

Yerevan ‘Not Doing Enough’ For Release Of Armenian Captives

By Artak Khulian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Armenia’s government is not doing enough to get Azerbaijan to free eight former leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh and other Armenian captives, Karabakh’s exiled human rights ombudsman said on Friday, October 11.

Gegham Stepanyan criticized the government as he led a demonstration in Yerevan in support of at least 23 Armenians remaining in Azerbaijani captivity. The several hundred demonstrators marched to the United Nations office in the capital, the US, Russian and French embassies as well as the Armenian Foreign Ministry building. They demanded that the international community pressure Azerbaijan to release the prisoners and shed light on the fate of dozens of missing Karabakh Armenians ahead



People rally in Yerevan to demand the release of Armenian captives held in Azerbaijan, October 11, 2024

of the COP29 climate summit that will take place in Baku next month.

Stepanyan complained that “the Armenian authorities are not taking active steps in this direction” and may even send a delegation to the global summit if the Azerbaijani side continues to hold the prisoners.

“There has to be a policy pursued at the state level,” he told reporters. “No matter how many various groups, including the relatives of the captives and missing persons, and concerned citizens stage such actions, I believe that it is the Republic of Armenia that must primarily raise the issue on the international stage. This is why this petition will also be handed to the Armenian Foreign Ministry.”

Ruben Melikyan, Stepanyan’s predecessor and an opposition-linked Armenian lawyer, echoed the criticism. He said, “From all [foreign] places, we officially and unofficially get this answer, ‘Your own state is not keen on the issue, what do you want from us?’ Unfortunately, it’s hard to counter the answer.”

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has insisted that his administration keeps pressing for the release of the prisoners. But he has given no details of those efforts. Other Armenian officials have admitted that a draft Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty discussed by the two sides would not require Baku to unconditionally free the captives.

see CAPTIVES, page 2

Azerbaijan Army on High Alert

By Arshaluys Barseghyan

Azerbaijan’s Defense Minister Zakir Hasanov has instructed the country’s armed forces to stay on “high alert” to prevent “provocations of the revanchist forces,” as peace talks with Armenia continue to flounder.

Hasanov held a meeting with high-ranking military officials on 12 October, during which he instructed troops “to maintain the combat capability at a constant high level, increase vigilance, as well as to be ready to take preventive measures against all possible provocations of revanchist forces on the conditional border.”

This instruction came as Azerbaijan doubled down on its demand for the removal of the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA), a civilian monitoring mission deployed to the Armenian side of the border with Azerbaijan. Last week state-affiliated media accused the EUMA of “gathering intelligence” and of making “preparations for provocations.”

see ALERT, page 5

Daron Acemoglu Among Trio of Nobel Laureates In Economics

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. (MIT News) — MIT economists Daron Acemoglu and Simon Johnson PhD ‘89, whose work has illuminated the relationship between political systems and economic growth, were named winners of the 2024 Sveriges Riksbank Prize in Economic Sciences in Memory of Alfred Nobel on Monday, October 14.

Political scientist James Robinson of the University of Chicago, with whom they have worked closely, also shares the award.

“Societies with a poor rule of law and institutions that exploit the population do not generate growth or change for the better,” the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences stated in the Nobel citation. “The laureates’ research helps us understand why.”

see NOBEL, page 20



Tekeyan Cultural Association Holds Successful Convention, Abaka Newspaper Banquet in Montreal

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

MONTREAL — The Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada (TCA)’s successful 37th convention at the Tekeyan Center in Montreal on October 4-5 concluded with a capacity crowd at a banquet which also celebrated the 49th anniversary of the Montreal-based *Abaka* trilingual newspaper.

TCA delegates and Central Board members arrived for a reception at the Tekeyan Center on Friday, October 4,



From left, soprano Sasha Djihanian, Alexandre Le Blanc on double bass (contrabass), and tenor Manuel Ashekian



Tekeyan Cultural Association delegates outside the Tekeyan Center, Montreal

from various parts of the United States, including Boston, Detroit, greater Los Angeles, New York/New Jersey, Philadelphia and Washington, D.C. While a convention had been held at the end of 2022 via Zoom, this was the first time that many TCA members had a chance

to see one another in person after the height of the Covid pandemic. As a result of months of preparation, the Montreal TCA executive and local members ensured that the convention would begin in a warm welcoming atmosphere.

see CONVENTION, page 10

CALIFORNIA

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Breaks Ground on Collaborative Learning Center



MASSACHUSETTS

Catholicos Aram I Visits Boston



ARMENIA

Vahan Artsruni’s Komitas Concert Project Continues





ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

MP Slams ‘Dirty Campaign’ against Opposition

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — Opposition lawmaker Tigran Abrahamyan hit out at the Armenian authorities for a “dirty campaign” targeting the opposition amid security threats facing Armenia, on October 15.

“Azerbaijan is preparing for new pressure against Armenia, which could take any form, while the Armenian leader’s steps are solely aimed at maintaining his grip on power,” he wrote on Facebook on Tuesday.

“Both the second and third presidents of Armenia, as well as all those who are active on social media and don’t remain indifferent to the fate of their country, are constantly in the crosshairs of the current government,” Abrahamyan penned.

Kazakhstan Ready to Host Peace Talks

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — Kazakhstan’s President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev reaffirmed his country’s readiness to host more peace talks between Armenia and Azerbaijan at a meeting with Armenian President Vahagn Khachaturyan, on October 15, the Kazakh presidential office reported, during an official visit by the latter to Astana.

“Kassym-Jomart Tokayev reiterated Kazakhstan’s readiness to continue hosting negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the conclusion of a peace treaty,” it said.

Tokayev and Khachaturyan also discussed bilateral relations.

Anger at Yerevan City Council Meeting

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — Passions heated up at a meeting of the Yerevan City Council on October 15 following a speech by its opposition member Pedro Zarokyan.

Zarokyan, who represents the opposition National Progress faction, accused Yerevan Mayor Tigran Avinyan and his team of corruption.

“Corruption destroys democracy, justice and primarily affects the most vulnerable members of society – children,” the oppositionist said.

He pointed to a Hetq report this week alleging systemic corruption in the Armenian State Interests Fund (ANIF) CJSC headed by Avinyan, which revealed that ANIF’s security service hired 8 employees – mostly relatives of law enforcement officials.

“Most interestingly, the ANIF office was located at a building that already had 24-hour security. You recently bought a Mercedes worth \$86,000,” Zarokyan underscored.

He then showed pictures of school grounds with potholes, adding, “Go and fix these potholes, shame on you!”

Avinyan turned off his microphone, but Zarokyan continued speaking out loud.

“Mr. Zarokyan, watch your mouth! I am warning you,” Avinyan said.

Avinyan urged the others not to react to “empty talk.”

Armenian Officials Resign Over Power Cuts

By Shoghik Galstian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Three senior government officials have resigned after Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan held an emergency meeting on power cuts in Armenia that have become more fre-

quent of late.

The outages that can last for several hours are now a regular occurrence in Yerevan and other parts of the country, fueling growing criticism of the national electric utility. The company, Electric Networks of Armenia (ENA), has essentially

denied responsibility for them.

ENA’s chief executive, Karen Darbinyan, said a month ago that many accidents disrupting power supply result from sloppy roadworks and a construction boom in Yerevan that has sharply increased the number of its service subscribers. He also put the blame on some Armenian power plants as well as the national power transmission network.

Pashinyan met with several members of his cabinet and other officials on Wednesday to discuss the problem. The officials proposed “possible steps and solutions” to it, a government statement on the meeting said, adding that Pashinyan gave them “clear instructions” on ensuring “quality electricity supply to customers.” No other details were reported.

Garegin Baghramyan, the chairman of Armenia’s Public Services Regulatory Commission, was the first to tender his resignation late on Thursday. The two other officials, Deputy Economy Minister Narek Terian and Deputy Infrastructure Minister Hakob Vartanian, followed suit the next morning. None of them made a public statement.

Vartanian has overseen the Armenian energy sector for the last six years. He and Baghramyan attended Wednesday’s meeting chaired by Pashinyan.

Speaking to RFE/RL’s Armenian Service later on October 11, Baghramyan attributed his resignation to the “problems in the energy system.” He refused to elaborate.

The resignations came amid media speculation that Pashinyan’s government may pressure ENA’s owner, the Tashir Group of Russian-Armenian billionaire Samvel Karapetyan, to fully or partially sell the company. The parliamentary group of Pashinyan’s Civil Contract party stoked that speculation late last month when it organized a parliamentary hearing on the power cuts. One of its senior lawmakers grilled Baghramyan about financial details of Tashir’s purchase of ENA from Russia’s RAO UES utility in 2015.

Tashir claims to have cut ENA’s massive losses by more than half, made significant capital investments in the aging power distribution network and saved some \$30 million annually since 2016. According to the ENA management, this has allowed the network to keep the electricity prices in the country unchanged.



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and other officials discuss problems with power supply, Yerevan, October 9, 2024.

Winners of Journalistic Competition On Mining Announced in Armenia

TSAGHKADZOR, Armenia — On September 28, in Tsaghkadzor, under the auspices of the Union of Miners and Metallurgists, the Economic Journalists’ Club of Armenia announced the results of the competition for diasporan Armenian journalists on the topics of “Mining Industry: Geopolitical Challenges and Opportunities” and “Mining Industry: Sustainable Development, Environmental and Social Management Issues.”

The materials evaluated by the competition committee and identified as winners were announced within the framework of the two-day international Mining Armenia Forum conference, which was held on September 26 and 27 in Tsaghkadzor. It brought together leading speakers of the field, aimed at revealing the mining potential of Armenia.

Certificates and monetary awards were handed over to the winners. You

can watch the video of the award ceremony at this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=afxz1UkLQ8c&t=796s>

First place winner is Vicken Aprahamian and Lori Manoukian’s article, “Recent Mineral Treatment Advances in Armenia: Ensuring Future Progress,” in the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* (September 18, 2024). Second place winner Sako Arian’s Armenian-language article, in *Arevelk.am*, is titled “Armenia: New Methods of Mining,” which is an interview with Vardan Jhanyan, Deputy Director of Zangezur’s Copper Molybdenum Company (https://arevelk.am/am/articles/hayastan-hanqardiunabervouthean-nvor-methvotner-ankeghts-zrvoyc-7-varдан-jhanean)).

Third place winner is Dikran Kapoyan’s “Mining Issues and Challenges” in the Istanbul-Armenian newspaper *Jamanak* (<http://www.jamanak.com>).

Yerevan ‘Not Doing Enough’ For Release of Armenian Captives

CAPTIVES, from page 1

Also, Pashinyan has been widely criticized for his scathing comments about one of the captives, Armenian billionaire and former Nagorno-Karabakh premier Ruben Vardanyan, made at an August 31 news conference. He wondered who had told Vardanyan to renounce Russian citizenship and move to Karabakh in 2022 and “for what purpose.”

Critics said that Pashinyan thus echoed Azerbaijani leaders’ earlier claims that Vardanyan was dispatched to Karabakh by Moscow to serve Russian interests there. They accused the Armenian premier of helping Baku to legitimize and prolong the prominent tycoon’s imprisonment. According to Vardanyan’s office in Yerevan, Azerbaijani interrogators last month asked him questions “in connection with” Pashinyan’s comments.

Vardanyan and the seven other Karabakh leaders were captured following Azerbaijan’s September 2023 military of-



Ruben Vardanyan, the state minister of Nagorno-Karabakh, leads a cabinet meeting in Stepanakert, January 3, 2023

fensive. They were charged with “terrorism” and other serious crimes and are due

to go on trial. The dates of those trials have not been announced yet.



ARMENIA

Moving Forward with Paros Foundation’s Debi Arach Center

By Alina Kouzouian

GYUMRI — What does it mean to “move forward” when all you have known is the life you have lived?

For many children in vulnerable communities, like those served by the Debi Arach Children’s Center in Gyumri, imagining a brighter future can seem daunting and unfathomable. Yet, through the support and consistency of Debi Arach’s afterschool programs, more than 180 children are given the tools, encouragement, and opportunities they deserve in order to break the cycle of hardship and “move forward” with hope and optimism for the future of both these children and our Armenian homeland.

My initial visit to Debi Arach took place in the summer of 2016, nearly a year after its opening. At that time, the Center was still a young project, infused with hope for the future and a vision to make a meaningful impact on the lives of the children and the community of Gyumri. The energy was palpable, and it was clear that this initiative held the promise of transforming the lives of the children and the community.

This year, nearly a decade later, I had the privilege of witnessing the aspirations of the 2016 Debi Arach Children’s Center come to fruition countless times. The growth of the Center, both in its capacity and impact, has been nothing short of inspiring. During my time in Armenia this summer with The Paros Foundation, I had the opportunity to visit Debi Arach on five occasions. Each visit was a reminder of the dedication and love that continue to drive this initiative forward.

Spending time with children of all ages as they learn to overcome their differences over a communal game of soccer, or help their friends improve their grammar or artistic ability truly sheds light on the value that Debi Arach brings to the lives of young individuals in Gyumri. We all know how vulnerable and formative adolescence is. It’s a time filled with embarrassment, adventure, self-exploration, and a lot of trial and error by way of fashion mishaps and friendship drama. Sprinkle in the added family pressures of financial struggles, multigenerational households, and



Children at Debi Arach excited to receive their new backpacks and school supplies.

lack of encouragement that many children in Gyumri face, and you realize just how important it is to have an external support system and a place of belonging.

Debi Arach provides underprivileged children a safe, second-home, where they continue to learn and socialize, but most importantly, it provides them a place where they feel seen and can focus on loving and valuing themselves. The Center is a place free from the drama of wearing the right outfit or having the newest toys, or being the ‘smartest’ kid in the class. It’s a welcoming place that accepts every child as they are, and seeks to help them be leaders in their own growth.

During one of the afternoons I spent at Debi Arach, I sat in on each of the afternoon class sessions (history, language, and art). While the lessons differ by age group, the experiences shared between the students and their teachers share a common thread: Armenian pride.

A lesson for the youngest group to teach them the Ayp Pen Keem turned into a Q&A where students asked every imaginable question about Armenian identity.

In the art classroom, the teacher prompted students to draw a dream they have, or something they wish could be reality. Amongst her peers’ drawings of a flying car, a pink elephant, and a half-dog-half-monkey hybrid, Anna drew herself at the top of Mt. Ararat, holding an Armenian flag. She displayed her piece with a smile and sense of pride. At first, a shiver ran down my spine when I saw her work. Then I realized how inspiring it is that the next generation could dream something into reality, reclaiming something so fundamentally Armenian and continuing to push to achieve the goals of generations past.

Regardless of which classroom I was in, the students at

Debi Arach intertwined their Armenian identities and individual expression into their work. When they come to the Center, children are able to be themselves and ask the tough questions, play around without fear of judgment, and learn to take pride in who they are. Anna “loves to draw and use pretty colors, and at Debi Arach [she feels she] can do that every day.” The Center gives Sevak “a place to be Armenian.” And it provides Elina and Nara “a place to laugh with friends and have fun.” Debi Arach provides opportunities to children to fully embrace the opportunities of life and enjoy every step along the way of reaching their fullest potential.

On my final day at Debi Arach for the summer, I witnessed the distribution of new school supplies to the children and their families. The participants of Paros’ Service Armenia program assembled nearly 200 supply-filled backpacks as gifts for the children of Debi Arach prior to the new school year. The joy on young Samvel’s face when he saw Spiderman on his new backpack and the excitement Ani felt when she discovered the Barbie-themed supplies in store for her made every effort we put into our work feel worthwhile tenfold.

Thanks to the generosity and good-natured intentions of both local and diasporan Armenian communities, Debi Arach is able to provide comfort, safety, motivation, encouragement and hope to over 180 children and their families in vulnerable conditions. In a continued effort to further the potential successes and secure futures of Gyumri’s youth, The Paros Foundation has broken ground on a second Debi Arach location, designed to meet the needs of diverse communities within the ever-evolving city of Gyumri.



Alina Kouzouian along with SERVICE Armenia 2024 enjoying a meal at Debi Arach.

Turkey Insists on Land Corridor Through Armenia at Geneva Meeting

By Astghik Bedevian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Turkish Parliament Speaker Numan Kurtulmus reiterated Ankara’s calls for a land corridor that would connect Azerbaijan to its Nakhichevan exclave as well as Turkey through Armenia.

Kurtulmus was reported to emphasize Turkey’s and Azerbaijan’s “common stance on regional and global issues” during a meeting with his Azerbaijani counterpart Sahiba Gafarova held in Geneva on October 14. He met with Armenian Parliament Speaker Alen Simonian there later in the day.

According to the official Turkish readout of the meeting with Gafarova, Kur-

tulmus said Azerbaijan’s victory in the 2020 war in Nagorno-Karabakh, greatly facilitated by Turkish military support, changed “the balance in the region” and created a “great opportunity for the Turkic world” .” He added that the two Turkic allies hope that the “Zangezur corridor will be opened to benefit Azerbaijan, Turkey and other peoples of the region.”

Azerbaijan has been demanding such an extraterritorial corridor ever since the 2020 war. Turkey has backed these demands, linking their fulfillment by Armenia to the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations. Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said in July that an agreement on the corridor would be the “final step” in the resolution of the

Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict.

The head of Turkey’s National Intelligence Agency, Ibrahim Kalin, echoed that statement during a subsequent visit to Baku. Kalin was present at Erdogan’s talks with Armenian Prime Minister Pashinyan held in New York late last month.

The Armenian government maintains that people and goods moving between Nakhichevan and the rest of Azerbaijan cannot be exempt from Armenian border controls and that the two nations should have only conventional transport links. Simonian was understood to reaffirm his stance during his talks with Kurtulmus held on the sidelines of the latest session of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

“If our position is known to them and

if they continue to use that term [Zangezur corridor,] one can assume that they at least speak of an extraterritorial corridor, which is unacceptable to us,” Sargis Khandanyan, the chairman of the Armenian parliament committee on foreign relations, told RFE/RL’s Armenian Service on October 15.

The corridor demanded by Baku and Ankara would pass through Syunik, the only Armenian region bordering Iran. The Islamic Republic has repeatedly warned against attempts to strip it of the common border and transport links with Armenia. Its Supreme Leader Ayatollah Ali Khamenei told Pashinyan in July that the corridor would also be “detrimental to Armenia.”

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL

Armenia FM to Attend 3+3 Platform in Istanbul

YEREVAN (News.am) — Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan is scheduled to attend the third meeting of the 3+3 regional consultative platform, to be held in Istanbul on Friday, October 18, Armenian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Ani Badalyan reported on October 15.

As reported earlier, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said that Turkey continues consultations with regional countries through the South Caucasus regional cooperation platform — referring to the 3+3 format.

Turkish, Greek Foreign Ministers to Hold Talks

YEREVAN (News.am) — Greek Foreign Minister George Gerapetritis will meet his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan in Athens on November 8 to discuss bilateral issues including the demarcation of the exclusive economic zone, Reuters reported on October 14, citing diplomatic sources.

Greece and Turkey, NATO allies, have feuded for decades over issues such as airspace and maritime jurisdiction in the eastern Mediterranean, energy resources and Ankara-occupied Cyprus.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said last week that he believed relations with Greece were improving and that the meeting between Gerapetritis and Fidan was aimed at finding solutions to issues such as maritime zones and airspace.

The foreign ministers have been instructed to examine whether conditions are favorable to start talks on the demarcation of the continental shelf and economic zone, Gerapetritis said last month.

Turkey Decries ‘Genocide’ in Gaza

YEREVAN (News.am) — Turkish authorities have once again uttered the word “genocide.”

The events in Gaza are a clear proof that the international system was designed, is used and acts in the interests of a certain minority, Turkish Foreign Minister Hakan Fidan said at a session of the “Future of Palestine” conference on “Global Diplomacy and the Future of Palestine” organized by Turkey’s Justice and Development Party in Ankara, Anadolu reported on October 15.

Fidan drew attention when his Jordanian counterpart Ayman Al-Safadi revealed during his speech the extent of the tragedy in the Gaza Strip that unfolded before the eyes of the entire world community.

According to Fidan, the people of the region “have been suffering tremendous agony for 70 years, and the international community, Arab and Islamic countries have shown complete impotence and failed attempts to put an end to this tragedy.”

According to Fidan, “genocide is taking place in front of everyone’s eyes, and the international community is completely helpless and unable to put an end to the killings.”

Armenian National Team Loses to North Macedonia, Top Coach Fired

By Haykaram Nahapetyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — With an identical score of 2:0, Armenia lost both games against North Macedonia, first on September 10 in Skopje, and then Sunday, October 13, in Yerevan. These were part of the Union of European Football Associations (UEFA) Nations League games. After the first defeat, Armenia’s coach Oleksandr Petrakov promised the squad was getting ready for revenge, which, however, never happened.

In the first half of the game in Yerevan, the Armenian team was more active, but the teams went to the break with no goals recorded. In the 72nd minute, Bojan Miovski made a left-footed shot from the right side of the box to the top left corner. The goal was assisted by Isnik Alimi, who also doubled the score about 10 minutes later. The referee added six extra minutes to the main time, and Armenia’s Eduard Spertsyan got a chance to score in the last minute of the additional time — but he was unsuccessful.

The history of the games between these

two nations is impressive: the Armenians defeated the former Yugoslavian country with significant scores of 4:1 in 2011 and 4:0 in 2018. However, compared to the improvement in the Eastern European teams’ games, the Armenian squad has been performing less impressive games lately, with perhaps the one exception of its win against Latvia last month. A week ago, Arme-



Armenian professional soccer player Eduard Spertsyan



Oleksandr Petrakov

nia also narrowly escaped another defeat against the Faroe Islands (2:2), a European self-governing territory with a population of 50,000 people.

The Football Federation reported that following the game against North Macedonia, Coach Petrakov has been sacked. On November 14, Armenians will host the Faroe Islands team in Yerevan. In the last game of the UEFA Nations League, Armenia will play in Latvia after that.

The video at mirrorspectator.com features snapshots of the game.

High School in France Named for Missak Manouchian

PARIS — By a unanimous decision of the Council of the Ile-de-France region, the central high school of the city of Châtenay-Malabry near Paris was named for Missak and Meline Manouchian, the Armenian Embassy in France reported on October 15.

This is the first school in France to bear the name of the Armenian hero of the Resistance Movement.

Missak Manouchian’s poems were read out by students of the school. The principal of the school, as well as the teachers of history and philosophy, briefed the younger generation on the goals

of the initiative, the need and importance of perpetuating the heroic figures of Manouchian and his comrades-in-arm laid to rest in the Pantheon of the greatest French figures by the decision of the French President Emmanuel Macron.

The opening ceremony of the school was also attended by the member of the council of the Ile-de-France region and Mayor of Châtenay-Malabry Carl Segaud, President of the Aude-de-Seine department Georges Sifredi, Prefect of the department, Benoit Trevisan, Armenia’s Ambassador to France Hasmik Tolmajian.



The naming ceremony in Châtenay-Malabry near Paris



INTERNATIONAL

Russian Border Guards to Leave Another Armenian Checkpoint

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Russian border guards will leave Armenia’s sole border crossing with Iran by January 1 while remaining deployed along the border between the two countries, the Armenian government announced on Tuesday, October 8.

The spokeswoman for Prime Minister

state border, the service will be carried out entirely by the Border Guard Troops of Armenia’s [National Security Service],” she wrote on Facebook.

Baghdasaryan said the two leaders also agreed that starting from next year Armenian border guards “will also participate in the protection” of the country’s borders

months after Russia completed the withdrawal of its border guards from Yerevan’s Zvartnots international airport, which was demanded by Pashinyan’s government in March amid heightened tensions with Moscow. The Russian Foreign Ministry criticized the demand, saying that Yerevan risks inflicting “irreparable damage” on Russian-Armenian relations and jeopardizing Armenia’s security and economic development.

Russian border guards have for decades been stationed along Armenia’s borders with Turkey and Iran as part of close Russian-Armenian military ties. Russia also has a military base in the South Caucasus country. In March, a senior Russian lawmaker said he “would not recommend that the Armenian authorities even think about” demanding an end to the Russian military presence.

Pashinyan has signaled no such plans so far. Still, he has frozen his country’s membership in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization and not ruled out a bid to join the European Union.

Tensions between the two longtime allies rose further in August after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused

Yerevan of “sabotaging” a Russian-brokered agreement to give Azerbaijan transport corridors to its Nakhichevan exclave. Armenian leaders rejected the accusations.

According to Baghdasaryan, during the meeting with Putin, Pashinyan “expressed concern about the formulations and vocabulary used by a number of Russian officials on regional topics.”

“Prime Minister Pashinyan positively evaluates the results of the meeting with the Russian president,” added the official.

In his opening remarks at the talks attended by Lavrov, Putin mainly spoke about Russian-Armenian economic ties. He touted continuing rapid growth in bilateral trade.

Former Azerbaijan MP Gets an Eight-Year Sentence for Voicing Support for Former Constituents

Nazim Baydamirli, a government critic and former member of Azerbaijani parliament, has received an eight-year prison term following conviction on extortion charges. He asserts his punishment is political, connected to comments made in support of an environmental protest in 2023.

The protest occurred in June 2023 in Soyudlu, a village in western Azerbaijan, and was sparked by opposition to plans to expand a reservoir to hold toxic waste created by gold mining operations. Ultimately, police used violent tactics to disperse the protesters, including pepper-spraying old women and making 11 arrests.

At the time of the incident, Baydamirli was living in the capital Baku. In an interview with Voice of America, he expressed his support for the protesters and criticized the government’s heavy-handed response. Within weeks after his comments were broadcast, he was arrested, accused of trying to blackmail another individual with a sex tape, according to an Interior Ministry complaint. Prior to his arrest, an Azerbaijani state television news segment about the protest alleged that Baydamirli had helped coordinate the opposition strategy.

During his trial in late September, Baydamirli insisted he did not commit any crime, and his comments on the Soyudlu events did not violate any laws. “I have never made provocative speeches,” Baydamirli said, according to the trial transcript.

Though the protesters were dispersed, the government took heed of the opposition. In July 2023, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev criticized the mine operator’s practices and vowed that environmental standards would be upheld. Operations at the mine were put on hold. That pause lasted just over a year. On August 5, Anglo Asian Mining, the British company running the mine, announced it had received an authorization to restart operations, including the expansion of an existing toxic waste reservoir.

The renewed operations at the mine come as Aliyev’s administration is preparing to host the annual UN environmental summit, or COP29, in Baku, in November. The mine, along with other contentious issues, including Baku’s vanishing green space and a growing water shortage in central Azerbaijan, could potentially fix unwanted attention, from officials’ point of view, on the government’s environmental protection record.

(This article originally appeared on www.eurasianet.org on October 4.)



A cargo terminal at a border crossing with Iran, November 29, 2018 (Photo by the State Revenue Committee of Armenia)

Nikol Pashinyan, Nazeli Baghdasaryan, said he reached such an agreement with Russian President Vladimir Putin during their talks in Moscow held earlier in the day.

“At the checkpoint on the Armenia-Iran

with Iran and Turkey together with their Russian colleagues. She gave no reason for these decisions apparently initiated by the Armenian side. Russian officials did not immediately comment on them.

The development comes just over two

months after Russia completed the withdrawal of its border guards from Yerevan’s Zvartnots international airport, which was demanded by Pashinyan’s government in March amid heightened tensions with Moscow. The Russian Foreign Ministry criticized the demand, saying that Yerevan risks inflicting “irreparable damage” on Russian-Armenian relations and jeopardizing Armenia’s security and economic development.

Russian border guards have for decades been stationed along Armenia’s borders with Turkey and Iran as part of close Russian-Armenian military ties. Russia also has a military base in the South Caucasus country. In March, a senior Russian lawmaker said he “would not recommend that the Armenian authorities even think about” demanding an end to the Russian military presence.

Pashinyan has signaled no such plans so far. Still, he has frozen his country’s membership in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization and not ruled out a bid to join the European Union.

Tensions between the two longtime allies rose further in August after Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused

Azerbaijan Army on High Alert

ALERT, from page 1

It also comes as the peace process appears to have reached a deadlock, after Azerbaijan rejected Armenia’s offer to sign an interim treaty on articles both sides had already agreed on, despite having proposed to do so earlier this year.

On Monday, October 14, a spokesperson for Armenia’s Parliamentary Speaker announced that Azerbaijan had pulled out of an agreement to meet “at the last moment.”

Alen Simonyan was due to meet his Azerbaijani counterpart, Sahiba Gafarova, this week on the sidelines of the Inter-Parliamentary Union Assembly in Geneva.

The two have previously held two meetings.

Last week, Hasanov referred to recent statements by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev that “the number one priority is to increase our military strength,” and that “vengeful forces are raising their head in Armenia.”

During his speech Aliyev also blamed “Western states” for arming Armenia, adding that they should “bear in mind that they will be directly responsible for all future developments.”

The Reopening of Transport Links

One key point of contention continues to be a proposed route through Armenia linking the Azerbaijani exclave of Nakhchivan with the rest of Azerbaijan.

Article 9 of the ceasefire agreement that brought an end to the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War states that Armenia should “guarantee the safety” of the route while control of it would be exercised by Russian border guards.

Azerbaijan has disregarded key parts of the agreement, by first placing the Lachin Corridor that connected Armenia with Nagorno-Karabakh under blockade

and then launching a military assault on the region in 2023, leading to the exodus of the Armenian population. The Russian peacekeeping mission that was deployed to Nagorno-Karabakh under the agreement has also been withdrawn.

While Azerbaijani officials have toned down their demands for what they term the “Zangezur corridor” in recent months, they have in the past threatened to establish the corridor by force.

Speaking at a “Crossroads of Peace” conference in Yerevan on 12 October, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said it was “unacceptable” to focus on Article 9 of the agreement while other articles remained unfulfilled.

He said Azerbaijan wanted Armenia’s roads “to be usable for itself, but at the same time, for Armenia “to continue being blockaded.”

He repeated his suggestion that the two countries open their borders to each other with any route within Armenia remaining under Armenian control. He added that Armenia was prepared to implement “certain simplifications of passage and control for this connection.” He suggested that opening the borders could potentially bring in “billions of dollars” to Armenia, and that this could be Azerbaijan’s concern.

Azerbaijan’s Foreign Ministry’s spokesperson, Aykhan Hajizada, responded by urging the Armenian authorities to “refrain from making statements exceeding all boundaries [and] distorting the realities.”

Hajizada accused Armenia of not fulfilling the 2020 agreement, and censured “the negligence of the Armenian leadership for the obligations it has undertaken.”

He also responded to Armenia’s claim that Azerbaijan continues to hold Arme-

nian prisoners of war in defiance of the agreement, stating that Azerbaijan “does not have any obligation to release war criminals or representatives of the separatist junta regime of Armenian origin.”

Armenia’s Foreign Ministry responded on October 14 stating that it was “clear” that Armenia would open transport links with Azerbaijan “within the framework of its jurisdiction and sovereignty.”

Ministry spokesperson Ani Badalyan said the Armenian government had already offered to start the process of opening up the borders.

Russia has also increasingly raised the issue of restoring economic and transport links. On October 8, Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk complained that for “at least a year and a half” there had been “almost no movement” on the issue.

He added that unblocking economic and transport corridors in the region “is only possible with Russia’s participation.”

Since the November 2020 agreement was brokered by Russia, relations between Moscow and Yerevan have declined dramatically. As a result, the Armenian government has increasingly turned away from Russia and towards the West for both its security needs as well as the mediation of the conflict with Azerbaijan.

During his meeting with Russian President Vladimir Putin in early October, Pashinyan expressed concern about “the language and terminology used by certain Russian officials regarding regional issues.”

In August, Russia’s Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov accused Armenia of “sabotaging” agreements to open transit links in its southern regions.

(This article originally appeared on www.ocmedia.org on October 14.)



Community News

Armenian Assembly Accepting Scholarships For Summer Internships

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America is now accepting applications for the 2025 Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program in Washington, D.C. and the Assembly Summer Internship Program in Yerevan, Armenia.

The internship programs have offered fulfilling professional and personal experiences over the decades for close to 1,200 college students in the two nations’ capitals, while partaking in educational, cultural, and social activities.

“I had a fantastic experience in and out of the office, on and off Capitol Hill,” said Alex Marootian, who participated in the 2024 Assembly Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program. “I have a deep connection with both my passion for politics and my Armenian identity, and being able to explore those as a part of this program has been such an amazing opportunity.”

Students who are accepted into the eight-week D.C. & Yerevan internship programs are assisted with placements in a range of offices, from governmental agencies to think tanks to media. Networking and social events are also organized for students to expand their circles.

During the Terjenian-Thomas Internship Program in D.C., students have the opportunity to meet with U.S. Representatives, Senators, and other government officials, as well as academics, attorneys, entrepreneurs, business leaders, and other high-profile individuals through the Capitol Ideas and Lecture Series programs. In addition, Assembly interns will have the opportunity to discuss Armenian American issues during meetings with Members of Congress and elected officials.

Students admitted into the Yerevan Internship Program are placed in Armenian governmental offices, inter-governmental agencies, non-governmental organizations, medical centers, and media outlets. Throughout the summer, they are able to explore their ancestral homeland, visit historical sites, and participate in service work with the Fuller Center for Housing, as well as meet with government officials.

“The Yerevan Summer Internship Program was an enlightening experience for me, as I worked in my chosen field and forged closer connections with my heritage and culture, which was a unique privilege,” said Adam Sherinian, who interned at the Republic of Armenia’s Ministry of Foreign Affairs.

Founded in 1977, the Armenian Assembly Summer Internship Program was the first internship program offered by an Armenian organization in America. From its earliest phases, the Armenian community has consistently supported the Assembly Summer Internship Program with major gifts from the Richard Tufenkian Memorial Fund, the John Hanessian Scholarship Fund, the Armen Astarjian Scholarship Fund, the Ohanian Memorial Fund, James and Connie Melikian, and the Knights of Vartan.

see INTERSHIPS, page 12



From left, Head of School David Ghoogasian, Aaron Carrera and Kevork Zoryan

AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Breaks Ground on Collaborative Learning Center

CANOGA PARK, Calif. — Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Manoogian-Demirdjian School proudly marked the official groundbreaking of its highly anticipated Collaborative Learning Center (CLC). The momentous occasion brought together administration, current and past board members, building committee, students, faculty, community leaders, donors, and distinguished guests to celebrate the future of education at the school.



AGBU Central Board member Sinan Sinanian

Western Region. Former Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian who has been involved and supportive of this project from its inception, spoke about the strength of our

to celebrate the future of education at the school. The ceremony commenced with the color guard entrance by the AGBU AYA (Armenian Youth Association) San Fernando Valley Chapter Scouts. Student Council President, Karin Oruncakciel and Vice President Hooys Dorian delivered their heartfelt gratitude and excitement on behalf of the entire student body. Notable figures in attendance included David Bright from Mayor Karen Bass’ office, Yervant Demirjian from AGBU Central Board, and Gohar Stambolyan, Director of AGBU Western Region. Former Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian who has been involved and supportive of this project from its inception, spoke about the strength of our

see GROUNDBREAKING, page 7



Groundbreaking ceremony for the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Collaborative Learning Center

New Members Join Armenian National Institute Academic Council

WASHINGTON — The Armenian National Institute (ANI) earlier this month welcomed the appointment of a new Academic Council, announced ANI Academic Council Chairman Dr. Armen Baibourtian. “I am honored to announce the appointment of new members to the ANI Academic Council,” stated Baibourtian, “and I am looking forward to working with our very distinguished group of experts, along with our Director, Dr. Rouben Adalian.”

“On behalf of the ANI Board of Governors, I want to welcome this accomplished group of scholars and thank them for joining in ANI’s work,” added ANI Board of Governors Chairman Van Z. Krikorian. “The legacy of the Armenian Genocide continues and the need for information and education to prevent further atrocities is especially clear after witnessing the ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh.” ANI recently expanded its leading Armenia Genocide resource website to include a section titled The Ethnic Cleansing and Destruction of Nagorno-Karabakh: The Latest Chapter of the Armenian Genocide.

Twelve new members are joining the ANI Academic Council, including Gregory Aftandilian of American University, in Washington, DC; Paul Boghosian of New York University; Antranig Dakessian of Haigazian University, in Beirut; Asya Darbinian of the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education at Brookdale Community College, in New Jersey; Barlow Der Mugdechian of California State University, Fresno; Daniel Fittante of the University of Helsinki; David Hovhannissyan of Yerevan State University; Stefan Ihrig of the University of Haifa; Harutyun Marutyan of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia; Vahram Shemmassian of the University of California, Northridge; Erna Shirinyan of the Matenadaran in Yerevan and Michelle Tusan of the University of Nevada, Las Vegas.

They join Peter Balakian of Colgate University; Robert Melson of Purdue University emeritus; and Claire Mouradian, Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), Paris, emerita, who are remaining on the ANI Academic Council and have been serving since its formation in 1997.

Aftandilian is senior professorial lecturer in Foreign Policy and Global Security at American University. A former Department of State analyst, he has published extensively on the Middle East and is the author of Armenia: Vision of a Republic and has been researching on the impact of the Armenian Genocide on descendants of survivors, about which he has written several articles. Boghosian is professor of philosophy at New York University and author of *Fear of Knowledge: Against Relativism and Constructivism* who has written extensively on the concept of

see ANI, page 12



COMMUNITY NEWS

Catholikos Aram I Visits Boston

BOSTON — This week, Catholicos of the Great See of Cilicia Aram I is paying a visit to the Boston area.

During the past week, he visited St. Stephen's Armenian Apostolic Church and St. James Armenian Apostolic Church for services and meeting with the church faithful.

During his visit to the area he also visited St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School, where he was met by the students.

During his visit he also met with the leaders of several organizations and discussed the situation of the Armenian diaspora as well as Armenia.



Catholicos Aram I of the Great See of Cilicia shares a sweet moment with a delighted child



ABOVE: Catholicos Aram I held a service at St. James Armenian Church.

(LEFT) Receiving the traditional bread and salt at St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School



Manoogian-Demirdjian School Breaks Ground on Learning Center

GROUNDBREAKING, from page 6 community. Aaron Carrera, representing Councilmember Bob Blumenfield's office, presented a certificate of recognition to commemorate the occasion.

Head of School David Ghoogasian delivered a heartfelt address, emphasizing the significance of the CLC in shaping the next generation of students. Chairman of the Board Kevork Zoryan, and AGBU Central



AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Board Chairman Kevork Zoryan

Board member Sinan Sinanian, a longtime supporter of the school, echoed this shared vision, expressing their enthusiasm for the future. Zoryan emphasized the deep-rooted connection between the school and the broader community, underscoring how this partnership has been pivotal in shaping the institution's success. He spoke about the transformative potential the new facility holds — not just as a space for learning but as a symbol of unity, progress, and cultural preservation. Sinanian, offering a historical perspective, reflected on the decades of growth and advancement that have brought the school to this moment. He spoke pas-



AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School students participate in the groundbreaking of the Collaborative Learning Center

sionately about the journey from humble beginnings to the flourishing institution it is today, recognizing the collective efforts of those who have contributed along the way.

Special recognition was also given to Christine Simone, one of the school's benefactors, whose continued support

honors the legacy of her late grandfather, Alex Manoogian, a visionary philanthropist and pillar of the Armenian community. The ceremony ended with a blessing of the soil by Archbishop Hovnan Derderian, Fr. Yermia Abgaryan, Fr. Gevorg Aryan and Fr. Shnork Demirjian, setting the tone for a day filled with promise and gratitude.

Following the groundbreaking ceremony, guests, including members of the Student Council, gathered for a reception where they reflected on the school's remarkable journey and shared in the collective enthusiasm for the future. Guests were gifted custom ceremonial shovels commemorating the significance of the event.

COMMUNITY NEWS

Knights and Daughters of Vartan Visit Projects In Armenia for Homeland VIII Mission Trip

YEREVAN — On September 22, more than 30 members of the Knights and Daughters of Vartan embarked on their eighth annual Back to the Homeland (Veratarts Hayrenik) Mission Trip to visit their various projects in Armenia.

Since its founding in 1916, the Knights of Vartan Inc. has provided scholarships to Armenian students in the US, assisted Armenian clergy traveling from the Middle East to the US, financially supported Armenian schools in Lebanon and Syria, and provided scholarships to students attending universities in the Republic of Armenia. Each year, both new and ongoing educational projects are introduced and implemented.

Highlights of the trip included two significant inaugural events: the Armath Laboratory at the Knights of Vartan #106 School in Yerevan and a new playground at the Tsitsernak Kindergarten in Charentsavan, both sponsored by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan.

Since 2011, the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE) has established Armath Engineering Laboratories across Armenia. The establishment of the 650th Armath Laboratory was funded by the Knights of Vartan and celebrated with the presence of the Knights of Vartan Back to the Homeland group. The Knights of Vartan admires the ability to provide young engineers the opportunity to design, build, test, and refine their creations in a safe and enjoyable environment. This marks the third Armath Laboratory funded by the organization.

The second project was the playground funded and constructed in memory of Nadia Nuritsa Chingos and Araxi Bezdjian by their relatives and the Daughters of Vartan Araxi Chapter in San Francisco. Implemented by the Focus on Children Now NGO, this playground serves more than



Knights and Daughters of Vartan members with the UATE staff and guests at the dedication of the new Armath laboratory at the Knights of Vartan #106 School, photo by UATE

the organization's continued support, the Gasparyan family from Arshaluys Village in the Armavir Region, previously living in a metal container, now have a beautiful home. It was heartwarming to share in their happiness and see 2-year-old Haig dancing with joy.

A day-long trip to the Chambarak community, just five kilometers from Armenia's eastern border, aimed to familiarize the group with the large project initiated earlier this year by the Trilogy of the Knights of Vartan in Los Angeles. While the Knights of Vartan renovated two sections of Kindergarten #3 in cooperation with the ATDF in 2016, the third section is currently being renovated in collaboration with the government. It is expected to be completed by the end of fall, opening its doors to 60 more children.

Since 2023, the Knights and Daughters of Vartan have launched humanitarian proj-



Ribbon cutting of the new Armath laboratory at the Knights of Vartan #106 School, photo by UATE

and meet others at a community gathering. Members of the Fresno Knights of Vartan Yegrad Lodge, located in an agrarian region, were enthusiastic to sponsor a heating and cooling system for Edgar Petrosyan's greenhouse. Lunch was shared with Vadim Grigoryan and his family, the first ESP beneficiary, who bakes *zhangyalov* hats (bread with greens) and other food in their newly established healthy fast-food business. The enjoyable combination of fresh greens and thin dough was an unforgettable experience.

The group took a full-day excursion to Tavush to go see an after-school project in the border community of Aygedzor and following this, they also visited additional programs including a renovated school auditorium in Aparan and the Armenian Artists Project. Needless to say, the trip would

not have been complete without paying our respects at the Armenian Genocide Memorial where a wreath was laid.

A banquet was held at the Tufenkian Kharpert Restaurant, featuring traditional Armenian cuisine. During the banquet, Grand Commander Hunan Arshakian presented certificates to four long-time partners of the Knights of Vartan: Marine Vardanyan, principal of the Knights of Vartan #106 Basic School in Yerevan; Ashot Yeghiazaryan, president of the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia; Fr. Aram Mirzoyan, a priest in the Berd Community of Tavush; and Peter Abajian, Executive Director of the Paros Foundation, for the foundation's contributions in assisting the Knights and Daughters of Vartan to reach out to over 200 Artsakh families with humanitarian support and renovation projects. Additionally, three dedicated volunteers were honored: Vahan Harutiunian, a pro bono lawyer who assisted with legal matters for the Knights of Vartan Charities Branch registration in Armenia; Tsovinar Miskaryan and Margarita Gyulnazaryan, who volunteered for the ESP program by visiting and interviewing shortlisted applicants.

"We sincerely appreciate our members who participated in the Back to the Homeland Mission Trip, as well as those who provided unwavering support from afar. We also extend our gratitude to our partners for their dedicated efforts on behalf of our community in Armenia. "Together, we can overcome all challenges," expressed Grand Commander Hunan Arshakian.

The Knights of Vartan Inc. is a fraternal leadership and service organization of Armenian men dedicated to safeguarding and perpetuating the Armenian heritage and cultural traditions.

The Daughters of Vartan is an Armenian Sisterhood associated with the Knights of Vartan. It was organized in 1933.

For more information about the Knights of Vartan, visit www.kov.org.

(Photos by Gohar Palyan and Armath/UATE)



Vadim Grigoryan, the founder of the Zhangyalov Hats bistro



The new Playground in Tsitsernak kindergarten in Charentsavan city.

300 kindergarteners and enhances their daily activities while contributing to their physical development. "The Daughters of Vartan members take a significant step in nurturing the growth and development of our youngest learners. By donating this playground to the kindergarten, we're not just providing a space for play; we're creating an environment where children can explore, socialize, and cultivate their imaginations," said Grand Chairwoman Nancy Berberian Thompson.

Thanks to the long-standing partnership between the Knights and Daughters of Vartan and the Fuller Center for Housing Armenia (FCHA), 62 families have been able to build or complete the construction of their homes. This year, as a result of

ects for families from Artsakh. In January 2024, recognizing the increasing importance of economic support, the Economic Sustainability Program (ESP) was introduced to assist Artsakh and local families. This program is designed to empower families by providing the tools and resources they need for long-term self-sustainability. It targets families who have or once had businesses and have the skills and experience but require the tools.

The first major project was implemented in the Masis community, Ararat Province. To date, 23 families have received support from the ESP, with \$68,692 allocated to these families and projects in Yerevan, surrounding regions, and Masis. It was enriching to visit some beneficiaries on-site



Knights and Daughters of Vartan members with the Grigoryan family the founders of the Zhangyalov Hats bistro



COMMUNITY NEWS

Khachkar Unveiled at Private Catholic Boys' School

NEEDHAM, Mass. — On October 8, members of the St. Sebastian's Armenian community and invited guests gathered to dedicate the recently installed cross stone, or *khachkar*, on campus. Wearing the traditional clergy stole from St. Sebastian's earliest days, Fr. John Arens was joined in the blessing by three priests from local Armenian churches, Fr. Krikor Sabounjian, Fr. Vasken Kouzouian and Fr. Arakel Aljalian.

The *khachkar* was donated by the Barsamian family.

Raffi Barsamian '17 spoke eloquently about the important role St. Sebastian's and Fr. Arens have played in his academic and spiritual life. Carson Arevian '26, Karson Bilezerian '25, John Esserian '27, Wes Nahabedian '29, Avi Najarian '25, and Cole Pastore '25 all recited a beautiful poem, "Khachkar," written by Fr. Arens. Head of School Brendan Sullivan remarked, "the *khachkar* speaks volumes about our shared values, about who we want to be as a school. It is a symbol of tradition, a symbol of openness and hope."

Memorializing Regina Najarian P'24, '25

who passed away in June 2022, Sullivan went on, "We feel your presence, we thank



The late Regina Najarian

you for walking with us through this day. Stay close and protect our boys." Fr. Bryan Parrish, Pastor of St. Joseph's, closed out the dedication with a final blessing before

all were invited to a reception in Martin Hall where guests enjoyed a buffet of Armenian delicacies. The *khachkar* now stands in perpetuity in recognition of the longstanding relationship between St. Sebastian's School and the Armenian community. Standing in communion with the Oratory dedicated to Our Lady and the Stations of the Cross Pathway, its placement will invite all to this prayerful space. It is most fitting that this cross is dedicated in honor of Fr. Arens in recognition of his welcoming ecumenical spirit, witnessed by all during his time at St. Sebastian's. Addition-

ally, the plantings surrounding the *khachkar* are dedicated in memory of Regina Najarian P'24'25. Her spiritual presence at this site will be a source of light and purpose for all Arrows, now and in the future. In addition to the Khachkar, the Fr. John Arens Scholarship



The unveiling of the Khachkar at St. Sebastian's school

Fund has been established in honor of Fr. Arens, adding to the school's Endowment, enabling St. Sebastian's to continue to offer need-based financial aid to our families. St. Sebastian's is a Catholic day school for 380 boys in grades 7 through 12.

Donations in Memory of Apet Torosian

The *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* received donations in memory of longtime supporter Apet Torosian.

H. Torosian and family of Belmont donated \$200 to the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator*.

Dr. Simpat Sirinoglu of Watertown donated \$100.

Sebough Setrakian and Nina Setrakian of Shaker Heights, Ohio, donated \$100.



OBITUARY

Ruby (Chorebanian) Baboian

Dedicated to Church, Community

WATERTOWN — Ruby (Chorebanian) Baboian passed away peacefully at home surrounded by her family on October 5, at the age of 97.

Born Yeranouhi Yakout Chorebanian in Newburyport, Mass., on December 16, 1926, to the late Arakel and Arousiag (Habashian) Chorebanian, she changed her name to Ruby as it was easier to pronounce.

Ruby moved numerous times in her life from Newburyport to Lynn, to the South End of Boston, to South Boston, back to Lynn, and finally to Watertown when she married the late Dr. Jacob C. Baboian of Watertown.

Ruby graduated from South Boston High in 1944, attended secretarial school and worked as a secretary for George T. Johnson Company for many years. When she married Dr. Jake, she managed his optometry practice until his retirement. One of her first, and favorite, jobs was working at the original Jordan Marsh store in downtown Boston.

Ruby loved to dance, especially the jitterbug, and dreamed of becoming a dancer, but her father advised her that "nice girls don't dance on the stage."

Ruby grew up attending Holy Trinity Armenian Apostolic Church when it was on Shawmut Avenue in Boston. After marrying Jake, she became deeply involved in the Armenian Protestant churches in Watertown and Belmont, singing in the choir, and advising the youth fellowship. A tireless worker, organizing youth trips and conferences, the door to her home was always open to her "kids."

Ruby's famous chocolate chip cookies became a beloved tradition throughout the East Coast Youth Fellowship and beyond. No conference, car ride, or visit to her home was complete without enjoying Ruby's cookies.

Throughout her life, Ruby's deep faith and loving nature guided her. She believed in giving not just through words but through actions, opening her heart and home to all. Her sense of humor, warm heart and exuberant spirit were felt by all



who knew her.

Ruby is survived by her children: John Baboian and his wife Lisa of Belmont, and June Baboian of Watertown, of whom she was incredibly proud. She was the grandmother to Alex, Jonathan and Christina Baboian, and the sister of the late Ann Devejian. She was "Auntie Ruby" to many, but she was especially close to nieces Audrey Devejian, and Alicia Devejian Wood and her family, whom she loved like daughters.

Being a grandmother was the role she treasured most. She adored her grandchildren, and was proud of each of them not only for their accomplishments, but simply for who they are.

She is also survived by many loving nieces and nephews, and friends whose lives she touched with her boundless generosity and zest for life.

A Memorial Service will be held at First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont on Saturday, October 19 at 11a.m. A Memorial Visitation will be held in the parlor of First Armenian Church on Friday from 5-7pm. Relatives and friends are respectfully invited to attend. Memorial donations may be made in her memory to First Armenian Church.

Nardolillo Funeral Home

Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.

Rhode Island's Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 (401) 942-1220
1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300
www.nardolillo.com

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC

Mark J. Giragosian

Giragosian
FUNERAL HOME

576 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472, Tel: 617-924-0606
www.giragosianfuneralhome.com

ADVERTISE IN THE MIRROR

COMMUNITY NEWS

Tekeyan Cultural Association Holds Successful Convention, Abaka Newspaper Banquet in Montreal

CONVENTION, from page 1

Formal Sessions

Over 40 delegates assembled Saturday morning, October 5 and a rollcall confirmed the participation of representatives of 7 chapters plus TCA Central Board members. The sessions lasted till 4 p.m., with several brief breaks.

TCA Central Board President Dr. Arshavir Gundjian served as the chairman of the convention. He spoke words of welcome, asked for a moment of silence in memory of TCA members who had passed away in the last few years (including former presidents Edmond Azadian and Haroutiun Arzoumanian) and announced the members of the Dikran Simsarian Award and Resolutions Committee (Jack Alexanian of Detroit, Rita Balyozian of Boston, and Noubar Babikian of Montreal), as well as of a nominating committee for Central Board positions (Hagop Vartivarian of New Jersey, Sargis Gavlakian of Boston and Berdj Kokorian of Montreal).

A printed report of CB activities in the 2023-24 period was summarized by Executive Director Aram Arkun. It included events the CB sponsored, legal matters, nu-

in an impressive reversal in the fourth quarter. Consequently, the portfolio both increased in value and also provided the necessary funds for all TCA operations.

Marashlian also reported on financial activities in 2023.

Central Board Assistant Secretary Mihran Toumajan read Bedrosian's report on the Sponsor a Teacher program, which, launched in 2001, is one of the most successful ongoing programs of TCA. Serving as the chairman of the project since its inception, Bedrosian reported that funds raised in 2023 in the US and Canada, were distributed to 350 teachers and workers of the four Tekeyan-sponsored schools in Armenia and the staff of the Tekeyan school which was unfortunately evacuated from Berdзор, Artsakh, in the aftermath of the war of 2020.

Tekeyan chapter representatives then each presented reports on their varied activities, including Rita Balyozian of Boston, Diana Alexanian of Detroit, Raffi Kelechian of Los Angeles, Sevan Deirbadrosian of Metro Los Angeles, Tsolig Moughalian of Montreal, Hilda Hartounian of Greater New York, Siran Oknayan of Pasadena-Glendale, and Vahe Hovsepian of Philadelphia. Central Board member Arto Manoukian of Montreal spoke about the special TCA trip to Egypt in 2024.

The chapters also include various special artistic or creative groups, such as the Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group of Greater New York and at the Pasadena-Glendale Chapter, the Azad Pem Theatrical Group and the Tekeyan Youth Band.

Reports were presented on the maintenance and renovations of the various Tekeyan centers, including the Baikar Building in Watertown, Mass., the Beshgeturian Center in Altadena, Calif., the Tekeyan Center in Montreal, and the Tekeyan Center in Englewood Cliffs, N.J.

The report about the Beshgeturian Center's extensive renovations and income-producing efforts was prepared by Chairman of the Beshgeturian Administrative Body (Khnamagal) Ara Babayan, but as he could not be present, it was read by TCA West Coast Executive Secretary Mayda Kuredjian.

Jack Alexanian announced the Nominations Committee's three candidates for the three one-year-term renewable seats on the TCA Central Board. Ara Babayan of Los Angeles was elected as a new Central Board member,



Unveiling of the investiture photograph of Dr. Arshavir Gundjian at the Tekeyan Center by Montreal Tekeyan Chapter Chairman Noubar Babikian, left, and Dr. Gundjian, with Mrs. Nadia Gundjian further right



Tekeyan delegates gathered around the investiture photograph of Dr. Arshavir Gundjian at the Tekeyan Center of Montreal



Abaka editor Avedis Bakkalian (left) and André A. Morin, deputy of Acadie in the National Assembly of Quebec, at the Tekeyan banquet

merous fundraising and philanthropic programs aimed at helping Armenians in crisis in Syria, Lebanon, Artsakh and Armenia, and the Dr. Noubar Berberian Scholarship program.

The ongoing financial support of the newspapers Azg in Armenia, Baikar, the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, Abaka, Nor Ashkharh of Athens, Greece, and Zartonk of Beirut, represent one of its most significant community services, along with the support of the Prague-based magazine Ozer for the last four years. The CB also sponsored the publication of several books.

Dr. Gundjian spoke about the purchase of an outstanding minority share in the TCA property at 20/3 Goghpati Street in Yerevan, which now means the entire building, serving as offices for the Yerevan representation of the TCA Central Board as well as for the newspaper Azg, is owned by TCA.

As Central Board Treasurer Maro Bedrosian was unable to attend, her report on the status of the TCA portfolio was delivered by Central Board Vice President Kevork Marashlian. In her report, she noted that fears of recession in 2023 were misguided, with a rollercoaster ride ending

while current board members Arto Manoukian of Montreal and Carl Bardakian of Los Angeles were reelected.

Hagop Vartivarian read the various statements of commendation of the Resolutions Committee and after reminiscing about Dikran Simsarian, announced that the TCA chapter winning this year's Simsarian Award, in recognition of its productive activities over the prior year, was the Metro Los Angeles Chapter. Chapter chairman Bardakian expressed his gratitude and noted he and several other chapter members had family connections to Simsarian.

Unveiling Dr. Gundjian's Investiture Photo

After the meetings concluded, the unveiling by TCA Montreal Chapter Chairman Noubar Babikian took place of a photo of the investiture of Dr. Gundjian as a Member of the Order of Canada on October 22, 2023, taken at the official ceremony at Rideau Hall, Ottawa. This is the highest civilian honor in the Canadian Honors System. The citation recognizes his half-century of efforts to lay the foundations of today's Canadian-Armenian community, including the spearheading of the efforts to found the Alex Manoogian School, the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Montreal and its center, and the Diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church of Canada, as well as his service over a decade as vice president of the Armenian General Benevolent Union.

TCA delegates and friends gathered at the unveiling of the photo on the ground floor of the Montreal Tekeyan Center, where Dr. Gundjian gave a moving speech about the early days of the Canadian-Armenian community and his work together with members of the Tekeyan Cultural Association and the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party.



At the meeting of the delegates on October 5

continued on next page



COMMUNITY NEWS



From left, Arden Arapyan, Samuel Keuchkerian, soprano Sasha Djihanian and her young daughter, drummer Sacha Daoud, tenor Manuel Ashekian, saxophonist Samuel Blais, and Tekeyan Cultural Association Montreal Executive Secretary Salpi Margossian



Dr. Arshavir Gundjian speaking at the evening banquet



TCA Montreal Executive Secretary Salpi Margossian



Silva Amadouni, the master of ceremonies for the musical program



From left, Mihran Toumajan, Shahnour Hovsepian, Sevan Deirbadrossian and Carl Bardakian of the Metro Los Angeles Chapter receive the Simsarian Trophy at the banquet

from previous page

Banquet Program

During the evening of October 5, a banquet under the auspices of Bishop Abgar Hovakimyan, the Primate of the Diocese of the Armenian Church of Canada and Ambassador of Armenia to Canada Anahit Harutyunyan at the Tekeyan Center in Montreal celebrated both the 49th

anniversary of the trilingual newspaper *Abaka*, published by TCA, and the TCA Convention. The congratulatory words of the Primate were read by Fr. Komitas Mirzakhanyan, of Holy Cross Armenian Church of Laval, Canada.

TCA Montreal Executive Secretary Salpi Margossian spoke words of welcome to the more than 200 guests who completely filled the Dr. Haroutiun and Sima Arzoumanian Hall. *Abaka* editor Avedis Bakkalian spoke about the role of the Armenian media and *Abaka* in particular while Dr. Gundjian spoke about the origins and significance of *Abaka* for the Canadian-Armenian community as well as the activities of TCA in North America and beyond.

The Simsarian Award trophy was formally presented to the representatives of the TCA Metro Los Angeles chapter by TCA Montreal Chapter Chairman Noubar Babikian in front of the large crowd of guests, while Dr. Hrayr Der Kevorkian bestowed upon Avedis Djihanian a plaque in recognition of his long service to TCA [as well as to the Armenian Democratic Liberal Party]. He had for many years been chairman of the TCA Montreal Chapter as well as an active member, and he also served on the Canadian-Armenian Diocesan Council. Djihanian in particular provided significant financial support towards the renovation of the Berdzor Tekeyan School in Artsakh and founded a scholarship program for Armenians pursuing university education in Armenia.

Several Canadian political figures were present at the banquet, including André A. Morin, deputy of Acadie in the National Assembly of Quebec, Emmanuella Lam-

bropoulos, MP for Saint-Laurent (federal deputy), and Mary Deros, City Councilor of Parc Extension. Sona Lakhoyan Olivier, deputy of Chomedey in the National Assembly of Quebec, could not be present but was represented by Hilda Tursucuyan.

Silva Amadouni served as the master of ceremonies for the musical program. The musical program for the evening was under the artistic direction of Samuel Keuchguerian (who also played kanun during the evening's performances). The combination of traditional Armenian music with jazz stylings made for an entertaining combination, enriched by the beautiful voices of soprano Sasha Djihanian and tenor Manuel Ashekian. Band director Arden Arapyan performed on the piano and provided musical direction, while the other instrumentalists included Alexandre Le Blanc on double bass (contrabass), saxophonist Samuel Blais, and Sacha Daoud as drummer. Aline Iradian was the stage decorator and Jano Arabatlian ran the audio system.

The evening ended with the audience transported to Armenia, standing on their feet to join in singing Edgar Hovhannisyan's *Yerevan, Erebouni*. Reinvigorated, Tekeyan delegates and Central Board members then returned to their homes, ready to continue their mission of promoting Armenian language and culture and maintaining ties with our far-flung diaspora and homeland.



From left, Noubar Babikian, Arsaluys Djihanian, Dr. Hrayr Der Kevorkian, Avedis Djihanian holding his recognition plaque, and Ara Balian

COMMUNITY NEWS

New Members Join Armenian National Institute Academic Council

ANI, from page 6

genocide and is heading the Armenian Genocide Denial Project at the NYU Global Institute for Advanced Study. Dakessian heads the Armenian Diaspora Research Center at Haigazian University in Lebanon and has been the editor of the *Haigazian Armenological Review* and several volumes recording the history and culture of Armenian communities of the Middle East.

Darbinyan is executive director of the Center for Holocaust, Human Rights & Genocide Education at Brookdale Community College and has researched and published on the topic of humanitarianism and Armenian refugees in the Russian Caucasus. Darbinyan earned a doctorate from the Clark University Kaloosdian/Mugar Chair in Modern Armenian History and Armenian Genocide Studies.

Der Mugrdechian, the longtime coordinator of the Armenian Studies Program and Director of the Center for Armenian Studies at Fresno State, is the editor of several volumes on Armenian culture and language and editor of the Armenian Series issued by The Press at California State University, Fresno. Fittante of the University of Helsinki is the author of *Ethnopolitical Entrepreneurs: Outsiders Inside Armenian Los Angeles* and has published a series of articles examining the process of recognition of the Armenian Genocide by European governments. Hovhannisyan, the Director of the Center for Civilization and Cultural Studies at Yerevan State University is an authority in Islamic studies and a former ambassador in the Armenian foreign service.

Ihrig is professor of history and author of

Atatürk in the Nazi Imagination and Justifying Genocide: Germany and the Armenians from Bismarck to Hitler. Marutyan of the Department of Cultural Anthropology at the Institute of Archaeology and Ethnography, National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, and immediate past director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, is the author of *Iconography of Genocide and the Karabagh Movement* and was a research fellow at United States Holocaust Memorial Museum Center for Advanced Holocaust Studies in Washington, DC.

Shemmassian, the director of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University Northridge, is the author of *The Armenians of Musa Dagh: From Obscurity to Genocide Resistance and Fame 1840-1915*. Erna Shirinyan, professor of theology at Yerevan State University, also heads the Department for the Study of Armenian Texts at the Matenadaran, the Mesrop Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts. Tusan is professor of history at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, and is the author of *The British Empire and the Armenian Genocide: Humanitarianism and Imperial Politics from Gladstone to Churchill* and *Smyrna's Ashes: Humanitarianism, Genocide and the Birth of the Middle East*.

Balakian, professor in humanities at Colgate University and Pulitzer prize-winning poet, is the author of *The Burning Tigris: The Armenian Genocide and America's Response* and *Black Dog of Fate* among other publications, translations, and poetry collections.

Melson, professor emeritus of political

science at Purdue University and past president of the International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS), is the author of *Revolution and Genocide: On the Origins of the Armenian Genocide and the Holocaust*. Mouradian, emeritus director of research at the CNRS in Paris and professor at the School of Advanced Studies in Social Sci-

ences (EHESS), among other works is the author of *De Staline à Gorbatchev: histoire d'une république soviétique, l'Arménie* and co-author of *Les Arméniens en France : Du chaos à la reconnaissance* and *Manouchian: Missak et Mélinée Manouchian, deux orphelins du génocide arménien engagés dans la résistance française*.

Armenian Assembly Accepting Scholarships For Summer Internships

INTERNSHIPS, from page 6

In 2003, the Assembly's Summer Internship Program was renamed in honor of Aram and Florence Terjenian and Annie Thomas after the announcement of their pace-setting \$1 million donation to the program.

Partial housing scholarships for the Terjenian-Thomas Summer Internship Program in Washington, D.C. are available to qualified students on a competitive basis. Applications are available on the Assembly's website. Please note applications will remain open for the Terjenian-Thomas Summer Internship Program until November 10, 2024, and Yerevan Summer Internship Program until January 10, 2025.

For more information on the Assembly internship programs or assistance with the application process, contact Programs Director Joseph Piatt in Washington, D.C. via email at jpiatt@aaainc.org.





Tekeyan Cultural Association

Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia

Since its inception in 2001, the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Sponsor a Teacher Program has raised 838,700 dollars and reached out to 7,386 teachers and school staff in Armenia and Artsakh. This year the program continues to support school teachers in Tekeyan Schools in Armenia, as well as teachers who had to flee Artsakh but continue teaching in Armenia's schools, as they educate new generations of children, our future leaders.



YES, I would like to sponsor TCA school teacher(s) in Armenia, as well as teachers who fled Artsakh and continue teaching in Armenia schools, in order to continue helping them work and educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the sponsored teacher/s' name(s) and address(es).

☐ \$240 ☐ \$480 ☐ \$700 ☐ other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association
Memo: Sponsor a Teacher
Mail your check to:
TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Val Verde, Houston, TX 77056



Your donation is tax deductible.



Arts & Culture

Tatev's Bilingual Song Marks Collaboration with Tigran Hamasyan

NEW YORK — Eclectic singer Tatev Yeghiazaryan, who uses only her first name professionally, on October 7 debuted the video for her new song, *Transhumanoids*, a bilingual (English and Armenian), a song that has been in the making for the past 3 years her producer, Campblicated and the jazz pianist Tigran Hamasyan.

According to an article by Janice Onanian McMahon, *Transhumanoids* are beings that operate at more highly evolved levels of bio-technical synthesis, representing the future of human consciousness at its highest potential. The *Transhumanoids* project envisions a world based on the more complex and less-understood sciences of regeneration, preservation, and rejuvenation as opposed to the more mechanistic and formulaic scientific practices that have been productive in more industrial settings; a world in which humanity works in a partner-



Singer Tatev

ship relationship with nature rather than dominant one. This future vision can only be realized via raised levels of consciousnesses through love and music and through sciences that learn from nature, such as biomimicry, microfluidics, and material ecology.

Much of this vision is inspired by realizations of Tatev's near death experience in her youth, Campblicated's continuous experience with medical technology and Dr. Neri Oxman's incredible work. Within this positive framework, technology can be regarded as a gift to mankind rather than its oppressor, as life-enhancer rather than soul-destroyer, and as partner rather than controller.

Tatev is an electric songster, a film composer and performer whose music and voice feel right at home in rock, jazz, soul, Armenian folk, classical and pop. Tatev's name means "Give Wings" in her native Armenian, which inspires her body of work that upholds the liberating prophecy of her name.

A multidisciplinary arts entrepreneur, translator and activist, Tatev was born in post-soviet Armenia in 1987. She immigrated to America in 2003, where she received a full scholarship to NJPAC's Jazz For Teens program, followed by her classical piano, voice and jazz studies at William Paterson University

see TATEV, page 17



Chef Marc Orfaly with his trophy for winning the Great American Seafood Cook Off in New Orleans in 2018.

Chef Marc Orfaly Brings Global Skills to Armenian Food

By Alin K. Gregorian
Mirror-Spectator Staff

BOSTON — Chef Marc Orfaly doesn't need an introduction to any dedicated foody. However, if you have not been to any of the many restaurants whose kitchens he has led since the 1990s, here's a brief list: Pigalle, Marco's, Peking Tom's, the Beehive and ReelHouse.

Orfaly has been nominated for a James Beard Award — the Academy Awards of the cooking world — seven times. In addition, he has been a Food & Wine "Best Chef in America" honoree and "One of the Top Chefs to Watch in the Country" by John Mariani of *Esquire Magazine* and Corby Kummer of *Boston Magazine*.

In an interview this week, he joked, "I am kind of like Susan Lucci. I did win best new chef in 2004 and have been nominated for James Beard seven times. I'm still working on [winning] it."

(Daytime soap opera actress Susan Lucci, of "All My Children," was nominated for an Emmy Award 21 times, winning only once.)

In an interview last week, Orfaly, now the Navy Yard Hospitality Group Culinary Director, which oversees the East Boston restaurant The ReelHouse, spoke about an upcoming passion project.

On October 25 and 26, Orfaly will present Armenian and Armenian-influenced food, at The Kitchen, in Melrose.

Learning from Boston's Best

The Brookline native was born into an Armenian family. It was at home that he learned the basics of what would become his passion: cooking.

Music was another fixture in his home. His mother was a pianist, while his father was an audio technician.

"I got into cooking [because] I grew up in an Armenian household, where a lot of food was going on," he said. "Long before I had any cooking ability or technique, I was really fascinated by the industry. It seemed so intriguing. I figured I could also be creative with cooking and I kind of stuck with that and that's been my story for the past four decades."

Orfaly came of age professionally at a time when chefs like Todd English were putting Boston on the US culinary map. In fact, Orfaly was working in the kitchen of English's revolutionary Olives in Boston's Charlestown neighborhood, which opened in 1989. And he was not the only kitchen hand that would go on to culinary fame.

"It was a really unique time. For instance, at Olives, Todd [English] was still there every day. I and Barbara [Lynch] were line cooks, Paul O'Connell was the sous chef, Annie Cobb was on garde manger. It was an incredible amount of talent in one small restaurant. It doesn't really exist anymore," he explained. "As far as the whole celebrity thing goes, it's nice to be celebrated ... after all the hard work you put in it, but at the end of the time, you're back there, grinding away. It's a very physically demanding career. The best high is when you go into the dining room and you see people oohing and ahing over your food. The '90s were a very exciting time in Boston."

see ORFALY, page 16

Vahan Artsruni's Komitas Concert Project Continues

By Konstantin Petrossian
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN — The concert project Komitas: Music and Creation was conceived by singer and composer Vahan Artsruni in anticipation of the 155th anniversary of Komitas Vardapet. This project has a continuous nature, aiming to present all manifestations of Komitas's musical heritage through various concert programs, as well as the latter's poetry, in a harmonious manner. The project is unique, as it includes the original vocal, vocal-instrumental, piano and choral works of Komitas, along with diverse interpretations of his musical legacy. Komitas's lyrical works are presented in Vahan Artsruni's song cycle "Komitas: Ten Revelations."

In the four different concert programs that started months ago, notable performances were given by Anna Mayilyan, a distinguished artist of Armenia and professor at the Yerevan State Conservatory, who presented the "unheard" folk and spiritual songs of Komitas. The Yerevan String Quartet performed famous arrangements of Komitas's melodies by Sergey Aslamazyan for string quartet.



At the Komitas Chamber Music House in Yerevan

Narek Avagyan, the concertmaster of the Armenian Philharmonic Orchestra and a virtuoso flutist, along with the Armenian flutist Nelli Manukyan, also participated in the concerts as part of Vahan Artsruni's trio.

At the next concert held at the Armenian General Benevolent Union Armenia's auditorium, the KV Art Ensemble, known for performing Baroque and Renaissance music in Armenia, took part. Accompanied by the ensemble, Artsruni's "Komitas: Ten Revelations," based on 10 poems by Komitas, was performed. The music was composed by Artsruni.

The following concert featured a special performance by the Narek Bell Choir from St. James Armenian Church of Evanston, Ill., founded and led by Fr. Hovhan Khoja-Eynatyan. The choir's performance of arrangements of Komitas's spiritual and secular music captivated the audience at the Arno Babajanyan Concert Hall.

The fifth concert of the Komitas: Music and Creation project took place on September 16 at the Komitas

see KOMITAS, page 15



ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian Datian



Zarouhi Sharafian’s Armenian Geragoor

SAN FRANCISCO — Asked what her ultimate Armenian dinner would be, The Armenian Kitchen’s chief cook and food blogger Robyn Kalajian said, “Our ultimate Armenian dinner would start with cheese beoregs and a hefty plate of mezze, including basterma and yalanchi. The main course would include bulgur pilaf, any type of kebab, kufteh, vegetable geragoor, and chopped salad. Finally, dessert would be baklava with Armenian coffee.”

Thanks to Steve Sharafian for this Armenian geragoor recipe (green beans with lamb stew) from Zarouhi Sharafian, his beloved paternal grandmother who passed away in 1999. “This delicious geragoor is a tomato-based string bean stew made with lamb bones, lamb shoulder chops, ground lamb, beef or turkey or even as a vegetarian entrée. Most Middle Eastern stews are prepared the same way and have similar ingredients. The main difference is the vegetable added to the stew. This dish is traditionally served with Armenian rice or bulgur pilaf, and



Steve Sharafian’s beloved grandmother Zarouhi Sharafian (in the yellow suit), with her niece and two young boys in a photo taken in about 1968 at her niece’s house next to St. Vartan’s Church in Oakland. Zarouhi and her husband Frank lived in Oakland. (Photo courtesy Steve Sharafian)

yogurt,” he says.

“To my memory, my grandmother never called this dish fassoulia, just plain geragoor,” he adds. According to Dining in Diaspora, this is a dish where every family has their own variation and favorite way to prepare it, but that’s what makes this dish so special. Here Steve provides some memories behind his grandmother’s dish:

“I grew up eating this dish at my grandparent’s house. Whether served as a week-day supper or as part of an elaborate celebratory meal, the basic ingredients remained the same: lamb, a featured vegetable (usually green beans), onions and tomatoes. Growing up I thought this dish was exclusively Armenian; it is not. Many Mediterranean and Near Eastern countries have similar rustic lamb and vegetable stews with an onion and tomato base. Penelope Casas’s *The Food & Wine of Spain* [1983] has a recipe for Cordero al Chilindrón that pairs red peppers with lamb, onions and tomatoes. Richard Olney’s *Provence, The Beautiful Cookbook* [1993] shares a French version of this dish called Ragoût D’Agneau Aux Artichauts that contains artichokes. Paula Wolfert’s *Mediterranean Grains and Greens* [1998] includes a Tunisian variation that features cactus pads. Each version is a simply seasoned combination of a limited number of regional ingredients.”

“My grandmother made her geragoor with fresh green beans, it was one of her favorite specialties. If she didn’t like her grocer’s green bean selection that day, she’d buy any vegetable that looked the best: leeks, squash, or my favorite, okra (bamia in Armenian). On a rare occasion she used potatoes in the place of vegetables; when she did, she seasoned her geragoor with dried purple basil or rahan,” says Steve. “Although this stew’s vegetables might vary, its meat does not: my grandmother always used lamb shoulder. I’ve tried the dish with leg of lamb and didn’t like the results; I think the leg is too lean for this dish. Although I sometimes cut cubes from a boneless shoulder, typically, I use lamb shoulder blade chops cut widthwise into thirds.”

“If using bone-in shoulder blade chops, remember that small (and often sharp) pieces of bone may turn up in the finished dish,” he says. “Look out for bones. When I have the time, I’ll salt the lamb the night before (using about 2 teaspoons of medium-grained sea salt) and leave the meat uncovered on a cooling rack inside the refrigerator. This step helps the lamb to brown and deepens the meat’s flavor. Remember to cut back on the amount of salt when seasoning the stew to account for the well-salted meat.”

“Don’t skip this dish if tomatoes aren’t in season,” says Steve. “Good-quality canned tomatoes work just as well.” He adds, “I started posting a series on Armenian food to memorialize certain family dishes that, through the passage of time, risked fading away. Ironically, often the simplest fare, like this geragoor, faces the greatest risk of being lost; past generations often fail to memorialize the simplest recipes. I can hear my grandmother now: ‘Why write it down, janig? It’s so simple?’ Yes, it is simple. But wonderfully special in its simplicity and its ability to comfort and create memories - it’s a dish worth memorializing, honoring, and saving.”

- INGREDIENTS:**
- 2 tablespoons olive oil, more to taste
 - 2 lamb shoulder blade chops, each chop cut widthwise into thirds by your butcher, trimmed of excess fat with bones retained
 - 1 large yellow onion, halved then sliced
 - Salt and freshly ground pepper to taste
 - 1 pound fresh green beans, topped and cut in half
 - 4 medium tomatoes (approximately 1 pound), peeled and chopped reserving juice
 - Water as needed
 - Serves 4.

- PREPARATION:**
- Heat oil in a heavy 5 1/2-quart casserole over medium-high heat. Add the lamb and brown meat. Add the sliced onions, season with salt and pepper, and cook until the onions soften. Add the green beans and chopped tomatoes with their juice. Add a little water as necessary, but keep in mind that the onions, beans and tomatoes will give up liquids to form a sauce. After the stew comes to a simmer, cover the casserole and reduce heat to low. Simmer for 45 minutes to 1 hour longer. Adjust seasonings to taste.
- References:
- Armenian National Cuisine at: <https://www.advantour.com/armenia/cuisine.htm>
 - What Makes Armenian Braised Green Beans Unique at: <https://www.tastingtable.com/1092135/what-makes-armenian-braised-green-beans-unique/>
 - Andrew Janjigian’s Ganach Lupia (Armenian Braised Green Beans) at: <https://www.seriousseats.com/fassoulia-armenian-braised-green-beans-5498678>
 - The Armenians Kitchen’s How To Make Fassoulia! (Armenian green beans) video at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iqKyGYt6Khc>
 - Aunt Arpie’s Celery Stew (Geragoor) with Kufteh Balls and Egg-Lemon Sauce at: <https://mirrorspectator.com/2019/09/05/recipe-corner-arpie-vartanesians-celery-stew-geragoor/>
 - Pumpkin Geragoor at: <https://thearmeniankitchen.com/pumpkin-geragoor-pumpkin-casserole/>
 - Bamiayov Zahd (Okra Stew – a recipe from Charles Kasbarian) at: <https://thearmeniankitchen.com/bamiayov-zahd-okra-stew-recipe-from-ck/>
 - Moutfouna (Lamb and Eggplant Stew) from Charles Kasbarian at: <https://thearmeniankitchen.com/sonia-tashjian-celebrates-foods-of/>
 - Go to the Adventures in Armenian Cooking website for more Armenian geragoor or pahnjareghenov mees (Vegetables with Meat) recipes at: http://www.cilicia.com/armo_cb_panch_mees.html
 - For this recipe, see: <http://ibunbury.blogspot.com/search/label/Armenian%20Geragoor>
 - For other Armenian recipes by Steve Sharafian, go to: <https://mirrorspectator.com/?s=steve+sharafian>



ARTS & CULTURE

Books

Chahinian's and Şekeryan's Books are Chosen as Der Mugrdechian SAS Outstanding Book Award

The Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) announced this week that Talar Chahinian's *Stateless: The Politics of the Armenian Language in Exile* (Syracuse University Press, 2023) and Ari Şekeryan's *The Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire: After Genocide, 1918–1923* (Cambridge University Press, 2023) have been awarded this year's Der Mugrdechian SAS Outstanding Book Award. An honorable mention has been awarded to Vartan Matiossian's *The Politics of Naming the Armenian Genocide: Language, History, and 'Medz Yeghern'* (I.B. Tauris, 2022).

Established in 2015, the Der Mugrdechian SAS Outstanding Book Award accepts nominations for works that advance knowledge and scholarship on Armenian society, culture, and history from ancient times to the present.

Prof. Barlow Der Mugrdechian, Director of the Armenian Studies Program at California State University, Fresno and a past President of SAS, has generously offered to sponsor the award for the next five years. The Book Award covered works published in the period of May 1, 2019, to April 30, 2021. Winners will receive a \$1,000

monetary award from SAS and a certificate of recognition.

Stateless focuses on two key moments and places of Western Armenian literary history, post-WWI Paris and post-WW II Beirut, to examine how a stateless language sustained itself in a diasporic setting. In it, by analyzing the public debates, critical writings, and the creative works of writers gathered around the journal *Menk* and writers gathered around the Writers' Association of Syria and Lebanon (WASL), Chahinian comparatively interrogates competing models of literary production and their intersection with Western Armenian's prolonged linguistic vitality.

"It's a great honor to receive this recognition from the SAS, whose community of scholars has helped shape the development of my intellectual trajectory," said Chahinian. "I congratulate my co-winner, Ari Şekeryan, and the recipient of this year's honorable mention, Vartan Matiossian, both of whose works inspire me. I'm grateful to the SAS for continuing to expand the comparative, multidisciplinary scope of the field and for encouraging scholarship that reimagines the limits of Armenian studies."

In *The Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire: After Genocide: 1918–1923*, Şekeryan examines the survival of the post-genocide Armenian community during the underexplored Armistice years, drawing on an extensive collection of Armenian and Ottoman Turkish primary sources. Şekeryan outlines the community's shifting political position and the strategies they employed to endure this turbulent period. By focusing on the Ottoman Armistice, Şekeryan sheds light on an oft-neglected period in history and presents a new case study for understanding the political reactions of ethnic groups to the fall of empires and nation-states.

"I am deeply honored to receive this recognition for my book from the Society of Armenian Studies and the Selection Committee. I extend my heartfelt thanks to Barlow Der Mugrdechian - whose decades of dedicated work in Armenian Studies continue to inspire young scholars - for making this award possible," said Şekeryan. "I am thrilled to share this award with Talar Chahinian, whose significant research on post-genocide Western Armenian literary history enriches our understanding of this period. My work aimed to explore the survival story of the post-genocide Armenian community during the turbulent Armistice years, amidst political turmoil, violence, and the ambitions of the Great Powers. I am glad to be part of a new generation of scholars building on the work of those who have laid the foundation in Armenian Studies."

Vartan Matiossian's *The Politics of Naming the Armenian Genocide: Language, History, and 'Medz Yeghern'* explores the genealogy of the concept of 'Medz Yeghern' ('Great Crime'), drawing upon extensive research based on Armenian sources, neglected in much of the current

The Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire After Genocide, 1918–1923



Ari Şekeryan

Cover of Ari Şekeryan's *The Armenians and the Fall of the Ottoman Empire: After Genocide, 1918–1923*

historiography, as well as other European languages in order to trace the development of the concepts pertaining to mass killing and genocide of Armenians from the ancient to the modern periods. Beginning with an analysis of the term itself, he shows how the politics of its use evolved as Armenians struggled for international recognition of the crime after 1945, in the face of Turkish protest.

"What an honor to chair the selection committee for the SAS Book Award, which was tasked to evaluate such a multidisciplinary and diverse set of submissions traversing national, disciplinary, and linguistic boundaries," said Shushan Karapetian, director of the USC Institute of Armenian Studies. "This is another testament to the ever-widening scope and impact of Armenian Studies scholarship."

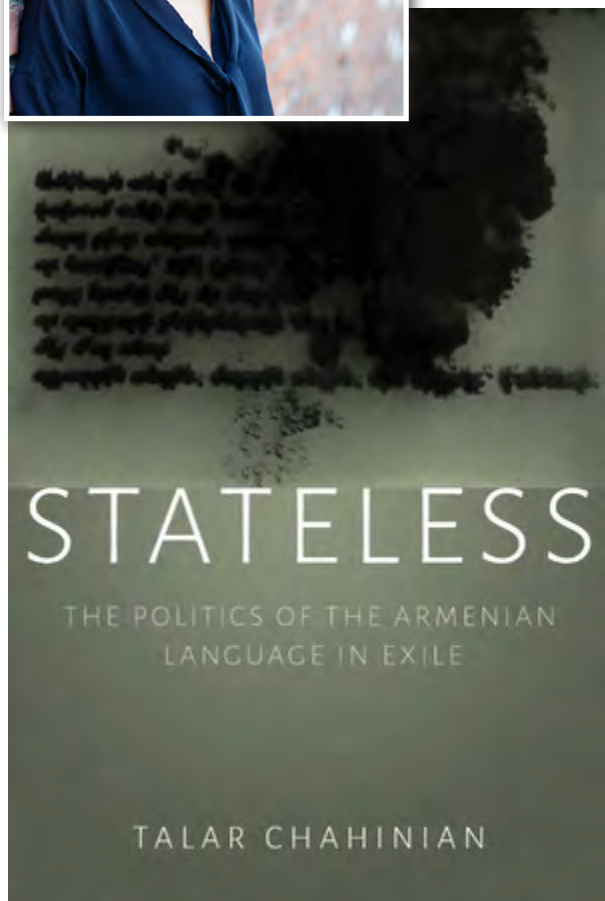
"It is a pleasure to recognize the excellent scholarship of Talar Chahinian and Ari Şekeryan (co-winners of the Der Mugrdechian SAS Outstanding Book Award) and Vartan Matiossian (honorable mention)," said Christina Maranci, the President of the Society for Armenian Studies (SAS) and the holder of the Mashtots Chair in Armenian Studies at Harvard. "We thank all those involved with the selection progress and offer thanks, above all, to Barlow Der Mugrdechian for his generosity in sponsoring this award."

The SAS is an international body, composed of scholars and students, whose aims are to promote the study of Armenian culture and society, including history, language, literature, and social, political, and economic questions; to facilitate the exchange of scholarly information pertaining to Armenian studies around the world; and to sponsor panels and conferences on Armenian studies.

For membership information or more information on the Society for Armenian Studies, please visit the SAS website or follow SAS on Facebook.



Cover of Talar Chahinian's book, *Stateless*



Artsruni's Komitas Project Continues

KOMITAS, from page 13

Chamber Music House in Yerevan. Participants included Artsruni, the Yerevan State Chamber Choir conducted by Kristina Voskanyan, soloist Nelli Kalashyan, and the KV Art Ensemble, which featured Narek Avagyan on flute, Narek Sahakyan on 1st violin, Iveta Korkina on 2nd violin, Hayk Ter-Hovhannisyan on viola, Vahe Danielyan on cello, and Eva Gevorgyan on double bass.

The concert program included Komitas's brilliant choral works and Arts-

runi's "Komitas: Ten Revelations."

The successive choral and vocal-instrumental performances, the high level of musicianship, and the musicians' profound reverence for Komitas and their homage to his creative greatness created an unparalleled aesthetic atmosphere and a spiritual space reflective of Komitas, where the unmatched poetry and music of the Master reigned supreme.

The project's concerts, featuring various soloists and ensembles, are expected to continue until the end of 2024.



Vahan Artsruni performing at the Komitas Chamber Music House, September 16



ARTS & CULTURE

Chef Marc Orfaly Brings Global Skills to Armenian Food

ORFALY, from page 13

The James Beard-winning Barbara Lynch went on to a culinary empire herself, with Menton, Sportello, B&G Oysters, Butcher Shop and No. 9 Park. Just this month she closed all her restaurants after several accusations were publicly lobbed against her for fostering a toxic workplace. Paul O’Connell, for many years, led the French-Cuban standout Chez Henri in Cambridge.

Orfaly graduated from Johnson & Wales University in 1990. After Olives, he headed to Los Angeles for three years, where he worked under master chef Joachim Spical at Patina and later Campanile, working under Mark Peel and Nancy Silverton. After a stint in New York, he returned to Boston in 1999, to work with Lynch at No. 9 Park.

Orfaly opened his first restaurant, Pigalle, in Boston’s Theater District in 2000. He then opened the Italian-leaning Marco in the North End, followed by Peking Tom’s, an Asian-influenced restaurant in Downtown Crossing, before opening the music venue The Beehive.

Home Cook vs Chef

Many people can be decent home cooks, but they cannot be chefs.

“In many ways a chef has to be an excellent home cook, but a home cook doesn’t have to worry about the other 80 percent of things a chef has to worry about,” Orfaly explained, “Sure there is great food involved, but it’s about managing a staff and all the business that goes into it. I always say cooking is the fun part and the rest of it is work.”

Orfaly added that his best dishes are influenced by his home cooking. And the key for good home-cooked meals is “simplify and buy the best ingredients.”

He noted that he appreciates the difficulties of home cooks. “It’s hard cooking at home. I am spoiled in a commercial kitchen. I order things and they come to me. Typically it is not the case at home,” he said.

Marc Orfaly’s Quinoa Tabouleh

FOR THE QUINOA

- ½ quart white quinoa
- 1 quart water
- 1 diced white onion
- 1 tablespoon chopped garlic
- 2 tablespoon dark zaatar
- 2 ounces extra virgin olive oil

In a heavy bottomed, two-quart sauce pan, sauté onion over medium heat with the olive oil. When onions begin to soften, add garlic and zaatar, cook for another two minutes.

Add quinoa and stir into the onions, add water. Bring to a boil, cover and cook over medium heat for approximately 15 minutes, or until pin holes of air appear on top of the grains.

Take off heat and let stand for another five minutes.

Fork and lay quinoa out on a flat cookie tray and let cool.

Add salt and pepper to taste while still hot.

FOR THE TABOULEH:

- 1 cup tomato, finely diced
- 1 cup cucumber, finely diced
- 1 cup green peppers, finely diced
- 2 cups parsley, roughly chopped
- 2 cups mint, roughly chopped
- 2 cups cilantro (optional), roughly chopped
- ½ cup extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tablespoons allspice

Finely dice one cup each tomato, cucumber and green pepper.



Salt and let drain.

Rough chop the greens, and mix with extra virgin olive oil, allspice, and salt and ground white pepper to taste.

Combine cooled quinoa with all other ingredients, mix with dressing, serve chilled or at room temp.

Asked what the most important piece of equipment for a home cook is, he said, it is the hood, “so you can exhaust anything you are cooking out.”

The rest, he said, is simple. “My kitchen at home is a gas stove and a toaster oven.

That’s what I cook with.” He added, however, that when the weather is nice, he prefers to grill his food.

As for ingredients, “I would recommend people to get out of their comfort zones and shop in places that aren’t Star Market and Stop and Shop,” he advised. “Go to the stores in Watertown or to the Asian markets, where you can find really exciting produce, dry goods and spices, to get acclimated and kind of break out of the mold and experiment with things you find in these stores.”

Cooking Style

Orfaly said that his cooking style has evolved since he founded Pigalle in 2000. “When I had my first restaurant, Pigalle, I was more focused on French cuisine, and not that all French cuisine is heavy, but that’s the way I was cooking at that time. I’ve definitely expanded my palette or global outreach to many other cuisines. Now I lean more toward being a pescatarian, heavy on vegetables and grains. As you get older you want to eat better, feel better. That’s definitely been a focus of my cooking as of late.”

With his most recent restaurant, ReelHouse, in East Boston, he has mixed in “Armenian flavors” “Frankensteined with Asian techniques.”

“My cooking ability today is kind of a story line of all the experiences I have had up to this point. Cooking at [the ReelHouse] was more global, Yes we were more fish-centric , but I interwove in the menu a little bit Middle Eastern and Cantonese,” he said, influenced by his travels and upbringing.

He said it is not “a fusion,” but rather a mélange of flavors.

One example he cited was the quinoa pilaf he did at ReelHouse. “I did it like a stir fry. I use Middle Eastern flavors but almost a Chinese technique.”

He added, “You don’t want to deter people

because the food is too esoteric,” but “sneak different flavor you don’t normally seen.”

Another example is the “Tuna Tataki” salad. “My version of it was crusting the tuna in black pepper and zaatar,” he added.

Orfaly just stepped down from the day-to-day operations of ReelHouse in June but is still an equitable partner.

ReelHouse operates under the Navy Yard Hospitality Group. In addition to ReelHouse, other restaurants in the group include ReelHouse Marina Bay, Pier6, the Tall Ship and Mija Cantina.

Armenian Nights

Now, he has decided to try an experiment with Armenian food, offering a two-night pop up in Melrose.

“As of late, I’ve been revisiting a bunch of my grandmother’s recipes with my mom. We’ve been cooking every weekend. Inspired me to put it in a commercial dinner type setting. It’s kind of a prototype to see how it goes. If it is received well, we will move it to a brick and mortar...”

This celebration of his childhood foods will take place at the Kitchen, a cooking studio/classroom in Melrose, on October 25 and 26.

Tickets are available online, for \$150 per person for four courses, mostly family style. There will be a mezze course, with among other items, roasted olives and a honey feta dip, cold grape leaves, octopus shawarma, manti, lamb bulgur dumplings. Dinner will include a stuffed lamb saddle, lentil rice and braised swiss chard.

Dessert will include whole walnuts, baklava and more.

“Many of these foods are on par or better than other ethnic foods,” he said.

For tickets and more information, visit <https://www.thekitchenmelrose.com/service/armenian-dinner-party-night-1>

Erevan Chorale and Orchestra Preparing Christmas Concert

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. —The Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra of Greater Boston are preparing a new program for their annual Christmas concert this year, which will take place on Sunday, December 15, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. The concert will feature soloists Tatev Baroyan (soprano) of Metropolitan Opera, and the New York City Opera, and Rev. Fr. Ghazar Bedrossian (tenor) of Holy Cross Armenian Church in Belmont.



This year the concert will be dedicated to the 155th anniversary of the birthday of Komitas Vardapet.

The Erevan Choral Society, which soon will celebrate its 60th anniversary, invites new singers and members who are willing to take part in the Christmas concert. Rehearsals will begin on Tuesday, October 22, at 7:30 p.m. every Tuesday and Thursday.

For more information, contact either Konstantin Petrossian, musical director of the Choral Society e-mail: Petroskon@aol.com, or Aida Diloyan, corresponding secretary of the chorale email: adiloyan@verizon.net



ARTS & CULTURE

CALENDAR

OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS

CALIFORNIA

OCTOBER 19 — The Massis Guild of Ararat Home will host a Malt Shoppe Diner Fundraiser to benefit Ararat Home, On Saturday, 5 to 10 p.m. Tickets \$65, at Whittier Elks' Lodge, 1362 Whittier Blvd., Whittier.

MASSACHUSETTS

OCTOBER 18-19 — St. James Armenian Church 77th Annual bazaar: Fri. 12-8 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m. – 7 p.m. Delicious Armenian food, mezze, pastries, and baked goods. Silent Auction, Raffle, Children's Activities, Booths and Local Vendors. St. James Armenian Church – 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information please visit www.stjameswatertown.org/bazaar.

OCTOBER 19 — AFA Kef Time is here again! Join the fun at the Armenian Friends of America (AFA) Dance. Open to all. Saturday, 6.30 p.m. to midnight. Featuring the live music of: Leon Janikian, Jason Naroian, John Berberian, Bruce Gigarjian and Bob Raphaelian. Event held at The Armenian Church at Hye Pointe; 1280 Boston Road; Haverhill. Individual tickets \$55; Tables of 8 - \$425. Ticket price includes Dance, Individual Mezza platters, coffee & dessert. Advanced tickets only - no tickets sold at door. There is a capacity limit. Online Ticket Sales at www.Armenianfriendsofamerica.org or call Mary Ann #603-770-3375 or Kathy #978-902-3198.

OCTOBER 20 — "Armenian Vistas: Diasporic Perspectives and Legacies" Concert at Armenian Cultural Foundation, co-sponsored by the Amaras Art Alliance, the Armenian International Women's Association. Works for Cello and Piano by Armenian Composers Komitas, A. Babajanyan, A. Hovhanness, E. Melik-Aslanian, S. Elmas, D. Goolkasian Rahbee in Tribute to composer Dianne Goolkasian Rahbee. Alessandra Pompili, piano; Christina Gullans, cello. Sunday, 4 p.m. Free and open to all. Armenian Cultural Foundation, 441 Mystic Street, Arlington.

OCTOBER 23 — CELEBRATING WHAT UNITES US! Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday at 10:30 a.m. highlights Haiti. Monthly series in collaboration with the City of Boston Office of Immigrant Advancement and Age Friendly Boston RSVP appreciated, hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

OCTOBER 25-27 — Armenian Church at Hye Pointe Church Consecration by His Grace Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan. On Friday, October 25, at 5 p.m. Trnpatsek (Opening of Church Doors), 6:30 p.m. Cocktail Reception, Ermonian Hall. On Saturday, October 26, 3 p.m. Consecration Service, 5 p.m. Gala Banquet, Ermonian Hall. On Sunday, October 27, 9 a.m. Morning Service, 10 a.m. Inaugural Divine Liturgy/Antranig Holy Badarak, Celebrant Fr. Vart Gyozyan, Fellowship following the Divine Liturgy. Due to limited seating capacity, please RSVP for all events by September 21. Armenian Church at Hye Pointe, 1280 Boston Road, Haverhill MA 01835, Tel. (978) 372-9227, email:hyepointearmenianchurch.org

OCTOBER 26 — First Armenian Church FALLFEST! Saturday 12 noon. At the church grounds, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont. Freshly cooked Losh, Lamb, Beef and Chicken Kebabs on our outdoor grills! Combo meals, Vegetarian meals and Pastries like mom made.

NOVEMBER 1 — City of Smile hosts Sip & Savor, a night of wine tastings from around the world. 7-10 p.m., Oakley Country Club, 410 Belmont St., Watertown. All proceeds will be donated to City of Smile- USA, an organization dedicated to treating children in Armenia suffering from cancer. Tickets are \$150 per person. RSVP to Joanne Tashjian (781) 249-6688 or Cynthia Kazanjian (339) 222-9900.

NOVEMBER 4 — Saint James Men's Club, Monday. Guest Speaker Radio Personality Karen Blake, a Boston native who proudly grew up attending St. James. Her voice and energetic personality have been heard on Boston radio for over 35 years! Karen can be heard on Magic 106.7 weekdays from 2-7 p.m. Losh Kebab & Kheyima Dinner 6:15 p.m. Mezze, 7 p.m. Dinner \$20.00 per person, all are welcome. 465 Mount Auburn street, Watertown, Ma. 617-923-8860

NOVEMBER 7 — Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Boston Child Care Committee presents a special evening with joy and laughter at the Wellesley Country Club in Wellesley, MA featuring comedian Kev Orkian to benefit Khoren & Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan. For more info and RSVP visit: <https://amaa.org/bostonchildcare2024/>

NOVEMBER 16 — St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School will celebrate with a 40th Anniversary Gala. Saturday, 6.30 p.m., Hyatt Regency Cambridge. Tribute will be paid to retired longtime Principal Houry Boyamian. Program to feature Dr. Mary Papazian as keynote speaker. Vocalist Angelina Nazarian will perform. MC will be Kristina Ayanian. Cocktail reception to start at 6.30 p.m., followed by dinner and program at 7.30 p.m. Tickets for the event are \$250 (\$150 for alumni and students) available at <https://ssaes.square.site/product/tickets/2?cs=true&cst=custom>

NOVEMBER 17 — GIVING THANKS: TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 2 p.m. Meet & Greet. Sing! Share the Warmth: Bring hat, gloves, scarf for the ABCD Winter Drive. Enjoy light refreshments. RSVP appreciated, hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

DECEMBER 8 — CANDLELIT LABYRINTH WALK: IN PEACE & HARMONY. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 4:45pm. Meet & Greet. Enjoy Hot Chocolate & Holiday Cookies. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

DECEMBER 15 — Rehearsals begin on Tuesday, October 22 at 7.30 p.m., every Thursday and Tuesday, for the Erevan Choral Society and Orchestra of Greater Boston, as they get ready for their annual Christmas concert, which will take place this year on Sunday, December 15, at Holy Trinity Armenian Church in Cambridge. Concert will feature soloists Tatev Baroyan (soprano) of Metropolitan Opera, and the New York City Opera, and Rev. Fr. Ghazar Bedrossian (Tenor) of Holy Cross Armenian Church in Belmont. Dedicated to the 155th anniversary of the birthday of Komitas Vardapet. The Erevan Choral Society, which soon will celebrate its 60th anniversary, invites new singers and members who are willing to take part in the Christmas concert. For more information contact either Konstantin Petrossian, musical director of the Choral Society e-mail: Petroskon@aol.com, or Aida Diloyan, corresponding secretary of the chorale e-mail: adiloyan@verizon.net

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 27 — The 100th Anniversary of the Choir of Saints Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, following the Divine Liturgy (approx. 12 noon), Sunday, Egavian Hall, 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI 02908. Complimentary lunch. Everyone is invited and welcome. Donations are gratefully appreciated.

DECEMBER 13 — Christmas Concert @ Sanctuary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church, 70 Jefferson St., Providence, RI, featuring Armenian Chorale of Rhode Island, Junior Choir, Soloists. 7 p.m. Details to follow.

Send Calendar Items to the Mirror-Spectator: To send calendar items to the Mirror-Spectator, email alin@mirrorspectator.com or alin.gregorian@gmail.com. You can also visit our website, www.mirrorspectator.com, and find the "calendar" section under the heading "More." You can also mail them to the Armenian Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown, MA 02472. All calendar entries must be received by noon on Monday before publication.

Singer Tatev's Bilingual Song Marks Collaboration with Tigran Hamasyan

TATEV, from page 13

Her professional experience includes work at the Brooklyn Academy of Music, leading songwriting and recording workshops at TUMO in Yerevan and over twelve years of live performances throughout the U.S. and abroad. She has performed with Tigran Hamasyan, Grammy-nominated Arto Tunçboyacıan and Benito Gonzalez.

She has performed at Festival Internacional de Jazz de Punta del Este. Tatev was a music ambassador at OneBeat Colombia in 2019 and a YoungArts composer's grant recipient whose vocal arrangement for the "Sounds of Sevan" project became the winner at the London International Motion Pictures Awards.

Tatev's musical influences, belief in the universality of sound, inspirations from fables, languages, enlightened peoples and connections to Mother Nature weave a rich and genre-fluid career path.

Tatev is a provocateur against stagnancy, irrational biases, and patriarchal and imperialist movements around the world. Her unique approach to life employs the senses, language, dance, oral traditions and simple daily acts like cooking as integral parts of expanding the mind. She believes that with curiosity, acceptance and understanding we can work to alleviate individual and universal suffering.

This year, she plans to repatriate to Armenia in November. As she explained, "In 2019 I was invited to teach at TUMO in Yerevan and was so moved and inspired by the kids, by TUMO and how its run and by how creatively and emotionally fulfilled I felt afterwards, that about 8-9 months ago I applied to i-Gorts in Armenia with hopes of being chosen to go to Armenia to help in the educational system in any way I could with creating new curriculums — particularly for schools in the provinces outside

of Yerevan and to help ignite a cultural and creative re-birth. This would be a government fellowship program for just a year and with minimal pay (basically I would be volunteering), but instead, Anna who works for i-Gorts and acts as the connector throughout different institutions in Armenia, showed my resume to the Symphony Orchestra of Yerevan, which is additionally funded by Keron Foundation, and they showed great interest in hiring me for at least 3 years to become their artistic planner and project manager."

She added, about *Transhumanoids*, "Throughout our civilizations — all civilizations across the globe — artists and creatives have been the most dangerous enemies against oppression of all and any kind, which is why during genocides — yes including the Armenian genocide — the writers, composers, astronomers, mathematicians and poets are the first ones to be killed or exiled."





THE ARMENIAN
**MIRROR
SPECTATOR**
— SINCE 1932 —



An ADL Publication

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE
ARMENIAN WEEKLY IN THE
UNITED STATES

EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

MANAGING EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Mark (Mgreditichian) McKertich

CONTRIBUTORS

Christopher Atamian, Artsvi Bakhchinyan,
Florence Avakian, Christine Vartanian
Datian, Dr. Arshavir Gundjian, Philippe
Raffi Kalfayan, Ken Martin, Gerald
Papasian, Benjamin Poghosyan, Suren
Sargsyan, Harut Sassounian, Hagop
Vartivarian

REGIONAL

CORRESPONDENTS

LOS ANGELES: Ani Duzdabanyan-
Manoukian, Kevork Keushkerian,
Michelle Mkhlian
YEREVAN: Raffi Elliott
BERLIN: Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
PARIS: Jean Eckian
SAN FRANCISCO: Kim Bardakian
Demirjian
CAIRO: Maydaa Nadar

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jirair Hovsepiyan, Ken Martin

VIDEO CORRESPONDENT

Haykaram Nahapetyan

The Armenian Mirror-Spectator is
published weekly, except two weeks in
July and the first week of the year, by:

Baikar Association, Inc.

755 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown, MA
02472-1509

Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com

For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

| | |
|-----------------|----------------|
| U.S.A. | \$80 one year |
| Canada | \$125 one year |
| Other Countries | \$200 one year |

© 2014 The Armenian Mirror-Spectator
Periodical Class Postage Paid at Boston,
MA and additional mailing offices.

ISSN 0004-234X

Postmaster: Send address
changes to The Armenian
Mirror-Spectator, 755 Mount
Auburn St.,
Watertown, MA 02472

Other than the Editorial, views
and opinions expressed in this
newspaper do not necessarily
reflect the policies of the
publisher.

COMMENTARY

International Law and Artsakh

By Arunansh B. Goswami

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The phrase “international law” was first coined by the utilitarian philosopher Jeremy Bentham; he defined it as “a collection of rules governing relations between states.” Accordingly to legal philosopher John Austin, international law is no law at all because it lacks coercive sanction; according to him, “the so-called law of nations consists of opinions or sentiments current among nations generally. It therefore is not law properly so called.” This statement of Austin appears more and more relevant when we observe the ongoing violation of human rights of the people of Artsakh in spite of existing treaties and International Court of Justice (ICJ) judgements in place to prevent this abhorrent state of affairs. In this region, realpolitik rather than law is determining the ongoing situation. Diplomatic homilies on upholding “international law” are a regular feature of international summits, but the Machiavellian volt-face follows in matters of actual geopolitics. But the use and importance of international law cannot be overstated; its persuasive value is immense. It’s important that lawyers, attorneys at law, and others alike know what international laws are being violated in Artsakh by Baku.

What Can India Do?

Addressing the recent 19th East Asia Summit, Indian Premier Modi said, “Our approach should be one of developmentalism and not expansionism.”

But what we saw during the invasion of the Armenian enclave of Artsakh by the energy rich and hence diplomatically strong Azerbaijan [oil reserves of 7 billion barrels (1 Mt) and access to the Caspian Sea, unlike landlocked Armenia] and later forced exodus from this region of ethnic Armenians to change regional demography, pursuing a Hobbesian-Machiavellian foreign policy inspired by Turkish-Turanism, was a blatant violation of established tenets of international law and the declared foreign policy goal of the Modi administration.

India has global power aspirations. It is the world’s fifth-largest economy (nominal GDP) that maintains the second-biggest professional army in the world with 1.45 million active military personnel. Even after all this, it will succeed in achieving global power status if it plays a decisive role in solving regional conflicts beyond its immediate neighborhood. The response of India has been less emphatic in the case of the Armenian situation. India can play an important role in ensuring that international law is upheld in Artsakh, and it needs to walk the talk [PM Modi has often talked about India being a land of “Buddha,” not “yuddha” (war)], and start from officially recognizing the Armenian Genocide of the past when Ottomans and Young Turks tried to wipe out Hayastan (Armenia) as a nation from the face of the earth and preventing the ongoing genocide of Armenians and their culture in Artsakh.

Realpolitik versus Law

Before launching the military offensive in 2020, Azerbaijan blockaded the Lachin Corridor; even though the International Court of Justice ordered “unimpeded movement” in both directions Baku conveniently ignored this. Now it is promoting cultural genocide in Artsakh, even though Baku is a party to The Hague Convention of 1954 for the Protection of Cultural Property in the Event of Armed Conflict, and on December 7, 2021 the ICJ indicated in its Order that it “shall take all necessary measures to prevent and punish acts of vandalism and desecration affecting Armenian cultural heritage, including but not limited to churches and other places of worship, monuments, landmarks, cemeteries and artefacts.” In this battle between realpolitik and international law, democracies around the world need to decide on which side they are on.

It is disheartening that only 34 countries in the world as of 2023 have recognized the Armenian Genocide as a historically documented fact, and when a substantial repetition of the same is happening in the present, most countries are showing a lack of will and initiative to protect the human rights of the Armenians. The horrible silence of countries with the rule of law on the violence and displacement of ethnic Armenians and the mistreatment of approximately 240 Armenian prisoners of war and civilian detainees in Azerbaijan raises questions on grand claims of upholding human rights made by these countries primarily from the global north at global forums. This dastardly disregard for the plight of the Armenians is ongoing even though the ICJ ordered Azerbaijan to ‘protect from violence and bodily harm all persons captured in relation to the 2020 conflict who remain in detention.’ New Delhi can make a difference to ensure the accountability of Baku, which has till now blatantly ignored ICJ orders.

Refugee Crisis

According to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), following the escalation of a decades-long conflict in the region at the end of September 2023, more than 100,000 refugees were forced to flee from their homes to Armenia. Battered refugees from Artsakh in Yerevan are witnesses to the horror unleashed by the Azeris. To get the answer to a profoundly important question, that is, is Baku doing genocide of ethnic Armenians in Artsakh? Readers should read the Genocide Convention of 1948; according to Article 2 of the same, “causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of the group” constitutes genocide when “committed with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial, or religious group.”

International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights Article 7 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights provides: “No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment.” Article 4(2) states that there can be no derogation from Article 7. According to an investigation by Human Rights Watch, Azerbaijani forces abused Armenian prisoners of war (POWs) from the 2020 Artsakh conflict, subjecting them to cruel and degrading treatment and torture either when they were captured, during their transfer, or while in custody at various detention facilities.

The moot question is, What is the international community doing? Organizing the 29th annual UN climate conference in Baku (Azerbaijan) from November 11 to 22, 2024, is like rubbing salt on the wounds of the victims of Azeri aggression.

The International Court stated in the Barcelona Traction case that there existed an essential distinction between the obligations of a state towards the international community as a whole and those arising vis-à-vis another state in the field of diplomatic protection. By their very nature, the former concerned all states, and all states can be held to have a legal interest in their protection; they are obligations erga omnes (towards all). Examples of such obligations included the outlawing of aggression and genocide, the protection from slavery and racial discrimination, and the prohibition of torture.

Further, the International Court in the East Timor case stressed that the right of peoples to self-determination “has an erga omnes character,” while reiterating in the Genocide Convention (Bosnia v. Serbia) case that the rights and obligations enshrined in the Convention are rights and obligations erga omnes.

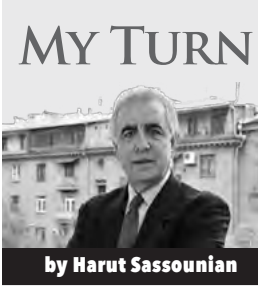
Conclusion

The aggravation of conflicts in several parts of the world is primarily because of the less than needed response of the United Nations to enforce international law in conflict zones. People of Artsakh are waiting for the countries in both the global north and south to come together to protect their human rights. India should take forward steps to show its geopolitical power by officially recognizing Armenian genocide and also ensuring that the present Armenian refugees get justice. Anatole France wrote in 1916, “Armenia is dying, but it will survive. The little blood that is left is precious blood that will give birth to a heroic generation. A nation that does not want to die does not die.” This author hopes that countries around the world will come together to protect the human rights of the people of Artsakh.

(Attorney Arunansh B. Goswami is also a historian and visiting fellow at the Orbeli Analytical Research Center, an initiative of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.)



COMMENTARY



MY TURN

Baku Hires PR Firm for \$4.7 Million to Cleanse Image Before Climate Summit

Azerbaijan’s dictatorial and corrupt government is paying \$4.7 million to a US PR firm in order to whitenash its tarnished image prior to hosting the prestigious COP29 international conference in Baku this November.

In February, Azerbaijan hired the American public relations firm, Teneo Strategy, to make “the warring petrostate look like a Mother Teresa,” according to Nick Cleveland-Stout who wrote in ResponsibleStatecraft.org an article titled, “How Azerbaijan is ‘peacewashing’ its image ahead of COP29; Baku is hosting the climate summit in November with some help from a high-priced PR firm.”

To earn its excessive pay, Teneo contacted “144 journalists in 88 different global media outlets some 500 times to promote Azerbaijan’s COP29 agenda.... In just one day, the PR firm ... treated three journalists to dinner at a five-star hotel restaurant in Nagorno-Karabakh during a media forum. The very next day, one of them celebrated Azerbaijan’s newly established control of the region in an article published in Pakistan. A few weeks later, he tweeted that Azerbaijan is ‘lucky to have such a leader’ in President Ilham Aliyev.”

An Azerbaijani official announced that his country had hired Teneo to “establish the COP29’s communications function, including narrative development, initial content development, communications and engagement campaign planning, issues management, organizational development, establishing media relations capability, and media training.” Nick Cleveland-Stout reported that “At least five Teneo executives are always on the ground in Baku -- racking up a tab of \$350,000 on airfare and hotels to date.”

Hikmat Hajiyeu, President Aliyev’s top advisor, shamelessly announced a “COP29 Truce,” meaning that Azerbaijan is calling on all warring parties in the world to declare a ceasefire during the November conference. Such a deceitful announcement is being made by a country whose leader has been issuing repeated threats to invade Armenia. This reminds us of the biblical admonition: “Physician, heal thyself!”

Cleveland-Stout wrote: “Azerbaijan has become notorious for flaunting its oil wealth to court foreign officials, lawmakers, and journalists with gifts, free flights, and luxury hotels, dubbed ‘caviar diplomacy’.... According to a trip itinerary obtained by RS [Responsible Statecraft] via a Freedom of Access Act Request, state lawmakers from Maine spent nine days in Azerbaijan in May with flights, food, and lodging paid for by the State Committee on Work with Diaspora of the Republic of Azerbaijan, the same agency that hosted [NY Mayor Eric] Adams’ aides. Part of the itinerary included two days learning about ‘new development after liberation from occupation’ in Nagorno-Kara-

bakh. ‘Guess I should locate my passport. I am very excited!’ wrote State Representative Jill Duson in response to the invitation. In June, Azerbaijan’s embassy in Washington even hired former Rep. Chris Stewart (R-Utah) in part to coordinate congressional delegation visits to Azerbaijan.”

Furthermore, Nick Cleveland-Stout mentioned that Azerbaijan had hired another PR company, “The Friedlander Group, a firm retained by Azerbaijan’s foreign ministry, [which] is leading the charge on Capitol Hill in Washington. An email obtained by RS shows that the firm sent an email on September 23 to members of Congress asking them not to sign onto a congressional letter calling for Baku to release Armenian prisoners ahead of COP29.” The firm’s CEO, Ezra Friedlander, wrote to members of Congress “we owe Azerbaijan praise, an apology and an open hand.”

Returning to the PR firm, Teneo, Cleveland-Stout reported that: “When Azerbaijan flew out some 300 foreign journalists to the newly-controlled Nagorno-Karabakh region for a media forum in July, Teneo held meetings and hosted expensive dinners — during which it discussed interviews with Azerbaijan’s COP leadership team.”

The RS reporter wrote that: “Three days after meeting with Teneo, the influential Indian newspaper, The Hindu, published an article titled “Climate conference in November to emphasize ‘peace’ and ‘truce.’” The firm also “facilitated a New York Times article featuring [Mukhtar] Babayev [COP’s president] in Azerbaijan that was based in part on a trip to Nagorno-Karabakh.”

Teneo has assigned a 17-person team to the pro-Azeri PR task. Azerbaijan’s officials are very pleased by the propaganda Teneo is doing for their country. Babayev told Azeri TV that “the government’s media strategy to change international perceptions of Azerbaijan is a success story, including its ‘restoration of territorial integrity,’ referring to its offensive in Nagorno-Karabakh. Without mentioning Teneo by name, he credited a new media team ‘consisting of serious specialists’.... Thanks to the work of this professional team, there has not been a week this year when we have not provided information and made statements to international media.... Now they all understand and see the strength of our country.”

The most unfortunate issue is that Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is the one who allowed Azerbaijan to host the conference by lifting Armenia’s veto in return for the release of 32 Armenian prisoners of war in exchange for two Azeri murderers who penetrated Armenia’s border in 2023 and killed an innocent Armenian worker.

While I welcome the return of the 32 Armenian prisoners, I believe that Pashinyan should have bargained for Azerbaijan’s release of all Armenian prisoners of war and the eight Artsakh political hostages held in Baku. President Aliyev was so obsessed with hosting the prestigious UN conference in Azerbaijan that he would have agreed to such a comprehensive deal.

If Pashinyan had made such a deal, Armenians and sympathetic non-Armenians around the world would not have needed to work so hard to pressure Azerbaijan to release all the Armenian detainees prior to the November conference.

Israeli Invasion Of Lebanon and The Ghosts of 1982

By Vicken Cheterian

In the summer of 1982 Israel launched what it called “Operation Peace for Galilee” and invaded Lebanon. Its aim was to liquidate the PLO. The Israeli army occupied Beirut and chased away the Palestinian guerillas from its southern suburbs. It was the summer of Sabra and Shatila massacres, when Israeli soldiers surrounded the two Palestinian camps, brought in Right-wing Lebanese Christians militias who for three days butchered hundreds of Palestinian civilians. How many died that summer we do not know for sure, but it could be as high as twenty thousand. In the summer of 1982 Hezbollah did not even exist.

It was a calm afternoon in that summer of 1982 when suddenly an explosion shook my apartment. I heard from neighbors who had come out to their balconies that a building was destroyed in an airstrike, near the Sanayeh gardens, few hundred meters from our street. A curious adolescent back then, I went to see the place of bombing to see the roof floor of what once a ten-story building was had come down to the ground and now was sitting on a heap of debris. The crowd that had gathered there were murmuring that Yasser Arafat was visiting the building that was full of Palestinian refugee families, and that the leader of the Palestine Liberation Organization (PLO) had left the building only fifteen minutes before the attack. The residents of the building, over a hundred people, perished in the bombing.

In the summer of 1982 Israel launched what it called “Operation Peace for Galilee” and invaded Lebanon. Its aim was to liquidate the PLO. The Israeli army occupied Beirut and chased away the Palestinian guerillas from its southern suburbs. It was the summer of Sabra and Shatila massacres, when Israeli soldiers surrounded the two Palestinian camps, brought in Right-wing Lebanese Christians militias who for three days butchered hundreds of Palestinian civilians.

How many died that summer we do not know for sure, but it could be as high as twenty thousand.

In the summer of 1982 Hezbollah did not even exist. Israel was fighting largely secular, nationalist Fatah, and Marxist Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine (PFLP) led by none other than George Habash, a medical doctor turned guerilla leader.

Several hundred Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) of Iran were sent to Lebanon to support the Palestinian guerillas fight the invasion. They themselves did not do much fighting but instead setup training camps in the Bekaa Valley and formed militants, which later became known as the Party of God, of Hizballah.

A decade later, in 1993 Israeli leader Yitzhak Rabin shook hands with Yasser Arafat and signed the Oslo Accords, a peace agreement that promised self-rule to the Palestinians.

But the Oslo Accords were never implemented; two years after the accords were signed, a Jewish extremist assassinated Rabin, and the killer eventually won: instead of Oslo peace, now Israeli leaders wanted “security” and only for themselves, at the cost of Palestinian security. In the mid-1990’s massive colonization of Palestinian territories in the West Bank started. In 2005, Israel withdrew from Gaza Strip but kept it under its strict control, making the region the biggest “open prison” in the world. All this accompanied with humiliation of Palestinians in their daily life, and a high dose of daily violence exercised by the army of occupation or by settlers.

Back in Lebanon, Hizballah emerged as the main force of resistant against foreign occupation. They were behind the bombing of the 1983 Marines barracks bombing that killed 241 US soldiers, and 58 French paratroopers in

Beirut, forcing them to depart from Lebanon.

Hizballah laid its roots within the sectarian cracks of Lebanese body politics and deepened it. First, it attacked its secular rivals such as the Lebanese Communist Party (LCP), assassinated its leaders, trade-union activists, and intellectual figures — such as the philosopher Mahdi Amel. It also eliminated the LCP led National Resistance Front, therefore monopolizing anti-Israeli resistance. Hizballah became the main forces mobilizing and representing Lebanese Shiite population.

Hizballah’s success in driving the Israeli occupation out of Lebanon in the year 2000 was a source of pride for the Lebanese. The party had transformed the poorest of the Lebanese communities into an efficient fighting force. Yet, this came at a high price: the “Party of God” was totally dependent on external — Iranian — funding, arms, and therefore orders. This was evident in the 2006 war when Hizballah provoked Israel, and in the following 33-days Israeli massive bombardment devastated the Dahiye — the Shiite inhabited southern suburbs of Beirut.

Hezbollah in 2006 is not the same as in 2024. In between, the Shiite party went to war in Syria, to save the regime of Bashar Asad from a popular rebellion that had become violent, Islamist, and sectarian. By fighting in Syria, in an environment that was not its own, the party exposed itself to Israeli espionage, both by data mining and by infiltrations. For years Israel was preparing itself to fight Hezbollah as well as Iranian Revolutionary Guards, and in a series of dramatic strikes decapitation of Hezbollah leadership, including its long-term leader, Hassan Nasrallah.

But if Israel thinks that it can achieve “security” on its northern border by committing massacres in Lebanon, by turning Beirut suburbs into another Gaza, it’s déjà vu: forty-two years ago, Israel destroyed a secular PLO but, in its ashes, a more radical, Islamist Hizballah was created.

No one in the Middle East believed in the “end of history”. Rather, history continuously repeats itself, like a broken record. Israel is burning down Lebanon yet again. But it will neither achieve peace, nor security.

(This commentary originally appeared in the Istanbul publication *Agos* on October 8.)



Daron Acemoglu Among Trio of Nobel Laureates In Economics

NOBEL, from page 1

The long-term research collaboration between Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson, which extends back for more than two decades, has empirically demonstrated that democracies, which hold to the rule of law and provide individual rights, have spurred greater economic activity over the last 500 years.

"I am just amazed and absolutely delighted," Acemoglu told MIT News this morning, about receiving the Nobel Prize. Separately, Johnson told MIT News he was "surprised and delighted" by the announcement.

MIT President Sally Kornbluth congratulated both professors at an Institute press conference this morning, saying that Acemoglu and Johnson "reflect a kind of MIT ideal" in terms of the excellence and rigor of their work and their commitment to collaboration. Their research, Kornbluth added, represents "a very MIT interest in making a positive impact in the real world."

In their work, Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson make a distinction between "inclusive" political governments, which extend political liberties and property rights as broadly as possible while enforcing laws and providing public infrastructure, with "extractive" political systems, where power is wielded by a small elite.

Overall, the scholars have found, inclusive governments experience the greatest growth in the long run. By contrast, countries with extractive governments either fail to generate broad-based growth or see their growth wither away after short bursts of economic expansion.

More specifically, because economic growth depends heavily on widespread technological innovation, such advances are only sustained when and where countries promote an array of individual rights, including property rights, giving more people the incentive to invent things. Elites may resist innovation, change and growth to hold on to power, but without the rule of law and a stable set of rights, innovation

and growth stall.

"Both political and economic inclusion matter and they are synergistic," Acemoglu said during the MIT press conference.

The scholarship of Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson has often been historically grounded, using the varying introduction of inclusive institutions, including the rule of law and property rights, to analyze their effects on growth.

As Acemoglu told MIT News, the scholars have used history "as a kind of lab, to understand how different institutional trajectories have different long-term effects on economic growth."

For his part, Johnson said about the prize, "I hope it encourages people to think carefully about history. History matters." That does not mean that the past is all-determinative, he added, but rather, it is essential to understand the crucial historical factors that shape the development of nations.

In a related line of research cited by the Swedish Royal Academy of Sciences, Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson have helped build models to account for political changes in many countries, analyzing the factors that shape historical transitions of government.

Acemoglu is an Institute Professor at MIT. He has also made notable contributions to labor economics by examining the relationship between skills and wages and the effects of automation on employment and growth. Additionally, he has published influential papers on the characteristics of industrial networks and their large-scale implications for economies.

A native of Turkey, Acemoglu received his BA in 1989 from the University of York, in England. He earned his master's degree in 1990 and his PhD in 1992, both from the London School of Economics. He joined the MIT faculty in 1993 and has remained at the Institute ever since. Currently a professor in MIT's Department of Economics, an affiliate at the MIT Sloan School of Management and a core member of the Institute for Data, Systems and Society, Ac-

emoglu has authored or co-authored over 120 peer-reviewed papers and published four books. He has also advised over 60 PhD students at MIT.

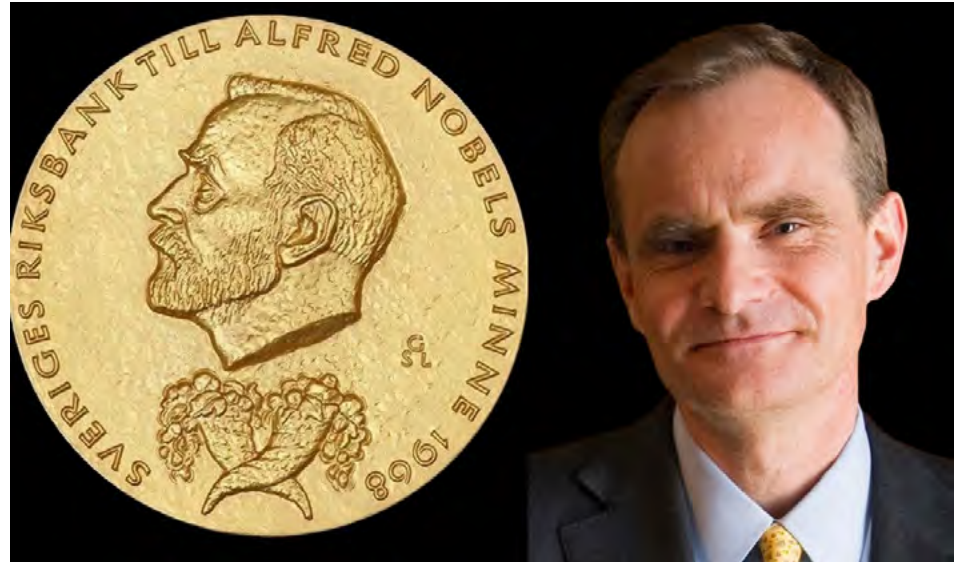
"MIT has been a wonderful environment for me," Acemoglu told MIT News. "It's an intellectually rich place and an intellectually honest place. I couldn't ask for a better institution."

Johnson is the Ronald A. Kurtz Professor of Entrepreneurship at MIT Sloan. He has also written extensively about a broad range of additional topics, including development issues, the finance sector and regulation,

research and innovation in the U.S.

Gruber, as head of the MIT Department of Economics, praised both scholars for their accomplishments.

"Daron Acemoglu is the economists' economist," Gruber said. "Daron is a throwback as an expert across a broad swath of fields, mastering topics from political economy to macroeconomics to labor economics — and he could have won Nobels in any of them. Yet perhaps Daron's most lasting contribution is his essential work on how institutions determine economic growth. This work fundamentally changed



Simon Johnson

fiscal policy and the ways technology can either enhance or restrict broad prosperity.

A native of England, Johnson received his BA in economics and politics from Oxford University, an MA in economics from the University of Manchester and his PhD in economics from MIT in 1989. From 2007 to 2008, Johnson was chief economist of the International Monetary Fund.

"I think of MIT as my intellectual home," Johnson told MIT News. "I am immensely grateful to the Institute, which has a special and creative atmosphere of rigorous problem-solving."

Acemoglu and Robinson first published papers on the topic in 2000. The trio of Acemoglu, Johnson and Robinson published their first joint study in 2001, an influential paper in the *American Economic Review* detailing their empirical findings. Acemoglu and Robinson published their first co-authored book on the subject, "Economic Origins of Dictatorship and Democracy," in 2006.

Acemoglu and Robinson are co-authors of the prominent book *Why Nations Fail*, from 2012, which also synthesized much of the trio's research about political institutions and growth.

Acemoglu and Robinson's subsequent book, *The Narrow Corridor*, published in 2019, examined the historical development of rights and liberties in nation-states. They make the case that political liberty does not have a universal template, but stems from social struggle. As Acemoglu said in 2019, it comes from the "messy process of society mobilizing, people defending their own liberties and actively setting constraints on how rules and behaviors are imposed on them."

Acemoglu and Johnson are co-authors of the 2023 book *Power and Progress: Our 1,000-Year Struggle over Technology and Prosperity*, in which they examine artificial intelligence in light of other historical battles for the economic benefits of technological innovation.

Johnson is also co-author of *13 Bankers* (2010), with James Kwak, an examination of U.S. regulation of the finance sector and *Jump-Starting America* (2021), co-authored with MIT economist Jonathan Gruber, a call for more investment in scientific

the field of political economy and will be an enduring legacy that forever shapes our thinking about why nations succeed — and fail. At MIT, we recognize Daron not just as an epic scholar but as an epic colleague. Despite being an Institute Professor who is freed from departmental responsibilities, he teaches many courses every year and advises a huge share of our graduate student body."

About Johnson, Gruber said: "Simon Johnson is an amazing economist, a terrific co-author and a wonderful person. No one I know is better at translating the esoteric insights of our field into the type of concise explanations that bring economics to the attention of the public and policymakers. Simon doesn't just do the fundamental research that changes how the profession thinks about essential issues — he speaks to the hearts and minds of those who need to hear that message."

Agustin Rayo, dean of MIT's School of Humanities, Arts and Social Sciences, home to the Department of Economics, heralded today's Nobel Prize as well.

"This award is deeply deserved," Rayo said. "Daron is the sort of economist who shifts the way you see the world. He is an extraordinary example of the transformative work that is generated by MIT's Department of Economics."

"All of us at MIT Sloan are very proud of Simon Johnson and Daron Acemoglu's accomplishments," said Georgia Perakis, the interim John C. Head III Dean of MIT Sloan. "Their work with Professor Robinson is important in understanding prosperity in societies and provides valuable lessons for us all during this time in the world. Their scholarship is a clear example of work that has meaningful impact. I share my heartiest congratulations with both Simon and Daron on this incredible honor."

Previously, eight people have won the award while serving on the MIT faculty: Paul Samuelson (1970), Franco Modigliani (1985), Robert Solow (1987), Peter Diamond (2010), Bengt Holmström (2016), Abhijit Banerjee and Esther Duflo (2019) and Josh Angrist (2021). Through 2022, 13 MIT alumni have won the Nobel Prize in economics; eight former faculty have also won the award.

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH
77th Annual
BAZAAR

FRI, OCTOBER 18, 2024
 12 – 8 PM

SAT, OCTOBER 19, 2024
 11 AM – 7 PM
(KITCHEN OPENS AT 12 PM)

DELICIOUS ARMENIAN FOOD
 Shish, Chicken and Losh Kebab | Imam Bayeldi | Eetch Kheyima (available 12-2pm & 4-7pm) | Mezze & More

FABULOUS DELICACIES AND PASTRIES
 Boereg | Manti | Yalanchi | Porov Kufte | Tourshi Choreg | Khadaif | Baklava | Tahin Hatz | Simit & More

BOOTHS AND VENDORS
 Armenian Vendor & Local Artisans | St. James Craft Booth | Sunday School Bake Sale | Children's Activities

ONLINE SILENT AUCTION
 Visit [AUCTRIA.EVENTS/STJAMES](https://auctria.events/stjames) to register.
 Multiple Items! Artwork, jewelry, services, experiences, and more.
 Items will be on display at the Bazaar. Bidding will be online-only.
 Online bidding begins at 9 am on Thurs, Oct. 17 and ends at 9 pm on Sun, Oct. 20.

\$100 RAFFLE
 \$5,000, \$1,000, \$750 and three \$500 prizes!
 Drawing will take place Saturday, October 19th.

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE

[WWW.STJAMESWATERTOWN.ORG/BAZAAR](https://www.stjameswatertown.org/bazaar)

ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH
 465 MOUNT AUBURN ST. WATERTOWN, MA | (617) 923-8860 | INFO@STHAGOP.COM