

Putin Reportedly Keen to Host Another Armenian-Azeri Summit

By Artak Khulian and Ruzanna Stepanian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Russian President Vladimir Putin is reportedly trying to host a fresh meeting of the leaders of Armenia and Azerbaijan following a series of Armenian-Azerbaijani peace talks organized by Western powers.

Citing an unnamed “diplomatic source,” the Russian daily Vedomosti reported on Monday, October 24, that the summit could take place in Moscow or Sochi before the end of this month. The Armenian government declined to confirm or refute the report.

Putin publicly offered to hold a trilateral meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev when he addressed on October 14 a summit of ex-Soviet states in Kazakhstan’s capital Astana. “You can agree on a date,” he said, appealing to them.

The offer followed Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov’s meeting with his Armenian and Azerbaijani counterparts held on the sidelines of the Astana summit. It underlined Moscow’s efforts to regain the initiative in international efforts to settle the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

The United States and the European Union have been at the forefront of those efforts in recent months and especially since the September 13-14 fighting on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border. Russia says that the Western powers are trying to sideline it and use the Karabakh conflict in the geopolitical standoff over Ukraine.

Aliyev and Pashinyan met in Prague as recently as on October 6 for talks mediated by French President Emmanuel Macron and European Union (EU) chief Charles Michel. They are understood to have made major progress towards signing an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty by the end of this year.

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Senator Menendez Lambastes Erdogan and Azerbaijan At Tekeyan 75th Anniversary Gala in New Jersey

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

PARAMUS, N. J. — The 75th anniversary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) was celebrated with an elegant gala organized by the New York Chapter on October 15 at the Terrace at Biagio’s. A highlight of the evening was the opportunity to honor Sen. Robert Menendez, chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, for all he has accomplished on behalf of Armenians and human rights in general.

Nearly 200 guests, including a significant number of youth, came not only from New Jersey but from as far afield as California and Canada, in support of the TCA mission. A gala committee headed by Hilda Hartounian, chair of the TCA Greater New York Chapter as well as member of the Central Board of the TCA of the United States and Canada, put together the program, which included in addition to talks and a silent auction, entertainment by Tigran Asatryan and Ensemble, an eight-man Armenian band from Los Angeles, and by DJ Barko (Barkev Sanossian).

The evening began with the playing of the American and Armenian national anthems and an invocation from Very Rev. Simeon Odabashian, vicar of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of America (Eastern).

Diran Jebejian kept the program moving smoothly and effectively as the master of ceremonies. A past member of the TCA Greater New York executive committee and performer in the TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group, he is co-host for the Armenian Radio Hour of New Jersey and member of St. Nersess Seminary’s board of directors. Chief of Emergency Medical Services for the Borough of Fort Lee, NJ, Jebejian also owns an event photography business.

He called Hartounian to the podium after



Sen. Robert Menendez

pointing out that she and her family have been involved in TCA for decades. Jebejian said that she is a firm supporter of other Armenian organizations as well, because she believes in one culture, one identity and one nationality, all working for the same cause.

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The foreign ministers of Armenia and Iran inaugurate the Iranian consulate in Kapan, October 21, 2022.

Iran Opens Consulate in Strategic Armenian Region

By Nane Sahakian

KAPAN, Armenia (Azatutyun) — Iran’s Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian stressed the importance of Armenia’s security on Friday, October 21, as he inaugurated the Iranian consulate general in a strategic Armenian region bordering the Islamic Republic.

“The Islamic Republic of Iran regards the security of Armenia and the region as its own security,” Amir-Abdollahian said at the inauguration ceremony held in Kapan, the capital of Syunik province. “Our policy is to respect territorial integrity and internationally recognized borders.”

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Dr. Arshavir Gundjian Invested as Member of Order Of Canada by Governor-General of Canada

OTTAWA — Scientist and Canadian and diasporan Armenian community leader, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian C.M. has been invested Member of the Order of Canada, together with a few other prominent Canadian personalities, at an official investiture ceremony held at Rideau Hall, the official residency of the Governor General of Canada Mary Simon, in Ottawa on October 20.

According to the official ceremony citation, “Over the course of fifty years, scientist and social leader Arshavir Gundjian laid the blocks on which today’s Canadian Armenian community continues to build. Relentless in his effort to

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Dr. Arshavir Gundjian with Governor General of Canada Mary Simon

SAN FRANCISCO
US High School Educators Meet in Armenia to Learn About Genocide, Human Rights



EGYPT
Nora Armani Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award



MASSACHUSETTS
Armenian Heritage Park Ceremony Welcomes New US Citizens





ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

OSCE Mission Visits Syunik to See Consequences Of Azeri Aggression

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) needs assessment mission met with the representatives of the Syunik regional administration on October 24.

The delegation learned more about the consequences of the latest acts of aggression carried out by Azerbaijani forces in Armenia on September 13.

The OSCE representatives also visited a border settlement.

Azerbaijan Violates Ceasefire with Armenia — Defense Ministry

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The Azerbaijani military opened fire on Armenian positions in the eastern section of the border in the wee hours of October 25, the Armenian Defense Ministry reports.

No casualties were reported on the Armenian side.

The latest round of fighting between the two countries began in the wee hours of September 13, when the Azerbaijani military attacked Armenian posts and shelled Armenian settlements both on the border and deep behind the front-line. More than 200 people are dead or missing as a result.

Pashinyan Slams 'Inhuman' Behavior

YEREVAN (Panorama) — Azerbaijan has been creating different obstacles for search operations of the bodies of Armenian soldiers in the zone of the latest Azerbaijani occupation, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in a tweet on Tuesday.

"Since 9/14 Azerbaijan has been creating different obstacles for search operations of dead bodies of Armenian soldiers in the zone of the latest Azerbaijani occupation. This is anti-humanistic and unacceptable behavior," he wrote.

Turkey, Armenia Reps to Discuss Cargo Agreements

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — A meeting between representatives of respective ministries of Armenia and Turkey is planned soon, during which the implementation of the agreements on launching direct air cargo transportation and opening the land border for citizens of third countries will be discussed, foreign ministry spokesperson Vahan Hunanyan told Armenpress on October 25.

"Soon a meeting is expected on the border between representatives of respective ministries of the two countries to discuss the implementation of the two agreements reached in July. These agreements are the launch of the direct air cargo transportation and opening of the [land] border for citizens of third countries," Hunanyan said.

He added that there is no agreement yet on the timeframe or location of the next meeting of the special envoys for normalization.

Semiconductor Software Giant Synopsys And Yervant Zorian Transform Armenian Tech and the World

By Aram Arkun

Mirror-Spectator Staff

WATERTOWN — Synopsys, Inc., based in Silicon Valley, in Mountain View, Calif., is one of the largest software companies in the world, with more than \$4 billion in annual revenue and more than 16,000 employees, according to its website. It helps design and verify complex silicon chips, which are omnipresent in everything from our smartphones to cars, and enables the processes needed to manufacture and maintain the health of those chips throughout their life-cycle, plus it provides software security. Founded over 35 years ago, it has 124 research and development centers around the world. Yerevan happens to host the largest of these sites after the original one in Silicon Valley. Its presence in Armenia is an important contribution to the local economy. The story of how this all happened is intertwined with the life story of Dr. Yervant Zorian.

Synopsys provides chip designers at many major companies with the building blocks necessary to provide the wide range of functionalities required of new chips, with a selection of thousands of such blocks. Today silicon chips may contain somewhere in the range of as many as 30-50 billion transistors or building blocks, and Synopsys provides most of those blocks and the software tools that puts them together. Zorian became involved in this field back during his graduate studies, with his McGill doctorate in the domain of self-testing and self-repairing in order to maintain the health of chips. He eventually registered 45 US patents and published four books on this and related topics.

Today Zorian serves not only as Fellow and Chief Architect in the company's overall hierarchy, but also as president of Synopsys Armenia. He explained that most technology companies are run through a two-track system, management track and technology track. Follows and Chief Architects are at the top of the technology track. Zorian said that he focuses on technology roadmaps, working closely with the major chip designers that use the building blocks and software tools produced by Synopsys to prepare the technology that they require in the next three to five years. It is the technological track's equivalent of vice president in the managerial track.

An Opportunity for Armenia

When the Soviet Union collapsed, Zorian was working at AT&T's Bell Labs. He said he knew that Armenia had the capability to do sophisticated research and development (R&D) due to the investment of the Soviet Union there in the fields of computer and communication systems. Armenia developed systems up to the stage of prototyping, and the universities, the Armenian Academy of Science and various institutes were involved, so that a culture of innovation solutions and the education for it was already present. Armenia had the chip design and system design culture, but manufacturing was not that sophisticated because of the gap in the Soviet Union compared to the US in this field.

Zorian said, "What I did initially was to establish links and find out who were my counterparts in electronic systems design. Even though I had been to Armenia before independence, I never had the chance to talk

with my technology counterparts before." Based on his prior knowledge, he prepared a two-page memo to Louise Simone, then president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), suggesting that all the investment of the Soviet Union in these specialists could disappear very quickly and the latter could leave for other countries unless they were provided with funding and work. He said he advocated supporting Armenia to revamp and retrain its workforce in order to be able to take on projects and contracts with Western firms. More sophisticated research and development work in Armenia would lead to higher paid jobs and more value added to the results.

Simone caught on very quickly, according to Zorian, and two days later asked him to go to Armenia personally to initiate such an effort, to which he agreed. AGBU funded a lab for two years which was established at the American University of Armenia (AUA) and hired 30 people. These were all top talent, who were provided with knowledge and books and training. Soon the lab was able to get contracts for research work, and some of its talent was hired by new technology startups. Zorian said that today, these people are still all there in Armenia. They didn't leave the country but instead formed the nucleus of today's thriving tech industry.

Soon, from around 1994 to 2004, startups from Silicon Valley which needed sites abroad came to Armenia to start R&D locations with the help of Zorian and the AUA lab. During the following decade, multinationals, including Synopsys, began to be attracted to Armenia and acquired already established companies. Zorian said that in the third, current decade of development, companies are not only coming to Armenia from abroad, but rather the opposite is also happening: startups created in Armenia come to Silicon Valley and elsewhere.

Why Is Armenia Attractive for Tech Companies?

What was so attractive about Armenia for tech companies? Zorian said that while the cost of labor and working there in general is comparatively low, there are other countries that also are not expensive. However, the work that companies like Synopsys do is not basic information technology. In Armenia, from day one, it was possible to develop a high end, more sophisticated level of R&D, such as chip design technologies.

Furthermore, the long-term way of considering jobs in Armenia leads to greater allegiance to companies, Zorian said. In certain Asian countries, there is as much as a 30-percent turnover annually, as people leave to increase their salaries. This means that there is barely time to teach them how to do their jobs before they leave. Of course, he added, you also have to give the proper benefits, like stock options, life insurance and health benefits for the entire family, to maintain that loyalty. In return, unlike in other countries, employees in Armenia may remain for long periods, providing more gain on the company's investment in them.

Multinational companies work to expand their product lines through acquisitions. Synopsys, for example, came to Armenia, Zorian said, because of the attractive differentiating products that startups with R&D sites in Armenia had created, which complemented Synopsys' portfolio of products. Once Synopsys and other tech companies



Yervant Zorian

came to Armenia, he said, "They saw that it was a natural place for growth." They learned about the talent and ability of the local workforce to come up with very creative solutions. Zorian exclaimed that there are many patents that come out of Armenia.

One additional factor is that compared to other Asian countries, which have many, many multinational companies, Armenia is not a crowded field and so it is different in that sense.

The role of the government in the development of technology in Armenia is positive in the sense that in generally it does not interfere, Zorian said. He based this statement on his experience with every government starting with Levon Ter-Petrosian to that of Nikol Pashinyan today. A committee was created during Robert Kocharyan's presidency with representatives of the tech sector, universities and the government to meet monthly to discuss any problems or issues, but in general the IT industry grew without any government subsidies or challenges.

A new Ministry of High-Tech Industry was founded in 2019 to replace the Ministry of Transport, Communications and Information Technologies. Zorian said that this is most helpful for newborn startup companies, but for midsized and well-established companies it does not make much of a difference.

Synopsys in Armenia

Synopsys, like many other technology companies, grows through frequent acquisitions of smaller companies, which allows it to absorb new products, concepts, technologies and people. In 2004 and 2005 it acquired three companies which already had established R&D sites in Armenia. Zorian happened to be involved professionally with the latest of these purchases, HPL Technologies (founded by a diasporan Armenian pioneer), which focused on the yield optimization of the semiconductor product lifecycle.

Prior to this, Zorian first began working as chief technology advisor in 1996 at LogicVision and then in June 2000 moved to a position at Virage Logic, based in Fremont, California, as vice president and chief scientist. He helped Virage Logic develop an R&D branch in Armenia. Synopsys acquired Virage Logic in 2010, and with it gained the skills of the approximately 150



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people it employed in Armenia, as well as a large team in the US including Zorian himself. All four of the aforementioned companies acquired by Synopsys happened to have at least some Armenians involved in their management.

Synopsys merged the four separate acquisitions, creating a unified administration for them, and brought the employees to the same site in Yerevan. There initially were about 350 technologists, Zorian estimated, but over time, their numbers increased annually, so that today there are over 1,000 people working in Synopsys Armenia. It probably became the second largest Synopsys site in the world.

Synopsys ad Education in Armenia

When the first small lab was started at AUA, Zorian said that there was a surplus of talent and 30-40 people would apply for every position announced. When the multinationals came to Armenia the talent supply began to balance out but Zorian realized that the next generation of talent in Armenia had to be prepared, and Synopsys began working with Armenian universities to offer the advanced education necessary for its field.

Initially Synopsys partnered with the engineering school of the Polytechnic Institute in Yerevan in 2005, and later with Yerevan State University. When more numbers of students were necessary, it expanded to the European and Russian universities in the city. Today, Synopsys works with four universities and together they produce over 150 graduates annually.

Software engineering and hardware chip design programs were jointly created by Synopsys and these universities, with the curriculum and courses based on what universities like Stanford or Berkeley offer in Silicon Valley. The programs lead to bachelor's, master's and doctoral degrees.

Between half to sixty percent of the course instructors are professors already at the universities, and the rest for certain more advanced courses instructors come from Synopsys, Zorian explained. Synopsys encourages employees with doctorates or more advanced knowledge to teach one course per semester in addition to their regular fulltime responsibilities. Zorian added that some of the university classrooms are located at the Synopsys sites.

Not only is this education (i.e. tuition) free, but Synopsys provides stipends to each student. It also pays the university professors and the instructors for their efforts. Perhaps most importantly, it sets up labs, and pays for all the tools and sophisticated software.

Synopsys does not mandate the graduates to work for it for any period of time, Zorian said. It hires around half of the graduates, and the rest, Zorian said, is its contribution to the larger community. They are hired by other companies or universities.

Zorian noted that the teaching components, labs and libraries formed serve now as models used not only in Armenia but in many other countries which have adopted the Synopsys Armenia approach. Universities around the world license the tools from Synopsys.

To increase the number of graduates in Armenia, 2 ½ years ago Synopsys started an educational program in Gyumri with the local Polytechnic Institute, offering bachelor's and master's degree programs. During the Covid period it began hiring employees in Gyumri and created a new Synopsys R&D branch which today has more than 30 employees. The offices are located next to the classrooms, allowing students to easily do internships and employees to teach students.

Synopsys is the only company in Armenia with such an educational program, Zorian remarked. Apart from this company, in-

dustry rarely is involved in such university or high school educational programs.

Synopsys Strengthens STEM Education

In the last decade, Zorian said that the demand for qualified workers in the tech field became far higher than what the universities could provide. There are now around 4,000 positions in Armenia that cannot be filled. Synopsys's website is full of positions and many other companies are in the same situation.

One reason is that in Armenia, a small country and market, people have to be given the chance to prepare and need to feel they have jobs later. However, the main problem is not at the university level. Zorian said he thinks it starts more at the schools, which do not prepare sufficient numbers of students to enter the realm of technology, or STEM fields (science, technology, engineering and mathematics) in general. Most recently, he said, only 13 percent of high school graduates go on to study STEM topics, and so he felt students needed to be motivated more to go into these fields while still in the school level. This means having the right teachers, labs and curriculum, so he said much work remains to be accomplished in fundamental education.

Synopsys therefore was motivated to expand its educational work to the high school level and strengthen their offerings of advanced courses. Four or five years ago, Zorian related, it began a program with two other companies and the Armenian Ministry of Education. They chose ten high schools and prepared a three-year program for them from the 10th to 12th grades, teaching software the first year, telecommunications the second, and chip design or microelectronics software the third. Unicomp was part of the software program, Viva-MTS helped develop the telecom part, and Synopsys the microelectronics part. Teachers were trained, and given the curriculum and all necessary materials. The courses were optional electives, somewhat like advanced placement (AP) courses in American high schools, Zorian said.

As the number of students reached was limited, Synopsys recently pioneered a new approach by coordinating the preparation of a similar three-year program for the same grades on artificial intelligence (AI) using online learning technologies, which can reach any village or province in Armenia. Synopsys has a foundation that does charitable work in education which provided funding for these courses, and Zorian also worked with the Union of Employers of Information and Communication Technologies (UEICT) in Armenia. The 10th grade course content already has been prepared, using models from high schools in other countries that have done this before, and the 11th grade one is being worked on at present.

The e-learning approach is done in partnership with the Armenian Virtual College (AVC), which Zorian helped initiate through the AGBU 13 years ago to teach Armenian topics, mainly to diasporan Armenians, through e-learning. AVC already has its own staff, production mechanism and cloud services, reaching students in 132 countries. In the AI case, online instructors located in Yerevan spark interest and do corrections with very interactive online learning, including multimedia, video, voice and text.

As Synopsys Armenia's president since 2015, Zorian said he oversees operations in Armenia.

Zorian declared that personally, "Having the Armenian link there is something of which I am really proud. I used to have two parallel tracks – my technology fascination was one track, and my Armenian volunteerism and involvement with the community another. My parents and my grandparents were all heavily involved in Armenian ac-

tivities too. When I was able to bridge them together, it was a nice win-win situation for me. Every day I talk to various people in Armenia about technology, and especially in Armenian."

Artsakh and Ukraine Wars' Effect

Zorian declared that from a cybersecurity perspective, the Artsakh war of 2020 had no impact on Synopsys because as a large multinational corporation, it had already invested in cybersecurity defense. The situation was different, he said, for smaller private and public institutions, including certain universities, which suffered from attacks during the war.

While some employees or staff were drafted and participated in the war, none of them died, though there were some family members of staff lost. Zorian did note that the worries of the war and the post-war insecurity had a negative impact on work but overall the effects of the war were not as bad as they might have been.

As far as the Ukrainian-Russian war is concerned, that led to constraints on foreign technology companies operating in Russia, so that many, including Synopsys, had to leave Russia. Some 100,000 Russians and Belarusians moved to Armenia and contributed to the technology environment there. Zorian said he thought overall the impact was beneficial, not only in terms of increasing the supply of potential employees, but also more broadly in terms of innovation. He explained: "The reason Silicon Valley succeeds is because it attracts people from various countries and cultures, with various ways of thinking. They teach us that if you have diverse teams, your innovation and creativity levels are higher. If you bring in people with the same background and education, you have less innovation because you don't have that variety. In Armenia, we don't have diversity because the population in general is quite homogeneous. But now, by having Russians, Belarusians and others coming there from different places, diversity is increasing, and this is a positive."

Beyond Synopsys

Zorian appears to be a very energetic man and volunteers his personal time in two categories of activities outside of his employment at Synopsys. As a technology professional, he volunteers for the Institute of Electrical and Electronic Engineers (IEEE), the world's largest technical professional organization. He has served as vice president of various bodies in IEEE and at present is president of its Test Technology Technical Council.

Alongside his technology volunteer work, there are his Armenian volunteer activities. Zorian said, "I feel they are complementary. The common denominator is education and preparing talent, which I think is a useful thing — working towards the betterment of all of us, of Armenia and the world at large...My work at AGBU is mostly on the educational side of things, either training startups from Armenia here [in California] or advancing the Armenian Virtual College to teach Armenian language, history and culture."

Zorian serves on the board of AUA, a university created with strong AGBU support. He said, "AUA is an open education entity and I like to help the students of AUA with various programs." He also served on the advisory board of the Armenian National Science and Education Fund (ANSEF), operating under the auspices of the Fund for Armenian Relief, which supports research.

In 2019, Zorian, together with Serj Tankian, Eric Esrailian and Alexis Ohanian, founded a pan-Armenian platform called HyeConnect which was meant to be a non-business collaboration platform facilitating discussions, joint projects, joint events and small topical or geographical

communities. Armenians with a certain interest, whether hobby or profession, can be grouped together and learn from one another, Zorian said.

As noted above, the two categories of volunteer work often overlap. For example, IEEE is a large network with over 400,000 members worldwide, but it did not initially have a branch in Armenia. Zorian said, "Bringing a branch inside Armenia allows Armenians to be connected as well and benefit from this wealth of worldwide knowledge." The process was an elaborate one, requiring a certain number of members in a given country, and a history of major conferences. Zorian was instrumental in taking several such international conferences to Armenia. Then the application to headquarters was made. Finally, in 2019, Zorian brought the IEEE president with him to the World Conference on Internet Technology, which took place in Armenia that year, and the announcement was made of the creation of an Armenian branch of IEEE.

Helping Armenian IT Companies Expand through Accelerators

A second significant example of convergence of Zorian's two major interests is the Armenian Virtual Bridge initiative. Zorian serves as the chair of AGBU's Silicon Valley chapter, which started this project through an agreement initialed in 2019 with the Armenian Ministry of High-Tech Industry during the visit of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and High-Tech Minister Hakob Arshakyan to Silicon Valley.

Tech startups begin with an incubation stage, when they start building up their technology, their team and their product. Once they begin to start selling their product locally — in Armenia in our example — the acceleration process helps turn them from a successful company in Armenia into a globally successful company. They start to obtain funding outside and do marketing and sales globally. The Silicon Valley AGBU chapter already had been hosting many companies from Armenia and taking Californian companies to Armenia. In this case, it began to bring startups from Armenia for acceleration training.

During the Covid pandemic, it trained 15 companies, and at the end of June the CEOs of four more companies returned to Armenia after training. They learned how Silicon Valley operates, and how to do fundraising, marketing, and to deal with customers. Over 100 companies from Armenia had applied for the four positions. Another set are coming in October and November for the five-week program. AGBU volunteers organize their visit and introduce them to Armenians and to investors, but the training is done through a professional program at Draper University at which 80 CEOs participate from various countries around the world as well as from the US.

The Armenian government participates in the costs of the program along with AGBU's network and organization. One important point stressed by Zorian is that some accelerator programs take a certain percentage of your company in exchange for teaching, but the Armenian Virtual Bridge chose one that does not do this.

Zorian said that while Synopsys is a for-profit company, he looks at it from a different angle, as "how Synopsys is helping the semiconductor industry, which I think is the backbone of all the technologies that we utilize. Without these chips, none of what we have would work. Your car is based on chips, your refrigerators, your phones, everything you do...soon we will even have some extensions of our minds in the chips. The chips or semiconductors are the enablers of technology, and Synopsys is present in every single chip. So we see that as a contribution to the betterment of the world through Synopsys."



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Pashinyan Hails Armenia's Soaring Trade With Russian-Led Bloc

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan touted a sharp increase in Armenia's trade with Russia and other members of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) as he hosted a meeting of their prime ministers in Yerevan on Friday.

"In January-August this year, Armenia's trade with [the other] EEU countries reached \$2.8 billion, up by 74 percent from the year-earlier period," Pashinyan said at the meeting.

Armenian government data shows that Russia accounted for 95 percent of that figure, solidifying its status as Armenia's number one trading partner. Armenian exports to Russia doubled to almost \$1.1 billion in the eight-month period despite the barrage of Western sanctions against Moscow.

Armenia was initially expected to be hit hard by the sanctions imposed by the United States, the European Union and other Western powers following the Russian invasion of Ukraine. Russian-Armenian trade fell in March but recovered strongly in the following months as the Russian economy proved more resilient than expected.

Economic growth in the South Caucasus state is now on course to reach a double-digit rate. It has also been helped by a surge in cash remittances from Russia.

Speaking at a roundtable discussion in Yerevan on Friday, Russian Minister of Economic Development Maxim Reshetnikov described Armenia as "one of the beneficiaries of the resetting of Russia's economy and flows of goods and services" resulting from the sanctions. He said the continuing exodus of Western firms from the Russian market is opening up more business opportunities for Armenian firms.

Pashinyan described rising trade among the five ex-Soviet states making up the EEU as proof of "serious successes" achieved by the Russian-led trade bloc. "An extensive common market has been created," he said.

Pashinyan at the same time renewed his calls for the creation of a "common gas



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan looks on as his Russian counterpart Mikhail Mishustin addresses a Eurasian Economic Union meeting in Yerevan, October 21, 2022.

market" that could lower the cost of Russian natural gas imported by Armenia and other EEU member states. He called that a "necessary condition for realizing the potential of economic integration."

Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishus-

tin insisted that Moscow remains committed to the eventual creation of such a market. But he emphasized that the Russian gas price for Armenia and other resource-poor member states is already well below international market-based levels and that it has

remained unchanged just as global energy prices skyrocketed in recent months.

"I believe that our Union seriously protects its participants against unjustified rises in the cost of energy resources," Mishustin said in Yerevan.

US Official Visits Armenian-Azeri Border

By Naira Bulghadarian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — A senior official from the US State Department has visited one of the sections of Armenia's border with Azerbaijan which saw heavy fighting last month.

The US Embassy in Yerevan said on October 24 that Mark Cameron, the director of the department's Office of Caucasus Affairs and Regional Conflicts, traveled to Gegharkunik province to meet with the commander of an Armenian army corps stationed in the area and "observe the situation on the Armenian-Azerbaijani border."

A statement released by the embassy said Cameron also visited the border village of Sotk which was heavily shelled by Azerbaijani forces during the September 13-14 hostilities.

"During his visit, he underlined the continued US support for Armenia's sover-

eignty, and lasting peace in the South Caucasus," added the statement.

During the two-day hostilities, Azerbaijani troops attacked and seized Armenian border posts in Gegharkunik and two other Armenian provinces.

The US State Department publicly urged Azerbaijan on September 26 to "return troops to their initial positions." Baku denies occupying any Armenian territory.

Speaking in the Russian city of Saint-Petersburg on Monday, the deputy chairman of the Armenian parliament committee on defense and security, Armen Khachatryan, said that Azerbaijan seized a total of 127 square kilometers of Armenia's territory in 2021 and this year. Khachatryan, who is affiliated with the ruling Civil Contract party, did not go into details and could not be reached for further comment later in the day.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said earlier that Armenia lost 41 square kilome-

ters of land in 2021 and another 10 square kilometers during the September border clashes. The figure given by Khachatryan suggests that the Azerbaijani territorial gains made last month were much bigger than what was claimed by Pashinyan.

The Armenian Defense Ministry has still not officially specified the number of border posts lost by its troops on September 13-14. The ministry spokesman, Aram Torosian, said on Monday that those losses are still being "clarified."

Armenian opposition leaders have portrayed the outcome of the recent border clashes as further proof of Pashinyan's incompetence and inability to rebuild the country's armed forces. They also blame him for Armenia's defeat in the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Pashinyan claimed on October 17 that Baku is looking for an excuse to launch "new military aggression against Armenia."

Putin Reportedly Keen to Host Another Armenian-Azeri Summit

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The four leaders also agreed on the dispatch of an EU monitoring mission to Armenia's border with Azerbaijan where at least 280 soldiers were killed last month. Armenian leaders have criticized Russia and the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) for what they see as a lack of support for Armenia shown during the two-day hostilities.

A senior Armenian lawmaker, Armen Khachatryan, on Monday lambasted the CSTO for not providing any military aid to Armenia or even condemning Azerbaijan's offensive military operations launched at several sections of the border.

"Why is there no reaction to the aggression against a [CSTO] member state and occupation of its territory even in the form of statements?" he told a meeting of parliamentarians from the CSTO member states.

Khachatryan also claims that Baku is "ready" to launch a fresh and more large-scale offensive with the aim of opening a corridor to Azerbaijan's Nakhichevan exclave through Armenia's Syunik province. He said that Turkish troops could also participate in such an attack.

Iran Opens Consulate in Strategic Armenian Region

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Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan also attended and spoke at the ceremony, again welcoming Tehran's decision to open the diplomatic mission in "our country's backbone."

"The Islamic Republic of Iran has always been and will always be a key partner for Armenia," he said.

The decision announced in December 2021 underscored the Iranian government's strong interest in Syunik and concerns over Azerbaijan's efforts to secure a special corridor to its Nakhichevan exclave passing through the sole Armenian province bordering Iran.

Over the past year, Iranian leaders have repeatedly warned against Azerbaijani attempts to change their country's "historical" border with Armenia. They stepped up those warnings following the September 13-14 fighting at various sections of the

Armenian-Azerbaijani border. One of them is about 30 kilometers south of Kapan.

Iran's elite Revolutionary Guards began on Monday military exercises near Syunik and an adjacent region in Azerbaijan. Amir-Abdollahian said on Tuesday that the drills are meant to demonstrate that "Iran will not allow the blockage of its connection route with Armenia."

The Iranian minister said that his country has "the capacity to impede and confront any such moves" after holding talks with Mirzoyan in Yerevan on Thursday.

Work on the Iranian consulate building in Kapan was still not over on Thursday. Workers paved its courtyard only the following morning, hours before the start of the opening ceremony. Some of those Armenian workers suggested that the consulate's inauguration was brought forward at the Iranian side's request.

Speaking in Kapan, Amir-Abdollahian

described Syunik as a key transit route for Iran's trade with Armenia and other regional countries.

"Syunik province is one of the most important sections of the North-South corridor," he said. "We regard Armenia as one of the most important countries located along the North-South highway and will do our best to develop this transit route."

He referred to an ambitious project to create a transport corridor that would connect Iran's Persian Gulf ports to the Black Sea through Armenia and Georgia. Mirzoyan reaffirmed Yerevan's support for the project after Thursday's talks with Amir-Abdollahian.

Also, Mirzoyan again ruled out giving Azerbaijan any "extraterritorial corridors" through Armenian territory.

Armenian officials said earlier that Baku could try to forcibly open such a corridor through military action against Armenia.



INTERNATIONAL

Dr. Arshavir Gundjian Invested as Member of Order Of Canada by Governor-General of Canada

GUNDJIAN, from page 1

help newcomers integrate into Quebec's society while continuing to cherish their unique culture, he spearheaded the creation of the École Alex Manoogian, the Tekeyan Association of Montreal, and the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Canada. Committed to supporting Armenian diaspora communities internationally, he also served as vice president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union for a decade."

According to the Canadian Encyclopedia, the Order of Canada is "the highest level of distinction in the Canadian Honours System, established on July 1, 1967, the 100th anniversary of Confederation. Any Canadian may be appointed a Member (CM), in recognition of outstanding achievements or exemplary contributions in any sector of Canadian society."

Appointments to the Order of Canada are made by the governor general of Canada. The recipients of this exceptional honor are nominated only after a long and meticulous process of validation conducted by a special advisory board chaired by the chief justice of Canada, currently, Richard Wagner.

Gundjian, while an inventor, scientist, and McGill University professor in quantum electronics, is well known for his exceptional contributions to Armenian culture, education and pioneering work in the creation of the Canadian community infrastructure. His services have already been recognized over the years by Armenian national organizations that he served with exceptional dedication and ability. He has been named honorary president of the Canadian Armenian Church Diocesan Council, the Montreal Tekeyan Cultural Associ-

ation (TCA), and emeritus Central Board Member of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU). Over the years, he has been granted honors at the highest levels by Catholicos of All Armenians Vazken I, at the Mother See of the Armenian Apostolic Church in Echmiadzin, the government of Armenia, and the iconic late Life-President of the AGBU Alex Manoogian. He serves at present as vice president of the Central Board of TCA of the United States and Canada.

The October 20 investiture ceremony, delayed almost three years due to the pandemic, was originally meant to take place right after the nomination in December 2019.

Among the other previous prominent Armenian recipients of the Order of Canada are Charles Aznavour, Yousuf Karsh and Atom Egoyan.

Russian Lawmaker Barred From Visiting Armenia

By Artak Khulian

YERVAN (Azatutyun) — The Armenian authorities have effectively banned Konstantin Zatulyn, a pro-Armenian Russian parliamentarian, from entering the country over his strong criticism of Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's administration.

Zatulyn publicized on October 25 a letter from a senior Armenian parliament staffer notifying him that his further visits to Armenia are deemed "undesirable" because his "recent public pronouncements addressed to the Republic of Armenia" damaged Russian-Armenian relations.

A parliament spokeswoman confirmed the authenticity of the letter sent to him at the initiative of the leadership of the National Assembly affiliated with Pashinyan's Civil Contract party. Parliament speaker Alen Simonian did not personally comment

on the entry ban.

"I regard this as an offensive move," Zatulyn wrote on Telegram. "It was sudden for us."

Zatulyn, 64, is the deputy chairman of a Russian State Duma committee on relations with former Soviet republics and "Eurasian integration." The veteran lawmaker is known for his pro-Armenian views on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, having visited Armenia and Karabakh on numerous occasions. He was blacklisted by Azerbaijan a decade ago.

Zatulyn, who is affiliated with Russia's ruling party, has been increasingly critical of the current Armenian government since the 2020 war in Karabakh. Earlier this month, he accused it of planning to make far-reaching concessions to Azerbaijan and switch Armenia's allegiance from Russia to the West.

Zatulyn was due to arrive in Yerevan for a regular session of the Lazarev Club, a non-governmental group uniting Russian and Armenian politicians, public figures and entrepreneurs. In a letter to Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan also publicized on Tuesday, he asked the Armenian government to help him and other Russian participants of the meeting visit the Armenian resort town of Jermuk which was shelled by Azerbaijani forces during large-scale border clashes last month.

Overchuk: Armenia at Risk of Dropping out of North-South Transport Project

MOSCOW (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The western route of the North-South International Transport Corridor may pass through Azerbaijan and Iran instead of Armenia, if the latter does not tackle its transport blockade, Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk told the Made in Russia 2022 export forum on October 21, Vedomosti reports.

The official noted that the establishment of transport links between the western regions of Azerbaijan and Nakhijevan through the territory of Armenia or Iran is important for creating a "crossroad" of the main international transport corridors North-South and East-West.

The implementation of these transport projects, according to Overchuk, will allow the economies of Azerbaijan, Armenia and Georgia to begin to receive "additional rent" associated with the advantage of their geographical position in Eurasia.

The North-South Road Corridor crosses the territory of Armenia from the South to the North including Agarak-Kapan-Yerevan-Gyumri-Bavra highways and road infrastructures and is linked to the Georgian road network leading to Poti and Batumi ports.

The road corridor is expected to facilitate and improve road connection with the two neighbors of Armenia – Iran and Georgia – providing access to international trade routes and markets.



Russian Deputy Prime Minister Alexey Overchuk



Turkish Weightlifter Snubs Armenian Champion's Handshake

DURRES, Albania (Panorama.am) — Armenian weightlifter Garik Karapetyan captured a gold medal at the 2022 European Junior and U23 Weightlifting Championships on October 24.

The athlete lifted a total of 367 (171+196) kilograms to be crowned European champion in the 96 kg weight class on Saturday, outcompeting his Turkish rival Emre Ozturk who took silver.

The Turkish weightlifter stood out for his unsportsmanlike conduct at the awards ceremony.

He first tried to cover up the flag of Armenia with the Turkish flag. When the Armenian anthem was played, the Turkish athlete left the podium, returning only at the urging of the Turkish delegation members.

After the awards ceremony, Karapetyan shook hands with the bronze medalist and extended his hand to the silver medalist, but the latter snubbed his handshake.

INTERNATIONAL

Baku Rejects OSCE Mission Reports

BAKU (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Baku has refused to accept the reports of the mission of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) as official documents as the country's Foreign Ministry says the mission "does not have a mandate."

"Any group called the 'OSCE mission to assess the needs of Armenia' does not have an OSCE mandate, cannot be associated with the OSCE in any way, and none of its results or reports will be accepted as OSCE documents," the Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry said.

The Foreign Ministry emphasized that the issue of the mission had never been discussed by any collective body of the organization. It is noted that the visit of OSCE experts should be assessed as a personal visit of a group of several participating States.

On October 18, Yerevan asked for help from the organization in connection with the aggression of Baku. Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan noted that the issue of sending OSCE observers to the border from Armenian territory was discussed. In addition, on October 20, the EU began deployed a mission to monitor the situation in the region. Zass 10-29

Stanislav Zass and Lavrov Discuss CSTO Zone of responsibility

MOSCOW (News.am) — Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) Secretary General Stanislav Zass met with Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov on October 25.

They discussed a detailed agenda related to the current activities and development of the organization.

In particular, an exchange of views was held on the situation in the CSTO area of responsibility. Zass informed Lavrov about preparations for the upcoming meetings of the CSTO statutory bodies and fulfillment of a number of individual instructions of the Collective Security Council.

State Department: US Interested in Seeing Stable Caucasus

WASHINGTON (Panorama.am) — The United States is interested in seeing a stable Caucasus region, U.S. State Department spokesman Ned Price told a press briefing on October 24.

"Of course we want to see and we've – we have made clear our interest in seeing a stable Caucasus region, a region that – where we work both with Armenia and Azerbaijan to de-escalate tensions between those two countries and to work to de-escalate any broader tensions that may arise," Price said in response to a question about the military exercises held by the Iranian Revolutionary Guard on border with Azerbaijan last week, which triggered some concerns in Baku.

‘Brotherly’ Azerbaijan and Turkey Build Lucrative Karabakh Business Ties

By Ulkar Natiqqizi

Following Azerbaijan’s victory over Armenia in the 2020 war, one of the biggest beneficiaries has been Turkey.

Turkey gave substantial military aid to Azerbaijan in the war, and the aid is now being reciprocated: Companies close to President Recep Tayyip Erdogan have received at least hundreds of millions of dollars in contracts, particularly in the reconstruction of the territories in Karabakh that Azerbaijan retook in the war.

In some cases, the relationships go beyond business and politics: In one large new agricultural complex in the Zangilan region, members of Erdogan’s family are business partners with members of President Ilham Aliyev’s family.

Erdogan and Aliyev laid the foundation for the Dost (“Friend”) Agropark in October 2021, and the two visited it again on October 20, when they took a tour around Karabakh as part of the inauguration of a new airport in Zangilan, near the borders with Armenia and Iran.

The Dost Agropark is envisaged as a \$100-million project that will eventually employ 500 people raising up to 10,000 head of cattle.

Accompanying Erdogan on his trip around Karabakh was Abdulkadir Karagöz, the owner of Dost Ziraat, the Turkish investor in the Dost Agropark. Karagöz is not just a business ally but a member of Erdogan’s family; he is married to Erdogan’s niece, the daughter of Erdogan’s brother Mustafa Erdogan.

Shortly after the 2016 wedding, Karagöz (via a different company, which he also headed) began winning conspicuous amounts of government contracts, in many of which his firm was the only participating

Also following the wedding, he began to take tighter control of Dost, which he co-founded in 2010. By 2017, the company’s other shareholders had left. Meanwhile, other Erdogan family members joined.

Documents in Turkey’s official Trade Registry Gazette reviewed by Eurasianet show that just over a year after the wedding, more of Erdogan’s family members (two nephews) became shareholders in Dost Ziraat: Üsâme Erdoğan, son of Mustafa; and Ahmet Enes İlgen, son of Erdogan’s sister Vesile İlgen. By 2020, however, other documents in the registry indicate that the two nephews no longer held shares in the company and that Karagöz was the only shareholder.

On the Azerbaijani side the investor is Pasha Investments, part of the Pasha Holding company that brings together all of the firms owned by the family of Aliyev’s wife and first vice president, Mehriban Aliyeva.

The management of the agropark, meanwhile, is in the hands of another Erdogan ally: the CEO is Mehmet Zeki Tuğrul, who has been both a vice chairman of Dost Ziraat’s management board as well as a board member of the youth wing of Turkey’s ruling Justice and Development Party.

On their October 20 visit to the park, both presidents briefly responded to questions from journalists. Erdogan referred to Karagöz as “the person in charge here” and when asked if the agropark may be expanded later, Aliyev responded: “That depends on Mr. Abdulkadir.” Erdogan added: “Whatever he wants will be the case.”

Karagöz himself chimed in: “Of course, it will expand. Inshallah, we will continue in Lachin,” he said, referring to another territory retaken in the 2020 war.

Karagöz was not the only Turkish busi-

nessman in Erdogan’s entourage. Others included Cemal Kalyoncu, the chairman of Kalyon Holding; Mehmet Cengiz, chairman of Cengiz Holding; and Yıldırım Demirören, chairman of Demirören Holding. All three had also joined Erdoğan in his previous Karabakh visit.

In remarks that he made in Jabrayil, Erdogan alluded to the poor state of the current road there. “I think that in a year from now, we’ll see the road to Jabrayil in a completely different state, because serious steps are also being taken related to infrastructure issues,” he said. “Steps have been taken here thanks to the joint work of Cengiz and Kalyon companies.”

While these businesses don’t have family connections to Erdogan, they are key political allies. Cengiz and Kalyon are two of what has become known as the “Gang of Five” Turkish firms that have close links to Erdogan and the ruling party and which have been awarded most large government tenders during Erdogan’s rule.

Now both Kalyon and Cengiz have been awarded lucrative contracts for work in Karabakh, as well, including construction of roads and the operation of three mines, particularly of gold and copper. Kalyon is constructing the Horadiz-Aghband railway line that is envisaged as part of the transport route connecting Azerbaijan’s exclave of Nakhchivan to the mainland via southern Armenia. That project is projected to cost more than 312 million manats (over \$180 million) and to be completed in 2023.

Another “Gang of Five” company, Kolin İnşaat, also has gotten a lucrative road construction contract in Karabakh, to build the “Victory Road” to Shusha along with an Azerbaijani firm, Azvirt. Kolin also was involved in the establishment of a market (located on “Turkey-Azerbaijan

Friendship Street”) in the village of Agali, where the first few Azerbaijanis to resettle in Karabakh have moved.

In total, the Azerbaijani government has allocated over 4.8 billion manats (nearly \$2.9 billion) for reconstruction and restoration projects in Karabakh. Data have not been published breaking down which countries’ companies get contracts, and other countries perceived to be friendly, including Italy, Israel, and the United Kingdom, also have gotten contracts. But Turkish firms appear to be the biggest winners of the contracts.

There are roughly 30 Turkish companies operating in Karabakh, according to the Turkish embassy in Baku. “These companies have already invested \$1 billion, and these investments will continue to grow,” said Yakup Sefer, Turkey’s chief trade counsellor in Baku, at a July business forum.

Another major Turkish firm, Demirören Holding, hasn’t been publicly awarded any Karabakh-related projects but it has won other major recent contracts in Azerbaijan. In 2021 it got a 10-year contract to run the state lottery, and signed a memorandum of understanding with the Economy Ministry to build a \$40 million pharmaceutical plant.

Asked by an Italian journalist in a September interview about the prospects for firms from that country getting construction contracts for Karabakh, Aliyev responded that Italy would be in second place – behind Turkey. “It is our neighbor and they have very prominent construction companies,” he said of Turkey. “Because it is our ally and close friend.”

(Ulkar Natiqqizi is an Azerbaijani journalist. This article originally appeared on the site eurasianet.org on October 24.)

Diyarbakır Bar Members Acquitted over ‘Armenian Genocide’ Statement

DIYARBAKIR, Turkey (bianet.org) — A court has acquitted the chair and executives of the Diyarbakır Bar Association in a case concerning a 2019 statement by the bar about the Armenian Genocide. However, systematic trials and prosecutions against the activities of the Diyarbakır Bar continue, as a recent report by the bar demonstrates.

The Diyarbakır 11th Heavy Penal Court acquitted Cihan Aydın, and other members of the Executive Committee of the Diyarbakır Bar in the 2018-2020 period, at an October 17 hearing.

However, this is not the only case against Diyarbakır Bar on similar grounds.

Members of the bar also appeared before the court regarding the following statements in the past: The declaration “We are remembering over one million civilian-innocent Armenians who lost their lives in the genocide with respect” in the statement dated April 12, 2017, titled “April 24 / Great Disaster: We Share the Pain of the Armenian People” published on the website of the Bar; the article dated December 18, 2017, titled, “It Is Shameful to Punish the Expression of Kurdistan, We Cannot Accept it!”, commenting that the sentence given to Osman Baydemir is “shameful”; and a report dated September 14, 2017, called “The Incident Which Resulted from Drone Attack,” where it was reported that those who were killed were civilians.

An investigation was opened against the Diyarbakır Bar again in 2021 for its statement on the Armenian Genocide. The statement of 2021, titled “We Share the Pain of *Medz Yeghern*” said the following: “Call it either ‘Medz Yeghern’ as the victims do, or ‘Ferma-



Diyarbakır Bar Members (photo Diyarbakır Bar Association)

na Filla’ as we have heard from our grandfathers and grandmothers, or ‘Genocide’ as Polish jurist Raphael Lemkin who says ‘I was inspired by what was done to the Armenian people when I wrote this’; the reality will not change.”

The Diyarbakır Chief Public Prosecutor’s Office opened an investigation into this statement, charging the bar with “humiliating the Turkish nation, the Republic of Turkey, the institutions of the state.”

Nahit Eren, chair of Diyarbakır Bar said, “Diyarbakır Bar will not be limiting its own freedom of expression while defending the freedom of expression for everyone to the full extent. We will continue to stand by our

words, which we told in line with our values.”

The Diyarbakır Bar had prepared a report on the cases and investigations in 2020 against 69 lawyers among whom are former bar chairs. The report is an attempt to demonstrate the systematic pressure on the bar of the major Kurdish-majority city in Turkey. It reads: “There are systematic trials and prosecutions against the activities of the Diyarbakır Bar and also against the professional activities of its members. At least 78 prosecutions and trials have been started against at least 69 lawyers among whom are chairs and executive committee members who served between 2016-2020 and those who are members of the Bar as of 2020.”



Community News

Los Angeles City Council Elects Paul Krekorian as New President in Wake of Martinez Resignation

By Rob Hayes, Sid Garcia, and Tim Pulliam

LOS ANGELES (KABC) — The Los Angeles City Council elected Councilman Paul Krekorian as its new leader Tuesday, October 18, to replace a president who was forced to resign amid a burgeoning scandal over racist remarks.

Krekorian is replacing former Council President Nury Martinez, who resigned her leadership post and her council seat after she was caught on a leaked recording making racist comments and discussing manipulations of the city redistricting process.

Krekorian is now tasked with leading the council on a series of political reforms, while dealing with increas-



Paul Krekorian

ingly loud calls for the two other members involved in the controversy, Gil Cedillo and Kevin de León, to also step down.

Legally the council cannot force members from office, short of serious criminal accusations, but most other members of the council have said resignations by the two is the only way for the city to heal and move forward.

Krekorian said he will aim to reduce the power of the position.

“The Council Presidency is a position of collaboration, not command,” Krekorian said in a statement. “I will see that the power of the Council Presidency is reduced, not enlarged. The era of unilateral decision making and consolidating power ends today.”

And he repeated calls for Cedillo and de Leon to follow Martinez and resign from office.

“Three elected members of this Council forfeited the public’s trust. One has already resigned, the greatest service to the city that the others can now perform is to resign their offices so that we can begin the process of healing.”

Mayor Eric Garcetti praised the selection of Krekorian, whose district is in the San Fernando Valley.

“Paul is a committed and conscientious leader who can bring a smart, collaborative, and effective approach see KREKORIAN, page 8



GenEd Teacher Fellows and staff visit 1st century AD temple of Garni

US High School Educators Meet in Armenia to Learn About Genocide, Human Rights Through GenEd

By Kim Bardakian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

SAN FRANCISCO — The Genocide Education Project (“GenEd”) held the inaugural GenEd Teacher Fellowship Program in Armenia this summer, carrying out a week-long series of professional development for U.S. high school educators. The new GenEd Teach Fellows, who hail from 14 US states, attended academic sessions, participated in field trips and engaged in discussions on human rights and genocide education, Armenian history, culture and teaching pedagogy.

During the week-long program, the GenEd Teacher Fellows spent mornings in a variety of academic sessions at the Armenian Genocide Museum and Institute (AGMI) which has partnered with GenEd to provide its unique and expert scholarship and documentation of the Armenian Genocide for the benefit of the future teaching endeavors of the GenEd Fellows.

The afternoons were filled with field trips to historic and cultural sites relating to the morning workshop themes, giving the educators valuable first-hand touchpoints to the Armenian experience. The agenda included discussion and field trips exposing the educators to the nation’s current conditions within the broader historical context.

“The GenEd Teach Fellowship program was a longtime dream come true,” stated GenEd Executive Director Roxanne Makasdjian. “Our longtime education director, Sarah Cohan, who had previously participated in other fellowship opportunities, had the foresight years ago to see the strong potential for such a program to vastly expand education about the Armenian Genocide in this country. Her vision, professional development skills, and experience and vision helped us create and bring this program to life in Armenia.”

Ultimately the goal of the GenEd Teacher Fellows program is to teach non-Armenian educators the importance of the Armenian Genocide and incorporating it into their high school curriculums. With their new found knowledge, they will not see EDUCATION, page 8



GenEd Teacher Fellows examine the permanent exhibit at the Armenian Genocide Museum in Yerevan

Plastic Surgeon Dr. Igor Zakaryan Advances Trauma Surgery in Artsakh

By Levon R. Karamanoukian

STEPANAKERT — Surgeons in the Republic of Artsakh recently performed complex microsurgery to re-attach the right arm of a 20-year-old man after a traumatic and life-threatening industrial injury. According to surgeons at the Central Republic Hospital in Stepanakert, Tigran Musayelyan sustained a mechanical avulsion injury that spared his life, but completely amputated his upper right arm, on September 8, 2022. (In medicine, an avulsion injury is one in which a body structure is torn off by either trauma or surgery.)

The patient was transported by the medical transport team, equipped with military life support equipment, in critical condition to the trauma unit where he was immediately evaluated by reconstructive surgeon Dr. Igor Zakaryan, Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery at Central Republic Hospital.

“A decision was made to perform complex reconstruction and microsurgical reattachment of the upper limb to improve his long-term functional outcome,” said Zakaryan. Organizing a critical care team composed of trauma surgeons, anesthesiologists, orthopedic surgeons, vascular surgeons, and medical specialists, Zakaryan recognized a unique window to salvage the severely mutilated limb and reattach it to the body.

“The decision to perform limb replantation is crucial and time-sensitive; even small delays in timing can mean the difference between success and failure...we were faced with the life-changing decision to restore function to this young man,” added Zakaryan.

Limb replantation requires complex microsurgery. “The chance of success is severely reduced in patients with avulsion rather than sharp cutting injuries to the soft tissue. The actions of Dr. Zakaryan and the trauma team at Central Republic Hospital in Stepanakert are nothing short of spectacular,” said California plastic surgeon Dr. Raffy Karamanoukian, who authored a paper on the feasibility of robotic microsurgery in the *Journal of Reconstructive Microsurgery*. “Replanting an upper arm in an avulsion injury requires expertise and coordinated trauma protocols that can help resuscitate and stabilize a potentially life-threatening injury.”

Over the last decade, Karamanoukian has performed many reconstructive surgeries in Stepanakert, Artsakh, and collaborated with Zakaryan at Central Republic Hospital. The surgical collaboration between US and Artsakh surgeons allows for a high level of expertise in the management of severe tissue trauma.

One factor that allowed this success was the quick response time; the patient was transported to Central Republic Hospital with the severed see SURGEON, page 8

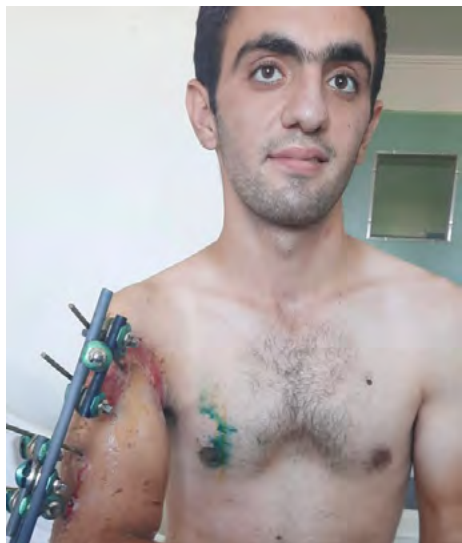


COMMUNITY NEWS

Plastic Surgeon Dr. Igor Zakaryan Advances Trauma Surgery in Artsakh

SURGEON, from page 7

limb in a record one hour from the time of injury, where an on-call trauma surgery team was prepared to resuscitate and stabi-



Tigran Musayelyan, Age 20. One month after right arm replantation in Artsakh Republic.

lize the patient for surgery. As the medical transport team evacuated the patient, experienced paramedics with military trauma expertise, retrieved and prepared the limb for possible transplant.

The goal of replantation was to restore vital blood circulation first, followed by complex and staged repair of bone, tendons, muscles, and nerves that maintain upper limb function. “This surgery is complex from the standpoint of cardiovascular shock,” reported Dr. Hratch Karamanoukian, a board certified cardiothoracic surgeon in the United States. “The acumen of these surgeons attests to the highest level of medical and surgical achievement in trauma critical care.”

The microvascular repair and replantation procedure lasted a total of four hours, with Zakaryan’s reconstructive surgery team successfully re-approximating and stabilizing the skeletal bone, re-establishing vascular perfusion to the limb, and re-attaching crucial nerves and tendons back together. The patient remained in critical condition as a result of cardiovascular shock and remained in the intensive care unit. After several weeks of inpatient care, Musayelyan has been discharged but will require long-term rehabilitation to restore function to the limb, according to Zakaryan.

“The work of the trauma team at Central Republic Hospital supports the social and cultural framework of our homeland,” said Zakaryan. “Our decision to restore function to this young man remains a duty and sacrifice to our nation.”



Dr. Igor Zakaryan, Chief of Plastic and Reconstructive Surgery Central Republic Hospital. Stepanakert, Artsakh Republic

Los Angeles City Council Elects Paul Krekorian as New President

KREKORIAN, from page 7

to a painful moment when Angelenos deserve steady leadership on the City Council,” Garcetti said. “I am confident that he’ll assemble a leadership team of bridge builders, and I’ll work closely with the Council to help heal the wounds caused by the hateful words of a few.”

Protesters gathered outside City Hall on

October 18 to call for Cedillo and de León to step down.

At one point, protesters tried to force their way into the building, which was closed to the public.

Police officers wearing riot helmets pushed them back.

It was not immediately clear why the protesters wanted to enter the building,

since the meeting was taking place online. Only Councilman Mitch O’Farrell, who was serving as acting president at the start of the meeting, was inside council chambers, while nine other members were meeting online.

They may have hoped to shut the meeting down until Cedillo and de León resign. Some protesters were heard chanting “No resignations, no meeting.”

Some protesters opposed the selection of Krekorian.

“It’s a slap in the face given what has just happened with the former City Council leadership, that they’re putting someone in place that’s actually worse than Nury Martinez,” said Black Lives Matter leader Melina Abdullah.

Some protesters with Black Lives Matter remain camped out in de León’s neighborhood, saying they will stay there until he steps down. De León has been publicly quiet since the scandal erupted and there was no sign of him at the home.

“Our prayer today is simply that these elected officials would do what is best for the city,” said Pastor James Thomas, with the NAACP of the San Fernando Valley. “This issue has attempted to rip this city apart. But thank God for Black Lives Matter and those who organize for justice, who have been committed to making sure that all of the solidarity built, all the unity built over the past couple of years will not be destroyed as a result of elected officials.”

Tuesday’s meeting was expected to be a launching point for a series of reforms and power shifts. Councilman Mitch O’Farrell, who temporarily served as acting president when Martinez resigned, earlier this week stripped de León and Cedillo of most of their committee assignments and leadership posts.

Other reforms on the table include changing the redistricting process and expanding the size of the council to increase representation.

US High School Educators Meet in Armenia to Learn About Genocide, Human Rights Through GenEd

EDUCATION, from page 7

only teach to their respective students (many in social studies) but also commit to training other educators about this topic in their school districts throughout the year. This ongoing and compounding impact of the potential reach to hundreds, and then thousands of students, is what GenEd aspires to each year.

“We were thrilled with the positive feedback from the teachers after the completion of the program. Many appreciated the workshops, speakers, and field trips were integrated, providing a memorable experience they can take back home to their students and share with other educators,” said Makasdjian.

There were many successful outcomes of this inaugural program — one of the biggest being how many of the new GenEd Teacher Fellows immediately sprang into action by preparing presentations, lectures and key-

notes back home in their school districts.

“I’m blown away with what they are already doing in their home regions,” said Makasdjian. “Phase Two of the inaugural program is proving just as successful as the trip to Armenia, Phase One. They are all committed to continuing to advocate for the implementation of Armenian Genocide education in their own school’s curriculum and well beyond.”

This project was funded by interested individuals, organizations and foundations. With such large dividends, GenEd intends to repeat the program.

“Imagine what can happen and how quickly we can exponentially expand the numbers of the students receiving this education if we continue this for years to come?” said Makasdjian.

For more information about GenEd and the GenEd Teachers Fellows program, visit genocideeducation.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

St. James Church Holds Fall Bazaar, Its First Since COVID

By Melanie Tuysuzian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

WATERTOWN – On Friday and Saturday October 14-15, the St. James Armenian Apostolic Church hosted its 75th fall bazaar, its first since COVID. The event is the church's main fundraiser for the year.

Those entering the Charles Mosesian Cultural and Youth Center's Hall of the church could smell the fresh pastries and meat cooked in the kitchen as soon as they walked in. Every step presented a food discovery, ranging from the Sunday school table, with pastries made by Sunday school parents and friends, to the cream khadyif. Homemade cupcakes were provided, mostly appreciated by the kids, who could buy them for \$1 and put a variety of toppings on them.

Other organizations represented there included the Armenian Saturday School and the Armenian Church Youth Organization of America (ACYOA), the Men's Club, the Women's Guild, they were part of this bazaar to help the church. They sold their items for two days straight, and the proceeds will all go to the church.

"This is the church's biggest fundraiser of the year," volunteer Sandy Raphaelian explained as she and fellow volunteer Carl Boloyan worked. These parishioners were involved in the planning of the event because they liked hosting visitors to immerse them in the Armenian culture in order to keep the church going.

As any Armenian event must almost certainly revolve around food, there was plen-



ty of it. Goods on offer included everything from yalanchi to baked goods, as well as traditional kebabs. Vegetarians and vegans could also have their meals, and there were packs of Armenian alphabet pasta available for purchase.

Other handcrafted items were available on the St. James Artisan table, mad by ladies who met on Wednesday evenings to work on their creations. A silent auction was also held, with 80 items displayed at the bazaar, including Armenian paintings, as well as manuscripts from Jerusalem and jewelry.

The fall bazaar was also filled with Halloween decorations and even some early Christmas trees. "It takes many hands to create what we do, it's a work team. We make memories together; we are very happy to host people when they're coming with family and friends," Raphaelian added.

Father Arakel Aljalian, the pastor of the church for the past 23 years, was also one of the main drivers behind the organization. "The bazaar is a major fundraising, fellowship activity. This is an opportunity to meet new people, to taste Armenian food," he said.

They weren't able to get together for the last two years due to the COVID, but that didn't stop them. Their volunteers began planning the event starting a few months back. The volunteer bakers have been making pastries since June. And the customers seem happy with the efforts.

"I come here every year. I enjoy this bazaar and all that it has to offer. The pastries are wonderful, and the food is so fresh. My family is also here, so that's perfect," said Diane Merian.

The St. James Armenian Apostolic was consecrated in October 1937. The Cultural and Youth Center was dedicated in 1967 to allow church members and friends to gather and spend time together, as the bazaar still illustrates. They have held an annual bazaar as well as a spring picnic for the past 75 years. But this autumn bazaar appeared to be a new beginning after COVID. According to Maria Derderian, the church's youth minister, around 1,000 people attended the event this year over the weekend.

ASA Gives Out Scholarships For 2022

This year the Armenian Students' Association (ASA) awarded \$164,800 in scholarships to 34 deserving students of Armenian descent enrolled in colleges and universities in the United States of America.

The members of the Board of Trustees thank their many generous benefactors who have made it possible for the ASA to assist our young men and women in their educational pursuits. Over the past eight years, the Association has been able to award over \$1,000,000 in scholarship grants.

The Scholarship Grant Program is the hallmark of the Association's mission. Please consider supporting this vital program, especially as tuition continues to increase. Your gift will have an immediate impact and give a lifetime of returns. Checks should be made payable to: Armenian Students' Association of America, Inc.

In addition, the ASA Silver Medal Award Committee selected two (2) seniors to receive the Silver Medal Award.

The following students were selected to receive this award: Arya Anoush Balian, Chevy Chase, MD, National Cathedral School, she will be attending Columbia University; Ariana L. Hovnanian, Bedford, MA, Bedford High School, she will be attending Bryant University. The Silver Medal Awards are given annually to high school seniors who have demonstrated outstanding scholastic ability.

Applications for Silver and Gold Medal Awards can be obtained at: www.asainc.org or by emailing headasa@aol.com. Deadline for submitting applications and documentation is May 1, 2023.

ASA Scholarship Applications for 2023-2024 academic year are available on www.asainc.org or by emailing headasa@aol.com. Completed application with all documentation must be submitted to the ASA National Headquarters, 333 Atlantic Avenue, Warwick, RI 02888 by March 15, 2023.



The team of volunteers who helped to manage this event, including the providers Carl Boloyan and Sandy Raphaelian



A table of homemade pastries,

New Members Join Armenian National Institute Board of Governors

WASHINGTON — The Armenian National Institute (ANI) earlier this month announced the election of new members to its Board of Governors. Chairman of the ANI Board, Van Z. Krikorian, welcomed Dr. Armen Baibourtian, Archbishop Vicken Aykazian, and Mr. Mark Malkasian, who are joining the current serving members including Carolyn Mugar, Annie Totah, Binka Kadian Dodov, and chairman emeritus Aram Kaloosdian.

"ANI is fortunate to add such distinguished individuals to its Board," stated Krikorian. "From the start, our Institute understood that the worst chapters of Armenian history could repeat themselves. The addition of expertise reflected by our new board members will not only advance the educational mission of ANI, but also contribute to our efforts at genocide prevention."

Baibourtian, who holds a doctorate in history and another in international relations, filled several posts around the world and in the United States in increasingly important assignments in his capacity as ambassador and consul general for the Republic of Armenia. He also served on the

faculty of Yerevan State University and the University of Massachusetts Amherst. Having completed his diplomatic service with the rank of ambassador, Baibourtian is now working in the United States.

Aykazian, who also holds a doctorate in history and historiography and is working on a second on the canon law of the Armenian Church, has been the long-serving Diocesan Legate of the Armenian Apostolic Church of America in Washington, DC. In his capacity as Ecumenical Director of the Eastern Diocese, he was elected to several offices in the World Council of Churches and to the presidency of the National Council of Churches in the United States. He is presently the vice-moderator of the central committee of the World Council of Churches.

Malkasian is the author of a number of important works on modern Armenian history, including *Gha-ra-bagh!: The Emergence of the National Democratic Movement in Armenia*. An educator and curriculum developer, Malkasian is also a web developer who has served as the ANI webmaster from the very beginning and contributed immensely to strengthening

the online presence of the Institute whose websites have long been leading references on the subject of the Armenian Genocide.

The ANI website on the Armenian Genocide has generated millions of hits annually over the past many years and is relied upon by multiple academic and media sources. Translated versions of the ANI website are also available in Turkish, Spanish, and Arabic. The vast catalogue of affirmation documents from around the world collected by the Institute, and posted on its website, is a unique feature that has served as a ready resource for community efforts to secure international recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

Dr. Rouben Adalian, who has served as the director of ANI since its founding in 1997 was joined last year by Mr. Robert Arzoumanian, who has been assisting in maintaining and expanding the Institute's online resources and social media handle. Besides its own extensive website, ANI also maintains the online Armenian Genocide Museum of America, which has served as another important and popular educational resource for teachers and students.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Tekeyan 75th Anniversary Gala in New Jersey

ANNIVERSARY, from page 1

Hartounian welcomed guests and thanked her organizing committee before speaking about the legacy of the poet, teacher and community leader Vahan Tekeyan that the TCA perpetuates. She enumerated some of the achievements of TCA over the last 75 years in promoting and supporting Armenian culture in its manifold spheres and looked forward to the continuation of its work for future generations.

A brief video clip of Menendez was screened showing the dramatic conclusion in December 2019 of his struggle over many years to get the US Congress to pass a bill to recognize the Armenian Genocide. The audience burst into applause several times during this moving clip.



Senator Bob Menendez and his wife, Nadine Menendez

New Jersey entrepreneur and philanthropist Saro Hartounian, then took the podium to provide a biographical introduction to Menendez. He and his brother, Nareg, co-founded in 2003 the Naregatsi Art Institute, which works to preserve Armenian art and values. He first attested to his own admiration of the TCA throughout his life, with its mission of promotion and revival of Armenian culture. This culture binds us, shields us, protects us and helps us survive as an ethnic minority, he said, especially in the case of adversity.

The love of ethnic culture and the protection of the rights of minorities are two values that are also very dear to Menendez, he continued. He said that he was fortunate to be able to get to know the senator personally and called him “mer pesan” (our son-in-law) to great applause, referring to the fact that Menendez’s wife, Nadine, present in the audience, is an Armenian American.

He extolled Menendez as “infused with this undying passion for the protection and defense of democracy and human rights,” declaring “Bob Menendez never took the path of least resistance. He always swam against it — he defied gravity.”

After sketching his career of public service and legislation, Saro Hartounian declared, “This year is the 30th anniversary of his being in the US Congress,” and “his actions and the laws he enacted brought economic and social justice and opportunity to the disadvantaged.” He also returned to the topic of Menendez’s commitment to justice for the Armenian Genocide, exclaiming: “He righted a wrong, he righted a thousand wrongs.”

TCA Appreciation and Recognition Award

TCA Central Board President Edmond Azadian stated that viewing the video of the senator’s speech on the Armenian Genocide bill brought tears to everyone’s eyes. He presented to Menendez the TCA Appreciation and Recognition Award, a sculpture of the Forget-Me-Not flower by Michael Aram symbolic of faith, renewal and undying

love. As the name suggests, the flowers are traditional tokens of memory, and are associated in Armenian culture with the symbol of remembering those we have lost in the past. Azadian said this gift is “symbolizing the profound gratitude of all Armenians around the world who had a family member murdered during the Genocide.”



Senator Bob Menendez, at right, and Edmond Azadian

Azadian then warned that genocidal forces are still on Armenia’s borders today. He thanked Menendez for his efforts to halt the waiver of Article 907 of the Freedom Support Act, so that the US would stop sending military aid to Azerbaijan. This and his other initiatives hopefully will lead ultimately to the removal of the genocidal threat. Azadian expressed the eternal gratitude of Armenians, in the name of both the living and the dead, to Senator Menendez for all that he has done and is doing.

Senator Menendez’s Speech

As expected, Menendez delivered a moving speech, starting off with the words “pari yerego” (good evening)



TCA Gala Committee and Central Board members cutting the cake

COMMUNITY NEWS

in Armenian and acknowledging the close friendship he and his wife Nadine had with Hilda and Saro Hartounian. He noted that his 92-year-old father-in-law came from Long Island for this evening’s event, along with the presence of his and Nadine’s daughter Sabine, and declared, “The award is especially gratifying because the cause of the Armenian people has been a cause that has been close to my heart for some time, and obviously it became even more passionate, when my father-in-law Garbis Tabourian and my wife talked about the many family members they had lost during the Genocide, the riveting stories as to how they perished and what happened to them.”

He recognized the efforts of the Tekeyan Cultural Association over the last three-quarters of a century to keep Armenian culture flourishing through its support of newspapers and schools and all other means, including of course efforts towards recognition of the Armenian Genocide.

He noted that “even as American leaders and allies stayed silent on this issue, I did not,” and declared that he was proud to have blocked nominees in his position at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to government positions for refusing to call the genocide what it is. He added that he continued to introduce or cosponsor resolutions in Congress for recognition ever since he came to the Congress in 1993 and continuously since he came to the Senate in 2006, stating, “we could not stand idly by as Turkey continued to cover up this crime.” He said that what was not shown in the video screened that evening was that was the sixth time that he had come to the floor to ask for unanimous consent. The reason he did it? “This is about upholding our fundamental moral values. This is about standing up for principles of justice and truth, no matter who is in office,” he exclaimed.

He said that if President Recep Tayyip Erdogan of Turkey criticized him personally as an enemy of Turkey, “Well, if standing up to human rights abuses makes me an enemy of Erdogan, if calling Turkey out for arming Azerbaijan and enabling the massacre of innocent Armenian civilians makes me an enemy of Erdogan, if demanding that the United States recognize the truth of history makes me an enemy of Erdogan, so be it! I wear it as a badge of honor.”

Menendez did not only speak about the past. He cited the recent Azerbaijani war uprooting 100,000 Armenians from their homes in Nagorno Karabakh and the “disgusting, cold-blooded war crime” captured on video of Azerbaijani forces killing unarmed Armenian soldiers as the reasons why he now calls upon the Biden Administration to halt any and all assistance to Azerbaijan. For the same reasons, he said he introduced a bipartisan resolution “condemning Azerbaijani forces’ illegal and unprovoked assault on Armenian territory” and wrote to the US secretary of state demanding that he revoke the waiver of Section 907 allowing Azerbaijan to continue to receive American military aid.

He said he told his staff “to push USAID for more humanitarian assistance to help the victims of Baku’s barbaric violence — both in Armenia and in Nagorno Karabakh. And it’s why I urged the Biden Administration to put sanctions on officials in the Aliyev regime and hold accountable those who have committed war crimes.”

He ended by calling on everyone “to keep fighting for human dignity, no matter where it is under attack. Let us all keep fighting to speak the truth, even if dictators prefer silence. We must hold accountable those committing genocide today, even if it takes a lifetime.” This struggle will succeed, he said, concluding: “And if we back up our values with actions, and have the courage to stand up for



TCA gala committee: from left, Varty Apanosian, Lilit Kalajian, Barkev Kalayjian, Serli Tasci, Shoghig Medzadourian, Sylvia Buzantian, Tamar Degirmenci, Vartan Ilanjan, Hilda Hartounian, Tsoler Panossian, Nanor Hartounian, Talia Jebejian, Serge Panossian, Katia Buchakjian

our principles, I believe we will triumph over tyranny.”

Aside from the dignitaries who participated in the program, representatives of organizations and institutions were present, including Permanent Representative of the Republic of Artsakh to the US Robert Avetisyan, Executive Director of the Armenian Assembly of America Bryan Ardouny and Assembly Co-Chair Van Z. Krikorian, Executive Director of the Armenian Missionary Association of America Zaven Khanjian, Armenian Democratic Liberal Party Eugene Papazian Montreal Chapter Chairman Ara Balian, Armenian American Health Professionals Organization President Dr. Lawrence Najarian, and Armenian General Benevolent Union Central Board member Nazareth Festekjian. TCA leaders included TCA Central Board member Mihran Minassian, California TCA Beshgeturian Committee Chair Ara Babayan, Detroit chapter Chair Diana Alexanian, Montreal chapter executive Ara Balian, TCA West Coast Executive Secretary Mayda Kuredjian and TCA Executive Director Aram Arkun based in Boston.

The gala organizing committee included Varty Apanosian, Taleen Babayan, Talia Jebejian Bouldoukian, Sylvia Buzantian, Katia Buchakjian, Tamar Degirmenci, Hilda Hartounian

(chair), Nanor Hartounian, Vartan Ilanjan, Lilit Kalajian, Barkev Kalayjian, Nanor Kradjian, Shoghig Medzadourian, Serge Panossian, Tsoler Panossian, Anahis Semerdjian and Serli Tasci.

A 75th anniversary booklet designed by Vartan Ilanjan includes in addition to the program, photographs and information about TCA.



Seated (from left): Garbis Tabourian, Senator Bob Menendez, Nadine Menendez, Elvina Avetisyan, Edmond Azadian; standing (from left): Sabine Arslanian, Rosalyn Minassian, Hilda Hartounian, Saro Hartounian, Van Krikorian, Mihran Minassian, Robert Avetisyan



From left, Edmond Azadian, Senator Robert Menendez, Hilda Hartounian, Saro Hartounian



Tekeyan Cultural Association 75th Anniversary Gala Donors

Nazarian, Nazar \$10,000	Azadian, Edmond \$500
Hartounian, Saro & Hilda \$7,500	A Friend of TCA \$500
Minasian, Garo & Baydzar \$5,000	Hovsepian, Vahe & Anita \$500
Chitikian, Arthur & Noel \$2,500	Jebejian, Diron & Andrea \$500
AMAA \$1,000	Marootian, George & Lorraine \$500
Babayan, Ara & Sonia \$1,000	Simonian-Totah, Annie \$500
Bedrosian, Sirop & Maro \$1,000	Shahinian-Leitner, Sandra \$300
Buchakjian, Serge & Anita \$1,000	Akian, Elizabeth \$250
Festekjian, Nazareth & Nila \$1,000	Tarpinian, Arshag & Takouhi \$250
Minassian, Mihran & Rosalyn \$1,000	Wolohojian, John & Anita \$250
Najarian, Lawrence & Magda \$1,000	Der Torossian, Vatche & Maral \$200
Nouri, Fayeze & Amal \$1,000	Kalayjian, Barkev & Lena \$200
Setrakian, Vasken & Sossy \$1,000	Bekarian, Arsham & Sonya \$100
TCA LA Beshgueterian Khnamagal Marmin \$1,000	Chipolone, Peter & Sharon \$100
Touryan, Garo & Mari \$1,000	Jebejian, Hagop Shahe \$100
Avsharian, Roupen & Jaqueline \$500	Keshishian, Ardo & Linda \$100

Arts & Culture

Boyadjian's Bach Ode on New CD

LEXINGTON, Mass. — Grammy Nominee composer and painter Hayg Boyadjian's composition *Variation on a Theme by Bach* for piano solo was recently released on a Navona CD and is now available internationally, including on the internet on Amazon, Spotify, and other sites.

Navona Records presents "Sustain" Vol. 3, an exploration of the capabilities of piano and organ highlighting the varied compositional approaches of today's composers. Influenced by the classical canon and moving in new directions, the latest edition in the "Sustain" series pays homage to the classical composers of yesterday, while thoughtfully expressing modern personalities and ideals in a dynamic presentation of new piano repertoire. From the suspenseful passages of Sydney Hodkinson's Organ-music, to the turbulent times reflected in Bruce Babcock's Alternative



Facts, and Hayg Boyadjian's delicate variations on Bach, "Sustain" once again gives it all, and everything in between.

Renowned pianist, music professor, musicologist, and critic Robin McNeil, a retired professor formerly at Colorado University, has written the following about Boyadjian "Hayg Boyadjian creates remarkable music. It is clearly 20th-21st century music, but does not rely on extemporaneous effects to generate a reaction from the audience. His compositions employ new harmonies to be sure, and they are pleasing to hear, thus, the pages of his compositions do not create disorder upon those who hear his significant music. Creativity and individualism are the ranking elements of his music."

Hayg Boyadjian wrote, "It was with great trepidation that I contemplated writing a set of variations for piano on a theme by Bach. The part that came easy was the choice of the theme, which in my set of variations comes only at the end of the composition. I planned to follow in the footsteps of Bach as to the structure of the variations and also in keeping the harmonic language to a great degree in the realm of traditional harmonies with modern harmonies used very sparingly so that the composition makes an almost direct connection towards the music of Bach. It is in my musical output a piece that stands completely outside of my normal harmonic language. There is a very close resemblance to the music of Bach but infused with elements of modern musical language. Even these infusions are kept at a minimum so as to keep

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"Dar" by Christine Zeytounian-Belous

Christine Zeytounian-Belous Belives in Ancestral Memories

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN /PARIS – Translator, painter, poet Christine (Kristina) Zeytounian-Belous was born in 1960 in Moscow and has been living in Paris since the age of 6, where she graduated from the Higher Normal School and the University of Paris. She has translated from Russian into French more than 80 books (Andrey Bely, Andrey Bitov, Sergey Dovlatov, Anatoly Kim, Vladimir Makanin, Olga Slavnikova, Alexei Slapovsky, etc.) and many Russian poets, classics and contemporaries. She has compiled several anthologies of Russian contemporary poetry. She writes poetry in Russian and French; her poems are published in periodicals (*Children of Ra*, *Zinziver*, *Neva*, etc.). She has published the book of poetry *Days of Predation* (2000) in Paris. As an artist, Zeytounian-Belous regularly exhibits in France, Russia and other countries; she is an illustrator of more than 30 books. Christine is laureate of the Russophonie award for 2010 and 2019 for the best translation, recipient of Grant of the European literary award for translation 2012 and Bronze medal *Renaissance française* 2013, as well as David Burliuk International Mark 2018.

Dear Christine, I would like to discuss about translation issues and your roots. All my life I have been doing translations - large and small, artistic and academic, commissioned and as a volunteer, from different languages into Armenian and sometimes vice versa. As soon as I take on the translation of a large piece of text, I immediately get the feeling of a "pain in the neck," I want to finish it as soon as possible, so I like to translate small texts (and mostly my own). What is your experience?

Translating short texts is, of course, easier and more enjoyable, but if it is valuable (and I always refused books that were not interesting to me), you can enter it in its entirety and live there for some time. This is not only interesting and instructive, but also useful for the translator's skill. True, sometimes the book begins to put pressure on the psyche and dream at night. In addition, it requires a lot of commitment and time. You get tired of this. I must say that last year I decided not to translate prose at all anymore. I will translate poetry exclusively and devote more time to my own creativity.

Once you gave some advice to beginner translators: "Don't be afraid to deviate from the text." Isn't that dangerous? Especially in Russian translation literature, quite free deviations from the original are very common.

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'I Want To Be:' Tamar Asadourian's *I Remember You My Future...*

By Arpi Sarafian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

A "new unspoiled unchained order," where the extraordinarily gifted are free to live in their own "solitude," and not in an "isolation" imposed on them by the "chains" of the existing order, is what Tamar Asadourian seeks:

Let the mild breath of God disperse the boundaries

of understanding.

Let the very deep azure of solitude reveal its angels

and replace isolation.

Finally let the autumn leaves and cold rocks and fresh mud

fill up the old screaming chasms and fashion a new ground.

Many of us know Tamar as the accomplished pianist, a prodigy who, at 16, was widely acclaimed for her "intelligence, creativity and performances" at New York's Carnegie Hall. This newly published collection of her work, *I remember you my future...* (Naregatsi Art Institute, Yerevan, Armenia, 2022), reveals to us the artist and the writer as well. The poems, the short prose pieces, and the artwork assembled in the handsome volume explore, with a shocking sincerity, what it means to be "human." The young artist dives deep into her soul to "recite psalms of woeful introspection," but also to "Thank [God] for my life." Tamar may offer God "my purest praise," but deep in her heart she knows that there is no peace on this earth for "the darkened children/in need of your bright light." "I hear those who suffer," she writes with disarming simplicity.

The poems do in fact are an unbridled expression of the "fear and pain" Tamar lived through in her 40 years on this planet. The young artist — most of the poems included in the book were written before she was in her mid-20s — is torn between her thirst for life — "Please don't take it from me now. I implore you. I have yet to write, yet to sing from my heart that which you have given me . . . let my life be still on the agenda, not my death," — and her knowledge that the "years ahead" will not happen. The connection between Tamar's life and her art is evident.

The hurting youngster makes no attempt to shy away from the truth of her, and of others', suffering. Indeed, rather than succumb to her "thoughts growing dark," she begs for love, and for her grandfather's "unstoppable victimless power, that strength of endurance," so she can keep up the fight. The irony of her, "I thank you in advance for tomorrow, even if tomorrow ends a little early," has no hostility, no aggression in it. "I feel death upon me. And I don't want it" is uttered with the same openness and honesty.

Most eye-catching in the attractive volume is Tamar's artwork. Her compositions give the viewer the sense of the artist having approached

see ASADOURIAN, page 12



ARTS & CULTURE

Christine Zeytounian-Belous Belives in Ancestral Memories

MEMORIES, from page 12

Everyone knows that Russian translations, especially the poetic ones, are often very different from the original. But in France, the tradition is quite different, on the contrary, they almost always translate very close to the text. But the translator should not convey the text literally, but the meaning and spirit of the work. My advice to young translators is due to the fact that they are sometimes so afraid to deviate from the original that they translate almost word for word, the quality of the translation from it suffers greatly. Always think about how the author would express it if he wrote in your language.

There are many thoughts about translations and translators, both positive and negative. My favorite aphorism on this topic is from Churchill: “Dictators should fear their translator and their dentist, as they are more powerful than themselves.” Do you have a favorite aphorism on this subject?

For some reason, the Italian “Traduttore, traditore” (Translator - traitor) comes to my mind, but this is not a favorite, on the contrary, a very unpleasant aphorism. One should try as much as possible not to “trait” while translating, translate the thoughts and spirit, not just the words, not to be the “slave” of the author, but not to become also his “rival.”

Russian translator Lilianna Lungina once said: “Translating is great happiness. The art of translation I would compare only with musical performance. This is an interpretation.” Is this true for you?

This is certainly so in the translation of poetry and sometimes in the translation of prose. You need to catch the music of the text and convey it in your own way. When you stop experiencing the joy of translation, it is better to switch to something else. I will translate poetry if it is interesting to me and makes me happy.

Although translating is not only an interpretative, but creative process, are you freer when you write and draw yourself? I would like rather write myself, than translate.

My own work is of course more important to me. But the artist, in order to earn a living, has to “betray” himself and “sell” himself. An artist who “sells well,” often paints the same thing to please potential buyers and spend more time wooing galleries and customers than behind an easel. Making money by translating and illustrating, I was always free to paint what I wanted and how I wanted, without focusing on the market or fashion. And the profession of translator is creative and interesting, I do not regret it. I have had several other professions, sometimes fleeting, sometimes longer, but always very interesting. Actually, it was my rule in life to be engaged only in interesting and exciting things: as soon as something stopped bringing joy, I gave it up. Now, as I said, I am going to translate only poetry, and I am going to devote a lot of my time to graphics and painting. And poems just “come” by “their own,” when they want “to come.”

Christine, because of your surname I see you among those French figures of Armenian origin who promoted Russian culture in France, as actor and director Georges Pitoëff (Pitoyan) and writer Henri Troyat (Torossian). Your father is a repatriate from France. It is interesting that some French Armenian repatriates, before returning to France in the 1960s, made a career in Moscow, such as pop singers Jacques Duvalian and Jean Tatlian, the artist René Hovivian. How did your father end up in Moscow?

My grandparents fled from Turkey to France. My father was born in Paris in 1928. In 1947, my father left for Soviet Armenia with his parents and one of his three brothers. He graduated from Yerevan State University, then went to Moscow to write a PhD thesis, where he met my mother, Natalia Belous. She is a painter. Recently we created some paintings together. My father is a renowned scientist in his field, theoretical hydromechanics, is the author of 15 books under the name Radyadour Kh. Zeytounian. Radyadour is actually Khachadour, but in the French maternity hospital his name was written improperly. His last book was published in 2017, when he was 89. Now, unfortunately, he is no longer able to engage in science, but he reads a lot.



“Sirine” by Christine Zeytounian-Belous

Have you ever had personal “clashes” with Armenian culture and reality and have you ever visited Armenia?

I have friends and acquaintances among Armenians in Moscow. And among French Armenians there are friends and relatives from my father’s side. In the 1990s I took part in the evenings and exhibitions of the “Hyousisapail” (Aurelia Borealis) Society together with Moscow artists and poets of Armenian origin.

Unfortunately, I am not familiar with the

Armenian language. My father learned it already in Armenia, and then forgot. I was lucky to visit Armenia only once and only a few days in 2010, when I was invited to a forum of translators and publishers. There were many interesting meetings, excursions to Geghard, Garni, Echmiadzin. Unforgettable impressions of people and nature. The Armenian scenery is breathtaking. Something has certainly responded to the soul: ancestral memory probably exists. I look forward to another visit to my historic homeland...

Armani Honored with Lifetime Achievement Award at Alexandria Film Festival

ALEXANDRIA, Egypt — Actress Nora Armani was honored with the Lifetime Achievement Award at the opening ceremony of the Alexandria Film Festival’s 38th edition on Wednesday, October 5, at the Bibliotheca Alexandrina, in presence of the great Egyptian film star and producer Mahmoud Hemeda, after whom this edition of the festival is named, Deputy Minister of Culture, Dr. Khaled El Galili, Festival Director film critic Al Amir Abaza, and a host of Egyptian, Arab and European movie stars.

Armani held a press conference on October 6, and spoke about receiving the award, past television and stage work in Egypt with the late star Gamil Rateb, and stage and TV personality Mohamed Sobhi, her future plans, her own script ready to be filmed and her recent work on the Netflix feature film Absolute Dominion due to be released early 2023. “My roots are here in Egypt, I like the work of Faten Hamama and Soad Hosny. I would be delighted to be back and work in the Hollywood of the Middle East in addition to my work in the USA, France, and Armenia,” said the charming actress. A number of interviews for Egyptian TV, and a host of media and



Nora Armani in Alexandria with her award

print outlets followed the conference.

Armani met with the students and faculty of the Egypt-Japan University for Science and Technology (E-JUST) on Sunday, October 9, in Borg El Arab, Alexandria,

where she shared her artistic journey and answered students’ questions. The session was moderated by Alexandria Film Festival Director, Al Amir Abaza.

Nora Armani was born in Cairo, Egypt, to Armenian parents. A versatile actress with multiple awards, she is a deeply rooted activist and humanitarian. Fluent in six languages, she holds two master’s degrees; an MA in Theatre from Hunter College CUNY, and an M.Sc. in Sociology from LSE, University of London, and has a BA from the American University in Cairo. Her actor training includes RADA, UCLA, and numerous workshops such as Ariane Mnouchkine’s acclaimed Théâtre du Soleil (Paris) and Simon McBurney’s Complicité Theatre (London).

Most recently, Armani shot scenes for the Netflix feature film “Absolute Dominion,” directed by Lexi Alexander to be released in early 2023. “Labyrinth,” a feature film in which she co-stars with Serge Avedikian, directed by Mikayel Dovlatyan, recently premiered in Armenia and will be released in Paris soon.

Nora’s multiple screen credits as an actor include I am Gitmo (Cannes), La Nouvelle Eve (with Karin Viard), Voisin Voisine

(with Anemone), Le Coeur à l’Ouvrage (France), Deadline in Seven Days (Armenia), Labyrinth (Armenia), Chasing Taste, Good Funk, Bourek, Last Station, Santa Claus in Baghdad and numerous shorts. She has a powerful screen and stage presence and interprets lead roles in English, French, Armenian, Arabic, and Italian. TV roles include “Black List: Redemption” (NBC), “Casualty” (BBC), “Golden Boy” (CBS), and “Al Asdiqaa - The Friends” (Egyptian TV). A film she directed, iMigrant Woman, won her the Best Woman Filmmaker of a Short award at the Toronto Independent Film Festival (Cift). Her role in Labyrinth has earned her the Best Actress Award at the Syunik Film Festival.

Nora Armani’s forthcoming work includes a solo performance in her own English translation of Mercedes and Zaruhi, written in Armenian by Anush Aslibekyan, a playwright and theatre critic from Armenia. Nora will present the play in English at the UnitedSolo Theatre Festival on Theatre Row in an Off-Broadway production. The play is about repatriations to the Soviet Union during Stalin told through the correspondence between two sisters. Read more here.



ARTS & CULTURE

Project Save Welcomes Pavel Romaniko as Its First Artist in Residence

BOSTON — Earlier this month Project Save Photograph Archives welcomed photographer and artist Pavel Romaniko as its first artist in residence.

Romaniko will spend three months looking through the vast collection of original photographs in the archive and then create a public work based on his engagement with the photographs. In November, he will also speak in the “Conversations on Photography” series.

A native of Pereslavl-Zalessky, Russia, Romaniko moved to the United States as a teenager. He completed a BA in studio arts from Northwestern College in Saint Paul, Minn. and an MFA in imaging arts from the Rochester Institute of Technology. He currently teaches photography at the University of Massachusetts-Lowell. Romaniko uses photographs, sculpture and video to explore gaps in archives and in collective memory, relying on imagery and symbolism found in both the public realm and his own memory. In this way, his work seeks to reconcile his own personal nostalgia with his native Russia’s attempts at reconciliation with its tumultuous history and its uneasy relationship with a rapidly changing present.



Romaniko- Untitled (TV) Archival Pigment Print 24inch x 36inch 2014

For his residency, Romaniko has chosen to focus on a specific collection of more than 2,000 photographs from Soviet Armenia that were donated to Project Save by Jack Torossian. “Even though in my artwork I often rely on and reflect on a public

repository of images, I have never worked with an archive before. This is a wonderful opportunity,” Romaniko said.

“I’m extremely pleased to welcome an established and unique artist like Pavel to Project Save,” said executive director,

Dr. Arto Vaun. “The aim of the artist and research residencies is to expand Project Save’s reach and impact,” he continued. “Pavel’s background and art make him ideally suited to be our first artist in residence.”

“I find Project Save a fascinating resource for a number of reasons but the most intriguing part to me is the fact that there is this large archive of photographs spanning a modern history of a culture and its very uneasy past,” Romaniko continued. “What intrigues me is how the archive blends the personal and the collective. For example, family albums alongside political and historical situations.”

The Project Save Artist and Researcher Residency is the only such initiative by an Armenian cultural organization in the



Pavel Romaniko

region. By engaging with professional artists and researchers, Project Save becomes a living archive, preserving the past while dialoguing with the present and future.

With more than 80,000 original hardcopy photographs from around the world, Project Save is the largest and oldest archive solely focused on images from the Armenian global experience. “Project Save has been under the radar for way too long,” said Vaun. “As we near our 50th anniversary, it’s about time Project Save takes its place as one of the most important Armenian cultural organizations in the world, and one of the most important photography archives in North America.”

For more information and to support Project Save’s mission, visit projectsave.org.

Boyadjian’s Bach Ode on New CD

CD, from page 12 the general tendency of the work connected to the music of Bach.”

He continued, “I had not originally determined the number of variations that I would be composing, but I thought of Beethoven’s 32 Variations for Piano, thus to pay humble homage to two of music’s giants. Thus the 32 Variations on a Theme by Bach was born at a duration of approximately 45 minutes, which is available on YouTube. For the present CD recording I decided for practical reasons to reduce the length of the piece to about half its original duration, thus in this recording there are now 20 variations.”

Boyadjian makes use of retrograde, inversion, variations of rhythmic figures and ornamentation, and canon. As the piece progresses, it begins to sound more and more familiar in spite of the avant-garde harmonies and enharmonic writing..... It truly is an epiphany.”

To read the booklet and hear selections, or to purchase, visit <https://www.navonarecords.com/catalog/nv6466/> or www.hayg-boyadjian.com.

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ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian



Baked pita chips with Za'atar (Photos <https://thesaltsweets.com/>)

Baked Pita Chips with Za'atar, Lebanese Cabbage Salad

This stress-free Baked Pita Chips with Za'atar recipe appears at The Salt and Sweet Kitchen food blog. The Salt and Sweet Kitchen is an outstanding online resource for the best Lebanese recipes, healthy recipes, vegetarian recipes, vegan recipes, quick meals and dessert ideas. This recipe features a simple way to use leftover pita bread. These flavorful chips make for a great mezze, snack or as an appetizer, and are perfect for all your dipping needs. If you have just 15 minutes or so, you can make this recipe with just 3 ingredients.

INGREDIENTS

- 2 pieces large pita bread (white or whole wheat): Keep pita bread with the pocket in the middle instead of separating the pita pocket, which makes for delicious, crispy, layered chips
- 2 tablespoons olive oil: this helps get the pita chips nice and crisp and makes the seasoning stick
- 3 tablespoons za'atar

Note: Za'atar (or Zaatar), both the herb and the condiment, is popular in Algeria, Armenia, Egypt, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Lebanon, Libya, Morocco, Palestine, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tunisia, and Turkey. Za'atar is a common Middle Eastern spice blend made from ground dried oregano, marjoram, thyme, sumac, coriander, salt and roasted sesame seeds. There is evidence that a za'atar plant was known and used in Ancient Egypt, though its ancient name has yet to be determined with certainty. The herbal plant is referred to in English as bible hyssop or Syrian oregano, but the mixture is just called za'atar. Remains of Thymbra spicata, one species used in modern za'atar preparations, were found in the tomb of Tutankhamun, and according to Dioscorides, this particular species was known to the Ancient Egyptians as saem (In this recipe, the blogger used Za'atar Road spice mix.)

PREPARATION

Here is a quick overview of the process for how to make pita chips from pita bread:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Next, line a baking sheet with parchment paper.

Prep pita bread: Cut whole pita bread loaf into triangles, try to have them cut into similar size pieces, so they bake evenly.

Season: Place triangular pita chips in a bowl, drizzle with olive oil and sprinkle with za'atar spice. Toss until evenly coated.

Bake: Arrange triangles in a single layer on a baking sheet lined with parchment paper. Place baking sheet in the oven and bake pita chips for 8-10 minutes, until golden browned and crispy. Serve the chips while they are still warm and enjoy.

For this recipe, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/baked-pita-chips-with-zaatar/>

Za'atar can also be used in marinades for grilled or roasted poultry or meats, mixed into dips, salads and egg dishes, or set on the table to be sprinkled on dishes as a bright condiment. If you make your own pita chips then you can make your own Homemade Labneh Dip, Baba Ganoush-Eggplant Dip, Homemade Hummus or Avocado Hummus to go with it. For Homemade Labneh Dip, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/homemade-labneh-recipe/>

Kept in an airtight container, baked za'atar pita chips will keep for up to a week at room temperature.

Here are more recipes featuring za'atar to make soon:

Za'atar Swirl Bread: <https://thesaltsweets.com/zaatar-swirl-bread/>

Za'atar Manaqish: <https://thesaltsweets.com/zaatar-manaqish/>

Labneh Flatbread: <https://thesaltsweets.com/labneh-flatbread/>



Lebanese Cabbage Salad-Malfouf Salad

For something different, try this delicious, crunchy Lebanese Cabbage Salad, known as Malfouf Salad in Arabic. Think of it as the Lebanese Coleslaw – minus the mayonnaise dressing. The basic ingredients are cabbage, lemon juice, olive oil, garlic, salt and dried mint. But you can add thinly sliced cucumbers, green onions or tomatoes as well. Also, if you prefer, you can use fresh mint instead of dried.

Go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/lebanese-cabbage-salad-malfouf-salad/>

For Lebanese recipes, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/lebanese-recipes/>

For salad recipes, go so: <https://thesaltsweets.com/salads/>

For vegan recipes, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/vegan/>

For dessert recipes, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/desserts/>

For air fryer recipes, go to: <https://thesaltsweets.com/air-fryer-recipes/>

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Artistic Distinction from Armenia for Konstantin Petrossian

YEREVAN — A longtime cultural leader in both Armenia and the United States, and especially in his home parish of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church in Providence, RI, was honored last month with the government of Armenia's highest commendation for artists. Maestro Konstantin Petrossian was conferred with the title "Honored Artist of Armenia" via special proclamation of President of the Republic Vahagn Khachaturyan, in recognition for his lifetime achievement as a musician, composer, and conductor of choral and instrumental ensembles.

The title and its associated medal are annually conferred by the president's office, on Armenian Independence Day in late September. As one of three initiates for 2022, Maestro Konstantin joins a rarified set of national artists honored in this way. His fellow honorees for this

year were jazz musician Narine Zarifyan of Komitas State Conservatory, and theatrical artist Garegin Evangelian of the Sundukyan National Theater.

Maestro Konstantin is well known in Armenian-American circles as the Cultural and Music Director of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Church, leader of its parish Cultural Committee, and president of the Armenian Music Festival of Rhode Island. He is also director-conductor of the Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra (of Cambridge, MA, pictured above), the Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island, and the Armenian Chorale of Greater Worcester. His record in Armenia and other diaspora settings is equally noteworthy.

Find listings for several of his upcoming cultural events in the *Mirror-Spectator* Calendar of Events in this issue.



Maestro Konstant Petrossian at work

International Conference on ‘Technologies of Communication And Armenian Narrative Practices’ Held at NAASR

BELMONT, Mass. — On September 17 and 18, 2022, the international conference “Technologies of Communication and Armenian Narrative Practices Through the Centuries” took place at the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) Vartan Gregorian Building.

The conference was organized and sponsored by the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) and NAASR with the co-sponsorship of the University of Southern California Institute of Armenian Studies, the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard University, the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno, the Armenian Studies Program at the University of California, Irvine, the Krikor and Clara Zohrab Information Center, and the Center for Armenian Studies at the University of Michigan, Ann Arbor.

The conference featured papers by scholars from Armenia, the United States, Hungary, and Australia, mainly participating in person but with several joining via Zoom.

Welcoming remarks on September 17 were provided by representatives of SAS and NAASR. SAS President Bedross Der Matossian of the University of Nebraska, Lincoln, thanked all of the conference supporters and co-sponsors and noted the significance of the conference’s being the first one held at NAASR’s new building, which had its grand opening shortly before the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic.

NAASR Director of Academic Affairs Marc Mamigonian pointed out that having scholars gathered together in the building to share their work and interact with each other and with the general public is the ultimate fulfillment of what was hoped for when the building was conceptualized.

Dzovinar Derderian of UC Berkeley, who with Christopher Sheklian of Radbound University, was one of the framers of the conference theme, gave opening remarks, stating that the idea for the concept went back several years and was “the outcome of Christopher Sheklian and my separate but intersecting interests in the questions of how forms and mediums of narration have shaped various Armenian communities and how Armenians in turn have molded those mediums and genres of communication.”

The first conference session was “Narrative Practices and Power” and included four papers with Marc Mamigonian as chair and discussant. Armen Abkarian (University of Michigan, Ann Arbor), “Forging The Crown of Togarmah: Vahram’s Chronicle and the Creation of Cilician Armenian Kingship,” focused on Vahram’s Chronicle and its strategies of projecting the power and legitimacy of the Cilician Armenian kings, as well as its place in a tradition of Armenian historiography that sought to legitimize this or that ruler but also how the Chronicle draws on non-Armenian forms and styles. Asya Darbinyan (Clark University), “Stories of Refugee Struggle and Assistance through the Periodicals of Imperial Russia,” discussed the coverage of the plight of Armenian refugees in various periodicals published in the Russian empire during WWI, both in Russian and in Armenian, and posed a key question, “What did the central imperial periodicals focus on vs. their Armenian counterparts?”

Harutyun Marutyan (Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute, Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences of Armenia), “Visual Forms of Communication as a Tool and Sign for Revolutionary Changes,” in his close look

at the posters and banners of the Karabakh movement in the late 80s and early 90s, focused a great deal of attention on the issue of legitimacy, in this case how the movement, through its posters, asserted the legitimacy of its cause by invoking a document, the Soviet constitution, and a concept, the will of the people. Hasmik Khalapyan (American University of Armenia), “Narratives of Atheism in Forging a Soviet Armenian Citizen,” provided a detailed look at the history and modes of communication used in Soviet Armenia to promote the communist doctrine of atheism to a nation with a strong Christian church and traditions.

On September 18 the conference continued with “Technologies of Communication and Identity Making,” with Zoom presen-

presented examples of old manuscripts, ritual and prayer books, and hmayils [prayer scrolls] that serve as conversation starters that allow viewers to learn Armenian stories of survival and thus to better understand Armenians as survivors, across multiple generations.

The next panel, “Adapting to Change: Mobility, Changing Socio-Economic Patterns, and Technologies of Communication,” began with a talk by Jesse Arlen (Zohrab Information Center), “An Old Technology in a New Era: The Use of the Scroll (Hmayil) among Early Modern Armenians,” concerning the hmayil, the extraordinary scroll-shaped medium that emerged in the early modern period, and addressed questions such as “Who produced these scrolls, who were they pro-

a significant contribution since the Armenian women’s movement has thus far been examined more through newspapers and books published in Constantinople and other metropolises.

Nora Bairamian (UCLA), “Assessing the Development of Armenian Nationalism in the Ottoman Borderlands Through the Genre of the Short Story,” discussed the differing responses of provincial masses to the emerging or ongoing revolutionary movement around them, drawing on two short stories written by provincial authors, Tlgadintsi of Kharpert in 1911 and Rupen Zartarian, who also was raised in Kharpert and was Tlgadintsi’s student. Varak Ketsemanian (Princeton University), “The Memoirs of Boghos Shadig (1874-1951): Subaltern Voices of the Armenian Revolu-



Some of the participants in the conference

tations by Natasha Parnian (Macquarie University), “A World in Crisis: Reconstructing Identity in Late Antique Armenia,” and Diana Ghazaryan (Pázmány Péter Catholic University), “Through the Lens of History: Photographic Modes of Inhabiting the Holy Land by 19th and 20th Centuries Armenians,” and, in-person, Shushan Khachatryan (Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute), “Sacred Objects as Symbols of the Armenian Genocide Survival Stories.” Nora Lessersohn of University College London was the chair and discussant.

All of the papers addressed forms of communication such as manuscripts, books, photographs, and prayer scrolls that double as devices of mediation; and through their mediation, they serve as objects of identity formation. Parnian discussed the development of the Armenian alphabet—a most fundamental technology of communication—which, in being used to translate Christian literature in particular, forged a visual and intellectual relationship between Armenian-ness, or Armenian identity, and Christianity. Ghazaryan, examined photographs that not only serve to connect or mediate their viewers with the stories they tell, but also situate the Armenian photographers themselves as mediators, in-between figures who could bridge their local community, the “East,” with the communities of the “West.” Khachatryan

duced for, and for what purposes?” and “How might the contents of hmayils help explain their function and use among early modern Armenians?” Gayane Ayvazyan (Harvard University), “The ‘Diary’ of Eremia Komurjian: The Writing of Everyday,” offered insight into the life of Eremia and his background, focusing on what his work tells us about the everyday, in productive contrast to previous scholarly work. The third paper was by Anush Sargsyan, and it treated the extraordinary T/O (terrarium orbis) map, which has been studied in depth by Rouben Galichian. Sargsyan took a different approach by seeking to understand the work within the context of its host manuscript, MS 1242 of the Matenadaran. Christina Maranci (Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies, Harvard University), acted as session chair and discussant.

The final panel, “Can the Provinces Speak? Mainstreaming Peripheral Narratives and Perspectives on Ottoman-Armenians,” focused on the theme of how to access the lives of provincial Ottoman Armenians during the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Anna Aleksanyan (Clark University), “Provincial Khmoratip School Press as a Platform for Representation of Women’s Issues,” looked at a relatively unknown source or set of sources that yield a wealth of information about provincial life and specifically women’s issues, marking

tionary Movement,” focused on scholarship of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation, both popular and academic, which has tended to concentrate on the leadership of the movement rather than lower-level revolutionaries such as Boghos Shadigian, whose narrative nevertheless expands our understanding of how the nationalist, revolutionary ideology spread among the masses in the provinces. Lerna Ekmekçioğlu (McMillan-Stewart Associate Professor of History), acted as the chair and discussant of this final panel.

Christina Maranci offered closing remarks, observing that “the speakers took us from late antiquity to modern period, from Artsakh to Jerusalem, and from Constantinople to the eastern provinces, they looked at the epic and the everyday, they brought to light modest objects and lesser-known genres, they gave voice to the subaltern, presented regional and microhistories, and told history ‘from below.’” Furthermore, the conference “reflects an important change in the way we approach history, literature, and culture from previous decades, and demonstrates the present and powerful engagement of Armenian Studies with the movements and developments in so many fields.” Conference co-organizer Dzovinar Derderian then led a general discussion on the papers and general themes of the conference.



ARTS & CULTURE

CALENDAR

OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS

MASSACHUSETTS

OCTOBER 29 — A conversation with artists from “On the Edge: Los Angeles Art 1970s-1990s from the Joan and Jack Quinn Family Collection” currently on display at the Armenian Museum of America, 65 Main Street, Watertown. Featuring artists Laddie John Dill, Gregory Wiley Edwards, and Joe Fay. Artist panel 2 - 3:30 p.m. Reception 3:30 – 5 p.m. Suggested donation \$15, free for museum members and students. Register at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/conversation-w-artists-from-on-the-edge-los-angeles-art-1970s-1990s-tickets-412385374757>

NOVEMBER 7 — St. James Men’s Club Monthly Dinner Meeting with speaker Zack Armen, Co-Founder and President of Storica Wines. Storica Wines is the leading US importer of fine wines from Armenia, The company was formed two years ago with the mission to spread awareness of the beauty and heritage of wine from Armenia, the oldest producing wine region in history now experiencing a modern day winemaking resurgence. Losh Kebab and Kheyima Dinner . 6:15p.m. Social Hour, 7p.m. Dinner. \$20 per person, Ladies Welcome. St. James Armenian Church - 465 Mt. Auburn Street, Watertown. For more information contact Robert Berberian e-mail mensclub@sthagop.com

NOVEMBER 12 — Annual Fall Bazaar at the Armenian Apostolic Church at Hye Pointe, 1280 Boston Road,(Rte. 125) Haverhill, 12 to 6 p.m. Delicious Armenian Food, Lamb Shish, Chicken, Losh Kebab, Kheyima, Vegetarian Menu, Lulu Kebab (limited), Hot Dog and Chips. Pastry and Cuisine Table featuring Spinach Pies, Vospov Kheyima, Lamejun, Ghapama, Tourshi, Paklava, Choereg, Khadaif. Gifts Baskets and Cash Prize Raffles, winner need not be present to win For more information visit: www.hyepointearmenianchurch.org or call (978) 372-9227.

NOVEMBER 19 — Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church, Chelmsford, Food Festival. 12 Noon – 7 p.m. Eat-in or Take-out. All lunches and dinners along with Country Store items are to be pre-ordered by Wednesday, November 9. The Food Festival menu includes shish-chicken-losh kebab dinners, a vegetarian platter, a variety of desert items, and a country store featuring eetch, cheese beureg, spinach pita, vosbov kofta, tourshi, choreg, and green beans. Food order and Festival Sponsor forms are available on the church website, www.stsvartanantz.com.

DECEMBER 8 – Join the Trustees of the Armenian Museum of America for a Christmas Reception in the museum galleries. All Museum Members are cordially invited for socializing, networking, and to enjoy the exhibitions including “On the Edge: Los Angeles Art 1970s-1990s from the Joan and Jack Quinn Family Collection.” 5:30 p.m. – Save the date!

DECEMBER 11 — Holy Trinity Armenian Church presents a Christmas Holiday

Concert by Erevan Choral Society in memory of Fr. Oshagan Minassian on what would have been his 90th birthday, at the Sanctuary of Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St, Cambridge, MA. Sunday, 7 p.m. Conductor will be conductor/composer Konstantin Petrossian and will feature soloists Rosy Anoush Svazlian, soprano, and Giovanni Formisano, tenor. The free concert is open to the public.

NOVEMBER 13 - Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. **GIVIING THANKS! TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION.** Sunday at 2pm.Meet & Greet. Refreshments. Share the Warmth: Bring a winter hat, scarve or gloves . RSVP hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NOVEMBER 18 — St. James Armenian Church Presents A Classical Evening Featuring Armenian Composers. A Concert with Asatur Baljyn, Baritone and Levon Hovsepian, Piano. Friday, 7 p.m.. Doors Open; 7:30 p.m. Concert. Reception to follow. Open to the public; complimentary admission. St. James Charles Mosesian Cultural & Youth Center, Keljik Hall. 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA.

DECEMBER 11 – Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. **CANDLELIT LABYRINTH WALK: IN PEACE & HARMONY.** Sunday at 4:45pm. “Boston’s Newest Holiday Tradition” Hot Chocolate & Festive Cookies. RSVP hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NEW YORK

NOVEMBER 6 — The 13th Annual United Solo Theatre Festival. Theatre Row 410 West 42nd Street, New York City. “Mercedes and Zaruhi” at p.m. Performed as part of the United Solo Theatre Festival on Theatre Row, in Nora Armani’s English translation of the Armenian original by Anush Aslibekyan. A solo play starring Nora Armani, about life behind the Iron Curtain during Stalin, told through the correspondence of two sisters, one of whom repatriated to the Soviet Union in the late 1940s from post-WW II Greece. It is about patriotism, shattered ideals, flickers of hope, and the joy of creating a new home and rebuilding a new Homeland. Ticket price: 42.50\$ - 46.50\$. Tickets may be booked: <https://bfany.org/theatre-row/shows/united-solo-theatre-festival-2022/>

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 14-DECEMBER 9 — Cultural Committee of the Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church presents:

•November 4 - Biblical music from the Louvre, Paris by Edouard Barseghian, Dr. of Philosophy (Musicology), 7:30 p.m.

•December 9 - Christmas concert at Church sanctuary, Friday at 7.30 p.m.

Armenian Cultural Hour: Whether or not you have a Facebook account, you can find the **LIVESTREAM** of the event through the parish’s Facebook page

‘I Want To Be:’ Tamar Asadourian’s *I Remember You My Future...*

ASADOURIAN, from page 12
the canvas with the “spirit of spontaneity” she writes about in “Painter/Poet.” Her creations are impactful and have enormous visual appeal. Most evocative of her inner pain are the five Self Portraits which become increasingly anguished with her years. However, even in her darkest moments, as when she writes of “the burden” of living, or of “my funeral,” what inevitably stands out is her commitment to expressing it all “wholeheartedly and truly.”

Tamar’s greatest virtue is perhaps her awareness of the imperfections of her work. The artist in her understands that achieving the “profundity” and the “humanity” of the greats, like Rembrandt and Shakespeare, takes toiling. She writes of Beethoven’s and of Gorky’s “constant reworking” and “endless versions and revisions” as part of the “creative ordeal.” The striving youngster well knows that “I have a long, long way to go . . . to be as great in my own art. . . . I’m under no illusions.” In fact, most of the pieces included in the book could be seen as “first drafts,” astonishingly perfect in their imperfection.

The depth of Tamar’s insights leaves one in awe. This is how, at 17, she comments on the overwhelming presence of “tragedy and



Drawing by Tamar Assadourian

its sorrow“ in the arts:

There is a force, unseen and unheard even by the artists themselves, that attracts us instantly to that which disturbs us, that which is able to take us where we do not want to go,

that which reminds us of what we try to forget.

It is unfortunate to me, that though its words are so loudly spoken, no one seems to be listening.

In another instance, she writes of her habit of coming down “in the middle of the night just to play chords on the piano. . . . All this time I’ve been convinced that nothing could replace the commerce I had with that instrument. But I’m starting after all these years to realize that lines can vibrate too.”

Speculating about what the “more years and years” Tamar begged for would have done is pointless. Tamar’s brilliance, the easy flow of her prayers, and her outspokenness are humbling enough. Tamar may have been stripped of life, but the book, a gift of the selfless collaboration of devoted family members and friends, gives her the “more years and years” she was “desperate” for. I remember you my future... is evidence that her creativity lives on, even in death. The haunting part though is that the ailing youngster was pleading for love — “I am empty,/Because love/has not strengthened me,” — when, in fact, she had been given the “Gift Of Love.”

Mark Silverman, Tamar’s one-time piano teacher, has said that “Tamar is a genius.” Genius is a “burden” society may yet have to learn to tackle adequately. Rather than accommodate an individual who has total devotion to her own truth, or “an artist of uncommon sensitivity and intelligence,” to borrow the words of New York Concert Review’s Jed Distler, we often alienate and isolate the exceptionally gifted and make them long for other realms. In “When My Muscles Fail,” Tamar writes:

I sought to walk elsewhere, to some different place,

And, finding none on earth,
Scanned the heavens, and unto that
Vast space flew: . . .

However, “Even in this world of sorrow and gloom,” the ailing youngster glimpses, in the simple things of nature, the possibility for purity and peace. She writes of the “hand of woe” perchance relenting, bidding her stand in a “sunny yard . . . [where] there can be an entire symphony of hopeful voices.” Contemplating a possibility is liberating. Reconciling the “possibility” and the “chains” however is, at best, a struggle. A painful struggle that Tamar lived through heroically. Cognizant of the “burden” of her gift, “Genius, is often useless,” she wrote.



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COMMENTARY

EDITORIAL

Competing Monitoring Missions in Pursuit of Elusive Peace in Caucasus



By Edmond Y. Azadian

All indications point to the fact that Turkey and Azerbaijan have found the once-in-a-century opportunity to finish up the grisly job that they had begun 107 years ago. This conclusion should not be construed as an exaggeration in light of some historic facts.

In 1914, a situation was created in the Ottoman Empire which led to the implementation of some clauses of the Berlin Treaty of 1878, whereby European governors were sent to the interior provinces of the empire, not only to oversee but also to carry out reforms in the Armenian provinces. The government's mistreatment of the residents of those provinces had led to the locals' agitation, putting fear in the hearts of the Ittihadist rulers that Armenians were on their way to independence, thus breaking up the empire.

One of the reasons Turkey entered World War I, on the side of Germany, was to prevent that breakup from happening. And indeed, the war offered an opportunity for them to eliminate the Armenian problem once and for all by wiping out the population entirely. That task was facilitated by the fact that the Russian forces, which had occupied the Eastern Provinces of the empire and were defending the physical security of the Armenians, decided to withdraw as a result of the Russian Revolution.

Throughout history, based on their own interests, the Russians have protected Armenians and defended their rights. But that role has not been a permanent enough feature in the Russian-Armenian relations to justify a blind pro-Russia policy in Armenia.

Currently, a similar scenario is playing out in the Caucasus, where Russia's traditional hold over the region is in tatters because of the war in Ukraine, offering an opportunity for the Turkey-Azerbaijan tandem to deal a crushing blow to Armenia's very existence. That prospect is necessitated by President Recep Tayyip Erdogan's imperial ambitions to reach the Turkic republics of Central Asia, with the hope of building a new Turanic empire.

Since the 44-Day War, Turkey has become fully invested in the region and entrenched on the ground, in plain view of the impotent Russian side.

As Russia's sphere of influence shrinks in the region, the West has also been demonstrating renewed interest there and Armenia is one of the political footholds that they can use against Russia.

To date, Armenia's defenses and economy have been fully integrated with those of Russia. To extricate Armenia from the Russian embrace will prove to be painful. Indeed, a weakened Russia may exact harsher vengeance from Armenia.

Armenia had pinned its hopes for safety on the presence of the 102nd Russian military base in Gyumri and its long-term treaty agreement with Moscow. In addition to these supposed guarantees, Armenia had joined the Moscow-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), created as a counterpart to NATO. But neither of those relationships offered any help during the 44-Day War, which, for all practical purposes, continues to this day.

Armen Khachatryan, deputy minister of defense, announced at a security conference of Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries recently that Azerbaijan has occupied 127 square kilometers of Armenia's sovereign territory since September 2022 and demanded that the forum condemn Baku as the aggressor. The amount of land occupied was a surprise; thus far, it had been believed that Azerbaijan had occupied 51 square kilometers.

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken's direct call to Azerbaijan and French President Emmanuel Macron's harsh characterization of the latter have not yielded any results and Azerbaijan continues to hold on to those territories and threatens to occupy even more.

Russia's lackluster defense of its ally has led many to call

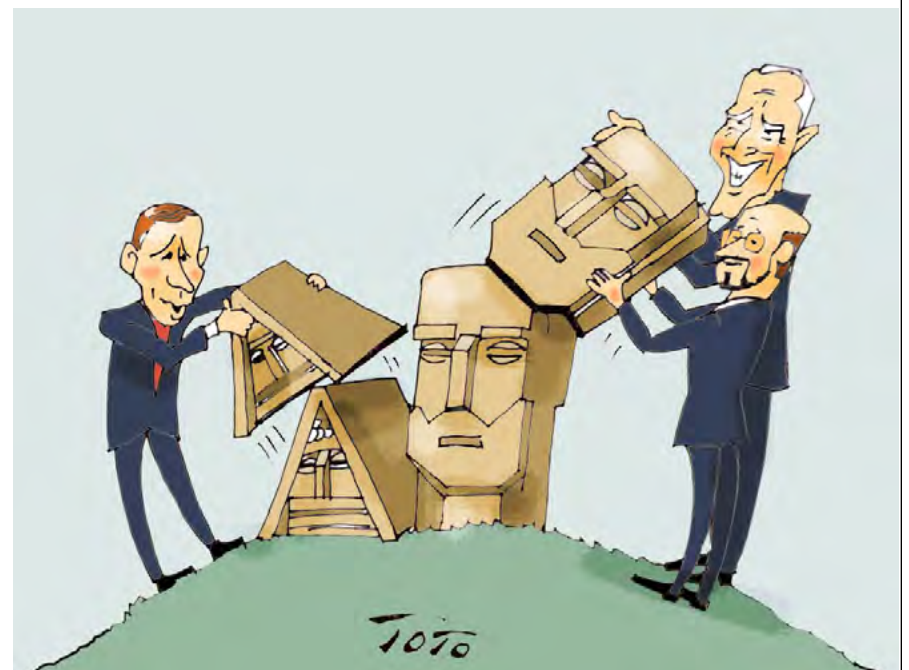
the CSTO a toothless structure, which Armenia does not need in this dire situation. Armenia's membership in the CSTO not only does not offer any hope for security, but it also serves as an impediment for it to seek defense and arms from elsewhere.

These trends in Armenia are being fueled by the West's renewed interest in the region and particularly President Macron's call that "France will stand by Armenia." This statement has angered not only Azerbaijan but also Russia, as if Armenia does not deserve any support from major powers and should be left to the tender mercies of Turkey and Azerbaijan.

At this time, there are 40 EU monitoring experts on the Armenian side of the border with a mandate of two months. Azerbaijan has refused to host them on its territory lest they report its atrocities and destruction on the border regions.

"The situation remains very dangerous, the instability is high, and the resentment of 30 years of conflict is great," says Toivo Klaar, the EU special representative for the South Caucasus and the Crisis in Georgia. "There are not many international players other than us, which is why we must be even more involved."

As if these statements were not enough to irritate Baku and



Moscow, now the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group is about to send its own observers.

Of course, any sign of the resurrection of the OSCE Minsk Group causes concern in Baku, because it is the only international structure that still maintains that Artsakh Armenians have the right to self-determination. On the other hand, the Kremlin is worried because it believed it was its divine right to shape the destiny of the peoples in the region.

"The OSCE mission has no mandate," stated Azerbaijan's Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov, adding, "Any group called the OSCE 'needs assessment mission in Armenia' does not have an OSCE mandate, cannot be associated in any way with the OSCE and none of its results nor reports can be accepted as an OSCE document."

But the advance technical group is already in Armenia, surveying borders and planning a monitoring mission in the near future.

Russia is worried that its role is being taken over by other powers, whose ultimate goal is to undermine its position in the region.

As soon as the news came about possible deployment of the monitors, Russia's Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov announced that the CSTO was also ready to send an observer team to Armenia.

It is ironic that unlike the EU or OSCE missions, the CSTO delegates cannot play the same independent role and monitor the border because Armenia is part of the CSTO monitoring zone as a full-fledged member. By definition, the CSTO has already been (or should have been) deployed on Armenia's territory to defend it. But the fact is that Armenia invoked Article 4 of the organization through which a nation under attack seeks help from the CSTO and that structure did nothing.

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COMMENTARY

Multiple Missions in Armenia: Opportunities And Challenges

By **Benjamin Poghosyan**
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The last month was marked with extensive developments around Armenia – Azerbaijan relations and the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. On September 27, the Secretary of the Armenian security council met with President Aliyev’s top foreign policy aide in the White House. According to Armen Grigoryan, sides reached several agreements during that meeting – to sign a peace treaty and implement delimitation of the Armenia – Azerbaijan border by the end of 2022 and launch international mechanism for Azerbaijan – Nagorno Karabakh negotiations. The possibility of signing a peace treaty and delimitating the Armenia – Azerbaijan border within less than 90 days sounds not realistic. However, the key message of the White House meeting was the significant increase of the US involvement in the Armenia – Azerbaijan negotiation process. On October 6, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to recognize each other’s territorial integrity based on the Alma-Ata declaration of December 1991 and to deploy a European Union (EU) civilian mission along Armenia – Azerbaijan borders. A week later, during the meeting with his Armenian counterpart, the Russian foreign minister Lavrov stated that the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) was ready to send its observers into Armenia. The only missing link was the initiative by Armenia to convene an extraordinary session of the collective security council to adopt a relative decision. An advance team of European Union monitors arrived in Armenia on October 14, while a full-scale mission comprised of 40 observers started its activities on October 24. Simultaneously, following the invitation of the Armenian government, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) sent a week-long needs assessment team to the country, which arrived on October 21.

Azerbaijan, in its turn, continues its information campaign to prepare a new attack against Armenia. It is challenging to assess if the final decision is made in Baku for another aggression. However, on a daily basis, Azerbaijan states about fire toward of positions of its armed forces. A similar information campaign occurred before the August 1 and September 13 Azerbaijani attacks. Simultaneously, Azerbaijan publicly expresses its resentment about deploying international missions in Armenia. Baku’s position is clear-cut. Azerbaijan wants to legalize the results of the 2020 war through the signature of a so-called “peace treaty” with Armenia, which will satisfy all Azerbaijani demands and violate all Armenian vital national interests. As no government will be happy to sign such a deal, Azerbaijan hopes to use force or threat of force to compel Armenia to sign that agreement. It will transform the Nagorno Karabakh conflict into an issue of protecting the rights of Azerbaijani citizens of Armenian origin, thus irrevocably depriving Nagorno Karabakh of any status. As the arrival of observers in Armenia potentially decrease the possibility of the new

Azerbaijani military attack, the discomfort of Azerbaijan is understandable, as they may lose the primary pressure tool against Armenia.

Meanwhile, the presence of observers decreases the probability but does not prevent new Azerbaijani aggression. The EU observers’ task is to monitor the situation and report to Brussels, nothing more. Their reports will not automatically trigger any immediate and tangible responses from the EU, such as economic sanctions against Azerbaijan. Thus, Armenia should know it does not have the luxury to think new aggression by Azerbaijan is entirely off the agenda now.

Meanwhile, as the de facto Russia–West war continues to rage, the arrival of the EU observers into the CSTO member state can create an impression that Armenia–Azerbaijan relations and the Nagorno Karabakh conflict eventually become another Russia–West battlefield. If this perception prevails in Russia, Iran, or the West, it may have catastrophic implications for Armenia. Azerbaijan will do everything possible to depict Armenia as a traitor in the eyes of Russia, which invited Russia’s enemies into the Kremlin’s backyard while rejecting CSTO’s offer to deploy its monitors. Iran always opposes any foreign presence in the South Caucasus, while Tehran does not view the Russian military as a foreign force. In this context, the deployment of Western observers in Armenia may also negatively impact Armenia–Iran relations. The Iranian foreign minister recently visited Armenia to open a consulate general in Kapan. During his meetings with Armenian officials, he delivered two direct messages: Iran would not allow Azerbaijani and Turkish control over Syunik, and Iran was against any international presence in the region.

Iran is against the potential increase of Azerbaijani and Turkish influence in Armenia. It simultaneously is concerned about possible changes in Armenian foreign policy from pro-Russian to pro-Western direction. The significant increase of the US involvement in Armenian–Azerbaijani relations and the frequent visits of high-level American officials to Yerevan make Iran nervous. Tehran understands that if Russia is pushed out from Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia, the vacuum will be filled by Turkey and strategically by the US.

In this context, the signature of the Armenia–Azerbaijan peace treaty on Azerbaijani terms with zero mentions of Nagorno Karabakh will pave the way for the withdrawal of Russian peacekeepers from Nagorno Karabakh after November 2025. This scenario cannot satisfy either Russia or Iran. Meanwhile, Azerbaijan sends a clear message that if Armenia seeks to postpone the peace treaty signing for whatever reasons, a new large-scale Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia or Nagorno Karabakh is imminent.

Against this very complicated geopolitical background, Armenia should avoid any steps which may be interpreted or perceived as a U-turn in Armenia’s foreign and security policies. A clear message should be sent to all external actors — Russia, Iran, the EU and the US. Armenian efforts to bring international observers into Armenia have nothing to do with Russia–West war or US–Iran confrontation. Armenia has absolutely no intentions to act against Russia on behalf of the West. The only thing of interest to Armenia is to prevent new Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia and to not allow ethnic cleansing in Nagorno Karabakh, which is inevitable without the international military presence and agreed and guaranteed status for Nagorno Karabakh.

(Benjamin Poghosyan is chairman of the Center for Political and Economic Strategic Studies in Yerevan.)

Competing Monitoring Missions In Pursuit of Elusive Peace

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Despite all this, things are moving in Armenia’s favor, to the chagrin of Russian leader Vladimir Putin and Azerbaijan’s President Ilham Aliyev, and Armenia’s leaders now have to demonstrate enough diplomatic skills to turn the tide in the region.

To top all these developments, this week Iran opened a consulate in Kapan, Syunik, with great fanfare in the presence of Iran’s Foreign Minister Hossein Amir-Abdollahian, who stated that “Armenia’s security is Iran’s security.”

He also revealed that Tehran had played a crucial role in deterring Azerbaijan from engaging in a full-fledged war, during the September 13 aggression.

It is the first time that cracks are appearing in the Iran-Azerbaijan relations, after Baku hosted, last month, the defense ministers of Turkey and Israel and the foreign minister of Saudi Arabia. From all appearances, they had been plotting against Iran.

To woo Armenia back into its fold, President Putin, whose hands are already full with the ill-advised war he launched in February, has invited Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev to Moscow at the end of October to work out the peace treaty between the two countries.

It is unlikely that Mr. Putin can offer any comfort to Armenia, nor broker a peace deal. At best, it is a tactical ploy to discourage Western interference in the Caucasus and send the false message to the West that he still has full control of the region.

Cartographer Galichian Declares ‘Border Demarcation May Take 10-20 years’

By **Gevorg Gyulumyan**
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — Since the disastrous 2020 war, launched by Azerbaijan against Armenia and Artsakh, Azerbaijan has started regular border incursions into Armenia proper. The leaders offer the rationale that the border between the latter and Azerbaijan has in fact not been firmed up. Geographer and cartographer Rouben Galichian, the author of many articles published in the world press and books about the Caucasus region, recently addressed the issue.

In the interview he stated that Azerbaijan’s territorial claims have no legal basis and cannot be satisfied, because they are just wishes, not facts.

“The map that the prime minister [of Armenia, Nikol Pashinyan] presents, according to which Armenia should have an area of 29,800 square kilometers, is a map drawn by the military headquarters of the Soviet Union, which was begun in the 1930s and completed in the 1970s and 1980s,” he said. Galichian believes that this map is not very accurate and is not in the best interests of Armenia, because it is based on many falsifications and a number of territories of Armenia have been given to Azerbaijan illegally and without grounds. Instead, he suggests that Armenians should work with older maps, which are drawn on a fairer legal basis and, moreover, are recognized by both countries.

He explained: “We need to ensure that the process is carried out with the map drawn in 1926, which is an official publication ratified by the People’s Commissariat of Internal Affairs of the Soviet Union. This is the most official

[map], dated April 1, 1926. There are no enclaves on this map. All enclaves on this map are within the territory of Armenia, and the territory of Armenia is greater than 31,000 square kilometers. Our target should be to reach this, which is the first map of the Soviet Union. They also prepared the same map for Azerbaijan signed on the same day of the same year, and it gives exactly the same borders, and it can be seen that there are no enclaves in Armenia. But the most important thing is that in that map, Artsakh and Armenia are next to each other — they are neighbors. Only the Aghavno River separates them, but a few years after that, a piece was taken from the Berdzor region of Artsakh, so that Armenia is separated from Artsakh by 15 kilometers.”

Galichian related that during the Soviet years, the Azerbaijani authorities did everything in order to extract as much territory as possible from Armenia, hiding this plan under the guise of “friendship.” He said: “A number of territories of Armenia, including the Al Lakes, were gradually given to Azerbaijan from 1929 to 1948, most of them in 1928-29. In 1923, Azerbaijan announced that they would create the Red Kurdistan province, where all Kurds living in Azerbaijan should reside, so that they could graze their cattle. They managed to get those territories taken from Armenia, so it turned out that Artsakh no longer had a common border with Armenia. But during that time, the Armenian peasant was cut off from his livelihood. About 1,000 square kilometers were given to Azerbaijan, but when the plan to create Red Kurdistan was canceled in 1932-1933, these lands were not returned to Armenia, but instead remained to Azerbaijan. Today we can legally present the

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Armenian Heritage Park Hosts Ceremony to Welcome New US Citizens

By **Melanie Tuyssuzian**

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

BOSTON — On Thursday, October 20, the Armenian Heritage Foundation organized its annual ceremony to welcome new US citizens to the Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway. This ceremony has been a tradition since 2015. Food, gifts, music, signs with “welcome” written in several languages: becoming American never seemed so friendly and emotional. At the end of the day, you feel like you have seen humanity at its best.

What hit me, at first, were the voices of children — fifth-grade students from the Advent School of Beacon Hill — crying out, “Welcome!” and the sound of their applause as they cleared the way for the new citizens arriving from Faneuil Hall following their naturalization ceremony. I had chills just watching this scene of love and acceptance spreading throughout this green lawn labyrinth. It was a beautiful interaction between the children and the new Americans to witness. The immigrants’ initially doubtful but pleased faces, encountering the soft and innocent gazes of the children, made for a touching tableau.

On this clear, warm, and blue October Thursday, I was amazed to see so many people, women, men, students, and se-



The new citizens arriving from Faneuil Hall, after their naturalization’s ceremony, welcomed by the children of the Advent school of Beacon Hill.

niors, gathered to welcome a group of 120 people from all over the world and who live in Massachusetts. As gifts for the new Americans, blinking American flags pins and other gifts from Bostonian institutions were given to these most recent Americans. The Boston Symphony Orchestra provided, for instance, 2 tickets to attend a concert to each new citizen, to welcome them to the city. The Boston Children’s Museum gave out passes for various programs and the Greenway Conservancy, offered rides on the Carrousel.

In the background, the Black Sea Salsa Band played a mix of music. Their biggest

fan was maybe Maral Dulgarian, cheering them and recording them with her phone. “I’m thrilled to be here today, it reminds me of my own experience. I was an Armenian-Lebanese immigrant years ago. I’m proud to be here as part of this event and enjoy my daughter’s singing,” she said, proudly.

During the afternoon, passersby walking near the park also stopped by, including a couple of tourists attracted by the music. Among these hospitable people, Anna Gunnarson Afeyan spoke, smiling broadly to all. Her husband is the Noubar Afeyan, co-founder and CEO of Moderna, which is under the umbrella of Flagship Pioneering. They have sponsored this ceremony for many years.

“My journey to this country was really easy because I came from Sweden, however, for my husband, born in Lebanon, it was more difficult. Many of you have similar stories and this park represent all of us,” she shared. Immigrants, she believes, are essential to the fabric of Boston, and they must be properly welcomed.

Teresa, a volunteer nearby, interacted with each individual in order to learn their story: “Because my parents were Italian immigrants, I understand how much courage it takes to leave your home country and come here. They’ all have shown a lot of leadership,” she said.

This is also why the Armenian Heritage Park is the perfect place for this ceremony, as the Reflecting Pool of water at the Labyrinth’s center proved. This particular part was created to represent hope and rebirth.

Next to the Labyrinth, the new Americans waited in line to have a plate of Armenian food from Anoush’ella, owned by Raffi and Nina Festekjian. They were glad and startled by the dishes and the gifts offered to them. When I asked them how they felt, they were a little

bit shy in the face of all the attention they received. Most of them told me they didn’t expect this. But whether it was a couple from Jordan or a woman from Slovakia, who used to live in Canada, they all agreed on one thing: this ceremony made their day and it was “wonderful!”

Nigerian Chima Achusi has been in the United States for five years and he was the most enthused. He was very talkative, which was touching because I could sense his happiness: “I came for my studies first and then I decided to stay, forever,” he laughed while holding proudly blue, white, and red balloons in his hand. “It’s my best day ever, I



Barbara Tellalian, member of “Friends of Armenian Heritage Park”, making a speech to welcome the new citizen, on Thursday October 20, Greenway, Boston.

finally feel 100-percent American, and I can fully celebrate. I met so many people from everywhere, that’s amazing,” he added.

I also had the chance to meet Mebs Murphy, originally from Burundi, who went to Canada and worked in a pharmaceutical company. He has been in the US for almost 20 years. “What will change for me is that now, I can vote, especially since the next elections are in November, so it’s very timely. Usually, I just watch it, frustrated. Now, I can act,” he said.

The first American get together for the new citizens is as traditionally Armenian as it gets, with plenty of food and music. Our people are known for being welcoming and generous, and we believe that is the meaning of the park, the Armenian Heritage Foundation realized. Knowing Armenian history, which saw many forced to leave their country, it made sense for me to see all these new citizens in the Park. It’s also a way to promote the Armenian history to people who are not familiar with it. Another component of the park is the Abstract sculpture, dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide and designed by an Armenian architect who was proudly present on Thursday, Donald Tellalian.

It was incredible to watch the volunteers establish a delightful connection the likes of which I had rarely seen. I remember hearing racists insults while being in Paris. A bus driver told a black woman to go back to “her country” or an old man screaming that Jews are the worst race in the subway. I also recall the atmosphere in France during the French presidential election this year, in April. Eric Zemmour, a far-right French candidate, talked about “the great replacement” and the idea of immigrants coming to France in order to replace the current population. (The

phrase has been used first to refer to Jews and now to Muslims and other minorities both in Europe and the US.) And yet, he received 2,485,226 votes and finished fourth out of 12 candidates in the first round of the presidential election.

More recently — 3 weeks ago to be precise — in Paris, a 12-year-old girl was violently killed by an Algerian resident. There were protests in Paris this week with large signs saying : “Immigration killed.” This crime was used to illustrate “this problem” by Marine Le Pen, another far-right French candidate. And yet, she nearly won the presidential race last April, placing second in the last round.

This simply is not true; most immigrants come to France because of international conflict or poor living conditions. Moreover, not all murderers are foreigners and, actually, immigrants helped build today’s France. Of course, not all French people behave like this and some can be incredibly friendly. However, racism remains a major issue in France, and seeing all of this hostility toward people from other countries always hurts me because as an Armenian person living in France, my ancestors were immigrants.

That’s why, even if it took place in the United States and not in France, this serene and peaceful event changed me. I think the ongoing concern with and anger toward foreigners in France is similar to what is now happening in the United States. This type of acceptance ceremony is more crucial than ever to spread love.

(Mélanie Tuyssuzian, 22, is from Paris.

She recently graduated with a degree in journalism from the European Institute of Journalism (IEJ) in Paris. She is an intern for the *Mirror-Spectator*.)

Cartographer Declares ‘Border Demarcation May Take 10-20 years’

CARTOGRAPHY, from page 19
issue to the international court that this land was illegally given to Azerbaijan.”

The expert is certain that lengthy work in international courts can give some results and not only curb Azerbaijan’s appetite, but also “bring it to justice.” He also believes that Azerbaijan poses a threat to the territorial integrity of the Republic of Armenia with its fake maps.

He said that international lawyers told him that President Ilham Aliyev of Azerbaijan’s “fake map” was a warning of a new attack so that Armenia could apply in this vein to the UN Security Council. It can

also show the Wilsonian maps prepared for the Treaty of Sèvres. One such map depicts Armenia with a territory of around 120,000 sq. km., extending far to the east, practically approaching Baku.

Galichian also pointed out that if Azerbaijan claims enclaves on Armenian territory, it is up to it to document its assertions, but it states the contrary, challenging Armenia to provide proof that it is wrong.

As far as the border demarcation process, the cartographer noted that it will be a lengthy process of many years. He said, “That demarcation can be done only when the Azerbaijani troops are withdrawn from

Armenia. The current border demarcation body is made up of deputy ministers and other officials who have to do the executive work, but they are unable to reach a professional conclusion. I am not aware that a professional expert group has been created in Armenia. its creation would take 6 to 12 months, because Armenia has to choose its specialists, present them to Azerbaijan, the latter should ratify it, and Azerbaijan should do the same. Only after that can they start the demarcation process.”

In other words, he said, “From an international point of view, it will take years of work to take back the enclaves. It must be

done during the demarcation process, that is, in the next 10-20 years. It may take several decades. We have been working with Georgia for 25 years and we have not finished that demarcation process yet. And this is when Georgia is a more friendly country. Can you imagine how many years it will last with Azerbaijan?”

He added: “I want to emphasize that during the delimitation, there is a need for the presence of a neutral organization, but it cannot be Russia, because those territories were given to Azerbaijan by Soviet Moscow. An impartial, neutral state is needed.”