

Prime Minister Pashinyan Resigns

Paves Way for Snap Election

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced his resignation late on Tuesday, October 16, paving the way for the holding of snap parliamentary elections in Armenia in December.

In a televised address to the nation, Pashinyan said the elections are necessary for completing the democratic Velvet Revolution that brought him to power in May. He seemed confident that the former ruling Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) and other parliamentary forces would not try to prevent them by electing another prime minister.

President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian has accepted the resignation of the Cabinet of the Republic of Armenia, ARMENPRESS was informed from the press service of the President's Office.

Pashinyan's party controls only a few seats in the current Armenian parliament.

Early general elections are therefore vital for his political future. Observers believe that the popular premier and his allies will win them by a landslide.

Under the Armenian constitution, the National Assembly can be dissolved if it fails to elect another head of government within two weeks after Pashinyan's resignation.

The HHK, which holds 50 seats in the 105-member legislature, said on October 9 that it “does not have an intention to nominate a candidate” for the post of prime minister. The party's deputy chairman, Armen Ashotyan, reaffirmed that pledge earlier on Tuesday.

Two other parliamentary forces, the Prosperous Armenia (BHK) and the Dashnaksutyun (ARF), have also pledged not to try to install another premier. They have 31 and 7 parliament seats, respectively.

Pashinyan said that while his political team is “more than prepared for any scenario” he believes that the parliament majority will not “act against the people



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan

and national security.” He stressed in that regard, he does not view the HHK as an “enemy.”

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Trudeau, Macron Headline 2018 Francophonie Summit in Armenia

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – The leaders of more than three dozen mostly French-speaking countries wrapped up on Friday, October 12, a two-day meeting in Yerevan which Prime Minister Nikol



President Emmanuel Macron at the Aznavour Museum

Pashinyan said has raised Armenia's international profile.

French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and other participants of the summit adopted a joint declaration that was not immediately made public. They also appointed Rwanda's Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo as head of the International



From left, Nicolas Aznavour, President Emmanuel Macron and President Armen Sarkissian

Organization of La Francophonie (OIF).

The summit, also attended by government delegations from more than 40 other states, was the largest international forum ever held in Yerevan. It highlighted what the current and former Armenian governments have described as Armenia's “privileged relationship” with France.

“We can say for certain that this event has helped to boost the international standing of our country and to strengthen the International Organization of La Francophonie and its authority,” Pashinyan said in a video address to the nation. “The summit was very well-organized.”

“I want to thank all those people who

were involved in organizing it,” he said, naming several senior Armenian diplomats and other government officials.

Pashinyan also acknowledged that Armenia's former government and former Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandyan in particular deserve credit for the Francophonie organization's decision in 2016 to hold its next summit in Yerevan. “Special thanks to Mr. Nalbandyan for those efforts,” he said.

The Armenian leader also used the forum to solidify his seemingly warm personal rapport with Macron. Private videos captured the two men as well as Trudeau

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Street Name in Istanbul Changed to Dink

ISTANBUL (Agos) – Samanyolu Street in Istanbul's Sisli district has been renamed for Armenian journalist Hrant Dink, Agos reports.

Dink, the editor-in-chief of the Istanbul-based Turkish-Armenian weekly Agos, was shot dead at the age of 52 in broad daylight by an ultra-nationalist outside his office in central Istanbul on January 19, 2007.

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Mills Says Armenia Needs to Return ‘Occupied Territories’

YEREVAN (Mediamax) – U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills, who is completing his diplomatic mission in Armenia, said that the settlement of NK issue will require the return of “some portion of the occupied territories.”

In an interview with EVN Report published on October 16, Mills said that the Armenian people will have to decide for themselves what they are prepared for.

He noted he has been struck by how little discussion there was about what would have been or is an acceptable solution and compromise in Armenia.

“What I did hear was a little disturbing because it appeared to be a step back from where we were. I was surprised when I first got here and found out that most Armenians I met were adamantly opposed to the return of the occupied territories as part of a negotiation settlement. It has long been my government's understanding of why the occupied territories were originally seized; they would be land for a peace option. So I was very surprised that there was no support for that anymore,” Mills said.

Bolton to Travel to Armenia, Azerbaijan And Georgia

WASHINGTON (RFE/RL) – US national-security adviser John Bolton has announced he will be traveling to Russia and three Caucasus nations later this month for talks with senior officials.

In a tweet on October 11, Bolton said he would depart on October 20 for Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia.

“On October 20th I'll be traveling to Russia, Azerbaijan, Armenia, and Georgia to meet with my counterparts and other senior officials to advance American interests on a range of security issues,” Bolton tweeted.

Russia's RIA Novosti news agency on October 12 quoted a Russian source as saying Russia's Security Council secretary, Nikolai Patrushev, planned to meet with Bolton in Moscow on October 22-23.

The Bolton visit to Russia comes at a time of heightened tensions between Washington and Moscow over Russian actions in Ukraine and Syria as well as alleged Kremlin interference in US elections.

In August, Bolton told Patrushev that the US “wouldn't tolerate meddling” in the upcoming US midterm elections. He also said US sanctions against Russia would remain in place until Moscow changes its behavior.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

US State Official Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan this week met with Deputy Assistant Secretary in the US State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs George Kent.

He welcomed Kent to Armenia and said it is a good chance to discuss the agenda of bilateral relations and possibilities for developing cooperation, Pashinyan's office said.

George Kent said he is happy to visit Armenia in the period of ongoing changes in the country, and that the United States attaches importance to further enhancement of mutually beneficial partnership with Armenia.

The prime minister addressed domestic political processes and stressed that Armenia is resolutely advancing on the path of developing democracy, which isn't a foreign political orientation for the Armenian society – but an inner conviction and value.

Pashinyan also spoke about the coherent work as part of the anti-corruption combat and the reforms in various areas.

Kent noted that the United States government is interested in Armenia having successes in developing democracy, economic progress, as well as in other priority directions of the country, and is ready to assist the Armenian government in the process of implementing reforms.

During the meeting the sides also exchanged ideas over the settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, the current international situation, regional challenges and other issues.

Kocharyan Vague about Future Plans

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Former President Robert Kocharyan spoke about his future in politics in an interview with Bloomberg, the ex-president's office said this week.

Kocharyan has said that he is willing to support the active formation of balance in the political system.

Asked how he is planning to do it, the second president of Armenia said: "Be a part of it, first of all by expressing opinion, second of all by active partnership with other political forces, using the entire toolbox which is usually used to participate in political processes. It may be both personal participation, it may be cooperation, it can simply be active stance in Armenia's political arena, stance regarding issues of public concern and the general situation. Meaning there is a rather broad circle here."

Kocharyan added that the most important thing for him is that he can't be distant from ongoing events. He said that having office has never been an end in itself for him. "I passed through the highest offices that any politician can dream of. And in this case it isn't something new, it isn't a so-called unseen thing for me, for me to have a powerful desire to aspire for," he said.

2 Ex-Armenian Lawmakers Dead in Suspected Murder-Suicide

YEREVAN (AP) – Police in Armenia say a former member of parliament was shot to death in a restaurant and that the suspected assailant, also a former lawmaker, later died of a suspected suicide.

According to police, Karo Karapetyan and Arutyun Karagezyan, met Saturday, October 6, in a restaurant in the Armenian capital of Yerevan and that a quarrel over unspecified financial issues broke out. Karapetyan was shot and pronounced dead at a hospital.

Police say Karagezyan was found dead early Sunday of a gunshot wound in a village north of the capital with a gun in his right hand.

Police spokesman Edgar Dzhanoyan said a pistol found at the restaurant where Karapetyan was killed belonged to Karagezyan.

Both men were former parliament members for the Prosperous Armenia Party, which is currently in opposition.

Prime Minister Pashinyan Resigns

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Pashinyan rallied tens of thousands of supporters outside the parliament building in Yerevan on October 2 immediately after lawmakers from those three parties pushed through a bill that could have complicated the conduct of fresh elections. The three parties thus attempted to delay the vote until next May or June. They dropped their objections to Pashinyan's plans following angry protests.

Pashinyan stepped up his push for parliament's dissolution after his alliance won more than 80 percent of the vote in the September 23 municipal elections in Yerevan.

The constitution allows the premier and his ministers to continue to perform their duties at least until the inaugural session of the new parliament. Pashinyan emphasized this fact in his live address.

Pashinyan Speech

Speaking directly to the camera, Pashinyan in turns encouraged voters and explained his course.

"The roadmap for achieving early elections of parliament is the following: after my resignation the President of the Republic immediately accepts the

resignation of the government, the National Assembly doesn't elect a prime minister twice during the upcoming 14 days, which results in the National Assembly being dissolved and the President of the Republic calling for early elections of parliament.

"During this entire period, the cabinet members will continue carrying out their duties. I will continue fulfilling the Constitutional powers of Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia, that is to say I will continue being the guarantor of the people's victory and if you give a vote of confidence to our political force in the upcoming elections in December, I will be re-elected as Prime Minister."

He said the demonstration on October 2 indicate his popularity and that he thus does not fear an underhanded move from other political parties.

"The October 2 events showed that we are more than ready for any scenario, because not a single force can stand before the will and desire of the people.

"But now I don't even want to discuss any such scenario, because as much contradictions and harsh debates we were to have with a number of parliamentary forces, I can't think

that they have a goal and intention to act against the people and Armenia's national security," he said.

While he asserted his power, he also encourage the political activity of all parties, including the Republican Party of former President Serzh Sargsyan.

"I've said during my entire political activity, and I would like to repeat now also: I didn't have, I don't have, and I won't have enemies in Armenia and among Armenians. And I would like to wish good luck to all political forces in the early elections of parliament and to affirm that our government will guarantee the free expression of will of the people in the elections," he added.

He thanked the people of Armenia for their support and apologized to those whom he has let down.

"But, dear countrymen, I want you to know definitely and undoubtedly: all your pains are in my heart, all your needs are in my thoughts, all your dreams are in my soul and give me wings and strength to stand before you and to confidently say – everything will be all right, everything will be very good. Prepare yourselves for new victories and prepare for building a new and powerful, free and happy Armenia."

(RFE/RL and Armenpress contributed to this report.)

Armenia's President Releases Details From Meeting with Artsakh Counterpart

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Within the frameworks of his visit to the Republic of Artsakh on October 15, President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian met with President of Artsakh Bako Sahakyan in Stepanakert.

Sarkissian told reporters at Shushi's museum of fine arts that he has discussed a range of issues with his Artsakh counterpart. "We talked about the domestic political life in Artsakh, the situation in the border, as well as a number of other issues. We also touched upon the future activity of Hayastan All-Armenian Fund. No one can underestimate the works of this structure for these years. We expect that the Fund will continue not only operating well, but also ensuring good quality. I, as a chairman of the Fund's Board of Trustees, will do everything possible for the structure to develop program led by the new executive director which will contribute to reaching the activities of the Fund to a higher level which in its turn will lead to recovering the activity which has been stopped for several months," the president said.

The Armenian president added that he wouldn't like to separate his visit to Artsakh as a regular official visit. "Every time by visiting Artsakh I discover it in a new way. In a sense, I come home. This time I visited with my wife and participated in the Harvest festival organized at the Revival square," Sarkissian said, adding that he tasted the Artsakh dishes. "After visiting Shushi's museum of fine arts, which has a collection of very great paintings in a short period of time, representing the works of different painters, I would like to state that this structure is an architectural value, and it's welcoming that classic music concerts are regularly being held here."



Hayk Marutyan

Hayk Marutyan Sworn In as New Yerevan Mayor

YEREVAN (Armenpress, Arka) – Yerevan Mayor Hayk Marutyan's swearing-in ceremony took place on Saturday, October 13.

The new mayor promised to make every effort to ensure prosperity to the city and welfare to its residents. He also vowed to protect the rights and property of the community.

Marutyan also promised to do whatever he can to ensure economic and spiritual renaissance to Yerevan and to support all the initiatives aimed at its development.

Hayk Marutyan, My Step bloc's mayoral candidate, was elected recently by 81,5% of votes.

Marutyan met with the mayor of Stepanakert Suren Grigoryan, who arrived in the capital of Armenia to participate in the inauguration.

Hayk Marutyan welcomed his guest and thanked him for accepting his invitation. Marutyan stressed his special attitude towards Artsakh and, in particular, Stepanakert, and also noted that close cooperation with the capital of Artsakh should be continuous, and the directions of this cooperation will expand in the near future.

In turn, the mayor of Stepanakert thanked Hayk Marutyan for the invitation and congratulated him on his election as mayor.

Grigoryan wished his colleague practical success in this important matter, which will also serve to develop cooperation formed between the two Armenian capitals.



ARMENIA

President Trump: 'My Attitude Towards Turkey Is Very Positive'

ISTANBUL (RFE/RL) — After the release of American pastor Andrew Brunson on October 12, signs of warming appear in Turkish-American strained relations.

The head of the White House, though he does not speak of eliminating sanctions against Ankara yet, publicly announces his opinion on Turkey.

"We have not promised anything to Turkey, we do not go for a deal to release captives or prisoners. However, I must say that now I have changed my opinion about Turkey very much, my attitude is very different from the feeling I had two days ago, now it's very positive, two days ago it was not so," Trump said.

Until recently, Trump was critical of interviews and Erdogan's administration in his tweets.

"Turkey has abused the United States' confidence," he said in August, a

few days after Washington had already imposed sanctions on Turkey to a significant blow to the country's economy.

US media outlets say the US president was ready to take stronger measures. According to ABC sources, Washington seriously discussed the issue of removing all diplomatic personnel from Turkey.

Speaking to the TV station, senior US officials said that the program was thoroughly discussed in the American elite, even though it was decided that the process would take place in two months, first by US high-ranking diplomats and then by ordinary employees of the embassy.

"For a moment, there was a fear that relations with Turkey would be severely disrupted," the State Department official said, adding that the issue of putting more severe restrictions on Turkish officials and businessmen was

on the table.

"The Turks were aware that the entire American administration was angry, and if Erdogan did not free Brunson many days ago, that anger would go out. Sanctions, restrictions, withdrawal of diplomats, everything was discussed," a senior US State Department official told ABC.

The Turkish court, who was imprisoned for more than two and a half years on charges of espionage and terrorism, released him last weekend and allowed him to return to his homeland.

Trump personally accepted Brunson in the White House. "From the Turkish prison to the Oval Office is not bad in 24 hours," he said.

The Turkish president continues to insist that he has nothing to do with the release of Brunson since the courts in Turkey are free, justice is independent.

Foreign Minister Meets with Rwandan Counterpart

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Zohrab Mnatsakanyan met on October 9 with his Rwandan counterpart Louise Mushikiwabo, the Foreign Ministry said.

Mushikiwabo was in Armenia for the La Francophonie events.

She was also elected to be the president of the organization later that week.

During the meeting the Armenian FM noted that he is happy to once again host his Rwandan counterpart after August.

Speaking about the bilateral agenda, the sides stressed mutual readiness to deepen relations and cooperation, pointing out digital economy, IT and innovations as a targeted sector.

The Armenian FM stressed that comprehensive development of relations with African countries is one of Armenia's foreign policy priorities and expressed hope that the 35th Ministerial Conference and the XVII summit of La Francophonie in Yerevan will boost expansion of cooperation.

Armenia has been a member of the organization since 2008.

The International Organisation of La Francophonie represents one of the biggest linguistic zones in the world. Its members share more than just a common language. They also share the humanist values promoted by the French language. The French language

and its humanist values represent the two cornerstones on which the International Organisation of La Francophonie is based.

The International Organisation of La Francophonie was created in 1970. Its mission is to embody the active solidarity between its 84 member states and governments (58 members and 26 observers), which together represent over one-third of the United Nations' member states and account for a population of over 900 million people, including 274 million French speakers.

IOF organizes political activities and actions of multilateral cooperation that benefit French-speaking populations. Its actions respect cultural and linguistic diversity and serve to promote the French language, peace and sustainable development.

IOF has concluded 33 cooperation agreements with international and regional organizations and has established permanent dialogue between the

major international linguistic zones (the English, Portuguese, Spanish, and Arab-speaking zones).

The IOF has its head office in Paris as well as four permanent representations in Addis Ababa (at the African Union and at the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa), in



Armenia's Minister of Foreign Affairs Zohrab Mnatsakanyan with his Rwandan counterpart Louise Mushikiwabo

Brussels (at the European Union), in New York and in Geneva (at the UN). It has three regional offices (West Africa ; Central Africa and Indian Ocean ; Asia-Pacific) located respectively in Lomé (Togo), Libreville (Gabon) and Hanoi (Vietnam) and two regional antennas in Bucharest (Romania) and in Port-au-Prince (Haiti).

Aurora Initiative Announces Scholarship in Honor of Charles Aznavour

YEREVAN — Aurora Humanitarian Initiative co-founders Noubar Afeyan, Vartan Gregorian, Ruben Vardanyan announced this week the creation of a scholarship to honor the legacy of the late singer, Charles Aznavour.

The new scholarship will be awarded annually to students from France — and

Francophone countries — who will have the opportunity to study at UWC Dilijan.

In a letter disseminated this week, they wrote, "Charles Aznavour personified the Armenian story — the child of refugees became a global idol who delivered messages of humanity through his music and his huge personality. His

charisma, his worldliness, his genuine love for people took him around the world and we will all remember him for what he gave us — love, energy, faith in ourselves and our fellow man. He did this as an entertainer and philanthropist. He will not be forgotten and we will miss him.

"Aznavour lent his name and his energy to the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative from the beginning. He was an important part of the first two Aurora Prize ceremonies in 2016 and 2017. In his memory, the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative will launch a new annual scholarship as part of the Gratitude Scholarship Program. This program was established in gratitude to the people of the countries that offered shelter and food to those displaced by the Armenian Genocide more than a century ago. Aznavour was one of those people and he found refuge — and fame — in France."

Street Name in Istanbul Changed to Dink

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Ogün Samast, then a 17-year-old jobless high-school dropout, confessed to the killing and was sentenced to almost 23 years in jail back in 2011.

The names of several streets in the city have been changed because the municipality was concerned they would evoke the community of the exiled cleric, Fethullah Gulen.

The Istanbul Municipal Council has decided to change the names of a total of 90 streets that included words, which could be associated with FETÖ, the group widely believed to have masterminded the failed coup in 2016.

International News

OSCE Visits Artsakh Contact Line, Denied Access to Azeri Line

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — On October 10, in accordance with the arrangement reached with the authorities of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic), the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission conducted a planned monitoring of the ceasefire regime on the Line of Contact between the armed forces of Artsakh and Azerbaijan, to the south from Gyulistan village of the Shahumian region, the Foreign Ministry of Artsakh said.

From the positions of the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh, the monitoring was conducted by Field Assistant to the Personal Representative of the (OSCE) Chairperson-in-Office (CiO) Ognjen Jovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Personal Assistant to the CiO Personal Representative Simon Tiller (Great Britain).

From the opposite side of the Line of Contact, the monitoring was conducted by Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk and his Field Assistant Ghenadie Petrica (Moldova), as well as staff member of the Office of the CiO Personal Representative Martin Schuster (Germany).

The monitoring passed in accordance with the agreed schedule. However, the Azerbaijani side did not lead the OSCE mission to its front-line positions.

From the Artsakh side, the monitoring was accompanied by representatives of the Republic of Artsakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense.

Armenian Serial Rapist Arrested in Poland

WARSAW, Poland (news.am) — An Armenian criminal, who has committed several aggravated rapes and assaults in the Belgian coastal town of Oostende, was arrested last week in Szczecin, Poland, the website of EU's law enforcement agency reported.

At the time of arrest, the 30-year-old was in possession of counterfeit Romanian, Belgian and Greek documents. Polish police officers immediately checked Europe's Most Wanted website and recognised him as the fugitive wanted by Belgium.

The suspect was convicted in 2015 and sentenced to 25 years imprisonment by a court in Bruges (Belgium). He was found guilty of violently raping several women, threatening his victims with a weapon, and numerous other assaults in Oostende (Belgium) in 2011 and 2012. He fled abroad and his whereabouts were unknown until last week. The criminal was featured on both Belgium's and Europe's Most Wanted websites.

The Fugitive Active Search Team (FAST) of the Belgian federal police was contacted by their Polish colleagues after they recognised him on Europe's Most Wanted website. They were quickly able to confirm his identity by comparing fingerprints.

The Belgian authorities have requested his extradition.

Sino-Armenian Cooperation Discussed At Conference

LONDON — On September 12-14, the "The Annual Conference of the British Association for Chinese Studies" was held at King's College London.

The conference was organized by The Lau China Institute, King's College London and British Association for Chinese Studies.

Selected scholars from different countries were invited to participate and introduce their research on international security issues.

Mher Sahakyan, the head of the China-Eurasia Council for Political and Strategic Research Foundation, Armenia, was among participants.

He presented his research on "One Belt, One Road Initiative's Financial Resources and Prospects for Sino-Armenian cooperation in the financial-banking sphere."

The presentation was followed by a discussion on both the topic of research and the methods used by Sahakyan.



INTERNATIONAL

Trudeau, Macron Headline Francophonie Summit in Armenia

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and Prince Albert of Monaco at an official dinner late on Thursday, learning how to perform Armenian dancing, as instructed by Pashinyan and his wife. (See <https://www.rferl.org/a/macron-trudeau-dance-in-yerevan/29540450.html>)

Pashinyan and Macron hugged each other before the latter left the Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concert Complex, which served as the summit venue, for Yerevan's Zvartnots international airport on Friday afternoon.

The Francophonie grouping comprises 54 member states where French is spoken or where there is an affinity toward French culture. Many of them are former French colonies.

Armenia hosted on Thursday a summit of the Paris-based Francophonie organization attended by French President Emmanuel Macron, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau and the leaders of three dozen other French-speaking nations.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan greets guests at the Francophonie conference.

The two-day summit, also attended by government delegations from over 40 other states, is the largest international forum ever held in Yerevan. It highlights what the current and former Armenian governments have described as Armenia's "privileged relationship" with France.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan opened the gathering with a speech delivered in French.

"I and all Armenian people are happy to host in Yerevan the 17th summit of the heads of Francophone states and governments," he said. "Welcome to Armenia!"

"Armenia is a young member of the Francophonie ... and yet there is no need to prove its commitment to promoting cultural and linguistic diversity and fundamental values of the French language and the Francophonie," he said. Those values include respect for democracy and human rights, added the Armenian leader.

Armenia and Moldova are the only former Soviet republics among the Francophonie's 54 full members. The three Baltic states, Georgia and Ukraine have an observer status in the organization.

Macron at the Summit

Macron also addressed the summit, describing the Francophonie nations as a global and diverse "family" that can contribute to international peace which he said is under growing threat.

"We do not have the same skin color, our gods do not bear the same names and some of us do not believe in God," he said. "We also live in very different climate zones and our songs are not similar. Our histories do not originate from the same sources and there have been many wounds between us which



President Armen Sarkissian with Prime Minister Emmanuel Macron

are only now starting to heal."

"Yet strangely enough, this diverse family is united around a single language ... That language does not belong to anyone, it belongs to all of us," declared Macron.

While in Yerevan, the French president held talks with Pashinyan. The two men most recently met in Paris on October 5 when the French government organized a national homage to Charles Aznavour, the legendary French singer of Armenian descent who died earlier this month.

Pashinyan paid tribute to Aznavour in his speech. At his request, the summit participants remembered the late crooner with rapturous applause.



Leaders of French-speaking nations pose for a photograph at a Francophonie summit in Yerevan, October 11.

Macron spoke about the planned meeting with great chansonnier Charles Aznavour that was to take place at "Charles Aznavour" residence but failed to happen and the struggle of Charles Aznavour for the recognition of the Armenian Genocide, noting that April 24 will be remembered in France as the Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.

Gala Concert

Pashinyan, accompanied by his wife Anna Hakobyan, attended the gala concert at the Republican Square of Yerevan organized in the sidelines of the 17th summit of Francophonie.

Macron, Trudeau, heads of delegations participating in the summit, and the highest political and spiritual leadership of Armenia were present at the concert.

The final part of the concert was dedicated to the memory of Aznavour.

Pashinyan presented French President Emmanuel Macron with the Armenian translation of Macron's book, *Revolution*, translated into Armenian by the state prior to the summit.

The French president added that Aznavour's struggle was first of all for the sake of Armenia, in order the Armenian nation could raise their heads and withstand the wounds of history.

In his speech Macron also recalled the Spitak earthquake of 1988, pointing out Aznavour's role in providing support to the survivors.

"Today, the Aznavour Foundation, under the auspices of [his son] Nicolas and [museum director] Kristina [Sarkisian] continues that humanitarian mission throughout the world," Macron said.



The gala concert



President Emmanuel Macron and his wife, Brigitte, visited the Armenian Genocide Museum and Memorial.



Nouneh Sarkissian with Brigitte Macron at the Aznavour Museum

ject of the Aznavour center at the Charles Aznavour Residence on October 11 with Macron and his wife, Brigitte.

Nicolas Aznavour, the son of the late singer, who is also the founder of "Aznavour" Foundation and Director Kristina Sarkisian presented the goals and activities of "Aznavour" center.

An interactive museum will operate in the center, dedicated to Charles Aznavour's life, as well as music, French and film making will be taught.

The two Presidents, accompanied by their wives and the leadership of the Foundation toured in the area of the center, which will open its doors after the full reconstruction of the building.

"Dear Nicolas, on behalf of the entire Armenian people, my wife and personally me I once again extend deep condolences on the occasion of this great loss. Your father, the great poet, once said in a philosophic manner that life is very simple — there is birth, there is death and there is life between them. But let me say that in case of a great poet, musician and artist such as Aznavour there is something beyond all that — a second life coming after death. His second life started a few days ago," President Sarkissian said.

Armen Sarkissian thanked Emmanuel Macron for what he, his wife and the entire French people did to show great respect and appreciation towards Aznavour.

Nicolas Aznavour said that it's a pity for him and the staff of the Foundation to present the project of the Aznavour center without the presence of his father.

Aris Adamian is the architect of the center, who discussed the reconstruction issue of the center with Aznavour when he was still alive.

New President of Francophonie Elected

Mushikiwabo lobbied for support and got the backing of the African Union and France

The world organisation of French-speaking nations on



INTERNATIONAL

Friday elected Rwandan Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo as its new head despite her country's shift to English a decade ago and controversy over its rights record.

Mushikiwabo was elected in a suspense-free vote on the last day of the International Organisation of La Francophonie (OIF) summit in the Armenian capital Yerevan. She will replace Canadian politician Michaelle Jean.

The 57-year-old visited dozens of countries to campaign for support and received the backing of the African Union as well as the crucial support of France.

Ironically Rwanda, a former Belgian colony where French

part the steps and reforms aimed at developing the economy, changing the economic structure and fighting corruption. Pashinyan suggested Trudeau to convey to Canadian businessmen the signals from Armenia – readiness of the government of Armenia for cooperation.

The prime minister of Canada saluted the reforms under implementation in Armenia and expressed readiness to actively cooperate with the Government of Armenia.

During the meeting the sides discussed a number of issues referring to the development of democracy, efficient governance, civil society, women's involvement in social and political processes.

The sides also exchanged ideas over Nagorno Karabakh conflict settlement, international threats and challenges.

The Armenian premier presented to his Canadian counterpart the nature of Nagorno Karabakh conflict, emphasizing that it's not a territorial dispute as Azerbaijan tries to present. The issue is about the right to life of the people of Artsakh and it's important for Armenia that international partners are informed about the negotiation process and situation. Nikol Pashinyan emphasized that the conflict

can be settled only through peaceful means in the sidelines of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-chairs' format.

The Canadian PM highlighted the continuation of dialogue and internationally authorized negotiation format for NK conflict settlement.

In addition, Trudeau and a group of his top aides paid a visit to the Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin and met Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians.

On October 9, Bishop Abgar Hovakimyan, Primate, accompanied by Ohan Ohanessian, Chair of the Diocesan Council, traveled to Armenia to partake in events organized on the occasion of the 17th Summit of the International Organization of La Francophonie, and the celebration of the 2800th anniversary of Yerevan, the Capital of Armenia.

Karekin II received Trudeau at Mother See of Holy Echmiadzin, who was accompanied by Foreign Minister of Armenia Zohrab Mnatsakanyan.

The catholicos recorded with satisfaction that the successful organization of the 17th summit of Francophonie in Armenia resulted in deepening of relations between different countries and establishment of new relations and partnership. According to Karekin II, it gave the member states of Francophonie and opportunity to get familiarized with the Armenian people.

Karekin II also expressed his appreciation for the warm attitude of the Canadian authorities towards the Armenian community.

Trudeau noted that he is glad for the meeting, emphasizing that it's a great pleasure to pay another visit to Armenia after 3 decades and a great honor to be hosted at the religious cen-



Prime Minister Pashinyan congratulates the group's new leader, Rwanda's Foreign Minister Louise Mushikiwabo.

was the lingua franca, switched to English as the language of education in 2008 and joined the Commonwealth a year after.

Her election is a victory for both Rwandan strongman Paul Kagame and Macron, who have sought to improve relations between their two nations, long fraught due to Kigali's accusations of French complicity in the 1994 genocide that killed at least 800,000, mostly Tutsis.

Her candidacy sparked criticism with Rwanda under fire over human rights violations and Kagame's controversial constitutional changes that allow him to extend his stay in power.

Trudeau Visit

Pashinyan, welcoming Trudeau to Armenia said, "Mr. Prime Minister, Your visit has caused great interest and good mood in Armenia. I hope that we will manage to transform this good mood into good deeds and agreements based on the talks. We can say that a very good atmosphere and mood exists in our relations. Now there is the necessity to implement projects and initiatives corresponding this mood and to put the cooperation on more tangible grounds, recording more tangible results. Once again welcome to Armenia. We perceive you as a good friend and I hope the same can be said about you in relation to our country and Government."

Trudeau said, "Thank you Nikol, these feelings are really reciprocal between Armenia and Canada. I want to once again



Prime Minister Trudeau visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial.



Prime Minister Trudeau visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial.

congratulate you and the Armenian people for organizing Francophonie summit in a brilliant and excellent way. It's not that easy to organize such an international event, it was really held on an excellent level. During our talks we will try to achieve simplification of interactions between our peoples and to ease air communication so as to create favorable conditions for investments, to promote enterprisers and economic development". Justin Trudeau added that he expects productive cooperation with the Armenian Government.

Pashinyan and Trudeau discussed a broad scope of issues referring to the development of Armenian-Canadian agenda.

The Armenian and Canadian PMs highlighted the facilitation of air communication for the activation of relations in the political, economic, business, culture and humanitarian spheres. For that purpose the sides reached an agreement to task the relevant bodies to start negotiations on the issue and submit a concrete package of proposals.

The Armenian premier presented to his Canadian counter-



From left, Nicolas Aznavour, President Emmanuel Macron, Brigitte Macron, and President Armen Sarkissian and Nouneh Sarkissian

ter of Armenia.

Speaking about the Armenian community in Canada, Trudeau noted that Canada has to thank the Canadian Armenians who have made a great contribution to various aspects of life of Canada. Referring to the Armenian-Canadian relations, the PM noted that Canada is proud to be Armenia's partner and will continue cooperation in various spheres.

Trudeau also met with Pashinyan, who said, "I am glad to welcome you in the capital city of Armenia. You are the first Prime Minister of Canada to pay an official visit to the Republic of Armenia and this is a historical event. I think you have already felt the positive attitude in our country towards your country and personally you and I hope that the already established relations will help to raise the friendly relations between our countries to a new level. I once again welcome you and I am glad to see you in Armenia."

Trudeau said in his speech, "Mr. Prime Minister, I am very grateful to you for the reception. It's a great honor to be in Armenia. I think you know that years ago I had the honor to visit Armenia with my father on summer holidays. He was no longer the prime minister of Canada at that time, which means I am the first prime minister of Canada to pay an official visit to Armenia. But even at that time I felt the friendship between Armenians and Canadians and the reception I received in Armenia today and in the previous days was great. It just an honor to be here. I am thankful."

Pashinyan presented his Canadian counterpart with the Armenian translation of the book, *Common Ground*, which Trudeau had written. "This is another proof that you have a unique place in the perceptions of the citizens of Armenia and this is the Armenian translation of your book which I am glad to present to you".

The two discussed a number of issues of bilateral interest, including the political changes in Armenia. Trudeau noted that when developments jeopardizing democracy were taking place throughout the globe, Armenia served as an example for the entire world, which was excellent not only for Armenia, but for the entire world. He noted that he had visited Armenia also for the reason to show the readiness of his country to support Armenia's development.

"The democratic developments of Armenia are a reason of pride not only for Armenians, but the entire world," Trudeau emphasized, adding that Canada is ready to support Armenia in the directions of economic development, attraction of investments, improvement of infrastructures and so on.

Speaking about the economic development of Armenia, Pashinyan emphasized that the goal of the Government is to change the economic structure of the country, making Armenia a technological country, and expressed confidence that there is the potential necessary for that. The PM added that the Government of Armenia has achieved serious success in the direction of fighting corruption and expressed confidence that it will foster the improvement of business environment and economic progress of the country.

Nikol Pashinyan and Justin Trudeau referred to other issues of development of Armenian-Canadian cooperation in various spheres.

(RFE/RL, Daily Mail, Armenpress contributed to this report.)

Community News

‘Armenia Way’ at Home in Queens On 210th Street

BAYSIDE, N.Y. — Sunday, September 30, was an amazing and historic day – not just for the Armenians of Holy Martyrs, but for all Armenians. The dream to have a street co-named for Armenians in Bayside, New York finally became a reality!

The day began with an Episcopal *Badarak*, celebrated by Abp. Khajag Barsamian (former Primate of the Armenian Diocese of America, Eastern), representing Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan. Following *Badarak*, the choir members, deacons and parishioners filled the church plaza to capacity (and overflowed into the street) while the children of the three schools – Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School, Holy Martyrs Armenian Language School and Sunday School – assembled on the church steps. With much excitement, the children sang Hayr Mer, and the American and Armenian national anthems, waving tri-colored flags and beaming with excitement. It was a proud moment for everyone who sang together.

Councilman Barry Grodenchik, who was instrumental in getting the approval for “Armenia Way,” served as master of ceremonies for the day. The celebratory program began with congratulatory remarks by Barsamian and Fr. Abraham Malkhasyan of Holy Martyrs Armenian Church, who were both visibly excited and moved by the sheer number of people who had turned out for the occasion. Barsamian declared the day a “blessed” one, marking the journey of Armenians to the shores of the United States and making use of the opportunities in their new homeland to become good citizens.

Armenian-Americans settled in Queens more than 60 years ago. Armenians love Queens and Queens has now given back to the Armenian community with a permanent sign. Malkhasyan, who was beaming, boldly told the hundreds in attendance that “this street sign, however, will have no importance if we do not fill our church with active members.” The cheers that erupted was a great indicator of the energy present in the Holy Martyrs community.

Local politicians who also spoke words of congratulations during the ceremony included

see BAYSIDE, page 7



The sign on “Armenia Way”



Razmik Grigorian with Mayor Zareh Sinanian and Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian

An Evening of Art and Education In Support of the American University of Armenia

GLENDALÉ – Among a showcase of rare Armenian paintings, the American University of Armenia (AUA) held a special event for its Pillars at the home of Razmik Grigorian on Saturday, October 6, where the city’s Mayor Zareh Sinanian and State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian were on hand to champion the university.

By Taleen Babayan

Grigorian’s ties to AUA were solidified during a visit to the campus, where he had a chance to tour the campus with President Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian, witnessing students in action who are eager to learn and become an important part of the country’s future.

“Armenia has no natural resources but it has the brainpower and energy of youth,” said Grigorian, a developer and community activist who is an avid art collector. “Dr. Der Kiureghian and his counterparts did something right with AUA by creating a university fit for the 21st century.”

Providing updates from Armenia to the donors gathered in the room, Der Kiureghian emphasized the “Western approach” AUA had adopted since its inception.

“We are essentially preparing the next generation and investing in the future of the country,” said Der Kiureghian, who noted that AUA currently has over 4,000 alumni, the vast majority of whom live and work in Armenia. “Our earliest graduates are coming of age and have taken on significant roles in the Armenian government.”

Nearly half of the nearly 2,000 students now on campus among the five undergraduate and nine graduate degree programs receive tuition waivers and financial assistance.

“We make sure we are open to all Armenians, regardless of the ability to pay,” said Der Kiureghian, stressing the importance of need-blind admissions, a policy that is maintained thanks to the unrestricted funding received through the 100 Pillars of AUA program, comprising donors who have dedicated themselves to the advancement of the University.

These contributions have indeed been put to good use as new degree programs and courses have emerged, remaining on par with the evolution of society and the job market. Observing the growth of the sciences and IT sector in Armenia, which has now been dubbed “Silicon Mountain,” AUA established new Bachelor of Science degree programs in Engineering Sciences and Data Science, as well as a Master of Science degree in Strategic Management, in order to stay ahead of the curve.

“Armenia has enormous potential to develop this field,” said Der Kiureghian. “This industry is one that requires brains, computers, the internet and management skills, and that is very suitable for Armenia.”

The opening of the brand new Student Union, Faculty Center and Amphitheater, funded by the American Schools and Hospitals Abroad Program (ASHA) of the US Agency for International Development (USAID), has also brought about positive changes on campus, as has the increase in the number of students from abroad who are studying at AUA, marking a record high of 233 academics from the U.S. and 28 other countries. In addition, AUA’s endowment has grown three fold over the course of 4 years, as the University of California fund managers carefully oversee the investment.

see AUA, page 7

Students Disciplined After Brawl Described As Race Riot at High School in Glendale

By Steve Gabey, Wendy Burch and Elizabeth Espinosa

GLENDALÉ (KTLA) – A meeting was held Monday, October 8, after video posted online showed what appeared to be dozens of students involved in a melee at Hoover High School in Glendale last week.

Students involved in the fight – described by concerned parents as racially motivated – were reportedly kept in separate rooms on Monday and speaking to counselors in “restorative circles.”

Police were called when the brawl broke out last Wednesday on the upper quad on campus at Hoover.

Parents told KTLA their kids say there is racial tension on campus between Armenian students – said to be the largest ethnic group in the school – and football players, who are mostly black, Latino, and other ethnicities.

“I know a lot of the students are very stressed and they can’t concentrate, and they don’t want to be at school. And what are we supposed to do?” parent Iris Lopez asked. “Our kids are supposed to go to school to get an education, not to worry about getting in a fight or getting jumped.”

Tensions boiled over into violence after an incident involving a special needs student who attempted to hug an Armenian student, parents said. At that point, they say, the Armenian student refused and supposedly spit at the special needs student.

Football players then became involved in a fight with Armenian students. Some parents say the spitting never took place.

The tension apparently didn’t end there.

A screenshot of a Snapchat message shared with KTLA read “whoever’s not Armenian we’re going to shoot.” Parents said that message circulated Thursday night, yet they were not informed by school administrators until Friday, one hour after classes had begun.

Parents met with school administrators on Monday to address the violence and threats. One parent said they feel that there is not enough security at the school.

District Superintendent Winfred Roberson Jr. issued a statement Monday afternoon, saying unsubstantiated rumors were heightening anxiety and fear in the campus community.

“Speculation about any motives and triggers for this altercation are very premature,” the statement reads in part. “The district is still gathering all of the facts and interviewing witnesses to the incident to determine exactly how and why this occurred.”

Roberson also said “adult supervision” on the campus has been increased to “maintain order.” KTLA spoke to a security guard on site Monday, who said she doesn’t generally work there, but the school has hired extra security because of the incident.

The students involved have been disciplined, Roberson added, noting that the “entire football team was not suspended or disciplined.” However, the superintendent said he could not go into the specifics of the repercussions or which students were involved.

According to parents, multiple students were suspended.

District officials are continuing to investigate the fight.

“This was a serious situation and the district is taking it very seriously,” Roberson said. “GUSD is working collaboratively with all responsible stakeholders to address the underlying circumstances and perceptions that may have contributed to the incident.”



COMMUNITY NEWS

An Evening of Art and Education in Support of the American University of Armenia

AUA, from page 6

Recognizing the Pillars in attendance, including Adour and Arsho Aghjayan, Vigen and Houry Ghazarian and Garo and Rebecca Minas, Der Kiureghian praised their commitment to the University through the 100 Pillars of AUA program, where donors pledge \$50,000 over the course of five years, allowing the institution to continue to thrive as it enters its third decade.

Shedding insight into why they decided to support AUA, Ghazarian said that “education is the way to become a progressive country, especially for Armenia that has limited resources.”

“We see that our brethren in Armenia are sacrificing so much to create a better Armenia,” said Houry Ghazarian. “By becoming an AUA supporter, we have joined this big family of like-minded individuals.”

The couple expressed their appreciation at the letters they receive from students who have benefited not only from their contribution as Pillars but also from the Endowed Scholarship they created in memory of their parents.

“We have seen how the funding has helped change their futures,” said Vigen Ghazarian. “We feel we are playing a small role in changing Armenia.”

The parents of AUA’s youngest Pillar, Adour and Arsho Aghjayan, said they made the commitment to become Pillars at the request of their son Nareg, who visited Armenia and AUA in 2015 as part of a delegation with the State Department for environmental protection, while he was in law school.

“On his return he was so impressed with AUA, he asked us to be Pillars and continue the interaction between the Diaspora and Armenia,” said Adour Aghjayan.

New Pillars Garo and Rebecca Minas said they appreciated “the vision of the founding members of AUA” and that it is “only through higher education that Armenia can become an economically independent country.”

The couple made their commitment after visiting AUA in person and were impressed with the “enormous amount of energy on campus.”

“Seeing the desire of students to excel gave me the inertia to become a part of the 100 Pillars of AUA,” said Mr. Minas.

In his remarks, California State Assemblymember Nazarian said that AUA is “training human capital for the next century.”



Pillar Adour Aghjayan, Razmik Grigorian, Mayor Zareh Sinanian, Arsho Aghjayan and President Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian

Referring to AUA as a “hub of innovation,” Nazarian pointed out that the leadership and vision of AUA will help Armenia flourish.

“It takes money and resources to be able to develop the future,” said Nazarian, who presented California State Assembly certificates to both Grigorian and Der Kiureghian for their commitment to the advancement of Armenia and the Armenian people.

Mayor Sinanian, who traveled to Armenia and visited AUA along with a delegation from the California State Legislature last month, elaborated on his connection with AUA that dates back to the beginning of the school’s founding when he interned at the institution in 1993 for two and a half months.

“I wanted to volunteer in Armenia during its dark days because I felt I had to be there and be of service during the war,” said Sinanian, who regularly travels to Armenia and praised the work of AUA’s leaders.

“The revolution may have seemed like a one

day event but it was an accumulation of efforts by AUA and the culture it instilled in its students that played a great role,” said Sinanian, who has witnessed the country’s progression due in major part to institutions like AUA.

“The university brings a new way of thinking, knowledge and modernity,” he concluded.

Speaking on behalf of state Sen. Anthony J. Portantino was his field representative Arda Tchakian, who said that the Senator enjoyed his recent trip to Armenia and AUA with the California State Legislature and appreciates the strong ties between the university and the State of California. She highlighted the recent bill the Senator signed, allowing tuition waivers to the UC Hastings College of Law to AUA alumni who are California residents.

Prof. Oshen Keshishian, editor of the *Armenian Observer*, who has been present at AUA’s multiple graduation ceremonies, encouraged guests to visit AUA’s campus, calling it Armenia’s “educational center.”

In the positive spirit of the evening’s gathering, Grigorian made a final announcement at the close of the Art and Education reception by naming himself as a Pillar of AUA.

“Education is what Armenia needs right now to empower the youth and the bright minds,” said Grigorian. “Because of my belief in AUA, I have decided to become the 84th Pillar and fulfill my pledge to the University that has brought so much to Armenia.”



Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian presented certificates to Razmik Grigorian and President Dr. Armen Der Kiureghian.

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‘Armenia Way’ at Home in Queens on 210th Street

BAYSIDE, from page 6

US Rep. Grace Meng (D-Flushing) who complimented the church for maintaining a “stellar” relationship with the community, adding that she is a proud member of the Congressional Armenian Caucus, Assemblywoman Nily Rozic (D-Fresh Meadows), Assemblyman Ed Braunstein (D-Bayside) and Assemblyman David Weprin (D-Flushing). All spoke highly of the Armenian community and their excitement to be with us on this historic day.

Following the speeches, Councilman Barry Grodenchik stood in front of the church doors and unveiled a duplicate “Armenia Way” sign to loud cheers. He then gifted the sign to Malkhasyan, who, with much pride and joy, lifted the sign up for all to see. The crowd of excited parishioners and friends then walked around the church complex to the corner of 210th Street and Horace Harding Expressway for the official unveiling. With cameras and

video rolling, Grodenchik, Barsamian and Malkhasyan pulled on the rope together and the beautiful “Armenia Way” sign was unveiled.

“Armenia Way” is the first street named for Armenians in New York City. The ceremony on September 30 was filled with much pride and joy for the entire Armenian community, as the day also coincided almost exactly to the 60th anniversary of the consecration of Holy Martyrs (September 28, 1958). Following the unveiling of the street sign a celebratory fellowship, which was standing-room-only, took place in Kalustyan Hall. Remarks by Aram Ciamician (Parish Council Chairman), Dr. Lynn Cetin (60th Anniversary Co-Chair) and Rabbi Menashe Bovit (a dear friend of the Armenian community) highlighted the significance of the day’s event. A cake cutting ceremony concluded the historic day’s festivities.

Lynn T. Cetin MD

Read News in Armenian at:





OBITUARIES

Anna Hovnanian

Philanthropist, Artist

WASHINGTON — Philanthropist and artist Anna Hamparian Hovnanian died recently.

She was born February 24, 1929 in Hoboken NJ, the only child of Hambartsum Hamparian and Virginia Achemian. Her father had been a professor in Kharpert, Western Armenia, where he had lost his first wife and son, who were slaughtered by the Turks during the Armenian Genocide.

Hambartsum Hamparian escaped to France and served in the French Legion. From France he immigrated to the United States. He met

Anna, from a young age, leaned towards the arts, and would pass time sitting at their apartment window sketching what she saw below. She recalls her childhood as loving, but quiet and lonely, and she vowed to herself she would marry for true love and have a lively happy household filled with lots of children and laughter. This was to be her destiny.

Anna was a diligent student and while attending high school would take a subway to Manhattan, to work in the hat department of Macy's, where she would model the hats. Her



Left to Right: Anna Hovnanian (front row, fourth from left) with Governor George Deukmejian, Gloria Deukmejian, and the Armenian Assembly of America leadership at the Assembly's 1987 tribute banquet in honor of George Deukmejian; Anna Hovnanian (front row, far right) with the Armenian Assembly summer interns class of 1984 at their New Jersey home; Lyudmilla Ter-Petrosian, Hirair Hovnanian, then President Levon Ter-Petrosian, and Anna Hovnanian at the grand opening of the Armenian Embassy in Washington, D.C. in 1995

Virginia, who had immigrated from Aleppo (Haleb), Syria; they married, and had one child—Anna.

They soon after settled in Queens, New York, where Anna was raised. Her father worked long hours in a small factory, and while always affectionate towards Anna, carried with him always the sadness of his lost family. Anna carries a special memory of her father carrying her on his shoulder through the streets so she would get sleepy, and holding her up to see the new invention of the television, displayed in shop windows.

love of Manhattan began and would continue throughout her life. Her beauty and elegant style were clear at this point and despite her humble position, she was always fashionably dressed, sewing her own clothes after studying the latest fashions from the best New York stores.

Anna graduated from high school and then received her bachelor's degree in fine arts from the Fashion Institute of Technology. Thereafter, she worked in Manhattan, first at Chase Manhattan Bank, and later for many years at Proctor and Gamble. On one occasion during a



Anna Hovnanian

morning subway commute, dressed chicly as usual, the subway attendant commented on her youthful elegance and said, "Miss, you are not meant to ride the subway." This, too, would be her destiny.

In addition to friends she had met through school and work, she spent time with a small group of Armenian friends, whom she met after she had joined the Armenia Dance Group of the AGBU. It was these friends who had invited her one weekend to join them in Asbury Park for a dance, where the Vosbikian band was playing. It was there she met Hirair Hovnanian, whose father had also escaped the Genocide, first set-

ting in Kirkuk, Iraq, then in Baghdad, Iraq, and later immigrating to the United States. Hirair arrived in the United States in 1951, and stayed initially with his second cousins, the Vosbikian family. He later got an apartment and attended Villanova University, working four jobs to put himself through school. Hirair has always expressed his gratitude to the Vosbikian family for the welcome they gave him when he first arrived in US.

Hirair and Anna were married February 11, 1956. Their marriage started with humble beginnings. They got a small apartment in Wayne, Pennsylvania, and as Hirair was completing his education at Villanova University to graduate in the spring, Anna got a part-time job at a leather factory making saddles. Anna was especially grateful for the kindness and love of Lily Vosbikian Hovnanian, who had married Hirair's brother Jirair, and she became the sister Anna never had. After graduation, with his engineering degree in hand, the couple settled in Bridgeport, Conn., where Hirair was employed by the Connecticut Turnpike Authority. Early homes in Connecticut were small walk up apartments with no kitchens, so the cooking had to be done in the bathroom.

Memorial Day 1958, was a life-changing day for the young couple, as that was the day that Hirair decided, with Anna's full encouragement, that he would start his own enterprise in large-scale real estate development. They moved to Toms River, NJ, to another modest apartment behind a supermarket, and in 1958 their first child Siran was born. Within the next six years they would have four more children. Anna had promised Hirair a son, and after three more girls, Edele, Tanya and Leela, Armen was born in 1964. During this time Hirair was working during the day, and on evenings and weekends would oversee his growing real estate business. The young couple worked hard, with Anna home raising five young children and Hirair working almost 24 hours a day.

see HOVNANIAN, page 9

Condolences

On behalf of the Tekeyan Los Angeles Chapter I would like to extend our condolences to Sossi and Vatche Semerdjian on the loss of Sossi's brother, Avedis Okkayan, who recently passed away in Toronto, Canada.

Parsegh Kartalian

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Noted Artsakh Filmmaker Don Askarian Dies at 69

BERLIN (Panorama.am) — Don Askarian, a renowned international filmmaker and photographer from Artsakh, died in Berlin on October 6 at the age of 69. He was the brother of sculptor and painter Robert Askarian.

In a Facebook post, the Artsakh Ministry of Culture, Youth Affairs and Tourism extended its condolences to Askarian's family.

Born in 1949 in Stepanakert, Askarian studied art and history in Moscow beginning in 1967. He worked as an assistant director and film critic for a year after his study but was imprisoned between 1975 and 1977. In 1978 he emigrated from the Soviet Union to West Berlin, living and working in the country for some 20 years. He founded his own film company, Margarita Woskanian Film Production, in Germany in 1982.

Askarian returned to his homeland after Armenia's independence in 1992.

His first film was "The Bear" (direction, scripts, costumes and scenery), based on Chekhov's story (1983-1984). From 1985-1988 he made "Komitas," which won several prizes at international film festivals.

In 1995 he founded the production and distribution companies — Don Film in Armenia and in 1998 Askarian Film in Germany.

In 1996 his book *Dangerous Light* was pub-

lished in Armenia.

Among his most famous films are "Nagorno Karabkh" (1988), "Komitas" (1988), "Avetik" (1992) "Parajanov" (1998), "Musicians" (2000), "On the Old Roman Road" (2003) and "Ararat — 14 Views" (2007).



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COMMUNITY NEWS

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Armenian Women's Welfare Association Annual Luncheon at the Belmont Country Club

By Lality Musserian

BELMONT, Mass. — On Saturday, November 3, beginning at noon, the Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA), sponsor of the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain and the Hanganak Clinic in Armenia, invite members of the community to join them for their annual Thanks-for-Giving Luncheon.

This year, the Belmont Country Club will be hosting the event.

The afternoon features a luncheon and a cash bar, followed by an array of "bucket challenge" auction items showcasing artisans from Armenia, as well as a three-tier supermarket challenge with three large prizes from local supermarkets. The creative "Armenian Sourj" themed centerpieces will also be won by a

guest on every table.

Entertainment will be provided by a professional DJ.

This luncheon is an annual tradition of the AWWA. It is one of the group's major fundraisers to support its focus on aiding and promoting the moral, intellectual, physical and social well-being of Armenian people. In addition to the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain, the AWWA also continues to expand its mission of caring by underwriting the Hanganak Clinic Elderly Project in Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh) and by contributing to projects to improve the Armenian community at large.

The AWWA Board of Directors, and its president, Susan Deranian, invite everyone to this afternoon of friendship and socializing.

For more information, contact the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center or visit www.awwa.us.



Some of the staff and clients at the Hanganak Clinic Elderly Project in Artsakh, which the AWWA supports.

Anna Hovnanian Dies

HOVNANIAN, from page 8

Throughout his life Hirair has consistently credited Anna's unwavering fortitude and determination, her total confidence and loyalty, as the inspiration for his grand endeavors, tremendous risks, and monumental success. At home, she took full responsibility for their children and was the ideal mother, loving yet firm. Even with the full responsibilities as wife and mother, Anna never let go of her artistic talents, drawing and painting when she could, the life around her; her family, the field behind their house, or a bowl of fruit on the kitchen table.

In 1972, with Hirair's financial success well on its way, the family moved to an oceanfront mansion in Deal, where the children continued their education and went on to top universities. Hirair and Anna enjoyed the fruits of their hard work and success, with world travels and entertaining at their beautiful home.

Their anniversaries were often celebrated in grand style. For their 40th anniversary they flew over 50 family and friends to the Bahamas for a weekend celebration, a 48-hour party, everyone sharing in the joy of their happy marriage.

In 1992, they moved to a large estate on the Navesink River in New Jersey, and there Anna created a full artist's studio in a cottage on the property on the water's edge. With her children grown and the time now available to her, she embarked on the most prolific phase of her artistic career. When she could, Anna always preferred to paint outdoors, as is reflected by her many landscapes. She continued her world travels with Hirair, often to Armenia, and had the opportunity to visit the studios of the artists she admired, including Rafael Atoian, Hagop Hagopian and Jansem, who once painted their portraits. Anna would often go on artistic retreats with her dearest friend, Charlene Onanian, to Rockport, Mass. where Charlene had a small seaside cottage. During this period

Anna produced many seascapes and landscapes. As the years past, Hirair and Anna became the proud grandparents of five grandchildren, whom Anna showered with love, as she did her own children.

In 1999 Hirair and Anna moved to Armenia, to a magnificent home which Hirair had built.

Anna Hovnanian had a personal exhibition of paintings on July 18, 2012 in Yerevan, Armenia.

She was a Life Trustee of the Armenian Assembly, but did much more than support the organization. She and her husband were the gracious hosts, and entertained at their beautiful house, which was always filled with Armenian music and dancing. During the early years of the Assembly's summer internship program in Washington, DC, now called the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program, Anna and Hirair hosted the numerous intern classes in their New Jersey home for a weekend filled with activities with as many as 30 to 40 college-age students at a time. Assembly intern alumni still have fond memories of their time with the Hovnanians during their participation in the summer internship program, and speak affectionately about Anna.

Hirair also spoke to others at the Assembly about Anna's unwavering fortitude and determination, as well as her total confidence and loyalty, and credited her as the inspiration for his life's work and passion for Armenia and the betterment of the Armenian people. Like Hirair, Anna looked to foster the next generation of Armenian leaders. Her dedication to young people is evident through her work within the Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation, where Anna hoped to encourage and develop the artistic talent and higher education of the Armenian youth through scholarships and grants to various organizations and students. She was a major force with the Foundation, and helped shape many lives.



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the Life &
Work of*

Diana Der Hovnessian

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COMMUNITY NEWS



Knights and Daughters of Vartan members with Ambassador Richard Mills, center, above picture, and with President Sarkissian, below at right.

Knights Meet Armenian President, US Ambassador

YEREVAN – The Knights of Vartan Back to the Homeland third mission trip to Armenia took place September 16-22, during which the Grand Commander, Dr. Gary Zamanigian, along with members in leadership positions met the President of the Republic of Armenia Armen Sarkissian on September 18.

During the meeting Zamanigian presented the history and mission of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan in Armenia and in the United States of America. The organization has been involved with supporting many projects in Armenia since its independence which include renovation and/or building of schools, kindergartens, community centers and homes for low income families; in addition grants are given to scholars which enable them to do research. Also the Knights and Daughters of Vartan support orphans in borderline regions.

The members expressed how most of their families have been living in the United States of America for two or three generations, as a result of the Armenian Genocide in 1915, but that their hearts always belong to Armenia.

The president expressed his readiness to sup-

port any program which contributes to the benefit and prosperity of Armenia.

In addition, the members met with the United States Ambassador to Armenia Richard M. Mills, Jr. and USAID Armenia Mission Director Deborah Grieser.

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The organization has been involved with supporting many projects in Armenia since its independence which include renovation and/or building of schools, kindergartens, community centers and homes for low income families; in addition grants are given to scholars which enable them to do research. Also the Knights and Daughters of Vartan support orphans in borderline regions.

The US Ambassador informed the group of the many projects the United States has been supporting in Armenia and that the current emphasis is on: Agriculture, IT and Tourism. The Knights and Daughters of Vartan thanked the US Embassy for the support they have provided to the Armenian people and discussed possible future joint projects.



TCA Group Meets with New Armenian UN Representative

NEW YORK – On October 11, the executive of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York Chapter visited Mher Margaryan, Armenia's permanent representative to the United Nations, to congratulate him on his appointment to the post this August. Prior to the appointment, he served one year as deputy permanent representative at the UN Mission of Armenia, under Ambassador Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, who now is Armenia's foreign minister.

The Tekeyan delegation promised to continue to unstintingly support the UN Mission in the same manner as with all the previous UN representatives.



From left, Barkev Kalayjian (treasurer), Amb. Mher Margaryan, Vartan Ilanjan, Hilda Hartounian (chair), Hagop Vartivarian (honorary chair)

ART EXHIBITION

Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York

Artist:
Simon Samsonian
(1912-2003)

Cubist-Impressionist

Opening Reception

Saturday, Oct. 27, 2018
7 PM - 10:30 PM

Sunday, Oct. 28, 2018
3 PM - 5 PM

Tekeyan Center
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For more information, please email
Tekeyannynj@aol.com

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COMMUNITY NEWS

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metmuseum.org

The exhibition is made possible by The Hagop Kevorkian Fund.

Additional support is provided by the Carnegie Corporation of New York, the Michel David-Weill Fund, the Armenian General Benevolent Union, The Giorgi Family Foundation, The Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Foundation, the Karagheusian Foundation, The Nazar and Artemis Nazarian Family, the Ruddock Foundation for the Arts, The Strauch Kulhanjian Family and The Paros Foundation, Aso O. Tavitian, and the National Endowment for the Arts.

The symposium is made possible by The Armenian Center at Columbia University.

Altar frontal (detail), New Julfa, 1741.
Mother See of Holy Etchmiadzin, Armenia.
Photo by Hrair Hawk Khatcherian.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills Dissolves

Legacy Survives through HMADS

By Arto Khrimian

FOREST HILLS, N.Y. – New York City has become an important cultural center for Diaspora Armenians for over fifty years thanks to its vibrant Armenian community with cultural organizations and private elementary and language schools. The Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills had been a notable participant among other organizations in their efforts to enrich our cultural and social life.

The Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills (ACCFH) – a non-political, non-religious, and non-profit organization – was founded in 1971 to foster Armenian culture in the Greater New York community, through such activities as lectures, literary events, educational classes, theatrical presentations, student talent shows, and social functions.

The founders were Dr. Sureyya (Suren) Naci Arkun, Ania Gross, Angel Hovagimian, Kevork Kahvecian, George Mouradian, Vartkes Ovanesian, Hagop Puskul, Arshag Sahakian, Levon Tatevossian, and Aram Vartanian.

The presidents of the Executive Committee in chronological order were Arshag Sahakian, Levon Tatevossian, Hrant Saruhan, Frank Kabarajian, Josephine Bebirian, and Sirpuhi Mark.

In addition to the above, the following individuals on the Executive Committee of the ACCFH at different terms had made substantial contribution to elevate the organization to its heights: Seda Terzian, Baruyr Tezel, Onnik Nevruzian, Alis Kahvecian, Silva Celiksu [Terjanian], Toros Celiksu, Hilda Biosyan [Sheshetian], Ayda Kabarajian, Walter Bebirian, Zabel Khrimian, and Arto Khrimian.

During its active years, the ACCFH organized both culturally and socially meaningful events such as theatrical productions in Armenian based on the works of Hagop Baronian and Yervant Odyan; scholarly book presentations – the one by Sona Tingir was memorable in its scope; concerts of classical Armenian and European music, among which soprano Ruthann Turekian Drewitz's was the most riveting; English language classes for new immigrants taught skillfully by Josephine Bebirian were also an introduction to American culture; and talent shows of poetry recitation, playing musical instruments, singing and dancing by the students of the Armenian schools in our Greater New York area enlivened the cultural life of our community.

The Paregentan, a dinner-dance masquerade party, had been a celebrated annual event for the ACCFH for many years. In addition to the Armenian music and dance, the "Quadrille Dance" conducted by Baruyr Tezel was considered the trademark of the ACCFH Paregentan event.

The ACCFH also collaborated with its sister institutions in organizing literary, musical, celebratory, commemorative events. Among the many renowned figures who were either honored or participated in those events, the following names stand out: Archbishop. Shnork Kalustyan, Archbishop Karekin II Kazancian, Archbishop Mesrob Mutafyan, Archbishop Sahar

Sivacian, Archbishop Nourhan Manougian, Archbishop Pargev Martirosyan, Prof. Abraham Terian, Zahrad, Rober Haddejian, Zareh Khrakhouni, Vahagn Dadrian, Yves Terson, Israel Charny, Peter Balakian, Aris Sevag, Berc Araz, Sahar Arzruni, Vartan and Silva Gomigyan, Agop Hacikyan, Gabriel Basmajian, Nourhan Ouzunian, Hrant Dink, Rakel Dink, Herand Markarian, Hagop Vartivarian, Osheen Keshishian, Carla Garapedian, Ara Kalaydjian and Zakariya Mildanoglu.

Those collaborative events were mostly organized under the auspices of Diocesan Primate Archbishop Khajag Barsamian and facilitated by the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center of the Diocese of the Armenian Church through its directors Rev. Fr. Krikor Maksoudian, Aram Arkun, and Rachel Goshgarian. The collaborating organizations generally consisted of the Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills, Constantinople Armenian Relief Society (CARS), Esayan-Getronagan Alumni of New York, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural

decline were the migration and the loss of its members and friends.

In compliance with the by-laws of the ACCFH, the Board of Trustees was formed to dissolve the organization in May 2018. The members of the ACCFH Board of Trustees included Dn. Frank Kabarajian (chairman), Arto Khrimian, Toros Celiksu, Hilda Biosyan-Sheshetian, and Zabel Khrimian; in addition, Silva Celiksu Terjanian, Walter P. Bebirian, and Medea Mark (representing Sirpuhi Mark) as advisors.

The Trustees adhered to the guidelines stipulated in its by-laws for the dissolution of the ACCFH. After careful and exhaustive consideration of appropriate distribution options of its total funds, the Trustees recommended and the members approved the following decision:

The Trustees and members decided to make individual donations to the ACCFH to increase the total of the funds to above \$10,000, so that it would be transferred as a lump-sum to the

Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School for the establishment of an ACCFH Endowment Fund.

The rationale for the choice of the school was that the children or grandchildren of some of the ACCFH members had been the students of the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School throughout the existence of the organization, it would be appropriate to choose the said school to donate the total funds.

In the judgment of the ACCFH Trustees and the participating members, this is an important event for our community as well as for the HMADS family to feel proud. First, our community through the ACCFH is invigorating our new generation to uphold our language and culture. Second, the HMADS has been chosen as an exemplary Armenian School deserving the honor of receiving this symbolic inheritance of our cultural heritage to impart to its students....

The Trustees of the ACCFH and the Board of the HMADS reached an agreement reflecting their shared purpose, and the first paragraph of their joint statement reads: "The Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills (ACCFH) and the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School (HMADS) jointly confirm that, as its final dissolution according to its by-laws, the ACCFH will transfer its total funds of about \$10,000 to the HMADS for the purpose of establishing the ACCFH Endowment Fund, the interests or dividends of which to be distributed annually to a deserving 5th-Grade student—in addition, to one 4th-grade and one 3rd-grade students at the discretion of the Principal and the Board if the generated income is sufficient—as the Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills – Excellence in Armenian Award."

The signatories of the agreement comprise Frank Kabarajian and Arto Khrimian from ACCFH; Bruce Ashbahian, Hovhannes Malikyan, and Seta Tavitian-Megherian from HMADS. Arek Nisanyan, a member of the HMADS Board, acted as a liaison throughout the process. The transaction was finalized when Frank Kabarajian and Arto Khrimian signed the agreement and presented the ACCFH check to Seta Tavitian-Megherian (School Principal) and Mina Hovsepian (Treasurer) of the HMADS – thus the ACCFH dissolved – on September 28, 2018.

This endowment fund will perpetually honor the memory and the principles of the Armenian Cultural Center of Forest Hills's founders and members, while inspiring our new generation of students to uphold our culture and language through the only and the exemplary Armenian elementary school in New York.



From left, Dn. Frank Kabarajian, Principal Seta Tavitian-Megherian and Arto Khrimian

Center of New York, Hye Doun - Armenian American Support and Educational Center, Tekeyan Cultural Association of NY and NJ, and Tibrevank Alumni of New York.

The ACCFH was one of the pioneers among its sister organizations in philanthropy. The ACCFH donated \$2000 to the St. Sarkis Armenian Church for its reconstruction at Douglaston after the fire in 1985; \$2000 to the Earthquake Relief for Armenia through the Armenian Diocese in 1988; \$2000 to the Emergency Fund – Food for Armenia through the Armenian Diocese in 1992; \$500 to the Gandzasar Theological Center in Artsakh in 1995; \$2000 to the Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul for earthquake relief in 1999; frequently rented the Kalustyan Hall of the Armenian Church of the Holy Martyrs for its events to provide income to the Church; made donations to the Holy Martyrs Day School, Holy Martyrs Armenian Language School, St. Illuminator's Armenian School, and St. Sarkis Armenian Saturday School.

The ACCFH remained dormant in recent years after contributing to the vibrant cultural and social life of the community in Queens for more than 40 years. The main reasons for this

US Nominee to Azerbaijan Condemns Violence along Line of Contact

WASHINGTON – On October 4, during a Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearing, in response to questions posed by Ranking Member Robert Menendez (D-NJ), the US Ambassadorial nominee to Azerbaijan, Earle D. Litzenberger, stated that the US condemns violence along the line of contact, which he noted undermines the peace process and violates the 1994 cease-fire agreement.

"As one of the three Co-Chairs of the Minsk Group process that is working to achieve a peaceful settlement to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, we are working along the lines of three principles: one is the non-use of force and the non-threat of the use of force, the second is the respect for territorial integrity, and the third is the rights of peoples to self-determination. All three of those

are important, any agreement or settlement that does not fully take all three into account is unlikely to succeed," said Litzenberger. "All of the Co-Chairs, the US especially, condemns any violence and any threat of the use of violence along the line of contact, it undermines the peace process, it violates the 1994 cease-fire, and is very unhelpful," Litzenberger continued.

During the Assembly's National Advocacy Conference last week, Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny along with former Chairman of the Armenian Assembly of America Board of Directors Peter Vosbikian and other New Jersey constituents met with the Senator's policy staff and discussed several issues, including Azerbaijan's ongoing cease-fire violations,

especially the targeting of kindergartens.

"We appreciate Ranking Member Menendez for raising key concerns about Azerbaijan's ongoing bellicose rhetoric and cease-fire violations," stated the Assembly Co-Chairs Anthony Barsamian and Van Krikorian. "We also remain deeply troubled by Azerbaijan's ongoing attempt to whitewash its human rights record through its \$3 billion laundromat scheme, which not only has been exposed, but led to an indictment by the US Department of Justice," the Co-Chairs continued.

Litzenberger of California is a career member of the Senior Foreign Service, Class of Minister-Counselor. Read his full statement before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.



US Ambassadorial Nominee to Azerbaijan Earle D. Litzenberger

Arts & Living

Gomidas Institute Director Sarafian to Speak on Book by Dr. Sarkis Karayan

FRESNO — Ara Sarafian, the London-based director of the Gomidas Institute, will speak on the newly published *Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914: A Geographic and Demographic Gazetteer* on Thursday, October 25, at 7:30 p.m. in the University Business Center, Alice Peters Auditorium, Room 191 on the Fresno State campus.

The presentation is co-sponsored by the Armenian Film Foundation and is part of the Fall Lecture Series of the Armenian Studies Program.

Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914, written by Dr. Sarkis Karayan, is a monumental, 674-page work, which painstakingly lists more than 4,000 Armenian inhabited towns and villages in modern Turkey, prior to the destruction of 1915. His presentation of data



Dr. Sarkis Karayan

and analysis is meticulous and allows readers to see the full extent of the Armenian presence in these lands. Karayan identifies each location by its old and new names, maps and geographical coordinates, population figures, and other vital references. His work puts Armenians back onto the map of Turkey.

Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914 is the first English-language book dealing with the demographic profile of Ottoman Armenians on such a massive scale. It is the result of several decades of probing Armenian, Turkish, German and French books, maps and archival sources.

Sarafian will discuss the significance of this work and why it is a milestone in serious scholarship on the Ottoman Empire. It is also an invaluable resource for Armenians, Turks and Kurds wishing to know more about their ancestral lands.

Armenians in Ottoman Turkey, 1914 will be on sale at the lecture.

The lecture is free and open to the public.



"Abstract Forms with Two Children," 1979, poster color, pen and ink and pastel by Simon Samsonian

TCA Exhibits Simon Samsonian Paintings in NJ

A Master of Rich Colors, Cityscapes, Portraits, Landscapes and Bold Lines

ENGLEWOOD CLIFFS, N.J. — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York Chapter (TCA-NY) will inaugurate a unique exhibition featuring Armenian artist Simon Samsonian (1912-2003). The exhibition will take place on October 27-28 at the Tekeyan Center, 560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs, with an opening reception on Saturday, October 27, 7-10 p.m. The exhibition will be open to the public on Sunday, October 28, from 3 to 5 p.m.

Born in 1912 and orphaned during the Armenian Genocide, Samsonian moved to Egypt and later to the United States. He became a giant in the art world with his "Symbolic Cubist" style.

The pieces selected for this exhibition are works on paper, as well as oil paintings, many framed by Samsonian himself, spanning several decades and showing a wide range of Samsonian's styles and modes, including his unmistakable warm abstraction and what critics have termed cubist-impressionism. One may find hints of abstract expressionism in some of the pieces, which would make sense as Samsonian was intrigued by developments in the west in the mid-twentieth century, perhaps more so than most of his contemporaries. Of interest is the shift into less figurative works as he grew closer to his passing and more of an emphasis on softer tones and hues instead of the bold lines and colors of the studies that dominated earlier in his career.

Samsonian's works are on display in various museum collections, including the National Art Gallery in Yerevan, Armenia, the Museum of Modern Art, Cairo, Egypt, the Musée Arménien de France, the collection of the Mekhitarist Fathers' Monastic Order, Vienna, Austria and the Hecksher Museum of Art in Huntington, NY.

The Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York Chapter is a non-profit organization dedicated to promote Armenian culture, language and art. The chapter will celebrate its 50th anniversary in 2019.

For more information about upcoming events, visit and like the chapter's Facebook page and Instagram @tekeyangreaterny or send emails to Tekeyannynj@aol.com.



Vartan Gregorian Scholarship Announces Calls for Applications

YEREVAN — The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative announces a call for applications for new research grants. The Vartan Gregorian Scholarship (Research Grants) Program will support exceptional early-career scholars and researchers, with a specific focus on historians and social scientists, in their efforts to study the unexplored questions of the 20th century history of Armenia.

The first phase of the five-year scholarship program will focus on Armenian scholars and researchers from Armenia under the age of 35. The second and third phases of the scholarship program will be expanded to include scholars and researchers in the global Armenian diaspora and beyond. The scholarship program will award two \$30,000 grants per year.

"Universities and scholars play a critical role in asking and answering the questions that concern mankind. The Vartan Gregorian Scholarship supports the spirit of inquiry and study that Vartan himself embodies. We are proud that the scholarship will enrich the body of knowledge about Armenia and will augment the contributions of Armenian scholarship," said Ruben Vardanyan, Co-founder of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. "We are making this announcement today, on Holy Translators Day, in the spirit of commitment to the foundational, cross-cultural exchange that the 5th century Translators introduced to the Armenian world. The Vartan Gregorian Scholarship will celebrate this man and this tradition."

The Vartan Gregorian Scholarship (Research Grants) Program was created to strengthen connections between Armenian and international research institutions, building on the deep and rich scholarly tradition of Armenia. With the support of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and experts in the field of Armenian Studies, the Scholae Mundi education platform will play a key role in the implementation of the program.

The scholarship program was created by the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative in consultation with experts in the field of Armenian Studies, to advance scholarly research in Armenia and on Armenian topics internationally. The experts who were consulted by the Initiative have included: Hratch Tchilingirian, Associate Faculty Member of Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford; Hayk Demoyan, Doctor of Historical Sciences and former Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute; and Levon Chookaszian, Head of Chair of History and Theory of Armenian Art, Yerevan State University.

Each application will be reviewed by a five-member international Selection Board comprised of prominent scholars:

- Ronald G. Suny, the William H. Sewell Jr. Distinguished University Professor of History, University of Michigan and Emeritus Professor of Political Science and History, the University of Chicago

- George Bournoutian, senior professor of history, Iona College

- Hratch Tchilingirian, associate faculty member of Faculty of Oriental Studies, University of Oxford

- Levon Chookaszian, head of Chair of History and Theory of Armenian Art, Yerevan State University

- Hayk Demoyan, Doctor of Historical Sciences and former director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute

Welcoming the call for applications, Suny said, "A small investment in a promising scholar at the beginning of her or his career rebounds many fold as that researcher continues through time to contribute to our knowledge of the world. The Vartan Gregorian Scholarship will bear fruit many decades after its first seeds are planted."

The application process will be conducted online at the Aurora website and will be open until December 1, 2018. All applicants will be requested to submit: A research proposal in English (maximum of 2,000 words, double spaced, 12pt font); a CV with a list of publications; a cover letter and at least one academic letter of recommendation.



ARTS & LIVING



Mascots and Flags: Thoughts from a Genocide Amusement Park

By Anahit Cass

I am grasping for words to describe what it looked like in Van. Just outside of the bustling modern city was the old city, or its ghost. Walking through the fortress gate, the view in front of us was the embodiment of the word desolation. The old city was a wide field of rolling hills covered in dry yellow grasses. Patches of the hills were charred black, as if the Armenian houses had been burned yesterday. Only a few buildings, forlorn and crumbling, looked back at us from the other side of the field.

As we walked off the path, I stepped through rough grasses and ashes that stained my feet grey and black. The ruins of a church were open to the elements, with crumbling walls, and piles of trash rotting in the desecrated sacred space. I walked in the faint path littered with paper cups and cigarette butts that must have been the old streets. It was almost impossible to imagine that just a century ago, this had been a city. People had walked here in between buildings, in a community that is now completely gone. Two of the churches had been retro-fitted with minarets, and a new mosque had been

set up camp to feed on the piles of Armenian bodies?

At the other side, a nice new park had been built, named after none other than Ataturk, one of the perpetrators of the Genocide.

It was nothing compared to Kharberd.

Kharberd, or Harput in Turkish, is the last place that my family lived before they fled to America. It is there where they lived after being forced out of their village of Gumish Madan, and there where the ones who did not escape were murdered in horrific ways. It was where thousands of Armenians from different areas were taken to be killed, leading it to be called the “slaughterhouse province.”

I had heard that Kharberd was preserved, but I did not realize that it had been turned into some sort of dystopian amusement park. It was as if you set up a quaint old German tourist town in Auschwitz. The houses were preserved in a kitschy “old” style, including one which had been turned into an “ethnographic museum,” with pictures of Turkish folk dancing, and carpets depicting attacking Ottoman soldiers, and a harem. It was crowned, of course, with a framed picture of Ataturk next to a Turkish flag. These images mocking the Armenians who had been murdered there made me recoil, as if I could feel the Armenian owners of the house

itary police with children, or smiling next to tourists. The fortress was well preserved, but had all mentions of Armenians removed. The views from the fortress were beautiful but bit-

gave me a unique opportunity to see both sides of this story. There, my family were victims of the Genocide, but I am also a citizen of the United States, a country built on the genocide



built overlooking the destruction. It was clean but empty. Who was praying in a graveyard?

The old city was backed by cliffs, on which the old fortress rested, marred by a giant red Turkish flag, flying as it must have flown when the soldiers began the Genocide by shooting down on civilians below. In an ironic turn, crows circled the flag, coming to nest in the cliffs. Were they the descendants of those that

turning in their unmarked graves.

Out in the streets, tourists walked and chatted, ate at outdoor cafes, and bought souvenirs made to look like the clothes and household items of the Armenians who had been murdered there 100 years ago. Military police, whose street checkpoints are threateningly present all over the Kurdish areas of Turkey, had a station there too, lined with pictures of the mil-

tersweet. To me they looked strangely like the cliffs of Shushi, a haunting reminder of what would have happened in Artsakh had the people not fought back.

At one of the viewpoints in the town, a man struck up conversation with us. He was very friendly, asking us about our professions and where we lived, but it was hard to make conversation. Our souls were shaken, and it seemed impossible to make a human connection in a place of this much inhumanity. The viewpoint was next to a mosque, potentially one of the old churches. There had been five churches, but all were destroyed.

Even as we left old Kharberd, I was haunted by the thoughts of the churches. Numerous accounts described how the Turkish soldiers had gathered women, children, and old people in the churches and set them on fire. I had even heard one of someone who had watched the soldiers take the village girls inside the church, strip them naked, hang them up by their hair, set the church on fire, and listen to them scream.

Old Kharberd was a deeply unsettling reminder that the cruelty of the Armenian Genocide is not a thing of the past. This celebration of murder was here all around me, and it was full of hapless tourists, probably not really aware all of the corpses they were walking on. With an uneasy stomach, I wondered, When was I one of these tourists? Being in Turkey

of Native Americans and the cruel exploitation of African slaves. As I walked through Old Kharberd, I couldn't help but think that this is how African Americans must feel seeing confederate symbols and monuments, or how Native Americans must feel seeing the faces of the perpetrators of their genocide carved into a sacred site at Mount Rushmore, or any number of Native American sports mascots.

Here's the thing about these symbols: they say something important about the society that uses them. Old Kharberd says that the Turkish government is happy to erase Armenians from their country and celebrate the Genocide that they committed. Similar symbols in America say, subconsciously to many, but directly to the victims, that we are not sorry for our crimes, and that even now we are willing to dehumanize them.

I hope I never see Old Harput again, but I am grateful that I saw it. It brought home the incredible inhumanity of mocking Genocide, no matter who it is done to. It brought home to me that in my own country I am one of the tourists of Old Harput, smiling without a thought to the blood I am walking on. It was a strong reminder that we must look beyond our own groups and be advocates for the rights of all, so that we can say never again to anyone.

(This piece originally appeared in the blog Rebirth Armenia.)



CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — The Erevan Choral Society of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Cambridge, pictured left, is welcoming voices in all sections in preparation for its Annual Christmas Holiday Concert on Sunday, December 10 in the Sanctuary of the Church. Rehearsals are held on Tuesday and Thursday evenings, from 7:30 – 9:30 p.m. in the Talanian Hall of the church under the direction of Konstantin Petrossian. To join this group, and for more information, contact Aida Diloyan at adiloyan@verizon.net

Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) Launches Podcast Series

FRESNO – In August, the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) launched the SAS Podcast Series. The aim of the SAS Podcast Series is to interview authors of recent books in Armenian Studies and related fields in order to disseminate knowledge about the latest research in the field.

The first episode was released on August 22 and featured Dr. George Bournoutian discussing his new book, *Armenia and Imperial Decline from 1900-1914: The Province of Yerevan* (Milton Park, Abingdon, Oxon: Routledge, 2018).

Since then, three further episodes have been released and more are forthcoming. The episodes are released on a biweekly schedule. Bedross Der Matossian, president of the SAS commented, “We are extremely excited about this new initiative which aims at disseminating the knowledge about the latest cutting edge research in Armenian studies to a general audience. It is also encouraging to work with a dedicated team of young scholars who are very enthusiastic to be part of the project.”

The SAS Podcast Series committee is in charge of both conducting the interviews as well as commissioning relevant scholars in the field to conduct interviews with authors of recent books. The committee consists of: Anna Aleksanyan, Clark University; Jesse Arlen, UCLA; Dzovinar Derderian, Univ. of Michigan, Ann Arbor; Varak Ketsemanian, Princeton University; and Armen Manuk-Khaloyan, Georgetown University.

New podcast episodes are posted on the SAS Podcast Series homepage, societyforarmenianstudies.com, where they may be listened to online or downloaded for free. They are also disseminated via the SAS Facebook page.

The Society for Armenian Studies was founded in 1974 and exists to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history, language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions, as well as to facilitate the exchange of scholarly information pertaining to Armenian studies around the world; and to sponsor panels and conferences on Armenian studies.

The SAS website is www.societyforarmenianstudies.com.

Recipe Corner

by Christine Vartanian Datian



Holiday Pear Apple Cobbler

INGREDIENTS

4 cups Anjou or Bartlett pears, cored, peeled, cut into 1/2 inch slices
2 cups Granny Smith apples, peeled and sliced
1 cup sugar or light brown sugar
3 tablespoons flour
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
2-3 tablespoons lemon juice and 1 teaspoon grated lemon rind
1 teaspoon each vanilla and cinnamon
1/2 cup dried cranberries (or golden raisins)
1/2 cup pear juice (or apple juice or apple brandy)
Sprigs of fresh mint to garnish

PECAN CRUMBLE TOPPING:

4 cups Anjou or Bartlett pears, cored, peeled, cut into 1/2 inch slices
2 cups Granny Smith apples, peeled and sliced
1 cup sugar or light brown sugar
3 tablespoons flour
3 tablespoons unsalted butter, melted
Toppings: Chopped cilantro and green onions, salsa, sour cream, sliced avocado, Jack cheese, crumbled Queso cheese, diced black olives, and sliced lemon and lime wedges

Combine the sugar, flour, spices, and salt in a medium bowl. Mix to blend thoroughly. Cut in the butter until mixture resembles coarse crumbs. Mix in the pecans and set aside.

PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 350 degrees and grease a 13" X 9" baking dish.

Toss the pears and apples with sugar in a large mixing bowl. Add flour, melted butter, lemon juice, lemon rind, vanilla, cinnamon, dried cranberries, and pear juice, and toss to combine all ingredients.

Pour half the fruit mixture into the baking dish and sprinkle with half the topping. Add remaining fruit mixture and sprinkle with remaining topping spreadover the top.

Bake for 35-40 minutes or until top is golden brown and fruit is bubbly. Cool slightly on a wire rack.

This cobbler is best served warm with ice cream, half and half, or fresh whipped cream. Top with sprigs of fresh mint, if 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/>





ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

CALIFORNIA

NOVEMBER 17 — Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its Annual Gala at the beautiful Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, CA. The fun-filled evening will begin at 6:30pm with a cocktail hour and silent auction followed by a delicious Mediterranean-inspired meal, live music and dance entertainment, and an exciting live auction. Tickets are \$500 per person and for those 35 and under, \$250 per person. To RSVP or for more information, please call 949-933-4069, email leslie@eyecareproject.com or visit eyecareproject.com/gala

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

OCTOBER 20 — Fall Harvest Bazaar, Saturday, noon to 7pm, First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Avenue, Belmont. Handmade choreg, manti, Armenian pastries and more. Grilled kebab all day. All are welcome, rain or shine. MBTA and handicapped accessible. Information: www.facbelmont.org, or call 617-484-4779

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 21 — 5th Annual Trinity Tailgate, New England Patriots vs. Chicago Bears, sponsored by the Trinity Men's Union of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 12:15 p.m., Sunday, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. All are invited to a tailgate party to watch the game, 1 p.m. kick-off, on a 12 foot high-definition screen. Lots of food, beverages and snacks. For further information, call the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632 or email office@htaac.org.

OCTOBER 28 — 57th Anniversary Celebration of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston Honoring "Parishioners of the Year" Nancy D. Kasarjian and Carol Krikorian upon their Retirement, following Church Services, Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge MA. Sunday. Donation for catered reception: \$30 per person. RSVP requested by October 19 by calling the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617-354.0632, emailing office@htaac.org or www.htaac.org/calendar/event/588/

NOVEMBER 2-3 — The 62nd Annual St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church Bazaar. Church volunteers will serve homemade chicken, beef and losh kebab, kufteh and kheyma dinners all day along with pastries and specialty gourmet items prepared by members of the Ladies Guild. Booths and vendors. Silent Auction. Armenian Cultural and Educational Center. Watertown, 11 a.m. to 9 p.m.

NOVEMBER 3 — Thanks-for-Giving Luncheon at the Belmont Country Club in Belmont, hosted by the Armenian Women's Welfare Association (AWWA). An afternoon of socializing with old and new friends, exciting raffle prizes from various artisans in Armenia, Super Market prizes and other fun events. AWWA sponsors the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center and the Hanganak Clinic Elderly Project in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabagh. Saturday, 12-4 p.m. Limited number of tickets. Complimentary Valet Parking available. Please call Karen, Martha or Lalg at 617-319-2651 for tickets or information.

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 affiliate, Armenian International Women's



On Sunday, November 4, several groups, including the Tekeyan Cultural Center, will collaborate to celebrate the life and work of Diana Der Hovanesian. Sunday, 3 p.m., at the Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic St., Arlington. Admission is free.

Association, Armenian Museum of America, The Friends of the Longfellow House, Hamazkaine Armenian Educational and Cultural Society - Boston, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, New England Poetry Club, and Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada. Sunday, 3 p.m. Armenian Cultural Foundation (441 Mystic Street, Arlington). Admission free and open to the public.

NOVEMBER 5 — St. James Men's Club Dinner Meeting, social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m. St. James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown. Speaker will be writer, editor, political cartoonist, and book publicist Lucine Kasbarian. Following questions and answers, she will sign copies of her new book, Perspectives from Exile, which will be available for purchase. Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyma Dinner \$16/person. Call St. James Church at 617-923-8860 or call Hapet Berberian at 781-367-6598.

NOVEMBER 14 — Najarian Lecture on Human Rights at Historic Faneuil Hall, Boston. Wednesday. Doors open at 6.45. Program at 7.30 p.m. "INCARCERATION Untangling the web of injustice." Speakers: Secretary Andrea J. Cabral, former Massachusetts Secretary of Public Safety, Author, Enforcing and Defending Chapter 209A Restraining Orders in Massachusetts; Marc A. Levin, Esq, Vice President of Criminal Justice, Texas Public Policy Foundation and Right on Crime; Founder, Foundation's Criminal Justice Program Moderator: Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. 30th Sheriff of Middlesex County. President, Massachusetts Sheriffs' Association. Founding Member, Law Enforcement Leaders to Reduce Crime & Incarceration. Reception follows at the Bostonian Hotel. An endowed public program of Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway. Advance Registration is appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NOVEMBER 16 and 17 — Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church, Annual Food Festival and Fair, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford, Phone 978-256-7234. Armenian Food and Pastries and Vendors, Friday and Saturday, 11 a.m. to 7 p.m. Tours of the church sanctuary and complex - Friday, 11 a.m. and Saturday, 4 p.m. Tavloo Tournament - Saturday, 2 p.m.

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 2 — Acapella Christmas Concert by Boston Jazz Voices to Benefit the Armenia Tree Project. 5 p.m. at the Jenks Center, 109 Skillings Road, Winchester. Free parking. Event will feature an acapella performance, refreshments, raffle, and silent auction. Tickets are \$30 each and a family four-pack of tickets is available for \$100. Tickets available via Eventbrite at www.armenia-tree.org/acappella

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

OCTOBER 23 — At the Foot of Ararat: Armenian Folk Dance, on Tuesday, 12.30 to 1.30 p.m. and 7 to 7.30 p.m., at the Paramus Campus, Technology Education Center, TEC-128. Refreshments will be served. RSVP Nvair Beylerian at nbeylerian@bergen.edu or www.bergen.edu/pjr/events. Presented by the Center for Peace, Justice and Reconciliation and the Bergen Community College Dance Club. Susan Lind-Sinianian of the Armenian Museum of America will introduce and teach line dances that she has collected over the last 40 years. Park in Lot B-Section G.

OCTOBER 27-28 — Art Exhibition sponsored by the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York with artist Simon Samsonian (1921-2003). Opening reception, Saturday, 7 to 10.30 p.m. and Sunday, 3 to 5 p.m. Tekeyan Center, 560 Sylvan Ave., Englewood Cliffs. Free admission. For more information email Tekeyannynj@aol.com

DECEMBER 8 — Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group will present a Christmas gala with Sarina Cross. Save the date. Details to come.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 22 - 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>

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 25 — The Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research present The Art of Armenia: An Introduction. Illustrated lecture by Dr. Christina Maranci, Arthur H. Dadian and Ara Oztemel Professor of Armenian Art and Architecture, Tufts University. Thursday, 7 p.m. Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island (AHARI) Museum, 245 Waterman Street, Suite 204, Providence. Admission free.

NOVEMBER 3-4 — Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church, 88th Annual Food Fair and Bazaar. 70 Jefferson St., Providence. Saturday, 11:30 a.m.- 10 p.m.- Sunday, Noon — 6 p.m. Daily Raffle & Silent Auction, Kids Games, Kids Movies, Arts & Crafts, Balloon man. Shish Kebab, Losh Kebab, Kufta, Kheyma, Yalanchi, Armenian Pastries, Lahmajoon & many other delicious food available. All are welcome. Handicap accessible. Cash, Check, Visa and Mastercard Accepted. For further information, call church office 401-272-7712.

CANADA

NOVEMBER 14 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian on her father's memoir. Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army. Wednesday, November 14, 2018 7:30 p.m. AGBU Montreal Center — Demirdjian Hall 805 Manoogian Street Saint Laurent , QCH4N1Z5. Reception and book signing to follow. (All proceeds from the sale of the books will be donated to the AGBU). RSVP — info@agbumontreal.org (514) 748-2428.

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



COMMENTARY

COMMENTARY

Armenia Enters Uncharted Course of Democracy

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenia's political reformation course, which was halted for a short period to accommodate the convocation of the Francophonie conference, is to resume with the resignation of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on October 16.

Incidentally, the 58-nation member Francophone summit, headed by France's President Emmanuel Macron and Canada's Prime Minister Justin Trudeau over the weekend, was a good opportunity to rehearse all the slogans of democracy. Now comes the true test of installing and applying true democracy.

Since the fall of the former regime and the election of Pashinyan as prime minister on May 8, Armenia's political fortunes have experienced many twists and turns until they were cleared of all hurdles to head into snap elections in December.

After Pashinyan took the reins, the Republican Party, the longtime political juggernaut of Armenian politics, which had held a majority in the parliament, tried a comeback with a sneaky legislative action with the collusion of Gagik Tsarukyan's Prosperous Armenia Party, which still has 31 members in the parliament, and the ARF (Dashnaktsutyun), to which Pashinyan responded with swift political action by firing the ministers and governors (*marzbeds*) belonging to the renegade parties.

Tsarukyan, the unabashed chameleon of Armenia's political landscape, struck a deal and signed a pact with Pashinyan to refrain from proposing a prime ministerial candidate and agreeing to hold snap elections in December.

Although Pashinyan is holding on to power by the rule of the mob, he is still trying to push his political agenda through the constitutional motions, which requires a seven-day period to elect a prime minister after the resignation of the incumbent. And then, another seven days of inaction to pave the way for the dissolution of the parliament is required.

tion, Pashinyan's party will once again receive 80 percent of the vote. The constitution requires that the 105-member parliament comprise four political parties. Thirty percent of the parliamentary seats have to be allocated to the opposition parties. Therefore, if Pashinyan sweeps the majority of the seats, a fictional opposition needs to be created to conform to the form rather than the spirit of the legislative structures. The system will not be far from the Sargsyan era, when ersatz opposition groups were created to give the appearance of democratization to the parliament.

In drafting the current constitution, Serzh Sargsyan had fashioned the office of the super prime minister to shape his ambitions, even stripping most powers of the president.

Pashinyan realizes that some of those powers have to be returned to the office of the president. And also, the security apparatus, which are under the command of the prime minister, need to work independently.

The judges and the entire judicial system had always been dependent on the presidential office. Verdicts were issued at the whim of the power center. If the role of the judiciary should be to hold the balance between the legislative and the executive branches, there has to be an independent judiciary. If in the past, the calls were emanating from the power center in the office of the president to the courts, recent leaks from the security apparatus reveal the calls now are coming in reverse order with the same effect and result.

The structure of the forthcoming government, which will put in place the changes, is extremely important.

During the French Revolution, guillotine executions had become public entertainment. Similarly, high profile arrests in Armenia, such as that of oligarch Gen. Manvel Grigoryan, satisfy the public demand for the former gluttons filling their pockets to face consequences in the wake of the Velvet Revolution.

"I'm not sure how educated the public has been about anti-corruption; Armenians mostly see corruption as oligarchs plundering the country," said Anahit Shirinyan, a Chatham House Academy fellow specializing in Armenian politics.

The fight against corruption is not a goal in itself; it has to lead towards the formation of a fairer society. Pashinyan has been advocating for non-violent change in an atmosphere of love and brotherhood. That policy has served him well in getting rid of a corrupt regime. But the task of reconstruction is more challenging, mostly because the public sentiment has not settled yet. Social media, which supports Pashinyan, is full of obscene and lewd statements aimed at detractors, from which the prime minister must disassociate himself. He has

already tried to tame that beast, to no avail.

"The rhetoric during the transition of power was entirely against the old regime," wrote Alexander Iskandaryan, the director of the Caucasus Institute. "That was smart. The old regime thought they could survive on bribes and apathy, but you can't maintain that forever. But neither does high popularity. The legitimacy it brings is useful only if you use it for something."

At this point, the Velvet Revolution is on its way towards its final victory, which is "using it for something."

Once the elections are held, without bribes and with cohesion, it will be the time for implementing reforms and those reforms should not only prove to be cosmetic, playing around the constitution, but fundamental, which envision the formation of true and serious political parties, emulating Western democracies. Thus far, all three presidents of Armenia, beginning with Levon Ter-Petrosian, have fought traditional political parties for having operated in the diaspora yet always focused on a free Armenia.

All new political parties in Armenia have been formed around personalities or around their pocketbooks, and that is why they have fallen like a house of cards. There is no ideological body that can hold them together. The diaspora may contribute in investments but also in political experience.

Armenia needs to harness all its resources domestically and from around the world to make this time its march towards a democratic future a success.



Many pundits and advisors had been warning Pashinyan against resigning in light of recent intrigues, but Pashinyan decided to take the risk after effectively paralyzing the forces which were capable of plotting against him.

The unconditional surrender of 15 parliamentary members of the Republican Party already has broken the camel's back. Now, the path is open for Pashinyan to sprint towards final victory.

Pashinyan was successful in mobilizing the citizenry to defeat the well-entrenched structure of the Republican Party. The latter, with all its petty, greedy cronies, had badly bruised the public sentiment. Pashinyan realized at the recent mayoral election in Yerevan that a good number of votes cast were against the old regime rather than for the new administration. At this time, there is so much anger and rancor against former presidents Robert Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan and their cohorts plundering the country, that the public is out for revenge. Little heed is being paid to Pashinyan's actions, policies or political philosophy. Pashinyan has already realized that the mob that he energized needs to be tamed so that the country can take a constructive course toward democracy.

There is no question about the forthcoming overwhelming victory of Pashinyan's Social Contract Party. He has not yet had the time and opportunity to enunciate the political philosophy of that party.

Another major question is what configuration the forthcoming parliament will take. If the mayoral elections are any indica-

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EDITOR
Alin K. Gregorian

ASSISTANT EDITOR
Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR
Marc Mgrditchian

SENIOR EDITORIAL COLUMNIST:
Edmond Y. Azadian

CONTRIBUTORS:

Florence Avakian, Dr. Haroutiun Arzoumanian, Philippe Raffi Kalfayan, Philip Ketchian, Kevork Keushkerian, Harut Sassounian, Hagop Vartivarian, Naomi Zeytoonian

CORRESPONDENTS:

Armenia - Hagop Avedikian
Boston - Nancy Kalajian
Los Angeles - Taleen Babayan
Berlin - Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

Contributing Photographers:
Jirair Hovsepian

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Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509

Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

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Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Britain Investigates Azeri Banker's Wife For Multi-Million Dollar Shopping Spree

Another Azerbaijan-related major corruption scandal is brewing in Europe. The country's crooked officials have swindled billions of petrodollars for their personal benefit while the majority of the Azeri people live in abject poverty.

The latest example is on the front pages of most British newspapers. Mrs. Zamira Hajiyeva, 55, the wife of an Azerbaijani banker, has spent over \$21 million by shopping at the Harrods luxury department store in London between 2006 and 2016.

The United Kingdom's National Crime Agency alleged that stolen funds were used to buy a \$15 million, five-bedroom house in the exclusive London neighborhood of Knightsbridge, 100 yards from the doors of Harrods. The house is now worth \$20 million. She is also accused of spending almost \$14 million to purchase a golf and country club in Ascot, *The Guardian* newspaper reported. Incredibly, Mrs. Hajiyeva owns two reserved parking spaces in Harrods at a cost of \$500,000 a year. She was given permission to live in the UK eight years ago under a visa scheme for wealthy

investors, without checking her source of funds.

"Mrs. Hajiyeva is the wife of Jahangir Hajiyev, 57, the former chairman of the state-owned International Bank of Azerbaijan. In 2016 he was sentenced to 15 years in jail for defrauding the bank out of \$3 billion," according to Rupert Neate of *The Guardian*.

Mrs. Hajiyeva's lawyers in London had petitioned to keep her name, the husband's name, their nationality and his bank a secret. However, the British court of appeal lifted the veil of secrecy at the request of the media.

The National Crime Agency stated that Mrs. Hajiyeva used 35 American Express, Mastercard, and Visa credit cards issued by her husband's bank to fund her spending spree. On one trip to Harrods she spent \$200,000 on Boucheron, a luxury jewelry, perfume and watches brand. On another trip she bought \$132,000 of Cartier jewelry. She also purchased a \$42 million Gulfstream G550 jet. Her wine cellar is stocked with some of the world's most expensive bottles, *The Guardian* reported. Meanwhile, Mrs. Hajiyeva's daughter from a previous marriage, who was a student in London, had shares worth \$20 million paying dividends of \$1.3 million a year. Mrs. Hajiyeva also has two 17 and 20 year old sons from her current husband, who were also educated at private British schools.

Mrs. Hajiyeva's husband gave her \$1.3 million to invest in British government bonds, and received \$26,000 monthly expense allowance. However, after her husband's arrest, she fled Azerbaijan and began selling her family's silver at Christie's auction house.

The Azerbaijani authorities are interested in questioning Mrs. Hajiyeva in connection with her husband's banking case, accusing her and other family members of serving as conduits for Mr. Hajiyev's scheme to take money out of the country.

Mrs. Hajiyeva is the first person in the UK's new anti-corruption law – "Unexplained Wealth Order" – designed to tar-

get suspected corrupt foreign officials who have potentially laundered stolen money. Justice Supperstone demanded that she explain the source of the funds for her lavish purchases. If she is unable to do so, her properties could be seized. The judge agreed that "this evidence is significant in the light of the reports of Mr. Hajiyev's trial allegations made against him included abuse of his position at the Bank by issuing credit cards in the names of family members, through which large debts were run up against the Bank."

Mr. Jahangir Hajiyev, as chairman of the IBA bank between 2001 and 2008, had an official salary of \$71,000 a year. However, Werner Capital, which manages property investment for wealthy people, produced a report in 2011 disclosing that Mr. Hajiyev was worth \$73 million, *The Guardian* reported. The prosecutor, Jonathan Hall, who represented the National Crime Agency, announced: "As a state employee between 1993 and 2015, it is very unlikely that such a position would have generated sufficient income to fund the acquisition of the property."

In court, Mrs. Hajiyeva stated that she had no knowledge of the source of funds for her purchases, claiming that her husband was responsible for the payments. She described Mr. Hajiyev as "a man of substantial means." She has hired a team of highly paid British lawyers to defend her in court.

For the time being Mrs. Hajiyeva's expensive London mansion and the golf and country club remain frozen and cannot be sold.

It remains to be seen if the British government would seize Mrs. Hajiyeva's properties in London. There are many more such cases which will come before the courts in the coming months, exposing the widespread corruption of Azeri officials who have stolen billions of dollars from their country's oil wealth, investing them for their personal benefit in many countries around the world.

Hostages As State Policy

By Raffi Bedrosyan

In August 2018, US President Trump angrily announced that sanctions will be implemented against Turkey, and personally against the Turkish ministers of interior and justice. What was the reason for Trump's fury? The refusal to release Andrew Brunson, a US evangelical pastor arrested and jailed over two years ago, on still unproven charges of aiding terrorist organizations in Turkey and aiding the failed coup attempt against President Erdogan in June 2016. The alleged mastermind of the failed coup attempt is Fethullah Gulen, a Turkish cleric who lives in exile in Pennsylvania and Erdogan has repeatedly demanded his extradition from the US. In the absence of any real evidence, the Americans have not complied with the Turkish demands for Gulen's return, and therefore, Turkey resorted to an age old tactic of hostage taking to achieve its objectives. The arrest and jailing of pastor Brunson, as well as several Turkish employees of the American Embassy in Turkey were meant to pressure the US to exchange them for Gulen. President Erdogan was even quoted a few months ago to have stated: 'You give me my cleric, I give you your pastor'.

The use of hostages is a normal state of affairs in Turkish politics. Other recent examples include the arrest of a German journalist of Turkish descent, used as a hostage to secure the return of several Turkish military officers who had sought asylum in Germany. A similar demand for the return of Turkish military officers who fled to Greece was made by Turkey by taking hostage a Greek soldier who allegedly crossed the Greek-Turkish border.

The Greek, Armenian and Jewish minorities living in Turkey have been treated as hostages by the Turkish state throughout history. The religious and community leaders of these three minorities are pressured to declare their allegiance to the government, despite openly discriminatory conditions, unfair legislations, denials of historic facts, and so on. The pressure on the hostage minorities is maximized during crisis times. The most recent example is again related to the Pastor Brunson affair. Just as Trump demanded the release of the pastor, for no apparent reason, out of blue, all the minority religious leaders includ-

ing the Armenian Acting Patriarch, the Greek Patriarch, the Jewish Chief Rabbi were paraded with one of the presidential aides of Erdogan and signed a declaration that 'minorities live happily in Turkey, completely free to practice their religious and citizenship rights without any pressure'. It was obvious that the declaration that the minorities are not under pressure was obtained by pressure applied by the state on the minority leaders who had to comply obediently – or else... Sometimes, the state does not even have to exert any pressure and, as a classic case of Stockholm Syndrome, some minority leaders like the chairman of an Istanbul Armenian hospital foundation, voluntarily profess their love for their Turkish masters or parrot the state version of history.

This pattern keeps on repeating itself in Turkey. During the Cyprus crisis in the 1960s and 1970s, the Greek Patriarch in Istanbul was obliged to condemn the Greeks and praise the Turkish invasion of Cyprus. When German Parliament recognized the Armenian Genocide and acknowledged its responsibility, the Istanbul Armenian Acting Patriarch condemned the decision and defended the Turkish version of history. When Israel takes any steps against Palestinians or Moslems in general, the Jewish minority in Turkey pays for it with attacks and vandalism against Jewish synagogues, shops and homes. When Greece is perceived to treat its Moslem citizens unfavorably, the Greek minority in Istanbul is punished by the state as retribution.

Sometimes one hostage community is used against another hostage community. When Armenians worldwide started to push for Armenian genocide recognition in the parliament of

THE GREEK, ARMENIAN AND JEWISH MINORITIES LIVING IN TURKEY HAVE BEEN TREATED AS HOSTAGES BY THE TURKISH STATE THROUGHOUT HISTORY.

several states, the Jewish minority leaders in Istanbul were pressured to actively engage Jewish parliamentarians and influential political leaders in those countries to stop the genocide recognition legislation. The Jewish minority leaders in Istanbul were 'persuaded' by the Turkish state to convince the Jewish lobby in the US to counteract Armenian and Greek lobbies.

But the most obvious and painful hostage incident in Turkish history relates to the perpetrators of the Armenian Genocide. When World War One ended with the defeat of Ottoman Turkey in 1918, the victorious Allies started occupying Istanbul and other regions of Turkey. In cooperation with the occupying British forces, the new Ottoman government went after the Ittihat ve Terakki (Committee for Union and Progress or CUP) leaders for war crimes, crimes against humanity, and for wholesale massacre of its own Armenian citizens. Turkish and British

police started rounding up dozens of Ittihat ve Terakki leaders and commanders, at least the ones who had not fled yet. Trials ensued in Istanbul and most of the wartime Ittihat ve Terakki leaders, including Talat, Enver and Cemal who had already fled, were sentenced to death in absentia. Two lesser officials who were sentenced to death were executed by hanging in Beyazid Square in Istanbul in April 1919. The Turkish public opinion was dead set against these hangings, and concerned with increased protests against them, the British decided to transport all the jailed Ittihat ve Terakki leaders to the British colony island of Malta in the Mediterranean, and continue the trials there. 148 Turkish leaders were interned in Malta. Almost all of them were actively involved in the massacres and deportations of Armenians from various regions of Anatolia. Some of them had amassed great fortunes with stolen property, possessions and lands left behind by the murdered or deported Armenians.

In the meantime, the Turkish resistance movement led by Mustafa Kemal in Anatolia started to gain momentum against the Istanbul government, which was regarded as a puppet regime friendly to the occupying Allied forces. Mustafa Kemal and the newly formed government in Ankara demanded the release of the Malta prisoners. The Allied forces had sent British Colonel Rawlinson to Turkey to assess the situation in Eastern Anatolia, ahead of the Sevres Peace Treaty negotiations. Rawlinson had met with Mustafa Kemal, other Turkish commanders and community leaders. He was married to the niece of Lord Curzon, who was the British Prime Minister and chief decision maker at the peace treaty negotiations. Declaring that Rawlinson is a 'valuable catch', Mustafa Kemal promptly decided to arrest Colonel Rawlinson in order to force the British to release the Ittihat ve Terakki leaders jailed in Malta. After several rounds of negotiations, the British resolve to hold on to the Malta prisoners started to weaken. The hostage taking tactic of Mustafa Kemal succeeded, as Lord Curzon finally declared that "one Briton is worth more than a shipload of Turks." An exchange of prisoners was agreed upon and Colonel Rawlinson, along with 20 other British prisoners of war, was exchanged for the 121 Turkish prisoners of Malta at the port of Inebolu in the Black Sea in October 1921. The freed Ittihat ve Terakki leaders were never tried for their war crimes nor their roles in the Armenian Genocide. In fact, most of them assumed leading positions in the new republican government as ministers and members of parliament. The state policy of hostages, denial of historic injustices and racist ultra nationalistic hatred of minorities inherited from Ittihat ve Terakki leaders continue today.

(Raffi Bedrosyan is a civil engineer and a concert pianist, living in Toronto. Proceeds from his concerts and CDs have been donated to the construction of school, highways, and water and gas distribution projects in Armenia and Karabagh – projects in which he has also participated as a voluntary engineer. Bedrosyan was involved in organizing the Surp Giragos Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd Church reconstruction project. He is the founder of Project Rebirth, which helps hidden Islamized Armenians reclaim their original Armenian roots, language, and culture.)



New Britain Pastor Paid with His Life While Helping Armenians in Adana

By Harry N. Mazadoorian

NEW BRITAIN, Conn. — A major international news story which has recently captured the attention of people all over the world has been that of Andrew Brunson, a US pastor held captive in Turkey and just released this past week.

Brunson had first been held in a Turkish prison and then detained under house arrest. He was arrested after a failed coup attempt against now Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan in 2016, despite all indications that the pastor had been engaged only in humanitarian efforts in Turkey.

The story bears a number of somber similarities to an older but similar story involving the sad fate of another minister in a comparable situation more than 100 years ago. The older story indeed had very local roots.

The incident, which took place in 1909, also involved a pastor who was committed to humanitarian pursuits and also involved the same part of the world, the former Ottoman Empire. Moreover, it involved misfortune coming to someone whose principal goal was to bring comfort to others.

The pastor in 1909 was Daniel Miner Rogers and he was from New Britain. After graduating from Princeton University and the Hartford Theological Seminary, he committed himself to working in a mission in Turkey along with his wife Mary, who also attended the Hartford Theological Seminary.



Daniel Miner Rogers

In April 1909, in a precursor to the horrific Genocide of 1915, in which more than a million and a half Armenians perished, a number of Turkish nationalists began attacking local Armenians in Adana and setting their homes on fire. Rogers was in Adana at the time attending a meeting with a number of other ministers serving in Turkey.

Amid the burning, looting, and killings, many local Armenians sought refuge in the Christian missions. Rogers and a number of his fellow clergymen sought to protect first the dispensary and then to extinguish the fires set by the attackers. The New Britain native hurled himself into the rescue efforts by transporting buckets of water in an effort to put out or at least diminish the inferno. Eyewitness accounts reported him abandoning his own safety as he tried to protect others. Tragically, he and another minister were shot and killed by the Ottoman aggressors as the clergymen tried to protect the innocent local Armenians. Thousands of Armenians were ultimately killed in the brutal assault.

The atrocities and Rogers' heroic efforts were widely reported in newspapers such as the *New York Times*.

Rogers hailed from a prominent New Britain family and the Rogers were and have been involved in numerous civic, philanthropic and commercial activities in New Britain. His grandfather was David Nelson Camp, a noted scholar, pioneering educator and former New Britain mayor.

Several plaques memorialize pastor Rogers death, including one in South Church in New Britain.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, with his wife, Anna Hakobyan, take a selfie with Sophia.

Unique Robot Sophia Attends Summit

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan exchanged some words with Sophia the robot during his visit to Tumo center in the sidelines of the Francophonie economic forum.

After his speech at the economic forum, Pashinyan, accompanied by his wife Nikol Pashinyan, approached Sophia the robot and exchanged some words with him. The premier asked Sophia if they can take a photo with her and Sophia answered "Of course."

Sophia is a social humanoid robot developed by Hong Kong-based company Hanson Robotics. Sophia was activated on February 14, 2016 and made her first public appearance at South by Southwest Festival (SXSW) in mid-March 2016 in Austin, Texas. She is able to display more than 50 facial expressions.

Sophia has been covered by media around the globe and has participated in many high-profile interviews. In October 2017, Sophia, the robot became the first robot to receive citizenship of any country. In November 2017, Sophia was named the United Nations Development Programme's first ever Innovation Champion, and is the first non-human to be given any United Nations title. On October 25, at the Future Investment Summit in Riyadh, the robot was granted Saudi Arabian citizenship, becoming the first robot ever to have a nationality.

THE CENTER FOR PEACE, JUSTICE AND RECONCILIATION AND THE BERGEN COMMUNITY COLLEGE DANCE CLUB PRESENT

At the Foot of Ararat: Armenian Folk Dance

Tuesday, October 23, 2018
12:30 p.m. - 1:30 p.m.
and 7:00 p.m. - 8:30 p.m.
 at the Paramus Campus,
 Technology Education Center – TEC-128
 (Park in Lot B - Section G)
 Refreshments will be served.
 RSVP to Nvair Beylerian at nbeylerian@bergen.edu
 or www.bergen.edu/pjr/events

The traditional village dances were as characteristic of Armenian culture as the language, food, songs, and other ancient customs. Susan Lind-Sinanian, Textile Curator at the Armenian Museum of America in Watertown, MA will introduce and teach line dances that she has collected over the last forty years from immigrants and survivors of a lost generation from western Armenia. Come join us in the footsteps of our ancestors to learn and celebrate this heritage. Wear comfortable footwear. Appropriate for all ages.

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