

Azerbaijani Policy Expert Visits Yerevan as Part of NATO Event

By Arshaluys Barseghyan

The deputy director of the Baku-based Topchubashov Centre, Murad Muradov, has visited Armenia to participate in the NATO Parliamentary Assembly’s 108th Rose-Rorth seminar.

Muradov arrived in Yerevan ahead of the seminar’s kick-off on Monday, September 22, which also saw delegations from both Turkey and Azerbaijan visiting Armenia’s capital. Armenia last hosted the event in 2015.

While in Yerevan, during a press briefing, Muradov reiterated Azerbaijan’s official position that the “only remaining barrier to a full peace treaty and normalization” is the Armenian Constitution. He suggested that Armenia’s Declaration of Independence, “creates potential legal grounds for [...] reconsidering the peace agreement.”

The Declaration of Independence referenced in the constitution alludes to a joint



Murad Muradov, the deputy director of the Baku-based Topchubashov Centre (screengrab)

statement made by Soviet Armenia’s Supreme Council and the Nagorno-Karabakh National Council on their “reunification.”

Azerbaijani officials, including President Ilham Aliyev, have repeatedly stated that Armenia’s constitution contains territorial claims against Azerbaijan, demanding that it be changed.

Armenia has officially expressed its intention to change the constitution; however, it insists that it would not be doing so based on Azerbaijan’s demands.

Most recently, on September 19, the ruling Civil Contract party adopted a declaration expressing its intention to establish the “Fourth Republic of Armenia” should it win the 2026 parliamentary elections. As part of this, the party also intends to adopt a new constitution through a national referendum.

During his visit to Yerevan, Muradov claimed that the Azerbaijani constitution does not contain any territorial claims against Armenia, and that the ‘western Azerbaijan’ narratives does not either, see NATO, page 3

Buenos Aires Celebrates 50th Anniversary of *Sardarabad* Newspaper

BUENOS AIRES — On Monday, September 8, the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Argentina opened its doors to host an evening filled with emotion, memory, and hope for the future: the reception celebrating the 50th anniversary of the *Sardarabad* daily newspaper.

The gathering brought together a wide array of representatives of Armenian institutions, diplomatic authorities, religious leaders, collaborators, readers, and friends, who wished to be present at this historic moment for Armenian community journalism in Argentina.

The preceding Sunday, on September 7, Bishop Aren Shaheenian, Primate of the Armenian Apostolic Church for Argentina and Chile, presented Sergio and Susana Nahabetian with a gontag or encyclical from Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II commemorating the anniversary. Special prayers were also given that day at the St. Gregory the Illuminator Cathedral in Buenos Aires for the members of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of Argentina and Sardarabad staff who have passed away.



Ruzanna Azoyan speaking, with Sergio Nahabetian

see SARDARABAD, page 4



Cutting the special 50th anniversary cake

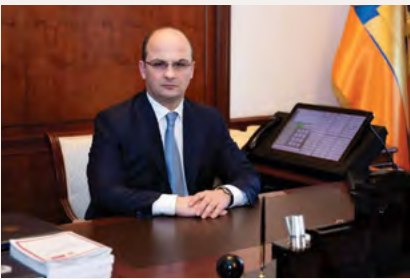
Captives’ Relatives Seek Meeting With Armenian Official After His Trip To Baku

By Ruzanna Stepanian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Relatives of Armenian prisoners held in Azerbaijan want to meet with the head of Armenia’s National Security Service (NSS), Andranik Simonyan, following his weekend visit to Baku, one of them said on Monday, September 22.

The declared purpose of the unprecedented visit was to attend an international conference organized there by Azerbaijan’s State Security Service.

Simonyan flew to Baku despite the



Andranik Simonyan

Azerbaijani authorities’ continuing refusal to release at least 23 Armenian prisoners, including eight former leaders of Nagorno-Karabakh, held

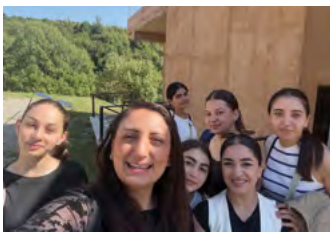
by them. He also heads an Armenian interagency commission on prisoners and missing persons.

Some relatives of the captives hoped that he will accelerate their release or at least collect more information about their health and prison conditions.

“We expected him to bring some news to us,” one of them told RFE/RL’s Armenian Service.

“We don’t know anything about what they [the Armenian authorities] are doing,” said the woman, who did not want to be identified. “They come see CAPTIVES, page 2

ARMENIA
German-Armenian Youth Build Bridges In Gyumri through Camp



CALIFORNIA
FEMINNO Participates in Glendale Tech Week



SCOTLAND
Armenian Performers at Edinburgh’s 2025 Fringe Festival





ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

Minister Calls for Expert Involvement In Genocide Memorial Renovation

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Minister of Education, Science, Culture, and Sport Zhan-na Andriasyan paid another visit to the Armenian Genocide Memorial and Museum-Institute on September 23 to examine the ongoing renovation efforts. She was accompanied by ministry secretary general Hasmik Hakobyan.

Andriasyan was briefed on existing problems and emphasized the importance of involving professionals to ensure proper restoration and maintenance of the memorial complex. She underlined that specialists must work consistently to guarantee both high-quality results and compliance with the established schedule.

She conducted a similar visit on September 16, when contractors presented updates on pillar renovation, carried out in line with approved project solutions.

Earlier, historian Hayk Demoyan argued that the renovation had caused damage to the memorial. Authorities cited drainage issues as the main reason for the works.

EU Commissioner For Enlargement, Armenian Minister of Internal Affairs Meet

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenia's Minister of Internal Affairs, Arpine Sargsyan, met with European Commissioner for Enlargement, Marta Kos on September 22.

Sargsyan praised the close cooperation with the EU, which has been continuously developing and encompassing new areas, the ministry said in a press release.

Sargsyan, who serves as Armenia's chief negotiator, highlighted the work of the EU missions that visited Armenia, noting that their efforts would positively impact the course of the process. She provided details on the introduction of the biometric system, as well as the Armenian government's steps in border control, the reintegration of displaced persons, and migration policy.

Kos emphasized the ongoing reforms within the Ministry of Internal Affairs and reiterated the EU's continuous support. She highlighted the EU's support of over 200 million euros, which will cover several areas of cooperation with Armenia, including the EU visa liberalization process.

Kos praised the Ministry's role in the dialogue and stated that the Action Plan is now in its final stages.

Sargsyan expressed her gratitude for the AEGIS program, which involves a 4.5-million-euro investment for the modernization of the Rescue Service and Police.

Both parties reaffirmed their readiness to continue and expand cooperation, as well as to work jointly towards EU visa liberalization.

Armenian Government Ignores Second Anniversary of Karabakh's Fall

By Astghik Bedevian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Armenian opposition figures and Nagorno-Karabakh's exiled leaders visited a military cemetery in Yerevan on Friday, September 19, on the second anniversary of an Azerbaijani offensive that restored Baku's full control over Karabakh and displaced its ethnic Armenian population.

The Armenian government did not organize any ceremonies on the occasion. Nor did Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan or other government officials make public statements on it.

Instead, Pashinyan posted on his Facebook page an Armenian pop song from the 1980s to show followers his "nice start to the workday." Later in the day, he attended an awards ceremony held at the presidential palace in Yerevan ahead of Armenia's independence holiday.

Azerbaijan launched the offensive in



A refugee boy from Nagorno-Karabakh waits upon his arrival at a temporary accommodation center in Goris, September 25, 2023

Karabakh on September 19, 2023 nearly three years after a ceasefire deal brokered by Russia halted a six-week Armenian-Azerbaijani war. Its troops greatly outnumbered and outgunned Karabakh's small army that received no military support from Armenia. Also, Russian peacekeepers deployed in Karabakh did not try to prevent or stop the assault.

After 24-hour hostilities, Karabakh's leadership agreed to disband the Defense Army in return for Baku stopping the assault and allowing Karabakh's more than 100,000 remaining residents to flee the enclave. Virtually all of them took refuge in Armenia over the next two weeks.

At least 198 soldiers as well as 25 civilian residents of Karabakh were killed in the brief but fierce fighting. The Azerbaijani Defense Ministry acknowledged around 200 combat deaths among its military personnel involved in the operation.

Speaking to journalists at the Yerablur military pantheon, Armenian opposition



Nagorno-Karabakh - A residential area in Stepanakert damaged by Azerbaijani shelling, September 19, 2023

leaders again blamed Pashinyan for the fall of Karabakh. They insisted that he precipitated the Azerbaijani attack by recognizing Karabakh as part of Azerbaijan in 2022.

"In [the run-up to parliamentary elections in] 2021, they promised the people to protect the rights of the Artsakh Armenians and even seek de-occupation of Armenian lands," said Ishkhan Saghatelian of the Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaktsutyun). "They got elected with a different platform. They got no mandate to recognize Artsakh as part of Azerbaijan or hand over any territory of Armenia to Azerbaijan."

"We are not resigned to the current situation," he said. "The Artsakh chapter cannot

be closed, and the ruling clique doesn't represent the views of our people."

Pashinyan has claimed the opposite for the past two years. Ten days after meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev in Washington on August 8, he declared that the Karabakh Armenians should stop hoping to return to their homeland. They should instead "settle down in Armenia," he said.

In a joint report released last November, U.S.-based watchdog Freedom House and six other human rights groups concluded that the exodus of the Karabakh Armenians was the result of Azerbaijan's systematic "policy of ethnic cleansing." They said that even before the 2023 offensive Baku sought to drive them out of their homeland by "creating conditions of severe insecurity, hardship, and psychological duress."

Azerbaijan has denied forcing Karabakh's population to flee the region and said they can live there under Azerbaijani rule. Karabakh's leaders and ordinary residents rejected such an option even before the Azerbaijani offensive condemned by the United States and the European Union. Despite the condemnations, the Western powers did not impose sanctions on Baku.

Turkish Envoy Gifts Ornate Bowl to Armenian FM

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — During his visit to Yerevan, Turkey's special representative in the normalization process with Armenia, Serdar Kılıç, presented an ornate glass bowl to Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan. The gift was disclosed through a declaration submitted by Mirzoyan to Armenia's Corruption Prevention Commission, according to Factor.am.

The Foreign Minister received it on August 12, the day he hosted the Turkish envoy in Yerevan.

Following amendments to the Law on

Public Service, new regulations now govern gift acceptance by public officials. According to these rules, gifts given during official or working visits, state or official events must be handed over to the state if their value exceeds 60,000 drams (\$156). The gift was valued at 73,000 drams (\$190).

On August 12, Kılıç entered Armenia through the Margara checkpoint on the Armenian-Turkish border, where he was welcomed by Armenia's special envoy Ruben Rubinyan. Kılıç first met with Rubinyan at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, followed by a meeting with Mirzoyan.

Captives' Relatives Seek Meeting With Armenian Official After His Trip To Baku

CAPTIVES, from page 1 and go for themselves. They don't keep people informed about what's going on."

She said she and other relatives therefore want Simonyan to meet them and answer their questions about his visit.

The NSS chief made no public statements on his return to Yerevan. It was therefore not clear whether he discussed the fate of the prisoners with Azerbaijani officials. Other details of his trip to Baku were also not known as of Monday evening.

Prospects for the release anytime soon of

the captives remain uncertain even after the initialization of an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty in Washington on August 8. Neither the treaty nor a separate declaration signed by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan at the White House commits Baku to freeing them.

This fact gave more ammunition to Pashinyan's domestic critics who accused him of doing little to secure the prisoners' release. Pashinyan again denied that following the Washington talks.

The Azerbaijani authorities until recently allowed representatives of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) to periodically visit the Armenian prisoners to inspect their detention conditions, inquire about their health and arrange phone calls between them and their families. They most recently did so in June.

The ICRC lost that exclusive access after being forced to end its mission in Azerbaijan on September 3. The captives' families are now even more concerned about their treatment.



ARMENIA

German-Armenian Youth Association Builds Bridges in Gyumri through Camp

By Shoghik Mikayelyan and Nina Abgaryan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

In Gyumri, Armenia's second-largest city, young people often face limited job opportunities, which in turn restricts their exposure to other cultures and their ability to develop meaningful cross-cultural connections. To address this challenge, Ari, an Armenian youth association in Germany, partnered with Gyumri's Nor Luyce Mentoring Center for Youth NGO to launch an educational camp that not only brought together Armenian youth from Germany and Armenia but also empowered teenage girls to believe in their potential.

Over six days, 30 participants engaged in creative workshops, team-building activities, and cultural exchange. The project's aim went far beyond recreation: it was designed to strengthen confidence, promote dialogue, and highlight the importance of community for young Armenians worldwide.

From Germany to Armenia: Ari's Story

Founded in 2016, ARI was born out of a desire to create an independent space for Armenian youth in Germany. Until then, young people had been part of a broader Armenian association, but generational differences and the need for youth-specific initiatives pushed them to form their own group. "The main goal of the youth association is to create a space for the Armenian youth in Germany to meet up, connect, and feel part of a community," explained the president of Ari, Anush Darbinyan. "Most of the young Armenians live in different cities, often without any contact with other Armenians. That's why we organize summer and winter youth meetings with around 80 participants, filled with workshops on Armenian culture, feminism, gender roles, and more. It's about learning, but it's also about creating friendships that last," she said.

While Ari's focus is primarily on Germany, the association has also expanded its reach internationally. Over the past few years, it has organized projects in Armenia, Lebanon, and other countries, often collaborating with local organizations and directing donations toward trusted community causes. This time they decided to focus on Gyumri. The partnership with Nor Luyce was no coincidence. Several Ari board members had previously volunteered in Gyumri through Birthright Armenia and had experienced firsthand the warmth of the city and the impact of Nor Luyce's work with adolescent girls.

"I remember meeting Shogher, the founder of Nor Luyce, during my Birth-

right stay," recalled Anush. "I left that conversation thinking: we have to do a project together one day. Nor Luyce is more than a program - it's like an older sister for these girls, guiding them from adolescence into adulthood. Their confidence, their sense of identity, their belief in their future - it's inspiring. We knew we wanted to support that."

The decision to focus on teenage girls reflected both organizations' shared mission: to empower youth, especially young



During the group activity where participants shared which women they see as role models and why

women, by giving them tools to grow into independent, confident adults.

For Ari, selecting participants for the Gyumri project was about more than filling spots. Applicants had to show genuine motivation and a willingness to contribute. "We wanted people who saw this not as a free trip to Armenia, but as an opportunity to support an important cause," the organizers noted.

The camp created a rare space where German-Armenian youth could meet their peers in Armenia on an equal footing. Discussions ranged from cultural identity to gender roles, while shared activities built trust and friendships. "The most challenging part is always ensuring that two groups truly connect," Anush admitted. "We can encourage engagement, but in the end, it's up to the participants. In Gyumri, we saw it happen: the girls from Nor Luyce and our members from Germany really bonded." This bond is the cornerstone of the organization because it is beyond any numbers that the organization can register. Indeed, when asked about Ari's greatest achievements, the organizers did not highlight grants, projects, or numbers. Instead, they pointed to something less tangible but deeply meaningful: inclusivity.

"At our events, you'll see someone with a disability dancing next to a group of teenagers, etc. We've built a community where everyone feels accepted, where you don't have to meet someone else's definition of how an Armenian should be. That, for me, is our biggest success," Anush declared.

Looking Ahead

The Gyumri camp is just one chapter in Ari's ongoing work to strengthen Armenian youth identity while fostering global

connections. By bringing together young people from different contexts - be it Germany, Armenia, or Lebanon - the association is building a network of Armenians who not only celebrate their culture but also shape its future.

For the girls of Nor Luyce, the camp was more than just a week of activities. It was a message: that their voices matter, their dreams are valid, and they are part of a larger Armenian story that crosses borders.

As Anush reflected, "We thought we were coming here to give, but in reality, we learned so much from the girls of Gyumri. Their confidence and resilience left us more inspired than ever."

(Shoghik Mikayelyan is co-founder of Nor Luyce Mentoring Center for Youth NGO supporting teenage girls from orphanages and socially vulnerable families. She is a Fulbright scholar with a Master's in Counseling and Human Services from Lehigh University and a Master's in Human Development and Education from Harvard University. Nina Abgaryan has been deeply engaged in youth empowerment since 2016, first as a mentee and later as a mentor with the Nor Luyce NGO, supporting adolescent girls through guidance and training.)

Trump, Marco Rubio Congratulate Armenia On Independence Day

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — U.S. President Donald Trump has sent a congratulatory message to Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan on the occasion of the 34th anniversary of Armenia's Independence on September 21.

"On behalf of the American people and myself, I congratulate you and the Armenian people on Independence Day," the message reads.

"The strong ties and shared values between our peoples remain the foundation of our lasting friendship. We will continue to strengthen these bonds through our strategic partnership, which will empower both nations and create new opportunities for cooperation in key areas such as energy, artificial intelligence, technology, and transit infrastructure.

It was a great honor to host you on August 8, 2025, as we celebrated our shared achievement in advancing peace. We look forward to realizing your bold vision of presenting Armenia as a Crossroads of Peace, as well as the full potential of the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP). Both efforts symbolize our mutual commitment and will yield real economic benefits. Congratulations to you and all Armenians on this Independence Day," Trump wrote.

U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio also extended his congratulations.

"The United States stands with Armenia, our valued partner, as we advance shared goals of peace, prosperity, and stability in the South Caucasus. Our strong relationship is built on deep cultural ties, common principles, and a mutual drive toward regional security and economic opportunity," the statement says.

"The United States is pleased to assist Armenia in enhancing energy security, expanding trade, and strengthening border protection, while reaffirming its support for Armenia's sovereignty and territorial integrity.

"Our strategic partnership and the bilateral memoranda of understanding signed by President Trump and Prime Minister Pashinyan form the cornerstone of our joint efforts. As Armenia continues to shape its future as a crossroads of peace and growth, the United States reaffirms its commitment to a more connected, stable, and prosperous region," Rubio's message concludes.

Azerbaijani Policy Expert Visits Yerevan as Part of NATO Event

NATO, from page 1

claiming that the non-governmental organization with the same name "represents the interests of people who used to live in the territory of the Republic of Armenia and it's concerned with the kind of cultural heritage."

Azerbaijani officials often refer to Armenian territory inhabited by Azerbaijanis prior to their conflict as "western Azerbaijan" — Armenia has long viewed the narrative as constituting territorial claims against it.

Asked if Azerbaijan would be open to releasing Armenian prisoners — including Nagorno-Karabakh's former leadership — as a gesture of peace, Muradov said it was "premature to speak about that in the context of a peace treaty."

"Especially considering that the Washington agreement also did not contain any mention of that. I think any further discussion should be built on political dialogue between Baku and Yerevan," Muradov said.

The unprecedented Washington summit between Armenia, Azerbaijan and the US on 8 August saw the initialling of the peace treaty, as well as agreement to establish a route between Azerbaijan and its exclave of Nakhchivan through Armenia called the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP).

Muradov also suggested that there was a "willingness" among Azerbaijanis for beginning a "normal co-existence with Armenia," adding that "most" people in Azer-

baijan are "really positive" about the peace.

Additionally, he said that the issue of Azerbaijan's occupation of Armenian territories during attacks in 2021 and 2022 could be resolved through the delimitation process.

Previous official visits between Armenia and Azerbaijan

Muradov's visit marks the third time Armenian and Azerbaijani officials or other notable public figures have visited each others' country.

Days earlier, on September 19, Armenian authorities announced that a delegation led by Andranik Simonyan, the Chief of the National Security Services, would participate in a security forum to be held in Baku from September 19-21.

Earlier, on September 5, the chairs of the Armenian and Azerbaijani border delimitation committees, Mher Grigoryan and Shahin Mustafayev, held unprecedented mutual visits to each other's respective countries.

Aside from the recent visits, APA reported on Monday about "a memorable moment" at the first stage of the Silk Way Star song competition in Kazakhstan.

"Specifically, the jurors from Azerbaijan and Armenia mutually awarded the highest score of 10 points to performers representing both countries," APA reported, adding that that was the first such instance in an international competition.

(This article originally appeared on www.oc-media.org on September 22.)

INTERNATIONAL

INTERNATIONAL

Pashinyan Meets NATO Parliamentary Officials

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Marcos Perestrello, resident of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly on September 22.

Pashinyan welcomed the holding of the 108th Rose-Roth Seminar of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly in Yerevan and emphasized the importance of developing relations with NATO, including cooperation in peacekeeping missions.

Perestrello expressed gratitude for the high-level organization of the seminar and highlighted the effective cooperation with Armenian partners within the framework of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly.

Pashinyan to Address PACE Autumn Session

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan is scheduled to address the autumn session of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), taking place in Strasbourg from September 29 to October 3, 2025.

According to PACE's official statement, the session's agenda will include debates on protecting journalists' safety in Gaza and on intensifying efforts to secure the release of Ukrainian journalists captured by Russia, Factor.am reported.

Jerusalem Patriarchate Dismayed by Court Case

JERUSALEM (Public Radio of Armenia) — The Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem has expressed disappointment and concern after learning that a hearing over its long-running Armona (municipal tax) dispute has been rescheduled for September 29, 2025, despite earlier assurances that the case would be addressed through a special government committee.

In a statement issued September 22, the Patriarchate said it had been officially notified in February that the original hearing for administrative petition ATM 1470-02-24 was cancelled. Church leaders interpreted that move as a sign that Israeli authorities intended to resolve the matter through the governmental committee headed by Tzachi Hanegbi, which was established in 2018 to handle similar disputes involving Christian institutions.

"The Patriarchate placed sincere trust in this process and welcomed the dialogue through the committee," the statement read. "It is therefore with disappointment and concern that we now approach a new hearing date, while the dispute has not been redirected to the appropriate governmental channels."

The Patriarchate said the decision to proceed with a new court date contradicts the formal notification it received earlier this year and "raises serious questions about the sincerity of the process and the willingness of the authorities to engage in good faith negotiations."

Sardarabad Newspaper of Buenos Aires Celebrates 50th Anniversary

SARDARABAD, from page 1

A Beginning Full of Symbolism

The event began with the unveiling of a plaque sent by the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada, a gesture symbolizing international recognition for half a century of uninterrupted work. The plaque, which will remain at the Tekeyan headquarters in Buenos Aires, also bears witness to the unity and fraternity of the Armenian diaspora.

Words that Mark the Path

The opening remarks were delivered by Bishop Shaheenian, who offered a message of faith and gratitude, highlighting the importance of Sardarabad as the voice of the community and as a defender of Armenian identity.

Afterward, the Armenian Center, through its president Aram Karaguezian, presented a commemorative plaque and addressed the audience, underscoring the relevance of the newspaper as a space of encounter, memory, and community commitment.

International voices followed. Aram Arkun, managing editor of the *Armenian Mirror-Spectator* and executive director



Unveiling of the plaque from the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the United States and Canada (from left, Mihran Toumajan, Bishop Aren Shaheenian, Sergio Nahabetian and Aram Arkun)

Mihran Toumajan, assistant secretary of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada, who conveyed a warm insti-

Ruzanna Azoyan, transmitted the greetings of the Armenian state and its official recognition of half a century of community service. Former Sardarabad director Diana Dergarabetian also took the floor, expressing her emotion in recalling the journey during her tenure and the responsibility of sustaining the community's voice through the newspaper's pages.

Recognitions and Distinctions

On behalf of the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), its president, Carlos Margossian, presented a plaque to Sardarabad, highlighting the shared vocation of service between the two institutions throughout these 50 years.

Subsequently, the Armenian Cultural Union (UCA), represented by its president Adrián Lomlondjian, joined the tribute with another commemorative plaque, as a testimony of recognition and affection for the newspaper's trajectory.

One of the most anticipated moments of the evening was the presentation by Susana Dergarabetian Nahabetian, who introduced the audiovisual project "Armenia at Home: Cooking that Connects Generations," a series that rescues Armenian culinary

continued on next page



Aram Arkun

of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada, traveled from the United States to join the celebration, stressing the value of keeping Armenian journalism alive in the diaspora. He was followed by

tutorial greeting and emphasized the ties that unite Armenian communities in North and South America through culture and the written word.

Later, Armenia's Consul in Argentina,



Bishop Aren Shaheenian and Sergio Nahabetian

INTERNATIONAL

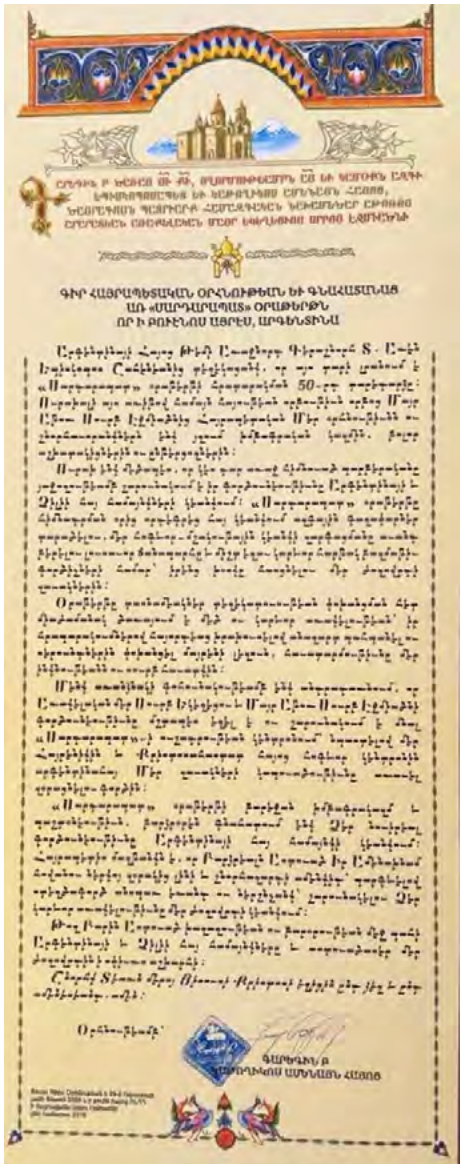
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tradition as a bridge between past and present. The cycle will soon be available on YouTube and Instagram and will be realized through the support of the Tekeyan Cultural Association of the US and Canada.

The “Men of the Year” present were then invited to the stage. Among them were Archbishop Kissag Mouradian, Arto Kalciyan, Rubén Kechichian, Roberto Malkhasian, and Antonio Sarafian, who received decorations in recognition of their service to the community. Bishop Aren Shaheenian and Consul Ruzanna Azoyan were also specially honored as a gesture of appreciation and respect.

There was also a moment to recognize fellow media outlets: Diario Armenia, represented by its director Pablo Kendikian, and La Voz Armenia and Nor Sevan, represented by their director Adrián Lomlondjian, with whom *Sardarabad* shares the mission of reflecting community life and strengthen-



Some of the supporters of Sardarabad and community leaders of Buenos Aires



The circular or gontag of Catholicos of All Armenians Karekin II

ing Armenian identity in Argentina.

In the final stretch, distinctions were presented to two institutions that have been

pillars in *Sardarabad*’s history: AGBU and the Armenian Center, whose presidents, Carlos Margossian and Aram Karaguezian, received the honors on behalf of their organizations.

Finally, current director Sergio Nahabetian took the floor. In a speech filled with emotion and conviction, he retraced the 50-year journey of *Sardarabad*, thanking all those who made it possible to sustain the project from 1975 to today. Nahabetian also announced important developments: upgrades to the Android and iOS apps and the complete digitization of all issues since the very first number, which will soon be available to the public as an invaluable archive for the community’s memory.

He said, “Today we renew our commitment: to continue informing with responsibility, to strengthen ties with Armenia and with our community in the diaspora, and to ensure that Armenian memory, culture, and language remain alive among us. Dear friends, fifty years are not a point of arrival but a new beginning.”

The evening concluded with the cutting of the 50th-anniversary cake, a moment that symbolized the festive spirit and shared joy of all those present.

Thus, the community celebrated half a century of life for a newspaper that has become an indispensable reference for the Armenian collective in Argentina and South America. *Sardarabad* reaffirms its mission to keep informing, preserving memory, and building bridges between Armenia and the diaspora, with the same passion that inspired its founders half a century years ago.



Mihran Toumajan speaking, with Sergio Nahabetian in the background



Susana Dergarabetian Nahabetian



The three Dergarabetian sisters: from left Silvia Dergarabetian Takessian, Susana Dergarabetian Nahabetian and Diana Dergarabetian (photo Aram Arkun)



Aram Karaguezian hands Sergio Nahabetian a plaque on behalf of the Armenian Center while Bishop Aren Shaheenian speaks (photo Aram Arkun)



INTERNATIONAL



EU Enlargement Commissioner Marta Kos and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan. Official photo.

EU to Provide Armenia with €200 Million

By Yousef Bardouka

YEREVAN (OC-Media) — EU enlargement chief Marta Kos has announced that Brussels intends to provide Armenia with a €200 million (\$236 million) grant as part of the Resilience and Growth Plan.

Kos made the announcement during a press conference in Yerevan on Friday, September 19.

According to state-run news outlet Armenpress, Kos said the funding would boost connectivity, resilience, and business development investments.

“This is evidence of Armenia’s commitment to a clear reform agenda. This also

demonstrates your clear commitment to implementing reforms in key areas’, Kos said, adding that the EU is ready to support Armenia in transport, trade, energy, and infrastructure projects in line with the “Crossroads of Peace” initiative, which would see the unlocking of transport and energy links for Armenia’s neighbors through its territory.

According to Armenpress, Kos also said that more than €2.5 billion (\$2.9 billion) had already been allocated to Armenia since 2021, adding that the EU is actively working on developing an international and interregional connectivity agenda link-

ing Europe with Central Asia through the South Caucasus.

In early August in Washington, Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to establish the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), which would connect Azerbaijan to its exclave of Nakhchivan through Armenian territory. The two countries also initialled their peace treaty.

Kos’ visit to Armenia followed her trip to Azerbaijan, where she highlighted opportunities offered by the peace process, saying that “peace in the region opens up opportunities for markets, trade, and investment.”

Queen Mathilde Of Belgium to Visit Armenia in October

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Queen Mathilde of Belgium will pay a working visit to Armenia October 13-15, as an advocate of the UN Sustainable Development Goals.

“This visit will provide an opportunity to underscore the importance of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and establish direct dialogue with numerous stakeholders in Armenian society involved in the fields of innovation, social inclusion, healthcare, education, and environmental protection,” the Royal Palace of Belgium said in a statement.



A visit to the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies is planned.

According to the source, one of the key points of the Queen’s program will be environmental issues. In this context, she will visit the Gegharkunik region and the Lake Sevan area.

The Queen will also learn about the afforestation project implemented by Forest Armenia, which aims to prevent desertification and mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

Her program includes a visit to a kindergarten specializing in supporting children with special educational needs, as well as discussions on the economic and social inclusion of refugees in Armenia.

Queen Mathilde will also hold high-level meetings with Armenian authorities to discuss the country’s priorities for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals and the potential challenges facing the 2030 vision.

This is not Queen Mathilde’s first visit to Armenia. In 2018, she and her husband, King Philippe, and their children, vacationed there.

Baku Court Rejects Plea to Summon Foreign Witnesses for Armenians on Trial

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — On September 22, during the ongoing trials at the Baku Military Court against the former political and military leadership of Artsakh, David Babayan, former Foreign Minister of Artsakh, and others urged the court to question Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan, the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs, and Andrzej Kasprzyk, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Personal Representative.

According to APA, defendant David Manukyan asked the court to summon Pashinyan as a witness or ensure his participation via video link.

David Babayan stated: “These people know us personally and have had direct contact with us. They would be excellent witnesses.”

Another defendant, David Ishkhanian, requested that senior Russian peacekeeping officers, including Generals Muradov, Kosobokov, Anashkin, Volkov, Lentsov and Kulakov, be summoned as witnesses.

“I have a number of questions for them. They had either direct or indirect ties to the 15 defendants present here. I



David Babayan in court along with other Armenians

repeat that, direct or indirect. I believe the court would have questions for them, too. Even if it’s not possible to summon them in person, you could arrange their participation via video call,” he said.

Senior Assistant to the Prosecutor General, Vusal Aliyev, stated that the documents submitted by the defense are being reviewed, but emphasized that none of the proposed witnesses had any connection to the charges under consideration.

Based on this, the prosecution requested that the court reject all motions.

After hearing both sides, the court ruled to deny all requests.

The court stated that the defense failed to specify which facts needed examination, why they were important, and how they were relevant to the charges.

Previously, the defense lawyer of former Artsakh State Minister Ruben Vardanyan also petitioned to question Pashinyan and the OSCE Minsk Group co-chairs. That request was also denied, and Vardanyan’s case is being tried separately.

Gazprom Trying to Squeeze Armenia

GAZPROM, from page 1

It remains uncertain whether Pashinyan will attend a Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) heads of government meeting, planned for late September in the Belarussian capital Minsk.

Some political observers see a pattern in Gazprom’s behavior, suggesting it is an expression of Kremlin discontent with Armenian government policies. Russia has a long history of using Gazprom as an instrument of leverage in seeking to achieve its geopolitical aims, although the state-run company’s importance as a global energy supplier has significantly faded in recent years.

If Gazprom’s actions are indeed politically motivated, the tough tactics do not seem to be intimidating Armenian officials.

An analysis published by the Atlantic Council on September 16 contends that the Kremlin’s “imperial approach” towards Armenia has “backfired.”

“Moscow has repeatedly responded to Yerevan’s efforts to align with the West with retaliation, pairing diplomatic snubs with targeted economic pressure intended to remind Armenians who is in charge,” the analysis states. “Even when holding a weak hand and needing to strengthen alliances, Russia defaults to intimidation over persuasion.”

(This article originally appeared on www.eurasianet.org on September 17.)



Community News

Seminal Scholars Residency Debuts at USC with Linguist Hrach Martirosyan

LOS ANGELES — The USC Dornsife Institute of Armenian Studies announced recently the launch of the Seminal Scholars Residency, a new program designed to bring leading scholars in Armenian Studies to USC for deep engagement with the academic community and broader public.

Dr. Hrach Martirosyan will serve as the inaugural Seminal scholar-in-residence.

Martirosyan is widely recognized as one of the foremost Armenian linguists of today. He earned his PhD in comparative linguistics at Leiden University, where his pioneering dissertation laid the foundation for the acclaimed Etymological Dictionary of the Armenian Inherited Lexicon. Over his distinguished career, he has held teaching positions at UCLA, Leiden University and the University of Michigan, advancing research on the Indo-European roots of Armenian, its dialects, and its cultural-historical layers. He has also conducted short-term intensive courses and delivered special lectures at universities across the globe, including in Japan, Europe, the United Kingdom, Russia, and Armenia.



Dr. Hrach Martirosyan

Renowned for his scholarly precision, Martirosyan is equally committed to public engagement. His lectures and interviews have introduced global audiences to the richness of Armenian language and culture.

During his six-week residency at USC, Dr. Martirosyan will deliver a series of academic lectures on Armenian linguistics and its intersections with history and identity, lead workshops and office hours to engage directly with students and faculty and collaborate with the institute on a special Armenian-language season of its flagship podcast, Language Therapy with Dr. K. (Institute Director Dr. Shushan Karapetian) — dedicated to the most pressing issues surrounding the Armenian language today.

This partnership will make cutting-edge scholarship on the Armenian language widely accessible, fostering dialogue in the very language at the heart of these questions.



Rep. Dina Titus, left, and Rep. Gus Bilirakis

Titus, Bilirakis Call out Azerbaijan for Violations of International Law

WASHINGTON — The Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) welcomed the introduction of a bipartisan bill spearheaded by Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV) and Rep. Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), that calls for review of sanctions against Azerbaijan for violations of international law.

The legislation requires the President to determine whether Global Magnitsky sanctions apply to senior Azerbaijani officials responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Armenians from Artsakh in 2023 and for ongoing repression of political opposition inside Azerbaijan.

“Despite its international legal obligations under the Geneva Conventions and repeated calls by the United States Government, Azerbaijan has not released all relevant persons and instead continues to detain new prisoners of war, hostages, and captured civilians, nor have those responsible for serious human rights violations and war crimes faced legal consequences,” the bill highlighted.

The bill also listed a number of officials representing the Republic of Azerbaijan, and highlighted that “not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a determination, including a detailed justification, of whether any person listed... meets the criteria for the imposition of sanctions pursuant to section 1263(b) of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 2656 note); or section 7031(c) of the Department of State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs Appropriations Act.

“After its illegal, year-long blockade of the Lachin Corridor, Azerbaijan weaponized food and starved many of Artsakh’s 120,000 Armenians,” Rep. Titus said. “The Aliyev government rejected calls from the international community to withdraw and ease tensions, and launched an assault on the Armenian community in Artsakh. People with long-standing claims to the land were systematically pushed out by an aggressor; children were denied food and water and could not go to school; and Christian landmarks were desecrated. It’s time to impose costs on President Aliyev and his supporters instead of rewarding them with military support and investment deals.”

“The U.S.-brokered agreement that was signed at the White House last month did nothing to address the safe and dignified return of Armenians ethnically-cleansed from Artsakh; the release of Armenian political prisoners and prisoners of war still held by Baku; the preservation of Armenian cultural and religious heritage sites in Artsakh; or the rights of political opposition leaders, journalists, and human rights advocates in Azerbaijan. If President Trump will not acknowledge Azerbaijan’s atrocious human rights record, I will. That is why I am introducing this legislation,” the Congresswoman said.

“While the historic peace declaration announced last month between Azerbaijan and Armenia may signal progress, a political and humanitarian crisis continues—driven by Azerbaijan’s ongoing aggression in the region,” said Congressman Bilirakis. “I’m proud to reintroduce legislation that would require the President to determine whether Magnitsky sanctions should be applied to senior Azerbaijani officials responsible for the ethnic cleansing of Armenians from Artsakh and for enforcing repressive policies against political opposition within Azerbaijan. American tax dollars should not be used to support members of a brutal regime—especially when those resources could be better spent addressing urgent priorities here at home.”

“The Armenian Assembly of America applauds Congresswoman Titus and Congressman Bilirakis for reintroducing the Azerbaijan Sanctions Review Act, a vital step to hold Azerbaijan accountable for ethnic cleansing, war crimes, and human rights abuses under the Global Magnitsky Act,” said Mariam Khaloyan, Congressional Relations Director, Armenian Assembly of America.

Comedian Kev Orkian Returns to ‘Hyeminds’ For Special Program To Support Avedisian School in Yerevan

WELLESLEY, Mass. — The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) Boston Child Care Committee will once again present “Hyeminds” in support of the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan, Armenia.

The program will take place on Friday, November 21, at the Wellesley Country Club.

Established in 1998, the Avedisian School has become a beacon of excellence, offering tuition-free K–12 education within a modern, environmentally sustainable facility. Guided by the vision and generosity of benefactors Edward and Pamela Avedisian, the school continues to impact the lives of children in Yerevan’s Malatia-Sebastia district. Today, the need to sustain this mission and preserve tuition-free education is greater than ever.

The evening will be a celebration of commitment, unity, and purpose. “Hyeminds” serves as a call to stand behind the deserving children in Armenia, whose potential to become the country’s future leaders depends on access to quality education and our collective support.

The program, chaired by Stephanie Stephanian and Donna Boole Yerganian, promises to be both inspiring and engaging. Kev Orkian, the acclaimed British Armenian actor, musician, motivational speaker and stand-up comedian will inspire and delight participants.

The evening will also feature cocktails, dinner, and a live auction showcasing exceptional offerings.

“The Armenian community of Boston is invited to take part in a unique opportunity to support the children of Armenia. For decades, the Boston Child Care Program has been a model of success, positively impacting thousands of young lives,” said Serge D. Buchakjian, AMAA CEO/executive director. “We invite you to join us in this important effort—your presence and partnership will help ensure that many more children are given the care, education, and hope they deserve.”

For reservations or further information, contact Phyllis Dohanian or the AMAA. Online reservations and donations may be made at <https://amaa.org/hyemindsboston2025/>. All proceeds will directly benefit the Avedisian School, and contributions in excess of the value of goods and services received are tax-deductible.



Comedian Kev Orkian

COMMUNITY NEWS

House Foreign Affairs Committee Calls for Release of Armenian Prisoners, Return of Artsakh's Armenians

WASHINGTON — The House Foreign Affairs Committee on September 19 adopted amendments to the Fiscal Year 2026 State Department Authorization Bill (H.R.5300), directing the State Department to secure the release of Armenian prisoners of war, safeguard Armenian religious and cultural heritage, and support the right of return for the forcibly displaced Armenians of Artsakh. In a further step forward for accountability, the Committee also passed an amendment calling for a comprehensive report on Turkey's regional destabilization.

"Despite all the stakeholders trying to erase Artsakh, forsake hostages, and abandon our holy sites, the U.S. House Foreign Affairs Committee — on a bipartisan basis — took a strong stand today for the return of Armenians to Artsakh, the release of Armenian hostages, and the protection of our Christian holy sites," said Armenian National Committee of America Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "We will continue to fight efforts to normalize genocide — to legitimize ethnic cleansing — because doing so only invites more genocide, further ethnic cleansing."

Rep. Gabe Amo (D-RI), whose amendment passed with bipartisan support in an en bloc package, highlighted the urgent issues left unaddressed by the so-called peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. "Armenian religious and historic sites continue to be destroyed. Armenian prisoners of war are still held in Azerbaijan. And more than 120,000 Armenian refugees still cannot safely return to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh," stated Amo during debate. He added, "My amendment would ensure that

we continue to march down the road of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan by directing the Secretary of State to advocate for the protection of Armenian heritage and religious sites, the release of the Armenian prisoners of war, [and] the safe return of Armenian refugees to their homes in Nagorno-Karabakh."

The Committee also debated two pro-Armenian amendments offered by Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA). His first proposal, Amendment #97, would have repealed the presidential waiver authority of Section 907 of the FREEDOM Support Act, restoring Congress's prohibition on U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan. "Section 907 was waived by administration after administration, no matter what the Azerbaijani dictatorship did. And, it's time for Congress to recognize that," Rep. Sherman stated. He went on to note, "we've seen an ethnic cleansing, a cultural genocide, and now, the destruction of the churches while hostages are still being held. I urge my colleagues to vote for this amendment." Although the amendment was narrowly defeated by a 26 to 24 vote, it received unprecedented unanimous support from committee Democrats. Republican Reps. Michael Lawler (R-NY) and Chris Smith (R-NJ), broke with Republican party-line opposition to the amendment, maintaining their longstanding commitment to enforcing prohibitions on U.S. military assistance to Azerbaijan.

Sherman's second amendment would have prohibited the U.S. International Development Finance Corporation



(left to right) Rep. Brad Sherman (D-CA) and Rep. Gabe Amo (D-RI)

from funding projects in Turkey until it lifts its blockade of Armenia, and in Azerbaijan until all Armenian prisoners are released. "We should not be developing the economy of Turkey until it ends its blockade of Armenia. We should not be developing the economy of Azerbaijan until it releases all Armenian prisoners of war from a war that's over," Sherman argued. Though the measure did not pass, Republican Representatives Michael Lawler and Keith Self (R-TX), House Foreign Affairs Subcommittee Chairs for Middle East and Europe, respectively, publicly acknowledged the need for the Administration to take action on these concerns.

The Committee also approved an amendment introduced by Rep. Dina Titus (D-NV) requiring the State Department

to submit a detailed report on Turkey's continued deployment of Russian S-400 missile systems. Speaking in support of the measure, Rep. Brad Schneider (D-IL) underscored the risks posed by Ankara's decision to operate Russian air defenses within NATO. "Operating the system alongside NATO aircraft risks exposing sensitive information, including the stealth profile and electronic signature of the F-35. The S-400 system has no place on NATO territory. If Turkey wants to demonstrate it is a dependable ally, the path begins with removing that system," stated Rep. Schneider.

Both H.R.5300, the State Department Authorization Bill, and H.R.5299 advanced out of Committee following the markup session and are poised for full U.S. House consideration at a later date.

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ADVERTISE IN THE MIRROR

FEMINNO Participates in Glendale Tech Week

GLENDALE — The force of Armenian women in innovation was on full display at Glendale Tech Week 2025, where FEMINNO partnered with DISQO to host an evening of conversation, culture and community.

Founded in Armenia, FEMINNO has grown into a global network that advances gender equality and innovation through STEM programs, conferences and community initiatives.

DISQO, a Glendale-based, Armenian co-founded tech company known for its unique culture of inclusivity and strong support for women in tech, opened its doors to a wide audience eager to connect with trailblazing leaders.

The event began with remarks by Elen Asatryan, immediate past mayor and Councilmember of Glendale, who underscored the strength and impact of Armenian women in leadership.

The program's keynote address was delivered by Cynthia Tusan, CEO and chairman of Strategic Global Advisors. With decades of experience in asset management, Tusan has led an international equity team in managing close to \$3.5 billion in international equity assets, offering the audience a global perspective on leadership, strategy, and the financial world's intersections with innovation.

A panel followed, featuring Anna Aladadyan (VP of product management, DISQO), Vanessa Ansoorian (chief of staff and senior manager to the president, the Walt Disney Company) and Mariya Palanjian (founder and CEO, Globafly). Together, they shared insights into product leadership, corporate innovation, and entrepreneurial resilience — while addressing the challenges women face and the opportunities they are seizing to shape the future of tech and business. The

audience was highly engaged, turning the question-and-answer period into a

in Yerevan on November 15, continuing to unite women innovators from around the



The FEMINNO and DISQO teams



Panelists Seda Papoyan, Anna Aladadyan, Vanessa Ansourian and Nariya Palanjian

meaningful dialogue that underscored Glendale's readiness to champion female innovation and leadership.

Adding a cultural heartbeat to the evening, Anna Muradyan invited participants to join in learning the traditional Armenian Kochari dance. The room lit up as tech leaders, innovators, and community members moved together, blending innovation with heritage and joy.

Looking ahead, FEMINNO is activating the local LA community as its new home, while also preparing to launch a new chapter in New York City in December. At the same time, plans are underway for the FEMINNO International Conference

world in Armenia.

To support its mission, FEMINNO invites the community to contribute to its STEM Acceleration Award Program, which directly supports the STEM education of 200+ schoolgirls from across Armenia, fueling the next generation of unstoppable innovators.

“This event showed that Armenian female innovators are truly unstoppable,” said Seda Papoyan, Founder and CEO of FEMINNO. “With global leaders like Cynthia Tusan, companies like DISQO fostering inclusive cultures, and women across industries breaking barriers, we are not just shaping the future of tech, we are reshaping it.”



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COMMUNITY NEWS

Racine Armenians and Friends Go Golfing

STURTEVANT, Wisc. — On August 23, the 18th Annual Racine Armenian and Friends Golf Outing was hosted once again by Ives Grove Golf Course in Sturtevant, Wisconsin. The event consisted of 18 holes of golf in a scramble format with a shotgun start, followed by an informal dinner catered by a local restaurant and complemented with plenty of delicious Armenian food items and desserts made by members of the local Armenian community.

During the dinner, awards were presented to the lowest scoring men's and mixed foursomes as well as for a number of hole prizes. A raffle drawing took place at the conclusion of the dinner and included numerous prizes donated by multiple local



businesses and individuals, as well as those donated by all of Wisconsin's major professional sports teams. This was followed

by an exciting 50/50 raffle draw. The evening was capped off with a highly contested auction for two delicious home baked

pies, the winning bid topping \$450. Overall, it was a fantastic day enjoyed by 120 golfers and numerous others who joined for the dinner portion only.

Since its inception, the outing has donated all proceeds to excellent organizations serving those in need. The Armenian EyeCare Project has been continually supported since the first year of the outing. In recent years, the Health Care Network of Racine which provides care to the underserved has been added. Due to the success of this year's event, a third organization was included, with funds donated towards equipping a children's center in the Berd community of Tavush Province, Armenia.

This year's success was due directly to the generous support received from individuals and businesses throughout the southeastern WI community which this year included match funding by one of the participants. The organizing committee expresses its sincere thanks to all of these wonderful individuals and businesses, as well as all the participants.

Next year's event will take place on August 22, 2026. All are welcome, pre-registration required.



Nearly 160 Naloxone Kits Dispensed from Middlesex Sheriff Koutoujian's Office

BILLERICA, Mass. — Nearly 160 naloxone nasal spray kits have been obtained by local residents during the first 10 months of a new initiative at the Middlesex Jail & House of Correction.

In December 2024, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office became the first sheriff's office in Massachusetts to install a naloxone vending machine – allowing visitors to obtain free doses of the opioid overdose reversal medication to carry with them or keep at home. Each kit contains two doses of the nasal spray.

“At the Middlesex Sheriff's Office, we have been at the forefront of providing care and support for those with substance use disorder, those in recovery and their loved ones,” said Sheriff Peter J. Koutoujian. “As an extension of our nationally-recognized Medication Assisted Treatment And Directed Opioid Recovery (MATADOR) and Families in Treatment (FIT) Programs, we have no doubt this initiative will help save lives.”

Individuals are able to obtain the medication anonymously and have the option to complete a brief survey regarding age, gender, race and zip code. The survey data will be used to help inform future MSO programming, as well as community-based prevention and intervention initiatives along with stakeholders from across Middlesex County. The survey takes less than 30 seconds to complete.

In addition to dispensing the naloxone, the vending machine features a video and graphics with instructions on how to properly administer the medication.

Throughout September, the Middlesex Sheriff's Office has joined local partners and community members to mark National Recovery Month. Established in 1989, Recovery Month is a time “to promote and support new evidence-based treatment and recovery practices, the nation's strong and proud recovery community, and the dedication of service providers and communities who make recovery possible,” according to the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA).

This month, MSO staff is participating in community events in Lowell, Malden and Waltham. The Families in Treatment (FIT) team is also holding a session for participants entitled “Many Roads to Recovery: Helping your loved one find the right path”.

“Recovery is possible,” said Sheriff Koutoujian. “We know it isn't easy, but we know it's achievable – especially when people have the assistance of our dedicated, passionate team of professionals to support them throughout their journey.”

To learn more about the Middlesex Sheriff's Office visit middlesexsheriff.org.

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COMMUNITY NEWS

Global Humanitarians Shortlisted for Prestigious 2025 Aurora Prize

NEW YORK — The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative today announced the four 2025 Aurora Humanitarians (finalists) for the \$1 million Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity. The Aurora Prize Selection Committee chose Sally Becker (UK), Jamal Eltayeb (Sudan), Zouhair Lahna (Morocco), and Jill Seaman (USA/South Sudan) from a global nominations pool of more than 800 humanitarians and introduced the finalists at a media briefing and discussion in New York City organized in partnership with the Overseas Press Club of America (OPC). One of these four humanitarians will be named as this year's Aurora Prize Laureate at a ceremony set to take place in New York on November 6.

As humanitarian crises deepen and international donors cut funding, these exceptional individuals continue to make an impact in their communities, putting their own lives at risk as they save children in war zones, keep hospitals open under fire, and bring lifesaving treatment to remote and conflict-affected communities.

The 2025 Aurora Humanitarians are:

* Sally Becker (UK), a humanitarian who evacuated hundreds of children from besieged areas during conflicts in Bosnia and Kosovo and founded organizations providing emergency pediatric care. Becker later expanded her work to Iraq, Ukraine, and Gaza, launching a telemedicine program that links local clinicians to a global pediatric network.

* Jamal Eltayeb (Sudan), a medical doctor who has kept Al Nao Hospital in Omdurman functioning as one of the last referral hospitals in greater Khartoum since the war escalated in April 2023. Dr. Eltayeb's leadership allowed the hospital to remain open despite repeated bombardment, extreme resource shortages, and infrastructure collapse, helping save hundreds of lives.

* Zouhair Lahna (Morocco), an obstetrician-gynecologist who has worked in conflict zones and disaster areas for more than two decades, delivering care, training local staff, and mobilizing support. Dr. Lahna has served in Afghanistan, Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), Syria, Yemen, Libya, Uganda, and most recently Gaza, where he has completed repeated rotations since October 2023.

* Jill Seaman (USA/South Sudan), a physician who co-founded South Sudan Medical Relief and has provided critical care in the conflict-affected town of Old Fangak for more than three decades, treating around 40,000 patients annually. Dr. Seaman is credited with pioneering visceral leishmaniasis and tuberculosis protocols, training local health workers, and providing hands-on care to communities both in South Sudan and rural Alaska.

"These four Aurora Humanitarians are a powerful reminder that even in the darkest of times, the courage, compassion, and commitment of a few can light the way for many," said Lord Ara Darzi, Chair of the Aurora Prize Selection Committee and Co-Director of the Institute of Global Health Innovation at Imperial College London. "It is a privilege to honor their extraordinary contributions and the hope they offer to the world's most vulnerable."

With 2025 on track to be the deadliest year on record for humanitarian workers, the Aurora Prize specifically recognizes local humanitarian leaders working on the front lines of the world's most dangerous



From left, Sally Becker (© Steve Parsons/PA Images), Jamal Eltaeb (Courtesy of Jamal Eltaeb), Jill Seaman (© John D. and Catherine T. MacArthur Foundation), Zouhair Lahna (Courtesy of Zouhair Lahna).

crises. The Laureate will receive \$1 million to support their courageous work and extend their impact by funding local humanitarians and grassroots organizations.

"What stands out in this year's nominations is the sheer bravery, ingenuity, and determination of individuals drawing on firsthand knowledge and local insight to

respond when no one else will. Their work is a powerful reminder that transformative change often begins at the local level, led by those who know their communities best for thoughtful, long-term solutions," added Leymah Gbowee, Aurora Prize Selection Committee member, Nobel Peace Laureate, and renowned Liberian peace activist

and women's rights advocate.

The Aurora Humanitarian Initiative will announce the 2025 Laureate on November 6 at the 2025 Aurora Prize Ceremony on New York's Ellis Island. At this historic landmark symbolizing refuge and hope, Aurora will honor extraordinary humanitarians who risk their lives to save others.

The ceremony will also celebrate the generosity of philanthropists and change-makers who exemplify the Aurora's core value of 'Gratitude in Action.' Honorees include Henrietta Fore, Graça Machel, Michael Milken, and David Rubenstein. The evening will be co-hosted by award-winning journalist Judy Woodruff and bestselling author David Ignatius and will feature live performances from Grammy-nominated artists Rufus Wainwright and Aloe Blacc.

Reserve your seat and join us in marking the 10th anniversary of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. For sponsorship opportunities or individual tickets, please reach out to us at development@auroraprize.com.



Tekeyan Cultural Association, Inc.

Dr. Nubar Berberian 2025 Annual Awards



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

ELIGIBILITY AND REQUIREMENTS

- 1) Eligible recipients are college students of Armenian descent who major in either **International Law** or **Political Science**.
- 2) Applicant must be enrolled in a full-time graduate program in a fully accredited college or university in the world.
- 3) Applicant must provide all of the information requested on the application form.
- 4) Applicant must submit a copy of his or her most recent college transcript.
- 5) Applicant is to include a small head and shoulders self-portrait.
- 6) Application could be received by requesting from Tcadirector@Aol.com.
- 7) Applicants should submit applications electronically (via email) to: Tcadirector@Aol.com.
- 8) The deadline of receiving the applications is **September 30, 2025**.
- 9) The administrators and managers of the fund will vote the qualified winners in **October, 2025** based on the merits of each applicant.
- 10) The winners will receive their awards in **November, 2025**.
- 11) Winning applicants are not eligible to apply again.
- 12) This announcement is published in Armenian, English, French and Spanish.

Watertown, MA, July 14, 2025



COMMUNITY NEWS

Triple X Fraternity Sequoia Chapter Pledges \$100,000 To Charlie Keyan Community School Legacy Campus

CLOVIS, Calif. — The Charlie Keyan Armenian Community School (CKACS) announced earlier in September a \$100,000 pledge from the Triple X Fraternity Sequoia Chapter in support of the school’s Legacy Campus project. This generous five-year commitment marks the second major contribution to the initiative, following the inaugural pledge from the Leon S. Peters Foundation earlier this year.



The Original Triple X Sequoia Chapter members

With this gift, Triple X Fraternity Sequoia Chapter will be recognized as a Founding Member of the Legacy Campus — a distinction reserved for visionary supporters who demonstrate a long-term commitment to the school’s future. The growing circle of Founding Members reflects the community’s shared belief in CKACS’s mission to empower future generations through enriched academic, cultural, and community-based experiences.

The Triple X Fraternity was founded in 1918 in Fresno by eight young men of Armenian descent. While attending Fres-

no State University, these students sought to join existing fraternities but were denied membership due to their heritage. In response, they established their own fraternal organization, one rooted in brotherhood, unity, and cultural pride. Today, the Triple X Fraternity has grown to include 13 nonprofit chapters across California and Nevada, with a membership of over 750 strong. Since its founding in 1950, the Sequoia Chapter has remained dedicated to promoting charity, goodwill, and cultural engagement within the local community and beyond.

Triple X Fraternity Master Gerard Garoian shared the reason behind the organization’s pledge, emphasizing the importance of cultural preservation and educational excellence. “Prior to the creation of the school, our Armenian children were being assimilated into the English language losing their ability to speak and understand Armenian, their mother tongue. Recently I’ve heard grandchildren, of my English only speaking friends, speak fluent Armenian,” he shared. “I have also met graduated students who have gone on to have successful careers, so the school is delivering a well-rounded education. This preservation of our Armenian culture, combined with educating students to become successful American citizens, prompted us to happily make this donation.”

CONCERT DE LA RÉSILIENCE

SHOUJOUNIAN 5 RECITATIFS
MOZART REQUIEM
CHŒUR A CAPPELLA D'YVERDON
CHŒUR SYMPHONIQUE DE VEVEY
ORCHESTRE DES VARIATIONS SYMPHONIQUES
Sofia RAUSS - Valérie PELLEGRINI
Baptiste JONDEAU - Patrice BERGER
Luc BAGHDASSARIAN Direction

SAMEDI 04 OCTOBRE 2025

À 19H15
ENTRÉE GRATUITE

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Comité SUISSE de
l'UNION GÉNÉRALE ARMÉNIENNE DE BIENFAISANCE
Avec le soutien de

FONDATION
HELENA VICTOR
BARBOUR

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MINKOFF
FONDATION

CATHÉDRALE SAINT-PIERRE GENÈVE

Tekeyan Cultural Association Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia

Since its inception in 2001, The TCA Sponsor A Teacher program has raised \$838,700 and reached out to 7,386 teachers and school staff in Armenia and Artsakh.

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, to continue helping them to work, and educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the teacher(s)'s name(s) and address(es).

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, to continue helping them to work, and educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the teacher(s)'s name(s) and address(es).

☐ \$240 ☐ \$480 ☐ \$700 ☐ other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association
Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2025
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If you prefer to donate by credit card, please go to:
givebutter.com/0g6lky

Your donation is tax deductible.



Arts & Culture

Violinist Emilya Gasparyan and Her Pianist Mother Jasmine Atabekyan Charm at Tekeyan Boston

WATERTOWN — Mother-daughter duo violinist Emilya Gasparyan and pianist Jasmine Atabekyan charmed a Sunday afternoon audience on September 21 at the Baikar Building with a concert of classical music. The event was hosted by the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Boston Chapter.

The talented 23-year-old Emilya studied at the New Conservatory of Thessaloniki (2008-2020) before moving on to the Frankfurt University of Music and Performing Arts, the Amsterdam University of Arts, and since 2024, the Vienna University of Music and Performing Arts.

(ARAM ARKUN PHOTO)



Emilya Gasparyan, left, and Jasmine Atabekyan

She has performed solo and chamber music on many prestigious stages, including at Weill Recital Hall at Carnegie Hall of New York City, Bernard Haitzinkzaal and Sweelinckzaal in Amsterdam, Musikverein in Vienna, Giuseppe Verdi Conservatory Hall of Milan, Komitas State Conservatory Hall of Yerevan, and the Massachusetts State House in Boston.

Emilya's mother Jasmine Atabekyan is a wonderful pianist in her own right, who has over three decades of achievements and also has performed in major venues in the United States and Europe. She is a laureate of pres-

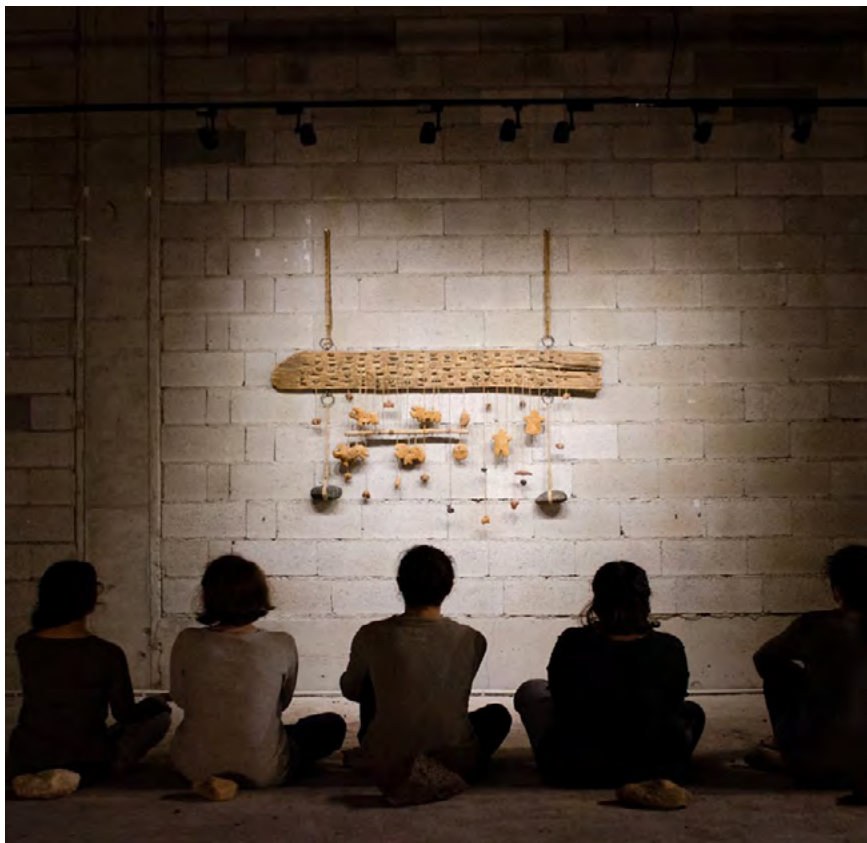
(ARAM ARKUN PHOTO)



Jasmine Atabekyan described the compositions performed

tigious competitions in Paris and Yerevan, and holds a doctorate in music from the Komitas State Conservatory of Yerevan. Jasmine is a beloved teacher to many in Greece, Armenia and the United States.

The program for TCA included pieces by Mozart, Sarasate, Liszt, Komitas, Khachaturian, and Saint-Saens, which were performed either as solos or duets. Aram Arkun served as master of ceremonies and after thanking the musicians, exclaimed that their excellent performances were both inspiring and moving.



"The Song of a Refugee," 2025 (photo Seda Grigoryan)

Diaspora in Performance: Armenian Performers at Edinburgh's 2025 Fringe Festival

By Lilia Foster

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

EDINBURGH, Scotland — Established in 1947, when a group of performers took to the stage at the Edinburgh International Festival uninvited, the Edinburgh Fringe has grown to become the world's largest arts festival, typically attracting over 3 million tourists to Scotland for the month of August. The usual hotspots of the Scottish capital are transformed into venues and stages as fresh and seasoned performers alike flock to the city for the chance to appeal to new audiences from all over the globe. This year, the Festival platformed three Armenian-led productions, situating our stories of diasporic identity and resilience firmly in the cultural conversation.

During the first week of the Festival the Armenian State Theatre brought to life Jan Quackenbush's "A Cold Day in Hell," a one-man play about a man grieving his comatose wife. The performance starred Nerses Avetisyan and was directed by Hrach Keshishyan, an established film director with a number of international awards to his name. His directorial experience was reflected in the performance's compelling depth and quietly building tension. Delivered entirely in Armenian with English subtitles projected behind the protagonist, Keshishyan succeeded in constructing an experience that was intimate and immersive.

Perhaps the most potent Armenian production on offer was "The Song of a Refugee," the brainchild of Yerevan-based dance company MIHR Theatre. The piece combined dance and visual art in a powerful expression of the experience of displacement, all accompanied live by traditional Armenian songs. Eliza Baghdiyan and Lusine MLKE-Galstyan, two of MIHR Theatre's performers, have their own musical group Tiezerk, and gave their own limited two day run of modernisations

see FRINGE, page 16



Fringe street event, 2025 (photo David Monteith-Hodge, courtesy of the Edinburgh Festival Fringe Society)

Music for Future Foundation Hosts Benefit Concert To Help Young Musicians in Armenia

LEXINGTON, Mass. — Yerevan's Music for Future Foundation (M4FF) will present a fundraising concert at 7:30 p.m. on Saturday, October 18, at the Scottish Rite Museum and Library. Eight young Armenian musicians, ranging in age from 10 to 18, will showcase their talents through a program encompassing both solo and ensemble performances. All proceeds from this concert will go directly to M4FF, supporting its mission to identify and nurture gifted musicians from Armenia and provide them the training and mentorship necessary to compete and thrive in the classical music world.

The eclectic program repertoire will include works by Babadjanian, Beethoven, Chopin, Dvorak, Khachaturian, Liszt, Rachmaninoff and Saint-Saens. Adding to the excitement, the concert will also feature two Boston premiere performances: The Serenade for Saxophone by Yuri Gevorgyan and In Memory of Artskah for piano, the most recent work of Arno Melkonyan, a composer, pianist and guitarist from Yerevan and alumnus of the Berklee College of Music.

Violinist/violist Ara Gregorian, Chair of String and Piano Chamber Music at New England Conservatory will also be on hand to discuss music education and professional music careers in the United States.

Founded in 2019 by Sergey Smbatyan, artistic director and principal conductor of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra and Principal Conductor of the Malta Philharmonic Orchestra, M4FF provides unparalleled opportunities for its scholarship recipients. Said Smbatyan, "It is our aim and mission at the Foundation to nurture the young talents, to expand their educational opportunities and to guide them on their path to fulfilling careers in music."

M4FF scholarship holders receive intensive musical training, participate in international performances and masterclasses with world-renowned musicians, and attend competitive music festivals, all experiences together instilling musicians with the confidence, discipline, and exposure needed to launch their musical careers.

Since welcoming its first cohort in 2020, more than 80 scholarship holders have participated in the program, performing in festivals across Armenia, Europe, and the UAE — including the Livorno Music Festival (Italy), the International Festival of Youth Orchestras and "Moscow Meets Friends" (Russia), and the Middle East Classical Music Academy and InClassica (UAE). Foundation scholarship recipients have also won awards in numerous international competitions, such as the

see FUTURE MUSIC, page 17

Recipe Corner



by Christine
Vartanian Datian



Nuvo Olive Oil’s Roasted Fall Vegetables With Fig Balsamic and Fused Garlic Oil

LONG BEACH, Calif. — “We are Josh and Nathan Mardigian, two brothers born and raised in Michigan. Back in 2012 we were working regular jobs and decided to visit our parents, who had just retired and were living in Chico, CA. While visiting, we became aware that our family owned a 125-year-old olive orchard in the area but unfortunately no one was taking care of the trees. At one point there was even talk of bulldozing the olive orchard and to sell the land. We knew we had to keep these beautiful trees and olives. We couldn’t let that happen,” they say.

“During that same visit, we met the man who would later mill for us. An Italian Master Miller whose facility was located on a remote property about 40 minutes from our farm. Not only did he learn his craftsmanship the old-fashioned way, on the classic stone mill and vertical press systems, but he expanded his knowledge to state-of-the-art and advanced machinery. With his profound know-how and with our entrepreneurial spirit, we truly believed we could save the olive orchard. We asked our parents to give us a chance and let us keep the orchard. We promised we would pour our heart and souls into saving the trees and would bring high-quality oils to our community. With our first harvest in 2012, Nuvo Olive Oil was born.”

“Nuvo Olive Oil is 100-percent family-owned and cared for. We proudly take immense care of our century’s old olive orchard. Our mission is to bring you the utmost authentic, best quality and tasting Extra Virgin Olive Oils (EVOO) — packed with goodness and full of medicinal like qualities — from our olive farm to your table. Our goal is to provide you with superior and unparalleled olive oil for you to enjoy at an exclusively great price in our online store. We also like to share great recipes made with real olive oil, helpful super-food tips and the latest knowledge about olives and their health benefits. So, follow us on our blog or social media for gifts, recipes and more.”

“Our Extra Virgin Olive Oils (EVOO) are bursting with unique aromas and flavors, due to the abundance of polyphenols/antioxidants primarily beta-carotene, vitamin E, vitamin A, and other omega fatty acids. Our olives are first cold pressed in a vacuum, unrefined, and extracted without the use of chemicals to create some of the highest quality EVOO in the world. We are recipients of Gold Medals for our 2019 and 2018 Early Harvest, our Expert Blend as well as 2 silver medals as we participated at the NYIOCC (one of the largest olive oil competitions in the world) and at the Los Angeles EVOO award show respectively.”

“Nuvo Olive Oil commits itself to a higher standard of excellence by providing Real, Fresh, Extra Healthy, EVOO. Each harvest of Nuvo Olive Oil is tested for a chemical analysis by 2 different 3rd party laboratories. Our production methods

yield a certified EVOO, which is very low in oleic acidity and peroxide values. The lower the oleic acidity levels the higher the smoke point and thus the hotter the oil can get for cooking at high temperatures.”

Roasted Fall Vegetables with Fig Balsamic and Fused Garlic Oil

Brussels sprouts offer a variety of health benefits, including being rich in vitamins, minerals, antioxidants, and fiber. Elevate your fall or winter table with this simple yet delicious recipe:

INGREDIENTS:

- 2 cups fresh Brussels sprouts, halved
- 2 large carrots, peeled and sliced
- 1 large red onion, quartered
- 3 tablespoons Fused Garlic Olive Oil
- 2 tablespoons Fig Balsamic Vinegar
- Salt and pepper to taste
- Fresh thyme for garnish

PREPARATION:

Preheat your oven to 400°F (200°C).

Toss the Brussels sprouts, carrots, and red onion in the Fused Garlic Olive Oil. Season with salt and pepper. Spread the vegetables on a baking sheet and roast for 25-30 minutes, or until tender and slightly caramelized. Remove from the oven and drizzle with Fig Balsamic Vinegar. Toss to coat.

Garnish with fresh thyme and serve hot. This dish is perfect as a side for your holiday meals or as a main for a cozy weeknight dinner. The combination of garlic-infused oil and sweet fig balsamic makes for a truly delightful experience.

Our Collection of Olive Oils - From Our Farm to Your Table What is Olio Nuovo?

Olio Nuovo, which means “new oil” in Italian, is the first extra virgin olive oil of the harvest season. Pressed just weeks after the olives are handpicked, it is bottled unfiltered and unrefined, preserving its natural vibrancy and nutrients. The result is a rich, neon-green oil bursting with fresh, robust flavors and a peppery finish.

Why Olio Nuovo is So Special

Unlike typical olive oils that are filtered and stored for months, Olio Nuovo is enjoyed immediately to capture its peak freshness. This oil is loaded with antioxidants, polyphenols, and healthy fats, making it as nutritious as it is flavorful. Its bold notes of green apple, fresh-cut grass, and a hint of bitterness create a unique and complex taste that can elevate any dish.

Creative Ways to Use Olio Nuovo

Olio Nuovo’s distinct flavor is best highlighted when used as a finishing oil. Here are a few ways to savor every drop:

Drizzle Over Fresh Bread: Dip warm, crusty bread into Olio Nuovo for a simple yet luxurious treat.

Finish Roasted Vegetables: Enhance the earthy flavors of roasted vegetables with a light drizzle.

Elevate Your Smoothies: Add a tablespoon to your morning smoothie for a nutrient-rich boost.

Natural Wellness: Swish it, gargle it, or massage it into your hair and skin for natural nourishment.



If you would like to know more about Nuvo Olive Oil or if you have any questions/concerns, please feel free to reach out to us via email or with the Contact form on our website, also can text us or call us:

Nuvo Olive Oil
4208 Pepperwood Ave.
Long Beach, CA 90808
Email: hello@nuvooliveoil.com
Phone: 1- (844) 688-6645
Free delivery over \$60 in CA | \$85 Rest of US
Website: <https://nuvooliveoil.com/>



ARTS & CULTURE

‘There Was, There Was Not:’ Emily Mkrtychian’s Quiet Tour de Force about Artsakh

By Christopher Atamian

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

“The falling of a leaf is quieter than the felling of a forest, but it tells us just as much about the coming of autumn.”

Anon

It is a truism of introductory film school courses that the camera should show and not tell. In her first feature documentary, “There was, There Was Not,” American director Emily Mkrtychian lets her camera seep into the lives of four women from Artsakh, whom we follow before, during and after the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War, all the way up to the surrender and evacuation by Artsakhtsis of this historically Armenian land.

Svetlana (Sveta) Haratunyan works as a minesweeper; Siranoush Sargsyan is an aspiring politician; Gayané Hambarzumyan, a women’s rights activist; and Sose Balasanyan, a world-class judo competitor who gives lessons to young children in Stepanakert. These four brave women try to better their communities in this idyllic Artsakh setting.

We meet Sveta while she is picnicking by a riverbank with her two daughters. They eat fresh mulberries, make jokes and splash water at each other. There are references throughout the film to Artsakh being like heaven. Here and in sweeping shots of the surrounding mountains, we

feel that this is perhaps indeed the case.

Some images that remain after a first viewing include a chair in the middle of a field where Sose and the others take turns sitting, and the filmmaker running to hug one of the women as she breaks down and cries. The recurring image of water boiling over as Gayané, now a refugee in Yerevan prepares Armenian coffee and worries about not having the proper cups to serve it in. Later she describes to one of the other women her memory of the rustling of leaves as air traverses the trees in the village of Jdrdruz. One of them says: “People who saw what happened think they understand. But they don’t...The place (Artsakh), becomes part of you.”

Apart from scant footage of bombs fall-



Filmmaker Emily Mkrtychian

ing on Stepanakert, Mkrtychian mercifully spares the viewer the bloodshed and violence that accompany so many war-related documentaries. She shows us instead Sveta lighting candles and then, still holding her cell phone tightly, crying herself to



Still from “There Was, There Was Not” by Emily Mkrtychian

sleep when she cannot reach her daughters whom she has evacuated the night before. We see Siranush contemplating a map of a unified Armenia and Artsakh on her wall being comforted by an elder — a friend or her mother perhaps — who tells her quietly: “Listen: this land that we had, this is a strange game going on. We really don’t know what happened and it’s not up to us...Our boys that’s another story. The land is temporary but they’re gone forever.” For the two women, but for the viewer as well, this works both as a message of resignation but also strangely enough, offers hope that things may someday change.

Apart from a few reverse shots of people crossing the street backwards, Mkrtychian avoids using technical devices or cinematic clichés to get her points across. Also to her credit, she also avoids falsely demonizing Azeris, though she clearly outlines the crimes their army and government commit against the Armenians in Artsakh. It is through pacing and by her astute choice of whom to portray in the first place that she achieves much of the emotion that the viewer feels throughout the documentary. Their charisma makes their emotional journey ours as well. The only criticism that I might have of the documentary is that Mkrtychian might have pushed the feminist angle at work here even more: i.e. would we have

war if women ran the world? For me, it is the theoretical elephant in the cinematic room at the end of Mkrtychian’s bravado 94 minutes of filmmaking. Maybe the filmmaker can take up this in a different documentary, under different circumstances.

There was and there was not. Traditional Armenian folktales begin with this admonition, one often hard to decipher. Here the metaphor and reality meet on different levels. By bookending her tale with this quote and by herself poetically reciting a retelling of the Biblical flood story in which Artsakh and not the Ararat plain are the site where man repopulates the Earth, Mkrtychian brings a fascinating depth to recent Armenian history. And in doing so, she also leaves the door open for the hope that one day Armenians will be back in Artsakh, and that they will continue to exist in this fabled land, just as today they continue to exist, if sometimes hidden, all along the Armenian highlands. Mkrtychian’s poetic recitation of the flood myth brings a fitting close to a small but important documentary which transcends its medium to become poetry itself.

“There Was, There Was Not” opens its theatrical release on October 10 at New York City’s DCTV Firehouse Theatre. To see a clip, visit <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LLoA6koTJF4&t=12s>

ARMENIAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION
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Presents: A Conversation and Meeting with
Muriel Mirak-Weissbach

MURIEL MIRAK-WEISSBACH

“This is a very valid inquiry into a multifaceted, fascinating German general during a late-Ottoman era of extremes... Based on primary sources, the author succeeds in giving a sober, but poignant portrait of a man of ‘honor’ in times of disregard for human dignity.”

— Hans-Lukas Kieser, University of Newcastle, Australia

BOOK LAUNCH

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, 2025 AT 4 PM

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Psychotherapist-Artist Shushanik Karapetyan Recognized With Queens Arts Grants

NEW YORK — Psychotherapist-artist Shushanik Karapetyan is one of 154 Queens-based artists, artist collectives, and small non-profit organizations to receive funding through the Queens Arts Fund program, presented by the New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) in partnership with the New York City Department of Cultural Affairs (DCLA).

Karapetyan was recognized with a New Work Grant for her project “Becoming a Mother,” which will bring a community-centered art exhibition of semi-abstract paintings paired with anonymous intimate interviews—exploring women’s health, pregnancy, motherhood, and childlessness—to Queens at Zaruma Gold Coffee on October 8, with an opening reception at 5 p.m. (11-18 46th Rd, Long Island City, NY 11101).

“Becoming a Mother” explores women’s health, pregnancy, and motherhood through semi-abstract paintings and anonymous interviews with mothers, mothers-to-be, women who wish to become mothers, and women who have chosen not to. The work highlights the Menstrual Cycle, Pregnancy, and Motherhood and combines personal storytelling and public health themes to foster connection, challenge si-



Mother and artist Shushanik Karapetyan, with her daughter and muse, standing in front of the paintings Grandmother, Mother, Daughter

lence around maternal experiences, and create a community archive of shared voices (shushanikartstudio.com).

The City-funded Queens Arts Fund, administered by NYFA, will provide \$493,350 in project grants to Queens-based artists, artist collectives, and small non-profit organizations of all artistic disciplines to support the local production of artwork and cultural programs that highlight, engage, and bolster the borough.

Diaspora in Performance at Edinburgh’s 2025 Fringe Festival

FRINGE, from page 13

of traditional Armenian songs at the Festival; Dzertan, sung in Artsakh dialect, a song which in the words of Eliza, “has no home,” was especially moving.

MIHR’s Artistic Director Tsolak MLKE-Galstyan credits sculptor Herqinaz Galstyan with a great deal of the inspiration for “The Song of a Refugee,” in particular her 2007 sculpture “Horovel (land worker’s song).” The piece features stones hanging by threads from its main structure, embodying the “anguish of distance from the homeland,” but all at once still connected to it. Its influence is plain to see; the performers dance and toy with stones throughout the performance. Galstyan describes these as partners in the dance rather than props, metaphors for the “unbreakable bond with the homeland.” “The Song of a Refugee” is characteristic of MIHR’s commitment to experimental style, but as the piece unfolds the unfamiliar rhythm became easier to absorb and the performers’ frustration at their displacement and a land lost is movingly conveyed – perhaps not for traditionalists, but they have never been the target demographic for the Fringe or MIHR.

Edinburgh has long been a site of significance for the Armenian community. Its city council was the first in the UK to recognise the Genocide in 2005. It would be another ten years before Derby, England, followed suit. It is no doubt a receptive and hospitable arena for the narration of Armenian



“The Song of a Refugee,” 2025 (photo Seda Grigoryan)

stories. In the absence of meaningful coverage by Western media – across the entire course of the Second Artsakh War, continued ethnic cleansing, and recent landmark diplomatic events – platforms like the Fringe are vital, stepping in to amplify Armenian voices.

For performers and directors like Eliza Baghdiyan and Tsolak MLKE-Galstyan, drawing attention to Armenia’s reality is not just a moral obligation – it is an act of solidarity. The displacement and loss faced in Artsakh and the diaspora are not isolated. They reflect a global pattern of violence and uprooting, from Palestine to Ukraine and beyond. By elevating Armenian stories, we not only preserve the memory of a people still under threat but also expose the deep interconnected cycles of forced migration and cultural erasure globally.

Books

New Saroyan Book Published in Yerevan

YEREVAN — From September 4 to 11, Yerevan hosted the Saroyan Days festival, an initiative of the William Saroyan Foundation, which concluded with the presentation of *The Nature of William Saroyan’s Dramaturgy and the Armenian Stage* (Yerevan: Gitutyun, 2025, 246 pages), a scholarly monograph by Anush Aslibekyan, senior researcher at the Theater Department of the Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia, PhD in Art Studies, and Associate Professor.

This book is the first comprehensive theoretical and theater studies exploration devoted to the dramaturgical particularities of the great writer William Saroyan and to the issues of staging his works. The author also presents the history of Saroyan’s plays on the Armenian stage — from the premieres of the two works that earned Saroyan international fame and awards, *My Heart’s in the Highlands* and *The Time of Your Life*, to subsequent productions of his plays in Armenia. The book includes the first ever chronological catalogue of Saroyan productions in Armenia, beginning with Vardan Ajemian’s legendary 1961 staging of *My Heart’s in the Highlands* at the Sundukyan State Academic Theatre and continuing up to the present day.

The volume contains archival materials and photographs from past and recent productions.

The author draws on Armenian, Russian, American, and European scholarly literature, as well as her own theater studies analyses of contemporary productions, interviews with directors, and a wealth of published media material. Beyond its theoretical and historical significance, the book offers directors valuable insights into staging even those Saroyan plays that might ini-



tially seem less suited for performance. One of the chapters also addresses and corrects common errors and inaccuracies that have circulated in Saroyan scholarship.



Anush Aslibekyan

The monograph was recommended for publication by the Academic Council of the Institute of Arts of the National Academy of Sciences of Armenia. The academic editor is NAS RA Corresponding Member Henrik Hovhannisyan. The publication was funded by the William Saroyan Foundation (San Francisco), chaired by Scott Setragian.

—Artsvi Bakhchinyan

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PS Form 3526, July 2014



ARTS & CULTURE

CALENDAR

OF EVENTS & PROGRAMS

MASSACHUSETTS

- SEPTEMBER 7-FEBRUARY 28** — Armenian Museum of America, through February 28, 2026 Adele & Haig Der Manuelian Galleries "The Art of Disruption: The Art & Impact of Serj Tankian" World renowned musician Serj Tankian is the lead singer and songwriter for the band, System Of A Down, a visionary poet, visual artist, and outspoken advocate for human rights. Inspired by his 2024 memoir, *Down with the System*, the exhibition immerses visitors in the dynamic intersections of music, painting, and protest that define Tankian's work. This exhibition is curated by Ryann Casey. Sponsored by Carolyn Mugar and the Alan K. & Isabelle DerKazarian Foundation. Hours: Thursday-Sunday 12pm-6pm 65 Main St., Watertown. (617) 926-2562 or armenianmuseum.org
- SEPTEMBER 27** — Armenian Museum of America Music in Color Concert with Musician-in-Residence, violinist Haig Hovsepian and pianist Joey Vasconi, 7-9 p.m., 65 Main Street Watertown, MA 02472, (617) 926-2562
- SEPTEMBER 28** — Book Launch and Reception. An afternoon with Muriel Mirak-Weissbach on the occasion of the release in English of her book, *A German General and the Armenian Genocide: Otto Liman von Sanders Between Honor and State*. Sunday, 4 p.m., at ACF. Co-sponsored by NAASR, the Tekeyan Cultural Association, Goethe Institut and Berghahn Publishing House. Free and Open to the Public
- SEPTEMBER 28** — Wellesley Symphony Orchestra performs Alan Hovhanness's Exile Symphony, a remembrance and commemoration of the Armenian genocide of 1915. Mass Bay Community College, 50 Oakland Street, Wellesley. 2 p.m. Tickets \$30 on-line and at the door. <https://www.wellesleysymphony.org>
- OCTOBER 4** — National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) - "Celebrating 70 Years- Building the Future of Armenian Studies" Gala at the Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston. Honorees, Pamela Avedisian and Yervant Chekijian. For tickets and sponsorship opportunities please go to <http://naasr.org/gala70>
- OCTOBER 6** — St. James Men's Club & Trinity Men's Union Joint Meeting, with special guest and speaker Ernie Boch, Jr. Boch serves as President and CEO of Subaru of New England. In 2006, Boch established Music Drives, which funds musical opportunities for the underserved throughout New England. Boch invested in the future of Boston's culture and performing arts in 2016 with the Boch Center, housing the city's landmark Wang and Shubert Theatres and sits on the organization's Board of Directors. Boch opened the Boch Medical Center in the rural village of Wajinja, Uganda. Losh Kebab & Kheyra Dinner \$25 per person. 6:15 mezza & social hour, & 7 p.m. dinner, 7.30 speaker St. James Armenian church Cultural and Youth Center, 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For info contact Robert Berberian 339-293-2514.
- OCTOBER 17-18** — Friday and Saturday, St. James Armenian Church 78th 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. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information visit www.stjameswatertown.org/bazaar.
- OCTOBER 18** — The Music for Future Foundation's visiting fellows from Armenia will present a special concert, showcasing their artistic talents while raising awareness and financial support for the Foundation's impactful work. Musicians aged 10 to 18 will perform works by Babadjanyan, Beethoven, Chopin, Dvorak, Khachaturian, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saens and Boston premieres by composers Yuri Gevorgyan and Arno Melkonyan. International violinist/violist Ara Gregorian, Chair of String and Piano Chamber Music at the New England Conservatory of Music will also be on hand to discuss music education opportunities in the United States. For tickets and information, visit www.FACSBoston.org
- OCTOBER 19** — CELEBRATING WHAT UNITES US! Highlighting Ireland. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday, 4 p.m. Monthly series in collaboration with the City of Boston Office of Immigrant Advancement and Age Friendly Boston RSVP appreciated, hello@armenianheritagepark.org
- OCTOBER 23** — The Armenia Tree Project is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a reception. Meet new executive director Ara Barsam and bid farewell to retiring executive director Jeanmarie Papelian and support ATP's work toward a greener Armenia. Thursday, 6 to 8 p.m. Food and drinks, photo exhibition. Sheraton Commander Hotel, 16 Garden St., Cambridge. Valet parking is available. Registration required by October 6. 617-926-8733.
- OCTOBER 24** — 20th Anniversary Celebration of Father Khachatur Kesablian's Ordination to Priesthood. Presentation of Floral (Dzaghga) Pilon by His Eminence, Bishop Mesrob Parsamyan, Primate. Dinner and Program to follow. Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelms-

- ford. 6 p.m. For tickets and further information, contact Dara Hagopian, djuke@comcast.net, 508-364-9729, or go to www.stsvartanantz.com. Tickets must be purchased by October 17. No tickets will be sold at the door.
- OCTOBER 25** — Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church 85th Anniversary Gala Fundraising Dinner, Saturday, 6:00 PM Cocktail, 7 p.m. Dinner & Program, Sheraton Boston Hotel. Celebrate 85 years of Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church in New England. Details and tickets: www.holycrossarmenian.com
- OCTOBER 25** — FallFest at first Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont, noon to 7 pm. All the kebabs, plus homemade pastries, string cheese, and eetch.
- OCTOBER 25-26** — Save the dates! First Anniversary Celebration of Holy Archangels Armenian Church Sanctuary Consecration presided by Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan. Saturday, October 25, at 4 p.m.: Worship and acknowledgment of Godfathers of the Church; 5 p.m. Mezza and Wine Reception. Sunday, October 26, 10 a.m.: Holy Badarak; 2 p.m. Banquet & Program including St. Vartan Award Recipients. Ordinations throughout the weekend
- OCTOBER 26** — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group presents Chekhov's "The Marriage Proposal" in Western Armenian at St. James Armenian Church, a cosponsor along with Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter and the Society of Istanbul Armenians, 4 p.m. Tickets \$75/person at themarriageproposal.eventbrite.com
- NOVEMBER 1** — Debut performance of the Massachusetts Chamber Music Artists. Program. Music by Frank Bridge, Komitas, Mendelssohn. Haig Hovsepian and Michael Fisher on violin, Yeh-Chun Lin on viola, Edward Arron on cello and Dina Vainshtein on piano. First Parish in Bedford, 75 Great Road, Bedford. 6 to 7.30 p.m. Tickets \$24 to \$30. Visit www.mcmartists.org.
- NOVEMBER 9** — GIVING THANKS: COMING TOGETHER. ARMENIAN HERITAGE PARK ON THE GREENWAY, Boston. 2pm. View the new Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture. Meet & Greet. Cider & Sweets. Refreshments. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org
- NOVEMBER 21** — AMAA's Boston Child Care Committee presents an evening supporting the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan, Armenia, FEATURING COMEDIAN KEV ORKIAN. COCKTAILS, DINNER & LIVE AUCTION. Wellesley Country Club, Wellesley Hills. SPONSOR BY AUGUST 1, 2025, TO BE LISTED ON THE INVITATION! (Individual Tickets will commence at a later date). For more info visit: <https://amaa.org/hyemindsboston2025/>
- DECEMBER 7 CANDLELIT LABYRINTH WALK: IN PEACE & HARMONY** Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 4:45pm. Meet & Greet. Walk the Candlelit Labyrinth Walk. Enjoy Hot Chocolate & Sweet Treats. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NEW JERSEY

- NOVEMBER 22** — 12 VOCATIONS: VARIETY OF GIFTS - ONE SPIRIT. Join St. Nersess Seminary and celebrate the vocations of its next 12 alumni, including three bishops, seven priests, a deacon and a lay minister at a gala banquet to be held at Macaluso's, Hawthorne, NJ. Starts at 6 p.m. Tickets are \$200 per person. Details, invitations, and booklet donations can be found on www.stnersess.edu.

RHODE ISLAND

- OCTOBER 18** — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church presents "GALA KEF Dinner Dance" dedicated to 30th Anniversary of Cultural Committee featuring Ken Kalajian - guitar, Charles Kalajian - percussions, Leon Janikian - clarinet, Harry Bedrossian - oud & vocal. Egavian Cultural Center - 70 Jefferson Street, Providence, 6 - 7 pm Cocktail Hour, 7 pm - Dinner, 8 pm - 11 Band. General Admission : \$60 (\$75 after October 12) Call for tickets: Zara Vartanian: 401-439-5971, Elvira Hovagimian: 860-462-3610.
- NOVEMBER 1** — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church presents a "Spiritual Music Festival", dedicated to the memory of Maestro Khoren Mekhanejian featuring the Choirs & Soloists of Rhode Island Orthodox Churches. Special guests: Hasmik Mekhanejian, mezzo-soprano (NY), Anahit Zakarian, soprano (NY). In the Sanctuary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church at 3 p.m. 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. Donations Gratefully Appreciated. Refreshments will be served

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" or 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.

Benefit Concert to Help Young Musicians in Armenia

FUTURE MUSIC, from page 13

Khachaturian International Youth Competition and the Santa Cecilia International Competition, earning 144 prestigious prizes, including more than 20 Grand Prix and over 80 First Prize titles.

Talented young musicians of the M4FF have been admitted to some of the world's leading music institutions, including the University of Music and Performing Arts Vienna, Cologne University of Music and Dance, Royal Academy of Music in London, Detmold University of Mu-

sic, Zurich University of the Arts, Zagreb Academy of Music, Mozarteum University Salzburg, and Folkwang University of the Arts in Germany.

Tickets for this performance are \$25 for students and \$50-\$75 for adults. All are invited to a post-concert reception to meet the performers and to learn more about the mission and impact of M4FF.

This event is hosted by Friends of the Armenian Culture Society (FACS). Ticket sales and additional information are available online at www.facsbboston.org.



COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN
**MIRROR
SPECTATOR**
SINCE 1932



An ADL Publication

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Two Different Meetings the Same Day Appear Connected

By Suren Sargsyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

In recent days, two important events took place in Armenia that, while different from each other, appear closely interconnected.

On September 12, Brendan Hanrahan, head of the US State Department's Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, visited Armenia. The key topic of discussion with the Armenian authorities was the implementation of the trilateral declaration signed in Washington by the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan, and the United States, including issues related to the realization of the "Trump's Road for International Peace and Prosperity" (TRIPP). Both sides emphasized the importance of expanding communications and infrastructure networks based on agreed principles — both in the context of regional peace and broader connectivity.

The second important event took place on the same day. The special representatives of Armenia and Turkey met in Yerevan and agreed that the relevant bodies of the two countries would carry out the necessary technical studies for the restoration and operation of the Gyumri-Kars railway and the power transmission line. They agreed to strengthen cooperation in cultural and academic fields, in particular by creating scholarship opportunities for students of higher educational institutions and through the joint restoration of the historic Ani/Silk Road bridge.

Turkish Special Envoy Serdar Kiliç also agreed to take the necessary steps to allow other interested airlines to operate flights in various directions starting in the summer of 2026, which will increase the number of air routes and flights between the two countries. It is not excluded that this could involve flights to Armenia operated by different Turkish airlines. However, there is a potential complication: Turkish airlines can fly to Armenia — and are doing so at present — but, as is well known, Armenian-registered aircraft are on the EU aviation blacklist, while the regulations in the Turkish aviation sector are similar to EU standards.

There is no information as to whether the Turkish and American delegations also met with each other, nor is it clear whether the American side is directly mediating the process of normalizing Armenian-Turkish relations. It is noteworthy that prior to the

visit of the Turkish delegation, the Armenian government decided to remove the image of Mount Ararat from the entry and exit stamps of visitors' passports — most likely a gesture by Armenia toward Ankara, rather than a result of Turkish pressure, since Mount Ararat still appears on Armenia's official coat of arms.

In any case, these two events are significant because Armenia is making concessions in both directions, effectively ensuring the full fulfillment of Turkish-Azerbaijani tandem demands. Moreover, in the case of rail and air transport, Turkey allows the

use of its territory for the transit of Armenian passengers and goods if the border with Armenia is opened. The same cannot be said for Azerbaijan, as this involves a road provided by Armenia rather than a safe and unobstructed route provided by Azerbaijan to Armenia.

As noted before, the normalization of Armenian-Turkish and Armenian-Azerbaijani relations are highly interconnected processes. Moreover, the demands and preconditions are quite similar, relating to Armenia's constitutional changes and the provision of a corridor.

These two events are also significant because they finalize an alternative overland connection between Turkey and Azerbaijan. Of course, there are routes through Georgia and Iran, but the shortest route connecting Nakhichevan and Turkey will be through Syunik. How safe the Azerbaijani road will be for Armenia remains unclear. Regarding communication with Turkey, it is noteworthy that by specifying the summer of 2026, the Turkish side is likely waiting to see how Armenia's elections conclude and whether Pashinyan will win the elections scheduled for June 2026, in order to secure the continuation of all these processes.

It is not excluded that a referendum may be held in Armenia during this same period so that Armenia can meet the demands of its two Turkic neighboring states.

(Suren Sargsyan is an expert on US foreign policy, researcher and author. He is a graduate of Yerevan State University, American University of Armenia and the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University. Suren Sargsyan is a founder of the Armenian Center for American Studies, a research center based in Yerevan.)



Defense Diplomacy: How Turkey Is Arming Itself, and the World

By Matthew Hoare

Made in Turkey

For the past five decades, successive Turkish governments have pushed to expand the country's defense industry and curb its reliance on overseas arms companies and international supply chains.

It has sought to build an ecosystem of local companies capable of manufacturing components and establishing partnerships with the world's leading contractors to obtain new technologies and technical know-how.

As of 2025, local companies provide more than 80% of the products required by the industry.

The push for autonomy was motivated by the US arms embargo of the 1970s, which for three years blocked the country from purchasing arms from what was then its biggest defense partner.

"Tensions with the United States and other Western countries, as well as restrictions imposed on Turkey in general, have prompted the country to focus more on its own arms sector," Ufuk Necat Tasci, a professor of international relations, tells The New Arab.

The lessons of the 1970s were reinforced only five years ago when the Trump administration slapped sanctions on Turkey's defense industry and expelled it from the F-35 programme in response to its purchase of

Russia's S-400 air defense system.

Since then, US arms sales to Turkey have fallen more than 80%, Tasci says.

The industry's development has, in recent years, begun to bear fruit in the shape of higher value-added, technologically sophisticated products.

Turkish armored vehicles and aerial drones have become huge overseas money-makers. The Turkish navy is expanding its use of locally made sea drones and is currently building the country's first aircraft carrier.

Aselsan - the country's largest defense company - produces sensors, missile guidance technologies, and electronic warfare systems. In August, the Turkish military began using the company's new 'Steel Dome' air defense system, which it says can protect against short-, medium-, and long-range missiles.

Among the industry's most ambitious undertakings is the ongoing development of an indigenous fifth-generation fighter jet, the KAN.

Led by Turkish Aerospace Industries, the project would put Turkey among an exclusive group of countries capable of producing the advanced aircraft, should it get off the ground later this decade.

continued on next page



COMMENTARY

MY TURN



by Harut Sassounian

Armenia's Survival Depends On a Strong Military, not Empty Rhetoric

Responding to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's daily statements is a full-time job. I take no pleasure in repeatedly criticizing him, but it would be irresponsible to ignore his anti-national positions without worrying about their destructive consequences.

Here is the latest example of his questionable remarks:

In a 46-minute-long speech at the "Comprehensive Security and Resilience 2025" international conference in Yerevan on Sept. 15, Pashinyan began by arguing that "previously, the primary tools for reducing our external security vulnerabilities were military-political alliances and the army." However, he claimed that "history has proven that this formula did not work...." He asserted that "legitimacy" matters more than military strength for safeguarding the nation. He even suggested that "this strategy has made peace possible," a transparent ploy to persuade voters to back his political party in next year's parliamentary elections.

Inexplicably, Pashinyan then tied his "legitimacy strategy" to army's goals, declaring: "The army of the Armenian Republic has nothing to do outside the internationally recognized territory of the Republic of Armenian, it has no problem, and the task of the army is to ensure the protection of the Armenian Republic's internationally recognized borders."

This statement is a thinly veiled attempt to justify surrendering the demands of future generations for Armenia's historical rights. It would be preferable if he simply remained quiet rather than prematurely give up those rights long before the opportune moment arrives.

Pashinyan also repeated his erroneous claim that recognizing Armenia's current borders makes it easier to buy weapons. In his view, arms suppliers will trust that Armenia won't use the weapons in a "non-legitimate manner." He fails to grasp that the legitimacy of Armenia's borders has nothing to do with being able to purchase weapons. The only thing that matters is one's ability to pay for the purchase. Either you have the money to pay for the weapons or you don't. If you are willing to pay, there will be plenty of countries that are ready to sell you any weapon you want; no questions asked. Legitimacy is irrelevant to the arms market.

Next, Pashinyan absurdly stated that in the past, "the army was our first, second, third, and fourth line of defense.... If your first tool to defend your security is the army, it means you have no defense. The army should not be the first, second, third, fourth or fifth tool for security. It should be the very last one for our security.... It shouldn't even be the 15th, 50th or 100th." It is not surprising that the Prime Minister, having lost a devastating war in 2020, would utter such spineless nonsense.

Instead of strengthening the military with modern weapons to deter enemies that are openly threatening Armenia's existence, Pashinyan is saying that the army should be the last resort to defend the country. With such defeatist thinking, Armenia risks losing even the small territory it has now.

Facing more powerful enemies should not mean that Armenia must refrain from acquiring the necessary weapons to defend itself. Just the opposite. When you are armed to the teeth, even the most powerful enemy will think twice before attacking you, knowing full well that it too will suffer losses. When you are weaker than your enemy, remaining defenseless is not the solution. Being unable to defend yourself is a recipe for disaster. The enemy can easily march to Yerevan without firing a single shot.

Pashinyan illustrated his point with the silly example of painting a mural on the outside wall of your house, sending the message that the neighbor is not entitled to the house he lives in. "This will lead to a dispute, fight, conflict, war." Pashinyan does not seem to understand that painting whatever you want on the walls of your house, does not grant your neighbor a license to attack your house and murder your family members. If your enemy knows that you are well-armed and ready to defend your house, he will be discouraged from carrying out his hostile intent.

The prime minister wrongly thinks that Armenia will continue to exist as a state 50, 100, 150 years from now. He boasted: "We are today more independent than ever before, more sovereign than ever, a state more than ever, and allow me to say, we are safer than ever. The Republic of Armenia has never had more security during its independence than it has today."

In reality, Pashinyan's defeatist doctrine plants doubt that Armenia may survive under his rule.

Armenia cannot risk its security by treating the military as a low priority. True legitimacy springs not from empty words but from the tangible guarantee that Armenia's borders -- and its people -- are defended by capable, well-equipped forces. It is time for the Prime Minister and the entire leadership to abandon defeatist rhetoric, strengthen strategic alliances, and invest decisively in modernizing the Armenian military. Only then can Armenians ensure that no adversary dares test their resolve to defend their sovereignty, which will make Armenia endure as a free, secure, and proud nation for generations to come.

from previous page

An Emerging Global Supplier

Turkey's investment in its domestic industry has seen it rise to become one of the world's fastest-emerging arms exporters and a major supplier to countries across Africa and Asia.

Fueled by purchases of armored vehicles and drones, annual revenues from defense exports have more than trebled since the turn of the decade, reaching \$7.1 billion in 2024.

This has seen the country increase its global market share from 0.8% in the latter half of the 2010s to 1.7% between 2020 and 2024, according to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI).

Demand for Turkish weaponry is particularly strong among high- and middle-income developing countries. Allies in Azerbaijan and Turkmenistan, the Gulf states, Ukraine, and Pakistan have been among its biggest foreign buyers over the past decade.

Turkish companies have not achieved such growth rates by pricing alone, but offer other advantages over their competitors.

For one, companies provide Western-standard products - by virtue of Turkey's NATO membership - on more favourable terms than American and European contractors.

"Because Turkish companies operate in a volatile, unpredictable and problematic domestic economic picture, they operate at higher margins of risk. This means that they offer shorter delivery times and more flexible contract terms," Sitki Egeli, professor of international relations at the Izmir University of Economics, tells The New Arab.

Turkish weaponry also comes with fewer political strings attached and is less subject to the shifting agendas of some Western governments.

"If you are buying weapons, you want some predictability. You want to make sure

they are not held hostage to other issues in the relationship," Egeli says.

They also have an advantage over many European products in that they are actively used by the Turkish military and tested on the battlefield.

Though developing countries continue to be their biggest buyers, Turkish companies have, within the past year, begun to carve out spaces in advanced economies that just a few years ago would have been unthinkable.

Turkish Aerospace Industries is supplying Spain with trainer aircraft. Turkish shipyards are building logistics ships for the Portuguese Navy. Leading drone manufacturer Baykar will produce unmanned aircraft in Italy alongside Italian defense giant Leonardo and sell them to European countries.

In a watershed moment in December, the company made its first acquisition in Europe, purchasing Italian aerospace firm Piaggio.

Sales are projected to continue rising in the coming years as the country widens its footprint in Africa and Asia and expands into Europe. The government expects revenues to climb to \$8 billion this year and is targeting \$11 billion by 2028.

A Global Drone Power

Drones have become the poster child for Turkey's rise as a significant force in the global arms industry.

Turkish companies such as Baykar and Turkish Aerospace Industries have exported UAVs to almost 40 countries around the world, generating headlines for their involvement in Ukraine, Syria, and Nagorno-Karabagh, and putting the country at the forefront of a technology that is rewriting the rules of warfare.

The growth has been rapid. Since first entering the international market less than

seven years ago, Turkish contractors have been responsible for more than two-thirds of global transfers of armed drones, according to data collected by the Centre for New American Security.

Between January 2020 and September 2023, Turkey was second only to the US in the number of drones it exported, eclipsing Israel.

Though relative newcomers in the global marketplace, the recent successes of the Bayraktar TB2 and TAI's Akinci are the results of a multi-decade strategy to develop unmanned vehicles that was driven by Turkey's conflict with the PKK.

"This provided Turkey with very extensive experience and first-hand knowledge on the use, the doctrines, the strong points, the weak points of UAVs," Egeli says.

Turkey owes its dominance in armed UAVs in large part to American and European companies, which have been almost entirely absent in the international market. Very few countries have been able to obtain American-made combat drones due to US legislation that restricts their export. Meanwhile, European companies have struggled to get indigenous drone programmes off the ground.

"Europeans were not there. Americans would not sell. The Chinese would sell, but customers were not happy. Turkey capitalised on that," Egeli says.

Added to that is Turkey's early adoption of smaller munitions for lighter aircraft, which provided a much-needed alternative to the larger, more expensive missiles produced by US and European contractors.

Exploiting the gap in the market, Turkey stepped in and developed munitions more suitable for militaries outside of the developed world, according to Egeli.

Guns and Diplomacy

Turkey's evolving technologies have

been a primary mechanism to strengthen its overseas relationships and pursue rapprochement with former adversaries.

Nowhere is this more evident than in the Gulf, where countries have begun to move past their previously troubled relations with Ankara and have become willing partners with Turkish defense companies.

The UAE - itself one of the world's fastest-emerging arms suppliers - was in the first half of the decade Turkey's largest export market, accounting for almost a fifth of all exports, according to data compiled by SIPRI.

Since Erdogan cleared the air with his trip to Riyadh in 2022, Saudi Arabia has begun to build closer ties with Turkish firms.

In 2023, the kingdom became the latest country to add Bayraktar drones to its air force, and is now reportedly chasing a deal worth \$6 billion to acquire a suite of Turkish-made armaments, including tanks, naval ships and missiles.

In July, the Saudi sovereign wealth fund recruited leading Turkish companies to help build up its own domestic defense industry in a step that would help it reduce its dependence on US-made systems.

It has reportedly expressed willingness to buy as many as 100 KAN fighter jets and is eager to help co-produce the aircraft.

Tasci says that technological advances have made Turkish companies a "critical determinant" of the country's ability to achieve its foreign policy goals.

"Turkey's claim to be a major player in the region is supported by deeper bilateral and regional contacts created through the defense industry," he says.

"For Turkey's neighbors, turning their backs on the country is no longer as simple as it once was."

(Matthew Hoare is a journalist at The New Arab. This piece originally appeared on the New Arab website on September 22.)

COMMENTARY

The Hidden Cost of Homophobia in the Armenian Community

By Vic Gerami

Homophobia is tearing apart an already divided Armenian community. It damages individuals, fractures families, fuels violence, and drives away talented LGBTQ+ Armenians whose voices and skills our nation desperately needs.

Running an advocacy organization like the Truth and Accountability League (TAAL) is already a monumental challenge. But in addition to the usual hurdles of activism, limited resources, entrenched power structures, and community divisions, homophobia has been a persistent barrier to support for our work. It is one more factor tearing apart an already fragmented Armenian community, and its cost is devastating. We are losing gifted, passionate, and capable Armenians because we choose to disenfranchise our LGBTQ+ brothers and sisters.

The word “traditional” has been weaponized to justify prejudice. Some Armenians claim to defend tradition while using it as a shield for intolerance. Similarly, many invoke the Bible to rationalize their homophobia, yet most have never read more than a paragraph or two. As someone who did not merely attend Sunday school for occasional Bible study, but who had Bible class every day in my private Armenian school, I have spent years reading and critically examining Scripture. When I ask homophobes to identify where the Bible condemns loving same-sex relationships, they are consistently unable to respond, exposing that they neither know nor understand the text they cite. They fail to understand that biblical references to homosexuality come only from the Old Testament and, in context, speak about infidelity, not loving, committed relationships. Jesus himself never condemned homosexuality. On the contrary, his message was simple and profound: love one another, be

kind and generous, forgive, and care for your neighbors.

Even within my own circles, people close to me sometimes report that others express admiration for TAAL’s work but quietly voice prejudice against my sexual orientation. Many of these same individuals are profoundly hypocritical. Were the hidden aspects of their own lives brought to light, we would find genuine moral failings far more serious than the prejudice they project onto others. Yet they keep their heads buried in the sand, clinging to a false sense of righteousness while condemning people whose only ‘offense’ is living authentically. I have also received emails and messages filled with homophobic slurs from Armenians who present themselves as morally superior. These experiences are not isolated incidents. They are symptoms of a deeper cultural problem.

Homophobia in the Armenian community inflicts wounds that go far beyond words. It damages mental and physical health, fractures families, fosters violence, and drives talented LGBTQ+ Armenians out of the country. The damage is sustained by political rhetoric, religious dogma, and the state’s failure to protect its citizens.

Hostility forces many LGBTQ+ Armenians to hide their identity from family and friends, creating profound psychological distress. Rates of depression, anxiety and suicide attempts are alarmingly high. The 2022 suicide of a young gay couple, met with online vitriol rather than compassion, was a tragic reminder of this reality.

LGBTQ+ Armenians often face biased treatment in healthcare settings or are denied care altogether. The outdated classification of homosexuality as a “mental disorder” within parts of the Armenian medical community has worsened stigma and denied transgender individuals access to gender-affirming care.

Mob violence, such as the 2018 attacks in Shurnoukh, goes unpunished far too often. In some cases, victims have been driven into exile, as in the instance of a nightclub owner who was forced to seek asylum in Sweden after repeated attacks that authorities failed to prevent.

Homophobia does not just harm individuals. It tears families apart. Many LGBTQ+ Armenians are met with abuse, threats or expulsion from their homes when they come out. A 2012 study revealed that over half of Armenians would sever ties with a family member or friend who identified as gay. This rejection erodes trust, weakens family bonds, and diminishes the richness of our cultural life. Even in death, prejudice persists. After the suicide of the young couple, questions arose about whether they would have been allowed an Armenian funeral.

The consequences of homophobia reverberate beyond individual suffering. Armenia’s future depends on the talent and dedication of its people, but a climate of fear and intolerance is pushing LGBTQ+ Armenians abroad, draining the nation of valuable skills and perspectives. Anti-LGBTQ+ rhetoric, often dressed up as nationalism, suggests that queerness and Armenianness are mutually exclusive. This is a false and destructive narrative. It weakens national unity and tarnishes Armenia’s international reputation, undermining relationships with allies and potential partners.

The Armenian community is no stranger to hardship or division. But homophobia is a wound we inflict on ourselves. We cannot afford to alienate, endanger, or silence members of our own community. To live up to our values, true Christian values of love, kindness, forgiveness, and generosity, we must confront prejudice, not excuse it under the banner of ‘tradition.’

Homophobia is not tradition. It is not faith. It is fear, and it is costing us our future.

(Vic Gerami is an award-winning Armenian-American journalist, editor, filmmaker and activist. He founded and edits the Blunt Post, a platform for incisive journalism and social justice. His documentaries, including “Motherland” and “ARTSAKH: Armenian Genocide Continues,” chronicle human rights violations against Armenians. In 2020, Gerami founded the Truth And Accountability League (TAAL), a 501(c)(3) advocacy organization that exposes bias, disinformation, and propaganda targeting Armenians while monitoring media, academia, policy, and social platforms.)

NAASR to Host Graduate Symposium As Part of 70th Anniversary Events

BELMONT, Mass. — As part of the celebration of its 70th Anniversary, on October 2 and 3, the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) will host the Pamela and Edward Avedisian Graduate Symposium in Armenian Studies at the NAASR Vartan Gregorian Building, 395 Concord Ave. An international lineup of speakers will present papers on a wide range of topics. The public is invited to attend sessions.

This symposium is presented in honor of Pamela and Edward Avedisian in recognition of and with gratitude for their support of NAASR and its mission.

The symposium will cover topics including Art and Architecture, Music and Poetry, Literature and Language, Late Ottoman Genocide and Mass Violence, and Modern Armenia and Diaspora.

NAASR has organized and co-sponsored dozens of



Edward and Pamela Avedisian conferences over the course of its 70-year history, including the first conferences focusing on the nascent field of Armenian Studies in the U.S., “Armenian Studies and Research: Problems and Needs” in 1955 and “Searchlight on Armenian Studies: Conference on Problems and Areas of Research” in 1956.

Following the two-day graduate symposium, NAASR will mark its 70th anniversary with a gala celebration at the Fairmont Copley Plaza, featuring Dr. Anthony Marx, President and CEO of the New York Public Library, as the featured speaker and Pamela Avedisian and Yervant Chekijian as Honorary Chairs.



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Master of Ceremonies
MR. ARA J. BALIKIAN, ESQ.
President of the AGBU New England District



Scan for more info

Saturday, October 25, 2025
6:00 PM – Cocktail Reception 7:00 PM – Dinner
SHERATON HOTEL, 39 Dalton Street, Boston, MA

Parking at the Prudential Center Garage