

# Armenia Condemns Turkey's Invasion Of Syria

YEREVAN (Combined Sources) – Armenia condemned the Turkish invasion of Syria, according to a message from the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, released on October 10. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan also called on the international community to take every measure to stop the Turkish invasion.

Armenia's diplomatic mission in Syria has organized an urgent evacuation of compatriots in the line of fire, especially from the cities of Tel Abyad and Kamyshly.

Turkey launched a military operation in northeast Syria to create a "safe zone" along its borders. The attack hit more than 200 targets using heavy weapons, including aircraft and artillery. Washington said it would not obstruct the Turkish military, and began to withdraw its troops from this territory.

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Armenia in a statement said, "This invasion will lead to a further deterioration of regional security, as well as civilian casualties, a large flow of displaced people and, ultimately, a new humanitarian crisis."

In addition, the situation is creating conditions for severe and large-scale human rights violations against another ethnic group, the MFA said.

"Armenia calls for effective international efforts to end this military invasion, prevent mass atrocities and protect the Syrian population on the border of Turkey," the statement concluded.

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A scene from the documentary of "The Stateless Diplomat"

## Diana Apcar Documentary Sheds Light on Tireless Heroine

By Alin K. Gregorian  
Mirror-Spectator Staff

Armenian Genocide. Her story is becoming known to a whole new generation thanks to a documentary on her life by her great-granddaughter, Mimi Malayan.

On Sunday, September 29, several Armenian groups banded together to co-sponsor a viewing of Malayan's "The Stateless Diplomat: Diana Apcar's Heroic Life," at the Mosesian Center for the Arts in Watertown.

Before the start of the movie, introductions were made by Project SAVE Executive Director Tsoleen Sarian, followed by special guest Setsuo Ohmori, the consul of Japan in Boston. "It is an honor to be here as a diplomat from Japan," he said, also paying tribute to Apcar as the first woman diplomat.

She was often heartbroken and led a difficult life, but she set her sights on helping her people. Her efforts are only now being recognized.

Malayan in her comments said, "It has been a labor of love for me," she said. "It has taken eight years to complete."

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Diana Apcar

## UN Blasts Turkey for Executions, Possible War Crimes

By Fazel Hawramy

Tuesday, October 15, that Turkey could be held accountable for possible war crimes, including the execution of captives and a female Kurdish politician, attacks on medical facilities, and the bombing a convoy of civilians and journalists during its now week-long offensive in northeast Syria. The United States defense chief has also said Washington could hold Turkey to account for possible war crimes.

Turkey launched an extensive bombing campaign on October 7 followed by a land invasion a few days later, which has forced more than 275,000 people from their homes and killed at least 45 civilians, including a popular female Kurdish politician and several journalists.

"We have received reports and viewed two separate pieces of video footage showing what appear to be summary executions carried out by fighters belonging to the Ahrar

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## US Congress Condemns Turkish Invasion of Syria

WASHINGTON – The United States Senate and House of Representatives condemned Turkey's invasion of northern Syria, and called for sanctioning Turkey for its violence against innocent civilians, specifically targeting the Kurdish population and ethnic minorities in the region, such as Armenians, Assyrians, Yazidis, and other vulnerable minority groups, reported the Armenian Assembly of America.

On October 14, Speaker of the House of Representatives Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) and Sen. Lindsey Graham (R-SC) discussed reaching across the aisle to take additional measures.

"We must put together the strongest bipartisan, bicameral sanctions package similar to the bipartisan bill the House is advancing," Pelosi said.

"I will be working across party lines in a bicameral fashion to draft sanctions and move quickly, appreciating President Trump's willingness to work with the Congress," stated Senator Graham.

Last week, a series of measures were discussed and proposed in both congressional chambers. Senators Graham and Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

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## NEWS IN BRIEF

### Britain Reverses Appointment of New Envoy to Armenia

LONDON (RFE/RL) – The British government has unexpectedly rescinded its recent decision to appoint an ethnic Armenian diplomat as the United Kingdom's new ambassador to Armenia.

The government announced two months ago that Alan Gogbashian will replace Judith Farnworth, a fellow diplomat who has served as British ambassador in Yerevan for the last four years. The announcement was welcomed by many in Armenia and its worldwide Diaspora.

"This is the first time that a Diaspora Armenian will be ambassador to Armenia," the office of Zareh Sinanyan, Armenia's Armenian-American commissioner general of Diaspora affairs, said on August 12.

"Mr. Alan Gogbashian will no longer be taking up the role of Her Majesty's Ambassador to Yerevan for operational reasons," read a statement released by the British Embassy in Yerevan on Monday, October 14. "Mr. Gogbashian will be transferring to another Diplomatic Service appointment."

"Mr. David Moran has been appointed as Chargé d'Affaires with the rank of Ambassador in the interim, until a new Ambassador is appointed," added the statement posted on the embassy's Facebook page.

The British mission gave no further explanation for the abrupt and highly unusual reversal of ambassadorial appointment.

Gogbashian lived and worked in Armenia nearly two decades ago, before joining the British diplomatic service. He has headed various divisions at the British Foreign Office since 2014. He was Britain's deputy head of mission in Morocco from 2011-2014.

### Yerevan Court Upholds Orbelian Claim at Opera House

YEREVAN (Factinfo) – The Yerevan Court of General Jurisdiction on October 8 upheld the claim of Konstantin Orbelian, artistic director of the Opera House, Director of the Youth Programs at the Opera House Levon Javadyan said.

"The lawsuit demands to invalidate the former Minister of Culture Nazeni Gharibyan's 2019 order of release on March 28," said Javadyan.

By a decision of Gharibyan, Orbelian was dismissed from the post of director of National Academic Theater of Opera and Ballet. The justification was that a person may not hold two positions at the same time, unless it is creative, scientific or educational. Another reason was Orbelian's lack of knowledge of Armenian.

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## ARMENIA

## News From Armenia

## New Humanitarian Mission Sent to Syria

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A second group of a Armenian humanitarian mission comprised of deminers, medics and their security personnel has been dispatched to Syria to provide humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people, the Armenian Center for Humanitarian De-Mining and Expertise said in a statement on October 14.

It said the group was transported to Syria with support of Russian colleagues, namely on a Russian military transport plane.

## A Gavats of Tea by Tankian

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — World famous rock musician, System of a Down co-founder Serj Tankian on October 8 presented his brand of tea called Gavats.

“We started selling Gavats tea in the US last year. It’s my desire to present the tea of my grandmother to the world. Our tea is part of our Armenian culture and we try to present our culture to foreigners in a wise way,” Tankian said.

In Armenia the tea will be sold in supermarkets, hotels and restaurants. It will be possible to purchase it also on the net.

Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan together with his wife Anna Hakobyan attended the presentation ceremony.

## Prime Minister Receives Minsk Group Co-Chairs

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received the co-chairs of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group, Igor Popov of the Russian Federation, Stéphane Visconti of France and Andrew Schofer of the United States of America, as well as the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office Andrzej Kasprzyk, on October 15.

Pashinyan and the OSCE Minsk Group leaders discussed the peaceful settlement process of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. In the context of strengthening trust between the parties, the meeting participants highlighted the importance of taking actions to strengthen the ceasefire regime.

The officials also touched upon the necessity to prepare populations for peace and the steps taken toward this purpose.

## Kurds in Armenia Hold Rally Outside US Embassy

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — On October 15 the Kurdish community representatives held a rally outside the US Embassy in Yerevan.

The Kurdish community of Armenia condemns the indifference of superpowers towards the ongoing Turkish aggressive operations against the Kurds in Syria. Drawing also the attention of the US on the matter, the Kurdish community today conveyed a letter to the US Ambassador in Armenia.

“We all condemn the genocidal, murderous policy of the Turkish authorities. We call on the whole world, the international community, the superpowers to leave aside their priority interests with a minute, hold the bloody, genocidal hands of Turkey and say “stop conducting genocide against different peoples every 100 years”, Kurdish MP of the Armenian Parliament Knyaz Hasanov said.

He stated that today the Turkish authorities’ policy is to eliminate all Kurds of the world, take the Kurdish lands and populate these territories with more than three million Islamists. “This will later become an evil for the peoples of the world, including for the US and Russia. Today we gathered here to condemn the US wrong policy against Kurds. We apply to the international community and the superpowers”, he said.

The Embassy representative promised to respond to the letter later.

One of the rally participants said they gathered here to try to stop Turkey from these aggressive actions.

On October 9 Turkish forces launched an offensive in Syria’s north-east.



President Armen Sarkissian, at right, speaking with Adrin Nazarian, with Los Angeles City Council member Paul Krekorian seated behind him.

## California Politicians Meet with President Sarkissian

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian on October 15 hosted member of the California State Assembly Adrin Nazarian and Los Angeles City Council member Paul Krekorian, the Presidential Office told Armenpress.

Highlighting the importance of Armenia’s close relations with the state of California, in particular, Los Angeles, the president mentioned the areas which have a great potential to further deepen this cooperation and the existing ties. Those are the new technologies, science, education, energy and agriculture. Nazarian and Krekorian expressed their readiness to do everything possible to contribute to the development of bilateral mutually beneficial cooperation, the strengthening of the Homeland-Diaspora ties.

The meeting participants also touched upon the engagement of the Armenian community of California in the local public, political and economic life.

## Armenia Condemns Turkey’s Invasion of Syria

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Armenia has offered its continued humanitarian assistance to the Syrian people.

Yerevan has delivered humanitarian assistance to Damascus since the start of the war. The assistance is for civilians suffering from the fighting.

Armenia’s humanitarian mission in Syria continues, with Armenian doctors and engineers fulfilling their daily responsibilities.

Armenia has emphasized that its presence in Syria is one of peace-building only through humanitarian activities.

“Assistance will be provided exclusively outside the combat zone. Armenian specialists will carry out humanitarian activities such as clearing mines and educating local people about the mines, as well as the provision of medical care in Aleppo.”— declared Armenia’s press secretary for the Ministry of Defense, Artsrun Hovhannisyan.

After the completion of the active phase of hostilities in Syria in February 2019, Armenia sent a humanitarian mission there. There is a group of engineers and doctors – 83 people in total.

Armenia’s government decided that citizens of Syria, Lebanon and Iraq could receive Armenian citizenship in their respective countries.

Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Avet Adonts explained that in 2012, the government made a similar decision, and citizens of Syria, Lebanon and Iraq could obtain citizenship and passports in the embassies or consulates of Armenia in these countries. However,

that policy was only in place until December 31, 2018. Adonts noted that: “Given the internal situation and the tension in these countries, it is necessary to extend this decision so that citizens of these countries can obtain Armenian passports at the embassies and consulates of their countries through December 31, 2019.”

Armenia is ready to help evacuate ethnic Armenian residents of northern

“ASSISTANCE WILL BE PROVIDED EXCLUSIVELY OUTSIDE THE COMBAT ZONE. ARMENIAN SPECIALISTS WILL CARRY OUT HUMANITARIAN ACTIVITIES SUCH AS CLEARING MINES AND EDUCATING LOCAL PEOPLE ABOUT THE MINES, AS WELL AS THE PROVISION OF MEDICAL CARE IN ALEPPO”

ARTSRUN HOVHANNISYAN  
MINISTRY OF DEFENSE, PRESS SECRETARY

Syria affected by Turkey’s military operations conducted there, a senior official in Yerevan said.

Armen Grigorian, the secretary of Armenia’s Security Council, briefed lawmakers on potential government actions at a meeting held in the National Assembly

behind the closed doors. Grigorian said afterwards that Yerevan stands ready to take in ethnic Armenian refugees from the area attacked by Turkish troops.

“We have not yet made an official proposal,” Grigorian told reporters. “As you know, not only is the issue at the

center of the government’s attention but also our embassy and consulate [in Syria] are in touch with leaders of the [Armenian] community. If there is such a desire [to relocate to Armenia] we will definitely take all measures and provide all necessary means.”

But he added that none of the local Syrian Armenians has so far expressed a desire to take refuge in Armenia.

The precise number of Armenians remaining in Syria’s Kurdish-controlled regions is not known. A senior Armenian Foreign Ministry official said on Thursday that around 3,000 of them live in the north-eastern town of Qamishli close to the Turkish border.

### Catholicos Urges End to Bloodshed

Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II stressed that the Holy See of Echmiadzin expects urgent and practical steps to prevent the further bloodshed.

“The danger of attacks by Turkey against the ethnic minorities and Syrian-

Armenians in particular awaken the recollections of Armenian Genocide carried out by the same state in 1915-23. These actions must be strictly condemned by the international community,” Karekin II wrote, stressing that he shares the pain and suffering of the Syrian people and prays for soonest establishment of peace.

He stressed that the current developments do not have any justification.

(Material from Armenpress, RFE/RL and government news sources were used to compile this report.)





## ARMENIA

# ‘My Way’ Center for Autistic Children Celebrates Expansion

**By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach**

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — There had been plans and revisions, deadlines missed and newly defined. The second building of the My Way Socio-Rehabilitation Day Care Center for people with autism was to be reconstructed, its spacious classrooms and facilities would provide the framework for vocational education of young adults. Through training programs led by professionally qualified instructors and assistants, the students would acquire skills in a variety of fields, which would enable them to find meaningful employment and thus the means to carry out independent lives.

The My Way initiative already has a functioning center in Yerevan for children with autism, and has operated with the help of financial support by public and private donors. Plans for reconstructing building number two began in 2017, and the organizers succeeded in lining up funds pledged from various quarters. As is so often the case in such endeavors, shortfalls occurred. Not only: the country went through a revolution in spring 2018, and the issue of government support was a big question mark. By the end of 2018, construction work came to a halt, as funds had run out. Private donors filled in the temporary gap, among them, the John Mirak Foundation. Creative fundraising efforts by the center’s leadership generated further contributions. Fortunately, a final gift from First Lady Anna Hakobyan’s My Step fund completed the task. On September 28, on the heels of Armenia’s national day, the new building was officially inaugurated.

The My Way leadership, as co-founder and board member Sona Petrosyan put it, had invited the whole world: in accordance with the



Ani Kurtyan and First Lady Anna Hakobyan cut the red ribbon.

her own charitable fund, My Step. Due to the high level political participation, the event was covered by major press outlets on television and Internet.

Representatives of Hakobyan’s own fund had visited My Way and reported back on their positive impressions. Then Hakobyan herself visited the center and, supplied with the required documentation of its project plans and costs, decided to allocate resources from her fund to fill in the missing amount. That donation was crucial in ensuring that the entire renovation budget could be covered. With that, My Way was able to go ahead, complete the work and announce the inauguration.

This was a donation from her fund, not from the government. As Babloyan made the point in his speech, “The issues of people with autism are not the concern of a particular government, but a problem that pertains to the whole society, the whole country, the whole nation.”

That said, the government was indeed represented. The First Deputy Minister of Social Affairs and Labor Gemafin Gasparyan attended and expressed his support, which augurs well for future relations.

## Guests from Germany

One might add to Babloyan’s remarks that the autism issue pertains to the whole world. In fact, the impetus for establishing My Way in

Armenia came from Germany. It was through the efforts of Maria Kaminski, mediated by Renate Beil, that a group of mothers of children with autism gained the knowledge, guidance and confidence to initiate a center in Yerevan (See <https://mirrorspectator.com/2017/06/15/my-way-is-helping-children-with-autism-in-armenia/>).

Kaminski (<https://www.autismus.de/ueberuns/struktur-des-bundesverbandes/vorstand-autistischer-beirat.html>) is director of the German organization, Autismus, and founder of centers for autism throughout the country. She travelled to Yerevan to attend the inauguration, together with Martina Steinhaus, who is director of the Autismus Therapiezentrum und Werkstatt für Menschen mit Autismus (Autism therapy center and workshop for people with autism).

Steinhaus held a workshop the day prior to the inauguration for staff members of My Way and other centers. Attendants were excited with the workshop and found encouragement in Kaminski’s assurances that My Way was on the right track; she stressed that in the long run it is society that reaps the benefits when it creates conditions for people with disabilities to contribute, to engage in meaningful employment, to enjoy the quality of life. This, she said, is the only productive way to deal with autism and other disabilities. The presence of the pioneer from Germany was appreciated not only as a personal gesture but also for the strategic message it sends to Armenia’s officialdom; Kaminski, who also had the opportunity to visit the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs, is a foreign expert whose views and experience have won recognition and respect.

## The Istanbul Diaspora

Another key protagonist in the effort to renovate My Way’s second building is the Istanbul diaspora. In April, My Way presented an exhibition of art works by board members and students, which was hosted at the Karagezian Armenian School Hall (<https://mirrorspectator.com/2019/06/06/artists-launch-creative-fundraising-in-istanbul/>). Through the sale of art works, My Way succeeded in raising a very significant amount towards the renovation budget, leaving that last gap that Hakobyan’s fund then would fill.

Representing the Istanbul diaspora was Ani Kurtyan, who had been the inspiration behind the exhibition idea. Also present was Tania Panosoghlu and her husband Misak Panusoghlu, daughter and son-in-law of Hayk Arslanyan; all three had worked to make the Istanbul event a success.

In addition to Istanbul, Geneva and Vienna were also represented, by their Women’s Guilds, Suzy Sahakyan and Gamara Babayan, respectively

## Prayers, Thanks and Music

Prior to the inaugural event, participants gathered in the morning in church. The Head of the Gougark Diocese Bishop Ter Sepuh Chuljian presided over the service, and offered prayers for the deceased relatives of



Sona Petrosyan leads the tour with First Lady Anna Hakobyan

charter of the Autism National Foundation, with which My Way is associated, that included government officials, from the Ministries of Health, Education and Social Affairs, as well as the Yerevan Municipality, who are members of the board; individuals and organizations, both local and foreign, that have ever supported My Way; those who worked specifically on the second building project, in whatever capacity, such as architects, constructors, furniture manufacturers as well as other partners from other schools and centers in Armenia. Ara Babloyan, the pioneer in addressing the autism problem in Armenia, who has a separate organization, was invited to speak. And a number of parents as well as students, who were to present flowers or certificates of appreciation.

A representative of Nune Sarkissian, the wife of President Armen Sarkissian, came in a non-official capacity and Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s wife, Anna Hakobyan, attended the event. Hakobyan appeared with Hovhannes Ghazaryan, the executive director of



Maria Kaminski addresses the gathering



The new building

all those who had contributed to the center.

The official act of cutting the ribbon opened the inaugural ceremony; Ani Kurtyan and First Lady Anna Hakobyan did the honors. Kurtyan was the first speaker, and acknowledged all supporters, former and current, foreign and local, official and private. There followed speeches, music and the distribution of certificates of appreciation. Archbishop Sepuh Chuljian addressed the gathering and officially blessed the new building. Sona Petrosyan conducted a tour of the edifice, which was festively decorated with blue balloons and flowers. In the garden between the two buildings further remarks were delivered by co-founder and board member Hasmik Margaryan, as well as the mother of a former student who has since moved back to the US.

Only the weather was uncooperative, but everyone found shelter under tents that the children use for summer outdoor activities. Besides, as the My Way founding mothers quipped, it was actually fine if they had rain in the end; wasn’t the film about the young man with autism called “Rain Man”?





## INTERNATIONAL

## International News

## Chile Interested in Armenian Goods

YEREVAN (Arka) — Armenia's Deputy Minister of Economy Varos Simonyan received on Friday, October 11, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs of Chile for Economic Affairs Rodrigo Yanez.

Simonyan said the visit was a good opportunity to rethink the framework of bilateral economic relations. Yanez said the delegation comprised government officials and private sector representatives. According to him, cooperation between Armenia and Chile can be of great importance in the context of the fact that both countries serve as hubs for other large foreign markets.

He expressed interest in considering the possibility of importing Armenian goods to Chile. Yanez also said that the Chilean side is interested in identifying opportunities for cooperation with the EEU member countries.

Simonyan spoke about free trade agreements between EEU and third countries. He also spoke at the request of the guests, about the framework of cooperation between Armenia and the European Union.

## Italy Asks UEFA to Reconsider Champions League final In Turkey

ROME (Panorama.am) — Italy's Sports Minister Vincenzo Spadafora has urged the European football governing body UEFA to reconsider the decision to play next year's Champions League final in Istanbul after Turkey's bloody offensive in northern Syria.

Spadafora wrote to UEFA President Aleksander Ceferin asking "to consider whether it is appropriate to keep the Champions League final in Istanbul" after Turkey's "very grave acts against the Kurdish civilian population."

In the letter, quoted by Italian news agency ANSA, Spadafora referred to the European Union's condemnation of Turkish actions and called on European football "to take the most courageous choice and to show, once again, that football is an instrument of peace."

The final is scheduled for May 30, 2020.

## Conductor Smbatyan Performs in Milan

MILAN (Panorama.am) — The artistic director and principal conductor of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra (ASSO) Sergey Smbatyan performed recently at the Teatro alla Scala, one the world's most famous opera houses in Milan, Italy.

He led the chamber orchestra of the Italian opera house on October 14, the Armenian Symphony Orchestra's press service reported.

The concert program featured pieces by both classical and contemporary composers — Edvard Grieg, Max Bruch, Krzysztof Penderecki and Vakhtang Kakhidze. Violinist Simonide Braconi and pianist, composer Vakhtang Kakhidze performed as soloists during the concert.

## Armenia Seeks to Open Embassy in Australia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs is conducting extensive negotiations in the direction of opening an Armenian embassy in Australia, Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan said in parliament on October 2 in response to a question from My Step bloc lawmaker Arman Boshyan.

"This issue is on our agenda for already a while and we are in pretty extensive negotiations. Our goal is to have an embassy in Australia, and we are proceeding in accordance to priorities. Australia is in our list of direct priorities, however in order to express the timeframes of our goals more clearly we need to complete certain negotiations with our partners in order to be able to have a reasonable program to open an embassy. Our goal is to do this as quickly as possible," the FM said.

Mnatsakanyan did not mention timeframe for opening the embassy.

## UN Blasts Turkey for Executions, Possible War Crimes

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al-Sharqiya armed group, which is affiliated with Turkey," said Rupert Colville, spokesperson for the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights. "On the same day, we received reports indicating that a well-known Kurdish female politician, Hevrin Khalaf, was also executed on the same highway, apparently also by Ahrar al-Sharqiya fighters."

"Turkey could be deemed responsible as a State for violations committed by their affiliated armed groups, as long as Turkey exercises effective control over these groups, or the operations in the course of which those violations occurred," the human rights body said.

Turkish-backed proxy forces are accused of serious human rights abuses during the invasion of the enclave of Afrin early last year in which thousands of civilians were displaced.

Earlier this month, the Britain-based Syrian Observatory for Human Rights said Turkish-backed forces had killed "an elderly man with severe visual impairment in Afrin's countryside in northwest Aleppo."

The same forces have been involved in fierce fighting in several border towns since last Wednesday, backed by Turkish warplanes and artillery batteries.

"Turkey's unilateral action was unnecessary and impulsive. President Erdogan bears full responsibility for its consequences, to include a potential ISIS resurgence, possible war crimes, and a growing humanitarian crisis," US Secretary of Defense Mark Esper tweeted on Tuesday.

The UN Human Rights Office said ambulances, health facilities, and a medical point belonging to the Kurdish Red Crescent were attacked by either Turkish forces or their proxies in Sari

Kani (Ras al-Ain), Kobane (Ain al-Arab), Geri Spi (Tel Abyad) and Derik (al-Malikiya). "We are also receiving reports of other attacks on civilian infrastructure, including power lines, water supplies and bakeries," the statement read.

Kurdish sources said on Tuesday that the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) has regained control of the strategic town of Sari Kani (Ras al-Ain) on the border, which has been under constant Turkish bombardment since October 7.

In Manbij, on the western edge of territories controlled by the SDF and their allies, Syrian regime forces have moved into the city as part of a deal to see the Syrian Arab Army secure the borders against Turkey's incursion.

"We are out of Manbij," the coalition tweeted on Tuesday.

"They Syrian government has full control over the city of Manbij and nearby settlements," the Russian defense ministry announced in a statement on Tuesday, AFP reported.

## Syrian Kurds Appeal for Aid

In related news, the Kurdish-led administration in northern Syria has appealed for urgent humanitarian aid after the withdrawal of international NGOs amid a worsening humanitarian crisis sparked by Turkey's military incursion into the territory.

In a statement released on Tuesday afternoon, officials appealed for assistance in an effort to "avoid exacerbating the humanitarian crisis caused by the barbaric Turkish attack."

Local schools are now hosting families displaced from the border towns of Tal Abyad, Ras al-Ain, and surrounding villages as camps reach full capacity. Over 275,000 have been displaced since the start of the Turkish incursion,

70,000 of whom are children, according to the administration, the Syrian Democratic Council.

According to International Organization for Migration (IOM) reports, approximately 180 families have arrived in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq in the past two days.

The Kurdish Red Crescent (KRC), a local charity, said it is running low on supplies. In a statement published to Facebook on Sunday, it lamented the "extremely limited support" for internally displaced persons (IDPs) and accused the Turkish government of breaking international law in obstructing the delivery of aid to local civilians.

KRC said many international aid organizations made the decision to leave northern Syria as fighting wages between the Syrian Democratic Forces (SDF) and Turkish-backed militias, a deal was reached between the SDF and Damascus that will see regime forces move to protect the borders, and the "unpredictable" actions of Turkey.

The Kurdish charity is now reportedly the only aid organization providing emergency services in northern Syria and faces severe difficulties following the withdrawal of "essential expat staff" over the past two days.

Several NGO's have gone public with their decision to withdraw from the area, citing security concerns and logistical difficulties arising from heavy fighting across the region.

Some United Nations agencies are still operating. UNICEF said on Monday it was stepping in to deliver water to over eight locations after other agencies suspended their activities. In the past ten days, the organization had delivered 95,000 liters to collective shelters across the northeast.

## European Court to Give Advisory Opinion on Kocharyan Case

STRASBOURG (RFE/RL) — The European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) has formally agreed to advise Armenia's Constitutional Court on the legality of coup charges brought against former President Robert Kocharyan.

Kocharyan was charged last year under Article 300.1 of the Armenian Criminal Code dealing with violent seizure of power. The accusation stems from the 2008 post-election street clashes in Yerevan which left ten people dead.

In separate appeals, Kocharyan and a district court judge in Yerevan asked the Constitutional Court early this year to determine whether the article conforms to the Armenian constitution. The ex-president's lawyers argued, among other things, that the clause was added to the Criminal Code in 2009 and cannot be used retroactively against him.

In July, the Constitutional Court suspended the consideration of the appeals, asking the ECHR as well as the Council of Europe's Venice Commission for "advisory opinions" on the matter.

"The European Court of Human Rights has accepted a request for an advisory opinion from the Constitutional Court of Armenia and has constituted a Grand Chamber of 17 judges to consider it," the Strasbourg-based tribunal said in a weekend statement.

The statement said the judges will arrive at a common conclusion regarding Article 300.1's conformity with the European Convention on Human Rights. "Advisory opinions, which are given by the Grand Chamber, give reasons and are not binding," it stressed.

The ECHR gave Kocharyan's legal

team and the Armenian parliament until November 19 to present "written observations" to the chamber. Other interested parties, including the Armenian government, can send their comments to Strasbourg by December 4, according to the statement.

Armenia's representative to the ECHR, Yeghishe Kirakosyan, said on October 14 that the government will exercise that right. Kirakosyan declined to shed light on the govern-

ment's likely arguments.

Kocharyan, who was arrested again in June, is specifically accused of illegally using Armenian army units against opposition protesters that demanded the rerun of a disputed presidential election held in February 2008, two months before he completed his second and final term. The 65-year-old ex-president was also charged with bribery early this year. He denies all charges leveled against him as politically motivated.

## Armenian Genocide recognition resolution to Be Introduced in Moldovan Parliament

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Soon a legislative initiative on officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide will be introduced in the Parliament of Moldova, Accent TV reported.

According to the report the announcement was made by Moldovan lawmaker Gaik Vartanean at a meeting of the parliamentary commission on foreign policy and European integration, on October 15. According to Accent TV this is the first time ever that an Armenian Genocide recognition initiative is being announced in the Moldovan parliament.

Vartanean is also the head of the local Armenian community.

He spoke at a confirmation hearing of ambassadors, and asked a question from Dmitry Kroitor, nominated as a candidate for the post of the Moldovan ambassador to Turkey.

"Given the fact that soon a legislative initiative will be introduced in the

Moldovan parliament to recognize the Armenian Genocide and Moldova may join most countries of the European Union, as well as the Russian Federation, which have already recognized this fact, this may entail negative reaction from the Turkish government", he said as quoted by Accent TV.

He asked the question in the context of a previous question regarding the candidate's attitude to Turkey's offensive in Syria, according to Accent TV.

The lawmaker also mentioned that one of the key points of disagreements between Turkey and the EU is Turkey's denial of the Armenian Genocide.

In 2015, the European Parliament adopted a resolution reaffirming its 1987 resolution according to which the massacres of Armenians in 1915-1917 by the Ottoman Empire was recognized as genocide in conformity with the UN 1948 convention.



## INTERNATIONAL

# Top Georgian Delegation Visits Armenia

YEREVAN (Armenpress) – A delegation of Georgian leaders, including Prime Minister Giorgi Gakharia and Foreign Minister David Zalkaliani visited Armenia on October 14 and 15. They met with President Armen Sarkissian, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan.

President Armen Sarkissian met with Gakharia. During a private meeting Sarkissian commended Gakharia's official visit to Armenia and congratulated him on assuming office of prime minister, and wished good luck and realization of plans, the President's Office said in a readout.

Speaking about the Armenian-Georgian relations, Sarkissian said that the two peoples have a millennia old history of friendship. "However now we are in the beginning of the 21st century. New century, new issues. But I believe that this is also a great opportunity for our two states and peoples," the Armenian President said.

Gakharia thanked his hosts for the warm reception and conveyed Georgian President Salome Zurbishvili's warm greetings to the Armenian President.

Gakharia said that it is a great honor for him to visit Armenia as prime minister for the first time and to have the chance to bring his contribution to the further deepening of the centuries old ties of the two peoples. "Our ancestors strengthened our friendship, and now we must think more about business. We are here with the thinking for our economic cooperation to have impact on our peoples' welfare," he said.

The private meeting was followed by an expanded format one with participation of the delegations of the two countries.

"We discussed with Mr. Prime Minister several very important issues. And my conclusion is the same: the opportunities of our joint activities are a lot bigger," Sarkissian said. "We can do many things together. I want Mr. Prime Minister to be certain – both the people of Armenia, the Government of Armenia, and the Presidential administration will do everything for these opportunities to become reality".

In turn the Georgian premier said: "We discussed issues, as to what should our young people, citizens do to be bold in the global, competitive world, to utilize all opportunities of the day and become more competitive and proactive. I am convinced that through our joint efforts we will achieve our citizens being able to overcome this competition.

The friendly relations of Armenia and

He also highlighted that the dynamics of contacts, the level of mutual trust, as well as the current visit of the Georgian premier prove that Georgia also pays a special importance to the relations with Armenia.

Pashinyan assessed his talks with the Georgian counterpart as important and productive. "We have such a broad bilateral agenda that it's difficult to discuss all issues during

The Armenian and Georgian premiers also emphasized the importance of implementing transportation and energy projects in terms of developing both the bilateral economic relations and ensuring regional stability.

Pashinyan said the formation of regional peace and security environment is one of the key foreign policy tasks of Armenia. "In this regard we are confident that the continuous development of the Armenian-Georgian relations should be free of the impact of any external factors. In this regard we touched upon the regional conflicts. We agreed that the comprehensive and lasting settlement of conflicts is possible exclusively through peaceful means in accordance with the principles of international law. I once again presented our position that each conflict is unique, therefore, their solutions must derive from their essence," Pashinyan said.

Gakharia visited the Tsitsernakaberd Armenian Genocide Memorial. Accompanied by Foreign Minister Mnatsakanyan, Yerevan Mayor Hayk Marutyan, Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute foundation Harutyun Marutyan and other officials, the Georgian premier laid flowers at the Eternal Flame.

Gakharia watered the fir tree planted by him while serving as Georgia's deputy prime minister and minister of interior.

Mnatsakanyan on October 15 met with his Georgian counterpart, Zalkaliani.

"The sides addressed a number of issues of bilateral interest. The foreign ministers reiterated mutual readiness to deepen in all possible directions the cooperation based on many centuries of friendship between the two countries, outlining the circle of upcoming steps in this direction. The FM's of Armenia and Georgia exchanged ideas around cooperation and dialogue with the EU within the framework of Eastern Partnership. The regional situation and issues were comprehensively discussed. Both sides attached importance to maintaining regional peace, security and stability," the Armenian foreign ministry said in a readout.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, right, and Georgian Premier Giorgi Gakharia

Georgia have started to develop with a special warmth, these relations are very important for Armenia, Pashinyan said during a joint press conference with Gakharia in Yerevan.

"I am sure that Georgia has noticed that starting from the first day of my tenure in office the Armenian-Georgian relations have started developing with special warmth. This reflects my belief that the relations with Georgia are of special importance for Armenia", Pashinyan said.

one meeting. We both highly appreciated the relaunch of the operation of the Armenian-Georgian inter-governmental commission after a long pause. We expressed confidence that it will be possible to implement the agreements reflected in the protocol of the commission's 10th session through joint efforts", Nikol Pashinyan said, adding that they also highlighted holding an Armenian-Georgian business forum in Yerevan.

## Aliyev, Pashinyan Trade Barbs, Talk At CIS Summit

ASHGABAT, Turkmenistan (RFE/RL) – Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan discussed the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict after trading barbs during a summit of former Soviet republics held in Turkmenistan's capital Ashgabat on Friday, October 11.

Aliyev started the tense verbal exchange at a plenary session of the summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) by accusing Armenia of "glorifying fascists." He noted that the former Armenian government erected in Yerevan the statue of Garegin Nzhdeh, an Armenian nationalist statesman who had fought against the Bolsheviks and later collaborated with Nazi Germany.

Pashinyan responded by accusing Aliyev of distorting the history of Armenia and the Second World War.

"Ilham Heydarovich's speech leaves one with a sense that [Adolf] Hitler played a secondary role and that the Nazi movement was led by Garegin Nzhdeh," he said. "Yet the truth is that Garegin Nzhdeh fought against Turkish occupation of Armenia, against the genocide of Armenians and ... also commanded, together with many Russian officers, a very important section of the frontline during the Armenian-Turkish war in 1918."

"I think it's inappropriate to use this [CIS] format for distorting history and adding some tension to the atmosphere of this important meeting," added Pashinyan.

Despite the public recriminations, Pashinyan and Aliyev spoke with each other at a dinner in Ashgabat hosted by Turkmenistan's President Gurbanguly Berdimuhamedov for fellow CIS leaders later in the day.

Pashinyan's spokesman, Vladimir Karapetyan, told the Armenpress news agency

that the two men discussed the Karabakh conflict and, in particular, "possibilities of reducing tensions" and "upcoming steps" in the negotiating process mediated by the United States, Russia and France. The conversation lasted for about two hours, said Karapetyan.

Aliyev and Pashinyan held five face-to-face meetings between September 2018 and May 2019, raising hopes for a settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Their first meeting was followed by a significant decrease in ceasefire violations in the conflict zone. There have been no signs of further progress in Armenian-Azerbaijani peace talks in the last few months.

Born in the Russian Empire in 1886, Nzhdeh was one of the prominent military leaders of an independent Armenian republic formed in 1918. In 1920, he mounted armed resistance against the republic's takeover by Bolshevik Russia in Syunik, a mountainous region in southeastern Armenia.

Nzhdeh was one of several exiled Armenian leaders in Europe who pledged allegiance to Nazi Germany in 1942 with the stated aim of saving Soviet Armenia from a possible Turkish invasion after what they expected to be a Soviet defeat by the Third Reich.

Nzhdeh surrendered to advancing Red Army divisions in Bulgaria in 1944 after reportedly offering Josef Stalin to mobilize

the republic's last Communist government was removed from power in 1990. He is widely credited with preserving Armenian control over



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan (L) and Azerbaijan's President Ilham Aliyev attend a summit of the Commonwealth of Independent States in Ashgabat, October 11, 2019.

Armenians for a Soviet assault on Turkey. In 1948, a Soviet court sentenced him to 25 years in prison on charges that mainly stemmed from his "counterrevolutionary" activities in 1920-1921.

Speaking at the Ashgabat summit, Pashinyan portrayed Nzhdeh as a victim of Stalin's political repressions. "Nzhdeh died in the Vladimir prison [in 1955]," he said. "Many prominent Soviet figures died in the Vladimir prison and [writer Aleksandr] Solzhenitsyn was in the Gulag. Do we consider everyone imprisoned from 1937 through the 1950s political prisoners?"

Nzhdeh was rehabilitated in Armenia after

Syunik. He is also revered by many Armenians as the founder of a new brand of Armenian nationalism that emerged in the 1930s.

Former President Serzh Sargsyan's Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) has espoused his Tseghakron ideology, which puts the emphasis on armed self-defense and self-reliance, ever since it was set up in the early 1990s.

Senior HHK representatives, who are highly critical of the current Armenian government, were quick to praise Pashinyan's reaction to Aliyev's remarks. "Nikol's response was appropriate," the former ruling party's deputy chairman, Armen Ashotian, wrote on Facebook.



# Community News

## Western Diocese To Hold Annual Christmas Ball On December 7

BURBANK, Calif. — Members of the Christmas Ball Committee of the Western Diocese have begun plans and preparations for the 16th Annual Christmas Ball. Under the leadership of Raffi Kendirjian, chair, this joyful event will be held on Saturday, December 7, at the Nazareth and Sima Kalaydjian Hall of the Arshag and Eleanor Dickranian Complex 3325 North Glenoaks Boulevard.

The festivities begin at 7 p.m. with a reception and gala Tree Lighting Ceremony in the Turpanjian Plaza. Families and friends gather together to enjoy the large beautifully decorated tree, the delicious hors d'oeuvres and inviting cocktail drinks in the Paul Brothers Galleria. Dinner and an exciting program will follow at 8 p.m. in the beautifully decorated Kalaydjian Hall.

The theme for this year's ball is "Believe." As in year's past, eight illustrious community members will be recognized for their distinguished careers and their dedicated service to both the Armenian and American communities.

The Christmas Ball was created by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Primate, to develop and establish an auspicious occasion that brings the community together to cele-

"SINCE THE INCEPTION OF THE CHRISTMAS BALL, THE WESTERN DIOCESE HAS RECOGNIZED MANY MEDICAL DOCTORS, LAWYERS, ARTISTS, MUSICIANS, PHILANTHROPISTS, COMMUNITY ACTIVISTS AND LEADERS, HUMBLE SERVANTS OF THE CHURCH, AND MANY OTHERS REPRESENTING VARIOUS PROFESSIONAL FIELDS."

—ARCHBISHOP HOVNAN DERDERIAN

brate the launch of the Christmas Season and the numerous achievements that have been accomplished throughout the year.

The archbishop stated: "What was spearheaded 16 years ago grew to become a prestigious and a well-known holiday celebration with hundreds of people attending it annually. Since the inception of the Christmas Ball, the Western Diocese has recognized many medical doctors, lawyers, artists, musicians, philanthropists, community activists and leaders, humble servants of the church, and many others representing various professional fields."

Kendirjian stated that a special reception will be held by the Christmas Ball Committee at the Western Diocese to meet and greet this year's honorees who will be presented on December 7. At the event guests will enjoy a video presentation showcasing each of the honorees with live on the screen action and the opportunity to hear first-hand about their careers and goals.

Entertainment will be provided by Greg Hosharian and his Band. Guests will enjoy both the traditional Armenian music and familiar American tunes.

A booklet containing the biographies of the honorees will be available to commemorate the event and afford families and friends the opportunity to recognize the honorees. Booklet Sponsorships in special categories are also available by contacting Hasmik Keyribarian: email Hasmik.Keyribarian@gmail.com, For tickets email: araxie.boyanian@gmail.com.



Coptic Orthodox Bishop David, who leads the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (at left), speaks with Syriac Orthodox Archbishop Kawak (right) during the Joint Commission of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches at New York's St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral. (photographer Artur Petrosyan)

## St. Vartan Cathedral Hosts Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Church Leaders

NEW YORK — On October 8, Eastern and Oriental Orthodox leaders met at New York's St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral for a meeting of the joint commission of both "families" of churches. It was the first such meeting in nearly a decade.

The meeting also provided an occasion for Bishop Daniel Findikyan, Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America, to welcome Archbishop Elpidophoros, the recently-installed leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, to the cathedral for the first time.

Following a prayer service in the sanctuary, the attendees convened in the Diocesan Center's tahlij for their meeting and lunch. In exploring practical ways to advance the relations between Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches in the US, the clergymen discussed marriage and baptism, religious education, and common areas of advocacy, including concerns over the Middle East.

"St. Vartan Cathedral has always been friendly ground for many Christian denominations to gather together for theological conversation, collaboration, and prayer," said Bishop Daniel. "We were delighted to continue this tradition by hosting our Orthodox brothers."

Findikyan and Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, the Diocesan Legate and Ecumenical Director, represented the Armenian Church at the meeting. Also joining in the prayer service were Diocesan vicar Fr. Simeon Odabashian and Cathedral Vicar Fr. Mesrop Parsamyan.

"This meeting is joyful, historic, and promising," said Bishop David of the Coptic Orthodox Church, who leads the Standing Conference of Oriental Orthodox Churches (SCOCH). "There is a spirit of good will and potential to move forward in faith and in hope."

see ORTHODOX, page 7



Archbishop Vicken Aykazian and Diocesan Primate Bishop Daniel Findikyan speak with Archbishop Elpidophoros, leader of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, on the plaza of New York's St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral, during a meeting of the Joint Commission of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches. (photographer Artur Petrosyan)

## Glendale Community College Can Commemorate April 24 Without Losing Revenue

SACRAMENTO, Calif. — On October 8, the Glendale Community College Armenian Genocide Commemoration Bill, SB 568, authored by State Senator Anthony J. Portantino (D-La Cañada Flintridge), was signed by Governor Gavin Newsom. Prior to the passage of SB 568, GCC would have had to forfeit nearly \$500,000 if it were to close on April 24 to commemorate the Armenian Genocide. Unlike the K-12 Education Code, which gave the GUSD the ability to properly respect and close on April 24th, Community Colleges had no such authority prior to today. This situation created an emotional and practical problem for many Glendale families where one child attended GCC and another attended a school which closed. It also created a significant financial difficulty for GCC in order to properly respect such an important day for many of the school families and the greater GCC community. To rectify the situation, GCC Board Members requested legislative help from Senator Portantino. As a long-time friend and supporter of the college and the Armenian American Community, Senator Portantino respectfully took up the cause.

"Two years ago, I was honored to have been asked by GCC Board members to help offset the cost of closing on April 24th. Today, I am very proud to have sent a bill to the Governor to help our Armenian Community, greater community, the faculty, administrators, and students of GCC solemnly and appropriately commemorate the Armenian Genocide without unnecessary financial pressure. I am grateful to Governor Newsom, who continues to support and recognize the importance of the Armenian American Community in California, for his signature, sensitivity and understanding of this situation," commented Portantino.

Portantino negotiated directly with the Community College Chancellor's Office to bring an amenable solution to this issue. The bill received bipartisan support in the Senate and the Assembly. The signing of SB 568 is the culmination of those discussions and actions.

"Glendale Community College commends Senator Portantino for his leadership and the Legislature and Governor Newsom for their support in enactment of this important law. GCC will use this legal day of remembrance, and other opportunities throughout the year, to educate our students and communities about the Armenian Genocide to assure such atrocities never happen again," said Dr. David Viar, Superintendent/President of GCC.

"On behalf of the Board of Trustees of Glendale Community College, I thank Senator Portantino's tireless effort on behalf of our students. We are extremely grateful that the Senator championed this issue and enabled us to commemorate the Armenian Genocide by closing our campuses without incurring a financial penalty," added Board of Trustees President Dr. Vahé Perroomian.

GCC President Dr. David Viar and Executive Vice President Dr. Anthony Culpepper travelled to Sacramento over the last year to offer testimony in support of SB 568. In addition to Chairing the Senate Appropriations Committee, Senator Portantino also Chairs the Senate Select Committee on California, Armenia & Artsakh Trade, Art, Cultural and Economic Exchange. He recently helped facilitate the formal Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) between California and the Republic of Armenia which included the establishment of a California Trade Desk in Yerevan. He was in New York with Governor Newsom, Prime Minister Pashinyan and High Commissioner Zareh Sinanyan for the historic MOU signing event.

"It is such good karma that I was sitting in Yerevan when I received the news from the Governor's office that SB 568 was signed. Clearly, the benefits of SB 568 go far beyond financial. When GCC closes on April 24th it educates many non-Armenians about the historical significance of April 24 and the horror of the first Genocide of the 20th century," concluded Portantino.





## COMMUNITY NEWS

## Armenian Assembly Delegation Thanks CA State Senator Holly Mitchell for Support

LOS ANGELES — On October 9, an Armenian Assembly of America delegation met with California State Senator Holly Mitchell (D-30) in her Los Angeles District Office.

First elected to the State Legislature in 2010, Mitchell represents nearly 1 million residents of the 30th Senate District, which ranges from the border at Century City to South Los Angeles and encompasses Culver City, Ladera Heights, Cheviot Hills, Crenshaw District, the University of Southern California, downtown Los Angeles, and a portion of Inglewood. Throughout her distinguished tenure in the California State Senate, more than 80 bills written by Mitchell have been signed into law, including ones aimed at “improving human services, expanding access to healthcare, defending the civil rights of minorities and the undocumented, and reducing the numbers of children growing up in poverty.” In addition to her chairmanship of the Senate Budget and Fiscal Review Committee, she also chairs the Senate Select Committee on Social Determinants of Children’s Well-Being and the Joint Legislative Budget Committee. Senator Mitchell sits on the Senate Health Committee; the Joint Committee on Rules; the Public Safety Committee; the Labor, Public Employment and Retirement Committee; and the Insurance Committee.



From left, Armenian Assembly of America Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan, Armenian Assembly of America Southern California Regional Council member Helen Haig, California State Senator Holly Mitchell (D-30), and Armenian Assembly of America delegate Arthur Kokozyan

Armenian Assembly of America Southern California Regional Council member, Helen Haig, expressed the Armenian Assembly’s gratitude to Senator Mitchell for her vocal support of AB 1320 (the Divestment from Turkish Bonds Act) in committee and on the

Senate floor. This bill was authored by CA State Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, and signed into law by California Governor Gavin Newsom last week in Sacramento.

Armenian Assembly delegate Arthur Kokozyan and Western Region Director

Mihran Toumajan thanked Senator Mitchell for her support of SB 302, authored by CA State Senator Anthony Portantino, which calls for the establishment of a California Trade and Investment Office in Armenia. In late September in New York City, in the presence of Armenia Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Governor Newsom and Armenia Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan signed an MoU to establish a framework for a CA Trade and Investment office in Armenia.

## Agape Circle’s 6th Annual Luncheon Takes Place in Los Angeles in October

BURBANK, Calif. — The humanitarian efforts of Agape Circle of the Western Diocese will be further invigorated during its sixth annual luncheon at The Castaway Restaurant that will serve as an opportunity to raise funds for Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and YWCA Glendale. A valued member of its community, Marlene Yerevanian, will be honored for her dedication and contribution to Our Lady of Armenia, a non-profit that secures the development of orphaned, abandoned and needy children in the homeland, on October 17.

Hosted by Sato Yessayan, in memory of her mother, Araxi Barooni, alongside co-chairs Peggy Kankababian and Armine Bedrossian as well as Alice Chakrian, chair of Agape Circle, the keynote speaker of the event will be Dr. Thomas C. Lee, Director of the Vision Center, Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and Associate Professor of Ophthalmology, Keck School of Medicine, who has been a longtime collaborator with Agape Circle. A thought-provoking panel discussion will follow titled, What Women Really Want to Talk About, featuring Nora Chitilian, MS, LMFT, Lisa Arslanian, PsyD, Aida Torosyan, IIN Certified Holistic Life Coach and Stella Baghdassarian, DDS, HHC, who will explore a variety of topics related to family and women.

In its brief yet productive history, Agape Circle has raised hundreds of thousands of dollars for philanthropic endeavors benefiting Los Angeles and Armenia that include services ranging from healthcare to homelessness. In addition to Children’s Hospital Los Angeles and YWCA Glendale, Agape Circle has also contributed to the Starkey Foundation, which has donated hearing aids to Armenia and to the Armenian Relief Society to aid needy families in California.

The Agape Circle’s 6th annual luncheon will take place at 10:30 am in the Starlight Room of the Castaway Restaurant, 1250 East Harvard Road in Burbank. Donation is \$100 per guest. Make checks payable to “Western Diocese - Agape Circle.” RSVP to [agape@wcdna.com](mailto:agape@wcdna.com).

## St. Vartan Cathedral Hosts Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Church Leaders

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Elpidophoros, who chairs the Assembly of Orthodox Bishops of the USA, said that the Eastern and Oriental Orthodox churches share “the closest relationships in the Christian world.” While the member churches have long developed separately, he said he was encouraged by the fraternal spirit among them. “This practical approach will breathe life into the church,” he said.

“The forward-looking, pragmatic, loving tone shared by all the bishops fills me with hope and expectation,” agreed Findikyan.

The Joint Commission of Eastern and Oriental Orthodox Churches will meet again in December. In the meantime it is planning a joint Christmas concert for later this year, and a pan-Orthodox youth conference in the summer.



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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Celebrates 35th Anniversary with Gala

WATERTOWN — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School (SSAES) is preparing to celebrate its 35th Anniversary on November 16, 2019, with a benefit evening themed "Shaping Our Future, Preserving Our Culture," to be held at The Westin Waltham, under the Auspices of Archbishop Anoushavan Tanielian, Prelate of the Eastern Prelacy. On this occasion, the school aims to rally the support of the Armenian community of the Greater Boston area and beyond to mark this milestone in its history.

Principal Houry Boyamian, who has been leading the school for the past 31 years, announced that the evening's proceeds will benefit the school's Financial Aid Program, with the goal of offering the opportunities of a rigorous American education coupled with a strong Armenian foundation to as many students as possible now and in the future.

Event Chair Nicole Babikian Hajjar, whose three children are graduates of St. Stephen's, was quoted as saying "we are expecting a diverse constituency to come together in sup-



Houry Boyamian

port, as we highlight the school's unique role in building identity and community among Greater Boston's Armenians."

The evening's mistress of ceremonies, Lisa Gulesserian, is a preceptor on Armenian language and culture at Harvard University and an ardent promoter of the Armenian language.

The keynote address will be delivered by Prof. Diran Apelian, member of the National Academy of Engineering and the National

Academy of Inventors, and co-founder of the Armenia Project Center in Yerevan. Singer and songwriter Artur Hakobyan (also known as Mister X) will provide the evening's entertainment.

The 20-member-strong planning team is hard at work putting the final touches to the program and ensuring the success of this milestone celebration. Tickets may be purchased online at [www.mkt/saes](http://www.mkt/saes).



Lisa Gulesserian



Mister X

## Congress Condemns Turkish Invasion of Syria

CONGRESS, from page 1

introduced a framework of legislation that puts financial and visa restrictions on US-based assets of Turkish authorities, sanctions military transactions with Turkey and the Turkish energy sector, and prohibits US military assistance. House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Eliot Engel (D-NY) and Ranking Member Michael McCaul (R-TX) introduced H.Res.625 to sanction Turkish officials and banks involved in the defense sector.

"The sanctions we are introducing will hold Erdogan accountable for this stunning disruption to international security," stated Engel.

"Turkey's military operation has already resulted in civilian casualties and threatens global security by creating conditions that will enable an ISIS resurgence. It must stop its incursion immediately," McCaul said.

Republican Conference Chairwoman Liz Cheney (R-WY) also took the lead to condemn Turkey for its violence in northern Syria with nearly 30 US Representatives in support of legislation to sanction Turkey.

Cheney is joined by House Minority Leader Kevin McCarthy (R-CA), House Minority Whip Rep. Steve Scalise (R-LA), House Armed Services Committee Ranking Member Mac Thornberry (R-TX), Rep. Jodey Arrington (R-TX), Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE), Rep. Jim Banks (R-

IN), Rep. Jack Bergman (R-MI), Rep. Rick Crawford (R-AR), Rep. Dan Crenshaw (R-TX), Rep. Mike Gallagher (R-WI), Rep. French Hill (R-AR), Rep. Will Hurd (R-TX), Rep. Richard Hudson (R-NC), Rep. Mike Johnson (R-LA), Rep. Adam Kinzinger (R-IL), Rep. Paul Mitchell (R-MI), Rep. John Ratcliffe (R-TX), Rep. Guy Reschenthaler (R-PA), Rep. Martha Roby (R-AL), Rep. Mike Rogers (R-AL), Rep. Denver Riggleman (R-VA), Rep. Elise Stefanik (R-NY), Rep. Mike Turner (R-OH), Rep. Mark Walker (R-NC), Rep. Michael Waltz (R-FL), Rep. Brad Wenstrup (R-OH), Rep. Joe Wilson (R-SC), and Rep. Steve Womack (R-AR).

"President Erdogan and his regime must face serious consequences for mercilessly attacking our Kurdish allies in northern Syria, who incurred thousands of casualties in the fight against ISIS and helped us protect the homeland," said Cheney.

"The international community should not stand by and watch as Turkey once again subjects ethnic and religious minorities in Syria to horrific atrocities. It is our legacy to protect those whose lives are at risk and our responsibility to prevent atrocities from being committed. We urge Congress to take immediate action against Turkey and to swiftly adopt bipartisan, bicameral legislation," Armenian Assembly of America Co-Chairs Anthony Barsamian and Van Krikorian stated.



Diran Apelian



Nicole Hajjar

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Diana Apcar Documentary Sheds Light on Tireless Heroine

DOCUMENTARY, from page 1

For her, Apcar was first only her great-grandmother. Slowly, she said, she kept hearing about her stories and sought to look deeper. “The more I investigated, the more awestruck I became,” she said.

Her lifetime coincided with several major events, including the continued annihilation of the Armenians in the Ottoman Empire and also the creation of the Republic of Armenia and its subsequent dissolution, and finally the creation of the Soviet Union.

In 1917, Japan had no refugee policy. Through her, the Armenian Genocide survivors were provided access to Japan even though they had no passports or proper documents. “Hundreds, even thousands of lives were” saved through the efforts of Apcar, Malayan said. “Diana rented houses to shelter the refugees,” she said, adding, “She helped with visas and ship passage for them before, during and after the First Republic.”

For her efforts she received the nickname “Little Mother of a Nation.”

## No Ordinary Woman

Apcar was born in India. She met and married her husband, Michael, a businessman, and the two moved from Calcutta to Japan in 1891.

It was around this time, the consul explained,

that Japan had started accepting, and even welcoming foreigners and used their help to transition the economy out of feudalism. “Mr. Apcar found his opportunity and moved to Yokohama and Kobe,” the most important open ports, he said.

During the brief existence of the First Republic of Armenia, 1918-1920, Apcar was tapped to be that country’s honorary ambassador in Japan.

Malayan explained that her non-stop work on behalf of her people halfway across the world never ceased.

“I believe Diana deserves the title of ambassador,” she said. And the audience agreed.

The emotional Malayan got choked up while thanking the audience.

The film, in a striking Japanese-style black-and-white animation interspersed with interviews, photos and letters, detailed Apcar’s life as a woman, activist, author and person of faith, showed her multifaceted personality. (For more details on the film see <https://mirrorspectator.com/2019/06/06/great-granddaughter-wants-to-give-diana-apcar-her-due/>)

She was a widow at a young age, with three children and a family business that her husband had failed to safeguard. She worked hard to set right the business, all the while getting news from Western Armenia, where the Ottoman forces had started their policy of extermination, first in Adana and later across the entire empire. She wrote endless letters about the situation, trying to add her voice to the highest levels of political circles around the world. After the catastrophe, she did what came naturally to her, helping those who had made their way to Russia to take a ship to Japan and from there, after all the paperwork was completed, to buy passage to the US.

Among the people interviewed in the documentary were descendants of



Project SAVE Executive Director Tsoleen Sarian (Aram Arkun Photo)

those who had been helped by Apcar, the current ambassador of Armenia to Japan, Grant Pogosyan, as well as several scholars.

The event was a collaboration between the Armenian Cultural Foundation, Amaras Ar 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 the Tekeyan cultural Association of Greater Boston. A major contribution was made by the Charles Mosesian Family Foundation toward the program.

A reception followed the film.

“The Stateless Diplomat” has garnered the Audience Choice for Best Documentary and Honorable Mention for Best Documentary Feature at the at the 2018 Pomegranate Film Festival.

For more information about Apcar or the film, visit [www.dianaapcar.org](http://www.dianaapcar.org).



Japan Consul General in Boston Setsuo Ohmori (Aram Arkun Photo)



Filmmaker Mimi Malayan (Aram Arkun Photo)

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ԵՒ 2, 2019

Առաւօտեան ժամը 10-էն -  
երեկոյեան 9:30

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Սրահին մէջ  
47 Նիքոլզ Էլլնիւ, Ուոթըրթաուն, ՄԵՄ.

Ճաշ՝ ժամը 11:30-էն սկսեալ  
Միջեւ երեկոյեան ժամը 8:30

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## COMMUNITY NEWS

# Diocese Symposium Explores New Approaches To Armenian Language in East Coast

**By Aram Arkun**

Mirror-Spectator Staff

NEW YORK — At the annual Armenian Teachers Symposium of the Eastern Diocese of the Armenian Church of America on September 7, various presentations and workshops were organized by the Diocesan Armenian Studies department, headed by Gilda Kupelian, to aid in the professional development of the 45 Armenian school educators present (see <https://armenianchurch.us/2019/09/10/a-symposium-for-armenian-school-teachers/>).

At this symposium, Fr. Davit Karamyan put forward some proposals concerning the future direction of Diocesan involvement in Armenian language instruction which could lead to radical changes in the role of the Diocese. He suggested that the work thus far had not led to much success and instead he suggested the creation ultimately of a joint entity including the Diocese, Prelacy and Armenian General Benevolent Union, with the support of the Education Ministry of the Republic of Armenia.

Karamyan urged the educators to reexamine their views, declaring in Armenian (all translation below is that of the author), “I feel that we, as teachers or educators, are not ready to look reality in the eyes. We know that speaking Armenian, Armenian culture, is very sensitive for all Armenians, especially for those Armenians who speak Armenian. All of us here are those kinds of Armenians. But being realistic, I think, is a good thing for our future. We are a little bit in the clouds, and when we fall from the clouds, we hurt a little. They call that a nose dive, no? Perhaps our nose touches the ground and blood comes out...Are we ready for that, do we have the courage for it?”

He asked what the goal of the Armenian schools are under the present circumstances. Karamyan said that in his nearly ten years of experience working with youth, at each seventh-grade graduating event he has witnessed, only two or three children out of fifty could put together two decent sentences in Armenian, and these are children from Armenian-speaking families. Their speeches are practically the replication of the words of the previous class, with only the names changed, and are read from transliterated notes, written in English letters. Consequently, their teachers, he said, are “defeated” teachers who cannot have any satisfaction in success. He continued, “So, I think the time has come for us, as a collectivity of teachers, to look at the reality and take realistic decisions.” He said that the Armenian Church at present “does not have sufficient ability to secure the right program and the best trained teachers.”

Karamyan said that as a priest, he recognized that the language issue was “the burden of centuries” on the church and added his personal point of view. He said that he does work to keep his people Armenian. However, he said, “I do this naturally because I am Armenian and my

people are Armenian, but I have taken an oath to be responsible for the souls of the Armenian people in front of God. Now, when I add to my responsibilities, I deviate a little from my true responsibilities, or at least I am not able to do my responsibility fully. We as a people have become accustomed to this system. It has come to us over the centuries. But now we have statehood. Why do we not value that statehood? Why do we not allow the Education Ministry [of

“But it is very clear that you cannot change something without having something else in its place.”

He proposed that if the Diocese could, “with the participation and perhaps the sponsorship of the Education Ministry of the government of Armenia, create a body here, with the representation of the two dioceses [the same word is used in Armenian, referring in this case to the Prelacy and the Diocese], with the participation

Armenian language on foreign shores, or will we be able to keep certain things?” Hopefully, the latter.

The teachers in the discussion that followed raised a number of points, including the following. Some suggested it was not possible to separate religion and language and that the Diocesan Saturday schools were important because they taught about Armenian identity, while others said the two were already separat-



Participants in the teachers' symposium at St. Vartan Armenian Cathedral in New York

the Republic of Armenia] to truly educate? Why do we not let the Armenian Church truly take care of the Armenian soul and not be occupied with Armenian schools. This is the perfect picture, which I dream and pray truly that we will have. However, since we do not have it, the Armenian Church is the responsible one for all these things, it must try to use its strength in the best way, which is you. Again, this is not a perfect picture, when a child who has graduated the seventh grade must read his final words in Armenian written in English letters. This is the picture practically everywhere.”

He later in the question and answer session clarified that all this did not mean that the Armenian Saturday schools of the Diocese will be closed soon. While there was some discussion that the results of the Armenian Studies department were not sufficient, he said that other formats were being looked at, and added,

of the Parekordzagan [Armenian General Benevolent Union], ... the textbooks will be prepared or printed in Armenia, experts will go to Armenia, be prepared and return. It will turn into a pan-Armenian thing, a perfect thing.” At least some of the Saturday school Armenian language teachers will also be part of this body, and representatives of Armenian daily schools, he said.

This is the ultimate goal. “Today, we cannot do that,” he pointed out, but the department could be restructured with the help of its head, Gilda Kupelian, stating “this means relooking a bit at the goals, and in accordance with this, also reexamination and reparation of the means.”

Fr. Karamyan exhorted the teachers to not fear change, saying, “You should not accept the changes as so painful. Those changes will come. But what will those changes be, the end of the

ed. Several said the schools were a means to connect with students and some might not come to the Armenian Church without it. It was pointed out that the schools did not receive any aid financially from the Diocese and the only support they had was the permission to use rooms in their local churches. One person exclaimed that there was a profound lack of confidence in Armenian political and religious leadership in general historically and at the present.

For context on the way the new Primate Bishop Findikyan is considering refocusing the mission of the Armenian Church, see <https://mirrorspectator.com/2018/06/14/new-eastern-diocesan-primate-listening-and-learning-considering-reprioritization/> and <https://mirrorspectator.com/2019/05/16/primate-findikyan-refocuses-direction-of-eastern-diocese-assembly-covers-wide-ranging-issues/>.

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## COMMUNITY NEWS



**Now for some good news: Young Eric Allahverdov, 1, likes to read the Armenian Mirror-Spectator back to front. He considers himself lucky that his grandfather, Andrey Allakhverdov, is a subscriber.**

## AWWA Luncheon to Take Place at Belmont Country Club on November 9

**By Lalig Musserian**

JAMAICA PLAIN, Mass. — The Armenian Women's Welfare Association, Inc. (AWWA) recently announced plans for their annual Thanks-for-Giving Luncheon, which will take place on Saturday, November 9, from 12 to 4 p.m., at the Belmont Country Club in Belmont. The luncheon will provide an opportunity for attendees to hear from the new Chief Executive Officer of the AWWA, Stewart Goff, and raise money for AWWA's primary initiatives: the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center, Inc., in Jamaica Plain, and the Hanganak Elder Clinic in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh. In addition, AWWA recently established the AWWA Founders Humanitarian Award, to be conferred upon an individual or organization in recognition of outstanding humanitarian vision and dedication to helping improve the welfare of Armenians less fortunate. The luncheon will also serve to honor its first recipient of the AWWA Founders Humanitarian Award.

AWWA announces that its inaugural AWWA Founders Humanitarian Award will recognize Dr. Carolann S. Najarian for her unfailing devotion and commitment to numerous humanitarian causes throughout a lifetime of dedicated service. In particular, Najarian was instrumental in

helping AWWA recognize the vision of helping elders in Nagorno-Karabakh, which led to AWWA sponsoring the Hanganak Elder Clinic (Hanganak) in Stepanakert, Nagorno-Karabakh in 2004. For more than 15 years, Hanganak has been providing medical care, food, and social support, including spiritual and community activities, to elderly women and men living alone in Stepanakert, who have no other means of support. These elders have been profoundly affected by conflicts in this region, most having lost family members. Since 2014, Hanganak has expanded their services by providing fuel assistance to Hanganak beneficiaries. Through AWWA's sponsorship, Hanganak serves more than 200 elderly beneficiaries each year.

In addition to Hanganak, AWWA sponsors the Armenian Nursing and Rehabilitation Center (ANRC), an 83-bed nursing facility located in Jamaica Plain, which serves both elderly Armenians and non-Armenians alike by care for residents requiring short-term rehabilitation, as well as long-term care. The ANRC has a five-star rating from the Centers for Medicare and



Dr. Carolann Najarian

Medicaid Services (CMS), placing the ANRC in the top 10 percent of skilled nursing facilities within the Commonwealth of Massachusetts.

Najarian, a native New Yorker, spent the major part of her medical career in private practice in Cambridge and Watertown. In 1988, after the great earthquake that destroyed most of northern Armenia, she spearheaded a medical relief effort to that country through the NGO she established, the Armenian Health Alliance, Inc. Over the course of more than 50 trips to the region, she delivered millions of dollars' worth of medicine and medical supplies to the destroyed region, established the Primary Care Center of Gyumri (providing care to needy residents and training to physicians) and the Arpen Center for Expectant Women, in Nagorno-Karabakh (providing food and vitamins to pregnant women). She most recently was awarded the Vachakan Barepasht medal from Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan in April of this year, which acknowledges her distinguished service in Artsakh, both during and after the war.

Najarian earned her medical degree from the Boston University School of Medicine. She also holds a BA in music from Queens College, New York. She wrote her book, *A Call From Home: Armenia and Karabagh, My Journal* (Arpen Press, 1999) based on her journals, chronicling her experiences and the people she met over the first 8 years of her work after the earthquake and the break-up of the Soviet Union.

Among the awards and honors Najarian has received are The Ellis Island Medal of Honor in 1999; Boston University School of Medicine Alumni Association Humanitarian Award in 2004; and Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry Charitable Trust Woman of the Year Award in 2003.

Advance purchase of tickets is required and seating is limited. Tickets may be purchased online at <http://www.awwa.us> and scrolling to the "Register for the AWWA Annual Luncheon" link or by contacting Stephanie Ciccolo at [sciccolo@armenian-nursing.com](mailto:sciccolo@armenian-nursing.com).



### Armenian Women's Welfare Association

## Thanks-For-Giving Luncheon

Please join us at our Annual Luncheon and in honoring

*Carolann S. Najarian, MD,*

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Tickets and donations for the event may be made online at:

[www.eventbrite.com/d/ma--boston/awwa/](http://www.eventbrite.com/d/ma--boston/awwa/)

or by contacting Stephanie Ciccolo at:

[sciccolo@armenian-nursing.com](mailto:sciccolo@armenian-nursing.com) or 617-522-2600 ext. 101.

Hosted by the AWWA Board of Directors

AWWA is a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization and donations are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.





# Arts & Living

## Lilit Hovhannisyan Wows Boston Audience

WINCHESTER, Mass. — She got the audience on their feet and she brought the house down. On September 27, pop singer Lilit Hovhannisyan took her unique stage show and pop stylings from Yerevan to Boston. As part of her 75-city world tour, Hovhannisyan, her band and dancers made her East Coast debut to a rapt audience at Winchester High School's auditorium.

Hovhannisyan is a self-made global rising star. Joining her for several numbers were local children from Zangakner Ensemble, led by Hasmik Konjoyan, who made a special trip from Los Angeles for the event, and the Erebouni Dance Ensemble, led by Arman Mnatsakanyan. She opened with the funky *Te Aghjik Lineir*. She was quick to lay down the rules, saying: "I want you to sing and dance with me." She then launched into *Mayrik*, a prayer song, written by her jazz pianist husband Vahram Petrosyan and dedicated to her mother. Rounding out the show, she performed her classic tracks, *Piti Gnank*, *Acapella*, *De El Mi*, *Gnchu*, and *Im Ser Atum Em*



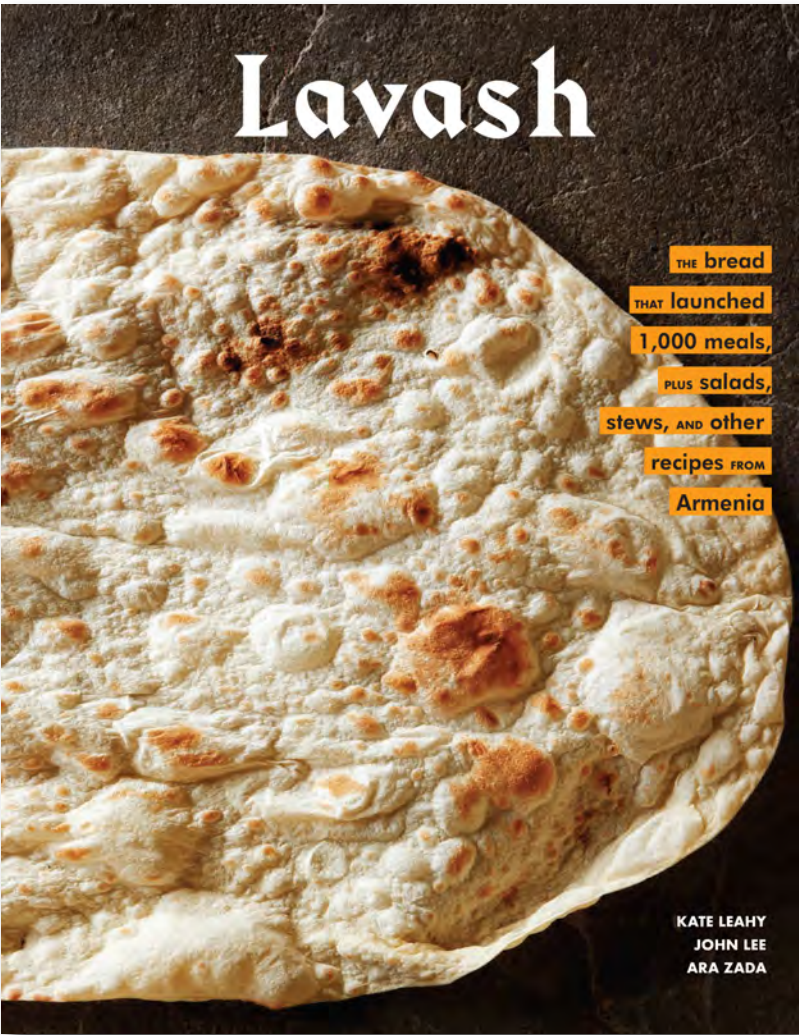
Lilit Hovhannisyan in concert in Winchester

Kez in between sprinkling messages of affirmation and telling stories connected to her songs. What the fans came to see was this young pop singer who is humble yet charismatic. She hasn't lost her human touch, and, most importantly, has a very powerful voice and puts on a spectacular show and in turn they responded enthusiastically, dancing and singing in the aisles.

"This event was a fundraiser for the Erebuni Armenian School. We took a risk because this was a completely different type of concert and we weren't sure how the audience would accept it. But I am glad we did it because we received an overwhelming positive feedback from the attendees and beyond, even from those who couldn't make it but heard about it. We thank Lilit for engaging the audience and connecting with the guests," said Armine Manukyan, the principal of Erebuni Armenian School.



Lilit Hovhannisyan (fourth from left) and Hasmik Konjoyan (third from left) with some of the local Boston-area performers and parents



Nikol Pashinyan and Serj Tankian (or actors portraying them) at a game show

## Lavash Trio Launch Modern Cookbook on Ancient Cuisine

LOS ANGELES — If you take the best features of Eastern Mediterranean cuisine — fresh produce, lively flavors, approachable dishes — and swirl them with the finest traditions of central Europe and Russia, you have Armenian cuisine. Think skewered, grilled meats; a table laden with delicious salads and stuffed vegetables; a variety of soups and porridges; and thin, chewy lavash bread to wrap or scoop up every drop.

A new book, *Lavash: The Bread that Launched 1,000 Meals, Plus Salads, Stews, and Other Recipes From Armenia*, part cookbook and part travelogue, hopes to take readers to unexplored destinations.

The book will be out on October 29. It is by Kate Leahy, John Lee and Ara Zada, with Lee also responsible for the photographs.

Armenia is a land of kind people, tantalizing foods, strong spirits, and fascinating history. Many centuries ago, it is where trade paths merged, bringing together flavors from Europe, Asia, and the Middle East. It's where entire villages venture into the fields and hills to gather wild herbs; local lavash bakeries are social hubs, and every home has a stash of pickled vegetables.

With growing interest in fermentation and the medical benefits of a Mediterranean diet, Armenian food offers a new take on healthful deliciousness.

More than 60 recipes — arranged by course — cover authentic breads and everything you eat with them. *Lavash* features the many flatbreads of Armenia — lavash (a UNESCO-heritage bread), herb-stuffed jingalov hats, focaccia-like matnakash, and others — and provides techniques to make them easy to prepare in your home kitchen. It also explores stuffed vegetables, salads, soups, pickles, sweets, and meals for feasting.

For both armchair travelers and home cooks, *Lavash* is a book as enticing in the reading as its recipes are to the palate. There is no finer way to understand a culture than to taste its foods. *Lavash* takes you through the gorgeous Armenian landscape, its proud and tragic history, and the hope of the now.

Kate Leahy has written or edited more than nine books on food and wine, including *A16 Food + Wine*, an IACP Cookbook of the Year and winner of the Julia Child best first book award. Prior to writing, she spent five years cooking on the line at James Beard award-winning restaurants in California and Boston. Years before joining forces with John Lee and Ara Zada to write *Lavash*, she did a deep dive into Armenian-American foodways for a research paper published in *Explorations*, a University of California at Davis academic journal. Kate lives in San Francisco.

John Lee is an award-winning photojournalist working primarily in gastronomy and portraiture. He was a staff photographer for the *Chicago Tribune* from 1996 to 2005, covering presidential campaigns, the rise of China, civil unrest in Haiti,

see LAVASH, page 13

## Exhibition at CSUN To Feature American Humanitarianism And YMCA Philanthropy In Armenia

NORTHRIDGE, Calif. — The Armenian National Institute (ANI) and the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) are partnering with the California State University Northridge (CSUN) Armenian Studies Program, CSUN's West Gallery, the CSUN Office of Government and Community Relations, the CSUN Armenian Student Association, and the YMCA of Metropolitan Los Angeles to present an exhibition titled "The Lifesavers: American Humanitarianism and YMCA Philanthropy in Armenia 1918-1920," premiering in the Western United States on Saturday, October 26 from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m. at CSUN's on-campus West Gallery.

The exhibit showcases the role of the YMCA and American relief work during the first republic of Armenia (1918-1920), and focuses on John Elder and James O. Arroll, who arrived in Yerevan in January 1918 to open a YMCA center. Neither Elder nor Arroll had anticipated being stranded as the only Americans left in the country's capital city with all communication to the outside world cut off when the front line faltered. World War I was still raging at the time and Allied forces were in retreat on the Caucasian front. The November 11, 1918 Armistice that ended World War I was many months away. By the time they left Yerevan in August 1919, Elder and Arroll had become responsible for the entire humanitarian operation set up by U.S.-based charities, which ultimately earned them special tribute from U.S. President Herbert Hoover.

The opening program for the exhibit starts at 3 p.m. on Saturday, October 26, and is free and open to the public.

The program will feature ANI Director Dr. Rouben Adalian, who researched and created the exhibit. Adalian will provide a brief overview at 3:15 p.m., explaining the photographic and documentary sources of the exhibit, as well as the importance of the exceptional accomplishments of the two YMCA volunteers who were recognized by the Armenian government for saving the lives of tens of thousands of Armenians in the critical first months of the newborn Armenian republic.

Representatives of the university, area elected officials, and community leaders will be in attendance joining CSUN Armenian Studies Program Director Dr. Vahram Shemmashian, members of the CSUN Armenian Student Association (ASA), and Adalian in launching the opening of the exhibit at the West Gallery. The exhibit will remain open for the public through Thursday, November 7.

"The Lifesavers: American Humanitarianism and YMCA Philanthropy in Armenia 1918-1920" exhibition displays 95 images total - 64 from John Elder's photo collection, 8 contemporaneous records and documents, and 4 maps. The exhibit includes the entire set of photographs Elder attributed to his time in Armenia.

Several American relief workers are also mentioned in the exhibit, including Rev. Ernest Yarrow, Gertrude Pearson, F. Tredwell Smith, and Mabel Farrington. Mary Kifer, whose life was cut short after leaving the Caucasus, improbably found romance while conducting relief work in Armenia. Her story parallels A Farewell to Arms before Ernest Hemingway wrote his WWI-era tragedy.

Other American personalities in the region appearing in the exhibit include the U.S. Consul in Tiflis, F. Willoughby Smith, who supported the efforts of the relief workers; Robert McDowell, who was at the front when the Turkish forces broke through and invaded Alexandropol/Gyumri; Dr. John H.T. Main, president of Grinnell College in Iowa, who witnessed the horrific conditions in Armenia

see EXHIBIT, page 13





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

## CSUN Exhibition to Feature American Humanitarianism and YMCA Philanthropy in Armenia

EXHIBIT, from page 12

firsthand on behalf of the American Committee for Relief in the Near East; missionary Grace Knapp; and John Mott, long-time president of the American YMCA, who, with the encouragement of his friend President Woodrow Wilson, dispatched young Americans wherever they could lend civilian support behind the front to soldiers in combat.

John Elder was particularly happy to welcome two Pennsylvania natives like himself, Pittsburgh businessman Howard Heinz, and president of the American Bar Association Walter George Smith, who traveled to Armenia on behalf of the American Relief Administration. Both were members of prominent families. Smith was married to Elizabeth Drexel, whose uncle, banker and philanthropist Anthony Drexel, founded Drexel University in Philadelphia. Smith became the most vocal American Catholic advocate of the Armenian people at the time.

Ryan Bean, Reference and Outreach Archivist at the YMCA Archives, who supported the project, remarked: "The Armenian National Institute has done a fantastic job telling this story. It is both tragic and heartbreaking on the one hand, and inspiring and humbling on the other. The timeliness of this exhibit is very appropriate, and I believe we could all learn a lesson from Elder and Arroll."

In its April 24, 2018 posting on its Facebook page, where the exhibit can be viewed, the YMCA Archives extended "Congratulations to Dr. Rouben Adalian and the Armenian National Institute on the release of the digital exhibit 'The Critical Role of the YMCA and American Relief in Armenia a Century Ago.' This exhibit both illuminates a tragic humanitarian disaster as well as highlights the capacity of the human



Children in the government orphanage

spirit to persevere and do good in the face of a seemingly hopeless situation."

YMCA Europe, which encompasses 43 countries, also currently highlights the exhibit on its website. YMCA Armenia has been touring the exhibit across the country over the past couple of years where it has been mounted in Yerevan, Stepanakert, Gyumri, and other localities. Vardan Hambardzumyan, who heads the YMCA in Armenia wrote that he was "absolutely grateful to ANI for disclosing so eloquently the story of the YMCA in the Republic of Armenia back in 1918."

"I am so honored that the YMCA once again is partnering with ANI in bringing the remarkable story of its volunteers to the attention of the general public. They have been supporting this project from the start. Leaders from the Philadelphia area YMCA who joined the Armenian community this year on April 24 and heard the presentation were excited to learn about this forgotten chapter about their own organization and took great pride in welcoming the exhibit. I am looking forward to sharing this story for the first time

with the Los Angeles community," stated Adalian.

Shemmassian, Director of the CSUN Armenian Studies Program, added: "Dr. Adalian has put together an impressive and dramatic exhibit that addresses the consequences of the Armenian Genocide and the important role American humanitarians played in relieving the plight of the survivors. As the exhibit makes evident, there were so many American relief workers who came to the aid of the Armenians in those tragic times that we still don't have a full picture of their contributions. They were the best exemplars of American philanthropy whose role in making the world a better place

should be better known. I am sure our students and faculty will benefit from the exhibit and I look forward to welcoming the wider community in visiting the exhibit."

"The CSUN Armenian Studies Program was the recent recipient of a \$2.1 million anonymous gift, and congratulations are in order.

The gift is a tribute to the excellence of its program and the leadership of its Director, Dr. Vahram Shemmassian," stated Assembly Western Region Director Mihran Toumajan. "We are thrilled to be partnering with such a distinguished program, which plays a significant pedagogic role at a university that is educating more Armenian American students than any other institution in the United States. I would also take this opportunity to thank James Sweeters, director of the CSUN West Gallery, and his staff for their guidance and support in realizing this valuable exhibit."

"On behalf of ANI and the Assembly, I also extend my gratitude to CSUN College of Humanities Director of Development Suren Seropian, CSUN Interim Director of Government and Community Relations Rafael de la Rosa, Mid Valley Family YMCA Executive Director Lionnel Zaragoza, and CSUN Armenian Student Association President Michael Barseghian for their leadership, partnership, and valued work during the past months," Toumajan added.



YMCA members and volunteers in Armenia with Armenian Assembly of America Regional Director Arpi Vartanian (third from right), Armenian Minister of Education Arayik Harutyunyan (second from right), and YMCA Armenia Acting Director Khoren Papoyan (far right) at the ANI Exhibit Opening in Yerevan



James O. Arroll (left) and John Elder (right)

## Trio Launch Modern Cookbook on Ancient Cuisine

LAVASH, from page 12

Islamic fundamentalism in Pakistan and Indonesia, and the war in Iraq. He was also part of the team of journalists at the Tribune who won the 2001 Pulitzer Prize for its profile of the chaotic American air traffic system. Since leaving the *Chicago Tribune* in 2005, he has photographed more than two dozen cookbooks. John is based in San Francisco and Singapore.

Ara Zada grew up in an Armenian-Egyptian household in Southern California. He graduated from Le Cordon Bleu, and worked for Jaime Oliver on the television show "Food Revolution." He was culinary instructor for the Jamie Oliver Food Foundation's mobile teaching kitchen in Los Angeles. He was also a food stylist for ABC, CBS, NBC, and the Food Network. He has led numerous cooking workshops, including in Armenia for Tumo Center for Creative Technology's culinary atelier. He is currently executive chef at Fresh Gourmet Cuisine. He is an avid wild game bow hunter. He lives in Los Angeles.

The book has received praise from some well-known names. Marcus Samuelsson, the award-winning chef, restaurateur, and co-owner of Red Rooster Harlem, has said, "*Lavash* takes readers on a colorful culinary journey to Armenia, past and present. From its investigation into the history of that part of the world to



The three Lavash authors (Raffi Youredjian photo)

its vivid images and diverse recipes, this book explores what Armenian cuisine looks like today in a very authentic and beautiful way."

And Serj Tankian, poet, visual artist, activist, composer, and former lead vocalist for System of a Down said, "*Lavash* is an incredibly complete

book of foods from Armenia, part cookbook, part coffee table photo journal, and part history book. The culinary culture of Armenia is ancient, profound, and a doorway to understanding the people and culture of that country – and this book and John Lee's incredible photos truly do justice

to this culinary tradition."

"At last, Armenian food gets its due! *Lavash* takes us on a captivating journey through Armenia, sharing stories of this ancient land's history and people, along with the secrets of its remarkable cuisine. The flatbread recipes alone are worth the price of the book, but there's so much more revealed here – piquant salads, whole-grain porridges, and soothing soups and stews. This eye-opening book belongs on every library shelf and kitchen counter."

The authors are on a tour of the country.

**The following are a few of the dates:**

October 24: San Francisco, Noon, 3pm & 7pm, Popup Lunch & Dinner, Noosh - 2001 Fillmore St. San Francisco, CA

October 26: San Francisco, 3pm, Talk & Book Signing (free event), Omnivore Books on Food, 3885 Cesar Chavez, San Francisco

October 29: GLENDALE, 7:30pm, Official Book Launch: Talk & Book Signing (free event), Abril Books, 415 E. Broadway, Glendale

November 13: CAMBRIDGE, Mass., 6:30pm, Conversation & Book Signing, Elmendorf Baking Supplies and Café, 594 Cambridge St., Cambridge

November 14: BELMONT, Mass., 7pm, Talk & Book Signing (free event), Belmont Books, 79 Leonard St., Belmont

To see more photos or find out about recipes, visit [www.lavashthebook.com](http://www.lavashthebook.com).

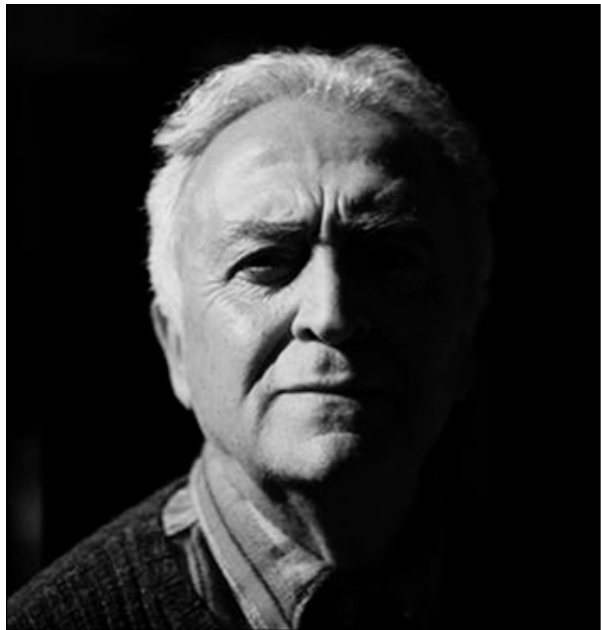


# ‘Echoes’ by Artist Jean Kazandjian To Go on Exhibit In San Diego

SAN DIEGO, Calif. – “Echoes,” a retrospective collection of works by world-renowned artist Jean Kazandjian will be on exhibition and available for acquisition at Meyer Fine Art. The exhibition opens on Saturday, November 9 and extends through Saturday, December 28. Two in-gallery receptions with the artist will take place on Saturday, November 9, from 5 to 8 p.m. and Sunday, November 10, from noon to 4 p.m.

The exhibition will feature 80 pieces of Kazandjian’s works created between 1991 and 2019. Kazandjian’s work can be seen in venerable fine art collections globally, as well as on the walls of the San Diego Intercontinental Hotel.

Kazandjian was born in Beirut, Lebanon, where he lived until his early twenties. He was influenced by a wide array of Mediterranean cultures. Of Armenian heritage, he was also exposed to French and English as a second and third language. His family had fled Turkey in 1915 at the onset of the



Jean Kazandjian

Armenian genocide; after spending many years in Ethiopia, they settled in Lebanon in 1933. Beirut was a culturally rich and sophisticated city and was often referred to as the “Paris of the Middle East” prior to the civil war, which began in 1975. Jean is the third of five children.

Kazandjian’s origins and education brought him into contact with three different cultures. His roots are in the Armenian tradition, his high school education introduced him to French culture, while his years spent at university opened him to the influence of the English-speaking world. These various influences have combined to foster in his work the qualities of patience and sensibility, knowledge and wisdom.

After his “freshman arts” year in 1960, Kazandjian was unanimously awarded the first prize for his submission in a special competitive exhibition for tapestry, organized by the



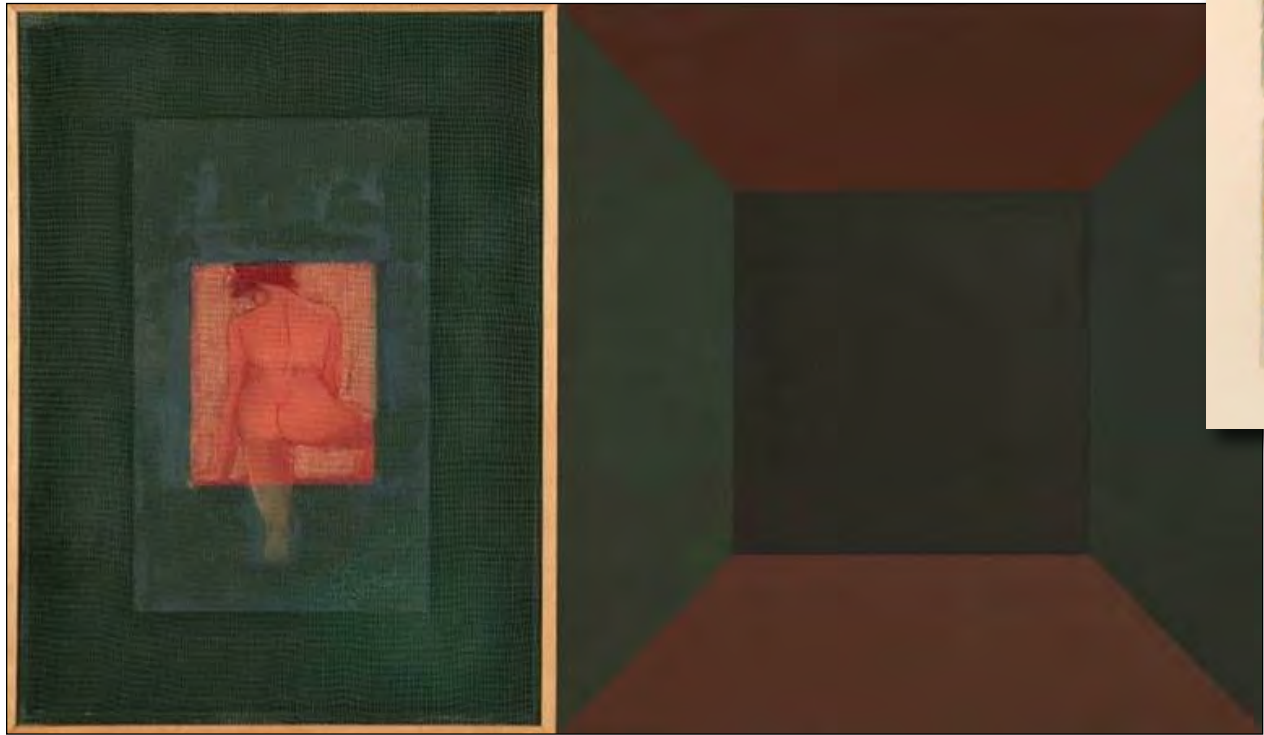
“Sequences- Mother and Child II.” Oil on canvas. 46,75x35 inches. Year 1995.

Sursock Museum of Beirut in 1962. Spurred on by his desire to become familiar with the techniques and the materials peculiar to the cultural world in which he had grown up, he embarked on studies in design. In 1968, he gained a master’s degree from ENSAD in Paris, a well-known publicly funded school for applied arts. In the aftermath of the political and social turbulence of 1968 Paris, Kazandjian came to a clearer sense of his capacities as an artist. The beginning of his career as a painter can thus be located in the year 1969. Recognition of Kazandjian’s talent in the Paris art world was immediate.

The late 1960s and early 1970s were a period during which he met painters as remarkable and as



“Sequences- Seated Woman- Nine Rectangles.” Oil on canvas. 36x28.75 inches. Year 2000



“Woman at her Bath.” Oil and acrylic on panel with screen. 22x37.75 inches. Year 1998.

diverse as Giorgio de Chirico, Salvador Dali, Leonardo Cremonini, Francis Bacon and Alexander Calder. The effect of this exposure to such a diversity of influences and artistic projects was to consolidate his sense of the need to remain faithful to the artistic interrogations proper to him. Kazandjian has exhibited his works in several European countries and also in Canada and the United States.

Meyer Fine Art is located at 2400 Kettner Blvd., Suite 104.





## ARTS &amp; LIVING

# Carlos Antaramian

## Mexico Has Always Had a Small but Strong Armenian Community

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

MEXICO CITY, Mexico – Carlos Antaramián is the only Mexican Armenian I have met, one of the active members of a small Armenian community in Mexico, who has been researching the history of this community and other Armenians-related topics. He travels often to Armenia, participating in different events. In 2015 he took part in the events dedicated to the centennial of the Armenian Genocide, and served as an observer in the elections of Artsakh. At the Spanish Club in Yerevan, he screened the film “Armenians in Mexico” by American-Armenian Philip Boyajian, shot in 1957, the only copy of which is in his possession.

Below, Antaramian in his own words tells us about himself and the Armenian community in Mexico:

I was born in 1972 in Mexico. My father, Eduardo Antaramián, was also born in Mexico, and my mother is Mexican of Spanish-Indian descent. My paternal grandmother, Victoria, was from Constantinople, and my great-grandfather, Garabed, from Kharberd area or Charsanjak, Hoshe village, near Peri, today called Akpazar, close to Dersim. I have visited there once. My grandfather Garabed was one of the Genocide survivors. The only thing he said was that his mother and younger siblings had committed suicide by jumping into the river, not surviving the slaughter of other family members. My grandfather was rescued by a Kurdish family; then he went in Aleppo, from where he left for Mexico in 1923. In 2015 I went down to the river to pay tribute to my ancestors who found their end there. By the way, my 6-year-old daughter, knowing where to go, gave me one of her toys and asked me to throw it into the river...

I studied international relations at the National University of Mexico, then social anthropology in Zamora Michoacán. My PhD thesis was about commemoration of the Armenian Genocide in different places. To this end, I have studied commemoration ceremonies in Paris, Montevideo, Buenos Aires, Istanbul, Yerevan, and interviewed various individuals. In my work I try to illustrate and analyze the similarities and differences between the first commemoration of April 24 (in 1919 in Constantinople) to date. For instance, by 1965, for example, our victims were constantly remembered, but no demands were made.

I have also been studying the history of the Armenian presence in Mexico for many years, collecting written material, photos and videos, and have already shot a small documentary on the subject. In the Inquisition archives in Mexico, I found an Armenian document written in 1632 according to which Francisco Martin, probably an Armenian, applied to the Inquisition for forgiveness of sins. In the same folder there's and Armenian alphabet, if both documents are linked, this is probably the oldest document written in Armenian language in the Americas. In the same archive I also found some documents about Don Pedro de Zarate, an 18th-century Armenian whose name is well-known in historiography. The 54 archive documents mention Armenians living in the Philippines in the 18th century (since the Philippines was then a colony of New Spain, today's Mexico). From the 19th century, I found a wonderful historical figure, Hagop (Jacobo) Harootian, about whom I am writing a biography. He was from Aleppo and left for the US in 1883, served in the US Army until 1889, then came to Mexico, was a miner, discovered several mines, including Mexico's largest gold mine. When the Mexican Revolution began, he helped the revolutionaries, got in touch with the leader of the revolution, Francisco I. Madero (their joint photo



is saved). Later he became a general, served in a dictatorial government, fought against Zapata and Pancho Villa. When the government was defeated, he went into exile, to New Orleans first, and spent the last years of his life in the Dominican Republic.

Hagop was a true Armenian, and his big house in a small town in Zumpango del Río in the Mexican State of Guerrero was called Casa del Armenio (The home of the Armenian). It is now the Jacobo Harootian Cultural Center. I am in touch with General Harootian's grandson, Ruddy Harootian, who is a tourism journalist in New York.

In Mexico our community has always been small; it has never had infrastructures – churches, schools. Only for some time have the branches of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation and the Armenian General Benevolent Union been in operation. But in the 20th century, we had a number of interesting figures that were important to both the community and the Mexican society in general. To the names I have already mentioned I will add the names of three prominent women - dancer and literary critic Armen Ohanian (Sofya Pirkbudaghyan), astronomer Paris Pismis de Recilas (Mari Sukiasyan) and writer Emma Dolujanoff (Dolukhanyan).

It is important to note that from the 1940s to the mid-2000s, Armenians in Mexico were isolated from each other. But when the Azerbaijani embassy erected a monument to Heydar Aliyev in the capital, local Armenians organized and began to fight for the demolition of the monument (which took place in 2013). Also, for the first time in thirty years, Mexican Armenians commemorated April 24. In 2014 the Armenian government opened an embassy in Mexico, and local Armenians finally had a meeting place. Our ambassador invited the spiritual leader of the Armenians in Los Angeles to Mexico. On the occasion of the Genocide Centennial, we organized activities in Mexico and Ensenada, at one of the country's best museums, the Museum of Tolerance, organized an exhibition dedicated to the Armenian Genocide, as well as a lecture by Romanian-Armenian writer Varujan Vosganian. We also planned a film festival on the Armenian Genocide, which did not take place due to pressure from the Turkish Embassy on the Mexico's Foreign Ministry. It is noteworthy that Mexico has such a denial of the Armenian Genocide. We are also fighting against the Mexican government's decision to classify the Khojaly events as genocide.

The Azeri ambassador has carried out anti-Armenian propaganda not only among Mexican senators and government

members, but also in the authorities of Colombia, Panama, Honduras, Costa Rica, and has invited state officials of those countries to Baku. Thus, Azerbaijan's caviar diplomacy is trying to win over countries where there are no Armenians or Armenian lobby. As a result, Colombia has also recognized the Khojaly events as genocide. This is an important issue that we need to be aware of and that we must fight against.

By the way, I would like to note that in some Central American countries there are actually scattered Armenians, including in Guatemala, Nicaragua and Cuba. Pablo Bogossian, a resident of Honduras, has written an article about this. With my cousin, I set up a small publishing house in Mexico called Aip Pen Kim. We have published From Popocatepetl to Ararat on Mexican Armenians (2011), and the other is Spanish translation of Hambardzum Chitjian's memoirs. This is the first book published in Mexico on the Armenian Genocide. We organized a book presentation, and reviews were published in various Mexican magazines. Thus, we are working to make the Armenian Genocide recognizable at both the public and government levels.

There are now 2,000-2,500 Armenians living in Mexico. Probably a thousand people are descendants of Genocide survivors who came in 1923-1928. The remaining thousand are Armenians from other countries, including Armenia, who have come since 1991. The vast majority of them are people of different professions: scientists, architects, musicians, artists. Today there are 10-15 Armenian specialists in the National University of Mexico - physicists, astronomers, doctors. So it is a new Armenian community with a high level of education. This is sad in some ways because these people have not found a job in Armenia and had to reach Mexico. Sometimes Armenians from other countries are also being settled in Mexico. I would like to mention the name of eminent artist Vatche Geuvdjelian, originally from Addis Ababa, who lives in Pátzcuaro, Michoacán.

Apart from Mexico City, Armenians also live in Tijuana, Puebla and Ensenada. One of the descendants of the Khrimyan Hayrik's dynasty use to live there, and owns the Ararat restaurant in the city. Many Armenians from Armenia work in the Acapulco, Queretaro and Chihuahua Symphony Orchestras. Some years ago, in one of Mexico's cities, historian Emanuel Sarkisyan, who was a professor at Heidelberg University, a person of great intelligence who spoke seven or eight languages, died. He was born in Baku, grew up in Tehran,

see ANTARAMIAN, page 17

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ARTS & LIVING

C A L E N D A R

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.

CALIFORNIA

**October 26 – West Coast Premiere of Armenian National Institute (ANI) Exhibition titled “The Lifesavers: American Humanitarianism and YMCA Philanthropy in Armenia 1918-1920”** at California State University, Northridge (CSUN) West Gallery (18111 Nordhoff St, Northridge, CA 91325). Exhibition opening is on Saturday, October 26 from 3-5pm, and the exhibit will be available for the public until Thursday, November 7. \$8 parking at Lot E6. For media inquiries or for group reservations to schedule a guided tour of the exhibition, please contact: Mihran Toumajan at mihran@aaainc.org or (818) 291-6466.

**NOVEMBER 23 — Join the Armenian EyeCare Project for its annual Gala** celebrating another year of great accomplishments in Armenia. Held at the beautiful Balboa Bay Resort in Newport Beach, at 6:30pm. Evening begins with stunning cocktail reception and silent auction followed by an exquisite five-course dinner, live Armenian music by the Hosharian Brothers Band, a live auction and more! Tickets are \$450/person if reserved by Oct. 10; \$500/person after Oct. 10; and \$250/person for those age 35 & under. All proceeds to benefit the AECF’s many sight-saving programs in Armenia. To RSVP or for more information, call 949-933-4069, email info@eyecareproject.com or visit eyecareproject.com/gala

CONNECTICUT

**OCTOBER 24 — Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father’s memoir *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army***, University of Connecticut’s Office of Global Affairs, UConn, Hartford, Hartford Times Building, Room HTB 210 – 10 Prospect Street, Hartford, from 5 to 8 p.m. For information: (860) 486-5184 or zahra.ali@uconn.edu. Book sale/signing during reception prior to the presentation and after. All proceed from the sale of the books will be donated.

FLORIDA

**DECEMBER 7 — Saturday, 12:30 to 4:30 p.m. The Women’s Guild of St. David Armenian Church in Boca Raton**, invites all members, spouses & friends to their Annual Christmas Luncheon & Fashion Show at the Wyndham Deerfield Beach Resort, 2019 NE 2nd Street, Deerfield Beach, FL, to enjoy an afternoon of fellowship, delicious food, and exciting fashion provided by Mario Pucci, among others. For reservations (deadline Nov. 29th) and additional information, please call Diane Azarian (401) 556-3886, Ginny Kyvelos (781) 789-9169, or the church office (561 994-2335).

**DECEMBER 13, 14, & 15 — Friday, Saturday, & Sunday - Friday - 6pm to 10pm; Saturday - 9am to 10pm; Sunday - 1pm to 6pm;** - St. David Armenian Art & Food Festival, 2300 Yamato Road, Boca Raton, FL. Join us for an afternoon of delicious homemade Armenian food, fun, fellowship, raffles, and children’s activities while you shop for Christmas gifts at our vendors. For more information, call the church office at 561-994-2335. Admission is free and there is ample parking on the church grounds.

MASSACHUSETTS

**OCTOBER 19 – NOVEMBER 9 — Fall Studio Art Classes Armenian Museum of America** Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor, 65 Main Street, Watertown. Young artists will be inspired by objects on display in the galleries to refine their individual artistic talents. Projects such as painting from observation, designing Armenian calligraphy, and pottery decoration will be presented. Members \$96. Non-members \$120. For more info and to register visit <https://www.armenianmuseum.org/classes>, or call Education Coordinator, Garin Habeshian at 617-926-2562, ext. 103.

**OCTOBER 18-19 — St. James 72nd Annual Bazaar, Delicious Armenian Food and Pastries. Silent**

**Auction**, Attic Treasures, Booths and Vendors. Raffles, Children’s Activities, and more. Friday and Saturday. Details to follow. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information contact 617.923.8860 or [info@stthagop.com](mailto:info@stthagop.com) or visit [www.stjameswatertown.org](http://www.stjameswatertown.org).

**OCTOBER 19 — The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) 100th Annual Meeting Banuqet** celebrating the Armenian Evangelical Church. Westin Hotel, Waltham, 70 Third Ave., Waltham. 6 p.m. reception, 7 p.m. Dinner, \$125. RSVP by October 5. Tickets and sponsorships available online at [amaa.org](http://amaa.org). Checks payable to the Armenian Missionary Association of Ameirca, and mail to 31 W. Century Road, Paramus, NJ 07652

**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. Recognition will also be given to Outgoing Parish Council Members, Edmond J. Danielson, Daniel K. Dorian and Paul Jamgotchian. Dinner Donation is \$35 for adults and \$15 for Children under 12. Seating by advanced paid reservations only. RSVP requested by October 10; to purchase tickets, log onto [www.htaac.org/calendar/event/703/](http://www.htaac.org/calendar/event/703/) or call the Church Office, 617.354.0632.

**OCTOBER 27 — Sunday Cultural Series: Popular Songs by Armenian Composers Performed by renowned singers** Arthur Ispiryan from Yerevan and Nara from California 2-4 pm, Armenian Museum of America Adele & Haig Der Manuelian galleries, 3rd floor, 65 Main Street, Watertown, MA. Please join us at the Armenian Museum as we welcome renowned singers Arthur Ispiryan from Yerevan and Nara from California as they perform popular sons by Armenian composers. Special appearance by Aram Satian, the president of the Composer’s Union of Armenia and Composer Maestro Konstantin Petrosian. This performance is presented by Armenian Museum of America and the Composer’s Union of Armenia, and sponsored by the Dadourian Foundation. Special appearance by Aram Satian, the president of the Composer’s Union of Armenia and Composer Maestro Konstantin Petrosian. Members free. Non-members free with \$15 Museum admission.

**NOVEMBER 1-2 — St. Stephen’s Armenian Apostolic Church Bazaar. 10 a.m. to 8 p.m.** Armenian Cultural and Educational Center, Watertown. Chicken, beef and losh kebab. Kufteh and kheyma dinners. Pastries and specialty gourmet items. Arts and crafts and auction items.

**NOVEMBER 1 — 4-7 p.m., Friday, grand opening of the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research:** Complimentary Light Fare and Entertainment. NAASR, 395 Concord Avenue, Belmont, MA 02478. Join us as we cut the ribbon symbolizing a new era, celebrating 65 years of achievement while transforming its goals for the future to welcome the next generation and launch a beautiful, new, state-of-the-art research center and gathering place. Open to the public free of charge.

**NOVEMBER 2 — National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) 65th Anniversary Gala. Sold Out.** Wait list only. Royal Sonesta Hotel Grand Ballroom. 40 Edwin H. Land Boulevard, Cambridge. 6 p.m. cocktail reception, 7 p.m. seated dinner. Performance by Isabel Bayrakdarian, accompanied by the Borromeo String Quartet. Distinguished Honoree: Dr. Vartan Gregorian, President, The Carnegie Corporation of New York. Master of Ceremonies: David Ignatius, Columnist for the *Washington Post* and Novelist

**NOVEMBER 4 — St James Men’s Club Dinner Meeting - social hour and mezza at 6:15 p.m. and dinner at 7 p.m.,** St. James Armenian Church Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center - Keljik Hall, 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown. Guest speaker will be George Aghjayan, Director of the Armenian Historical Archives and the chair of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation

(ARF) Central Committee of the Eastern United States. Aghjayan’s topic will be “DNA Testing and Reconnecting Family Ruptured by Genocide.” Mezza and a Losh Kebab & Kheyma Dinner \$17/person. Ladies invited. For additional information call the St. James Church office at 617-923-8860 or call Hapet Berberian at 781-367-6598.

**NOVEMBER 8 and 9 – Annual Autumnfest Bazaar sponsored by the Armenian Church at Hye Pointe**, at our new location 1280 Boston Road, (Rte. 125) Haverhill, Friday 12 – 7 pm and Saturday 12 – 7 pm. Lamb, Losh, Chicken Kebab and Kheyma. Dinners served all day. Pastry table, Armenian cuisine, gift baskets, raffles for cash and prizes. For more info, visit [www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org](http://www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org) or call (978) 372-9227. Take Rte. 495 N to exit 48, bear right at the end of the ramp.

**NOVEMBER 9 — Armenian Women’s Welfare Association, Annual Luncheon**, Saturday, 12 - 4pm, Belmont Country Club, 181 Winter Street, Belmont.

**NOVEMBER 9 —An Evening with Fr. Vasken Kouzouian: Celebrating 25 Years of Ministry**, 6:30 p.m., Cocktail Reception; 7:30 p.m., Dinner and Celebration. Samberg Conference Center, MIT, Chang Building (E52), Floor 7. 50 Memorial Drive, Cambridge MA 02142. Donation: \$100 per person. Seating by advance paid reservation only, by November 1. Reserve online at <https://aneveningwithfrvasken.eventbrite.com> or through the Church Office, 617-354.0632..

**NOVEMBER 16 — St. Stephen’s Armenian Elementary School 35th Anniversary Celebration.** Keynote speaker: Dr. Diran Apelian, Professor of Engineering & Former Provost, Worcester Polytechnic Institute, Distinguished Professor, UC Irvine. Entertainment: singer Artur Hakobyan (Mister X). Emcee: Lisa Gulesserian, Ph.D., Harvard’s Preceptor on Armenian Language & Culture. @ The Westin Hotel Waltham-Boston. 6:30pm Cocktails / 7:30pm Dinner and program. More to follow...

**DECEMBER 1 — A cappella Christmas Concert by Boston Jazz Voices to Benefit the Armenia Tree Project.** 5 p.m. at the Jenks Center, 109 Skillings Road, Winchester. The venue has plenty of free parking. Event will feature an a cappella performance, refreshments, raffle, and silent auction. Tickets are \$30 each and a family four-pack of tickets is available for \$100. Tickets available via Eventbrite at [www.armeniatree.org/acappella](http://www.armeniatree.org/acappella)

**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 [Lucassian@TBEonline.org](mailto:Lucassian@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

continued on next page





# Recipe

## Guest Recipe



by Christine Vartanian Datian

### Armenian Baked White Fish

#### INGREDIENTS

3 pounds white fish, any kind  
2 medium yellow onions, sliced or chopped  
3 medium tomatoes, seeded, chopped or 1 1/2 cups crushed  
canned tomatoes, drained  
2-3 large cloves garlic, minced  
3-4 tablespoons chopped fresh parsley  
2 tablespoons fresh chopped or dried mint  
1/4 cup olive oil or 1/4 cup unsalted butter, melted, to taste  
Kosher salt and pepper, to taste  
1 cup water or dry white wine  
Juice of 1 large lemon and zest of 1 lemon  
Sliced lemon, paprika, chopped parsley

#### PREPARATION

Preheat oven to 425 degrees F. Lightly oil a 9×13 baking dish or coat with nonstick spray.

If fish is frozen, allow enough time for it to thaw, covered, in the refrigerator. For faster thawing, transfer fish to a resealable plastic bag and submerge in cold water. Change the water every 30 minutes to keep it cold. Continue the process until thawed.

Place white fish skin side down in a single layer in a greased shallow baking pan. Drizzle fish with olive oil or melted butter.

Spread the tomatoes and onions over the fish, and season with parsley, mint, salt, pepper, and paprika. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over the fish, and add the zest. Pour remaining olive oil or butter over the fish, and add water (or wine) from the side of the dish. Garnish with lemon slices, if desired.

Bake for 30-35 minutes or until tender. Check fish at the minimum baking time to ensure fish does not get overcooked.

Insert a fork into the fish and gently twist. The fish is done as soon as it begins to flake. The fish juices will be milky white.

Using a long spatula, separate the skin from the fish, and serve immediately with lemon wedges and tartar sauce, if desired.  
Serves 6.



\*The is one of the treasured recipes published in the Armenian and Selected Favorite Recipes Cookbook by the Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church Trinity Guild (now Ladies' Guild) in 1970. The church is located in downtown Fresno, and is registered as a U.S. National Register of Historic Places. The cost is \$20.00 each to purchase the cookbook. Include \$5.00 for shipping. Please make check payable to: Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church. To order, please call or contact: Nazik Arisian, Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church, 2226 Ventura St., Fresno, CA 93721

### Carlos Antaramian: Mexico Has Always Had a Small but Strong Armenian Community

ANTARMIAN, from page 15  
studied history in Germany and Chicago, and is the author of English work on Transcaucasian history, the Philippines, the Burmese revolution, etc. Today, I can also remember Mexican-Armenian singer-songwriter Sirak Baloyan (whose winery family, by the way, named one of his wines Sirak), film actress Rosa Gloria Chagoyán, whose ancestors came to Mexico in the early 19th century, poet Nelly Keoseyán, former rector of the National University of Mexico, José Sarukhán, whose son was formerly the Mexican ambassador to the United States Arturo Sarukhan, Avetis Aznavurayan, who was also rector of one of the Mexican universities, etc.

With a small group we are now working to develop photos of Mexican-Armenians' past, trying to identify the identities of the people on photos and publishing a new book on the Armenians of Mexico. We also digitize the film "Armenians in Mexico," an important documentary in our history.

I came to Armenia for the first time in 2003. At that time, I had my first Armenian lessons. In 2015, as I mentioned at the beginning, I traveled to Western Armenia. In my grandfather's birthplace in Hoshe, I filmed interviews with local Alevi-Kurds. So far we have spoken to survivors; we should also start interviews with Kurds and Turks who also remember what their grandfathers did to Armenians. By the way, it is a widespread word among the Kurds that when someone gets sad, they tell him: "Do not to stare on me with that Armenian look." Kurds are well aware of the genocide. When I was in Tunceli and I told a Zaza-Kurd that I am an Armenian who came to find his grandfather's village, he immediately told me: "Well, I will be your driver, I will serve you for free, because I know what my grandfather has done to you: I have to wipe out my bad karma"... He has been with me for four days, helping me in every way. Hambardzum Chitjian's book has a map of that region, which also included my family's, Antaramyans' home, so I found my ancestral home, or rather what was left of it. One Alevi-Kurd said there was probably some land there that belonged to my grandfather, and if he wanted, he could go to the head of the village and tell them to return the land to me. He said that everything there – the river, the trees, the birds – are all Armenian, and we can go back there. But the question is will there ever be returnees? Will I go back to that very small village myself... I do not know, it really needs to be thought about...

## CALENDAR

### NEW JERSEY

**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

**NOVEMBER 15 – Book presentation by Adrienne G. Alexanian, editor of her father's memoir *Forced into Genocide: Memoirs of an Armenian Soldier in the Ottoman Turkish Army* - Fordham University Armenian Society, Fordham University, 113 West 60th St. N.Y., N.Y. 10023 – Room 602 – 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. For information – Takoosh@aol.com Book sales/signing following the presentation. All proceeds from the sale of the books will be donated to St. Nersess Armenian Seminary.**

### RHODE ISLAND

**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.

**OCTOBER 25 — The Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, Providence** Presents "Armenian Café Night" with performances by renowned singers Arthur Ispirian (Yerevan), Nara (California) Special appearance by composer Aram Satian, President of the Composers Union of Armenia Sumptuous appetizers, wine, pastry and coffee will be served at 7:30 p.m. Egavian Cultural Center, 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. Tickets: \$35 per person. By reservation only. Reservations for tables of 8 can be confirmed

upon receipt of payment. Reservation deadline: October 20. Tickets will not be sold at the door. For reservations: Call Ann Ayrassian at 401-529-5210. Payments accepted: Check only. Checks are payable to "Cultural Committee" and should be mailed to Ann Ayrasyan at 234 Gentian Ave, Providence, RI, 02908

**NOVEMBER 2-3 — Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church 89th Annual Food Fair and Bazaar.** 70 Jefferson St., Providence. Saturday, 11:30 a.m.- 10 p.m.- Sunday, Noon – 6 p.m. Daily Raffle & Silent Auction, Kids activities, Balloon man. Armenian Food Market and Armenian Vendor gift shop. Shish Kebab, Losh Kebab, Kufta, Kheyma, Yalanchi, Armenian Pastries, Lahmajoon & many other delicious food available. All are welcome. Handicap accessible. Cash, Check, Visa and Mastercard Accepted. For further information, call church office 401-272-7712. [www.ArmenianFoodFairRI.com](http://www.ArmenianFoodFairRI.com)

**NOVEMBER 17 — Armenian Historical Association of Rhode Island presents Ruth Thomasian, Founder and President of Project Save Armenian Photograph Archives, Inc. Program titled "A Look at Ourselves: Armenians through the Camera's Eye." Sunday. Refreshments at 12:30 pm Lecture 1:00 pm. AHARI located at 245 Waterman Street, 5th floor conference room Providence. The AHARI Museum will be open from 2:00 - 3:30 p.m. Everyone is invited to bring family photos for Ruth's "Antiques Road Show" evaluation after the presentation. [info@armenianhistorical-ri.org](mailto:info@armenianhistorical-ri.org)**





## COMMENTARY

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# Mirror Spectator

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## Turkey's Misadventures in Syria Create Political Turmoil, Tragedy

By Edmond Y. Azadian

The Middle East is aflame and the political world is in an uproar over the third Turkish incursion into Syria under the code name "Peace Spring." With this current invasion in Syria, President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's avowed intention is to carve out a "peace corridor" 500 kilometers long and 30 kilometers deep, expelling 40,000 Kurds from that territory and resettling 3.6 million Syrian Arab refugees currently living in Turkey.

Erdogan's audacious plan to occupy a segment of a sovereign country's territory, to slaughter the local Kurdish population and conduct population engineering was made possible when the erratic US president, Donald Trump, arbitrarily ordered the withdrawal of the US forces from the area, contrary to the recommendations of his advisors and against the objections of Pentagon analysts.

Turkey would not have dared to take that kind of initiative had the political conditions not been right for the action.

Turkey invaded and occupied 38 percent of the territory of Cyprus in 1974 and no force has been able to dislodge Turkey's occupation army, nor its creation of a made-up country on that soil.

Similarly, Ankara has stationed its forces on Iraqi territory for a variety of reasons and the international community has been quiet on the issue.

Turkey has established military bases in five countries, which allows Ankara to act as a superpower.

All these military and political strategies were developed by Turkey by taking advantage of rivalries between the political blocs controlling the region.

The West created an artificial divide between the Sunni and Shia sects to divert the attention of the Islamic world from the Israeli-Palestinian conflict; previously, the main concern of the

were nothing more than empty bluster. He further played his hand by concluding the purchase of S-400 missiles from Russia.

Thus, Ankara bought impunity through calculating political steps and today no force in the world has the intention nor the will to stand in its way as it sets to gobble a piece of territory from Syria, while creating a humanitarian disaster.

President Erdogan reprimanded the European Union when the latter condemned Turkish aggression and called it an "invasion." He threatened to open the immigration floodgates and to inundate Europe with a new wave of Syrian immigrants.

One of the major instigators of the original Syrian crisis was Turkey, which resulted in the creation of millions of refugees. Rather than punishing Turkey for its crimes, Europe rewarded Ankara with generous grants to keep the Syrian refugees in Turkey.

The US was involved in the Syrian crisis to destroy the Islamic State whose resurgence was mainly due to Turkey. After trying several combinations of allies, Washington found the YPG Kurdish forces to be the most reliable, as their interests coincided. The Kurdish forces were eventually successful in defeating the Islamic State while sacrificing 5,000 of their own people. At the present time, they have imprisoned 12,000 ISIS terrorists and the US is counting on the opposing Turkish and Kurdish forces to keep them in jails when all hell has broken loose and the Kurds have been hanging on for dear life.

For a long time, President Trump was teasing Ankara, praising the Syrian Kurds as trusted US allies, when Turkey was threatening to destroy them. The Kurds had also won credibility throughout the US political establishment on the strength of their power against the Islamic State. And today, that entire establishment is in turmoil, trying to figure out an exit strategy out of the chaos, after Mr. Trump's unilateral decision to withdraw the US forces out of the Syrian battleground without a strategy or a rational exit plan.

The world is condemning Mr. Trump's action. European leaders are furious and further, Mr. Trump's home base is shaken. Not only is a new realignment taking shape in the Middle East, but also another one is being created at home in the US. The rapprochement between House Speaker Nancy Pelosi and Sen. Lindsay Graham, an arch hawk and Trump supporter, says a lot. Indeed, both camps are coming together to draw a bicameral and bipartisan resolution to overturn Mr. Trump's decision to throw the Kurds under the bus.

We have yet to figure out how this coalition may impact Mr. Trump's reelection prospects, which have already been under a cloud with the Ukrainian scandal.

President Erdogan would not have taken the initiative had he not consulted with the Kremlin and Washington. Indeed, Mr. Erdogan has confessed that Turkey has not engaged in any military action without informing Russian President Vladimir Putin. So far, five European countries have called for United Nations action and Germany, France and Finland have set up an arms embargo against Turkey, but Moscow's criticism has been the mildest. Mr. Putin has called on all foreign forces to leave Syrian territory and Foreign Minister Sergei

Lavrov has proposed that the crisis must be resolved through the principles of the Adana Treaty which Damascus and Ankara had concluded before the crisis.

Moscow is also contented to see the US forces evacuating Syrian territory and Kurdish forces, in desperation, returning to the Syrian-Russian fold to face Turkish aggression.

The Arab League has unanimously condemned the aggression and is ready to invite back Damascus, which was expelled from the league. Saudi Arabia, which was pushed by the US into a losing war in Yemen, fearful of Trump's unpredictability, is looking for an accommodation with Iran, the presumed supporters of the Houthi rebels in Yemen.

The political world is confused with President Trump's actions while the President seems even more confused. His

*continued on next page*



Arab world had been the treatment of the Palestinians by Israel. The Kingdom of Saudi Arabia fell into this trap, which galvanized the region.

Ankara claimed the leadership of the Sunni bloc under the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) banner and license but in fact, it has acted on its narrow self-interest. It challenged the US sanctions against Iran, subverted the interests of the only regional US ally, Israel, by championing the Palestinian cause, lent its support to the Islamic government of Mohamad Morsi in Egypt while the US was fighting the Islamic State (variously known as ISIS, ISIL, or Daesh) in the region and to top it all, cozied up to Moscow when the US was trying to curb Russia's resurgence as a world power. All these digressions were made possible under the untouchable banner of NATO.

Erdogan thumbed his nose at Washington after realizing that President Trump's bombastic threats to North Korea and Iran





## COMMENTARY



## My Turn

By Harut Sassounian

## A Declassified Top Secret CIA Report On the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict

A 48-page Central Intelligence Agency Top Secret Report, prepared in August 1988 and made public in 2012 with some deletions, is titled “Unrest in the Caucasus and the Challenge of Nationalism.” Despite the passage of time, the Report includes an interesting analysis of the Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) conflict from the perspective of US intelligence services.

The CIA analyst, in the introduction of his Report, traced the origins of the Artsakh conflict: “Enmity between Armenian and Azeri factions has existed for hundreds of years, and the 1920s settlement subordinating Nagorno-Karabakh – Armenia’s cultural and religious center – to the Azerbaijan Republic has been a continual, albeit long-muted, source of Armenian frustration and concern. Azeri animosity toward the Armenians has been intensified by political, economic, and demographic trends that have adversely affected the political status of Azeris and increased the gap in living standards between Azerbaijan and Armenia. In particular, the rapid expansion of Azerbaijan’s young adult population has put enormous strain on the Republic’s capacity to provide adequate jobs, housing, and education. Azeri frustration has found an outlet in attacks on Armenians.”

The unnamed CIA analyst reported that a split within the Politburo on how to handle the Artsakh crisis made the situation worse. Second Secretary Ligachev and KGB Chief Chebrikov were the hardliners who vehemently opposed the separation of Artsakh from Azerbaijan. They disagreed with Gorbachev’s reforms and blamed foreign powers for inciting unrest inside the Soviet Union.

When two prominent Armenian writers, Silva Kaputikyan and Zori Balayan, met with Gorbachev in Moscow in February 1988, they reported that he was well briefed and assured them that he wanted a “just solution.” He acknowledged “the peaceful nature of the [Armenian] demonstrations and emphasized his personal sympathy with the desire to reunite Nagorno-Karabakh with Armenia....”

Upon the return of the Armenian envoys to Yerevan, in a radio broadcast on February 27, 1988, Kaputikyan called for Armenians to trust Gorbachev. “He knows about and understands our problem and wants to resolve it personally.... We must do our utmost to ensure that no harm” is done to him, Kaputikyan announced.

Regarding Soviet concerns about foreign, particularly Armenian-American interference in domestic Soviet turmoil, the CIA analyst reported: “The recent unrest appears to have made Soviet officials more fearful about the role of foreign actors in the Nagorno-Karabakh problem. Of the approximately 5.5 million people in the world today who speak Armenian, about 60 percent live outside the Soviet Armenian republic, about 1.4 million elsewhere in the USSR, and 2 million abroad. So far, Armenian emigres – most of whom see Turkey much more than Russia as the historic oppressor of their nation – have not been actively involved in pushing for change in the Soviet system or in Soviet policies. Moscow worries that diaspora attitudes could turn sharply critical of the USSR and that Armenians in the United States, particularly, could grow into a powerful anti-Soviet pressure group. Soviet officials are wary of the large concentration of Armenians in California and New York, states with large electoral votes that have been closely contested in previous presidential elections.”

In a footnote at the end of the previous paragraph, the CIA analyst specified that “the United States hosts at least 600,000 Armenians. About 90 percent of America’s Soviet Armenian immigrants came to California. Los Angeles – with 100,000 – has the largest community of Armenians outside Yerevan. The New York City region has about 70,000 Armenians, mostly from Lebanon and Iran.”

The CIA analyst added: “Moscow may be concerned that foreign Armenian terrorist groups like the Armenian Secret Army for the Liberation of Armenia (ASALA) could turn against Soviet targets – although we have no evidence that this is the case. Hitherto, the USSR has figured very little in

ASALA’s blending of armed struggle with Marxist ideology; the dominant faction of ASALA considers Soviet Armenia as liberated territory and the group concentrates its attacks exclusively on Turkish officials. In fact, ASALA eventually would like to see ‘the Armenian provinces’ now located in Turkey and possibly Iraq [?] reattach themselves to the Soviet Armenian core. Furthermore, ASALA is now in a quiet phase, and its leader was assassinated on 28 April [1988]. Nevertheless, ASALA in early April did send a moderately worded appeal to Gorbachev supporting the reunification of Karabakh with Armenia, while characteristically stressing that Armenia is an integral part of the USSR and seeks only to rectify the border, not to pursue claims against Moscow.”

Finally, the CIA analyst explained the position of Turkey on the Karabakh conflict: “Although the Turkish Government has not explicitly sided with Azerbaijan, Turkey’s fear of resurgent Armenian nationalism makes Ankara sympathetic to Baku. When the crisis broke in February [1988], Turkish Government spokesmen indicated publicly that international agreements entitle Ankara to a voice in the crisis, an apparent reference to the 1921 treaty between the USSR and Turkey that led to the shift of Nagorno-Karabakh and Nakhichevan to Azerbaijan. Turkey no doubt especially feared that transferring Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia would whet Armenian appetites and would lead to increased pressure to change the status of Nakhichevan and to acquire former Armenian regions in Turkey. Turkish officials probably also noted that some Armenian expansionist demands for a ‘Greater Armenia’ were based on historic claims rather than on the ethnic composition of the affected territories. Thus, some Armenians have demanded the return of Nakhichevan, even though Azeris now greatly outnumber Armenians in this region. Using such historical criteria, could give Armenians a claim even on some border parts of Turkey where only 50,000 Armenians now live.”

The CIA analyst concluded his Report by outlining five options the USSR had for the resolution of the Artsakh conflict:

- 1) “Sticking with the Status Quo”
- 2) “Making Further Economic Concessions” to Armenians
- 3 “Enhancing Autonomy of Nagorno-Karabakh Within Azerbaijan”
- 4) Expanding “Extraterritorial Native Cultural Institutions”
- 5) “Reconfiguration of Nagorno-Karabakh” by splitting it between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

## Turkey’s Misadventures in Syria Create Political Turmoil, Tragedy

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incongruent policies were reflected in some Tweets, as he threatened to obliterate Turkey’s economy if the latter goes “off limit.”

But he has yet to figure out where that limit stands.

He even blamed the Kurds for not sending troops during the Normandy invasion in World War II, only to be reminded by historians that the Kurds did not have a state to be counted on for such support. Then, finally he settled for the following options. He Tweeted that he had “one of three choices: send in thousands of troops and win militarily, hit Turkey very hard financially or mediate a deal between Turkey and the Kurds.”

Mr. Trump has not settled on any of his options, while the Kurds have changed sides and joined Syrian government forces to defend Qamishli, against advancing Turkish forces with Moscow’s blessing.

Turkey’s unbridled appetite for invading any neighboring country with impunity has spread fear in all nations in the region. It is not surprising that of all the nations the US, at this time, has been engaged in reinforcing security on Armenia’s borders.

The Armenian government and the public have been concerned with Turkey’s actions and they have condemned them vehemently. Many Armenians in Syria are in harm’s way. Compounding those fears are some mysterious political moves, which have accentuated that fear. Mr. Erdogan has flown to Baku and Azeri President Ilham Aliyev has reached President Putin in Sochi, no one knows to what end.

After all, the current situation is a reenactment of history for the Armenian people who were asked during World War I to join the allies in volunteer battalions, which they did. They fought valiantly to defeat the Ottoman-German forces on Mount Ararat on September 19, 1918 and marched victoriously into Cilicia, where home rule was promised them under a French protectorate. The French military command abandoned the Armenians who were unprotected in front of invading Turkish Kemalist forces. History repeats itself.

Fortunately, the international community has not forgotten the fate that the Armenians experienced. The CBN Middle East Bureau Chief Chris Mitchell reports that the Turkish invasion of Northern Syria is not really a well-intentioned attempt to fight terrorists. There is actually a strong element of Islamic Jihad at the heart of Turkey’s agenda. “Many of the people that fled the Armenian Genocide 100 years ago fled to this area of Turkey and now Erdogan’s attempt to revive the glory of the Ottoman Empire is targeting their descendants.”

At the present time, war is raging in southeast Syria. For Turkey, the Kurdish YPG is nothing but an extension of the PKK (the Kurdish Workers’ Party) in Syria. The PKK has been waging a war of liberation within Turkey, on behalf of 25 million Kurds. Since 1985, Turkey has razed 3,000 Kurdish villages and murdered 20,000 Kurds. Mr. Erdogan’s intention is to carve out a “peace corridor” but that plan is only illusory. Instead of building a security zone, Turkey will be expanding its insecurity zone within Syrian territory.

## Sorry State Of Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate

By Raffi Bedrosyan

**E**VER SINCE the last Armenian Patriarch Mesrob Mutafyan fell ill with dementia but continued to live in a vegetative state in 2008, the seat of the Istanbul Patriarchate has been vacant. Archbishop Aram Atesyan, who got himself appointed as Acting Patriarch, devised several arrangements with the help of the Turkish government to delay the election of a new Patriarch and remained in power for the past 11 years. Patriarch Mutafyan passed away in March 2019 and now no more legal and illegal loopholes are left to avoid the Patriarchal election.

The Turkish government finally relented to have the Patriarchal election take place in December 2019, but also presented a further obstacle against a fair and democratic election process. It imposed a condition that ‘the only eligible candidates would have to be clergy in the employ of the Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate’, thereby eliminating at least ten other potential candidates who could have been eligible, based on the historically legitimate condition of eligibility applied in previous Patriarchal elections, which was to be born into an Armenian family from Turkey. It should be noted that two of the previously elected Istanbul Patriarchs were clergymen born in Turkey but serving the Armenian Church outside Turkey and not in the Istanbul Patriarchate.

The Electoral Commission of Istanbul Armenians, selected from Istanbul Armenian community leaders, charitable foundation directors and some clergy, assembled to decide whether to object to the Turkish government about the imposed eligibility condition,

but after a very short debate and a few resignations of objectors, it conveniently decided to comply with the government condition and proceed to the election. Therefore, instead of having a healthy debate and new approaches on how to run the Patriarchate with worthy candidates from inside and outside Istanbul, the December election will be between two Istanbul Armenian clergymen, Archbishop Atesyan, the Acting Patriarch until recently, and Archbishop Mashalyan, newly elected as the caretaker clergyman to oversee the election.

Based on their past performances, both men appear to be completely subservient to the Turkish government, convinced that the best and only way to conduct the Patriarchate affairs is to act exactly as the state demands, without ever rocking the boat. This may perhaps be acceptable as a tactic of survival, but what is even less acceptable is how these candidates act as subservient to the Istanbul Armenian charitable foundation leaders. The Patriarchate has the right to exert moral authority over the charitable foundations. Instead, the charitable foundation leaders, who are supposed to run the affairs of the Armenian churches, schools and hospitals on behalf of the Armenian community, conduct themselves as the head of individual empires, not accountable to anyone. Some charitable foundations are quite wealthy as they have substantial revenues and income from significant real estate holdings, while others are only reliant on individual donations or fundraising dinners. The “haves” are supposed to help the “have-nots,” but this can only be done by having a strong and influential Patriarch, arbitrating among the charitable foundations and distributing the wealth for the common good of the entire community. But at present, the directors of the wealthy foundations keep the revenues to themselves and spend it as they see it fit. Although they are supposed to be elected, the Turkish government has not allowed elections for Armenian charitable foundations for many years, and these people just rule their empires, with no accountability. The director of Holy Trinity Church (Surp Yerrortutyun), which oversees numerous other churches and schools in Pera, kept on ruling for 39 years until he passed away recently, completely wasting the potential of the historic Tokatliyan Hotel which his foundations owns, renting it cheaply to his friends and associates. The director of the Holy Saviour Hospital (Surp Prgitch), sees

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# Turkey Pushes Offensive in Syria Despite Sanctions and Calls to Stop

MANBIJ, Syria (Reuters) – Turkey pressed ahead with its offensive in northern Syria on Tuesday, October 15, despite US sanctions and growing calls for it to stop, while Syria’s Russia-backed army moved on the key city of Manbij that was abandoned by US forces.

Reuters journalists accompanied Syrian government forces who entered the center of Manbij, a flashpoint where US troops had previously conducted joint patrols with Turkey.

Russian and Syrian flags were flying from a building on the city outskirts and from a convoy of military vehicles.

Russia’s Interfax news agency, citing Moscow’s Defense Ministry, said later that Syrian forces had taken control of an area of more than 1,000 square kilometers (386 miles) around Manbij, including Tabqa military airfield.

President Donald Trump’s unexpected decision to withhold protection from Syria’s Kurds after a phone call with Turkish President Tayyip Erdogan a week ago swiftly upended five years of US policy on Syria.

As well as clearing the way for the Turkish incursion, the US withdrawal gives a free hand to Washington’s adversaries in the world’s deadliest ongoing war, namely Syrian President Bashar al-Assad and his Russian and Iranian allies.

The Syrian army deployments into Kurdish-held territory amount to a victory for Assad and Russia, giving them a foothold in the biggest remaining swathe of Syria that had been beyond their grasp through much of its eight-year-old war.

The United States announced on Sunday it was withdrawing its entire force of 1,000 troops from northern Syria. Its former Kurdish allies immediately forged a new alliance with Assad’s government, inviting the army into towns across the breadth of their territory.

A Reuters cameraman on the Turkish frontier reported heavy bombardment on Tuesday morning of the Syrian border town of Ras al Ain where an SDF spokesman reported a fierce battle going on.

US military aircraft carried out a “show of force” in Syria after Turkish-backed fighters came in close proximity to American forces during the Turkish offensive, a US official told Reuters.

The official said US military aircraft were flown over the area after troops in northeastern Syria felt the Turkish-backed fighters were too close. The Turkish-backed fighters dispersed after the show of force, the official said.

US Vice President Mike Pence will meet Erdogan on Thursday in Ankara, where he will urge Turkey to reach an immediate ceasefire in Syria and to work toward a negotiated settlement.

“Vice President Pence will reiterate President Trump’s commitment to maintain punishing economic sanctions on Turkey until a resolution is reached,” the White House said in a statement.

Trump announced a set of sanctions on October 14 to punish Ankara, and on Tuesday a senior Trump administration official said Washington would threaten more sanctions to persuade Turkey to reach a ceasefire and halt its offensive.

The measures announced on Monday – mainly a hike in steel tariffs and a pause in trade talks – were less robust than financial markets had anticipated, and Trump’s critics derided them as too feeble to have an impact.

The Turkish lira, which had fallen on the expectation of tougher US measures, recovered after the sanctions were announced, as did its bond and stock markets, with traders noting that Trump had spared Turkish banks.

Bilateral trade between Turkey and the United States is relatively small - around a tenth the size of Turkey’s trade with Europe. Washington’s most effective form of economic leverage would be to hinder Turkey’s access to US financial markets, a step Trump has so far avoided.

In a potentially more damaging blow, German car-maker Volkswagen said it was postponing a final decision on whether to build a 1 billion euro (\$1.1 billion) plant in Turkey, citing concern over “current developments” after international condemnation of the incursion.

Following Trump’s announcement, the US Treasury said on Monday it had sanctioned Turkey’s energy, defense and interior ministers, as well as the ministries of energy and defense.

Trump has defended his reversal of US policy as part of a plan to extricate the United States from “endless” wars in the Middle East.

But his critics, including senior figures in his own Republican Party, cast it as a betrayal of the Kurds, loyal allies who lost thousands of fighters as the principal ground forces in Washington’s battle against Islamic State.

The Kurdish YPG militia, the key component of the forces who fought Islamic State, is seen by Ankara as a terrorist group aligned with Kurdish separatist insurgents in Turkey.

Turkey says it aims to defeat the YPG and create a “safe zone” where millions of Syrian war refugees now in Turkey could be resettled.

The United Nations says 160,000 people have fled their homes as Turkish forces advance. The regional Kurdish administration puts the number of displaced at 270,000.

## Norayr Dadourian Speaks about History Of Armenian Poetry

ALTADENA, Calif. – A lecture organized by Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Pasadena-Glendale Chapter on Sunday, October 6, at the Beshgeturian Center Hall, featured Norayr Dadourian and titled “The Armenian Rebirth (1000-1795).”

On behalf of TCA’s Pasadena-Glendale Chapter, Kevork Keushkerian welcomed the guests and then introduced the speaker.

### By Kevork Keushkerian

Dadourian presented his lecture with a slide show that took a little over one hour, but it was both very interesting and highly informative. The Armenian Rebirth is the poetic era that starts after Krikor of Nareg (951-1003) and ends before Sayat Nova, who was born in 1712.

It was very interesting to hear that up until Krikor of Nareg, the Armenian poetry was spiritual in nature, composed of prayers and hymns, and addressed to God. After that, Armenian poetry took a major turn towards the secular realm, addressing previously considered taboo themes like the beauty of nature, enjoying food and drink, and confessions of love.

Slide by slide, Dadourian presented 19 poets, some of whom were religious fathers of the Armenian church and two of whom were females, a phenomenon very strange for that time period. This period of Armenian poetry started with Krikor Bahlavouni (990-1058) and ended with Naghash Hovnatan (1661-1722).

Interestingly, Naghash means miniature painter.

Poetic dialogue between lovers in the Armenian rebirth era, as presented by Dadourian, evolved from figurative speech, where expressions of love were implicit to more explicit language. In the figurative speech realm, a bird meant a male lover, whereas a rose meant a female lover. In the more explicit expressions later, words like bosom, breast, and kissing on the lips were commonly used.

It was interesting to know that Hovhannes Yernkatsi (1225-1293) was the inventor of the quatrains in secular Armenian poetry. Another eye opening fact that was revealed in the lecture was the use of the triangular dialogue by Nahabed Kouchag, who died in 1592.

At this time, triangular dialogue was introduced, where the man addressed his lover through an imaginary figure, as direct verbal encounter was not acceptable yet. Furthermore, Nagash Hovnatan was commissioned to paint the dome of Holy Echmiadzin in 1712.

Dadourian was born in Istanbul, Turkey. He first attended Karaguezian Elementary School, and then Mkhitarian Middle and Secondary School. He was accepted to the University of Bosphorus in Istanbul, where he studied philosophy and graduated with a Bachelor of Arts Degree.

He is married to Never Silahli and have four children. He has been teaching Armenian language and literature at the AGBU Vatche and Tamar Manoukian High School in Pasadena, since its founding in 2006. Every summer, he takes his 11th grade students to Armenia for an exploratory, educational, and cultural trip.

In tune with the theme of the lecture, Khatchig Nahabedian rendered a beautiful song by Sayat Nova. Reception followed the lecture, during which the members of the audience continued asking informed questions to the lecturer.



Norayr Dadourian

# Sorry State of Istanbul Armenian Patriarchate

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himself as the spokesperson of the entire Armenian community and makes irresponsible statements to the Turkish media, as he did recently, saying that students at highly prestigious Armenian Getronagan School are being raised as “militants.”

One critical issue that the Patriarchate needs to address but has not done until now is the reality of the hidden Armenians, living in different regions of Turkey outside Istanbul. The Islamized hidden Armenians have started to return to their Armenian roots in recent years. Against all odds, risks and consequences, they seek an Armenian identity. At present, the Armenian Patriarchate, or rather the Acting Patriarch, does not recognize them as Armenians until they get baptized and become Christian. But the conditions for baptism are so onerous that few hidden Armenians choose to go through with the process. Moreover, the hidden Armenians are also prevented from being baptized elsewhere in Armenia or Europe, as we experienced during Project Rebirth trips to Armenia with several groups of hidden Armenians. It is my humble opinion that any hidden Armenian who wishes to return to Armenian roots, language and culture, has the right to do so, and should not be prevented

from doing so. Religion should be considered as a personal choice that comes later.

Another critical issue that the Patriarchate needs to address but has ignored at present is the status of the hundreds of abandoned Armenian churches in the rest of Turkey outside Istanbul. There were more than 4,000 churches and schools left behind in Turkey after the 1915 Armenian Genocide. Although most of them have been destroyed, there are still hundreds intact, either used by the Turkish state, organizations or individuals for other purposes. It is Patriarchate’s right, indeed its duty, to take steps toward the return of these properties to the rightful owner, the Patriarchate. There are also six active Armenian churches still open in the rest of Turkey outside Istanbul, in Kayseri, Iskenderun, Hatay, Vakiflikoy, and the largest of them all, in Diyarbakir, the Surp Giragos Church. The Patriarchate should appoint part-time or full-time clergy to these churches, even though there may not be a visible Christian Armenian community at present. These churches, and potentially new others, would act as magnets for the hidden Armenians to have the courage to come out, congregare and support one another.

The two Patriarchal candidates have not uttered a word about any of these critical

issues. In fact, they have only praised themselves about what they have done in the past, but not shared any of their future plans and programs, if elected. I think every Istanbul Armenian voter should think about these issues and demand how the candidates will deal with them. The Istanbul Patriarchate is not simply a church administrative center appointing clergymen or running a few churches for a community of 60,000 Armenians. There is immense responsibility and duty, not only limited to Istanbul but covering the entire country, to deal with remaining historic assets and emerging realities of hidden Armenians. I would therefore, urge the Istanbul Armenian voters to ask the following questions to the Patriarchal candidates:

- What are your plans to take charge of the Istanbul Armenian charitable foundations, and fairly arbitrate among them for the benefit of the entire Armenian community?
- What are your plans to accommodate and welcome the hidden Armenians who wish to join the Armenian community and return to their Armenian roots, including those who wish to convert to Christianity, and those who do not convert to Christianity?
- What are your plans to start discussions with the Turkish government, organizations or

individuals toward the return of Armenian churches and schools previously owned by the Patriarchate?

- What are your plans to appoint clergymen outside Istanbul in the rest of Turkey in areas where there are emerging hidden Armenian communities such as Diyarbakir?

If the voters are not aware or interested in these issues, the candidates will not be interested in these issues, either. Instead of serving the voters and the Armenian community at large, they will serve their “masters,” the wealthy directors of the charitable foundations. Not much will change and the Istanbul Armenian community will continue to be treated as “flock,” not only in the religious sense but also in the literal sense as “sheep.”

(Raffi Bedrosyan is a civil engineer and concert pianist, living in Toronto, Canada. He has donated concert and CD proceedings to infrastructure projects in Armenia and Karabakh, in which he has also participated as an engineer. He helped organize the reconstruction of the Surp Giragos Diyarbakir/Dikranagerd Church and the first Armenian reclaim of church properties in Anatolia after 1915. He gave the first piano concert in the Surp Giragos Church since 1915.)