

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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## Davutoglu: 1915 Armenian 'Deportation' Inhumane

YEREVAN (Hürriyet and RFE/RL) – The “deportation” of Armenians in 1915 was inhumane, and Turkey has never supported the move, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said on December 12 as he made a landmark visit to the country’s long-time foe, Armenia.

that he suggested to Armenia that it withdraw from two regions in Nagorno-Karabagh.

Davutoglu expressed his hope that a collective consciousness between the two countries could be created with a “just memory.”

“We say ‘just memory.’ What I mean with that is we should know the facts. Then we see that Turkish-Armenian relations do not date back like German-Jewish ties. In every street, there is a common sign.

“After you discover this, then you see the deportation, which I see as a totally wrong practice done by [the Ottoman-era rulers under the Committee of Union and Progress]. It was inhumane,” Davutoglu told a group of reporters en route to Yerevan.

Yerevan wants Ankara to recognize the mass killings of Armenians during the forced deportation in World War I as genocide, but Turkey has steadfastly refused to do so.

“But when you write a history taking the deportation into account, then a collective conscious was created from this side [Turkey] that Armenians betrayed their nation and deserved the deportation.

We should destroy these two collective see DAVUTOGLU, page 3



Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, left, with his Armenian counterpart, Eduard Nalbandian, in Yerevan (AFP)

Accompanied by Foreign Ministry Undersecretary Feridun Sinirlioglu, Davutoglu visited Yerevan for the Black Sea Economic Cooperation (BSEC) group meeting. The top diplomat met with his Armenian counterpart, Edward Nalbandian, on the sidelines of the summit.

“We are very pleased with the meeting with Nalbandian; it was candid. The primary aim is to build an environment of dialogue on a strong basis,” Davutoglu said after the meeting, while dismissing claims

## Rep. Schiff Requests Orphan Rug for Capitol Hill Event From White House

WASHINGTON – This week, Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA) sent a letter to President Barack Obama requesting that the White House lend the Ghazir rug, more commonly known as the Armenian Orphan Rug, be lent out for an event on Capitol Hill hosted by Schiff with survivors, historians, members of the Armenian-American community and Members of Congress and their staff to highlight the efforts made by the American government to aid the Armenian community after the first genocide in the 20th century. Schiff previously had encouraged the White House to allow the rug to be displayed at the Smithsonian.



Rep. Adam Schiff

In the letter, Schiff writes: “Most Americans, including a great many of my colleagues in Congress, are not aware of the scope and scale of the American response to the genocide. Our efforts, public and private, helped to relocate refugees and to provide relief to survivors and their families throughout the years of the genocide (1915-23) and after. But America’s generosity was not lost on

see RUG, page 16

## Winter Break for Mirror Spectator

WATERTOWN – The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* will have a one-week break the first week of the New Year.

The issue of December 28 will be the last issue of the current year. The first issue of the New Year will be dated January 11.

The annual Christmas Greetings will appear in the December 28 issue.

Our staff wishes all our readers a Merry Christmas.

## President Sargisian’s Father Dies

STEPANAKERT (Armenpress) – Azat Sargisian, the father of Armenian President Serge Sargisian, died here on December 16, at age 84.

Messages of condolence were sent by the President of Karabagh (Artsakh) Bako Sahakyan, among others, as well as US Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern.

The funeral service took place at St. Hakop Church in Stepanakert on December 18 and the burial took place the following day.

## Christmas Service at St. Vartan Cathedral

NEW YORK – The Nativity and Baptism of Jesus Christ will be observed at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral on Sunday and Monday, January 5 and 6.

On Armenian Christmas Eve, there will be an Evening Service with Scripture Readings (by students from the Diocese’s Khrimian Lyceum and the St. Vartan Armenian School) at 4 p.m. The Divine Liturgy will begin at 5 p.m., celebrated by the Very Rev. Mamigon Kiledjian.

The St. Vartan Cathedral Choir will sing the Divine Liturgy, under the direction of the Khoren Mekanejian. A reception will follow.

On Armenian Christmas Morning, Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern), will celebrate the Divine Liturgy. The Morning Service begins at 9:30 a.m., and the Divine Liturgy follows at 10:30 a.m. The sacred music will be sung by the St. Vartan Cathedral Choir.

In Armenian tradition, this feast day commemorates not only the birth of Christ, but also His baptism by John the Baptist. The latter is remembered through the “Blessing of the Water” ceremony. Hratch Nersessian will serve as “godfather” of the Blessing of Water service.

After the cathedral’s January 6 church services, a home blessing service and Christmas reception will take place in Haik and Alice Kavookjian Auditorium. The Akh’tamar Armenian Dance Ensemble will perform during the reception, which is open to all. Admission is free.

## UMass Boston Nursing School Helmed by Prof. Anahid Kulwicki

By Alin K. Gregorian  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BOSTON – One of the major departments at the University of Massachusetts, Boston, the College of Nursing and Health Sciences (CNHS), now has a dean who is a leader in her field nationally and who happens to be Armenian-American.

Dr. Anahid Dervartanian Kulwicki, originally from Lebanon, has extensive training in the US. She holds a PhD in nursing synthesis and a master’s degree in nursing care of children from Indiana University, in addition to a bachelor’s degree in nursing from the American University of Beirut.

During a recent interview, Kulwicki said that she was raised in Anjar, which has the distinction of being the only Armenian city See KULWICKI, page 16



Dean Anahid Kulwicki



President Serge Sargisian meets with OSCE Minsk Group leaders.

## Nalbandian Calls Attention of Visiting OSCE Co-Chairs to Death of Armenian soldier

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) – Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian received Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-Chairs Igor Popov, Jacques Faure and James Warlick and Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk.

In the context of talks with Armenian and Azerbaijani presidents in Vienna on November 19 and foreign ministers in Kiev on December 4, the interlocutors continued the discussions on furthering the process of peaceful settlement of the Karabagh issue.

The Armenian foreign minister called the attention of the co-chairs to the death of an Armenian soldier as a result of firing from Azerbaijani side near Tavush region.

The minister underlined that despite the calls of the OSCE Minsk Group chairing countries about the necessity of reinforcement of confidence-building measures, not only servicemen, but also civilians still fall victim to the constant see MINSK, page 2

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Armenian Delegation Visits Iran

TEHRAN (Armenpress) – A delegation headed by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Shavarsh Kocharyan were hosted by Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran on Pacific and Commonwealth Affairs Ebrahim Rahimpour on December 15.

Kocharyan held a meeting with Zarif, during which they discussed the “good-neighborly” relations and mutually beneficial cooperation that exist between Iran and Armenia.

Speaking about the bilateral cooperation in the international arena Zarif stated he appreciated the constructive role of Armenia in that area.

Zarif also underscored the need for a peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabagh issue within the norms of the international law.

## François Hollande to Visit Armenia in May

YEREVAN (Armenpress) –President of France François Hollande will pay a visit to Armenia in May, he announced at a meeting with the heads of the Coordination Council for the Armenian Organizations of France Mourad Papazian, Ara Toranian and Alexis Govciyan.

The editor-in-chief of *Nouvelles d’Arménie* periodical Ara Toranian stated that they discussed their concerns at the meeting held at the Élysée Palace. In particular the trio touched upon the issue of adoption of the law on criminalization of the Armenian Genocide denial. Also, the two sides discussed the issue of Turkey’s membership in the European Union.

“During the course of the meeting François Hollande stated that he will pay a visit to Armenia on May 8 or 14,” Toranian said.

## Research Reveals Origins of Gampr Dog

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Historical sources have recently been compiled proving that Gampr dogs are indeed the national Armenian breed. Chairperson of the Armenian Association of Cynologists Violeta Gabrielian stated this at a press conference held on December 16. Among other things, Gabrielian noted that the Armenian Gampr dog has an age-old history. “Studying descriptions of our historians we can state that this breed of dog had appeared in fourth century and was used in the army.”

Armenian Gampr is a breed of livestock guardian dog native to the Armenian Highlands, including the territories of modern Eastern Anatolia of Turkey and Armenia. The Armenian Gampr was bred by local people using primitive selection.

The modern Gampr has changed little within the history of its existence in Armenian Highlands. It is one of few natural breeds not subjected to hard selection by phenotype. They preserved the genetic variation that other dog breeds had initially and this genetic variation was promoted by spontaneous and, in some cases, intentional periodic mating with locally indigenous wolves (still present). Gamprs are noted for their vitality, independence, mind, strong self-preservation instinct, ability of the trustworthy defense and protection of livestock and exclusive friendliness to humans.

## FM Welcomes Newly-Appointed Latvian Ambassador to Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Eduard Nalbandian received newly appointed Latvian Ambassador to Armenia Elita Gavele (residence in Tbilisi) on December 10.

Nalbandian congratulated the ambassador on her appointment and spoke of the friendly relations established between the two countries and the developing cooperation.

Gavele, in turn, thanked Nalbandian for his welcoming reception and noted her commitment to expanding bilateral cooperation between Latvia and Armenia.

## Levon Aronian Wins Silver in World Mind Games

BEIJING (Armenpress) – The leader of the Armenian Men’s Chess Team Levon Aronian took second place in the World Mind Games. In the 28th and the 29th matches, the Armenian grandmaster (GM) defeated GMs Ian Nepomniachtchi (Russia) and Maxime Vachier-Lagrave (France), respectively. In the final match, Aronian played to a draw with GM Shakhriyar Mamedyarov (Azerbaijan).

Aronian won the silver medal, while Sergei Karjakin took gold and Vachier-Lagrave took bronze.

In the May 2012 ranking of chess players, Aronian was ranked number two in the world and had an Elo rating of 2825, making him the third highest rated player in history.

Aronian won the Chess World Cup 2005. He led the Armenian national team to the Gold medals in the 2006 (Turin), 2008 (Dresden) and 2012 (Istanbul) Chess Olympics and at the World Team Chess Championship in Ningbo 2011. He was also World Chess960 Champion in 2006 and 2007, World Rapid Chess Champion in 2009 and World Blitz Chess Champion in 2010.

Aronian was declared the best sportsman/ gamer of Armenia in 2005 and was awarded the title of “Honored Master of Sport of the Republic of Armenia” in 2009.

Aronian was born on October 6, 1982 in Yerevan to Seda Sarkisovna, an Armenian mining engineer, and Grigory Leontievich, a Jewish physicist. He was taught to play chess by his sister Lilit at the age of 9. His first coach was the Grandmaster Melikset Khachiyan. An early sign of his ability came when he won the 1994 World Youth Chess Championship (under-12) in Szeged with 8/9, ahead of future luminaries Etienne Bacrot, Ruslan Ponomarev, Francisco Vallejo Pons and Alexander Grischuk.

Aronian has a degree from the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture.

In March 2009, he won the 18th Melody Amber Blindfold/Rapid tournament held in Nice, France for the second time, scoring a combined 14 points in 22 games. In August 2010, he attempted to defend the World Rapid Chess title, but lost to eventual champion American Gata Kamsky. In March 2011, in Monaco, he won the 20th and final Melody Amber Blindfold/Rapid tournament for the third time, scoring 15½ points in 22 games.

In January 2012, Aronian competed in the Tata Steel



Levon Aronian

Chess Tournament in Wijk aan Zee; the field included world No. 1 Magnus Carlsen, defending champion Hikaru Nakamura, and former world champion Veselin Topalov, among others. The average rating of the field was 2755, making this 13-round event a category 21 tournament. Aronian finished first with 9/13 (+5) and a performance rating of 2891, a point ahead of Carlsen, Radjabov and Fabiano Caruana. Aronian played in the 2013 Candidates Tournament, which took place in London, from March to April. He finished fourth.

Top player, Viswanathan Anand called Aronian “a very gifted tactician” and added that “He’s always looking for various little tricks to solve technical tasks.” In 2011, Boris Gelfand described Aronian as “the most striking player around, with the highest creative level, in terms both of openings and original ideas in the middle-game.”

## Making a Difference, Two Feet at a Time

YEREVAN, Armenia – Share-a-Pair, a project of The Paros Foundation’s 100 for 100 Projects for Prosperity distributed more than 50,000 shoes to children in need in Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh this year.

“In its third year, Share-a-Pair has successfully distributed more than 75,000 pairs of new shoes and almost 1,000 pairs of warm winter boots to children in need,” said Peter Abajian, Executive Director of The Paros Foundation. “This has been particularly exciting because we have been able to engage hundreds of volunteers from around the world during our various distributions.”

In 2013, shoes were distributed to children in need, in more than 90 rural communities. Distributions were also made to children in boarding schools, kindergartens, orphanages and through other non governmental children’s organizations.

Helping meet the need of an impoverished child with a well-fitting pair of new shoes appropriate for school or play, improves their health and development. New shoes are costly and often times pose a financial hardship for parents of multiple children. Throughout the process, both children and their parents expressed their thanks for this bit of relief.

Through the partially-funded Healthy Teeth Project, dental hygiene products were distributed to almost 2,000 children in select rural communities. SERVICE-Armenia 2013 participants both distributed the products and provided instruction on their proper usage.

Our partner, Focus on Children Now spearheaded shoe distributions throughout needy communities in Nagorno Karabagh. US Ambassador to Armenia John Heffern and the US



US Ambassador to Armenia, John Heffern and the Embassy’s Helping Hands Group with the Paros Foundation’s SERVICE Armenia 2013 participants following a day-long shoe distribution trip in Armavir.

Embassy’s Helping Hands group joined with SERVICE Armenia 2013 Participants to distribution shoes to children in rural communities.

A video report on this completed project can be seen at [www.parosfoundation.org/sharepair2013](http://www.parosfoundation.org/sharepair2013).

Share-a-Pair’s Operation Winter Boots continues to accept donations. A

\$20 contribution will provide a child in need a new pair of warm winter boots. The Paros Foundation underwrites all administrative expenses allowing 100 percent of donor contributions to go directly to this project. To sponsor a project of the Paros Foundation’s 100 for 100 Projects for Prosperity, please visit [www.parosfoundation.org](http://www.parosfoundation.org).

## Nalbandian Calls the Attention of Co-Chairs to Death of Armenian soldier

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ceasefire violations by the Azerbaijani side at the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and at the line of contact between Nagorno Karabagh and Azerbaijan.

Nalbandian stressed that such provocations hinder the efforts of the co-chairs and Armenia towards peaceful settlement.

During the meeting the parties discussed the perspectives of organizing a new meeting between the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan at the beginning of next year.

The visiting Minsk Group delegation also met with President Serge Sargsian.



## INTERNATIONAL

## Davutoglu: 1915 Armenian Deportation Inhumane

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consciousnesses. We abolished this wrong consciousness in 2005, but Armenians still have it," he told reporters.

"Our primary aim is not open only the Turkish-Armenian border but to form a foundation that will pave the way for a comprehensive peace," Davutoglu said. "It has three pillars. The first one is relations between Turkey and Armenia. The second one is Azerbaijani-Armenian relations. This also includes Georgian-Abkhaz ties. The third one is relations between Turks and Armenians," he said.

Turkey and Armenia signed protocols

you cannot provide a basis in ties with the diaspora, that puts pressure on ties with Armenia and it becomes deadlocked."

### Meeting Vazgen Manukian

During his visit to Armenia, Davutoglu also met with veteran politician Vazgen Manukian, it emerged on Monday.

Manukian, who was a key member of Armenia's first post-Communist government and now heads a body advising President Serge Sargsian, said he was invited to speak with Davutoglu immediately after the latter arrived in the Armenian capital on Thursday morning.

tions to stave off greater international recognition of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire during its forthcoming 100th anniversary.

"In a sense, the Turks fooled us on the protocols issue," Manukian explained, referring to Turkey's refusal to unconditionally implement the 2009 agreements on the normalization of bilateral ties. "We followed a rocky path, overcoming serious complications, but Turkey stopped at some point. As if that wasn't enough, it linked the Karabagh issue to relations with Armenia."

According to Manukian, the genocide issue was discussed during their conversation. He said he told Davutoglu that Armenians around the world will continue campaigning for genocide recognition regardless of interstate relations between Turkey and Armenia.

"I told him the story of our family as an example," he said. "My grandfather had five sons when they fled the southern shores of Lake Van. Only one of them, my father, was alive by the time they reached modern-day Armenia. ... Many other Armenian families can tell similar stories."

"Apart from historical memory and our duty to our grandparents, we have a feeling that Turkey will remain dangerous to us as long as it refuses to acknowledge the Genocide," added Manukian.

Manukian was one of the architects of the foreign policy pursued by newly independent Armenia's government in the early 1990s. Unlike Diaspora-based traditional Armenian parties, the government of then President Levon Ter-Petrosian did not set any preconditions for normalizing relations with the Turks. It also avoided any territorial claims to Turkey.

After a brief period of mutual engagement, Turkey closed its border with Armenia in April 1993 in response to a successful Armenian military operation in and around Karabagh that precipitated Azerbaijan's subsequent defeat in the war. Manukian was Armenia's defense minister at the time.

Manukian said he told Davutoglu that the border closure was a serious mistake as it stripped Ankara of any leverage against Yerevan. He claimed that the chief Turkish diplomat partly agreed with him.

"He admitted that if you shut down everything you lose a chance to influence things," said Manukian. "He said that if they had been more flexible in 1993 they would have been in a better position to influence events in the South Caucasus."



Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu, left, with his Armenian counterpart, Eduard Nalbandian, in Yerevan (AFP)

in 2009 to establish diplomatic relations and open their sealed borders, but neither succeeded in completing the process for different reasons.

"If one of the pillars is crippled, it will create distress. Let's say we opened the Armenian border gate. If a war breaks out between Armenia and Azerbaijan, then we would be forced to close it again. The hardest thing is to defrost the iceberg of the status quo. You could start a war when you trying to defrost it," he said.

The foreign minister said they were holding talks with the Armenian Diaspora but were not publicizing the matter. "In the past, talking with the diaspora has been perceived as a threat or aimed for intelligence issues. Diplomats thought, 'What would I do?' if it were recorded. But now it has become a duty. Since that time, whenever I go abroad I meet with the Armenian community if there is one. We don't publicly announce the people we meet due to the fact that extremist Armenians would cause problems," he said. "What we realize is that if

"A member of the Turkish delegation phoned me in the morning to ask whether I would mind meeting [Davutoglu]," Manukian told RFE/RL's Armenian service (Azatutyun.am). "I said I don't mind. I find it hard to tell why he wanted to meet me, but during our conversation I got the impression that they have come not so much to make statements as to gauge public mood here."

Manukian was one of the top leaders of the 1988 popular movement for Nagorno-Karabagh's reunification with Armenia that eventually ended Communist rule in the republic and led it to independence from the Soviet Union. He served as prime minister from 1990-1991 and defense minister from 1992-1993.

Manukian stressed that he talked to Davutoglu in his private capacity and expressed only his personal views. He defended the Turkish minister's lukewarm reception by Armenia's leadership, a fact reflecting a widespread sense in Yerevan that Ankara is trying to imitate another thaw in Turkish-Armenian rela-

## EU, Turkey Set Immigration Legislation

ANKARA (PanArmenian.net) – Turkey and the European Union (EU) have signed a deal enabling EU countries to send back illegal migrants who entered the 28-nation bloc via Turkey.

The deal also establishes a roadmap for lifting visa requirements for Turks travelling to the EU. Visa-free status is expected in three years' time.

Turkey is a major transit country for Asians and Africans heading for the EU. Ankara has set up special camps for thousands of Syrian refugees, but other migrants often face great hardship.

Greece, where migrant reception centers are overcrowded, stepped up security on its land border with Turkey in August 2012.

But the EU border agency Frontex said in its 2013 risk analysis report that detections of illegal migrants on boats in the Aegean Sea, between Turkey and Greece, increased by 912 percent later that year.

In the past, human rights organizations, including the UN refugee agency, have strongly criticized Greece and Italy for "push-backs" – a policy of sending

migrants back to their point of departure.

Under international law, groups of migrants are supposed to be checked for legitimate asylum claims.

Bulgaria, an EU member, has struggled to cope with large numbers of irregular migrants – especially Syrians – arriving from Turkey.

Bulgaria is not in the EU's Schengen passport-free zone, where border checks are minimal, but Greece is.

Ketty Kehayoiyolou of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in Greece said migrants were taking more dangerous routes since the land border with Turkey was fenced off last year.

The situation of Syrian refugees remains precarious in Greece, she told the BBC.

Unlike other migrants, Syrians are now given a six-month suspension of deportation. But that temporary permit does not entitle them to such things as a place stay, food or medical assistance, she said.

Turkey's Prime Minister Recep Tayyip

Erdogan called the new deal with the EU a "milestone."

Erdogan said Turkey was no longer a country that people "escape from, but one that people return to."

"We are not a country that is a burden [to the EU] but one that takes away its burdens," he said.

"The visa requirements should have been removed long ago. The fact that they haven't been removed yet has only harmed the European Union."

Turkey wants to join the EU and negotiations began in 2005, but progress has been slow, amid EU concern about human rights abuses. Turkey is carrying out various judicial reforms in an effort to meet EU standards.

EU leaders complained about the Turkish police crackdown on anti-government protesters in June, and Turkey's long-running dispute with Cyprus has also been a stumbling block. Turkey's EU accession negotiations resumed last month.

Two years of talks led up to the migrants/visa deal.

## International News

### US Diplomat Baku Visit Sparks Concerns

BAKU (PanArmenian.net) – US Co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group James Warlick is planning a visit to Baku. The diplomat announced this on his Twitter account, saying that he was going to meet with the Azerbaijani leadership, but did not provide the exact date of the visit.

His frequent visits to Baku have prompted speculation as to why he does not plan partnering trips to Yerevan. This may be conditioned by the unstable situation in Azerbaijan and alarming data on waning oil resources, which might make the country of less interest to the US.

Armenian media has criticized the move by Warlick as a sign his lack of dedication to resolving the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict.

### Margaryan Meets Tbilisi City Council President

TBILISI (Armenpress) – A delegation headed by the Mayor of Yerevan Taron Margaryan attended a meeting hosted by President of the City Council of Tbilisi Irakli Shixiashvili. Shixiashvili spoke of the important friendship between the two countries, offering plans to strengthen the cooperation between Tbilisi and Yerevan.

"The Armenian people are truly [impartial] friends to the Georgian people. And we all must do our utmost to expand and develop cooperation between the two cities," Shixiashvili noted.

Margaryan thanked his hosts for the welcoming reception and shared a similar vision for positive relations between the two cities.

### Radikal Praises Armenian Diplomacy

ISTANBUL (Armenpress) – An article by Aris Nalje published in the Turkish Radikal newspaper on December 15 attracted attention for its pro-Armenian stance.

In the article, the author argued that Armenia had "profound diplomacy" efforts. The first line of the article reads: "Armenia knows Turkey well. Armenia knows what Turkish diplomats and politicians belong to certain words."

Nalje, speaking about the Black Sea Economic Cooperation organization (BSEC), stated that all the member countries of BSEC organization have their representations in Turkey, including Armenia. The representation office of Armenia within the frames of BSEC is the only official office since the severing of diplomatic relations between Turkey and Armenia.

### OSCE Official Concerned With Azeri Arrest

VIENNA (Armenpress) – Ambassador Janez Lenarcic, director of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), this week expressed concern about the recent arrest of Anar Mammadli, chairperson of the Election Monitoring and Democracy Studies Center (EMDSC) in Azerbaijan, on grounds of running an alleged illegal business.

Noting that EMDSC is an established and professional citizen election observation group, Lenarcic said "the reported arrest of Anar Mammadli is disturbing as it endangers citizen election observation, the role of which in ensuring the integrity of electoral processes has been recognized by all OSCE participating States, including the Republic of Azerbaijan".

EMDSC was created as the successor of the Election Monitoring Center by a district court at the request of the Ministry of Justice. An appeal of this case is currently pending before the European Court for Human Rights. Since 2008, EMDSC has faced challenges with registration, affecting their activities during the October 9 presidential election this year. "We have raised our concerns with the authorities and requested clarification on this matter," Lenarcic added.



## INTERNATIONAL

# South American Armenians React to Davutoglu Statements

BUENOS AIRES (Agencia Prensa Armenia) – Following the statements of Foreign Minister of Turkey Ahmet Davutoglu in Yerevan during a meeting of the Council of Economic Black Sea Cooperation (BSEC), where he said that “the deportation of Armenians in 1915 was inhumane” and spoke of a “collective consciousness” and a “just memory,” Armenian communities in South America and experts reacted with mixed replies and answers.

Vice President of the Socialist International and member of the World Armenian National Committee Mario Nalpatian said that “the statements of Davutoglu are inconsequential and do not add anything” and “they were made to please Western foreign ministries.” He stressed that “it is almost a mockery to talk about ‘deportations’ because that was the name of the law that the Turkish government gave to the systematic annihilation plan of the Armenian people in 1915.”

“To label as inhumane deportation what was indeed a systematic attempt to eliminate an entire people, it’s just a refined version of traditional Turkish denial,” added Attorney Diego Dolabjian.

Asked about the issue, Marcelo Cantelmi, journalist and foreign policy chief of the newspaper Clarin, commented that this is not a change of discourse but a change in the attitude. “There are many immutable things that are beginning to change and the Turkish denial may be, at some point, one of them,” he said.

The sociologist and director of the Department of Political Science and International Studies at the Di Tella University Juan Gabriel Tokatlian criticized the emphasis on deportations to avoid talking about the Genocide: “Regretting for the former without mentioning the latter is like worrying about the transport of millions of people to Auschwitz without mentioning the Holocaust.”

Ricardo Yerganian, former director of newspaper Diario Armenia of Buenos Aires, also

made a comparison with the genocide committed by the Nazis: “Could Davutoglu say that the deportations of Jews to Nazi concentration camps were inhuman and thus avoid the recognition of the Holocaust?” he asked.

Jorge Dolmadjian, of the Armenian National Committee of Buenos Aires, compared the statements with the case of Argentina: “It is like the theory of the two demons, ‘bad things happened but the Turks also suffered.’”

“This is another way of saying that the Armenians were not killed according to a state plan, only ‘deported’ to save their life or because they were suspected of their loyalty to

the Ottoman Empire,” argued Khatchik Der Ghougassian, professor at the University San Andrés and chairman of the Armenian National Committee of South America.

Leo Moumdjian, host of radio show Ayres de Armenia, recalled that “in political discourse there is a description for this type of statements used in political campaigns: the ‘langue de bois’. This type of speech is used in political campaigns, it is empty of significant and never says anything.”

“Davutoglu must show whether it will face the press lamenting this ‘inhumane act’ or have the humane courage to take the consequences

in front of the victims,” said Federico Waneskahian of the Armenian National Committee of Uruguay.

Similarly, Geologist James Onnig Tamdjian, of the Armenian National Committee of San Pablo, warned that “such statements are the most sophisticated and perverted form of denial. It aims to create a positive effect on international public opinion, presenting a false humanist face of the Turkish government, creating euphemisms and false premises in an attempt to avoid penalties for this offense that is, under international law, imprescriptible.”

## Turkish Ministers’ Sons Arrested

ISTANBUL (*The Guardian*) – Turkish police have arrested the sons of three cabinet ministers and at least 34 others in orchestrated raids that appeared to represent the biggest assault on the authority of the prime minister, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, since mass protests against his rule last summer.

The detentions went to the heart of the Erdogan administration and included leading businessmen known to be close to the government and officials said to be engaged in suspected corruption, bribery and tender-rigging.

While no official statements have yet been made, Turkish analysts saw the surprise wave of arrests as a strong sign of the worsening conflict between the Erdogan government and his former allies, a movement of moderate Islamists led by exiled cleric Fethullah Gülen.

According to Turkish media reports, the sons of the interior minister, the economics minister and the environment and city planning minister were among those detained. Other detainees included the head of the state-controlled Halkbank, the mayor of an Istanbul district considered to be a stronghold of the ruling AK

party as well as the three construction sector tycoons, Ali Agaoglu, Osman Agca and Emrullah Turanlı. Agaoglu has recently made headlines with controversial mega-projects and works for the notoriously opaque state housing agency (Toki).

Prosecutors and police were not available for comment.

The dawn raids were launched following a year-long investigation into allegations of rigging state tenders and bribery and were undertaken without Erdogan’s knowledge, signaling a considerable blow to the authority of the increasingly authoritarian prime minister, the Turkish daily *Hürriyet* said.

“The [arrests] target the softest spot of the current political and business elite, construction and corruption,” sociologist and urban researcher Yasar Adanali said. “We have a very liberal legal environment for investment in Turkey. It does not come as a surprise that such deals in real estate or gold trade were happening. But what is a surprise is that such an operation is possible.”

Erdoğan declined to comment on the corrup-

tion arrests, citing the ongoing investigation. However speaking at an opening ceremony in the city of Konya, he blamed what he called “dark circles.”

Many commentators speculated that the high-profile operation may have come on the back of an increasingly heated feud between the AKP government and the moderately Islamist Gülen movement. Critics of the group allege that Gülenists wield considerable influence over Turkish state institutions, especially in the judiciary, the police and the secret security sectors.

At the start of Erdogan’s 11-year-long rule, the Gülen movement was an important ally but the union between the two factions of Erdogan’s conservative power base has since turned sour.

Tension increased last month when Erdogan announced plans to close down or transform prep-schools owned by the Gülen movement, thus depriving them of millions in revenue. Two AK MPs have since left the party over the row.

Turkish media reported that one of the prosecutors involved in the corruption probe is Zekeriya Öz who headed the so-called Ergenekon case, an investigation supported by the Gülen movement into an alleged coup plot.

## Starving in Syria: Biggest Emergency In UN’s History

DAMASCUS (*Independent*) – Syrian society teeters on the edge of final collapse after three years of ferocious warfare and economic devastation, the UN is making its biggest-ever appeal for \$8 billion in aid to help the country’s starving civilians.

Three-quarters of Syria’s 22.4 million people will need humanitarian aid to survive by 2014, according to a UN study. Bread in some areas costs five times what it was at the start of the conflict, and 80 per cent of Syrians say their greatest fear is shortage of food.

The former Foreign Secretary, David Miliband, who is now chief executive of the relief charity International Rescue, warned that the refugee crisis in Syria is “the biggest humanitarian test of the century” – a test that the international community is failing. The relief effort is being crippled by a lack of funds from donors and increasing danger for relief workers, he said.

Snow is worsening conditions for the 2.4 million Syrian refugees who have fled to Lebanon, Jordan, Turkey, Iraq and elsewhere, while another four million people have been displaced within Syria.

Doctors are trying to stop a polio epidemic with an emergency immunization campaign. Whole districts have been rendered uninhabitable by the government bombardment that inevitably follows a rebel takeover in urban and rural districts. Many people inside and outside Syria are reaching the end of their savings after three years in which a lot have been without a job. The violence is still getting worse, sending more people fleeing for safety elsewhere. On Sunday, government air raids, using explosives packed into barrels, killed at least 76 people, including 28 children, according to the Syrian Observatory for Human Rights. Relief workers said that as many as 50 more people might be trapped under the rubble but they did not have heavy equipment to rescue them.

Meanwhile, the Observatory said that 28 people from the Syrian minorities – in this case

believed to be Alawi and Druze – had been killed by rebels in the town of Adra, northwest of Damascus.

As the Syrian conflict enters its third year, many parts of the country are besieged and cut off from supplies of food, electric power and water. The UN sent a plane on Sunday from Arbil in Iraqi Kurdistan with food and other supplies for the winter to the Kurds of Hassakeh in north-east Syria – where fighters from among the 2.5 million Syrian Kurd population have been battling against al Qaeda-linked affiliates seeking to get possession of the oil wells in the north-east of the country. The flights will bring in 400 tons of food and 196 kilograms of medical equipment. There is great variation in the degree of impoverishment, with people in state-controlled areas much better off because they are able to get bread at very low prices from government bakeries – though they often have to queue for a long time.

In central Damascus, Tartous and some other government-held areas it is possible to have a near-normal life. But food bought in the market, such as lamb, cheese, eggs and margarine, have all soared in price because they are not being produced or the roads are too difficult for food supplies to be easily or cheaply transported.

In rebel-held areas the situation is much worse. Food is in short supply and government salaries and pensions, however inadequate, are not being paid. A recent graduate from the University of Damascus, writing for IRIN, the UN news agency, said that there are few doctors in the besieged town of al-Hajar al-Aswad in south Damascus – and those that remain say that mothers are too undernourished to produce breast milk for babies and there is no powdered milk available.

One doctor said adults “are getting by on small amounts of seasonal stocked traditional Syrian foods like olives, thyme and marmalade – and in some cases cats and dogs.” He expected adults to start dying of starvation in the near future.



Artur Bobikyan

## Pianist Bobikyan Performs in UK

SHEFFIELD, England (PanArmenian.net) – Armenian pianist and composer Artur Bobikyan was scheduled to perform in a recital called “My Keys to Christmas” at the Cathedral Church of St. Marie on December 17. The program included works and arrangements by Mendelssohn, Wade, Watts, Gruber, Tchaikovsky, Haroutunian, Khachaturian, Komitas and Bobikyan himself on a seasonal theme.

“My Keys To Christmas” is the title of an album he recorded at the Royal College of Music in Manchester.

The concert pianist, organist and composer graduated as a pianist from Yekmalian Music School and later combined performing with composition at the Tchaikovsky Music School.

At the age of 14 he won the title of Pianist of the Year in Armenia and was soon winning piano competitions in Armenia, Russia and in across Europe. He was the organ curator for nine years at the Cathedral of Holy Echmiadzin.

As a composer, Bobikyan’s portfolio includes piano and violin concertos, preludes for organ and piano and choral arrangements. He has even turned his hand to scores for TV advertisements and a musical. They have been performed by the BBC singers and the London Symphony Orchestra and heard on BBC Radio 4 and Classic FM.

He has performed at the Royal Festival Hall, Westminster Abbey, Cathedral Grant Trinity Paris, Armenian National Opera and the Aram Khachaturian Philharmonic Music Hall and in front a variety of guests, from Pope John Paul II to Jean-Claude Van Damme and Charles Aznavour.



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Community News

Update:

## Young Stella Gets Transplant

CLEVELAND – The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* first reported on the case of Stella Arakelian in August. Arakelian, 17, is a native of Armenia in Cleveland to receive treatment for cancer at the Cleveland Clinic.

She and her mother, Irena, have been adopted by the local Armenian community, under the aegis of St. Gregory of Narek Church and its pastor, Rev. Hratch Sargsyan.

The community, through St. Gregory of Narek Church and its pastor, Fr. Hratch Sargsyan, is rallying behind Stella Arakelian, 17, a leukemia patient from Armenia, has been receiving care at the Cleveland Clinic since May. Stella is accompanied by her mother, Iren.

The teenager had been diagnosed in Armenia with leukemia. Her family was devastated as the young Stella had already been fighting diabetes since age 10.

Doctors treating her at the Cleveland Clinic with monthly chemotherapy had told the family that Stella's best chance for beating the cancer was by receiving a bone marrow transplant. Against all odds, she found a match earlier this fall and had her surgery on November 8.

The costs, of course, are staggering and well beyond the finances of the family.

Sargsyan said this past week, "We still continue the fundraising. So far we have raised over \$20,000, plus \$10,000 was raised in Armenia. We had a meeting with Cleveland Clinic staff and assured them on our continued efforts with fund raising. It was rather an emotional day for all of the people present in the room; there some tears and hugs and silent moments. The Cleveland Clinic staff



Dr. Rabi Hanna, right, and Irena, Stella's mother, before her transplant operation. One of the nurses is holding the enriched transplant blood.

present at that meeting assured that no matter how fast the fundraising goes that will not affect the clinical treatment for Stella. It was a big relief for her mom Irena to hear that."

Sargsyan said that according to the hospital's tradition, the medical staff sang Happy Transplant Day to You for the teen. Among those singers was her doctor, Rabi Hanna.

The prognosis seems positive. "So far she is doing okay. She even started to show some signs of success as the reproduction of new blood cells goes," Sargsyan said. "We still need people's support with prayers and finances because there will be more bills coming as the treatment continues after she is discharged. We also take this opportunity to thank all those who responding to the prompting that God has put in their hearts and considered making a kind donation or send a heart warming note/prayer or both for Stella. We thank you in advance if you consider making a donation in this blessed session of sharing and giving. Your tax deductible donations can be made online, or send a check made out to St. Gregory of Narek, memo line: Stella Fund, 678 Richmond Rd., Richmond Heights, OH 44143.

– Alin K. Gregorian



Baykar Dervishian displays a number of items for sale as proprietor of a business called The Armenian Vendor.

## Dervishians Bring Armenia to Shoppers' Fingertips

FRAMINGHAM, Mass. – What started out as an only trip to Armenia in 2005 has turned into a burgeoning enterprise for Ed Baykar Dervishian.

Together with his Armenia-born wife Narine, the two have nurtured a business called "The Armenian Vendor" which travels the circuit at bazaars and conventions peddling anything and everything under the native sun.

**By Tom Vartabedian**

It's America's answer to Vernissage – the open-air market you'll find inside Yerevan – with merchandise that stretches the gamut from CDs and DVDs to food, T-shirts, games and promotional items.

On a recent visit to Sts. Vartanantz Church, I stumbled across a recording of Armen Tigranian's opera "David Beg" which I hadn't heard since my childhood days and a scented candle with red, blue and orange wax.

My shopping was far from complete, adding an Armenian flag to replace one that's seen its better days, a T-shirt featuring a manual typewriter (nostalgic) and lastly some gift cards from Zadig Orphanage – a place after my own heart.

I visited that orphanage during a trip to Armenia and I was so touched and moved by the children there and the artwork they created that I wound up sharing my experience with the Armenian press.

On any given day, you'll find the Dervishians tending to business with three children in tow – Anna, 7; Tanya, 5, and Natalya, 12 months.

It all adds up to a dedicated, hard-working Armenian family, steeped in the roots of their Armenian ancestry and taking every initiative to promote it.

It's about a guy who graduated from Lehigh as an engineering major with a minor in music who saw a need for Armenian commodities and decided to address it.

Hence their motto: "We bring Armenia to your front door."

"Growing up in New Jersey, there were no local Armenian stories from which to trade," Baykar Dervishian recalled. "Moving to New England, I decided to expand what was already inside the Watertown markets by creating a website (ArmenianVendor.com) where anyone anywhere around the world could shop effortlessly and buy whatever they wanted. It's been eight years and has matured immensely on its own."

Without his wife, he admits, there's no way this venture could prosper. Narine worked 15 years in finance and puts the experience to work here, juggling her day job with three kids, this business and housekeeping chores.

They have recruited the help of many friends in bringing the products back from Armenia and getting them sold at various events. Sponsors also get a slice of the pie.

"Many Armenian organizations were skeptical about how we would fit into their venues," Baykar Dervishian added. "But now, we're doing picnics and bazaars all over New England and the Mid-Atlantic area. People tell us they attend these events just to browse over our product line and see what they can find."

Besides music and videos, Armenians are hot after tee shirts and unusual items created by artisans throughout the world. Though by no means a Karsh, Dervishian's photos of Armenia are another good sell. The stories behind the images are free and entertaining. Children's toys, books and educational items are always up for grabs, especially during Christmas.

"Our initial intent was to sell products only from Armenia," he said. "But

see **VENDOR**, page 7

## US Hands Armenian Gang Member 8-Year Prison Term

WASHINGTON (RIA Novosti) – An alleged Armenian gang leader has been sentenced to eight years in prison in California after pleading guilty to involvement in a \$2 million bank card scam, as well as drug and weapons charges.

Karo Yerkanyan, described by US prosecutors as a leader of the "Armenian Power" gang in California, was sentenced to five years of supervised release last week in addition to the eight-year prison term on charges related to racketeering, bank fraud, identity theft, marijuana trafficking and illegal firearms possession, according to federal court documents.

Yerkanyan, who is also known by the nickname "Guilty," pleaded guilty in a federal court to involvement in a scam that used illegally-obtained information from victims' bank cards to open fraudulent bank accounts, loans and credit lines at HSBC Bank and Bank of America, US prosecutors said in September.

The information was stolen using so-called "skimming" devices to steal customers' bank information at cash registers, causing more than \$2 million in damages, prosecutors said.

Yerkanyan, 32, was one of 70 individuals charged in a 140-count indictment in 2011 for activities tied to Armenian Power, a criminal organization believed to have more than 250 members who are "primarily individuals of Armenian descent" and who operate largely in Southern California, according to US prosecutors.

Armenian Power "maintains ties to Russia and Armenia," and its members and associates have been involved in murder, kidnapping, robbery and extortion, prosecutors alleged in the indictment.

Prosecutors say members of the gang typically identify themselves through gang tattoos, graffiti, street names and gang clothing, according to the indictment. Monikers of alleged Armenian Power members and associates named in the July 2011 indictment include "Thick Neck," "Puffy" and "Hollywood Mike."

## Margarian Law Firm Offers Scholarship

LOS ANGELES – The 2014 Margarian Scholarship, in celebration of the seven-year anniversary of the Hovhanness Margarian law firm, is again going to reward a certain number of students for their academic and personal achievements.

In addition to academic accomplishments, the organizers seek candidates who have demonstrated a commitment to their heritage, community and society. Persistence, dedication, idealism, perseverance, success and humility are just some of the characteristics this scholarship will reward. The scholarship will not be determined solely on the basis of GPA or economic hardship. The scholarship prizes will consist of five awards of \$1,000 each.

Hovhanness Margarian moved to the US as a child with his family, speaking very little English and not doing well in school. Through perseverance he succeeded in school and graduated as class valedictorian, attending the University of Southern California on a full scholarship, conducted gene therapy research, publishing in scholarly journals.

For further details and the complete application visit



## COMMUNITY NEWS

## OBITUARY

## Katherine Haytayan

CAMBRIDGE – Katherine Balian Haytayan died on November 28, Thanksgiving Day, after a long battle with lymphoma. She was born on September 15, 1931 in Boston to Hagop Balian and Arshaloos Zeytoonian Balian.

She grew up in Dorchester and graduated in 1949 from the Dorchester High School for Girls.

On February 3, 1957, she married Harry M. Haytayan at the Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston. After they were married, Katherine and Harry lived in Boston and then Waltham, and eventually settled in Lincoln, where they raised their four children, Karen, Harry, Linda and Alita.

Katherine Haytayan loved her Armenian heritage and the Armenian Church. She was a life-long parishioner of Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church on Brattle Street.

She leaves her husband, Harry M. Haytayan, her four children, Karen Tuthill, Harry Haytayan, Jr., Linda Haytayan, Alita Guillen; nine grandchildren, Harry Haytayan III, Geoffrey Tuthill, Natalie Haytayan, Jacquelyn Haytayan, Sofia Guillen, Nicholas Guillen, Robert Haytayan, Izabella Haytayan and Julia Guillen; daughter-in-law Alison Surabian Haytayan; sons-in-law Scott Tuthill and Enrique Guillen; sister Alice Balian Mazmanian and brother Arthur Balian, as well as many nieces, nephews, cousins and friends.



Funeral services were on Wednesday, December 4 at the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St. Interment followed the church services at Mount Auburn Cemetery.

The family requests that donations be made to the American Cancer Society or the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church of Greater Boston.

Arrangements were by the Giragosian Funeral Home, 576 Mount Auburn St., Watertown.

## Landyce Kaprielian

WATERTOWN – Landyce (Torrance) Kaprielian, originally from Milledgeville, Ga., died on December 12. She was the wife of Robert Kaprielian for 53 years; mother of Rachel Kaprielian and Myra Ovoian and her husband Bill; grandmother of Will, Calvin and Drew Landyn; sister of Harold Torrance and the late Edward Torrance and sister-in-law of Ilse Kaprielian. She



is also survived by several nieces and nephews.

Funeral services were held at Saint James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown on Monday, December 16, at 11 a.m.

Kaprielian was a retired social worker at the Massachusetts Department of Social Services. In lieu of flowers, memorial gifts may be made to Massachusetts Department of Children and Families Fund (Kids Fund), 600 Washington Street, Boston, MA 02111.

A private interment service followed at Mount Auburn Cemetery, Cambridge.

Arrangements were by the Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, 558 Mount Auburn St.

## Grigor Guluzian

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. – Grigor Guluzian died on December 14.

Guluzian was born on September 15, 1930. He was the husband of Sonia (Melkikian) Guluzian and father of Lucy Bagdasarian and her husband Khoren of Billerica and Khachig Guluzian and his wife Elizabeth of Cambridge. He leaves his grandchildren Robert Bagdasarian, Sossi Bagdasarian, Grigor Guluzian and Janet Guluzian; brother of Noemi Zakarian of

Roslindale and the late Sepon Guluzian.

Services were scheduled to be held at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown on Wednesday, December 18 at 11 a.m. Visiting hours were at the Giragosian Funeral Home, 576 Mt. Auburn St., (Rt. 16) Watertown on December 17, 6-8 p.m. Interment followed at Cambridge Cemetery, Cambridge.

Memorial contributions may be made in his memory to St. James Armenian Church.



## Vasgen Hovanesian

WATERTOWN – Vasgen Hovanesian of Jamaica Plain, formerly of Watertown, died on December 7.

He was the husband of Siranus (Benlian) Hovanesian, father of Silva Cameron and her husband Richard of Jamaica Plain and Armenuhi Hovhannes of California; grandchildren Nicholas and Nora Cameron; sister Askanoush Tonoyan of Armenia.

Two siblings, Aghavni Aivazian and Karnig Hovanesian, predeceased him.

He was a member of the Newton and Watertown Art Associations.

Chapel service was held at the Giragosian Funeral Home on Saturday, December 14, and interment at Forest Hills Cemetery, Jamaica Plain.

Memorial contributions may be made in his memory to the First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont, MA 02478.

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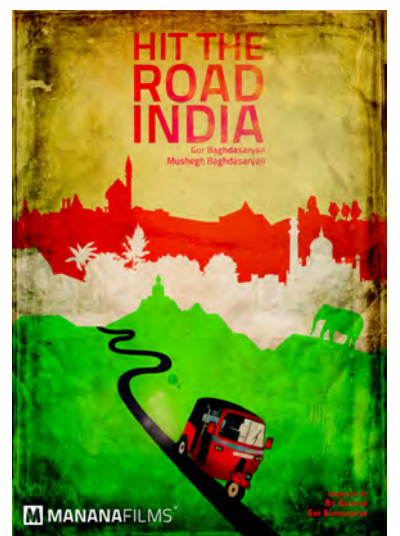
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## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Hovnanian Family Foundation Subsidizes Entire Operation of Birthright Armenia

PHILADELPHIA – Transitions come and transitions go. And then some transitions are large enough to change the entire playing field. It is the latter for Birthright Armenia. Since sponsoring its very first volunteer group to Armenia in 2004, the organization's active alumni base is up to more than 800, representing 32 different countries, and its donor base hit 1,500. Birthright's founder, Edele Hovnanian, who has covered about 50 percent of the organization's annual operating budget since its inception, announced recently some good news for the organization.

"As we are closely approaching our 10th anniversary, I could think of nothing more fitting or meaningful than announcing to the Birthright Armenia team that I had secured a commitment from our family foundation to cover 100 percent of the annual operating costs of this program come January 1, 2014, and moving forward," she shared.

Birthright Armenia has been actively fundraising support from the general public for the last eight years. The organization's forward-thinking vision and mission attracted the attention and support of thousands of people on multiple continents who understood the post-independence reality on the ground in Armenia and the importance of youth engagement. "We cannot express our thanks enough to our team of supporters who advocated for our work and contributed generously of their time and financial resources to help make Birthright Armenia the success it is. We've enjoyed a multi-generational level of involvement, and without all of our supporters, there really would have been no Birthright Armenia," explains Linda Yepoyan, executive director in the US. "The Hirair and Anna Hovnanian Family Foundation has supported us since day one, and we graciously welcome this generous commitment of support they have made to us going forward, which will now enable us to focus our resources on marketing and growing our program as well as a meaningful activities in support of our alumni."

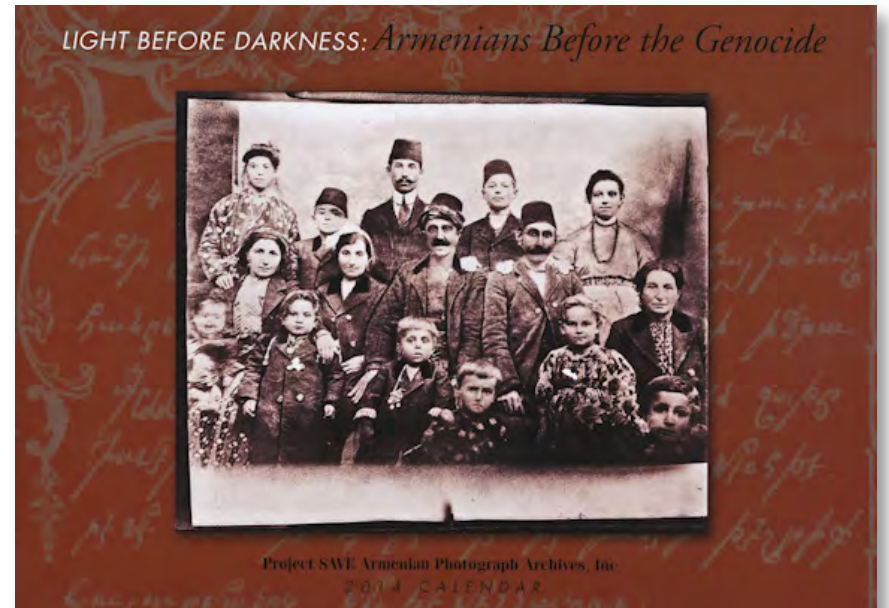
One of the challenges Hovnanian has put before the Birthright Armenia team, now that there is no need for active fundraising, is to focus on recruitment without sacrificing quality for quantity. "At community events, I regularly get approached by people who want

to talk about Birthright's success, or by an alum who has done Birthright, and they want to share with me stories about the impact it had on their lives. Inevitably, every conversation ends with 'we need thousands of youth to experience the Homeland annually, not just hundreds, so the ripple effect of our impact is that much greater.' And I believe we can grow this program by making it a household name, a rite of passage that all of our youth should pass through at one point in their young adult lives," she adds.

"I gave the staff a specific goal of doubling the number of participants in 2014, our 10th anniversary year, and then tripling our numbers by the end of 2015, without compromising the high-quality program for which the Birthright Armenia program is widely known. And I know they can achieve these goals," she says confidently.

Although any amount contributed to Birthright Armenia is still fully tax deductible, the organization sent out letters to its entire donor base stating that they would like to see whatever was traditionally donated to it go instead to another Armenian charity in need – not something seen in many charitable organizations.

Birthright Armenia offers a full service volunteer program to young diasporan adults 20-32 years old from all over the globe, who are interested in volunteering their services in Armenia. In addition to a rewarding job placement in the sector of their choice, for the length of their stay volunteers are provided with intensive language training, weekly excursions, educational forums on current event topics, and can opt for homestay living accommodations. In exchange for their service, participants with a stay of over 14 weeks of service successfully completed receive 100 percent of their round-trip airfare back in the form of a travel fellowship. Similarly, those who complete at least nine weeks up to 14 weeks of service receive a 50 percent of their round-trip airfare travel fellowship. The organization offers a variety of post program benefits to its alumni including professional networking, Next-Step grants, quarterly newsletters and most recently a Pathway to Armenia program for alums interested in finding employment in Armenia after their volunteer service is completed.



## Project SAVE Archives' 2014 Calendar

WATERTOWN – Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives' 2014 calendar, titled "Light before Darkness: Armenians Before the Genocide," bears witness to the diversity of Armenian life in the Homeland of the Ottoman Empire a century ago. Project SAVE's tour via 17 photographs will take you to visit people who lived in Van and Bitlis, Erzerum, Dikranagert and Kharperit as well as Sepastia, Amasia, Caesarea, Konia and Bardizag, near Constantinople. And what stories they have to tell!

As always, the 2014 calendar, Project SAVE's 27th, reads like a book with information about the people whose faces will reach out and touch you each month of the year with captions describing their lives 100 years ago.

This year the calendar is available at a discount when two or more are purchased. For more information visit [www.projectsavesave.org](http://www.projectsavesave.org) or call Project SAVE Archives. To purchase on line, go to [ArmenianVendor.com](http://ArmenianVendor.com) or drop in at Project SAVE's office at 65 Main St, 3rd floor, Watertown during the week, or at the Armenian Library and Museum of America's gift shop at the same address on weekends 12-6 p.m.; and also at NAASR Book Store, 395 Concord Ave, Belmont, MA 02478, weekdays 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

## Dervishians Bring Armenia to Shoppers' Fingertips

VENDOR, from page 5

having them shipped was way too costly.

Since Armenia is landlocked, getting them out of the country became a challenge. Connections with family and friends facilitated our market."

So he could better help his fellow Armenians, he joined the Knights of Vartan. He has also been a Parish Council member at the Armenian Church of the Holy Translators in Framingham and helped start the Armenian School there.

What might surprise you about Baykar

Dervishian is his musicianship. He studied violin in his younger days and went places with his instrument. He was in Regional and All-State Orchestras in New Jersey along with many pit orchestras for plays and ensembles. Much of that has taken a back seat due to time constraints.

People who know him recognize the stories he's waiting to tell, even if it might interfere with business a tad. He's a genuine resource for Armenian products, information and events.

There's the one about a bike-a-thon in New York City a few months ago. A priest called to order 40 shirts from his inventory to outfit the bikers – two days before the event.

"There was no way I could ship them on time," he said. "It was then that I discovered the power of the Armenian Network."

Baykar Dervishian contacted Talene Khachadurian, president of the New York Armenian Network, for help. They found a participating biker and got together along a highway to transfer the shirts and get them into the proper hands just in time.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Artsakh Independence Celebrated at Washington Event

WASHINGTON — Last week, the 22nd anniversary of Nagorno Karabagh's independence was commemorated on Capitol Hill, bringing together Members of Congress, diplomats, foreign dignitaries, think-tank representatives, religious figures and the Armenian-American community of the Greater Washington Metropolitan Area.

"I would like to congratulate Speaker Ashot Ghulian who represents the President of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic (NKR) Bako Sahakyan and the people of Artsakh on the occasion of the 22nd anniversary of NKRs independence," stated Armenian Assembly of America Board Member Annie Totah who was present at the commemoration. "Accolade is due to the leadership and people of NKR who have done such a great job embracing democratic principles and moving forward their tiny republic in spite of major difficulties and challenges. I'm very happy that here in the United States a special reception was held on Capitol Hill with several Members of Congress who praised the achievements of the young Artsakh republic," she stated.

Titled "Nagorno Karabagh/Artsakh: 22 Years of Freedom, Democracy & Progress," the event began with opening remarks by Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Co-Founder and Co-Chair of

passionately about the dangers facing Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh and the threats imposed on it by its neighbors. He specifically highlighted Azerbaijan's pardon and glorification of convicted axe-murderer Ramil Safarov, who violently killed an Armenian officer during a NATO conference in Hungary.

Next, Armenian Caucus Rep. David Cicilline (D-RI) took the podium, recalled the pogroms Armenians faced in Baku and Sumgait, and expressed the importance of self-determination for the Karabagh people. Rep. Cicilline stated with pride that his state of Rhode Island was the first US State to recognize the independence of Nagorno Karabagh. Ani Haroian from Rhode Island, a constituent of Rep. Cicilline, who was present, worked actively in her community to secure this affirmation.

Congresswoman Jackie Speier (D-CA), one of only two Armenian Americans serving in the US Congress, spoke at length about the adversity faced by the Armenian people and the importance of commemorating the independence of Karabagh Armenians. Speier also reminded those in attendance that their presence was a part of something greater, an illustration of commonality with freedom-loving people here in America, as she read aloud portions of a letter



Nagorno Karabagh Representative in the US Robert Avetisyan, NKR Parliament Speaker Ashot Ghulian, Assembly Board Member Annie Totah, Rep. Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ), Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny.

Markarian, thanked the US Congress for continued assistance supporting Nagorno Karabagh's development and democratic aspirations, noting the strong impact it makes in the lives of Karabagh Armenians. He also highlighted the fact that the Capitol Hill commemoration, now in its eighth consecutive year, will help "force Azerbaijan to negotiate a peaceful settlement. It makes sure that Azerbaijan has no doubts, that the alternative to a peaceful negotiated settlement will not be another war they desire, but the recognition of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic by the international community."

Robert Avetisyan, representative of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic in the US, thanked everyone for marking the historic occasion, especially Members of Congress. He also recognized key individuals in attendance, such as former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans, Massachusetts Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian, Assembly Board Member Annie Totah, ANCRI member Ani Haroian and author

Anna Astvatsaturian Turcotte of Maine.

This year the keynote guest was Ghulian. His remarks were pointed and inspirational. He stated that "On December 10, 2006 the main law of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic — the Constitution — was adopted at a nationwide referendum, summarizing in a very special way the road we had passed." "It is yet another manifestation of my people's will to lead a free and sovereign life - this time in the form of constitutional arrangements which has made the existence of the independent statehood of the Nagorno Karabagh Republic irreversible," Ghulian said to the excitement of the audience.

Hosted by the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, and in cooperation with the Embassy of the Republic of Armenia, the Nagorno Karabagh Republic Representation in the US, the Armenian Assembly of America, and the Armenian National Committee, the event marking Nagorno Karabagh's freedom referendum has become an annual tradition on Capitol Hill since 2005.



Caption (clockwise): (top left) Annie Totah with Rep. Jackie Speier (D-CA), (top right) Annie Totah with Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA), (bottom left) Annie Totah with former US Ambassador John Evans, (bottom right) Bryan Ardouny with Massachusetts Middlesex County Sheriff Peter Koutoujian.

the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues, who has travelled to Armenia and Nagorno Karabagh on several occasions. He talked about the importance of educating Members of Congress about Artsakh, the history of the Karabagh Armenians' struggle for freedom, and the realization of independent statehood.

House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA), himself a former Armenian Caucus Co-Chair, was also on hand. He spoke

she received from Azerbaijan's Ambassador urging her not to attend.

Congressman Brad Sherman (D-CA) issued a message, stating "As a senior member of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, I have been a strong, supportive, and consistent voice for providing aid to the people of Artsakh and for a strong and cooperative relationship between the United States and the Nagorno Karabagh Republic."

Armenia's Ambassador to the US Tatoul

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# TCA Honors Founder of Mher Megerdchian Theater Group Hagop Vartivarian

TENAFLY, N.J. — The Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Mher Megerdchian Theater Group celebrated its 15th anniversary with a gala on November 24. The event was sponsored by the Lebanese-born international businessman who is active in the New Jersey community, Henry Dimidjian. On this occasion, an album was published to mark the 15th anniversary.

The founding members of the TCA Mher Megerdchian Theater Group, the loyal members of the Greater New York ADL committee as well as the friends and supporters of the TCA attended the gala dinner.

Master of ceremonies was Diran Djebejian, who did an impeccable job capturing the atmosphere that is unique to this artistic group. Throughout the evening, Armenian music was performed by various artists, including the Huyser Choir, led by Harout Barsamian. Also, Maria Barsoumian, Harout Barsoumian and Diran Djebejian performed classical Armenian songs. During the cultural portion of the program, another participant was Seta Djebejian, the host of the Armenian radio show, "Temker yev Tebker," by reciting Hovhannes Shiraz' poem, "Yerevanen eh Ganchum."

The TCA Central Committee's Baydzig Kalaydjian offered a congratulatory speech. By looking back at the history of the theater, she stated, "we all are aware of the difficult circumstances that the theater faced when it was founded, because its necessity was present everywhere.



Baydzig Kalaydjian

Indeed, with deep beliefs and a Tekeyan spirit and with hard work, the theater group continues its journey and enlightens the inherited culture in order to excel in the coming generations."

"In the past 15 years, the TCA Mher Megerdchian group, with its unique style, has marched on the Armenian stages with pride, performing great international and national pieces. And thus, they have captured the audience within the Armenian cultural field," Kalaydjian said. She extended her sincere gratitude to the Greater New York TCA Chairman Hagop Vartivarian, who she said, "with dedication and selflessness, became a beacon of light to the local committee as well as to the theatrical group."

On behalf of the Mher Megerdchian theatrical group, a heartfelt speech was given by one of the founding members, Harout Tchatmajian, who spoke using his trademark wit, when honoring



Harout Tchatmajian

his old friend.

He said, "When the theatrical committee had its planning meeting, we realized how important it was to dedicate the 15-year milestone event to the right person. Hagop Vartivarian was the only reasonable choice because Hagop and the MMTG are inseparable. It was easy to discuss since he was out of town for that particular meeting and we didn't need his approval.

"I was asked to speak at this event. I accepted gladly since Hagop and I have collaborated and worked closely, from the inception of the idea to the formation of the theatrical group, until today. I thought it would be fairly easy to acknowledge our 15th anniversary and Hagop Vartivarian, as everyone knows him very well, especially the crowd that is assembled here tonight. But when I thought about it more, I realized that it's not that easy and sometimes it can be scary; after all Hagop is a big man and it's not so easy to carry him around. So I decided to dissect him to mini Hagops and I started making my list calling it the different 'Hats of Hagop Vartivarian,'" he noted.

The mini Hagops, as he said, are, "The Ramgavar Hagop; The Tekeyan Hagop; The Echmiyatznagan Hagop; Hagop the Writer, Editor and Publisher in other words the "Literary Hagop;" Hagop the community organizer; Hagop the man with the 1001 connections; Hagop the fundraiser; Hagop the Philanthropist; Hagop the Crusader of Armenian Theater; Hagop the tie between this community and Armenia (he can reach almost anyone in Armenia); Hagop the promoter of Armenian culture and Hagop the man who is not scared of big ideas and big projects."

He noted, "So as I kept reading the list over and over, I found my way out. It's the Theatrical Crusader Hagop Vartivarian that I am here to dedicate this event to, without whom all of this would have been very difficult if not impossible to accomplish."

The theater group, he said, has staged 18 plays and 56 performances with seven directors, 76



Seta Djebejian

actors and visits to multiple cities in the US and Canada, as well as Armenia in 2007.

"Hagop and I met in the active days of the AGBU Ardashad Theater Group, under the direction of Krikor Satamian. When the theatrical vacuum was created with Krikor's move to the West Coast, many of us felt the need to start something here. But how? Hagop was there for the rescue. He called and told me that Tamar Hovannisyian, Mher Megerdchian's wife, was here in our area, and that she was willing to help us jump start a theater group, if we could convince her that we had the willingness and stamina to work with her. While listening to him, in my mind, I was saying this is too good to be true, wow. So he arranged a meeting for us with Tamar and everything you see today is the product of that meeting," Tchatmajian said.

Finally, he said, "You can't talk about MMTG without talking about Hagop Vartivarian. He has literally done everything in his power to make sure that this theater group has what it needs to achieve its goals. As he has said many times, people can support the theatrical group in 3 ways, by donating money, by donating their talent, and by donating their time."

Following the speech, Tchatmajian invited

Vartivarian, Kalaydjian and Dimidjian up to the stage in order to award them on behalf of the TCA.

Vartivarian gave a heartfelt speech thanking the group for the honor and spoke about the TCA's mindset. "Ever since its establishment, the TCA's main purpose has been to help independent Armenia and its fatherly government, as a pledge for the sustainability of the Armenian Nation. To pursue the rights and the liberation of the lands of the Diaspora/Western Armenians, in order to restore and have a complete Motherland. This is how the TCA gradually proceeded. It defended and implemented nationalism within the souls of the Diaspora Armenians, by keeping the Armenian torch lit in their hearts — their love for Armenia." Vartivarian paid tribute to all whose efforts created the strong backbone of the Mher Megerdchian Theater Group and for believing in its mission and anticipating its present success. He also extended his sincere appreciation to TCA's loyal friend Dimidjian, who with a deep faith in the Armenian youth, is helping their continued involvement in the Armenian community.

Later on, each member of the theater group, and the director Gagik Karapetian, who over the years with has helped the theater group with his artistic and knowledgeable approach.

Moreover, New York's Hamazkayin Cultural Committee's president, Hrant Markarian, extended his congratulations and praised his friend, Vartivarian, for his dedication, energetic character and lastly the Ramgavar that lives within him. He stated that although they follow different



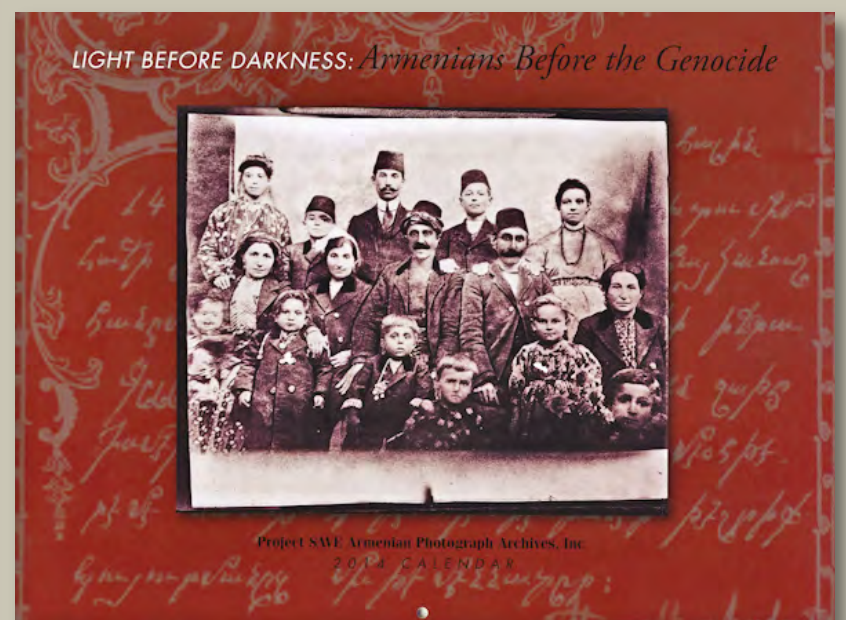
Hagop Vartivarian

political ideologies, they both carry the same love for the Motherland, which is a priority above everything else.

Ending the evening's cultural section, Vartivarian and his wife, Maria, were called on to the stage in order to cut the cake. Seizing the opportunity, MMTG member Misak Boghosian started sharing anecdotes about the group's members. Later on formally rewarding Marie Zokian, who has effortlessly participated and performed with the group for 15 years.

Following the professional introductions of the evening, the audience enjoyed their program.

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# Arts & Living

## Pianist Sona Barseghian Performs In Concert at Höchster Town Hall

Höchster, Germany – A young pianist from Armenia, Sona Barseghian, is having great success here. A German music critic wrote about her concert: “Sona Barseghian (24), from Yerevan, Armenia, is considered the biggest piano talent of her country. She is at present studying at the Kölner Music High School with Nina Tichman to perfect her natural talent.

“On Sunday morning, piano enthusiasts from the region had a chance to hear this young talent at the Höchster historical Town Hall. An audience of music fans heard a high-class piano recital.

“The Bach *D-Minor Chaconne*, adapted by Ferruccio Bussoni, Beethoven’s *Sonata No. 31 Opus 110*, Rachmaninov’s *Prelude*, Cesar Frank’s *Prelude, Choral and Fugue*. Each work could have been taken as the main piece for a recital.

“The program had the degree of difficulty matching a Tour de France with 4 strenuous tests of reaching the summit, which Sona Barseghian took with the greatest of ease. She filled the pieces with great sensitivity and expression, inspiring the audience of the Town Hall, who endowed her with frantic applause.”

Barseghian is a graduate of the Tchaikovsky Music School, Yerevan. She had a number of appearances in Armenia and abroad (Russia, Lithuania, United Arab Emirates, the US, Poland, Italy, Belgium, Luxemburg, Belarus, Australia and Germany).

She has taken part in many prestigious International competitions and achieved outstanding results. Notably she was awarded the second prize at the Aram Khachaturian International Competition (2007), First prize at the Republican Chamber Assembles Competition (2008), first prize at the



Sona Barseghian

Republican Art of Accompaniment Competition (2010), 2nd prize at the Republican Chopin Competition (2010). She has also participated in a number of International festivals in Yerevan, Kaunas, Moscow, Dubai, Rostov. As a soloist, she has had appearances with Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra and State Youth Orchestra, performing the piano concertos by Shostakovich, Poulenc, Rachmaninov, Khachaturian and Babajanian. In 2000-2007, she was the recipient of the Vladimir Spivakov Benevolent Fund scholarship. In 2003 The All-Armenian Fund awarded her the special prize entitled “A Way to the Future”. In 2009 Sona was awarded the President’s “Youth Prize for the Achievements in Performing Classical Music.”

Since 2003, Barseghian has often accompanied the Aram Khachaturian Trio and performs with her mother, pianist Armine Grigoryan, on two pianos, music written for two pianos.

In September 2013 Sona Barseghian won the third prize at the International Amadeo Competition, which took place in Aachen, Germany. There were 39 participants from 16 countries. No participant was awarded the first prize.



Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian, right, and Eugenia Sarian

## Armenian Youth Shine at Carnegie Hall Concert

NEW YORK – For the fifth consecutive year, Armenian Youth Talent finalists were featured at New York’s prestigious Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall, on December

**By Florence Avakian**

1. Dedicated to the 110th anniversary of the legendary composer, pianist and conductor Aram Khachaturian, and the fifth anniversary of Armenian Youth Talent, it was organized by Direct Help for Armenian People (DHAP), under the leadership of Dr. Svetlana Amirkhanian, president and founder of DHAP.

Opening the program, the concert hosts Harut Minasian and Eugenia Sarian welcomed the sell-out audience and noted that that the event is “to encourage young Armenian talent in the performing arts. It is a great expression of Armenian ability, musicianship and spirit that our heritage demonstrates and is proud of.”

The event featured 32 young musicians from ages 6 to 15, many of whom had chosen compositions by Khachaturian, in honor of the anniversary of his birth. All performers were granted honorary certificates and monetary awards following their performances.

Singers, among whom were Zovinar Aghavian, Julia Cumming, Christina Kerestedian, Lucine Musaelian, Julia Naldjian and Amalia Shahinyan, displayed their bell-like angelic voices.

Vahn Mouradian showcased his cello talents with an acapella Bach *Prelude*, and Laura Navasardian displayed her formidable technique on the cello, which was larger and taller than her. Haig Hovsepian’s musicianship was amply shown on the violin.

The largest group of young musicians tickled the ivories. They included Michael Khoury, David Hovanisyan, Harutiun Kljyan, Sophia Hovakimian, Nico Carere, Ansel Chang, Zoe Pian-Chowdhury, Gregory Sarafian, Irene Vilgorin and Ani Mouradian, all displaying impressive technique and expression.

Fifteen-year-old David Antabian showed his special versatility and self-confidence see CONCERT, page 12



A group of young violinists

## ALMA to Become The Armenian Museum of America, Inc.

WATERTOWN – As of December 24, the Armenian Library and Museum of America (ALMA) will drop a couple of words from its name and add a few: it will now be known as the Armenian Museum of America, Inc., in recognition of its preeminent function as a museum.

“By this change, this institution will be known for its uniquely distinct role as probably the largest Armenian museum outside of Armenia. We continue to enhance the holdings of our expanding adjunct research library named for the late Mesrop Boyajian,” wrote Haig Der Manuelian, the ALMA board chairman.

ALMA was founded in 1971, with the dream of capturing and presenting the 3,000-year-old Armenain heritage which has survived against serious odds to people within the community or those outside.

“Those of us then involved saw our mission to honor our ancestors and the victims of the Armenian Genocide by creating a permanent, living memorial library and museum. At that time, we expected significant acquisitions mostly for our intended library while hoping against hope possibly for a modest number of artifacts. For that reason, when we decided upon a name for our organization, the word ‘Library’ preceded the word ‘Museum,’” DerManuelian added.

In 1996, Dr. James Russell, the Mashdots Professor of Armenian Studies at Harvard University, wrote, in part, describing ALMA’s collections: “Over all, it is perhaps the most important Armenian museum collection after the Armenian State Historical Museum in Yerevan and the collections of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem in Israel.” By then, the museum’s holdings had multiplied “beyond our wildest expectations – including eclectic major collections from the Bedoukian Families, numerous inscribed Armenian rugs from the late Arthur T. Gregorian, Kutahya tiles from the Karabians, among so many other gifts generously donated to build our collections,” Der Manuelian noted.

He added that recent collections have been even more impressive. Within the past four years, ALMA has acquired the Yousuf Karsh collection of photographic portraiture, post-Soviet Armenian paintings from the famed Norton Dodge Collection, the Berj Garabedian Metal Arts Collection and the Almasian Family Map Collection, and numerous other accessions. The museum has more than 20,000 objects and the Mesrop Boyajian Research Library has more than 27,000 titles.

ALMA has mounted three major travel exhibits, “Who Are the Armenians,” the “Gamavor Exhibit” and the “The Ongoing Armenian Genocide: Death, Denial & Desecration.” The Gamavor Exhibit is currently being translated for a tour of France. The Genocide Exhibit was shown primarily in various non-Armenian sites including an eight-month showing at the Virginia Holocaust Museum, the third largest such museum in the United States. That Holocaust Museum was impressed sufficiently as to seek to develop its own permanent Armenian Genocide Exhibit.



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Armenian Assembly Hosts Panel Discussion on 'Islamized Armenians' in Calif.

PASADENA – Last week, the Armenian Assembly of America's Western Region Office held a special panel discussion titled "Islamized Armenians." Moderated by Armenian Observer editor, Prof. Osheen Keshishian, panelists Doris Melkonian, Arda Melkonian and Anoush Suni addressed a standing-room-only crowd at the University Club of Pasadena.

"It was a pleasure and honor hearing these three scholars recount their experiences and present their papers to our community and members," stated Assembly Western Region Manager Aline Maksoudian. "The overwhelming amount of interest in this presentation shows the importance and value of their work and we look forward to learning more about the progress of their research in the future," Maksoudian said.

All three panelists recently returned from Istanbul, Turkey, where they presented papers at a conference under the same title last month. The Assembly program began with opening remarks by Assembly Board member Lisa Kalustian, who thanked everyone for their interest and participation that evening. Kalustian then introduced an early participant during the Assembly's founding, Keshishian.

First to take the podium was Doris Melkonian, an alumnus of the Armenian Assembly's summer internship program in Washington, DC (class of 1994). She shared her paper on "Taken into Muslim Households – Experiences of Armenian Children during the Genocide" as presented at the Istanbul



Southern California Armenians pack the room to hear a panel on "Islamized Armenians."

conference and spoke about the other Istanbul conference panelists, their backgrounds and presentations.

Next was Arda Melkonian, also an alumnus of the Armenian Assembly's summer internship program in Washington, DC (class of 1990). She shared with the California audi-

ence her paper on "Gender and Survival Options during the Armenian Genocide" as presented at the Istanbul conference, retelling the tales of the Armenian Genocide survivors whose memory is preserved in the Armenian Genocide oral history survivor memoirs at the University of California Los Angeles (UCLA).

Finally, Suni summarized her paper on "The Production of Difference: the Case of Islamized Armenians." She also remarked on her experience in Turkey, and what others shared with her, delving deep into her emotional state at the time, and spoke at length about her experience living with a Kurdish family in Turkey, as well as her time in neighboring Armenia.

The Melkonian sisters also showed a slide presentation complete with pictures from the Istanbul conference, sponsored by the Hrant Dink Foundation and the MalatyaHye Foundation. Together, this gave the audience a sense of what it was like to be in Turkey, as a descendant of Armenian Genocide survivors, talking openly about the Armenian Genocide. A robust question and answer session with the audience concluded the evening's program.

The growing discussion of the Armenian Genocide in Turkey is part of a pattern of breaking taboos, especially over the last eight years, as the first academic conference on the 1915 Armenian Genocide in Turkey took place in 2005. Since then, more and more scholar-

ship on the Armenian Genocide has emerged within Turkey, which has brought with it another dimension: the discovery of hidden or "Islamized Armenians."

Photos from the event can be found on the Assembly Facebook page.



(L-R): Arda Melkonian, Doris Melkonian and Anoush Suni

## A Bibliography of Notable Armenian Genocide Texts

By Alan Whitehorn

KINGSTON, Ontario – As we approach the 100th memorial year of the 1915 Armenian Genocide, there is increasing global interest and attention to what happened to so many Armenians. There is also a desire to discover how much the world knew at that time. Armenians and non-Armenians alike seek to understand more about the complex but deadly events of a century ago. Amongst important sources are newspaper accounts from the leading foreign press such as the *New York Times*, the *London Times*, the *Manchester Guardian*, the *Toronto Globe* and the *Sydney Morning Herald*. The daily accounts can give insight into how the phases of the genocide unfolded and how the world tried to describe the horrific sequence of events. This was a substantial challenge since it was before the term "genocide" had been created to define the indescribable.

In teaching my university courses on comparative studies of genocide, I have often asked students to study the headlines from 1915. In so doing, they can better learn how the world began to know about such events, struggled to comprehend such horrific deeds, and searched for the words to describe such nightmarish scenes. Of course, such original archival research of old newspapers can be daunting in terms of travel, time, access and even technology. I know this first-hand. As a young professor in the 1980s, I spent many hours reading the old *Toronto Globe* for the year 1915. I studied column after column and page after page of the daily newspaper coverage for the entire year of 1915. I peered at the articles on a microfilm reader. Systematically, I was searching for articles relating to the plight of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire for that fateful year of 1915. I took careful notes and made photocopies of the most important articles. It was an important learning experience for me as an Armenian-Canadian. It also turned out to be a pivotal moment. From that point onwards, I would commence to write about the Armenian Genocide. This was even more so when confronted by troubling ongoing Turkish government denials.

Fortunately for my students and me pioneering work has been done now by others. This see BIBLIOGRAPHY, page 12

## Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia and Karabagh 2013



Since its inception in 2001, TCA's 'Sponsor a Teacher' program has raised over \$563,000 and reached out to 4,440 teachers and school workers in Armenia and Karabagh.



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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## A Bibliography of Notable Armenian Genocide Texts

BIBLIOGRAPHY, from page 11

means that our task today of scanning the headlines and reading full newspaper accounts are easier and sources more accessible.

The most innovative and path-breaking work on newspaper coverage of the Armenian Genocide was conducted by Richard Kloian in his 1980 monumental book *The Armenian Genocide: News Accounts From the American Press (1915-1922)*. Working for many years to gather diverse material and employing far less advanced technology, Kloian surveyed the American press for the key seven-year period. He focused upon coverage in the *New York Times*, *Current History*, *Saturday Evening Post* and the *Missionary Review of the World*. The volume he delivered was epic and pioneering. It not only included a vast comprehensive account, but also a very useful five-page chronological table listing the main headlines. The *New York Times* alone accounted for over 120 articles in 1915 on the terrible plight of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. It also revealed that there had been key and unprecedented extensive access to important and timely information, often from confidential US government sources and missionary accounts. Kloian's book has undergone a number of editions and printings and is still available.

A few years after Kloian's influential book appeared, the Armenian National Committee in both Australia and Canada sought to produce similar edited volumes for their respective countries. In 1983, the Australian ANC printed *The Armenian Genocide As Reported in the Australian Press*. It included newspaper articles from *The Age*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *Sydney Morning Herald* and *World's News*. The text was supplemented with a number of powerful photographs. A revised edition is apparently in progress.

In that same decade, the Canadian ANC printed the bilingual two-volume set *Le Genocide Armenien Dans La Presse Canadienne/The Armenian Genocide in the Canadian Press*, providing about 280 pages of documents. Accounts were taken from various newspapers such as the French language *Le Droit*, *La Presse*, *Le Devoir*, *L'Action Catholique*, *Le Canada* and the English language *Vancouver Daily Province*, *Toronto Daily Star*, *Montreal Daily Star*, *the Gazette*, *the Toronto Globe*, *Manitoba Free Press*, *Ottawa Evening Journal*, *London Free Press* and the *Halifax Herald*.

A decade and half later in 2000, Katia Peltekian in Halifax, Nova Scotia edited *Heralding of the Armenian Genocide: Reports in the Halifax Herald, 1894-1922*. With great determination and skill, Peltekian has now followed up her earlier Canadian volume with a new 1,000 page two-volume set, *The Times of the Armenian Genocide: Reports in the British Press*. This collection covers the period 1914 to 1923 and includes hundreds of entries from both the *Times* and the *Manchester Guardian*.

Anne Elbrecht published *Telling the Story: The Armenian Genocide in the New York Times and Missionary Herald: 1914-1918*. Her book was printed by Gomidas Press and offers a chronological comparison of the press coverage in the *New York Times* and the *Missionary Herald*.

Vahe Kateb's MA thesis (University of Wollongong, 2003), "Australian Press Coverage of the Armenian Genocide: 1915-1923" explores a number of key genocide-related themes in the Victoria-based *The Age* and *The Argus*, Queensland's *The Mercury*, and in New South Wales' *The Sydney Morning Herald*.

As we approach 2015, at least one major new project is underway to comprehensively collate international press coverage on the subject. Rev. Vahan Ohanian, Vicar General of the Mekhitarist Order at San Lazzaro in Venice, is coordinating a multi-volume project that will cover the Hamidian and Adana massacres and the 1915 Genocide. Several prominent genocide scholars will pen the introductions to the different volumes. This project, along with the earlier volumes, should mean that we can become more informed about the Armenian Genocide.

(Alan Whitehorn is an emeritus professor of political science at the Royal Military College of Canada and author of a several books on the Armenian Genocide, including *Just Poems: Reflections on the Armenian Genocide*.)

## Armenian Youth Shine at Carnegie Hall Concert

CONCERT, from page 10

in Khachaturian's difficult Sonata. And duo pianists Alin and Nicole Khrimian, and Marina and Eve Kazarian had impressive synchronization.

A highlight of the event was the Arminstring violin group featuring Griffyn Kang, Aren Arakelian, Nicholas Degoian, Anthony Degoian, Lily Kliyan, Nicole Mark and Zovinar Aghavian. They delighted the audience with a jazzy *Can Can* by Offenbach and heartfelt *Memories* by Babajanyan.

At the conclusion of the concert which brought on a spontaneous standing ovation, Amirkhanian expressed her gratitude to the parents, relatives, teachers and sponsors which included the Gulabi Gulbenkian Foundation, Inc., Edward and Carmen Gulbenkian, Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and Saro and Hilda Hartounian, among many others.

She pointed out that in the past five years of the Armenian Youth Talent concerts, more than 300 young Armenian musicians have performed on the Carnegie Hall stage. "The level is getting higher and higher, with now even non-Armenian performers singing and playing Armenian compositions with great Armenian feeling," she said with obvious pride, adding that in the last two years, a violinist's group has been included.

Amirkhanian also introduced executive

member Marina Bagdasarova for her tireless work, and as well this year's distinguished judges which included St. Vartan Cathedral Choir director Khoren Mekanejian, singer Vagharshak Ohanyan, pianists Lusine

is necessary and crucial."

Congratulatory letters sent by Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Eastern Diocese, Archbishop Oshagan Choloyan, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy, Nazarian, the



Young cellist Laura Navasardian

Badalyan, Karen Hakobyan, Karine Poghosyan and violinist Diana Vasilyan.

Among the special guests attending were Armenia's Ambassador to the United Nations Garen Nazarian, St. Illuminator Armenian Cathedral pastor Rev. Mesrob Lakissian, Lucine Der Harootian, wife of the renowned sculptor Khoren Der Harootian, and AGBU director of Performing Arts Haig Arsenyan who emphasized that "promoting Armenian culture, and supporting our next generation

AGBU, the Tekeyan Cultural Association, the Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society of New Jersey, Metropolitan Opera diva Lucine Amara and pianist and composer Sahar Arzruni were printed in the program booklet given to all concert attendees.

Applications for the Armenian Youth Talent 2014 competition are due on February 16, 2014, and will be available on the website <http://dhap-ayt.org> starting on January 7.

## CALENDAR

### NEW JERSEY

**DECEMBER 31 — St. Thomas Armenian Church New Year's Eve Celebration**, 8 p.m., featuring DJ Shant. Serving extensive appetizers, full course dinner, Viennese table at 12 a.m. and free champagne! Donation: \$65 for adults, children 7-12 \$20, children 6 & under free, please reserve early, space is limited. Additional entertainment for children and gifts from Santa. For reservation contact Tanya 201-941-6764, Talar 201-240-8541 or Jacklyn 201-266-4830, Rt. 9W & E. Clinton Avenue, Tenafly.

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## COMMENTARY

## COMMENTARY

# Rising Kurdistan: Potential Friend or Potential Rival?

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The Middle East and the Caucasus are in political flux; events are moving at a dizzying pace and those left behind these developments stand to be losers. Major powers certainly have their role in this calculated whirlwind, but regional powers are also in constant chase of events to use opportunities and not to be left out.

Recently a map was published in the *New York Times* whereby the remote strategic planners of the Middle East advocated further fragmentations of the region's countries along ethnic and religious lines, arguing that the countries in question had come into being artificially after the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, mainly through the arbitrary decision of colonial powers.

If that logic were used universally, the maps of many countries need to be redrawn, beginning with the US. But the real purpose of this drive is to reduce the Middle Eastern countries to mini states to forestall the rise of any popular leaders like Mossadegh, Nasser, Saddam Hussein, Gaddafi and Assad, all of whom have caused or in Bashar al-Assad's case are still causing major headaches to the world powers in their drive to emancipate and civilize their respective nations.

Partitioning plans aside, the indigenous peoples of the region have been seizing the opportunity to assert themselves and carve territories that are identified with their ethnic entitlement.

The most aggressive group is certainly the Kurdish people, who have been divided, subjugated, massacred, used and abused throughout history. They seem to be on the verge of having most of their dreams and aspirations come true, which have cost so much blood, tears and sweat.

The Kurds themselves have been divided and constantly used against each other by their respective rulers. For example, even at this moment, Turkey's Erdogan is using the Kurdistan Workers' Party against the Iraqi Kurdistan's leadership, especially Massoud Barzani, or vice versa.

The Kurds have been a restive minority, a thorn in the sides of Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Syria. The rulers of those countries have persecuted the Kurds relentlessly, and they continue to do so in many parts of the Middle East. The only country where the Kurds have been accepted and treated as equals was Soviet Armenia, despite their bloody and rancorous history together. They have been used by the Ottoman Sultans and the Ittihadist Turks against Armenians.

The Kurds realized their erroneous alignment in history when Mustafa Kemal, founder of the Republic of Turkey, began his demographic engineering to homogenize Turkey's diverse ethnic groups, assigning a new label to the Kurds as "Mountain Turks." He denied their identity and tried through ferocious repression to prove that Kurds do not exist as distinct ethnic group. Even recently, the name "Kurdistan" was deleted from the minutes of Turkey's parliament, where ironically, many Kurdish members serve.

The Treaty of Sevres (August 10, 1920), which gave Armenians a territory of 160,000 square kilometers, also provided a homeland to the Kurds. At that stage there was a give-and-take between the Kurds and Armenians especially about Van, Mush and Ararat regions. But all those discussions were to be rendered academic when Ataturk negotiated with his former enemies the Treaty of Lausanne (1923), which reduced all nationalities in the former empire to the status of minorities, whose rights could be easily trampled on the way of the dictator's unitary state.

While Armenians were wiped out through historic Armenia (or they went into hiding, as history has come to prove), the Kurds remained on their (and our) ancestral territory. And those who continue inhabiting the territory win 95 percent of the argument. It is true that the Kurds paid a heavy price in blood and suffering throughout the history of the Turkish Republic. Their struggle extended all the way to the Erdogan era. In the process they gave up 40,000 victims and lost 3,000 villages in the mountains which were destroyed to force the Kurds to live in the more manageable lowlands, as they had relied on their mountain habitat saying that "Kurds have no friends in the world, except their mountains."

At this juncture of history, the tides are turning in Armenian-Kurdish relations. Certainly some political considerations have to

be factored in as well.

On the one hand, Erdogan's administration has begun a peace process with the Kurds, taking a bold initiative to negotiate with the jailed Kurdish leader Abdullah Ocalan. While that initiative was cheered throughout the political world, it met stiff opposition from the military and secularist rivals at home. The use of the Kurdish language was finally permitted and its instruction in private schools was tolerated. As far as the public schools are concerned, there is no language instruction to the Kurdish students yet.

Many of the promises by the Erdogan administration remain unfulfilled. Cemil Bayik, the co-president of the Kurdistan Communities Union (KCK), the umbrella organization which includes the PKK and its affiliates, says that "the peace process in Turkey is over unless the governing Justice and Development Party (AKP) moves from preliminary talks to a roadmap for a genuine solution to the Kurdish problem." While Erdogan is playing a double- or triple-pronged policy by arming the al Qaeda units in Syria against the nascent Kurdish autonomous region in that beleaguered country, and flirting with Iraqi Kurdistan (through oil deals) and pitting the leader of that region, Massoud Barzani, against the PKK.

We have to remember that Foreign Minister Davutoglu visited Syria and hugged and kissed Bashar al-Assad before he called for his overthrow. Therefore, Turkey is capable of using the same tactics against the Kurds as well.

But the Kurds are gaining more clout and at this time Erdogan needs their cooperation to win forthcoming elections in Turkey.

Where does that leave the Armenians?

Dyrbakir (Dikranagerd) has become a hub of Kurdish autonomy. As reported in *Al-Monitor* by Amberin Zaman, Turkey's largest pro-Kurdish party's leader (Peace and Democracy) Abdullah Demirbas, has been making amends to the Armenians. He said, "As Kurds, we also bear responsibility for the suffering of the Armenians. We are sorry and we need to prove it." In 2009, Demirbas and Osman Baydemir, a fellow BDP politician, have helped to restore St. Giragos Church in that city. They have also begun offering Armenian language classes to lure the "hidden" Armenians to come forward.

Incidentally, five Armenian members have been elected to the 111-member Iraqi Kurdistan parliament. The Armenians are being elected, along with other minorities, such as Assyrians and Turkomans.

We cannot gauge at this time how much of that goodwill can be translated into political capital, but Armenians need to respond in kind. Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern) Archbishop Khajag Barsamian led a delegation to the reopening of the St. Giragos Church in Diyarbakir. A monument has also been erected with the inscription in six languages, including Armenian, and at its dedication, the region's top cleric, Zahit Çiftkuran, announced: "Today, we have to pay for what our grandparents have done."

In October, a Kurdish delegation including Demirbas visited Washington and officials from the Armenian National Committee of America and its parent organization, the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, met with the visiting delegation. ARF Bureau member Hagop Der Khatchadourian stated on that occasion: "This meeting presented an opportunity for a useful dialogue about the possibilities of Armenian-Kurdish cooperation, Western Armenia and Kurdistan as well as the national and democratic aspirations of Armenia and the Kurdish nation."

These are essential initiatives and contacts, but we hope they will not prove to be too little, too late. While Kurds were waging bloody battles against the common enemy, Armenians have no record of helping them. We hope that will not hamper the present positive trends between the two groups.

When the time arrives to settle our claims against Turkey, we will face once again the Kurds as we did in 1920 during the negotiations of the Sevres Treaty. Currently the Kurds populate the land and the Armenians are outsiders.

At best, for the foreseeable future we can negotiate the preservation of our religious and cultural heritage in the territory of historic Armenia until we find out whether the Kurds will prove to be our friends or rivals.

## LETTERS

## Sweeping it Under the 'Orphan' Rug

To The Editor:

Human relations have reached a pretty sad pass when the mere fact of displaying a simple hand-woven rug can become a cause celebre in governmental affairs. I don't know who is more worthy of exorciation in this matter, President Obama, for standing in the way of this display for fear of offending Turkey, or Turkey, for threatening to become so offended.

Turkey's opposition is because it doesn't want another example advertising that such a depredatory crime took place on its land. Because then, it would have to answer the accusatory question; if you weren't the perpetrator, then why didn't you, at least, take steps to stop it?

— Berge Tatian  
Mass.

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## COMMENTARY

# A Homeless Christmas to Remember

By Tom Vartabedian

People will ask me from time to time what story brings me the greatest joy and fulfillment in my profession.

After 50 years, it is a lot like picking which grandchild you love most. There are favorites, but after giving it some thought, nothing could ever measure up to the time I went homeless one Christmas season.

No, my parents did not kick me out of the house. If anything, they would have opened their door to a vagrant or a derelict. And, no, my wife didn't point her finger to the outside and ask me to vacate the premises.

Oh, we have had our share of arguments over the Christmas tree and what gifts to buy for whom. In such cases, I would gamely defer to the mistress of this house and let harmony take its place.

Instead, I took to the streets during the Christmas season for the sake of journalism to get the story that wasn't coming to me.

I kissed my wife goodbye, gave my children a hug and lived inside a shelter for three days and two nights. I went homeless at a time when I enjoyed all the comforts of my world – a loving family, a good home, a reliable job that led to some shenanigans like these and plenty of food on my table.

The only people who knew my disguise were the editor who suggested the assignment, my family and the director of the shelter. Even my co-workers were kept in the dark and assumed I had just taken some vacation time.

I had a theatrical make-up artist change my appearance until I did not recognize myself in the mirror. I was incognito from the moment I stepped out of my home to when I returned – all the better for my experience.

I slept in their beds, ate their food, talked their talk and walked their streets during the day. Admittedly, it was the experience of a lifetime, made all the more rewarding by the Christmas season, even more rewarding than the time I spent behind bars in an undercover mission or frequenting AA meetings as a pretend alcoholic.

As a reporter, I often chose my assignments, even if some of them were meant to discomfort me. Most often, you have to live the experience to write about it effectively.

The first day I walked into that shelter, I will admit it – I felt like a mouse at an owl convention. My body was shaking until one of the regulars came over and gave me the welcome sign.

"I'm Ronald," he said, "but people around here call me Buddy. Welcome to our home. We ask no questions, give no answers, mind our own business and get along just fine together."

They took me under their wing, possibly struck by the haggard wardrobe I was wearing and the shoes with the tattered laces. I was suddenly a part of a very indigent community, many of whom were one paycheck away from becoming wayward.

Buddy said it best that evening during an after-dinner chitchat, words that left an indelible impact.

"We're not homeless, son," he pointed out. "Just down on our luck."

They wanted to know who this "new kid on their block" was and how I happened to wind up there. Without blowing my cover, I told them I was just passing through town with nowhere to go and needed a place to stay. Somebody recommended the mission house up this street.

No reporter pad was used for this story, not even a napkin note. No communication with anyone from the outside. My bed was a communal cot, much like an Army barracks, where the snoring and stench of complete strangers kept you sleepless.

By the third day, I had gotten to know some of the most compassionate people you could ever want to meet – people like me and you who deserved a better fate. My stomach turned when a young man brought his father to the door in a blatant gesture of neglect.

A pregnant woman was getting close to her due date, worried about her fate as well as her newborn's. Those spending the night in that mission acted like the town of Bethlehem at Christmas and offered the woman their support.

On the third day, I ate a cold breakfast, bade farewell to my newly-adopted family of castoffs and walked out the door to a nearby CVS parking lot where I had left my car. I felt exonerated.

The story I had intended to write turned into a three-part series on homelessness in my community, straight from the source. It was a good Christmas after all, maybe my best, as people in my city rallied together in donating both money and resources to the shelter.

I felt truly blessed.

# The God We Find in Christmas

By Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian

Christmas is the celebration of the birth of a Particular Child, Jesus Christ, in and through whom God was acting in history. Christmas is the celebration of God's incarnation – a God who became man and dwelt with us.

What kind of God do we find in Christmas?

First, the God we find in Christmas is a loving God. He is a God who is concerned for, and is involved in, this world. He has revealed His true nature in Jesus Christ. Jesus declared this love of the Father God for His children in word, deed, and life. Apostle Paul testifies: "God demonstrated His love for us in this: while we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans 5:8). The God we find in Christmas commands His followers to show this love to one another: "A new command I give you that you love one another, even as I have loved you" (John 13:34).

Second, the God we find in Christmas is a God of peace. The voice of Hebrew prophecy acclaimed the coming Messiah as Prince of Peace. Prophet Isaiah described him saying, "His name shall be called Wonderful Counselor, Mighty God, Everlasting Father, Prince of Peace" (Isaiah 9:6).

This was the promise given to the shepherds of Bethlehem as they heard the angel choir praising God, and saying, "Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace among men in whom He is well pleased" (Luke 2:14). The gift of the prince of peace to those who truly abide in him is peace with God, peace with one's fellowmen, peace with

the world, peace within the heart.

Third, the God we find in Christmas is a giving God. Christmas stands for God's gift of love to mankind, "God so loved the world that He gave His only Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have eternal life" (John 3:16). We can, in a small measure, reciprocate His love when we give our time, talent, treasure, and ourselves to Him, by serving His other children lovingly and cheerfully.

Fourth, the God we find in Christmas is a God Who places upon us a commission. He tells us, "I send you into the world go and be my disciples." This means that Christmas is essentially the year round business of the Church and of Christians. In other words, our calling as Christians is to take the message of Christmas and implement it, by carrying it in all its implications.

We think of the shepherds of Bethlehem. They came to the manger of Christ and saw what had occurred. They went back telling everybody the things they had seen and heard. They went back and made Christmas their first order in the business of living.

The God we find in Christmas commissions us to take what Christmas means and is and carry it from the church to the market place and into places where there are ignorance, disease, and suffering and be his witnesses and agents in this world.

Christos Dznayev Hayndnetzav, Tsezi Mezi medz avedis. Christ is born and is revealed; good tidings to you and to us!

(Rev. Dr. Vahan H. Tootikian is the executive director of the Armenian Evangelical World Council)

# Patriarch, Primate and Poet: The Legacy Of the Late Archbishop Manoogian

By Joyce Sulahian

NEW YORK – On March 22, 1990, a sea of change came over the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem when the charismatic Primate of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church in America, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, was elected by the St. James Brotherhood as the 96th Armenian Patriarch of Jerusalem. His controversial predecessor had passed into eternity about a month and a half before, and the 39 members of the Brotherhood, present and voting quickly, set about electing a successor to take the helm of the Patriarchate. Manoogian, who had gone to Jerusalem as a seminary student at the age of 12, returned to that ancient city with all the pomp and ceremony befitting a Patriarch.

The path of his life had taken him from the hallowed halls of the Vatican to the stately pillars of the White House. Throughout his long life he boldly faced what God had ordained without regard for personal comfort or convenience. Personally, he exemplified the quiet dignity, grace and steely, inner strength idealistically (and often falsely) attributed to princes of the Church. Truly those qualities characterized his very being and he brought honor to his people and church wherever he went, a trait that continued to his last days on Earth.

At the time of the Patriarchal election, Torkom Srpazan had guided the church in the Eastern Diocese for two and a half decades, magnificently, courageously, filled with an inexhaustible energy belying his calendar years. He gave 200 percent of himself to all he did, and expected the same from anyone around him. His unshakable faith and strict adherence to the sacred legacy of our suffering forefathers rebuffed any opponents; yes, of course there were some, but they could never vanquish the essence of his spirit.

For the young generation active in the churches of the Diocese at the time, the sudden departure for Jerusalem by this energetic and vibrant clergyman brought on irrational feelings of abandonment. The knowledge that Archbishop Manoogian's integrity was so needed in Jerusalem didn't help much in easing a profound sense of loss.

As children without direction, searching for an identity as individuals and as Armenians when they first met "Father" Manoogian in the 1950s and '60s, they had matured to realize what a wonderful and unique experience it had been to grow up with him in their midst.

Manoogian's official persona and responsibilities had not allowed for many close friends, or the time to enjoy them. But somehow he always had the time – and an exceptional feeling – for the young, "the future," and that feeling was reciprocated in kind, as only the young can, with boisterous love

for the extraordinary man beneath the Roman collar.

Most of the time, from afar, he was "The Primate," solemn and intimidating, but when he entered the young people's world, he became their playful and ageless friend with the mischievous wit, winning their devotion, and frustration, with heated ping-pong games and chilling snowball fights. He continually challenged his young adversaries to surpass the boundaries of mediocrity while making them think they were just having fun. Their hungry minds opened for him, allowing the powerful lessons of a rich heritage to penetrate within slowly becoming an indivisible part of their being. And so their mutual bond grew.

To be sure, the relationship over the years was not always smooth. The emerging adults sometimes angered him; his occasional intransigence often puzzled them. Yet apparent throughout were the unbreakable links of a deep attachment forged in the innocence of childhood when he had often soothed their fragile souls with gentle words of encouragement and hope, innately knowing just what to say.

Manoogian lived long enough to feel pride in that young generation he nurtured. They went on to become leaders in industry and politics, medicine and education, and yes, even religious life. There must have been times he thought they'd never survive in the complex and competitive community called "the world." Survive they did, and stand even today as individual monuments to the power of his nurturing investment in them, saturated by the Armenian spirit and still dedicated to the survival and improvement of the Armenian Church and community. They have passed on to their own children the priceless lessons which he so lovingly instilled in them, and active in numerous church parishes of the Diocese today are the children and grandchildren of that generation. It is an immortal tribute to Manoogian's lifetime of sacrifice.

The "Torkom" generation is now quite mature and suffered the final abandonment by their spiritual father on October 12, 2012, when the much beloved Manoogian entered his eternal rest in Jerusalem at the age of 93. He had occupied the Patriarchal Throne of St. James for 22 years. Disciplined and faithful to his calling to the very end, he left a legacy of service and grace few will be able to surpass. The rich memories of his love and nurturing investment in them still lives in the hearts of that generation, golden memories that will sustain them in the years to come.

Although Torkom Srpazan has left us, the words of this German poem are oddly soothing:

"Death is nothing. I am only in the next room, I am me, you are you: that which I was for you, I will always be."

May the soul of Manoogian, patriarch, Primate and poet – spiritual father and friend – be blessed throughout eternity until the ages of ages.





## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## Davutoglu's Charm Offensive During His Visit to Armenia

The wily Turkish Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu used every diplomatic trick to take maximum advantage of his presence in Yerevan during the Black Sea Economic Cooperation conference (BSEC) last week.

Davutoglu and his diplomatic team had initially launched a disinformation campaign by announcing that he might not participate in the conference because of other commitments, thus giving the impression of not being eager to travel to Armenia. Later on, he conditioned his attendance on the positive outcome of the meetings between the presidents and foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan. To reassure President Aliyev of Azerbaijan that Turkey was minding the interests of its junior brother, the Turkish Foreign Ministry falsely tipped off the press that Armenia had agreed to withdraw from two regions around Karabagh (Artsakh).

Davutoglu's real intent in unleashing a charm offensive during his Yerevan trip was to preempt the anticipated worldwide campaign against Turkey during the Centennial of the Armenian Genocide in 2015. He wanted to impress the international community of his country's willingness to reconcile with Armenia, while helping to advance Turkey's

application for European Union membership.

In response, Armenian officials did everything possible to lessen the success of the Turkish charm offensive. Armenia's strategy was to keep Davutoglu's Yerevan trip within the confines of the BSEC conference rather than engage in bilateral Armenian-Turkish relations, and exclude any discussion of the Armenian-Turkish Protocols and the Artsakh conflict.

It is therefore not surprising that there was no meeting in Yerevan between Armenia's president and Turkey's foreign minister. The only official encounter was with Armenia's Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian, who also met with several BSEC participants as host of the conference.

To be sure, Davutoglu faced some obstacles during his stay in the Armenian capital. He had to enter the Marriott Hotel, the venue of the conference, through the back door to avoid young political activists protesting his visit. Meanwhile, Nalbandian issued a series of terse statements before, during and after the BSEC conference, warning Turkey that Armenia would not accept any preconditions, such as a partial withdrawal from the Artsakh area, in return for establishing diplomatic relations and opening the border between Armenia and Turkey.

Nalbandian's resolute stand forced Davutoglu to back down, fearing that his trip to Armenia would be characterized as a failure. At the risk of alienating Azerbaijan, the Turkish Minister acknowledged that he had not come to present concrete proposals on Armenian-Turkish relations, and had not asked Armenia to withdraw from two regions around Artsakh. After the conference, Davutoglu changed his tune, insisting that his only purpose for coming to Yerevan was to overcome the "psychological barrier" between Armenia and Turkey and initiate renewed dialogue and trust.

In his stated quest for improved relations, Davutoglu held a meeting with former Defense and Prime Minister Vazgen Manukian, during which he belittled the Genocide as "certain past events" and urged everyone "to move forward." When Manukian recounted the deaths of his four uncles during the Genocide, Davutoglu promised to say a prayer during his next visit to their birthplace – Moks, South of Lake Van. Yet audaciously he advised Armenians not to forget Turkish victims of World War I. He also suggested that Diaspora Armenians return to their former homeland, present-day Turkey. The most intriguing aspect of the meeting with Manukian was Davutoglu's revelation that one of the buildings in the Foreign Ministry headquarters in Ankara had belonged to an Armenian – thus raising the possibility of a lawsuit by the former owner's heirs.

Davutoglu made one last attempt at undermining the preparations for the Armenian Genocide Centennial, by telling Turkish reporters on board his flight that the "deportation" of Armenians in 1915 was "inhumane." By claiming that Turkey had never supported this move, he condemned the "deportation" as a "totally wrong practice done by [the Ottoman-era rulers under the Committee of the Union and Progress]."

Davutoglu also revealed that he has been meeting with Diaspora Armenians during his trips abroad, but had not publicized these encounters concerned that "extremist Armenians would cause problems."

The Turkish charm offensive left a good impression on those who are hell-bent on Armenian-Turkish reconciliation and have no qualms in equating the executioner with the victim. The US and Canada were the only two countries that officially welcomed the Turkish foreign minister's visit to Armenia, urging further dialogue between the two sides.

# The Myth of Turkish Secularism

By David Boyajian

**T**urkey is a secular state. So claim its government and nearly all mainstream Western media. They are mistaken.

In civilized, democratic countries, secularism means not only a respectful separation between church and state but also freedom of religion. As we shall demonstrate, Turkish policies have long been the antithesis of secularism.

The Turkish government massively supports and funds Islam – specifically Sunni Islam – inside the country. Turkey simultaneously represses religions such as Alevism, and bullies and persecutes indigenous Christians, most of whom it liquidated in 20th century genocides. Moreover, it uses Islam to project Turkish political power into Europe, Asia, and elsewhere. Turkey's system is more properly termed State Islam.

This article is not a criticism of Islam or its faithful. We respect both. Turkey's secularism myth, nevertheless, cries out to be laid bare.

The Directorate of Religious Affairs – known as the Diyanet – is the government body that represents and directs all of Sunni Islam in Turkey. Created in 1924, a year after the Republic of Turkey was formed, the Diyanet is enshrined in Article 136 of the Turkish Constitution. The Diyanet is huge and powerful. Operating under the prime minister, it employs about 100,000. All Sunni clergy are salaried civil servants of the Diyanet.

The Diyanet's \$2 billion annual outlay exceeds the combined budgets of Turkey's Foreign, Energy, and Environmental Ministries. By law a political party can be dissolved if it dares to advocate the Diyanet's abolition.

Until recently, the Diyanet wrote all the sermons for its clergy, but reportedly now sometimes allows them to write their own, though their contents are controlled.

Would the US – or any democratic Western country – be termed "secular" if it funded a huge Christian government agency that employed all Christian clergy and controlled their sermons? Obviously not.

Who owns Turkey's 80,000 mosques? It's not always clear. Even many Turks wonder. For sure, however, the Diyanet controls all mosques. (Shiite Muslims represent only about 3 percent of Turkey's 80 million people and are largely independent of the Diyanet.)

Two large mosques to be built on Istanbul's Camlica Hill and Taksim Square are personal projects of Prime Minister Erdogan. The government is apparently paying most of the costs, not something a secular state would do.

The Diyanet operates not only in Turkey but worldwide. Turkish foreign policy and the Diyanet are intertwined. The

latter promotes the country's political influence abroad.

## Worldwide Reach

The Diyanet has a Foreign Affairs department that sends religious consultants not only into Muslim countries, such as those in Central Asia and Africa, but also into the United States, France, Germany, Great Britain, Sweden, and other European countries.

Indeed, some Turkish embassies and consulates have a religious affairs department and attachés that work with local Diyanet representatives. Turkey is very active, for instance, in the Netherlands where it reportedly pays the salaries of the Diyanet-affiliated Dutch Islamic Foundation's staff.

In partnership with Turkey's Religious Foundation, the Diyanet has in the last two decades constructed or renovated mosques in Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia, northern Cyprus, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kosovo, Kyrgyzstan, Russia, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and elsewhere.

A \$100-million, 15-acre Turkish American Culture and Civilization Center (TACCC), which includes a large mosque, is being built in Lanham, Md., 14 miles from Washington, D.C. It is "a project of the government of Turkey" and the Turkish American Community Center. The latter's older mosque is "related to the Republic of Turkey and the Department of Religious Affairs [Diyanet]." Several months ago, PM Erdogan placed a ceremonial stone at the TACCC construction site.

No truly secular state would do these things. Nor would it persecute persons of other religions.

Last year the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF), established by Congress, placed Turkey in its worst category, a "Country of Particular Concern," alongside Burma, China, Pakistan, and a dozen others.

Turkey, noted the USCIRF, "significantly restricts religious freedom, especially for non-Muslim religious minority communities – including the Greek, Armenian, and Syriac Orthodox Churches, the Roman Catholic and Protestant Churches, and the Jewish community."

Restrictions that "deny non-Muslim communities the rights to train clergy, offer religious education, and own and maintain places of worship, have led to their decline, and in some cases their virtual disappearance."

Such mistreatment of Christians, numbering only about 100,000, is particularly reprehensible given that Turkey carried out genocide from 1915 to 1923 against millions of indigenous Christian Armenians, Greeks and Syrians, including many Catholics and Protestants.

The persecution of non-Muslims continued even after the Turkish Republic came about in 1923. The infamous Capital Tax (Varlik Vergisi) program during WW II, as but one example, deliberately taxed Christians and Jews at extortionate rates that often exceeded their income. Men were sent to labor camps in the interior when unable to pay. Families were bankrupted. Only an international outcry stopped the program.

Thousands of Christian churches, schools, hospitals, orphanages, cemeteries, and other community properties have been continually seized by Turkey in the past several decades.

Though Turkey has recently returned some of these properties under international pressure, the vast majority has not been, and probably will not be, returned.

Countless ancient Armenian churches and monasteries, such as Saint Mark's (Nshan) in Sivas, have been deliberately destroyed, sometimes with explosives. Others serve as stables. Earlier this year in the cities of Iznik and Trabzon, old Greek churches were converted to mosques.

Alevism is a religion that has some 10 to 20 million adherents in Turkey. Complex and somewhat mysterious, it contains elements of Shia Islam, Sufism, paganism and other spiritual and religious traditions. Alevism worship in houses called cemevis, not mosques. Alevism and cemevis are not recognized by the Turkish government. Alevism complain bitterly, to little avail.

Alevism have long been the victims of discrimination and even violent attacks, such as in Sivas in 1993 when 35 leading Alevism were murdered by mobs, and most recently this year in Ankara, when police fired tear-gas at protesting Alevism.

"Turkey may look like a secular state on paper," says Izzettin Dogan, a leading Alevism, "but in terms of international law it is actually a Sunni Islamic state." He is correct, but most of the outside world is oblivious to voices such as his.

## True Secularism

Some Turks feel that their country is secular because the Diyanet's hegemony moderates Islam against extremist tendencies. There may be some truth to that.

But as secularism must include a respectful distance between religion and state, Turkey would still not qualify. Along with Turkey's domestic religious repression, and employing the Diyanet in foreign policy, the claim of secularism is simply fallacious.

The Turkish government is in full-blown denial about secularism and religious freedom, as evidenced by PM Erdogan's preposterous claim two years ago that

If Turkey is ever to be secular, it must allow the free exercise of all religions – including Islam – and guarantee the rights of the faithful to be free from harassment and compulsion. The Turkish government's acknowledgement of its past and present wrongs, especially to the non-Turkish and non-Muslim communities, and making genuine amends, must be part of this process.

Until then – particularly in the West – mainstream media, governments, religious leaders, academicians, and political analysts should cease swallowing Turkey's fraudulent claim of secularism.

(David Boyajian is an Armenian-American freelance journalist.)



# UMass Boston Nursing School Has Anahid Kulwicki at the Helm

KULWICKI, from page 1

outside of Armenia. She attended the local Armenian Evangelical School and then AUB.

Before coming to Boston, she served as the deputy director of the Department of Health and Human Services of Wayne County, Michigan, after serving as director and health officer for the Department of Public Health. She was on the faculty of Wayne State University, Oakland University and Florida International University. Most recently, she was the director of the doctoral program in nursing and associate dean for research at the College of Nursing and Health Sciences of Florida International University.

Kulwicki was appointed to her post at UMass in November 2012. As dean she wants to continue to focus on areas which she has focused for many years, including “immigrants and refugees, from Arab countries and African Americans when I was in Detroit.”

Kulwicki is also focusing on the needs of urban populations and in fact, has applied for and received a grant for the CNHS students for \$1 million to recruit minority students through a new program: Boston Urban Nurse Leaders in

Eliminating Academic Disparities (BUN-LEAD). The grant comes from the US Department of Health and Human Services.

“I find UMass to be extremely supportive. There are many more opportunities for the kind of work I do,” she said.

Over the next three years, BUN-LEAD will provide tuition assistance, tuition waivers and mentoring support to CNHS students from ethnic or racial minorities.

“The urban population in Boston is very diverse. People forget that 70 percent of Boston’s population is from different countries and are different races. The number of nurses from some races and countries is very small,” she explained, noting that this program would work toward remedying the lack.

“The health status of minorities in Boston is very poor,” she added.

## Arab-American Minority

Studying minorities and their access – or lack thereof – to healthcare has been her focus during her entire professional career.

In fact, she said, “I wrote my dissertation looking at healthcare practices of one Arabic-speaking community in Detroit,” specifically

focusing on immigrant women, who she said, are often treated as “second- or third-class citizens or invisible.”

Other issues in immigrant communities have been cardiovascular disease, diabetes, AIDS and domestic violence.

“When I was young, domestic violence was a very hot topic and politically charged. People didn’t want me to look into it, because [they thought] it was making Arabs look bad,” she recalled.

Despite the obstacles, she persevered and tried to study the issue in the community and treat the issue in such a way that the women could learn what resources they had. “The women had PTSD [post-traumatic stress disorder]. The men have issues, but I spent most of the time with the women.”

Men, she said, “have come here to work. They knew how to advocate for themselves.”

“Immigrant women, especially those that don’t know English very well, are isolated,” she noted. “It’s also impossible to give them the information they need. Women are the biggest consumer of healthcare because of reproductive health and we need to give them access.”

By working with them, Kulwicki said, she was able to learn what was important to them and how to best make available that information for their consumption.

“Domestic violence is not something they thought would be considered a health issue. Now they understand,” she noted.

There are similarities within the immigrant Arab and Armenian communities, she explained. Both communities need to learn “there are basic things you need to do to take care of yourself: Pap smears, mammograms, having a primary care provider,” she noted.

Another problem is that many don’t speak about sex, Kulwicki said. She said she stressed to the women in her study the importance of getting checkups if their husbands are having extramarital affairs, therefore exposing their wives to various diseases. “I tell them you need to know you are vulnerable and you have to protect yourself,” she said. Therefore they may be surprised if they test positive for AIDS, though they have not been with anyone else.

Even today, she said, there are people from the south of Lebanon or Yemen who do not feel comfortable accessing healthcare. “People who come from poorer areas may never have seen a

doctor or a public health person,” with the possible exception of a midwife, she said.

Change happens slowly but steadily.

“There is increasingly better awareness,” she said, especially when it is provided in their native languages and help from the Internet.

Her next project in the US, she said, is to write a grant to recruit male nurses.

In addition to her work in the US on minority and immigrant populations, Kulwicki has been a Fulbright scholar in Jordan, where she focused on cardiovascular risk factors as well as honor killings. She has received grants from many foundations and organizations, including the Centers for Disease Control, March of Dimes, the National Institutes of Health and Blue Cross Blue Shield, among many others.

In Armenia, issues facing nurses, she explained, include a lack of respect for the profession and no graduate degrees in nursing in the country. A meeting in the US this year with representatives of the Ministry of Health in Armenia and a group of Armenian-American healthcare providers drove home the point that investing in master’s and doctorates for nurses in Armenia is important. She said that she has met with a group of students from Armenia studying nursing locally and said she hoped a partnership would be created and enough momentum would be generated to force some changes there.

Among the healthcare issues in Armenia, she said, is domestic violence, closely tied to alcohol abuse.

Kulwicki has two daughters, and soon to have one grandchild. Her husband has been in banking and is currently semi-retired.

Kulwicki met her “all-American Polish” husband, Michael in Vienna, while he was spending his junior year abroad. Eventually, they married and settled in Indiana, where he lived. With little else to do, as she put it, Kulwicki decided to continue her education and eventually got her doctorate in nursing.

Kulwicki said that she has visited Poland with her family and has been pleasantly surprised to see a heavy trace of Armenians there, including many notable architects and a high instance of intermarriage.

She added that while she has been very busy at her new job, she is looking forward to seeing more of the Armenian community in the coming years.

## Rep. Schiff Requests Orphan Rug for Capitol Hill Event from White House

RUG, from page 1

those we helped. In 1925, a group of Armenian orphans who had been relocated to Ghazir, now in Lebanon, wove a rug, now known as the “orphan rug,” and gave it as a gift to US President Calvin Coolidge. To highlight these efforts, I will be hosting an educational event here in the Capitol and plan to invite survivors, historians, members of the Armenian-American community, and Members of Congress and their staff. As part of this event, I believe that it would be fitting to display that Ghazir rug, which embodies the tragedy of the genocide and the rebirth of the Armenian people and I respectfully request that it be made available for the event.”

The full letter is below:

Dear Mr. President:

As the centennial commemoration of the Armenian Genocide draws ever closer, I will be hosting an event in the coming weeks to highlight the American response to the slaughter, including the efforts by American diplomats, journalists, and Near East Relief.

Most Americans, including a great many of my colleagues in Congress, are not aware of the scope and scale of the American response to the genocide. Our efforts, public and private, helped to relocate refugees and to provide relief to survivors and their families throughout the years of the genocide (1915-23) and after. But America’s generosity was not lost on those we

helped. In 1925, a group of Armenian orphans who had been relocated to Ghazir, now in Lebanon, wove a rug, now known as the “orphan rug,” and gave it as a gift to US President Calvin Coolidge. To highlight these efforts, I will be hosting an educational event here in the Capitol and plan to invite survivors, historians, members of the Armenian-American community, and Members of Congress and their staff.

As part of this event, I believe that it would be fitting to display that Ghazir rug, which embodies the tragedy of the genocide and the rebirth of the Armenian people and I respectfully request that it be made available for the event.

Earlier this year, the White House declined a request to loan the rug for display at an event held at the Smithsonian, stating that a book signing was not considered an appropriate venue. At the time, the White House indicated that it would consider a display of the rug in another setting, and I believe that this would be an appropriate venue and occasion for a viewing.

I hope that you will grant my request expeditiously and that the White House curator’s office will work with my staff and me to arrange a mutually acceptable date in January or February of 2014.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,  
Adam B. Schiff

## Freestyle Wrestler David Safaryan Recognized As Armenia’s Best Athlete in 2013

YEREVAN (ArmeniaNow) –

David Safaryan, who became the first Armenian to win a world title in freestyle wrestling since 2002, has been voted by a federation of sports journalists as the Athlete of the Year.

The Armenian Sports Journalists Federation survey, gave the second and third spots in the top ten athletes list to Greco-Roman wrestlers Artur Alexanyan and Arsen Julfalakyan.

The list includes another four wrestlers – Greco-Roman wrestlers Roman Amoyan, Maxim Manukyan, Artur Shahinyan, and freestyle wrestler Musa Murtagaliyev.

Besides, Armenia’s Greco-Roman wrestling national team, which came in third in the European Individual and Team Championships,



David Safaryan

is recognized as Armenia’s 2013 team of the year.

The top ten athletes list also includes Ashot Danielyan (sambo – unarmed self-defense), Artur Davtyan (gymnastics) and Aram Avagyan (boxing).

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