

Armenian PM Participates In Gaza Peace Summit in Sharm El Sheikh

SHARM EL SHEIKH, Egypt (Public Radio of Armenia) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan participated in the Middle East Peace Summit in Sharm El Sheikh at the invitation of US President Donald Trump and Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi on October 13.

The summit participants were welcomed by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, and then the heads of state were greeted Trump.



An agreement to end the war in Gaza was signed by Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, US President Donald Trump, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdoğan, and Prime Minister of Qatar Mohammed bin Abdulrahman al-Thani.

Above, Trump greets Pashinyan.



The leaders of Azerbaijan, Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Russia Tajikistan, Kyrgyzstan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan pose for a family photo during a CIS summit in Dushanbe, October 10, 2025

Pashinyan Promotes US-Brokered Deal During Ex-Soviet Summit

YEREVAN (Azatutyun) — Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan touted the Armenian-Azerbaijani agreements brokered by the United States when he attended a summit of the leaders of Russia and several other ex-Soviet states in Tajikistan on Friday, October 10.

Pashinyan again claimed that the agreements reached by him and Azerbaijani President Ilham mean that “peace has been established between Armenia and Azerbaijan.”

“Following the Peace Summit in Washington on August 8, 2018, initiated by President Trump, we adopted a declaration with President Aliyev which states that Armenia and Azerbaijan recognize the need to chart a path to a bright future not predetermined by past conflicts in accordance with the UN Charter and the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration,” he said.

The declaration also calls for a US-administered corridor that would connect Azerbaijan to its Nakhichevan exclave through Armenia. It is due to be named the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP). Aliyev and Pashinyan have offered different interpretations of the transit arrangement and its implications.

“The TRIPP project opens up new export and import opportunities for the [Commonwealth of Independent States] countries as well,” Pashinyan told Russian President Vladimir Putin and other CIS heads of state.

Although the TRIPP deal is seen by analysts as another blow to Russian presence in Armenia, Russia’s public reaction to it has been cautious. Moscow has said that it must not be at odds with Armenia’s membership in the Eurasian Economic Union

see SUMMIT, page 3

EVN Report Takes On the Washington Accords at MIT

By Aram Arkun
Mirror-Spectator Staff

CAMBRIDGE, Mass. — EVN Report, an English-language website in Yerevan, has presented several panel presentations in the US, both at major universities and in Armenian community institutions, as part of a one-week outreach effort.

On September 25, the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT) was the host for “EVN Talks: Armenia at a Crossroads: Technology, Security and Survival.” This panel of four speakers, including Nerses Kopalyan, Arek Danagouljian, Anna Ohanyan and Raffi Kassarian, primarily focused on the Washington Accords initialed on August 8 of this year by Armenia and Azerbaijan with the United States, along with questions of energy security and technology. Maria Titizian, founding editor of EVN Report, served as the moderator at MIT, introducing the speakers and started them off with targeted questions.

see EVN, page 8

Nobel Prize Winner Daron Acemoglu Joins Samvel Karapetyan Against Pashinyan

Nobel laureate and prominent economist Daron Acemoglu has agreed to serve as an adviser to Our Way, the political movement founded by detained Armenian tycoon Samvel Karapetyan.

In a video message shared by the movement on October 13, Acemoglu outlined his views on the potential directions for Armenia’s economic development and said he would contribute as an expert to drafting Our Way’s (Mer Dzevov) economic program.

Movement coordinator Narek Karapetyan, the billionaire’s nephew, confirmed that Acemoglu would participate in the working group shaping their national development strategy, calling it “milestone partnership for rebuilding Armenia’s economy on modern foundations.”

Turkish-born Armenian-American Acemoglu, a professor at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), is one of the world’s most-cited economists. He received the 2024 Nobel Prize in Economics, shared with fellow researchers James Robinson and Simon Johnson, for their work

see ACEMOGLU, page 3

Tumanyan’s ART Restaurant Helps Preserve Artsakh’s Traditions

By Shushanik Hayriyan
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

WATERTOWN — On Moskovyan 6/7 in Yerevan, Armenia, Tumanyan’s ART looks like just another restaurant with a cozy space and the smell of good food drifting into the street. Passersby stop for coffee or a bite of zhengyalov hats, never guessing the layers of loss and resilience behind the doors. Few would know this place was born in a war zone, rebuilt in exile, and stands today not only as a restaurant, but a lifeline for the displaced Artsakh community.

Kristina Balayan is the woman at the heart of it all. For Kristina, Tumanyan’s is more than a restaurant: “It’s a space for the displaced Artsakh community to meet, help each other, and stand together,” she says — a way to preserve food and traditions and, soon, she hopes, to launch a new project: a kindergarten for Artsakh children.

see TRADITIONS, page 4



AUSTRALIA

AGBU President Simonian Connects With Armenians in Australia



ARMENIA

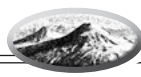
AMAA Dedicates Renovated Camp Hankavan Complex In Armenia



GERMANY

Komitas Duo Wins European Honors





ARMENIA

NEWS from ARMENIA

Afeyan Hopes for Release of Armenian Prisoners in Azerbaijan

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Entrepreneur and investor Dr. Noubar Afeyan, the co-founder of Moderna and founder of Flagship Pioneering venture capital firm, on October 14 at a press conference expressed hope that the Armenian prisoners held unlawfully in Azerbaijan would be released soon.

Speaking to reporters, Afeyan said that over the past two years, continuous efforts have been made to draw attention of the Armenian government, as well as world leaders, to this issue.

“They’re trying, and I hope we’ll succeed. I know this is an important issue, and it’s being raised by various countries,” he said when asked on the matter on the sidelines of the Silicon Mountains 2025 forum in Yerevan.

“Hopefully, this peace process will ultimately lead to peace and justice. I believe peace is essential from every perspective.”

Several Karabakh politicians are among the prisoners.

When the population of Nagorno Karabakh fled to Armenia during the September 2023 Azerbaijani offensive, a number of officials were detained and charged with what has been widely described as fabricated charges, including terrorism. The detainees and POWs include ex-presidents of Nagorno-Karabakh Arkady Ghukasyan, Bako Sahakyan, Arayik Harutyunyan, then-Speaker of Parliament Davit Ishkhanyan, former FM Davit Babayan, former Defense Minister Levon Mnatsakanyan, as well as former State Minister Ruben Vardanyan.

Afeyan and Ruben Vardanyan are the co-founders of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. Afeyan has described Vardanyan as his ‘longtime friend.’

UN Ambassador Praises New Chapter of Peace in Caucasus

YEREVAN (News.am) — Paruyr Hovhannisyan, Permanent Representative of Armenia to the UN, attended the first Committee General Debate at the 80th session of the UN General Assembly, the Permanent Mission of Armenia to the UN announced on October 13.

At the event, Hovhannisyan underlined that global disarmament and non-proliferation are among the top priorities of Armenia’s foreign policy agenda, and stressed that a robust and effective conventional arms control, alongside confidence and security building measures, is essential for maintaining peace at the international and regional levels.

Hovhannisyan emphasized that the breakthrough achieved on August 8 in Washington through signing of the declaration between Armenia and Azerbaijan, has renewed the confidence that a new chapter of peace, stability, and regional cooperation is opening in the South Caucasus.

Former Human Rights Defender Tatoyan to Challenge Pashinyan in 2026 Elections

Following his recent re-entry into politics, Armenia’s former human rights defender Arman Tatoyan has officially announced that his newly formed political movement Wings of Unity will contest the upcoming parliamentary elections — and that he personally intends to run for the post of prime minister.

“We are determined to form a government, and I am running for the position of Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia,” Tatoyan said on October 9 during a press conference in Yerevan. “We will move forward as an independent political force, uniting the efforts of society toward common goals.”

Tatoyan, 43, began his career in the state system in 2003 and served as Armenia’s Human Rights Defender from 2016–2022. He was initially nominated for the post with backing from the then-ruling Republican Party, but also received support from then-opposition lawmaker and current Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

While his early years as human rights defender were largely nonconfrontational, relations with the current authorities

deteriorated sharply after the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War in 2020 and Azerbaijan’s subsequent incursions along Armenia’s borders. Tatoyan repeatedly accused the government of neglecting the needs of border residents, while officials in turn accused him of pursuing political ambitions under the guise of human rights advocacy.

When asked by reporters whether his movement would raise the issue of regaining control over Nagorno-Karabakh, Tatoyan stressed that while displaced residents have a legally recognized right to return, his movement would not base its political platform on “false expectations.”

“Over 120,000 of our compatriots were displaced from their homes and have the right to return. This is not my personal interpretation — it is a principle recognized by the International Court of Justice,” he said. “But we will not build our agenda on illusions about the physical return of [Nagorno-Karabakh]. That would be dishonest toward the people.”

Tatoyan also ruled out abandoning interstate cases filed by Armenia against Azerbaijan over alleged war crimes, despite



mutual commitments in draft peace negotiations to withdraw such claims. Citing the brutality of Azerbaijani attacks in 2022, he said, “How can I look into the eyes of the families of tortured women and tell them we withdrew those cases?”

Tatoyan was joined at the press conference by David Ananyan, the former head of Armenia’s State Revenue Committee, who is expected to oversee the movement’s economic agenda. Ananyan, who resigned in 2020 amid disagreements with the government over COVID-era regulations, has since become a vocal critic of the Pashinyan administration.

Ocampo Accuses UN Judge Passing Verdict on Vardanyan of Having Azerbaijani Ties

YEREVAN (Armenian Report) — A new investigation by the first Prosecutor of the International Criminal Court, Luis Moreno Ocampo, has revealed a serious conflict of interest inside the United Nations system, raising serious doubts about the fairness of a ruling concerning Armenian political prisoner Ruben Vardanyan.

Ocampo’s report exposed that the chairperson of the UN Working Group on Ar-

sional, financial, and family ties with Azerbaijan have compromised her impartiality. Someone with close connections to the authorities in Baku should not have judged any case related to the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh,” stated Luis Moreno Ocampo.

Ocampo’s findings shows a deeper issue: Azerbaijan has not only committed grave human rights abuses against the Armenian people of Artsakh but also appears to manipulate international structures to protect its actions. The WGAD decision stands in stark contrast to a March 2025 statement by UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Volker Türk, who demanded the immediate release of all Armenians arbitrarily detained in Azerbaijan.

Ruben Vardanyan — a businessman, philanthropist and former State Minister of the Republic of Artsakh — was cap-

tured by Azerbaijani forces on September 27, 2023, as he tried to flee to Armenia following Baku’s brutal military attack that forcibly emptied Artsakh of its entire indigenous Armenian population. Since then, he and 22 other Armenian detainees, including civilians and former officials, have been subjected to fabricated charges, inhumane treatment, and denial of access to international observers. Even the International Committee of the Red Cross has been blocked from visiting them.

Vardanyan’s lawyers are now preparing to challenge the tainted UN opinion, demanding that Yudkivska be recused and that a fair review take place. Other legal experts are drafting new complaints to UN bodies, insisting on accountability for Azerbaijan’s violations of international law and the continued unlawful detention of Armenian prisoners.



Luis Moreno Ocampo

bitrary Detention (WGAD), Ukrainian jurist Ganna Yudkivska, has deep business and personal ties to Azerbaijan — the very country holding Vardanyan in illegal detention. This connection directly compromises the legitimacy of the WGAD’s February 2025 opinion, which claimed that Azerbaijan’s imprisonment of Vardanyan was “not arbitrary.”

The investigation shows that Yudkivska is a partner at a Ukrainian law firm representing the Azerbaijani state oil company SOCAR. Her husband, former Ukrainian MP Georgii Logvynskyi, is Azerbaijani and has publicly voiced support for Baku’s aggressive policies toward Nagorno-Karabakh (Artsakh). These undisclosed ties violate multiple UN ethics rules that demand independence, impartiality, and the avoidance of any real or perceived conflict of interest.

“These facts constitute serious violations of UN rules. Ganna Yudkivska’s profes-



Pashinyan and Aliyev Meet in Egypt

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev met during the Sharm el-Sheikh international peace summit in the Egyptian resort town on October 13.

A video from the meeting shows Pakistani PM Shehbaz Sharif joining the conversation. He said he was happy to see the Armenian and Azerbaijani leaders talk.

Pashinyan is heard mentioning the recently established diplomatic relations with Pakistan.

Above, Pashinyan is at left, with Aliyev at right.



ARMENIA

Noubar Afeyan Participates in Luncheon Discussion on an Innovative Psycho-Spiritual Approach to Collective Trauma

YEREVAN — The Armenian Spiritual Revival Foundation (SRF) recently held a luncheon discussion titled “Healing Futures: The Psycho-Spiritual Method in Action”, featuring the participation of Dr. Noubar Afeyan, SRF Founder, and Anna Afeyan, Trustee and Co-Chair of the Afeyan Foundation.

Established in the summer of 2022 by Dr. Noubar Afeyan, with the blessing of Karekin II, Catholicos of All Armenians, SRF (revival.am) was created to design and deliver programs rooted in innovative psycho-spiritual approach to collective trauma recovery. The Foundation’s vision is to promote psycho-spiritual revival in trauma-affected communities — empowering individuals to take a leap of faith and embrace their futures by advancing a globally relevant method rooted in Armenian legacy.

The luncheon brought together officials, including Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan, Deputy Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Anna Zhamakochyan, the Executive Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute Edita Gzoyan, as well as mental health experts and representatives of partner organizations.

In his remarks, Afeyan shared the foundation’s long-term vision and global ambitions. He noted that SRF’s work builds upon other impactful initiatives, most notably the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, which celebrates its 10th anniversary this year, having reached more than 3.5 million people across 63 countries through its flagship Aurora Prize for Awakening Humanity. Afeyan emphasized that the psycho-spiritual approach represents “the next-stage opportunity for those who have endured adversity and seek to embark on their own journeys of revival after experiencing collective trauma.”



The event in Yerevan

Participants engaged in a discussion on the growing impact of psycho-spiritual support programs implemented by SRF in Armenia. The exchange explored the



Dr. Noubar Afeyan and his wife, Anna, at the discussion

Foundation’s future growth plans, alignment with the Armenian Government’s mental health priorities, and potential research and collaboration opportunities

with the invited experts.

Avanesyan and Zhamakochyan shared their perspectives about mental health priorities adopted by the government, which create relevant space for combining efforts with the Foundation and its wide network of mental health academics and practitioners both in Armenia and internationally.

SRF Executive Director Hovhannes Nikoghosyan reiterated the foundation’s readiness to partner with government agencies, academic institutions, and international organizations to scale psycho-spiritual programs nationwide and to generate rigorous scientific evidence on their effectiveness.

The luncheon took place on the margins of the 10th International Conference “Current Issues in Theoretical and Applied Psychology”, co-organized by Yerevan State University and the Psychologists Union of Armenia.

To learn more about SRF’s work and projects during 2022-2025, download the booklet “From Vision to Practice: The Story Behind the First Psycho-Spiritual Programs” at revival.am.

All programs are implemented with the support of the Afeyan Family Foundation and Afeyan Initiatives for Armenia (AIFA), reflecting a shared commitment to transforming Armenia’s legacy of survival into a global model for healing and renewal.

Pashinyan Promotes US-Brokered Deal During Ex-Soviet Summit

SUMMIT, from page 1 (EEU), a Russian-led trade bloc, and the presence of Russian border guards along the Armenian-Iranian border.

Pashinyan also pointed on Friday to an Armenian-Azerbaijani peace treaty that was initiated during the talks hosted by Trump at the White House.

“I hope and am confident that we will sign and ratify this agreement in the near future,” he said.

Aliyev makes that conditional on a change of Armenia’s constitution. While rejecting this precondition in public, Pashinyan has pledged to try to enact a new constitution through a referendum. He indicated last month that the referendum will not be held before or during the next Armenian parliamentary elections due in June 2026.

The draft treaty publicized on August 11 says that Armenia and Azerbaijan will be “guided” by the Alma-Ata Declaration in which newly independent ex-Soviet republics recognized each other’s Soviet-era borders. Pashinyan has portrayed this reference as a key guarantee of peace.

The Azerbaijani Foreign Ministry downplayed last year the legal significance of that declaration, saying that it “has nothing to do with the question of where the borders of CIS member states lie and which territories belong to which country.” Yerevan deplored that statement at the time, saying it “may mean that Azerbaijan has territorial claims to Armenia.”

Pashinyan’s domestic critics say that the treaty touted by Pashinyan will therefore not preclude a future Azerbaijani aggression against Armenia even if Baku agrees to sign it.

Nobel Prize Winner Joins Samvel Karapetyan Against Pashinyan

ACEMOGLU, from page 1 on “the origins of prosperity and the political economy of development.” Their studies demonstrated how inclusive political and economic institutions foster sustainable growth, while extractive systems lead to stagnation — ideas popularized in Acemoglu and Robinson’s best-selling 2012 book *Why Nations Fail*

Following the 2018 Velvet Revolution, Acemoglu was courted by the new government, with Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan inviting Acemoglu to advise on economic reforms. However, Armenian media at the time reported disagreements over financial terms, which officials, including former Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Avinyan, denied. The government later said it had declined to follow Acemoglu’s proposed reform plan, effectively ending the engagement before it began.

The Our Way movement, founded by Samvel Karapetyan from detention, has become one of the most closely watched emerging political forces ahead of the 2026 parliamentary elections. Karapetyan, owner of the Russia-based Tashir Group conglomerate and one of Armenia’s wealthiest figures, was arrested in June on charges of inciting “public calls to seize power” after publicly defending the Armenian Apostolic

Church during a government dispute with the clergy.

At a press conference in Yerevan on 9 October, Narek Karapetyan said Our Way would name its candidate for prime minis-



Prof. Daron Acemoglu at 2024 Nobel Prize Conference (image via Wikimedia)

ter in three months, when the group formally registers as a political party.

“We will do everything possible so that the Civil Contract party becomes the opposition,” he declared. “We assure our citizens that our candidate will be acceptable to all.”

Asked whether he himself would run as the party’s candidate, Narek Karapetyan replied: “We’ll know in January.” He said negotiations with other political forces

were ongoing, but suggested the group preferred to expand through individuals rather than party alliances.

“Every professional with experience and clean hands can join us,” he said.

Narek Karapetyan acknowledged that his uncle’s imprisonment had hurt the movement’s visibility but claimed it also strengthened public sympathy.

“Every extra day that Samvel Karapetyan remains in the KGB basement, the authorities lose what remains of their credibility in the eyes of the people,” he said.

Government supporters have accused Karapetyan of seeking to steer Armenia back toward Moscow’s orbit, suggesting he is “Moscow-sent” with the aim to align the country with a Russia-led union. Responding to those claims, Narek Karapetyan said the movement is “committed to Armenia’s sovereignty,” supporting only “economic integration” with partners, not political dependency.

“We are the generation of independence. The Soviet Union collapsed irreversibly,” he said. “We are against any concept that questions our sovereignty. Relations with Russia are important, but Armenia must have a second strategic line of partnership.”

(This article originally appeared on www.oc-media.org on October 13.)



ARMENIA

Tumanyan’s ART Restaurant Helps Preserve Artsakh’s Traditions

TRADITIONS, from page 1

Holding steady to the Artsakh identity while adapting to the new reality is the idea behind the kindergarten, where children will preserve their dialect, celebrate holidays as they were back home, and hear Artsakh fairy tales while also receiving early education. This would help the parents struggling to find a job in Yerevan and, while they are settling, the kindergarten would be free. “We move forward with time, but we keep our roots,” repeats Kristina, referring to the motto she has chosen.

Before the restaurant opened its doors in Yerevan, it stood in Stepanakert with a simple and unusual concept: merging an inclusive education center with the concept of a restaurant. Kristina has a background in teaching and worked for decades in education, eventually specializing in working with children with developmental challenges.

Tumanyan’s, named after its location on Tumanyan Street in Stepanakert, kept running during the nine-month-long blockade of Artsakh. Kristina mentions how she had to improvise daily. “First, I’d look up what to cook without eggs,” she remembers. “Then without sugar. Then what to replace it with. One day, I thought, soon I will be asking what I could make with nothing at all.”

When war broke out in 2023, Tumanyan’s served as a place for the internally displaced to get food and shelter while waiting for answers. Days later, once in Armenia, Kristina joined World Central Kitchen in Yerevan to prepare thousands of hot meals each day for the displaced.



Tumanyan’s ART in Yerevan

On December 2, 2023, Tumanyan’s ART reopened in Yerevan as a platform for Artsakh’s displaced artisans to sell their crafts in the daytime and as a restaurant at night. The menu features an “Artsakh set,” with traditional dishes like lubu shorva (red bean soup traditional to Artsakh) and khashil (roasted and crushed wheat porridge), alongside international and Armenian dishes. Fifteen of its staff members are from Artsakh. “Everything we do is to make sure our people know they are not alone and that our roots will stay alive no matter where we are,” says Kristina.

Artsakh

Balayan’s journey began decades earlier, when her family fled to Artsakh from Baku. Balayan’s parents are originally from Artsakh. Her father was a native of Mehtishen, and his family had previously moved there from Khoy, Iran. After graduating eighth grade in Artsakh, he moved to Baku — like thousands of other Armenians of Artsakh — to continue his education and later secured a job.



Tumanyan’s ART in Yerevan

Ten years later, when Kristina was 10 years old, the family moved to Artsakh. Shortly after, Kristina lost her father in the First Artsakh War, and her mother raised her and her brother alone, ensuring they received an education despite all the hardships. Balayan earned degrees in law and accounting.

In 2016, Kristina co-founded the first Vernissage in Stepanakert, operating at The Roots, a cafe in Stepanakert founded by French-Armenian Guerard Guergerian. She launched a foundation offering workshops to both special-needs and typically developing children, called the MilaGri Charitable Foundation. Balayan recalls that the idea behind the foundation came to life after the April War of 2016. Back then, following the ‘Four-Day War’ in Artsakh, she was visiting villages in different regions and discovered the impact of various state programs that encouraged larger families while neglecting maternal health. This ultimately resulted in many children being born with various illnesses and disabilities.

It was then that Balayan, combining her experience in education and love for working with children, came up with classes for those with disabilities.

Balayan mentions that cooking is an essential skill for any Armenian woman, as they are traditionally the ones doing it in the family. She recalls learning most of her skills from her mother, who was

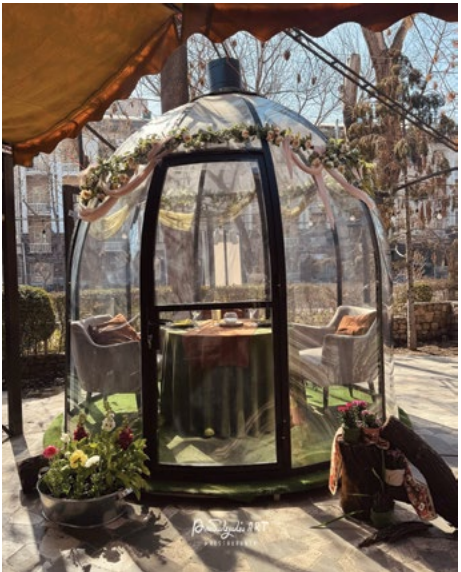


an excellent cook and baker, preparing many traditional dishes. Initially, when Tumanyan’s couldn’t find a cook, Kristina stepped up to do it herself. Because everyone liked her cooking, she continued.

Reopening Tumanyan’s in Yerevan was a major challenge, especially because they didn’t have the funds to do so. She participated in many masterclasses and workshops, which helped her acquire different equipment for the restaurant through grants, as well as with the help of friends who either regularly visited the restaurant or sent financial support. While

she received a lot of help from friends, the government has done nothing to support the process.

If you wish to support the Artsakh kindergarten initiative and contribute to creating a nurturing and inclusive environment for children affected by war and displacement, please reach out to Kristina Balayan directly at kristinbalayan78@gmail.com. Support — whether through donations, resources, or collaboration — can make a meaningful difference in the lives of children and families striving to rebuild their future in Artsakh.



INTERNATIONAL

Queen of Belgium Stresses Education as Key to Sustainable Development in Address at Yerevan State University

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Queen Mathilde of Belgium, on a visit last week to Armenia as an advocate for the UN Sustainable Development Goals, delivered remarks at Yerevan State University on October 14.

Speaking to the students and academic staff, Mathilde noted that she is at the oldest university in Armenia — an ideal place

edge that, globally, we are not on the right track to achieving this goal. In some areas, we are even regressing, or the fundamental principles are being called into question. However, we cannot afford to accept defeat. In such critical times, it is more important than ever to take responsibility and invest our efforts in achieving the goals we

canceled and schools are closed — further compounding the harm already experienced by young people in those areas and making them more vulnerable to violence and exploitation. Added to this are the challenges posed by new technologies, which, although they promote progress in many ways, are costly and can widen the gap between the wealthy and the poor.

“Artificial intelligence prompts us to question the importance of certain types of learning. Why acquire language skills if ChatGPT can translate for you? Why learn how to solve a math equation when a computer can do it much faster with a single click? While artificial intelligence undoubtedly holds great potential, it should never be allowed to diminish our creativity or weaken our critical thinking skills. As UN Secretary-General António Guterres stated at this year’s General Assembly, technology must be our servant, not our master. I will use my time in your country to learn more about the challenges facing the education system and the aspirations of Armenia’s youth,” she noted.

Armenian Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport, Zhanna Andreasyan, welcomed the Queen of Belgium at the YSU and said that Her Majesty’s visit is a great honor both for Armenia and the university.

“As an advocate for the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, Her Majesty plays a vital role on the global agenda by promoting the values of education, social solidarity, and sustainable development. These values fully align with Armenia’s national priorities, particularly in the fields of education and youth empowerment,” said Andreasyan.

Yerevan State University Rector Hovhannes Hovhannisyan gave a detailed overview of the university’s activities, ongoing programs, and recent achievements.



Queen Mathilde of Belgium at Yerevan State University

to reaffirm the importance of education and to remember that education is a fundamental right of every child, although, unfortunately, in many cases, it is still not guaranteed in today’s world.

“Education contributes to the development of our individuality, but it is also the shortest path to a bright professional future. It is one of the most effective tools in the fight against poverty and marginalization. That is why the United Nations has made education one of the priority goals of sustainable development to be achieved by 2030. Unfortunately, we must acknowl-

adopted in 2015 and in defending those values,” she said.

According to her, education should be a priority in political decision-making processes, as it lays the foundation for the human capital needed to build a social state.

“Each visit has further convinced me that education is the key to a better future for billions of people. For girls and women in particular, it is also a vital means of empowerment and of combating gender discrimination,” the queen said.

She emphasized that in conflict zones, teaching is often interrupted, classes are

Turkey’s Armenian Patriarch: Being Armenian Still Seen as Insult

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) — The Armenian community of Turkey hopes for normalized relations between Armenia and Turkey, said Armenian Patriarch of Constantinople, Archbishop Sahak Masalyan, during a meeting with journalists from Armenia in Istanbul, Armenpress reported on October 14.

“Our community supports the Armenia-Turkey normalization process. We want closer ties because it would ease a huge burden we carry. For the past 100 years, Armenia-Turkey relations have been so strained that here, the word ‘Armenian’ is practically an insult. And in Armenia, it’s the same with the word ‘Turk.’ If relations improve, the heaviest weight will lift off our shoulders. We deserve to breathe in a friendlier atmosphere,” the Patriarch said.

Masalyan noted that the community closely follows official exchanges between Yerevan and Ankara, such as cross-border infrastructure projects, restoration of Ani’s bridge, and Turkish airline entry into the Armenian market.

“These processes are underway. But we, as short-lived beings, want quick results, whereas the lives of nations move slower.



“IN KUMKAPI, WHERE THE PATRIARCHATE AND OUR CATHEDRAL ARE LOCATED, THERE WERE ONCE 40,000 ARMENIANS. NOW, FEWER THAN 40 LIVE THERE.”

Looking at Turkey-Armenia relations, I see many reasons for optimism,” he said.

Regarding the Turkish government, Masalyan acknowledged positive shifts under the current administration.

“We regained properties, obtained greater freedoms, and today we can renovate churches and buildings. There was a time when we needed permission just to hammer a nail. Now things are much easier. The president, ministers visit us, and we are invited to state events,” he said.

However, Masalyan warned that demo-

graphic decline is the biggest threat to the future of the Armenian community in Turkey. With a current population of 35–40,000, he projected a drop to 10–15,000 in the next 25 years. “Our institutions were built for 125,000 people. We have 50 churches, but we can’t fill them anymore. We used to have 50 schools — now we have only 17.”

In Istanbul’s Armenian neighborhoods, the change is stark. “In Kumkapi, where the patriarchate and our cathedral are located, there were once 40,000 Armenians. Now, fewer than 40 live there.”

Masalyan also highlighted the community’s struggle to preserve the Armenian language, which he said is essential to resisting cultural assimilation. “Losing the language means losing the culture. If you don’t speak the language, you can’t access the culture. We are trying to hold on. We have 3,000 students in our schools. The schools do a great job. They help preserve our literary, linguistic, and cultural heritage. We are among the diaspora’s strongest communities, and we pray to continue as we have for the past 600 years around the church,” he concluded.

INTERNATIONAL

Foreign Ministry Issues Statement on Gaza

YEREVAN (Armenpress) — Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan participated in the Middle East “Peace Summit” in Sharm El-Sheikh on October 13, the Foreign Ministry said.

Mirzoyan met with various foreign ministers and officials, including those of Saudi Arabia, Azerbaijan, Spain, Oman, France, Jordan, Egypt, Türkiye, Norway and India.

In a statement, the Foreign Ministry welcomed the Gaza ceasefire deal and lauded the “tireless efforts” of mediators led by United States President Donald Trump.

“We welcome the ceasefire agreement in Gaza, which also secures the release of hostages & ensures free access of humanitarian aid, reached through the tireless efforts of mediators led by U.S. President Donald Trump,” the foreign ministry said in a post on the platform formerly known as Twitter.

Tehran Metro Station Named for Virgin Mary

YEREVAN (PanARMENIAN.Net) A new metro station has opened in Tehran on October 14, and it was named in honor of Iran’s Armenian Christian community, local media reported.

The station, named Maryam-e-Moghaddas (Holy Virgin Mary), is located just a few minutes’ walk from St. Sarkis Cathedral, according to Auroranews.am.

The Armenian community in Iran dates back around four centuries, shaped by both historic migration patterns and state-organized resettlements, particularly during the Safavid era.

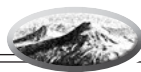
According to official statistics, roughly 200,000 Armenians currently reside in Iran, though independent estimates suggest the real number may be closer to 100,000 due to waves of emigration, especially following the 1979 Islamic Revolution.

TUMO Participates in Vietnam Tech Summit

YEREVAN (Public Radio of Armenia) — The Armenia-Vietnam EdTech Summit, organized by the NIC – Vietnam National Innovation Center, the Embassy of Armenia, Hanoi, Vietnam, and the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies, highlighted the growing partnership between the two countries.

The summit took place in Hanoi and Ho Chi Minh City from September 23 to 25, with participants including Vietnam’s Deputy Prime Minister and Deputy Minister of Education and Training. Armenia was represented by Ambassador Suren Baghdasaryan and Consul Gregory Ohannessian.

Chris Shahinian, head of TUMO International, and Stephen Bridges, Partnership Development Manager, recognized Vietnam’s pace of education and technology development. They highlighted the natural alignment between Vietnam’s ambitions and the TUMO model.



INTERNATIONAL

AGBU President Sam Simonian Connects with Armenian Communities on Trip to Australia

NEW YORK — Between August 31 and September 7, AGBU President Sam Simonian continued his global tour of the AGBU network of Districts and Chapters, where he deepened ties with the vibrant Armenian communities in Melbourne and Sydney. Accompanied by his wife Sylva, Council of Trustees member Elie Akilian and his wife Ela, as well as Natalie Gabrelian, Director of Chapters and Central Board Administration, the delegation began their Australian journey in Melbourne.

Founded in 1989, AGBU Melbourne has played a vital role in fostering the growth and unity of the local Armenian community. True to its mission, the chapter continues to maintain its impact through a variety of ongoing initiatives. These include monthly meal nights at the AGBU Center, the long-running Nor Tsayn quarterly newsletter, and the Hagop Baronian Theatre Group, which has staged numerous productions since 1997. These efforts, among many others, reflect the chapter's commitment to cultural enrichment and community engagement.

The delegation immersed itself in the life of the local Armenians, visiting key institutions such as St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church, the Aginian Armenian School, and the Mesrob Mashdots Matheosian Armenian Saturday School. These visits offered firsthand insight into the strong educational, spiritual, and cultural foundations that continue to thrive.

A highlight of the trip was a welcome



AGBU Alexander Primary School students celebrate excellence in education at the 35th Anniversary Concert.

reception hosted by the AGBU Melbourne Ladies' Auxiliary at the AGBU Melbourne Centre, bringing together nearly 150 community members, donors, and representatives. Emceed by AGBU Melbourne Secretary Berdj Tchakerian, the evening featured heartfelt remarks from AGBU Melbourne Chair Maral Tchorbadjian,

and Rev. Fr. Khacher Harutyunyan of St. Mary's Church, followed by a performance of traditional Armenian folk dance by the Azad Gharibian Dance Group.

During their visit, Simonian and the delegation held a series of productive meetings with the AGBU Melbourne Chapter, its Youth Committee, and Young Professionals of Melbourne, exchanging ideas and discussing ongoing initiatives and future aspirations.

The visit concluded with a farewell dinner that reflected the close-knit and welcoming spirit of the community. In her remarks, Tchorbadjian shared: "It was a very inspirational three-day experience. As promised, we will help keep the AGBU torch alive for the next generation."

Next up was Sydney, where the visit began with a warm reception by the local community. First on the agenda was a tour of AGBU Alexander Primary School (PreK–6), where the delegation attended the soft opening and blessing of the school's new library and multi-purpose center. The group also visited Hamazkaine Arshak and Sophie Galstaun College, showing their support for the city's Armenian educational institutions. The following day, the AGBU Sydney Chapter, which was established in 1965, hosted a welcome gathering of 100 guests including AGBU leadership, benefactors, and clergy.

Meaningful meetings were scheduled

with key community stakeholders, including esteemed Vahe Artinian, Chair of the Tekeyan Cultural Association and a longtime former Chair of AGBU Sydney, as well as with the Young Professionals of Sydney and current AGBU Sydney Chapter board members. The delegation also met with Bishop Vardan Navasardyan, Primate of the Diocese, and members of the Diocesan and church councils.

The centerpiece event was the 35th anniversary concert of AGBU Alexander Primary School, which featured performances by the school's students. Founded in 1990, the school is an independent, co-educational, bilingual English-Armenian Christian school that offers a balanced curriculum that nurtures the intellectual, spiritual, cultural, physical, and personal growth of each student. During the concert, Vahe Boyadjian, member of the school board, was honored with an AGBU Certificate of Appreciation presented to him by Simonian.

School Principal Manoug Demirjian stated: "Today, AGBU Alexander Primary School stands as a living testament to the vision of the founding members. It is a place where children are surrounded by the tradition and the excitement of modern education. Let us dream bigger. Let us build stronger. Let us ensure that the future is filled with even greater achievements."

Reflecting on the visit, AGBU Sydney Chair Mihran Lepejian expressed his gratitude to the delegation. "Our conversations confirmed how aligned we are in our vision. As AGBU continues to grow globally, we're grateful to be part of that journey and excited about what lies ahead. We deeply appreciate their visit to our part of the world and look forward to strengthening our efforts to serve both local and international communities, while proudly promoting our Armenian heritage and culture."

President Simonian summed up the experience by saying: "Our time with the Armenian communities of Australia has been nothing short of inspiring. While the farthest from our diasporan communities, these local Armenians remain deeply committed to the AGBU mission to preserve their identity and uplift our people. This is especially the case in terms of investing in education and empowering the next generation with the tools and vision to lead. We were truly proud to witness how active, engaged, and resourceful they are in every aspect of community life. This visit was a powerful reminder that no matter the distance, we are all united by a common purpose."



President Sam Simonian receives a warm welcome at the AGBU Alexander Primary School in Sydney.

Azerbaijan Compels Putin to Take Responsibility for Civilian Jetliner Shootdown Incident

State-aligned media in Azerbaijan is lauding the country's leader, Ilham Aliyev, for making his Russian counterpart Vladimir Putin blink first during a long-running diplomatic stare down over the shootdown of a civilian Azerbaijani jetliner last December.

After months of dodging, Putin finally acknowledged that Russian air defenses were responsible for causing the airliner to crash in late December, killing 38 passengers and crew aboard. Putin made the admission on October 9, during a one-on-one meeting with Aliyev on the sidelines of a CIS summit in Dushanbe, Tajikistan, claiming, implausibly, that he only found out details of

the incident a few days before.

The Kremlin leader attributed the mishap to "technical failures in the Russian air defense system," adding that two anti-aircraft missiles "exploded, perhaps self-destructing, a few meters away" from the airliner as it flew over Russian airspace in Chechnya.

In what for Putin passes as an apology, he went on to say "everything required in such tragic cases will be done by the Russian side in terms of compensation, and the actions of all officials will be legally assessed," according to a Azerbaijani government statement.

Aliyev, who has in recent months been increasingly biting in his criticism of Rus-

sia's refusal to take responsibility for the incident, accepted Putin's olive branch, "expressing gratitude for considering it necessary to address this issue at our meeting."

He went on to indicate that bilateral relations, which experienced a flash freeze over the shootdown, can now start returning to normal.

One of the main complaints aired by Aliyev during the spat over the shootdown was that Moscow did not regard Baku as an equal partner. By compelling Putin to take responsibility for the shootdown, Aliyev's hardline approach appears to have succeeded in shifting the power dynamic govern-

ing the bilateral relationship, forcing the Kremlin to acknowledge Azerbaijan as a partner, not treat it as a subservient state.

A commentary published October 10 by the Caliber.az outlet lauded Aliyev for standing up to Putin by exhibiting a combination of "firm principle and a willingness to go all the way, balanced by a pragmatic and carefully calculated approach."

"President Ilham Aliyev can celebrate yet another success," the commentary stated. "Once again, he has achieved the desired result and upheld the national dignity of our country."

(This article originally appeared on www.Eurasianet.org on October 10.)



Community News

Preserving A Legacy:

The Turpanjian Family Sponsors the Digitization of Zoryan's Zabelle C. Boyajian Collection

TORONTO — The Zoryan Institute announced earlier this month the successful digitization of its Zabelle C. Boyajian Collection thanks to the support of Peter Turpanjian and his family. As a researcher, Peter Turpanjian sponsored the digitized of the collection to grant access not only for his work, but researchers to follow as well.

Zabelle C. Boyajian was born in 1873 in Diyarbakir, Turkey. Her father, Tovmas Boyajian, was an important figure who led the Diyarbakir Protestant church and served as a British vice-consul. Zabelle Boyajian was sent to Cyprus following the Hamidian massacres to assist in organizing an industrial home for Armenian widows and orphans and to care for the sick and wounded. In 1896, she moved to England and enrolled at the Slade School of Fine Art, where she studied painting and would go on to become an accomplished artist, writer, and poet.

She is perhaps best remembered for Armenian Legends and Poems, an anthology that she compiled, translated and illustrated, bringing Armenian folklore to an English-speaking audience. She considered Gilgamesh: A Dream of Eternal Quest to be her most important literary contribution; however, she also authored a series of creative works, including a drama titled Etchmiadzin. Her artwork was exhibited internationally, and she maintained a vibrant career at the intersections of art, literature, and cultural advocacy until her death in 1957. Her legacy offers insights into the experiences of Armenians during the late Ottoman period, the Armenian diaspora in England, and the role of women in the cultural and intellectual life of the early 20th century.

While the Zoryan Institute is recognized for its work on genocide and human rights studies, this archival collection reflects its dedication to the study of diaspora-homeland relations as well.

The Zabelle C. Boyajian Collection housed at the Zoryan Institute comprises six archival boxes of materials, including personal correspondence, creative writings (both published and unpublished), watercolor paintings and drawings, reviews of her work, photographs, Armenian newspapers and magazines, and a unique selection of 19th-century British consular papers from Diyarbakir. The materials are primarily in English and Armenian, with some items in German and other European languages.

To learn more about how to access the Zabelle C. Boyajian Collection, submit a formal archival request on <https://zoryaninstitute.org/publications/#resources>.



Ribbon cutting ceremony of Camp Hankavan/Shoghig

AMAA Dedicates Renovated Camp Hankavan Complex In Armenia

YEREVAN — The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) held the Dedication Worship Service for its newly renovated Camp Hankavan Complex on Sunday, September 28, at the Camp's Auditorium. The ceremony gathered benefactors, AMAA leaders from the U.S., including CEO/Executive Director Serge D. Buchakjian and Board President Gary Phillips, Esq., and Evangelical Church of Armenia members from Yerevan and other towns in Armenia.

Originally acquired in 2003, Camp Sheen Shoghig in Hankavan has long provided a place of recreation, learning, and spiritual growth for children and youth across Armenia. The renovated complex will continue this mission with renewed purpose for generations to come.

The Worship Service featured ECA Senior Pastor Rev. Avetik Khachatryan, ECA Council President Rev. Vardan Apinyan, and President of the Union of Armenian Evangelical Churches in Eurasia Rev. Dr. René Léonian.

Rev. Krikor Youmshajekian, President of the Armenian Missionary Association of Australia, delivered the message titled "Set Apart for God."

The dedication ceremony was led by Rev. Dr. Haroutune Selimian, President of the Armenian Evangelical Community of Syria.

Following the Service, officials including Minister of Economy Gevorg Papoyan, Minister of Labor and Social Affairs Arsen Torosyan, High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Zareh Sinanyan, and Chief Advisor to the Prime Minister Lilit Makunts joined for the ribbon-cutting ceremony and a special program.

AMAA Representative in Armenia Aren Deyirmenjian expressed gratitude to all benefactors.

AMAA Board President Gary Phillips shared that "the camp is a place where children and young people encounter Christ, form lasting friendships, and begin lifelong journeys of faith and service," and added that the renewal of Camp Hankavan reaffirms AMAA's mission "to build lives upon the foundation of Christ — nurturing hearts, shaping character, and preparing new generations to live out their faith in Armenia and beyond."

In his remarks, AMAA CEO/Executive Director Serge D. Buchakjian emphasized AMAA's deep commitment to the Homeland, saying: "Wherever we live, our hearts are directed toward Armenia. Here, we feel the deepest responsibility to strengthen our people's future and provide new opportunities for the next generations."

The event concluded with expressions of appreciation from Armenian government representatives, honoring AMAA's lasting impact on the life of the Armenian people.



AMAA CEO/Executive Director Serge D. Buchakjian delivers his message during the program.

California Finally Counts Its Middle Eastern and North African Community

Assemblymember Harabedian's Bill Signed Into Law

SACRAMENTO — In an effort to promote equity and ensure proper representation in demographic data, Assemblymember John Harabedian's (D-Pasadena) AB 91, the MENA Inclusion Act, has been signed into law. The bill will require agencies, boards, and commissions in California to disaggregate Middle Eastern and North African (MENA) groups in demographic data. The bill ensures that California reflects its diversity not just in words, but in data.

"California is home to a thriving MENA community that has too of-



John Harabedian

ten been undercounted and under-represented," said Harabedian. "As an Armenian American and Chair of the California Armenian Legislative Caucus Foundation, I know that when our community is overlooked, it loses resources, voice, and influence. We cannot wait any longer to be recognized. California must lead on MENA recognition, fight for accurate data, and set the standard for inclusion."

"The CA MENA Civil Rights Coalition welcomes Governor Gavin Newsom's signing of the California MENA Inclusion Act into law. This monumental achievement is the result of over two years of relentless grassroots community advocacy, where the voices of Middle Eastern and North Africans across California were heard because of organizing and community. The passing of this legislation is not just a policy win, it marks a pivotal moment in recognizing and empowering MENA communities, ensuring that they receive the resources, visibility, and representation they deserve. This will have a generational impact, laying the foundation for a more inclusive, equitable future where our diverse histories and experiences are fully acknowledged and celebrated in California." — California MENA Civil Rights Coalition

"After years of grassroots advocacy led by MENA-serving communities, California has taken a historic step forward to say: 'We see you.' For too long, MENA Californians have lived as 'visibly invisible,' left see MENA, page 12

COMMUNITY NEWS

EVN Report Takes On the Washington Accords at MIT

EVN, from page 1

Associate Professor-in-Residence of Political Science Nerses Kopalyan of the University of Nevada Las Vegas, who provides monthly security briefings for EVN Report, provided the audience the background to the Accords. He said that by late 2022 or early 2023, in the aftermath of the 2020 war with Azerbaijan, Armenian foreign policy pivoted towards the West and in particular the US, and this, in turn, “changed the entire paradigm through which the United States viewed Armenia. Armenia went from what the United States considered it to be a Russian satellite, to an actor that had decoupled from Russia, from the Russian authoritarian, orbit, and was now a country that was more conducive to being aligned with American strategic interests.”

In the last year and a half, Armenia feared that Azerbaijan was planning a new incursion onto its territory to obtain a “Zangezur corridor” in its south. Kopalyan said that the current US administration had intelligence that this would happen in March of this year, so it engaged in diplomacy which led to the Washington Accords.

signed by the time the Trump administration has to leave office.

The third document set up memorandums of understanding (MOUs) in three areas between Armenia and the US based on the strategic partnership between the two countries that was signed this January. First, the US will help Armenia develop its infrastructure and logistics capacity in order to become a regional transit hub. The two other areas are civilian nuclear energy and high tech semiconductors and artificial intelligence (AI).

Kopalyan concluded, “When we look at the Washington Accords, we see that it was not simply about a road. It was about the United States becoming the most dominant actor in the South Caucasus and geopolitical implications. It was about enhancing and deepening US-Armenian strategic relations and it was basically undertaking a joint venture between the two sides to begin a normalization process which offers Armenia a new security architecture. The reigning paradigm now is that with the United States having a vested interest in alliance with Armenia in all these projects,

At present, overall electricity generation in Armenia averages about 900 megawatts, including the output of Metsamor, while traditional nuclear power plants produce somewhere between 1,000 and 1,400 megawatts. This is a problem. Technically, Danagoularian said, you cannot put a plant in Armenia which produces over 1,000 megawatts because that source would have to run at half-capacity, and that would be very inefficient.

One possible alternative, he said, would be a small modular reactor (SMR). In an attempt to get economies of scale, after the 1960s, global efforts focused on building larger nuclear power plants, but it became evident that the increased complexity of such plants actually also increased costs. Now there are a number of efforts throughout the world to build SMRs but none have yet been built or tested anywhere.

Another problem is determining what Armenia will require down the road. Metsamor produces 600 megawatts, but Armenia’s energy consumption has risen 20 percent in the last ten years, and if AI expands there, it will need a great deal more

considerably over the last few years.

He called attention to the focus in the MOU on cooperation on artificial intelligence and semiconductors, and in particular to a line in it saying that the US and Armenia will work together to facilitate or streamline export controls for the supply chain of semiconductors and AI.

He said that the US divides countries into four categories when it comes to sharing of technology — A, B, D and E. Category A countries are NATO allies with access to the most sophisticated US technology and Category B includes non-NATO friendly states with a little bit less access. Category D countries are viewed to have some level of security risk so they need to go through special processes to get access to sensitive commercial technology or military technology. Armenia falls into Category D, so in addition to not getting access to military technology, companies like AMD, Nvidia, Synopsys and Microchip Technology, all semiconductor companies that have significant research and development operations now in Armenia, face significant challenges to enable Armenian engineers to work on certain things.

They need to constantly ask for waivers of export controls and go through all kinds of hoops, he said, to separate operating infrastructures. If what is in the MOU is worked out, the aforementioned companies will be able to do more advanced work in Armenia. Kassarian said that this will result in Armenia becoming a more important part of the global supply chain for semiconductors and artificial intelligence, and more squarely on the US side of the competition between the West and China in artificial intelligence.

Kassarian said that this is not only a question of more investment going into Armenia but more importantly, a form of soft deterrence against violence, as “the more we work on things that matter, the more likely it is that if something were to happen, the West would collectively — and particularly the United States — might take a different stance than it otherwise might.”

As one step in this direction, Kassarian mentioned Firebird, an AI cloud company, and the Armenian government, with support from Nvidia, to build and operate an AI data center in Armenia in a \$500 million project. What is particularly important, he stressed, is that Nvidia will provide its new Blackwell H200 CPUs, which are in short supply throughout the world, once the US government approves the release of these chips. Armenia will have a competitive advantage in being one of the first to market, and especially the first to market in the region, and so will get customers abroad and, as Kassarian said, a very healthy business.

The number-one challenge Armenia faces in this situation, Kassarian said, is not enough qualified candidates coming out of universities to fill the jobs being created in the tech expansion, which is affected by both the level of the Armenian educational system as well as the ability to get enough people to choose STEM fields as opposed to other areas. The private sector he said, has tried to step in with programs to help.

Furthermore, he said Armenia is no longer just an outsourcing country but has had a serious startup ecosystem for some 10-12 years now. He said, “What is missing now is the ability to scale and the ability to produce leaders that have the vision and the ability to be able to not just grow their own teams but grow an entire ecosystem.”

International Comparative Perspective

Anna Ohanyan, the Richard B. Finnegan Distinguished Professor of Political Science and International Relations at

continued on next page



EVN Talks panel at MIT: from left, Maria Titizian, Areg Danagoularian, Nerses Kopalyan, Anna Ohanyan and Raffi Kassarian (photo Aram Arkun)

Finding a solution to the Azerbaijani demand of a road through Armenia could begin a process of normalization of relations of the two countries and remove a justification which could be used by Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev to initiate violence. Kopalyan said that the US President’s Special Envoy Steve Witkoff’s team showed up in Armenia in mid-May to bring a proposal which became the foundation of the Washington Accords and Armenia quickly agreed.

Kopalyan declared, “I was involved in liaising between the two sides so as a disclaimer, I have a personal involvement in the process, but that also gives me access to a lot of information, which I will be happy to share when there are questions.” He did not reveal whether he was working for either side in this process.

Kopalyan said that the US proposal “was actually a very, very favorable proposal for Armenia” considering the imbalance in power between Armenia and Azerbaijan, so Azerbaijan negotiated and delayed the process for three months before being forced by the Trump administration to accept the deal on August 1.

The accords entail three sets of separate agreements between the three sides as well as between the US and Armenia. The first was the joint declaration of the Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP), which would initiate a transit route through southern Armenia.

The second was the draft peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan which was initiated by these two countries but not signed. Kopalyan stressed that this meant the Washington Accords were only the beginning of a normalization process and not a peace treaty. He added that the US anticipates that a peace treaty would be

that creates a very robust level of soft deterrence against Azerbaijan.” In other words, the risk of an invasion of Armenia has been diminished, though not fully removed.

Nuclear Energy and the Accords

Speaking at the event, MIT Associate Professor of Nuclear Science and Engineering Areg Danagoularian said that Armenia’s electricity generation is split into three parts, nuclear, hydro and gas. On the one hand, one-third of its electricity comes from Russian natural gas, also used for heating, so that about half the energy in Armenia comes from Russia. However, though Armenia imports its nuclear fuel from Russia too, its nuclear power plant only has to be refueled every two years, which, Danagoularian said, gives Armenia quite a bit of flexibility and independence.

Given the size of Armenia’s gross domestic product (GDP), Danagoularian said that it has a remarkably small amount of energy consumption because it does not have heavy industries such as textile production, car manufacturing, or smelting. Armenia has a lot of tourism and agriculture, and its growing IT sector so far has been energy-light (though this will change with the expansion of AI operations).

The Metsamor plant is a pressurized water reactor, with about half a billion dollars’ worth of safety and security upgrades, so while not the safest in terms of what is internationally acceptable, Danagoularian said it cannot be compared with the Chernobyl plant, which was a graphite moderated reactor with an antiquated design, built cheaply and sacrificing safety features. Nevertheless, as Metsamor ages, it will eventually start having breakdowns that increase the cost of operations and so will have to be decommissioned. The problem, Danagoularian said, is what to replace it with.

energy. Danagoularian explained that it takes five years to prepare to build a reactor, and five years to build, but this reactor could be around for 80 years before the decommissioning process. In other words, this is almost a century of commitment and it is difficult to estimate what will be needed in 20 years or so.

Another more general problem Armenia faces, Danagoularian said, is the lack of a Ministry of Energy. It used to have such a ministry which became lumped into the Ministry of Territorial Administration, but there is not even a deputy minister for energy yet. He stressed that an entire government agency is needed focusing on nuclear power. Furthermore, it needs to develop a new generation of reactor operators and nuclear engineers.

He said that as part of the MOU Armenia signed with the US, there was the understanding that Armenia would become a signatory of the so-called 123 Agreement (referring to Section 123 of the US Atomic Energy Act) and accede to certain conditions in order to acquire US civilian nuclear technologies. Danagoularian said that accepting these constraints is necessary.

The big risk that remains, he said, is that if Armenia does install a small reactor, there will be many unknowns as it will be a first of a kind.

High Tech and the MOU

Raffi Kassarian, a board member of EVN Report, is the CEO and principal advisor at Sensyan, a boutique advisory firm focused on the growing Armenian tech sector. Titizian called him “our tech guru, our tech entrepreneur.”

He spoke about the tech industry in Armenia and the new MOU. He said that this industry contributes about nine percent now to the Armenian GDP, having grown



COMMUNITY NEWS

from previous page

Stonehill College in Easton, was asked by Titizian to compare Armenia's approach and situation to other small states.

Ohanyan started by giving her key conclusion on the Washington Accords: "So the agreement provides very specific tools for transforming the South Caucasus from a post-soviet battleground to a Eurasian gateway." It could help turn Armenia's century-old rivalry with Azerbaijan to a cold peace and create pressures for change inside Azerbaijan.

She said that the specific language in the accords on norms against conquest and for territorial integrity are important for pacification, with the US involvement helping take territory off the table for all the states. Secondly, she said that the accords should be viewed as part of a broader shift in Eurasian continentalism, meaning that what happened is very much about US-China rivalry. The accords are about enhancing and diversifying connectivity and infrastructure in the South Caucasus.

At the state level, this interconnectivity, especially in the digital and energy realms, elevates Armenia's position in the region, giving it something to offer, Ohanyan said. At the regional level, Ohanyan said the Armenia-Azerbaijan relationship is a dangerous dyad, where Armenia is a nascent democracy but Azerbaijan is an authoritarian petrostate, which is personalized. Studies show that this is the hardest type of authoritarian system with which to negotiate, she observed. But the accords allow Armenia to managing its rivalry by creating stakeholders for connectivity beyond Armenia.

Opening the region to the outside would be a threat to dictatorial systems, Ohanyan said, because economic openness would lead to a more diversified Azerbaijani economy, but it would also create new economic power centers interested in broader regional markets, and this could be a risk to the Ilham Aliyev regime. This is why Aliyev was dragging his feet in signing the accords, let alone a peace agreement.

On the continental level, Russia lost its strategic position as intermediary or bridge

between East and West, especially after the Russian invasion of Ukraine, Ohanyan said. With Russia in decline, it will be more difficult for it to continue to exercise its new imperial forms of engagement with its periphery. This opens the way for peripheries like the South Caucasus and countries like Armenia in particular, to navigate and manage relations with Russia in such a way that Armenia can escape its satellite condition. She said now it could "start behaving like a small state with all the benefits, benefiting from the opportunities and managing the risks that small states face in the world system."

At the same time, Ohanyan said that Russia's capacity for producing weakness for the states in the post-Soviet system is quite significant, and there are specific ways in which neoimperial geopolitics are played out. Finland as a small state managing relations with Russia applies "strategic reassurance," and Ohanyan said that she thought Armenia was doing this too. Many small states face similar balancing acts, such as those in East Asia trying to maintain security relations with the US while engaging economically with China.

Audience Reactions

Some audience members at the end of the presentations expressed skepticism about the benefits of the Washington Accords. One person pointed out that Azerbaijan, with Turkey's backing, has much more resources and experience to take advantage of TRIPP while Armenia lacks the same capacity for its development. Kopalyan replied that, "implicit in the Washington accords is the understanding that the US is going to be funding, supporting, providing knowhow, knowledge and logistical support [to Armenia] in making this happen." The US and Armenia will be developing working groups to address the various issues at hand. Right now, seven such groups are being created and two weeks ago the first such group visited Armenia and set up feasibility studies in southern Armenia, with a small tranche of 145 million dollars allocated as a small part of an economic package the US State Department is put-

ting together.

In other words, the US will be helping Armenia enhance its institutional capabilities through a long term process of learning and engagement, Kopalyan said. The MOUs state the US will be providing support and training for Armenian university programs in the nuclear energy field. Information will be shared in the tech domain too. "So not to oversimplify it, but in many cases, the US basically will be holding Armenia's hand in supporting some of these things to happen," Kopalyan said.

When pressed on the risks of relying on the seemingly short attention span and personalized approach of the current US administration, Kopalyan pointed out that many aspects of the Washington Accords were actually present in the Antony Blinken-led State Department during President Joe Biden's term, so there has been continuity in foreign policy through the institutionalized process. There are two very large teams in the State Department right now working on these projects, so the US is investing a lot of resources in making this a reality. In fact, the US, Kopalyan said, will be investing potentially billions of dollars in TRIPP as a low-cost, high dividend investment in Armenia, turning the US into the dominant geopolitical player in the region and giving it a vested interest in the success of the accords and TRIPP.

Ohanyan noted that American foreign policy has been in the midst of a dramatic shift, becoming transactional and personalized. Yet she saw opportunity as well as risk in this change, declaring: "The United States can have the capacity, and seems to have the willingness and the interest, to structurally change the environment of the rivalry that exists. Instead of focusing on 'let's find a peace agreement that will work, and then it will trickle down,' the opposite approach is taken. 'Let's change the structure and within this context relations can improve.'"

Ohanyan said that the current Trump administration has greater willingness to push to see quick results compared to the previous one. Furthermore, she said that the

South Caucasus now is "an easier region for the United States" to navigate after the ethnic cleansing of Armenians since the US, and for that matter Russia, do not have good track records in protecting minority rights.

Kopalyan declared that there was no naivety in the process to initially diminish the threat of violence and have de facto peace. He stated, "There is no trust towards Azerbaijan. There is no trust towards the Aliyev regime." That is why having American vested interests will put forward systemic constraints or guardrails limiting the possibility of belligerent or irredentist Azerbaijani actions, he said.

Looking at it from this perspective, he said that the real question is not whether peace can be achieved through the Washington Accords, but rather will Armenia be able to achieve a stability which will enhance its economic capacity, and also how well can Armenia be integrated into the transatlantic system. He said, "From a very, very pragmatic perspective, the normalization process is being used as basically a conducive environment in which we can accelerate our objectives as opposed to being consistently stuck in an impossible security environment. Will Aliyev sign 3 1/2 years from now? I don't know. Very likely not."

Instead, this normalization process, he said, "gives Armenia a sort of an umbrella of protection until you enhance your deterrence capabilities."

Kassarjian agreed, declaring that Armenia essentially had a 3 1/2 year window of relative peace and stability to deliver on the key types of soft and hard deterrents needed to guarantee Armenian security.

When asked how a peace could be possible with prisoners of war still in Baku, continuing Azerbaijani human rights violations and territory of the Republic of Armenia remaining occupied, Kopalyan reiterated that it is a process. Occupation of land and POWs and other issues will be addressed subsequently, but initially the goal is the absence of interstate violence and the creation of a situation where the use of force becomes very, very difficult for Azerbaijan, he said.

Nardolillo Funeral Home

Est. 1906

John K. Najarian, Jr.

Rhode Island's Only Licensed Armenian Funeral Director

1278 Park Ave. Cranston, RI 02910 (401) 942-1220

1111 Boston Neck Rd. Narragansett, RI 02882 (401) 789-6300

www.nardolillo.com

James "Jack" Giragosian, CPC

Mark J. Giragosian

Giragosian
FUNERAL HOME

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

www.giragosianfuneralhome.com

Telephone (617) 924-7400

Aram Bedrosian Funeral Home, Inc.

Continuous Service By The Bedrosian Family Since 1945

558 MOUNT AUBURN STREET
WATERTOWN, MA 02472

MARION BEDROSIAN
PAUL BEDROSIAN
LARRY BEDROSIAN

**STS. SAHAG AND MESROB
ARMENIAN CHURCH**
70 JEFFERSON ST PROVIDENCE RI

Food Fair & BAZAAR

NOVEMBER 15 & 16

SATURDAY 12 PM - 7 PM

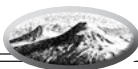
SUNDAY 12 PM - 5 PM

Delicious Armenian Food & Pastries

Lamb shish kebab, losh kebab, baked half chicken, kheyima, kufta, lahmajoon, boreg, yalanchi, choreg, cream khadaif, paklava, katah, kourabia, Armenian coffee and more!

COME FOR LUNCH, DINNER, OR
TAKE OUT
\$1000 Raffle

Kids Activities, Nazeli Dance Group,
Silent Auction and Vendors!



COMMUNITY NEWS

L.A.’s Armenian Community Participates in ABMDR Walkathon

LOS ANGELES — On Saturday, October 4, close to 400 supporters converged on the plaza of the Glendale City building, in Glendale, to participate in the 20th annual Walk of Life, the walkathon of the Armenian Bone Marrow Donor Registry (ABMDR).

With its uplifting message of solidarity and hope, the event drew broad community support and enthusiastic youth participation. In addition to individual teams of walkers, there were several teams representing local schools and universities, including the USC Armenian Students’ Association (ASA), Glendale City College ASA/Nursing Club, AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School, Ferrahian High School, Providence High School, and Rose and Alex Pilibos Armenian School. Other teams walking to benefit ABMDR’s life-saving mission represented various community organizations and businesses.

During the opening ceremony, remarks were delivered by Walkathon Committee co-chairs Medik Aghbalian and Khachig Boghossian. “The mission of our organization is to provide matched donors to those who suffer from life-threatening blood-related illnesses and whose last hope of survival is to have a stem-cell transplant,” Boghossian said. “Toward this goal, we have recruited over 33,500 donors in 32 countries, and facilitated 44 bone marrow transplants to date, all thanks to our communities and dedicated volunteers.”

Boghossian acknowledged the presence of community leaders and elected officials at the event, among them California Sen. Sasha Renee Perez.

Boghossian also acknowledged some of the top teams participating in the walkathon, including Team Arpz (Arpine Zohrabyan); Providence High School, led by Sona Ashjian; the AGBU Manoogian-Demirdjian School Cancer Awareness Team, led by Dr. Evelyn Baghdasarian; the Rose and Alex Pilibos Armenian School Team; and the Ferrahian High School Team, led by Sanahine Chahinian.

In her remarks, Aghbalian thanked the walkathon’s sponsors, including major sponsors.

The invocation was performed by Father Yeghia Isayan of the Western Diocese.

Next to address the attendees was ABMDR co-founder and president Dr. Frieda Jordan, who said, “You should be very proud of yourselves for being here today, because every one of you, by participating in this walkathon, are giving hope to all of our cancer patients and their families. We want to let them know that they are not alone in their fight, and we’re here to support them. You are all anti-cancer heroes.”

Jordan’s comments were followed by an



A scene from the walkathon (Photo by Aleko Boghoskhanian, courtesy of ABMDR)

appearance by Gayaneh Sahakian, a young cancer survivor who spoke of the vital importance of having a registry of potential stem cell donors such as ABMDR.

continued to expand NextGen’s mission to several universities including UCLA and UCSD,” Balian said. “Among our many important events was a standout recruit-

and dance, our volunteers worked tirelessly to recruit and swab attendees, collecting over 25 new swab samples. I think this drive highlights NextGen’s core mission, which is engagement with the Armenian youth to ultimately help find a match and save a life.”

In one of the highlights of the walkathon, Perez took the stage to address the throngs of supporters. She praised ABMDR’s community-outreach and recruitment efforts, she said, and went on to present Jordan with a special commendation for the work of ABMDR on behalf of the California Senate.

Prior to the start of the walkathon, awards were presented to Team Arpz (Arpine Zohrabyan) as the team that had raised the most funds; and the Providence High School team as the one that had the most participants.

Following the ribbon-cutting, the 5-K walk-run looped through central Glendale. The walkathon concluded at the plaza of the Glendale City building, where the festivities continued into the day. The event also gave participants the opportunity to join ABMDR as potential bone marrow stem cell donors, while volunteers were on hand to answer questions and welcome new recruits.

For more information, visit abmdr.am.



California Senator Sasha Renee Perez presented ABMDR with a special commendation from the California Senate. (Photo by Aleko Boghoskhanian, courtesy of ABMDR)

Remarks were also delivered by Jeffrey Balian, an executive director of NextGen, ABMDR’s youth group. “This year, we’ve

ment drive at UCLA’s Coachellian, one of the most cherished Armenian collegiate functions nationwide. Amid hours of song



Cancer survivor Gayaneh Sahakian (Photo by Aleko Boghoskhanian, courtesy of ABMDR)



Walkathon Committee co-chairs Medik Aghbalian and Khachig Boghossian (Photo by Aleko Boghoskhanian, courtesy of ABMDR)



COMMUNITY NEWS

UCLA's Armenian Genocide Research Program Shares Updates on Recent Work, Future Initiatives

WESTWOOD, Calif. — At the heart of the work of the Armenian Genocide Research Program (AGRP) within the Promise Armenian Institute at UCLA is a renewed focus on reparation and justice. Following the formal recognition of the Armenian genocide by Congress and President Biden in 2021 — and given the current geopolitical climate that poses significant obstacles to recognition by Turkey — the question of what's next is more urgent than ever.

While recognition represents a crucial milestone, the central issue remains the pursuit of justice, of which reparation is an essential pillar. The AGRP has therefore undertaken multiple initiatives centered on reparation and restitution. This concept also relates to various recent projects, including the new documentary, "What's Next? Armenian Genocide Restitution in the Post-Recognition Era," and the lecture series, Looted Art as Part of the Reparation Movement.

In partnership with the Armenian Bar Association and the Armenian Film Foundation, the AGRP presents the release of a documentary, "What's Next: Armenian Genocide Restitution in the Post-Recognition Era," directed and produced by filmmaker Carla Garapedian. The film documents the proceedings of a March 2023 conference at UCLA, which explored the future of restitution and justice following the U.S. recognition of the Armenian genocide in 2021. The documentary is now available for public and institutional screenings.

On September 5, 2025, the AGRP co-hosted a lecture at California State University, Fresno, titled, Nazi Looted Art Recovery as a Model for Recovery of AGLA: Armenian Genocide Looted Art. Led by AGRP Director Dr. Taner Akçam



Dr. Taner Akçam

and Holocaust restitution expert Professor Michael Bazzyler, the event examined efforts to recover Armenian cultural heritage looted during the genocide and drew parallels with post-Holocaust restitution models. This lecture, a central component of the AGRP's Armenian Genocide Looted Art (AGLA) Research Project, serves as a model for future educational collaborations. The AGRP is also developing an academic course on looted art to further research and awareness on cultural restitution and justice. Institutions interested in hosting this lecture or related events are encouraged to reach out.

This summer, the AGRP launched an online archive, The Auctioning of Stolen Armenian Properties: Emval-i Metruke, which traces the fate of properties left behind by Armenians deported and killed during the Armenian genocide. Using hundreds of newspaper auction announcements from the 1920s and 1930s, the project documents and translates these records into Turkish and English, providing a valuable resource for researchers and the public alike. As part of this initiative, the AGRP also hosted two accompanying lectures —

one in English and one in Turkish — that introduced the project's key findings and historical significance.

In collaboration with the Ararat-Eskijian Museum (AEM), the AGRP is proud to announce the forthcoming English-language publication of Aram Andonian's *The Great Crime (Medz Vojir)*, the first systematic historical documentation of the Armenian genocide, originally published in 1921.

This new edition includes a detailed preface by Dr. Taner Akçam, incorporating recent archival discoveries and contextual analysis from his book, *Killing Orders*, along with additional explanatory notes.

Institutions interested in hosting a documentary screening, lecture, or book presentation should contact AGRP Program Coordinator Nanor Hartounian at nhartounian@international.ucla.edu. Please

visit the AGRP website for more details on all program activities.

The Armenian Genocide Research Program (AGRP) was established within the Promise Armenian Institute at UCLA in early 2022. Led by Dr. Taner Akçam, the AGRP engages in research and scholarly activities pertaining to the study of the Armenian Genocide in the Ottoman Empire during the early 20th century.

Scott Michael Campbell
MASTER OF CEREMONIES

George Chakiris
LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

Angela Sarafyan
CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD

28TH

ANNUAL ARPA INTERNATIONAL FILM FESTIVAL

Nov. 6-9, 2025 TCL Chinese Theatre
6801 Hollywood Blvd. 3rd floor, Hollywood CA 90028

Nov. 6 8:30 pm - Opening Night - Deadly Vows featuring Billy Zane, Shohreh Aghdashloo
Nov. 8 4:00 pm - World Premiere Centerpiece Film - Shakkar
6:45 pm - Spotlight Film - A Winter's Song
Nov. 9 5:30 pm - Awards Ceremony - Red Carpet followed by 7:00pm Awards Presentation.

Robin Weigert
VISIONARY AWARD

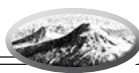
Mikael Sharafyan
CAREER ACHIEVEMENT AWARD IN COSTUME DESIGN

Anna Maxim
RISING STAR AWARD

Ido Samuel
BREAKTHROUGH ARTIST

For TCL Chinese Theatre schedule and ticket information, please visit www.arpafilmfestival.com/tickets

The Arpa Foundation for Film, Music & Arts is a charitable, non-profit, tax-deductible organization registered as a 501© corp.



COMMUNITY NEWS

Nov. 15 AECP Gala to Celebrate 65th Medical Mission to Armenia

COSTA MESA, Calif. — It was an enormously productive trip to Armenia for the 12 volunteer physicians and others of the Armenian EyeCare Project (AECP), an organization that celebrated its 65th Medical Mission to the country this year with many milestones and accomplishments.

From September 20-28, specialists in cornea, glaucoma, pediatric ophthalmology, oculoplastics, optometry and research, each paid their own way and traveled to Armenia to participate in AECP's annual mission trip. During this time, volunteer physicians did hundreds of patient consultations at four eye clinics in Yerevan; visited and worked in many of AECP's facilities across the country including two of its Regional Eye Centers and its Mobile Eye Hospital; trained local physicians in the country at AECP's state-of-the-art wetlab; and performed dozens of eye surgeries, including many procedures that have never been performed in Armenia before.

AECP also had several accomplishments to celebrate during its milestone Mission trip, including the grand opening of a new diagnostic eye clinic in the Kotayk province of Armenia; the launch of a revolutionary new glaucoma project in the country and a very successful International Ophthalmology Conference in Yerevan.

AECP kicked off its Medical Mission with the grand opening of a new diagnostic eye clinic in Yeghvard. On September 22, AECP physicians, staff and friends gathered alongside local government officials and hospital personnel, including Armenia's Minister of Health, to celebrate the opening of the Yeghvard Diagnostic Eye Clinic, AECP's fifth Diagnostic Eye Clinic in the country and the first in Yeghvard in the Kotayk province.



Left to right: AECP Volunteer Physician Dr. Richard Hill; AECP Country Director Dr. Nune Yeghiazaryan; AECP Vice President and Volunteer Physician Dr. John Hovanesian; Armenia Minister of Health Anahit Avanesyan; Yeghvard Medical Center Director Dr. Mary Balyan

The clinic was established with the support of the Harry T. Mangurian Jr. Foundation and funds raised by donors during AECP's annual gala last year. It is equipped with state-of-the-art medical equipment, which will provide the population of the region with the opportunity for in-depth eye examinations and outpatient treatment. Ophthalmological services at the center will be provided by local medical personnel who receive continued training by AECP.

"It is noteworthy that the 65th Medical Mission of AECP is launched with the opening of another ophthalmology clinic," said Dr. John Hovanesian, vice pres-

ident of AECP. "For more than 30 years, our volunteer physicians and benefactors have contributed to the prevention of acquired blindness and the improvement of the healthcare system in Armenia."

"Our strategy is to ensure access to quality services for our population through proper infrastructure, state-of-the-art equipment, and well-trained personnel. The Armenian EyeCare Project has been our long-standing and trusted partner in this mission," said Anahit Avanesyan, Minister of Health of the Republic of Armenia.

The establishment of the Yeghvard Diagnostic Eye Clinic is part of a large-scale regional eye care initiative in Armenia developed by AECP since 2015, the goal of which is to restore the eye healthcare system in all regions of Armenia. From 2015-2020, five Regional Eye Centers were established in five provinces of Armenia and equipped with all the necessary capabilities for diagnostics and surgery. Now AECP has developed five Diagnostic Eye Clinics in the country's remaining provinces and is working to re-equip eye care services in polyclinics in several towns in Armenia, thus supporting the provision of high-quality eye care services countrywide.

Launch of Glaucoma Project

Another huge accomplishment that took place during AECP's Mission was the launch of the Sarkis and Shushan Mnatzaganian Glaucoma Project, Armenia's first-ever nationwide glaucoma screening initiative. Spearheaded by Dr. Richard Hill, a founding board member of AECP and a U.S. ophthalmologist who has been volunteering with the organization since 1992, the newly launched project is a pioneering, three-year initiative designed to combat glaucoma, a leading cause of irreversible blindness worldwide.

The project is led on the ground by Dr. Lilit Voskanyan, head of the glaucoma department at the Malayan Ophthalmological Center in Yerevan, and is expected to significantly increase early detection rates of glaucoma, reduce the risk of blindness and enhance the skills and knowledge of Armenian healthcare professionals. AECP is happy to announce that at the time of its Mission trip, the new initiative had already provided more than 150 patients with screenings and over 70 patients with laser treatment. Thousands in Armenia are anticipated to benefit from

the program.

The Sarkis and Shushan Mnatzaganian Glaucoma Project was made possible with the support of the Alysia Vanitzian Family, who was able to join AECP on its Mission trip to Armenia this year and witness the remarkable effects of their most-generous recent contribution. As well, the donation of an OCT machine by Zeiss with support from the ASCRS Foundation will also prove invaluable for this revolutionary project.

23rd Int. Ophthalmology Conference

AECP's Medical Mission culminated with its annual ophthalmology conference hosted alongside the organization's



Grand opening of the AECP Yeghvard Diagnostic Eye Clinic in the town of Yeghvard in Kotayk province

longtime partner, Children's Hospital Los Angeles (CHLA.) The 23rd AECP-CHLA International Ophthalmology Conference was held on September 26-28 in Yerevan, bringing together leading ophthalmologists from Armenia, the U.S., Canada and Russia. With a focus on sharing cutting-edge research, surgical techniques and innovations in eye care, topics this year included pediatric ophthalmology, glaucoma, neuro-ophthalmology, refractive surgery, optometry and the role of artificial intelligence in medicine.

In a special video message, Dr. Roger Ohanesian, Founder and President of AECP, welcomed participants and expressed his deep gratitude for their commitment: "Thank you for being here. Your participation is truly an investment in Armenia's future. For more than 30 years, AECP has worked to prevent blindness and ensure accessible, high-quality ophthalmic services throughout the country."

Opening remarks were delivered by Dr. John Hovanesian, Vice President of AECP (U.S.); Dr. Nune Yeghiazaryan, Country Director of AECP (Armenia); Dr. Thomas Lee, Director of the Vision Center at CHLA (U.S.) and Armen Gasparyan, Deputy Minister of Health (Armenia.)

Yeghiazaryan presented AECP's projects' continuity through development by highlighting its nationwide glaucoma screening and treatment project; establishment of a Dry Eye Center of Excellence; research activities in pediatric ophthalmology; nationwide training of family physicians in eye care; publication of the second edition of the AECP professional handbook; and more.

Another key educational initiative was the two-day AECP-CHLA Pediatric Conference, organized in partnership with the Armenian Pediatric Association. The event gathered specialists from CHLA and Armenia's leading hospitals to exchange knowledge and discuss the latest trends and developments in general pediatrics.

Year Will Culminate with AECP Gala

The celebration of such a successful year for AECP will continue with the organization's annual Gala. Many doctors, volunteers and friends who participated in AECP's recent Medical Mission will attend the event, celebrating the accomplishments of such a historic Mission trip and year for AECP.

This year, the AECP Gala will be held on November 15 at 6 p.m. inside the newly constructed Stambolian Family Assembly Hall at St. Mary Armenian Church in Costa Mesa. The 2025 Honorees will be: the

Vanitzian Family, Zeiss and ASCRS Foundation. All are welcome to celebrate this momentous year for AECP by attending its upcoming Gala. For more information and to make reservations, please visit: www.eyecareproject.com/gala

To learn more about its impactful work, please visit: www.eyecareproject.com.

Assemblymember Harabedian's Bill Signed Into California Law

MENA, from page 7

out of the data that drives state services - resulting in gaps and inaccuracies. Today, that changes. We are proud of Assemblymember John Harabedian's tireless leadership, and even prouder of the community whose persistence made this victory possible. With AB-91 now law, California has officially recognized the MENA community, and we look forward to its implementation and the lasting benefits it will bring," said Amin Nash, Arab American Civic Council, Co-Chair of the CA MENA Civil Rights Coalition

"This day is a historic and triumphant day for MENA communities in California built on generations of work. We are thankful the Governor signed this historic legislation and that MENA Californians can now get the recognition, rights and resources they deserve. This is just the beginning" said Dr. Sophia Armen, Executive Director,

Armenian-American Advancement Network, Co-Chair of the CA MENA Civil Rights Coalition

For decades, MENA individuals have been miscategorized as "white," which has resulted in a failure to capture their unique identities and challenges. AB 91 ensures that the thousands of Californians who identify as Middle Eastern or North African are no longer an afterthought. It means families will be counted, their needs will be seen, and their voices will be heard in policymaking. For parents, it means their children's experiences in schools won't be erased. For seniors, it means better access to culturally competent services. For the community as a whole, it means finally being recognized as part of California's diverse fabric.



Arts & Culture

Komitas Duo Wins European Honors

By Muriel Mirak-Weissbach
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

KARLSRUHE, Germany — At the 10th European Chamber Music Competition Karlsruhe, held on September 24-26 in the German city of that name, pianist Hasmik Sarukian and cellist Egon Buchner — the Komitas Duo — earned second prize. The competition for up-and-coming young musicians, which has been held semi-annually (with two exceptions) since 2005, is organized by the city of Karlsruhe and the Max Reger Institute located there.

The Karlsruhe University of Music sponsors the competition and composer Wolfgang Rihm was its patron until his death in July 2024. Rihm was a native of Karlsruhe and lived and taught composition at the University of Music. It is named after one of the initiators of the competition, a musician and former rector of the Academy. The artistic director of the event is Prof. Saule Tatubaeva.



The Komitas Duo with their award (Photo courtesy of Komitas Duo)

The successful performance marked a major step forward in the career of the Komitas Duo, itself a very new partnership between two young and promising musicians. It also has contributed to bringing knowledge of Armenian music to a German audience.

This writer had the opportunity to experience a performance by the Komitas Duo, prior to their successful participation in the European competition. It was the first of two concerts in September in Mainz, a city on the Rhine. Under the rubric “The Romantic Idea,” the duo presented works by Max Weber, Claude Debussy, Ludwig van Beethoven, and concluded with an Impromptu by Alexander Arutiunian. The concerts were, in a sense, dress rehearsals for the competition; pieces they performed would be scrutinized by the jury weeks later.

As the two explained, the notion of Romanticism, originally associated with certain narrative forms in vernacular literature, came to express an aesthetic concept that thrusts the subjective and emotional into central focus, especially the sense of longing for love; their program sought to present its various facets, not only as a specific period, but as a mood or

see KOMITAS, page 15



Mike Agopian with Asdghig Dadourian, AGBU Special Events Committee Chairperson (Karine Armen photo)

TCA LA Chapter, AGBU Host Exhibit by Mike Agopian

By Karine Armen
Special to the Mirror-Spectator

PASADENA — On Friday, October 10, the Tekeyan Cultural Association (TCA) Los Angeles Chapter, and the Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) Special Events Committee hosted an art exhibition of artist Mike Agopian at the Vatche and Tamar Manoukian Center’s Boyadjian Hall. The art event included poetry reading and musical performances.

The Beirut-born Agopian is a multidisciplinary artist based in Los Angeles. He has created paintings, written lyrics for songs and poems, and composed music. He has also acted in two plays.

As a painter, he said, he has been influenced by the styles of Kandinsky, Gauguin and Matisse.

The master of ceremonies was Asdghig Dadourian, who also read two poems by Agopian. Dadourian is the Special Events Committee Chairperson of AGBU. She said, “Mike Agopian’s art is unique and creates a positive mood with the use of colors. He is a multitasking and great human being.”

Tenor Berj Karazian performed songs written and composed by Agopian accompanied by pianist Ripsime Rshtuni.

International flutist Salpy Kerkonian performed four pieces composed by Agopian. Kerkonian has performed as the solo/principal flutist with Greg Hosharian’s Armenian Pops Ensemble, Iranian singer Moein, the Los Angeles Korean Musicians Association, Santa Cecilia Orchestra and the Burbank Philharmonic. In addition, she has recorded with members of the Los Angeles Philharmonic. Agopian said, “Salpy, your musical knowledge, experience, and virtuosity touched me. I am thankful.”

Later, Ellen Vartanyan recited a poem by Agopian. The event continued with more song and flute performances.

Agopian thanked each performer and the organizers. He spoke about his work, noting that many people had told him his paintings resembled those of Martiros Saryan because of the bright colors.

He added, “I have not studied art in college. I enjoy the creativity process.” He continued, “I want to inspire the young generation to love the Armenian music and language.”

TCA West Coast Executive Secretary Mayda Kuredjian made the closing remarks. She said, “Mike Agopian’s emotions inspire him to create art in a variety of ways. His Armenian teachers had a special influence on him.”

The event included an elegant reception.



Salpy Kerkonian playing the lute (Karine Armen photo)

Project Save Fall Programs Will Include First Full Exhibition in New Gallery Space

WATERTOWN, Mass. — Project Save Photographic Archive, a Massachusetts-based nonprofit dedicated to preserving the global Armenian experience through photography, announced today its lineup of fall programming, including its first major exhibition in the organization’s gallery and archive space, and two events in its popular “Conversations on Photography” series.

French-Armenian photojournalist and documentary filmmaker Astrig Agopian’s multimedia exhibition “Like There’s No Tomorrow” will open at Project Save on November 13, and run through January 17, 2026. The exhibit focuses on the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh, a region Armenians have inhabited for millennia and whose cultural heritage has endured centuries of upheaval. Agopian’s exhibition digs deeply into questions of cultural heritage, identity in diaspora, and wartime displacement. The exhibit is in partnership with ART WORKS Projects, a Chicago- and Hague-based visual arts non-profit.

“Like There’s No Tomorrow” incorporates photographs and video that document the lives of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh as an Azerbaijan-led war broke out in September 2020 and escalated in 2023 into mass displacement, widely described by human rights organizations as ethnic cleansing. Agopian’s travels to the area garnered interview footage and extensive photographic documentation of war and its effects, following individuals and families as they navigated violence, loss and displacement. The project combines powerful photography, oral histories, and multimedia assets into a living archive that also serves educational and advocacy purposes.

“Agopian invites us to consider how people live in and endure the unimaginable: war, hatred, and revisionist history, and what they cling to or carry when forced to flee,” said Arto Vaun, Executive Director of Project Save. “Her work reflects Project Save’s mission to preserve and share the stories and cultural materials that define the global Armenian experience.”

To deepen the historical narrative, Vaun says the exhibition will include photographs from Project Save’s own collections, presented alongside Agopian’s contemporary work. These archival images document Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh across the 19th and 20th centuries, amplifying the continuum of Armenian presence and resilience in the region.

Like There’s No Tomorrow is supported through ART WORKS Projects’ Emerging Lens Fellowship. Partially funded through the National Endowment for the Arts, Emerging Lens provides unrestricted stipends, professional mentorship, editorial

see PROJECT SAVE, page 16



ARTS & CULTURE

Recipe Corner



by Christine
Vartanian Datian



Lena Tashjian’s Pickled Cabbage Soup (Krchik)

“Do you want something to eat? said my grandmother. I have cabbage soup and bread.” – From *The Living and the Dead* by William Saroyan

LOS ANGELES — Released in 2020, *The Vegan Armenian Kitchen Cookbook* is a self-published project from Lena Tashjian, the author/recipe developer, and Siroon Parseghian, a Los Angeles-based photographer specializing in commercial, food, and product photography. With over 115 taste-tested recipes, the cookbook highlights the many plant-based and Lenten staples in Armenia and the Armenian Diaspora, and includes a variety of easy to prepare, healthy veganized classics.

“Armenian cuisine is connected to an endless sense of abundance, generosity, and often a grandmother, mother or aunt who takes it upon herself to lovingly (or forcefully) make sure that everyone is well-fed,” says Lena. “The photos we use are attractive depictions of exactly how your dish will turn out. Siroon grew up in a family of photographers in Los Angeles. By pursuing her talent and creativity in photography, she has achieved an incredible standard, thus making this cookbook a visually appetizing triumph.”

Lena spent six years in Armenia traveling from rural to urban areas, observing many traditional dishes created by locals while relishing Armenia’s unending hospitality. During her stay, she honed her culinary skills and recorded each experience while experimenting with a range of different vegan dishes and ingredients. Growing up in Toronto, Canada, and a graduate of Sourp Khatch and ARS Armenian schools, she had a profound love for food from early childhood and family life that was enhanced by her trip to Armenia.

She likes preparing the plant-based dishes she grew up with as a child, and making them “just like my mom’s.” Her recipe for Krchik, or Pickled Cabbage Soup, is featured at the Tazah/Karabetian Import & Distribution, Inc.’s website. “This soup is a comforting dish that will keep you coming back for seconds. The flavors — thanks to the tanginess of the pickled cabbage and savoriness of the tomato and red pepper pastes — come together to create a result that everyone will enjoy. Ar-

menians are serious about cooking with many fresh vegetables, including cabbage.”

Karabetian Import & Distribution, Inc. is a family-owned and operated company established in 1987 with the mission of providing unique products with authentic taste made only with premium ingredients. “We are the exclusive, direct importers and distributors of fine Middle Eastern, Iranian, Greek, Armenian, Russian, and Mediterranean delicatessen, food products, cultural gifts, pipe tobacco, souvenirs, specialty beauty, kitchen and houseware products. Our line of innovative items from the historic past have been tailored to fit today’s contemporary lifestyle. Quality is our top priority -- which is why we travel across the world and import only the finest products in the market,” the website says.

A recipe for Bitlis Tutoo (Sour Cabbage Stew) is featured in *Breaking Bread* with William Saroyan (Heliograph Publishing, September 2016). Author Janice Stevens captures the essence of Saroyan’s love for his Armenian culture through excerpts of his written word and carefully selected authentic Armenian recipes. (Tutoo means sour in Armenian, and the stew can really live up to its name. The recipe includes both fermented cabbage and the brine used to pickle the cabbage.)

“Like everywhere in the Middle East, cabbage is eaten raw, dried, pickled and marinated, and cabbage is an obligatory ingredient for making soups and main dishes. This is one of my favorite vegan soups that makes 6-8 generous servings so you can enjoy leftovers,” Lena adds.

INGREDIENTS:

- 3-4 cups pickled cabbage, chopped
- 1 large onion, chopped
- 2 medium potatoes, cubed
- 1/2 cup coarse bulgur
- 2 tablespoons Tazah Tomato Paste
- 2 tablespoons Tazah Red Pepper Paste
- 3 tablespoons Tazah Extra Virgin Olive Oil
- 5-6 cups boiled water
- Salt, black pepper, and red pepper, to taste
- Chopped fresh parsley as garnish, optional

PREPARATION:

Heat the oil in the pot and sauté the onions. Once the onion is cooked, add the tomato paste and mix well. Add the pickled cabbage, stir, and allow it to heat up for a few minutes. Add the potatoes and enough boiled water to completely cover the vegetables, about 5 cups.

Cook on low-medium heat, covered, until the potatoes soften completely, around 15 to 20 minutes. Add the bulgur, spices and another cup of boiled water, if necessary, and cook for 5 to 10 minutes, covered. Turn off the heat and allow the soup to sit for 5 to 10 minutes. Garnish with chopped parsley.

Serves 6-8.

For more information, see:

Karabetian Import & Distribution, Inc.
2450 Crystal St.
Los Angeles, CA 90039
Phone: (323) 664-8956
<https://karabetian.com/>
<https://karabetian.com/recipes/>
<https://www.instagram.com/tazah/>

See this recipe at: <https://karabetian.com/pickled-cabbage-soup/>

See this recipe at: <https://embroideredrecipes.com/recipes/pickled-cabbage-soup/>

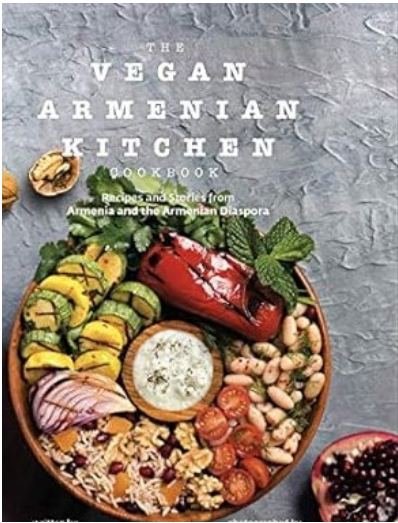
See: Lena Tashjian’s Instagram: <https://www.instagram.com/embroideredrecipes/>

Shop at: <https://www.amazon.com/s?me=A2UYPWM9T6WXY7&marketplaceID=ATVPDKIKX0DER>

The Vegan Armenian Kitchen Cookbook

ORDER TODAY, go to: <https://veganarmeniankitchen.com/product/vegan-armenian-kitchen-cookbook/>

The Vegan Armenian Kitchen Cookbook is an all-in-one resource for Armenian cooking which is intertwined with its rich culture and heritage. From food idioms and detailed explanations on dishes, names and customs, to pantry staples, menu pairing and holiday planning, *The Vegan Armenian Kitchen Cookbook* is an invaluable tool that will serve not only to educate and fascinate readers on Armenian cuisine and history, but also inspire them to create the plant-based and veganized dishes in their own kitchen. “We continue to donate all proceeds from our signature tote bags to initiatives and organizations supporting the people of Artsakh, and donate a portion of proceeds from the cookbook to Centaur Animal-Assisted Therapy & Rescue Center in Ushi, Armenia,” says Lena.





ARTS & CULTURE

Komitas Duo Wins European Honors

KOMITAS, from, page 13

spiritual attitude. Thus, the composers included Max Reger, whose “late-romantic realm of expression anticipates transition to the modern world.” And although he deliberately avoided external attributes of romantic music, Claude Debussy, in his Sonata for Cello and Piano, which they performed, is thematically related, especially in its symbolism and subjectivity.

As cellist Buchner related with humor, the piece has been interpreted as a reflection of the adventure of one Pierrot Lunaire, in what is almost a musical play: the melancholic, sensitive Commedia dell’arte-type character awakens entranced in a dream, strives to win over the moon as his beloved, and, unrequited, sings an ironical hymn to freedom. Beethoven’s 7 Variations on a Theme from Mozart’s “Magic Flute,” is presented as “a romantic idea illuminated by a classical perspective.”

And concluding their program was the Impromptu — a typical romantic form — by Arutiunian, who combines it with “elements from Armenian folklore, colorful harmonics and personal expression.” In illustrating the works through brief comments and anecdotes, the artists provided fruitful insights into the works, but especially into their own conceptual approach to them.

The concert was electrifying. Not only do both performers display a firm command of technique, but their musicality is vibrant, assertive, bold, and yet free. In chamber music, whether a duo or quartet or chamber orchestra, it is the dialogue among the voices that is primary, achieving a unity of creative tension and interplay. To think and perform with ears, eyes, mind and fingers oriented to the other voice, and in pursuit of the higher unity, requires artistic maturity which is seldom found among such young musicians.

A Dynamic Duo

Anyone attending the concerts in Mainz



Hasmik Sarukian and Egon Buchner at Karlsruhe Competition (Photo courtesy of Komitas Duo)

would have no difficulty understanding the duo’s success in Karlsruhe. Both are accomplished musicians, though still young. Egon Buchner started playing the cello at the age of 5, and was fortunate to participate in several chamber music groups and orchestras with young musicians.

This experience led to his decision to seek a career in high-level chamber music. In 2020 he began studying cello in Mainz under renowned conductor and cellist Daniel Geiss, at the conservatory, then at the University of Music. With experience as a soloist and participant in “Soundlab” projects under Geiss, he took part in a concert series at the famed Hamburg Elbphilharmonie, in the Brixen Classics Festival orchestra, and master classes with Prof. Wen-Sinn Yang, Prof. Maria Kliegel and Prof. Gabriel Schwabe.

Sarukian, born and brought up in Germany, also began young, and took her first piano lessons at the age of 7. Success came early, as she won several promotional awards of the Peter Cornelius Conservatory of Mainz and took six first prizes for solo and duo performances. At graduation, she earned the student prize of the federal state of Rhineland Palatinate. In her debut solo concert, at the age of 15, she demonstrated her special love for classical Armenian music. Thanks to her parents, she has never lost a close relationship to Armenia. As a young girl, it was especially her mother who encouraged her to include Armenian works in her concert programs. As a result, she discovered composers like Aram Khachaturian, Arno Babajanian, or Edgar Bagdasarian early. This link has remained to the present, and in her studies as well, she has considered it especially important to develop this repertoire further and to keep it alive.

Last year, she started at the Mainz University of Music, studying under with Prof. Thomas Hell, and has attended master classes under Igor Cognolato and, in chamber music, with Daniel Geiss. Her studies are supported by a German national scholarship.

The two met as students, when Sarukian was looking for a partner with whom she could play chamber music for her exams. They immediately found a harmonious

relationship in musicality, something that listeners readily confirmed. Last year they decided to continue their collaboration and to establish the duo officially with the aim of performing together regularly. They chose the name to promote knowledge and appreciation of the founder of Armenian music and musicology, Komitas Vardapet (1869–1935), whose role in preserving and developing the musical heritage of Armenia was decisive.

Playing Music in Armenian

The Mainz concerts were, in a sense, dress rehearsals for the European competition. They played the first movement of the Reger Sonata op. 116, his Romance, and Arutiunian’s Impromptu for the first round. In the second round, the jury had them play the Debussy sonata and the second movement of Reger’s sonata. And for the winners’ concert that evening, the jury chose Reger’s Romance as well as Arutiunian’s Impromptu.

The inclusion of a piece by an Armenian composer is intriguing. At the end of the concert, a young woman from the Armenian community, praised Buchner. “He played not only with extraordinary technique,” she said, “but he played it like an Armenian!”

It turns out that Egon Buchner became acquainted with Armenian music through his collaboration with the young pianist. At first, he considered it utterly new, also because there are only very few works for cello by Armenian composers known in the canon of Western music. Since the repertoire for cello and piano in Armenian music is generally limited, thus far the two have performed few other works, among them, Aria & Dance by Arno Babajanian. As a contribution to expanding acquaintance with Armenian music, they are now planning to arrange several songs by Komitas Vardapet for cello and piano, to include them in their future concerts.

St. James Armenian Church, Tekeyan Cultural Association
Boston Chapter & Society
of Istanbul Armenians of Boston
present
NY’s TCA Mher Megerdchian
Theatrical Group
in
Anton Chekhov’s
The Marriage Proposal
A comedy directed by
Harout Chatnadjian
*performed in Armenian
with English subtitles*
surprise preshow
Sunday Oct. 26
3:45 pm doors open
4 pm lavish dinner
5 pm show

St. James Armenian Church Keljik Hall
465 Mt. Auburn St.,
Watertown, MA
\$75 plus cash bar
Reservations at Eventbrite:
themarriageproposal.eventbrite.com
Or use this QR code

Project Save First Full Exhibition in New Gallery Space

PROJECT SAVE, from page 13 and production support to emerging visual storytellers across the globe working to document human rights issues through lived experiences. More details on the Fellowship are here.

“Conversations On Photography” series Project Save’s work includes conversations with prominent voices in photography and the visual arts whose work highlights the importance of documentation and archiving, and the use of visual storytelling in the preservation of cultural heritage. Two “Conversations On Photography” events are planned this fall:

Thursday, October 30 at 7 p.m., Conversation with Toni Pepe. As Chair of Photography and Associate Professor of Art at Boston University, Pepe creates prints and three-dimensional assemblages from discarded newspaper images, family snapshots and obsolete photographic equipment. Using those elements, Pepe investigates how photography shapes understandings of time, space and self. In conversation with Arto Vaun, Pepe presents examples from her work “Can I Hold You?,” exploring the press photographs and newspaper clippings found in the Boston Public Library’s Women and Gender Issues Collection. These photographs, long hidden within a larger Library archive, and the collection’s origins remain unknown. Pepe says working in the archive as an artist “allows me to navigate it not just as a repository of history, but as an unstable, active space of meaning. By emphasizing the photograph as both image and artifact, I hope to prompt viewers to reconsider how

we witness, record and remember.” Thursday, November 6 at 7 pm, Conversation with Claire Beckett. The Boston-based photographer’s large-scale por-

can identity and the impact of global conflict. Recent projects include Simulating Iraq, a stunning look at cultural appropriation within American military train-

practice Islam. Of her work, Beckett says, “Photography is my language for thinking and speaking. I lean into picture-making’s visual and psychological aspects to draw viewers in, encouraging them to think about the issues driving the work.”

“All three of these photographers are telling a larger story about how culture is perceived, collected, and preserved,” Vaun says. “Their work reflects Project Save’s role as a living archive. Each one brings photographs and stories to life; they preserve and illuminate culture and history through their lenses.”

Founded in 1975 by Ruth Thomasian, Project Save began as a grassroots effort to document the stories of elderly Armenian immigrants through photographs. Over five decades, the organization amassed more than 100,000 original images from Armenian families and communities around the world, depicting daily life, world events, religious ceremonies, and visits with political leaders, artists, writers and freedom fighters. Vaun became Project Save’s Executive Director in 2021 and led the acquisition of Project Save’s first public home, complete with offices, climate-controlled storage, and gallery space.



A photo by French-Armenian photojournalist Astrig Agopian

traits offer views into a post-9/11 America and the impact of the U.S. on global affairs. In conversation with Boston Public Library Lead Curator & Manager of the Arts Kristin Parker, Beckett will show and discuss photographs from her body of work that offer a critical lens on Ameri-

ing, including maneuvers during which troops enact training practices upon other troops dressed in traditional dress of Middle Eastern citizens. The “cosplay” elements of the maneuvers have a significant impact on American soldiers who are themselves Middle Eastern, Muslim, or



Tekeyan Cultural Association

Sponsor a Teacher in Armenia

Since its inception in 2001, The TCA Sponsor A Teacher program has raised \$838,700 and reached out to 7,386 teachers and school staff in Armenia and Artsakh. Yes, I would like to sponsor TCA school teacher(s) in Armenia, as well as teachers who fled Artsakh and continue teaching in Armenia schools, to continue helping them to work, and educate the children, our future leaders. I would like to have the teacher(s)’s name(s) and address(es).



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

☐ \$240 ☐ \$480 ☐ \$700 ☐ other _____

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Email _____

Make check payable to: Tekeyan Cultural Association
Memo: Sponsor a Teacher 2025
Mail your check to:
TCA Sponsor a Teacher
5326 Val Verde, Houston, TX 77056



If you prefer to donate by credit card, please go to:
givebutter.com/Og6lky

Your donation is tax deductible.



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

OCTOBER 17-18 — Friday and Saturday, St. James Armenian Church 78th Annual Bazaar – Fri. 12-8 p.m., Sat. 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Delicious Armenian Food, Mezze, Pastries, and Baked Goods. Silent Auction, Raffle, Children’s Activities, Booths and Local Vendors. 465 Mt. Auburn St., Watertown. For more information visit www.stjameswatertown.org/bazaar.

OCTOBER 18 — The Music for Future Foundation’s visiting fellows from Armenia will present a special concert, showcasing their artistic talents while raising awareness and financial support for the Foundation’s impactful work. Musicians aged 10 to 18 will perform works by Babadjanyan, Beethoven, Chopin, Dvorak, Khachaturian, Liszt, Rachmaninoff, Saint-Saens and Boston premieres by composers Yuri Gevorgyan and Arno Melkonyan. International violinist/violist Ara Gregorian, Chair of String and Piano Chamber Music at the New England Conservatory of Music will also be on hand to discuss music education opportunities in the United States. For tickets and information, visit www.FACSBoston.org

OCTOBER 19 — “Alan Hovhaness: Unveiling the Life of a Musical Genius” Book Launch and Concert. Sunday. Sylvie Zakarian (marimba), Daniela Tošić (vocals), Karineh Bagdasarian (piano). Sunday, 4 p.m., 441 Mystic Street, Arlington. Organized by Armenian Cultural Foundation (ACF) and co-sponsored by Amaras Art Alliance (AAA), National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR).

OCTOBER 19 — Annual Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture, creating a New Sculptural Shape. Sunday, 9 a.m. Armenian Heritage Park on the Greenway, Boston. Rain date: October 26.

OCTOBER 19 — CELEBRATING WHAT UNITES US! Highlighting Ireland. Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Wednesday, 4 p.m. Monthly series in collaboration with the City of Boston Office of Immigrant Advancement and Age Friendly Boston RSVP appreciated, hello@armenianheritagepark.org

OCTOBER 23 — The Armenia Tree Project is celebrating its 30th anniversary with a reception. Meet new executive director Ara Barsam and bid farewell to retiring executive director Jeanmarie Papelian and support ATP’s work toward a greener Armenia. Thursday, 6 to 8 p.m. Food and drinks, photo exhibition. Sheraton Commander Hotel, 16 Garden St., Cambridge. Valet parking is available. Registration required by October 6. 617-926-8733.

OCTOBER 24 — 20th Anniversary Celebration of Father Khachatur Kesablian’s Ordination to Priesthood. Presentation of Floral (Dzaghga) Pilon by His Eminnce, 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, djuke@comcast.net, 508-364-9729, or got to www.stsvartanantz.com. Tickets must be purchased by October 17. No tickets will be sold at the door.

OCTOBER 25 — Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church 85th Anniversary Gala Fundraising Dinner, Saturday, 6:00 PM Cocktail, 7 p.m. Dinner & Program, Sheraton Boston Hotel. Celebrate 85 years of Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church in New England. Details and tickets: www.holycrossarmenian.com

OCTOBER 25 — FallFest at first Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont, noon to 7 pm. All the kebabs, plus homemade pastries, string cheese, and eetch.

OCTOBER 25-26 — Save the dates! First Anniversary Celebration of Holy Archangels Armenian Church Sanctuary Consecration presided by Bishop Mesrop Parsamyan. Saturday, October 25, at 4 p.m.: Worship and acknowledgment of Godfathers of the Church; 5 p.m. Mezza and Wine Reception. Sunday, October 26, 10 a.m.: Holy Badarak; 2 p.m. Banquet & Program including St. Vartan Award Recipients. Ordinations throughout the weekend

OCTOBER 26 — TCA Mher Megerdchian Theatrical Group presents Chekhov’s “The Marriage Proposal” in Western Armenian at St. James Armenian Church, a cosponsor along with Tekeyan Cultural Association Boston Chapter and the Society of Istanbul Armenians, 4 p.m. Tickets \$75/person at themarriageproposal.eventbrite.com

NOVEMBER 1 — Debut performance of the Massachusetts Chamber Music Artists. Program. Music by Frank Bridge, Komitas, Mendelssohn. Haig Hovsepian and Michael Fisher on violin, Yeh-Chun Lin on viola, Edward Aron 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 1 — New England Couple’s Ministry, supported by New England Armenian Clergy offers “Restored by Grace: Forgiveness that Renews Marriage.” Speaker: Kevin Sanders, executive director and counselor, Boston Center for Biblical Counseling. 5 p.m. \$75 per person, includes catered buffet, First Armenian Church, 380 Concord Ave., Belmont.

NOVEMBER 3 —St. James Men’s Club Monthly dinner and fellowship; Guest Speaker, Sportswriter Steve Buckley, a sportswriter for more than 45 years and has been a columnist with The Athletic since 2018. Prior to that he was the columnist with the Boston Herald for 23 years. He also covered baseball for the Hartford Courant, Tacoma News Tribune and Portland Press Herald. Monday, St. James Armenian Church, 465 Mount Auburn St., Watertown. Social hour 6:15 [mezza]Dinner 7:00pm Losh and Kheyma. \$25 per person.

NOVEMBER 7 — Showing of “There Was, There Was Not” documentary, Friday at 7 p.m. West Newton Cinema, 1296 Washington Street, West Newton. Following the screening, filmmaker Emily Mkrtichian will join a Q&A discussion moderated by Paul Boghosian, President of Harbor Side Films. Reception hosted by anoush’ella follows. For tickets: \$20/person, westnewtoncinema.org

NOVEMBER 9 — GIVING THANKS: COMING TOGETHER. ARMENIAN HERITAGE PARK ON THE GREENWAY, Boston. 2pm. View the new Reconfiguration of the Abstract Sculpture. Meet & Greet. Cider & Sweets. Refreshments. RSVP appreciated hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NOVEMBER 21 — AMAA’s Boston Child Care Committee presents an evening supporting the Khoren and Shooshanig Avedisian School in Yerevan, Armenia, FEATURING COMEDIAN KEV ORKIAN. COCKTAILS, DINNER & LIVE AUCTION. Wellesley Country Club, Wellesley Hills. (Individual Tickets will commence at a later date). For more info visit: <https://amaa.org/hyeminds-boston2025/>

NOVEMBER 22 — Sts. Vartanantz Armenian Church Food Festival. 11 a.m. – 6 p.m., 180 Old Westford Rd., Chelmsford, MA. Eat-in or Take-out. The Food Festival menu includes lamb, chicken, and losh kebab dinners, and a vegetarian platter; a country store with a variety of Armenian specialties and deserts. The festival also features a jewelry table and gift items from Armenia as well as a Tavloo Tournament at 1:30 p.m. For further information, see the church website at www.stsvartanantz.com or call the church office at 978-256-7234.

DECEMBER 7 CANDLELIT LABYRINTH WALK: IN PEACE & HARMONY Armenian Heritage Park on The Greenway, Boston. Sunday at 4:45pm. Meet & Greet. Walk the Candlelit Labyrinth Walk. Enjoy Hot Chocolate & Sweet Treats. RSVP appreciated. hello@ArmenianHeritagePark.org

NEW JERSEY

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

RHODE ISLAND

OCTOBER 18 — Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church presents “GALA KEF Dinner Dance” dedicated to 30th Anniversary of Cultural Committee featuring Ken Kalajian - guitar, Charles Kalajian - percussions, Leon Janikian - clarinet, Harry Bedrossian - oud & vocal. Egavian Cultural Center - 70 Jefferson Street, Providence, 6 – 7 pm Cocktail Hour, 7 pm - Dinner, 8 pm – 11 Band. General Admission : \$60 (\$75 after October 12) Call for tickets: Zara Vartanian: 401-439-5971, Elvira Hovagimian: 860-462-3610.

NOVEMBER 1 — The Cultural Committee of Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church presents a “Spiritual Music Festival”, dedicated to the memory of Maestro Khoren Mekhanejian featuring the Choirs & Soloists of Rhode Island Orthodox Churches. Special guests: Hasmik Mekhanejian, mezzo-soprano (NY), Anahit Zakarian, soprano (NY). In the Sanctuary of Sts. Sahag & Mesrob Armenian Church at 3 p.m. 70 Jefferson Street, Providence. Donations Gratefully Appreciated. Refreshments will be served

NOVEMBER 15-16 — Sts. Sahag and Mesrob Armenian Church Food Fair and Bazaar. Saturday, 12 p.m. to 7 p.m. and Sunday 12 p.m. to 5 p.m. Delicious Armenian food and pastries, including lamb shish kebab, losh kebab, baked half chicken, kheyma, lahmajoon, boreg, yalanchi, choreg, cream khadaif and more. Lunch, dinner or takeout. \$1,000 raffle. Kids activities, Nazeli Dance Group, silent auction and vendors. 70 Jefferson St., Providence.

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.

COMMENTARY

THE ARMENIAN
**MIRROR
SPECTATOR**
SINCE 1932



An ADL Publication

THE FIRST ENGLISH LANGUAGE
ARMENIAN WEEKLY IN THE
UNITED STATES

EDITOR

Alin K. Gregorian

MANAGING EDITOR

Aram Arkun

ART DIRECTOR

Mark (Mgrditchian) McKertich

CONTRIBUTORS

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

REGIONAL

CORRESPONDENTS

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

PHOTOGRAPHERS

Jirair Hovsepian, Ken Martin

VIDEO CORRESPONDENT

Haykaram Nahapetyan

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

Baikar Association, Inc.

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

Telephone: 617-924-4420

FAX: 617-924-2887

www.mirrorspectator.com

E-Mail: editor@mirrorspectator.com
For advertising: mirrorads@aol.com

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

U.S.A.	\$100 one year
Canada	\$150 one year
Other Countries	\$230 one year

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

ISSN 0004-234X

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

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

Terminological Disagreements And Shifts in Russian Relations

By Suren Sargsyan

Special to the Mirror-Spectator

The Trump Route for International Peace and Prosperity (TRIPP) has been one of the most discussed topics in recent weeks. However, there is a significant issue with terminology as Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev persistently calls it the “Zangezur Corridor.” In his speech at the UN General Assembly’s 80th session Aliyev said that the August 8 Washington summit’s key outcome was TRIPP which will “ensure unimpeded access through the Zangezur corridor and foster regional connectivity.” In response, just two days later, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan addressed this in his speech, stressing that such an expression does not exist in the documents agreed in Washington and the use of such term in Armenian reality “is perceived as a territorial claim from Armenia and is associated with conflict discourse.”

According to the prime minister’s spokesperson Nazeli Bagdasaryan, the problem of the term’s usage was also discussed during the October 2 meeting between Pashinyan and Aliyev in Copenhagen on the sidelines of the European Political Community Summit. The official statement did not provide much information, with both Armenian and Azerbaijani sides posting the exact same text.

However, Aliyev continued with the “Zangezur corridor” narrative. During the Summit of the Organization of the Turkic States Aliyev once again spoke of the opening of the “Zangezur Corridor” and it was also included in the text of declaration of the summit: “Express support to the ongoing efforts by the member states to operationalize and to develop the Zangezur Corridor.”

After this, the Armenian prime minister’s spokesperson said that the “narrative presented by the president of Azerbaijan cannot in any way pertain to the territory of the Republic of Armenia.” and the only projects pertaining to the territory of Armenia are TRIPP and the Crossroads of Peace. Thus, this terminology has led to a diplomatic ping pong match between Aliyev and Armenian officials.

While there is a debate as to what actually is going to pass through Armenian territory, President Donald Trump in his discussions often refers to the Washington meetings and accords, claiming he resolved the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. One recent mention was during Trump’s meeting with the Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney, where the latter called

Trump a transformative president. The normalization of Armenian-Azerbaijani relations was supposedly one of these transformations.

Meanwhile, Aliyev seems to have mended relations with Russia, which were strained following the Azerbaijan Airlines crash in Russian airspace at the end of last year. A significant part of the discussion between President of the Russian Federation Vladimir Putin and Aliyev, held in Dushanbe, Tajikistan on October 9 at an informal meeting of leaders of the Commonwealth of Independent States, was dedicated to the topic. Putin essentially admitted that the crash was caused by some malfunction of the Russian air defense system, along with the presence of Ukrainian drones inside his country that it had to strike down. He said the investigation on that is still ongoing but Russia will do everything necessary in terms of compensation.

On the other hand, there was a certain tension between Putin and Pashinyan. In his speech during the meeting of CIS heads of state council in Dushanbe, while speaking of deepened trade

relations within the Eurasian Economic Union, Putin referring to Pashinyan asked how much was trade with Armenia. When Pashinyan said it is 4 billion dollars, Putin doubted that, saying it should be more. This small episode of sparring was most probably connected to Armenia’s recent statements and actions in the context of EU integration. Interestingly, Pashinyan joined the CIS meeting right after his visit to Brussels for a conference called Global Gateway where he also talked about the TRIPP and Crossroads of Peace initiatives.

During the CIS meeting Aliyev and Pashinyan both gave speeches, each with different messages. While Pashinyan’s whole speech was dedicated to Armenian-Azerbaijani relations, Washington agreements and TRIPP, Aliyev did not speak of that at all. Instead, he thanked CIS countries for supporting “the candidacy of the city of Lachin in Azerbaijan’s East Zangezur” that was “liberated from 30 years of Armenian occupation.”

Two months after the Washington accords, there is still no agreement on the use of terminology and Pashinyan and Aliyev each follows his own agenda.

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



TRIBUTE:

Robert Jay Lifton and the Armenian Genocide

By Peter Balakian

Robert Jay Lifton died on September 3 at the age of 99. He was a towering figure in the field of psychohistory (psychology and history) that he helped found with his mentor Erik Erickson, the eminent psychiatrist and historian who wrote Young Man Luther and Ghandi’s Truth. Lifton’s contributions to social thought in our time are central to our understanding of mass violence, trauma, and survivor experience. He created a new lexicon for thinking about how humans commit atrocities and how humans survive catastrophes. He opened up the discourse on survivors by conceptualizing survivor identity in his 1968 National Book Award winning study Life in Death about survivors of Hiroshi-

ma. He created concepts and definitions — a whole lexicon that transformed our understanding of our age. Some of them include: “Psychic numbing,” “doubling,” “atrocious producing situation,” “survivor guilt,” “nuclearism,” “counterfeit reality,” “superpower syndrome,” “totalism,” “malignant normality,” “proteanism,” “climate swerve,” “angry grief,” “symbolic immortality.” Among his two dozen books are The Nazi Doctors: Medical Killing and The Psychology of Genocide, Death in Life: Survivors of Hiroshima, Home From The War: Learning From Vietnam Veterans, Thought Reform and Totalism: A Study of Brainwashing in China, The Protean Self: Human Resilience in an Age of Fragmentation, The Broken Connection: On Death and the Continuity of Life.

My own friendship with Robert is inseparable from his encounter with the Turkish ambassador to the United States — an episode that would have a large impact on breaking down the wall of Turkish denial of the Armenian Genocide. Robert and I came together in that moment and our friendship of the past thirty years was spawned. The story of his encounter with the Turkish ambassador could be part of a spy novel with an academic twist. When Robert received a letter from Ambassador Nüzhet Kandemir on October 2, 1990 scolding him for writing about the role of Turkish physicians during the Armenian Genocide in his book The Nazi Doctors — his landmark study of German physicians who served Hitler’s program of bio-med

continued on next page



COMMENTARY

MY TURN



by Harut Sassounian

Pashinyan is Wrong: No 4th or 3rd Republic; Only 2 Armenian Republics: 1918 And 1991

Last month, during a speech at the general assembly of his Civil Contract party, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan announced a new ploy: the creation of a Fourth Republic of Armenia next year.

Not satisfied with his repeated attempts to erase Armenia's several-millennia-old history and mislead the people into thinking that the country began to exist when he came to power in 2018, Pashinyan now wants to cover up his disastrous seven-year rule and start all over again in 2026.

Whether Pashinyan likes it or not, it is impossible to forget Armenia's long existence beginning with successive ancient kingdoms, the founding of the Kingdom of Cilicia in 1078, the first independent Republic of Armenia (1918-1920), and the second independent Republic of Armenia in 1991.

You will notice that I left out Soviet Armenia. Even though Armenians had many cultural accomplishments during that period, Soviet Armenia was not a sovereign, independent country, since it was part of the Soviet Union. As a result, Soviet Armenia cannot be the second Republic of Armenia. There were only two independent Armenian Republics: the first in 1918 and the second in 1991. Pashinyan's plan to create a Fourth Republic is doubly wrong because there was no third republic; therefore, there cannot be a fourth.

No matter what tricks Pashinyan uses to conceal his misdeeds, Armenians cannot forget that:

— He is responsible for losing Artsakh, for the deaths of thousands of Armenian soldiers, and territorial losses suffered by the Republic of Armenia.

— He has asked irresponsible questions about the Armenian Genocide and about the liberation of Artsakh.

— He has made critical comments about Armenia's sacred patriotic symbols, including the coat of arms, the national anthem, and Mount Ararat.

— He acquiesced to Azerbaijan's demands and made several concessions to President Aliyev, including preparing a new constitution, agreeing to drop Armenia's lawsuits against Azerbaijan in international courts, disbanding the OSCE Minsk Group of mediators, accepting the suspension of the ban on U.S. aid to Azerbaijan, removing EU border observers from Armenia, and giving Azerbaijan an "unobstructed" road to cross Armenia.

Pashinyan has done all these dreadful things in the name of creating a fake

"real Armenia" in line with the demands of Armenia's enemies. He is trying to accomplish what neither Turkey nor Azerbaijan succeeded in doing — to eliminate from the hearts and minds of Armenians the dream of restoring historic Armenia, which includes Western Armenia and Artsakh. Azerbaijan and Turkey have taken our lands, but they can never erase our memories. Only by not forgetting our lost territories and by committing to regain them when the right opportunity arises can we realize our dreams. The Jewish people dreamed of returning to Israel for 2,000 years and passed that wish to successive generations until the right opportunity came in 1948, when they created their own state. If Jews can keep their dreams alive for 2000 years, why can't Armenians do the same? All those who say it is impossible to realize our dream because powerful enemies are occupying our lands do not understand that I am not talking about restoring our territories tomorrow morning but at a future date when realities on the ground change. No country remains powerful forever. If Armenians give up hope of ever recovering their lands, they would be doing exactly what our enemies want. When you give up your dream and do not pass it to the next generation, you will not be able to take advantage of the opportunity when it comes. Do not blame the Azeris or the Turks; you are the one giving up what belongs to you.

Pashinyan cunningly keeps harping on the word "peace" in order to fool the people into reelecting his parliamentary majority in next year's elections, thereby remaining Prime Minister for another five years.

To save Armenia from the edge of the abyss, the citizens of Armenia need to do two things:

1) Elect a competent and patriotic leader who can gradually correct Pashinyan's errors.

2) Concentrate Armenia's resources on building a militarily strong country that can defend itself from hostile neighbors. A well-armed Armenia can inflict sufficient damage to deter enemy attacks. Unless we protect our borders, our enemies will be able to enter and occupy Armenia without firing a shot.

Armenia's next patriotic government should cancel and reverse all illegal agreements and concessions made by Pashinyan. Whatever he is signing and giving away now is a meaningless piece of paper.

All opposition groups and parties should unite and form a powerful coalition to defeat Pashinyan's party in the 2026 parliamentary elections.

In next year's referendum, the citizens of Armenia should reject Pashinyan's new constitution, imposed by President Aliyev. This will derail Pashinyan's and Aliyev's sinister plans, since Aliyev has said he will not sign the so-called peace treaty, unless Armenia changes its constitution.

Even though Armenia has lost much under Pashinyan's rule, all is not lost. There is still an opportunity to rescue the country from its enemies, both domestic and foreign.

from previous page

ical killing — he was surprised. But — when he saw the pile of documents in the envelope, he was astonished. Inadvertently or not, someone had included the full correspondence that led to this castigating letter. It was revelatory. The inter-office correspondence included several pages from Mr. Health Lowry, Director of the Institute for Turkish Studies, funded by the Turkish government, in Washington DC. Lowry writes in a long memo: "I have located and read Lifton's *The Nazi Doctors*, with an eye to drafting a letter for your signature to the author. . . . Lifton is a recognized authority in his own field who clearly knows nothing about the so-called 'Armenian Genocide'. . . . our problem is less with Lifton that it is with the works up which he relies, Lifton is simply the end of the chain." Ingratiating himself to the power of the state, he writes "I strongly recommend that it be pointed out to Ankara that Lifton's book is simply the end result of the Turkish failure to respond to Dadrian," and the others. Lowry then drafted the letter that Ambassador Kandemir sent to Lifton: "I was shocked by your references to the so-called Armenian Genocide," "to compare a tragic civil war perpetrated by misguided Armenian nationalists" to the Holocaust "is ludicrous," and the letter goes on in an unctuous tone with denialist rhetoric.

Robert told me that when he received the packet from the embassy his first response was to fire a letter back to the ambassador conveying his disgust at the denial lies and the harm they do. But, then he decided he could be more effective if he teamed up two scholars Roger Smith an authority on the Armenian Genocide and Eric Markusen his co-author for *The Genocidal Mentality* — to write an article that would analyze the psychology and corruption of denial-

ism. The article, "Professional Ethics and the Denial of the Armenian Genocide," was published in the *Journal for Holocaust Studies* in the spring issue of 1995. It is a necessary text for everyone interested in genocide and criminal cover up in the aftermath. It's online and an important read for everyone.

When I read the article in late April of '95 I was in a low state having just been through yet another ordeal with Turkish denial. I was trying to educate the editors at the Syracuse Post-Standard who had to field angry denialist attacks from Turkish nationalists and the Turkish embassy after they had published my op-ed "Remembering the Armenian Genocide Eighty Years Later." Feeling exhausted by the relentless attacks from Turkey to discredit all representations of the Genocide in our own country, I was fending off despondency. The Lifton/Smith/Markusen article came to me as manna. A profound piece of moral witness fused with scholarship and ethical reflection; it struck me as more important than anything I'd ever read on the issue of denial.

Immediately I wrote Robert Lifton, whom I knew only by reputation, a letter explaining to him that I would like to go public with his article with a petition I had drafted aimed at gathering a hundred prominent scholars and writers who would affirm the ethical significance Robert's encounter with Lowry and the Ambassador. Robert called me right back and invited me to meet him in his office at John Jay College of Criminal Justice on the upper west side of Manhattan. I walked into his office on a Friday morning in mid-May and he greeted me with an affirmative handshake and the blend of calm and upbeat energy that defined him. He read my petition and liked it. The petition was asking fellow

scholars and writers to take a stand against Turkish denialism and the other ethical issue wrapped up in this drama that had to do with the Turkish government's efforts to manipulate the university curriculum in the US. A big part of Turkey's denial campaign was focused on universities. And what had happened between the time that Robert received the packet from the ambassador and the publication of the article made this ever clearer. In 1994 Health Lowry had been advanced from his position at the Turkish Institute in DC (which boasted a goal of establishing chairs in Turkish studies at American universities) to an endowed chair at Princeton University named — no kidding — the Atatürk Chair in Turkish studies funded of course by the Turkish government. What had Lowry done to deserve this prestigious honor reserved for the most highly accomplished scholars in a given field? After finishing his Ph.D. in Ottoman Studies, he went to Turkey to work for a research institute in Istanbul and did some teaching at universities there and published a denialist tract attempting to discredit US Ambassador Henry Morgenthau's memoir that included important chapters on the Armenian Genocide. Then he returned to the States to direct the Turkish Institute. He had never held a tenured position at an American university, nor had he published a book by mainstream scholarly or trade press. Given this record and the fact that the Turkish government and its supporters had funded the chair struck many professors around the nation as not quite right. "Let's get going," Robert said, and we talked for the next two hours. I told him that thought if we could flash a light on this scandal, we could raise a mainstream awareness about the Armenian Genocide and Turkish denial in a way that had never happened before.

The Lifton/Markusen/Smith essay closed by weighing in on the impact of denialism and the unethical and careerist motivations of scholars who choose to promote it. "Denial contributes to genocide and continues the process of genocide"; "Where scholars deny genocide, in the face of decisive evidence, they contribute to false consciousness that can have the most dire reverberations. Their message is, in effect is: murderers did not really murder, victims were not really killed; mass murder requires no confrontation. . . . by closing their minds to the truth scholars contribute to the deadly psychohistorical dynamic in which unopposed genocide begets new genocides."

Our petition "Taking A Stand Against the Turkish Government's Denial of the Armenian Genocide and Scholarly Corruption in the Academy" went viral. I had my friends and colleagues around the nation and Robert had his friends and colleagues, and there were dozens of other prominent scholars whom neither of us knew but who were indignant about this compounded corruption and were happy to sign. For several months I made phone calls, sent faxes and emails, gathering name after name. There were long and short conversations at late hours of the evening. Everyone who signed expressed their deep moral concern and many their outrage. I called Robert's colleagues and friends Norman Mailer, David Brion Davis, William Sloane Coffin, Judith Herman, Daniel Ellsberg, Catherine Bateson, Cathy Caruth all of whom signed enthusiastically. My colleagues and fellow writers who signed included Seamus Heaney, Derek Walcott, Alfred Kazin, Robert Pinsky, Arthur Miller, Kurt Vonnegut, William and Rose Styron. I was uplifted when Susan Sontag faxed me back a big "yes see TRIBUTE, page 20

Tribute: Robert Jay Lifton and the Armenian Genocide

TRIBUTE, from page 19

happy to sign” in a few minutes. Prominent Holocaust scholars Robert Melson, Roger Smith, Helen Fein, Raul Hilberg, Deborah Lipstadt, Deborah Dwork, Yehuda Bauer were vital. Henry Louis Gates, Cornel West, Anthony Appiah, Houston Baker gave essential moral weight. With more than 150 signers such as these and the dovetailing of Turkish denialism and the Lowry appointment at Princeton — the petition was covered by the mainstream press.

When a headline ran in the New York Times in May 1996 “Princeton Accused of Fronting for the Turkish Government,” with a photograph of me with my hand raised at the podium during an address I gave at the Princeton Club in New York City, I knew we were being heard. The Boston Globe, LA Times, Chronicle of Higher Education, and others followed. The Lifton-Lowry-Turkish ambassador affair brought a sea change of awareness unlike anything that had happened in the past eighty years. Legislators on Capitol Hill and at local levels were also getting it: Turkey manipulating higher education, coercing opinion in America, and denying genocide.

My friendship with Robert was defined by our shared intellectual, political, and activist projects and passions and our avid fandom for the Knicks, Dodgers (his team), and Yankees. Almost every year from ’95 on I was at his yearly four-day seminar held at his house on Cape Cod known as The Wellfleet Meetings — where I often presented a paper or read my poems. When we celebrated Robert’s birthday over dinner as we did most every year, we would lift a glass to the work that brought us together in the spring of 1995.

(Peter Balakian is the author of many books including the Pulitzer Prize winning collection of poetry Ozone Journal and the memoir Black Dog of Fate, winner of the PEN/Albrand Award. His book of poems New York Trilogy has just been published. He teaches at Colgate University.)

Honorary Consulate of Armenia in Fresno Calls 15th Mission to Armenia a Success

FRESNO, Calif. (KSEE/KGPE) – The Honorary Consulate of Armenia in Fresno is calling the 15th medical mission to Armenia “high-caliber”.

From September 19 to October 4, Honorary Consulate Berj Apkarian and a team of medical professionals from around the country and world were in Armenia for the medical mission.

The overall goal is to establish lifelong ties between medical professionals in America and medical professionals in countries like Armenia to save lives.

The first part of this mission encompassed the 3rd annual international medical conference from September 23 to 26 at Yerevan State Medical University. For the first time, nursing

education and lectures on nurse practitioners were provided at this conference.

Apkarian calls nurses the most essential workforce in healthcare, and with his experience being in healthcare for over 37 years, he knows countries like Armenia need upgrades to their nursing foundation.

The conference was opened by Her Excellence Ms. Kristina Kvien, United States Ambassador to the Republic of Armenia, along with Dr. Armen Muradyan,



Some of the medical team members in Armenia




Ambassador Kristina Kvien, front row, sixth from left, with members of the medical mission in Yerevan

the Dean of the Medical School. Topics covered everything from disaster response to AI in medicine, being discussed by professionals from the University of Irvine, the Cleveland Clinic, UCSF, and more.

During the conference, Apkarian was also surprised by being awarded the title of Honorary Professor of Public Health Faculty. This was presented by the President of the Yerevan State Medical University. This took place during day one of the conference.

Apkarian calls the conference “critical” to keep Armenia’s healthcare on pace with current standards. Along with the conference was the deployment of rehabilitation teams to the Armenian regions of Gyumri and Armavir.

Because of this year’s success with assessment, Apkarian says next year’s rehabilitation team will be larger.



1940 - 2025
ANNIVERSARY

Ս. ԽԱՐՉ ՀԱՅ ԿԱԹՈՂԻԿԷ ԵԿԵՂԵՑԻ 85-ԱՄԵԱԿ
ՀԱՒԱՏՔ • ՍՇԱԿՈՅԹ • ՀԱՄԱՍԻՈՒԹԵՆԱԿԱՆՈՒԹԻՒՆ

Please join us as we celebrate
Holy Cross Armenian Catholic Church

Anniversary Gala

FAITH • CULTURE • ECUMENISM


Under the Patronage of His Excellency
THE MOST REVEREND MIKAEL MOURADIAN
Bishop of the Armenian Catholic Eparchy of
Our Lady of Nareg in the USA and Canada

Honoring
His Excellency
ARCHBISHOP RICHARD G. HENNING
Roman Catholic Archdiocese of Boston

Keynote Speaker
MR. PETER PALANDJIAN
CEO of Intercontinental Real Estate Corp.

Honorary Presenter of the Servant of God
Cardinal Agagianian
DR. CARA AGHAJANIAN
Dame of the Order of Malta

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



Scan for more info

Saturday, October 25, 2025
6:00 PM – Cocktail Reception 7:00 PM – Dinner
SHERATON HOTEL, 39 Dalton Street, Boston, MA
Parking at the Prudential Center Garage



ST. JAMES ARMENIAN CHURCH
78th Annual
BAZAAR

FRI, OCTOBER 17, 2025 12 – 8 PM
SAT, OCTOBER 18, 2025 11 AM – 7 PM
(KITCHEN OPENS AT 12 PM)

DELICIOUS ARMENIAN FOOD
Shish, Chicken and Losh Kebab | Imam Bayeldi | Eetch
Kheyma (available 12:30-2:30pm & 4-7pm) | Mezze Items

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

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

ONLINE SILENT AUCTION
Visit AUCTRIA.EVENTS/STJAMES to register.
Bidding is online only. Auction opens Fri, Oct. 17 at 9 am and ends Sun, Oct. 19 at 9 pm.

NEW! “ARMENIAN” CHANCE AUCTION
Wide range of items and experiences! Available in-person only.

BAZAAR SITE



\$100 RAFFLE
\$5,000, \$1,000, \$750 and three \$500 prizes!
Drawing will take place Sat, October 18th.

SILENT AUCTION SITE



SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE
WWW.STJAMESWATERTOWN.ORG/BAZAAR

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