

# THE ARMENIAN Mirror-Spectator

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1918 photo of an Armenian church in Trabzon, which was used as an auction site and distribution center of confiscated Armenian belongings and property after the Armenian Genocide

## Ninth Circuit: Claims Based On Armenian Genocide Not Revived by Statute

LOS ANGELES (*Metropolitan News-Enterprise*) – Although the United States has never recognized that the Armenian Genocide occurred, the Ninth U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals has found that it did take place, in 1915-23, but on August 7 held that two 2010 lawsuits based on confiscation of property by the Ottoman Empire, now Turkey, are time-barred, despite a California statute of limitation setting a 2016 deadline for court actions.



Judge Dolly Gee

The opinion, by Circuit Judge Andrew D. Hurwitz, affirms the dismissal of suits brought by two sets of descendants of genocide victims against two Turkish national banks, seeking imposition of constructive trusts on real property that was seized and an accounting in connected with looted assets.

Also sued was the Republic of Turkey, but only the dismissal as to the banks was appealed.

That dismissal occurred in 2013, with District Court Judge Dolly Gee of the Central District of California declaring that the question of whether the genocide took place was a non-justiciable “inherently political question.” She did not determine whether the actions were timely.

see CONFISCATION, page 8

## Pashinyan Government Defends ‘Mega-Goals’

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Vice-Premier Tigran Avinyan has reaffirmed his government’s vision of Armenia’s strategic goals for the next three decades or so that were outlined by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan earlier this week.

Speaking at a rally in the Nagorno-Karabakh capital of Stepanakert on August 5, Pashinyan, in particular, said that increasing the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) 15 times should be among the “mega goals” of Armenian governments in the period until 2050. He also said that the country’s population by then should grow from today’s 3 million to 5 million.

In an interview on Friday, August 9, Avinyan said that in order to meet the GDP growth target by 2050 Armenia’s economy needs to annually grow by 9.5 percent on average, which, according to the official, is quite doable.

“If corresponding efforts are made what today seems unrealistic will become possible in the very near future,” said Avinyan.

Armenia’s economy expanded by 5.2 percent in 2018. The International Monetary Fund predicts a 4.5-percent GDP growth for Armenia this year, while the country’s Central Bank expects the Armenian economy to grow between 4.6 and 6.1 percent in 2019.

Vice-Premier Avinyan, meanwhile, expressed confidence that Armenia will be able to get on track for fulfilling the ambitious goals through reforms to be carried in the coming years.

“I think that with in-depth reforms and overall budget revisions in the next few years these existing inertial approaches will be completely changed, and in particular with the introduction of an inclusive economic growth model, with the expansion of

see GOALS, page 3

## Iranian President Invited to Attend EEU Summit In Yerevan

CHOLPON-ATA, Kyrgyzstan (RFE/RL) – Iranian President Hassan Rohani has been invited to attend a summit of a Russian-led economic grouping, which is to be held in Yerevan, Armenia, this fall.

This was announced by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan who made opening remarks at the Inter-Governmental Council of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) that took place in Cholpon-Ata, Kyrgyzstan, on Friday, August 9.

Armenia currently presides over different bodies of the organization that embraces Russia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Armenia and Kyrgyzstan and Pashinyan spoke as the chair at the meeting, presenting the results of his recent visits abroad and negotiations in the context of the EEU.

As quoted by his press office, the Armenian prime minister reported on his talks in Vietnam and Singapore. He said that he, in particular, discussed the possibility of signing a free trade agreement between the EEU and Singapore.

Yerevan is to host a session of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council to be attended by Russian President Vladimir Putin and other leaders of the post-Soviet economic grouping. Pashinyan said that Singapore’s prime minister is ready to

attend the session for signing the agreement if it is drafted by that time.

“I had the consent of the heads of all EEU member states on that,” Pashinyan said, asking his colleagues to “maximally



Iranian President Hassan Rohani

speed up” the procedures ahead of the Yerevan summit.

“In accordance with agreements with the heads of EEU-member states I also invited the president of Iran to attend the session of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council that will take place in Yerevan,” said the Armenian premier, apparently referring to his talks with the Iranian leader

see SUMMIT, page 20



## Britain Appoints Ethnic Armenian as New Ambassador to Yerevan

LONDON (RFE/RL) – The British government has appointed an ethnic Armenian diplomat as the United Kingdom’s new ambassador to Armenia.

A government statement released on Monday, August 12, said Alan Gogbashian will replace Judith Farnworth, a fellow diplomat who has served as British ambassador in Yerevan for the last four years.

Gogbashian has headed various divisions at the British Foreign Office since 2014. He was Britain’s deputy head of mission in Morocco from 2011-2014.

see AMBASSADOR, page 20

## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Armenia, Russia Send Aid to Syria

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – Armenia and Russia have jointly sent another batch of humanitarian assistance to Syria through the Russian-Armenian Humanitarian Response Center, the Ministry of Emergency Situations said in a news release on August 13.

Minister of Emergency Situations of Armenia Felix Tsolakyan personally reviewed the cargo before dispatching it.

The aid contains 52.5 tons of canned meat, 35 tons of canned fish, 40 tons of sugar, as well as dry rations weighing around 14.5 tons.

The Armenian-Russian team will deliver the cargo to representatives of the Syrian Red Crescent, which will distribute it further.

### Defense Chief Believes Soldier ‘Simply Got Lost’ in Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – An investigation is underway to find out how Artsakh Defense Army serviceman Arayik Ghazaryan ended up in Azerbaijan, Defense Minister Davit Tonoyan told reporters on Tuesday, August 13.

Tonoyan said he believes the 19-year-old serviceman just got lost.

The defense chief dismissed Azerbaijani media reports alleging the serviceman deserted his military position due to ‘inhumane treatment’ towards him as yet another Azerbaijani disinformation.

“I have an inner conviction that he has simply got lost,” the minister said.

Tonoyan said they have applied to international structures, including the International Committee of the Red Cross, to help arrange his return.

Private Arayik Ghazaryan abandoned his military position on Monday, at around 12 p.m., only to appear in Azerbaijan.

### Nazarian Appointed Portugal Ambassador

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian appointed Ambassador of Armenia to the Holy See Garen Nazarian Ambassador to Portugal (dual accreditation), the president’s office announced on August 9.

Nazarian was appointed ambassador to the Holy See by Sarkissian on December 28, 2018.

Nazarian was deputy foreign minister of Armenia (2014-2018). He was the chief Armenian Negotiator for the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement with the European Union (2015-2017) and co-chaired the Global Forum against the Crime of Genocide held in Yerevan in 2015 and 2016.

In 2009, Nazarian was appointed Armenia’s ambassador to the United Nations in New York.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## Armenia Participates in UN Forum on Children In Armed Conflicts

NEW YORK – On August 2, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the United Nations, Mher Margaryan participated in the United Nations Security Council open debate on “Children and armed conflict.”

Close to 80 delegations took part in the meeting presided by the Foreign Minister of Poland Jacek Czaputowicz. Special Representative of the Secretary-General for Children and Armed Conflict Virginia Gamba and Executive Director of UNICEF Henrietta Fore briefed on the issues of protection of children in conflict situations.

In his statement Margaryan underscored that Armenia prioritizes the protection of children’s rights and referred to the steps undertaken by Armenia to ensure safety of schools located in border regions, including creation of safe rooms and shelters in cooperation with the International Committee of Red Cross.

The ambassador drew the attention of the Council to the deliberate targeting of civilian population and infrastructure of Nagorno-Karabakh and bordering regions of Armenia, as a result of which civilians and children had been killed and injured. He emphasized that rejecting the creation of an investigative mechanism to identify cease-fire violations, which would contribute to reducing the risks to life of civilians and children, is beyond any justification.

## Jivan Avetisyan’s Film ‘Gate to Heaven’ to Premiere in October

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – The production of Jivan Avetisyan’s “Gate to Heaven” film is nearing its completion after three years. Days ago, the film authors revealed the official trailer and announced upcoming dates for the premiere. As the film’s Facebook page reports, the film will premiere in Yerevan and Stepanakert in October this year and then will be screened in Los Angeles in March, 2020.

“Gate to Heaven” centers on Robert Stenvall, a European journalist, who returns to Artsakh in 2016 to cover the April Four-Day war. During his time in Artsakh, Stenvall meets Sophia Martirosyan a young opera singer and daughter of a missing photojournalist Edgar Martirosyan whom Robert left behind in captivity in the village during the fall of Talish in 1992. The film will feature Tatiana Spivakova, Sos Janibekyan, and Naira Zakaryan in lead roles and is expected to begin production in August.

“Gate to Heaven” is a co-production of Armenia, Lithuania, Finland, and France.

## Russian-Azerbaijani-Iranian Summit Delayed

MOSCOW (Panorama.am) – A summit between the presidents of Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran, Vladimir Putin, Ilham Aliyev and Hassan Rouhani, has been postponed, Kremlin Spokesman Dmitry Peskov told reporters on Monday, August 12, according to TASS.

“The summit between the presidents of Russia, Azerbaijan and Iran, which had been scheduled for this week, was delayed due to technical reasons,” Peskov said.

The first summit in this format was held in Baku in August 2016, at the initiative of the Azerbaijani leader. The presidents focused on joint economic projects and regional security issues. After the summit, the leaders adopted a joint declaration, confirming the intention to develop trilateral cooperation. The document concerned such spheres of cooperation as joint anti-terror fight, ironing out regional conflicts, cooperation in the Caspian region, developing ties in the spheres of energy, transport and others.

The last summit between Russia, Iran and Azerbaijan was held on November 1, 2017 in Tehran. The leaders of three countries discussed a range of issues, including cooperation in the energy sphere, the Syrian settlement and cooperation in the Caspian region.



A wildfire in the Arevik nature reserve, August 12. (Photo by the Armenian Ministry of Emergency Situations.)

## Major Wildfire Rages in Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Firefighters joined by army soldiers, police officers and forestry workers battled a major wildfire in southeastern Armenia for the second consecutive day on Monday, August 12.

According to the Armenian Ministry of Emergency Situations, it erupted on Sunday afternoon in a forest several dozen kilometers north of Meghri, a small town located near the country’s border with Iran.

A ministry statement said the fire destroyed around 12 hectares of mostly wooded land belonging to the Arevik nature reserve by the time it was con-

tained on Sunday morning. It said the firefighting efforts there continued in the following hours, involving about 70 firefighters as well as 30 soldiers, 45 police officers and dozens of civilian workers. Arevik’s mountainous terrain is complicating the use of heavy equipment, added the statement.

Minister of Emergency Situations Felix Tsovakian discussed the operation with his top subordinates at an emergency meeting held on Sunday evening. They formed a special task force to deal with the emergency.

It was the most serious forest fire reported in Armenia since August 2017.

Authorities struggled at the time to extinguish fires that broke out in the Vayots Dzor province and the Khosrov forest reserve southeast of Yerevan in the space of two days.

The Khosrov blaze was particularly serious, with hundreds of hectares of woodland burned as a result. It was put out with the help of a heavy water-dropping aircraft sent by the Russian Ministry of Emergency Situations at the Armenian government’s request.

Tsovakian’s ministry has reported dozens of small-scale wildfires in various parts of the country, including Yerevan, in the last few months.

## COAF Breaks Ground for Conference Center in Lori Province

DEBET, Armenia – On August 8, COAF Conference Center groundbreaking ceremony took place in Debet community, Lori. The construction of the center was initiated by Children of Armenia Charitable Fund (COAF).

The Conference Center by COAF is one of the important infrastructures of COAF SMART Campus, along with the COAF SMART Center and the Concept Hotel.

The Center is a 1,826-sqm building with 20 guest rooms, 2 fully-equipped conference rooms, a cafeteria, a professional kitchen and a leisure and meeting room. It will host summits, conferences, corporate retreats, expositions, exhibitions and other events.

During the groundbreaking ceremony, COAF managing director Korioun Khatchadourian mentioned that one of the main objectives of the center was increasing economic development in the region of Lori and transforming it into a sought-after tourist destination.

“Another important goal is hosting young people from various regions of Armenia and all over the world. They can stay here and participate in the camps and other events organized at the COAF SMART Center,” Khatchadourian said.

Thus, the Conference Center by COAF will expand the opportunities provided by COAF SMART Campus, boosting the educational and economic progress of rural communities.

A number of prominent guests and COAF representatives attended the groundbreaking ceremony, including Lori region deputy governor Gayane Markosyan, COAF board of trustees chairman Richard Bezjian, COAF founder’s representative and senior advisor Erik Gyulazyan, COAF senior advisor Haig Boyadjian, Kanaka construction company director Hayk Hovivyan, mayor of Debet Ashot Ghazaryan, former mayor of Debet Ararat Kocharyan, architects from d’Arvestanots studio Arsen Karapetyan

and Grigor Haykazyan.

The ceremony had a lively turn-out when all the guests were offered to wield shovels to mark the territory where the Center would be constructed, after which the deputy governor Gayane Markosyan expressed hope that collaboration between COAF and

Charitable Fund (COAF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that employs community-led approaches aimed at improving the quality of life in rural Armenia, with a particular focus on children and youth. COAF’s target development areas are education, healthcare, social and economic devel-



The groundbreaking ceremony for the COAF Conference Center in Debet

regional administration would be long-lasting. “You are doing a great job by having your input into the advancement of rural communities,” she said. “The center will hopefully attract more and more visitors to Lori region.”

“And let’s not forget about the core idea of the building,” Koryun Khatchadourian added. “The construction itself might be fascinating but what’s more important is the ‘content’ that is has to offer to visitors.”

The Conference Center by COAF will be designed and constructed by d’Arvestanots architecture studio and Kanaka construction company. The construction will be completed, and the conference venue will be fully operational by the end of 2020.

The “Children of Armenia”

opment. COAF launched its programs in 2004, starting in one village and expanding to 51 villages in Armavir, Aragatsotn, Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak and Tavush regions.

Since 2015 COAF has developed and started implementing a new vision – COAF SMART Initiative. COAF SMART is designed to advance a generation across the rural world through education that will benefit individuals, societies and the environment. COAF SMART will become an exemplary model of development and will be replicated in other regions and communities throughout Armenia. The first COAF SMART Center was inaugurated on May 27, 2018 near the village of Debet, Lori Region, with an outreach to over 150,000 rural residents.



## ARMENIA

# Technovation Armenia 2019 Program Concludes with Awards

YEREVAN — Technovation Armenia 2019 held its award ceremony in June. This was the third year of this program organized in Armenia by the Women and Information Society NGO and the National Institute of Education in Armenia. It allows schoolgirls to create mobile applications addressing social issues in their communities. Since 2017, over 122 such apps have been developed by program participants, and over 242 teams from villages, towns and cities from all provinces of Armenia have participated, using the App Inventor program developed by the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT).

The underrepresentation of women in information and communications technology (ICT), especially in managerial positions and decision-making processes in

Armenia is clear. The Woman and Information Society NGO works to change that through education in all of Armenia's provinces. Its founder and president Narine Abazian declared, "We do not have the right to lose the talent of women in ICT. Women's empowerment in ICT guarantees women's financial stability, which serves the prosperity of the country." Her NGO initiated Technovation Armenia in 2017. Technovation ([www.technovation.org](http://www.technovation.org)) is the world's largest technology entrepreneurship competition for schoolgirls. Its introduc-



Participants in the Technovation Armenian 2019 ceremony

(which is one of the five schools in Armenia and Artsakh supported by the Sponsor a Teacher Program of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada) received the international grand prize for its Armenian sign language application in the category of education, and was invited to Silicon Valley to participate in the international awards ceremony.

The next year, in 2018, one of the semifinalist teams, Codice Puellis, was nominated as a winner in the Sevan Startup Summit 2018 for

teams reached the semi-final phase in Armenia. There were four winning senior teams, sponsored by the company Service Titan, and three junior teams, sponsored by Synopsys Armenia. President of Synopsys Armenia, Technovation Armenia Good Will Ambassador Yervant Zorian and the Director of Synopsys Armenia CJSC and Chair of the Executive Board of the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA) Hovik Musayelyan congratulated the teams and handed them financial awards to further develop the mobile applications. All seven teams received participation tickets to the international competition.

The acting Deputy Chief of Mission of the US Embassy in Armenia Robert Anderson greeted the participants of the ceremony and extended to them US Ambassador to Armenia Lynn M. Tracy's message and best wishes to the program participants. Furthermore, Executive Director at UEICT (Union of Employers of Information and Communication Technologies) Edward Musayelyan in his greeting speech emphasized and valued highly the hard work performed by the teams and expressed his willingness to support the teams in the future through mentorship and counselling. **Together4Armenia and Raffi Simonian**

In 2018, the Women and Information Society NGO received a grant from the

Information Society NGO online. The latter's president and founder, Narine Abazian, said that these discussions have been significant for the NGO. They led to Simonian joining the team of judges for Technovation Armenia 2019. In addition to evaluating the submission packages of the teams for the competition, he shared his experience and expertise with the teams for further development of their mobile applications.

The online discussions also laid the foundation for partnership with a large American company called Service Titan. The company was founded by American-Armenians Vahe Kuzoyan and Ara Mahdesyan and has become the world's leading all-in-one software for home service businesses.

### Partnership with Service Titan

The 2019 prizes were awarded by the head of Service Titan's Armenia office Ashot Tonoyan. He delivered a

message from his company's co-founder Vahe Kuzoyan to all the participants and highlighted the importance of the Technovation program for Armenia. Kuzoyan in his video message shared his life experiences and encouraged the girls to challenge themselves and open up the magical world of technology. He said women should have their place in the development of their communities.

As Kuzoyan said in one of his interviews, "Our roots are in Armenia and it's really important for us to not only have a presence here, but to invest in the community. Our intention is to contribute to the education of the labor force and provide opportunities so the best talent doesn't have to leave the country."

The Service Titan Armenia office expressed its readiness to mentor the teams by sharing skills and practice with Technovation Armenia participants to empower and motivate them to pursue their career in the IT sector.

Kuzoyan hopes to create an environment and culture in Armenia that is an extension of Service Titan's US operation, which provides competitive compensation and several benefits and perks to employees, and the dedication to helping people find long-lasting careers. Another goal is to help develop the Armenian tech workforce so the country does not suffer from a shortage of talent.

### Technovation Armenia 2019 supporters

Technovation Armenia 2019 was financed by



Regional Grand Prize winning team sponsored by Synopsys Armenia with President of Synopsys Armenia, Technovation Armenia Good Will Ambassador Yervant Zorian, far left, and Director of Synopsys Armenia CJSC and Chair of the Executive Board of the State Engineering University of Armenia (SEUA) Hovik Musayelyan, far right

tion to Armenia granted girls a chance to reveal their potential using MIT's online program.

Technovation Armenia produced success stories, even during the first year of the program. In 2017, the One Step Ahead girls' team from the Vahan Tekeyan School in Karbi village

the app "1 of U," which was created for children with autism. Afterwards, the team became the European Youth Award 2018 Finalist.

In Technovation Armenia 2019, 420 schoolgirls and 93 mentors were registered from all over Armenia, forming 91 teams. Of these, 51



Ashot Tonoyan of Service Titan, left, with one of the winning senior teams sponsored by Service Titan OR 5. Ashot Tonoyan of Service Titan, second from left, with one of the winning senior teams sponsored by Service Titan

European Union funded Bringing Real Impact with Diaspora and Global Engagement (Bridge4CSOs) launched by the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) to implement Technovation Armenia 2018 and became a Together4Armenia (<https://together4armenia.am/>) beneficiary.

Together4Armenia Armenian-American expert Raffi Simonian, with rich experience in Internet technology both as a programmer and a business management supervisor, has been collaborating with the Woman and

a grant from the Public Affairs Section (PAS) of the US Department of State through the US Embassy in Yerevan and supported by the Service Titan company, Synopsys Armenia Company, Union of Employers of Information and Communication Technologies, the UN Office in Armenia, Unicom Company, the American University of Armenia, Enterprise Incubator Foundation, Phymath school, Ararat bank, Volterman company and Onex company.

## Pashinyan Government Defends 'Mega-Goals'

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education and healthcare services when we will be working to develop the human capital, I am sure it can't but yield its serious results in the future," he said.

"Perhaps it won't happen in the next few years, but after that when some deep changes are made in the system of education, science, in the sphere of high technologies, healthcare, I am confident that this can't but yield some serious results," Avinyan added.

Earlier, some economists voiced skepticism over the government's vision of its future goals.

Economist Bagrat Asatryan, who served as governor of Armenia's Central Bank in 1994-1998, for instance, said that in order to expand its economy 15-fold by 2050 Armenia will need to dramatically accelerate its growth rates.

"At the current rate of growth we will at best quadruple our GDP in 30 years' time," he said.

Anticipating skeptical assessments by economists and analysts, Pashinyan stressed in his speech on August 5 that after achieving "the impossible" during the 2018 Velvet Revolution, Armenians are no longer interested in "what is possible."

"What is possible to implement is no longer interesting for us. We are interested in what everyone considers to be impossible to realize. Because the Armenian people have already realized what is impossible!" he underscored.



## ARMENIA

# Bari Mama - Supporting Disabled, Underprivileged, Abandoned Children and Mothers

*An interview with Bari Mama co-founder Marina Adulyan*

By Joseph Dagdigian

YEREVAN – Bari Mama is an organization which provides support to disabled, underprivileged, and abandoned children and their mothers. Following is a slightly edited interview with co-founder, Mrs. Marina Adulyan (MA), by Joseph Dagdigian (JD).

**JD: Please tell us about yourself, how and when you co-founded Bari Mama, and who the other co-founder is. Is Bari Mama an official Armenian NGO?**

MA: Bari Mama was launched in 2014 initially as an informal online network of mothers, and established itself as a non-profit in 2015, founded by Marina Adulyan, a professor of Greek Studies of YSU, and Inessa Muradyan, Governance Programs and Business Development Manager at the British Council. This was triggered by a case of a new-born abandoned by his biological family due to a physical disability (3 missing limbs). Support was immediately provided to the new-born and work initiated with the family. Similar cases were discovered in due course (1-2 cases week-



Children at Bari Amar Camp

ly on average) and the need for a support organization was identified. The first baby with the missing limbs was returned to its biological family within a year. Since then over 100 children have been either reunited with their families or prevented from entry into an institution.

**JD: Please indicate the programs Bari Mama conducts.**

MA: Bari Doon (Bari Tnak) started in 2015 as an inclusive children's daycare facility providing development and entertainment programs both for children with disabilities, and for other children who attended in return for a donation. Various events were organized; crafts were being made, theatre performances and competitions held, etc. All the proceeds from the donations went to the NGO's main mission of providing psychological, medical, and material support to the families of children with disabilities who faced the risk of being abandoned.

Another successful activity of Bari Tnak is Santa House, an annual Christmas project run on the premises of Bari Tnak where the theme of the activities is Christmas; it features an elves factory for crafting ornaments and handmade presents, a Santa's workshop, etc.

Challenges: During the past three years Bari Tnak faced a number of challenges which needed to be addressed. Our maintenance and overhead costs were too high, mostly due to rent. Because we were dependent on using the premises of our partners we had to change locations frequently. We needed more space for therapies and had to rely on our partners for facilities again.

It became clear that in many cases mothers want to keep their children, however they are pressured by the families (husbands, in-laws, etc), and due to financial dependency have no way of staying with their children. Space was not available to cater for the needs of mothers with newborn children, who often needed special equipment, furniture, or medical intervention.

Bari Tnak: Thus the idea of building our own Bari Tnak multifunctional facility was developed. This is a complex of two buildings, located in the town of Jrvezh. One building is primarily for the mothers of children with disabilities. The second building is for older children with disabilities who are leaving the orphanages and need a place to live.

Land for the Bari Tnak facility was bought for us by a local Paradiplomacy NGO. The first building was built through a Social Enterprise support project funded by AGBU and the EU. Also other private donations, in kind contributions from sponsors, donations from construction companies, etc as well as fundraising campaigns funded the project.

Construction of the second building has been started with the funds raised by Serj and Angela Tankian. However a significant amount is still required to complete the building.

Social Services: Bari Tnak is a social enterprise, which intends to use several

commercial components to support its sustainability as a social initiative. The social components include shelters for mothers who feel pressure, or experience violence, from their families for attempting to keep their children with disabilities. Shelters provide therapy, free rehabilitation services, and psychological support for parents and children. Various social programs for the sustainability of these parents/families includes vocational training and work placement within Bari Tnak or with corporate sponsors.

Shelter for those over 18 years of age who are leaving orphanages and have no place to go is provided. There is a long waiting list for government provided social housing. Orphanage graduates are offered vocational training to enable them to find work and become self-sufficient. A work placement program helps provide work at the Bari Tnak cafe/souvenir shop and



Two mothers with children staying at Bari Doon, physical therapist in back

provides work referrals to partners/sponsors

Commercial Activities: Our commercial fundraising components of activities include providing rental facilities for social gatherings and corporate events. The second building which is currently under construction will feature a café, craft production facilities, and a souvenir gift shop.

Clients and Staff: Currently women find out about us through word of mouth or through those doctors/nurses who informally cooperate with us.

At the moment there are four mothers with children with disabilities like Down Syndrome and Cerebral Palsy housed in Bari Tnak. This number will grow once the formal project with the Ministry of Health is launched and information is officially provided to parents and families of children with disabilities.

The government was always supportive of our activities and efforts but didn't provide any other support. Recently, however, we signed an MOU with the Ministry of Health, the Ministry of Social and Labor Issues, as well as with UNICEF in order to formalize our services and support, as well as to provide training to medical personnel and to introduce a psychological support facility in the postnatal departments.

The staff of Bari Mama serves mostly on a voluntary basis. The only paid staff members are the therapists and project coordinators, hired temporarily through specific partner funded projects

**JD: Please describe the program which takes children from poor families for a vacation at Lake Sevan.**

MA: Bari Amar Camp (aka Bari Camp) is another annual project that Bari Mama has been implementing during the last 3 years. Every summer we take children with disabilities from the orphanages, as well as other underprivileged children who are beneficiaries of our partner institutions, on an inclusive camping holiday near Lake Sevan. The locations of our partners were used. Then the Ministry of Environmental Protection granted us a private shoreline at Lake Sevan where we are currently trying to establish facilities for a convenient,

accessible, and secure camping site.

The camp has been a great opportunity for taking the children out of their gloomy routine at the orphanage where, due to mobility restraints, some of them don't even have a chance of going for a walk outside the building. For some children who have parents but still reside in the orphanage, mostly due to economic issues, it has been a good bonding exercise also resulting in some cases in the reunification of families with the establishment of some support mechanisms.

The children are 7-18 years old. They are usually accompanied by their institutional representatives, or sometimes their parents. Our volunteers and therapists also work with the children throughout their stay. Normally each group visits the camp for 7 - 10 days, and we run 2 or 3 groups every year depending on the funds raised and the weather conditions.

Currently we are building a container house, which we raised funds for through a local sponsor, the Chronimet Mining Company. In the meanwhile the children are staying in tents and sleeping bags which is an inconvenient solution for the cold and windy Sevan nights. Ideally we are looking to build a more comfortable site with fixed housing and basic conveniences. These could also be rented for a fee by tourists during times when there are no children there. This would serve as an additional source of funding for the NGO and for the camp's sustainability.

**JD: Please list the needs of Bari Mama and Bari Doon, such as financing, equipment, etc. and what organizations have helped.**

MA: The AGBU, Serj and Angela Tankian, and Chronimet foundation have supported us.

**JD: How can Diaspora Armenians help?**

MA: They can donate clothes, food, or money via paypal: meripoghosyan@gmail.com or contact us at <http://barimama.org/am/> or on Facebook, and send any amount to us. Because every dollar counts

**JD: What personal message would you like to tell the Diaspora.**

MA: Join us and help to close all the orphanages. Let children stay with their families.

## Correction

Due to an editing error, the name of a subject in an interview by Kevork Keushkerian in last week's edition of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* was misspelled. Keushkerian had interviewed Judge Armenui Amy Ashvanian. We regret the error.

## Armenia Slams Azerbaijan Over Ceasefire Violations

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) – Armenia has accused Azerbaijan of dishonoring its commitments to strengthen ceasefire after border incidents over the weekend in which at least one Armenian soldier was killed and two others were wounded.

Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Anna Naghdalyan said on Monday, July 29, that the recent violations show that authorities in Baku have shown disregard for the obligations undertaken during the two countries' leaders in Vienna, Austria, earlier this year.

"The intentional and provocative violations of

the ceasefire by Azerbaijan contradict the commitments to maintain and strengthen the ceasefire that were made at the level of the leaders of the two states at the Vienna Summit on March 29. They disregard the statement adopted by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe's (OSCE) Minsk Group Co-chairs following their June 20 meeting in Washington with the [Armenian and Azerbaijani] foreign ministers, in which the parties were urged to strictly adhere to their commitment to respect the ceasefire and refrain from provocative actions by using

snipers along the line of contact and the state border," Naghdalyan said.

The Foreign Ministry representative stressed that Yerevan condemns "the provocations that lead to human casualties and are accompanied by Azerbaijan's refusal to implement security and confidence-building measures aimed at maintaining and strengthening the ceasefire."

In a statement released by Naghdalyan stressed that Azerbaijan's actions "create a risk of increased tensions, for which the entire responsibility lies with the Azerbaijani side."



## INTERNATIONAL

# Russian Security Chief Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL/Panorama.am) – Russia's Security Council Secretary Nikolay Patrushev wrapped up on Tuesday, August 13, a two-day visit to Armenia which focused on close defense and security ties between the two countries.

Patrushev was reported to describe as “productive” his talks with his Armenian counterpart, Armen Grigoryan, when he met with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan at the end of the trip.

According to an Armenian government statement, Pashinyan and Patrushev discussed not only Russian-Armenian relations but also the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict as well as other “regional and international security developments and challenges.” The statement cited Pashinyan as saying that “strategic cooperation between Armenia and Russia is dynamically developing.”

Pashinyan also noted that it is Patrushev's first visit to Yerevan since last year's Velvet Revolution that brought down Armenia's former government.

Patrushev and Grigoryan praised the current state of bilateral military ties at their separate talks. A statement by Armenia's National Security Council said they agreed on the need to set up more Russian-Armenian defense enterprises.

They also discussed “the issue of regulating arms sales to third countries,”



Armen Grigoryan, left, with Nikolay Patrushev

the statement said without elaborating. It apparently referred to Russian arms supplies to Azerbaijan and Turkey which have raised concerns in Armenia. The current and previous Armenian governments have been particularly worried about Moscow's large-scale defense contracts with Baku.

Pashinyan condemned those deals and questioned the wisdom of Armenia's membership in the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) when he was in opposition to the former authorities in Yerevan. But after coming to power in May 2018 he has repeatedly ruled out his country's withdrawal from the CSTO and another Russian-led bloc, the Eurasian Economic Union.

Russia has long been the principle supplier of weapons and other military equip-

ment to the Armenian military. Armenia also hosts a Russian military base.

During his meeting with Patrushev, Pashinyan stressed that the strategic cooperation between Armenia and Russia is on the rise. The premier attached importance to cooperation between the Security Councils of Armenia and Russia against the background of developing Armenian-Russian strategic ties. The head of the Armenian government said joint efforts should be made to ensure regional and international security and stability.

Conveying Russian President Vladimir Putin's and Prime Minister Dmitry Medvedev's greetings to Pashinyan, Patrushev said he was happy to visit Armenia and to meet with Pashinyan and Grigoryan.

# Istanbul-Armenian Singer to Visit Armenia

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) – Istanbul-Armenian singer Maral Ayvaz, who released her first album “Maral Gibi” and her first music video, “Kusagi Yerki” (The Song of the Fortune Teller) in June, is set to arrive in Armenia in the near future to present the album to her Armenian fans.

In an interview, the singer said several concerts are planned in Armenia, but she is most excited about meeting with poet Suren Muradyan, who has written the lyrics of The Song of the Fortune Teller.

“I will be giving concerts and other performances in the homeland. My biggest dream is to be in my homeland soon and to communicate with people,” Maral said.

The singer's first album features eight traditional and modern Armenian songs with new arrangements. The album also stands out with its harmonious alignment of the modern and traditional Armenian musical instruments.

Maral says the music director of the album is Istanbul-Armenian musician Ari Hergel, who arranged seven songs of the album. One of the songs is Anverç Khavar (Eternal Darkness). The singer has written Armenian lyrics to the song Picture/Agladikça by renowned musician Ara Dinkjian.

Asked whether she performs Armenian songs in Istanbul frequently and whether she faces any difficulties while performing

those songs, she replied: “We have numerous colleges, churches, unions and choirs in Istanbul. We have many performances throughout the year, including concerts of Armenian music.”

The singer says she has started her music career at a very young age by attending the Lusavorich Choir, an Armenian church choir, which has performed numerous concerts in Yerevan. “So, yes, I sing Armenian songs very often. I am planning to perform various solo performances to present my album,” Maral says.

Meanwhile, the singer confesses it's not easy to perform Armenian music in Turkey, but it is also the case with other countries with unique local languages.

“It's quite difficult to preserve the Armenian culture and traditions and speak and create in Armenian in a foreign country. I and people like me have chosen this difficult path, striving to always hold fast to our national values and to present them to people as much as we can,” she stressed.

Speaking about the upcoming projects, Ayvaz said she is due to take part in various community concerts, as well as in a private concert marking the 90th anniversary of the Lusavorich Choir.

The singer also unveiled her plans to make another music video for another of the songs on the album and hoped to shoot the music video of one of her songs in Armenia. “As I already said, I am dreaming of performing in my homeland. With the help of God, I shall do that,” she said.

Commenting on her Armenian roots, Maral said her ancestors were from Constantinople and Sebastia, adding her paternal grandfather was the founder of Istanbul-based Kulis theater magazine, theater worker Hagop Ayvaz.

“It's a great honor to have patriotic parents who love culture. We would speak Armenian, would listen to and sing Armenian songs in my childhood home. So, I first heard and learned our wonderful language in my family. Now I continue preserving those traditions in my own little family,” she said.



Pictures of the damaged church

## Paylan to Treasure Hunters: If Only You Knew the Real Treasure Is the Church Itself

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) – Armenian MP Garo Paylan, representing the pro-Kurdish Peoples' Democratic Party (HDP), took to Twitter to comment on the attack against the historic Armenian church in Germush District of Urfa, Turkey by treasure hunters.

The MP shared the photos of the damaged church where treasure seekers have dug deep holes for gold and jewels, Ermenihaber reports.

“If only you knew that the real treasure is the church itself ... Thousands of churches in the country have been destroyed and continue to be destroyed by thieves and vandals,” Paylan said.

## International News

### Artsakh Delegates Meet With Australian Premier

SYDNEY (Armenpress) – Within the framework of the working visit to Australia, the delegation headed by Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic) Masis Mayilian met with Prime Minister of the Australian State of New South Wales Gladys Berejikian on August 1.

During the meeting, the sides exchanged views on the development of cooperation and strengthening the ties between Artsakh and the State of New South Wales, taking into account that the Parliament of New South Wales recognized the Republic of Artsakh in 2012.

The sides also touched upon issues related to the increase of the role of the Armenian Diaspora in promoting the foreign policy agenda of Artsakh. Mayilian presented the priorities of Artsakh's foreign policy and the challenges in this sphere.

Berejikian spoke of her recent visit to Armenia and the meetings she had there.

Mayilian noted that the people of Artsakh highly appreciate Berejikian's activities aimed at promoting Pan-Armenian issues and invited her to visit Artsakh.

### Georgia Suspends Diesel Imports from Azerbaijan

TBILISI (news.am) – Georgia suspends diesel imports from Azerbaijan, Georgian Public Television reported.

According to the source, the decision was announced at a seminar organized by the Georgian Association of Oil Importers.

From January 1, 2020, the use of Euro-4 diesel fuel will be banned in Georgia. From this date, only diesel meeting Euro-5 standards will be used in the country.

For this reason, diesel imports from Azerbaijan will be stopped in Georgia, while the diesel will be bought from Russia.

### Turkey Mulls Purchase Of Russia's Su-35 jets

ISTANBUL (Panorama.am) – After the United States expelled Turkey from the F-35 jet program, Ankara is mulling over Russia's offer to export Su-35 fighters to their nation, ANI news agency reported on Tuesday, August 13.

Turkey's arms procurement agencies have reportedly instructed the defense industry, the Air Force Command and other parties concerned to assess Russia's proposal, reported the Yeni Safak newspaper while citing a military source.

Positive feedback will kick-start negotiations with Russia on the issue.

No official comments about the matter have been issued yet.

In July, the US announced its decision to suspend Turkey's participation in the F-35 international program over Ankara's purchase of Russian-made S-400 air defense systems.

Shortly thereafter, Russian state corporation Rostec said it was ready to export Su-35 fighters to Turkey if requested to do so.

### Uruguay Foreign Minister Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) – Foreign Minister of Uruguay Rodolfo Nin Novoa was due to pay an official visit to Armenia on Tuesday, August 13.

On Wednesday, the foreign minister met with his Armenian counterpart Zohrab Mnatsakanyan, the Armenian Foreign Ministry's press service reported. On the sidelines of his visit, Rodolfo Nin Novoa was hosted by Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

He is also expected to meet with Health Minister Arsen Torosyan, High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Zareh Sinanyan and Yerevan Mayor Hayk Marutyan.

The minister of Uruguay visited Tsitsernakaberd Memorial Complex to pay tribute to the memory of the Armenian Genocide victims.

# Community News

## Highest-Ranking Armenian-American in US Administration to Be Keynote Speaker at Assembly Conference

WASHINGTON – The Armenian Assembly of America announced recently that Overseas Private Investment Corporation (OPIC) Acting President and Chief Executive Officer (CEO) David Bohigian will be the keynote speaker at the Assembly's National Advocacy Conference luncheon on Monday, September 16. Bohigian is the highest-ranking Armenian-American official in the current Administration, appointed by President Donald Trump.

OPIC is a self-sustaining US Government agency that helps American businesses invest in emerging markets. The US agency provides financial products such as loans and guaranties, political risk insurance, and support for investment funds, all of which help American businesses expand into emerging markets.

"Mr. Bohigian's insights on OPIC's mission and perspective from his visit to Armenia will give conference participants a better understanding of US support of economic development opportunities in Armenia in support of this young democracy," Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny stated. "The Armenian Assembly of America strongly supports US initiatives to help provide opportunities in Armenia and strengthen its economy, in addition to having a strong record in promoting US-Armenia relations, including the advancement of democracy, rule of law, and good governance."

Bohigian has served as acting president and CEO since March 2019, and was executive vice president since August 2017, when he was sworn in by the Senate. This year, Bohigian and Ivanka Trump launched OPIC's 2X Africa initiative to support investment in women in Africa. From 2002 to 2009, Bohigian held several senior positions at the US Department of Commerce under the George W. Bush administration. As the Assistant Secretary for Market Access and Compliance in the International Trade Administration, he focused on eliminating barriers to trade and investment for US companies. Prior to that, he was the Director of the Department of Commerce's Office of Policy and Strategic Planning as the lead economic and energy advisor to two Secretaries.

OPIC has a long history of supporting development in Eurasia, and was an early investor in the newly independent states in the 1990s following the fall of Communism. Today this region remains critical to American foreign policy and OPIC continues to actively support investment in the area. In 2019, OPIC implemented a project on long-term home mortgage loans to households in the Republic of Armenia with First Mortgage Company III, and is expected to have a positive developmental impact by expanding the availability of mortgages to women and low-income/rural families in Armenia.

Other OPIC projects in Armenia in the past ten years include Eurasia Foundation (2016), WBC - Ardshinbank CJSC (2016), ACBA Credit

see BOHIGIAN, page 7



Armenian Assembly of America Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, OPIC Acting President and CEO David Bohigian, and Armenian Assembly of America Co-Chair Anthony Barsamian



AECF Founder and President Dr. Roger Ohanesian overlooks an eye screening

## Hundreds Travel to Attend AECF-CHLA Medical Conference in Yerevan

LOS ANGELES/YEREVAN – Volunteer physicians from the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECF) and Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA) hit the ground running when they arrived in Armenia for the AECF's Medical Mission in July.

During the two-week trip, AECF Founder and President Dr. Roger V. Ohanesian, CHLA Vision Center Director Dr. Thomas Lee, Orange County Glaucoma Physician Dr. Richard Hill and other traveling ophthalmologists from the US spent their time training local physicians and medical staff by seeing patients and discussing difficult cases as well as overseeing the several programs put in place by the AECF.

Working together with CHLA and the Ministry of Health of Armenia, the AECF held its 17th AECF-CHLA International Conference on Ophthalmology, Neonatology and Endocrinology in Yerevan during its Mission trip.

More than 400 medical professionals including ophthalmologists, neonatologists, endocrinologists and others participated in the two-day conference. Participants traveled from all over the world, from the United States to England to Australia as well as several Central Asian and Eastern European countries, to attend the conference and learn the latest practices in ophthalmology and affiliating spheres. The growing popularity and attendance of the conference year after year signifies that Armenia is evolving into a knowledge export and medical tourism destination.

"I am glad that the Armenian EyeCare Project, with its partners, has been organizing international conferences in Armenia with professionals from different local and world-renowned hospitals and universities for almost 20 years," Ohanesian said. "Through the EyeCare Project's programs including our Mobile Eye Hospital, Regional Eye Clinics, Center of Excellence for the Prevention of Childhood Blindness and other initiatives, we not only promote the development of ophthalmology in Armenia but also create fertile soil for the creation of such programs in other areas of healthcare."

In the conference's opening remarks, Deputy Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan spoke of the immense work and dedication of the EyeCare Project over the past 27 years of its service to Armenia, referencing tens of thousands of research, diagnostic and treatment interventions and surgeries; the introduction of vitreoretinal surgeries for infants in the country; invaluable professional and technical assistance and public education activities. "In short, a tireless job for the glory of the Motherland," she said.

### Meeting with Armenia's Leadership

Also of great importance were the many meetings AECF physicians participated in with Armenia's leadership, including Armenia President Armen Sarkissian, Minister of Health Arsen Torosyan and Deputy Minister of Education Arevik Anapioyan.

At the meeting with Sarkissian, AECF physicians updated him on all the

see ACEP, page 10

## EPIC Entrepreneurs Travel to Silicon Valley

SAN FRANCISCO – A group of student startup entrepreneurs from the Entrepreneurship and Product Innovation Center (EPIC) of the American University of Armenia (AUA) recently returned from a ten-day tour of Silicon Valley. The students were able to experience the global center of technology, innovation, investment, and social media, meet with cutting-edge technology companies, network with other entrepreneurs, and participate in workshops and seminars with world leaders in sectors such as business and the tech ecosystem. This trip, made possible through funding by EPIC benefactor Sara Chitjian, was immensely enlightening and students returned with new ideas and inspiration for their projects and businesses.

During this tour, the group visited high-profile, cutting-edge companies such as Google, Amazon, Facebook, PayPal and Nvidia as well as fast-emerging companies like Doordash, Eat Club, EyeQue, Pinterest, and Parkstash. They also had meetings at Silicon Valley's leading startup incubators, including UC Berkeley SkyDeck and Draper University. Company visits were complemented by lectures and presentations on personal and professional growth, developing an entrepreneurial mindset, and starting a business. The students were housed at San Jose State University and many of the business presentations also were hosted by the university.

The impact of the trek on AUA students was apparent. "The Silicon Valley trip was truly a life-changing experience," said AUA 2019 graduate and Breededge co-founder Liana Hakobyan.

"The trek overall was an exceptional experience for all of us," said Irina Tirosoyan (CSE '19). "Attending lectures, meeting new startups, and learning more about top companies were especially helpful in shaping our entrepreneurial mindset and exposing us to innovation. Such opportunities come once in a lifetime."

During a visit to PayPal, the students were introduced to PayPal's Innovation Incubator and were introduced to the latest FinTech innovation. Participants visited Pinterest where the Senior Vice President of Engineering Jeremy King, who also is the former chief technology officer of Walmart, shared the stages of his journey and how Pinterest came to be. A highlight of the trip included a visit to Google, where the students were introduced to their disruptive technologies, including self-driving cars, the inner workings of Google Search, and how Google uses machine learning in Google Cloud.

There were also visits to Stanford University and the University of California, Berkeley. At Berkeley, the students discussed startup ecosystems and the potential within Armenia with Dr. AnnaLee Saxenian, the dean of the School of Information. The group also visited the Amazon fulfillment center, where they witnessed the robot-enabled automated workflow of the center. Perhaps most eye-opening was a discussion and demonstration at Nvidia, where the company's stunning vision of the future for artificial intelligence, machine learning, gaming, and visual computing – as well as the sophistication displayed by their innovation and technology – reinforced their position as an industry leader.

Another highlight of the trek was networking with the vast Armenian diaspora community within the Silicon Valley high technology

see EPIC, page 7



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# EPIC Entrepreneurs from Armenia Travel to Silicon Valley

EPIC, from page 6

and entrepreneurial scene. During company tours, the students were able to meet with numerous Armenian executives, technologists, and employees. HyeTech, an Armenian organization at the center of the San Francisco Bay Area technology community, hosted a reception for our student entrepreneurs to present their EPIC startups. The organization also facilitated discussion and networking at the Armenian-founded Vineti, Inc. office in San Francisco.

“At almost every company we visited, we heard the same advice: ‘think ten times,’ which meant setting targets that are ten times greater than what we believe is achievable. That way, we may not only get further than expected but might also come up with new solutions that we wouldn’t have thought of previously,” said Sona Sharoyan, founder of EPIC startup BeautyBook (BAB ‘19).

Raffi Sahakyan, a recent graduate of AUA’s College of Business and Economics, noted: “The Silicon Valley Industry Trek allowed me to investigate the corporate culture and work environment of companies like Google, Amazon, Facebook, Nvidia, and other industry leaders. During my four years of studies at AUA, we have read more than 100 case



EPIC students with Dr. Michael Kouchakjian



**Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.**

**Dr. Nubar Berberian Annual Awards**

Dr. Nubar Berberian, intellectual, journalist, activist and editor of many ADL daily newspapers for more than 50 years passed away at the age of 94 in November 23, 2016. In his Will, Dr. Berberian directed his Trust Fund managers to appropriate awards every year to college students of Armenian descent worldwide who major in either International Law or Political Science.

#### ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Eligible recipients are college students of Armenian descent who major in either International Law or Political Science.
- 2) Applicant must be enrolled in a full-time graduate program in a fully accredited college or university in the world.
- 3) Applicant must provide all of the information requested on the application form.
- 4) Applicant must submit a copy of his or her most recent college transcript.
- 5) Applicant is to include a small head and shoulders self-portrait.
- 6) Application could be received by requesting from [Tcadirector@Aol.com](mailto:Tcadirector@Aol.com).
- 7) Applicants should submit applications electronically (via email) to: [Tcadirector@Aol.com](mailto:Tcadirector@Aol.com), The Paper submissions will be accepted by the deadline at:

**Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.**  
**Dr. Nubar Berberian Trust Fund**  
 755 Mt. Auburn Street  
 Watertown, MA 02472  
 USA

but electronic application is preferred.

- 8) The deadline of receiving the applications is **September 15, 2019**.
- 9) The administrators and managers of the fund will vote the qualified winners in **October, 2019** based on the merits of each applicant.
- 10) The winner or winners will receive their awards in **November, 2019**
- 11) Winning applicants are not eligible to apply again.
- 12) This announcement is published in Armenian, English, French and Spanish.

**Watertown, MA, July 15, 2019**

studies of these companies. Now, we can draw our conclusions on these cases. The experience gained during the trip has the full potential to be applied in the Armenian business reality.”

Throughout the trek, the students also heard lectures by San Jose State University professors on the differentiating aspects of Silicon Valley and insights on how to enter markets and accelerate the growth of companies. During topical presentations, the students were introduced to cutting edge developments in the fields of blockchain, artificial intelligence, smart mobility, the internet of things, and sharing economy.

“I cannot wait to go to Armenia and implement and share what I’ve learned,” remarked Alisa Chalakhyan (CBE ‘19). “This trip serves as a great motivation and inspiration for me, as well as helps me see my career growth clearer. In many ways it changed my life and my way of thinking. The experience and knowledge will hugely contribute to my personal and professional development.”

Besides business meetings, the students enriched their trip with leisure activities.

The Entrepreneurship and Product Innovation Center (EPIC) is a platform of the American University of Armenia (AUA) for promoting entrepreneurial education, cross-disciplinary collaboration, and startup venture incubation. EPIC provides an ecosystem for emerging entrepreneurs consisting of first-class facilities and collaborative workspace, programs and events, and a network of mentors, advisors, and investors. EPIC fosters the understanding and application of entrepreneurship in students and faculty at AUA to craft high-impact multidisciplinary ventures.

## Highest-Ranking Armenian-American in US Administration to Be Keynote Speaker at Assembly Conference

BOHIGIAN, from page 6

Agricole Bank CJSC (2014 & 2012), Promyshlenno-Stroitelny Investitsionny (2013), Marriott Hotel (2013), MicroVest Short Duration Fund, LP (2012), First Mortgage Company II (2012), and Ardshinvestbank (2009).

In addition to the luncheon, the National Advocacy Conference and Gala includes panel discussions, meetings on Capitol Hill, and a congressional celebration on United States-Armenia relations.

Tickets are available online at [www.aimhye.com/events/tickets](http://www.aimhye.com/events/tickets).



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Ninth Circuit: Claims Based On Armenian Genocide Not Revived by Statute

CONFISCATION, from page 1

## Attorneys' React

Yesterday's decision evoked angered responses from attorneys for the plaintiffs.

Kathryn Lee Boyd of the downtown Los Angeles firm of Pierce Bainbridge Beck Price & Hecht—representing three persons whose ancestors allegedly owned 122.5 acres of land that was confiscated—commented:

"It is a sad day for Armenian Americans when a U.S. court has stripped them of all access to justice, refused to consider or even recognize the extenuating circumstances of the Armenian Genocide, and left them with no remedy against Turkey, which continues to hold and use their stolen property with impunity."

She said that the Ninth Circuit's recognition that the holocaust did take place "is of significance" but remarked that the court failed to consider that the official nonrecognition "would be an extenuating circumstance and tolling event under federal and state law."

Mark Geragos of the firm of Geragos & Geragos, also in downtown Los Angeles—who represents the other set of plaintiffs—asserted:

"The Turkish Lobby has bought and paid for the United States Executive Branch and State Department for decades. Sadly the Judicial branch is left with very few options to remedy the blatant mendacity of the Turkish lobbying machine."

Turkey insists the genocide did not occur.

## Hurwitz's Opinion

Hurwitz said it did. He wrote:

"From 1915 to 1923, in what is often referred to as the Armenian Genocide, the Ottoman Empire massacred, forcibly expelled, or marched to death 1.5 million of its Armenian citizens, seizing the property of the dead and

deported. In 2010, the plaintiffs in these consolidated actions, United States residents descended from victims of The Genocide, sued the Republic of Turkey and two Turkish national banks, seeking compensation for property taken from their ancestors almost a century ago."

In 2006, the California Legislature enacted S.B. 1524, authored by then-Sen. Jackie Speier (now a member of the U.S. House of Representatives). Codified as Code of Civil Procedure §354.45, it provides:

"Any action, including any pending action brought by an Armenian Genocide victim, or the heir or beneficiary of an Armenian Genocide victim, who resides in this state, seeking payment for, or the return of, deposited assets, or the return of looted assets, shall not be dismissed for failure to comply with the applicable statute of limitation, if the action is filed on or before December 31, 2016."

The plaintiffs proceeded to sue in 2010 based on that legislation.

## 2012 Decision

Hurwitz pointed to the Ninth Circuit's 2012 decision in *Movsesian v. Victoria Versicherung AG* which invalidated a 2000 statute extending the time for bringing certain insurance claims based on the Armenian Genocide. In an opinion for the court, sitting en banc, Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber said the statute was preempted under the foreign affairs doctrine.

In the opinion filed yesterday, Hurwitz wrote: "Our decision in *Movsesian*, issued while this litigation was ongoing, foreordained the ultimate outcome of the plaintiffs' claims: they are time-barred. A ruling on these complex jurisdictional issues would thus in effect be an advisory opinion, because this case plainly cannot go forward even if there is jurisdiction."

## OBITUARY

### Mariam (Simavonian) Kostikian



BOSTON — Mariam (Simavonian) Kostikian, 93, passed away peacefully at the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center in Jamaica Plain, on August 7.

Mariam was the wife of the late Abgar Kostikian and the mother of Karpis Kostikian and his wife Lianoush of Watertown, Aracse Kurkjian of Weston and her late husband John Kurkjian and Khachatour Kostikian and his wife Takoush of Watertown. She will be remembered by her 7 grandchildren, Levon and Paul Ara Kurkjian; Derenig, Arthur, Apkar, David and the late Mari Kostikian; great-grandchildren, John, Alex, Grace, Alyssa, Eva, Mathis, Gemma, Kiera, Shyla and Sienna. She was the sister of the late Simon Simavonian.

The funeral service took place at St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown, on Monday, August 12. Interment followed at Ridgelawn Cemetery in Watertown.

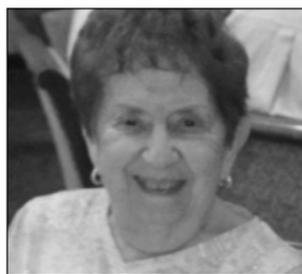
### Mary 'Mimi' Kalustian

#### Longtime Member of Holy Trinity Church

ARLINGTON, Mass. — Mary "Mimi" Kalustian passed away peacefully on August 6. She was 90.

She is survived by her husband Martin Kalustian; children Dr. Albert A. Kalustian and his wife Dr. Anita Lurantos of Manchester and James M. Kalustian of Arlington.

Funeral services were held at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge on Saturday, August 10. Interment followed at Newton Cemetery in Newton.



## Donations

Jirair Moughamian of Berkeley, Calif. Donated \$100 to the *Baikar* weekly.

Edward Babayan donated \$250 to the *Baikar* weekly.

Armen McOmber donated \$100 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

There was, he proclaimed, no equitable tolling, explaining:

"We have no doubt that The survivors of the Ottoman Empire's atrocities experienced enormous hardships after The seizure of their property. Indeed, we take as true the allegations in the operative complaints that it "was impossible for Plaintiffs' predecessors to seek compensation for their stolen property or focus on anything but rebuilding their lives." But, these suits are brought not by the victims of the Armenian Genocide, but rather by residents of the United States long removed from its carnage, many of whose predecessors relocated to this country decades ago. And the current plaintiffs do not allege any attempts to pursue these claims judicially prior to 2010."

Hurwitz noted that the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act ("FSIA") became law in 1976. It sets

forth exceptions to state immunity establishes procedures for suing a foreign government.

He wrote:

"It is possible that the plaintiffs believed that any suit against The Republic of Turkey or its instrumentalities would have been futile until 1976...But, even if we assume that the plaintiffs' claims were equitably tolled until 1976, the plaintiffs do not explain why they should be tolled a further twenty-four years. Thus, even under the most charitable of assumptions, as the California legislature expressly recognized in passing § 354.45, the plaintiffs' claims against the Banks are time-barred."

The case is *Bakalian v. Central Bank of Turkey*, 13-55804.

Neil Michael Soltman of Mayer Brown LLP, who argued for the banks, did not respond to a request for comment

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COMMUNITY NEWS

# James L. Melikian L.A. Brother Scholarship Fund Established at Fresno State

FRESNO – Armenian Studies Program Director Prof. Barlow Der Mgrdechian announced this week that the James L. Melikian L.A. Brothers Scholarship fund has been newly established at Fresno State. A donation of \$5,100 established the scholarship, which will be awarded to deserving Armenian students studying at Fresno State.

The effort to establish the scholarship was led by Fresno State alumnus James L. Melikian, who annually hosts a gathering of friends at his home to raise funds for charitable purposes. Melikian (“The Popcorn Man”) established his company, “The Popcorn Man,” in 1977. “The Popcorn Man” provides school districts in California and other states with healthy, nutritious items for the National School Breakfast and Lunch Program, the Child Care Program as well as the After School Snack Program.

In 2014 Melikian was a recipient of the Fresno State “Top Dog” award, recognizing outstanding alumni and he has been an active supporter of both the Armenian Studies Program and the Department of Media, Communications, and Journalism at Fresno State. He is also an Alumni Association Life Member and a Bulldog Foundation supporter.

Melikian graduated from Fresno State in



James L. Melikian, right, with Prof. Barlow Der Mgrdechian

1969 with a degree in mass communication and journalism, and was president of the Hye Society organization. A highlight of the Hye Society activities was when noted author

William Saroyan came to Fresno State to speak to the Armenian students. Melikian is also active in the community and in state and national politics.

# Senate Urges USAID to Continue Funding HALO Trust to Clear Mines in Artsakh

WASHINGTON – Twenty-two United States Senators signed a letter to the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) encouraging continued funding to The HALO Trust to complete its mine clearance in Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh), reported the Armenian Assembly of America.

“The end of USAID’s funding threatens the lives and health of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh as well as prospects for peace in the region. We urge USAID to reconsider this decision,” the letter states.

Led by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Ranking Member Robert Menendez (D-NJ), the letter was signed by Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-NY) and Senators Tammy Baldwin (D-WI), Michael Bennet (D-CO), Richard Blumenthal (D-CT), Sherrod Brown (D-OH), Ben Cardin (D-MD), Robert Casey, Jr. (D-PA), Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), Dianne Feinstein (D-CA), Kirsten Gillibrand (D-NY), Kamala Harris (D-CA), Mazie Hirono (D-HI), Ed Markey (D-MA), Jeff Merkley (D-OR), Christopher Murphy (D-CT), Jack Reed (D-RI), Bernie Sanders (I-VT), Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), Chris Van Hollen (D-MD), Elizabeth Warren (D-MA), and Ron Wyden (D-OR).

“This type of humanitarian assistance to support the victims of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict has long been recognized as important and I believe it remains critical that we continue to support demining efforts in the region,” said Menendez. “As we made clear in our letter, any changes to USAID’s commitment to complete the clearance of landmines and unexploded ordnances saving lives in Nagorno-Karabakh will be met with broad opposition in Congress.”

The letter concludes: “As your agency’s... letter states, USAID-funded mine clearance in Nagorno-Karabakh has ‘made the region undoubtedly safer.’ However, clearance work remains to be done and the people of Nagorno-Karabakh cannot afford to have that work ended or disrupted by a lack of funds. We strongly urge USAID to reconsider its decision to end funding for humanitarian landmine clearance in Nagorno-Karabakh at the end of the year.”

“We commend the leadership of Senator Menendez along with his colleagues on this critically important humanitarian issue to help save lives in Artsakh. The Armenian Assembly of America applauds the efforts in the Senate and the House and greatly appreciates the work of The HALO Trust,” Assembly Congressional Relations Director Mariam Khaloyan stated.

On Monday, August 5, 89 U.S. House of Representatives rallied together to support The HALO Trust’s demining efforts in Artsakh, and sent a similar letter to USAID.

“With thousands of land mines still left in the ground, and families living daily in the shadow of death or devastating injury, this is no time for the United States to back away from its historic commitment to the people of Nagorno Karabakh,” The HALO Trust (USA) Executive Director Chris Whatley told the Assembly earlier. “We want to thank the Senate and House for responding so quickly to this important matter, and thank the Armenian Assembly of America for supporting this life-saving program,” he added.



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COMMUNITY NEWS

# Hundreds Travel to Attend AECP-CHLA Medical Conference in Yerevan

AECP, from page 6  
 programs and initiatives implemented by AECP in Armenia. It was noted that in the first several years of the AECP's activities in Armenia, the organization aimed to provide immediate care and humanitarian assistance to those with neglected eye disease and vision issues. In recent years, more emphasis is being placed on preventative care and in particular the prevention of potential blindness due to the development of eye disease with time.

Sarkissian thanked AECP physicians for their continued work and programs in Armenia as well as activities aimed at the development of ophthalmology in the country and wished them much success in their future initiatives for Armenia.

"I am proud that our compatriots from the Diaspora cooperate with their counterparts in Armenia and share their experience and knowledge," President Sarkissian said.

### Cutting-Edge Medical Platform in Development

AECP physicians also met with Armenia Minister of Health Arsen Torosyan to discuss the latest advancements in Armenia's healthcare industry with respect to the EyeCare Project. This includes the recent launch of the AECP's large-scale School Screening Program for children throughout Armenia and the cutting-edge new medical record system being developed by both CHLA and AECP to facilitate this program – the Avetis Child Health Outcome Platform. Avetis will have the capability to provide data visualization and analysis, collect data from any healthcare provider and support both physician work and patients.

In addition to these developments, AECP Country Director Nune Yeghiazaryan reported that the AECP's Mobile Eye Hospital is currently traveling throughout Armenia to screen and treat those on the country's poverty list. Also, that the AECP, with cooperation from the Minister of Health, has developed and opened four Regional Eye Clinics throughout the country – in the cities of Ijevan, Spitak, Kapan and



Hundreds gather at the AECP-CHLA 17th

Gyumri – with the fifth clinic to be opened in the Vayots Dzor province by 2020. Torosyan welcomed and praised the AECP's work as a role model for health programs not only in Armenia but in other developing countries and thanked them for their continuous cooperation.

A meeting with the Ministry of Education also proved to be productive. AECP physicians spoke to Deputy Minister of Education Arevik Anapioyan regarding its large-scale School Screening Program launched in Armenia late



AECP and CHLA physicians meet with Armenia President Armen Sarkissian



AECP and CHLA physicians meet with Armenia President Armen Sarkissian



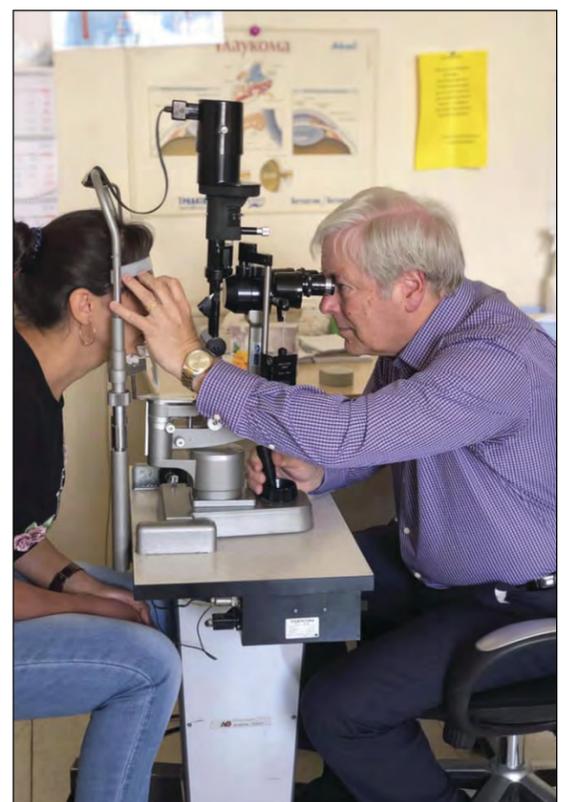
From left to right, CHLA staff member; AECP Country Director Nune Yeghiazaryan; CHLA Vision Center Director Dr. Thomas Lee; AECP Founder and President Dr. Roger Ohanesian

last year, reporting that 20,000 children in the country have already been screened through the initiative with more screenings scheduled.

The program intends to screen every school-aged child in Armenia in hopes of early detection of eye disease and the prevention of possible blindness. Anapioyan, too, emphasized that prevention of disease is of primary importance. Additionally, she mentioned the importance of public education in schools, thanked the AECP for their efforts and expressed readiness to support the organization in its activities in this sphere.

The AECP also reported that the Avetis Child Health Outcome Platform is currently in development and will aid in collecting and providing information on the primary eye disorders found among the children screened in Armenia in order to detect and possibly prevent these diseases in the future.

With steps to make preventative care a priority in Armenia – preventing eye disease from developing and possibly eliminating avoidable blindness in the country – the AECP looks to the glory of the Motherland and is proud of another successful Mission toward this greater goal for the country.



Dr. Richard Hill, an ophthalmologist from Orange County who's traveled to Armenia with the AECP since the early 1990s, screens a patient on its most recent Mission



## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Armenian International Women's Association LA Affiliate Presents Scholarship Awards at Annual Spring Luncheon

LOS ANGELES – Guests and members of the Los Angeles Affiliate of the Armenian International Women's Association (AIWA) gathered for the Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarship Spring Luncheon on June 8 at the home of Jack and Zarig Youredjian. Guests enjoyed cocktails, hors d'oeuvres, and an elaborate buffet graciously hosted by Zarig Youredjian.

Nicole Nishanian, president of AIWA-LA, welcomed the guests and expressed her thanks and appreciation to Zarig Youredjian for opening up her picturesque home in this magnificent scenic setting and for her hospitality. "We are delighted to present the recipients of the 2019 Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarship Awards and to recognize their talent, ability, and perseverance to achieve their career goals. We are also honored today to have as our Guest Speaker, our dear friend and supporter Anita Vogel, who needs no introduction and has had a distinguished career as a noted journalist and newscaster for Fox-TV. Her rise and success in the broadcast industry will justly serve as an inspiration to our young women."

Margaret Mgrublian, vice president of

D.C. as desk assistant for "This Week with David Brinkley," followed by WJET-TV (ABC) in Eric, PA; KCRA-TV (NBC) in Sacramento and WTLC-TV (NBC) in Jacksonville, Fla. Vogel joined Fox-News in 2001 and currently serves as a Los Angeles-based correspondent covering news stories. Mgrublian reported on the many awards Vogel has received through the years, including the Golden Mike Award for best broadcasting news coverage by a network; the Edwin R. Murrow Award; Regional Emmy Award for best newscaster; the Pennsylvania Association Broadcasters Award for best documentary; and the recipient of a RIAS Fellowship Award in 2006, a German-American Journalism Exchange Program, spending two weeks in Germany representing Fox News Channel.

Vogel captivated the guests with her remarks on her career. She focused on the years she spent pursuing her career and the many rejections she received from news stations throughout the United States. Her determination, diligence and tenacity were finally rewarded with her position at ABC Network News as Desk Assistant for This



From left: Carla Khatchaturian, Vivian Kesedjian, Ani Aivazian, Zarig Youredjian and Rene Arakelian.



Standing, left to right: Hermine Janoyan, Nicole Nishanian, President, AIWA-LA, Anita Vogel, Fox-TV Newscaster, Jean Kelegian; Seated, left to right; Joan Agajanian Quinn, Lily Balian

AIWA-LA, presented guest speaker Anita Vogel, and reflected on her illustrious career as a news correspondent. Mgrublian pointed out that they were cousins and that they had enjoyed a longtime friendship. She reviewed Vogel's journalism career beginning at ABC Network News in Washington,

Week with David Brinkley, which was followed by associations with other network news in Pennsylvania, Sacramento and Florida. Vogel's association with Fox-TV News began in 2001 and continues and, in her own words, she is ready with her suitcase in hand, to journey and report on the

news wherever it is happening.

The highlight of the afternoon's program was the presentation by Lily Balian, chair of the Scholarship Committee, of the recipients of the 2019 Hasmik Mgrdichian Scholarship Awards. Balian introduced and presented five of the six recipients receiving \$5,000 scholarships. In her remarks, Balian stated that the committee had the difficult task of selecting the recipients from the huge amount of applications that were received. Balian introduced, the following five recipients who were present:

- Nora Galoustian, currently attending UC Berkeley, majoring in molecular and cell neurobiology and minoring in disciplinary human rights; after completing her bachelor's degree, she will be applying to medical school.

- Meghmik Harabedian currently attends CSU Fullerton majoring in communication sciences and disorders. Upon graduation she plans to attend Loma Linda University studying to receive a master's degree in communication sciences and disorders in order to become a certified speech-language pathologist.

- Tara Rose Kessedjian, currently a sophomore at UC Berkeley, as a physics major, with her goal to attain a degree in physics, specializing in astrophysics and to continue to graduate school to again a master's degree in astrophysics and eventually a doctorate.

- Julie Poladian, currently a graduate student at UCLA in her second and final year

majoring in the Teacher Education Program and will graduate with a master's degree in education. As a resident she will be a full-time elementary school teacher in the L.A. United School District, while continuing to work on her Master's Inquiry Project.

- Grace Raphaella Vertanessian, currently a sophomore at UCLA, majoring in economics, focusing on finance and international economics; with a minor in French, concentrating on writing and speaking skills and business culture.

- Tatevik Kechiyants, who was not present, received her bachelor's degree in linguistics from YSLU, Armenia. She currently is a graduate student in her first year at the LLM program at USC Gould School of Law, specializing in American Law, arbitration and mediation.

The five recipients who were present enthralled the guests with their words of thanks and appreciation for receiving the awards.

In her closing remarks, Nicole Neshanian, President of AIWA-LA, thanked everyone for being present and stated that the proceeds from this event would benefit the Women's Shelter Program in Armenia. Nishanian expressed her thanks to Zarig Yaredjian for also making a generous donation to the Women's Shelter Program.

For further information regarding AIWA-LA, contact AIWA-LA at [aialosangeles@gmail.com](mailto:aialosangeles@gmail.com).

## Oregon State University's Dr. Anthony S. Davis to Keynote at Inaugural Forest Summit in Armenia

YEREVAN – Armenia Tree Project (ATP) and the American University of Armenia (AUA) Acopian Center for the Environment, organizers of an upcoming global forestry conference in Yerevan, Armenia, announced this week the event's keynote lecturer,



Dr. Anthony S. Davis

Dr. Anthony S. Davis, interim dean and professor at the College of Forestry at Oregon State University. The three-day conference will bring leading minds in forestry to Armenia's capital for discussion, education, and networking.

Davis will deliver the keynote address at the inaugural Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia on Tuesday, October 22, and will press participants to consider the opportunities that

exist in Armenia and around the world to use science-based practices in advancing forest restoration, conservation, and management for multiple values. His background in working at the local level to develop best practices in seedling production, tree planting, and long-term management builds on a global suite of experiences that can inform management and policy decisions in Armenia's forest sector.

"It's with great enthusiasm that I prepare to share my learnings and experience with the attendees of the inaugural Forest Summit," says Davis, who has been working on forest restoration and tree planting with several organizations in Armenia including ATP. "It's an honor to be able to share my passion with so many like-minded professionals, and to do it in a country that has made a commitment to double its forest cover by 2050. This conference comes at a critical time for forest health worldwide. More than ever we are cognizant of the wide-ranging values forests provide - as a sink for carbon, a source of renewable materials, and habitat for critical wildlife including the Caucasian Leopard.

I look forward to participating in this dialogue."

Davis serves as the chief executive of the College of Forestry at Oregon State University, which is broadly recognized as one of the world's leading forestry research, teaching, and extension institutions. Under his leadership, the Corvallis, Oregon-based College of Forestry crafts research projects with various constituencies around the globe to expand forest-driven economies, steward forest resources, and to translate new discoveries into tools and techniques that can be used to advance livelihoods and sustain ecosystems.

With three days of discussion and collaborative dialogue on the conservation and reforestation efforts much needed in Armenia and countries across the world, Forest Summit: Global Action and Armenia will offer field visits to Dilijan National Park and ATP's reforestation nursery and forest plantings in Margahovit Village, as well as social and networking opportunities.

In addition to hosting the conference in October, Armenia Tree Project will celebrate

the planting of its six millionth tree in Armenia this fall. For more information about the conference, AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, or Armenia Tree Project, please visit <http://forestsummit.am>.

The AUA Acopian Center for the Environment, a research center of the American University of Armenia (AUA), promotes the protection and restoration of the natural environment through research, education, and community outreach. The AUA Acopian Center's focus areas include sustainable natural resource management, biodiversity and conservation, greening the built environment, clean energy, and energy efficiency, as well as information technology and the environment. Founded in 1991, the American University of Armenia (AUA) is a private, independent university located in Yerevan, Armenia, and affiliated with the University of California. AUA provides a global education in Armenia and the region, offering high-quality graduate and undergraduate studies, encouraging civic engagement, and promoting public service and democratic values.



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# Arts & Living

## Christian Architecture Of the Levant Project Aims at Preserving The Past through Modern Tools

FRESNO – Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) member Jirair Christianian has launched a new website dedicated to the churches, monasteries, fortifications and other architecture of the Armenian, Greek, Georgian, Syriac, Crusader and Arab people of the Near East. The website is called The Christian Architecture of the Levant (<https://ChArLvArchive.org>).

A generous and anonymous grant has allowed the creation of this website as a forum for serious scholars to post their carefully documented photographs, plans, and assessments of the Christian architecture in the Levant. The initial 3,300 photographs, plans and maps of 118 sites presented on the website are composed of secular, ecclesiastical and military construction within Turkey, from the Byzantine, Cilician Armenian and late Medieval periods. By exposing this material to the widest possible audience, the donors hope to encourage dialogue, provide documentation for publications, and facilitate efforts for the preservation of these endangered monuments. The rate at which these sites have become damaged and, in some cases, completely obliterated, has accelerated in the last decades. The loss of this world heritage is irreversible and not to be underestimated.

Anyone interested in contributing images and plans of the late antique and medieval Christian settlements in the Levant is invited to contact the General Editor via the Contact link in the website header. There is no minimum limit on the number of photographs and plans that can be submitted, and a contributing



A picture of an Armenian cross from the website

author is free to deposit any of his/her images contained in this Website into any other archive without restrictions. Christianian commented on the project saying: "I am thrilled to be bringing this website online; it is my hope that others will contribute their images and plans of additional sites, on a non-exclusive basis, in order to make it as comprehensive as possible."

Volume One of the website is comprised of the archive of Robert W. Edwards, the author, among other publications, of The Fortifications of Armenian Cilicia and articles on the ecclesiastical architecture of the Armenians, Georgians and Byzantine Greeks in Cilicia, the Pontus, the Marchlands of north-eastern Turkey, and Historical Armenia. His detailed photographs, plans, and extensive documentation of these sites represent an invaluable documentation of this architectural heritage in Turkey, much of which is under threat of permanent destruction.

President of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) Bedross Der Matossian commented on the project saying: "While many of the Armenian architectural sites in Historic  
see ARCHITECTURE, page 17



Arman Nur wears "The Fly"

## Nur and the Quest To Reconnect With Nature

YEREVAN – "The Fly" is touring the world. The massive – i.e., human-size – sculpture made its debut at the 2017 Florence Biennale, winning the prestigious Lorenzo il Magnifico Gold Medal.

The following year, "The Fly" was shown at the Cafesjian Center for the Arts, in Yerevan. More than 7,000 people saw it during the multimedia exhibition which was unprecedented for the museum. Those who were there will tell you that per-

**By Sona Hamalian**

haps the most characteristic reaction to the imposing sculpture was one of surprise and delight, a certain childlike bewilderment. Those visitors also had the opportunity to align their bodies with that of "The Fly," to wear its limbs, as it were, in the manner of a skydiver wearing a wingsuit.

It was all about seeing the world from the perspective of someone – or, in this case, an insect – most of us don't care much about. Why? Not only to gain deeper insight into what makes them who they are, but also, as its creator Arman Nur would suggest, to be poised to transcend the hatred that can fetter our intellectual and spiritual growth. To further demonstrate the point, the exhibition included a symbolic sculpture, in the form of a pair of eyeglasses, that complemented and amplified the large fly sculpture. After learning about the philosophical rationale behind the sculpture, visitors would actually wear the intricately-designed eyeglasses, thereby imagining, if not feeling, the experience of viewing the world through the eyes of a fly. "That experience has to do with being free to roam and explore the environment around us, without the need to live entrapped in our selfish, self-centered ways," Nur explains.

From July 16 through 21 of this year, "The Fly" was exhibited at the RAI Amsterdam Convention Center, garnering critical acclaim. Next, the sculpture will be shown at the Art Nocturne Knocke, in Knokke-Heist (West Flanders), Belgium, beginning August 10. Art Nocturne Knocke is one of Europe's most important art and antiquities fair. Given the now-iconic sculpture's universal message of "understanding, forgiveness, and love," Nur's dream is to have it exhibited at the place still considered the very heart of international synergy, the United Nations headquarters,  
see NUR, page 14



"The Fly" by Nur

## McDonald's Might Have Been McMikoyan's, if Not For a World War

**By Deena Prichep**

WASHINGTON (*Washington Post*) – It's high summer – hamburger season. The char, the fat, the squishy perfection of processed bread sopping up the overflowing juices – doesn't it somehow seem like Americans' birthright?

But peel back the oil-spattered pages of history, and you'll find that the sandwich so closely aligned with the stars and stripes was once also embraced by the hammer and sickle. (Yep, like so much about this current administration, even U.S. President Donald Trump's beloved hamburgers have ties to Russia.) In the 1930s, when McDonald's was just a greasy twinkle in Ray Kroc's eye – he didn't open his first McDonald's until 1955 – the Soviet Union was a couple of decades out from its revolution and in the midst of industrialization and urbanization on a staggering scale. Tens of millions left the countryside for the cities as feudal farmers transformed into urban Soviet workers. And these workers needed to be fed.

In the centralized Soviet system, this task fell to the ministry of food – which was struggling. "The ideal was to make everything centralized, everything standardized," explains University of Helsinki sociologist Jukka Gronow. "They had menus that were centrally planned, down to the very small details – so many grams of potatoes."

At canteens, factory workers were fed meals that, on paper, sounded tasty. "They all had these three-course meals: zakuski (appetizer), soup, main dish. And even a dessert," Gronow says. "A French style of dining."

But we're not talking soufflés and cheese courses. The soup might be little more than cabbage, the main dish perhaps macaroni. "Workers were complaining about the bad quality," says Gronow. "So many weekdays without meat."

The food commissars knew they had to improve their centralized system. And so, in 1936, Anastas Mikoyan, the ministry's head, took a delegation to America, to learn how Ford's conveyor-belt approach and emerging technology could streamline food production. According to Irina Glushchenko, a professor at Moscow's Higher School of Economics University, the three-month tour included "ice cream, soft drinks and beer factories, a factory for freezing ducks, a factory for the production of powdered milk and fruit juices, poultry farms and the famous Chicago slaughterhouses."

Mikoyan and his delegation loved it all. Dispatches home had the feel of a fairy tale, with poetic descriptions of the order and standardization. They took notes on how to replicate the drumbeat of industrial capitalism, except without the capitalists. And they especially loved hamburgers.

"For Mikoyan, hamburgers obviously became the most powerful shock in his entire trip," Glushchenko explains, citing the loving mentions of American machine-made burgers in Mikoyan's memoirs. In the steaming burgers and buns churned out for sale in stadiums and parks, Mikoyan saw a solution to the food needs of the Soviet Union.

"Mikoyan shared Trump's opinion of fast food. He was a great admirer,"  
see HAMBURGER, page 17

## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Nur and the Quest to Reconnect With Nature

NUR, from page 13

in New York. Nur has also designed a game featuring "The Fly" that was featured at the ICE London gaming convention, in February 2018.

Born in the Armenian capital in 1971, Arman Nur was educated at the Toros Roslin Applied Arts Institute, in Yerevan; the Moscow Institute of Gemology; and Miami International University of Art and Design.

Today, Nur is widely regarded as one of Armenia's most innovative artists. He wears several hats: he is a designer, sculptor, jewelry maker, and painter. His evolving body of work – including sculptures and jewelry that often playfully tap into a broad range of art-historical references – is on display at his own exhibition space, the Nur Art Gallery, which has become a beloved cultural destination in Yerevan. Nur has shown his works throughout the world, with major solo exhibitions including the "Aratta" jewelry collection, shown at Erebuni, in Armenia; the Russian Fashion Week, for several years; and the "Uhi" collection, dedicated to Armenian women and shown at the Yerevan History Museum.

Nur has designed jewelry for celebrities, among them Madeleine Albright, Andre Agassi, Cher, Montserrat Caballe, and Al Jarreau. As importantly, he has designed numerous public sculptures and other works. Among these are his sculpture titled "Childhood," symbolizing health and happiness, at the Hematology Center of Yerevan; and his statue titled "The Reader," created on the occasion of Yerevan's designation as the 2013 "World Book Capital."

Nur's works have garnered a string of distinguished accolades. They include being named "2004 Jeweler of the Year" in Moscow; winning the "Best Jewelry" award at the YUVELIR 2001 International Exhibition, in Moscow; and being



Arman Nur arrives in Belgium with his sculpture

replaced with love. We must strive to do this. And if we're able to pull it off, we and the world as a whole will be the better for it. Here's "The Fly's" basic vision: "If you can love the fly, you can love everyone and everything, and you'll be able to fly."

**Q – How would you describe the physical and emotional experiences of becoming one with the fly sculpture, when you enclose your body within it? What do you feel? What do you imagine seeing?**

A – The human brain is designed in such a manner that we remember everything which we see for the first time. As we look through the eyes of the fly, it becomes clear that, for the first time, we're seeing the world through the eyes of another being. The memory of this experience is indelibly etched in our mind. And if we reach a moment in our life when our hatred begins to hold us back from living life as we should, our memory brings us back the vision of the fly, which we've seen, helping us replace hatred with love.

**Q – Since "The Fly's" debut in 2017, how, in general, have spectators responded to the compassionate and altruistic philosophy on which the sculpture is based? And, in this respect, have you seen any key differences between spectators in Armenia and those in Europe?**

A – "The Fly" earned much praise at the Florence Biennale. I didn't realize this at first, as I was busy explaining to spectators the ideology behind the sculpture. In fact, the whole of Florence was talking about "The Fly." The exhibition had large numbers of visitors every day. As for differences between Armenian, European, and other spectators, I can say that Armenian spectators are quite restrained in expressing their impressions, whereas the reactions of European spectators tend to be much more emotional, direct, and frank.

**Q – You have an abstract drawing of Yerevan in which the entire image is composed with a single line. This single line performs every compositional duty required of the work, from drawing some of Yerevan's major cultural landmarks and thoroughfares to fleshing out everything in between. What prompted you to create this work? And do you plan on creating similar drawings dedicated to other cities?**

A – Yes, the Yerevan drawing was executed with a single line. That's my drawing technique, and I use it often. I call it "one line, one touch."

The Yerevan drawing is unique in the sense that it's my largest canvas to date. I have worked on it for 12 hours nonstop. I expect to apply the same technique to draw all the cities in which "The Fly" is exhibited, as a way of commemorating the fact that the sculpture has been in these places. By using my "one line, one touch" technique for the Yerevan drawing, I have tried to reproduce the trajectory of a fly's uncontrollable flight, which almost never is interrupted or cut short. The Yerevan drawing will be renamed "The Fly in Yerevan."

**Q – Your jewelry – be it a ring, a bracelet, an earring, a brooch, or a wedding crown – is as technically accomplished and intricately designed as it is boldly inventive. Would you agree that classical training is the cornerstone without which there cannot be sustainable creative audacity?**

A – Without a doubt, every innovation is based on the established, the classical. And the value of innovation rests in the fact that it will eventually result in a cultural legacy for future generations. While my artistic sensibilities are very much rooted in the classical, I try to reimagine and present it in a novel and inventive

manner, in terms of subject matter, style, and technique alike.

**Q – It is rather astonishing that every piece of jewelry you design is painstakingly hand-made, can take a very long time to finish, and is one-of-a-kind. So how do you feel when a given piece is purchased by a client? Is there a feeling of loss involved? Or do you feel the piece has now been given a second life?**

A – I have thought about this often, and my answer is always the same: creating a work of art is akin to giving birth; and giving birth to a baby requires two people – one is myself, the jewelry maker, and the other is the person for whom the jewelry is being created. Therefore, by transferring a piece of jewelry to its wearer, I am "delivering" it to its second parent, without losing my connection with the thing created, and certainly without losing my connection with the person wearing it.

**Q – The Nur Art Gallery has become an important artistic hub, and the central space where you exhibit your jewelry, sculptures, paintings, and multimedia works. How important is it for you to maintain a bond with the art-loving public, considering that such a bond can be enormously facilitated and nurtured by a space such as your gallery?**

A – I think art must educate and enlighten, and I think the Nur Art Gallery, as a Yerevan landmark, is profoundly committed to that vision. Accordingly, we organize exhibitions and various events through which we strive to help elevate the public's artistic consciousness, by sharing with it the achievements of Armenian and world art.

**Q – Many of those who frequent your gallery also know that you're an accomplished songwriter and musician. What role does music play in the bigger scheme of your artistic interests and output?**

A – Music is an inseparable part of myself, and an inseparable part of my work. That's because in my artistic environment, and in my life in general, music is a constant presence and I consider myself not a musician per se but rather a music lover. As for songwriting, I've been doing it only recently. I don't know where it came from or why. But it seems to me that in this particular stage of my life, I have a great need to express art through music as well; to explore, through songwriting and performance, fresh new avenues of creativity.



Another creation by Arman Nur

bestowed two of Armenia's top civilian honors, the Golden Medal of the Ministry of Culture of the Republic of Armenia and the Movses Khorenatsi Honorary Medal of the President of the Republic of Armenia.

Perhaps Nur's most essential mantra is to never repeat himself. It's what keeps him ever-curious and on his toes, the artist says.

I spoke with him at his gallery in Yerevan.

**Q – You have designed hand-drawn T-shirts on which you expound the core ideas behind "The Fly" sculpture. One of those ideas is: "You must look through the eyes of the one who is hated, in order to understand, forgive, and love." Can you elaborate a bit on the statements found on the T-shirts?**

A – The T-shirts constitute only a small part of "The Fly" project, and the ideology behind it is only partially presented on the T-shirts, including in my own handwriting. The totality of the concept can be understood only after viewing the project in its entirety – that is to say, not just the large fly sculpture, but also the many complementary works that give it further context. The key idea behind the project is that one must be able to love instead, not hate. Hatred hurts the hater, first and foremost. It stands to reason, therefore, that hatred must be



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CULTURAL ASSOCIATION  
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THEATRICAL GROUP

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## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Pianist Sahan Arzruni Tours Armenia, Works with Young Music Students

YEREVAN and NEW YORK – When master pianist Sahan Arzruni spent the majority of June working with music students in some of Armenia's rural towns, he was interested in learning about the state of musical education outside of Yerevan. He wanted to commune with the youth, but admitted he wasn't completely sure he'd be able to "speak their language."

As it turned out, he could, and what he found during his three-week journey was a plethora of small communities rich with young people actively engaged in music.

This was the second time Arzruni had visited Armenia's music schools. He had already done a similar, but less extensive, tour in 2017. This trip, which took him to five provinces as well as Artsakh, was coordinated by Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR) in partnership with the Armenian Ministry of Culture.

Armenia is still filled with music schools and conservatories, a positive vestige of the Soviet period. Teaching methods at these schools, however, are still very much in the Soviet style, which means highly prescriptive and disciplinarian instruction, according to Arzruni. The curriculum is a bit insular as well. Instructors still focus very much on primarily Russian composers – mainly those they studied themselves as students.

Arzruni visited Arkavand, Ashtarak, Berd, Dilijan, Goris, Kapan, Vanadzor and Stepanakert. Spending two days in each loca-



Students who received certificates after participating in Arzruni's master classes

tion, he spent a full day listening to several students from different schools play. He then selected a few outstanding pupils who participated in the concert Arzruni would give the second day. Students included pianists, string and wind players, vocalists and folk instrumentalists.

Without upsetting the current course structure, Arzruni set out to introduce them to new

methods of thinking and learning about music, and to further stimulate their aesthetic values. He used alternative methods of trying to help students understand ways of playing music. "This was why I was there," he said. "To show them a different way of playing and doing things."

Arzruni also had another goal, which was to relay the message that studying music –

Armenian music, in particular – is not only a terrific mental discipline but also a great way to get to know one's own culture and to conserve it. This is easier in Armenia's rural areas where pride and preservation of cultural identity are more natural as opposed to large urban centers where outside influences encumber the purity of ethnic learning, he said.

Along with the master classes, Arzruni met with many provincial and city leaders. He urged officials to pay more attention to culture and music in Armenia's regions.

The entire tour closed with a performance at the Aram Khachaturian House-Museum in Yerevan, which featured a student representative from each village on trumpet, clarinet, violin, piano, as well as an eight-person drum ensemble.

At the end of the concert, Arzruni received a Certificate of Gratitude from FAR for contributing to the development of young musicians. The pianist also received an award from the Aram Khachaturian House-Museum for his long-lasting friendship and support.

FAR's Education and Science Program Manager Eduard Karapetyan also said that he, too, highly valued Arzruni's investment in Armenia's youth and culture. "Considering how well the tour went, I can state that Sahan Arzruni's patriotic and extensive work will have a huge educational impact on the musical schools and talented children from these regions. We must thank him once more," he said.

The benefit tour took place under the auspices of the Ministries of Culture and Youth Affairs of Armenia and Artsakh, and was organized by FAR. He reiterated his gratitude to FAR for orchestrating the initiative. "I'm grateful to them for making it happen," he said.

## Arpa International Film Festival Opens at New Venue with World Premier Film from Morocco

HOLLYWOOD – The 22nd Arpa International Film Festival will take place this year on November 8-10 at a new location after 14 years at the Egyptian Theater in Hollywood. Due to the purchase of the Egyptian by Netflix, the theater is being renovated and therefore the festival will move to the American Legion Post 43 on Highland, located next to the Hollywood Bowl.

The Legion Post 43 Theater is the only historic theater in Hollywood owned and operated by veterans, and has undergone a major transformation into a state-of-the-art cinema and event venue. Its halls were once graced by Hollywood legends such as Humphrey Bogart, Charlton Heston, Clark Gable, Ronald Reagan and Shirley Temple.

To ensure that the oldest international independent film festival in Los Angeles will not suffer any difficulties, the executive committee has been working diligently to make sure that the Festival will keep its prestige.

Once again, the festival will screen the best shorts, features, documentaries, music videos, and animated films at our new location. With a cutting-edge new projection and sound system, The Legion Theater recently screened Quentin Tarantino's newest film, "Once Upon a Time in Hollywood," starring Brad Pitt and Leonardo DiCaprio. The historic building dates back to 1929 with an original Egyptian revival architecture style building, an incredible underground Art Deco bar, ample parking and amazing drinks and food.

Many films are being viewed and selected before the final selections are announced. One film that has already made the cut is "Sand and Fire" from Morocco's top director Souheil Ben Barka, which will have its world premiere on the opening night of the festival. The film is an epic story that takes place in the 17th century between Spain and Morocco, and has a renowned international cast. In a twist of fate, the filmmaker's grandmother was of Armenian heritage and viewers will hear Dle Yaman throughout the film. The filmmaker is a frequent visitor to Armenia.

The festival will take place November 8 through 10.

# Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian Dalian

## Auntie Zee's World-Famous Apricot Jam from Fresno

"Here's my late Auntie Zee's (Zarhoui Baxter) private recipe for the most delicious apricot jam on earth," said Dr. Baxter. "This delicious jam recipe takes time to make and is a major labor of love. My Auntie Zee in Fresno knew how to cook and always went the extra mile to make special Armenian dishes that had her signature. Auntie Zee protected this recipe for many years, and had a twinkle in her eye when she would give it up to those few relatives and friends who asked how to make it. I think I am the only person she shared the recipe with in all those years. And I think that was because I once caught her climbing up a fruit tree to pick her own apricots on a hot summer day when she was in her late 90's. She knew I was thinking of her that day, and she reluctantly shared this recipe with her oldest nephew."

(Recipe and photo are courtesy of the late Dr. Harold H. "Buzz" Baxter from the Gutsy Gourmet, his popular international food website.)

### INGREDIENTS

3 quarts washed and cut apricots\*  
8 cups sugar  
1 small can crushed pineapple  
1/2 cup fresh lemon juice  
15 apricot pits – remove seeds and boil until skin peels off  
2 tablespoons light Karo syrup or corn syrup

### PREPARATION

In a large pot, bring all ingredients to a boil and cook until apricots are soft and begin to lose their shape. Let cool completely. Pour into shallow baking pans to about 3/4 inch deep. Cover with cheese cloth netting and put in the hot sun for 3-4 days to further "sun-cook." (Dr. Baxter explained: "Of course you have to live in an area where the temperature will remain in the 90's to 100's during the day. Bring pans in at night because you do not want insects to eat your jam.")

When ready (after 3-4 days), put the jam back into a large pot and bring to a boil for 10-12 minutes, stirring. Pour into sterilized jars and seal (and follow normal canning instructions).

\*Dr. Baxter adds: "Cut apricots in half unless they are very large, then you should cut them in quarters. We are making jam here, not jelly. Tree-ripened apricots are not easy to find these days. It is important that these apricots are ripened in the sun. That is where all the flavor comes from. If you can find a farm that grows apricots or have your own tree, you are going to love this recipe. The apricot pits are the hard woody center of the apricot. Within that hard woody center is the seed. You will have to use a hammer or vise to break the hard pit and remove the seed. Boiling the seed will remove the bitter skin that covers it. This seed gives a unique flavor to this jam."

Makes about 4 quarts.

For this recipe, go to: <http://www.thegutsygourmet.net/zeesjam.html>





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CALENDAR

## ARIZONA

**NOVEMBER 2-3 — ARMENIAFest at St. Apkar Armenian Apostolic Church.** Weekend food and cultural festival featuring traditional Armenian foods, beverages, exhibits, music and dance performances. 8849 E. Cholla St., Scottsdale.

**NOVEMBER 16 — SOAR (Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief) Annual Golf Tournament.** Saturday 7 a.m. to 1 p.m. Stonecreek Golf Club, 4435 E. Paradise Village Pkwy, Phoenix. This is a fundraising event for Armenian orphans. For more information, contact Dr. Alan Haroian, 603-540-1961.

## CALIFORNIA

**AUGUST 17 — In honor of Professor Vahakn N. Dadrian, the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, in collaboration with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and the Organization of Istanbul Armenians (OIS), is organizing a "Celebration of Life" event to be held on Saturday, at the Deukmejian Community Center at the Ararat Home of Los Angeles. 4 p.m. Dadrian, who passed away on August 2, was the pre-eminent scholar of the Armenian Genocide and was instrumental in establishing the larger field of genocide studies. The event is open to the public. For more information, contact the Ararat-Eskijian Museum at (747) 500-7585 or eskijian@ararat-eskijian-museum.com. Deukmejian Community Center is located at 15105 Mission Hills Road.**

## CONNECTICUT

**AUGUST 25 — Armenian Church of Holy Resurrection Annual Armenian Festival, 12-5 p.m.** Traditional Armenian and American food and activities. Harry Bedrosian oud band and ensemble. 1910 Stanley St., Route 71, New Britain.

## MASSACHUSETTS

**AUGUST 14-23 — Wednesday and Fridays Summer Studio Art Classes for kids, Session 2.** Armenian Museum of America, Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor, 65 Main Street, Watertown. Artists explore the amazing objects in the galleries and create art from this inspiration. Ages 6-10: 11 am to 1 pm; Ages 11-14: 3 pm to 5 pm; Session 2 Dates: August 14-23, Wednesdays and Fridays. Cost per student: \$120. Members (family or higher) \$96! Individual drop-in classes can be purchased for \$35. Members \$28. A 10% discount will be offered for each additional sibling in the same course and/or class. For individual classes and siblings, please call Education Coordinator, Garin Habeshian at 617-926-2562, ext. 103.

**AUGUST 22 — Under the August Moon. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston.** Thursday from 7:30- 9 p.m. Delightful evening for supporters, partners & friends featuring fabulous signature dishes, hosted by anoush'ella and the Berklee Jazz Trio. RSVP appreciated hello@armenianheritagepark.org

**AUGUST 25 — Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic. 12 to 5 p.m., Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Picnic** to be held at our new Family Life & Cultural Center, 1280 Boston Road (RTE. 125) Haverhill MA Music by the fabulous Jason Naroian Ensemble. Menu includes Lamb Shish, Losh, & Chicken Kebab Dinners, Kheyra, Pastries, & Beverages. Air Conditioned Hall. Bring your lawn chairs for sitting outside. For more info visit [www.hypointe.armenianchurch.org](http://www.hypointe.armenianchurch.org) or call (978) 372-9227. Take Rte. 495 N to exit 48, bear right at the end of the ramp and follow the signs. Additional parking at Osgood Landing with free shuttle bus to the picnic grounds.

**SEPTEMBER 15 — Trinity Annual Picnic, 12-5 pm, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge MA.** Delicious Armenian food – shish, losh, and chicken kebab - paklava, khadaif, and more with take-out available. Armenian music for your listening and dancing pleasure featuring the Greg Krikorian Armenian Ensemble with Greg Krikorian, oud and vocals, Mark Der Mugrditchian, clarinet, Kevin Magarian, guitar and vocals, Arthur Chingris, dumbeg, and Steve Surabian, tambourine. Lots of activities for children including the Moonwalk. Blessing of the Madagh at 4 p.m., followed by raffle drawing for cash prizes. For information, log onto [www.htaac.org/calendar/event/716/](http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/716/), contact the Holy Trinity Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org).



**In honor of the late Armenian Genocide studies pioneer Prof. Vahakn Dadrian, a program at the Ararat-Eskijian Museum will take place on Saturday, August 17 at 4 p.m., in Mission Hills, Calif. The "Celebration of Life" program will be in collaboration with the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research.**

**SEPTEMBER 16 — Registration is now open for the 2019-2020 sessions of the Abaka Dance Academy,** 101 Bigelow Ave., Watertown, MA. Principal/director Apo Ashjian. Classes begin September 16 for grades Nursery II - Grade 10 students. Check the schedule and enroll today at [www.abakadanceacademy.com](http://www.abakadanceacademy.com). For more info, email [abakadanceacademy@gmail.com](mailto:abakadanceacademy@gmail.com) or call 617-283-2010.

**SEPTEMBER 18 — Celebrating Contributions of Our Nation's Immigrants – Gala Benefit for the Endowed Fund for Care of Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway** Honoring Dr. Noubar Afeyan, Leader & Philanthropist Recognizing Organizations Serving Immigrants & Refugees InterContinental Hotel Boston. Advance Reservations only. For information, [hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org](mailto:hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org)

**SEPTEMBER 22 — Sunday Afternoon for Families and Friends.** Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. 2-4 pm. Wonderful afternoon with The Hye Guys Ensemble featuring Ron Sahatjian and Joe Kouyoumjian. Hoodsies, Face Painting and more RSVP appreciated [hello@armenianheritagepark.org](mailto:hello@armenianheritagepark.org)

**SEPTEMBER 29 — Sunday, at 6 p.m. The screening of "The Stateless Diplomat," a documentary film** by Mimi Malayan on the heroic life and legacy of Diana A. Apcar (1859-1937), Armenia's Honorary Consul to Japan in 1920 at Mosesian Center for Arts, 321 Arsenal St, Watertown. Organized by the Armenian Cultural Foundation and co-sponsored by Amaras Art Alliance, Arlington International Film Festival, Armenian International Women's Association, Armenian Museum of America, Armenian Women's Welfare Association, National Association for Armenian Studies and Research, Project SAVE Armenian Photograph Archives, and Tekeyan Cultural Association. Details to follow. For more details contact ACF during office or email: [armeniancultural.fdn@gmail.com](mailto:armeniancultural.fdn@gmail.com)

**OCTOBER 2 —Joint Sts. Vartanantz – Hye Point Golf Outing at the beautiful Butter Brook Golf Club in Westford.** Proceeds to benefit scholarships to Diocesan youth programs. 10 a.m. Shotgun start. Golfers with all skill levels most welcome. Single players will be grouped into foursomes. \$150 for Golf, lunch, and Dinner. \$165 will include 25 raffle tickets. Awards dinner to follow golf outing at Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. For registration and sponsorship information, please contact Steve Sarkisian at 978-808-2820, [Stsgolf@earthlink.net](mailto:Stsgolf@earthlink.net).

**OCTOBER 19 — The Vosbikians are coming to the Merrimack Valley.** The Armenian Friends of America proudly present their Annual HYE KEF 5 Dance, featuring The Vosbikians. The DoubleTree by Hilton Hotel, Andover, MA. Tickets Purchased before 9/13/19 will include the Great Venue, Outstanding Buffet, The Vosbikian Band and

5 Free Raffle Tickets Adults \$75.00 & Students 21 & under \$65 Specially priced AFA Rooms available through 9/17/19. For Tickets and more information, Contact: Lu Sirmaian 978-683-9121 or Sharke' Der Apkarian at 978-808-0598 Visit [www.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org](http://www.Armenia-FriendsofAmerica.org)

**OCTOBER 20 — Annual Banquet of Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston,** Celebrating the 58th Anniversary of the Consecration of Holy Trinity and honoring Bruce Newell as the "Parishioner of the Year," 12:30 p.m., Charles and Nevart Talanian Cultural Hall, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. Save the date; details to follow.

**NOVEMBER 1,2 — NAASR Grand Opening and Gala. Friday, November 1 – Grand Opening & Ribbon Cutting,** NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, at NAASR's new world headquarters, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA. Saturday, November 2 – NAASR 65th Anniversary Gala, at the Royal Sonesta Hotel, Cambridge. 6 pm Reception, 7 pm Dinner and Program. Honoree Dr. Vartan Gregorian, president of the Carnegie Corporation of New York; Master of Ceremonies David Ignatius, columnist for the *Washington Post* and novelist; Featuring renowned soprano Isabel Bayrakdarian, accompanied by the Borromeo String Quartet, performing a program of songs by Komitas. Further details to follow.

**NOVEMBER 16 — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School 35th Anniversary Celebration.** 6:30 PM Cocktail Reception, 7:30 PM Dinner and Program. The Westin Waltham - Boston, MA \$150 per person.

**DECEMBER 6 and 7 — Friday and Saturday, Trinity Christmas Bazaar, Friday, 12 noon-9 p.m., Saturday, 10 a.m.-7 p.m.;** Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge. For further information, contact the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

**DECEMBER 15 — Christmas Holiday Concert – Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra,** 3:00 p.m., Church Sanctuary, Holy Trinity Armenian Church of Greater Boston, 145 Brattle Street, Cambridge, MA. Save the date; details to follow. For further information, call the Church Office, 617.354.0632, or email [office@htaac.org](mailto:office@htaac.org).

## MICHIGAN

**OCTOBER 26 — Kef Time Keghi IV 6:30 p.m. Saturday, at St John Armenian Cultural Hall, Southfield,** headlined with Traditional Keghetzi Pagharch feast, full buffet dinner with dancing, music by the Keghi All-Star Armenian Band. Reservations call Laura Negosian Lucassian at 248-376-3794 or email at [Llucassian@TBEonline.org](mailto:Llucassian@TBEonline.org). Donation: Adults \$45, Children under 17, \$20. Cash Bar. Mail checks to Karen Nigosian, 21919 Michigan Ave, Dearborn, MI 48124 Checks payable to Nor Keghi Association. Proceeds to support continuing renovations at public schools and community projects in Nor Keghi, Armenia. Supported by parishioners of the four Armenian churches in Greater Detroit.

**NOVEMBER 16 — The Knights of Vartan, Nareg-Shavarshan Lodge #6 and the Daughters of Vartan,** Zabelle Otyag #12 will celebrate their respective 100th and 70th organization anniversaries. Featuring: Kevork Artinian and his All Star Band at St. Mary's Cultural Hall, 18100 Merriman Rd, Livonia. This is a fundraiser Dinner/Kef Dance to celebrate Knights and Daughters as well as a chance for future members to observe how our community puts our heritage on display. All proceeds to fund renovation of school gymnasium, Knights of Vartan #106, Elementary School, Yerevan, Armenia. For Reservations Contact: Laura Lucassian, (248) 376-3794, Cost \$75 per person, \$40 after 9:30 pm

## NEW JERSEY

**SEPTEMBER 22 – Annual Picnic, Sunday, 12:30 to 6:30 p.m. St. Stepanos Armenian Apostolic Church,** 1184 Ocean Avenue, Long Branch. Louleh and Shish Kebab, Dolma Dinners. Armenian Cuisine featuring Cheese Boereg, Pastries, Baklava and more. Armenian Music and Children's Games.

**OCTOBER 25 — Banquet Honoring Dr. Taner Akcam Abajian Hall St. Leon complex Fair Lawn, NJ** Sponsored by Knights & Daughters of Vartan- Under the Auspices of His Grace Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate. For Reservations please call Sona Manuelian 551-427-8763. \$125 p.p. early reservations recommended.

## NEW YORK

**SEPTEMBER 17 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir** Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the



## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## Christian Architecture Of the Levant Project Aims at Preserving The Past through Modern Tools

ARCHITECTURE, from page 13

Armenia and the region of Cilicia are in a dilapidated condition due to negligence and destruction, this groundbreaking endeavor by Christianian provides a forum for a collective effort of preserving the history of these sites in the digital age. Christianian's project should be applauded as a timely and essential for preserving what was lost."

It is the hope of the project directors that other archives of photographs and plans will be added to the website, in order to develop it into a truly comprehensive archive. Any efforts to promote the website, whether in talks and lectures, communications of organizations focused on related topics in architecture, art history, or history, or in publications are encouraged and appreciated. Any online links to the Website would be especially appreciated. Links to the website could be either to the home page or to individual sites, e.g., to Sis, Anavarza, Vahka, Aghtamar, etc., as appropriate.

Any questions or comments about the website can be directed to the editor from the Contact links at: <https://charlarchive.org/Home/Contact>.

Born in Beirut, Lebanon, Christianian moved to the US in 1978. He earned a BS from the Colorado School of Mines in Geophysical Engineering (1985), and a MA in Geophysics from the University of Houston (1989). In 1990, he joined Mike's Camera, a business engaged in selling and promoting photographic equipment and services, with retail stores in Colorado and Northern California as well as e-commerce sites. His research interests include Armenian Numismatics, the Armenian Kingdom in Cilicia, the Armenians of Gesaria, and the art and material culture of Armenians in the Ottoman Empire. He is married, with three children who are equally passionate about their Armenian heritage.

## Men of Granite: Take Two

By Theo Tate

GRANITE CITY, Ill. — The 1940 Granite City Warriors boys basketball team poses after winning the state championship.

For over 30 years, Arthur Sarkissian has been a successful Hollywood producer, making 17 motion pictures, including three in the "Rush Hour" series starring Jackie Chan and Chris Tucker.

Now, he's setting his sights on producing "Men of Granite," a film about the 1940 Granite City boys basketball team winning a state championship.

"It's not so much about sports, although I love basketball very much, but it's about the challenges that anyone faces in any particular field," Sarkissian said. "It's a challenge that I connect with these kids. They had nothing and didn't give up and I like that."

The motion picture will be based on the 2007 book written by Dan Manoyan, a former longtime sportswriter from Milwaukee.

"I'll be happy when it gets moving," Manoyan said.

This will be the second attempt for "Men of Granite" to hit the big screen. Production for the movie was originally scheduled to start in 2015 after Milwaukee philanthropist Albert

Nicholas — who died in 2016 — invested \$1.3 million in the project and Valerie McCaffrey was hired as producer. But lack of funding halted production for four years.

Two years ago, Manoyan sued the producers for mismanagement of money for the film. A three-day trial ended earlier this summer in Milwaukee and the judge will decide within the next several months who will pay back the money that remained in the production account when the project was shut down.

"It was a bench case, which means you don't get a verdict right away," Manoyan said. "You have to wait about two months."



The Happy Warriors of 1940: Everett Daniels, Dan Eftimoff, George Gages, Andy Hagopian, Ed Hoff, John Markarian, Sam Mouradian, Ebbie Mueller, Evon Parsaghian, Andy Phillip. Coach: Byron Bozarth, Assistant Coach: Leonard Davis, Manager: Harold Brown

Manoyan said he's happy that the project has started back up with a new producer.

"It's great to get the Men of Granite project back on track, especially with a proven producer like Arthur Sarkissian," the author said. "He

has a track record of producing quality films and I couldn't be happier that he is interested in the project. The project is still in the early stages, but with the court case behind us, I'm sure things will start happening rapidly now."

Sarkissian said there is no specific timetable on when the movie will be made.

"It's finding the right person to adapt it and finding the right director," the producer said. "I don't think it's a difficult movie to make. I'm hoping that within the next six months, I'm hoping to be able to be in production with it."

Sarkissian said he contacted Manoyan through Anita Busch, a Granite City native who used to work for Deadline Hollywood.

"She brought the story to my attention and she said I should get in touch with him and I did," Sarkissian said. "The rest is basically talking about what I wanted to know, like what has transpired, who was involved and what happened."

"Men of Granite" tells the story about the players growing up in the Lincoln Place neighborhood. Most of the players on the team came from Hungarian, Armenian, Yugoslavian and Macedonian backgrounds.

Granite City beat Herrin in the 1940 state championship game and finished 29-5.

"It's a story that I feel is timeless and I love true stories and what these guys have accomplished," Sarkissian said. "It's something I felt very strong about and I want to find a good way to bring it to the screen."

## McDonald's Might Have Been McMikoyan's, if Not For a World War

HAMBURGER, from page 13

Gronow says, laughing. "If the war hadn't broken out in 1941 (when the USSR entered the Second World War), we would have a chain of McMikoyan's."

In his memoirs, Mikoyan recalls ordering 25 American machines that could produce two million hamburgers per day. Historian Pavel Syutkin notes that by October 1937, the Mikoyan meat-processing plant was already

working toward this goal, daily churning out more than 400,000 patties.

But ask anyone from the former Soviet Union about Soviet hamburgers today, and they'll look confused. Because, for the most part, burger did not meet bun until McDonald's opened in Moscow in 1990 — about two years before (and perhaps heralding) the end of the Soviet Union.

Yes, Mikoyan cutlets, or *kotleti*, were

churned out en masse. Syutkin notes the original recipe "was a complete analogue of the American hamburger," featuring minced meat and seasoning. But it quickly took on a distinctly Soviet character. Instead of disk-shaped patties, the Mikoyan factory eventually produced ones that were rounder with tapered ends, like footballs. And most strikingly, they were served sans bun, as bread crumbs were introduced into the patty itself as filler.

"You can say that the Soviet mass-produced cutlet swallowed up the American hamburger and devoured it," Glushchenko jokes.

The result, whose taste has been likened more to meat loaf than a Big Mac, was served in the stolovaya (Soviet cafeteria), and sold in stores frozen, using the blast-chilling that had so impressed Mikoyan during his American trip. This, in turn, made it a Soviet weeknight staple.

Actress Yelena Shmulenson, who grew up in Soviet Ukraine, says her American husband calls *kotleti* "Soviet meatball," and laments that she doesn't make them for holidays. Others have less fond feelings toward Mikoyan's creation. Sociologist Asya Tsaturyan, who grew up in Moscow, recalls the "horrendous smell" of her cafeteria *kotleti*. Twenty years later, she remains best friends with the Grade 2 classmate who volunteered to eat her portion so that Tsaturyan wouldn't run afoul of her teachers for wasting food.

Author Boris Fishman, who left the USSR as a child in 1988, says that while the distinctions between burgers and *kotleti* are not huge, the meaning behind them can be.

"Has a single, instantaneous kitchen manoeuvre ever accounted for more distance between two places, two selves?" Fishman wrote in an email. "I'm talking about the patty-flattening that turns a kotleta (humped, sturdy, as Soviet as living with Grandma) into a hamburger (backyards, ball games, 'Amurka'). Eating a burger (with my hands), I feel diffusely American, a little coarse, faddish. But eating a *kotleta* (with knife and fork), I feel ... like that grandmother's grandson."

Fishman isn't the only one who has come to love the food of his *babushka*. Russians can now dine in retro canteen-style restaurants serving up Soviet nostalgia — and *kotleti*. Who knows what Mikoyan would think of that.

## CALENDAR

Ottoman Turkish Army. Luncheon at 12:00 noon (\$45) sponsored by the WNRC Foundation located at 3 West 51st. St., New York City. Book sale/signing following the presentation. All proceeds to be donated to the foundation RSVP: [anna@snapandstyle.com](mailto:anna@snapandstyle.com) or (615) 934 - 3873

### RHODE ISLAND

**AUGUST 27 — The Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island (AHARI) and the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR)** present The Armenian Legionnaires: Sacrifice and Betrayal in World War I, a lecture by Dr. Susan Pattie, honorary senior research associate, University College, London. Tuesday, 7 p.m., 245 Waterman St., 5th floor conference room, Providence. Admission is free. Doors open at 7 p.m. Reception before and after program. Copies of The Armenian Legionnaires will be available for purchase.

**SEPTEMBER 20 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church**, Providence will host a book presentation, "The World of Konstantin Petrossian" (English and Armenian), Published by Institute of Arts National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia, and Composers Union of Armenia. Friday at 7 p.m., Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson street, Providence. Details to follow.

**SEPTEMBER 22 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church**, Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers. We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Martin Papazian, ear, nose and throat specialist. Steven

Zaroogian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

**OCTOBER 20 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church**, Providence Presents Meet With The Doctors - Questions & Answers. We invite everyone to avail themselves of this opportunity and "Meet with our Armenian Doctors" Dr. Herman Ayvazyan Internal Medicine. Topic: New Trends in Primary Care Medicine. Ara Boghigian, Moderator. Sunday, 12:30 p.m., Hanoian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

### WASHINGTON, DC

**SEPTEMBER 16-17 — Armenian Assembly of America's National Advocacy Conference and Gala** will take place. It will include the Conference, Gala honoring Armenian American Congresswoman Jackie Speier, Advocacy Day on Capitol Hill, and a Congressional Reception celebrating U.S.-Armenia relations. Special room rates available at The Wharf InterContinental Hotel. Visit [www.aimhye.com](http://www.aimhye.com) for tickets, sponsorships, special hotel room rates, and more information.

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

## COMMENTARY

# 'Abandoned' Armenian Properties Around the World

## Part II

By Edmond Y. Azadian

There are a number of valuable Armenian properties around the world which have played a historic role in preserving Armenian heritage. But with the change in the demographic profile in the countries where those properties are located, the institutions have outlived their usefulness.

The educational mission of the Mekhitarist Order has disintegrated because of the paucity of young clergy recruits. On the other hand, the once-burgeoning Armenian community in India has all but disappeared, leaving behind an island in the form of the Calcutta Philanthropic Academy.

But there are institutions whose viability and relevance to their respective communities continued to justify their existence and their mission and they, also, have been abandoned prematurely.

One such property is the Melkonian Educational Institute in Nicosia, Cyprus. That institute has been "abandoned" in the sense that its mission is no longer contributing to the preservation of the Armenian heritage.

Melkonian's creation was a response to a catastrophic crisis and it continued to provide solutions throughout its history, every time a crisis erupted in various Armenian communities.

Following the 1915 Genocide, hundreds of thousands of Armenian orphans were left destitute in the desert or at the mercy of foreign charitable organizations. Patriarch Zaven Der Yeghiayan of Istanbul gathered 300 such orphans to house

the school was unable to keep up its standards and deserved to be shuttered.

In addition, the school had an endowment fund and had the responsibility of abiding by the terms of the Melkonian brothers' wills.

Besides, thanks to the visionary leadership of Haigashen Ouzounian, an intellectual leader of the AGBU, income-bearing office buildings were constructed on the school's campus. Public records indicate that in recent years, the Melkonian Commercial Center produced an annual income of \$650,000.

The Cypriot government was also supporting the school and there was potential for further subsidies. If there is a discrepancy in the math, where then is the responsibility of the leadership to raise funds?

Melkonian's closure in 2005 almost coincided with Cyprus joining the European Union which took place in 2004 and resulted in two particularly damaging missteps. The European Union had designated Western Armenia as an endangered language; therefore funds would be forthcoming for its preservation, as Melkonian was a major educational center in Europe, besides some failing schools in Greece. In preparation to join the Union, the Cypriot government was highlighting its focus on minority rights, in compliance with Europe's standards. The status of the Armenian community and other minorities was to serve as credentials for the government's minority policy but the closure of Melkonian at that delicate moment served as a stab in the back. So much for the political prudence of the AGBU leadership.

The retaliation was not delayed as the government took part of the

Melkonian campus by eminent domain to handicap the sale of the entire property, which at that time, was quoted to be worth \$80 million, thanks to the urban sprawl of Nicosia's suburbs.

Melkonian's demise still remains a hotly-debated controversy. Many reasons and speculations are being thrown back and forth. The leadership of the AGBU has not come up with a plausible explanation and in its absence, many people are left to draw their own conclusions.

The main argument seems to be the lucrative potential of the sale of the property.

When the late Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan decided to sue

the AGBU on the grounds that the original intent of the Melkonians' will was to entrust it to the Istanbul Patriarchate, we were all alarmed at the potential transfer of the property to the jurisdiction of an entity in Turkey.

If today the Patriarch were alive, it would be within his right to question the AGBU leadership about the whereabouts of the endowment fund and the use of its income.

In 1974, Turkey's President Bulent Ecevit launched an act of aggression against Cyprus, and in his determination to intimidate the Greek people, he also targeted the Armenians.

During that act of aggression, the Melkonian school was purposely bombed by the Turkish Air Force because it had been a shining star of Armenian education throughout its history and Turks have always abhorred Armenian educational institutes.

There is an anecdote about Sultan Abdul Hamid who has said that "I am more afraid of the Mekhitarist printing press [churning out scholarly books] than the bombs of Armenian 'terrorists.'"

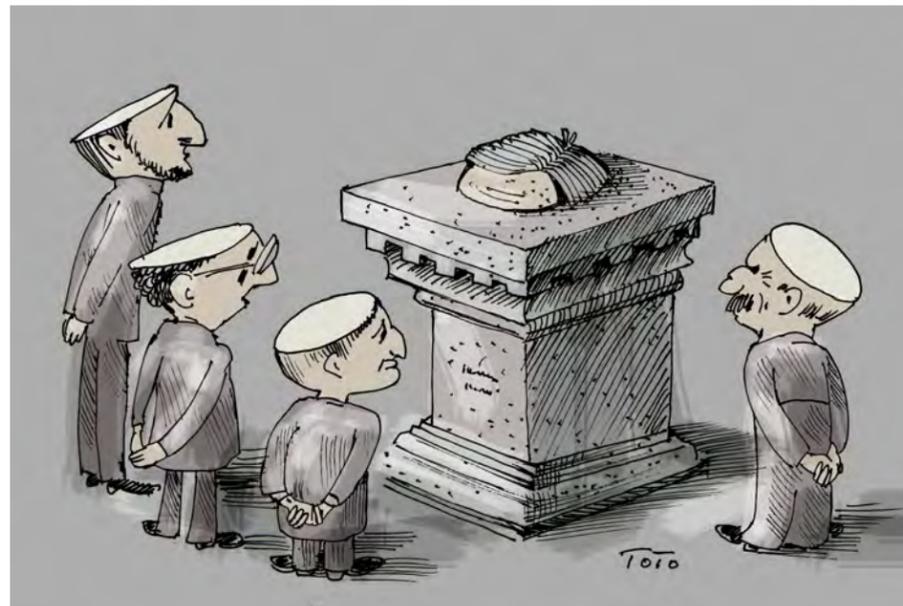
Thus, Ecevit had to outdo the destructive task of his predecessors.

Unfortunately, those who turned off the lights at Melkonian became inadvertent accomplices.

The Melkonian property has not been sold yet, therefore it is safe to assume that greed is not one of the reasons for its demise.

But even worse, there is apparently a reversal of the educational mission and philosophy among the AGBU leadership, particularly in the mindset of its current president, my respected friend, Berge Setrakian.

*continued on next page*



them at the Melkonian Institute; the school originally acted as an orphanage before changing its mission to that of a boarding school. In later years, it housed and educated students escaping the Iranian revolution or the Lebanese civil war.

The institute was ideally located on the island of Cyprus to continue in its role as a safe harbor as other crises plagued Armenian communities in Iraq, Syria and elsewhere.

In time, the institute became a center for academic learning and the names of many noted scholars, writers, philosophers were connected with it, such as poet Vahan Tekeyan, Hagop Oshagan, Vahe Vahian, Kersam Aharonian, Hagop Topjian, Krikor Guiragossian, Moushegh Ishkhan and many others.

Melkonian graduates eventually took over the intellectual life of much of the diaspora, shaping the lives and minds of their fellow Armenians.

The institute was founded by benefactors Garabed and Krikor Melkonian, brothers from Egypt. They liquidated their large tobacco business to create an endowment which initially was entrusted to the Istanbul Patriarchate. However, through the efforts of some prominent Armenian leaders, including Archbishop Mushegh Seropian, the endowment was diverted away from Turkey and entrusted to the Armenian General Benevolent Union, which carried out the school's educational mission eminently, until its demise in 2005.

The closure of the Melkonian touched off a public uproar; in particular, the alumni mobilized and organized to keep the doors open, but to no avail.

The Melkonian had not suffered a drop in enrollment nor experienced difficulty in recruiting educators and it maintained reputable academic standards. However, AGBU officials said that

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## COMMENTARY



My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## US Appeals Court Makes a Wrong Decision on Armenian Demands

The United States Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit made a decision on August 8, 2019 to deny the appeal of two lawsuits brought by several Armenian-Americans demanding compensation from the Republic of Turkey and two of its banks for confiscating their properties shortly after the Armenian Genocide.

The first lawsuit was filed in December 2010 by Alex Bakalian, Anais Haroutunian, and Rita Mahdessian seeking \$65 million from the Central Bank of the Republic of Turkey, and Ziraat Bankasi. The second lawsuit was filed by David Davoyan (administrator of the Estate of Garbis Tavit Davoyan) and Hrayr Turabian against the Republic of Turkey, the Central Bank of Turkey, and Ziraat Bankasi.

The US Court of Appeals confirmed the 2013 decision of Judge Dolly Gee who dismissed the two lawsuits declaring that “under the political question doctrine which says certain questions – in this case, determining whether Turkey’s actions were genocide – should be handled by the executive branch, not the courts,” according to the Courthouse News Service.

The Court of Appeals, however, rejected the appeal for a different reason, claiming that the two Armenian lawsuits are time-barred. In 2006, a California statute had set the deadline of 2016 for such lawsuits stating that: “Any action, including any pending action brought by an Armenian Genocide victim, or the heir or beneficiary of an Armenian Genocide victim, who resides in this state, seeking payment for, or the return of, deposited assets, or the return of looted assets, shall not be dismissed for failure to comply with the applicable statute of limitation, if the action is filed on or before December 31, 2016.”

Unfortunately, in 2012, Ninth Circuit Judge Susan P. Graber, in the case of Movsesian vs. Victoria Versicherung AG, invalidated the California statute extending the time for bringing certain insurance claims based on the Armenian Genocide. Judge Graber wrote that “the statute was preempted under the foreign affairs doctrine,” according to the Metropolitan News-Enterprise.

The August 8, 2019 decision by the Court of Appeals is contradictory in the sense that while Judge Andrew Hurwitz (who wrote the Appeals Court decision) acknowledged the Armenian Genocide, he ignored the fact that genocides have no statute of limitations, therefore regardless of how much time has elapsed, genocide-related lawsuits could not be dismissed on that basis.

Here is what Judge Hurwitz wrote in the decision of the Court of Appeals: “From 1915 to 1923, in what is often referred to as the Armenian Genocide, the Ottoman Empire massacred, forcibly expelled, or marched to death 1.5 million of its Armenian citizens, seizing the property of the dead and deported.”

In another section of the Appeals Court decision, under the subtitle of “Facts,” Judge Hurwitz added the following comments on the Armenian Genocide: “During World War I, the Ottoman Empire began forcibly relocating its Armenian subjects away from population centers and into the desert, causing the deaths of over a million ethnic Armenians. The Empire confiscated the real property left behind by the victims of the Armenian Genocide.”

Judge Hurwitz agreed with the plaintiffs’ assertions in the lawsuits. He wrote: “We assume for purposes of our accrual analysis the truth of the plaintiffs’ allegations that either the Ottoman Empire illegally seized the property of the plaintiffs’ predecessors, or the Empire and the Banks placed the property in trust under Turkish law but later illegally refused to return it. If the initial expropriation was wrongful, the plaintiffs’ claims accrued by 1923. If the property was placed in trust, the plaintiffs acknowledge that ‘laws passed in 1928 and 1929 formally ended Turkey’s disingenuous attempt at the restitution of immovable property to its rightful Armenian owners.’ Thus, the plaintiffs’ predecessors should have known well more than ten years ago that Turkey did not intend to return their property.”

Judge Hurwitz complained that the lawsuits were filed

decades after the Armenian Genocide which does not make them timely. “We have no doubt that the survivors of the Ottoman Empire’s atrocities experienced enormous hardships after the seizure of their property. Indeed, we take as true the allegations in the operative complaints that it ‘was impossible for Plaintiffs’ predecessors to seek compensation for their stolen property or focus on anything but rebuilding their lives.’ But, these suits are brought not by the victims of the Armenian Genocide, but rather by residents of the United States long removed from its carnage, many of whose predecessors relocated to this country decades ago. And the current plaintiffs do not allege any attempts to pursue these claims judicially prior to 2010.”

The attorneys for the Armenian-American plaintiffs reacted with anger at the Appeals Court decision. Kathryn Lee Boyd of the law firm Pierce Bainbridge Beck Price & Hecht – representing three Armenian-Americans whose ancestors owned 122.5 acres of land that was confiscated – told the Metropolitan News-Enterprise:

“It is a sad day for Armenian-Americans when a US court has stripped them of all access to justice, refused to consider or even recognize the extenuating circumstances of the Armenian Genocide, and left them with no remedy against Turkey, which continues to hold and use their stolen property with impunity.”

Mark Geragos of the law firm of Geragos & Geragos, who represents the second group of plaintiffs, was quoted by the Metropolitan News-Enterprise:

“The Turkish Lobby has bought and paid for the United States Executive Branch and State Department for decades. Sadly the Judicial branch is left with very few options to remedy the blatant mendacity of the Turkish lobbying machine.”

The Court of Appeals took the easy way out by basing its decision on the unconstitutionality of the California statute which had given the plaintiffs more time to file their lawsuits. If the Court of Appeals had based its decision on the occurrence of genocide, the issue of time-limitation would have been irrelevant and would have ruled that the Turkish government and its two banks are liable for confiscating the Armenian properties.

I hope the attorneys for the Armenian-American plaintiffs will appeal to the US Supreme Court to reverse this unjust decision.

## ‘Abandoned’ Armenian Properties Around the World

from previous page

The late Alex Manoogian, throughout his presidency of the AGBU (1953-1989), allocated his own resources and inspired other benefactors to contribute to the development of the educational mission of the organization; benefactors like Hussisian, Nazarian, Kouyoumjian, Zaroukian, Hanessian and Bazarian joined his drive to expand the network of the schools in the Diaspora.

With the current leadership of the AGBU, the trend has been reversed. Therefore, Melkonian was just the tip of the iceberg as other schools have met the same fate. The AGBU closed the Bazarian School in Sao Paolo, Brazil and the Zaroukian School in Toronto, Canada. The axe was over the Manoogian school in Detroit before it became a charter school funded by the state.

The Kalpakian School in Athens and the Sydney School in Australia are slated to be closed.

As well, the AGBU School in Watertown had closed in the 1990s.

The fact that all the schools started by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (ARF) camp in the same communities are burgeoning is proof that there is no dearth of students nor funding in the respective communities. That leaves the AGBU leadership open to be accused of lack of vision, lack of commitment to our heritage and lack of know-how to run educational institutions.

The current educational philosophy of the AGBU leadership is – and that is enunciated proudly – that preserving the Armenian heritage is tantamount to containing those communities in ghettos and that closing schools is a form of emancipation in the present globalized world.

Should we hesitate to call this campaign to close down schools a betrayal of our heritage?

The Melkonian Educational Institute is not yet an “abandoned” property but it looks like it’s on its way.

This destructive drive is being conducted with impunity, under the belief that the diaspora is disintegrating and will reach a point where there will no longer be an authority seeking accountability and no public to be incensed.

(Part III of this subject will appear next week.)

## IN MEMORIAM

## Prof. Krikor Pidedjian

## Musician, Scholar, Pioneer of Gara Murza’s Armenian Holy Mass

By Fr. Zaven Arzoumanian, PhD

I was deeply saddened reading in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* weekly about the passing of our distinguished musician Prof. Krikor Pidedjian in New York at age 84. He was the pioneer of the complete study of the 19th century Armenian musician Krisdapor Gara Murza, whose life and achievements he explored academically as a final and complete evaluation, and published his study in an impressive volume. Pidedjian was the most recent scholar who restored the many unknown events of Gara Murza’s intricate life, and more importantly, he established and published the academic complete text of Gara Murza’s original Armenian Holy Mass (Badarak), before Makar Ekmalian and Gomidas Vartabed composed their own versions of the same Liturgy years later. Pidedjian’s conclusion was that the last two versions were based on the traditional music of the Armenian Church Badarak written originally for the first time by Gara Murza. In addition to this important case later in this article I will touch on another publication where Krikor Pidedjian explored a unique hymn dedicated to the Hripsimian and Gayanian Virgins, the earliest Christian martyrs of Armenia.

## Two Boys at the Camp

Pidedjian was baptized Hagop, born in Alexandria, where at age 12 he met a friend from Cairo, Taniel Arzoumanian, age 14, who had traveled to Alexandria for a summer camp in 1947. At the camp those two boys soon became friends, and one day Pidedjian told his friend, this writer, if I had heard the hymn “Kta Der” (Lord have mercy), the memorial sharagan, he had learned at his most tender age from the elderly priest Der Vartan Karageozian of Alexandria. The hymn was unknown to me hearing the boy singing softly the whole stanza while we were camping. Years later we met each other in the Theological Seminary in Antelias as students, three grades apart, where I reminded him about the hymn. With his soft and permanent smile Pidedjian remembered those earlier days. Recently on the phone, we both shared memories, now Professor and a distinguished scholar in music, and I a senior clergy serving the Armenian Church in America. In his utmost humility and kindness he would speak with me respectfully as his senior colleague.

Pidedjian arrived in Antelias in 1952, and ancient photos show the young student and I attending the funeral of His Holiness Karekin I Hovsepian of the Great House of Cilicia who had passed away the same year in June. A year ago as I was mentioning the historic event on a telephone conversation, he confirmed and soon sent me a photo showing both of us, myself a deacon and him a fourth grade student, walking in the annual Pilgrim Day Procession of the Catholicosate, with the “Right Arm of St. Gregory the Illuminator” carried by the Vicar of the Catholicosate. In return I sent him a photo from 1954 July 4, following my priestly ordination in the Cathedral, as Pidedjian was ceremonially pouring the water to wash my hands just anointed with the Holy Miuron (Oil) as my junior godfather.

## The Distinguished Musician

Undoubtedly, among the alumni throughout the history of the Seminary, Krikor Pidedjian stands the only internationally acclaimed musicologist, scholar and conductor, as his academic credentials led his steps to Armenia where he was distinguished as a talented music authority. There he was awarded the degree of Honorary Professor of Music, based on his many publications, headed by those two volumes representing Gara Murza, and the 7th century hymn “Antsink nviryalk” dedicated to the Hripsimian and Gayanian Virgins. Upon his return from Yerevan, Krikor sent me those two valuable books, scholarly written and enriched with documentary data.

## Hambartsum Berberian’s Oratorio

During our recent conversation Krikor referred to our Seminary music teacher, the well-famed composer Hambartsum Berberian, whom he praised very highly as one of the greatest composers of our time, mentioning his equally famous Oratorio, dedicated to Saints Vartanank. I added the information unknown to him that His Holiness Karekin I Hovsepian had suggested Berberian in 1951 to compose a musical masterpiece honoring the 1500th anniversary of the Battle of Vartanank. I told Krikor that the Oratorio, which was based on the text of the great poet Vahan Tekeyan’s famous poem “Khorhoort Vartanants,” was completed by Mr. Berberian just in time, with an orchestra and chorus, in which he included some of us the students at the Seminary, and that the Catholicos had heard the very first performance in 1951.

see PIDEJIAN, page 20



# Armenian High Court Judges Offered Financial Incentives To Resign

By Naira Bulghadarian

YEREVAN (RFE/RL) — Members of Armenia's Constitutional Court will continue to receive their salaries and other benefits if they resign before November, according to a government bill made public late last week.

The bill, drafted by the Justice Ministry following harsh criticism of the court's chairman, Hrayr Tovmasyan, voiced by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, also stipulates that the court justices will have to be suspended if law-enforcement authorities launch criminal proceedings against them.

In a July 19 interview with RFE/RL's Armenian service, Pashinyan accused Tovmasyan of cutting political deals with former President Serzh Sarkisian to become the head of the country's highest court and hold that position until 2035 through constitutional amendments that took effect in April 2018. "The Constitutional Court must get out of this status of a privatized booth," he said, implicitly demanding changes in the court's composition.

Tovmasyan rejected the verbal attack as offensive and warned Pashinyan's government against trying to force him and other court members to resign. He pointedly declined to deny pro-opposition media claims that the government has already instructed law-enforcement bodies to explore ways of exerting such pressure on them.

The Justice Ministry bill, which has yet to be formally approved by the government, involves a set of draft amendments to an Armenian law on the Constitutional Court. The ministry called for a public debate on the

amendments when it posted them on a government website.

One of the proposed measures gives Tovmasyan and the eight other court judges the option of tendering their resignations by October 31. In return, they would keep



Supporters of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan block the entrance to the Constitutional Court building in Yerevan, May 20, 2019.

receiving their salaries and other perks until what would have been the end of their legal tenure. The bill implies that the success of judicial reforms planned by the Armenian authorities requires a different makeup of the Constitutional Court.

Some legal experts as well as critics of the government have denounced this amendment, saying that it amounts to a legal "bribe" offered to the judges.

"This provision has, to put it mildly, noth-

ing to do with the concept of a rule-of-law state," said Ruben Melikyan, a lawyer critical of the government.

Melikyan also described as unconstitutional another amendment envisaging the suspension of the Constitutional Court mem-

bers facing criminal investigations.

liament, disagreed. He insisted that the government is proposing a workable solution to the "constitutional crisis" in the country. The existence of such a crisis was alleged in June by Vahe Grigoryan, the Constitutional Court's newest judge also elected by the current parliament. Grigoryan claimed that only he and another judge of the 9-member court, Arman Dilanyan, can make valid decisions because they were elected after the constitutional changes came into force over a year ago.

Grigoryan argued that under the amended constitution the Constitutional Court now consists of "judges," rather than "members," as was the case until April 2018. He said that the other members therefore cannot be considered "judges."

The eight other members of the Constitutional Courts, including Dilanyan, dismissed those claims. They countered that an article of the amended constitution makes clear that the court "members" appointed before 2018 can serve as "judges" until they turn 65.

Grigoryan's position was backed by some senior pro-government lawmakers. The government has stopped short of explicitly and formally endorsing it, however. Citing the Justice Ministry bill, Melikyan suggested that the government recognizes all Constitutional Court members as "judges."

The pressure on the high court followed sweeping judicial reforms promised by Pashinyan in May. The premier has repeatedly stated that he wants to make Armenia's courts "truly independent." His political opponents and other critics maintain, however, that he is on the contrary seeking to gain full control over the judiciary.

## Prof. Krikor Pidedjian

### Musician, Scholar, Pioneer of Gara Murza's Armenian Holy Mass

PIDEDJIAN, from page 19

Krikor was curious to know if the music with the orchestra was available somewhere in its complete notes. I informed him that I had the most recent copy of the complete text, and that I have tried to sing the basic part as simple as possible, as I still do privately, except for some confusion due to so many musical notes which did not help me sing the way I remembered while learning it. He said you should try to separate the orchestral notes from the basic music. Krikor was anxious to have a copy of that most revised text by Mr. Berberian, who had conducted the Oratorio in various Armenian communities abroad and in Armenia. The last performance I attended in 1972 was at the Carnegie Hall in New York.

Recently on our frequent conversations on the phone, Krikor Pidedjian would talk about our academic works, his travels to Armenia, where he was acclaimed for his credentials as a musician, receiving awards from respective institutions, not forgetting to offer his high commendations addressed to me for the books I had written as academic publications. In fact Krikor in his noble and respectful words had signed a hand-written letter of praise and sent to California where the Diocese was honoring me with the Pontifical Encyclical and Medal from Holy Ekmadzin. During our conversations he would always mention some of the illnesses and health problems he was going through that unfortunately led him to his untimely passing.

#### An Ancient Hymn Explored

Krikor Pidedjian's next volume represent an authoritative exploration of the 7th cen-

tury hymn known as Antsink nviryalik sirooyin Krisdosi (Souls devoted to the love of Christ), 36 stanzas, each of them starting with the Armenian alphabet. An amazing hymn, as ancient as it is, written by Catholicos Gomidas (615-628) who has also composed its unique music, distinctive from the rest of those similar traditional Armenian Church modes. There are eight modes that govern the singing of our shargans, and some of them require "elaboration" such as this particular hymn Antsink. Krikor Pidedjian is the first scholar to study all those hymns that are sung in similar "elaborate" mode and compare them showing the progress through the succeeding centuries. His conclusion has been the source of those hymns being the 7th century hymn dedicated to the Holy Virgins, and the one that stands the original and genuine if compared with the rest. He has included in the volume the updated musical notes of all those similar hymns as samples for comparison. It is indeed truly a scholarly work.

#### The Last Mohican

It is hard for me to conclude, if I am permitted, that Krikor Pidedjian may stand as the last Mohican in the field of the Armenian classical music and performance since the fall of the Soviet Union. For sure Soviet Armenia has offered many talents then, most valuable composers and performers of our classic music and theatrical art. Today unfortunately we do not see any of those since the independence of Armenia. Instead, non-classical and modern unqualified music has flooded the field of the Armenian music, telling us if Prof. Pidedjian will have concluded the era of classical music at large.

## Iranian President Invited to Attend EEU Summit

SUMMIT, from page 1

as part of his visit to Tehran in February.

Pashinyan also said that an international forum entitled "Transit Potential of the Eurasian Continent" will be held on the sidelines of the Yerevan summit and the leaders of the EEU and its partner states have been invited to attend the event.

"It is expected that the forum will discuss topical issues related to the development of the continent's transport-logistical network, prospects of developing new and implementation of existing large-scale infrastructure projects of the region's states as well as issue connected with the development of digital corridors of Eurasia," the Armenian leader said.

Addressing the EEU Inter-Governmental Council's session, Pashinyan also highlighted the importance of a set of measures planned

until 2025 that will lead to the establishment of a common financial market among the EEU member states.

It is expected that the Concept on the establishment of this market will be signed during the EEU summit in the Armenian capital on October 1.

Speaking about regulations on the alcohol beverages market, Pashinyan said that the EEU member states generally support the removal of barriers in this sector of the economy. He said this direction is a priority for Armenia, which is internationally recognized for its brandy and wine production.

Pashinyan also highlighted the importance for entities working the agribusiness sector to have some summarized information on the supply and demand on agricultural produce in the EEU member states.

## Britain Appoints Ethnic Armenian as New Ambassador to Yerevan

AMBASSADOR, from page 1

The office of Zareh Sinanyan, Armenia's commissioner general of Diaspora affairs, welcomed Gogbashian's appointment. "This is the first time that a Diaspora Armenian will be ambassador to Armenia," the office wrote on its Facebook page.

The development coincided with Armenian President Armen Sarkissian's latest visit to London. Sarkissian's office said on Monday that he met there with "a number of high-ranking UK officials." It did not name any of those officials.

Sarkissian expressed Armenia's readiness to deepen ties with the UK when he congratulated Boris Johnson on becoming British prime minister late last month.

Sarkissian, 66, lived and worked in London, including as Armenian ambassador to Britain, for nearly three decades prior to becoming Armenia's largely ceremonial head of state in April 2018. He received British citizenship in 2002 but renounced it about a decade later.

Meanwhile, the British Embassy in Yerevan touted on Monday a "substantial" increase in

commercial ties between the two countries.

"Growth in trade turnover was 42 percent and 18 percent in 2017 and 2018 respectively," it said in written comments to RFE/RL's Armenian service. "There was a substantial growth in the UK's investment flows to Armenia over the past four years in sectors such as ICT, pharmaceutical and mining."

"The British Embassy in Yerevan sees further potential for growth and is working with UK companies and sectors in Armenia to encourage more UK trade and investment," it added.

The British mission also said London is committed to helping Armenia become a "democratic, prosperous and resilient country."

"To do this, over the last year or so, the UK has increased its support to Armenia's domestic reform agenda," it said. "We supported delivery of the free and fair elections last December and now we are focusing on helping to strengthen Armenia's institutions, which is crucial for Armenia's long-term development. We are doing this through a range of governance and economic reforms, defense reform, efforts to tackle corruption and uphold human rights."