

Azerbaijani Leader Touts Trump Peace Plan for the Caucasus

In a wide-ranging television interview on August 27, Azerbaijani leader Ilham Aliyev asserted a key provision of the Trump peace plan for the Caucasus can be implemented quickly. The same cannot be said for the restoration of stable relations between Azerbaijan and Russia, he indicated.

Aliyev spoke at length about the provisional peace deal he signed with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and US President Donald Trump on August 8 in Washington, sounding broadly optimistic that the agreement signals the end of almost four decades of conflict and “opens absolutely new opportunities for the South Caucasus region and the broader regions of Central Asia and the Middle East.”

He told an interviewer from the Al Arabiya television channel he would sign a peace treaty, the text of which was reportedly finalized in the spring, as soon as Armenia amended its constitution to acknowledge Baku’s sovereignty over the long-contested Nagorno Karabakh territory. Azerbaijani forces reconquered Karabakh in 2023. Aliyev did not sound confident that Yerevan would adopt an amendment quickly, given the sensitivity of the issue among the general Armenian population and the low popularity ratings of Pashinyan’s government.

“I hope that nothing will interfere with the process,” Aliyev said. “But again, I don’t have 100 percent guarantees because I am not well aware of the internal politics of Armenia. We know that next summer they will hold parliamentary elections. We know that they are working on the draft of a new constitution. But if there is strong external interference, then yes, we may think that something could break what has been agreed.”

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Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan meet on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in Tianjin, August 31, 2025

Putin, Pashinyan Meet in China

TIANJIN, China (Azatutyun) — Russian President Vladimir Putin and Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan met in China on Sunday, August 31, for what were their first face-to-face talks held in almost a year.

“We haven’t seen each other in a long time,” Putin told Pashinyan at the beginning of the talks held on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) summit held in the Chinese city of .

“Many issues have accumulated: bilateral, regional and international ones,” he said. “I hope that our meeting today, as it usually happens when we meet, will be useful and informative.”

For his part, Pashinyan praised the “very active dialogue between our brotherly countries.” Neither side reported afterwards details of their meeting. Kremlin spokesman Dmitry Peskov said only that it was “very good.” The two leaders previously met in a one-on-one format in

Moscow last October amid heightened tensions between Moscow and Yerevan.

Their latest conversation came less than a month after Pashinyan pledged to let the United States administer a transit corridor for Azerbaijan, which would pass through Armenia’s strategic Syunik region, during White House talks with US President Donald Trump and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev.

Although the deal is seen by analysts as another blow to Russian presence in Armenia, Russia’s public reaction to it has been cautious so far. Moscow has said that it must not be at odds with Armenia’s membership in the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), a Russian-led trade bloc, and the presence of Russian border guards along the Armenian-Irani-an border.

The transit corridor would be adjacent to that border. The issue is believed to have been high on the agenda of Russian see PUTIN, page 2

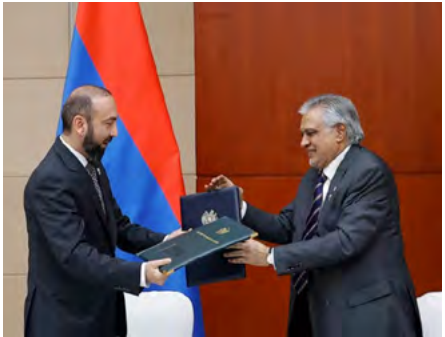
Armenia, Pakistan Establish Diplomatic Ties

By Anush Mkrtchian

TIANJIN, China (Azatutyun) — Pakistan has agreed to establish diplomatic relations with Armenia after decades of full and unconditional support shown for Azerbaijan in the Karabakh conflict.

The foreign ministers of the two states signed a relevant communique at the weekend on the sidelines of a Shanghai Cooperation Organization summit in the Chinese city of Tianjin. The Pakistani Foreign Ministry described the development as a “historic step forward.”

“The two leaders reaffirmed their desire to work closely with each other at bilateral and multilateral fora, to achieve their shared objectives of peace, progress, and prosperity for the peoples of their two countries,” it said in a statement.



The foreign ministers of Armenia and Pakistan sign an agreement to establish diplomatic relations between their countries, Tianjin, August 31, 2025

Pakistan had for decades refused to not only establish diplomatic relations but also formally recognize Armenia, accusing it of military aggression against Azerbaijan. Islamabad underscored its strong support for Baku during the 2020 Armenian-Azerbaijani war. Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in October 2020 that Pakistani special forces are taking part in fighting in and around Karabakh on the Azerbaijani side. Pakistani officials denied that.

Military ties between the two Muslim nations continued to deepen after the six-week war. Pakistani troops regularly take part in joint military exercises held by Azerbaijan and Turkey. The Azerbaijani military is due receive dozens of Pakistani-manufactured warplanes in the coming years.

For its part, Armenia has stepped up military cooperation with Pakistan’s arch-foe, India. Yerevan and New Delhi have signed a series of multimillion-dollar contracts reportedly calling for the delivery of Indian artillery systems, anti-tank rockets and anti-drone equipment to the Armenian army.

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OSCE Minsk Process and Related Structures Disbanded

VIENNA (commonspace.eu) — The Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group has been disbanded. The decision was made by the OSCE Permanent Council at its meeting in Vienna on Monday, 1 September.

Following the adoption of this decision, the OSCE will take steps to implement the closure of the Minsk Process and its related structures. Only administrative functions, such as the handover

of assets and equipment, will continue until the process is completed no later than 1 December 2025.

The OSCE Chairperson-in-Office, Foreign Minister of Finland Elina Valtonen, and OSCE Secretary General Feridun H. Sinirlioglu welcome the adoption of a Ministerial Council decision closing the Minsk process and related structures following a Joint Appeal from Armenia and Azerbaijan.

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A 2017 meeting in Geneva between Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev (CL) and Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan (CR) (official photo)

ALBANIA

Albania’s Tiny Armenian Minority Survived 50 Years of Communism, But Now Disappearing

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GLENDALE

‘A Suitcase to Home’ To Have Premiere on September 24

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YEREVAN

Nikolay Madoyan: “The violin has become an extension of me”

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ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

Armenia Sees Drop In New Population Registrations

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — During the first half of 2025, from January to June, a total of 32,464 people were registered in Armenia — a significant drop compared to 80,556 registrations recorded last year.

The capital city Yerevan remained the top destination, though its numbers declined sharply: only 10,888 people registered in Yerevan this year, compared to 33,263 in 2024, according to Pastinfo.

In Kotayk Province, the number of registered individuals in the first quarter of this year was 3,945, down from 12,845 the year before. Similarly, Ararat Province saw 3,033 new registrations in the first quarter, compared to 9,686 in 2024.

Meanwhile, the number of individuals removed from the registry increased. Last year, 16,404 people were removed nationwide; this year the number rose to 24,449.

Again, Yerevan led with 7,790 deregistrations. Kotayk followed with 2,518, and Ararat with 2,038.

According to current procedures, citizens of Armenia who primarily reside abroad and lack a permanent residence in the country are recorded in the state population registry.

Armenia, Japan To Ratify Double Elimination Taxation Convention

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The National Assembly of Armenia on September 2 was presented with a draft law to ratify the “Convention between the Republic of Armenia and Japan for the elimination of double taxation with respect to taxes on income and the prevention of tax evasion and avoidance.”

The document was introduced at the Standing Committee on Economic Affairs by Deputy Finance Minister Arman Poghosyan, Armenpress reports.

He noted that “the government’s program in the field of tax policy emphasizes expanding the geographical scope of double taxation treaties. This is particularly important with countries with which stronger economic ties and increased investment are expected. Within this framework, the Armenia-Japan convention was initiated and signed on December 26, 2024.”

According to Poghosyan, such agreements address two key issues: they provide more favorable tax conditions than those set by national legislation and create a stable and predictable tax environment for businesses in both countries.

Until now, Armenia had nominally followed the agreement between Japan and the former Soviet Union, which, for legal reasons, could not be applied by the Armenian side. The new initiative restores the applicability of such treaties in Armenia.

Paros Foundation Celebrates Ribbon Cutting At Two Homes for Artsakh Refugee Families

LOS ANGELES/MEDS MASRIK, Armenia — The Paros Foundation recently held an official ribbon cutting for two newly renovated homes for refugee families from Artsakh, marking a milestone in the foundation’s ongoing commitment to supporting displaced Armenians and fostering hope for a better future. Notably, these homes are the 41st and 42nd permanent homes provided to Artsakh refugee families by The Paros Foundation. Thanks to the heartfelt sponsorship of Diane Barsam, these homes stand as beacons of resilience and compassion, offering safety, stability, and the promise of new beginnings for the Saghyan and Lalayan Families, who have endured the pain of displacement.

Late last month, The Paros Foundation, alongside community leaders, local officials, and enthusiastic SERVICE Armenia participants, gathered with the Saghyan and Lalayan Families from Artsakh to celebrate the successful completion of this transformative initiative. The event saw children’s laughter mingle with words of gratitude, as neighbors, supporters, and members of SERVICE Armenia joined hands to welcome the families into their new homes.

The two newly renovated homes, in the vibrant community of Meds Masrik, represent more than just physical structures — they are sanctuaries of hope for those who have faced unimaginable loss. Each home has been thoughtfully restored, furnished and equipped, ensuring comfort and dignity for the families who will now call them their own.

The illegal takeover of Artsakh left more than 120,000 people uprooted, forcing them to leave behind their homes, communities, and livelihoods. The Paros Foundation recognized the urgency of this humanitarian crisis and has made it a top priority to provide direct assistance to those in need. Through collaborative efforts with sponsors and donors, the Foundation has been able to transform the lives of countless families by offering not only shelter, but also the tools needed to rebuild and thrive.

Diane Barsam’s sponsorship exemplifies the crucial role that individual philanthropy can play in creating positive, lasting change. Her commitment has enabled The Paros Foundation to go beyond temporary aid, delivering sustainable support and



The Lalayan Family in front of their new home

empowering families to take charge of their futures.

“The resilience and determination of these families inspire us all,” Barsam remarked. “It is an honor to be able to contribute to their new beginnings and to work alongside The Paros Foundation in building a brighter future for Artsakh’s refugees.”

The renovation process for each home was a labor of love, involving skilled local artisans and construction teams dedicated to creating safe, comfortable, and welcoming environments.

During the ribbon cutting ceremony, the two recipient families shared heartfelt words of gratitude, reflecting on their journeys of displacement and the new chapters that now await them. Their stories are marked by resilience — a testament to the strength of the human spirit in the face of adversity.

Barsam’s personal commitment to supporting displaced families stems from a deep empathy for their plight and a desire to foster positive change. By partnering with The Paros Foundation, she has helped create a model for sustainable, impactful giving that addresses both immediate needs and long-term integration.

“I would like to personally thank Diane Barsam for her generous gift that allowed us to purchase and renovate these two homes, and to our other donors that came together to support our resettlement efforts with funding for furniture and appliances for these families,” said Executive Director Peter Abajian.

The Paros Foundation has long been at the forefront of humanitarian efforts in Armenia, with an established record of delivering high-impact projects in housing, education, health, and economic development. The organization’s approach is rooted in transparency, accountability, and a deep respect for the dignity of every beneficiary.

For more information about this or similar projects visit www.parosfoundation.org.

Putin, Pashinyan Meet in China

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Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk’s August 20 visit to Yerevan.

Earlier this year, Overchuk repeatedly warned of severe economic consequences of Armenia’s declared desire to eventually join the European Union. He complained in June that the Armenian government has already made decisions “contradicting Eurasian Economic Union norms.”

Pashinyan reportedly told Russian Prime Minister Mikhail Mishustin in July that he still has no plans to pull Armenia out of the EEU. Still, he again stated last week that Yerevan will eventually have to choose between the EU and the trade bloc that guarantees Armenian exporters’ vital tariff-free access to the Russian market.

Pashinyan already suspended Armenia’s membership in another Russian-led bloc, the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO), in early 2024. He has indicated that his country will leave the CSTO altogether.

The five other CSTO member states, including Russia, are among the 10 Eurasian countries making up the SCO. Yerevan announced in July plans to join the Chinese-led grouping.



Ribbon Cutting Celebration took place in the family’s home with friends, family, local officials and SERVICE Armenia participants in attendance



ARMENIA

Armenian Creative Technologies College Opens Its Doors to the Specialists of Tomorrow

GYUMRI — Under Armenia's flag, with the music of Komitas performed by the Gyumri State Symphony Orchestra, hundreds of guests gathered on August 20 before a striking new structure of tuff stone, one destined to be remembered as the bringer of knowledge for generations of bright young Armenian minds.

Just two years ago, when the first stones of its foundation were laid, few could have imagined that this college would claim its place as a hub of innovative education. Today, the Armenian Creative Technologies College (ACT), established in honor of

its donors Nshan and Aida Garayans, has opened its doors, ready to nurture talent and excellence in technological education.

From the front row, the Garayans watched with pride. They had witnessed ACT rise up floor by floor, stone by stone, until it became a modern campus equipped with the latest technologies to help students thrive and become tomorrow's tech ambassadors.

"Today is one of the most heartwarming moments of my life," Nshan Garayans said in a heartfelt speech, delivered by his representative. "This college is an



From the front row, Nshan and Aida Garayans watched with visible pride as ACT opens its doors to students



ACT's ED, Amalya Yeghoyan, welcomes future innovators and technologists

investment in the future. It is not just a place of knowledge but of upbringing, remembrance of generations. My wish is that the students of this school become strong patriotic citizens and that their knowledge serves not only their personal success but the progress of our country."

ACT is the product of the partnership between GITC, the Fund for Armenian Relief (FAR), the government of Armenia and the Garayans family. FAR will continue supporting ACT as it grows.

"Education has always been our priority and we have pioneered many innovative

programs for the last 30-plus years. An education generation is the guarantee of Armenia's development. With ACT, we are entering a new stage. This college, unique in the entire region, will become a supplier of highly skilled specialists for Armenia's labor market — a true forge for the future," said Bagrat Sargsyan, FAR's country director, in his speech at the unveiling.

ACT College is opening with three core departments: computer science, digital arts and engineering and manufacturing.

For more information, visit <https://www.actcollege.am/en>.

Armenian Foreign Ministry Employee Detained on Treason Charges

By Arshaluys Barseghyan

An Armenian Foreign Ministry employee has been detained on charges of committing treason. According to unconfirmed reports, the young woman was involved in a romantic relationship with an Azerbaijani, and was blackmailed with intimate footage.

The first reports of the case appeared on August 29, with several Armenian media outlets citing their anonymous sources, and in some cases dismissing each other's information.

According to the tabloid media outlet Hraparak, the arrest took place "nearly two months ago," which the authorities "tried to keep secret."

The state authorities have since confirmed the arrest, though they did not name the detainee, who local media has named as Ashkhen Aleksanyan.

According to Hraparak, Aleksanyan reportedly served as "the Armenian consul in Austria" and was arrested at the Yerevan Zvartnots Airport upon her return to Armenia.

"Documents were found on the young woman, and she was suspected of spying for Azerbaijan," the article read.

Hraparak further reported that following Aleksanyan's arrest, the National Security Service (NSS) conducted a full-day search at the Foreign Ministry, examining computers and reviewing official documents.

A few hours later that same day, Factor TV cited its unnamed sources as claiming that Aleksanyan was involved in a romantic relationship with an Azerbaijani and that she "passed on important information to him."

Aleksanyan reportedly worked in "key departments" of the ministry and "had access to important information."

Factor TV further noted that, according to their information, during the interrogation, Aleksanyan stated that she had taken money from the Azerbaijani side and did not act alone.

They also reported that the NSS had seized the computers of some other ministry employees.

In turn, Pastinfo, citing its sources at the Foreign Ministry, reported that the arrest took place on Aleksanyan's departure to Vienna, and not on her arrival, and "that extremely important documents were found on her."

According to unconfirmed reports circulating on social media, Aleksanyan was blackmailed with intimate footage featuring herself.

Following the media reports, the Armenian Investigative Committee confirmed the arrest on the same evening.

The committee stated the case had been launched on June 20 and entailed charges of espionage and treason. If found guilty, Aleksanyan could face up to life imprisonment.

In the same statement, the authorities dismissed the reports that other ministry employees were involved in the case as well, saying that during the preliminary investigation, "no data was obtained" in this regard.

They also refuted the information that the detainee was a high-ranking official, or served as a consul.

(This report originally appeared on the website www.oc-media.org on August 29.)

Narek Mkrtchyan Appointed Armenia's Ambassador to the United States

YEREVAN — President of Armenia Vahagn Khachaturyan signed decrees on August 27 appointing Narek Mkrtchyan as the country's new ambassador to the United States and relieving him of his post as minister of labor and social affairs.

Born on June 20, 1989, in the village of Parakar in Armavir Province, he studied history at Yerevan State University and eventually became a lecturer in this field before his election in 2018 to the Armenian National Assembly as part of the My Step electoral alliance.



Armenia, Pakistan Establish Diplomatic Ties

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The Pakistani-Armenian communique was signed less than a month after Armenia and Azerbaijan initialed a bilateral peace treaty during talks between their leaders hosted by U.S. President Donald Trump at the White House.

"It's pretty obvious that ... this wouldn't have happened if there weren't agreements between Armenia and Azerbaijan," said Leonid Nersisyan, an analyst with the APRI Armenia think-tank. "It's also clear that Azerbaijan probably didn't try hard to block Pakistan's decision."

Meanwhile, a senior representative of

former President Serzh Sarkisian's Republican Party (HHK), Eduard Sharmazanov, poured scorn on Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's government, saying that Pakistan has "always had an anti-Armenian position." In a Facebook post, Sharmazanov pointed out that in 2016 Yerevan vetoed Islamabad's request for an observer status in the Parliamentary Assembly of the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO).

"The 'diplomacy' of Pashinyan's Civil Contract party is clear: they kiss and place on the head of our nation the hand they cannot cut," he wrote.



Armenia’s Leading Food Exporter ‘Paralyzed’ By Russian Ban

By Narine Ghalechian

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Armenia’s largest food exporting company, Spayka, on Tuesday, September 2, confirmed reports that authorities in Russia have intercepted in recent days more than 100 of its commercial trucks carrying fresh fruit and vegetables.

One of its top executives, Karen Baghdasaryan, told RFE/RL’s Armenian Service that the company has still not received any explanation for the extraordinary measure which he said has disrupted its operations essential for the Armenian agricultural sector.

“Within a day or two they stopped all our trucks in Russian cities and said, ‘The trucks won’t move; if you have cargo in them, you can transfer the cargo to other vehicles and take it to its recipients,’” said Baghdasaryan.

“We have not been officially informed what the problem is,” he said, adding that the effective seizures of the trucks are also “paralyzing” Spayka’s further food shipments and purchases.

The company founded in 2001 is Armenia’s leading producer and exporter of agricultural products grown at its own greenhouses or purchased from farmers across the country. It currently employs about 2,500 people.

Russian government agencies, including the Rosselkhoznadzor agricultural watchdog, have not yet made any public statements on the situation. The Armenian government has not commented on it either.

Late last week, the government’s State Revenue Committee issued a statement urging Armenian food exporters not to do business with dodgy wholesale buyers accused by the Russian authorities of tax evasion. The statement did not name Spayka or any other company.

Baghdasaryan said in this regard that Spayka sells agricultural produce mainly to Russian supermarket chains and is not involved in any fraudulent practices. The company has never faced such punitive measures before, he said.

Russia is the main market for agricultural products as well as alcoholic beverages exported by Armenia. In the last few years, Moscow has occasionally and briefly banned some of those exports on sanitary grounds, interpreted by Armenian commentators as Russian retaliation against the Armenian government’s continuing drift to the West.

Earlier this year, senior Russian officials, notably Deputy Prime Minister Alexei Overchuk, repeatedly warned of severe economic consequences of Yerevan’s declared desire to eventually join the European Union. They said that an EU membership bid would be incompatible with Armenia’s continued membership in the Eurasian Economic Union, which gives it tariff-free access to the vast Russian market. Overchuk visited Yerevan late last month.



The new monument dedicated to Artsakh at Yerablur Military Pantheon

Monument Dedicated to Artsakh Unveiled at Yerablur Pantheon

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — On Artsakh’s Independence Day on September 2, displaced Armenians from Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) gathered at Yerablur Military Pantheon in Yerevan, unable to mark the occasion in their homeland or visit the graves of their loved ones left behind. Many do not even know if those graves still stand or have been desecrated by Azerbaijan.

A new memorial complex, Call of Artsakh, was inaugurated at Yerablur in honor of all those who were killed in the Artsakh wars, civilians buried in Artsakh and the victims of the 2023 fuel depot explosion in Stepanakert. The ceremony included the blessing of khachkars (cross-stones).

The 500-square-meter complex features a six-meter-high central monument surrounded by khachkars. Conceived by former Artsakh President Samvel Shahramanyan, the project was realized by Interior Minister Karen Sargsyan and funded by Homeland Party leader Artur Vanetsyan. The design was led by architects Vladimir and Mikayel Sargsyan, with sculptor Robert

Askaryan and khachkar maker Varazdat Hambardzumyan.

On the same day, Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, issued a message marking Artsakh’s Independence Day.

“Ahead of the thirtieth anniversary of Artsakh’s independence, between 2020 and 2023, tragic events unfolded. As a result of Azerbaijan’s war and genocidal actions, Artsakh has been occupied and its Armenian population forcibly expelled from their millennia-old homeland.

“Thousands of our sons gave their lives for the Motherland, and numerous sacred sites were desecrated and destroyed. To date, state officials and military personnel of Artsakh remain hostages in Baku.

“Today, we honor our courageous warriors, who gave the most precious gift—their very lives for the independence of Artsakh and the security of its people.

“We lift fervent prayers to Almighty God, beseeching the swift return of all our prisoners and those who remain missing, and for lasting peace in our country,” he said in part.

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According to the tabloid media outlet Hraparak, the arrest took place “nearly two months ago,” which the authorities “tried to keep secret.”

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(This report originally appeared on the website www.oc-media.org on August 29.)



INTERNATIONAL

International Association of Genocide Scholars Resolution Asserts Israel Is Committing Genocide in Gaza

By Lorenzo Tondo

An overwhelming majority of members of the world’s leading genocide scholars’ association have backed a resolution stating that Israel’s actions in Gaza meet the legal definition of the crime.

Eighty-six percent of those who voted in the 500-member International Association of Genocide Scholars (IAGS) supported the motion. The resolution states that “Israel’s policies and actions in Gaza meet the legal definition of genocide in article II of the United Nations convention for the prevention and punishment of the crime of genocide (1948).”

The three-page resolution passed by the body calls on Israel to “immediately cease all acts that constitute genocide, war crimes and crimes against humanity against Palestinians in Gaza, including deliberate attacks against and killing of civilians including children; starvation; deprivation of humanitarian aid, water, fuel, and other items essential to the survival of the population; sexual and reproductive violence; and forced

displacement of the population.”

The resolution said the IAGS recognized that “since the horrific Hamas-led attack of 7 October 2023, which itself constitutes international crimes”, the government of Israel had engaged in systematic and widespread crimes against humanity, war crimes and genocide, including indiscriminate and deliberate attacks against the civilians and civilian infrastructure, including hospitals, homes and commercial buildings, of Gaza.

Melanie O’Brien, the IAGS president and a professor of international law at the University of Western Australia, said the resolution was “a definitive statement from experts in the field of genocide studies that what is going on on the ground in Gaza is genocide.”

Founded in 1994, the IAGS has a broad membership that includes academics, historians, political scientists and human rights activists. It has adopted previous resolutions identifying genocide, including historical cases such as the Armenian genocide.

The 1948 UN convention, drafted in the

aftermath of the Holocaust, defines genocide as acts committed “with intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group”. It obliges signatory states to act to prevent and stop such crimes, which may include killing members of a group, inflicting serious harm, imposing destructive living conditions, preventing births or transferring children by force.

There was no immediate response from the Israeli foreign ministry.

Israel is fighting allegations at the world’s top court, the international court of justice, of committing genocide in Gaza. Separately, the international criminal court (ICC) has issued arrest warrants for Israel’s prime minister, Benjamin Netanyahu, and his former defense minister Yoav Gallant. It also issued an arrest warrant for the Hamas military chief Mohammed Deif, but withdrew it after he was killed.

Reuters contributed to this report (This story initially appeared in The Guardian (www.guardian.co.uk) on September 1.)

UK OECD Watchdog Accepts Human Rights Complaint Against Architectural Firm Following Conduct in Redesign of Shushi, Artsakh

LONDON — The United Kingdom’s National Contact Point (NCP), a major corporate social responsibility agency and watchdog, announced an official examination of UK-based architectural firm Chapman Taylor for violations of human rights related to the company’s redesign of Shushi, Artsakh.

“The UK NCP considers that the reports provided by the complainant underscore the severity of the human rights situation in the sites where Chapman Taylor undertook redevelopment activities,” stated the UK National Contact Point in their Initial Assessment report.

The United Kingdom National Contact Point for Responsible Business Conduct accepted a complaint submitted by Kerkonian Dajani LLP, on behalf of Avan Shushi Partnership, against Chapman Taylor’s redesign of the historic city of Shushi in Nagorno-Karabakh. The complaint alleges that Chapman Taylor’s conduct in redesigning Shushi violated the most respected global corporate

responsibility standards by failing to mitigate, and instead contributing to, the adverse human rights impacts suffered by indigenous Artsakh Armenians. The UK NCP concluded that all of the complainants’ cited provisions of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) Guidelines warranted further examination and went further by adding two additional provisions—Chapter II, paragraphs 2 and 15—for consideration.

“Corporate interests play a fundamental role in green-lighting oppressive regimes that violate human rights. The OECD process is crucial to reminding multinational actors that their responsibilities for international human rights extend far beyond balance sheets and corporate donations,” stated Karnig Kerkonian, international attorney and co-founder of Kerkonian Dajani LLP.

In accepting the complaint, the UK National Contact Point has agreed to offer its mediation offices. If the parties cannot reach an agreement through mediation,

the National Contact Point will continue forward in its examination and make a final determination on whether Chapman Taylor has acted consistently with OECD Guidelines.

“It is imperative that businesses refrain from supporting projects that contribute to human rights violations. The military takeover by Azerbaijan and its impact on displaced Armenians who were living in Shushi is deeply distressing,” stated Avan Shushi’s lead partner Alec Baghdasaryan.

As alleged in the complaint, Chapman Taylor proceeded undeterred with its work in Shushi amidst ongoing human rights abuses. Avan Shushi, which owns the Avan Shushi Hotel & Tourist Center in Shushi, alleges that Chapman Taylor was engaged to redesign Shushi shortly after the Azerbaijani military took control of the historically Armenian city in November 2020, and that, during its work, Chapman Taylor actively determined the fate of structures within Shushi, even marking buildings and homes for demolition.

Azerbaijani Leader Touts Trump Peace Plan for the Caucasus

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The Azerbaijani leader appeared to suggest that even in the absence of a signed and ratified peace agreement, other parts of the Trump peace deal could proceed, namely, the development of a transit corridor dubbed the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity. With Trump’s name now attached to the project, “I’m sure that it will materialize very soon,” Aliyev said.

Aliyev said Baku has already created much of the road and rail infrastructure on its territory to link up to TRIPP, envisioned as a 42-kilometer road, rail and pipeline corridor traversing Armenian territory to connect Azerbaijan proper and its Nakhichevan exclave. Meanwhile, Turkey has commenced work on a railway to connect Nakhichevan to the Turkish hub at Kars.

It is in Armenia’s best economic interests to see TRIPP through to completion, given it stands to become a lucrative source of transit revenue, the Azerbaijani leader contended. “Taking into account that the volumes of cargo from Asia to Europe through

Azerbaijan are growing year by year, I’m sure that [TRIPP] will be an important transportation link connecting the continents,” he said. He added that completing a 42-kilometer rail link across Armenian territory could occur quickly, as fast as one year.

Commenting on the state of Azerbaijani-Russian relations, Aliyev confirmed ties remain in a deep freeze. The touchstone of acrimony is Russia’s accidental shoot down of an Azerbaijani civilian airliner last December. The Azerbaijani leader accused Russia of trying to cover-up its responsibility, adding that “the reaction of Russian officials to [the incident] created a very big frustration and disappointment in Azerbaijan.”

Aliyev during the interview delved into history, backhandedly blaming Russians for creating the conditions that ultimately sparked the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict in the late 1980s amid the collapse of the Soviet Union. Following the collapse of the Tsarist empire, he noted an independent

Azerbaijan had existed from May 1918 to April 1920, “when the Russian army invaded Azerbaijan and occupied [the country].” The Bolsheviks, he added, went on to separate Nakhichevan from Azerbaijan proper and gave the territory in between to Armenia. “That’s how Azerbaijan became divided into two,” he said.

“We established our own state, but the Bolsheviks took it from us,” he added.

Aliyev’s interpretation of history caused an outcry in Moscow, with an array of officials in Moscow disparaging his remarks. An influential Russian MP, Konstantin Zatulins, described Aliyev’s comments as an “attack” on Russia.

Meanwhile, another MP, Mikhail Matveyev, said Aliyev should be grateful that Azerbaijan was absorbed into what became the Soviet Union. “Russophobia is a very dangerous disease that only gets worse over the years,” the Lenta.ru outlet quoted the MP as saying.

(This article originally appeared on the website www.eurasianet.org on August 27.)

INTERNATIONAL

ICRC Closes its Office In Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (Panorama.am) — Following a decision by the Government of Azerbaijan, the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) close its office in the country on September 3.

The ICRC will continue to engage with the Azerbaijani authorities to support persons protected under international humanitarian law (IHL) in line with our mandate and the country’s obligations under the Geneva Conventions. The group intends to preserve its dialogue on all matters pertaining to humanitarian diplomacy.

India Blocks Azerbaijan’s SCO Bid

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — India has once again vetoed Azerbaijan’s application for full membership in the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO). Sources suggest New Delhi’s decision is linked to Azerbaijan’s close relations with Pakistan, Sputnik Armenia reported, citing AnewZ on September 2.

At the same time, China reaffirmed its support for Baku’s application.

While in China, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev held a bilateral meeting with Pakistani Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif, where he congratulated Pakistan on what he called a “victory over India,” Minval.az reported.

Aliyev also stated that India was “trying to take revenge on Azerbaijan in international platforms in response to Baku’s allied relations with Islamabad.”

On September 1, at the SCO summit in Tianjin, Chinese President Xi Jinping declared that China supports full membership for both Armenia and Azerbaijan, which currently hold the status of SCO dialogue partners.

Expert: Tehran Ready To Give Armenia Security Guarantees

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — Speaking to reporters during the conference “Artsakh: Unresolved Conflict, Right of Return,” on September 2, Iranian expert on Caucasus affairs Ehsan Movahedian said Syunik remains a red line for Iran, and Tehran is ready to provide security guarantees to Armenia.

“It depends on US actions. If they try to cut the Armenia–Iran border, there will be an adequate response from us,” Movahedian said, according to Panorama.am.

He stressed that Iran and Armenia are natural neighbors.

“Naturally, if there are issues related to Armenia’s security, Iran can provide guarantees. These matters also directly affect Iran,” the expert noted.

Movahedian was commenting on questions about how Iran perceives the document signed in Washington and whether the Iranian president’s visit helped ease concerns.

INTERNATIONAL

Albania's Tiny Armenian Minority Survived 50 Years of Communism, But Now Disappearing

By Larry Luxner

TIRANA — Throughout most of their modern history, Albanians have confused Armenians with Jews, and vice-versa. This is hardly surprising, since the two minorities have had so much in common.

Adding to the confusion is the term “Caucasian Albania” — the name for an ancient state located in the Caucasus, mostly in what is now Azerbaijan. It thrived between the second century B.C. and the eighth century A.D., but has no connection, geographically or otherwise, with modern Albania.

Beginning in the late 1800s, both Armenians and Jews came to this small Balkan country on the Adriatic Sea to escape persecution. Both ethnicities put high priorities on education, producing physicians, dentists and intellectuals far out of proportion to their numbers. And throughout the long dark years of communism, both groups struggled with isolation and assimilation.

In early 1991, with the Marxist regime crumbling, nearly all of Albania's Jews fled to Israel. That left the country's 300 or so Armenians as Albania's tiniest — and perhaps least-known — minority.

Since then, with Albanians free to leave

for the first time in half a century, the community has dwindled to perhaps 100 souls. So says Etrit Adami, a music professor and prominent Armenian-Albanian who also runs a web development and freelance design company on the side.

Adami traces his Armenian roots to his maternal great-grandfather, Mikal Truja, who was living in Edirne, Turkey, with his Armenian wife, Takui Ohanessian.

“Before the genocide, they realized that things were not so good in that region, so in 1895 they decided to go to Albania and settle in Durres,” Adami said. “They were helped by the Greek consulate and arrived in Durres, but then Takui got ill and passed away when my grandfather was 10 years old. Mikal married again, and from 1919 to 1920 served as the mayor of Durres.”

After the Armenian Genocide, which began in 1915, some 20 to 30 Armenian families settled in Albania, joining those already here. Most settled in Tirana, though some families like Adami's ended up in Durres as well as Vlora, where the majority of Jews also settled. Like the Jews, the Armenians became doctors, dentists, biologists, economists and accountants, and for the most part stayed out of politics.

During the reign of King Zog in the 1920s



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama meet May 15, 2025, on the sidelines of the 6th European Political Community Summit in Tirana (photo courtesy Armenian Consulate, Tirana)

and 1930s, the community prospered, and some Armenians became wealthy. One of the most prominent was Mokini Poturljan, the king's personal physician. In World War II, Armenians fought bravely, winning the admiration of their Albanian comrades. One such resister, Emanuel Assadurian, was killed for his anti-Nazi activity.

Because of their valor in the war, Albania's Armenians were not singled out for harsh treatment by communist leader Enver Hoxha, as were some other smaller ethnic groups. They were also partially exempted from Hoxha's later Albanianization campaigns.

Unfortunately, throughout the tyrannical Hoxha regime, no ethnic organizations of any kind were allowed, though the community did receive occasional literature from Soviet Armenia. And in some very specific cases, they were permitted to make family visits to Armenia, thanks to Albania's close ties with Moscow, which gave an Albanian with ethnic origins in any of the Soviet Union's 15 republics the right to be a Soviet as well as an Albanian citizen.

But because the community was so

small, intermarriage with non-Armenians was inevitable. So Armenians, who are predominantly Christian members of the Armenian Apostolic Church, generally married Albanian Christians — rarely Muslims or Jews. That way, they at least kept their religion, even if they weren't allowed to practice it openly.

After Hoxha died in 1985, his successor, Ramiz Alia, kept Albania firmly in the communist camp, though he did introduce some limited political reforms. The really big changes, however, came in early 1990, when demonstrators smashed Hoxha's bronze statue in downtown Tirana and opened the way for multiparty elections.

On April 28, 1990, without official government approval, Catholic priest Zef Pellumbi performed a Mass to commemorate Armenian victims of repression, especially those who died without a religious burial. In March 1991 — the same month multiparty elections finally took place — the Armenat e Shqiperise fraternal organization was established in Tirana.

Later that year, in September, the community marked another milestone: the establishment of an independent Armenia after the dissolution of the former Soviet Union.

Armenia does not have an embassy in Tirana. Rather, the Armenian ambassador in Athens, Tigran Mkrtchyan, is responsible for both Greece and Albania; in addition, Varuzhan Piranjani has served since 2016 as Armenia's honorary consul in Tirana.

Piranjani, born in Tirana to an Albanian mother and an Armenian father, worked for many years in accounting and finance, and also as the CEO of Albania's largest insurance company.

In May 2023, the Armenian-Albanian Friendship Association was formed, and this past May 15, the leaders of both countries — Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Albanian Prime Minister Edi Rama — met on the sidelines of the 6th European Political Community Summit in Tirana. Among other things, they discussed the prospects of peace between Armenia and Azerbaijani and other areas of mutual interest.

“We gather once a year in the Sar'Otel, in the center of town about 200 meters from Skanderbeg Square, to remember the genocide and say a few words about what is left of the Armenian community here,” Adami said.

continued on next page



Formation of the Armenian-Albanian Friendship Association in Tirana (photo courtesy Armenian Consulate, Tirana)



Fading Marxist slogan near Gjirrokaster pays homage to late Enver Hoxha (1991 file photo)



INTERNATIONAL

TUMO Heads to India: New Center Opening in Mumbai

YEREVAN — This November, TUMO will open its first South Asian center in Mumbai, in partnership with the Shantilal Shanghvi Foundation. The new center will be located in Shikha Academy's brand-new building, one of India's most forward-thinking educational institutions. TUMO Mumbai will provide free education in technology and design to up to 1,800 teens each week.

"I have no doubt that TUMO can be life-changing for teenagers in India. But this is

also a huge learning opportunity for us. The population density, the socio-economic mix, the degree of mobile penetration, and a unique emphasis on national excellence in AI... These are all things we look forward to experiencing and learning from in India," said Marie Lou Papazian, TUMO CEO.

TUMO's model combines self-learning, hands-on workshops, and learning labs where students personalize their learning journeys while working alongside industry



Pegor Papazian, TUMO's Chief Development Officer, at AI workshop in Mumbai



The Shikha Academy building in Mumbai

professionals. Along with technical knowledge, they develop soft skills that prepare them for the future.

Before the center's official launch, Pegor Papazian, TUMO's Chief Development Officer, and Tom Auger, Senior Software Engineer, piloted TUMO's new Generative AI workshop with students from Mumbai's informal settlements. Teens explored generative AI through coding, building AI agents, designing websites, and creating visuals and music.

This follows TUMO's ai/teens worldwide conference in March, where future Mumbai staff and students joined their peers from

across TUMO centers worldwide to discuss the relationship between artificial intelligence and education. Watch the conference at tumo.ai/teens.

The launch of TUMO Mumbai strengthens ties between Armenia and India, uniting both nations around shared goals of innovation, digital literacy, and youth empowerment.

India now joins TUMO's international network, with centers in Argentina, France, Portugal, Germany, Albania, and Japan.

Next up will be centers in Uruguay, the United States, the Netherlands, Georgia, and Kazakhstan.

Albania's Armenian Minority Survived 50 Years of Communism

from previous page

Piranjani's brother, Berzh Piranjani, is a noted scholar who's compiled a 288-page Albanian-Armenian dictionary containing around 11,000 words. He's also published a 449-page grammar book of the Armenian language for Armenian-Albanians who want to deepen their knowledge of the language of their forefathers.

One of the most interesting projects linking the two countries is TUMO Tirana, an outgrowth of TUMO Armenia — a free after-school education program "at the intersection of technology and design," according to its website.

Established in 2011 with a \$60 million endowment from Sam and Sylva Simoni-an — a prominent Armenian diaspora couple based in the United States — TUMO has since served more than 60,000 teenagers aged 12-18 throughout Armenia. Its flagship center contains 750 workstations and accommodates 15,000 students per week. There's a waiting list of close to 4,000, with the typical wait lasting three months.

"Our mission is to innovate the future of learning — putting equitable access to free education at the intersection of technology and design, giving economically disadvantaged families access to this kind of education," said Chris Shahinian, TUMO's director of development.



Varuzhan Piranjani, since 2016, Armenia's honorary consul in Tirana (photo courtesy Armenian Consulate, Tirana)

TUMO operates three learning centers in Armenia besides the flagship Yerevan facility — one each in the cities of Gyumri, Dilijan and Stepanakert. TUMO is currently raising \$50 million to build the infrastructure to expand that network to 16 centers, as well as 110 "TUMO boxes"

"The program has drawn attention throughout Albania and a number of cities have expressed interest in developing new TUMO locations," said Sawyer Hecock, head of international partnerships at TUMO, adding that he's working with the AADF to design a national network of



Headquarters of TUMO Tirana (photo courtesy Armenian Consulate, Tirana)

that basically consist of three repurposed shipping containers welded together. These "boxes" will be deployed in rural villages and are aimed at reaching all of Armenia's estimated 80,000 teenagers.

The program has proven so successful that TUMO has opened eight centers in seven countries in Europe and the Middle East. These include two in France (Paris and Lyon) and two in Germany (Berlin and Mannheim); and one each in Albania (Tirana); Lebanon (Beirut); Portugal (Coimbra); Russia (Moscow); Switzerland (Zürich) and Ukraine (Kyiv).

In Tirana, funding comes from the Albanian American Development Foundation (AADF), a nonprofit created in 2009 by the Albanian-American Enterprise Fund with support from USAID. It's based in the capital's 70-foot-tall concrete and glass pyramid, once a shrine to Enver Hoxha.

learning centers "to reach every corner of Albania."

While there are still no direct flights between Yerevan and Tirana, increasing numbers of Armenians are visiting Albania. In fact, the country — closed for so many years — is now Europe's fastest-growing tourist destination, noted for its unspoiled Adriatic beaches, its friendly people and its relatively low cost. In 2023, tourist arrivals were up 56 percent compared to 2019.

Yet because of both emigration and assimilation, Adami conceded, with a tinge of sadness in his voice, that he doesn't really see a future for the Armenian community in Albania.

"We are considered part of Albanian society," he said. "Nobody distinguishes anymore between Armenians and Albanians. They no longer feel Armenian in their blood."

OSCE Minsk Process and Related Structures Disbanded

MINSK, from page 1

"I would like to once again extend my warmest congratulations to Armenia and Azerbaijan on their historic agreements towards peace and normalization of relations and their resolute decision to start their prompt implementation. I have responded without delay to their Joint Appeal and would like to express my sincere appreciation to the parties for their excellent co-operation in the process. I also would like to commend participating States for their collaborative spirit in achieving this consensus," said Minister Valtonen.

This Ministerial Council decision follows the 8 August Joint Declaration signed in Washington D.C. by Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan and President of Azerbaijan Ilham Aliyev and witnessed by U.S. President Donald J. Trump. The Ministerial Council decision was adopted by consensus of all 57 OSCE participating states.

"This is a historic development that underlines what diplomacy can achieve, even after decades of conflict and mistrust. It demonstrates that agreement remains possible when there is a shared determination between parties to find common ground," said Sinirlioglu.

The OSCE Chairperson-in Office and OSCE Secretary General reaffirmed their unwavering commitment to supporting efforts that bring lasting peace and stability to Armenia, Azerbaijan and the wider region.

Community News

Celebrate Armenia! At Armenian Heritage Park on September 20

BOSTON — The Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway will host Celebrate Armenia! on Saturday, September 20. This joyful celebration for all ages will include folktales, children's choruses, young dancers, community storytelling, live music, dancing, tastings of signature dishes and will conclude with Jazz Under the Stars at 7 p.m. The event will honor Armenian Independence Day, and as with all programs at the park, is free and open to the public. The rain date is Saturday, September 27.

Opening the festivities at 1 p.m. will be Meghri Dervartanian, children's book author and illustrator, sharing Armenian folktales.

At 1:30 p.m., Children in Song will feature the Little Miracles Children's Chorus of the Erebuni Armenian School, directed by Anahit Karchikyan with Principal Arminé Manukyan, M.Ed.; the St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School Choir, led by Choir Director Maro Arakelian with head of school Dr. Garine Palandjian, PhD; and Kamurjner Cultural Connections' Zanger Children's Chorus of Boston, under the artistic direction of Dr. Artur Veranian.

At 2 p.m., young dancers from the Armenian Dance Studio under the direction of Anahit Toroysan, artistic director, will perform.

At 2:30 p.m., there will be a segment titled "Let's Dance," featuring the St. James Hye Café Band with David Ansbikian, guitar and vocals; Leon Janikian, clarinet; Bob Raphalian, oud; and Joe Sarkisian, dumbeg and vocals. Tea and Sweets will follow at 4 p.m.

At 4:30 p.m., Sharing Stories will reflect on the immigrant experience with Armine Hovhannissian and others sharing their personal journeys.

At 5 p.m., Signature Dishes: Tastings will highlight culinary traditions with Arman and Armina Manoukian, owners of the House of Lavash and David Aleksanvan, founder of the Arsenal Catering Group including Flame Café.

At 7 p.m., Jazz Under the Stars will feature Berklee College of Music students and faculty: Lia Sarkisyan, voice and leader; John Baboian, guitar; Armen Hovannissyan, voice; Arno Melkonyan, piano; Alex Mirzabeigi, drums and Garo Saraydarian, oud. A reception will follow.

Celebrate Armenia! is a collaboration by Kamurjner ("Bridges") Cultural Connections and the Friends of Armenian Heritage Park, an initiative of the Armenian Heritage Foundation.

Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway is accessible via public transportation. The Park is a 5-minute walk from Government Center Station and Haymarket Station. For directions and parking information, visit ArmenianHeritagePark.org/directions-parking.

For further information, email hello@armenianheritagepark.org.



Gary Daglian received the Business of the Year Award for the firm he leads, the Daglian Law Group. (Photo by Arka Photography)

ABMDR's 26th Annual Gala Celebrates Global Mission of Saving Lives

LOS ANGELES — On Sunday, August 24, the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR) celebrated its 26th anniversary, with a gala.

The Match for Life Gala, which comprised the ABMDR awards ceremony, took place at the Glendale Hilton, in Glendale. The event was attended by more than 300 supporters, including elected officials, community leaders, representatives of community-service and health organizations, and television personalities.

After a cocktail hour and silent auction in the foyer and terrace of the Hilton's "Glendale" Ballroom, the evening's main program began inside the hall.

Opening remarks were delivered by Master of Ceremonies Dr. Vicken Sepilian, president of the Armenian Medical International Committee. Sepilian said, "We're here to celebrate an organization that represents perseverance, resilience, and generosity. As indicated by its very name, ABMDR is an organization of donors who are prepared to donate their own stem cells. Donating your own stem cells means that you are giving somebody else a second chance, that you are helping save a life."

Next, welcome remarks were delivered by Gala Committee co-chairs Sona Ashjian and Amy Boyadjian.

The co-chairs recognized the members of the Gala Committee and thanked the event's major sponsors, Daglian Law Group and the Family Rescue Fund. The co-chairs also recognized the Gala's Diamond sponsors, including Adventist Health Glendale, Dr. Evlyn Avanesian, First Eagle Realty (Zaven and Vehanoosh Grigorian), the Gadimyan family, Mark Geragos, Esq., the Gourchounian family, Dr. Vergine Madelian, Janet Parsanj, Rama Drugs (Artem Darbinyan and Rosie Diremsizian), Tri-Tech Restoration and Construction (Michael and Amy Boyadjian), TRU Med Spa (Ruzz Tagvoryan), LA Cancer Network (Dr. Boris Bagdasarian and Dr. Nubar Boghossian), St. James Armenian Church, and Carmen Lukassian.

The evening's invocation was performed by Archbishop Kegham Khacherian, Prelate; and Father Ghevont Kirazian of the Western Prelacy. Sepilian went on to acknowledge the presence of distinguished guests, including Father Yeghia Isayan of the Western Diocese; St. James Armenian Church Board Chair Robert Barsam; California State Senator Sasha Renee Perez; a representative of US Senator Adam Schiff; California Congresswoman Laura Friedman; Glendale City Council members Ardy Kassakhian, Elen Asatryan, and Vartan Gharpetian;

see GALA, page 10



Master of Ceremonies Dr. Vicken Sepilian (Photo by Arka Photography)

Armenian Educational Foundation to Honor Visionary Leaders

BEVERLY HILLS — The Armenian Educational Foundation (AEF) will commemorate its 75th anniversary this year, with its upcoming celebratory gala on September 7 at the Beverly Hilton Hotel in Beverly Hills.

The evening will feature a distinguished keynote address, the honoring of individuals who have greatly contributed to the education of young Armenian students, live entertainment, and a showcase of AEF's historical journey and future aspirations. Proceeds from the event will directly benefit AEF's ongoing programs, including scholarship funds, school renovation projects, IT education, and other STEM related educational projects.

AEF will honor Vahe Hacopian at its 75th Anniversary Gala with the Distinguished Lifetime Service Award. Hacopian, a respected community leader, has dedicated his life to the growth and development of the Armenian community in Los Angeles. An active member of the AEF for 39 years, for an exceptional 34 years Vahe has served on its Board of Directors, primarily as Treasurer, notably including four terms as Board President.

He retired after a distinguished 37-year corporate career at Northrop Grumman, where he served as Director of Programs, managing projects and programs. He holds a Master's degree in Computer Science from UCLA, underscoring his commitment to excellence and strong technical background.

In addition, AEF will honor social entrepreneurs and educational visionaries Ruben Vardanyan and Veronika Zonabend with the prestigious Educational Visionaries Award



Ruben Vardanyan and Veronika Zonabend in happier times

at the gala. Zonabend will be present to accept the award on behalf of the couple. Unfortunately, for the past two years, Ruben has been held captive in Baku because of his advocacy and service to Artsakh. They will be recognized for their transformative contributions to global education, and their pivotal roles in founding UWC Dilijan, Armenia's first international boarding school. Under their leadership, UWC Dilijan has become a prominent center for intercultural learning and global citizenship, helping propel Armenia to the forefront of the global educational landscape.

Established in 2014, UWC Dilijan embodies the mission of the United World Colleges movement: see AEF, page 12



COMMUNITY NEWS

Gérard Chaliand: Intrepid Authority on Geopolitics, Dies at 91

(Editor's note: A brief obituary for Gérard Chaliand appeared in last week's edition of the *Mirror-Spectator*. The obituary below captures the late scholar much better.)

By Adam Nossiter

PARIS (New York Times) — Gérard Chaliand, an acclaimed writer on geopolitics, revolutions in the developing world and terrorism, whose dozens of books were informed by on-the-ground experience in conflict zones, died on Aug. 20 in Paris. He was 91.

His death, in a hospital, was announced by the Kurdish Institute of Paris, a Kurdish-rights advocacy group to which he belonged. His son, Roc, said the cause was kidney failure.

Mr. Chaliand (pronounced SHA-lee-ahn), who spent much of his life in France, taught at some of the country's most prestigious schools — the École Nationale d'Administration and the École de Guerre — and at the University of California, Berkeley, and Harvard. His lectures on geopolitics drew top-level diplomats and officers. But his influence in the French-speaking world was based on an unusual attribute: He had actually been to the revolutions he wrote about.

Over nearly four decades, he spent time with guerrillas in Guinea-Bissau, Angola, Jordan, Lebanon, the Philippines, Afghanistan, North Vietnam, the Kurdistan region, Sri Lanka, Eritrea and elsewhere. He witnessed the beginnings of the Algerian revolt against France in the early 1950s. And he frequented revolutionary leaders like Che Guevara, Ahmed Ben Bella, Julius Nyerere and Sékou Touré as well as Amílcar Cabral of Guinea-Bissau, whom he particularly admired.

Chaliand acknowledged being attracted to insurrection, but he was there to observe, report and write. “Felt knowledge is irreplaceable,” he told France Culture radio in 2008.

That hands-on experience, particularly in the 1960s, led him to an early insight into the revolutions taking place in what was then called the third world: They had largely failed. They had not brought greater security, freedom or prosperity to the people they claimed to liberate. In the early 1970s, a time when optimism over the promise of liberation struggles still prevailed, particularly on the left, Chaliand's report from reality was a cold shower.

“Most of the regimes which used to be considered somewhat revolutionary have been eliminated by coup d'état,” he wrote coolly about Africa in his breakthrough book, *Mythes Révolutionnaires du Tiers Monde*, published in 1976 (and in English, as *Revolution in the Third World*, in 1977). “Compared to what generally prevails on the continent, Tanzania, with Somalia, stands out as the only country where corruption is not the main characteristic of the regime.”

Rent-seeking administrators, what Chaliand called in his book “the administrative bourgeoisie,” had gobbled up what meager resources and small dollops of aid were available in newly liberated countries across the continent.

Because he was known as someone whose sympathies were on the left, his skepticism about developing-world insurrection carried weight — and accounts for the ecumenical praise he received after his death from both right and left in the ideologically divided French press.

Chaliand helped change the terms of the discussion in the United States as well. “Having strongly sympathized with aspirations of the third world insurrectionary movements, he feels angry and betrayed,” the historian Ronald Steel wrote in the *New York Review of Books* in 1977.

“The utility of Chaliand's book lies not in its prescription for the true, if infinitely distant and forever ephemeral, social revolution,” Steel wrote, “but in his demystification of the ‘people's wars’ that have so attracted Western intellectuals over the past two decades.”

Chaliand's insights, French commentators in *Le Monde* and *Le Figaro* observed, were valuable across some 40 books not because he was disillusioned, but because he was without illusions.

“The world is no doubt always changing,” he wrote in *Revolution in the Third World*, adding, “But there is nothing to indicate that the course of a history founded on power relationships, where the well-being of the conquerors is nourished on the blind

ify his surname — was born in Etterbeek, Belgium, on Feb. 15, 1934, to Simon and Bercusar (Tchekmeian) Tchalian. His father was a pharmacist.

He grew up in Paris and attended the Lycée Henri-IV but never received his baccalauréat. When he was 10, he recalled on France Culture, his father took him to see French Resistance fighters force lingering German soldiers out of the Palais du Luxembourg as Paris was being liberated in the summer of 1944 — an experience that he said seeded his interest in revolutionary change.

At 18, he left the family apartment to explore an Algeria seething with nascent revolution. Returning six months later with a newfound hatred of colonialism, he enrolled

jobs to help support his early journalism and book writing.

In 1975, he submitted his doctoral thesis, which would become *Revolutions in the Third World*, to the Sorbonne, under the tutelage of the Orientalist Maxime Rodinson.

Chaliand taught at the École Nationale d'Administration from 1980 to 1987 and at France's War College from 1990 to 1995. He was also a visiting lecturer at the RAND Corporation and the U.S. Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, Calif.

Among his many books translated into English are *A Global History of War* (2014); *The History of Terrorism: From Antiquity to Al Qaeda* (with Arnaud Blin, 2007); *Mirrors of a Disaster: The Spanish Military Conquest of America* (2005); *Nomadic Empires, From Mongolia to the Danube* (2004); *The Kurdish Tragedy* (1994); and *Armed Struggle in Africa: With the Guerrillas in Portuguese Guinea* (1969).

His later books reflected a pessimism about the West's military prospects after defeats in Indochina and the Middle East. About *Pourquoi Perd-On La Guerre? Un Nouvel Art Occidental* (2016), published in English as *Why We've Stopped Winning Wars*, *Le Monde* wrote:

“His outlook on 200 years of conflicts is cold and without pathos, his writing is sharp as a sword, and his irritation total. With their blindness and their hesitations, the West refuses to give itself the means, beyond rhetoric, to win its wars, drawing no lessons from its failures.”

Roc Chaliand, his son, is his only immediate survivor. His wife, the sociologist Juliette Minces, died in 2021.

“Over the decades,” Chaliand wrote in *Le Savoir de la Peau*, “I've seen large chunks of contemporary reality which have opened my eyes in regard to ideological illusions.” He added, “I've participated, within the limits of my means and in the manner which best suited me, in the history of my time.”



servitude of the victims and the pain of the vanquished, can be changed.”

Chaliand was well aware of the uniqueness of his method, which combined the initiative of a journalist with the tenacity of an academic.

“I am not an expert on counterinsurrection but on insurrection,” he wrote in *Revolution in the Third World*. “I have always experienced guerrilla warfare not from the side of the forces of law and order but from the side of those who are fighting against the state, seeking, usually, to replace it.”

He acknowledged that he was addicted to risk, and he experienced frequent near misses. He recalled the guerrilla fighters who were killed at his side, in Guinea-Bissau and North Vietnam, and the land mine that nearly killed him in Afghanistan, in a series of 2008 interviews on France Culture.

“In the ditch next to mine the guy next to me was killed during a bombing raid,” he said, referring to his experience in North Vietnam. “I didn't see it,” he said of the mine in Afghanistan. “It was a young Afghan who alerted me to it.”

Successful revolution must have deep roots in the soil, Chaliand wrote in his seminal book. Cabral, whose insurrection in Guinea-Bissau drove out the Portuguese colonizers in 1973, was a model.

“Far from overestimating peasant spontaneity in the manner of Fanon or Guevara, Cabral patiently built up a political support structure within the population,” he wrote in *Revolution in the Third World*, referring to Franz Fanon, the psychiatrist and revolutionary theorist. Of course, all bets were off after Cabral's assassination in 1973; the country quickly devolved into the chaos that still envelopes it.

The months Chaliand spent with Cabral in 1966 were some of his happiest. “I loved action, the unknown, discoveries historical and personal, and participating as observer and sometimes as actor in irregular conflicts on three continents,” he wrote in one of his memoirs, *Le Savoir de la Peau* (2022).

Gérard Tchalian — the progeny of Armenian immigrants, he would later French-

at the École des Langues et Civilisations Orientales in Paris, although his son said he did not graduate.

“Between the ages of 18 and 35, while traveling on four continents, I engaged in 20 different professions,” Chaliand wrote in *Le Savoir de la Peau*, among them “window-washer, waiter, plumber, photographer's assistant, road worker, cook, docker,” he wrote in his memoirs. He did these odd

ARMENIAN CULTURAL FOUNDATION

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Presents: A Conversation and Meeting with

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

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COMMUNITY NEWS

ABMDR’s 26th Gala Celebrates Global Mission of Saving Lives

GALA, from page 8
author Aram Saroyan (son of William Saroyan); “Good Day LA” anchor Araksya Karapetyan; “Good Day LA” entertainment anchor and reporter Amanda Salas; CBS/KCAL anchor Kalyna Astrinos; 103.5 KOST morning-show co-host Ryan Manno; “Alvin and the Chipmunks” producer Ross Bagdasarian, Jr.; Adventist Health Glendale Vice President of Business Development Dr. Ramella Markarian; Dr. Nubar Boghossian; Healthcare Systems of America CEO Dr. Michael Sarian; Dr. Neena Kapoor, Director of the Bone Marrow Transplant Center Laboratory at Children’s Hospital Los Angeles; Armenian Eye Care Project founding Board member Dr. John Hovanesian; Taleen Khatchadourian, President of the Armenian Autism Outreach Project; Taline Kayayan, Eugenie Aroyan, and Jasmen Jerahian of the ARS Western Region; Steve Chelebian of the Triple X Fraternity, and his team; Armenian American Medical Society past presidents Dr. Varoosh Ala-



Members of the ABMDR Gala Committee with ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan. (Photo by Arka Photography)

verdian and Dr. Kevin Galstyan; and Naz Atikian of the Family Rescue Fund.
Sepilian then invited the evening’s key-

note speaker, ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan, to the podium. “Twenty-seven years ago, a group of brave visionaries came together and founded ABMDR,” Jordan said. “Since then, our organization has grown, flourished, and become a significant global force, as a beacon of hope for our patients in Armenia and our entire global Diaspora. ABMDR now has an army of over 33,000 registered donors, and has already facilitated 44 transplants.”
Jordan continued: “While we stayed true to our primary mission of finding matches and saving lives, our state-of-the-art facility and our technical expertise have had a significant impact in the medical community of Armenia, in terms of introducing and helping implement data-driven medical practices in the region. But all this work, and all this success, could only be achieved with the dedication of our volunteer work force, and the unwavering support of you, our community, our friends, our supporters.”

Next, the attendees were shown a documentary video about the work of ABMDR since its inception in 1999. The production of the video was donated by acclaimed filmmaker Garen Mirzaian, of Friendly Filmmworks.
Following the screening of the documentary, ABMDR Executive Director Dr. Sevak Avagyan addressed the audience. “Over the years, ABMDR built itself into a strong and growing family,” Avagyan said. “And now we’re joined by a new generation bringing fresh energy, ideas, and vision. We do this work in a world full of uncertainty and challenges – all of which, of course, affect our homeland as well. Yet through it all, ABMDR has remained



California Congresswoman Laura Friedman and ABMDR President Dr. Frieda Jordan. (Arka Photography)

steady and strong, thanks to the unflinching support of so many: our donors, sponsors, doctors, researchers, and technicians, and our dedicated Board members and volunteers.” Avagyan also acknowledged the presence of ABMDR Medical Director
continued on next page



Michele Seyranian, Lifetime Achievement Award recipient (Arka Photography)



1940 - 2025
ANNIVERSARY

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DR. CARA AGHAJANIAN
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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



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STEPAN ALAJAJIAN
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Writer, Prosaist and Translator

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Cultural program
with the participation of
**Nune Avetisyan &
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Sunday, October 5, 2025, 4 PM
Glendale Central Library

COMMUNITY NEWS

from previous page

Dr. Mihran Nazaretyan, who is the former Health Minister of Armenia and “someone who has had an instrumental role in the founding and growth of ABMDR,” he said.

Afterwards Sona Ashjian announced the successful implementation of ABMDR’s newly-launched, immersive summer Internship Program, through which outstanding high school students from the US receive hands-on training at ABMDR’s Tissue-typing Laboratory, in Yerevan. The program, which seeks to help prepare the next generation of scientists and researchers, was established through the efforts of Dr. Evlyn Avanesian, Dr. Frieda Jordan, and Ashjian herself. Ashjian and Dr. Avagyan presented Certificates of Accomplishment to this year’s Internship Program participants, including Emily Davoodian, Vahan Gadimyan, and Zara Ovanessian, all from Providence High School, where Ashjian serves as manager of the school’s Medical Program. Participants of the Internship Program have also included Alexander Galstyan, from Ferrahian School.

At this juncture, Sepilian introduced the members of NextGen, ABMDR’s youth group. Delivering remarks on behalf of NextGen was Khachig Boghossian, who said that NextGen continues to make strides, in terms of organizing donor recruitments and raising public awareness of

the ABMDR mission, across college campuses and at various community events throughout California.

For the presentation of the 2025 ABMDR Inspiration Award, Sepilian invited longtime ABMDR supporter Araksya Karapetyan to the podium. After a deeply moving introduction, Karapetyan presented the ABMDR Inspiration Award to her “Good Day LA” colleague Amanda Salas, a beloved anchor and reporter and a cancer survivor.

The presentation of the award was followed by the “Be an Angel, Save a Life” fundraising portion of the evening, featuring the young ABMDR Angels. The Angels were introduced by Amanda Salas as well as ABMDR Board members Alique Topalian and Paulette Malekian. As this segment was underway, Allen G and his band delighted the guests with performances of Armenian and world classics.

The evening’s main awards ceremony followed the musical interlude. The ABMDR Business of the Year Award was presented to the Daglian Law Group, with founder and CEO Gary Daglian accepting the award. The Volunteer of the Year Awards were presented to Ardemis Minasian, Arsineh Karabedian and Arpa Mehdikhani.

The Woman of the Year Award was bestowed on Dr. Evlyn Avanesian, and the



“Good Day LA” anchor and reporter Amanda Salas, recipient of the ABMDR Inspiration Award. (Photo by Arka Photography)


Man of the Year Award was conferred on Harut Sassounian. The ABMDR Lifetime Achievement Award was conferred on Michele Seyranian.

Just as the award ceremony was being concluded, Jordan, Ashjian and Amy Boyadjian came on stage and surprised Sepilian by presenting him with a Certificate of Special Recognition, which was issued by US Senator and longtime ABMDR sup-

porter Adam Schiff.

Subsequently the 2025 ABMDR Lottery was drawn and the winners were announced by Boyadjian and Sepilian, while supporters continued to participate in the silent auction in the foyer, and the festivities resumed inside the hall, with guests dancing to the music of Allen G and his band.

For more information, visit abmdr.am.



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

New York Public Library President to Be Keynote Speaker at NAASR Gala

BELMONT, Mass. — The National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) is pleased to announce their guest speaker for the 70th Anniversary Gala will be Dr. Anthony W. Marx, President of the New York Public Library, the nation’s largest library system with 92 locations in New York City and the most used research library in the



Dr. Anthony W. Marx

world. Since joining NYPL in 2011, Marx has strengthened the Library’s role as an essential provider of educational resources and opportunities by becoming a national leader in bridging the digital divide through groundbreaking programs.

Before joining the Library, Marx served as president of Amherst College from 2003 to 2011. Marx has a BA from Yale, and an MPA and a PhD from Princeton.

The gala, “Celebrating 70 Years - Building the Future of Armenian Studies,” will take place on Saturday, October 4, at the Fairmont Copley Plaza in Boston.

Two long-time supporters of NAASR, Pamela Avedisian and Yervant Chekijian, will be the Honorary Chairs of the gala which will be emceed by Dr. Nora Lessersohn and Dr. Thomas Simsarian Dolan.

For tickets and information visit www.naasr.org/gala70



COMMUNITY NEWS / OBITUARY

Dorothy Anne Keverian: 1930-2025

Devoted Matriarch, Born to Genocide Survivors

BOSTON — Dorothy Anne (Moranian) Keverian, beloved wife, mother, grandmother, great-grandmother, sister, and friend, passed away peacefully at the age of 95.

Born on August 25, 1930, in Arlington, Mass., Dorothy was the daughter of Manuel and Osanna Moranian, survivors of the Armenian Genocide. Their courage and resilience, along with the close bonds of their extended family, shaped Dorothy’s life. She grew up surrounded by dozens of uncles, aunts, and cousins, all of whom shared meals, stories, and traditions that remained dear to her throughout her life.

Dorothy is survived by her husband of 73 years, Jack Keverian. Together, they raised three children: George (with wife Diane), Kenneth (with wife Dorota), and Lisann (with husband Doug Dillon). She was the grandmother of 11 — Niari, Hagop, Ani, Lori, Katrina, Tanya, Kristine, Ryan, Kevin, Michael and Kelsey — and a great-grandmother of 6 — Talia, Dominic, Gemma, Cyrus, Hudson and Michael — each of whom she adored and cherished.

More than anything, she saw her greatest purpose in raising her children and grandchildren and creating a home that was nurturing. She embraced that role with an unmatched devotion and unwavering love.

Family was at the very heart of Dorothy’s life. She was deeply close to her siblings — Alice, Helen, Marguerite and Thomas — and was a loving aunt to their children and great-aunt to many more. Her greatest joy was time spent with family, where her lighthearted spirit and joyful demeanor set the tone. She left the disciplining to the parents, preferring instead to be a source of fun, laughter and unconditional love.

Dorothy had a remarkable gift for connection. Anytime she met another Armenian, within minutes she would determine that they were a second cousin once removed. Whether or not this was technically true, to

Dorothy it didn’t matter because to her, they were all family. Dorothy inherited from her mother the gift of reading fortunes in the grounds at the bottom of a Turkish coffee cup. Young men and women alike would inevitably be told of romance just around the corner or of great fortune soon to come. It was less about prophecy than it was about her gift of encouragement — a reflection of her deep power of positive thinking.

She also inherited from her mother an appreciation for life’s finer details. Dorothy’s table settings, jewelry, and style reflected her eye for beauty and her belief in celebrating life’s special moments.

Though she grew up in an era when many women did not attend college, Dorothy pursued higher learning in her 40s, taking courses at Goucher College. True to form, she became a “den mother” to her fellow



students, teaching as much through her example as she absorbed in the classroom.

She expressed her love as a mother and grandmother most often through food. A gifted cook, she created cherished Armenian dishes such as dolma, sarma, kufta, eetch and kufta yachne. To her family, these foods were not only delicious but an expression of her love - meals that nourished the

soul as much as the body. Even now, those flavors evoke Dorothy’s presence and her boundless affection.

Dorothy will be remembered as a positive, fun-loving, and caring woman who made the lives of those around her better simply by being herself. Her spirit will live on in the memories, traditions, and love she leaves behind. We will all miss her dearly yet feel so grateful to have had her in our lives.

Funeral Services were held at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, 145 Brattle St., Cambridge, on September 3. Interment followed at Mount Auburn Cemetery in Cambridge, which in turn was followed by a Memorial Meal (Hokejash) at the Holy Trinity Church Hall.

In lieu of flowers, donations may be made in her memory to Holy Trinity Armenian Church or the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU), 55 East 59th Street, New York, NY 10022. More details can be found at www.giragosianfuneralhome.com.

Armenian Educational Foundation to Honor Visionary Leaders

AEF, from page 8

“To make AEF, from page 7 education a force to unite people, nations and cultures for peace and a sustainable future.” Under the guidance of Zonabend, Chair of the Board, and Vardanyan, the institution has educated students from 125 countries and transformed Dilijan’s economy by creating over 2,000 local jobs and fostering community engagement through educational and social initiatives.

Vardanyan and Zonabend’s philanthropic efforts extend well beyond UWC Dilijan. Together, they’ve founded the RVVZ Family Foundation, IDeA Charitable Foundation, and Scholae Mundi Foundation, focusing on sustainable development and global education initiatives.

Vardanyan has influenced socioeconomic development through projects such as the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative and

the Foundation for Armenian Science and Technology (FAST). He is a recipient of multiple international awards for his contributions to education and community development, including the AIB Presidential Award, and the Common Ground Awards.

Zonabend has been a driving force in educational philanthropy. She was honored with the Order of Friendship by the President of Armenia in 2014, and by the Armenian International Women’s Association (AIWA) in 2024, for her significant and continued contributions to education in Armenia.

Diane Cabraloff, co-chair of the gala committee, remarked, “We are both humbled and excited about celebrating 75 amazing years of support by the AEF to help enable the education of literally thousands of young Armenians, both in Arme-

nia and in the Diaspora”.

Founded in 1950, the Armenian Educational Foundation is a non-profit organization whose mission is to serve the educational needs of Armenian students around the world. AEF strives to foster personal growth, community engagement and global citizenship, with a steadfast commitment to promoting and preserving Armenian heritage, culture and values.

Since its establishment, AEF has been instrumental in providing scholarships, refurbishing schools, and supporting educational initiatives that have profoundly impacted Armenian communities globally. The forthcoming gala aims to celebrate these accomplishments and rally continued support for the foundation’s mission.

For more information about the 75th Anniversary Gala or to learn more about AEF’s initiatives, visit the website.



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Tekeyan Cultural Association
Metro Los Angeles Chapter



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FAMILY FUN DAY

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Angel Stadium of Anaheim
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Arts & Culture

Araksya Karapetyan, Alajajian Marcoosi Architects to Be Honored at Armenian Museum Gala

GLENDAL — The Armenian American Museum and Cultural Center of California announced that acclaimed Alajajian Marcoosi Architects and Emmy Award-winning journalist Araksya Karapetyan as the honorees for the Armenian American Museum Heritage Gala. The highly anticipated event will be held on Saturday, November 22, at the InterContinental Los Angeles Downtown.

Alajajian Marcoosi Architects, led by Aram Alajajian and Sako Marcoosi, are the creative force



Araksya Karapetyan

behind the design of the landmark cultural center. The Glendale-based firm is renowned for its expertise in institutional, commercial, and cultural projects that thoughtfully blend functionality with artistry. Their work on the museum reflects a deep commitment to honoring Armenian heritage while creating a vibrant, forward-looking space for education, community engagement and cultural exchange.

Karapetyan is the anchor for FOX 11's Good Day L.A. and a respected voice in journalism. Over her career, she has become a trusted source of news and storytelling, using her platform to share important issues affecting the Armenian-American community and beyond. Her authenticity, advocacy, and connection to her roots have made her a beloved figure both on and off screen.

The Heritage Gala is the museum's signature annual event, uniting community members, leaders, and supporters for an inspiring evening celebrating heritage, culture, and progress.

Guests will enjoy an elegant dinner program and live on-stage performances, all in support of the museum's mission to promote understanding and connection through education, exhibitions and cultural programming.

Learn more and RSVP for the Heritage Gala at ArmenianAmericanMuseum.org/Gala.



A still from "A Suitcase to Home"

‘A Suitcase to Home’ To Have Premiere on September 24

GLENDAL — The Glendale/La Cañada chapter of Society for Orphaned Armenian Relief (SOAR), on September 24 will host the premiere of "A Suitcase to Home," a documentary that not only won the prestigious Deauville Green Award, but also encapsulates the heart-wrenching struggles and unwavering spirit of the Armenian people.

The program will take place at the AGBU Vatche & Tamar Manoukian Performing Arts Center 2495 E Mountain St, Pasadena, at 8 p.m.

This film documents the profound challenges faced during the recent 44-day Artsakh War, the blockade of the Lachin Corridor, and the forced displacement of more than 120,000 Armenians from their homes in September 2023.

Through the lens of this documentary, viewers can witness the extraordinary resilience of the Armenian people who strive to uphold their cultural identity amidst adversity. The film is a testament to their strength and an inspiring reminder of their enduring connection to their homeland.

For two decades SOAR has provided humanitarian relief to orphaned Armenian children and adults with disabilities throughout the world. Its work in child protection extends beyond institutionalized children, however, protecting the most vulnerable members of Armenian society regardless of global circumstance.

Through the Families of Fallen Soldiers Relief Fund (soar-us.org/ffsrf) and the Artsakh Family Integration Fund (soar-us.org/afrf), the organization bring assistance and hope to these vulnerable populations that have been most affected by the recent events.



A still from "A Suitcase to Home"



The exodus from Artsakh (Karabakh)

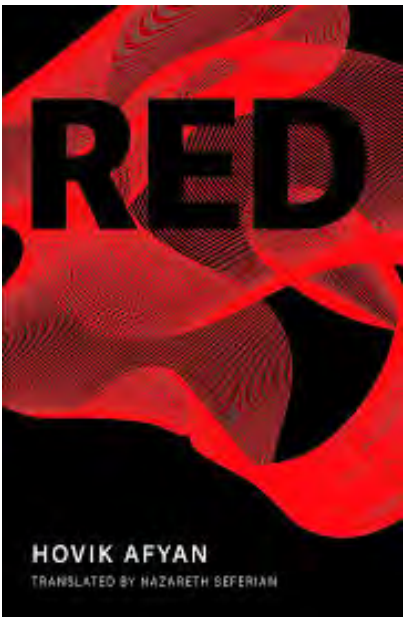
BOOKS

Red: Hovik Afyan’s Brooding, Enchanting Wartime Novel

(Translated from Eastern Armenian by Nazareth Seferian)

By Christopher Atamian
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

Sadness permeates Hovik Afyan’s 2020 debut novel, *Red*. The characters in this dark tale inhabit a world of gloom, palpable anguish weighs everything down. If Milan Kundera once wrote about the unbearable lightness of being, here Afyan describes a hermetic universe where an unbearable heaviness of being reigns. The novel is set sometime in the 1990’s, and Armenia is once again at war with its neighbor Azerbaijan. Wood and food are scarce, young



men are being sent off to Artsakh to die on the front, and even those who stay behind wage a personal war of their own: with family and friends, and with society-at-large, not to mention with themselves as they face their own inner demons.

Red’s main protagonists, Arus and Aram, are a couple grown weary of each other by the time we meet them in the novel’s opening pages. Unable to have children, they slowly turn away from each other: “Arus and Aram had begun to perceive each other as they were, which was always stressful and inevitable, especially when their desire to have children had been defeated over the years in the battle against their inability to do so.”

Aram is a talented painter who has survived a difficult childhood ruled by a disciplinarian mother who once gave away all his paintings to a neighbor to be used as kindling to keep her family warm in winter. Much to Arus’s dismay, Aram has recently taken to painting female nudes from live models. This becomes particularly glaring for Arus when he decides to use one of her friends as a model for his behind -closed-door sessions. As for Arus, she is a dancer whose performances Aram chooses not to attend, even though he knows

see *RED*, page 17



ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine Vartanian Datian



Chef George Mardikian serving Iraqi UN delegates at Omar Khayyam's restaurant in 1945. [Photo: Peter Stackpole/The LIFE Picture Collection/Getty Images]

George Mardikian's Arkayagan Abour (Royal Soup) from Dinner at Omar Khayyam's

SAN FRANCISCO — “George Mardikian (1903-1977) channeled the pain and hunger from his survival of the Armenian Genocide: He went from a dishwasher to a world-famous San Francisco restaurant owner who won the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1951 for his work in the Army and dedicated his life to feeding people,” writes Greg Keraghosian, at SFGATE.

Mardikian's Omar Khayyam's was the dining destination for San Franciscans for over 40 years at its underground location near the corner of Powell and O'Farrell streets. Celebrities, politicians, and professionals paid upscale prices while armed service members and refugees ate for free. Its authentic shish kebab and bulgur pilaf were the main draw for a largely American clientele unfamiliar with such food. But the restaurant drew its life force from, as William Saroyan called him, “the big man with the bright face coming over to your table.”

In *Dinner at Omar Khayyam's*, Mardikian's cookbook for all Americans, America's first celebrity chef reveals the culinary secrets that made his San Francisco establishment so revered. “The recipes are for Armenian food, prepared in the Armenian fashion, but seasoned to the American palate. Dishes were exotic and different, but thrifty, healthful, and easy, even for amateur chefs to prepare. His food was sophisticated enough for parties, but economical and well balanced enough to serve the whole family.”

He wrote, “I have found records of the authentic origin of Royal Soup in monasteries in various parts of old Armenia. Here Armenian monks have saved the most precious Armenian manuscripts for sixteen centuries. It was in one of these 1500-year-old manuscripts that I found out why this soup is called Royal Soup or Victory Soup. Over 3,500 years ago, when an Armenian king went to war and came back victorious it was his solemn day to go into the rich forests and bring back all sorts of wild birds and gazelles. He would bring the game to the palace steps where a huge gatsa or kettle had been placed by coppersmiths. After his servants had cleaned the gazelles and birds, the king with his own hands would prepare the Royal Soup and serve it to the princes and princesses of his court, who in turn would serve the public who had come from every part of Armenia to celebrate the victory.”

“As the game and birds became scarce, Armenians tried to find other ways to make the soup. Now instead of serving huge chunks of gazelle and pheasant meat, they substituted chicken broth, and made the meatballs out of deer meat. As culinary art has progressed, they have added zest to the soup for flavoring. In the olden days they used to put young grapes into the soup for flavoring. Now they add lemon juice and eggs beaten together. It gives a delightful flavor that you can't find in anything else.”

“Not having any gazelles available in America, I have substituted venison in my recipes. One of the most important dinners I have served in America was when A.E. Nelson, then vice-president and general manager of NBC in San Francisco commissioned me to serve the most perfect meal I could prepare to the visiting NBC president, Niles Trammell. Fortunately, just before the dinner, the deer season opened, so I sent two of my boys, who were good hunters, to get me a buck. I knew they wouldn't come back empty-handed. We had a 135-pound buck from which we prepared the Royal Soup ‘a la Niles Trammell.’” (Niles Trammell was president of NBC from 1927 to 1952, and later co-founder of WCKT in Miami. He is credited for discovering and developing much of the network's star talent during the “Golden Age of Radio.”)

“George Mardikian immigrated to the United States in 1922, and was an indispensable influence in introducing shish kebab, dolma, pilaf, spinach salad, stuffed cabbage leaves, and dozens of other dishes for the time from Anatolia, Armenia

and the Middle East to the American diet for the masses. While serving as a food consultant to the Quartermaster General of the United States Army in Germany, he became aware that some 2,000 Armenians who had been displaced by World War II were being held in the slave labor camp, Funkerkaserne. Mardikian went to the camp, where the displaced Armenians honored him with an unforgettable program in the hope that Mardikian would be the link to a future in America. Promising to do his best to assist them, he – along with Suren Saroyan – established the American National Committee to Aid Homeless Armenians (ANCHA). Along with Suren Saroyan and General Haig Shekerjian, Mardikian launched a humanitarian effort that enabled thousands of displaced Armenians to settle in the United States.”

Arkayagan Abour (Royal Soup)

- INGREDIENTS:**
- 1/2 gallon chicken broth
 - 1/2 pound venison meat, ground (see Note)
 - 1/2 cup bulgur, finely ground wheat, or rice
 - 1/4 cup very finely chopped onion
 - 1/4 cup very finely chopped parsley
 - Juice of 2 lemons, to taste
 - 3 eggs (raw)
 - Salt and pepper

- PREPARATION:**
- Mix raw meat, bulgur or rice, onions, parsley, and seasonings together. Make mixture into small balls about the size of hazelnuts. Drop into the hot chicken broth and cook for about 1 hour.
- Mix the juice of the 2 lemons with the raw eggs and beat well. Slowly pour the soup broth in the egg and lemon mixtures, beating constantly, until all the broth has been used. Pour over the meat balls and serve immediately.
- Makes about 8 cups
- Note: In most recipes, the venison can be replaced with grass fed beef, goat or lamb. The best cuts of meat for the various type recipes are as follows: venison tenderloin-beef tenderloin, venison loin-beef loin, and venison hindquarter roast. For ground venison, purchase a rump roast and have the butcher grind it on the largest setting.

Domatesli Pilaf (Pilaf with Tomato Juice)

- INGREDIENTS:**
- 3 cups rice
 - 1/4 pound butter
 - 3 cups tomato juice
 - 3 cups chicken, lamb or beef broth
 - Salt and pepper
- PREPARATION:**
- Preheat oven to 375°F. Melt butter in heavy frying pan. Add dry rice. Braise well until butter bubbles. Mix broth and tomato juice together and boil. Pour boiling mixed broth over rice. Add salt and pepper and mix well. Bake in oven for 30 minutes. Take out, mix well again, and bake for 20 minutes more.
- Serves 6 to 8.

Sophene Books, an independent publisher celebrating the rich literary legacy of Armenia and beyond, has made the treasures of old Armenian literature available to a modern audience. Including famed San Francisco restaurateur, chef, author and philanthropist George Mardikian's classic cookbook, *Dinner at Omar Khayyam's*. Order at: <https://sophenebooks.com/blogs/dig-deeper/tagged/dinner-at-omar-khayyams>

See: George Mardikian's *Dinner Menu, Omar Khayyam's* (1946) at: <http://ciadigitalcollections.culinary.edu/digital/collection/p16940coll1/id/9507/>

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New edition of the 1944 classic by George Mardikian, America's first celebrity chef



ARTS & CULTURE

Nikolay Madoyan

“The violin has become an extension of me”

By Artsvi Bakhchinyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

YEREVAN – Nikolay Madoyan (born in Yerevan in 1973) is an Armenian virtuoso violinist whose artistry has earned him international recognition. His Guinness World Record for continuously performing 59 world classics for over 33 hours stands as a testament to his endurance and mastery. From a young age, he distinguished himself in major international competitions, later building a career that brought him to the stages of Europe, Asia and the Americas. He worked with Isaac Stern, an encounter that deeply shaped his artistic outlook, and went on to perform with some of the world’s leading orchestras and conductors.

Alongside his solo career, he has also been active in chamber music and recording, most recently releasing his Naxos debut album “Armenian Brilliance” in 2023 to wide critical acclaim. His repertoire is vast and ambitious, including rare feats such as performing all six Paganini concertos by memory in a single concert.

In 2025 he embarks on a world tour devoted to Paganini’s 24 Caprices, works that remain among the most demanding in violin repertoire. With numerous awards, honors, and an enduring presence on the international stage, Madoyan continues to represent Armenian artistry with brilliance and dedication. His recordings with Danish label Kontrapunkt and German label Naxos Records received critical acclaim from publications like The Strad, Gramophone, BBC Music Magazine and American Record Guide.

Dear Nikolay, I’ve been following your concerts since 1995, and have been a fan ever since. What’s one thing about your childhood that you believe directly led to the artist you are today?

There was always music in my house. We had an extensive collection of recordings — some of the greatest musicians of the past. My grandfather was a passionate music lover; he knew entire operas by heart. My father had a beautiful singing voice before adolescence changed it. We often listened to violin and opera legends. But what truly shaped me was hearing Jascha Heifetz’s recording of Pablo de Sarasate’s Gypsy Airs for the first time. I was completely spellbound and I must have listened to it a thousand times. It became almost an obsession — not to imitate, but to understand and someday reach and maybe overreach that level of mastery in my own way, with my own fingerprint.

Do you believe music carries a spiritual dimension or even healing power?

I don’t just believe it — I know it. Music heals and reaches places where words can no longer go. Being immersed in music professionally, I feel its ability to heal and uplift every single day. When we engage with music at its highest level, our body and soul fall into harmony. Music doesn’t just move the heart — it renews the spirit. Today, even science confirms what musicians have always known: that music carries a profound power to restore — both physically and spiritually.

When playing works by composers from past centuries, do you ever feel haunted — or protected — by them, or feel some mystical connection?

Yes, absolutely. When I perform, I often feel that something is working through me, like a dialogue. I believe there is a real, universal connection formed when you engage deeply with the composer’s music. The soul becomes present. My interpretation always has a co-creative nature — on stage, I’m not simply reproducing a score; I’m co-creating the piece in real time. That living moment is sacred to me. I remember a powerful moment after performing all six of Paganini’s violin concertos from memory in a single evening. Film director Henrik Markarian, who attended the concert, told me and the journalists that he felt as if Paganini’s spirit himself had been there. That kind of experience can only happen when you are fully immersed in the composer’s source and energy, which concentrates around you and gives you a unique kind of power.

Which piece reveals the most about you when you perform it? Have you ever been surprised by what your own playing revealed to you?

I would highlight Bach’s Chaconne for solo violin, from the Second Partita in D minor. This work is often performed on its own and has inspired many different arrangements for various instruments. Some composers have even incorporated its theme into their own compositions. I want to emphasize that the Chaconne consists of a theme followed by a series of variations. I have always thought of these variations as representing different stages or evolutions of life. At the end, the original theme returns as a kind of quintessence of the entire piece, as if it gathers all the episodes and steps you have passed through in life. This theme summarizes the idea that everything repeats endlessly, forming a cycle — a spiral of repetition. I have performed this piece many times, and each time with a different interpretation. It has a unique philosophy and depth that never ceases to reveal something new about life — and about myself.

You often perform enormous programs from memory. Does your mind organize music more visually, emotionally or structurally?

I believe it is all combined, each adding to the other: visual, muscle memory and musical memory. Together, they form a solid foundation, giving your memory many pillars to lean on. I always build on the architectural structure of the piece which then flows into emotions by binding both into my inner stream, my conscious and



subconscious absorption of music: visual, physical, and mental — which provides 100% memory coverage.

Has there ever been a moment on stage when you had to quickly make a decision to save the situation due to an unexpected circumstance?

I remember a moment on stage when I was performing the Sibelius Violin Concerto in the Netherlands. One of my strings — the most vulnerable one and the biggest fear of any violinist — snapped during the performance. I quickly gathered myself and turned to the first violinist to lend his violin so I could continue playing without a pause. I’ve encountered similar situations before, and in those moments, staying calm and adapting quickly is essential.

Have you ever had a dream or vision that changed the way you played a piece?

Yes, in a way — but it wasn’t exactly a dream. When I was about 8 years old, I had this surreal experience that happened to me only once and has stayed with me ever since. I was walking on a trail in a big open field when I was on vacation in Martuni. At one point, I saw some bushes and decided to go behind them. The moment I stepped through, I suddenly found myself in what felt like quantum parallel reality in physics — a neighborhood with buildings and people going about their lives. I remember feeling completely disoriented because I had just been on a field seconds before. I walked around in a daze, not really understanding what had happened. Eventually, I retraced my steps and ran back. In several minutes, curious, I went back with my brother and went through the same bushes — but the neighborhood was gone! It was just a field again. That experience, though mysterious and inexplicable, stuck with me and I think it began to influence how I play music, especially in intimate or intense moments. I try to channel that strange feeling of crossing into another dimension, and then leading the listener back through it.

If your violin had a memory, what moments do you think it would remember most vividly?

Why ‘if’? The violin does have a memory. I’m playing an instrument that was crafted centuries ago, and like many violins of its kind, it carries the soul of those who came before me. These instruments often bear the names of the great violinists who once played them. I spoke earlier about my admiration for Heifetz’s recording of Sarasate’s music — a performance made all the more haunting by the fact that he was playing on Sarasate’s own violin. The history is embedded in the very wood of the instrument. When touched by the fingers of a true virtuoso, a violin is transformed. It becomes an extension of something larger than oneself, where the violinist draws on the echoes of the past while contributing to its living memory.

After playing for over 33 hours nonstop — an achievement recognized by Guinness World Records as “Officially Amazing” — did your relationship with music change?

Absolutely. That experience was transformative. What many people don’t realize is that music influences us differently depending on the time of day. Our bodies are incredibly intelligent, and our internal systems respond to sound in unique ways throughout the day and night — affecting everything from mood to our internal rhythms. There’s compelling scientific research on this, and my father, who was deeply involved in neuroscience, made notable discoveries about how music interacts with the brain and body. During that 33-hour performance, I could

genuinely sense those fluctuations — the shifting energies, the altered emotional resonance of the music as the hours passed. I was testing the boundaries of my own being — mentally, physically, and emotionally. And through that, I came to a powerful realization: human potential is far greater than we often imagine.

Armenia has a musical soul — a tone, a rhythm, a hidden mode. What does it sound like to you, and how do you channel that into classical concert halls around the world?

It sounds like longing to me — modal, tender, like an ancient hymn rising from our stones and mountains. It’s not just a tone, but a memory. That sound lives within me, and I carry it onto the world’s stages, so that even in Paris or Tokyo, one might hear the echo of Armenia and Artsakh in my playing. For me, Krunk is a symbolic piece — an emotional fingerprint of our people. I’ve performed it in concert halls across the globe. It carries a depth and identity that speak to who we are, where we come from, and what we hold in our hearts.

You’ve performed all over the world, studied with masters, and redefined what a violinist can achieve. What do you still not understand about the violin? What mystery remains?

I believe that perfection is endless. No matter how much I’ve learned, performed, or discovered, there is always more — more depth, more color, more subtlety waiting to be found through the violin. I constantly uncover new palettes of sound that I can shape and refine, and that process never truly ends. That’s the beauty of it. The idea that there is no true limit gives me energy, purpose, and joy. It’s this infinite pursuit of perfection that fuels my passion and drives my creativity. The mystery of the violin is that it keeps transforming with you — and that’s what makes my artistic journey so meaningful.

Books

Lawyer Releases Candid Memoir Titled Singing Through Fire

By Lisa Kradjian

SAN FRANCISCO — *Singing Through Fire*, the new memoir by Lara Palanjian Silverman, was released on August 26, on Amazon and other book retailers.

Lara is an Armenian Christian, lawyer, comedian, vocalist and violinist from the Bay Area but in many ways, she defies categorization. Her presence on social media and in her new book speak to her remarkable spirit, talent and journey.

Singing Through Fire shares Silverman’s journey from childhood to Stanford Law School, to a busy life interrupted by her severe illness that left her bedridden



Lara Palanjian Silverman

for four years, to meeting the love of her life, Dr. Matt Silverman, and losing him to cancer, and living through the extreme grief of it all — while still embracing joy through her deep faith.

Reader and reviewer Miriam

Burnett says of *Singing Through Fire*: “An unforgettable memoir. It’s like a love letter to life, even when life breaks you. This book changed the way I see suffering.”

The author shared her journey of how this book came to be.

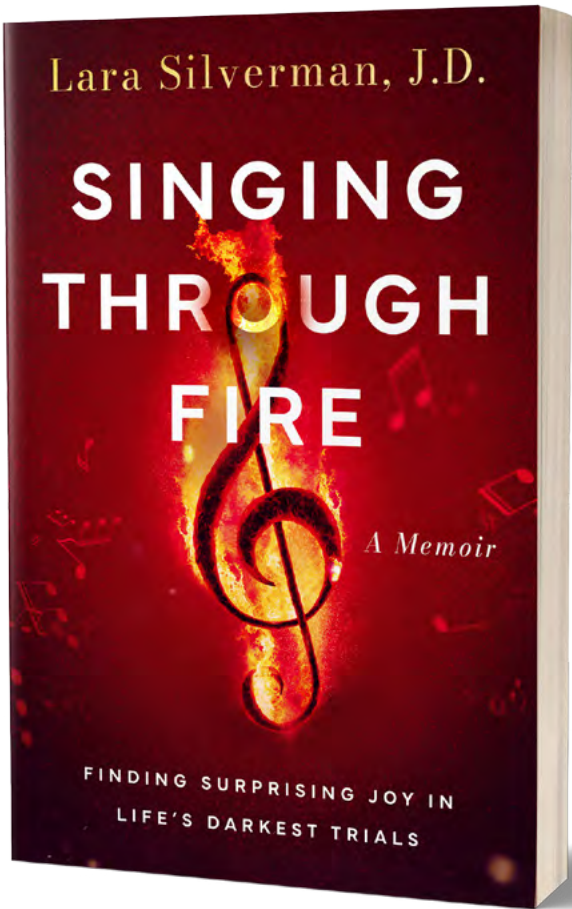
“After my husband passed, I felt the Lord calling me to write a book on my journey through suffering. I wrote it from my sick bed, in the thick of loss. God knew I needed to make meaning out of the rubble and to wrestle with Him on paper,” she said.

She added that she picked the title as a reflection of her inner turmoil.

“*Singing Through Fire* captures the tension of my life: the nonstop ache of chronic illness, grief, and countless dashed dreams — and yet still daring to sing, laugh, trust, and moving toward hope. It’s the music of defiant faith echoing in a burning room,” Silverman said.

One may wonder how through these devastating episodes, she managed to do comedy. “There are two answers. On an earthly level, laughter is oxygen when you’re suffocating. I joke so that I won’t cry. On an eternal level, the Lord explicitly calls us to have joy amid our grief. And what better way to find joy than to use humor and giggles to cheer up other people during their own trials? That’s why I wanted my book to be hilarious too. It’s laughter mixed in with tragedy,” she explained.

She concluded by saying, “I’m still a work in progress.



Still asking God hard questions, but still hoping, still performing. Still believing God will one day bring tremendous beauty from my ashes — because He explicitly promises as much in the Bible.”

Silverman performs as “Deegee Loorchig” in her solo Armenian comedy show on Instagram, Facebook and YouTube, and sings Armenian arias, oldies, jazz, and pop on “The Silverman Show” YouTube channel. Her social media links can be found here: <https://linktr.ee/Larap3>. Her book, *Singing Through Fire* is available for purchase here: <https://www.amazon.com/dp/B0FMQZ264W>.



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).



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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 8 — Monday, St. James Men's club and Holy Trinity Men's Union will have a joint meeting at the Charles and Nevart Talanian Hall at Holy Trinity Armenian Church, Mezza 5.45 p.m., Dinner 6.45 p.m. Losh Kebab or Kheyma Meal \$22. Guest speaker will be John Garabedian, lifetime career in the radio business WJIB 720am, and 101.3 FM.RSVP is highly encouraged, email tmu@htaac.org or call the church office 617-354-0632

SEPTEMBER 16 — Holy Archangels 2nd Annual Golf Tournament Hickory Hill Golf Course 200 North Lowell St., Methuen, MA 7:30 AM Registration; 9:00 AM Shotgun Tee off. For Golfer Registration Info and Sponsorship opportunities, contact Mark Kazanjian (508-633-7447) Markkaz55@aol.com

SEPTEMBER 20 — CELEBRATE ARMENIA! Heritage. Culture. Traditions. On the occasion of Armenian Independence Day on September 21. 1-8 p.m. Saturday. ARMENIAN HERITAGE PARK ON THE GREENWAY, BOSTON rain date: September 27. For the schedule, email hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

SEPTEMBER 21 — The Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter presents A Summer Concert featuring Greek-Armenian violinist Emilya Gaspar and her mother, pianist Jasmine Atabekyan. The duo will perform Armenian and classical masterpieces. 4.30 p.m. 755 Mount Auburn St., Watertown. Please use Norseman Avenue entrance. Free, followed by a small reception. All donations will support Emilya's education. For reservations or information, call Sossy at 617-281-1647 or email syogurtian@comcast.net.

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 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 24 — 20th Anniversary Celebration of Father Khachatur Kesablian's Ordination to Priesthood. Presentation of Floral (Dzaggha) Pilon by His Eminence, Bishop Mesrob Parsamyan, Primate. Dinner and Program to follow. Saints Vartanantz Armenian Church, 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford. 6 p.m. For tickets and further information, contact Dara Hagopian, djuka@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 26 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group presents Chekhov's "The Marriage Proposal" in Western Armenian at St. James Armenian Church, in cosponsorship with Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter and the Society of Istanbul Armenians, 4 p.m. Details forthcoming.

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 16 — GIVING THANKS! TOGETHER IN CELEBRATION. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 2pm. Meet & Greet. Share the Warmth: Bring a Winter Hat, Scarf or Gloves for the ABCD Winter Drive, Seasonal 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.

NEW YORK

SEPTEMBER 14 — St. Paul Armenian Church, Syracuse: Annual Shish Kebab Picnic at Ryder Park under the pavilion. Games, Great Food, and Good Times. All are welcome!

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.

Red: Hovik Afyan's Brooding, Enchanting Wartime Novel

RED, from page 13

that this wounds her. Aram comes off as being emotionally brutish, but we are made to understand that this is largely the result of his upbringing. Arus eventually gives up dancing altogether of her own accord. One day, as the couple drives to the Artsakh border they encounter something truly gruesome lying on the road ahead, and they will never be the same again.

Meanwhile their friend Frunze and his Lebanese cousin Raffi, a deluded youngster who fancies himself some type of latter-day fedayee, join the war effort in Artsakh, and are soon taken prisoner. A brave villager who returned from a previous war missing a leg, crawls over the border from Armenia and kidnaps a young Azeri girl named Leyla, so they can barter her against the two Armenian hostages. The rather remarkable remaining plot twists and developments leave the reader with a decidedly less favorable view of war than the narrator who acknowledges all its destructive aspects, but also praises the heightened passion and

bravery that s(he) feels it elicits in people.

Stylistically, Afyan's prose possesses a certain Hemingwayesque quality, composed as it is of largely declarative sentences, which include equally pared down prose descriptions and terse dialogue. These are interspersed with debatable — or at the very least subjective — statements and philosophical disquisitions on love, war, ethnic rivalries and the human condition in general.

At times, the writing seems awkward, as in the following early scene in which Aram walks his dog in a local park: "The city was quite big for a country that small, and the dog never returned home, breaking all stereotypes about canines and how stomachs dictate their actions. Perhaps this was not because the city was big, but rather the dog's feelings were."

Elsewhere Afyan's words almost glow, as in the lovely description that follows: "The flowers were so pretty that the sun had turned in their direction and decided to sleep in their embrace that day. Aram stopped the

car next to some violets. The purple and dark red colours were magnificent."

Overall *Red* possesses an enchanting and almost fairy tale-like quality, in spite of the grim events taking place. There are dangerous woods to get lost in, heroes and villains to cheer for and fear, and a Cinderella character of sorts as well. As for the novel's title, it refers to red as the color of both war and love/passion, as well as the blood red paint that covers Aram's canvases.

While the 138-page English version makes for generally good reading, the novel's translator, Nazareth Seferian, falters somewhat here, when compared to his pristine translations of works such as Karine Khodikyan's *The Door was Open* and Susanna Haratyunyan's *Ravens Before Noah*. There are occasional odd choices of verb tenses and turns-of-phrases. In one passage, for example, we find the odd "lupine stray dogs," which could more readily be translated as "wolflike stray dogs," or better yet, simply: "wolflike strays."

More than anything perhaps, it is Hovik



Author Hovik Afyan

Afyan's deep engagement with issues of life and death and his attempt to understand what stirs human passions — here art and war — that most convinces. *Red* has received much praise: shortlisted for best fiction novel in the 2020 European Union Book Prize, it was first published in English on Australia's Arcadia Books 2023. And a film version is already being shot by a young director from the Yerevan TUMO center, based on his own script adaptation. Hopefully in the coming years, Afyan will develop a slightly more personal style of writing and cement his reputation as one of Armenia's writers of note.

COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN
**MIRROR
SPECTATOR**
SINCE 1932



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Why Would Pashinyan Criticize US Democrats?

By Suren Sargsyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

A few days ago, a rather interesting incident took place, which sparked serious reactions in Armenian political life. First, in his recent article, former US Assistant Secretary of State James O'Brien under President Joe Biden, now an independent expert, criticized agreements Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan reached in Washington. O'Brien stated that the Trump administration offered "no substantial peace dividend for Armenia: no open border with Turkey, no extra investments for Armenia's benefit ... only a corridor connecting different parts of Azerbaijan." He added, "The election campaign will now be dominated by the prospect of a coerced constitutional change," predicting this "will be deeply unpopular in Armenia and will hurt Pashinyan further."

Pashinyan responded to O'Brien's argument that the Armenian-Azerbaijani agreements signed in Washington were a major win for Azerbaijan, as they wouldn't provide Armenia a "substantial peace dividend," end the conflict with Azerbaijan, or protect Armenia's vulnerability. When asked to comment, Pashinyan said at a press briefing that O'Brien lost his job during the tenure of US President Donald Trump and now needs to try to explain why the Trump Administration was able to do something the Biden Administration couldn't.

"From this point of view O'Brien's remarks are very strange, but on the other hand not strange at all," Pashinyan said. "If Mr. O'Brien is talking about Armenia's vulnerabilities, I have to state that unfortunately Armenia was most vulnerable during his and their tenure.

I'd like to remind you about the events of 2023, the events of 2022, the events of 2021. And I have to say that we had never been satisfied with the reaction and work that the then-US administration had carried out in our region to support the peace process. Mr. O'Brien is someone who lost his job as a result of this all, and I am not going to comment on his emotional assessments. If he has lost his job, he needs to self-reflect and not try to put the blame for losing his job on Armenia. Today, Armenia is in the least vulnerable state of its modern independent history. We've never been less vulnerable since 1991. And perhaps it was the lack of skills to notice geopolitical, regional and political nuances that didn't allow Mr. O'Brien to continue his career in the U.S. State Department," Pashinyan said.

Such criticism is quite surprising, because Pashinyan consistently received significant support from the Biden administration. And this support has not only been in the form of financial or diplomatic assistance, but also in the form of political backing. It is therefore striking that Pashinyan today, when the Democrats are no longer in the White House, is reacting in such a manner toward the Democratic administration.

The reasons for this may be varied. The most important one may be that Prime Minister Pashinyan and his political team had acquired a reputation in Washington as a government closely cooperating with the Democrats. In other words, in Washington they were perceived as carrying the political orientation of the Democratic Party. The prime minister may now wish to distance himself from the stance adopted during the US presidential elec-



tions. Pashinyan may be trying to appeal to Trump by portraying himself as a victim of the Democrats. This approach would likely please Trump, who frequently criticizes Biden, as he did during the Armenia-Azerbaijan statement signings in Washington.

Regardless of whether we agree with Pashinyan's evaluations, Armenia's current political leadership has consistently struggled to maintain a balanced approach in its relations with the United States, failing to effectively engage with both Republicans and Democrats to ensure a stable foreign policy. Its disregard for the fact that the most active members of the Armenian Caucus in Congress are Democrats risks negative repercussions, if not immediately, then in the near future.

Without Return and Justice, Armenia-Azerbaijan Peace Deal Cements Tragedy for Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians

By Artak Beglaryan

On August 8, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev joined President Donald Trump at the White House to sign a joint declaration. That same day, the foreign ministers of both countries initialed a long-negotiated agreement on peace and inter-state relations.

Together, the declaration and agreement were hailed as a long-awaited diplomatic breakthrough: recognition of borders, renunciation of territorial claims, a ban on the use of force, and new connectivity projects—including the Trump Route

THE DECLARATION SPEAKS OF "CLOSING THE CHAPTER OF ENMITY" AND REJECTING "REVENGE"—WHILE IGNORING THE FACT THAT AZERBAIJAN EMPTIED NAGORNO-KARABAKH OF ARMENIANS THROUGH BLOCKADE, BOMBARDMENT, AND FEAR.

for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP).

For diplomats, it looked like success. For the 150,000 Christian Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh)—ethnically cleansed and fully displaced in 2020 and 2023—it looked like disappearance. Nowhere in these texts is there a single ref-

erence to the primary victims of this conflict, a people who lived in their ancestral homeland for millennia.

What the Peace Framework Ignores

The agreement emphasizes sovereignty, borders, and good-neighborly relations. Symbolically, it even condemns intolerance, hatred and extremism. But it never names the displaced Armenians, never sets conditions for our safe return, and never acknowledges the destruction of our homes, churches, and cemeteries under Azerbaijani occupation.

Instead, the declaration speaks of

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COMMENTARY

MY TURN



by Harut Sassounian

Pashinyan Joins Erdogan In Objecting to Armenian Genocide Recognition

The controversy over Israel's lack of recognition of the Armenian Genocide erupted last week when Armenian-Assyrian blogger Patrick Bet-David asked Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu why Israel has not recognized the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides. Netanyahu wrongly replied: "In fact, I think we have. I think the Knesset [parliament] passed a resolution to that effect." Netanyahu knows better than anyone that is not true, since he himself, as prime minister, has blocked several such Knesset resolutions.

When Bet-David pressed Netanyahu, asking him to recognize the Armenian Genocide as prime minister, he replied: "I just did. Here you go." This was a flippant way to address such a serious issue.

Netanyahu's minimalist statement was interpreted by some as the first time that Israel had recognized the Armenian Genocide. In reality, Netanyahu had referred to the Armenian Genocide in March 2024, after Turkish President Erdogan compared him to "Hitler, Stalin, and Mussolini." Netanyahu replied that Erdogan "denies the Armenian Holocaust." In January 2024, Israel's Foreign Minister Yisrael Katz directly accused Turkey of being responsible for the Armenian Genocide: "The President of Turkey @RTErdogan, from a country with the Armenian Genocide in its past, now boasts of targeting Israel with unfounded claims. We remember the Armenians, the Kurds. Your history speaks for itself...."

It is also not true that Netanyahu's comment on the genocide was triggered by bad relations between Israel and Turkey. They have clashed many times before and later reconciled.

To better understand the background of this issue, let us review some of the developments over the past five decades.

In 1982, Israel's Holocaust Memorial sponsored the first "International Conference on the Holocaust and Genocide" in Tel Aviv. There were six Armenians among the 100 scholars invited to participate. The Turkish government immediately threatened Israel with various anti-Jewish actions. Israel's Foreign Ministry complied with the Turkish request and pressured the organizers to cancel the conference. As a result, the sponsors withdrew, and several prominent Jewish scholars refused to participate, but the conference went ahead, albeit in a limited format.

In 2001 and 2002, Israel's then-Foreign Minister Shimon Peres outright denied the Armenian Genocide, stating that Israel rejected "attempts to create a similarity between the Holocaust and the Armenian allegations." Israel Charney, executive director of the Jerusalem-based Institute on the Holocaust and Genocide, responded with a scathing letter to Peres: "You have gone beyond a moral boundary that no Jew should allow himself to trespass.... As a Jew and an Israeli, I am ashamed of the extent to which you have now entered into the range of actual denial of the Armenian Genocide, comparable to denials of the Holocaust."

In 2015, when I was invited to speak at a conference on the Armenian Genocide at a Tel Aviv university, I had the opportunity to meet with Israel's then-President Reuven Rivlin. I complained to him about Israel's unacceptable denial of the Armenian Genocide. He explained that he had no doubts about the Armenian Genocide, since he had grown up in Jerusalem with survivors of the Genocide. When Rivlin was chairman of the Knesset, he had tried unsuccessfully to pass a resolution on the Armenian Genocide. Given Prime Minister Netanyahu's negative position on this issue, he said his hands were tied as President. He thus confirmed Netanyahu's long-standing opposition to Armenian Genocide recognition.

In my Tel Aviv lecture, I made a distinction between the Israeli government's denialist position and the strong support of key Jewish individuals for the Armenian Genocide, such as US Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire (1913-16) Henry Morgenthau; Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term "Genocide;" novelist Franz Werfel; Deputy Foreign Minister and later Justice Minister Yossi Beilin; Minister of Education Yossi Sarid; Minister of Immigrant Absorption Yair Tzaban; Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel; and President Reuven Rivlin. I called them "righteous Jews."

On the other hand, Prime Minister Pashinyan, while Armenians around the world have struggled for decades to publicize the Armenian Genocide, has raised childish questions about its recognition, dismissing their valuable efforts.

Pashinyan told Armenian journalists last week that Netanyahu's statement had nothing to do with Armenia or the interests of the Armenian people. He also questioned whether Armenians have gained anything from genocide recognition by dozens of countries. He even revealed that he had asked foreign leaders why they had recognized the Armenian Genocide. Pashinyan is thus actively undermining the pursuit of justice for the Armenian Cause. This is what happens when a politically inexperienced and unpatriotic man ascends to the seat of power in Armenia.

Pashinyan does not understand that if Armenians had not struggled for decades to publicize the Armenian Genocide, no one today would have remembered it, giving Turkey a free pass to get away with mass murder. Armenians need to hold Turkey accountable for its crimes.

Instead of criticizing the efforts to recognize the Armenian Genocide, Pashinyan should have taken concrete steps to demand justice, including restitution and the return of the occupied territories in Western Armenia. This is something the diaspora cannot do, since only countries can file claims with the International Court of Justice (World Court). Pashinyan will never take such a step, since he is busy capitulating to Turkish and Azeri demands.

As a result of Netanyahu's statement on the Armenian Genocide:

- 1) The Armenian Genocide was extensively covered by the international media, informing millions of people worldwide of the Turkish crime, which Turkey desperately tries to conceal.
- 2) Armenian and Turkish officials, by reacting to Netanyahu's comments on the Armenian Genocide, publicized it further, regardless of whether they acknowledged or criticized it.
- 3) The Turkish Foreign Ministry condemned Israel after Netanyahu's comment on the Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides. Turkey also announced that it was ceasing all trade relations with Israel and closing its airspace to Israeli planes due to the Gaza conflict.

Without Return and Justice, Peace Deal Cements Tragedy for Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians

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"closing the chapter of enmity" and rejecting "revenge"—while ignoring the fact that Azerbaijan emptied Nagorno-Karabakh of Armenians through blockade, bombardment, and fear. That reality has been described as genocide by the International Association of Genocide Scholars, by Juan Méndez, the U.N.'s first special adviser on the prevention of genocide, and by Luis Moreno Ocampo, the International Criminal Court's first prosecutor. Meanwhile, Freedom House, the European Parliament, and many other institutions have called it ethnic cleansing. Notably, President Donald Trump himself publicly recognized that "Armenian Christians were horrifically persecuted and forcibly displaced in Artsakh" on October 23, 2024.

The signed documents also avoid mentioning the Armenian hostages still held in Baku. They avoid addressing the cultural erasure underway in our ancient Christian homeland.

It is peace without people—crafted for diplomats and politicians, yet blind to the very communities that paid the price of the conflict and mass atrocities.

Hatred Still Institutionalized

For decades, Azerbaijan's state policy has nurtured anti-Armenian hatred. Its schools teach children to hate Armenians as enemies. A "trophy park" in Baku displayed mannequins of dead Armenian soldiers. Perpetrators of atrocities have been honored as heroes. President Aliyev has proudly claimed that Azerbaijan's youth were raised to hate Armenians.

Among other international institutions, in 2021, the U.N. International Court of Justice confirmed this state-led anti-Armenian hatred policy. And yet, the new agreement

leaves untouched the reality that President Aliyev still calls Armenia "Western Azerbaijan" and demands extra-territorial corridors across Armenian sovereign territory.

A paper promise to fight hatred means nothing when hatred remains state doctrine and justice is deliberately ignored.

What a Just Peace Must Contain

For this peace framework to become more than symbolic diplomacy, at least two elements are indispensable:

1. The collective, safe, dignified, prompt and sustainable return of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenian people — along with the release of all hostages, the protection of cultural heritage and private property. This is not optional; it is a legal right and international obligation, reaffirmed by the U.N. International Court of Justice's order of November 17, 2023, by a joint statement from 40 U.N. Human Rights Council member states (including the United States) adopted on October 11, 2023, and by 87 members of the U.S. Congress earlier this year.

2. The eradication of Azerbaijan's state-sponsored anti-Armenian hate policy. Genuine peace requires rewriting textbooks, ending propaganda, and ceasing the glorification of violence. Without this, reconciliation and sustainable peace will remain impossible.

History proves the point. In Bosnia, the Dayton Accords guaranteed the right of return. In Rwanda, reconciliation required eradicating genocidal ideology. In both cases, peace became sustainable only when justice and rights were restored. Nagorno-Karabakh is no different.

The World Still Has a Choice

I grew up blind and orphaned because of this conflict. I have endured bombings, blockades, and forced displacement. As Nagorno-Karabakh's former human rights

defender (ombudsman) and state minister, even with my blind eyes I have witnessed suffering on a scale no one should accept.

Yet, I do not hate ordinary Azerbaijanis. Our demand is not revenge. It is for a just, dignified, inclusive, comprehensive, and sustainable peace. These are not empty words but principles and norms of international law — principles applied in other conflicts and principles that must not be denied to us.

President Trump now has a choice. He can celebrate August 8 as a historic achievement and another big deal — or he can ensure it becomes a foundation for true peace. Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders, responsible for this shameful deal, have already whispered about a Nobel Peace Prize for President Trump. But does legitimizing mass atrocities merit the world's highest peace honor?

And our people will not remain silent. We will challenge any narrative presented by politicians and diplomats that erases our rights and our existence. Without return and justice, these documents will not end the conflict and bring peace. They will only cement our tragedy and embolden perpetrators of mass atrocities — inviting new tragedies for the peoples of the South Caucasus, and ultimately, for humanity.

(Artak Beglaryan is the former human rights defender (ombudsman) and state minister of the de facto Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh). A survivor of genocide and forced displacement, he now chairs the Artsakh Union and advocates globally for the rights of Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians. He has testified before the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission of the U.S. Congress. This commentary originally appeared in www.newsweek.com on August 26.)



Azerbaijan Demolishes Artsakh Foreign Ministry Building

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — On September 2, Azerbaijani authorities began demolishing the building of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Artsakh in Stepanakert. Azerbaijani media report that the choice of date was not accidental — September 2 marks the proclamation of independence of the Republic of Artsakh.

“The date of the demolition is symbolic for Azerbaijan, as September 2 was previously observed as the anniversary of the separatist entity’s declaration,” Media.az reported.

The building had previously hosted meetings with foreign politicians sympathetic to the Armenian cause and had been used to issue “illegal entry visas and non-legitimate press accreditations” to international media, according to the report.

The article also notes that the building had been the site of “provocative” statements by figures such as Davit Babayan and others, who are now imprisoned in Baku. Babayan, for instance, had once said that “the Azerbaijani flag could ap-

pear in Karabakh only if an embassy were to open there.”

Thus, the demolition’s timing is seen not only as politically calculated but also symbolically significant.

In place of the demolished building, Azerbaijani authorities plan to construct a new “Department of Architecture and Urban Planning.”

On September 19, 2023, Azerbaijan launched a large-scale military assault on Artsakh, subjecting the region to massive shelling. One day later, on September 20, the authorities of Artsakh agreed to a ceasefire proposed by the Russian peace-keeping command, effectively accepting Baku’s conditions — the disarmament of the Defense Army and the dissolution of the Republic of Artsakh. Forced deportations began on September 24, displacing over 100,000 people to Armenia. As of current reports, only about 20 Armenians remain in Artsakh. On September 28, President Samvel Shahramanyan signed a decree dissolving the Republic of Artsakh, which came into force on January 1, 2024.



Thousands Rally for Karabakh in Yerevan

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Armenian-Azerbaijani agreements brokered by US President Donald Trump last month will not bring “real peace,” the opposition Armenian Revolutionary Federation (Dashnaksutyun) insisted on Tuesday, September 2, as it rallied thousands of people in support of Nagorno-Karabakh’s displaced population.

Dashnaksutyun organized the rally in Yerevan on the 34th anniversary of the proclamation of the unrecognized Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. It came almost two years after an Azerbaijani military offensive that restored Baku’s full control over Karabakh and forced the region’s entire ethnic Armenian population to flee to Armenia.

The Karabakh Armenians’ right to return to their homeland was the main theme of the speeches delivered at the gathering. Virtually all speakers lambasted Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan’s government for its refusal to champion that right in talks with Azerbaijan and on multilateral international platforms.

Pashinyan made it clear that the Karabakh issue is closed for him even before his August 8 talks with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev hosted by Trump. Accordingly, there is no reference to it in an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty that was initiated, but not signed, at the White House.

“The Artsakh question is not resolved, nor is it closed,” Karabakh’s exiled parliament said in a statement read out by one of its members during the rally.

The Armenian government must seek “the return of the people of Artsakh to their homeland” and their ability to live there “freely, safely, and with dignity,” said the statement also signed by Dashnaksutyun and several other Armenian opposition parties.

Pashinyan declared on August 18 that

this would only undermine the “peace established between Armenia and Azerbaijan” in Washington. He said the more than 120,000 Karabakh refugees should stop hoping for repatriation and instead “settle down in Armenia.”



A rally organized by the Armenian Revolutionary Federation in Yerevan’s Liberty Square, September 2, 2025

Dashnaksutyun leader Armen Rustamyan insisted that the Washington agreements, which also include Pashinyan’s pledge to open a US-administered transit corridor for Azerbaijan, have “nothing to do with real peace.” He claimed that Pashinyan made more concessions to Baku without securing any safeguards against further Azerbaijani attacks on Armenia.

“Yes, the three participants of the Washington meeting got what they wanted,” Rustamyan told the crowd that gathered in Yerevan’s Liberty Square. “Trump became a real contender for the Nobel prize, Aliyev received yet another portion of his fulfilled demands, and Pashinyan got peace on paper, or rather a paper peace, which he needs badly ahead of the elections.”

“Our people can no longer afford to again become a victim of deception. It is incumbent on all of us except this regime not to allow expectations of illusory peace to tempt some people to help this regime retain power,” he added, alluding to the elections expected in June 2026.



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