

THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

Volume LXXXIII, NO. 8, Issue 4253 In Our 80th Year
\$ 2.00

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

NEWS IN BRIEF

Extradition of Azeri Killer of Armenian Soldier to Baku Touches off Firestorm

Armenia Severs Diplomatic Ties with Hungary

YEREVAN and BUDAPEST (Combined Sources) – The extradition of an Azerbaijani soldier jailed in Hungary for the 2004 murder of an Armenian soldier, Lt. Gurgen Markarian, to Azerbaijan and his subsequent – and immediate – presidential pardon and hero's welcome touched off a firestorm in Armenia, the Armenian Diaspora as well as within Hungary itself.

Armenia said it was suspending diplomatic relations with Hungary on Friday.

"Hungarian authorities should understand that they have made a grave mis-



Demonstrators in Yerevan outside the Hungarian embassy



Ramil Safarov visited "Martyr's Alley" upon his return to Baku.

take," President Serge Sargsian told his Security Council. "They de-facto made a deal with the Azeri authorities."

The row erupted after Azerbaijan President Ilham Aliyev pardoned Ramil Safarov, who had been sentenced to life in

prison for the killing of Markarian during a NATO Partnership for Peace English-language training in Budapest.

Hungary agreed to return Safarov to Azerbaijan after it had received assurances he would serve out his sentence in a local prison but he received a presidential pardon and was promoted from lieutenant to major.

Hungary has been developing economic ties with energy-rich Azerbaijan and gave backing to the Nabucco pipeline project,

seen as the main route for Azeri gas exports to Europe. Hungarian media reported that Azerbaijan could lend Hungary 2-to-3 billion euros (\$2.5-3.8 billion).

Internationally, leaders have condemned the action but refrained from doing any more than a verbal rebuke.

Several hundred angry demonstrators in Armenia burned the Hungarian flag and threw eggs, tomatoes and coins.

"The Hungarians have sold their honor and conscience to the Azerbaijanis like a common prostitute," protest organizer Armen Mkrtchian said.

see SAFAROV, page 4

Armenian Watchmaker Builds 24.65-Hour Martian Clock

MONTROSE, Calif. (Tert.am) – Watchmaker Garo Anserlian, head of Executive Jewelers Inc., designed a special watch that keeps time with Martian solar days, scienceblogs.com reports. The Martian day is longer than Earth's, but this minimal variance can amount to physical and mental fatigue. Every day, team members are reporting to work 39 minutes later than the previous day. "Everything on this mission is based on local solar time on Mars," said Julie Townsend, Mars Exploration Rover avionics systems engineer. "From home, during the mission practice tests, it was very difficult to constantly translate Earth time to Mars time." Townsend and her co-worker, Scott Doudrick, a systems engineer on the project, set out to find a solution for this otherworldly problem. The pair began to ask watchmakers to tackle the challenge but each one turned them away, saying that it couldn't be done unless they placed a large order (10,000 plus) for quartz-controlled watches; they insisted that attempting to convert mechanical watches was not possible. Thankfully Anserlian proved the doubters wrong, and his Mars watches now helps NASA scientists keep track of their distant rovers.

European Group Issues Plea on Behalf of Syrian Armenians

UPPSALA, Sweden – The arms and ammunition that Turkey provides abundantly to the opposition forces in the Syrian crisis are passing easily in the hands of extremist fundamentalists that have entered Syria from other countries.

In its statement, the Assembly of the Armenians of Europe (AAE) said, "The threatening declarations against Armenians and members of other Christian minorities in Syria, which coincide with information concerning violent acts, demonstrate the seriousness of the situation."

The statement went on to "express its concern about the dangers threatening the life and the well-being of the unarmed and peaceful Christian population of Syria."

They added, "The present Turkish government is continuing the traditional racist policy of all Turkish governments and will be held immediately responsible for any undesirable violation of the rights of the Armenian and other Christian minorities of Syria. We call on them to stop fomenting religious hatred and passions in Syria."

The group appealed to the European Parliament, the European Commission and the United Nations to adopt immediate measures in order to safeguard the Armenians and other Christian communities of Syria. The group also asked the organizations to monitor the number of weapons entering the country.

Bedros Hadjian Dies in Argentina

Buenos Aires, Argentina – Bedros Hadjian, the last old-school Armenian educator, writer and journalist of that community, died on Monday, September 3, following complications due to heart surgery.

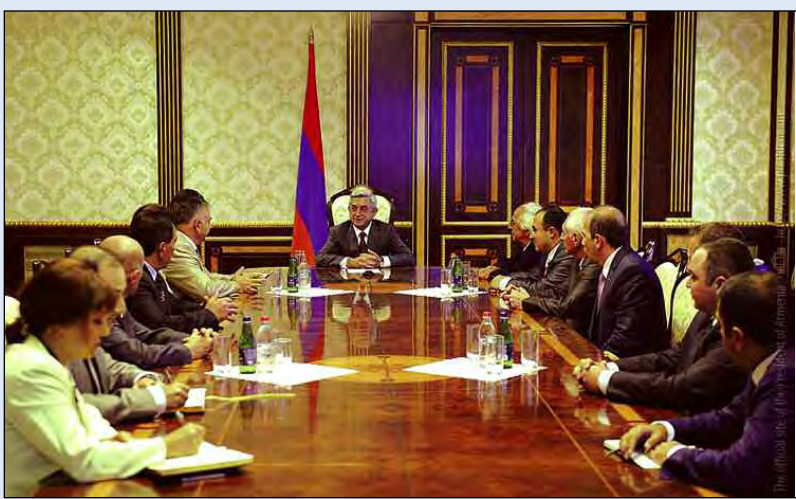
Born January 24, 1933, in Jarabulus, Syria, Hadjian became in 1954 the principal of the Armenian school of Deir el Zor, in northern Syria, one of the destination points of Armenians marched off by Ottoman authorities during the 1915 Armenian Genocide.

After teaching Armenian history and literature at the Haigazian Armenian School of Aleppo from the mid-1960s, Hadjian in 1970 was named principal of the Karen Jeppe High School, one of the biggest Armenian secondary schools in Aleppo and one of the most prominent in the Armenian Diaspora.

In 1970, Hadjian moved to Buenos Aires as the editor of *Diario Armenia*, an Armenian-language daily newspaper that became a weekly in the late 1980s, as well as the principal of Instituto Educativo San Gregario El Iluminador, one of many Armenian schools in South America. He remained the editor of *Diario Armenia* until see HADJIAN, page 3



Bedros Hadjian



President Serge Sargsian speaks with the leadership of the Ramgavar Party in Armenia, including the party's president, Hagop Avedikian.

Armenian President Meets with Ramgavar Party Representatives

YEREVAN – President Serge Sargsian, on Wednesday, August 29, received representatives of the Armenian Liberal Ramgavar Azadagan Party's Executive Board.

According to the Armenian president's official website, the delegation headed by the party's president, Hagop Avedikian, briefed Sargsian on their upcoming programs.

The sides considered plans for carrying out active work in Armenia's political life and uniting the party in the diaspora.

The guests asked the president about economic, political and foreign policy issues of Armenia, expressing concern for Syrian-Armenians. They also proposed measures for assisting the Armenian community of Syria.

The Armenian Liberal Ramgavar Party of Armenia will participate in local and statewide elections. It has already proposed a slate of candidates for the upcoming municipal elections in Armenia.

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Recalling ADL Hero

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ARMENIA

News From Armenia

Armenians Protest Release of Killer of Soldier in Turkey

ISTANBUL (Agos) – The Nor Zartonq organization this past week held a protest in Taksim Square honoring the memory of a Turkish-Armenian soldier, Sevak Balikci, April 24, and protesting his death at the hands of a fellow soldier.

Posters by Nor Zartonq said, “Let the murderer of Sevak be arrested, let such mindset be condemned.”

Balikci, who was killed in the military unit on April 24, had 23 days to complete his service. Official sources suggested that the fellow soldier shot the gun without intending it. The Turkish Ministry of Defense declared that the serviceman died accidentally when joking with a fellow soldier. Kivanç Agaoglu, the shooter, was a relative of officials in the national forces. He was released on August 1, 2011, after serving three months.

Yerevan to Host First WikiConference Sept. 8-9

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – Yerevan will be hosting its first ever WikiConference on September 8-9, with Wikimedia International Foundation, Armenia’s Wiki community and ArmenTel as the event organizers.

The conference will be hosting Wikimedia representatives from Hungary, Georgia and Russia, with scientists, university professors and members of Internet communities participating.

The event aims to promote the idea of Wikipedia and free content in the region and provide an opportunity for Wikipedians around the world to meet and share their experiences of Wikipedia.

Development of Armenian-language Wikipedia content, local functioning of Wiki-tools and technologies will be on the event agenda.

Diaspora Minister, UNICEF Rep. Meet

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) – On August 28, Armenian Diaspora Minister Hranush Hakobyan met with United Nations International Children’s Fund (UNICEF) representative in Armenia Henriette Ahrens.

Issues related to Syrian-Armenian children were in the focus of the meeting.

Hakobyan briefed Ahrens on privileges and assistance offered to Syrian Armenians.

Ahrens, in turn, voiced her readiness to contribute to the implementation of the programs targeting Syrian Armenians.

Kazakhstan’s Amb. Suggests Trade Should Increase

YEREVAN (Arminfo) – Trade between Armenia and Kazakhstan has been rapidly decreasing, Kazakhstan’s Ambassador to Armenia Ayimdoz Bozzhigitov said at press conference this week.

“The trade between the two states amounted to \$11 million in 2010 and \$9 million in 2011, and only \$3 million in the first half of 2012. Armenia imports grain, oil products and metal from Kazakhstan, whereas Armenia exports alcoholic beverages, primarily brandy, as well as stone-processing benches to Kazakhstan,” Bozzhigitov said. He also added that the reason for lack of development in areas of trade and economic cooperation is the absence of a corridor through which products could be exchanged easily. For this reason, import of the Kazakh production from transit countries to Armenia exceeds direct commodity circulation for several times.

He said that unlike the trade and economic relations, the political and cultural ties between Kazakhstan and Armenia are on a high level. A total of 33 documents were signed between the two states at the inter-state, inter-department and inter-governmental level.

Armenia: Vacationing Any Place but Home

By Marianna Grigoryan

YEREVAN (Eurasianet.org) – Complaining about high prices and limited choices at home, Armenians this summer are opting to holiday abroad. The Armenian government, boasting that tourism is one of the economy’s fastest developing sectors, apparently sees little reason to encourage them to reconsider.

By law, Armenians who work five days a week are entitled to 20 days of paid vacation per year, a block of time that, as elsewhere in the Caucasus, is taken primarily in August. Disposable income for these holidays, however, is relatively modest. Armenia posted a per capita income of just \$5,500 in 2011, the lowest rate in the region, according to the US Central Intelligence Agency.

But the prices for a vacation within Armenia do not reflect that limited income. At an August 8 press conference, Union of Domestic Tour Operators of Armenia Director Armine Adamian put the cost for a seven-day tour of Armenia at 1,500 euros, about \$1,885. Other countries can be visited for half that sum, she argued.

“You see, if people can spend the same sum or even less for a vacation in European countries – Spain, Italy, Greece, Bulgaria – or, for instance, Sri Lanka or Turkey, let alone the cheap offers in Georgia, why should they want to stay in Armenia?” elaborated Marine Ayyazian, a tour manager for one Yerevan travel agency.

With such consumers in mind, TV and radio stations and billboards in Yerevan advertise mostly seaside vacations abroad. Northeastern Armenia’s vast Lake Sevan may be somewhat of an alternative option, but faces stiff competition.

A fortnight stay in a single room (with breakfast) at a mid-level Sevan hotel runs between \$1,260 and \$1,400. By comparison, a similar-length stay at a mid-level beachside hotel in Italy or Spain can be arranged for approximately \$1,500 - \$2,000, and with a richer range of dining and entertainment options, Yerevan travel agencies claim.

The Armenian government professes little or no official concern that many Armenians are opting for such vacations abroad, although it has tried to encourage state employees to holiday at home by covering part of the costs for stays at Armenian resorts.

Hotels at Sevan or other holiday destinations are “fully booked,” officials maintain, and claim that the economy’s tourism sector is expanding by a phenomenal 25 percent per year.

“Except for a couple of hotels,” prices for a vacation in Armenia are “moderate,” asserted Deputy Economy Minister Ara Petrosian.

But those “moderate” prices seem overpriced to some.

“I lack the financial resources to have my vacation in Armenia. I don’t even think about it,” commented 50-year-old pharmacist Anahit Alexanian, who instead holidays in Georgia, Armenia’s northern neighbor.

Thousands of other Armenians appear to be doing the same. The Georgian government claims that the number of Armenian tourists increased by 22 percent this year (to more than 408,000) compared with 2011, Newsgeorgia.ru reported.

Most make a beeline for Georgia’s Black Sea region of Achara. While prices in the central city of Batumi climb far higher, small seaside towns in Achara feature modest hotels with three meals a day and a four-person room for \$50. Renting a room in a private house comes still cheaper.

With such prices, “very few [Armenians] will prefer expensive Sevan with its cold water and burning sun,” said 35-year-old IT specialist Narine Babujian.

Yerevan travel agencies name both Georgia and Turkey as the most popular destinations for vacationing Armenians.

In an apparent attempt to deflect such travel decisions as summer approaches, more sensational print media often run stories about unknown skin diseases and infections allegedly plaguing Georgia’s Black Sea coast or about the rape of tourists in Turkey.

Rather than resorting to such tactics, Armenians would be better advised to make their own tourism sector more competitive, critics charge.

“We have almost no services here, and guests are discontented,” said Adamian. A 2011 report from the World Economic Forum ranked Armenia as 90th among 139 countries – between Cape Verde and Botswana – for the competitiveness of its tourism sector.

Mekhak Apresian, head of the Ministry of Economy’s tourism department, concedes that Armenia has some infrastructure shortcomings, but asserts that the country still could become a hot spot for foreign tourists. “We have all the prerequisites for it, and

the dynamics of our development demonstrate it,” Apresian said.

Not exactly, according to the United Nations’ World Tourism Organization. Armenia supposedly trailed Georgia, the Caucasus’ top travel destination, by nearly 2 million visitors in 2011 – 758,000 compared with an alleged 2.8 million for Georgia. Azerbaijan fell into second place with 1.5 million tourists.

Those tourists who do visit Armenia tend to be mostly Diaspora Armenians, who come for visiting family or rediscovering their roots, travel agency representatives said. Iranians, eager for a vacation free of the social restraints that exist in the Islamic Republic, appear to be the one group of foreign tourists visiting Armenia in increasing numbers.

Deputy Economy Minister Petrosian, though, prefers to emphasize the increase. The number of tourists in 2011 represented a 10.3-percent increase since 2010, he claimed.

Nonetheless, the questions about why Armenians are not following foreign tourists’ supposed example remain. “The Armenian government must seriously consider all this,” said IT specialist Babujian.

(Marianna Grigoryan is a freelance reporter in Yerevan and the editor of MediaLab.am.)

Armenian President Sagrisian Congratulates Artsakh on Independence Day, September 2

Dear Artsakhians,

I cordially congratulate you on the occasion of Independence Day.

It’s been more than two decades that you have been healing the wounds inflicted by the war unleashed by the short-sighted authorities of Azerbaijan; you are restoring to life your villages and towns devastated by the deadly bombs and missiles, your homes and schools; you are building and beautifying the land of your ancestors. Today, we state with confidence that the Republic of Nagorno Karabagh is an accomplished state – democratic and developing. It is obvious for the entire world, even for those who hate to admit it.

In 1991, when the people of Artsakh were making their historic decision, we told Azerbaijan that the Armenians must not be underestimated. Our words fell on deaf ears. We said that we didn’t want war but we were ready and would fight. And again our words fell on deaf ears. We said that we were not afraid of maniacs, sadists and murderers, that we had already seen that. Once again our words fell on deaf ears. And they unleashed war which had one clear-cut goal – to wipe the Armenians out from the territory of Artsakh, or at least to expel them. The program of ethnic cleansing failed, as will fail every new one.

Today, we state the same: the Armenians must not be underestimated; we don’t want a war, but if we have to, we will fight and win; we are not afraid of murderers even of those enjoy the highest patronage. And again our words fall on deaf ears. Well, they have been warned.

Recently, we have witnessed a morbid episode. The one who killed with an axe a sleeping Armenian officer was set free. We expect the response of the international structures as well as of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs on this. However regardless of the response, on behalf of the people of Artsakh and the entire Armenian nation, I would like to pose a question – after what has happened, is there a living soul on this planet who will advise the people of Artsakh to become part of Azerbaijan, a country where illicit orders set free and publicly glorify every bastard which kills people only because they are Armenians?

A greater disgrace for the European justice is hardly to be imagined, particularly for Armenia and Artsakh, because it was looked upon for guidelines, but now we have seen another face of it.

Dear compatriots, unfortunately the history of Artsakh has never been short of the invaders and brigands. We know that, we also know how to send them right where they belong – to the cesspit of history. We have been doing it regularly, and if needed, will do it again.

Almost daily, and particularly in recent days, we are witnessing new proofs on how justified the choice made by the people of Artsakh 21 years ago was. We continue to receive new striking evidence what was in store for the people of Artsakh. Today is a great day, and nothing can spoil our glorious holiday. I wish your families peace and prosperity.

Long live free Artsakh – embodiment of Armenian dignity!





INTERNATIONAL

Genocide and Human Rights University Program Alumni Continue to Grow in 11th Successful Year

TORONTO, Canada – The International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights Studies (A Division of the Zoryan Institute) concluded its 11th successful year of growth in the Genocide and Human Rights University Program (GHRUP).

To date, some 300 students from 22 countries have participated in the program, which is run in partnership with the University of Toronto. Twenty-two students from Armenia, Belgium, Brazil, Canada, Germany, Turkey and the United States participated in the 65-hour seminar, which ran from August 6 to 17. They were taught by 11 scholars from the fields of international law, political science, history, sociology and psychology through a uniquely interdisciplinary and comparative approach. This year's students came from such diverse fields as criminology, development studies, diaspora studies, international law, literature, social work, theatre and, of course, genocide studies.

Prof. Joyce Apsel, the program's new course director, observed "The GHRUP students formed a learning community both within and outside the classroom setting. They learned both from the speakers and from one another, and were able to weave together difficult, important themes about studying genocide and other atrocities. The classroom was a site for moving beyond static frameworks and hierarchies and challenging each other to understand the complicated dynamics of human destructiveness in history. The diverse intellectual interests, training and backgrounds of the students and their commitment to the study of genocide and human rights issues resulted in my first year as GHRUP Course Director being an extraordinarily meaningful one."

The GHRUP was established in 2001 – the first course was offered in 2002 – with a mission to help develop the next generation of genocide scholars. A noteworthy achievement in this regard was the participation of one of the program's own graduates as an instructor. Maja Catic, assistant professor, Department of Defence Studies, Canadian Forces College, reintroduced the genocide in the Former Yugoslavia to the curriculum, which hadn't been taught for several years.

Another achievement this year was a new unit, titled "The Psychological Trauma of Genocide," taught by Shaké Toukmanian, professor emerita and senior scholar, Department of Psychology, York University, and a founding member of the GHRUP

Program Development Committee. She noted that while studying genocide through a historical or political lens is important, it does not allow for a holistic understanding of the crime. In her presentation, she sought to focus on the human dimension of genocide, the experience of psychological trauma of the survivors and their descendants, with particular emphasis on women and children of the Armenian Genocide, and drawing comparisons with interviews with female survivors of the Bosnian genocide, who had borne children conceived through rape.

Israel Charny, executive director, Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, Jerusalem, and editor-in-chief of the Encyclopedia of Genocide, joined the class via webcam from Israel. As a practicing psychologist and one of the world's foremost experts on the subject of genocide denial, he was able to draw on his decades of personal experience confronting denial to give students an insight into its theoretical basis, the motivations of deniers and the controversy over criminalizing denial versus freedom of expression.

Upon completing the program, one student commented, "All of the instructors were incredibly knowledgeable, prepared, empathetic and passionate about the field. They conveyed passion and inspired a true commitment from all of us." Another wrote, "I simply loved the course. Trying to learn from prominent scholars and to understand the debates surrounding the field was enlightening. Getting to know, spend time, respect and make friendships among like-minded human beings who are truly committed and willing to learn and share experiences was fantastic." A third student remarked, "Genocide is not taught like this anywhere, it is a must to keep this going."

"It has been a challenge to keep this program going for so many years, but a very satisfying one," said Greg Sarkissian, president of the International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights (IIGHRS). "The challenges are many – organizational, logistical, pedagogical and, of course, financial," he continued. "To bring in so many talented instructors – 11 this year – and dedicated students from far and wide is a very difficult undertaking, costing to date some \$1.1 million, or an average of \$100,000 per year. But when you see how the faculty present their subjects and how the students respond and are engaged, you know that you have made a good investment helping to

develop the next generation of genocide scholars, raising awareness of the crime of genocide, and, hopefully, in the future of genocide prevention," he concluded.

For more information, visit www.genocidestudies.org or write to admin@genocidestudies.org.

Annie Lennox to Perform at 2012 Nansen Refugee Award Program In Geneva

GENEVA (Armenpress) – Singer, songwriter, campaigner, activist and UN AIDS International Goodwill Ambassador Annie Lennox will perform at this year's United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Nansen Refugee Award ceremony being held at the at the Bâtiment des Forces Motrices on October 1 and broadcast internationally. The line-up will also include performances by classical singer and UNHCR Lifetime Goodwill Ambassador Barbara Hendricks and Swiss musician Bastian Baker. The 2011 Nobel Peace Prize Laureate Madam Leymah Gbowee is also confirmed to attend the award ceremony which will pay tribute to this year's Nansen Refugee Award laureate.

Lennox said, "I am delighted to



Singer Annie Lennox

be performing at the UNHCR Nansen Refugee Award ceremony in Geneva. We often fail to recognize the real heroes of this world. The Nansen Refugee Award is an opportunity to pay tribute to those who work tirelessly for the humanitarian cause, often unrecognized and often at great risk to their own personal safety. I welcome this opportunity to pay tribute to the unwavering humanitarian spirit embodied in this award." Hendricks, who marks 25 years as a UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador this year, said: "The Nansen Refugee Award is an opportunity for the international community to focus their attention on the plight of refugees and to encourage international assistance and cooperation. I am honored to help give a voice to the voiceless and I hope the award will inspire others to take action." TV presenter Isabelle Kumar will be the master of ceremonies for the Nansen Refugee Award ceremony on October 1. She currently hosts Euronews' flagship debate program, "On the Frontline."

International News

Turkey's Armenian Community Urges Changes To School Regulations

ISTANBUL (PanARMENIAN.Net) – The Armenian community is preparing to submit a report to the Turkish education minister, requesting certain modifications to the regulations at minority schools, *Hurriyet Daily News* reported.

In a report to Education Minister Ömer Dinçer, the Armenian community will demand the abolition of the practice of appointing Turkish deputy principals to minority schools. The report will also demand that the terms of offices of Turkish language and Turkish history teachers be determined by the schools themselves.

Karekin Barsamyan, the principal of Private Pangalti (Mihitaryan) Armenian High School in Istanbul's Nisantasi neighborhood, said they had taken steps to resolve the problems.

Barsamyan said the difference of opinions between Armenian principals and Turkish deputy principals had caused some major problems in the past. "Actually, according to the current regulations, we are able to choose our own deputy principals and teachers. We only want to legalize this regulation," he said.

Silva Kuyumcuyan, the principal of the Armenian School in Karaköy, also contributed to the report. "It is true that we are not currently experiencing the problems that we faced in past. We only demand equal citizenship," he said.

There are 14 elementary schools, five high schools and one kindergarten belonging to the Armenian community. There were 3,000 students registered in these schools during the last school year, *Hurriyet* reported.

Safarov's Extradition Casts Hungary into Domestic Turmoil

BUDAPEST, Hungary (Armenpress) – The opposition factions in the Hungarian parliament are demanding the government to present reasons for extraditing Ramil Safarov. Some have also demanded the Minister of Justice of Hungary to step down.

The chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee of the Socialist Party, former Minister of Foreign Affairs of Hungary László Kovács also demanded the Hungarian parliament have an extra session to discuss the decision of the Hungarian government to extradite Safarov to Azerbaijan.

"The members of [Prime Minister Viktor] Orban's government bear responsibility for the pressure that is being applied on Hungary by the international community," Kovács said, noting stating that the extradition of an Azerbaijani national who killed an Armenian officer had triggered huge international pressure. He also demanded that the Hungarian government present the reasons for the extradition of Safarov. Kovács, who served as the European Commissioner for Taxation and Customs Union, considers that one of the reasons for the extradition may have been the purchase of Hungarian state bonds by Azerbaijan, that's to say big money played their role.

The Hungarian Socialist Party is the biggest party in the country's parliament with 48 members in a parliament with 300 members. This left-centrist party is headed by former Prime Minister Ferenc Gyurcsány.

Austrian Ambassador Hands Credentials to Foreign Minister

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Foreign Affairs Minister of Armenia Eduard Nalbandian on August 27 hosted the newly-appointed ambassador of Austria to Armenia Alloys Kraut (based in Vienna) when he handed copies of credentials. The Armenian Foreign Affairs Ministry congratulated the guest on the occasion of holding the post and Nalbandian expressed hope that during his tenure relations between two countries will become more developed and strong.

Kraut thanked Nalbandian for the reception and assured that he would do his best for strengthening Armenian-Austrian relations.

There was also discussions of the Armenia-EU relations, international and regional issues.

Bedros Hadjian Dies in Argentina

HADJIAN, from page 1

1986 and retired as the headmaster of San Gregorio El Iluminador.

After 1986, he devoted himself to writing fiction and non-fiction books, published in Buenos Aires, Aleppo and Yerevan.

He was a frequent contributor to Armenian newspapers, such as *Haratch* in Paris, *Nor Gyank* in Los Angeles and *Sardarabad* in Buenos Aires on Armenian and Armenian-Diasporan affairs, Armenian language as well as literature and book reviews. The following are books he published: *Grandes Figuras de la Cultura Armenia, Siglos V-X* (Great Figures of the Armenian Culture, 5th-10th Centuries, Buenos Aires, 1987, in Armenian and Spanish); *Grandes Figuras de la Cultura Armenia, Siglos XI-XVI* (Great Figures of the Armenian Culture 11th to 16th Centuries, Buenos Aires, 1989, in

Armenian and Spanish); *Armenian Grammar 1, 2 and 3* (Buenos Aires, 1991, in Armenian); *Hrammetsek Baronner Badmootyun* (One Hundred Years, One Hundred Stories, Buenos Aires, 2003, in Armenian; English translation by Aris Sevag published in 2009); *Gargemish* (Aleppo, 2003, in Armenian) and *El Cinturón* (The Belt, Buenos Aires, 2005, in Spanish); *Cien Años, Cien Historias* (Buenos Aires, 2008, in Spanish, translated by Vartan Matiossian); *Janabarh Tebi Gargemish'* (The Road to Gargemish, Yerevan, 2008, in Armenian) and *Haravë Spyrki Metch* (The South in the Diaspora, Aleppo, 2008, in Armenian).

Funeral services were held on Wednesday, September 5, at St. Gregory Armenian Church, which he attended for more than 40 years. Internment followed at the Armenian Cemetery of Buenos Aires.



INTERNATIONAL

Extradition of Azeri Killer of Soldier from Budapest to Baku Touches off Firestorm

SAFAROV, from page 1

President Barack Obama said he was "deeply concerned" over the move.

"President Obama is deeply concerned by today's announcement that the president of Azerbaijan has pardoned Ramil Safarov following his return from Hungary," said National Security Council spokesman Tommy Vietor.

"We are communicating to Azerbaijani

aggression," Abdullayev said.

Armenian Foreign Minister Eduard Nalbandian in turn said "international society cannot tolerate the continuation of Azerbaijan's adventurist policy under the cover of the negotiations process."

Separately from the OSCE statement, Russia's Foreign Ministry condemned both Hungary's release of Safarov and Azerbaijan's pardon of him.

"We believe that these actions of Azerbaijani as well as Hungarian authorities contradict internationally-brokered efforts, of the OSCE's Minsk group in particular, to ease tensions in the region," the ministry said.

During his trial in Budapest, Safarov claimed that the Nagorno-Karabagh conflict was at the root of his actions and that he killed Markarian while the victim was sleeping after the Armenian repeatedly provoked

and ridiculed him.

Parliamentary Assembly Council of Europe (PACE) President Jean-Claude Mignon said, "I



The funeral of Lt. Gurgen Markarian in 2004



Protestors in Armenia burned a Hungarian flag.

authorities our disappointment about the decision to pardon Safarov," Vietor added in a statement.

"This action is contrary to ongoing efforts to reduce regional tensions and promote reconciliation. The United States is also requesting an explanation from Hungary regarding its decision to transfer Safarov to Azerbaijan."

Armenia warned Azerbaijan it was ready for war as tensions soared Monday between the ex-Soviet foes after Baku pardoned and promoted an Azerbaijani officer who axed an Armenian soldier to death.

"We don't want a war, but if we have to, we will fight and win. We are not afraid of killers, even if they enjoy the protection of the head of state," Sargsian fumed in a statement last week.

"They [Azerbaijanis] have been warned," he said, calling Azerbaijan a country where "illicit orders set free and publicly glorify every bastard who kills people only because they are Armenians." The co-chairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, the troika negotiating on Artsakh, met in Paris with the Armenian foreign minister on Sunday and his Azerbaijani counterpart on Monday.

The co-chairs "expressed their deep concern and regret for the damage the pardon and any attempts to glorify the crime have done to the peace process and trust between the sides," an OSCE statement said.

Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mamedyarov also spoke by telephone with US Deputy Secretary of State William Burns on Monday, ministry spokesman Elman Abdullayev said.

Mamedyarov "underlined that the question of Ramil Safarov must not be looked at outside the context of the fact of the occupation, because it is a consequence of this Armenian

join the international condemnation of the 'glorification' of the terrible crime which Mr. Safarov has committed, and for which he has been condemned by a court in a Council of Europe member state. His liberation is unacceptable, and I am extremely disappointed by the abusive use of a Council of Europe legal instrument in this affair. This scandalous liberation is having very negative consequences on the already-strained relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan and also risks destabilizing the situation in the region. I call on the Azeri authorities to reconsider their position, in line with the standards and the ethos of the Council of Europe."

ment's decision to release an Azeri military officer who was sentenced to life imprisonment for murdering an Armenian officer in cold blood in Budapest in 2004. The convict-



Demonstrators in Budapest apologized to the Armenian people.

"I do not want to comment on the legal proceedings, but I find it unacceptable that a convicted murderer is welcomed as a hero," Jagland said in the latest in a series of statements by European officials criticizing the pardoning of Ramil Safarov immediately after his extradition from Hungary.

"I reject the prospect of a world whose moral code begins to fray, where respect for human dignity is denied," he said. "This is not the Europe that we should wish for future generations."

"I condemn such glorification of crime, and urge that we all work to uphold the respect



Thorbjorn Jagland, the Council of Europe's secretary general

for life, and our values as defended by the Council of Europe," added the Norwegian politician.

Anger regarding the move has not only happened outside Hungary, but within it, where members of the opposition are expressing their solidarity with the Armenian people. Almost 2,000 Hungarians protested in Budapest on Tuesday against the government of Prime Minister Viktor Orban.

Protesters chanting "We are sorry, Armenia" said they doubted the government's motives, adding that whatever the reasons, the decision was unacceptable.

"Murderers should not be extradited to countries where it is clear that ethnic hate crimes are considered heroism," said protester Laszlo Muhari, 30. "In a democratic country this is not acceptable."

"Orban should stop lying and start giving clear answers, because it is simply impossible that such a brutal killer is just released without a background deal."

NATO's Secretary General Anders Fogh Rasmussen was scheduled to visit Armenia this week in the aftermath of the debacle, to meet with Nalbandian and Defense Minister Seyran Ohanian.

(Stories from Reuters, the Associated Press, Radio Free Europe, Agence France Presse and Armenpress were used in compiling this report.)



Demonstrators gathered in Sofia, Bulgaria.

Lt. Gurgen Margaryan
Born: 1978
Murdered: 2004

PROTEST Thursday 9/6/12 3:00PM
Azen & Hungarian Consulates
11766 Wilshire Blvd. Los Angeles, CA 90025

Imprisoned: 2006
Extradited: 2012
Pardoned: 2012

Ramil Safarov
Axe Murderer
(818) 507-1833

Combined groups of youth have staged protests in the US.

ed criminal was wrongfully and unjustly pardoned and set free by Azerbaijan's President immediately after arriving in Azerbaijan. I stand by our friend and ally Armenia in her ongoing quest for peace and security for her citizens. I call on the Azeri government to bring this individual to justice instead of freeing a convicted criminal. Baku's actions demonstrate a stubborn refusal to avoid threats against its neighbor."

Thorbjorn Jagland, the Council of Europe's secretary general, also condemned the move.

Community News

Yahoo Fires Bureau Chief Chalian for Romney Remark

NEW YORK (*Boston Globe*) –Yahoo News fired its Washington bureau chief late last month, less than 24 hours after he was caught on an open microphone saying that Mitt Romney and his wife, at the GOP convention in Florida while a hurricane was approaching Louisiana, were “happy to have a party with black people drowning.”

Company spokeswoman Anne Espiritu said that David Chalian’s remark was inappropriate and does not represent Yahoo’s views.

“We have already reached out to the Romney campaign and we apologize to Mitt Romney, his staff, their supporters and anyone who was offended,” she said.

Chalian made the remark while the microphone was on before Yahoo began its live coverage of the GOP convention in Tampa, Fla. Yahoo was streaming coverage in association with ABC News.



An August 28 photo released by ABC News shows Yahoo News’ Washington Bureau Chief David Chalian at the Republican National Convention in Tampa, Fla.

The website, Newsbusters, posted a copy of the video and the audio. The video showed Ann and Mitt Romney while the audio picked up background conversation, not all of it intelligible, about the GOP convention taking place as Hurricane Isaac hit the Louisiana coast.

Someone makes a remark, “they’re not concerned at all.” In a clearer voice, Chalian said, “they are happy to have a party with black people drowning.”

Birthright Armenia to Host Annual Fundraiser At Mars Gallery

CHICAGO – The Chicago Brigade of Birthright Armenia is holding its second annual fundraiser on Friday, September 14, at Mars Gallery, 1139 West Fulton Market.

The program, showcasing Armenian art and music, will take place 6:30 to 9:30 p.m. and will benefit Birthright Armenia.

Donations are \$75, with all proceeds going straight to work on covering this year’s program-related expenses of Birthright Armenia. There will be music from the Tiny Miles Band as well as hors d’oeuvres and drinks.

To reserve tickets, contact Christina Markarian at christina.markarian@lmkinc.com.



NICU nurse with a baby suffering from ROP

Armenian EyeCare Project to Host 12th International Ophthalmology Conference in Yerevan

LOS ANGELES and YEREVAN – On September 14, Dr. Roger Ohanesian will open the 12th International Ophthalmology Conference in Yerevan, by the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECF), celebrating the AECF’s 20th anniversary. Opening remarks will be delivered by John Heffern, US ambassador to Armenia, and Dr. Derenik Dumanyan, Armenia’s minister of health.

The topic of the conference will be the treatment of retinopathy of prematurity (ROP) with the introduction of a new surgical component, which can restore the sight of children when other treatments cannot. This specialized surgery is done by just six surgeons in the United States, while it is unavailable in the Caucasus.

With the support of Heffern, the AECF is fostering capacity building and cross border projects, which are in the interests of the US. The AECF is taking the lead in the exchange of experience on ROP in the region, with the establishment of their Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Childhood Blindness, as well as with their conference. The September 14, 15 international conference will allow for Armenian doctors to share their knowledge and experience with their counterparts from neighboring countries. Some of the neighboring countries that will be represented with their physicians speaking on childhood blindness include Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Moldova, Russia, Ukraine and Uzbekistan.

The AECF expects several hundred attendees at the conference, many of whom will tour Armenia’s neonatal intensive care units (NICUs) to learn how Armenia has been able to drastically cut the number of ROP cases. Those attending include a number of internationally-recognized ROP surgeons from the US and Europe who will speak about and teach the full range of ROP treatments. The goal is to exchange knowledge and experiences to reduce the number of cases of ROP, which has been a curse to premature infants throughout the world – particularly in developing countries.

In preparation for the conference, the Armenian EyeCare Project is sponsoring see EYECARE, page 9



Roger Ohanesian, MD will open the conference.

Memorial Marks General Andranik’s Death at California Hotel

CHICO, Calif. (*Chico Enterprise Record*) – Memorials all over the world – including one near this Californian city – pay tribute to a war hero and “freedom-fighter” who spent the last month of his life in Butte County.

Gen. Andranik Ozanian is revered by people of Armenian descent everywhere, said Chico State University accounting Prof. Tim Kizirian.

Probably few people know that Ozanian came to Butte County and died here, 85 years ago today.

Ozanian, who is known affectionately by Armenians as “General Andranik,” was born in 1865 in Armenia. When Ozanian was born, Armenia was part of the Ottoman Empire.

Ozanian grew up in a troubled time, Kizirian said. The Ottoman Turks were attacking and killing great numbers of Armenians. One issue was that the Armenians were Christians while the Ottoman Turks were Muslims, Kizirian said. Another was the Ottoman Turks’ increasing desperation as the empire lost land and power.

Ozanian’s fame stems from his deeds during the Armenian Genocide, Kizirian said. After the Young Turks came to power, a decision was made to rid the empire of Armenians.

The new leaders’ motto was “Turkey for the Turks,” said Kizirian, who is Armenian-American. The Genocide, which was carried out over eight years, began in the spring of 1915, when 200 members of Armenia’s “intelligentsia” – mayors, professors, priests – were publicly hanged, he said.

The next step was to gather men of “fighting age” all over Armenia, Kizirian said. They were told they were being drafted into the army. Then they were marched out of their towns and villages and were killed.

During the period, 1.5 million Armenians died, Kizirian said. Elderly men, women and even children were killed, and thousands were marched into deserts and left to die, Kizirian said. “This was our Auschwitz.”

Ozanian led guerrilla fighters, who tried to rescue as many people as they could, he said.

In one famous episode, Ozanian and his men headed for a monastery, diverting the attention of Ottoman Turkish soldiers who were about to attack an Armenian village. As the guerrillas and the soldiers fought for days, the villagers were able to flee.

It is said that when Ozanian and his men ran out of ammunition, they escaped unnoticed by draping themselves with sheets so they would blend in with the snow-covered land.

During World War I, Ozanian was named a general and put in charge of Armenian volunteer units of the Russian Army, Kizirian said. He and these volunteers took part in 20 offensives.

After the war, Ozanian went to America and raised money for Armenian refugees and orphans, Kizirian said.

The general and his wife were living in Fresno when he became ill with heart trouble. A doctor advised him to go to Richardson Springs, just north of Chico, to see if treatment in the mineral water there could help him, Kizirian said. He stayed at the Richardson Springs hotel for a month until he died of his heart ailment.

Kizirian searched local newspapers from 1927 but could find no mention of Ozanian. Then, at the county offices in Oroville, he was amazed, he said, to find the general’s death certificate. And it said, indeed, that he had died at Richardson Springs.

Kizirian said a copy he made of the certificate is now in the General Andranik Museum in Yerevan.

He added he spoke about Ozanian to the local director of Youth With a Mission, the Christian organization that now owns the Richardson Springs hotel building. The director was agreeable to having a memorial placed there in honor of Ozanian.

Since he first asked his father about the family history, he said he has become very interested in Ozanian and the Genocide.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Great Leaders of Armenian-American ADL Party Remembered:



Garabed 'Charlie' Sulahian

By Hagop Vartivarian

NEW YORK – Garabed “Charlie” Sulahian was born on December 9, 1903, the third son of Hrand Effendi Sulahian, the prominent Aintab leader. Hrand Effendi had been born in 1871 and was one of the first six students to graduate in 1888 from the Vartanian Secondary School for Boys in Aintab, whose principal was Vahan Kurkjian. In that class was also his relative, Armenak Nazar (who would become known as “Ayp” Nazar), and who would play, in future years, a major role in forming the path of young Garabed’s life.

Garabed Sulahian’s father was from one of the most respected and well-known families of Aintab, endowed with many talents. He was an influential person and a renowned orator. Hrand Effendi Sulahian was a member of the Social Democratic Hunchagian Party. One of his achievements was in 1895 when, gun in hand, he protected a major section of Aintab.

Sulahian married Levonig Nazaretian, who hailed from one of the better-known Aintab families.

In 1915 the family was deported to Aleppo, where they stayed for a short while. Garabed Sulahian’s father applied to government ministers to be transferred to Damascus; he was able to secure the permit and the family moved to Damascus. During this time, Hrand Effendi Sulahian was arrested twice and jailed, the first time in Aintab, in April 1915, and the second time on June 17 in Aleppo, where he was imprisoned for months and condemned to death. Fortunately, due to a special dispensation from Jemal Pasha, he miraculously gained release from prison and escaped the hangman’s noose.

After his release from prison, he devoted his life to the national recovery of the Armenian refugees. Following the “liberation” of Damascus from the Ottomans by the British Forces, the mandate or task of protectorate of

the refugee Armenians was given to Hrand Effendi Sulahian as its director. He was a noted “Honorary Member” of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) and was also the first Armenian member of the Syrian parliament, where he displayed his significant political wisdom and oratorical skills.

During the imprisonment of their father, the responsibility for the family, including sister, Marie Sulahian, (who would later marry Nicholas Topjian), had fallen upon Garabed Sulahian and his elder brother Kevork Sulahian. The family’s third brother, Puzant,



Then-governor of Massachusetts, Francis Sargent, welcoming Vartkes Hamazaspian, the visiting head of the Committee for Cultural Relations with Armenians Abroad, early 1970’s

had died in Aleppo in his youth as the result of an accident.

Following the war, in 1920, when they moved to Aleppo, Hrand Sulahian’s intention was to send his two sons to France to continue their education. The father’s desire was to have Garabed Sulahian pursue a career in dentistry and for Kevork Sulahian to go into medicine.

Two Brothers Come to Boston

Due to the various moves of the family and political upheavals at home, plans had to be changed. Hrand Effendi Sulahian’s close friend, Bishop Papken Guleserian (the future co-adjutor Catholicos of the See of Cilicia), suggested that the two brothers go to the United States, and they arrived in Boston on April 17, 1920. They become the houseguests of Ayp Nazar, where Guleserian also lived at the time.

Nazar proved to be a great influence on young Garabed Sulahian for his political direction and orientation. Armenak Nazar was born in Aintab in 1870. Prior to his immigration to the United States in 1910, he had been invited to teach at the national Armenian school of Aleppo for two years. After coming to Boston he took charge of *Azg*, the official weekly newspaper of the Armenian Democratic League (ADL) that had been established two years before (and which eventually, in 1922, was renamed *Baikar*). He managed the paper until 1936. In addition, together with Guleserian, in 1917-1918, he published the *Davros* weekly. Up to his death, on November 20, 1950, Nazar contributed regularly to *Baikar*. It was in such an intellectual milieu that Garabed Sulahian was surrounded from his first day in the United States.

Unfortunately, due to the Heroic Battle of Aintab which had changed the economic fortunes of his father, Garabed Sulahian and his brother were obliged to abandon larger educational dreams, and both began taking night classes in business in Boston to strengthen their intellectual capacities. Eventually, Kevork Sulahian became a self-employed certified accountant, and Garabed became a self-employed manufacturer of novelty items, at one time producing items for the noted designer, Elsa Schiaparelli. The two brothers remained close, working together in business. Kevork Sulahian unflinchingly played a valuable morally supportive role for his brother’s myriad activities.

Garabed Sulahian Joins The ADL

In 1920 Garabed Sulahian, still a young man, joined the ADL, becoming a member of the Watertown chapter. He took his “Oath of Office” from Nazar, in whose name the Watertown chapter was eventually named. Due to his speaking abilities and wisdom, Garabed Sulahian was soon elected chairman of the chapter.

Despite the fact that the “Kharperthees” were in the majority of membership, especially due to the influence of Hratch Yervant, Garabed Sulahian, supported by Guleserian and Nazar, quickly became an influential person in the party. His intellect and progressive attitude catapulted him into this leadership role.

Return to Aleppo

In 1929, Garabed Sulahian returned to Aleppo to visit his parents and stayed until 1935. During that period, he continued his national, educational and civic activities. He was elected chairman of the Cilician School Board of Trustees and greatly assisted in the progress and welfare of the school. He also was active in the AGBU and greatly helped the organization morally and financially. He was also elected to the Central Board of the ADL and carried important responsibilities.

In those days he remained in regular touch with ADL leaders both in Beirut and in Aleppo while continuing his relationship with the ADL. He had an opportunity to visit national institutions in the Middle East and to keep in touch with the leadership. The Cilician See had already moved to Antelias and Guleserian and Fr. Shahe Kasparian had gone there to assist Catholicos Sahag II in the establishment of the seminary (1930).

Back to Boston

In 1935, Garabed Sulahian returned to the US filled with new vigor and threw himself into educational, religious and party activities.

He served as chairman of the Parish Council of St. James Armenian Church of Watertown and as a Diocesan delegate. During the primacy of Archbishop Tiran Nersoyan (his close relative and once Patriarch-elect of Jerusalem), Garabed Sulahian’s engagement with the Armenian Church was intense and highly productive as he brought his service and assistance to the tasks at hand.

Finally, with his children in America and given his advancing age, in 1939, Hrand Effendi Sulahian decided to join his children in the United States.

Garabed Sulahian participated in all of the AGBU programs about which will be further elaborated on. However, the primary source of his interest had always been national politics and, through the ADL, service to it. More than once he served as the chairman of the ADL’s American-Armenian and Canadian-Armenian regional boards.

In 1960, he gave time and energy to realizing the planning and construction of the *Baikar* building in Watertown. For years, the offices of the ADL, the *Baikar* daily and the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* weekly were located on Shawmut Avenue in Boston, a section of the city that had become increasingly dangerous.

The official opening of the *Baikar* building was held on April 1, 1962 in the Cultural Hall of the Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. The editor of *Baikar* at that time was Dr. Noubar Berberian and the editor of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* was Bob Vahan. On the occasion of the official opening of the *Baikar* building, congratulatory letters were received from high-ranking clergymen and American political figures.

Garabed Sulahian headed the fundraising for the new *Baikar* building, which was completed with great success. Despite his ill health, after the fundraising, he was reelected as chairman

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COMMUNITY NEWS

of the ADL Regional Board. It is significant that in his closing remarks during the annual assembly of the ADL he said, "If I am going to depart from my *ungers* for eternity, I want that departure to be from the rampart."

He was a participant on numerous occasions at the American-Armenian and Canadian-Armenian Regional Annual Assemblies of the ADL as well as at the 13th International Assembly in Lebanon October 22-25, 1969 and remained impassioned his whole life with the fire of a party member.

He was a founding member of the Armenian Rights Council (Armenian Rights Board) and one of the leaders of the rights of Armenians and fighting for recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

It was during the 1946-1948 AGBU's fundraising campaign of \$1 million that *Unger* Charlie Sulahian, as the chairman of the American-Armenian Aintab Armenians, raised the largest sum, \$28,000.

American-Armenian Aintab Organization

This organization remained under his personal care. In 1932, due to the assassination of Archbishop Ghevont Tourian, the organization suffered a division. Once again, as chairman of the American-Armenian Aintab Organization, Garabed Sulahian took special care to reunite the two divided groups. The organization had a very honorable purpose and therefore he wanted to ensure that it would remain a unified organization without denominational or divisional separation. He was often invited by other national organizations so that they might avail themselves of his organizational capabilities and expertise.

Considering the American-Armenian Aintab Organization as the most progressive group, he always wanted to be useful to Soviet Armenia. Despite the Cold War, he tried to stay outside the perimeter of the Soviet government watchdogs and yet bring his contribution to the economic progress of the fatherland. Also, with activities for the Aintab Armenians, he had the far-sighted vision to help "Nor Aintab."

The textile factory building for which the Aintab Armenians had raised close to \$300,000 in a short time, was realized due to the hard work of Garabed Sulahian. This project meant the rejuvenation of a dream on the land of his fatherland. It was the realization of the hope for Aintab and the heroic battle that they had fought for survival.

For the fundraising, he reached out to every Aintab Armenian throughout the world. With



ADL leaders surrounding Hrach Yervant, seated center, 1920's Travelers of the Great Dream

the assistance of Nersoyan, it was possible to raise significant funds from Aintab Armenians in South America. Sulahian also contacted Aintab Armenians in California and various countries overseas, traveling personally to ensure the success of the task.

The plan for the construction of a textile factory in a suburb of Yerevan known as "Nor Aintab" was born in the 47th General Assembly of the American-Armenian Aintab Organization and was unanimously received. The new Central Committee was given the responsibility to realize the plan as soon as possible.

Garabed Sulahian was elected president of the Central Committee and despite his ill health he undertook the giant responsibility for the project. On September 21, 1975 the official opening of the textile factory took place in Nor Aintab.

The fundraising started with a 1971 December appeal along with the *Gontag* of Catholicos Vasken I, praising the Central Committee for this project. The following paragraph of the *Gontag* is significant, "Respect and blessing to heroic Aintab and its martyred individuals. To create a Fatherland is heroism. To bring a Fatherland to fruition is an act of valor."

After the successful completion of this project, the catholicos bestowed upon Garabed Sulahian the Krikor Lousavorich Medallion and a *Gontag* on October 6, 1975, with the intercession of Diocesan Primate Archbishop Torkom Manoogian (later to become Patriarch

of Jerusalem). Unfortunately, in failing health, Garabed Sulahian was unable to attend the opening of the textile factory.

During that period, he wrote to his Aintabtsi friend, Yeghia H. Dolbakian, "We heartily believe that the hope and future of our people is tied to our glorious fatherland. It is there, in the fatherland, our final destination. In our work the primary place is reserved to the building up and strengthening of the fatherland wherever and whenever we are able to do so."

Garabed Sulahian was a proud Aintabtsi. Aintab had given to the Armenian nation great religious and civic figures: Catholicos Papken Guleserian, Nersoyan, Archbishop Papken Abadian, Archbishop Norayr Bogharian, Archbishop Papken Varjabedian, Rev. Dikran Kherlopian, Rev. Yeghya Kassouny, literary figures Krikor Bogharian, Kevork Baboyan, Armenak (Ayp) Nazar, Krikor Sarafian, Levon Zenian, Yervant Babayan, Gen. Aram Karamanougian, businessmen Kalousd Agha Nazarian, Nigoghos Agha Nazaretian, Levon Nazarian, Yervant Demirjian, Haroutunian Brothers and many others. The Sulahian family itself has had in its ranks five continual generations of clergy, including Nersoyan.

Garabed Sulahian was a proud member of Freemasonry and later also became a Shriner.

Before the formation of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA), there were auxiliary committees of the Vahan Tekeyan School of Beirut, in Boston, New York and Fresno that financially

assisted the school. He would join the friends from Beirut to assist in their fundraising.

In the United States, the newly-established TCA had started to develop chapters in various cities as well as Canada. He formed a fundraising committee to secure a Tekeyan building in Montreal to be used as a youth center and played a major role in raising funds from the Boston area for this project.

He was a founding member of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and, along with Executive Director Manoog Young, worked for the teaching and establishment of centers for Armenian studies in the United States, as well as the publication of various literary works.

Family Life

Garabed Sulahian was married to Eugenie Bouchakjian, the youngest daughter of a large Bolis family, on December 18, 1938, at Holy Cross Armenian Church of New York. The couple had one daughter, Joyce. Their home in Watertown was an eclectic crossroad for individuals who reflected Garabed Sulahian's community and church activities, just as his boyhood home had been. Their daughter grew in this milieu and herself has made notable contributions to her community and church. In her professional life, she served at the United Nations in New York in administrative/organizational management positions for more than 30 years and also volunteered for many years at the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church during the primacy of Archbishop Torkom Manoogian. After retiring from the UN, Joyce Sulahian lived in Jerusalem for three years, serving in the secretariat of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem.

His niece, Artemis, is the wife of noted community benefactor Nazar Nazarian, and in her own right brings generous support and contribution to the various AGBU cultural and benevolent projects all over the world. She is also a generous supporter of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator.

Many members of the succeeding generations of this unique family remain involved to this day in important aspects of Armenian community life throughout the United States, Europe and the Middle East.

Soon after Garabed Sulahian's death, I was able to go to Boston to visit his brother, Kevork, who related to me the stories of his brother's work over the years and the many aspects of his contributions to national life.

Death and Memorial

Garabed Sulahian spent his whole life being productive and was one who never feared death. *Unger* Garabed Sulahian died on February 18, 1976, at Mount Auburn Hospital of Cambridge, where he had been admitted about a week earlier. Funeral services took place at St. James Armenian Church, the very parish where he devoted so much of his effort and commitment, and were presided over by then-Primate of the Diocese, Archbishop Torkom Manoogian, a close family friend of many decades.

A month or so later, on the occasion of the 40th day memorial, a gathering was organized by the American-Armenian Aintab Organization, with the participation of the ADL American and Canadian Regional chapters and the St. James Armenian Church, at the Sheraton Commander Hotel. The guest speakers were Nersoyan and Berberian. Also present were ADL Regional Chairman Avedis Alabiligian and Secretary Papken Megerian.

During the memorial, an educational fund was established in the name of Garabed H. Sulahian, the faithful *unger* and an individual of importance and substance to the Armenian nation.

As friends testified, Garabed Sulahian was an orator and his words were very effective and persuasive. He was expressive, charming, constructive and convincing. His speeches were impressive and he was able to guide and lead individuals toward achieving optimum solutions with wisdom. One wonders if he had inherited those talents from his father. His whole life was one of service and dedication to his people, to the fatherland and to the ADL. May his memory be eternally blessed.

(This article is part of a series on profiles of former ADL leaders. Translation from Armenian by Fr. Nersess Jebejian.)

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New York METRO

Two Sts. Tarkmanchatz Students Enjoy Fellowship at St. Nersess Seminary

By Florence Avakian

NEW ROCHELLE, N.Y. — “It was unforgettable. Our experience at St. Nersess Seminary was filled with the Armenian Christian spirit,” said 16-year old Tania Nassar. Hagop Kasparian, also 16, agreed, adding, “It was like a big Armenian family. The friendships we made with our fellow students in the summer program there will last a lifetime.”

Both Nassar and Kasparian, born in Jerusalem, are outstanding students at the Sts. Tarkmanchatz Armenian Secondary School in Jerusalem’s Armenian Patriarchate, and were

other. There were Bible studies, daily worship, lectures and discussions, as well as visits to the Armenian homes in Flushing, NY, and Emerson, NJ. The connections we made between the young people our age are strong, and unforgettable,” says Nassar. “The daily prayers in chapel made my faith stronger,” said Kasparian, adding, “the fact that we have the same culture as our Armenian friends in America is very special.” At the conclusion of the conference, one of the benefactors, Ovanes, treated them to a two-day tour of the many famed landmarks of New York City.

The Very Rev. Daniel Findikyan, dean of St. Nersess Armenian Seminary, expressed thanks to Chevia, whose “efforts for our summer conference participants have resulted in building lasting friendships with up till now 15 young Armenians who have attended. Those bonds are a small but tangible sign of our support for the ancient Armenian community of Jerusalem and its historical Patriarchate.”

Sts. Tarkmanchatz Armenian School, noted for its rigorous academics with its cadre of excellent instructors, is not only known for its Armenian program of history, culture and language, but also for its diverse studies in mathematics, history, physical and social sciences and language. Both young visitors speak, read and write four languages fluently, including Armenian, English, Arabic and Hebrew, and both plan to attend university abroad, Nassar interested in forensic chemistry and nursing, and Kasparian is favoring finance.

They both expressed their appreciation to the school’s principal, the Very Rev. Norayr Kazazian for all he has done for them and the school. “Our classes at Sts. Tarkmanchatz are like a big family, because the classes are small, we all know each other. If you

want children to be Armenian, they should attend Armenian school from a young age,” said Kasparian, who lives in the convent with his parents and older brother. Nassar, who commutes between Bethlehem and Jerusalem, where her family’s residences are, lives with her parents and a younger brother and sister.

Both students have been deeply imbued with the Armenian faith and are especially moved when they hear the choir of seminarians at the St. James Armenian Cathedral sing hymns, especially *Der Voghormia*. “Its many sounds on different levels puts me in a position with God,” said Nassar.

Kasparian points out that the cathedral, which has no electrical lights, but more than

300 oil lanterns, takes on different mystical hues and atmospheres as light filters through the windows throughout the day.

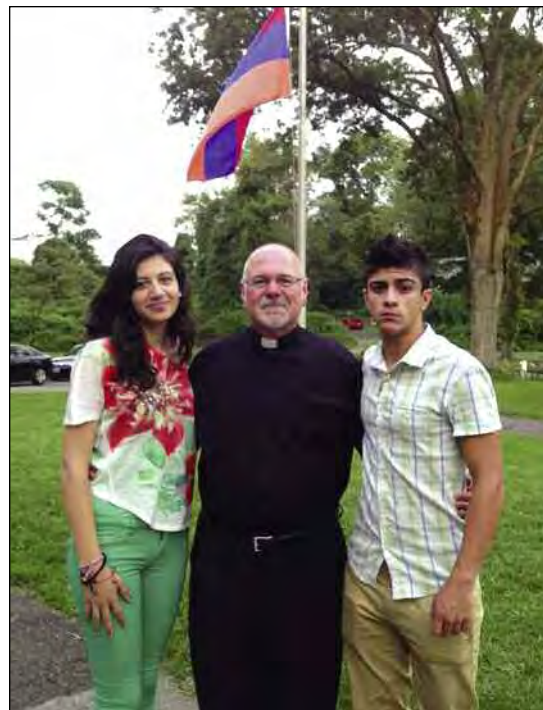
Though both students have done some traveling, they agree that life in Jerusalem is “wonderful” and life in the convent is safe despite the outside difficulties.

Kasparian, an avid soccer player, has been to Armenia five times with his Armenian soccer team. “If you want to stay Armenian, go to the homeland,” he said. “In the diaspora, it’s hard to stay Armenian. I’m a patriotic man who would love to help Armenia in any way I can.” For Nassar, this was her first visit to America. “I want to travel to all the countries of the world and learn about their cultures,” she said. “I’m

an Armenian who loves to make friends and learn new things.”

However, both students strongly emphasize that their roots are in Jerusalem. “Our families are there, and we wish to live and work there,” Nassar said. “We are Armenians, and we have to keep the Armenian community which in the past was becoming less and less, together and vibrant in Jerusalem.”

“This endeavor each year brings me a great deal of satisfaction,” said Chevia, “knowing because of it we have been able to connect young Armenian Christians of Jerusalem and America in a very special way. The benefit is definitely experienced by all of them. I thank God for the opportunity to make this happen.”



Rev. Mardiros Chevia with Tania Nassar and Hagop Kasparian

selected by the school faculty to travel to New York and attend the St. Nersess Armenian Seminary’s summer program.

This is the seventh year that this project has been in effect through benefactors, and under the direction and guidance of Rev. Mardiros Chevia, who initiated the program. Major benefactors for this year were Russell and Susan Kashian of Greenfield, Wis., and Michael Ovanes of New York. The project was also supported by Keith and Karyn Bilezerian of Wrentham, Mass., Pamela Young of Washington, DC, Glen and Kristin Dabaghian of Ramsey, NJ, and Gregory Toufayan of Upper Saddle River, NJ.

“We prayed, sang and danced every day at St. Nersess, learning from the instructors and each

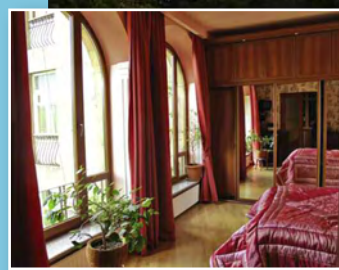
Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center In New Jersey Receives Five-Star Rating

EMERSON, N.J. — The annual meeting of the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (ANRC) took place last month, during which the current slate of officers was unanimously re-elected. In the same month, the ANRC became a five-star facility. The rating is awarded by the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services to nursing home and nursing rehabilitation centers providing an outstanding quality of care. Andy Torigan, president and chairman of the Board of Trustees, congratulated ANRC Administrator Matthew Russo and his staff for their exemplary work in bringing this honor to the ANRC.



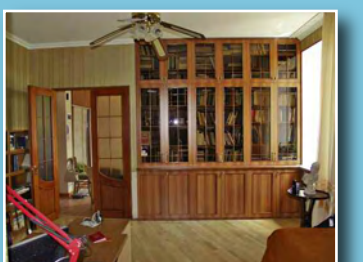
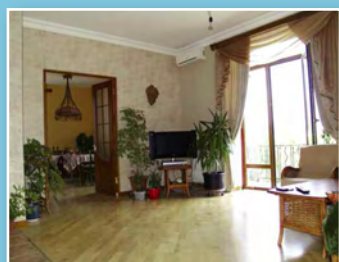
ANRC Administrator Matthew Russo gives a PowerPoint presentation.

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CLIFFSIDE, N.J. — On Friday, August 31, friends, including those from the Karabagh Committee, gathered to celebrate the birthday of Hratch Kaprielian, a New York-based benefactor. The party took place in Zara Armenian Restaurant. Kaprielian has mostly invested in benevolent and humanitarian causes. Among those attending were Andreas Roubian, Dr. Hagop Gulekjian, Hirant Gulian, Dr. Karen Kakoyan and Hagop Vartivarian.



New York METRO

French-Armenian Singer Patrick Fiori to Perform at Armenia Fund Program

NEW YORK — On September 29, French-Armenian singer Patrick Fiori (nee Chouchayan) will perform at the Armenia Fund USA 20th-anniversary gala.

Fiori was born in 1969 in Marseille, France to a Corsican mother and an Armenian father. The performance will mark the French-Armenian heart-throb's American debut.

"The buzz about Patrick Fiori, who has been taking western Europe and other international cities by storm, has already begun to gather momentum in the US," said Gala Chairperson Vesna Markarian. "Our guests should anticipate a magical evening that only a true showman like Patrick can deliver, appealing to all age groups."

"We are looking forward to Patrick's live show for three reasons," said gala committee member Khoren Bandazian, chairman of Armenia Fund USA and former event committee chairperson for the organization's 15th anniversary celebration in 2007.

"First, he's a charismatic vocalist with an instinct for connecting with his audience. Next, as a French-Armenian, he represents the 22 affiliates worldwide without whom our overall nation-building mission would be impossible. Though our own affiliate will always have special status as the first affiliate of the Hayastan All-Armenian Fund, the idea behind the organization is unifying the global diaspora around one cause — the prosperity and security of our homeland. The presence of Patrick reminds us of the international scope of our commitment."



Patrick Fiori

He concluded, "The third reason is very basic. As Armenians, we are always proud to see one of us making a positive contribution to the world at large. Patrick Fiori contributes through music and song, the international language of the human spirit."

Markarian said, "Patrick Fiori is truly versatile as an entertainer. His songs range from musical theater to soundtracks for film to contemporary pop."

Fiori took his first steps onstage as a singer at the age of 12 at the Opera de Marseille. In 1993, he was chosen to represent France at the Eurovision Song Contest with the song, *Mama Corsica*. He took fourth prize in a competition, which included contestants from 25 countries.

A few years later, he was offered the role as Phoebus in the musical production of "Notre Dame de Paris" — a role he played for three years in both France and Canada.

In 1998, he signed a contract with Sony Music and released his first album, "Prend Moi." He also lent his voice to the soundtrack of the French version of the Walt Disney animated film "Mulan" and the DreamWorks production of "The Prince of Egypt."

These successes were soon followed by the release of three other albums: "Chrysalide" (2000), "Patrick Fiori" (2002) and "Si On Chantait Plus Fort" (2005), which also generated hundreds of live performances in major concert venues.

In 2008, accompanied by the Philharmonic Orchestra of Budapest, Fiori paid tribute to the film music genre with the album, "Les Choses De La Vie," inspired by the classic song, *Les Montagnes d'Armenie*.

On the soundtrack of Henri Verneuil's film, "Mayrig," Fiori wrote his own lyrics in memory of his Armenian ancestors. The tour for this album extended to Moscow for a special concert at the Kremlin Theatre.

He has since released a new album, called "L'instinct Masculin," which ranks among the top-selling records in France. This tour will bring him to Russia, Armenia, Tunisia and other countries around the world.

The gala will be hosted by lawyer Mark Geragos. Eduard Nalbandian, foreign minister of the Republic of Armenia, will give the keynote address.

Tickets are available by invitation, or by ordering online at www.armeniafundusa.org.

EyeCare Project to Host 12th International Conference in Yerevan

EYECARE, from page 9

the education of two Armenian physicians, Tadevos Hovhannisyanyan and Levon Grigoryan, in the US. They will work with Dr. Thomas C. Lee at Children's Hospital of Los Angeles observing and learning the ROP surgical technique for advanced cases of the disease. While at Children's Hospital they will be able to observe patients with ROP in stages of pre- and post-surgery. When they return to Armenia they will speak at the conference as the lead ROP surgeons in Armenia. They will also teach their colleagues the diagnosis and treatment of ROP along with the surgical management of the most advanced cases.

The AECP began its work in Armenia in 1992 and its ROP program in 2010, in partnership with the United States Agency for International Development (USAID). Commenting on the project's accomplishments, Heffern said, "the partnership between the Armenian EyeCare Project and the US government within the Global Development Alliance is one of the best examples of private and public cooperation we have seen. The USAID-AECP Primary and Ophthalmologic Health Care Alliance has played a crucial role in the development of the National Blindness Prevention program of Armenia. As a result of its comprehensive, integrated nature and thorough implementation it has secured greater access to high quality eye services for the rural and vulnerable populations of Armenia as well as improving the general state of ophthalmology nationwide."

In the past two years, the AECP has made a great deal of progress in developing its ROP program, and with the introduction of the specialized surgical procedure it will deliver the full complement of ROP treatments. Treating ROP can be done rather simply with trained physicians, the right equipment and public education. With these components in place there is the opportunity to eliminate infant blindness from ROP and at the same time diagnose and treat a number of other childhood eye diseases that cause childhood blindness and low vision.

The project has trained Armenian pediatric ophthalmologists in screening and diagnostic techniques to prevent blindness in ROP using a RetCam, an instrument, donated by Luther Khachigian, that takes photographs of the infant's eyes. Armenian doctors perform their own exams and then take pictures with the RetCam that are viewed remotely by a team of doctors at Children's Hospital Los Angeles via the Internet.

ROP is a potentially blinding disease, which in the United States affects several thousand premature infants each year. It was unknown prior to 1942 because premature infants did not survive long enough to show the effects of ROP. While improvements in the medical care of the smallest premature infants have been made, the rate and severity of ROP have also increased. Now that the health care infrastructure is advancing, doctors in developing countries are beginning to see this disease that the US first encountered in the early 1950s; an epidemic of ROP left an estimated 7,000 children blind in one year alone.

ROP affects children typically born less than 30 weeks of gestation and can lead to the accumulation of scar tissue in the eye that results in a severe retinal detachment and blindness. In the United States, approximately 60 percent of children in the NICU will go on to develop some degree of ROP and 10 percent will progress to the advanced form. Untreated, half of the children with the advanced form will go on to develop irreversible blindness. The treatment for ROP is a non-invasive laser therapy that can be performed at the child's bedside in as little as 30 minutes. The overall success rate is 90 percent, although in the most aggressive form of ROP, the success rate falls to 50 to 70 percent. In those cases where laser is not enough to halt the progression of the disease, surgery may be necessary to physically remove the residual scar tissue that remains and tugs on the retina.

20 YEARS 12
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Armenia Fund USA

Arts & Living

Music and Rocket Science Come Together to Greet Endeavour at LAX

LOS ANGELES – More than 30 artists from the Open Music Society Foundation (OMSF) will perform during the arrival ceremony of Space Shuttle Endeavour, an invitation-only event, which will be held at Los Angeles International Airport (LAX) on September 20.

Endeavour, which completed its last mission in 2011, will be flown on the back of a modified Boeing 747 from Florida's Kennedy Space Center to LAX. It will remain at the airport a few weeks before being transferred to the California Science Center, which was named by NASA as the new home of the shuttle.

A Los Angeles-based arts organization, the OMSF has been working closely with the California Science Center Foundation to design an integrated artistic program for the shuttle's arrival ceremony. Components of the program will be performed at various stages of the event, which will include appearances by dignitaries, the dramatic landing and taxiing of Endeavour and rolling of the red carpet to welcome the storied spacecraft. The ceremony will take place at a United Airlines hangar.

"Imagine being part of such an extraordinary celebration," said Aram Gharabekian, OMSF's artistic director and conductor. "The arrival ceremony will engage the entire Greater Los Angeles community, like a large, united family paying homage to an American scientific icon, through an event we will experience only once in our lifetime."

"I feel privileged to be surrounded with so many talented professionals who make up our team," Gharabekian said. "And it has been a joy working with the California Science Center team, led by President and CEO Jeff Rudolph, whose vision, enthusiasm and support have been a source of inspiration."

Gharabekian also spoke of the daunting task of mounting artistic performances in an industrial environment. "We were faced with three main challenges: the excessive noise level of LAX, one of the nation's busiest airports; the absence of a performance stage inside the



The OMSF team, from left: Arsine Shirvanian, Alina Koutnouyan, Varand Gourjian, Aida Amirkhanian, Aram Gharabekian, Raffi Ganoumian, Keith Dixon and Mark Mardoyan

hangar and the lack of natural acoustics in the structure," he said. "We had to be creative in an unorthodox manner to overcome these challenges. Thanks to the resourcefulness and guidance of our production team, we designed performances which will take place in 'virtual' and 'mobile' spaces inside and outside the hangar, with minimal noise interference from plane take-offs and landings."

Apart from Gharabekian, the OMSF artistic team includes Aida Amirkhanian. A dancer, choreographer, theater director and Iyengar yoga instructor, Amirkhanian has performed and collaborated with several world-renowned companies, among them Maurice Béjart's Ballet du XXème Siècle, the Human Veins Dance Theatre, the Canberra Dance Theatre and the Jigsaw Theatre Company. Amirkhanian has performed around the world, including at Covent Garden in London, Théâtre des Champs-Élysées in Paris, the Odeon of Herodes Atticus in Athens and the Teatro Colon in Buenos Aires.

see MUSIC, page 12



Residents letting loose their "notes of hope" in balloons

Greetings from The Homeland

I have lost count, but it is well over a dozen trips since Armenia gained independence in 1991. Upon each visit I encounter fresh experiences and gain greater understanding and knowledge of my ancestral homeland. I am privileged to share them. This visit took place in June and July 2012.

Return to Jrvezh

Instead of attending liturgy in Echmiadzin, we took a 20-minute cab ride to Jrvezh. It is a charming town on the outskirts of Yerevan. Believe it or not, this has been the first time in Yerevan that we have worshipped among the local people outside of Echmiadzin. I had visited Jrvezh in 2005, but had not attended liturgy; thus I kept a promise to myself to return. Since there are many miles separating us, my reflections, I hope, will inspire you. Armenians are returning to the fullness of their religious heritage and effectively erasing the negative

By Ruth Bedevian

results of Soviet suppression of religion.

Earlier arrivals have filled the front pews of Sourp Catholicate, but the faithful still keep coming – by public buses and vans, private cars and by foot. The community spans age groups as there are aging grandparents, middle-aged men and women, teenagers and young married couples holding their toddlers' hands, as well as several fathers carry their sleeping newborns in their arms. They are eagerly congregating at the doors of Sourp Catholicate, and exactly at 11 a.m. the liturgy begins. A distinct variation for a visitor from the US, the liturgy begins with the general confession.

We find seating in the few pews at the entrance, but multitudes stand in front of us throughout the morning's worship. Not used to covering my head, I am embarrassed as I observe every woman's head is covered with a scarf. Understanding that I am a foreign visitor, the lady sitting next to me hospitably covers my head with her own scarf and then opens the palm of her hand, offering me incense. As Father Guregh, deacons and acolytes approach during the procession, there is a gentle urgency among the faithful to kiss the cross. Others place the incense in the bag the deacon is carrying, and I follow the custom and place my borrowed treasure along with many who are also placing their written prayer notes.

see HOMELAND, page 11



Sourp Catholicate, in Jrvezh, Armenia, during the Soviet Era, was used as a warehouse.

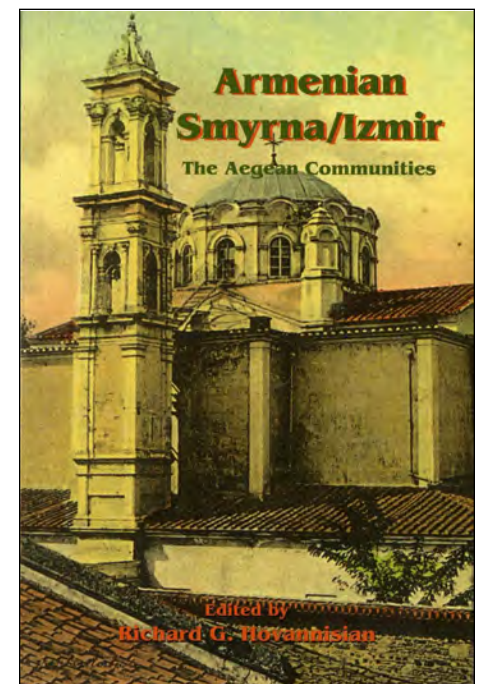
Richard Hovannisian To Speak about Smyrna Catastrophe On 90th Anniversary

BELMONT, Mass. – The First Armenian Church of Belmont, the Charles K. and Elisabeth M. Kenosian Chair in Modern Armenian History and Literature at Boston University and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will sponsor the illustrated lecture, "The Smyrna Catastrophe, 1922-2012," by Prof. Richard G. Hovannisian, on Friday, September 28, at 8 p.m. at the Nahigian Fellowship Hall at First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave.

Prof. Simon Payaslian, who holds the Kenosian Chair at Boston University, will provide an introduction.

This year marks the 90th anniversary of the Smyrna Catastrophe when much of the city, the second largest in the Ottoman Empire, was destroyed by fire during the final phase of the Greco-Turkish War. The calamity marked the end of a strong Christian presence in the historic Aegean coastal regions and turned hundreds of thousands of Greeks and Armenians into refugees.

In this illustrated lecture, Hovannisian will discuss the important role of Smyrna (Izmir) in modern Armenian history and the inferno that engulfed the city in September 1922. Hovannisian is the editor of the recently pub-



Cover of *Armenian Smyrna/Izmir*, edited by Richard Hovannisian

lished *Armenian Smyrna/Izmir*, the 11th volume of proceedings from the UCLA conference series, "Historic Armenian Cities and Provinces." He also traveled to Izmir and environs in June as the historian-guide for a NAASR Armenian Heritage Tour led by Armen Aroyan.

A book signing of *Armenian Smyrna/Izmir* will immediately follow the lecture. There will be a reception and refreshments at the NAASR center, across the street from First Armenian Church. The lecture and reception are free and open to the public.

Hovannisian is the author of *Armenia on the Road to Independence*, the four-volume history of the Republic of Armenia, and has edited and contributed to more than 25 books including: *The Armenian Genocide in Perspective*; *The Armenian People from Ancient to Modern Times*; *Remembrance and Denial*; *Looking Backward, Moving Forward* and *The Armenian Genocide: Cultural and Ethical Legacies*. Hovannisian is professor of Armenian and Near Eastern history at UCLA and is the chancellor fellow in the Department of History and the Rodgers Center for Holocaust Education at Chapman University for fall 2012.



ARTS & LIVING

Greetings from the Homeland

HOMELAND, from page 10

The multitudes obscure our view of the choir, but voices rise robustly. They are familiar to me, as I have listened often to the CD that Father Guregh had managed to record a few years prior. It is a holy scene as they touch the stone flooring, kiss the three fingers of their right hands and make the sign of the cross.

The Kiss of Peace is an exhilarating medley of joy, affection, fellowship and welcome. I am caught up in it and spontaneously offer the traditional greeting to my neighbors while physically embracing them as they embrace me and one another.

The hour for Holy Communion arrives and Father Guregh gently but firmly instructs us: "You must be baptized. You must truly believe this is the body and blood of Jesus Christ, Our Lord. You must have peace in your family life and with your neighbor to be worthy to participate. It takes almost one hour for Father Guregh to give Communion."

Just imagine. This church was used as a storage building during 70 years of Soviet rule.

AUA Graduation on 20th Anniversary

How privileged we are to have been invited to the graduation ceremonies of the American University of Armenia (AUA). It is hard to put into words the pride I felt to be part of a global family that is helping our ancestral homeland stand up tall after centuries of domination and near annihilation a century ago. Armenia is beginning to smile again.

More than 170 graduate degrees were awarded in seven disciplines. What jubilation we witnessed as the mortarboards soared into the air at the finale of the ceremonies! Hope arose in me, as I am sure it did in others, that these young people – all bi-lingual and many tri- or quadri-lingual – will soon render their talents and education for the betterment of life in Armenia and on the world's stage.

There were two graduation speakers – a young man spoke in English and a young woman who spoke in Armenian. Both put forth stirring messages of hope for a brighter Armenia. Gratitude filled me for the founders of AUA and their vision.



On the 20th anniversary of AUA, a graduation ceremony takes place.

I am awed by the progress in 20 short years. No eligible student will be turned down for lack of funds. Starting in 2013, AUA will offer undergraduate degrees. For more information, visit the AUA website at: <http://www.aua.am/>.

A Glimpse at Komitas at Charents Museum

Would I not attempt a visit to a museum? Today Gohar joined me and we walked across Republic Square and entered through the large arch to the Charents Museum of Literature and Arts. Established during the Soviet Era (1954) as a museum, it has grown into an impressive research center, where the archives of more than 600 Armenian authors, playwrights and musicians are presently housed. By 1967 the name was officially changed to honor the brilliant poet, Yeghishe Charents, who died in prison under mysterious circumstances during the Stalin purges of the late 1930s.

We were greeted by David Petrossian who is the manager of the Scientific Exhibition Department. He explained that drafts and origi-

nal writings are preserved in the institution for researchers.

Many photographs, posters, theatrical costumes and props and some personal artifacts of these artists are also owned by the museum. "The Matenadaran," he clarified for us, "is the archival institution of manuscripts dated through the 18th century whereas the Charents Museum of Literature and Art covers the 19th century to modern day." The oldest book in its possession, however, is dated 1513.

He cordially invited us into the exhibition hall which is used for events and this is where we encountered a wonderful treat – the artifacts of Komitas Vartabed. The personal piano of Komitas Vartabed was the focal point of the room, a gift from Alexander Mantashian, the great philanthropist. His biography deserves full attention for another day. Mantashian's vision and generosity supported the education of Komitas and many other worthy contributors to Armenian cultural life. On occasion the piano is played for very special events. Petrossian generously allowed me to take photos to share. I am awed to think that this treasure is but walking distance across Republic Square from the Marriott and in countless visits to Yerevan, I had missed its existence. I hope that you will visit and see for yourselves someday.



A gift of a grand piano to Komitas Vartabed from Alexander Mantashian, philanthropist, is housed at the Charents Museum.

Nakashian Children's Support Center and Mer Hoos

The Mer Hoos (Our Hope/House of Hope) group is here from California. Lynn Nakashian came down from Vanadzor to be with the group. She is working with a Fuller House group from Minnesota. She is also a member of the Mer Hoos Advisory Board.

I am very happy that my husband, Sarkis, and I are present for the dedication of the building that Lynn Nakashian's parents and uncle, John and Arpine Nakashian and Jack Nakashian, of Fair Lawn, NJ, donated to the Holy See of Echmiadzin. With this gift they have memorialized their parents who were orphaned during the Genocide. It will provide a healthy home environment for Armenia's disadvantaged young women.

Before the traditional home blessing took place, Lynn Nakashian remembered her late parents and uncle for their vision and honored them. She also thanked Karekin II for supporting the Mer Hoos program which the Western Diocese of the US created. Its mission is to provide teen-aged girls advanced levels of training and education in languages, life and social skills, the arts and other areas to augment their basic state-provided education. Unfortunately, teenage girls who age-out of their orphanages are vulnerable to homelessness and human trafficking. Mer Hoos' mission is to provide training and transition for the girls to enter mainstream living to avoid such pitfalls. Adrienne Krikorian chairs the Board of Directors of Mer Hoos, while her full-time job is as an administrative judge in the area of special education in the state of California. She said to the initial 20 residents and more than 120 invited guests, "You can be a doctor, lawyer, teacher – anything you dream. Our hope is that with your hard work and commitment and our support, you will receive the foundation at Mer Hoos to achieve your dreams."

The Arabkir Youth Center is right next door, thus the girls will have opportunities to develop their talents in an array of skills. Most importantly, because Mer Hoos and the Youth Centers are under the supervision of the Holy See, the girls will benefit from spiritual support and religious education. Several representatives from international support organizations with bases in Armenia like the United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), World Vision, Project Harmony International and the US Peace Corps, attended the dedication because they are partnering with Mer Hoos.

Bishop Moushegh Babayan, liaison of the Mother See to Mer Hoos, presided over the traditional house blessing and Very Rev. Komitas Vardapet Hovnanyan, spiritual head of the Holy Mother See's youth centers, was also present. Afterwards, we enjoyed a tour of the home and a buffet dinner. The evening climaxed with the Mer Hoos girls writing their wishes and dreams on paper angels, tying them to balloons and releasing them into the heavens! It was an outward and visible sign of everyone's inward hopes. For more information, visit <http://www.merhoos.org/html/about.html>.

(This article was originally published at the Armenian News Network/Groong. Ruth Bedevian writes brief biographies on Armenian authors and museums. Several of her articles have appeared in Diaspora communities abroad. She lives in New Jersey with her husband, Sarkis, and delights in her four grandchildren in between her frequent travels to Armenia where the couple has built the St. Gregory of Narek Mother Cathedral and Youth Center in Vanadzor, Armenia.)

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ARTS & LIVING

Evils of the World Explores Aspect of Genocide

DETROIT – MAG and Associates have published George Mouradian's latest book, *Evils of the World*, a historic account of a young fedayee who fought the Ottoman Turks during World War I then came to America after the war. The story starts with the defense of Shabin Karahissar and the typical life of a freedom fighter and extends to his life in America. The evils of power, religion, war, money and their adjunct malevolences are discussed throughout the book and how individuals and families are affected by their tribulations and the causes of their hardships. The book covers the life of new immigrants and the lives of Armenian and American citizens through the Great Depression, World War

II, the period after the war to the present and the problems that beset most people.

The book was written primarily to portray the evils in the world and how they have affected mankind and what ordinary citizens can do about them. Mouradian discusses who were/are the perpetrators of these immoralities and what has been done to them.

The book elaborates on the financial misgivings of corrupt investment bankers and Wall Street gurus, how politicians foul-up, how the Christian and Muslim religions are in conflict with each other and how the power of individuals and organizations work their ugly and sinister methods. The nar-

rations continue through trials and misfortunes of the American public and what it can do to protect itself from evils.

Evils of the World is a continuation of other books Mouradian has written on Armenian subjects such as Armenian InfoText, a mini-encyclopedia; *Never to Die: A Historical Novel About Armenia* and *the Quest for Noah's Ark; Your Journey Into Armenia* and *Notable Armenian Sayings and Family Relations* in addition to two engineering texts. All of the books have received exceptional reviews. *Evils of the World* is available through www.Amazon.com.

Music and Rocket Science Come Together to Greet Endeavour at LAX

MUSIC, from page 10

Alina Koutnouyan, the foundation's chief operating officer and executive producer, heads the production team. "We are fortunate to be collaborating with some of the best talent in the business," Koutnouyan said. "Our production and artistic teams have come up with some wonderful solutions to overcome the logistical difficulties of performing at an airport, within the limited time frame of the arrival ceremony. We are equally privileged to have a skilled Board Task Force, which has taken on the challenge of raising funds in a very short span, aiming to assist the California Science Center in organizing Endeavour's arrival ceremony."

Members of the production team include producer Keith Dixon, live-television director Mark Mardoyan, production director Raffi Ganoumian and event designer Arsine Shirvanian.

Dixon has executive-produced scores of corporate events throughout the globe, produced or directed more than 3,000 corporate television productions and directed more than 400 interactive, multilingual television broadcasts.

Emmy-Award-winning Mardoyan's credits include top-rated productions such as "World Magic Awards," "Masters of Illusion," "Impossible Magic," "Heroes Among Us" and "Hollywood Christmas Parade."


Ganoumian is a highly-regarded event producer.

Shirvanian of Shirvan Design is an event designer, with a portfolio that includes numerous corporate and private occasions. Shirvanian's work has been featured in a number of international publications.

Chief Financial Officer Varand Gourjian expressed gratitude to the California Science Center.


"It has been a pleasure working with a receptive, forward-thinking institution such as the California Science Center. We have established a very trusting and mutually respectful relationship, and it's been great to witness the synergy between our teams, in creating a memorable arrival for the shuttle," he said.

On the night of October 12, the Endeavour will leave LAX, arriving the next morning at Inglewood City Hall. From there the shuttle will travel through city streets to the California Science Center – the first time a spacecraft will be transported through urban roadways. Beginning October 30, it will be on display at the California Science Center's Samuel Oschin Space Shuttle Endeavour Display Pavilion while the Samuel Oschin Air and Space Center, a new addition to the Science Center, is being built. The new wing is slated to be completed in 2017.



DIOCESE OF THE ARMENIAN CHURCH OF AMERICA (EASTERN)
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ARTS & LIVING

Young European Musicians Perform at Independent Living Center

WOBURN, Mass. — Winchester resident Ida Boodakian recently sponsored a concert at New Horizons at Choate. Boodakian, a trustee emeritus at the not-for-profit Warren Avenue retirement community, sponsored the concert as a special gift to New Horizons' residents. Raphael Lang and his brother, Ariel Lang, known as L'Archicello Duo of Paris, along with pianists Mina Beldimanescu of Romania and Alexandre Lochak of Paris, entertained the community with an afternoon of chamber music.

The Lang brothers — 22-year-old cellist Raphael and 20-year-old violinist Ariel — began learning their craft at the age of 5. Raphael Lang has been named a Leverhulme Mentor and has won numerous prizes along with the May Mukle

Competition of Virtuoso Cello. Ariel Lang has participated in master classes and recently was invited to the National Young String Quartet Weekend. Both study at the Royal Academy of Music (RAM) in London. Also a member of RAM, Beldimanescu has participated in numerous international competitions and won first prize in the National Music Competition by the Romanian Ministry of Education and Research. Lastly, 10-year-old Lochak stole the hearts of the community with his impressive musical abilities, playing the piano and accordion.

The performers were lead by Winchester native, Melissa Schneps, of Paris. Schneps is mother to the Lang Brothers and aunt to Lochak.



From left, Raphael Lang, Ida Boodakian, Mina Beldimanescu, Ariel Lang, Melissa Schneps and Alexandre Lochak in the foreground

CALENDAR

MASSACHUSETTS

SEPTEMBER 9 — Trinity Family Festival, 12-5 p.m., Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Delicious dinners; Moonwalk for kids; children and family games, starting at 1:30 p.m., Armenian music by the Greg Krikorian Ensemble. Blessing of Madagh, 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. Bring your tavloo board. For info, contact the church office, (617) 354-0632, e-mail office@htaac.org or www.htaac.org.

SEPTEMBER 20 — Ed and Mary Kazanjian present "Journey to Historic Armenia, Part II," Andover Public Library Memorial Hall, 6:30-9 p.m. Open to the public, limited seating, free admission. Co-sponsored by Knights of Vartan, Arakadz Lodge #35. Contact John Jeknavorian: (978) 557-1065.

SEPTEMBER 30 — Holy Trinity 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Reception and Banquet, following church services, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Donation for reception and banquet, \$50; RSVP deadline September 20. To make an online reservation, visit www.httac.org/banquet.

OCTOBER 13 — Sayat Nova Dance Company, North America's leading Armenian dance company, performs "Journey Through Time" presented by Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church of Worcester, 3 p.m. at North High School, 140 Harrington Way, Worcester. Tickets are \$35 and \$15 for children, 12 and under. For tickets or more info, call (508) 770-1124 or (508) 754-1039.

SEPTEMBER 30 — Holy Trinity 50th Anniversary Grand Finale Banquet, following church services, Charles and Nevert Talanian Cultural Hall, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

OCTOBER 25 — K. George and Carolann S. Najarian Endowed Lecture on Human Rights. Speaker: Ambassador Edward P. Djerejian, founding director, James A. Baker III Institute for Public Policy, Rice University and former US ambassador to Israel (1992-1994) and the Syrian Arab Republic (1988-1991). Faneuil Hall, Boston. Thursday, 7 p.m. An endowed public program of Armenian Heritage Park. Free and open to the public.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

SEPTEMBER 29 — Ararat Armenian Congregational Church of Salem NH Annual Shish Kebab Supper. 4:30 to 7 p.m. 2 Salem St., Salem.

NEW JERSEY

OCTOBER 5 — Save the date. His Eminence Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate, Diocese of Armenian Church, invites everyone to attend a tribute banquet in honor of Hrant Gulian. Details to follow.

OCTOBER 21 — Hye Doon (Armenian American Support and Educational Center), 35th Anniversary Celebration, with the participation of Akh'Tamar Dance Ensemble of the Hye Doon, Arev Armenian Folk Ensemble of Hamazkayin of Boston, Sunday, 3:45 p.m. Bergen County Academics, 200 Hackensack, NJ 07601. All net proceeds to benefit the Hovnanian Armenian School. Tickets: \$50, \$35 and \$25. For tickets, call Sonya Bekarian, (201) 315-5916; Juliyet Tabibian, (201) 233-0326; Nivart Arslan, (201) 475-0224; Maral Kalishian, (845) 729-1888; Maral Kaprielian, (201) 289-6486; Lina Bakhtiarian, (732) 299-1120; Linda Gezdir, (201) 394-6310 or the school, (201) 967-5940.

NOVEMBER 17-18 — Musical theater presentation by TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group, Yervant Odian's "Love and Laughter" (Ser yev Dzidzagh), directed by Krikor Satamian, with



On September 20, Ed and Mary Kazanjian will present "Journey to Historic Armenia, Part II," at the Andover Public Library Memorial Hall, Andover, Mass., 6:30-9 p.m. The event is free and open to the public, with limited seating. For information, call John Jeknavorian at (978) 557-1065.

more than 20 actors participating. Dwight Englewood High School, Englewood Cliffs, 8 p.m., Saturday and 4 p.m., Sunday. \$25, \$35, \$50. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.

NOVEMBER 18 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group Cast Party and tribute to Karnig Nercessian on the occasion of the 15th anniversary of the group. Special program and dinner, with Archbishop Khajag Barsamian, Primate of the Armenian Diocese of the Armenian Church, presiding. St. Thomas Armenian Church, Tenafly. Donation, \$30. For tickets, call Marie Zokian or Noushig Atamian.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 22 — "Evening Under the Stars," benefit reception and silent auction, at St. Nersess Armenian Seminary. Enjoy cocktails, hors d'oeuvres and music under an elegant candlelit tent on the scenic grounds of the seminary campus at 150 Stratton Road, New Rochelle, while reminiscing on 50 years of St. Nersess past, celebrating the present and launching an exciting future for generations to come. Donation, \$75 per person. Register at www.stnersess.edu or call (914) 636-2003. Auction items go live online September 10.

SEPTEMBER 29 — Armenia Fund's 20th Anniversary Gala, at Gotham Hall, New York City. Celebrity lawyer Mark Geragos, as master of ceremonies, entertainment by French-Armenian pop singer Patrick Fiori; keynote speaker, Eduard Nalbandian. Details to follow.

Edward and Mary Ann Kazanjian to Give Talk In Andover on Trip to Historic Armenia

ANDOVER, Mass. — In May 2010, Edward and Mary Ann Kazanjian of Belmont, traveled to Historic Armenia in the interior of Turkey. A second trip for the Kazanjians, this was a 2,000-mile journey through more than 50 cities and villages from the Black Sea to the Mediterranean.

The pilgrimage included Amasya, Marsovan, Samson, Ordu, Shabin Karahisar, Erzincan, Ucpinar, Pertek, Kharper, Kuyulu, Yeghike, Malatya, Marash, Aintab, Berejik, Jibin, Hromgla, Kilis, Antioch, Musa Dagh, Belen, Iskenderum, Tarsus, Lampron and Adana. Among the highlights of the journey was the climb to the Monastery of Abarank near Ucpinar where they saw two 16-foot-high khachkars and a visit to Hromgla, the fortress where Catholicos Nerses Shnorhali (Nerses the Graceful) wrote many of his liturgical pieces.

On Thursday, September 20, at the Andover Public Library Memorial Hall, the Kazanjians will present "Journey to Historic Armenia, Part II" consisting of 500 annotated slides with embedded videos, musical excerpts and narration of their trip.

Sponsored by the Friends of the Andover Memorial Hall Library and the Knights of Vartan Arakadz Lodge, the program is from 6:30 to 9 p.m. It is open to the public. Seating is limited and admission is free. For more information, contact John Jeknavorian, jjeknav@yaoo.com.

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COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN
Mirror-Spectator

Established 1932
An ADL Publication

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The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is published weekly, except two weeks in July, by:

Baika Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472-1509
Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES:

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

© 2011 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston, MA
and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to The Armenian Mirror-Spectator, P.O. Box 302, Watertown, MA 02471-0302

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COMMENTARY

Partners in Crime

By Edmond Y. Azadian

Armenians are rightfully outraged over the extradition of the Azeri criminal, Ramil Safarov, to Baku, where authorities accorded a hero's welcome to that convicted murderer.

Yes, Armenians all over the world are outraged, but not necessarily the rest of the civilized world, and that is cause for more outrage than the mockery that the governments of Azerbaijan and Hungary made of international law.

Outrage and anger will not solve this serious problem; a sober analysis of what happened and what we can learn from this international scandal may prove to be more constructive.

This blatantly illegal act is concurrently reverberating in three major directions: a) domestic political impact in Hungary, b) domestic political impact in Armenia and c) international ramifications.

Hungary has been a friendly nation to Armenia since historic times. Armenians settled in Hungary after the Seljuks overran the medieval Armenian capital city of Ani in the 11th century. The tide of immigration led Armenians to Crimea and then on to Transylvania, which has been part of Hungary since 1526. However, with the Treaty of Trianon in 1921, the region changed hands and Transylvania was transferred to Romania. Many Armenians moved to Budapest and those remaining in Transylvania continued to use Hungarian as their mother tongue. Armenians were well integrated in the fabric of Hungarian society, while preserving their ethnic identity. At times they were granted local autonomy, and they produced many revolutionary heroes and prominent statesmen and artists. Today, the local Armenians count between 12,000-15,000, with an additional 2,000-3,000 recent immigrants from Armenia and the Middle East.

Unlike other European nations, Hungary presently has recognized and supports the Armenian minority's self-government in the Budapest coalition, one of 13 different ethnic groups that elect their president and representative in the Hungarian parliament.

After joining the European Union, Hungary experienced a serious economic crisis which caused the collapse of the Socialist government, paving the way for the current Young Democrats, an extreme rightist party, which won a landslide election and now controls more than two-thirds of the parliament. The party, therefore, can pass any laws without seeking the support of a coalition partner. It is this government, headed by Prime Minister Viktor Orban, which has negotiated the deal with the Azerbaijani government to enact the extradition of Ramil Safarov upon the assurances of the Foreign Ministry of Azerbaijan that the convicted criminal will serve the balance of his sentence in Azerbaijan.

Since the Hungarian government has fallen on hard times, it has opted to undertake the shameful act of transferring the criminal to his native country, hoping that the Turkish government will broker a deal between the two parties, whereby the Baku government will buy Hungary's government bonds to the tune of 3 billion euros. (One can call it blood money.) This, after Hungary had failed to receive guarantees from the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to internationally market its bonds at a lower interest rate.

It is believed that Azerbaijan has not yet met its part of the deal and even if it does at this late hour, it will serve as a political bomb and blast the legitimacy of Orban's government. The opposition has taken up the Safarov case as a cause célèbre. The president of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' conference, Cardinal Peter Erdo, has issued a statement expressing "solidarity with the Armenian Christians." There is a groundswell of popular support for the Armenian side in Hungary and it looks like this rash decision by the government will boomerang and hit the government where it hurts.

Recently, Hungary's president, Pal Schmitt, resigned after having been caught plagiarizing one of his doctoral theses. Growing anger caused him to resign, thus showing a precedent in converting moral outrage into political action in Hungary.

The Safarov extradition had a different impact on the Armenian domestic political scene. As President Serge Sargsian's administration was fully engaged in the forthcoming presidential election, it did not need to deal with yet another political hot potato. That is why he has taken a resolute stand in order not to lose the momentum in the domestic political game. Upon learning about the extradition, he convened the National Security Council for an emergency meeting and announced the severing of diplomatic relations with Hungary. This must grant him some brownie points domestically, as Armenians are prone to sacrificing political realism for macho stances.

Former Prime Minister Hrant Bagratian, head of the opposition in the parliament, labeled that decision as a "wrong step."

However, it seems that the crisis may turn into a blessing in disguise, as most of the Armenians are outraged enough to support any tough action.

Many ideas and recommendations emerged as a consequence of

the scandal, most popular among them being the recognition of Artsakh as an independent nation by Armenia, although this involves a serious political risk as Azeris may use that to rekindle the hostilities. Last time around the Armenians won the Artsakh War through the acquiescence, if not the outright support of Moscow. Armenia cannot afford that risk without Russia's consent, but rumors are out that the Azeri tycoon Ilham Rahimov had kept his former classmate Vladimir Putin abreast of secret negotiations and perhaps that has been the reason for the low-key response of the Russian government to the crisis.

Armenia's second president, Robert Kocharian, has come up with another interesting idea, which makes sense if the Budapest government is in the mood to appease Armenia. He has proposed to ask Hungary to recognize Artsakh, to make amends to the Armenian side.

But above all, one political point can be promoted internationally that Armenians in Artsakh can never be ruled by Azerbaijan, given the racist nature of that government which promises the "highest level of autonomy to Armenians under Azeri rule."

As the barbaric nature of that rule has become amply visible to the international community, the theory of territorial integrity sounds hollow to any sane political observer.

Of course, the opposition in Armenia did not miss the opportunity to use the scandal to criticize the administration, blaming it by asking: were you asleep when secret negotiations were going on?

Armenia's Foreign Ministry issued a clarification that as late as week before Safarov's release, the Hungarian government had assured the Armenian side that no such deal was in the making.

The upshot is that the Azeri government duped the Hungarian government, which in turn had duped the Armenian government.

Having witnessed the mass hysteria in Azerbaijan upon Safarov's conviction, the Hungarian government was fully aware of the consequences of its action. But it went head with its decision, using the Azeri assurances as a legal fig leaf to announce to the Armenian side that Hungary "acted within the norms of the international law."

The third dimension of the crisis is the international reaction to Hungary's action. If there is anything more outrageous than Hungary's shameful act, it is the benign reaction of the international community that makes Armenians painfully aware that Armenia is isolated and does not have friends, meaning political allies who have a stake in Armenia.

Whether the present government or any other party in power could do better than what Armenia is doing now is up for debate. It boils down to the relative clout of Armenia versus Azerbaijan, in the world political scene and the cliché that Azeri oil is worth more than Armenian blood Azerbaijan understands as well as Hungary does. They have acted in full awareness of Armenia's limited options to react. What does Hungary lose when Armenia severs its diplomatic relations? Not much. Whereas Baku's actions – or reactions – may have much higher consequences.

The Organization for Security and Cooperation's Minsk Group, which has been engaged in an idle shuttle diplomacy regarding Karabagh for the last two decades, has come up with a mild statement that the Budapest-Baku extradition game may impact negatively the ongoing negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. There is no condemnation, not even a slight criticism of the monstrous legal scandal.

The European Union has kept the parity between the criminal and the victim, as usual, preaching calm not to escalate the tension. Some parliamentarians have called upon Margeret Ashton to learn some civilized conduct, before dispensing that advice to Armenia.

Russia, Armenia's strategic ally, has issued a statement through a low-ranking representative of the Foreign Ministry, while Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov has yet to utter a word on the subject. A spokesperson of Foreign Ministry, Alexander Lugashevich, made the following statement: "We believe that the actions undertaken by the Azerbaijani and Hungarian authorities contradict the internationally-agreed efforts and in the first place the actions of OSCE group to reduce the tensions in the region." No qualifications nor any reprimands were issued to the two governments involved. The president of the Russian-Armenian Congress Ara Abrahamian released a statement demanding an unequivocal condemnation from President Vladimir Putin himself.

Thus far the outrage has been directed towards Budapest and Baku, the main actors in the extradition deal. But NATO Command and the United States government, as the leader of NATO, bear a heavy responsibility.

Armenians certainly appreciated the strongly-worded condemnations released by Rep. Frank Pallone, Brad Sherman and Adam Schiff. But those are no substitute for the administration's responsibility.

The National Security Council has issued a statement expressing President Barack Obama's "deep concerns" about the extradition, which the president finds "contrary to the ongoing efforts to reduce regional tensions and promote reconciliation." The

continued on next page



COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

Hungarian/Azeri Scandal Vindicates Artsakh's Quest for Independence

Armenians worldwide are outraged by President Ilham Aliyev's pardon following the Hungarian government's release of Ramil Safarov – an axe-wielding Azeri lieutenant who hacked to death Armenian officer Gurgun Margarian in his sleep, while attending a 2004 NATO course in Budapest.

One is at a loss to decide which country should be blamed more for this scandalous and shameful affair – Hungary or Azerbaijan? Part of the blame should also go to the international community for ignoring the repeated protestations of Karabagh (Artsakh) Armenians that they never again could live under the repressive rule of Azerbaijan.

When Safarov committed his barbaric act in 2004, Azeris celebrated his cowardly crime and sang his praises. Since then, Azerbaijan had done everything possible to induce the Hungarian government to release the axe-man from prison, while Armenian officials sought to ensure that Safarov serves his life-sentence.

Hungary's leaders repeatedly assured Armenia that the Azeri prisoner would not be released, despite Azerbaijan's relentless pressures. Yet, on August 31, 2012, without any

prior notice, the Hungarian authorities broke their solemn pledge by sending Safarov to Baku.

Why this sudden turn of events? The likely explanation may be found in a brief news item released by Bloomberg a week earlier: "Azerbaijan is in talks with Hungary to buy as much as three billion euros worth of government debt.... The debt, which may be sold in Turkey at the request of Azerbaijan and denominated in Turkish lira, may be sold prior to Hungary coming to an agreement with the International Monetary Fund on a backstop.... Azerbaijan is willing to accept yields below the market rate on Hungary's debt."

Clearly, Hungary has betrayed Armenia for "30 pieces of silver" – in this instance, three billion euros (\$3.77 billion)! Such a large sum would go a long way to rescue Hungary from financial ruin, but would not save Hungarian officials from moral bankruptcy! For Hungary, Azerbaijan's oil money is more precious than Armenian blood.

To justify its sinister deed, Hungary leaked a letter dated August 15, 2012 from Vilayat Zahirov, Azerbaijan's Deputy Minister of Justice, confirming that his country would not commute Safarov's sentence after his transfer to Baku. Zahirov cited Article 57.3 of Azerbaijan's Criminal Code, assuring that a convict serving a life sentence can only be released after 25 years in prison.

Not surprisingly, Azerbaijan violated not only its commitment to Hungary, but also its own laws, when President Aliyev set Safarov free by granting him an immediate pardon upon arrival in Baku on a specially-chartered flight of Azerbaijan Airlines. The Azeri lieutenant was promoted to the rank of major, received a free apartment, eight years of back pay and a hero's welcome for the cold-blooded murder of a sleeping Armenian!

In view of the worldwide Armenian outrage at this disgraceful development, President Serge Sargsian called the National Security Council to an emergency session on

August 31, announcing Armenia's suspension of diplomatic relations and all official contacts with Hungary. He further summoned the head of Armenia's National Security Service and gave him a "special assignment!" President Sargsian then delivered a terse message to a gathering of ambassadors in Yerevan, cautioning them that Armenia's future relations with their governments would depend on their reaction to this incident! Russia and the United States responded by expressing their concern at Safarov's release and pardon, and demanding an explanation from Hungary and Azerbaijan.

Since Azerbaijan will surely reject any suggestion of incarcerating its "national hero" or returning him to Hungary to serve out his life-sentence, Armenians should embark on a series of initiatives to convince the international community that Artsakh can never accept the rule of axe-wielding murderers and their state sponsors. Armenians should take advantage of the sympathy generated by this miscarriage of justice in order to strengthen their case for Artsakh's independent statehood.

In the coming days and weeks, Armenians should step up the pressure on Hungary and Azerbaijan by holding demonstrations in front of their embassies and consulates, asking all countries as well as NATO, EU and the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) to condemn the shameful manipulation of international norms of justice by Budapest and Baku.

Armenia should immediately suspend negotiations with Azerbaijan and recognize the independence of Artsakh, urging all other countries to do likewise. When President Aliyev signed Safarov's pardon, he unwittingly affirmed Artsakh's quest for independence.

Armenians worldwide should join forces to strengthen Armenia politically, economically and militarily to forestall Azerbaijan, Turkey and all others from resorting to any future hostile action.

LETTERS

Azadian Asks US, NATO to Play Bigger Role in Punishing Azerbaijan

(The following letter by Edmond Azadian was sent to President Barack Obama.)

Dear Mr. President,

At this moment, as the presidential election campaign intensifies, understandably, an Armenia soldier's assassination cannot be ranked among your top priorities. However, the issue is not confined to the loss of a single soul, that of 26-year-old Lt. Gourgen Markarian of Armenia, who was hacked to death in his sleep by Lt. Ramil Safarov of Azerbaijan in Budapest, Hungary.

After receiving a life sentence in Hungary, Safarov was extradited to his native Azerbaijan this week, where he received a hero's welcome, was pardoned by President Aliyev, promoted to the rank of major and awarded lavishly by Azerbaijani govern-

ment, which had assured the Hungarian authorities earlier that according to the extradition terms the racist criminal would serve the balance of his term in an Azerbaijani jail.

We were reassured by the statement the White House released that you had expressed "concern" about the case and had requested clarification from the Hungarian authorities.

But, Mr. President, before reaching out to the Hungarian government, the responsibility rests at your own doorsteps, because Lt. Gourgen Markarian was enrolled in NATO-sponsored partnership for peace. Therefore, he was under the legal umbrella of NATO. The US being the leader and major partner of NATO, bears the prime responsibility to safeguard the security of

program participants in the first place.

This unjustified extradition and ensuing "license to kill" not only renders international law a mockery, but also sanctions assassination of targeted ethnic groups, as Ramil Safarov's attorney has spelled out during the trial "that killing Armenians is not a crime."

Armenian contingents have served honorably and in an exemplary fashion in Kosovo and Afghanistan, putting their lives in harm's way under NATO command, but NATO has failed to protect their colleague, Gourgen Markarian, from the murderous axe of an Azeri colleague who had enrolled in the same program.

Therefore, "concern" is not enough from distance of a third party, because the US, as the

leader of NATO, is the first party. That the Hungarian government has been guilty of underhanded practices in its shady deal concerns the Hungarian people who are genuinely outraged at this scandal.

This murder case and its subsequent extradition are charades that trample the many principles that NATO purports to advocate, such as human rights, international law and the moral high ground. Our government in the US should address these concerns if we wish other nations to respect our moral posture around the world.

Respectfully yours,

Edmond Y. Azadian

President,

Armenian Rights Council of America

Don't Defend Obama

To the Editor:

In the August 25 edition of the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Mr. Edmond Y. Azadian defends President Obama, first, by saying and I quote: "Every legislative initiative has been opposed by Republicans." But he forgot to mention that the Democrats had control of the House and The Senate for the first two years, that is how they were able to pass Obama Care, but amazingly never passed a budget so that the President can borrow and spend as much as he wanted.

Second, He hints that Mitt Romney is not an able and honest business leader. He should

have listened to former President Bill Clinton's praise of Mr. Romney.

Instead of going on and pointing to many more mistakes of Mr. Azadian, I'll just mention what we got under President Obama: \$5 trillion of new debt; over 8 percent unemployment; more dependence on foreign oil; a less respected and much weaker America and lies to us about acknowledging the Armenian Genocide.

Mr. Azadian, let's stop playing the blame game; our people deserve better.

— **Karekin Movsesian**

Paramus, NJ

Canadian Activist Sends Missive to Hungarian Ambassador

(The following letter was sent to Laszlo Pordany, Hungary's ambassador to Canada, in Ottawa.)

Dear Mr. Ambassador,

I am raising my voice of disapproval for your Government's act of negligence releasing a murderer called Ramil Safarov. A killer judged by law and serving a life sentence in your country was released and sent back to his country of origin, Azerbaijan.

A childish and a naive act of good-willingness resulted in making a hero out of a criminal. As matter of fact as per a news release, the killer on his return has been congratulated by Aliyev,

cleared of any guilt awarded over eight years' worth of salary for the time he spent in a Hungarian prison, and gifted him with an apartment.

As per another report from news.az, the Azerbaijani Defense Minister Safar Abiyev promoted Ramil Safarov from the rank of lieutenant to major, a day after the latter was extradited to Azerbaijan from Hungary and received a pardon from Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

I am full of disgust for the way your government acted.

Economic considerations and financial dealings should never be a valid cause to suppress human rights. Unfortunately, as an EU member, Hungary, which cherishes the principles of democracy and justice, supported the nasty program of justifying an Azerbaijani murderer, a fact, which is pregnant with the threat of murders on the basis of nationality and religion.

We need to see a serious effort in correcting this blunder. Your minister of justice as well as your minister of foreign affairs are to be demoted and to be brought to order.

The promoted hero "Major" Safarov is to be repatriated (if yet possible) and Azerbaijan's way of handling the issue is to be questioned.

Simple face-saving actions will not be enough.

— **Berdge Manoukian**

Armenian Rights Council of Canada
Montreal

Partners in Crime

from previous page

State Department has come up with more specific wording, finding the action "extremely troubling."

But all these statements place the US in the role of a third party, whereas the US administration and NATO are the parties bearing primary responsibility by failing to guarantee the security of Lt. Gurgun Markarian, who was enrolled in a NATO Partnerships for Peace Program at the time of his assassination. As if that failure were not

enough, the US administration and NATO officials were certainly aware of the ongoing secret negotiations over the faith of their "guests" and they could certainly nip the deal in its bud. Standing aloof and expecting clarification for other parties sounds more hypocritical than genuine concern over the fate of military personnel being trained under their jurisdiction.

Through this scandalous deal, Azerbaijan was able to prove that Armenia is isolated politically and should Baku decide to unleash a war, Armenia is on its own.

Armenia may certainly reap some political dividends from the Hungarian-Azeri scandal if

it can package the case adequately and market it in the international political arena.

If the US did not find it important to stop the deal, the Armenian government certainly could not do any better.

But Armenians must take the blame for abandoning their homeland, leaving the responsibility of defending the borders to the remaining few and then beating their breasts as patriots from a distance, from Moscow, Europe or Glendale, and occasionally, criticizing the government to cover their guilty feelings. Yes, Azerbaijan and Hungary are partners in crime and they can only be stopped at the border of Artsakh.



Hye Pointe Picnic Draws 700

HAYERHILL, Mass. — On Sunday, August 26, the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe held its annual picnic to a crowd of 700 people on the grounds of the American Legion Farm. The weather drew crowds from four different states.

The picnic began with a Jashou service on the picnic grounds followed by a requiem service in memory of departed members of the Hye Pointe Parish. Picnic attendees enjoyed meals prepared by the church's cooking crew. The Hye Pointe kheyima which is made from an old country recipe that goes back to Heusenig Kharpooot, was a popular menu item.

The Women's Guild bakery table featured traditional Armenian baked goods, which are sought after in the valley thanks to the Women's Guild's secret recipes.

Music for the event was provided by Hye Pointe's own seven-piece Jason Naroian Ensemble, with guest vocalist Haz Essegian and Mal Barsamian on saxophone. There was a surprise visit from Jay Baronian, who sang and played a few songs. The church raffle had prizes totaling \$1000, as well as gift cer-

tificates to area restaurants and boutiques. Representatives from area clergy and city government were in attendance to meet the crowd, sample the cuisine and enjoy the day.

The Parish Council had an informational table on upcoming church activities, as well as plans for the new church complex.

The picnic drew attendees from the Merrimack Valley, North Shore, Metro Boston, New Hampshire, Maine, Connecticut and even a few from New York. The picnic harks back to when picnics were held in wooded areas or parks outside of the cities. Each year the picnic attracts a larger following which can be attributed to its parishioners, as well as the pastor, Fr. Vart Gyozealian.

The picnic provided an opportunity for friends, family and Armenians in the Merrimack Valley to come together and connect for the love of their church, culture and community.

For further information on the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe, visit www.hyepointechurch.org.

— Robert Serabian



Some of the picnic attendees dance while others browse the food tables.

Calif. Rep. Rohrabacher's Proposes Plan to Partition Iran

By Touraj Daryae

From time to time it is important that one provide a teach-in to non-academics and educate those who promote wrong and harmful ideas. As a history professor I would like to teach a history lesson to Mr. Dana Rohrabacher, the honorable congressional representative of California's 46th District in Orange County where I live and work. On July 26, Rohrabacher wrote a letter to the US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton, informing her that since the "people of Azerbaijan are geographically divided and many are calling for the reunification of their homeland after nearly two centuries of foreign rule," the United States should help them reach that goal. He then goes on to say that: Russia and Persia divided the homeland of Azeris homeland in 1828, without their consent. "The Azerbaijan Republic won its independence in 1991 when the Soviet Union collapsed," continues the letter "Now it is time for the Azeris in Iran to win their freedom too." Finally, Rohrabacher states: "Aiding the legitimate aspirations of the Azeri people for independence is a worthy cause in and of itself...yet, it also poses a greater danger to the Iranian tyrants than the threat of bombing its underground nuclear research bunkers."

Obviously Mr. Rohrabacher is concerned with the immediate issues at hand in the Middle East and the interests of the US and Israel in a very twisted way, because he calls the MEK (Mojahedin Khalq Organization, an Iranian exile group on the US terrorist list), "Israel's Friends." This obviously demonstrates Mr. Rohrabacher's political stance and the influ-

ence of its supporters which is detrimental to the US policy in the Middle East. This shortsightedness and lack of knowledge about the region and its history is indeed exactly the reason for which the US has gotten involved in the Middle East (Iraq and Afghanistan), which has bankrupted us. The question is how this kind of interference in different countries and plan of dismantling nation-states, recognized by the UN would help the US? Or does it simply just help other countries in the region? Well, the short answer is that it doesn't help a bit! Last time I checked, it was the work of colonial powers in the 19th century which created and divided countries in Middle East. Even in Orange County it is taught that such ideas and actions were evil and has caused problems in the world for the past two centuries. It has been a long time since any country has thought of such colonial plans.

Mr. Rohrabacher states that the Azeri people have been divided for the past two centuries by Russia and Persia in 1828 (I wonder how much travel he has had in the Republic of Azerbaijan and Iran's province of Azarbijan to make such a claim). Just a short glance in any preparatory college world history book will make it clear that the territory he is discussing was part of Iran (known as Persia then), which was invaded by Russians in 1828 and annexed through a peace treaty. But what is important is that the territory that Imperial Russia took as part of her victory over the Persians was never called Azarbijan. It was the Soviet strongman, Stalin, who in order to meddle in Iran's affairs renamed the region of Arran (historical ancient Albania) as Azerbaijan as a thorn on the side of Iran and those allies who disagreed with the USSR, namely the US and the UK. It seems Mr. Rohrabacher is following Stalin's footsteps!

As an ancient historian I am also tempted to give Mr. Rohrabacher a history lesson about the very ancient past. The name Azarbijan (Turkified as Azerbaijan), comes from the name of the last Satrap (Persian word now existing in English, check it in any good dictionary) of the Achaemenid Persian Empire, named Aturpat, in the fourth century BCE. His family stayed on as local rulers even after Alexander the Great's conquest and hence the region became known as Azarbijan (old Persian Aturpatakan). The old Persian terms mean "Protector of Fire." This, however, is only the region south of the Aras River (Iranian Azarbijan), while to the north; Arran was named Azerbaijan by Stalin. The Republic of Azerbaijan is a 20th-century creation. Hence, there was never historically a unity or connection between the two. The region was Turkified in the Medieval period and that is just one more ethnic group among many others in the modern nation-state of Iran and

beyond.

But Mr. Rohrabacher should also be told that it was the Azaris of Iran and Arran who in fact invented modern ideas of Iranian nationalism. Akhundzadeh, known in the Republic of Azerbaijan as Akhundof, a national hero is the man who perpetuated the intellectual movement behind the idea of the greatness of Iran. Since then, many if not most Iranian statesmen and intellectuals have been of Azari background (Ayatollah Khamenei and the previous presidential candidate Mir-Hossein Mousavi are both from Iranian Azarbijan). Many of the most famous Iranian historians, linguists and scholars in modern times have also been ethnically Azari, but none have called for such a separation. I don't know why Mr. Rohrabacher and his handful of friends (Mojahedin Khalgh in Washington who are spending money trying to buy congressmen and congresswomen, along with Israel), are making such nonsensical statements. They are both incorrect and historically inaccurate.

Furthermore, the Iranian Azarbijan is not only inhabited by Turkic-speaking people, but also Kurdish people as well as the Christian Assyrian and a few remaining Armenians. Mr. Rohrabacher should read a bit on the consequence of promoting a single ethnicity in multi-ethnic areas and a nation-state such as Iran. Lessons from Kosovo and Serbia-Bosnia

Herzegovina, as well as Armenia-Azerbaijan wars among other, places have shown that such ethnic divisions leads to ethnic cleansing and horrific acts of violence. Iran has been a multi-ethnic civilization for the past 2,500 years. It is people like Mr. Rohrabacher who have fallen into the trap of Israel and the Mojahedin Khalgh who seek such divisions for their own opportunistic aims.

US involvement in the Middle East, particularly in Iran in the 20th century, with a highlight of a US-backed coup in 1953 which dethroned the only democratically-elected prime minister in that nation's history has made modern Iran as it is today. I am sure the congressman has heard of the term "blowback," meaning any shortsighted action could lead to long-term problems in the Middle East and for the US. It should be a lesson to Mr. Rohrabacher to stay out of Iranian affairs and concentrate on unemployment, the broken educational system and poverty in his own county. He is needed more here in Orange County where things are falling apart. His similar ideas about partitioning Afghanistan have made him persona non grata in that country. Let us save California, before others begin to call for its secession from the US!

(Touraj Daryae is professor of history at University of California, Irvine. This column originally appeared in Counterpunch.)

Global Report Shows Further Progress In Armenia's Competitiveness

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Armenia's economy has become slightly more competitive over the past year thanks to greater government transparency and macroeconomic stability, according to an annual global survey released on Wednesday.

Armenia ranks 82nd in the latest Global Competitiveness Index (GCI) of 144 economies of the world compiled by the Geneva-based World Economic Forum (WEF), up from 92nd place it occupied last year and 98th in 2010.

The country still lags behind of all its four neighbors, according to the WEF. Neighboring Azerbaijan and Georgia are 46th and 77th respectively in the annual rankings.

The WEF assigns each of the countries surveyed a GCI score based on a dozen "pillars of competitiveness." Those include the efficiency of public institutions and the labor market, the macroeconomic environment, financial market sophistication and the quality of public health-care and education.

Presenting the report in Yerevan, Sevak Hovannisian of the EV Consulting firm, the WEF's partner organization in Armenia, said the improvement shown by the latest report was the result of the ongoing introduction of electronic governance championed by Prime Minister Tigran Sarkisian. He also attributed it to the fact that the Armenian government has made the country's foreign debt more manageable and cut the state budget.

In Hovannisian's words, Armenia's relatively low position in the rankings reflects lingering problems in the domestic business environment. "Corruption, customs administration, a lack of judicial independence and weak state support for innovation remain serious problems," he told journalists.

Minas Avetisyan Mural in Danger Due to Negligence

GUMRI (news.am) — The Asbarez Journalists Club issued a statement recently that it had obtained a copy of a letter sent by Arman Avetisyan, president of the Minas Avetisyan Charitable Foundation, to the Shirak Regional Administration.

In the letter, Armen Avetisyan accuses the Gumri Municipality of not fulfilling all its contractual obligations regarding the restoration of Minas's mural, "Armenian Pastoral," and that the art work may be irrevocably lost as a result.

The foundation has urges the Shirak Regional Administration to intervene in order to save the mural which is considered a national treasure.