

Armenian Parliament Fails To Pass Key Election Bill

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan accused Armenia's outgoing parliament of "sabotage" on Monday, October 22, after it failed to approve proposed amendments to the Electoral Code drafted by his government for snap general elections expected in December.

Upon the decision of Speaker of Parliament Ara Babloyan, a special session will be convened on October 29, the parliament's press service said.

The electoral code amendments bill will be once again debated after a group of lawmakers began a petition to convene a special sitting and re-introduce the bill. The required amount of signatures was gathered.

The amendments, formally approved by the government on October 16, are aimed at facil-

[THE OUTGOING PARLIAMENT] HOPE[S] THAT IN THIS WAY THEY WILL MANAGE TO TURN THE FRESH PARLIAMENTARY ELECTIONS INTO AN INSTRUMENT FOR POLITICAL REVENGE...

—NIKOL PASHINYAN

itating the proper conduct of the elections. They would, among other things, change the existing legal mechanism for distributing seats in the National Assembly which many believe favored Serzh Sargsyan's Republican Party (HHK) in the last parliamentary elections held in April 2017.

Under Armenia's constitution, any amendment to the Electoral Code must be backed by at least 63 members of the 105-member parliament. Only 56 lawmakers voted for the government bill.

Pashinyan was quick to accuse the parliament majority of "sabotaging" the work of his cabinet. "They hope that in this way they will manage to turn the fresh parliamentary elections into an instrument for political revenge," he said. "But I want to make clear that even if the elections are held under the existing Electoral Code that will not change anything because the victory of the people is inevitable and cannot be stolen by anyone."

ADL Position Regarding Forthcoming Snap Elections in Armenia

The Diasporan and Armenian structures of the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party (ADL) have been observing every development of Armenia's political scene. Simultaneously, the organization, through its worldwide membership and the broad network of its news outlets, has been promoting the fundamental wishes of the citizenry of Armenia regarding the irrevocable process of democratization.

Based on the above premises, all structures of the ADL have been committed to the idea of snap elections to bring to power a true legislative body representing genuinely all segments of society in Armenia. The vision is spearheaded by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and shared by all of us. To that effect, the ADL is ready to lend its support to the prime minister's endeavors and cooperate

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Ara Guler, Poetic Photographer of Istanbul, Dies at 90

ISTANBUL (*New York Times*) — Ara Guler, a Turkish-Armenian photographer who was best known for capturing poignant and nostalgic images of a bygone Istanbul but who also portrayed famous figures and everyday life in far-flung lands, died on Wednesday, October 17, in the city he so lovingly chronicled. He was 90.

His death was announced by Magnum Photos, his agency, in a statement on its website.

Guler's pictures reflected the shadows and sparkle of Istanbul, a city he once described in an interview as a sort of "Madwoman of Chaillot" who had grown old but never neglectful of how she looked: Touch her, he said, "and a jewel will appear."

His Istanbul, before it was erased by fast-paced modernization, was a place of boats gliding down the Bosphorus, minarets poking up in the distance behind a horse-drawn cart, an elderly head-scarved woman smoking a cigarette, children flinging their arms out in joy.

Guler described his photographs, often taken with a Leica, as "a little bit romantic." "I don't take pictures in normal light," he said, "only just before or after sunset, or early in the morning."

Guler viewed himself as a citizen of the world. His assignments had him circling it as he documented the well-known faces of the 20th century, including Pablo Picasso, Salvador Dalí, Alfred Hitchcock and Winston Churchill, as well as more obscure subjects like the headhunters of Borneo. Other settings for his work included China, New Guinea, Kazakhstan and Kenya.

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"There will be no return to the past," Pashinyan added, urging supporters to get ready for "completing regime change" in Armenia.

The bill was essentially blocked by the HHK, which still has the largest parliamentary faction.

The former ruling party officially voiced its opposition to the proposed changes in a statement released earlier in the day. It said that they were submitted to the parliament at a very short notice and that the lawmakers therefore did not have enough time to look into them.

The HHK also accused the government of ignoring a number of alternative proposals that were jointly made by the four political forces represented in the current National Assembly.

The HHK's stance was denounced by other parliamentary forces. Naira Zohrabyan, a top representative of Gagik Tsarukyan's Prosperous Armenia Party (BHK), called it an act of "political sabotage."

The HHK's deputy chairman, Armen Ashotyan, remained unrepentant, however, saying that the electoral system must not be changed less than two months before the anticipated elections. "It is simply absurd

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Hrag Papazian Explores Armenian Identity in Turkey

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN — Hrag Papazian, a Lebanese-Armenian graduate student in his late 20s, is studying the Armenians of Turkey. He came to the United States recently to give a series of lectures at the Institute of Armenian Studies at the University of Southern California. On his way back across the Atlantic, he stopped by in Boston to give a lecture on the Nor Zartonk movement of Istanbul (see <https://mirrorspectator.com/2018/10/11/hrag-papazian-to-speak-at-inaugural-zoravik-event/>) and gave an interview on his work.

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NEWS IN BRIEF

Trump Lawyer Giuliani Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — US President Donald Trump's personal lawyer Rudy Giuliani met with Armenia's Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan and visited the Armenian Genocide memorial in Yerevan on Monday, October 22, during what he described as a private trip to the country.

Giuliani, who served as mayor of New York City from 1994 to 2001, was invited by Ara Abrahamyan, a pro-Kremlin leader of the Armenian community in Russia, to take part in an international forum organized by the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

Giuliani was accompanied by Abrahamyan when he visited the Tsitsernakabert Armenian Genocide Memorial.

When asked about the Armenian Genocide, he said, "I certainly recognize it. I think it's a historical fact."

Giuliani was also careful not to comment on US-Armenian relations, saying that "it's up to the two governments" to develop them. "Again, I'm here as a private citizen just to learn some facts in my first time in Armenia."

Giuliani, 74, is known for his hawkish views on America's relations with Iran.

Armenia's Economy More Diversified after Joining Eurasian Union

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenia's membership to the Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU) has enabled it to minimize the negative consequences caused by external factors on the country's economy, Veronika Nikishina, Minister for Trade for the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC) said on October 23 at the Eurasian Week International Forum here.

"Armenia's membership to the EAEU coincided with the period when the international economic situation was not favorable, and this, of course, affected the economies of all our countries. Armenia's joining the EAEU enabled to mitigate the negative consequences on the country's economy which was facing all countries of our Union. Despite not so large economic growth, it became more diversified based on the export growth to the Union's member states," she said.

She added that the physical volume index of Armenia's GDP increased by 7.5 percent in 2017 compared to 2016. "Armenia has recorded the highest economic activity rate among the EAEU member states during January-June 2018. Based on the results of six months of this year, Armenia's economic activity rate comprised 8.3 percent, which is the highest figure among the member states of our Union."

She said Armenian agricultural goods are in high demand in the Russian market.

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Yelk Nominates Pashinyan as Candidate For Prime Minister

YEREVAN (Arka) — The Yelk parliamentary faction nominated on October 23 Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan as a candidate for the post of prime minister, the head of the faction Lena Nazaryan said in the parliament.

"We have nominated the candidacy of the acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. As we have already noted, the nomination, of course, is formal aimed at ensuring the procedures provided for by the Constitution," she said.

Pashinyan resigned October 16 to clear way for the dissolution of the parliament and holding early parliamentary elections on December 10. On the same day, President Armen Sarkissian accepted the resignation of the government.

Under the Armenian Constitution, early elections are held if lawmakers fail twice within 14 days to appoint a prime minister.

New Mayor Sits Down With Former Mayors

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The new mayor of Yerevan, Hayk Marutyan, hosted former mayors of Yerevan Suren Abrahamyan and Vahagn Khachatryan on October 20, the Yerevan City Hall reported.

Welcoming his former counterparts, Marutyan thanked them for accepting his invitation to meet and stated that it will help in solving the issues facing the capital.

The former officials thanked Marutyan for the warm reception and invitation and congratulated him on his election. The former mayors stated that they are ready to provide advice to the new mayor and share their experiences.

Two Newborns Left Outside Facility

GYUMRI (Armenpress) — Two newborn baby boys were found alive in a plastic bag outside a children's care facility in Gyumri on the evening of October 17 by a security guard.

The guard contacted police immediately.

First responders arrived shortly and attended to the infants. Doctors said they believe the boys are between 2 and 10 days old. Officials from the Shirak Governor's Office also arrived at the scene. The children were fed and were placed under supervision.

"We can't say for sure at this moment if they are siblings or not. They are in normal condition, there are no traces of violence," Lilit Grigoryan from the Shirak Governor's Office said.

No further information was available.

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.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and acting Mayor Diana Gasparyan (L) attend a festival in Echmiadzin on October 7.

Pashinyan's Party Wins, Loses Local Elections

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's Civil Contract party won mayoral elections in two major Armenian towns but was defeated in another at the weekend.

Voters in nearly 50 communities across Armenia went to the polls on Sunday, October 21, to elect their chief executives or local councils. As was the case in the September 23 municipal elections in Yerevan, the polls were marked by a lack of serious fraud reported by election candidates, observers and media.

In the largest of those communities — the towns of Armavir, Echmiadzin, Hrazdan and Kapan — the elections were held because their former mayors resigned shortly after Pashinyan swept to power in May in what is known as a democratic "velvet revolution." They were affiliated or linked with former President Serzh Sarkisian's Republican Party (HHK).

In Echmiadzin, official vote results gave victory to Civil Contract's Diana Gasparyan, the acting mayor appointed by Pashinyan's government in June. Gasparyan, 30, was challenged by 11 other contenders. She is the first female head of an Armenian urban community elected since the early 1990s.

Another Civil Contract candidate, Davit Khudatyan, prevailed in the mayoral race in Armavir. The town located

about 50 kilometers west of Yerevan is the administrative center of the Armavir province encompassing Echmiadzin.

The snap election in another provincial capital, Hrazdan, was won by a 25-year-old son of Sasun Mikaelian, a prominent Hrazdan-based politician and a leading member of Civil Contract. The party leadership pointedly declined to back Sevak Mikaelian for still unclear reasons, however.

Pashinyan's party suffered a setback in Kapan, the capital of the southeastern Syunik province bordering Iran. Its candidate, Narek Babayan, was defeated by a non-partisan challenger.

Pashinyan personally campaigned for Babayan, holding a rally in Kapan on Friday.

The Armenian prime minister put a brave face on the setback on Monday. While saying that he is "very sorry" for Babayan's defeat, he portrayed the election outcome as a triumph of democracy.

"It's an unprecedented phenomenon [for Armenia] when the country's prime minister backs a candidate and that candidate doesn't win an election. This is the greatest victory for democracy in the history of the Third [Armenian] Republic," Pashinyan declared in a trademark video address to the nation aired on Facebook.

"Citizens made a decision and the government didn't even attempt to place the citizens' choice into the bounds of its wishes. Dear people, this is what we did the revolution for," he said.

The former ruling HHK had for years swept most local elections in Armenia, heavily relying on its administrative and financial resources. Sarkisian's party has essentially refrained from contesting such polls since losing power.

According to Pashinyan, Civil Contract nominated or endorsed candidates in 15 communities and only two of them lost in Sunday's elections.

ADL Position Regarding Forthcoming Snap Elections in Armenia

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fully with him to achieve that noble goal. It is time for Armenia to be endowed with a truly representative national assembly (parliament).

We fully welcome the initiative of the prime minister to begin a process that will lead to new elections. In this process, the prime minister tenders his resignation and during a waiting period of 7 + 7 days, as prescribed by the current constitution, the sitting parliament is dissolved, since no other candidate is anticipated for the position. Upon completion of this process, snap parliamentary elections will be held in mid-December to create the desired legislative body.

Despite the time limitations, the ADL hopes that the forthcoming elections will be held in the paramount spirit of cooperation, based on democratic and constitutional principles. The unity between Armenia, Artsakh and the diaspora will help the Armenian people confront the dangers extant in the region and move forward with determination to create a powerful homeland enjoying peace and economic prosperity.

In pursuit of the above vision, the ADL is ready to cooperate with true political forces and will participate in the elections, bearing its share of responsibility, with the help of its membership and friends.

October 17, 2018
Armenian Democratic Liberal Party
Supreme Council Central Committee

Armenian Parliament Fails To Pass Key Election Bill

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to build democracy in the country with undemocratic methods," Ashotyan told reporters.

In the 2017 elections, Armenians voted for not only parties and blocs as a whole but also their individual candidates running in a dozen nationwide constituencies. The individual races greatly helped the HHK to score a landslide victory at the time. Wealthy HHK candidates relied heavily on their financial resources and government connections to earn both themselves and their party many votes.

The bill put forward by Pashinyan's government also envisages safeguards against vote rigging and other major changes such as a lower vote threshold for winning seats in the parliament.

Gianni Buquicchio, the president of the Council of Europe's Venice Commission, said on Friday that the draft amendments "pursue legitimate aims and seem mostly positive." In a statement, he also noted "the specific situation in Armenia, which requires the holding of early elections."

Buquicchio said at the same time that the commission still has "reservations" about the proposed change of the electoral system. He stressed, though, that "these reservations are less relevant if there is consensus among political forces about the change."

The government is allowed to reintroduce the bill to the parliament and force another urgent debate on it in the coming days. Pashinyan did not say whether the government will do so.



ARMENIA

Pashinyan Visits Lebanon, Meets With Leadership

BEIRUT (Combined Sources) – During his working visit to Lebanon on October 20 and 21, Armenian Acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met Lebanese Prime Minister Saad Hariri.

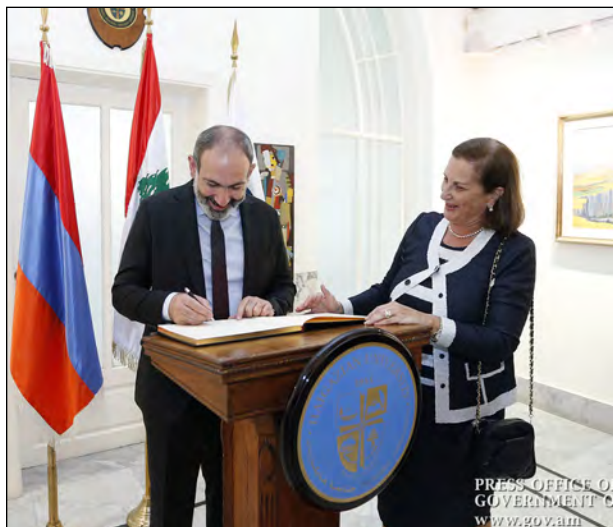
Pashinyan thanked Hariri for the warm reception and hospitality. “This is my first visit to brotherly Lebanon, a country full of history of ancient civilizations. I am convinced that this visit will best contribute to the debate on the agenda of bilateral cooperation in different spheres. Of course, your father, Rafik Hariri, who was a great friend of Armenia, had a great contribution to the deepening and strengthening of ties between our countries.”

Hariri noted that Lebanon appreciates the close cooperation with Armenia and is interested in its strengthening it further. He attached importance to the Lebanese-Armenian community's role in the development of the country, as well as the deepening of Armenian-Lebanese ties.

The interlocutors exchanged views on the domestic situation in the two countries.

Pashinyan touched upon the pan-national processes in Armenia in April-May of this year, presented the political changes, the current processes and the expected developments.

Pashinyan and Hariri noted with satisfaction that there is a high level of political dialogue between the two countries and

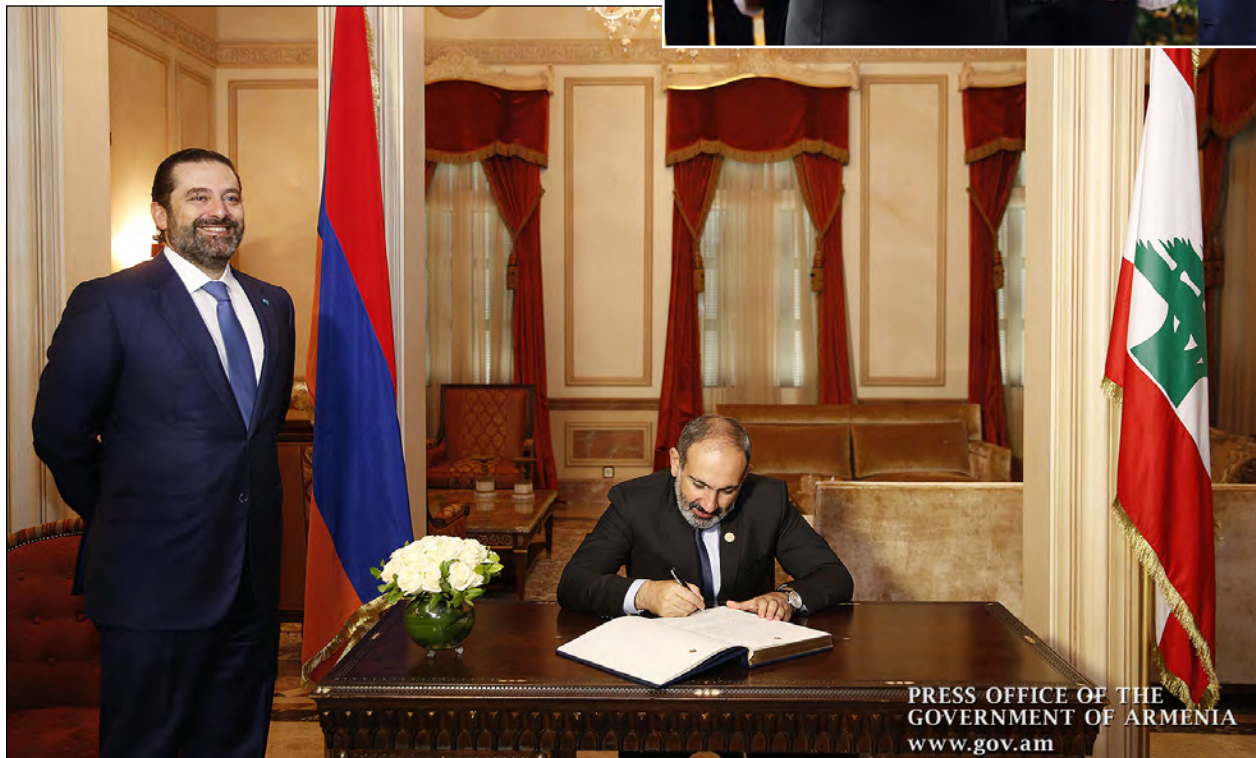


Signing the guest book at Haigazian University

encouraged adding the economic component to that bar

Pashinyan presented the steps undertaken by the government of Armenia to improve the business environment in Armenia, to ensure the protection of investments and proposed to organize a visit to Lebanese business circles to get acquainted with the conditions on the spot.

The sides discussed issues related to expanding cooperation in agriculture, transport, tourism, as well as in other spheres of mutual interest. The interlocutors expressed satisfaction with the process of cooperation in the field of tourism, the positive momentum of which was the direct air communication between the two countries.



Acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan signs the Golden Book of Honorable Guests while Prime Minister Saad Hariri looks on.



Lighting a candle in Zmmar Monastery

Pashinyan welcomed and highlighted the interest of Lebanese companies in making investments in Armenia and accessing third markets through Armenia.

At the end of the meeting, Pashinyan signed the Golden Book of Honorable Guests.

Pashinyan also met with President Michel Aoun.

“Since Armenia's independence in 1991, the relations between our countries have been consistently enriched with a new quality, which is characteristic of two friendly countries and brotherly nations. We should make best out of that to strengthen our partnership and implementation of common goals,” Pashinyan stated.

Pashinyan pointed out that the Armenian people have special gratitude toward friendly Lebanon, namely the fact that the country hosts the Catholicosate of the Great House of Cilicia of the Armenian Apostolic Church since 1994 in Antelias.

Moreover, Pashinyan added that Armenians feel a sense of gratitude toward Lebanon and Lebanese people for accommodating the refugees escaping the Armenian Genocide. “Lebanon is the only country in the region that has officially recognized the Armenian Genocide which is important not only for preserving the historical memory but also preventing the crime of genocide,” Pashinyan stressed.

President Aoun, in turn, welcomed Pashinyan's visit, empha-

sizing it would further strengthen and deepen the traditionally friendly relations between the two countries.

During the meeting the interlocutors discussed the bilateral trade and economic relations between Lebanon and Armenia as well as opportunities to expand the scope of cooperation.

Pashinyan also visited Armenian educational and spiritual-cultural centers in Beirut.

He first visited Haigazian University, where he met with members of the Council of the Armenian Evangelical Churches of the Middle East and the professors of Haigazian University, and representatives of the Armenian schools in Beirut.

Pashinyan was presented a monument dedicated to the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. He, in turn, praised the work carried out by Haigazian University in the field of Armenology.

Pashinyan also made a note in the Book of Honorable Guests at Haigazian University.

The next stop was the patriarchal union of the Armenian Catholic Church, where he met Bishop Gevorg Asatourian, Bishop of Beirut, Archbishop Gabriel Muradyan of Zmmar Monastery and Anthony Vardapet Noratuncyan.

Pashinyan and his wife, Anna Hakobyan, took part in the chapel's welcome prayer by the spiritual representatives of the Armenian Catholic Patriarchate and the members of the

Zmmar Monastery, lit candles in the Church of the Monastic Complex, visited the museum and the Matenadaran.

Muradyan, on behalf of the Patriarchal Congregation of Zmmar, presented Pashinyan with a picture of the Virgin.

Pashinyan thanked the church for the warm reception, noting: “It is a very exciting occasion for me because I am at the Catholic Church for the first time and in such an environment. This is a memorable visit to me that will keep me going. One of the most important issues in Armenia and the Diaspora is that we do not have dividing lines. We are one nation, we come from the same place and aspire to the same place, we have common dreams at the center of which are the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Artsakh and the Armenian people.”

The acting prime minister attached importance to the activities of one of the most important cultural and cultural centers of Armenia, namely

Zmmar's activity in the preservation of historical and cultural heritage and national identity, strengthening the Armenia-Diaspora ties.



With nuns at the Zmmar Monastery



INTERNATIONAL

International News

President Sarkissian to Attend Swiss International Investment Forum

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian President Armen Sarkissian left for Switzerland on October 22, for a three-day working trip, the president's office said in a press release.

Sarkissian participated in the World Investment Forum 2018 – organized by the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) – which this year is held under the Investments For Sustainable Development motto in Geneva. The program took place October 23-26.

The Armenian president is to deliver remarks at the Global Leaders Assembly on the sidelines of the forum, according to his office.

Sarkissian will also participate in the grand opening of the 20th annual Crans Montana Forum. The Armenian president will be the keynote speaker at the local and global security matters discussions of the event, Sarkissian's office said.

Crans Montana Forum brings together leaders from more than 100 countries who discuss social, economic and security issues in an informal atmosphere.

Canadian to Increase Investment in Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Canadian Armenian Gevorg Torosyan, who participated in the recent La Francophonie Economic Forum in Armenia, is going to establish the branch of Canadian ISB engineering company in Armenia through the support of the Enterprise Incubator Foundation (EIF), deputy minister of economic development and investments Mane Adamyan announced on Facebook on October 20.

“The company produces security devices which are attached to different production devices and block the devices during human work with sensors in order not to harm the employees. At this stage the ISB Armenian branch will be engaged in improvement of software, and at the next stage the devices will be produced in Armenia. One of the key parts of these devices has been produced in Armenia's Goris for a long time, and our compatriots have exported this part to Canada for many years. We have agreed with Mr. Torosyan to organize the whole cycle of production of the devices in Armenia soon,” Adamyan wrote.

Armenian Government Seeks Closer Economic Ties with Japan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – The Armenian government this week approved a bill on ratifying an agreement between Armenia and Japan on liberalizing, encouraging and protecting investments.

Acting minister of economic development and investments Tigran Khachatryan said at the cabinet meeting that relations between Armenia and Japan have continuously progressed and developed during the recent years. 2017 marked the 25th anniversary of establishing diplomatic ties. The opening of the Armenian Embassy in Tokyo in 2010 and the opening of the Japanese Embassy in Yerevan in 2015 contributed to the more dynamic development of ties.

He said the ratification of the agreement will greatly boost and elevate the development of bilateral economic relations to a qualitatively new level. “The presence of a corresponding legal-contractual field will contribute to an increase of interest for the Armenian economy and investment flow,” Khachatryan said.

“Various level visits have become frequent. Consultations between the foreign ministries of the two countries take place regularly. Inter-parliamentary ties are on a high level. Productive cooperation within the framework of international organizations also exists,” he said, highlighting JICA – the Japan International Cooperation Agency – which carries out official assistance from Japan to Armenia.

Ruben Vardanyan: The Russian-Armenian Businessman Focusing on Giving Wealth Away

By Rick Pushinsky

MOSCOW (*Financial Times*) – Ruben Vardanyan recalls earning a first monthly salary of just \$100 shortly after the Soviet Union collapsed. Today, his focus is more on how to give away the vastly larger sums he has amassed and to share his advice with Russians still ill-prepared for wealth succession.

The Russian-Armenian businessman – who puts his wealth at “way less” than a Forbes estimate of \$950 million – says in recent years he has made \$300 million in donations and social impact investments. In parallel, he advises wealthy families that have emerged from the post-Communist world as they move towards retirement.

As a student at Moscow University in 1990, Vardanyan began preparing for the transition from central planning to the market economy. Within months, he became one of the first employees of Troika Dialog, which aimed to be Russia's pioneering investment bank in fast-moving and unpredictable “Wild East” times.

“It was really a unique time,” says Vardanyan. “There were no regulations, no clients, nobody knew what the securities market was. My exam was a discussion with the deputy minister of finance.”

In 1992, when Goldman Sachs poached senior staff, he became Troika's executive director at the age of only 23. The bank was active in the “voucher” privatizations of state enterprises and began wooing foreign investors as clients. He became an early participant in the country's fledgling trading and deposit clearing systems. “It was the very, very beginning of everything.”

By 1996, he had acquired significant wealth through a stake in Troika shortly before it was bought by the Bank of Moscow. Then came the 1998 financial crisis and widespread default.

“It was quite horrible. Eighty percent of our business was from western clients and they all disappeared.” His new owner tried to force him out in 2001, but he fought back and oversaw a leveraged buy-out.

He witnessed another market crisis in 2008, sold a stake to Standard Bank before the whole company was acquired by Sberbank of Russia in 2012. By then, he was already reflecting on how to give away and invest money with a social purpose.

He was a founder of Skolkovo, the Russian business school based just outside Moscow that launched in 2006, where he encouraged discussions about how to give away as well as earn money. “I wanted to build a new infrastructure for private ownership,” he says. “I realized it was critical for Russia, 100 years after the revolution, as we were facing the first generation that needed to transfer wealth to the next generation. They had no experience, culture or legal infrastructure.”

He created his own consultancy group, Philin, to offer managerial support for philanthropic structures for the rich and Phoenix Advisors to help them with wealth conservation and succession issues. His target market is families with \$50 million-\$1 billion in assets and says he has about 50 clients.

“It's the most difficult category: they are not big enough to have family offices and not small enough for the private banks.” He says few Russians are prepared for succession: a survey by Skolkovo suggested that 78 percent of their children did not want to take over their parents' businesses; and 92 per-



Ruben Vardanyan

cent of the founders had not yet written wills.

“We believe philanthropy will move very fast in the next five years, but people have no culture to think about it,” he says. “This will be critical for Russia. Who can they learn from? Your company needs to be run, management can steal from you, the legal system is inefficient and sometimes corrupt. You can lose everything. “My main advice is whatever you have decided, it will take time to explain to your family – five years or more,” he says. “If you don't start now, it will be dangerous. It's a long-term process that requires lots of effort and commitment. Do it as soon as you can.”

He and his wife agreed they would give away more than 80 percent of their wealth, simply leaving their children some property and a relatively modest allowance.

Although he holds a Russian passport, his roots are in Armenia on the country's southern flank and half of his activity is focused there. The genocide in the crumbling Ottoman Empire a century ago remains a heavy historical burden in Armenia, memorialized in a moving museum in the capital city Yerevan. His grandfather was reluctant to talk about his own experiences, but Vardanyan learned that he had been saved by a Turk and four American missionaries, moved westwards and placed in an orphanage school. That inspired him to create the annual \$1.1 million Aurora prize in 2016 to recognize humanitarian courage, commitment and impact. (Vardanyan contributes the majority of support for the prize fund.)

This year's winner was Kyaw Hla Aung, a lawyer and activist on behalf of the Rohingya refugees in Myanmar. Last year's laureate was Dr. Tom Catena, who worked in Sudan's Nuba mountains and in 2016 Marguerite Barankitse, who worked with orphans in Burundi. “We all remember the people who were killed, but let's look at those who have been saved,” says Vardanyan. “We should say thank you and give something back. That's not about human rights, but human values.”

He has also donated significant amounts to education, notably through the creation of a school in the Dilijan district in northern Armenia. Yet much of his activity has been what he characterizes as “commercial social impact” investments through “anchor projects” inspired by a series of principles. These include an approach that is “private-public” rather than “public-private” (or state-led) and a focus on projects that are ambitious and scalable. He has encouraged investments from the country's unusually large diaspora of 7 million, who make up more than twice the number of Armenian inhabitants.

“They have been good but bad for Armenia,” he says. “They give \$2 billion

a year, which helps people to survive, but creates the wrong message. Becoming dependent on their external funding is like dependency on oil: if it's free of charge, you don't value it.” His priorities came from Armenia 2020, a project he asked McKinsey to draw up 15 years ago. The consultancy highlighted the pivotal importance of education, healthcare, urban development, cultural heritage and national identity to growth. “We'll do another report in 15-20 years to see if it's working,” he says. “But there are already some success stories.” He points, for example, to the funding of a cable car to Armenia's remote Tatev monastery, which has helped sharply boost tourism and investment in the area.

He regards Armenia as a test bed for some 25 other small, “invisible” countries with similar characteristics, such as Moldova, Macedonia and Nicaragua.

“No one cares about them, so it is difficult to invest. The costs of charitable giving are high. I thought, how can we convert this problem into a solution to create something common for other countries like it?” But just as he stresses the need for long-term planning as wealth passes to a new generation of post-Soviet families, he also sees the need for patience. “That's one of the biggest challenges. The expectation of a return is usually a maximum of 10 years in Armenia. Our vision is 25 years.”

Ukraine Lodges Complaint Against Armenia For Steel Tariff

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Ukraine has lodged complaints at the World Trade Organization to challenge anti-dumping duties imposed by Armenia and Kyrgyzstan on certain types of Ukrainian steel pipes, Reuters reported, citing documents published by the WTO on Monday, October 22.

Ukraine said the two countries, should have phased out duties that were “higher than necessary, erroneous and based on deficient rulings, procedures and provisions.” Ukraine has already lodged a similar WTO complaint against a third member of the customs union, Kazakhstan. Countries accused of breaking the WTO rules have 60 days to settle the matter or Ukraine could ask the WTO to adjudicate.

Community News

ACOYA Juniors Aspire to New Heights at Sports Weekend

WATERVLIET, N.Y. — Over Columbus Day weekend, more than 200 teenagers gathered at the St. Peter Armenian Church here for the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA) Juniors annual Fall Sports Weekend. The parish hosted 217 participants from 19 parishes across the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, for a week-end of worship, sports and fellowship.

The Rev. Stepanos Doudoukjian, pastor of St. Peter Church, and his wife, Paulette Doudoukjian, worked alongside many dedicated community members to ensure the success of the weekend. Events were held at the church and the gym of Christian Brothers Academy; participants were housed with local families.

Fr. Mardiros Chevian, dean of St. Nersess Seminary, and Fr. Gomidas Zohrabian, pastor of the St. George Church of Hartford, Conn., were on hand for parts of the event. Kathryn Ashbahian, of the Diocese's Department of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, participated and photographed throughout the weekend, which ran Friday evening through Monday morning, October 5-8.

"Reach New HYE-ghts" was the theme the host parish ACYOA Juniors chose as for week-end — and new heights were certainly achieved. see ACYOA, page 7



John Simpson Jr., son of copilot Lt. John Simpson Sr. holding color-enhanced gun-camera photo of C-130 60528 during attack by Soviet MiG-17 pilot on September 2, 1958 —photographed in Bellevue, Nebraska, September 1, 2018

60th Anniversary of Shooting Down of USAF C-130 60528 over Armenia Memorialized

BELLEVUE, Nebraska — The 60th anniversary of the shoot-down of US Air Force C-130 60528 with its 17-man crew near Sasnashen, Armenia, is being commemorated this year. On September 2, 1958 the aircraft was shot down by the USSR. A memorial was created in 1993 for the Sasnashen site and a second was unveiled at the National Security Agency, Fort Meade, MD, on September 2, 1997. The incident and the dedication of the C-130 60528 memorial was addressed in the Armenian Mirror-Spectator issue dated August 18, 2018.

By Larry Tart

Special to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator

Other Memorials Dedicated to C-130 60528's Lost Crew

In 1993, a United States POW/MIA recovery team excavated the crash site, recovering miniscule bone fragments and related aircrew artifacts. In August 1993, Sasnashen village elders and sculptor Martin Kakosian dedicated a khachkar memorial to the aircrew that perished in the edge of their village.

The *khachkar* tumbled over and broke in half, and with assistance from the Big Safari Association (a non-profit USAF-affiliated organization), Kakosian created a new C-130 60528 memorial that he and the villagers dedicated at the crash site in 1998.

The Big Safari Association also funded a replica of the C-130 60528 Sasnashen Memorial as an outdoor display at the National Museum of the US Air Force at Wright-Patterson Air Force Base, Ohio, dedicating the replica memorial in 2002. In reverence to the lost crew, Michael Patterson, a retired Big Safari program manager, laid a 60th Anniversary Memorial Wreath at the replica on September 2, 2018 — Patterson had managed the acquisition and placement of the C-130 60528 Memorial aircraft in National Vigilance Park in September 1997, the creation of the memorial at Sasnashen, Armenia, in 1998 and the replica memorial at the Air Force Museum in 2002.

50th Anniversary Memorial Service for C-130 60528's Crew

Gathering in front of the C-130 60528 Memorial aircraft, National Vigilance Park, Fort Meade, MD, on September 2, 2008, the National Security Agency (NSA) and the 70th Intelligence Wing hosted a 50th Anniversary Memorial Service honoring the 17 crew members who perished in the shoot-down of C-130 60528 on September 2, 1958. Heading the NSA official party, Chris Inglis, Deputy Director, NSA, provided an inspiring eulogy, speaking from the heart — the Inglis family had lost his younger brother Pat 25 years earlier (May 1983), when his Navy A-6A fighter-bomber crashed in the edge of a Soviet naval task force in the Mediterranean Sea.

see MEMORIAL, page 10

Dr. Armen Orujyan Wants to Put Armenia in the FAST Lane

By Monique Svazlian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

SAN FRANCISCO — With the recent change in government in Armenia, there is a renewed sense of hope for the future of the country. It feels like the timing couldn't be better to complement the recent influx of future-forward initiatives and projects that have nudged Armenia toward progress such as the Tumo Center, UWC Dilijan College, Aurora Prize and an increasing presence of technology and venture capital focusing on social, cultural and economic development in Armenia.

One prominent name behind some of these projects has been entrepreneur Ruben Vardanyan, whose vision for the future of Armenia is no secret. His most recent venture is the Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST), focused on science and technology innovation in Armenia. I recently had the chance to speak with FAST's CEO, Dr. Armen Orujyan, about what he sees as the opportunities and possibilities in Armenia.

Orujyan was born and lived in Armenia until age 16. He left in 1989 for the United States and completed all his schooling up till his PhD in the US. He has been an entrepreneur and innovator his entire career, having built organizations and initiatives such as the Athgo Corporation, one of the world's leading entrepreneurship platforms in consultative status with the UN Economic and Social Council, UN Department of Public Information, and the World Intellectual Property Organization. Earlier in his career, he joined the UN's Global Alliance for ICT and Development (GAID) as a Founding Member. He further served as a Commissioner on the UN's venerated Broadband Commission for Digital Development through 2015.

A lesser known fact - he was also one of the founders of the Armenian Genocide March that takes place in Hollywood every year on April 24.

In 2017, he met Ruben Vardanyan in Los Angeles, after which he invited him to go to Armenia to explore the country. "It was incredible to see the progress since I had been there last in 2007. That's when Ruben introduced me to his vision for making Armenia a science and technology hub. He was looking for someone to take over that initiative, so I agreed to go for six months to get to know Armenia better, to know the team and it was like falling in love — both

see ORUJYAN, page 6



Dr. Armen Orujyan



COMMUNITY NEWS

Hrag Papazian Explores Armenian Identity in Turkey

PAPAZIAN, from page 1

Papazian graduated from Hamazkayin's Melankton and Haig Arslanian College (formerly called Hay Jemaran) in Antelias, Lebanon, in 2010 and then attended American University in Beirut, from which he received a bachelor's degree in communication arts. Deciding to switch his focus to anthropology, he went into a master's program at the University of Oxford in 2013. He wrote on the Christian Armenians citizens of Turkey living in Istanbul for his thesis, but upon starting the doctoral program at the same university in 2015, decided to broaden his topic to include two other types of Armenians, migrants from the Republic of Armenia to Istanbul who came beginning in the 1990s due to the collapse of the Soviet Union, and Muslim Armenians, who began to come to media attention in the early 2000s.

Papazian moved to Turkey where he did ethnographic field work for 18 months, and then went to Armenia to begin to write his dissertation, which he says he has half completed and plans to finish by the summer of 2019.

In it, Papazian said, he primarily deals with understandings of Armenian identity and Armenianness, including the production, reproduction and interpretation of the latter. He compares how the three groups of Armenians mentioned above who are living now in Istanbul each perceive and define Armenian identity. Papazian said, "It turns out that it is quite different. For the local Christian Armenians, Armenian identity is mostly an ethnoreligious identity. It is very much tied with being a member of the Armenian Church." Papazian explained that the reasons for this includes the Turkish state's categorization of Armenians as a religious minority and its oppression or censorship of trans-religious understandings of Armenianness. The state tried as much as possible to encourage the religious aspect and to make Armenians assimilate in other realms so that they no longer are an ethnic or national minority with national ethnic claims. The Treaty of Lausanne, which laid the foundation of the Republic of Turkey, also guarantees religious rights. A concomitant reason for the ethnoreligious identity is the religious discrimination which took place throughout the history of the Turkish republic. It made them conscious of their religious difference. Papazian also pointed to what he calls the experiential pairing of Christian and Armenian. People in that community always experience one in tandem with the other. They learn about Armenianness through the

church and religious classes in schools because the history of Armenia and the Armenians itself is banned as a subject to be taught in schools.

As for the Armenian migrants, Papazian finds their main ideological pillars of Armenian identity to be different. It starts with Armenia as a homeland. Consequently, they expect Armenians to show concern, interest and love toward Armenia. If they see these lacking, they would immediately start to question their Armenianness. Papazian related an incident recalled by one migrant who worked for a local Istanbul Armenian. There was a debate about politics and his boss told him "you are a guest here – go back to your country if you do not like this one." The migrant replied, "how come that country is my homeland and not yours? Are you also not an Armenian? If this is your homeland and not Armenia, then what is the difference between you and the Turks? How can I count you as an Armenian?"

A second important pillar according to Papazian is morality. The migrants speak about moral norms or traditions of Armenianness, particular behaviors that are Armenian and others that are not like Armenians. Kinship and gender are also involved. If one acts in accordance with these traditional moral norms, then one is an ideal Armenian, but if not, they start questioning that person's Armenianness.

The third group, the Muslim Armenians, said Papazian, lack institutions that the migrant and local Christian Armenians have which somehow dictate, define and reproduce Armenianness. For the local Armenians, that is the church and community system, while for the migrants, the Armenian state. "The only thing the Muslim Armenians have," Papazian said, "is a lost past, a lost memory. For them, it is very much lineage-based. You are an Armenian if you have Armenian origins. If you learn that your father or grandfather is Armenian, then you are Armenian, period. There is no religious condition, there is no morality or state...It is about learning about one's Armenian origins and trying to recuperate what was lost in terms of culture and knowledge and content. They mostly learn this from the elders or from discrimination."

Some of them did not even have a clue about their Armenian origins until they were discriminated against as infidels or Armenians. This made them realize that changing religion and knowing nothing about Armenianness cannot help them

escape being identified by others as Armenian and discriminated against as such.

This identity is also connected to the Anatolian, Turkish and Kurdish environment where people live in clans or asirets. Growing up the Muslim Armenians begin to realize that they do not belong to any tribe or clan and eventually realize why – because of their Armenian origins.

Papazian found that with such different understandings and definitions of being Armenian, when these three groups coexist in one city, there are identity conflicts, and a lot of social and symbolic boundaries emerge. Christian Armenians often even reject the expression Muslim Armenian, finding it to be an example of cognitive dissonance – how can one be both a Muslim and an Armenian – because of their religious understanding of Armenianness.

The migrants do not deny the Armenianness of the local Armenians yet do really question it. They see, Papazian said, a lack of enthusiasm toward Armenia, occasional pro-Turkish statements by the local community representatives, and cultural and linguistic Turkification. Many of the migrants as domestic workers see how local Armenian family relationships and gender roles are played. They find it very different than back home in Armenia. Some women told Papazian that the local Armenian men were not real men, as they were not strict enough with their women. In fact, they said, "the wives control the husbands," which they felt was against Armenian traditions, as was the placing of elderly parents in old age homes.

While analyzing the intra-Armenian boundaries in Istanbul between the three different groups, Papazian argues that it is necessary to always take into account the boundaries between these groups and the Turkish state and the Turkish majority population. For example, the boundary between Christian and Muslim Armenians can be explained through the understanding of Armenianness as well as the symbolic and political relationship of these two groups with the Turks. When the boundary between Christian Armenians and Turks is primarily a religious one, if the Christian Armenians accept Muslim Armenians as Armenians, they would automatically jeopardize their own boundaries with the Turks.

When asked if he would make any comparisons of the Armenians in Turkey with those of various diasporan communities, Papazian replied that he has not done it academically, but could reply informally about the

Lebanese Armenians based on personal experience. He said that though the Armenian Church was still important for the latter, their Armenianness was not an ethnoreligious identity because there were ways other than through the church to be Armenian. The transreligious dimensions of Armenianness were not banned, so that political parties and secular schools could exist. You could be an Armenian without having contact with the church in Lebanon, unlike in Turkey.

A short-lived exception to the situation in Istanbul arose in the 1990s with a minority within the Armenian Christian minority that started to challenge the religious understanding of Armenianness. They claimed ethnic rights and the recognition of Armenian history and the contributions of the Armenians to the Ottoman Empire and the Republic of Turkey, and raised their voice against the injustices faced by Armenians. The political climate in Turkey had changed. Various Kurdish organizations had claimed their rights as an ethnic minority, though part of the religious majority. When the Justice and Development Party (AKP) came to power and made some initial steps toward democratization, partly as part of the process to access the European Union, this had its influence on Armenians too. The movement around Agos and Hrant Dink, and the Aras publishing house emerged, demanding rights for Armenians as a national minority.

The youngest generation of Armenians created the Nor Zartonk or New Awakening movement. They saw Hrant Dink as a role model and when he was shot they decided to go public in the Armenian community. They were active as democratic leftist activists in Turkish political circles and began to at the same time involve themselves in Armenian activism. They thought, according to Papazian, that Armenians could not solve their problems by looking inward. Instead they must take part in the general political changes in Turkey. Armenians could have their rights respected only if there was a democratic, non-nationalistic and more diverse Turkey.

Papazian said that they understood that they had to be active in movements like the Gezi Park protests, environmental movements, feminism, LGBT movements, and the defense of workers' rights in order to represent the Armenian minority in this progressive democratic faction of Turkish society. By this, Papazian said, they also challenged the institutions of the Armenian minority. They advocated a secular representation of minorities such as Armenians in the place of the Armenian Patriarchate, pointing out that there were Armenian atheists and now Muslim Armenians raising their voices.

However, starting in 2015-16, when the AKP put aside democratization and returned to an authoritarian approach, the crackdown on the progressive pro-minorities movements in Turkey had its impact on the extension of these movements in the Armenian community. Some of the Nor Zartonk members left the country like their Kurdish and Turkish counterparts.

For more on Papazian's analysis of the Nor Zartonk movement, see the video of his recent talk in Cambridge, Mass. for the Zoravik Armenian Activist Collective ([https://www.facebook.com/zoravik/videos/314684859307974/?fref=mentions&_xts__\[0\]=68.ARCqY_al2P_BX_X2HXADaiMPB1GGdPC-Wo9N5K1eKzMIRwe74hJovu9pM-ujQ_AqIfc3ym_sl-MEHZ4OXsXoEvJyXRuFDmcMSVDEJ4ZI1T2F1Pc-IfXRdVPHHmKAm6S-sil8XScUh37jomUL6vagn3EPDeUzImkspLHfE_BXZU1Wu204KzzNzb9ipebf0AWHsp80CDs_XY&_tn_=K-R](https://www.facebook.com/zoravik/videos/314684859307974/?fref=mentions&_xts__[0]=68.ARCqY_al2P_BX_X2HXADaiMPB1GGdPC-Wo9N5K1eKzMIRwe74hJovu9pM-ujQ_AqIfc3ym_sl-MEHZ4OXsXoEvJyXRuFDmcMSVDEJ4ZI1T2F1Pc-IfXRdVPHHmKAm6S-sil8XScUh37jomUL6vagn3EPDeUzImkspLHfE_BXZU1Wu204KzzNzb9ipebf0AWHsp80CDs_XY&_tn_=K-R)). He also has published the article "Between Gezi Park and Kamp Armen: The Intersectional Activism of Leftist Armenian Youths in Istanbul" (*Turkish Studies*, vol. 18:1, 2017) and "Armenians and Other Armenians in Turkey" (<https://repairfuture.net/index.php/en/identity-standpoint-of-armenian-diaspora/armenians-and-other-armenians-in-turkey>, 2017), which covers much of the same topics he discussed in the present interview.

Texas Armenians Meet with the Texas Commission on Holocaust and Genocide

COLLEGE STATION, Tex. – On October 18, the Texas Commission on Holocaust and Genocide (TCHG) held its quarterly meeting at the George Bush Presidential Library and Museum in College Station, Texas. The purpose of the meeting was to begin the process of making an exception to the TCHG policy that currently educates and informs Texans about genocides that are officially recognized by the Federal Government. It was noted in the prepared statement delivered by Mihran Aroian that on May 19, 2017 the Texas House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution 191, titled "Recognizing the Armenian Genocide," thus making Texas the 46th state in the U.S. to officially classify and commemorate the 1915-1923 annihilation of Ottoman Turkey's indigenous Armenian Christian community as genocide.

Prior to the meeting, a letter was sent to the Commissioners signed by the leadership of the four Armenian communities in Texas (Dallas, Houston, Austin and San Antonio). Mihran Aroian presented prepared remarks on behalf of the Armenians present at the commission hearing with the purpose of getting the Commission to hold a discussion and vote on including the Armenian genocide in the educational materials that the TCHG provides to all Texans. The Commission agreed to discuss and vote on the Armenian genocide at the next quarterly meeting on January 17, 2019.

By gaining the support of the TCHG, this will include the Armenian Genocide in TCHG publications and seminars and be a

positive step towards greater recognition by the Texas Education Agency which is responsible for all public schools in Texas.

Participants on October 18 included Karen Aroian, Mihran Aroian, Raffi Caloustian, Cynthia Chisolm, John Nichols, Levoun Ohan, Tatevik Sekhposyan and Anna Yeritsyan. We also want to thank the following individuals for helping to prepare us for the



The Texas Armenian delegation

hearing: Bryan Ardouny (Armenian Assembly), Peter Balakian, Natalie Gabrelian (Armenian General Benevolent Union), Roxanne Makasdjian (Genocide Education Project) and Marc Mamigonian (National Association for Armenian Studies and Research).



COMMUNITY NEWS

ACCOYA Juniors Aspire to New Heights at Sports Weekend

ACCOYA, from page 5

At points throughout the weekend, 16 ACCOYA Juniors from Watervliet shared brief spiritual reflections with their peers, chaperones, and parents.

Saturday, participants played sports and individual games (see the standings below), had dinner with their host families, and returned to St. Peter Church for evening activities. They enjoyed an outdoor dance party complete with a food truck and bonfire.

To Grow and Improve

On Sunday morning, Doudoukjian celebrated the Divine Liturgy and gave an uplifting sermon, cleverly utilizing sports equipment as props to make his homiletic point. Just as an athlete reviews old performances in order to grow and improve, he said, so must Christians review their actions and habits in order to grow and strengthen their faith.

That evening, participants gathered at Treviso by Mallozzi's for an Italian banquet, awards ceremony, and dance. The weekend concluded Monday morning with a farewell choreg breakfast.

2018 ACCOYA JUNIORS SPORT WEEKEND STANDINGS

Beginners Chess

1st: Alex Hananian—St. James, Watertown, MA
2nd: Colby Madden—St. James, Watertown, MA

Advanced Chess

1st: Nick Budka—St. Peter, Watervliet, NY
2nd: Shahe Jebejian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
Beginners' Tavloo

1st: Tanya Akian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2nd: Victor Hermes—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
Advanced Tavloo

1st: Armand Zeibari—Wynnewood, PA
2nd: Marianna Lilla—St. James, Watertown, MA

Girls' Ping Pong

1st: Mia Setrakian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2nd: Elsa Kevorkian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

Boys' Ping Pong

1st: Shahe Jebejian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2nd: Michael Nargizian—St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

Co-Ed Volleyball

1st: Philly 'A' Team
2nd: St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

Girls' Basketball

1st: St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2nd: Philly 'A' Team

Boys' Basketball

1st: St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ
2nd: St. Mary, Washington, DC

Overall Sports Champion Chapter

St. Leon, Fair Lawn, NJ

Female Sportsmanship

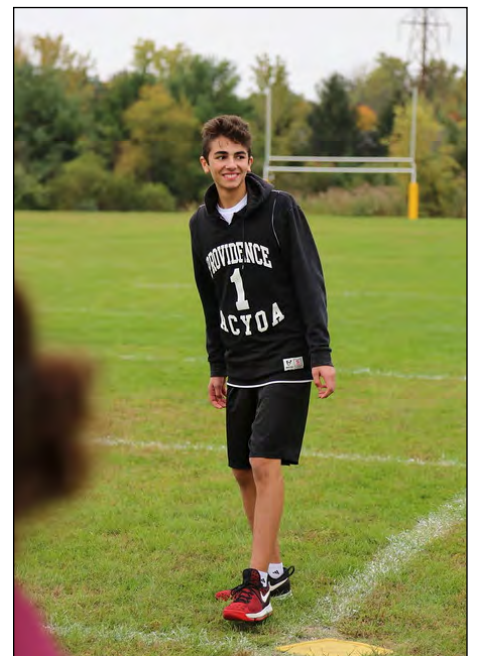
Mary Cimen—St. James, Watertown, MA

Male Sportsmanship

Hagop Derian—St. Peter, Watervliet, NY

Exemplary Christian Spirit

Edward Khachatryan—Holy Trinity, Cambridge, MA



Dr. Richard Hovannisian To Speak on 'The Republic Of Armenia: A Daring Endeavor, 1918-2018'

FRENSO — Dr. Richard Hovannisian will present a talk on "The Republic of Armenia: A Daring Endeavor, 1918-2018" at 7:30 p.m. on Thursday, November 1, in the Armenian Cultural Center, 2348 Ventura St, in Fresno.

This special presentation is co-sponsored by the Armenian Studies Program, the Homenetmen Fresno Sassoon Chapter, and the Hamazkayin Taniel Varoujan Chapter on the occasion of the 100th Anniversary of Homenetmen.

In this centennial year of the Republic of Armenia, Hovannisian will reflect on the enormous challenges of establishing the first independent Armenian state in more than 500 years. In an illustrated power-point presentation, he will assess how the difficult road to independence evolved into an opportunity for a self-sustainable united sovereign republic that would gather in the historic homelands and all elements of the Armenian people the world over.

Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian is Professor Emeritus of Armenian and Near Eastern History at University of California at Los Angeles (UCLA), President's Fellow at Chapman University, and Adjunct Professor of History at the University of Southern California (USC) to work with the Shoah Foundation on testimonies of survivors of the Armenian Genocide.

He received a PhD in history from UCLA and was a member of the UCLA faculty since 1962, where he organized both the undergraduate and graduate programs in Armenian history and served as the Associate Director of UCLA's Center for Near Eastern Studies for two decades. Professor Hovannisian is a founder and six-time president of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS), and a member of a number of editorial boards, scholarly organizations, and civic organizations.

Hovannisian has given more than 2,500 university and community lectures in 48 countries and has participated in numerous teacher workshops and international forums and media events. He has published more than 30 volumes on Armenia History and culture and seven other books on Near Eastern history, society, and culture. In addition, he has edited and contributed to fourteen volumes in the UCLA conference series, "Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces."

The lecture is free and open to the public.

For more information about the lecture contact the Armenian Studies Program, visit the website at www.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies or visit the Facebook page at @ArmenianStudiesFresnoState.

Armen Orujyan Wants to Put Armenia in the FAST Lane

ORUJYAN, from page 5

with the country and the people working on these incredible initiatives like UWC Dilijan and IDEa, it was really exciting. I've been involved ever since."

FAST is a nonprofit organization that reinforces intellectual, financial, and network capacities of the science and technology ecosystem in Armenia and beyond. Focused on producing an ecosystem that drives scientific advancement

and technological innovation, under Orujyan's leadership, FAST has launched a Fellowship for the top 10 percent of all PhDs in Armenia in STEM, deployed numerous scientific grants, and established the first Science and Technology Angels Network in Armenia.

FAST is focusing on developing four main areas, specifically data sciences (AI, machine learning, big data and analytics), bio-technology, advanced materials and micro-electronics. They plan on doing this through concentrating resources behind select breakthrough innovations, inventions, and multi-stakeholder projects, and coordinating activities of scientists, inventors, and entrepreneurs to amplify their work and impact both in Armenia and the world. "The goal is to successfully advance these four verticals, to make Armenia a very competitive country, grow the GDP in line with Western standards, stop the brain drain and think about the brain gain in the country and attract Armenians from the Diaspora as well as non-Armenians from other countries," says Orujyan.

The bigger objective is to turn Armenia into a Top 10 Innovation country. Currently, Armenia is number 69 on the list. "It's going to take a big cultural and socio-economic shift, as well as lots of out-of-the-box thinking to get there. Culturally, however, Armenia is ready to embrace science —we love studying physics, biology, chemistry, mathematics. The instruction level is fairly low in the country, so education and knowledge needs to be improved, but it's an issue that exists and we can correct that. But we do have the talent, the drive and the passion that can help us grow exponentially."

I asked him why he thought this was such an important initiative for the country, given all the other challenges it faces currently. "Armenia is very small, we don't have many natural resources. Our best resource are our people, we have human capital. Science doesn't require big numbers, it requires intellectual capital and we can do that with the people that are in Armenia."

Currently, the organization is looking to raise hundreds of millions of dollars to turn Armenia into a science and tech hub, through philanthropic investment, impact investment, and return on investment. "We need intellectual capital as well as coaches and mentors for our young fellows in various areas of science. We also need to develop our network capacity to get in touch with top notch institutions around the world we can collaborate with. We welcome everyone's support — we can't and don't want to do this by ourselves!"

To learn more about FAST, visit <https://fast.foundation/>

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November 3 and 4

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Sunday Noon to 6 p.m.



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Visa and Mastercard accepted

Donation

The Armenian Missionary Association of America's Koren and Alice Odian Kasprian Endowment Fund donated \$817.28 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.



OBITUARIES

Ara Guler, Poetic Photographer of Istanbul, Dies at 90

GULER, from page 1

Only three subjects got away, he said in a 2005 interview: Charlie Chaplin, who refused to be photographed because he was in a wheelchair by then; Jean-Paul Sartre, who lived near where Guler worked in Paris but nevertheless eluded him; and Albert Einstein, “who died too soon.”

Guler’s work has been widely exhibited, at



Ara Guler in front of his portrait of Pablo Picasso

institutions including the Istanbul Modern art museum, the Museum of Modern Art in New York and the National Library in Paris. He was a recipient of France’s Légion d’Honneur.

The Ara Guler Museum, dedicated to his work, opened with fanfare in Istanbul on August 16, his 90th birthday.

Despite his stature in the cultural world, Mr. Guler declined the mantle of artist.

“If it’s art, it’s art,” he told the *New York Times* in 1997. “If it’s not, it’s not. Other people will decide that 100 years from now. Photography looks like art, but art has to have some kind of depth.”

He continued: “I hate the idea of becoming an artist. My job is to travel and record what I see.”

More important than art, he said, is history, “and that is what press photographers record.”

“We are the eyes of the world,” he added. “We see on behalf of other people. We collect the visual history of today’s earth.”

Guler had a long collaboration and friendship with the Nobel Prize-winning Turkish author Orhan Pamuk. His photographs were included in the Pamuk book *Istanbul: Memories and the City* in 2003, and Pamuk wrote the foreword to the 2009 book *Ara Guler’s Istanbul: 40 Years of Photographs*.

Guler was born on August 16, 1928, the only child of Armenians living in Istanbul. His father was a pharmacist and sold to the movie indus-

try chemicals used to develop film. As a young man, Guler wanted to become a screenwriter and thought he could use his father’s movie contacts. Instead, his father found him a job at a newspaper.

There, Guler said, he learned that it took him longer to write an article than to shoot a pic-

ture. He preferred photography’s faster results.

He also learned, he said, that “you can give more of the message with a photograph than with writing.”

He later moved on to international publications, including *Time*, *Life* and *Paris Match*, and

was part of the stable of photojournalists employed by Magnum, the agency founded in 1947 by Robert Capa, Henri Cartier-Bresson, George Rodger and David Seymour.

Guler’s first marriage ended in divorce. His second wife, Suna Guler, died in 2010. No immediate family members survive.



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In later years, Guler could be seen in a rumpled overcoat sitting at a table in Ara Café, a restaurant named after him in the Beyoglu district of Istanbul, near his studio. Prints of his photographs lined the cafe walls and were reproduced as place mats.

Arsen Sayan Noted Conductor, Educator, Benefactor

WASHINGTON — Conductor Arsen Sayan passed away on October 5. He was 89.

Born in Aleppo, Syria, Sayan attended the local Mkhitarist Fathers School and in 1949 graduated from the Seminary of the Cilician Catholicosate of Antelias, Lebanon. Returning to Aleppo he taught Armenian language, history and music in various Armenian national school, was concertmaster of the Aleppo Diocese Mother Church, and organized the Shoghakana Chorus.

Moving to the United States in 1957, Sayan founded the Knar Armenian Choral Group in 1960, followed by the Ani Armenian Choral Group in 1970. In the interim, (1963-66), Maestro Sayan also studied in the Komitas Conservatory of Music in Yerevan, majoring in choral direction with first-class honors and a dissertation titled “Armenian Religious Music

of the Middle Ages.” He retired in 1995 from the U. S. Information Agency, Washington, D. C., after serving for 25 years as musical-cultural director and chief producer of the VoA’s Armenian Service. In 2000, the Knar-Ani joint chorales marked the 50th anniversary of Sayan’s dedicated service to the Armenian musical culture and heritage.

In 2014, Sayan visited Armenia with the Fund for Armenian Relief to officially open the Argavand Music School that was renovated by FAR thanks to his donation. In a gesture of deep appreciation and respect, the Argavand, Ararat community has renamed the school after him.

Sayan used the time before the official ceremony very productively. During his week in Yerevan he visited his dear Yerevan Komitas State

Conservatory where he studied many years ago and where he also taught. He met with the Conservatory’s Arsen Sayan Stipend recipients and was valued by Conservatory rector Prof. Shahen Shahinyan, People’s Artist, composer, and professor Robert Amirkhanyan, president of the Musical Society of Armenia and Honored



Arsen Sayan and students at the Argavand Music School in Armenia

Cultural Worker Prof. David Ghazaryan, and other professors.

Students told of their recent successes and upcoming plans, some of them performed and amazed Maestro. Elen Eghiazaryan and Mariana Martirosyan (vocal), Asdghik Anhtsuts (canon), and Artur Harutyunyan (piano) notified him that they participated in a series of competitions with some notable success.

Twenty of the conservatory’s best students have been receiving the Arsen Sayan Stipend for the past two decades.

While walking by a classroom in the conservatory, Sayan heard the sound of music and wanted to find out what it was. When he found out that the sounds were coming from the conservatory’s symphony orchestra rehearsal, he asked to visit the orchestra musicians for a bit.

It turned out that the conductor – Anna Manukyan – was a Sayan Stipend recipient some years ago.

He leaves his wife Catherine Sayan; sister-in-law Negda; children Arsen Raphael and Paula and their families (Venezuela); sisters-in-law Sirvart, Araxi (Henri) and their daughters Solange, Valerie and Capucine (France); sister-in-law Koharig (deceased) (Gilbert); and their children; Didier, Karine (Patrick) (Germany); Extended family Khantzian (US), Khatchadourian, Manoukian, Terzian, Sahakian (France), Najarian, Boyadjian, Jamgotchian families in Armenia.

The funeral took place on Saturday, October 20, at Soorp Khatch Armenian Apostolic Church, Bethesda, Md. Interment followed at Fairfax Memorial Park, Fairfax, Va.

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Turkish Officials Honor Ara Güler While Reluctant to Mention His Armenian Heritage

By Haykaram Nahapetyan

Special to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator

ISTANBUL — Istanbul-based Turkish-Armenian Ara Güler was not only the most famous photographer ever to emerge from Turkey, but he actually founded professional photography in modern Turkey. The Turks called him the “Eye of Istanbul” for his famous images of the city, although he would refer to himself and news photographers more broadly. “We are the eyes of the world. We see on behalf of other people. We collect the visual history of today’s earth,” was how the *New York Times*



Ara Guler taking a picture of President Erdogan

quoted him. (See Page 1 for the obituary.)

When on October 17 the Eye of Istanbul entered his eternal rest in one of the hospitals of Istanbul, Turkish media in its entirety reported this as flash news. The sad announcement remained as a frontpage article in many newspapers for many hours. Up until now Güler's death and the subsequent funeral ceremonies continue to remain top news in Turkey. Some excerpts from those reports come to confirm that it is not merely the Armenian perspective that Güler was "number one" in Turkey - this is actually what Turkish media says.

“Ara Güler... was the biggest photo reporter ever in Turkey” - *Hurriyet*.

“The most prominent name of Turkish photography in international arena” – *Milliyet*.

“He shaped Turkey’s public memory with his photographs” – *Sabah*.

And there are many more examples...

Suffice it to say that Ara Güler was the only photographer from Turkey who was elected to and became a member of the American Society of Magazine Photographers (ASMP; today called the American Society for Media Photographers).

Turkish authorities, from President Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Parliament Speaker Binali Yildirim, to ministers and MPs publicly expressed condolences. Because of the funeral services the tramway communication in one of Istanbul's main avenues was stopped.

With all the attention coming from Turkish authorities, one thing, however, was hard to not notice: Ara Güler's Armenian roots were not highlighted by the officials at all and got just a few sometimes controversial mentions in the Turkish mainstream press of recent days. Some indirect references to Güler's Armenian heritage have been made by press during the coverage of liturgy at the Armenian church and his funeral at the Armenian cemetery. *Hurriyet* mentioned that *Dle Yaman* and *Groong* were played at the funeral without noting that those were Armenian folk songs. The same newspaper featured that some soil was brought from Shabin Karahisar, from Güler's father Dajad's tomb, to be scattered over his grave in Istanbul - yet again

providing no details about the Armenian profile of this community or the artist's parent.

The author was able to locate only one article in Sabah's English edition that clearly stated that Güler was an Armenian. More liberal media outlets questioned why Güler's Armenian descent remained unmentioned throughout his life.

“Was Ara Güler an Armenian? Who was his father? These questions are being asked after the death of the master-artist,” a piece in *InternetHaber* mentioned. The publication found out that the original name of Ara Güler was Aram Gülerian.

Some pro-governmental mainstream publications called him a “Turk.” Paradoxically those statements often appeared in the same piece that would refer to the Christian liturgy for Ara Güler conducted at the Beyoğlu Armenian church of Istanbul.

Recently another great Armenian, Charles Aznavour passed away. The French government and public from President Emmanuel Macron to endless media publications would continuously highlight Aznavour's ethnic origins. President Macron even tweeted in the Armenian language. However, Turkish officials turned out to be reluctant to do anything similar for Ara Güler, a man who did so much work to make Istanbul recognizable and prominent in the world of international photography.

Applications Now Being Accepted for the 2019 AGBU Summer Internship

NEW YORK – Every year, the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) empowers young people from the diaspora and Armenia through its professional development programs, including the flagship AGBU Summer Internship Program. Interested applicants are welcome to apply to the 2019 Program by December 1, 2018.

The AGBU Summer Internship Program prepares young people for the future and helps them get closer to their roots and peers through enriching cultural, educational and social activities. Throughout the years, carefully selected placements that match interns' background and career goals have ensured the success and sustainability of the program. In addition, the network of host organizations and companies continues to grow, including new industries. For the upcoming year, Boston has been added as one of the major cities.

Students are placed in exciting industries such as the arts, tech/IT, medicine, finance, fashion, media and film, engineering, international relations and many others.

"This internship has been educational and has exposed me to various types of operations," said George Tarabelsi, a student at the University of Massachusetts, who interned in Yerevan. "As an aspiring physician, shadowing doctors in different departments has allowed me to gain a better understanding of what specifically I would like to pursue in medicine."

Interns have full exposure to life and culture in the host city through an array of activities, ranging from workshops, classes, sightseeing and visits to iconic landmarks, to meetings with high-ranking officials, clergy and community leaders.

For more information about the AGBU Internship Program and applications, visit <https://agbu.org/program/internships/>

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COMMUNITY NEWS

60th Anniversary of Shooting Down of USAF C-130 60528 over Armenia Memorialized

MEMORIAL, from page 5

The Prop Wash Gang held its 2008 reunion concurrently in Baltimore, honoring 60528's lost crew at a reunion banquet on Sunday, August 31. Retired Air Force Lt. Gen. James R. Clapper (then Under Secretary of Defense for Intelligence) was keynote speaker. John Simpson Jr. and his son John Simpson III were special guests at the banquet on August 31 and at the Memorial Service in NVP on September 2, 2008.

60th Anniversary Memorial Services, August and September 2018

On August 30 and September 2, 2018, the Prop Wash Gang (PWG) took the lead role in two 60th Anniversary Memorial Services – both in commemoration of 17 Air Force brothers who perished in Sasnashen, Armenia, on September 2, 1958. Gathering in Bellevue, Neb., five miles from Offutt Air Force Base, for their annual reunion, PWG members devoted their long Labor Day weekend to honoring their 17 lost Air Force comrades. On Thursday, August 30, the 55th Wing 97th Intelligence Squadron (IS) and the PWG hosted a memorial service on the wing's parade ground on Offutt. The Prop Wash Gang's Lonnie Henderson was

At a reunion banquet on Sunday, September 2, 2018 – exactly 60 years after Soviet pilots shot down US Air Force C-130 60528 at

His Eminence had assigned Rev. Fr. Vazken Movsesian “to join you for the special 60th Anniversary Memorial Service.” As keynote



Attendees (PWG Families), 60th Anniversary Memorial Service, Bellevue, Nebraska, September 2, 2018

Sasnashen, Armenia, killing the 17-man crew – the Prop Wash Gang conducted a special 60th Anniversary Memorial Service honoring the crew. Recognizing the gravity and reverence an Armenian priest would evoke with a requiem

service for the 17 deceased comrades, in July 2018 I contacted Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate, Western Diocese, Armenian Church of North America, Burbank, California.

Explaining our planned memorial service, I provided His Eminence an overview of the C-130 60528 shoot-down incident and requested his assistance in making a priest available in Bellevue, Nebraska,

for the memorial service. Seventy minutes after sending my email, I received Abp. Hovnan's response (sent from his iPhone) – “I am certainly interested in this matter.”

Two days later, an assistant informed me that

speaker, Fr. Vazken gave a brief history of Armenia and its people and the early history of the Armenian church – the first nation to accept Christianity in AD 301. He continued with a brief overview of the Armenian Genocide of 1915 and used analogies to memorialize the 17 American flyers who perished in Sasnashen 60 years earlier.

As the grandson of a survivor of genocide, Fr. Vazken has devoted much of his life to helping victims of genocide. When told to “get over the Genocide, it happened a hundred years ago,” Fr. Vazken's response is, “You can't get over it, the moment you forget, you have given in.”

He said, “Sixty years ago on that fateful day, 17 United States Air Force airmen perished in that crash, it was in Armenia, shot down by the Soviet Union.” He pointed out that we must remember their losses, but it is not enough to just remember, you can't end it with just a memorial – the reason for that is that in 1938, Adolf Hitler stated that he was going to invade Poland. When one of his generals said, “You can't do that, we won't get away with it,” Hitler responded, “Who after all today, speaks of the annihilation of the Armenians?” Just 20 years

The memorial service ended with the Prop Wash Gang surprising Fr. Vazken with a most unusual memento (a piece of C-130 60528 debris mounted in a shadowbox), an autographed copy of *The Price of Vigilance*, Larry Tart's extensively researched history of the C-130 60528 shoot-down incident, and a plaque “We Saw An Eagle Fly,” composed by the PWG's poet laureate Lonnie Henderson as a tribute to our 17 lost Air Force brothers.

The September 2 event was recorded and available now on YouTube (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=a4uqCicF5W4>).

In an email exchange on October 1, Fr. Vazken provided a personal assessment of the 60th anniversary memorial service. “Indeed it was a pleasure and honor to be at the commemoration last month in Nebraska. The group made me feel right at home in the PWG family.” Meeting John E. Simpson Jr. and Sam Clark brought an element of connectivity to the events of 1958 in very real human terms. Additionally, at the beginning of his speech, Fr. Vazken made a point of placing the 17 names of the lost crew on the dais “in front of me, just so at no time would I be tempted to speak of an ‘incident’ and forget that the personal sacrifices of these men translated into personal tragedies for the families.” He also commented that “the missing-man table, which Chief Lonnie Henderson had set, was very touching and moving – “I don't think it could have gotten any more personal.”

Having watched in awe when presented the shadowbox containing the piece of 60528 debris, Fr. Vazken saw a greater purpose than a personal keepsake. “I'm transferring the shadowbox with the piece of the plane to the Western Diocese of the Armenian Church Museum so that it can stand as a marker/witness to the shoot-down for future generations. We're working with the archbishop to schedule a special presentation one evening for the local Armenian community.”

Transferring the 60528 debris shadowbox to the Armenian Church museum is unto itself an inspiring summation for the 60th Anniversary Memorial Service in Bellevue on September 2, but there is more.



John Simpson Jr., Larry Tart and John Simpson III, 50th Anniversary Memorial Service, NVP, Fort Meade, MD, September 2, 2008

keynote speaker at the ceremony. After the memorial service, the PWG veterans were guests of the 97th IS at a BBQ lunch and an afternoon gathering with the squadron's active duty airborne reconnaissance flyers.



“Missing Man Table” adapted to honor 60528's lost crew – 17 red roses (one for each lost Air Force brother), inverted glass, salt shaker, slice of lemon, pinch of salt and piece of 60528 debris

ART EXHIBITION

Tekeyan Cultural Association of Greater New York








Artist:
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(1912-2003)

Cubist-Impressionist

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later, not 60 years, not 100 years.

Fr. Vasken ended his moving speech by singing an Armenian hymn and delivering an ancient prayer of the Armenian Church – a requiem service for the departed – naming each of the 17 US airmen who were being memorialized.

Fr. Vasken was enamored with the love and comradeship he witnessed amongst Prop Wash Gang members, commending the audience specifically on the energy he detected in the banquet room. In particular, he regarded with great respect John Simpson Jr., who was three years old when his father, Lt. John E. Simpson Sr. perished aboard C-130 60528, and Sam Clark, who lost several friends/flying comrades aboard 60528. Simpson, who had attended memorial services honoring the lost crew in 1997, 1998, and 2008, was the only family member present at the 60th Anniversary Memorial Service in 2018. Retired Lt. Col. Sam Clark, an enlisted (A2C) Russian linguist (airborne voice intercept operator) who flew reconnaissance missions from Rhein-Main Air Base, Germany, 1957-1962, was the only attending veteran who had served with 528's lost crew 60 years earlier.

During the memorial service in Nebraska, Fr. Vazken reflected that although he had been to Armenia many times, he has never been to Sasnashen. “I will not go back to Armenia again without visiting Sasnashen after this,” he declared. He had planned a trip to Armenia on October 21 (after press time) and volunteered to deliver a small gift from the Prop Wash Gang. In appreciation of the villagers' reverence to C-130 60528's lost crew – annual remembrance ceremonies by villagers and their progeny honoring an alien aircrew since 1993 – the PWG recently solicited voluntary donations from its members to help with the education of Sasnashen's youth. Fr. Vazken was to deliver collected proceeds to Sasnashen village leaders to be used in the village's school system.

Remembrance and connecting the dots – Sasnashen where the airplane fell and where the villagers honor the deceased crew is now connected to Bellevue, Nebraska, it is connected to Burbank, California, it is connected with the PWG audience in Nebraska going back to their homes, to Fr. Vazken's visit to Sasnashen and the crash site, and to the Prop Wash Gang contributing to the education of Sasnashen village youth – the big picture.

COMMUNITY NEWS

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Arts & Living

Celebrating Armenian Cultural Month

By Kevork Keushkerian

ALTADENA, Calif. – Catholicos Karekin I of the Great House of Cilicia had declared October to be dedicated to culture. This year the feast of the Holy Translators was on Saturday, October 13. The cultural month refers to the translation of the Holy Bible by the disciples of St. Mesrob Mashtots, the founder of the Armenian alphabet.

Tekeyan Cultural Association's Pasadena-Glendale Chapter Committee organized an evening of artistic renditions to commemorate the Armenian Cultural Month. It took place on Sunday, October 14, at TCA's Beshgeturian center.

In commemoration of the Armenian Cultural Month, Tekeyan Cultural Association's Los Angeles Chapter had organized a lecture about novelist Zabel Yesayan on Wednesday, October 10, at the Glendale Central Library. The lecturer was Dr. Minas Kojayan.

In the same spirit, the newly-founded Tekeyan Cultural Association's Los Angeles Metro Chapter is organizing a comedy night on Saturday, October 27, at 7:30 p.m. at Pasadena's Rococo Restaurant. It will feature comedian Harout Soghomonian, with the participation of Maro Ajemian and Narine Avakian. It is a sold-out event.

Now, back to the TCA Pasadena-Glendale Chapter's event. In his opening remarks, Kevork Keushkerian briefly dwelled upon the significance of the Cultural month and then invited the various artists to participate in the program. The program consisted of vocal renditions, poetic recitation, and dance performance.

Raffi Kerbabian was phenomenal in his rendition of 3 Armenian popular folk songs and an English song from our famous Charles Aznavour (Yesterday when I was young), which was in tribute to the late singer-song writer. Following this, Keushkerian asked the audience to stand and observe a moment of silence, in his memory.

Asdghig Dadourian eloquently recited two poems from poet Vahan Tekeyan and poet Henrig Toumanyanyan. Pateel and Cynthia Albarian performed three dances during the program, the last of which was in memory of the Sardarabad victory.

Finally, Khatchig Nahabedian of the chapter committee rendered three songs, the first of which was from Sayat Nova. This one was also in tribute to the late Charles Aznavour, as he had performed this with his daughter, Seta.

At the close of the artistic renditions, Very Rev. Kegham Zakarian of the St. James Brotherhood in Jerusalem, recited the Lord's Prayer and dismissed the audience with his Benediction. This was followed by a light reception, when the audience had a chance to congratulate the artists and the committee members for an evening of highly acclaimed performances.



The performers at the Tekeyan Cultural Association's Pasadena-Glendale Chapter



Element Band violinist Shant Mahserejian

Element(ary) Music From the Soul

SANTA MONICA, Calif. – Among the cavernous cliffs of the Santa Monica mountains, the sweet hues of Armenian melodies rise into the air, floating high up above the Ford Amphitheatre, where more than 1,000 audience members are transfixed by the musicians on stage, who come from all walks of life, to create folkloric music with a novel twist.

By Taleen Babayan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

As their music comes alive here in Los Angeles for a diverse audience, attesting to the unifying essence of Element Band, a mixture of cultural nostalgia and emotional tradition envelopes the crowd. The group's performance centers around its latest album, "É," but the evening is also filled with their signature fusion tunes they have become known for over the last 14 years on the world stage.

"It's more fulfilling to record Armenian music and present it to a wider audience," said Ara Dabandjian, founder of Element Band, in an interview. "The fact that I'm able to serve Armenian music in places and to people who otherwise wouldn't have access to it is something I'm very proud of."

The moving songs, performed live in an eclectic and energetic atmosphere throughout the two-hour concert last month, ranged from folklore to lullabies to love songs, forging parallels to the band's three previous albums but strongly standing out with a message: "É," which means existence in Armenian, celebrates the being of the band, which officially formed in 2004 and quickly made a name for itself opening for the legendary Demis Roussos at the Kodak Theater in its inaugural year.

Since then Element Band has continued to increase its visibility, experimenting with different forms as it searched for its core identity, which Dabandjian

see ELEMENT, page 14



Ara Dabandjian playing the oud during Element Band's recent performance at the Ford Amphitheatre

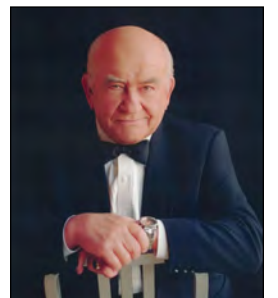
Arpa IFF 2018 to Showcase Inspiring Lineup of Films From Around the World

HOLLYWOOD – The 21st Annual Arpa International Film Festival (Arpa IFF), being held at Hollywood's historic Egyptian Theatre from November 2 to 4, has announced the lineup of 46 films from 17 countries being screened this year. Arpa IFF will once again highlight a diverse range of films that explore themes such as genocide, war, feminism, family dynamics, environmentalism, music, art, adoption, intersectional identities, and LGBTQ issues.

Honorees this year include: Edward James Olmos - Lifetime Achievement Award; Academy Award-nominated actor/producer ("Stand and Deliver," "American Me," "Selena," "Miami Vice," "The Burning Season," Battlestar Galactica," "Mayans MC").

The Awards Ceremony will take place on November 4.

Receiving the Icon Award will be television legend Ed Asner, who has won 7 Emmy Awards ("The Mary Tyler Moore Show," "Lou Grant" and "Roots").



Ed Asner

Natalie Qasabian will receive the Rising Star Award. She is a Producer ("Searching," "All About Nina," "Rainbow Time," "Take Me," "Duck Butter" and "Join the Club").

Sveva Alviti will receive the Career Achievement Award. The Italian actress has starred in "Dalida," "Dangerous Lies Vol. 1" and "The Bouncer."

Opening night on Friday, November 2 will kick off with a special reception and screening of "Monday Nights at Seven," a love story about a single father who is struggling unsuccessfully to let go of his past. The film stars Edward James Olmos, Marty Sader, past Arpa IFF award recipient Mary Apick and mixed martial arts legend Anderson Silva. A special ceremony honoring Edward James Olmos with a Lifetime Achievement Award will follow the screening of the film. Olmos, currently starring in the television series Mayans M.C., has played iconic roles both in film and television, receiving Academy Award and Golden Globe nominations for "Stand and Deliver" (1988).

Saturday evening's centerpiece program and reception will showcase two films – "Yeva," Armenia's foreign language film Oscar submission last year, as well as "Diverted Eden," written and directed by Prince Bagdasarian. "Yeva," an Armenian-Iranian co-production, is set against the backdrop of the long-running conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan over the territory of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh). Director Anahid Abad tells the story of a young woman named Yeva who escapes her influential in-laws with her daughter, after her husband's tragic death and takes refuge in one of the villages of Karabakh. Yeva, accused of murdering her husband, is a complete stranger in this village and is obliged to live her daily life in disguise.

"Diverted Eden," winner of the Audience Award at this year's Sedona International Film Festival, is the story of a war hero who takes matters into his own hands after his young daughter is kidnapped, as detectives unravel the mystery surrounding the unusual crime. Bagdasarian's debut feature "Abstraction" (2013) starring Ken Davitian and Korinna Rico won the Audience Award at Arpa IFF that same year.

Among the films to be shown on Saturday will be:

- "The Song of the Sway Lake" (USA), an

see ARPA, page 13



ARTS & LIVING

Arpa IFF 2018 to Showcase Inspiring Lineup of Films from Around the World

ARPA, from page 12

intriguing family drama about a young record collector and his friend who go to his family's lake house to claim a valuable jazz recording, upon his father's suicide. While he is there, encounters with his estranged grandmother and a neighbor dredge up years of family suffering.

- “River of Gold” (documentary) (USA) – a disturbing account of the apocalyptic destruction of Peru's Amazon rainforest in the pursuit of illegally mined gold. The acclaimed documentary is narrated by Academy Award winners Sissy Spacek and Herbie Hancock.

- “Six Musicians and the City” (documentary)(Russia) – Filmmaker Tatiana Danilyants showcases 6 amazing musicians based in Yerevan, each with their own unique story and musical genre. Between East and West, between strong traditions and today's innovations, between the nostalgic melodies of duduk and the beat of modern jazz, is the city of Yerevan. Among the six participants of this film are Arto Tunçboyacıyan and Jivan Gasparyan.

- “The Girl in the Show” (documentary) (USA) – a poignant retrospective of comedienne, exploring the ways in which women's comedy and women's liberation have evolved together. The Girl in the Show brilliantly explores how comedy and feminism have grown hand in hand to give women a stronger voice in the ongoing fight for equality.

- “Nowhere” (feature) (Canada) – Serbian filmmaker Predrag Velinovic tells the story of three inseparable friends who graduate together and develop a relationship balancing on a thin line between friendship and love.

- “Modern American Artists” (documentary) (USA) - Rockstar/Guitarist Peter DiStefano of the band Porno for Pyros explores his local city of Los Angeles in search of local artists to collaborate with. Peter's journey takes you on a day in the life of a modern American artist as he interacts with painter Michael Gorman and child prodigy Alice Asmar with whom he creates original works.

- “Betty: They Say I'm Different” (documentary) (USA) – creatively blending documentary, animation and nonfiction techniques, this movie traces the life of Funk Queen Betty Davis who arrived on the 70's scene to break boundaries for women with her daring personality, iconic fashion and outrageous funk music. The wife of jazz legend Miles Davis, Betty was a feminist pioneer, inspiring and intimidating in a manner like no woman before. After years of trying, the elusive Betty who vanished overnight, finally allowed the filmmakers to creatively tell her story based on their conversations.

- “Dorbeen” (short) (India)- based on the life of two street children in India and their pursuit of happiness in the little things in life that most adults are unaware of or choose to ignore.

- “Echo” (short) (Serbia) - a young boy spends a day with his father, whom he only occasionally sees, in nature, with the game of calling Echo. After a great emotional charge that the play and the presence of his father create in him, he returns to his mother's house, where there is no place for such outbursts of

“irrational” attitudes towards the world.

- “Genesis” (short) (Iran) - a fantasy short film with a critical point of view about the situation in Syria.

- “What War?” (short) (USA) – a non-Armenian photojournalist's exclusive footage from the Velvet Revolution that unfolded in Armenia in the spring of this year.

A Look into Some of Sunday's Film Screenings:

- “The Pursuit” (short) (USA) - a first generation Armenian-American single mother still struggling with her cultural identity. She tries to conform with her family's and culture's expectations but feels that she is stuck in the middle of the Armenian and American cultures. When she discovers her daughter has similar ambitions to be in the arts as she once had, she is forced to self-reflect. Lucy must decide whether or not she will stand up for her daughter, and vicariously for herself, or will succumb to the ever-present familial pressures.

- “In Vino” (feature) (USA) - it's a special night for the Buoiiton Family. Charles and Linda, extremely wealthy couple, invite their closest friends and family members to dinner. Before dinner is served Charles raises the glass for a toast to his family and falls face forward on his plate dead. Linda confesses that she had poisoned him and she had poisoned everyone in the room to get the money. The guests have one choice: Kill one person among them and take the blame for both murders to get the antidote or... DIE in one hour. What follows is a hysterical exchange between the overstressed members of the group who, in an attempt to establish who should die and who should be the killer, reveal all the skeletons in the closet they have been hiding from each-other for years.

- “Under the Walnut Tree” (short) (USA) - a young boy has been displaced during the massacre of his people and his family. After wandering alone for days, he is ready to give up but fights to continue to safety. His struggle for survival ends when he finds his mother singing to a lifeless body. Loosely based on the true story of Shahan Natalie, who survived the Hamidian Massacres (also known as the Armenian Massacres) which were the precursor to the Armenian Genocide.

- “My New Year” (short) (Armenia) - Based on childhood memories of the devastating 1988 Spitak earthquake in Armenia. A father and his two young children are left homeless, grieving

and aging are perceived in our modern society dominated by social media, as he limns her portrait during a timeless sitting session. With this film the director sets in motion his theory on

poetics of cinematic art, by creating the sense memories of an artist in a non-linear, challenging story-telling scheme.

- “Taniel” (short) (UK) - Film Noir images, prophetic verse, and narration by Sean Bean tell the story of Taniel Varoujan, one of the most majestic poets of the 20th century. At the age of 31, he was lost under the vast shadow of the murder of a race, in what became known as the Armenian Genocide.

- “Side by Side” Out of a Korean Orphanage and Into the World” (doc) - an international journey through the personal memories and experiences of abandonment, relinquishment, orphanages, aging out, and inter-country adoption from South Korea.

- “I Promised Her Life” (short) (Canada) - On the day of her daughter's funeral, a grieving Armenian-American mother defies a centuries-old ritual and tests the limits of tradition as she walks the thin line between death and afterlife.

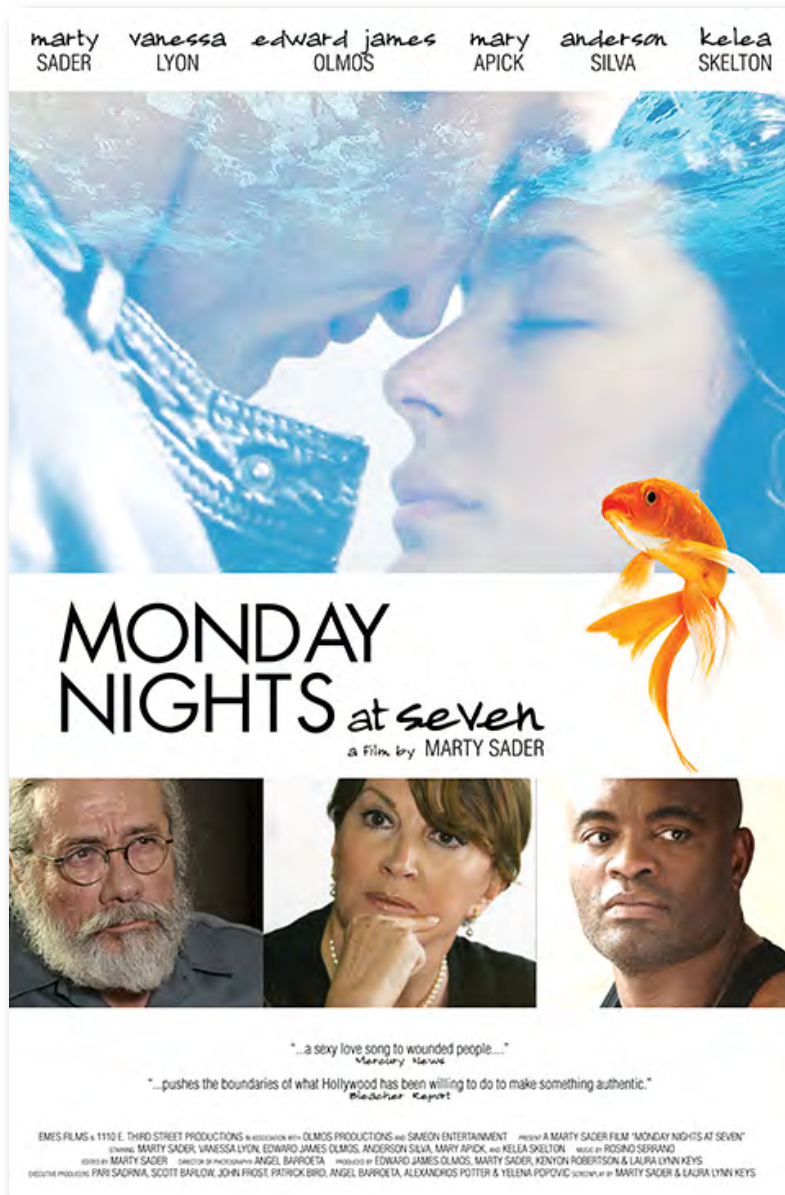
- “Little Fiel” (short doc) (USA) - Artist Fiel dos Santos grew up during the 16-year-long civil war in his home country of Mozambique. The only one of his family to never have shot a gun, today he makes art out of guns to commemorate the lives lost.

- “Homeless” (short) (Armenia) - a 9-year old Syrian-Armenian girl discovers her

father's plans of leaving their beloved homeland.

The 21st Annual Arpa International Film Festival will close with a special Awards Ceremony on Sunday, November 4 at the Egyptian Theatre, with Ed Asner, Natalie Qasabian and Sveva Alvit being honored.

For tickets (Individual Screenings, All-Access Passes, Day Passes) and a full schedule of this year's film screenings, visit www.arpafilmfestival.com



the loss of their mother and wife. After painful quest to find her body and give her a proper burial, by New Year's Eve, the family is settled in a trailer near the wreckage of their home. The father for the sake of his children struggles to find the strength and heart to live on.

- “American Mirror-Intimations of Immortality” (documentary) (USA) - Oscar-winning screen icon Susan Sarandon and Armenian painter Tigran Tsitoghdzian discuss how the apparently in conflict values of beauty

CineCulture and the Armenian Studies Program Present the Fresno State Screening of “Roots”

FRESNO – The CineCulture Film Series and the Armenian Studies Program at Fresno State are sponsoring the screening of the film “Roots” at 5:30 p.m. on Friday, November 2, in the Leon and Pete Peters Educational Auditorium (5010 N. Woodrow Ave., at the west end of the SaveMart Center, on the Fresno State campus.

After the screening producer Lilit Martirosyan (Yerevan, Armenia) will discuss the film and answer questions.

“Roots, by Armenian director Vahé Yan, tells the story of a Boston-based journalist-blogger named Aram who decides to visit Armenia on the eve of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide in 2015 and cover the commemorative events on his blog. In Armenia purely by accident, he meets Anet, who lives in France and who, under the nickname Vané, is one of his regular blog readers. The beautiful love story that emerges makes these protagonists' ties with their native homeland even more profound. A modern-day romance. In Armenian and English with English subtitles.

Admission is free, but seating is limited. The screening is open to the public and free parking is available at any of the adjacent Fresno State parking lots (near the corner of Shaw and Woodrow Avenues).

For more information about the presentation visit www.fresnostate.edu/armenianstudies, or the Facebook page at @ArmenianStudiesFresnoState.



Arpa IFF 2018 Team Photo (photo credit Don Q. Hannah Photography) with following caption: (Upper Row L to R: Sarineh Garapetian, Shaunt Gharibian, Haig Boyadjian, Berge Kallibjian, Sossi Varbedian, Maral Kazazian, Cammie Jones Lower Row L to R: Vanja Srdic, Nelli Harutyunyan, Sylvia Minassian, Jacklin Boyadjian, Lorena Dilanian, Don Hannah)



Element Band on stage during their recent concert at the Ford Amphitheatre in Los Angeles

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concludes is “strictly” Armenian. The group, under the capable leadership of its director, ensures that its live performances are as fulfilling as its recorded albums, particularly when the audience is just as invested as the musicians on stage.

“We derive energy from the audience,” said Dabandjian. “Performing in front of a full house

California’s freeways, from Tarzana to Victorville, where he owned a fiberglass factory. It was on those 100-mile rides that he would compose in his head arrangements of the songs he grew up with, bringing to life the soon-to-be recorded sultry, tango-influenced *Ov Du Geghetzik* with the crying violin to the refreshing and energetic drum-heavy rendition of *Anush Hairenik*.

ly determining his own future.

His house reflected this burst of creativity where Dabandjian was soon playing the saz as his mother sang and his father plucked the mandolin. He would spend countless hours listening to old records of Ophelia Hambardzumyan and Rubik Matevosian that arrived from Soviet Armenia, his ears glued to the large bronzed brass phonograph in his living room.

“I have scratched every vinyl in my house since the 1960s,” said Dabandjian. “My parents used to yell, laugh and be happy all at the same time.” He has kept those scratched vinyls, his first markers into the musical world.

He echoed centuries of music through his mahogany stringed instruments and as he honed his talents, his mother encouraged him to learn the violin as it would enable him to play multiple instruments with ease. At the age of 10 he enrolled at the Conservatoire Libanais in Beirut where he was just beginning to receive formal training when it all came to a crashing

end – quite literally – with the eruption of the Lebanese Civil War in 1975. The bloody conflict created a chasm in this culturally rich, vibrant community that rejuvenated a sizeable Armenian community after the attempted extermination of its population. It was where they had recreated their lives, their families, their work – and it was where they began to play music again – to once again have a reason to celebrate their life and their existence.

As the violence escalated, Dabandjian’s conservatory lessons were cut short by a war that would ultimately change the course of his and his family’s life. Immigrating to the United States as a teenager, Dabandjian and his family settled in Philadelphia. He brought along a mandolin and an accordion, carrying with him a few lessons from a neighbor, but left behind the saz and his one-stringed oud, missing his hometown and desiring to return.

“Back in Beirut, life was stable for my parents and they had an idea of where to direct me,” said
continued on next page



Ara Dabandjian playing the accordion during Element Band’s recent performance at the Ford Amphitheatre

is a whole different experience on stage and you can feel the vibe that everyone is immensely enjoying themselves.”

Playing a multitude of instruments on the album and on the stage, including the accordion, piano, mandolin, *saz*, percussion and *oud*, Dabandjian has been the innovator of this contemporary and imaginative genre of music. The diverse band members, who range from Armenian to Filipino to Persian, play a variety of instruments, creating a unique and distinct sound while performing Armenian songs, without sacrificing that unmistakable identity.

“I don’t think as an artist you can ever get to where you want to be,” said Dabandjian who worked on arranging, recording and producing “É” for close to a year. “But I feel this is my best work up to this point.”

His accordion strapped steadily on his shoulders, Dabandjian softly introduces the group’s next song, one that has not been sung live since the band’s inception over a decade ago, the personal meaning too strong. Like many of Element Band’s selections, these compositions and lyrics are rooted in history, in culture, in family and ultimately, in humanity, the melodies a lifetime in the making as the notes stirred and swished in Dabandjian’s subconscious as he drove on those long smooth stretches of

This piece that Element Band was about to perform was no different; like many Armenian songs it was akin to collecting dust on a bookshelf until Dabandjian decided to chronicle it, in the process unearthing his mother’s acapella vocals on the opening verse of *Vorqan Tzangatz* (How Much I Longed). Tinged with her own longing, the song would be the first and last time her voice was recorded.

“My mother’s voice was beautiful,” said Dabandjian. “Growing up in the environment she did, however, she was never able to take her natural abilities to the heights she wanted to.”

That environment was one of relentless survival, as direct descendants of Armenian Genocide survivors whose priority was merely to live. The roots of *Vorqan Tzangatz* and the sold-out concert under the stars of Hollywood last September can be traced back thousands of miles away to the Armenian enclave of Bourdj Hammoud in Beirut. This Mediterranean port city that served as a haven for hundreds of thousands of Armenians, was experiencing an explosion of arts, culture and music in pre-war Beirut of the 1960s, the so-called Golden Age, where an abundance of ideals and diverse influences fused together. It was here where Dabandjian grew up among a rich palette of records and instruments, picking up a mandolin at the age of 3, inherent-



Element Band vocalist Natalie Avunjian



ARTS & LIVING

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Dabandjian. “However, once we immigrated to the US, we faced many challenges on many different fronts, as do most immigrants.”

Though he was now far from his birth city, the lavish array of music he was raised on stayed with him as did all of the international influences that had filled his ear. From the musical instrumentation of Beirut’s Harper to the rock and roll of Led Zeppelin to the Mediterranean sounds of Greek vocalist Demis Roussos, Dabandjian continued to study and play music on his own, soaking in the myriad of musicians he had been exposed to in his hometown while seeing them perform live as well as in his imagination through those vinyl records.

“Artists see things and I hear things,” said Dabandjian. “At that young age to consume those classics and different languages shaped me and I became the product of all of that.”

From *Fado* music queen Amalia Rodrigues to Caesaria Evora’s Cape Verdean *morna* blues, he is “infatuated by it all.” An opera and classical music fan, Dabandjian would play Mozart in the background of his bike shop he opened in his early 20s in San Diego. He dabbled in various professional paths but kept music a vital part of his life as he listened to new sounds while retaining the revolutionary music of those locals in his childhood neighborhood – Hartar, Ara Kekedjian, The Five Fingers – the inflections of which can be heard in Element Band’s arrangements.

“All of these musical sounds brew in me to this day,” said Dabandjian. “I always paid attention to what each musician did instrumentally to a specific piece of music and what one did differently from the other.”

By the time he turned 40, Dabandjian was a self-described “horrible businessman,” and a push from his oldest nephew gave him the courage to finally tune into what was stirring inside of him since the day he began making music on his parents’ egg-slicer.

He soon set off on recreating his favorite



Element Band vocalist Soseh Keshishian Aramouni

disappear.” He cites the song *Tou Anmegh Es* as an example, which is titled *Meghavor Achkeroun* on the “É” album, a smooth jazz rendition by vocalist Natalie Avunjian.

“I haven’t heard anyone sing or record that song in at least 30 to 40 years,” said Dabandjian, who remembers Levon Katerjian’s recording in Eastern Armenian. “Through Element Band, yes, they are listening to it in a different form, but at least it is not getting lost.”

As far as the types of songs he selects, he aims to be authentic, while still remaining “adaptable to the ear that wants to have fun and be nostalgic.” He knew from the beginning, however, that song selection would be of “utmost importance” harking back to his childhood when he would eagerly listen to a new record from Led Zeppelin or the Styx, only to find that he would love one song, but not the rest of the album.

“I always knew I wanted to make albums where I picked the cream of the crop and people could listen to the whole album over and over so I am always mindful of that,” said Dabandjian, who also encourages his vocalists to choose songs they are emotionally attached to, as that passion will come through in their performances.

In a society where mediocrity is hailed, Dabandjian’s music portrays the genuine meaning of art. While it is much easier to consume baseless pop numbers, Dabandjian is actualizing a documentation of sorts of folkloric Armenian music. He is quick to clarify that is he no ethnomusicologist, but relents somewhat, remarking that perhaps he is in his “own way and microcosm.”

“If your work is honest and true to your beliefs, people will see that,” said Dabandjian. “Many people have said that if it wasn’t for Element Band, their children would not listen to Armenian music and you can’t give me a bigger compliment than that.”

His music embodies him to his core as he humbly composes not for vanity, ego or a quick buck, but because he sees the significance of bringing quality songs to the forefront and breathing life into classics. Dabandjian presents Element Band to contrasting generations – from the Armenian teenager in Glendale to the American airplane mechanic in Santa Paula.

“We are not cheating you out of music,” said Dabandjian. “We are giving you something real.”

Upholding the tenets of substantive Armenian music outside of Element Band, Dabandjian fully embraces his life as a musician and composer as he works on a variety of artistic projects, such as the “Papak” album he recorded with German-Armenian musician Aren Emirze. The duo composed music to Western Armenian poetry, subsequently embarking on their 2017 PAKAK Tour, which kicked off in Beirut, Lebanon with performances in France, Switzerland, Germany, Canada and the United States.

make mistakes, it is all part of the experience,” said Dabandjian.

His musical journey came full circle when he returned to the city that had such a profound effect on him all those years ago.

“It was very impactful and emotional for me to perform in Beirut,” said Dabandjian who played for a sold-out audience in Bourdj Hammoud’s Hagop Der Melkonian Theater in 2015. While there he returned to his old haunts and his schools, reflecting emotionally on his experiences there as the youngest of five children, noting that he was very attached to every single person in his family, who have been his lifeline.

From there he moved onto his first trip to Armenia where he was again greeted with great enthusiasm and fanfare – so much so that the family of Ardashes Kachadrian, the original composer of Anoush Hairenik, gifted him the musician’s original notes and signed the composition. While there he also taught at the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies, reflecting on it as a gratifying experience as he composed, arranged and recorded music with the young students. He seeks to pave the way for these future musicians, the way that was done for him as a youngster in Beirut.

“Element Band is the tip of the iceberg and by passing it onto the next generation, they can take it to an even higher place,” said Dabandjian.

Until then, he continues to channel his art through his music, stringing into existence the unfulfilled dreams of his mother, of those singers in Bourdj Hammoud, and of all those whose voices could only take them so far. Through fingers strumming on the gut strings of the oud or pressing down on the ivory keys of the accordion, he creates melodies that evaporate into the starry speckled night, echoing the souls and the unsung songs of all those before him, bouncing off the Santa Monica mountains and transcending into the cobalt sky from the hills of Hollywood to the highlands of Armenia – and everywhere in between.



Ara Dabandjian with close friends Vahe Berberian & Serj Tankian following the sold-out Element Band performance at the Ford Amphitheatre in Los Angeles

Armenian songs, composing without barriers and remaining open to experimentation, allowing himself to come alive as a musician.

“The best part about it is that I’m free,” said Dabandjian. “I haven’t put up any barbed wires with music because people and the industry can be limiting.”

Although he was without professional musical training, he had the vital elements of a musician – the ear, the creativity, and a musical legacy passed down from his parents, who encouraged his music even in the US when they were all trying to find their direction.

“I was always a musician at heart, at home and at parties,” said Dabandjian. “I always knew I should return to my true love of music and that is what has happened.”

His primary concern is the vulnerability of losing this cultural music, stressing that “it will



A scene from “Distant Constellation”

‘Distant Constellation’ Documentary Opens in November in Boston, NY

BOSTON – From Bostonian filmmaker Shevaun Mizrahi, this Turkey-set documentary features survivors of the Armenian genocide. Mizrahi’s award-winning documentary, “Distant Constellation,” introduces us to the colorful residents of an Istanbul retirement home – a community made up of pranksters, historians, artists and Casanovas – who reveal their stories for the camera, discussing distant sexual conquests, artistic pursuits put an end to by dimmed sight, and inescapable memories of war and the Armenian genocide. An Independent Spirit Award nominee, Mizrahi’s dreamy, Tarkovskian film opens November 2 with the director present in New York and runs till November 8 at The Metrograph (<http://metrograph.com/film/film/1828/distant-constellation>), November 9 in Chicago (Mary and Leigh Block Museum of Art in Evanston, Illinois) and November 26 in Boston again with the director present at the Brattle Theatre (<http://www.brattle-film.org/2018/11/26/distant-constellation/>) followed by a national release via Grasshopper Film: <http://grasshopperfilm.com/film/distant-constellation/>).

“Distant Constellation” world premiered in Locarno where it received the Jury’s Special Mention Award. The film won the FIPRESCI Award at Viennale and Best Picture Prize at Jeonju International Film Festival. “Distant Constellation” was nominated for an Independent Spirit Award and Film Comment placed the film in its list of Best Undistributed Films of 2017.

“Distant Constellation” is Mizrahi’s first feature film. It is 82 minutes long, and in Turkish, English, Armenian and French. Shevaun shot the film as a one-woman crew in Istanbul over a six-year period. She received earlier training as a photographer and then went on to study cinematography at NYU and was the assistant to Ed Lachman (“Carol,” “Wonderstruck”) for several years. The film reflects on the nature of time, memory and the cycles of life in a sensually playful cinematic way. Most recently Shevaun was awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for her work on the film.



Celebrating the Legacy of Diana Der Hovanessian

ARLINGTON, Mass. — On Sunday, November 4 at 3 p.m., the Armenian Cultural Foundation and the New England Poetry Club, in collaboration with Amaras Art Alliance, Armenian General Benevolent Union – New England, Armenian International Women’s Association, Armenian Museum of America, The Friends of the Longfellow House, Hamazkaine Armenian Cultural and Educational Society, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research and Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada, will pay tribute to the life and literary legacy of Diana Der Hovanessian.

Born in Worcester, Der Hovanessian was born to John Der Hovanessian and Mariam Israeli. Her parents’ families, on both sides, were wiped out during the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

Diana’s first exposure to poetry came through the words of the martyred Armenian poets Daniel Varoujan and Siamanto. Her father recited their poems in Armenian, while her mother acquainted her with American and English poetry by literary giants such as Henry Wadsworth Longfellow. All of the Der



Diana Der Hovanessian

Hovanessian children, according to Diana, were not only encouraged but “expected to write poems for gifts for special days.”

Moving to Cambridge, Mass., where she lived for the rest of her life, Diana began writing and publishing poems. Over the years more than 25 books of her poetry and translations were published, including *How to Choose Your Past*, *Songs of Bread, Songs of Salt*, and *Dancing at the Monastery*. She taught American literature, poetry, and translation, and also conducted poetry workshops.

She served on the editorial board of several literary and academic journals, such *Ararat Literary Quarterly* and the *Armenian Review*.

As a member, and later president, of the New England Poetry Club, Diana served with distinction. She transformed the club from being “insular and provincial, with meetings held at the Brahmin enclaves of Beacon Hill and the Harvard Faculty Club” into a more open and vibrant society by inviting poets of diverse backgrounds and nationalities. During her tenure, she initiated in 2006 the Daniel Varoujan Award. Later, in her honor, the Club established the Der Hovanessian Awards for translation works from any language. As president of the New England Poetry Club. she also initiated and presided over the popular summer poetry reading festivals at the Longfellow House in Cambridge.

Diana’s interest in translating Armenian poetry blossomed decades later, making a major literary legacy unmatched in English-language Armenian diasporan literature. The first attempts were a set of Armenian *sharakans* (hymns) for a Boston Pops concert conducted by Rouben Gregorian. The second consisted of a set of six pieces for a lecture on Daniel Varoujan her father was giving.

Today Diana’s translated works by more than

Recipe Corner

Guest Recipe



by Christine Vartanian Dalian

Armenian Lamb Shank Dinner for Four

This month, Douglas Kalajian, author of *Stories My Father Never Finished Telling Me*, shares his favorite lamb shank recipe with Armenian Mirror-Spectator readers.*

INGREDIENTS

- 4 meaty lamb shanks, trim off fat
- 1 large onion, coarsely chopped
- 4 carrots, cut into chunks
- 3 celery stalks, coarsely chopped
- 3-4 garlic cloves, peeled and coarsely chopped
- 3-4 tablespoons olive oil
- 3 bay leaves
- 3 to 4 cups homemade lamb broth (water or low-sodium beef broth may be used)
- Salt and pepper

PREPARATION

Day 1: Parboil shanks in a large pot of lightly salted water for about 2 hours. The water should almost cover the shanks. By doing this, the cooking time is cut down on serving day, and you’ll end up with a large bowl of lamb broth for future recipes – soup, lamb and string bean stew, or whatever you are inspired to prepare. Note: Cool the broth and place it in a large bowl. Cover and refrigerate overnight. The next day, skim off any fat that rises to the top and discard. Use some of the broth to prepare the shanks; the remaining broth can be stored in containers and placed in the freezer for future recipes.

Day 2 – Serving Day: Sauté the onions, carrots, celery and garlic in olive oil in a pot large enough to hold the shanks, vegetables and broth. Add the shanks, bay leaves, broth and seasonings to taste. Place a cover on the pot in a tilted position; bring to a boil, then reduce the heat to simmer. Simmer shanks for about 1 to 1 1/2 hours. Check periodically to ensure there is still enough liquid to prevent burning. Adjust seasonings, if necessary. Remove bay leaves. Once done, the tender, falling-off-the-bone lamb, can be served in individual bowls over a bed of buttered noodles with plenty of vegetables and cooking liquid from the pot. Armenian rice or bulgur pilaf would be an ideal accompaniment in place of the noodles.

Crusty bread or garlic bread (for dipping into the juices) and a tossed green salad make for a very satisfying and traditional lamb shank dinner.

What to do with leftover meat from the shanks:
Note: Larger leftover meat pieces may be shredded and added to a string bean stew, while smaller bits of leftovers may be turned into a breakfast hash with an egg on top.
Add 1/2 to 1 cup red wine depending on the number of lamb shanks. Also, add a 15 oz. can of diced or crushed tomatoes with liquid and dried herbs, such as oregano and thyme, depending on the amount of meat.
Serves 4.



*Douglas Kalajian is a retired editor/journalist and sous chef at <https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>. His career in newspapers took off in the fading days of manual typewriters and touched down in the digital age. As an editor, reporter and feature writer for the *Palm Beach Post* and the *Miami Herald*, he enjoyed a front-row view of South Florida’s explosive growth and equally explosive crime and corruption over three decades. His first book, *Snow Blind*, grew out of a front-page story about a brilliant young public defender whose ideals and health fell victim to the region’s cocaine insanity in the 1980s. After retiring from newspapers, Kalajian co-authored *They Had No Voice: My Fight for Alabama’s Forgotten Children*. His latest book, *Stories My Father Never Finished Telling Me*, is a memoir about growing up in the shadow of the Armenian Genocide. His wife, Robyn Kalajian, is a retired culinary teacher and chief cook at <https://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>. Together as a husband-wife team, they publish *The Armenian Kitchen*.

“After more than 30 years as an editor, reporter and feature writer at various newspapers,” Douglas stated, “I’m using many of those same skills along with a few new ones to tell stories and connect with readers and viewers in different ways. For example, I write books. I’m particularly excited about independent publishing and have released *Stories My Father Never Finished Telling Me* as the first title under my own imprint.”

“I write occasional reviews and profiles for *Independent Film Quarterly*,” he adds. “And in my spare time, I’m co-producer of <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/>. I test recipes and write about the secrets and delights of Armenian cooking. I appear in and produce the site’s how-to videos, which are also posted on my popular YouTube channel.”

Go to: <http://www.thearmeniankitchen.com/> for more Armenian recipes and culinary insight from the Kalajians. This highly respected and popular website shares knowledge about Armenian food, cooking tips, and preparation, whether it’s Aunt Arpie’s deviled eggs or Gavoor’s amazing cheese puff/bourag called “penerli.”

To order *Stories My Father Never Finished Telling Me: Living with the Armenian Legacy of Loss and Silence*, go to: <https://www.amazon.com/Douglas-Kalajian/e/B00F218Q6M>

For recipes and stories about Robyn and Douglas Kalajian, go to:



200 Armenian poets, appear in 10 volumes of anthologies as well as in volumes dedicated to individual poets. In her 2005 anthology, *The Other Voice*, Diana dedicated an entire volume to her translation of poems by Armenian women writers.

In addition to the Armenian, she also translated works by Russian, Romanian, and Arab poets such as Anna Akhtamova, Maria Banus, Nizar Qabbani and Abd al-Razzaq.

Her poems, exceeding a thousand, have appeared in more than 100 literary journals and magazines as well as anthologies.

She wrote a number of plays. “Two – The

Secret of Survival” and “Growing Up Armenian” were produced on many college campuses. Both pieces are built around themes of Armenian American history and identity.

Her contributions were recognized by some 34 institutions and publication, and won her their highest awards, among them the PEN/Columbia Translation Award (1979), Paterson Poetry Prize (1998), Prairie Schooner, George Herbert Award of the World Order of Narrative Poets, Writers Union of Armenia, The PEN-New England GOLDEN PEN Award, the Allen Ginsberg Poetry Award (2009), and the Armenian Writers Union Award.

The keynote speakers on November 4 include award-winning poet and educator, Dr. Vivian Shipley, and Dr. Askold Melnyczuk Professor of English and MFA Graduate Program Director, College of Liberal Arts, University of Massachusetts Boston. Other speakers will include Dr. Robert Mirak, ACF president, Mary Buchinger, president of the New England Poetry Club, Maro Dalley, Diana’s daughter, and Dr. Barbara J. Merguerian, co-founder, Armenian International Women’s Association. The program, followed by a reception, will also include recitations of her works in English and Armenian.



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 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 Talianian 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 Lalig at 617-319-2651 for tickets or information.

NOVEMBER 4 — Celebrating the Life and Work of Diana Der Hovanessian, Organized by the Armenian Cultural Foundation and co-sponsored by Amaras Art Alliance, Armenian General Benevolent Union - New England affiliate, Armenian International Women's 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 & Kheyima 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



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

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 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

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, Kheyima, 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.

NOVEMBER 10 & 11 — Armenian Fest 2018, Sts. Vartanatz Armenian Church of Providence presents its ARMENIAN FOOD FESTIVAL AT RHODES ON THE PAWTUXET, 60 Rhodes Place, Cranston. - Featuring chicken, losh and shish kebabs and kufta dinners. Armenian delicacies, dancing to live music, arts and crafts, flea market, gift baskets, children's corner, country store, jewelry, hourly raffles. Armenian Dance Group will perform on Saturday and Sunday at 5 p.m. Armenian food and pastry are available all day. Saturday from noon — 9 p.m. and Sunday, noon — 7 p.m. Free admission and parking. Valet parking available. Please call the Church Office at 401-831-6399 or www.armenianfestri.com/food for further information.

WISCONSIN

NOVEMBER 3 — Saturday, Armenian Genealogy Conference, hosted by St. John Armenian Church of Metro Milwaukee. Join us for a day of workshops, presentations, community and discovering your Armenian roots. This conference grew out of the Armenian Genealogy group on Facebook. For more information, visit <https://armeniangenealogyconference.com>

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

US Ambassador's Parting Salvo Asks for Territorial Concessions in Karabakh

By Edmond Y. Azadian

After completing his three-and-a-half year tenure in Yerevan, US Ambassador to Armenia Richard Mills has chosen to leave while making incendiary remarks rather than parting quietly with fond memories.

During his term in Armenia, a remarkable transformation took place in the country. While Armenia became more visible on the international scene, domestic changes heralded a new era particularly with the advent of the Velvet Revolution.

Any country, regardless of size, has a role to play on the strategic balance of powers, especially in the Caucasus region, which has become a powder keg.

In his parting salvo, Mr. Mills gave a long interview to EVN Report (<https://www.evnreport.com/politics/u-s-ambassador-mills-i-leave-inspired-and-hopeful>), where he covered much of the developments in the region during his tenure in Yerevan. To say the least, his remarks and views created a bitter aftertaste in Armenia with regard to the solution of the Karabakh conflict.

The Armenian media, in Armenia and in the diaspora, has reacted vehemently to his statement, even hurling personal insults at the ambassador. It would be foolhardy and naïve to hold Mr. Mills personally responsible for those remarks. We do not need to shoot the messenger instead of the message. We have seen in the case of one of his predecessors, namely John Evans, a single word, “genocide,” cost a diplomat his position and destroy his career. Ultimately history will vindicate Evans, but it has not helped his case in the present.

These policy statements are carefully crafted at a higher level, at the State Department, and trusted to individual diplomats to enunciate. Basically, that was the mission of Mr. Mills, to deliver the message to the Armenian people, no matter how unpalatable it was. His successor, Lynne Tracy, cannot deviate from the script either.

During that notorious interview, Mr. Mills stated, “I was sur-

them to the enemy.

Currently, President Trump's National Security Advisor John Bolton is on a mission to Moscow. Mr. Bolton is not known as a suave diplomat and nothing good should be expected out of his trip to Armenia. That trip coincides with the president's blunt pronouncement that the US will further build up its nuclear arsenal and not be intimidated by Russia and China, called out by name. Certainly, that will be the thrust of Mr. Bolton's message.

While Mr. Trump knows that President Vladimir Putin of Russia and President Xi Jinping of China are not the type of statesmen who will blink, as Mr. Bolton travels further south, where he is scheduled to visit Armenia, Georgia and Azerbaijan, he may wreak havoc in that region. His sole mission in the Caucasus will be to contain Iran at any price.

Some commentators believe that Mr. Trump's call to arms is more motivated by domestic factors than international issues. In view of the forthcoming mid-term elections, Mr. Trump's advisors have urged him to take a more aggressive posture to overcome the erosion of the Republican seats in the House and Senate races.

Naturally, that kind of posture tends to grease the wheels of the military-industrial complex, which sets higher store in the president's moral compass, as was revealed in his treatment of the Saudi Kingdom, after the murder of a dissident journalist.

Mr. Mills and his successor are the extension of the same policy in the Caucasus. He has surmised that the return of lands was one of the core tenets of the Madrid Principles.

By mentioning that one aspect of the Madrid Principles, Mr. Mills is taking apart an entire deal which also has other components. If the deal is about land for peace, where is the other component which ensures the safety of the population of Karabakh after it gives up its strategic positions?

The ambassador states that he was surprised to find out there was no appetite for territorial concessions on the Armenian side. How was it that he was not similarly surprised when Azeri President Ilham Aliyev repeatedly threatened that he would occupy not only Karabakh but also Armenia proper?

The resolution of the Karabakh conflict has been entrusted to the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, chaired by the US, Russia and France. Thus far, the code of conduct has been to have coordinated, united pronouncements by the three co-chairs. But by Mr. Mill's unilateral statements, it seems the US has been breaking away from the established protocol.

Last but not least, Mr. Mills' position favors Azerbaijan for the latter's \$5 billion arms purchases from Israel and its willingness to allow Israel to spy on Iran and if necessary to use its territory as a launching pad to stage an attack against Iran.

As far as Iran is concerned, and perhaps also Russia, Mr. Mills has an incongruous message for Armenia. He pontificates in the following manner: “Ultimately, what we want for Armenia is that it follow its

own foreign policy based on a very basic principle; Armenia is a sovereign nation, it should make its own decisions based on its own interests and the interests of the Armenian people.”

In the same breath, he delves into the Iran issue, and after giving the same diatribe (“Iran is an exporter of terrorism,” “Iran's mischief in Syria,” “Hezbollah,” etc.) he asks Armenia to stand up and bash Iran. He said, “But if your voice is going to be heard in the international community, you also have to accept some responsibilities.”

Mr. Mills' advice amounts to double suicide: give up Azeri territories without peace guarantees so that Mr. Aliyev marches into Armenia. You have to antagonize Iran because we want you to do it as part of “your voice in the international community,” even if Iran is your only pipeline to the outside world, as proven during the 2008 Russia-Georgia war.

Certainly Armenia and Karabakh have to use their official channels to make their voices heard. But it is incumbent upon the diaspora Armenians, particularly in the US, to react. In order to be able to react effectively, the community has to be politicized. The mid-term elections are ahead. No party and no candidate has made an issue of the State Department's toxic policy vis-à-vis Armenia or Karabakh.

Only Armenians can raise their voices in an organized or coordinated fashion. Other groups have been vitally involved in protecting and defending the interests of their ancestral lands.

If the diaspora is to mean something to Armenia, it has to become the extension of its foreign policy in faraway lands.



prised 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,” he said. “So I was very surprised that there was no support for that anymore.”

Originally the idea of territorial concession was adopted by Armenia's first president, Levon Ter-Petrosian, incidentally the mentor of the current acting prime minister, Nikol Pashinyan. But that view cost him the presidency and support for that position has been eroding with the public ever since. Armenia was eventually able to force a cease-fire on Azerbaijan in May 1994, after taking strategic heights in the battlefield, and which entailed seizing control of some territories (seven regions in all) outside the historic boundaries of Karabakh.

In one village nestled under the city of Shushi, called Karintak, there was not a single family left which had not lost a member. The Azeri army was raining rockets over the civilian population indiscriminately. That is why people in Karabakh refuse to cede a single inch of territory.

Ter-Petrosian still believes that inflexibility is a sure path to war but the majority of the population thinks otherwise, particularly after the Azeri blitzkrieg of April 2016. The post-independence generation is more security conscious and believes that Armenia's safeguard begins in the Karabakh mountains.

The strategic drive is to populate those areas rather than cede

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COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Another Major Erdogan Scandal; This Time on US Soil

Not a week passes without the disclosure of another major scandal in Azerbaijan or Turkey. The latest such scandal was exposed by the Stockholm Center for Freedom in an article written by exiled Turkish writer Abdullah Bozkurt, titled: “Utah case exposes more dirt on Turkey’s Erdogan.”

The article reveals that Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s corrupt tentacles reach into the United States, which makes the subject of this scandal of particular interest to Special Counsel Robert Mueller in connection with his Russia probe and “international organized crime network,” according to Bozkurt.

“A federal grand jury in Utah returned a sealed indictment on August 1, 2018, naming Erdogan as the leader of a foreign country who met with highly controversial businesspeople in California and Utah in what was claimed to be a major money laundering and tax fraud case,” Bozkurt reported.

The indictment, unsealed on August 24, 2018, charged that “Jacob Ortell Kingston, the chief executive officer, and Isaiah Kingston, the chief financial officer of Washakie Renewable Energy (WRE), by filing false claims for tax credits, obtained over \$511 million in renewable fuel tax credits that were designed to increase the amount of renewable fuel used and produced in the US. Lev Aslan Dermen (Levon Termendzhyan), owner of California-based fuel company NOIL Energy Group with links to a transnational criminal enterprise, is also identified as a partner in this grand scheme. From 2010 through 2016, they fabricated documents and rotated products within the US as well as overseas to make it appear that they were engaging in real trade to qualify for the tax credits,” Bozkurt wrote.

The indictment stated that Jacob Kingston was arrested on August 23, 2018, while on his way to Salt Lake City international airport headed to Turkey after he was tipped off. Bozkurt reported: “The Kingstons had already bought a luxury mansion in a seaside town in Turkey according to a wire transfer from a WRE account to Termendzhyan’s account at Turkey’s Garanti Bank on March 5, 2014. More wire transfers to Turkey were listed in the indictment. Jacob Kingston, who frequently traveled to Turkey to meet with top Turkish officials including Erdogan, was often greeted like a VIP at the Turkish airport, was provided a police escort and did not even use his passport to enter Turkey according to witness testi-

mony in the US indictment.”

Jacob Kingston first met Erdogan in New York in September 2017 when the Turkish president came to the US to attend the UN General Assembly. This meeting took place “after FBI raided the Kingston group’s properties on February 10, 2016, and the revelations of the fuel tax scam had already made the headlines in Utah,” according to Bozkurt.

“In early November 2017, Jacob flew to Turkey to hold a series of high-level meetings in both Ankara and Istanbul. He tapped Sezgin Baran Korkmaz, the chairman of SBK Holding LLC, as the main conduit in Turkey, while he kept a separate investment and asset management firm, Mega Varlık Yönetim A. ., which was set up with equity of \$450 million in Turkey,” Bozkurt wrote.

“Termendzhyan also has a company named SBK Holdings USA, which is a sister company to Korkmaz’s SBK Holding LLC in Turkey. Korkmaz was quoted as telling the Turkish press that his partnership with WRE has resulted in an investment valued at \$1 billion and thanked Erdogan for personally facilitating the business deals. According to the press release issued on September 9, 2016, by the Turkish government’s Investment Support and Promotion Agency (ISPAT), WRE, the Noil Energy Group and SBK Holding LLC have made significant investments in Turkey and planned to do more. The partnership with SBK Holding began in 2013 with Noil Energy making the first batch of investments in real estate. Construction and real estate businesses comprise the prime source for ill-gotten proceeds for Erdogan’s massive multi-billion-dollar wealth. The total investment reached \$500 million with another half million dollars assigned to a Mergers and Acquisitions fund for operations in Turkey. The trio has made investments in all types of sectors including pharmaceuticals, automotive, chemicals, technology, glass, and food,” according to Bozkurt.

“With Erdogan’s political backing and cover, SBK Holding has expanded its operations into various areas including finance, energy, real estate, defense, mining, industry, tourism, technology, and logistics. The company is mainly active in the finance industry through investment banking, asset management, and raw materials financing. It also has substantial interests in the energy sector that span both the US and Russian markets. Erdogan was not bothered at all by the fact that Termendzhyan was already implicated in a major probe that was being conducted by the Department of Homeland Security for money laundering, tax evasion, and stolen oil. Edgar Sargsyan, the ex-president and former legal counsel for SBK Holdings USA, stated in his declaration filed in court on July 14, 2017, that Termendzhyan, a Russian [Armenian], is the head of a criminal organization. It is worth remembering that he was arrested in 1993 for a gas tax scam in the US, where the Russian mafia was known to have been actively involved in similar scams in the ’80s and ’90s. He was also charged with tax fraud and armed assault in the past and was convicted of battery in 2013,” Bozkurt reported.

Interestingly, “Korkmaz appears to be the main conduit linking the Kingstons and Termendzhyan to pro-Erdogan businessman Ekim Alptekin, whose Dutch shell company Inovo BV hired former national security advisor Mike Flynn’s Flynn Intel Group to run a smear campaign and defame Muslim scholar Fethullah Gülen, a US-based cleric who emerged as the main critic of the Erdogan regime. Flynn tapped former CIA director James Woolsey to do the work against Gülen in a meeting held with Korkmaz in California in August 2016. Woolsey and his wife had a meeting with both Korkmaz and Alptekin in New York City on September 20, 2016, to discuss the proposal. On September 19, 2016, Flynn met with Mevlüt Çavuşoğlu, the foreign minister of Turkey, and Berat Albayrak, Erdogan’s son-in-law who is also a minister in his cabinet, to discuss another proposal to kidnap Gülen and whisk him away from US soil to Turkey. Two months later, on November 8, 2016, Flynn published a poorly written, derogatory op-ed on *The Hill* news website about Gülen, which many suspected was penned by Turkish operatives, not Flynn. Flynn later admitted to making false statements including lying about the fact that Turkish government officials were supervising and directing the work. He also misrepresented his lobbying on behalf of the Erdogan government and lied about the op-ed he published on *The Hill* website,” Bozkurt wrote.

Alptekin fled to Turkey after he was interviewed by the Mueller team in May 2017 and dodged the subpoena that was subsequently issued after investigators concluded that he had lied to them. Korkmaz was also ordered to testify before a grand jury in Washington on September 22, 2017, over possible violations of federal criminal laws including the Foreign Agents Registration Act (FARA). He also did not comply with this subpoena. “It was believed that money in the amount of some \$450,000 that Alptekin’s Dutch shell company paid to Flynn, in fact, came from Korkmaz. The Utah indictment reveals Termendzhyan fled to Turkey in August 2017 on the day state search warrants were executed on his home and office,” Bozkurt revealed.

“If there was an independent judiciary in Turkey, this would have been addressed first and foremost by the Turkish criminal justice system, and Erdogan would have been forced to leave office in disgrace, at the very least. Most likely he and his thugs would have been sentenced to prison for breaking about a dozen Turkish laws. That is no longer possible since the corrupt Turkish president has crippled the judiciary, destroyed the independent media and suspended the rule of law in the aftermath of a major graft investigation in December 2013 that uncovered his corrupt practices involving highly controversial Iranian and Saudi businesspeople. Now we see US judicial action on Erdogan’s crimes that extended all the way to American soil. This time he won’t have the political clout to cash in to derail or hush up the legal cases that implicate him. He unsuccessfully tried before in the Hakan Atilla case in New York, and he will likely suffer the same fate in the Utah case as well,” Bozkurt concluded.

The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul: Seventy Years (1948-2018)

By Father Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

The Patriarchate in 1948

Patriarch Mesrob Naroyan of Constantinople took office during the first decades of Kemalist Turkish Republic from 1927 to 1944, under great hardship. He displayed wisdom and dedicated leadership. Upon his death Archbishop Kevork Aslanian was elected locum tenens and four years later in 1948 internal crisis erupted by a group of clergy of the Patriarchate demanding the already delayed election of the new Patriarch. They blamed Archbishop Aslanian for the delay and demanded to take an action, while the Archbishop was adamant waiting to hear from the Catholicos of All Armenians who was not elected yet. The Mother See was vacant.

The election of Catholicos Kevork VI Chorekjian of All Armenians took place in 1945 in Holy Echmiadzin, where Archbishop Kevork Aslanian went to represent the Patriarchate and participate in the consecration of the Catholicos. Upon his return the clergy in Istanbul were suspicious whether Aslanian had reached a decision with the newly elected Catholicos. They thought he was procrastinating the election of the Patriarch while still waiting to hear from the Mother See and act accordingly. Among the 53 active clergy in Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate, 38 were heading the opposing group who considered themselves a majority, and decided to invite delegates for an election without the consent of the locum tenens Archbishop Aslanian. They even sent a delegation of three to Ankara to secure permission for the hasty election.

Opposing Clergy Suspended

Archbishop Kevork Aslanian had no choice but to suspend five of the opposition clergy, asking the Catholicos of All Armenians to confirm the punishment. The Supreme Spiritual Council did confirm, stating the fact that “those in question had gone on their own to ask help from the Turkish authorities which con-

stituted action taken against the canons of the Armenian Church.” Those suspended were Hmayak Dz. Vartabed Bathtirian, Zarmyre Dz. Vartabed Guezurian, Archpriest Abraham Ebeyan, Archpriest Tovma Shigaher, and Priest Serovbe Bourmayan. The decision of the Mother See Holy Echmiadzin was in force until “further action.” The confrontation developed into invasion and illegal election of a new Patriarch, trying to impeach the Archbishop and replace him with another leader, the above named Bathtirian who would call delegates for the election. The next step they took was to invade the Patriarchate and occupy the building which was interfered and prohibited by the authorities.

Authorities Interfere

Turkish authorities interfered in the local electoral procedure, and without approval from the Hierarchy of the Mother See they permitted the opposition to hold Patriarchal election on July 17, 1949 against the approval both of the locum tenens Archbishop Aslanian and the National Constitution. The Catholicos of All Armenians Kevork VI forcefully rejected the illegal action and sent an urgent message to Ankara to stop any action taken by the opposing side, until he had fully examined the issue on the highest canonical level of the Armenian Church.

Karekin I Hovsepian Catholicos of Cilicia

To receive a closer report, the Catholicos of All Armenians assigned Karekin I Catholicos of the House of Cilicia to call a delegation from Istanbul to find ways for resolving the conflict. Upon his invitation a delegation of five arrived in Antelias, Lebanon, the Seat of the Catholicosate, including Toros Azadian who represented Archbishop Kevork Aslanian, two suspended priests, and independently attorney Stepan Baronian, and Dr. Hrant Hairabedian. Catholicos Karekin I met with the delegation in the presence of Archbishop Khat Achabashian, Vicar of the Catholicosate, and Dajad Israbian, Chairman of the Central Council of the See of Cilicia. After gathering all the disputed issues, the Catholicos referred them to His Holiness Kevork VI for final decree.

Further Complications

To make matters worse, the opposition party, now furious for being suspended and considered “lay persons, defrocked and with no authority to function as clergy,” decided to call in early 1950 an Assembly of delegates for Patriarchal election, regardless of the strict warnings of the Catholicos from Holy Echmiadzin. Subsequently the same year final reprimand arrived in November when His Holiness sent a telegram directly to Jelal Bayar, President of the Republic of Turkey, strictly rejecting all actions that could jeopardize the stability of the Armenian Patriarchate in Turkey, deeming those actions “unacceptable encroachments” (Cf. *Hask* monthly 1950, p. 356).

The telegram insisted that the government of Turkey should “annul all unauthorized actions not in agreement with the National Constitution of the Armenian Patriarchate”. The same Constitution, said the telegram, served as the basis for the election of the previous Patriarch Mesrob I Naroyan in 1927, and his successor can only be elected in accordance with the same Constitution.

President Jelal Bayar wasted no time and called an assembly to elect a successor to Patriarch Naroyan according to the guidelines from the Mother See. The Assembly of the duly elected delegates met on December 2, 1950, presided over by the locum tenens Archbishop Kevork Aslanian, and elected Archbishop Karekin Khachadourian, the Pontifical Legate of the Catholicos of All Armenians in Argentina as the Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople. The long and complicated crisis ended as the newly elected Patriarch Karekin I established peace and prosperity in the Armenian Patriarchate of Turkey until his passing in 1961.

The Present Situation

Three decades later, following the most deserving and blissful patriarchate of Archbishop Shnork Kaloustian (1961-1990), a crisis emerged in the Patriarchate, while the present Patriarch Mesrob II Moutafian was running the affairs of the Patriarchate see ISTANBUL, page 20



Russian Orthodox Church Cuts Ties with Constantinople

Andrew Roth in Moscow and Harriet Sherwood

MOSCOW (*The Guardian*) — The Russian Orthodox Church has announced it will break off relations with the Patriarchate of Constantinople in a religious schism driven by political friction between Russia and Ukraine.

The Synod of the Russian Orthodox Church elected on Monday, October 15, to cut ties with the Ecumenical Patriarchate of Constantinople, which is viewed as the leading authority for the world's 300 million Orthodox worshippers.

The split is a show of force by Russia after a Ukrainian church was granted independence.

Last week Bartholomew I of Constantinople, the “first among equals” of eastern Orthodox clerics, granted autocephaly (independence) to the Ukrainian Orthodox Church, which previously answered to Moscow.

Archbishop's Defiance Threatens Putin's Vision of Russian Greatness

If Monday's decision is a lasting one, the loss of the powerful and wealthy Russian church will be a serious blow to the global church. It also marks an important new facet for the rift between Russia and Ukraine, who have become

bitter enemies since the annexation of Crimea and the war in Donbass.

Metropolitan Hilarion of Volokolamsk, the Moscow patriarchate's head of external church relations, announced the Russian church's decision on Monday and said Russia hoped the Patriarchate of Constantinople would change its mind.

“Until that happens, until all these unlawful decisions made by Constantinople are in force, we won't be able to communicate with the church which today finds itself in the midst of a schism,” he said, according to reports of his remarks.

The global Orthodox churches collectively represent 300 million people. But there are fewer than 3,000 of the Orthodox faithful in Istanbul.

The Russian Orthodox Church represents a majority of Orthodox Christians and commands huge wealth and power. Its leader, Patriarch Kirill, is closely allied to Vladimir Putin, the Russian president, who he has described as “a miracle of God”.

Rivalry between the Russian church and patri-

arch of Constantinople has been a feature of eastern Orthodoxy. Kirill has objected to Bartholomew's close relationship with the Roman Catholic church and Pope Francis.

Ukraine's government had lobbied strongly for autocephaly as part of a larger break from Russian influence in the country's affairs.

“Autocephaly is part of our pro-European and pro-Ukrainian state strategy,” the Ukrainian president, Petro Poroshenko, said in a statement last week. He also called Moscow's loss of control over the Ukrainian Orthodox Church “the fall of the ‘third Rome’ as the most ancient conceptual claim of Moscow for the global domination”.

Russia's Orthodox Church already had a tense relationship with the religious authorities in Istanbul.

In the summer of 2016 the first global gathering of the 14 self-governing Orthodox churches since the year 787 almost collapsed before it opened because of disagreements over the agenda. Several churches – including the Russians – threatened to boycott the “holy and great council,” which had been 55 years in the planning.

The Patriarch of Constantinople has sought to repair relations with the Roman Catholic church, which broke from eastern Orthodoxy almost a millennium ago, in 1054.

Former Oppositionists Win Lawsuits against Armenian State

STRASBOURG (RFE/RL) — The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) on October 18, ordered Armenian authorities to pay a total of 7,500 euros (\$8,600) in compensation to two former opposition activists who were arrested during 2008 post-election protests in Yerevan.

Grigor Voskerchian and Masis Ayvazian ran regional campaign offices of Levon Ter-Petrosian in the February 2008 presidential election. They also participated in nonstop demonstrations staged by Ter-Petrosian against alleged vote rigging.

Both men were arrested when security forces dispersed protesters camped out in Yerevan's Liberty Square on March 1, 2008. Eight protesters and two police servicemen were killed as a result.

Voskerchian, who coordinated Ter-Petrosian's election campaign in the town of Abovian, was subsequently sentenced to two years in prison for organizing “mass disturbances.”

The ECHR ruled that Armenian courts did not have sufficient grounds to allow investigators to keep Voskerchian under pre-trial arrest. The 62-year-old is to receive 3,000 euros in damages.

Ayvazian received a suspended two-year jail sentence at the time for assaulting law-enforcement officers on March 1, 2008. The ECHR said that Ayvazian must be compensated financially because he was kept in pre-trial detention longer than was allowed by an Armenian court.

Both former activists hailed the Strasbourg court's rulings.

Dozens of Ter-Petrosian loyalists, among them Armenia's current Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, were jailed on controversial charges. Pashinyan ordered a renewed criminal investigation into the bloodshed shortly after he swept to power in May.

The Armenian Patriarchate of Istanbul: Seventy Years (1948-2018)

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capably and conscientiously until he fell ill after ten years in office. He succeeded Patriarch Karekin II Kazanjian whose tenure was relatively short (1990-1997). Patriarch Mesrob Moutafian suffered a terminal illness losing his memory and the ability to stay in office. At age 52 he entered the Armenian Hospital ever since, and as of today at age 60, he remains bed-ridden with no hope to return to the Patriarchate.

Internal crisis followed since two parties involved in the controversial election of a new Patriarch, while as of today Patriarch Moutafian is living. Receiving petitions unilaterally, Turkish authorities interfered and did not allow an election, arguing the impossibility the existence of two Patriarchs. Thee Religious Council of the Patriarchate, on the other hand, obviously by tacit approval of the authorities,

hastily decided to appoint Archbishop Aram Ateshyan Vicar of the Patriarchate, born and raised in Turkey and a graduate from the Seminary of the Jerusalem Armenian Patriarchate. His position was duly approved by the Turkish authorities as of this day.

Election of Locum Tenens Failed

Internal conflict developed as in the recent past and an opposition group headed by Bishop Sahag Mashalian, chairman of the Religious Council, demanded election of a Patriarch coadjutor to run the affairs in place of Patriarch Moutafian. The Religious Council, presided by Archbishop Aram Ateshyan, Vicar of the Patriarchate, had one way of resolving the status quo by declaring both Archbishop Mesrob Moutafian retired Patriarch of the Armenians in Turkey, and the vacancy of the Patriarchate. In March, 2017, as a follow-up, another positive action was taken by the executives of the

Patriarchate when Archbishop Karekin Bekjian, born and raised in Turkey and currently the Primate of the Armenian Diocese of Germany, was elected locum tenens of the Patriarchate, replacing the Vicar Archbishop Ateshyan.

However, this last action was never approved by the Turkish authorities. They did not recognize any new leader other than Archbishop Ateshyan whose appointment they had approved some eight years earlier. Co-existence of both, the elected locum tenens Archbishop Bekjian and the appointment of Vicar General Archbishop Ateshyan, was rejected and, subsequently Archbishop Karekin Bekjian left Istanbul and returned to his Diocese. Meanwhile, upon his resignation as the Primate, hoping to fulfill his obligations at the Patriarchate and accomplish the election of a new Patriarch, a new Primate was elected for the Armenian Diocese of Germany.

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