tchakarian on Twitter, praising his historical work and calling him "a hero of the resistance and a tireless witness whose voice resounded with force until the end."

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Mandossian Honored

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Azeri Soldier Killed by Fellow Soldiers

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – A soldier in the Azerbaijani army, Arif Mamedov, born in 1999, was killed by co-servicemen on July 26, meydan.tv reports.

The Azerbaijani defense ministry said the soldier was killed in non-combat conditions.

Academician and Professor Sergey Hambardzumyan Dies at 97

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Academician, professor of the Armenian Academy of National Sciences, and one of the founders of the Armenian school of mechanic engineering, Sergey Hambardzumyan has died at the age of 97. As the press service at the Academy of National Sciences reports, a government commission was set up to organize the funeral of the academician.

A requiem mass was held in Surb Hovhannes Church in Yerevan's Kond district on August 6, while the funeral ceremony took place on August 7 at the Academy of National Sciences.

Hambardzumyan is the author of refined theories of elastic and magneto-electroelastic plates, shells. Throughout his professional career the professor has been honored with six orders and numerous medals, including the Tigran Mets his significant investment in the development of Armenian science.

Dashnaksutyun's Presence in Government 'Not at Risk'

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – The Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun) has not undermined its power-sharing arrangement with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan with its strong criticism of former President Robert Kocharyan's arrest, a senior member of the party insisted on Tuesday.

Dashnaksutyun said late last month that coup charges levelled against Kocharyan "can be interpreted as political persecution." Accordingly, three of its parliament deputies joined last week more than 40 other lawmakers in signing a joint petition calling for his release.

One of those Dashnaksutyun deputies, Ruzan Arakelyan, said the move was endorsed by the party's leadership. She downplayed its implications for Dashnaksutyun's continued presence in Armenia's new government.

"This is a very normal political process," Arakelyan told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "It does not contradict the fact that we are now part of the [governing] coalition and together with the current authorities are trying to ... contribute to Armenia's progress."

"I think that this [stance on Kocharyan] will not jeopardize the coalition because we do not undermine our agreement with the current authorities in any way," she said.

Dashnaksutyun received two ministerial posts in Pashinyan's cabinet formed in May following mass protests that forced the country's longtime leader, Serzh Sargsyan, to step down. It had cut similar power-sharing deals with Sargsyan in 2008 and 2016.

Dashnaksutyun, which holds 7 seats in the 105-member National Assembly, was also allied to Kocharyan during his 1998-2008 rule. Kocharyan lifted a controversial ban on the party's activities in Armenia and freed its imprisoned leaders shortly after coming to power.

The petition signed by the 46 parliamentarians was sent to Prosecutor-General Artur Davtian and the Court of Appeals. The latter is scheduled to open hearings on Thursday on Kocharyan's appeal against a lower court's decision to allow his pre-trial arrest on charges stemming from the March 2008 post-election violence in Yerevan. The ex-president has rejected those charges as politically motivated

Armenian LGBTQ Attacked By Mob

By Mary Grace Lewis

SHURNUKH, Armenia (Advocate.com) – Nine Armenian LGBT activists were attacked by a group of 30 men, with two activists seriously injured. The nine assaulted are calling the act of aggression the worst attack against LGBTQ Armenians in memory.

Hayk Oprah Hakobyan, founder of the Rainbow Armenia Initiative, was having a drink with friends when someone showed up outside his house in the village of Shurnukh. The person claimed he only wanted to talk to Hayk and his friends. and when the activist refused, the stranger jumped over Hayk's fence.

"We told the man there was nothing to talk about," Elvira Meliksetyan, one of the victims, said. "He then broke into the house and began to swear at us."

"He started to threaten us. We had to leave our house immediately because they were gathering villagers to lynch us," Hayk said.

The activists had experienced consistent harassment from people in the village for months prior to the attack, and two of the nine were assaulted in the city of Goris earlier this year, according to Pink Armenia, a Yerevan-based NGO.

Hayk and his friends rushed inside to collect their things so that they could escape. When they exited the house, they found 30 angry villagers waiting for them, chanting "homosexuals can't live here" before punching and kicking the activists.

"In the beginning, they were just

shouting that homosexuals can't live in this village, but it became violent very fast. We started running for our lives," Hayk said. "They followed us and started to beat us up and throw rocks. We all got hurt, but two of my friends are seriously injured and had to go to the hospital immediately. We ran up to the highway where they couldn't follow us anymore."

The group made multiple attempts at calling the police.

"We had to wait for more than an hour for [the police] to show up," Hayk said. "But we are hopeful that the attackers will be punished since we recognized a lot of them and we were also able to somehow film them."

Hayk claims he saw Hakob Arshakyan, a former mayor of the village, among the attackers.



Hayk Hakobyan

"I don't know yet if I dare to go back to my village," Hayk said. "So many people showed up and tried to get me out of there. But on the other hand, we shouldn't just leave, because then they would win."

Three days after the attack, there has been no statement from senior officials regarding the incident.

"We expected some kind of statement or condemnation from the government but there has been nothing so far," Mamikon Hovsepian, executive director of Pink Armenia, said. "The government is downplaying LGBT issues for the present in order to concentrate on Electoral Code reform and

cracking down on corruption so they are unlikely to be particularly vocal on such issues for the time being."

The Gay and Lesbian Armenian Society offered sympathy for the activists on their Facebook page, which included a picture of the one the victims.

"Our hearts go out to our friends at PINK Armenia who have been senselessly beaten and fallen victim to violence," the organization wrote.

On August 4, the Goris Police Department issued a statement saying that an investigation to find the attackers are underway, and several suspects have already been detained.

Local authorities have proved sympathetic to the attackers. Meliksetyan posted a photo on Facebook of the mayor of Shurnukh "talking warmly with the main actor involved in the

attacks on us."

"Since the revolution, a lot of social movements are positive about the future in Armenia, but this is not the same for the LGBT community," political scientist and LGBT activist Remy Bonny said.

"The anti-discrimination legislation which excludes LGBT people is still not off the table and nobody knows what's going to happen with it. It is important that the EU and Western embassies put pressure on the Armenian government to include the LGBT community in this legislation. Because if they are not explicitly in the law, they will be outlawed," Bonny said.

Pashinian Ally Defends Choice of Mayoral Candidate In Yerevan

By Narine Ghalechian

YEREVAN (RFL/RL) – Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan on August 7 defended the decision by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Civil Contract Party to nominate a prominent Armenian comedian as its candidate for the vacant post of Yerevan's mayor.

The previous mayor, Taron Markaryan, resigned on July 9 under apparent pressure from Armenia's new government. Residents of the Armenian capital are expected to elect next month a new municipal council



Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan speaks to RFE/RL in Yerevan, August 7

that will appoint Markaryan's successor.

Civil Contract's mayoral candidate, Hayk Marutyan, is a 41-year-old actor famous for his performances in popular comedy shows aired by Armenian TV channels. He has also produced his own shows and films in the past several years.

Avinyan said that he was among those members of the party's governing board who Marutyan's candidacy on July 29. He expressed confidence that Marutyan would make a good mayor.

"I think that Hayk Marutyan will be a [positive] revelation for the public in his new role," Avinyan told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "I myself was surprised to see Hayk Marutyan the actor transform into Hayk Marutyan the politician. He is a person with strong organizational skills who can bring about real change in Yerevan."

The 29-year-old vice-premier dismissed critics' claims that Marutyan's entertainment industry background does not make

him fit to run the city of one million. "Hayk Marutyan is not just an actor," he said. "He is a producer, a job which requires very serious organizational work."

Marutyan, commonly known as "Kargin Hayko," actively participated in mass protests in April and May that brought down Armenia's former government. He joined Civil Contract shortly after Pashinyan, the main organizer of the protests, became prime minister on May 8.

One of Marutyan's main challengers in the mayoral race will be Naira Zohrabyan of the Prosperous Armenia Party (BHK), the country's second largest parliamentary force led businessman Gagik Tsarukyan. BHK representatives say their party will be aiming for victory in the upcoming elections.

Other major political groups, including Sargsyan's Republican Party (HHK), have not yet nominated mayoral candidates. Markaryan, the former mayor, is a senior member of the HHK.

It remains unclear whether Civil Contract will enter the race on its own or in an alliance with the two other parties making up the Yelk bloc. Those parties, Republic and Bright Armenia, are understood to be considering fielding a joint candidate.



ARMENIA



Youth at the summer camp

Aleppo-NGO Holds 'Hope, Faith, Love' Summer Camp for Syrian Youth in Armenia

DARANAK, Armenia - On July 23, Aleppo-NGO commenced a summer camp for 25 Syrian youth at the Vardenis YMCA Summer Camp at Daranak village in the Gegharkunik province of Armenia. The summer camp was organized and financed by Nareg Dekermenjian, Aleppo-NGO's 2017 Birthright Volunteer from Sydney, Australia.

In the Summer of 2017, while volunteering at Aleppo-NGO, Nareg became a supervisor at a summer camp organized by Aleppo-NGO and UNHCR for Syrian, Iraqi, and Artsakh youth.

"I had a gratifying experience as a volunteer at Aleppo-NGO in 2017, not only because of the incredible experience I had in supporting refugees but because Aleppo-NGO's team members became like a family to me," said Nareg, a Syrian-Armenian who moved from Aleppo to Sydney more than 10 years ago. "As I had promised when I left Armenia last summer, I returned to continue the work I had started with Syrian youth and Aleppo-NGO."

After volunteering for more than 6 months at Aleppo-NGO in the Summer of 2017,



Nareg returned to his hometown in Sydney and immediately started planning his next visit to Armenia. With the help of the New Life Armenian Ministry-Sydney, Nareg started fundraising for the organization of the "Hope, Faith, and Love" Summer Camp 2018 for Syrian Youth in Armenia.

"The purpose of this summer camp is to inspire Syrian youth with Hope; empower them with Faith, and surround them with Love," said, Nareg.

During the camp, the youth have been engaging in various educational games and exercises, as well as in discussion about history, culture, faith, spirituality, and other important topics.

"We are delighted to once again enjoy the company of Nareg, who has been one of Aleppo-NGO's most dedicated volunteers," said Ani Balkhian, President of Aleppo-NGO. "Young Armenians like Nareg are the future of this nation not only because of the work they do, but because they inspire others to be the best version of themselves."

Prime Minister's Wife Announces My Step Foundation Replacing 18 Luys Foundation Scholarships



Anna Hakobyan

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) - My Step Foundation, headed by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's spouse, Anna Hakobyan, has managed to grant scholarships to 18 beneficiaries of Luys Foundation studying at different leading universities in the world, she told reporters at a news conference on August 7.

Hakobyan said the scholarships are set to cover the tuition fees of the first academic year, stressing the foundation did its best to deal with the issue of Luys Foundation's scholarship recipients who faced a difficult situation after the latter terminated its activities in May.

The PM's wife said apart from them, four more students, who are not beneficiaries of Luys Foundation, are set to receive

scholarships. "The cases of five others are being considered. But I want to note that My Step Foundation cannot settle the scholarship issues of everyone this way," she said. "We have already launched discussions with all stakeholders to find out possible ways to give a lasting solution to this issue."

Hakobyan stressed My Step has cooperated with partner organizations to collect a sum worth \$517 thousand for the students. She detailed that the major investments were made by Vitaliy Grigoryan Foundation and AGBU - \$220 thousand and \$200 thousand respectively. \$70 thousand has been allocated by a Canadian-Armenian businessman, she said, adding an anonymous philanthropist has also provided financial support to the project.

Ambassador Mills Assures Armenia And US Have Strong Cooperation In Many Areas

YEREVAN (Armenpress) - There is a lot of interest right now towards Armenia in terms of investments and trade after the events in April-May, US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills told reporters at a briefing on July 25. He also attached importance to the Armenian government's efforts to ensure the attractiveness of the investment climate for the US investors and all foreign investors in general.

"Investors are watching some of the changes here in the country which they welcome. They are also watching the investigations into corruption and tax evasion that the government has launched. And I can tell you that the US investors welcome that. They want to make sure that these investigations are done in



US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills

accordance with the rule of law, and so that anyone who did investment here in good faith is not mistreated," he said.

The US Ambassador said Armenia and the US have strong cooperation in many areas. "The one is the cultural area. Recently the Armenian ministry of defense was in Brussels and had a chance to meet with the senior defense department officials during which they discussed the opportunity to deepen our existing cooperation in the military field. Both for us and Armenia it's very important to see the deepening and expansion of our economic and commercial relations," he said.

He added that efforts are being made to make happen a meeting between Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump, Mills told reporters. He added that no decision has been made yet on the meeting.

"We are looking at whether it might be possible for President Trump and Prime Minister both to meet in New York around the margins of the UN General Assembly," he said.

Richard Mills said the US government and the Embassy in Yerevan are satisfied with the high level of bilateral relations. "Just in the last six weeks we had President Sarkissian in Washington to meet with the Secretary of State, we had the first deputy prime minister, the minister of justice is there this week," the US Ambassador said.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan will depart for New York in September.

First deputy prime minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan on July 24 commented on the possible meeting of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump via a video on Facebook. "Within the frameworks of the upcoming visit PM Pashinyan will depart for the US in September to participate in the UN General Assembly, and therefore on the sidelines of the visit the Congressmen find it appropriate to organize Pashinyan-Trump meeting: they launched a petition in the Congress for this purpose and address letter to President Trump," he said.



INTERNATIONAL

International News

Greens Call for New Zealand Parliament to Recognize Armenian Genocide

WELLINGTON, New Zealand (newshub.co.nz) – New Zealand's politicians will decide whether to recognise the deportation and killing of Armenians as genocide, a decision that could have diplomatic ramifications.

A campaign of mass killing and deportation of Armenian subjects by the Ottoman Empire during World War I is recognised as genocide by most historians - and by 29 countries.

In 1915, the Ottoman parliament formally authorized the deportation of Armenians. Nearly 1.5 million people were killed by Ottoman armies - many removed from their homes and marched to concentration camps in the Syrian Desert.

The Turkish government to this day insists there was no policy of extermination of the Armenian people, and therefore says it was not genocide. It says the killings were part of a collective tragedy in which Turks and Armenians died.

"The Turkish government for decades have been trying to downplay it," Green MP Gareth Hughes told Newshub,

"It's important we don't forget these crimes and atrocities have occurred in the past."

Mr Hughes said if Parliament voted to recognize the genocide, Turkey could respond.

"There could be some backlash from Turkey. I would point out, though, that in the last 10 years, the subject has become liberalised in Turkey itself. There's a lot more discussion."

When German MPs voted to recognise the genocide in 2016, the MPs were placed under 24-hour police protection and were warned not to visit Turkey. Turkey withdrew its ambassador from Berlin, and Turkey's president Recep Tayyip Erdogan said the MPs have "impure blood" and described them as the "long arm of separatist terrorists."

Prime Minister Pashinyan Receives Ambassador of Kazakhstan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Kazakhstan to Armenia Timur Urazyaev on August 7, according to the official website of the Prime Minister of Armenia.

Pashinyan highlighted the future development of Armenian-Kazakh relations, and expressed confidence that the active efforts of the ambassador will foster the expansion and deepening of bilateral relations in different spheres. Timur Urazyaev noted that Kazakhstan is interested in strengthening cooperation with Armenia and effective partnership on both bilateral and multilateral formats, including in the sidelines of the EAEU and the CSTO.

The interlocutors highlighted the expansion of trade and economic relations between the two countries and noted with satisfaction that in the first half of 2018 trade turnover rose 2.5-fold against the same period of the last year.

The sides also referred to the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, highlighting regional peace and stability. Pashinyan emphasized that the conflict should be settled exclusively through the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs' format.

Lebanese President to Visit Armenia This Autumn

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of Lebanon Michel Aoun will pay a visit to Armenia in October, according to Al-Masdar News, which cites the press service of the Lebanese president. Aoun will hold meetings with his Armenian partners and will participate in the 17th summit of the Organization of La Francophonie in Yerevan. This will be his second visit to Armenia after being elected the President of Lebanon in 2016.

Armenian Cars, Trucks Stuck Again At Russian-Georgian Border

UPPER LARS, Georgia (RFE/RL) – Armenia's Transport Minister Ashot Hakobyan on Monday, August 6 rushed to Georgia's sole border crossing with Russia where hundreds of Armenian cars and commercial trucks were stranded due to a severe bottleneck.

Long lines of vehicles and frustrated travelers reportedly formed at the weekend on the Russian and Georgian highways leading to the Upper Lars crossing.

"There are again problems at Lars, on both the Russian and Georgian sides," one of Hakobyan's deputies, Armen Pambukhchyan, wrote on his Facebook page late on Sunday. "The lines on the Russian side are 9-10 kilometers long, while there are some 200 vehicles stuck on the Georgian side. Efforts are now made to quickly solve the problem."

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan dispatched Hakobyan to Upper Lars the following morning. Pambukhchyan told RFE/RL's Armenian service that the minister will meet with relevant Georgian and Russian officials. He said a "gentleman's agreement" has already been reached with Georgian authorities on giving priority to Armenian trucks loaded with fruits, vegetables and other perishables.

A senior executive of the Spayka company, Armenia's leading exporter of agricultural produce, said at least 100 of its trucks mostly carrying peaches remained stuck at Upper Lars as of Monday afternoon. "Some trucks have been waiting in the line for four or five days," Karen Baghdasarian said, adding that every day of stoppage damages the

quality of fruits sold by Spayka in Russia.

"I see no special reason [for the bottleneck,] they are just working slowly," Baghdasarian told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "There has been no change in the procedures for cargo processing or other customs paperwork. It only has to do with the pace and scale of work."

Pambukhchyan, for his part, attributed the long lines to a surge in the

notably Yuri Khachaturov, the secretary general of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization.

Landlocked Armenia's trade with Russia, its leading commercial partner, is mainly carried out through Upper Lars. Traffic along that mountainous road is periodically blocked by bad weather, especially in winter months. This is why the current and former Armenian governments have strongly



Armenian and other heavy trucks are lined up on a road leading to the Georgian-Russian border crossing at Upper Lars at an earlier occasion, May 6, 2016.

flow of Russian tourists to Georgia. "Armenian citizens make up only 25-30 percent of the people waiting in the lines there," he said.

Accordingly, the deputy minister denied any political reasons for the virtual disruption of traffic through the Russian-Georgian border.

Over the past week, Russia and Armenia have been embroiled in a rare diplomatic spat resulting from Armenian authorities' decision to prosecute former senior Armenian officials,

supported the opening of new Russian-Georgian transport corridors.

A Russian-Georgian agreement signed in 2011 calls for reopening two roads connecting Georgia to Russia via the breakaway Georgian regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. For that purpose a Swiss company would set up special customs checkpoints on the administrative boundaries of the two territories. Moscow and Tbilisi have for years been discussing practical modalities of implementing that agreement.

Armenian Foreign Minister, Russian Deputy Defense Minister Confirm Cooperation Agreements

YEREVAN (ARKA) – Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan received on August 3 a delegation headed by Deputy Defense Minister of Russia Alexander Fomin. Earlier, Armenia proposed that its Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) partners embark on the replacement of the secretary general of the organization. Yuri Khachaturov, CSTO secretary general, is charged with toppling the constitutional order in Armenia in collusion with other persons. Khachaturov was detained over the bloody events of March 1, 2008, but later he was released on an AMD 5-million bail. The case dates back to late February and early March 2008 following the disputed presidential election, when then prime minister Serzh Sargsyan was declared the winner, angering the opposition, led by the first Armenian president Levon Ter-Petrosyan. This set off 10 days of non-stop protests that led to a crackdown on March 1, in which 10 people were killed and more than 200 injured. Khachaturov then was the chief of the Yerevan garrison. Former Armenian president Robert Kocharyan is charged with the same crime, but he will remain in detention pending trial. Also former defense minister Mikael Harutyunyan is wanted by the law-enforcement authorities as a defendant in the case. The press office of the Armenian foreign ministry quoted Mnatsakanyan as saying that Armenia highly appreciates cooperation between the two countries, attaches great importance to further

development of the CSTO and will continue its active participation in the organization's activity. Mnatsakanyan and Fomin discussed cooperation in military area. The Armenian foreign minister said that the Russian 102nd military base deployed in Armenia is a positive example of cooperation. Earlier, Kommersant, a Russian media source, said that the prosecution of such high-ranked former officials in Armenia aroused discord in

relationship between Moscow and Yerevan and can drive a wedge between them. Another Russian media source said that the Russian authorities are irritated especially over the prosecution of Yuri Khachaturov. They think this has stricken hard at the CSTO reputation and they don't rule out that he may be replaced by another member country's representative. Besides, they say the arranged earlier supply of arms worth \$100 million is in question now.

Lebanese Student Granted Amal Clooney Scholarship to Armenia

BEIRUT (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Human rights lawyer Amal Clooney, who married Hollywood superstar George Clooney in 2014, founded a scholarship to help girls from her native Lebanon realize their potential.

This year, Amal Clooney and assessors at the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, an organization founded on behalf of the survivors of the Armenian Genocide, chose 16-year-old women's rights activist Kamar Omary as the youngster who will travel to Armenia to attend the United World College Dilijan.

"This scholarship will give young women from Lebanon the opportunity of a lifetime," the 40-year-old said in a statement.

"Cross-cultural learning and studying abroad can be transformative. I am grateful to the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative for helping to open doors for these bright and talented young women."

Kamar, who was selected due to her interest in activism as well as her notable school grades, also revealed that her mother "cried" when she found out that her daughter would begin studying in Armenia in August.

She added: "The closer it gets to August the more nervous I become – it's exciting because it's terrifying. This is an opportunity of a lifetime. I hope to gain a platform – to talk to and change people. To bring about change you need to inspire individual people and change the world one person at a time. And that's what I'm planning to do."



INTERNATIONAL

New Armenian Prime Minister's English-language Interview Airs on Al Jazeera

YEREVAN – The Republic of Armenia's newly elected Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's first full-length, English-language interview was broadcast on Al Jazeera's flagship interview program "Talk to Al Jazeera" at the end of July.

The half-hour, one-on-one conversation between Al Jazeera's Robin Forestier-Walker and Pashinyan was broadcast into 290 million homes on Saturday, July 28.

"Nikol Pashinyan's eyes gleam with the zeal of someone who has defied expectations and intends to do it again and again," said Forestier-Walker following his interview. "He has made a smooth transition from rugged revolutionary to suited statesman."

During the weeks leading up to the election of Pashinyan as Prime Minister, Al Jazeera's Forestier-Walker, correspondent Natasha Ghoneim, Senior Producer Paul Chaderjian, cameramen Nick Porter, Jamil Bassil and Fadi Elbenny and local journalists Zara Poghosyan and Maria Titizian chronicled the mass civil disobedience campaign, the daily protests, the arrest and release of Pashinyan, the issues prompting hundreds of thousands to take to the streets, the plight of those struggling with the fledgling republic's poverty and the branding of the Velvet Revolution.

Among the stories reported by Al Jazeera's teams in Yerevan were those of the student activists involved in the protests, the resignation of former President and Prime Minister Serzh Sargsyan, the two meetings of Armenia's National Assembly and the eventual election of Mr. Pashinyan as the country's interim Prime Minister.

Al Jazeera also profiled and collaborated with the alternative media organizations covering the revolution online including EVN Report, HETQ, CivilNet and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's Armenian service, Azatutyun TV.

In addition to hourly live and taped reports from Yerevan, Gyumri and Metsamor, Al Jazeera featured the revolution on three half-hour programs - two episodes of "Inside Story"



Al Jazeera Central Asia Reporter Robin Forestier-Walker and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan for "Talk to Al Jazeera"

and the interactive "Stream". The story was also a regular part of Al Jazeera's NewsGrid, which logs hundreds of thousands of views on YouTube and Facebook.

Guests featured throughout Al Jazeera's coverage included activist and rock phenomenon Serj Tankian; activist and actress Arsinee Khanjian; Civilitas Foundation founder and former Foreign Minister and former parliament member Vartan Oskanian; Director of the University of Southern California's Institute of Armenian Studies Salpi Ghazarian; South Caucasus Director of Human Right Watch Giorgi Gogia; President of the International Center for Human Development Tevan Poghosyan; Richard Giragosian, Founding Director of the Regional Studies Center; and Lilit Gevorgyan, Russia and Caucasus Analyst and Country Risk Analyst at global information provideo IHS Markit.

Forestier-Walker asked Prime Minister Pashinyan about his people's expectations following the unprecedented Velvet Revolution, which toppled the ruling Republic Party's government and paved the way for Pashinyan's election his country's interim leader. Pashinyan also addressed his government's battle against corruption and dismantling the oligarchic systems that have monopolized his country's economy.

"In our interview he chose his words carefully and concisely despite limitations with his English vocabulary and the over abiding impression: that this revolution is only just getting going – and nothing – if he has anything to do with it – will derail it," said Forestier-Walker.

Al Jazeera asked the prime minister what has changed since he assumed his new role and what's ahead for a country that continues to struggle with poverty, a frozen-conflict with Azerbaijan and closed borders with Turkey.

Pashinyan told Al Jazeera he is ready to meet Azerbaijan's president face-to-face to resolve the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and that Armenia is ready to establish a diplomatic relationship with Turkey without any precondition and that its side of the border with Turkey has never been closed.

He told Forestier-Walker that the revolution now guarantees all Armenian citizens equality under the law and equal playing field for all businesses. His message to those who want to do business with Armenia and in Armenia is that his government guarantees the security of any investment.

"Talk To Al Jazeera"'s interview with Armenia's prime minister remains online at this address: <http://www.primeminister.am/en/interviews-and-press-conferences/item/2018/07/27/Nikol-Pashinyan-interview-Al-Jazeera/>

Armenia's Highest Courts Can Now Request Advisory Opinions from European Court

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – From August 1 onwards, the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia and the Court of Cassation of the Republic of Armenia can request the European Court in Strasbourg to give advisory opinions on questions of principle relating to the interpretation or application of the rights and freedoms defined in the European Convention of Human Rights (ECHR).

This has become possible thanks to the entry into force of Protocol No. 16 to the European Convention on Human Rights for the ten member States that have signed and ratified it, including Armenia that ratified it back in January 2017.

As ECHR reports in a press statement, Protocol No. 16 enables the highest national courts and tribunals, as designated by the member States concerned, to request the Court to give advisory opinions on questions of principle relating to the interpretation or application of the rights and freedoms defined in the Convention or the Protocols thereto. The advisory opinions, which will be delivered by the Grand Chamber, will contain reasons and will not be binding.

Requests for advisory opinions will be made in the context of cases pending before the national court or tribunal concerned. The Court will have discretion to accept a request or not.

The President of the European Court of Human Rights, Guido Raimondi, stated: "The entry into force of Protocol No. 16 will strengthen dialogue between the European Court of

Human Rights and the highest national courts. This is a fundamental step in the history of the European Convention on Human Rights and a major development in human rights protection in Europe. It also represents a new challenge for our Court."

TCHAKARIAN, from page 1

Tchakarian was born to an Armenian family in Turkey in 1916. After fleeing to Bulgaria to escape Ottoman violence against Armenians, the family settled in France in 1930. He was conscripted into the French army in 1937, but was demobilized in 1940 once France surrendered to the Nazis.

By 1942 he had joined the Manouchians, a small resistance group made up of foreigners and named after its leader, the Armenian poet and communist Missak Manouchian.

"They were immigrants who had come from countries that were becoming fascist, like Hungary, Romania, Poland, Bulgaria," Tchakarian said, according to the German News Agency. "From all those countries, there were immigrants who were kind of hunted out."

The Manouchian group carried out an intense campaign of resistance activities against the Nazi German occupation of France that included attacks and acts of sab-

otage such as assassinations and train derailments.

In 1944, 23 members of the group were rounded up and sentenced to death by a German martial court in a highly publicized trial.

After the execution of Tchakarian's fellow group members, Nazi German authorities and French officials in the collaborationist Vichy government hung up infamous red posters, known as the "Affiche Rouge," denouncing the members of the Manouchian group as "the army of crime" in an attempt to sway public opinion against the resistance fighters.

Tchakarian managed to escape to Bordeaux and was taken into hiding by fellow resistance members. He remained active in the resistance until the war's end.

After the war, he turned his focus to history, writing multiple memoirs, and fighting for recognition of the Armenian genocide.

As recently June 18, the former resistance

fighter attended a ceremony commemorating the French Resistance, *Le Parisien* reported. Tchakarian was granted French citizenship in 1958. He received multiple medals for bravery in the war and in 2012, he received France's highest distinction, the Legion of Honor.



As recently June 18, the former resistance

Community News

Diocese Hosts Reception for Armenia's New Foreign Minister

By Florence Avakian

NEW YORK – July 20, 2018, marked a celebratory evening at the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America in New York City, as Armenia's new Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan was honored at a special reception in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium.

Diocesan Primate Very Rev. Fr. Daniel Findikyan hosted the evening and welcomed the foreign minister – a longtime friend of the Eastern Diocese—and numerous dignitaries in attendance. These included Armenian religious leaders, ambassadors and diplomats from the United Nations, and leaders of the Armenian community and its organizations.

Among the guests in attendance were Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, and Very Rev. Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan; United Nations Under Secretary-General for the General Assembly Dr. Movses Abelian; Armenia's Deputy Defense Minister Gabriel Balayan; and some two dozen diplomats from the UN, including the Ambassadors of Canada, France, Iran, Greece, Hungary, Kazakhstan, Argentina, Finland, and Turkestan.

Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation, addressed the enthusiastic crowd and called the foreign minister “an erudite gentleman born to be a diplomat.” He remarked that the event was an opportunity not only to honor the foreign minister, but also to bid him farewell as the highly respected Ambassador of Armenia to the United Nations.



Vartan Gregorian

Diocesan Primate Fr. Findikyan said: “We are a small country; but we are much more than that, with a rich history, culture, and civilization—in Armenia and in the diaspora.” Wishing Minister Mnatsakanyan great success, he com-



Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, left, with Primate Fr. Daniel Findikyan

mented, “You bring great honor, and will bring justice to our people.”

Justice, Faith in Humanity, Peace

“I do want to share in the responsibility in the good things that are happening in Armenia,” stated the foreign minister in his remarks. “Our objectives are very clear. They include democracy, the rule of law. We may be a small nation, see RECEPTION, page 8



George Mandossian, left, receiving commendation certificate from Ara Aharonian (photo: Aram Arkun)

George Mandossian Honored

By Kevork Keushkerian

ALTADENA, Calif. – George Mandossian was honored for his 30 years of dedicated service to the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Beshgeturian Center on the evening of July 28. He was the driving force in getting the necessary funds from benefactors Vahan and Nartoui Beshgeturian and once the building was completed, he served on its Board of Trustees for over 30 years. His sharp negotiating skills concerning the rental of space to cellphone companies at the center made it possible for this center to be not only self-sufficient, but a profitable enterprise as well.

The event was organized by the Board of Trustees of the TCA Beshgeturian Center, with Kevork Keushkerian serving as the master of ceremonies.

Dinner was served following the blessing of the food by Archpriest Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian. During dinner, guests enjoyed a performance of light classical music provided by the renowned violinist Merujan Margaryan.

TCA Los Angeles Chapter Chair Parsegh Kartalian was called upon to deliver his remarks. Kartalian had served with Mandossian on the Board of Trustees of the TCA Arshag Dickranian school for over 30 years. He also recalled the good times when they both served as deacons on the altar of St. Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church in Pasadena.

Kartalian's remarks were followed by a poetic recitation by Asdghig Dadourian. She eloquently interpreted the prince of poets Vahan Tekeyan's “Hashvehartar,” [Reckoning] which is a pragmatic evaluation of his life. It starts with the famous line “What is left to me of my life...” and ends with the similarly famous line “That, which I gave to others...”

see MANDOSSIAN, page 7



Cutting the cake (photo: Aram Arkun)



Meet Dr. Philip Gamaghelyan

Kroc School's Newest Faculty Member

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – Philip Gamaghelyan, PhD, will be joining the Kroc School's faculty starting in Fall 2018 as an assistant professor with a focus on conflict analysis and resolution. To help the USD community get to know him better, he answered the following questions about his career and life, and the road that led him to the Kroc School.

How would you describe yourself, personally and professionally?

My background of a person who lived through a war, disintegration of an empire and the collapse of a state, and attempts at building of a new one, shapes the global-local perspective I bring to academia. I grew up in Armenia during the final years of the Soviet Union. As a high-schooler, I was active in mobilizing schoolmates to participate in strikes and demonstrations for freedom and for Armenia's independence. Soon after, the Soviet Union collapsed and Armenia gained independence, but the turbulent years that followed and the war with Azerbaijan cast a long shadow on this monumental achievement.

These formative years of mine were both empowering and humbling. They were empowering as I learned early in life that bottom-up mobilization can bring great and swift change, even when your interlocutor is a super-power; yet they were humbling as the immediate results were not freedom and prosperity, but war and economic collapse. With time I understood that change, while necessary, needs to be strategic, theoretically grounded, and ethical. My search for a milieu where such change can be conceived led me to the field of international relations and later conflict resolution. With time, I developed a resume as a scholar-practitioner, combining the “on the ground” work in conflict zones with research and teaching.

Please give us the highlights of your career that led you to the Kroc School.

I completed my undergraduate work in Political Science and French at the Institute of Foreign Languages in Yerevan, Armenia, followed by a master's degree in Intercommunal Coexistence at Brandeis University's Heller School of Social Policy and Management, and a PhD at the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University.

I started my career as an educator in my undergraduate years, and turned to teaching more consistently in 2012. Prior to joining the Kroc School, I have had the privilege of teaching at Tufts see GAMAGHELYAN, page 8



COMMUNITY NEWS

George Mandossian Honored

MANDOSSIAN, from page 6

“Ode to Father” was an Armenian song appropriate for the occasion. It was a very emotional piece presented by Khachig Nahabedian, with Paul Ishkanian accompanying on the guitar. Both Khachig and Paul are trustee members of the TCA Beshgeturian Center.

Ara Aharonian, a City of Glendale commissioner, presented the honoree with commendations from US Representative Adam Schiff,

United States and Canada. Azadian is also a renowned columnist, whose weekly political-analytic articles appear in both the English-language *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and Armenian-language *Baikar* weekly newspapers.

Azadian fondly recalled his student years at the American University of Beirut, where George Mandossian was also a student. He mentioned that George was a handsome young man, who was the envy of his friends, because George attracted all the pretty female students on campus.

Mr. Azadian mentioned that George was born in Jerusalem and during the Arab-Israeli war, he immigrated to Amman, Jordan. George was an athlete, playing basketball with the Armenian Youth



George Mandossian, left, receives award from Edmond Azadian, with Hasmig Mandossian at right (photo: Aram Arkun)



Parsegh Kartalian (photo: Aram Arkun)



Violinist Merujan Margaryan (photo: Aram Arkun)



Kevork Keushkerian (photo: Aram Arkun)



Asdghig Dadourian (photo: Aram Arkun)

California State Senator Anthony Portantino and Honorable Armela Shakaryan, Consul of the Republic of Armenia in Glendale.

Edmond Y. Azadian was the keynote speaker. Azadian is the president of the Central Board of Tekeyan Cultural Association of the

Association there.

Azadian and Mandossian served long years as vice-presidents of the Central Board of Directors of the Tekeyan Cultural Association. Azadian’s testimony concerning George Mandossian’s diligent and methodical

hard work was centered around the TCA Arshag Dickranian School in Hollywood and the TCA Beshgeturian Center in Altadena.

Azadian mentioned that George was a man of a few words, but his work spoke volumes about him and his dedication to his community. George was one of the founders of the Armenian Genocide Monument that was built in Montebello, California about fifty years ago.

At the close of his warm and heart-felt remarks, Azadian presented the honoree with a plaque, on behalf of the Board of Directors of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of United States and Canada.

At this time, Mandossian was asked to cut the 30-year service cake, surrounded by his

wife Hasmig, Azadian, and members of the TCA Beshgeturian Board of Trustees.

Finally, Mandossian went to the podium to deliver his remarks on this auspicious occasion. He thanked the organizers, all those who had taken part in the program, his relatives and friends who had attended this event and finally, but not last in order of importance, his wife who had stood by him, especially in his days of illness.

At the conclusion of the event, a group picture was taken in front of the special TCA banner, which was prepared for this occasion. It was an evening of well-deserved recognition that I am sure will linger in everyone’s memory for a long time to come.



Khachig Nahabedian singing, accompanied by Paul Ishkanian (photo: Aram Arkun)



George and Hasmig Mandossian with members attending from the Tekeyan Central Board of Directors



COMMUNITY NEWS

Diocese Hosts Reception for Armenia's New Foreign Minister

RECEPTION, from page 6

but we are strong, and large in history, culture, and spirit."

He called Armenia's representation at the United Nations "strong, committed, and dedicated. We are a small nation, but at the United Nations each nation is represented as one. I represent a country and a proud people who have always had a strong sense of justice, faith in humanity, international cooperation, and peace," he said with emphasis.

For their generous help to Armenia's Mission to the United Nations, he paid a special tribute to Nazar and Artemis Nazarian, to Dr. Raffy and Shoghag Hovanessian, and to Toros Mangasarian. Turning to the large crowd, he stated with a smile, "I look forward to seeing you all in Yerevan."

During his visit to New York, Minister Mnatsakanyan met with UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres, who stated to the Armenian diplomat that he was impressed by the recent developments in Armenia and the changes that have resulted. The UN chief said the world body is ready to help Armenia's further development in ways necessary to the nation.

The foreign minister replied that Armenia considers cooperation with the United Nations very important. He detailed the Armenian government's priorities, including reforms in justice, the rule of law, fighting corruption, and improving and providing equal opportunities in the social and economic fields.

Minister Mnatsakanyan also stressed Armenia's commitment to the peaceful settlement of the Karabagh conflict under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group, and emphasized that Karabagh's status and security are top priorities during the negotiations.

Considered one of Armenia's most experienced diplomats, Zohrab Mnatsakanyan (who holds the rank of



Zohrab Mnatsakanyan

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary) has served in Armenia's embassy in Great Britain, as head of the Foreign Relations Department of the Armenian President's Staff, permanent representative of the United Nations Geneva Office, ambassador to Switzerland, and permanent representative to the Council of Europe. He is wellknown to the New York Armenian community from his recent impressive service as Armenian UN ambassador.

The elegant reception at the Diocesan Center to welcome Foreign Minister Mnatsakanyan was organized by Armenia's Mission to the United Nations, led by the Mission's chargé d'affaires, Mher Margaryan.

Meet Dr. Philip Gamaghelyan

GAMAGHELYAN, from page 6

Experimental College, the School for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University, Program on Peace and Justice at Georgetown University, Elliott School of International Affairs at George Washington University, and School of international Service at American University of Washington, DC.

My research has been twofold: coming from a region devastated by violent conflicts often seen as "historical", I long developed a keen interest in investigating the role of memory in intergroup relations. To this end, I studied the representation of self and the others in the post-Soviet education systems, the politics of the production of historical content, and their impact on the reproduction of conflicts. I have authored and co-authored a number of critical articles and book chapters on topics of history, memory and conflicts in the South Caucasus, as well as methodological manuals aimed at formulating alternatives to the existing education models.

My more recent work, however, moved in another direction. Concerned with the apparent inability of our field to effectively prevent or address violence, I refocused on identifying patterns of conflict resolution theory and practice that serve to perpetuate rather than transform conflicts. My monograph based on my dissertation titled "Conflict Resolution Beyond the International Relations Paradigm: Evolving Designs as Alternative Practices in Nagorno-Karabakh and Syria" is a critical and reflective engagement with the field.

What are you most looking forward to about your new role with the Kroc School?

In the 2018-2019 academic year, the Kroc School will be launching the new master's program in Conflict Management and Resolution. Developing that program into the recognized leader of the field that produces advanced scholarship able to address the complex challenges of today's conflicts while providing high quality training to our incoming students is what excites me most about my new role. As a big believer in the promise of conflict resolution, and yet overwhelmed by our modest up to date accomplishments, I look forward to collaborating with the colleagues at the Kroc School in unleashing the full potential of our field.

What do you hope to accomplish in your first year as a faculty member?

Conflict resolution as a field has been maturing for the past few decades, not least thanks to the continual epistemological contestation of its

philosophy and methodology. Dominated by realist approaches during the Cold War, the field moved to rely heavily on neo-liberal theories of economic interdependence and democracy-building in the 1990s. By the late 2000s, as the constructivist paradigm and critical theory started gaining ground in academia, the conceptual conversation in our field also shifted toward the possibilities of building inclusive societies and achieving structural and cultural peace.

Unlike realist and neo-liberal approaches with their clear tools and measurable outcomes, however, the constructivist paradigm constrained by its inherent suspicion toward fixed methods was slow to translate into applied scholarship.

In my first year as a faculty member, I intend to take steps toward incorporating critical theory and constructivism into both scholarship and practice of conflict resolution paving way to more cohesion between the existing paradigmatic shift and our field.

What do you think Kroc School students and the broader USD community will learn from you?

Parallel to my academic career, I have built an extensive experience as a practitioner deploying my theoretical learning to engage in practice in various conflict zones. For more than ten years, I have worked in the context of active ethnic conflicts. In 2007, together with Turkish and Azerbaijani colleagues, I co-founded the Imagine Center for Conflict Transformation that works in post-Soviet states, as well as in Turkey, and Syria among others.

I intend to bring to the USD community my commitment to bridging the theory-practice divide and ensuring that the Kroc School becomes the leader in translating the most up-to-date academic thinking into positive social change.

How do you like to spend your time when you're not working?

I always devoted considerable time and resources to traveling and exploring new localities and cultures. I especially love doing that with my spouse, who is a fantastic travel companion. As an artist and a designer, she has an aesthetic eye for all things colorful that my overburdened by concerns for social justice mind tends to overlook. We are a fun couple: one looking for hidden signs of discrimination and violence wherever we go, the other seeing the beauty at every corner. We complement each other well. Never bored. We look forward to exploring Southern California.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

6th Bridge to the Future 'Victory Gala' Oct. 27 San Diego

SAN DIEGO, Calif. - The 6th Bridge to the Future "Victory Gala" will be held on October 27, 2018 at the Sheraton Hotel & Marina Bay Tower. The Victory Gala will feature more entertainment, dancing and socializing this year, to raise funds to construct a state-of-the-art church campus near Del Mar that will become the new spiritual and cultural home for the Armenian community of San Diego and beyond.

The Emmy-winning Dan Cohen, co-anchor of Fox Los Angeles Channel 11 and previously from KFMB TV Ch. 8 San Diego, will return as master of ceremonies. Notable chefs and restaurateurs from around San Diego will be serving some of their signature dishes as appetizers in stations during the cocktail reception. Guests will also be treated to a gourmet dinner with fine wines. The Victory Gala will also feature celebrity performances by Youri Dance Company and "THE VOICE" Armenian multi-genre singer Mane and Project M, currently touring Southern California.

The St. John Garabed Armenian Church Building Committee is organizing the event under the auspices of Archbishop Hovnan Derderian. The Gala Committee is overseen by Very Rev. Fr. Pakrad Berjekian, with Kathy Kassardjian and Dr. Anna Kulidjian Khachatryan as co-chairs. Event proceeds will go toward the \$2 million needed for the first phase of building our new church and hall near Del Mar, California.

To order tickets online or receive updates, visit www.stjohngarabed.org or stjohn-garabedsd@gmail.com. Also look for "Bridge to the Future" on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/BridgetotheFutureSD/> or www.bridgetothefuture.com/BridgetotheFutureSD/@BridgetotheFutureSD.

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Youri Dance Company

Forty-Eight Members of Congress Urge President Trump to Meet with President Pashinyan

WASHINGTON (Armenian Assembly of America) - The Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues leadership spearheaded a letter signed by 48 Members of Congress sent to President Donald Trump on July 31 urging him to meet with newly-appointed Prime Minister of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan, during the annual United Nations General Assembly held in New York in September, the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) reported.

"A conversation between President Trump and Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasizing economic development, security, and democracy is critical for a strong pivot towards a strategic partnership between our countries," Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) said.

The letter to President Trump says, in part: "The peaceful transition of power after the revolution is a clear indication of the will of the Armenian people, strongly demonstrating their commitment to a fairer and more democratic state. As Armenia seeks to bolster government transparency, strengthen democratic institutions, and empower civil society, it is critical for the United States to deepen its ties with this regional partner at every level of government."

In addition, the bipartisan initiative also requested "a series of high-level conversations between [the President's] Cabinet Secretaries and their counterparts in Armenia - many of whom have recently been appointed as members of the newly formed government."

The prior week, Armenia's First Deputy Prime Minister Ararat Mirzoyan traveled to Washington, DC and met with the US Assistant Secretary of State, Wess Mitchell; Senator Chris Van Hollen (D-MD); Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Congressmen Dave Trott (R-MI), Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), and David Valadao (R-CA); House Democracy Partnership President Peter Roskam (R-IL) and Vice President David Price (D-NC); and Congressman Brian Mast (R-FL). He also spoke before an audience of academics, diplomats, and government officials at the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.

Similarly, during this period Armenia's Minister of Justice Artak Zeynalyan attend-



President Donald Trump and First Lady Melania Trump with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan at the NATO Summit in Belgium on July 11, 2018

ed the inaugural Ministerial Meeting on Advancing Religious Freedom in Washington, hosted by US Secretary of State Michael Pompeo. Armenia's Minister of Diaspora Mkhitar Hayrapetyan has recently concluded his travels throughout the United States, hosting community town hall discussions in Los Angeles, Boston, and the Greater New York area.

"On behalf of the Armenian Assembly of America, I would like to thank the Co-Chairs and Vice Chairs of the Caucus for strengthening US-Armenia relations and to help solidify Armenia's democratic reforms. We appreciate the leadership of the Armenian Caucus in this regard," Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny said. "In September, the Assembly is holding a National Advocacy Conference, which will provide a great opportunity for activists to come to DC and help reinforce US-Armenia relations and the democratic developments in Armenia," Ardouny added.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

New Diaspora Minister Visits US

Diaspora Minister Speaks at Town Hall Meetings in Boston and LA

VISIT, from page 1

Camp Haiastan, Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, Armenian Relief Society, Hairenik, Armenian Weekly and State Rep. David Muradian of Grafton, Mass.

During the Boston visit, he was accompanied by his assistant Vagharshak Hakobyan, Davit Janazyan from the Armenian Embassy in Washington, and advisor Dr. Vahe Sahakyan from Michigan. Sahakyan is a historian and sociologist specializing in diaspora studies.

In his talk at the Baikar building, organized by the Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Mirror-Spectator, as well as at the town hall meeting, Hayrapetyan spoke in fluent English, only halting occasionally to ask for the translation of a special term in Armenian. The meetings were an opportunity for him to become more familiar with the Boston community and its issues and challenges as well as suggestions that it might have for the work of the ministry and new government.

At the Baikar building, Hayrapetyan met with active members of the Boston community who are supporters of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator and the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA). TCA Executive Director Aram Arkun, who is also assistant editor of the Mirror-Spectator, introduced the



Minister of the Diaspora Mkhitar Hayrapetyan at the Baikar building (photo: Aram Arkun)

minister, who in turn introduced his team.

Hayrapetyan began by declaring that he hoped that those present felt how much he loved them and said, "We are bringing with ourselves the positive atmosphere and energy from the new Armenia after the revolution." He stressed that the revolution belongs to all Armenians throughout the whole world and that the agenda of his ministry would be created in cooperation with all Armenians. Instead of a lengthy prologue, Hayrapetyan asked that questions be directed to him in order to begin a direct dialogue.

During this dialogue he stated that the relations between the diaspora and government would not be the same as in the past, when the ministry would ask for support from the diaspora. The relations should be mutually beneficial, he said, and the strategy of the government would be changed. There would be more planning, while, he said, "In the past it was only about what we do today, and there was no vision for five or ten years."

He identified three foci of the ministry and the government in general concerning the diaspora: preservation of Armenian identity, repatriation and strengthening ties between the diaspora and Armenia, in part to use the potential of the diaspora for Armenia. At the same time, the ministry accepts that the diaspora is a permanent one and so will work to make the diaspora stronger. Repatriation efforts, he said, would focus primarily on professionals as well as those who left Armenia in the last two decades, especially on those in post-Soviet countries who still maintain close ties with Armenia.

Some have voiced the criticism during the minister's trip that all they hear is talk, but the minister pointed out that they must take into consideration the fact that the new government has

only been in charge for several months and it takes time to do research, listen to the ideas of the diaspora, and plan proper action.

Among other things, the minister said, the ministry did not have a deep understanding of assimilation, why it happens, and what the government could do to help prevent it. Either new institutions must be created or existing ones be used to do the necessary research. Hayrapetyan said that in the past the diaspora was treated as a single uniform body but now the government realizes that even in one country it is actually many different bodies. No profound research has been previously conducted, he stressed.

Education was among the topics discussed by the guests at the event. Geographical and demographic disparities and funding difficulties are among the difficulties faced by Armenian schools in the US. The suggestion was made by one teacher to organize visits of groups of teachers from Armenia to American public schools to learn of the approaches used here, and similarly, teachers of Armenian origin and also other American teachers be sent from the US to Armenia through ongoing programs.

The question of creating data bases for the diaspora and Armenia was raised by several audience members, but the answer was given that these already existed, at least to a certain extent. Another question was whether it could be possible to coordinate various projects to aid Armenia to avoid duplication of efforts. The minister responded that he is aware of this problem and efforts are underway to create a platform with the necessary information but that sometimes even if the information is made available some organizations might still try to engage in the same activities.

According to Sahakyan, one way the ministry will try to help various diasporan communities is by identifying resources in one community which might help a different one hitherto unaware of this resource, and in this way serve as a bridge for information and contacts.

Hayrapetyan gave a specific example of attempting to harness the potential of the diaspora. He announced that in one week's time, Prime Minister Pashinyan will announce a new program in cooperation with the Armenian ministry of health. Hundreds of hospitals in the provinces of Armenia do not have a sufficient number of trained doctors. At present, the sick in these areas or in Artsakh must be transported to Yerevan for care. On the other hand, many physicians in the diaspora contact the government to ask how they could help Armenia. Pashinyan will announce all the positions that must be filled in hospitals, and



Massachusetts State Rep. David Muradian, left, with Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan (photo: Aram Arkun)



Ani Zargarian, left, with Kristin Asadourian at ACEC (photo: Aram Arkun)

arrangements will be made in all details to connect the physicians with specific positions. They will both do things like surgeries but also train local staff in specialized fields.

This approach will be expanded to many other fields outside of medicine, where diasporan skills will be matched to needs in Armenia. Hayrapetyan said that the diasporan ministry is attempting to be the bridge between the various government ministries and the diaspora.

As part of its attempt to work more directly with the diaspora, 20 to 30 diaspora ministry employees will be sent to be trained for one year as professional diplomats in the diplomacy

school of the Armenian foreign ministry, and discussions are in progress for having a representative of the diaspora ministry in various Armenian consulates. This person would work with communities to find out their problems and help solve them. The intent, Hayrapetyan said, is that "the community should have the feeling that Armenia cares." The only challenge is to find the funds to pay for this, he added.

The ministry will prioritize work-



Mkhitar Hayrapetyan at ACEC (photo: Aram Arkun)

ing with young diasporan Armenians and will soon launch "Nerouzh," a major project being prepared in cooperation with the IDEA Foundation, AGBA Federation, Dilijan UWC, UNDP and others, for Armenians from 18 to 35 years old.

It will finance 10 start-up business ideas from young diaspora Armenians with up to thirty thousand dollars. They will come live in Armenia and attempt to realize these ideas. Their workplace, residence and professional coaching will be provided. One precondition is to try to place these Armenians in the provinces if their business will work there.

An audience member asked whether English-language television programming could be provided by Armenia for the diaspora along with Armenian programs, perhaps with subtitles or dubbing. The minister said there were already such projects being realized. For example, the Turkish-Armenian community asked for news reports at least one hour a day to be presented in Western Armenian, and it offered to pay for all the costs. The ministry is working with Armenian public television to realize that project.

Hayrapetyan said he cannot promise it, but if he can do it he will. Hayrapetyan's advisor Sahakyan said that it will have to be done in many other languages of the diaspora as well. Another audience member said that it was more an issue for the local television or cable distributors to subtitle or dub programs into other languages, but Western Armenian programming would also be good for the Republic of Armenia in order to familiarize Eastern Armenian speakers with Western Armenian.

Arkun asked that the request for the establishment of a consulate in Boston be considered, and in addition expressed the wish that the minister return soon to further strengthen ties with the active and large local community.

At the Armenian Cultural and Educational Center (ACEC), which was packed despite the inconvenient timing during the summer vacation period, the event began with a prayer by Fr. Antranig Baljian of St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church of Watertown. Afterwards Ani Zargarian sang the American and Armenian national anthems. The minister and his delegation had been welcomed with children in traditional costume bear-



COMMUNITY NEWS

Diaspora Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan Meets NY/NJ Armenians

DIASPORA, from page 1

The chair of the TCA of Greater New York, Hilda Hartounian, spoke words of welcome to the minister and in the name of TCA gave him a Michael Aram centerpiece of Noah's ark and Mt. Ararat as a gift in memory of the visit. Hagop Vartivarian, secretary of the TCA Central Board, then introduced the minister to the audience and moderated the remainder of the event.

Vartivarian invited Amb. Hovhannisian to say a few words. The latter wished the minister great success in his new post.

The minister then concisely spoke about the causes of



Hilda Hartounian presents a gift to Minister Hayrapetyan

the Velvet Revolution, which were primarily the result of two decades of injustice, corruption, economic crisis and the depopulation of the country through massive emigration. He declared that the revolution began with limited



From left, Amb. Grigor Hovhannisian, Barkev Kalayjian, Nadya Boyadjian, Hagop Vartivarian, Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, Hilda Hartounian, Marie Zokian and Vartan Ilanjan

financial resources. He expressed optimism about the forthcoming years and emphasized the importance of the participation of the diaspora in the development and progress of Armenia.

During a question and answer session, he answered the queries of those present calmly and logically in a broad-minded fashion. Aside from the issues raised concerning relations between Armenia and the diaspora, Armenians who had immigrated here from the Republic asked about various domestic matters and woes.

In his closing remarks, Vartivarian spoke of the imperative of helping Armenia and assured Hayrapetyan that TCA and the organization which supports it, the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, are ready just as in the days of the first Republic of Armenia to continue the strengthening of Armenia-diaspora ties.



Minister Mkhitar Hayrapetyan

ing bread and salt. Hayrapetyan and his delegation were enthusiastically introduced by master of ceremonies Kristin Asadourian.

Hayrapetyan spoke a few words about the successful nature of the nonviolent revolution in Armenia, quoting Gandhi and declaring that the victory belongs to all Armenians around the world. He said that this is an historic opportunity to show that the Genocide and all other actions against Armenians were failures, and that "Right now, we are showing the world that we are powerful. We are a great nation, with a great future." He called on all those present to visit Armenia and enjoy the new atmosphere.

Furthermore, he said, a strong Armenia means a strong diaspora, and vice-versa. He stated that he was "appointed by the leader of my country Nikol Pashinyan to heal, yes, let me say to heal, the ties between Armenia and the diaspora." He promised to be honest in his promises for actions. He said he came not to ask for money but support and action, as well as to get to know the diaspora and introduce to it the government's vision.

Hayrapetyan immediately began to answer questions, read by the moderator and other organizers, which had previously been collected in written form electronically. He said that the ministry is going to prioritize the target young people living in the diaspora because this was a group overlooked by the ministry under his predecessor, with its potential underrated.

One important point made by the minister was that in the past, the ministry was identified solely with the person of the minister. Whoever came to the ministry would always only want to meet with the minister, not any employees. This was true, he said, for all ministries. Now, he continued, "We are doing a restructuring to limit my privileges. ... It is about the collegial decision making process." He emphasized that his deputy ministers make decisions just as he does. In the end, the institution itself must be strengthened. He concluded, "Ministers will come and go but the institution should stay forever."

Most of the remaining topics were also discussed in the Baikal meeting. At the end of the evening, a person who had submitted a question electronically which was not read insisted on submitting her question in person. She asked about the position of the ministry concerning the Melkonian school in Cyprus as well as the closing of other diaspora Armenian schools in general. This question had been asked previously at the town hall meeting in Los Angeles and there the minister declined to make any statement.

This time, he said that he had met with Armenian General Benevolent Union president Berge Setrakian in New York the day before on this topic, but declined to state anything further for the present. He did say that he spoke with the Armenia Fund leadership in California during his visit there a few days ago and asked them to consider allocating five to

ten percent of funds raised to the diaspora. This could help, among other things, to cover the expenses of diasporan schools which suffer from financial tribulations and at the same time would connect diasporan communities to one another. This is one example, he said, of how Armenia can help solve the problems of the diaspora.

The minister's last statement, a repetition of the one he made in Los Angeles, was that he and his ministry (and the new Armenian government in general) would work with any individual or institution ready to serve Armenia, strengthen the diaspora, and strengthen relations between Armenia and the diaspora.

In Los Angeles and New York/New Jersey, the minister and his delegation met with a large range of representatives of Armenian organizations and institutions. A separate article in this issue describes the town hall meeting in New Jersey held at the TCA Center in Englewood Cliffs. In Glendale, among many other visits, he met with the officials of the Armenian-American Museum (see *Mirror-Spectator*, August 4), and a public town hall assembly was held by the ministry with the Armenian embassy to the US under the sponsorship of Mayor Zareh Sinanyan's office on July 30. Many of the same themes noted in Boston above were brought up there first. Just as the Armenian community is much larger in numbers in Glendale, the size of the crowd that night was much larger.

The crowd was also more unruly. During the question and answer session, they lined up to ask their questions in person, and some who made long statements instead of questions would resist efforts by the moderator to stop them. Some audience members who declared themselves to be longtime supporters of Nikol Pashinyan's movement asked the minister why the government should work with elements in the diaspora which supported or collaborated with the old regime, and not in a way reward the local supporters. The minister reiterated in response the intent of the ministry and government to work with all elements of the diaspora willing in turn to work in good faith with the government, regardless of their previous political positions.

A curious incident occurred in connection with the Los Angeles public assembly. Hamazkayin and some other organizations connected with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation advertised on Facebook that they were sponsors of the assembly. In response to this and evidently other rumors, Hayrapetyan wrote, "Recently, it was brought to my attention that according to some rumors, my visit is organized by organizations affiliated with the Armenian Revolutionary Federation. In order to address any misconceptions and concerns, I want to restate that all my meetings during the trip are organized and sponsored exclusively by the Government of Armenia and the Ministry of Diaspora." The Facebook advertisement was afterwards changed.

Hayrapetyan was appointed as minister this May, and previously served on the political council of Pashinyan's Civic



Mkhitar Hayrapetyan, left, with James Kalustian of the Armenian Heritage Foundation, at the grass labyrinth of Armenian Heritage Park (photo: Aram Arkun)

Contract Party. He was coordinator of diasporan affairs for this party from 2016 to 2018.

Minister Hayrapetyan earned a master's degree from Yerevan State University's Department of Oriental Studies in 2013. Afterwards he served as an analyst for Armenian news media organizations for several years as well as led travel tours from the Republic of Armenia to Western Armenia, in present-day Turkey. He is fluent in Armenian, English, Russian and Turkish.

Arts & Living

Onnik and Ara Dinkjian to Perform At 5 Hour Dance Hye Kef 5 in Andover

ANDOVER, Mass. – ONNIK DINKJIAN is coming to town! The world-renowned singer, Onnik Dinkjian will be coming to the Merrimack Valley to perform on Saturday October 20, 2018 at the Doubletree by Hilton in Andover, MA. This enduring Armenian singer and performer will be accompanied by his son Ara (“Night Ark,” “An Armenian In America”) and a local all-star ensemble for Hye Kef 5. Tickets are available for this exceptional opportunity to hear and enjoy the music, dance and the Armenian community. Tickets are \$55.00 and includes reserved seating and a full buffet; after Sept. 16, the ticket price goes up to \$65.00.

Hye Kef 5, a five-hour dance, will be held from 7 PM to midnight and along with headliner Onnik Dinkjian will feature John Berberian, Oud; Mal Barsamian, Clarinet; Ara Dinkjian, Keyboard and Jason Naroian, Dumbeg. Hye Kef 5 is an annual event organized by the Armenian Friends of America (AFA) organization.

“It is without a doubt, that having Onnik agree to perform for Hye Kef 5 is extraordinary. At 89 years old, he is a legend, with boundless energy and a timeless love for his music and culture. Please join us for this exceptional opportunity to witness history and enjoy the true spirit of what brings us together as Armenian Americans. All indications are this will be another sell-out”, said John Azigian, AFA Chairman.

Onnik was born in Paris, France in 1929. He overcame the difficulties of being orphaned at a very early age by finding comfort and happiness in singing, initially in the Armenian Church of Paris. Upon arriving in America in the late 1940s, he quickly became the most-loved singer of the Armenian-American community. To meet the demands of his audience, he released several recordings of Armenian folk and popular music. However, Mr. Dinkjian, an ordained deacon, never lost his great love of Armenian liturgical music, and released an entire CD (“Havadamk”) of emotionally performed sacred hymns of the Armenian Church.

His fame as a great interpreter of Armenian song has brought him to concert halls throughout Europe, Jerusalem, United States, and South America. He has passed his love and passion of Armenian music to his son, oud player and composer Ara Dinkjian. Ara will be playing along with his father at this exciting event. Ara Dinkjian is also considered one of the top oud players in the world. He was chosen to represent the Armenians in the international oud festivals of Jerusalem and Greece.

“It’s been a wonderful and exciting experience to be a part of this grassroots organization. We have been able to bring together hundreds of Armenians from the Greater Merrimack Valley and beyond, to connect and reconnect who would not have otherwise done so,” said Sharke’ Der Apkarian of the AFA Committee.

The Armenian Friends of America (AFA) is a non-profit organization. All proceeds for this event will benefit the Armenian Churches of the Merrimack Valley including: St Gregory Armenian Apostolic Church of N. Andover, The Armenian Apostolic Church of Hye Point, Bradford; Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Apostolic Church of Chelmsford and the Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem, NH and other Armenian Charities.

For tickets please contact: John Arzigian – 603-560-3826; Lucy Sirmaian – 978-683-9121; Peter Gulezian – 978-375-1616; Sharke Der Apkarian – 978-808-0598; Kathy Geyer 978-475-8309.



Emmanuel Tjeknavorian

Armenian Musician Emmanuel Tjeknavorian Celebrated in Germany

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

RHEINGAU, Germany – Among the many special cultural events held in Germany during the summer, the Rheingau Music Festival is perhaps the most famous, not only for its location in the magnificent castles and basilicas of the Rhine valley, but also for the world class performers it invites. Among them this year is the 22-year-old exceptional violinist Emmanuel Tjeknavorian.

For HR2Kultur, the regional Hesse cultural radio, “He makes the violin glow,” and is “one of the highlights of the Rheingau Music festival so far.” That was on July 19, the day after his concert in the Johannisberg Castle, where he was joined on the piano by Maximilian Kromer. At the conclusion of the performance, he was formally presented the LOTTO prize by the festival’s artistic director Michael Hermann. The LOTTO prize, which includes €15,000, is awarded annually to an extraordinary young talent who has performed at the festival. Tjeknavorian won it for a concert in 2016. The jury selected him for his “brilliant technique and his incredible sense of interpretative subtleties” and noted that “so much naturalness, sympathetic charisma and pleasant modesty coupled with a great virtuosity are rarely experienced with a great musician.”

The works selected for this year’s concert, as Tjeknavorian described in the brochure, all express the spirit of friendship, the motto of the festival. The three romances by Clara Schumann were composed and dedicated in friendship to Joseph Joachim, and the FAE Sonata “was a present from his closest friends Johannes Brahms, Albert Dietrich and Robert Schumann.” It was Joachim who arranged the Hungarian dances by Brahms for violin and piano. The second part of the program featured Eugene Ysaye, with a sonata he composed for violin solo, and a sonata he received as a wedding present from Cesar Franck. “Last but not least,” he concluded, “my close friendship to my longstanding duo partner Maximilian Kromer is of special significance on this extraordinary concert evening.”

A Rising Star in Europe

The young violinist has already performed in the most renowned concert halls in Europe, including the Berlin Philharmonic, where he appeared with the Berlin Symphony Orchestra, in a series called Debüt im Deutschlandfunk Kultur, the same series where Daniel Barenboim, Jessaye Norman and Simon Rattle had made their debuts before him. He performed the Sibelius violin concerto. He also appeared in the spectacular new Hamburg Elbphilharmonie in January of this year, as well as in Cologne and Dortmund. In Vienna’s Konzerthaus in April, he stepped in for David Garrett, who was ill.

see TJEKNAVORIAN, page 14

Gulbenkian Art Dynasty Entangled in \$1.4 Million ‘Fraud’

By Valentine Low

LONDON (*The Times*) – In the arts world, it is one of the best known philanthropic names, up there with Rothschild, Getty and Tate. However, the Gulbenkian family name, which usually brings to mind the world-famous museum in Lisbon, is about to be dragged through the courts after one of its members was accused of fraud over a million-dollar art deal.

Angela Gulbenkian, an art collector, is being sued in the High Court in London over a deal that went wrong. A buyer from Hong Kong claims he paid her nearly \$1.4 million for a sculpture that never materialised. Mathieu Ticolat, an art adviser and director of Art Incorporated, has launched a claim to get either the sculpture, a 81kg (179lb) spotted yellow pumpkin by the Japanese artist Yayoi Kusama, or the money back.

Ms. Gulbenkian, 36, is a German who married a great-great-nephew of the oil tycoon Calouste Gulbenkian, whose fortune has funded the multibillion-pound private foundation and museum that bears his name. In 2016 she set up a company in London, FAPS-Net, with a German art adviser, Florentine Rosemeyer, who has since left.

Art Incorporated said that it entered into a contract with Ms. Gulbenkian last year to buy Yellow Pumpkin from an anonymous seller for \$1.375 million (about £1 million). The company’s lawsuit says that FAPS-Net claimed to be acting on behalf of the owner. “Those representations were false and the defendants knew them to be false or did not believe them to be true,” it said. No defence has been filed yet but Ms. Gulbenkian is understood to be resisting the claim.

The dispute raises issues of how much buyers and sellers know about who they are dealing with when transactions are channelled through intermediaries. Christopher Marinello, of Art Recovery International, who is working with Art Incorporated, told Bloomberg: “People are buying expensive art and are not doing due diligence on people they are buying the art from.”

Born Angela Maria Ischwang, Ms. Gulbenkian grew up in Munich and studied politics and history in London, where she opened a marketing firm. She married Duarte Gulbenkian, a football agent, and moved to Lisbon in 2016. Some of those who have had dealings with her formed the incorrect impression that she was connected to the Lisbon-based Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation, which distributes money for the arts, social welfare, education and science and is valued at about €3 billion. The foundation said: “Angela Gulbenkian has nothing to do with the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation or the museum.” Mr. Ticolat told Bloomberg: “I got fooled by the name.”

Ms. Gulbenkian’s Instagram account describes her as “Fine Art Collector | Gulbenkian Art Collection”. In an interview with a Portuguese financial newspaper, *Jornal de Negocios*, last year she talked about bringing new artists to Lisbon although she said that she did not want to interfere with the foundation. Talking of the Gulbenkian name, she said: “In the art world this name opens doors, but doesn’t close

see FRAUD, page 13



ARTS & LIVING

A Family's Four-Hundred-Year-Old Secret Still Rings True

By Lara Pellegrinelli

NORWELL, Mass. (*New York Times*) – The surest route to a drummer's heart? Cymbals.

"You can have all the swirling harmony in the world," the drummer Brian Blade said, "but only the cymbals can put you over the top of that mountain you're trying to climb. The tension is the beauty of it, like riding a wave until you need it to crest."

Mr. Blade, who is best known for playing with the country music singer Emmylou Harris and the jazz saxophonist Wayne Shorter, said he thinks of his cymbals as an extension of himself, though he also gives credit for his distinctive sound to the instruments he plays: Zildjians. He has endorsed the brand for 20 years, just one in a long, diverse roster of musicians to do so.

Zildjian was incorporated in the United States in 1929. But the company's relationship with drummers, and drumming itself, dates back much further: 400 years to be precise, to 1618, when a secret casting process resulted in the creation of a new bronze alloy for the court of Sultan Osman II, the ruler of the Ottoman Empire.

"My father always said that the name is bigger than any one person in the family," said Craigie Zildjian, the company's chief executive officer (the first woman to have the job), a member of the family's 14th generation of cymbal makers. "In other words, you have this little piece of 400 years. Don't screw it up."

For the 3,000 or so years before 1618, cymbals had evolved very little. The earliest evidence of them can be found on pottery fragments from Hittite Anatolia dating to the Bronze Age. Metallic percussion was long part of the military music for Turkic tribes including the Seljuks, who migrated to the Middle East in the 11th century. (Some "had horns, others pipes and timbrels, gongs, cymbals and other instruments, producing a horrible



George Plaskasovitas has worked with the Zildjian company for 43 years (Credit: Kayana Szymczak for the *New York Times*)

noise and clamor," reads a description of battle during the Third Crusade.)

The sound quality of these boisterous instruments might have left something to be desired by the 17th century, an age of Ottoman musical refinement. It was then that Avedis I, a 22-year-old Armenian metal smith and aspiring alchemist, learned that mixing ample tin into copper would produce a rich, robust sound. But he faced a formidable problem. "It's a very brittle alloy," Paul Francis, Zildjian's director of research and development, said. "It will shatter like a piece of glass."

Then Avedis I made a musical-altering discovery – still carefully guarded by the family – that involved forging a metal so flexible it could be repeatedly heated, rolled and hammered into the finest instru-

ments. "He was looking for gold," Mr. Francis said. "As far as I'm concerned, he found it."

Osman II thought so: He granted the young artisan permission to make instruments for the court and gave him the Armenian surname Zildjian (meaning "son of cymbal maker"). The family set up shop in the seaside neighborhood of Samatya in Constantinople, where metal arrived on camel caravans and donkeys powered primitive machines.

Those working in Zildjian's shop produced cymbals for the mehter – monumental ensembles with double reeds, horns, drums and other metallic percussion that belonged to the empire's elite janissary military corps. The Zildjians likely also did business with Greek and Armenian churches, Sufi dervishes and the Sultan's harem, where belly dancers wore finger cymbals.

"Military music was a branch of their classical music," Walter Zev Feldman, the author of "Music of the Ottoman Court," said. Although mehter ensembles were known in the West for playing in battle, they also performed courtly suites for its rulers, like those by Solakzade Mehmed (1592-1658), who wrote under the name Hemdemi.

Every morning before prayer, and every evening after prayer, ensembles gathered to play from castle towers, including one above the gardens of Topkapi Palace. Hand-held cymbals measuring a foot or so in diameter probably marked the rhythmic cycles, which Mr. Feldman said "are among the most complex in the world: cycles of 24, 28, 32 and even 48 beats."

It's no wonder that composers like Gluck and Mozart wanted to emulate a Turkish style with busy, glittering percussion. Precisely what Ottoman music they heard is an open question, though. A handful of European rulers adopted mehter ensembles or sent their kapellmeisters to Constantinople to learn the tradition, but the composers more likely were exposed, Mr. Feldman said, to "klezmerim, local Jewish musicians, in places like Prague and Berlin, who had learned the Ottoman repertoire."

George Plaskasovitas has worked with the Zildjian company for 43 years. Credit: Kayana Szymczak for The New York Times

What came to be known simply as "Turkish cymbals" were assimilated by European orchestras and, in the first half of the 19th century, into new military and wind band styles that thoroughly integrated West and East. Meanwhile, the janissaries, having assassinated one too many sultans, were outlawed and executed in 1826 – as were their mehter musicians. The Zildjians lost a significant portion of their market.

Avedis II built a 25-foot schooner to transport the first cymbals physically bearing his family's name to London for the Great Exhibition, the first world's fair, in 1851. His brother Keropé assumed the company helm in 1865, establishing a line of instruments named K Zildjian in several sizes and thicknesses that are still prized by percussionists today.

Those old K's – which possess the "sound of two gladiator swords meeting," in the words of Armand Zildjian, Craigie's father – can be heard in the Philadelphia, Cleveland and Metropolitan Opera orchestras, among others. Gregory Zuber, the Met's principal percussionist, said, "It's a tra-

dition that's been handed down from player to player" and that can be heard in the tremendous, exposed crashes that heighten the drama of the 19th-century operas.

In America other musical forms began to shape, and be shaped by, the cymbal's evolution. Avedis III, a Boston candy maker who left Turkey before the Armenian genocide, was reluctant to take over the family business when it was thrust upon him by his uncle Aram in 1927. But he changed his mind after checking out the growing dance band scene: "I saw the possibility that even if there wasn't a market we could create one," he recalled in a 1975 interview with *The Armenian Reporter*.

According to Jon Cohan's book "Zildjian: A History of the Legendary Cymbal Makers," drum shops and catalogs in the 1920s were likely to carry only so-called Oriental cymbals, American ones made of brass and nickel silver, and the weighty K's from Constantinople. Avedis III sought out swing drummers, like Gene Krupa, and learned that they preferred Turkish cymbals but wanted them to be thinner and more responsive – "paper thin," as Krupa put it.

The new instruments Avedis III developed and trademarked under his name had the crispness to cut through the sound of a big band. And, paired in hi-hats, cymbals took over the time keeping responsibilities from the laboring bass drum, a technique pioneered by Jo Jones of the Count Basie Orchestra.

"It gave you that upbeat that puts the snap in a dancer's foot: down, chit; down, chit," said Mr. Blade, who uses 1940s-era Avedis Zildjians in his drum kit. By the mid-1930s, celebrities including Chick Webb, Buddy Rich and Lionel Hampton were coming to the Zildjian factory in Quincy, Mass., to pick out their cymbals, with help from Avedis's fine ear.

His experimentation producing novel cymbal types – swish and sizzle, bounce and crash – would inspire a new generation of musicians to utilize a broader sonic palette. The bebop drummer Kenny Clarke led the pack by keeping a flexible, furiously paced, highly individualistic beat, probably on 17-inch Zildjian bounce cymbal. That instrument, later named a ride, became a cornerstone of modern drumming.

Touring the factory, which now sits in a leafy industrial park in Norwell, Mass., is the drummer's equivalent of stumbling into Willy Wonka's chocolate factory. "We are the music makers, and we are the dreamers of dreams," Mr. Francis, the director of research and development, said, quoting the movie, as he led the way on a recent visit.

A line of Gen16 products attempts to create an electronic cymbal that looks and feels like a real cymbal instead of a drum pad. A low-volume practice cymbal that looks like mesh is selling well among drummers in Asia who live in apartments with thin walls.

The lobby has the feel of a show room, with kits on display that belonged to Travis Barker (Blink-182), Tré Cool (Green Day) and Ginger Baker (Cream), along with a replica of Ringo Starr's. "We all know what happened in 1964," Mr. Francis said, referring to the British Invasion. "We had 90,000 cymbals on back order."

A lounge gives drummers a place to try out their instruments or simply hang out while waiting for an order. Some, like Joey Kramer of Aerosmith and the famed session musician Steve Gadd, prefer to watch from the factory floor.

Newly poured metal castings are heated in an oven, then rolled and heated again – up to 12 times – as they are shaped into cymbals. Metal glows hot from the furnace, and rolling machines spit out silvery pancakes of zinc-oxide-coated bronze, collected with coal shovels. Armand Zildjian modernized the factory using robots to remove the most burdensome physical labor and offer greater precision in tasks like hammering. (His younger brother Bob broke from the company in 1981 and founded his own cymbal manufacture, Sabian, in Canada.)

Today, each instrument still passes through the hands of dozens of highly skilled workers. "Paper thin" is not measured by tiny calipers, but by lathe operators shaving off golden ribbons and checking to make sure their work falls within a certain range on digital scales.

The head cymbal tester, Leon Chiappini, who has worked at the factory for 57 years, listens to each one multiple times with a standard in mind and pairs them. But like drummers, no two are exactly alike.

Gulbenkian Art Dynasty Entangled in \$1.4 Million 'Fraud'

FRAUD, from page 12

It is understood that Ms. Gulbenkian has denied presenting herself as acting for the foundation.

Ms. Rosemeyer, who is now an independent art adviser in Munich, said: "In the spring of

reported that Ms. Gulbenkian had said that she had been arranging for the money to be repaid, although representatives of Art Incorporated claim not to have seen evidence of this.

An all-consuming passion



Angela Gulbenkian is married to a descendant of the oil tycoon Calouste. She was allegedly paid \$1.4 million to secure Yayoi Kusama's pumpkin but failed to do so (GETTY IMAGES/BRUNO SIMAO)

2017 I heard through contacts that one of Yayoi Kusama's statues might be for sale. I put Angela Gulbenkian in touch with those contacts. I did not have anything further to do with this deal and received no updates from Ms. Gulbenkian. I was shocked to learn of the allegations now being made against Ms. Gulbenkian."

According to Bloomberg Ms. Gulbenkian has said that she offered to get the sculpture to Mr. Ticolat before the case was filed. She had spoken to the owner, who was prepared to transfer the work, but Mr. Ticolat did not want a deal.

Mr. Ticolat's team denies these claims and say that she was not able to procure the piece because it had been sold. Bloomberg also

Calouste Gulbenkian (1869-1955) was an Armenian who played a major role in developing oil in the Middle East – particularly Iraq – around the turn of the 20th century. He amassed a huge fortune, which he used to build up an art collection that he kept in a private museum at his home in Paris. An art expert said in 1950: "Never in modern history has one man owned so much."

In his lifetime he was said to have collected more than 6,400 pieces of art, from antiquity to the 20th century. When he grew tired of an object he would give it away, exchange it or use it in part-payment for something else.

Armenian Musician Emmanuel Tjeknavorian Celebrated in Germany

TJEKNAVORIAN, from page 12

The Beare's International Violin Society, a private foundation, made a Stradivari available to him two years ago and he has been performing on this historic instrument since then. In a television interview at the beginning of August, he said, "The thought fascinated me: this violin was built in 1698, when Mozart had not composed anything, Beethoven had not yet thought about his violin concerto and the architects had not conceived the Elbphilharmonie, and yet I pick up my violin and enter such a huge concert hall and it sounds."

A Family of Musicians

Tjeknavorian's parents are both professional musicians, and the story goes that his mother did not want him to follow in their footsteps. But at the tender age of two, he was already on stage, pretending to conduct, together with his father, the famous composer and conductor Loris Haykasi Tjeknavorian. When he was five, he asked for a violin as a present and two years later made his debut, accompanied on the piano by his mother. Since 2011 he has been studying with Gerhard Schulz, formerly of the Alban Berg Quartett at the University for Music and Performing Arts in Vienna, where he was born. He studied in Armenia, under Petros Haykazyan, and has experience also with the Russian school.

His paternal grandfather was from Eastern Armenia and his grandmother, from Western Armenia, whence she fled in 1915. His father Loris started on the violin at the age of eight and began to compose as a child. He studied at the Vienna Academy of Music and spent many years in Iran. In 1989 after the earthquake, he went to Armenia to help rebuild cultural life, in Gyumri and other cities. He served for 11 years as musical director of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra in Yerevan, and has composed many operas, symphonies, choral works as well as pieces for piano and voice. A number of his major works develop themes from Persian literature.

The young Emmanuel takes after his parents, not only as a musician but as a person conversant with several different cultures. As he put it in the television interview, "One or two years ago I thought it was not all that important, whether I came from Armenia, or was educated in Vienna, but at the moment - I don't know about later - now I think these components are so important: that I know Armenian, that I can read Russian literature in the original; and my feelings are especially strong when I play Armenian music, for example."

Though still very young, he displays a rare technical mastery. He has compared the importance of technique in music and soccer, a favorite sport, where utmost precision in making a pass on the playing field is crucial, too. "Music is 99 percent hard work and technique, and one percent inspiration, and that comes from the Creator," he is quoted as saying. "If one has the technique, one can work with more intensity."

In addition to his concert activity, Tjeknavorian has released his first CD, entitled "SOLO," and hosts a monthly show on "radio klassik Stephansdom" in Vienna. Germans will have a chance to hear more of his music in person, as he has been engaged for three years to participate in a concert series in Dortmund, dubbed Young and Wild, beginning in the 2018/2019 season.

(Sources: "Tjek it out!" by Helge Birkelbach, Nov. 25, 2017, Concerti; ARD, German national television, July 1, 2018, Lutz Pehnert; Rheingau Musik Festival, Program, from July 23 to September 1, 2018; Wikipedia Loris Tjeknavorian; www.emmanueltjeknavorian.com)



From left, Dr. Heinz-Georg Sundermann, Maximilian Kromer, Emmanuel Tjeknavorian, Franziska Reichenbacher, Michael Herrmann (Photo: © Ansgar Klostermann)

Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian

Curry Seafood and Fruit Salad with Rice



INGREDIENTS

- 2 cups cooked flaked fish (salmon, tuna, whitefish, cod, etc.)
- 2 cups small cooked bay shrimp or 1 pound raw shrimp, peeled and deveined
- 2 (7 1/2 oz.) cans crab meat, drained or 6-8 oz. crab legs, cut in bite size pieces
- 1 cup cooked white, brown or cauliflower rice, quinoa, barley or couscous
- 1 cup diced fresh or canned pineapple chunks (and 2 tablespoons pineapple juice)
- 2 medium oranges, peaches or nectarines, peeled, cut in bite-sized pieces
- 2 stalks celery (plus top greens), finely chopped
- 1/2 medium red or yellow bell pepper, seeded and finely chopped
- 1/2 cup each chopped flat-leaf parsley and green onions (or minced red onions)
- 1 jalapeno pepper, seeded and minced
- 1 1/2 cups mayonnaise, sour cream or low-fat Greek yogurt (or use half mayonnaise and half yogurt)
- Juice of 2 limes or 2 lemons
- 2 tablespoons curry powder
- Dried dill, paprika and black pepper to taste
- 8-10 cups mixed salad greens, such as baby spinach, endive, kale, mesclun, arugula, red leaf, or romaine
- 1/2 cup each toasted coconut and toasted silvered almonds
- Garnish with choice of lime or lemon wedges, sliced hard boiled eggs, sliced avocado, red grapes, grape tomatoes and chopped parsley



PREPARATION

- Place mayonnaise, lime or lemon juice, pineapple juice, curry powder, and spices in a large bowl and stir to combine. Add the flaked fish, shrimp, crab, fruit, celery, bell pepper, parsley, onions, jalapeno pepper, and rice, and toss to combine all ingredients.
- Check seasonings, adding more mayonnaise, curry powder, lime or lemon juice, if desired, and toss again.
- Cover and chill before serving. Serve on top of mixed greens and sprinkle with coconut and almonds. Garnish as desired.
- Serves 6-8.

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

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ARTS & LIVING

Exhibition of Vartus Varadian's Chinese Watercolor Paintings Opens in Natick

By **Aram Arkun**

Mirror-Spectator Staff

NATICK, Mass. - Vartus Varadian's Chinese watercolor brush paintings are on display at the Broadmoor Wildlife Sanctuary of the Massachusetts Audubon Society in Natick, Mass. from August 1 to 31. The exhibition of paintings, called "Beauty in Bloom," is primarily of various types of flowers. An opening reception was held on

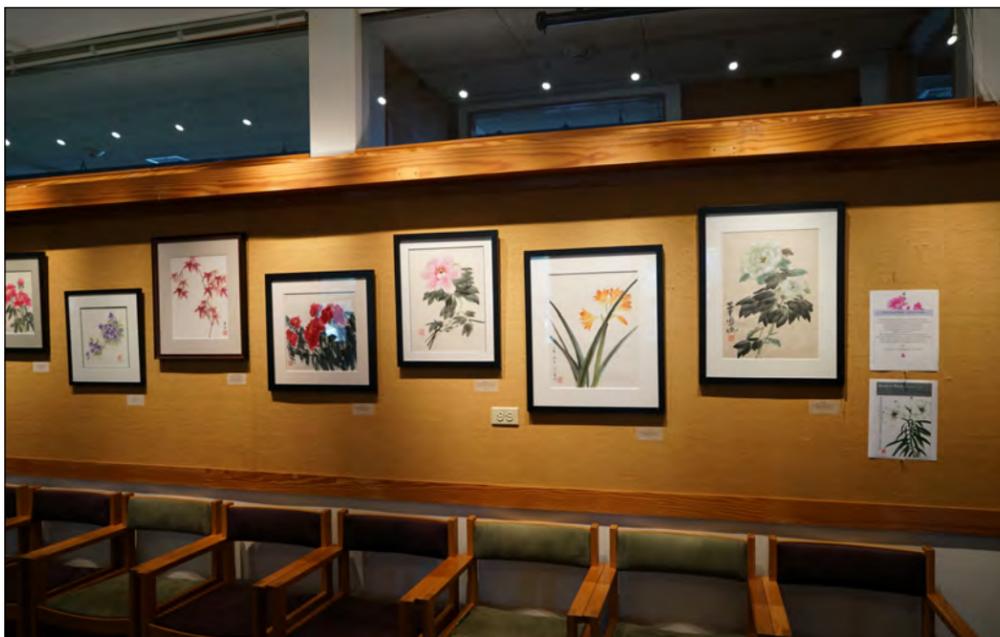


Vartus Varadian (photo: Aram Arkun)

August 5 with the artist.

A cancer survivor, Vartus took up this style of painting as a way of personal therapy upon the completion of her treatments. She also began dragon boat paddling as part of a team, which certain studies show is beneficial to breast cancer survivors. She designed the website for the Wellness Warriors, Massachusetts' first dragon boat team for cancer survivors (<https://wellnesswarriors-boston.org/>).

Vartus is a graphic designer and art director who has worked for numerous advertising agencies, design studios and companies in the Boston area, most recently at IBM. She sits on the board of the Newton Art Association and the Chinese Painting Guild (<http://chinesepaintingguild.com/index.html>), and is responsible for publicity, communications and design. She teaches elementary students and cancer survivors Chinese brush painting through



Newton Community Education (<http://www2.newtoncommunityed.org/>) and Facing Cancer Together (<https://facing-cancer.org/>).

For more information on the exhibition,

see <https://www.massaudubon.org/get-outdoors/wildlife-sanctuaries/broadmoor/exhibits/beauty-in-bloom>. Some of Vartus' prints and cards are available at <https://www.etsy.com/shop/Vartus>.

Ancient City of Ani Helps Link Turkey, Georgia

By **Cuneyt Celik**

KARS, Turkey (Anadolu Agency) - Eastern Turkey's ancient city of Ani is a link in healthy ties between Ankara and Tbilisi, said Turkey's ambassador to Georgia on Sunday.

"History is part of improving cultural relations between Turkey and Georgia. Ani is part of Turkish-Georgian relations, as well as regional relations," Fatma Ceren Yazgan told Anadolu Agency during her tour of the ruins of Ani in the eastern Kars province.

Also called the World City, the City of 1,001 Churches, the Cradle of Civilizations, and the City with 40 Doors, the ancient city was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in 2016.

"Ani has a well-known status in UNESCO. I'm



here to discover what we can do to introduce Ani to Georgia," whose border is nearby, she said.

Interest in the site from both Turkish and foreign tourists grew when it joined UNESCO's World Heritage List, Yazgan added.

Located along Turkey's border with Armenia, the site, including Islamic architectural work from the 11th and 12th centuries, was the capital of Armenian emperors from 961 to 1045 A.D. at the time of the Pakradouni Dynasty.

The first settlement in Ani dates back to 3,000 B.C. and in its history was home to nearly two dozen civilizations.

Tourists show great interest in the Mosque of Abul Manuchihr, the first Turkish mosque, the Amenaprgic Church, and the Ani Cathedral.

Yaren Zeynep Saglam, a visitor, expressed her admiration for the archeological site.

"There are great works here, the architecture is perfect. I'm really impressed," she said.

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ARTS & LIVING

CALENDAR

FLORIDA

JANUARY 20-27, 2019 — Armenian Heritage Cruise XXII 2019. Western Caribbean Cruise aboard the Royal Caribbean's Allure of the Sea. Traveling to Nassau, Cozumel, Roatan, Costa Maya. Cabin Rates, starting from \$949/person based on double occupancy, including port charges and ACAA registration fee. Government rates of \$137.45 are additional. Armenian entrainment, Armenian cultural presentations, Armenian Festival Day, Tavlou and Belote Tournaments and much more. Call Travel Group International at 1-561-447-08750 or 1-866-447-0750 ext. 108, contact person Janie.

MASSACHUSETTS

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

AUGUST 23 — Under an August Moon, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Thursday, 7:30 - 9:00 pm. Meet & Greet! Berklee All-Star Jazz Trio! Enjoy signature tastings, hosted by anoush'ella say kitchen; creative mocktails, hosted by The Bostonian Hotel; luscious ice teas hosted by MEM Tea Imports. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

AUGUST 26 — Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic, 12 to 5 p.m., to be held at our new Family Life & Cultural Center, 1280 Boston Road (RTE. 125) Haverhill. Music by the fabulous Jason Naroian Ensemble. Menu includes Lamb Shish, Losh, & Chicken Kebab Dinners, Kheyma, Pastries, & Beverages. Raffles for Cash Prizes & Gift Certificates. Air Conditioned Hall. Bring your lawn chairs for sitting outside. For more info visit www.hye-pointearmenianchurch.org or call (978) 372-9227. Take RTE. 495 N to exit 48, bear right at the end of the ramp and follow the signs. Additional parking at Osgood Landing, 1600 Osgood Street, North Andover, with free shuttle bus to the picnic grounds.

SEPTEMBER 9 — Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Sunday. Delicious Armenian food — shish, losh, and chicken kebab — paklava, khadaif, and more with take-out available. Armenian music for your listening and dancing pleasure featuring The Greg Krikorian Ensemble with Greg Krikorian, oud and vocals; Mark Der Mugrditchian, clarinet; Kevin Magarian, guitar and vocals; Charles Dermenjian, dumbeg; and Seve Surabian, tambourine. Lots of activities for children including the Moonwalk. Blessing of the Madagh at 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. For further information, log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/575/, contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email office@htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 10 — Holy Trinity Men's Union welcomes Boston Celtics' Great Sam Jones, Monday, 6 p.m., Social Hour, 7 p.m., Dinner. Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge MA. Everyone Welcome for this unique opportunity to meet a Boston sports legend. Book signing following talk. Donation for losh kebab and kheyma dinner: \$15 per person. RSVP required, call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email tmuhtaac@gmail.com. For further information, log onto www.htaac.org/calendar/event/584/.

SEPTEMBER 13 —7th Annual Surf, Turf & Cigar Evening hosted by Knights of Vartan Ararat Lodge. Doors open at 6pm at Armenian Cultural & Education Center (ACEC), 47 Nichols Ave, Watertown, MA, Tickets are \$165.00

SEPTEMBER 16 — Sunday Afternoon at the Park for Families. Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway, 2-4 p.m. Cindy Fitzgibbon, WCVB TV5, Emcee; Boston Hye Guys-Ron Sahatjian, clarinet; Joe Kouyoumjian, oud; Art Chingris, percussion; ADD At 2:30pm "Match the Pair": Game for all ages! Face Painting: For Kids by Kids, Hoodies RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 21 — St. James Hye Café. Join us for delicious food and fellowship! Kebab, Falafel, Imam Bayeldi, and more. Doors open at 6:15pm. For more information visit www.stjameswatertown.org. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown.

SEPTEMBER 23 — "Lights, Camera, Stories!" An evening with award-winning filmmaker Bared Maronian, Sunday, 5 p.m. Take 1) Screening of Women



On Wednesday, August 15, the Tea & Tranquility meet and greet brings people together to walk the labyrinth at the Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway in Boston, and enjoy refreshing ice teas and desserts, hosted by MEM Tea Imports and the Bostonian Hotel. A special introduction is offered to first time labyrinth walkers at 5:30 p.m. RSVP appreciated to hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org.

of 1915; Take 2) Exclusive footage of Armenia's recent Velvet Revolution; Take 3) Reveal of Bared's Titanic Love. Co-sponsored by AIWA & AWWA, proceeds to benefit the Women's Support Center in Yerevan, and Hanganak Elderly Clinic in Stepanakert. Scottish Rite Masonic Museum & Library, 33 Marrett Rd., Lexington. Tickets: \$75 - Reception to follow.

SEPTEMBER 29 — The 7th Annual Benefit Dance to benefit Syrian Armenian Relief and Fund for Armenian Relief. Saturday, Armenian Church of Our Saviour, Cultural Center, 34 Boynton St., Worcester. Dance to the music and vocals of the Mugrditchian Ensemble with local favorites Mark Der Mugrditchian, Kevin Magarian, Arthur Chingris, with special guest artists Greg Krikorian and George Reghellis. Sponsored by the Armenian Churches of Worcester County: Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, Armenian Church of Our Saviour, Armenian Church of the Martyrs, Soorp Asdvadzadzin Armenian Apostolic Church. Doors Open at 7.30 p.m. For tickets, reservations or information contact Jay Kapur (508) 740-4464, Eva Kopoyan (508) 757-6195, Magdy Faltaous (508) 278-3805 or Donna Barsamian (508) 769-3279. Donation \$35 in advance, \$45 at the door. Deluxe Mezze, coffee and dessert, with cash bar.

OCTOBER 12-13 — St. James 71st Annual Bazaar. Delicious Armenian Food and Pastries. Silent Auction, Attic Treasures, Booths and Vendors. Raffles, Children's Activities, and more. Details to follow. St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information contact 617.923.8860 or info@stthagop.com or visit www.stjameswatertown.org.

OCTOBER 20 — Hye Kef 5: Onnik Dinkjian Performs at DoubleTree by Hilton in Andover, MA, with Ara Dinkjian and local ensemble, for Armenian Friends of America, 7 pm to midnight. All proceeds benefit the Armenian churches of the Merrimack Valley. For tickets: John Arzigian — 603-560-3826; Lucy Sirmaian — 978-683-9121; Peter Gulezian — 978-375-1616; Sharke Der Apkarian — 978-808-0598; Kathy Geyer 978-475-8309.

OCTOBER/NOVEMBER — Armenian Museum of America is planning a bus trip to view the upcoming Armenia! exhibit at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, NYC; Join us for a special tour of the show, which includes two very unique and beautiful illuminated manuscripts from our own collection! Stay tuned for dates and details. Museum Contact: Stephanie Garafolo, sgarafolo@armenianmuseum.org. (617) 926-2562, ext. 4 ([website www.armenianmuseum.org](http://www.armenianmuseum.org))

NOVEMBER 4 — Celebrating the Life and Work of

Diana Der Hovanesian, Organized by the Armenian Cultural Foundation and co-sponsored by Amaras Art Alliance, Armenian General Benevolent Union-New England, Armenian International Women's Association, Hamazkaine-Boston, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, New England Poetry Club, Tekeyan Cultural Association. Sunday, November 4, at 4 p.m. Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic Street (Route 3), Arlington.

NOVEMBER 14 — Najarian Lecture on Human Rights at Historic Faneuil Hall, Boston Wednesday. Doors open at 6:45 pm, Program at 7:30 pm. Reception follows at The Bostonian Hotel An endowed public program of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway.

NOVEMBER 30 and DECEMBER 1 — Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12 noon-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.; Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA. Save the date; details to follow. For further information, contact the Church office, 617.354.0632 or email office@htaac.org.

DECEMBER 9 — Christmas Holiday Concert — Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra, 7 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow. For further information, call the Church office, 617.354.0632 or email office@htaac.org.

DECEMBER 16 — Candlelit Labyrinth Peace Walk, Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston, Sunday, 4:30-5:30 p.m., Walk the Candlelit Labyrinth. Tie a Ribbon on the Wishing Tree. Hot Chocolate & Desserts, hosted by The Bostonian Hotel. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 18, 2019 — SAVE THE DATE! InterContinental Hotel, Boston. Extraordinary Benefit for Armenian Heritage Park's Endowed Fund for Care

NEW JERSEY

SEPTEMBER 23 — St. Leon Armenian Church Women's Guild hosts a 90th anniversary celebration on Sunday. With a commemorative luncheon following the Divine Liturgy, at 1 p.m., in Abajian Hall. Honoring 22 Women's Guild Members with between four and six decades of service. Reservations by September 15. Contact Margaret Ajemian, 201-914-0354 or lynnberberian@gmail.com. Send checks to Lynn Berberian at 823 Peachtree Lane, Franklin Lakes, NJ 07417. Cost is \$30 per person, \$15 for children 12 and under. St. Leon Armenian Church, 12-61 Saddle River Road, Fair Lawn.

SEPTEMBER 29 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group 20th Anniversary Banquet Celebrating 20 Years of Theater at 7 pm. at the Palisadium, 700 Palisadium Dr. Cliffside Park, NJ. Featuring Special Entertainment by Krikor Satamian. Master of Ceremonies Gerald Papisian. Presentations by past and present MMTG Directors. Special Musical Performance by Hovhannes Babakhanyan. Donation: \$150 pp. For more information and tickets please call, Marie Zokian (201) 745-8850, Talar Sarafian 201-240-8541.

SEPTEMBER 30 — Armenia Fund USA and Ardzagang Armenian TV are proud to present Artash Asatryan and Band, guest singer Grisha Asatryan, from Armenia on Sunday, 4 p.m. Don't miss the performance by the son and grandson of the legendary Armenian singer Aram Asatryan! Proceeds will benefit Fruitful Artsakh Project. Location: Bergen PAC, 30 N. Van Brunt St, Englewood, NJ. Tickets: \$50, \$70, \$90. Please call Box Office 201-227-1030 or visit www.bergenPAC.org

NEW YORK

September 22, 2018 - January 13, 2019 — ARMENIA! at the Metropolitan Museum of Art, New York. Armenia! is the "first major exhibition to explore the importance of Armenians and their remarkable achievements in a global context..." <https://www.metmuseum.org/exhibitions/listings/2018/armenia>

WASHINGTON, D.C.

SEPTEMBER 24-25 — Armenian Assembly of America's National Advocacy Conference will take place in Washington, D.C. Join us on Monday for the conference and welcome reception, and on Tuesday for the advocacy day on Capitol Hill, cocktail reception, and gala honoring Annie Simonian Totah. Special hotel rates are available at the Marriott Marquis. Visit www.aimhye.com for tickets and more information.

COMMENTARY

Armenia's Foreign Policy Alignment and Misalignment

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Common folks in Egypt have a very keen sense of humor. They can create anecdotes to render the most complex political issues into simple humorous stories. One such anecdote is about President Anwar Sadat, who succeeded President Gamal Abdel Nasser. According to the anecdote, Sadat inherited Nasser's chauffeur, who is supposed to drive him from his residence to the presidential palace. On the first day, the driver stops at a crossroads and asks the new president which way to take. After finding out that his predecessor used to take a left turn, he orders the driver to "signal left and turn right."

In a way, this situation also characterizes Armenia's foreign policy. Outwardly, relations seem normal. From the prime minister down to the foreign minister, all exalt Armenian-Russian relations. They reaffirm the importance of the Russian 102nd military base in Armenia and they value Armenia's participation in the collective security pact led by Russia; yet there is an unease in the air. While on the official level, pronouncements are rare, the news media are awash with criticism and counter criticism, giving the impression that the parties are at each other's throats.

During the previous administration, media criticism - and caustic ones at that, was permissible. As a journalist, even the current prime minister did not pull his punches. But the Velvet Revolution, which has unified the population and has offered a hope for a better future, has also endowed the new administration with an aura of infallibility. It is within this paradigm that we need to analyze Armenia's foreign policy.

Now that Armenia has overthrown bloodlessly the corrupt regime, it has all the right to guard its sovereignty jealously. But that sovereignty has its own determinants, one of which is Armenia's relevance in the balance of power of the region. In Europe, 28 nations have forfeited their sovereignty to a certain measure, for the common good. That's statecraft which develops with historical experience.

At this time, Armenian-Russian relations seem to be at a critical juncture. The Kremlin has been watching all the movements and actions of the new government in Yerevan, in domestic and foreign policy, and has been reacting nervously.

Robert Kocharyan's incarceration and his pending trial do not bode well for Moscow, because he has always served as a pillar of Russian influence in Armenia. So far, Moscow has tempered its reaction in Kocharyan's case, considering it a domestic issue.

However, when Yuri Khachaturov's case arose, official Moscow spoke. The latter was the commander of the Yerevan Garrison during the March 1 events of 2008, when 10 people died and many others were wounded. Kocharyan is accused of "overthrowing the constitution" by ordering the army to move. General Yuri Khachaturov is considered the executor of Kocharyan's order. Cognizant of the delicate nature of Khachaturov's case, Armenia's government dealt rather deftly with it and released him from jail on bond, allowing him to travel to Moscow to continue serving his term as the secretary general of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

CSTO is in a way, the counterpart of the NATO military alliance. Jens Stoltenberg is NATO's secretary general. Imagine if the latter's home country, Norway, recalled him for criminal investigation. The entire structure of NATO would experience a shake-up. In Khachaturov's case, the Armenian government is pondering whether to recall him, after hardly serving half of his three-year term, and replace him with former defense minister Lieutenant General Vagharshak Harutyunyan.

It was indeed a special consideration for Armenia to have its representative in that very sensitive position. CSTO does not have as solid a structure as NATO, where there is virtually universal commitment to its goals and policies. CSTO has a looser structure: of its six member countries, two (Belarus and Kazakhstan) have closer relations with Azerbaijan than Armenia, while Azerbaijan has turned down the offer to join that military alliance. The secretary general has the command of flow of all information within the alliance and has control of military procurement. Unfortunately, it is not Armenia's choice to replace Khachaturov. It is believed that Belarus has already lined up its candidate for that position.

For a certain time Kremlin was observing a patient silence, while the Russian media was raging with a scathing campaign

against Armenia. Khachaturov's case was the straw that broke the camel's back.

The Russian influential publication *Kommersant* states that Russia is particularly irritated by the accusations laid against Secretary General Yuri Khachaturov, because Moscow believes it was a serious blow to the authority of CSTO.

In the wake of the current row, rumors went around that Russia was halting its deal with Armenia to deliver \$100 million worth of military aid. Later on, Armenia's Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan contacted Russia's Deputy Defense Minister Alexander Fomin, who assured that the deal was still on.

Sergei Lavrov is Kremlin's top diplomat, and his words carry weight. He blamed the new government in Armenia, stating that its actions do not correspond to the promises made earlier. He added that "Russia, as an ally to Yerevan, has always been interested in the stability of the Armenian state and Russia is concerned over developments in Armenia." Lavrov hopes that the matter will be settled "constructively."

Nikol Pashinyan did not react immediately. But commentators believe that Pashinyan's call for a general rally on August 17, which coincides with his 100th day in power, was his response, because that day he may come up with some major policy statements. But the Armenian media reacted violently. The newspaper *Zhoghovurd* wrote: "Lavrov's statement is a blatant attempt to interfere in the country's domestic affairs. It was the first ever sign hinting Russia's disagreement with Armenian politics since the Velvet Revolution."

Armenia's news media are abuzz with angry reactions. Commentators have been writing under pen names like Sargis Artsruni and Armen Amatuni, people who may prove to be officials in the government. For example, Sargis Artsruni writes: "Lavrov's announcement is a hostile act, which is unleashing a war against Nikol Pashinyan's government, mobilizing the revanche of the counter revolutionary forces in the country."

Another writer, Armen Amatuni, says "Thus, Nikol Pashinyan's call for a rally turns out to be response to the announcement of the Russian foreign minister. At that rally, Yerevan will demon-

strate the level of its legitimacy, to remind Russia that this time around it has to deal with a different kind of government in Armenia. And as a consequence, it has to forget old methods of dealing with Armenia and has to adopt a new manner of approach."

If the above statements are considered hysteria in the news media, a consummate diplomat's position is not any different. "Russia should not have interfered in Armenia's domestic political affairs to criticize the authorities for the arrest of the Collective Security Treaty Organization's top official, Ambassador Arman Navasardyan

said, commenting on Foreign Minister Lavrov's statement. What matters here are mutual interests. Armenia's importance for Russia is almost as great as what Russia represents for Armenia. Should Russia lose Armenia, it will also lose the South Caucasus."

It looks like below the surface of these exchanges, Russia has deeper concerns: Armenia's rapprochement with Brussels, its participation in NATO military exercises in Georgia, and now the new movement of the US Armenia Caucus, hand-in-hand with advocacy groups, to arrange a Trump-Pashinyan meeting are all signs of Armenia's political re-alignment.

Armenia deserves to accede to full democracy, eradicating corruption and adopting European standard of governance.

Armenia's population alone can achieve that goal, without relying on Europe or the West. Adhering to the West has its hazards too. The West is interested in Armenia as much as it can use it as an irritant against Russia. But once Armenia lines up with the West, different circumstances come into play. The West has its own priorities and on that priority list Armenia's interests will stand below the ones of Turkey as a NATO ally, and Azerbaijan as an energy source. The West did not lift a finger to dislodge Turkey from Northern Cyprus, although Greeks also are partners in NATO. Therefore, Armenia does not stand a better chance than Greece.

Alliance with Russia is not an ideal situation, but there is no ideal situation for a beleaguered country like Armenia.

Pashinyan's mentor, Levon Ter Petrosyan, once snubbed Moscow at his own peril and we lost two thirds of Karabakh to Azerbaijan.

Armenia's foreign policy will derive its strength from its rejuvenated domestic policy. And today Armenia is fully geared to achieve that under new rule. Realigning Armenia's foreign policy should not lead the country to misalignment.



Mirror Spectator



Established 1932
An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July and the first week of the year, by:

Baikar Association, Inc.

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www.mirrorspectator.com

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SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

U.S.A.	\$80 a year
Canada	\$125 a year
Other Countries	\$190 a year

© 2014 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472

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COMMENTARY

The Growing Housing Affordability Crisis in Glendale

By Monique Svazlian Tallon

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Glendale, California, has grown into one of the largest Armenian communities outside of Yerevan. The Glendale City Council, which is four-fifths Armenian American, recently voted to rename Maryland Street to "Artsakh Street" in acknowledgement of the city's rich Armenian-American population. Sadly, that same city council has taken no meaningful action to address the city's affordable housing crisis, leaving tens of thousands of its own community vulnerable to displacement.

Walking down Brand Avenue in downtown Glendale, one can't help but notice the sudden glut of luxury apartments all cheerfully advertising vacancies. Over the last three years, dozens of these developments have been greenlit and built adding thousands of units to the city. However, only a small fraction of those have been designated as affordable housing units, while the majority have a starting price of upwards of \$2500 for a one-bedroom apartment. The same "luxury-only" construction priority is seeping into South Glendale, home to many Armenians and working families.

As the number of new developments rise, so do the rents. Recently, the 63-unit apartment building located at 1377 E. Windsor Ave. in Glendale was sold to Champion Real Estate, which also owns a rent-controlled building in Hollywood, which it plans to turn into a luxury housing development. One Armenian resident, a mother of two small children, saw her rent skyrocket from \$1400 to \$2200 overnight. On top of that, she describes the building as completely neglected, with termites, plumbing issues, broken windows, rotten appliances and other problems that property management has chosen to ignore.

This is just one example out of hundreds of residents who have complained of \$800-\$1000 rent hikes in apartment buildings all over Glendale. Hayk Makhmuryan, a volunteer with the Glendale Tenants Union which was formed to address the growing housing crisis, says "Affordable housing is a human right. We at the Glendale Tenants Union believe this is the number one issue impacting our community right now and we are not going to rest until we pass an ordinance that establishes rent control in Glendale."

Neighboring cities like Hollywood or West Los Angeles have rent control laws on the books that cap rent hikes to three percent per year, but Glendale has no such regulation. It also does not have a Rental Board, so individual tenants or even whole buildings that are victims of price gouging have no recourse or means of defense. This puts vulnerable members of the community - working families, recent immigrants, and senior citizens - at considerable risk. "We have spoken to hundreds of Armenians and other minority communities in Glendale who are moving out of the city because they can no longer afford to live here. It is absolutely devastating to the rich diversity that has been unique to Glendale," says Mike Van Gorder of the Glendale Tenants Union.

To combat this crisis, there is a new ordinance that is being proposed called the Fair Rent Stabilization Act designed to cap rents at a four percent increase per year and establish a rental board in Glendale. The voter-led initiative process includes gathering 10,500 signatures to force the City Council to include this initiative on the ballot in the next voting cycle. These petitions were due August 6. While the City Council does have the authority to add this to their agenda and pass the ordinance outright if they so choose, they have thus far done nothing to help protect their constituents.

"We are committed to showing up every week to City Council meetings to put pressure on this City Council to adopt rent control. We will not stop until we prevail," says Mr. Makhmuryan.

If you would like to get involved with the Glendale Tenants Union, visit their Facebook page or their website at <http://glendaletenants.org/>

Sanctions on Turkey: The Secret Story of How It Happened and Nightmare Scenarios

By Melik Kaylan

As a strategic alliance of some 70 years degenerates into recriminations and tit-for-tat sanctions between Turkey and the US, let us consider the possible scenarios. What happens if Turkey dumps NATO and joins the strategic opposition? Can the Brunson case lead in that direction - and what's really going on there anyway? First the facts: Washington imposed Magnitsky-like global injunctions against two top officials of President Erdogan's cabinet, the Justice and Interior ministers, for Turkey's failure to release the evangelist Pastor Andrew Brunson. News emerged that Ankara rather cluelessly planned to retaliate in kind against the US Attorney General and Interior Secretary - the latter official presides over National Parks. Turkey's top four non-Kurdish political parties issued a unified protest against the US. The Kurdish party didn't.

The charges against Pastor Brunson betray a scattershot opera-bouffe fraudulence. Brunson apparently consorted with coup plotters, Kurdish terrorists, Gulenists, apostates...any and all groups that Erdogan incited into resistance through his despotic antics. Nobody believes the accusations, but in Erdogan's Turkey the country feels constantly under siege from dark forces and nobody knows what to believe. Precisely the environment of hysteria and chaos that strongmen foster to justify unilateral rule. Erdogan has learned amply from Putin and the mullahs. From the latter he learned the business of alienating the US by taking innocents hostage, picking a fight, and consolidating power at home.

The secret history of Brunson's ordeal has many layers. Most outside commentators see through his prosecution's flimsy charade. They assume he's being set up for a swap with Fethullah Gulen or the Turkish financier Reza Zarrab currently in federal prison for breaking Iran sanctions. That is true as far as it goes. But there's another layer, one that poked out briefly during the Zarrab case in New York back in December 2017. I wrote about it at the time, and I predicted that "a Magnitsky-like sanctions regime might be levelled at top people around Erdogan." My article points out that anomalous documents got introduced into the public record during the trial, having little apparent relevance to the proceedings. In brief, those documents suggest that Zarrab had helped Erdogan's family profit from breaking the Iran embargo.

In essence, the US (and other countries) seem to have evidence that Erdogan personally profited from sanctioned Iran-

oil finances. Such evidence serves as leverage on the Turkish president not to stray too far from the Western alliance or else. Or else what? Or else Turkey itself, with Erdogan at its head, might ultimately go from Magnitsky to Iran-like embargoes. The process works incrementally, can be ratcheted up any time. Aware of the threat, Erdogan has countered with human hostages as pawns. Currently, Donald Trump et al. have chosen to expend some of the leverage on the Brunson case. It's outrageous, anyway, that in the 21st century religious minorities in a country like Turkey can suffer such visible adversity. Just in April the Mormon church pulled out 38 volunteers owing to "political tensions." The historic Greek Orthodox seminary of Halki still remains inexplicably closed. The Armenian horrors of 1915 have not faded from global memory. Meanwhile the Turkish media constantly ramps up hysteria against invisible enemies such as missionaries and foreign spies dressed up as missionaries or journalists. As he amasses wealth and power, Erdogan is playing with his nation's future, indeed its survival, impervious to the examples close by of the chaos that dictatorship ultimately sows.

For the Western alliance, such as it is, the question of Turkey hovers ever more luridly. What to do if Erdogan goes too far and realigns with the strategic opposition? Namely, joins a "multipolar" bloc alongside Moscow, Tehran and possibly Beijing. Nothing good for Turkey, that's for sure. As we see around the world, their patronage cannot guarantee the stability and prosperity of their client states. What strategic implications for the US and EU? A Venezuela- or Syria-like collapse of Turkey would spell disaster for the EU on its eastern border involving the whole nightmare scenario of migrants, refugees, fundamentalists and much else. Result? A massive nationalist backlash in Europe replacing Merkel et al. with more Orbans and Le Pens. It would end the EU as we know it. Who benefits the most? Answer: Vladimir Putin. He destroys NATO's southern flank and gains political allies in Europe. He can then march fully into Georgia and Ukraine and dominate Moldova with no prospect of resistance, no Cold War to fear.

Take a moment to digest the scenario. No economic alignments, no human rights anywhere, no coherent Western soft power. Instead: China and Russia. Ask yourself if the current White House can play its next moves with any consistency to block the drift. So what should it do? Now more than ever the Western alliance needs fortifying. Secure Europe, secure Asian allies. Find a way to ease out Erdogan and correct Turkey's course.

(This piece previously appeared in Forbes.com)

Immigrant Detention Centers 'A Stain on America'

By Sue Dremann

BROWNSVILLE, Texas (Palo Alto Weekly) - US Rep. Anna Eshoo, D-Palo Alto, and more than 20 members of the US Congress journeyed to Texas Friday June 23 to visit immigration detention facilities where hundreds of adults and children are being held after they tried to enter the United States.

The conversations Eshoo had with distraught mothers, she said Monday, June 25, are keeping her awake at night.

In the Brownsville, Texas facility - under the control of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) - Eshoo met with at least seven mothers whose children had been taken away.

"They were beside themselves and filled with grief and worry. They had no idea where their children were; no one could tell them; they didn't know how long they were going to be held there. They were in prison uniforms," she said.

Under the Trump Administration's "zero tolerance" policy, thousands of people have been taken into custody in recent months and are being held in detention cells and cages while they await deportation, prosecution or an asylum hearing. Many hundreds of children have been separated from their parents.

On June 20, facing widespread bipartisan outrage, President Trump issued an executive order that reversed the practice of separating children from their families. But those family members who are already apart remain that way for now.

More than 2,053 children were being held in US Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)-funded facilities as of June 20. An additional 522 children had been reunited with their parents. About 17 percent were separated from their parents at the border; 83 percent arrived in the US without a parent or guardian, according to a June 23 Health and Human Services statement.

What deeply troubled Eshoo during the visit is that the agencies didn't seem prepared to implement the administration's policy. There is no dual-tracking system for the children who have been separated from their parent, she said.

The children have only a telephone number of a relative pinned to their clothing. Some Border Patrol and ICE agents told Eshoo that parents wrote the phone number of relatives on their child's shoes before they were taken away. But many of the children are so small that they don't even know their last names or even their parents' first names, she said.

HHS staff said children are allowed to speak to their parents at least twice a week. But Eshoo said she did not find a mother who said that has actually happened. Parents were given instructions on how to use a free phone service but Eshoo said the system doesn't work. The mother must have some resources to pay for the minutes they're on the phone, and many have nothing, they said.

"The mothers were so distraught. We asked questions, and they were just continually weeping and sobbing. They were given some tear sheets that ICE had given to everyone that said to 'call this number so that you can be connected with your child.' I've been calling the number and no one answers," Eshoo said.

HHS issued a three-page press release on June 23, "Zero-Tolerance Prosecution and Family Reunification," which states that federal employees know where all of the children are located. It refutes reports that the agencies are disorganized, and it claims to have a process for reunification.

"A parent who is ordered removed from the US may request that his or her minor child accompany them. It should be noted that in the past many parents have elected to be removed without their children," the officials stated.

Eshoo disputed that claim.

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Turkey Pressures Non-Muslim Leaders into Claiming that They Are Not Pressured

In a recent article, I wrote about the US State Department's annual report on International Religious Freedom, which stated that "all religious groups that are not Sunni Muslim suffer discrimination and persecution in Turkey... Religious minorities said they continued to experience difficulties obtaining exemptions from mandatory [Islamic] religion classes in public schools, operating or opening houses of worship, and in addressing land and property disputes. The government restricted minority religious groups' efforts to train their clergy..."

Immediately after this report was issued, the Turkish Foreign Ministry rejected it calling the documented violations of religious rights "a repetition of certain baseless claims."

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan sought a stronger rebuttal of the State Department's accusations against Turkey, even though he usually ignores all complaints about his country's flagrant violations of the human rights of its own Turkish citizens as well as those of its minorities and even Americans such as Pastor Andrew Brunson. Erdogan immediately ordered his aides to orchestrate a joint statement signed by all non-Muslim leaders in Turkey, claiming that their religious rights are not violated. Since these non-Muslim leaders are hostages in Turkey, they had no choice but to sign the petition that was prepared for them by the Turkish government.

While it would be easy for us to criticize these minority leaders for misrepresenting the violations to which they are subjected, this argument should be balanced by the fact that they live under a brutal regime that has no qualms about jailing and torturing not only religious leaders but also their

community members. We should also be somewhat gratified that President Erdogan, despite his despotic nature, has exhibited a rare sensitivity on the accusations against his country, and has valued the statement issued by the non-Muslim leaders, thinking that it would help Turkey look good in the eyes of the international community.

As directed by President Erdogan, the representatives of 18 non-Muslim minority groups in Turkey submissively signed the joint statement on July 31, 2018, claiming that their rights are not violated by the Turkish government.

The statement falsely declared: "As religious representatives and foundation directors of the ancient communities of different religions and belief groups that have been living in our country for centuries, we live our beliefs freely and we freely worship according to our traditions. Statements claiming or implying that there is repression are completely false. The various problems and times of victimization in the past have reached solutions over time. We are in continual communication with our state institutions, who meet the issues we wish to advance with good intentions and a desire for solutions. We are making this joint statement consciously out of the responsibility to correctly inform public opinion."

The signatories were the Greek Orthodox Patriarch Bartholomeos I, Turkey's Armenian Deputy Patriarch Archbishop Aram Ateshyan, Turkey's Chief Rabbi Ishak Haleva, Syriac Ancient Community Deputy Patriarch Mor Filuksinos Yusuf Chetin, Turkey's Armenian Catholics Spiritual Leader Archbishop Levon Zekiyan, Chaldean Community Deputy Patriarch François Yakan, Turkish Syriac Catholic General Deputy Patriarch Chorbishop Orhan Chanli, Gedikpasha Armenian Protestant Church and Denomination Foundation Spiritual President Pastor Kirkor Agabaloglu, RUMVADER President Andon Parizyanos, VADIP and Yedikule Sourp Pergich Armenian Hospital Foundation President Bedros Shirinoglu, Turkish Jewish Society and Turkish Chief Rabbinate Foundation President Ishak Ibrahimzadeh, Beyoglu Syriac Lady Mary Church Foundation President Sait Susin, Sourp Agop Armenian Catholic Hospital Foundation President Bernard Saribay, Istanbul Syriac Catholic Foundation President Zeki Basatemir, Chaldean Catholic Church Foundation President Teoman Onder, Bulgarian Exarchate Orthodox Church Foundation President Vasil Liaze, Georgian Catholic Church Foundation President Paul Zazadza, and Haskoy Turkish Karaites Jewish Foundation President Misha Orme. The joint statement of

these 18 non-Muslim leaders was widely disseminated to all minority newspapers in Turkey, all Turkish media, and many overseas publications.

Interestingly, on August 1, a day after signing their joint statement, all 18 non-Muslim leaders were invited to the Dolmabahce Official Reception Hall in Istanbul and had a four-hour luncheon meeting with Ibrahim Kalin, President Erdogan's Spokesman. Erdogan himself was initially supposed to attend this meeting, but was unable to do so at the last minute.

While the joint statement was intended to conceal the many difficulties experienced by non-Muslim institutions in Turkey, this bluff was quickly exposed when the participants at the meeting complained to Ibrahim Kalin about the multiple violations of their religious rights.

For example, Archbishop Ateshyan reported to the local Armenian media that he and Shirinoglu told Kalin about the properties that in recent years were returned to Armenian community foundations, only to have the decision reversed by a mayor or a government minister. They also complained about the Patriarchate's legal status and inability to receive contributions as a result of which the Patriarchate suffers from a serious financial hardship. Abp. Ateshyan suggested that either the Turkish government allow the Patriarchate to receive contributions or allocate a budget to pay its expenses. Abp. Ateshyan also brought up the suspended elections of local church executive committees, and the postponement of the Patriarchal election. The other participants in the luncheon complained to Kalin about their various difficulties, contradicting their own signed statement that they have no religious problems in Turkey. That is why the luncheon took four hours!

Kalin, in turn, thanked the signatories on behalf of President Erdogan for their joint statement, making it obvious that it was a major public relations coup for Turkey.

The only voice opposed to the joint declaration of non-Muslim leaders was Garo Paylan, an Armenian member of the Turkish Parliament, who boldly stated: "They don't allow us to elect our Patriarch, they don't permit us to open a seminary, they don't give us the right to elect the board members of our church foundations, and the community is scared like a pigeon!"

The joint statement was clearly signed under duress. Ironically, the minority leaders were pressured by the Turkish regime to claim that they are not pressured. Only in Turkey!

Turkey Becomes More Dependent on Russia Due to Idlib

By Metin Gurcan

LAST WEEK, Russia quietly began delivering large-scale weapons shipments worth \$200 million to Armenia as agreed upon between the two countries in 2015. Armenia is set to pay for the deliveries over 13 years with 3% interest. "State-of-the-art Russian weapons have been completely supplied under a \$200 million credit. Some types of such weapons are used in the Russian army," Armenian Defense Minister David Tonoyan said after the first batch was delivered.

Under the agreement, the purchase includes 90-kilometer-range (56-mile) BM-30 Smerch multiple rocket launchers, SA-24 Igla-S MANPADS, Avtobaza-M ground-based radio reconnaissance systems, RPG-26 rocket launchers, SVD Dragunov sniper rifles, grenade launchers, rifles and various types of munitions.

Strategic military relations between Russia and Armenia are not new. Armenia is Russia's sole military ally in the south Caucasus. The 102nd Russian Military Base at Gyumri is Russia's military base in the region.

With troops at Armavir, Meghri, Artashat and Zvartnots airports, Russia maintains more than 5,000 troops in the country. Armenia is heavily dependent on Russia for its economy, investments, electricity, oil and natural gas. Since 1992, Russian troops have been guarding Armenia's borders with Turkey and Iran. Armenia is also the sole south Caucasus country that is a member of Russia-led Collective Security Treaty Organization and Eurasian Economic Union. Although there was a recent major change in the Armenian government, there has been no change in its ties with Russia.

Kerim Has, a Moscow State University lecturer who closely follows Turkish-Russian relations, said Russia's military assistance to Armenia has exceeded \$720 million in the past 20 years.

"Sometimes, due to developments, some debts are written off," Has told Al-Monitor. He said "a \$100 million credit agreement signed in October 2017 provides a 15-year repayment schedule with 3% interest. The latest \$100 million credit will be given to Yerevan in the 2018-2022 period. With such credit arrangements and other forms of military assistance, Russia is able to keep Armenia in its axis, prevent expansion of clashes at Nagorno-Karabakh from harming Russian interests while reminding Azerbaijan of Russia's role in south Caucasus military balances."

This is precisely why sometimes Azerbaijan feels compelled to buy Russian weapons, Has added.

Has indicated he does not believe the latest military assistance to Armenia is related to

Russia-Turkey relations or bears any kind of military message to Ankara. However, a Russian military expert who did not want to be identified said that following its establishment of bases in Somalia, Qatar and Sudan, Turkey now has plans to set up a military base in Nakhichevan, a landlocked enclave of Azerbaijan. These kinds of plans are "disturbing" Moscow, the expert said, and added that the timing of the new Russian assistance to Armenia is an expression of these concerns.

But Elnur Ismayil of the Istanbul-based BILGESAM Wise Men Center for Strategic Studies agreed with Has. "Today, the priority of both Russia and Turkey is Syria. That is why both of them tend to ignore security issues elsewhere," Ismayil told Al-Monitor, adding that Russia's military and defense industry cooperation with Armenia should not be perceived as a message to Turkey.

Has also highlighted the importance of Idlib. "Syria is the priority but that is a very sensitive ground. Idlib, which has become a powder keg ready to go off, worries both sides. Idlib has actually become the primary candidate to become the starting point of a new Russia-Turkey crisis," he said. "I believe that in Idlib, Russia will try to keep Turkey on its side but push [Syrian President Bashar] al-Assad forward to control the region. It would be naive to think that Russia will tolerate the long-term presence of jihadis at Idlib. Remember, this year there were several attacks against Russian bases from Idlib with mortar fire and UAVs [unmanned aerial vehicles]. You can be assured that Russia is searching for a formula to put Idlib under Damascus' control. I think the Kurdish PYD [Democratic Union Party] is a part of that formula. The number of PYD delegations coming to Moscow from Hasakah-Qamishli has increased."

It is not hard to surmise that these PYD delegations dispatched to Damascus are primarily seeking weapons and political protection from Russia to balance US inputs.

Ankara's policy of pitting Russia against the United States in Syria will be more difficult after the Helsinki summit. Northern Syria is not vital area for Russia like Ukraine is. Northern Syria also is not vital for the United States. If somehow the indications of a US-Russia reconciliation in southern Syria are also applied in northern Syria, no doubt Turkey's cards against both the United States and Russia will weaken.

In sum, currently the priority is on the bumpy Turkey-Russia cooperation in Syria. Yet considering that Ankara's dependence in this forced partnership is increasing day by day, Ankara might be needing Russia even more to maintain Turkey's military presence at Afrin, Idlib and Euphrates Shield pockets – especially after the accord between Washington and Moscow for southern Syria. Concurrently, Russia's need for the Astana process is also diminishing following the advances of forces loyal to Assad. One now has to await and see what the non-Syria-related repercussions of Turkey's increasing dependency on Russia are.

(This article was originally published in Al-Monitor)



Metin Gurcan is a columnist for Al-Monitor's Turkey Pulse. He served in Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Iraq as a Turkish military adviser from 2002 to 2008. After resigning from the military, he became an Istanbul-based independent security analyst. Gurcan obtained his PhD in 2016 with a dissertation on changes in the Turkish military over the preceding decade. He has published extensively in Turkish and foreign academic journals, and his book *What Went Wrong in Afghanistan: Understanding Counterinsurgency in Tribalized, Rural, Muslim Environments* was published in August 2016.



Immigrant Detention Centers 'A Stain on America'

DETENTION, from page 18

"I never heard one of the mothers say that. We asked them that," she said.

The mothers are also told they can ask ICE personnel to help them locate their child.

"None of this works for any of the mothers we met with. So it sounds very tidy, like it's a parent hotline, but it didn't work for them. And almost to a person – that is, the mothers – they didn't have the resources to make the phone calls.

"None have them have seen attorneys," she said. "They have no idea when they will have an appointment to be interviewed relative to their status. They have been informed of nothing."

The administration has also moved to keep the children and their parents in custody indefinitely. Under the Flores settlement, a class-action lawsuit affecting the treatment of undocumented children, the government can't hold minors in detention for more than 20 days. The Trump administration wants the courts to lift the limitation.

President Trump has requested that the Department of Defense identify bases in the United States where people can be housed – up to 20,000 persons.

"So it sounds to me like the administration is doubling down," Eshoo said. "To think that in the 21st century that in the United States of America ... the intention of the administration is to build more internment camps is so horrible that really this is a stain on the soul of America."

Children are reportedly being sent to states far away from where their parents are held. Each has its own laws pertaining to minors and care facilities, she said.

"I think the reason the administration wants to detain people on military bases is that state laws governing licensing facilities ... for keeping the kids don't apply," she said.

At the Border Patrol Processing Center in McAllen, Texas, which is run as an intake facility, Eshoo saw about 25 to 30 children in each roughly 20-by-20-foot chain-link-fenced cell and there were numerous cells lining the long hall. (News photos from 2014 show similar conditions in detention centers run during the Obama presidency.)

Once a day for a half hour, those children big enough to walk get to run around outside.

"Most of them were very small children and babies. There were a handful of adults – women who bottle-fed the babies," she said. She doubted that the oldest was even 5 years old, she added.

As they toured the facility, members of Congress attempted to give the children little felt animals, but Border Patrol staff would not allow it.

"Border Patrol said it was the rules. I said, 'What rules?'"

"Well, we have rules," was the reply.

"Well, who wrote the rules?" she asked.

"You know, they have their jobs to do and they're doing it, but there's very little leeway to extend a loving hand to these little innocents," she said.

Eshoo didn't know if what the Congress members saw was staged or not. The facilities she saw were clean enough but are not comfortable.

"People are fed and they have clothes on, but they have no privacy whatsoever. The older people were just standing around and also the children, without any kind of spirit. It's so heavily laden with sadness," she said.

"The individuals that were being held had a very dazed look to them. It was as if they were almost devoid of emotion or that they were undergoing something that was obviously traumatic," she said.

At the very large facility in Brownsville, the

congressional members asked if there were doctors or social workers.

"They said there were something like four social workers and there were hundreds and hundreds of people there. That's hardly enough," she said.

For Eshoo, the effects of such incarceration and separation are personal.

"I know from my own mother when she came to the United States, she traveled with her mother. ... They came through Ellis Island. She was separated from her mother for about a week, and it scarred her. It scarred her. She couldn't speak any English; she didn't know where she was; she didn't know anyone there. She couldn't eat. She sobbed. She couldn't sleep.

"There was a woman. She remembered she had many tags on her, and the woman approached her and saw she had an Armenian surname. The woman spoke Armenian and she comforted my mother. Mom always said she remembered that she laid down with her on her cot and held her. And you know, she lived to be almost 91 years old and two nights before she died she was still calling out for her mother. So that trauma for children is scarring," Eshoo said.

Back in Washington, Eshoo said she will make due process her top priority.

"Most of the people we met with had presented themselves at the border seeking asylum. We have laws relative to asylum in our legal immigration system, and there are international laws that govern asylum as well. But they have not seen any lawyers," she said.

"Both Border Patrol and ICE said that there would be lawyers after they have an interview, which was confusing to me because once they have the interview they're informed whether their case is accepted or not. And if not, they are deported immediately," she said.

Eshoo said she is not against border controls.

"I believe anyone who presents themselves must be vetted. We don't want criminals, we don't want cartels and drug movers coming into the country. We have to guard our borders, but these children are not a threat to our national security," she said.

"The (administration) is not going to be able to continue these mass incarcerations if the Congress doesn't appropriate the money. I

think to a member that was part of the congressional delegation to Texas, the thought was that it was absolutely essential that there be a firestorm on the part of appropriators relative to putting the money up. It's one thing to say you have policy, but if you don't have money to drive it you don't really have a policy. The appropriators really need to know what's being spent, and the Congress, again, holds the purse strings. That's in the Constitution," she said.

"This is a tremendously costly operation," she said, noting that a prior policy vetted undocumented immigrants, put tracking ankle devices on them and allowed them a hearing before deportation. It was much less costly. The administration quietly ended that program before instituting zero tolerance, she said.

"The cost of that (previous) program was something like \$3.45 per day per individual. It is now something like \$45 a day per individual," she said.

What can Americans do?

"However someone views this, they should call their member of Congress and let them know. There are consequences to elections, and we have elections coming up in November. Everyone – everyone – should use their right to vote and go out to vote because this will not change unless there is a change in the policy," she said.

On June 22, Eshoo sent a letter to HHS Secretary Alex M. Azar II asking for an accounting of how many children are being held in facilities in her district and where they are located.

"I think I have a right to that information," she said, but she added that she hasn't yet received a response.

American citizens are decent people, she added.

"I asked the translator to communicate to the mothers that, because they don't know what's happening outside the walls of where they are, that everyone in the country knows that this is taking place," she said. "The American people are good and decent. ... They are appalled by it. We believe in the sanctity of the family; that the family unit is the core of our society and of all societies. And they wept some more. They cried even more."

London Armenian Community Council Elections Concluded

By Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian

LONDON – The elections of the Armenian Community Council were concluded on June 25, 2018 and the certified results have been returned to the Council by the Electoral Reform Services, London. Fifteen candidates were elected and the Bureau was

formed as follows:

Armand Aprahamian, Chairman; Dr. Hratch Kouyoumjian, Vice-Chairman; Stepan Tatouljan, Secretary (Armenian); Miss Maral Jakeman, Secretary (English); Dr. Setrak Karanfilian, Treasurer.

In accordance with the constitution of the Armenian Community Council the elected members took office on July 17 after the official handover ceremony on July 12.



From left, Mr. R. Sarkissian, Dr. A. Tarverdi, Mr. S. Tatuljan, Dr. V. Kassemajian, Mr. K. Ohanian, Mrs. M. Mackertitchian, Mr. A. Abrahamian, Dr. H. Kouyoumjian, Mr. A. Saboonchian, Miss M. Jakeman, Dr. S. Karanfilian, Mr. V. Haladjian. Absent from the photo: Mr. Z. Gasparian, Mr. Z. Jerejian, K. Derderian.

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