

**We are not speaking about a looming crisis anymore; we speak about an ongoing humanitarian disaster - FM Mirzoyan**



Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan participates in the OSCE Special Permanent Council meeting, Vienna, July 20,

Armenia urged the international community on July 20 to put stronger pressure on Azerbaijan to reopen the Lachin corridor, saying that Nagorno-Karabakh's population is "on the verge of starvation."

"We are not speaking about a looming crisis anymore; we speak about an ongoing humanitarian disaster," Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan told an emergency session of the Vienna-based Permanent Council of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe. "The mediaeval practices should be ceased. This cannot continue if we are serious about values and principles."

"The international community in general and the OSCE in particular cannot remain silent simply because the lives of 120 thousand people are at stake," he said.

Armenia initiated the meeting to draw greater international attention to the seven-month blockade of Karabakh's sole land link with the outside world, which has led to severe shortages of food, medicine, fuel and other essential items in the region.

Azerbaijan has also cut off Armenia's supplies of electricity and natural gas to Karabakh. The humanitarian crisis deteriorated after Baku blocked on June 15 relief supplies carried out, in limited amounts, by Russian peacekeepers and the Red Cross.

"Prior to the blockade, around 90 percent of all consumed food was imported from Armenia, and with every passing day the people of Nagorno-Karabakh don't receive 400 tons of essential goods," said Mirzoyan. "Furthermore, by using force and the threat of force, Azerbaijan continues to obstruct agricultural activities on approximately 10,000 hectares of land adjacent to the line of contact, which constitutes a significant portion of total cultivated land."

"As a result, today the people of Nagorno-Karabakh are on the verge of hunger and starvation," Mirzoyan warned.

Mirzoyan said that the blockade could also "seriously harm" ongoing Armenian-Azerbaijani negotiations on a bilateral peace treaty. But he stopped short of threatening to suspend the talks if Baku remains adamant in keeping Karabakh cut off from the outside world.

Mirzoyan also reaffirmed Yerevan's readiness to recognize Azerbaijani sovereignty over Karabakh through the treaty. "The respect for the territorial integrity of Azerbaijan should not and could not be anyhow misinterpreted and used as a license for ethnic cleansings in Nagorno-Karabakh," he added.

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## PM Pashinyan commends former MP Francois Rochebloine's contribution to the development of Armenian-French ties

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received former member of the French National Assembly, long-time chairman of the France-Armenia parliamentary friendship group Francois Rochebloine.

The Prime Minister welcomed Mr. Rochebloine's visit to Armenia and emphasized his important role in the continuous development and strengthening of relations between Armenia and France. The Prime Minister also emphasized his personal attitude towards Armenia's agenda and its promotion.

Francois Rochebloine thanked for the warm welcome and added that this

day is symbolic for him. "Five years ago today, Mr. Prime Minister, you handed me a passport of the Republic of Armenia. I am happy for the opportunity to be in Armenia again and exchange ideas," said Mr. Rochebloine.

The interlocutors touched upon the Armenian-French interaction, as well as other issues of mutual interest.



## Armenian, US defense officials discuss bilateral cooperation



On an official visit to the US, Chief of the General Staff of the Armenian Armed Forces, First Deputy Minister of Defense, Major General Eduard Asryan participated

in the conference dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the US National Guard's State Partnership Program.

Throughout the event, meetings were held with the Chief of the National Guard Bureau, General Daniel R. Hokanson, the Director for Strategy, Plans and Policy, United States European Command, Major General Daniel Lasica, and the Adjutant General, Commander of Kansas National Guard, Brigadier General Michael T. Venerdi.

During the meetings, the current status

and prospects for the development of the Armenia-Kansas partnership within the framework of the program and a number of issues related to bilateral cooperation with the United States were discussed.

On the same day, Lieutenant General Edward Asryan met with the Minister of Defense of Cyprus, Michalis Giorgallas, and the Chief of the Cypriot National Guard, Lieutenant General Demokritos Zervakis.

A number of issues related to bilateral cooperation were also discussed.

## Political consultations between Armenian, German Foreign Ministries held in Yerevan

Political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Germany took place in Yerevan on July 17. On the Armenian side, the consultations were conducted by Deputy Foreign Minister Paruyr Hovhannisyan, the German delegation was led by Mathias Lutenberg, Political Director of the GDR Foreign Ministry for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia.

During the consultations, the parties emphasized the unprecedented intensification of relations between Armenia and

Germany in the current year, taking into account bilateral high-level visits and the expansion of cooperation in various fields.

Consistent development of relations on both bilateral and multilateral platforms was discussed. Cooperation in political, economic, educational, cultural, inter-parliamentary and decentralized spheres was specially emphasized.

The Deputy Minister addressed the issues of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno Karabakh, emphasized the need to eliminate the illegal blocking

of the Lachin Corridor by Azerbaijan and exclude the threat of using force.

Mathias Lutenberg was briefed on the process of normalization of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, the security situation in the region and Armenia's efforts to establish peace.



## Brussels summit didn't provide concrete result in terms of opening Lachin Corridor - Pashinyan

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has said that Azerbaijan continues its ethnic cleansing plan in Nagorno Karabakh and that his latest trilateral meeting with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev and President of the European Council Charles Michel in Brussels did not provide any concrete result in terms of opening the Lachin Corridor and overcoming the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno Karabakh.

"Unfortunately this meeting did not provide any concrete result in terms of opening the Lachin Corridor and overcoming the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno Karabakh," Pashinyan said at the July 20 Cabinet meeting. "Politically, in his post-meeting statement the President of the European Council emphasized the need to open the Lachin Corridor and the need to address the agenda of the rights and security of the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh through dialogue between Stepanakert and Baku," Pashinyan added. This dialogue cannot be productive without international involvement and mechanisms, at least due to the fact that Baku continues its aggressive and threatening rhetoric against Armenians of Nagorno

Karabakh, with a goal to commit ethnic cleansing in Nagorno Karabakh, he noted.

"This is no longer a theoretical claim, but a concrete plan being carried out through the illegal blockade of Lachin Corridor, directly demonstrated by the complete absence of electricity, natural gas, food and other essential supplies into Nagorno Karabakh aimed at making life in Nagorno Karabakh impossible for Armenians," Pashinyan warned.

The Armenian PM noted with regret that the International Court of Justice rulings of February 22 and July 6 ordering Azerbaijan to reopen the Lachin Corridor haven't been implemented.

Nonetheless, Pashinyan emphasized the need to continue to work in this direction and attract broader international media coverage of the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno Karabakh.

Lachin Corridor, the only road connecting Nagorno Karabakh with Armenia and the rest of the world, has been blocked by Azerbaijan since December 2022. The Azerbaijani blockade constitutes a gross violation of the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh ceasefire agreement, which established



that the 5km-wide Lachin Corridor shall be under the control of Russian peacekeepers. Furthermore, on February 22, 2023 the United Nations' highest court – the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - ordered Azerbaijan to "take all steps at its disposal" to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions. Azerbaijan has been ignoring the order ever since. Moreover, Azerbaijan then illegally installed a checkpoint on Lachin Corridor. The blockade has led to shortages of essential products such as food and medication. Azerbaijan has also cut off gas and power supply into Nagorno Karabakh, with officials warning that Baku seeks to commit ethnic cleansing against Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh. Hospitals have suspended normal operations and the Red Cross has been facilitating the medical evacuations of patients.

## MEPs encourage Turkey to recognize the Armenian Genocide



The Foreign Affairs Committee of the European Parliament has just adopted the Report on 2022 Commission Report on

Turkey, which "supports the normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey in the interest of reconciliation, regional stability and security, Armenia's Mission to EU informs.

The MEPs welcome the progress achieved so far and note with appreciation the presence of the Prime Minister of Armenia at the inauguration of the newly-elected President of Turkey.

The Parliament calls for the speedy

implementation of the agreements reached by the special representatives, such as opening the airspace and the border between the two countries.

It also encourages Turkey once again to recognize the Armenian Genocide to pave the way for genuine reconciliation between the Turkish and Armenian peoples.

Finally, it encourages Turkey to fully respect its obligations to protect Armenian cultural heritage.

## Canada to contribute to EU Mission in Armenia

Canada will contribute to the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA). EU's Political and Security Committee has decided that the contribution of Canada to the Mission is acceptable and significant.

The Armenian Foreign Ministry commended the decision, saying "it as an important contribution for the Mission's role in enhancing stability and peace in the South Caucasus."

Canada will be exempted from financial



contributions to the budget of EUMA.

EUMA is a non-armed civilian Common Security and Defense Policy (CSDP) Mission. EUMA observe and reports on the security situation along the Armenian side of the border with Azerbaijan. It aims to contribute to human security in conflict-affected areas in Armenia and help build confidence between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

## US says peace and dialogue the only way forward for Armenia and Azerbaijan

The United States welcomes the continued high-level meetings between Armenia and Azerbaijan, including the most recent trilateral meeting in Brussels on July 15 and the June 27-29 meeting of the foreign ministers in Washington, US Chargé d'Affaires at OSCE Katherine Brucker said in response to Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan's speech at the special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council convened in Vienna upon Armenia's request.

She quoted Secretary of State Blinken as saying that "peace is achievable in the South Caucasus."

"Peace, dialogue, and the normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan on the basis of mutual respect for each other's sovereignty and territorial

integrity, eschewing force or the threat of force – principles that are set forth in the Helsinki Final Act – remain the only way forward. We welcome your active support towards this goal. We continue to believe efforts to reach a durable and dignified peace agreement, normalize relations, delimit and demarcate borders, open transportation and communication links, and ensure the rights and security of all residents in the Nagorno-Karabakh region are in the best interest of all stakeholders," she said.

"The United States recognizes ongoing tensions on the ground, including Azerbaijan's recent closure of the Lachin corridor to all but some limited humanitarian traffic which threatens to worsen

the humanitarian situation for the population of Nagorno-Karabakh. Cross-border incidents also threaten the momentum you have already worked hard to achieve. We again urge the sides to refrain from provocative, threatening, or hostile actions or rhetoric," Katherine Brucker said.

"The OSCE's comprehensive approach to security, anchored in our principles and commitments, can enable the prosperity and security in both Armenia and Azerbaijan as part of and following a comprehensive peace agreement," she noted.

The Ambassador noted that the United States is committed to working with Armenia and Azerbaijan, bilaterally, multilaterally, and through partners to reach a durable and dignified peace.

## Protesters Demand Unblocking of Artsakh in front of UN Office and Russian Embassy in Yerevan

Hundreds of demonstrators, including children, gathered on July 17 outside the UN Office in Yerevan to call on the international community to help lift the blockade of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh).

The demonstrators included displaced residents of Nagorno Karabakh who lost their homes in the 2020 war.

Dr. Aramays Galumyan, a member of the professional council of the Artsakh Ministry of Health, noted in his speech that currently, a 'terrorist attack' is being committed against Artsakh.

"It is terrorism by a state, which is not a private terrorist group but a terrorist state. It is an unprecedented phenomenon; 120,000 people are surrounded, deprived of basic food and health services. What is this if not terrorism? All international organizations, all major powers that establish order in the world are responsible for this situation. We demand that the population of Artsakh be provided



with food, health services, free movement through the corridor, and everything else," Aramays Galumyan told reporters.

Mariam Avagyan, coordinator of the Congress of Refugees from the Azerbaijani SSR, mentioned in her speech that Armenians have not lost hope that they can save Artsakh with soft power.

"The Yerevan office of the UN regularly reminds me personally that they do not deal with political issues. Now, I ask a question: Isn't the death of 2 young children in the complete blockade a result of

politics? Why has the Yerevan office of the UN not yet spoken out about the impending genocide against Artsakh, which is currently under a complete blockade? Today, Artsakh is subjected to genocide through exhaustion." The UN office in Yerevan is obligated to act as a mediator between the UN office in New York and us and to convey to them that the UN needs to save its reputation. The UN should not forget that it is the successor of the League of Nations, which did not recognize Artsakh as a part of Azerbaijan. The UN should take control of its many conventions, according to which the Republic of Artsakh is a de facto and de jure established republic," Avagyan said.

The demonstrators then walked through downtown Yerevan to the Russian Embassy, where they held the same rally.

The demonstrators called on Russia to take action to open the Lachin Corridor.

## Armenia, US military discuss bilateral defense cooperation

On a working visit to the United States the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces First Deputy Minister of Defence of the Republic of Armenia, Lieutenant General Eduard Asryan had meetings with the Vice Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of

Staff, Admiral Christopher W. Grady and the Chief of Staff of the Air Force, General Charles Brown.

A number of issues related to the current status of the Armenia-US defence cooperation, upcoming programs, joint

activities, the implementation of the concept of "Mission Command" and the professional NCOs system, opportunities for extending cooperation in the air force sphere, as well as regional security were discussed.

## International actors should step in prevent humanitarian catastrophe in Europe's neighborhood, Armenian FM tells OSCE chief

On July 18, in Vienna, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a meeting with Helga Schmid, the OSCE Secretary General.

During the meeting, the issues of the regional agenda were discussed, and an exchange of views took place on the activities and role of the OSCE when facing the current challenges.

Ararat Mirzoyan briefed the OSCE Secretary General on the details of the security situation in the South Caucasus, as well as the latest developments in the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Presenting Armenia's vision of establishing comprehensive stability in the region, the Minister stressed that Azerbaijan



should not act in conditions of arbitrariness. The imperative of addressing the issues of the rights and security of the Nagorno-Karabakh people within the framework of an international mechanism was emphasized.

Ararat Mirzoyan noted that Azerbaijan, ignoring the legally binding Orders of the International Court of Justice of

February 22 and July 6, continues the blockade of the Lachin corridor. The Minister stressed the urgency of effective steps by international actors to prevent another humanitarian catastrophe in Europe's neighborhood in the 21st century, particularly emphasizing the need to prevent the ethnic cleansing of the population of Nagorno-Karabakh. The need for the effective use of OSCE mechanisms and existing tools was also highlighted.

Both sides stressed that sustainable peace requires proper addressing of all outstanding issues.

The possibilities of ensuring the inclusiveness of regional programs and other topics of mutual interest were also touched upon.

## Humanitarian situation in Artsakh deteriorating hour by hour – Ombudsman

A video filmed in Stepanakert city's largest supermarket shows the disastrous humanitarian consequences of the Azerbaijani blockade of Nagorno Karabakh – all shelves are empty.

The video was released by Human Rights Defender of Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) Gegham Stepanyan's office.

In a statement released on July 20, Stepanyan called for an immediate international intervention to help stop the suffering of the people of Nagorno Karabakh.

"Humanitarian situation in Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) is deteriorating hour by hour. All shops and groceries are empty. Complete absence of food and basic necessities inflict sufferings on 120,000 people, including 30,000 children. The Ombudsman's Office reports from the ground, documenting the disastrous humanitarian



consequences and asking for immediate international intervention," Stepanyan said in a statement.

Lachin Corridor, the only road connecting Nagorno Karabakh with Armenia and the rest of the world, has been blocked by Azerbaijan since late 2022. The Azerbaijani blockade constitutes a gross violation of the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh ceasefire agreement, which established that the 5km-wide Lachin Corridor shall

be under the control of Russian peacekeepers. Furthermore, on February 22, 2023 the United Nations' highest court – the International Court of Justice (ICJ) – ordered Azerbaijan to "take all steps at its disposal" to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions. Azerbaijan has been ignoring the order ever since. Moreover, Azerbaijan then illegally installed a checkpoint on Lachin Corridor. The blockade has led to shortages of essential products such as food and medication. Azerbaijan has also cut off gas and power supply into Nagorno Karabakh, with officials warning that Baku seeks to commit ethnic cleansing against Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh. Hospitals have suspended normal operations and the Red Cross has been facilitating the medical evacuations of patients.

## Armenian FM, IAEA Director stress the need to keep the issue of safe use of nuclear energy away from groundless political speculation

In Vienna, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan met with Rafael Mariano Grossi, Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA).

The interlocutors hailed the effective and close cooperation established between Armenia and the IAEA aimed at strengthening the capacities in the field of nuclear safety and energy in Armenia and the peaceful and safe use of nuclear energy.

During the meeting, a number of issues of the comprehensive agenda of Armenia-IAEA were discussed; ideas were

exchanged on the projects implemented in the fields of energy, healthcare, environment and prospects for the expansion of cooperation.

Rafael Grossi expressed his appreciation for the active involvement and support of Armenia to IAEA initiatives, as well as for joining the statement "On Atomic Energy" to be presented within the framework of the UN Climate Change Conference. The parties emphasized Armenia's participation in the Rays of Hope program of the IAEA with a view to ensuring progress in the field of oncology and, in

particular, radiation medicine.

Referring to the activities of the IAEA and the programs implemented within the framework of the safe operation of the Armenian nuclear power plant and the long-term successful experience in this direction, the need to keep the issue of safe use of nuclear energy away from groundless political speculation was emphasized on both sides.

Issues related to the security situation in space tourism were also on the agenda of the meeting.

## Apricot Capital has launched a foreign currency trading platform in its mobile application

Apricot Capital, a licensed investment company in Armenia, has launched a foreign currency trading platform in its mobile application.

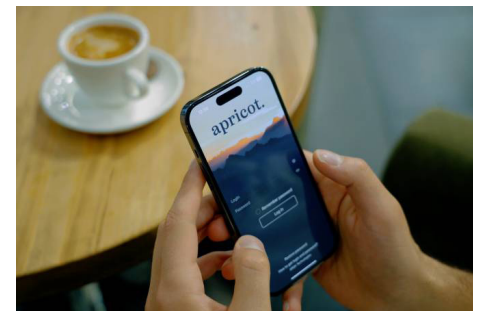
From now on, customers can make real-time foreign exchange conversions with the primary currency pairs (US Dollar, Euro, British Pound, Chinese Yuan, etc.) at global cross rates through the Apricot Capital application.

The Apricot Capital platform grants entry to currency transactions and trading in international securities markets at a competitive rate and the ability to observe the result of the transaction directly on

the account.

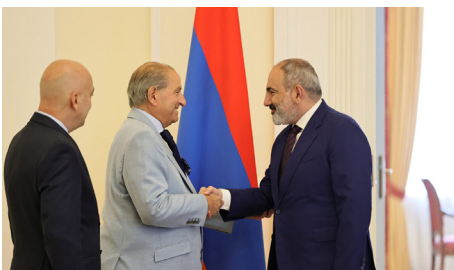
To utilize Apricot Capital's currency conversion tools and other platforms, one must become an Apricot Capital client by completing all the mandatory procedures once. Upon successful validation, resident, and non-resident citizens of the Republic of Armenia fund brokerage accounts in the specified minimum amount, after which the client gets access to the mobile application.

The Apricot Capital mobile app is available on the App Store and Google Play. It is a reliable platform through which Apricot Capital offers its clients a wide range



of brokerage services. Apricot Capital's commercial infrastructure ensures the high-quality execution of transactions with various financial instruments through a wide network of partnerships with leading European and American brokers and financial companies.

## Plans to open the branch of Lausanne Hospitality Business School discussed



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received Swiss-Armenian businessman Vahe Gabrash and AGBU Armenia President Vasken Yacoubian.

The latter presented to the Prime

Minister the plans to establish a branch of EHL Hospitality Business School (Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne) in Gyumri and the progress of the works in that direction.

The Prime Minister welcomed the initiative and expressed the Government's support in the implementation of the program. Nikol Pashinyan emphasized that the executive is carrying out large-scale reforms in the field of education in order to improve the infrastructures.

He noted that the process of certification of teachers was initiated, which

resulted in the increase of salaries. At the same time, he said, the works of designing the Academic City have started.

The Prime Minister attached importance to the establishment of a branch of Ecole hôtelière de Lausanne in Gyumri from the point of view of providing quality professional education and capacity development.

Vahe Gabrash and Vasken Yacoubian expressed gratitude for the support and provided details on the further course of the project implementation.

## Digital Society and Economy program discussed at Government



Chaired by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, a consultation was held in the Government, during which issues related to the process of the program of the formation of Digital Society and Economy were discussed, Noyan Tapan was informed from the Office of the Prime Minister.

Nerses Yeritsyan, Secretary of the Information Systems Council of Armenia, reported on the works carried out in the

direction of the implementation of the digitization strategy and the road map. In particular, it was noted that based on the results of the meetings of the Information Systems Management Board, the program's vision and targets were approved, the one and a half year work program was defined, which is implemented according to the guidelines approved by the Board.

Work is being done on the introduction and active use of the electronic identification system, analysis on impact assessment and formation of digitalization capabilities in the public sector, formation of national cyber security capabilities, dialogue platforms with the private sector have been launched, and the digital architecture of Armenia has been approved.

Based on the report, an exchange of

ideas took place; the participants of the consultation presented their views on issues related to service provision policy, interoperability of information systems, data infrastructures.

The Prime Minister emphasized the need to create a developed and safe environment and infrastructure for Armenia's transformation into a digital society and digital economy. According to Nikol Pashinyan, it will contribute to increasing the potential and well-being of citizens, support enterprises in improving competitiveness and ensure effective management of public institutions.

Nikol Pashinyan instructed to organize discussions on the issues raised during the consultation and to present the proposed solutions at the next meeting.

## Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Khachatryan chairs regular session of the SME Development Council

On July 19, the 21st session of the Small and Medium Business Development Council of the Republic of Armenia was held under the leadership of Deputy Prime Minister Tigran Khachatryan, the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister informs.

Welcoming the members of the Council, the Deputy Prime Minister noted that the formation of a friendly institutional environment for the activity and continuous growth of small and medium enterprises is among the Government's priorities. Khachatryan expressed confidence that as a result of cooperation with the private sector, the legal framework regulating the business environment will be continuously improved, creating favorable conditions



for the sustainable development of small and medium-sized enterprises.

Summarizing the results of the implementation of the decisions made during the previous session, the members of the Council referred to a number of important issues from the point of view of ensuring a

favorable business environment, including the possibility of revising the responsibility for the employer in case of non-calculation or non-payment of wages in accordance with the law, reasonableness of fines for violation of the rules of the use of cash registers, as well as the problems that appear in the export process.

Thanking the members of the Council for the objective and effective discussion, Deputy Prime Minister Khachatryan expressed hope that the close cooperation formed during this period with state administration bodies will be continuous, allowing to effectively address the obstacles that appear during the activity of small and medium enterprises.

## Armenia to host 2024 World Conference on Information Technologies

The 2024 World Conference on Information Technologies (WCIT), will be held in Yerevan, Chief of Staff of the Prime Minister Arayik Harutyunyan informs.

Armenia last hosted the event in October 2019. More than 2500 people from 70

countries attend the Congress.

The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) is one of the largest & most prestigious ICT events in the world. It features discussions related to the evolution of the Digital Age.



## Stable peace possible if rights and security of Artsakh people are property addressed – Armenia FM

Stable peace in the region is possible if the issues of the rights and security of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh are properly addressed within the framework of an international mechanism, through the Stepanakert-Baku dialogue, Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at a joint press conference with his Austrian counterpart Alexander Schallenberg.

“In this context, it is regrettable to state that instead of engaging in such a dialogue, Azerbaijan is currently pursuing a policy of ethnic cleansing in Nagorno-Karabakh. A clear manifestation of it is the blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh which has been going on for more than seven months now. Nagorno-Karabakh is now on the verge of a humanitarian catastrophe. This is happening in violation of international humanitarian norms and contrary to numerous appeals of international actors, resolutions and the legally



binding Order of the International Court of Justice of February 22, which, by the way, the Court reaffirmed with its Order of July 6 this year,” the Foreign Minister said.

“In the negotiation process with Azerbaijan, the key issue is to ensure maximum certainty regarding the interstate border. In this context, it should be emphasized that the borders of the former Soviet Republics, as recognized by the Alma-Ata Declaration, serve as the interstate border between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Armenia is also interested in unblocking the regional economic and transport infrastructure, which should be based on the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the countries and according to the principles of equality and reciprocity,” he noted.

“Of course, for reaching agreements to the mentioned issues, the general atmosphere is very important: the rejection of the use of force or threat of use of force as well as of hostile and aggressive rhetoric, the solution of urgent humanitarian issues, in particular, the release of all Armenian prisoners of war by Azerbaijan are important for creating an environment conducive for peace,” Mirzoyan added.

He emphasized that Armenia expects effective steps on the part of the international actors, especially by the members of the UN Security Council to ensure lifting of the blockade of the Lachin corridor.

## French lawmakers call for opening of consulate in Syunik as ‘important step’ to protect Armenia’s territorial integrity



Two prominent French Members of Parliament have called on the French government to open a consulate representation in the province of Syunik, a move they described would be an “important step” by France for preserving Armenia’s territorial integrity.

In a letter to French Foreign Minister Catherine Colonna, Member of Parliament Anne-Laurence Petel, the Chair of the National Assembly’s France-Armenia Friendship Group, and Senator Gilbert-Luc Devinaz, the Chair of the France-Armenia Friendship Group of the Senate, said that

France ought to open a consulate either in Kapan or Goris, like other countries have done.

Opening a consulate would be a strong move for the benefit of regional stability, and will act as a valuable outpost in terms of developing cooperation between France and Armenia.

The French lawmakers noted that despite being the least populated mountainous province, Syunik has a central place in terms of geopolitics in South Caucasus, first of all because of its rich mineral deposits, which are significant for the Armenian economy.

“Although Syunik is linked with Yerevan only with one mountain road, it is an important corridor for establishing contact with the outside world through the border with Iran. The 35km long Armenian-Iranian border is of vital importance

for Armenia. It was the only one to remain open in the autumn of 2020 during the 44-Day War, safeguarding Armenia from total suffocation,” reads the letter.

“After all, the Azerbaijani regime has aspirations towards Syunik and wants to achieve the land connection of the Republic of Azerbaijan and Nakhijevan. This aspiration is part of a larger pan-Turkic plan, which aims to connect the Turkic population of the Bosphorus with the Caspian Sea region. In this context, when the military imbalance is growing in favor of Azerbaijan every day, a new possible aggression by Azerbaijan could have disastrous consequences. Armenia has few allies to withstand this threat. Among them, France is the most dedicated country acting as guarantor of Armenia’s territorial integrity and the Armenian population’s security,” the French lawmakers added.



## MEP Fabio Massimo Castaldo calls for urgent EU aid to Nagorno Karabakh, slams Azeri ‘crime against humanity’ blockade

Member of the European Parliament Fabio Massimo Castaldo (Italy - Movimento 5 Stelle) has expressed deep concern over the deteriorating humanitarian situation in Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh).

In an interview with ARMENPRESS, MEP Castaldo said that Azerbaijani ‘prolonged, hateful’ blockade of Lachin Corridor puts countless lives at risk by impeding access to vital goods and exacerbating the suffering of the affected population.

He said that the blockade constitutes a crime against humanity and called on the EU to provide urgent humanitarian aid and propose itself as one of the final guarantors of any final agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan which must include international guarantees for the safety and security of the Armenian population in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.

“The deteriorating humanitarian situation in Nagorno-Karabakh is deeply concerning. The prolonged, hateful blockade of the Lachin Corridor puts countless lives at risk, impeding access to vital goods and exacerbating the suffering of the affected population. As I recently witnessed the dire conditions faced by the Armenian community during an official visit organised by the European Parliament,



I am firmly convinced that we cannot ignore these violations of international law that represent crimes against humanity. In the immediate term, the EU must provide urgent humanitarian aid to address the pressing needs on the ground. Then, in the medium run, our Union should actively support the trilateral negotiations, acting as an honest broker, to ensure the inclusion of crucial clauses in any final agreement. These clauses must include international guarantees for the safety and security of the Armenian population in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, and the EU should propose itself as one of the final guarantor of this agreement and its conditions,” MEP Castaldo told ARMENPRESS correspondent Lilit Gasparyan in Brussels.

Castaldo visited Armenia in November 2022 on a fact-finding mission.

Lachin Corridor, the only road connecting Nagorno Karabakh with Armenia and the rest of the world, has been blocked by Azerbaijan since December 2022. The Azerbaijani blockade constitutes a gross violation of the 2020 Nagorno Karabakh ceasefire agreement, which established that the 5km-wide Lachin Corridor shall be under the control of Russian peacekeepers. Furthermore, on February 22, 2023 the United Nations’ highest court – the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - ordered Azerbaijan to “take all steps at its disposal” to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions. Azerbaijan has been ignoring the order ever since. Moreover, Azerbaijan then illegally installed a checkpoint on Lachin Corridor. The blockade has led to shortages of essential products such as food and medication. Azerbaijan has also cut off gas and power supply into Nagorno Karabakh, with officials warning that Baku seeks to commit ethnic cleansing against Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh. Hospitals have suspended normal operations and the Red Cross has been facilitating the medical evacuations of patients.

## Azerbaijan’s actions cannot be tolerated, Massachusetts Governor tells Biden



In a letter to President Joe Biden Massachusetts Governor Maura Healey has made it clear that Azerbaijan’s actions with respect to the ongoing blockade of Artsakh “cannot be tolerated,” the Armenian Assembly of America reports.

“We commend Governor Healey for

standing in support of human rights and in support of the Armenian people,” stated Assembly Co-Chairs Anthony Barsamian and Van Krikorian.

“While we appreciate the active engagement of the Administration, the humanitarian crisis created by Azerbaijan’s blockade of Artsakh continues and additional measures are urgently needed to end this inhumane blockade and help prevent another Armenian Genocide,” the Co-Chairs emphasized.

In her letter to President Biden, Governor Healey stated that “credible news reports, human rights organizations, and

members of the Armenian American community are sounding the alarm about the risks of another Armenian Genocide. Azerbaijan’s actions to further degrade already strained living conditions for the vulnerable Armenians living in Artsakh cannot be tolerated.”

The Governor urged the President to “find any avenues possible to support... humanitarian assistance to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, and continue forging ahead in our diplomatic efforts to lift the blockade.” Further, the Governor highlighted that the “Commonwealth of Massachusetts has long recognized the independence of Nagorno-Karabakh...”

## EU Mission to OSCE calls on Azerbaijan to fully ensure restoration of movement of goods and people along Lachin corridor

EU Mission to OSCE responded to the address by the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia, Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan.

“The European Union warmly welcomes Foreign Minister Mirzoyan back to the Permanent Council.

Since your last visit to Vienna in January 2023, we have witnessed comprehensive and productive negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, thanks to the active involvement of the European Union and the complementary efforts of the United States of America, and despite a worrying increase in tensions on the ground over the past few months.

Following last week’s latest Brussels trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev, President of the European Council Michel encouraged the two leaders to take further courageous steps to ensure decisive and irreversible progress on the normalisation track. In particular, the EU expects the Azerbaijani side to take concrete steps in providing clear reassurances for the rights and security of the Armenian population in Nagorno-Karabakh. All outstanding issues should be resolved through negotiations,

without the use or threat of force.

The EU has been repeatedly calling on the Azerbaijani authorities to fully ensure restoration of movement of goods and people along the Lachin corridor, in line with the ICJ Orders of February and July 2023, as well as unrestricted supplies of energy.

Increased restrictions to such freedom of movement are causing significant distress among the local population. The EU is alarmed about the humanitarian impact resulting from the lack of food, medicines and other essential goods, as a result of current restrictions. The ban on ICRC transports to and from the region by Azerbaijani authorities has been worrisome. The current situation is not sustainable and creates tensions that run contrary to much-needed confidence-building efforts.

The EU also recalls the importance of the EU Mission in Armenia (EUMA) that aims at contributing to ensuring an environment conducive to the normalization efforts supported by the EU.

We wish to reiterate our strong support to a stable, democratic, sovereign,

and prosperous Armenia. We welcome Armenia’s continued commitment to reforms in line with our common values, in spite of the difficult security context of the region. We will continue working together to strengthen human rights and fundamental freedoms, including freedom of expression and media freedom. In this respect, we would like to recall the importance of continuous improvement in the independence and efficiency of the judiciary and the fight against corruption in order to increase citizens’ trust in public institutions, as well as in eliminating discrimination on all grounds. The EU stands ready to continue assisting Armenia in the implementation of our Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA) and in addressing socio-economic challenges.

In conclusion, Minister Mirzoyan, let me reiterate the EU’s continued support to Armenia, its citizens and the normalization of its relations with Azerbaijan. The EU stands ready to contribute to all efforts to build confidence and strengthen regional security”, the press readout by the EU press service said.

## UK remains deeply concerned about ongoing disruptions to the Lachin corridor

UK remains deeply concerned about ongoing disruptions to the Lachin corridor and hopes momentum will be maintained towards an historic peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Ambassador Neil Holland, Head of the United Kingdom’s Delegation to OSCE, said in response to Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan’s speech at the special meeting of the OSCE Permanent Council convened in Vienna upon Armenia’s request.

“We remain deeply concerned about the ongoing disruptions to the Lachin corridor and the associated humanitarian consequences for the local population,” he said.

“We support the International Court of Justice order of February 2023 for Azerbaijan to ensure unimpeded movement



along the Lachin corridor in both directions. The UK calls again on all parties to refrain from the politicization of humanitarian aid. In order for the civilian population to be protected, it is crucially important for organizations such as the International Committee of the Red Cross to be able to continue to carry out their work in this region, where their operations provide access to essential goods and services, including life-saving medication

and health care,” Ambassador Neil Holland said.

“The UK has been clear that there is no military solution to this conflict and urges both sides to continue to engage in substantive negotiations towards a settlement. We recognize that any settlement should include provisions on protecting the rights of the local population in Nagorno-Karabakh. UK Ministers discussed this with Foreign Minister Bayramov during the recent UK-Azerbaijan strategic dialogue,” he added.

“We are therefore encouraged by President Michel’s trilateral meeting on 15th July with President Aliyev and Prime Minister Pashinyan, and hope momentum will be maintained towards an historic peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan,” the Ambassador concluded.

## Pashinyan is Incorrect that Armenia had Agreed to Exchange Meghri for Artsakh

BY HARUT SASSOUNIAN,  
PUBLISHER, THE CALIFORNIA COURIER ·

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan attempted last month to distract attention from Armenia's current tragic situation by blaming former Foreign Minister Vartan Oskanian. This is a routine ploy used by Armenia's current leader to cover up his defeat in the Artsakh War and failure to protect the country's national interests.

This does not mean that the former leaders were faultless. They made plenty of mistakes and I repeatedly criticized them at the time while sitting in front of them in the Presidential Palace. Those who describe my criticisms of Pashinyan as defending the former leaders are totally mistaken.

Here is what Pashinyan said last month while testifying in a parliamentary committee investigating the circumstances of the 2020 Artsakh War: "On June 2, 2000, Aravot newspaper [in Armenia] published the following article: Vartan Oskanian, the Foreign Minister, on April 25, 2000, during his meeting with the Armenian community of Glendale [California], described by him as 'very private, unofficial remarks,' announced the following: 'Meghri is being given to Azerbaijan, Lachin [Corridor] along with Artsakh is being given to Armenia. Through Meghri, Armenia is being given a sovereign road with which Armenia would be able to have a sovereign contact to enter Iran.'" Pashinyan added: "His [Oskanian's] remarks were published in The California Courier weekly newspaper [in 2000] which also quoted Oskanian's words that the above mentioned proposal has 'some logic and needs serious consideration....'"

Since Prime Minister Pashinyan was referring to an editorial I wrote in The California Courier on May 25, 2000, a few

lines of which were reprinted in Aravot, I would like to set the record straight by quoting from what I wrote 23 years ago, titled: "Exchanging Meghri with Karabagh: Good Idea or Political Suicide?"

What Pashinyan is referring to was a 1992 proposal by Paul Goble, Special Adviser to Secretary of State James Baker, to exchange Meghri, the strategically important Southern Region of Armenia, for Artsakh. This idea was rejected by then Pres. Robert Kocharyan and subsequently by Azerbaijan's then Pres. Heydar Aliyev.

Pashinyan is partially distorting what Oskanian said in Glendale. In my editorial of 2000, I quoted Oskanian as saying: "There are many rumors about the resolution of the Karabagh conflict. There are criticisms alleging that the Armenian authorities want to give Meghri to Azerbaijan. In fact, there is a small degree of truth in those rumors. Such a proposal on the exchange of territories has been made to the Armenian Republic, to the President of Armenia. But, such a proposal was rejected. Armenia did not accept it as a basis of negotiations." Oskanian repeatedly stated that this proposal was rejected by the Armenian government. The proof is that Meghri was not exchanged for Artsakh.

However, Oskanian continued his remarks, raising questions about his assertion that Armenia rejected the Goble Plan. Pashinyan is now capitalizing on Oskanian's supplementary statement.

Here is what Oskanian said in his additional statement which I reported in my 2000 article: "But let me say the following: I don't want you to misunderstand me. It's been rejected, it will be rejected and it's not a plan that can be realized. Nevertheless, this is such a proposal that is worth thinking about. It's not happening. It won't happen, but when people say it's treasonous to even think about it, that's

what I would like to respond to: Let's think a little deeply about it. This proposal has certain logic. To simply dismiss such a proposal on a purely emotional basis is wrong. We have done that. We must seriously analyze it. I wonder, maybe we are wrong in saying no. What are we afraid of? Why are we not analyzing it? Is it a taboo? Let's make a checklist. Let's analyze it in newspapers. It has pluses and minuses. What I'm calling for is that it's possible to have a very healthy debate and a dialog on this issue, because this proposal is worth thinking about."

I don't know why Oskanian, after repeatedly rejecting the exchange proposal, went on to say that it is "worth thinking about." In my opinion, there was nothing to think about. It was clearly an unacceptable proposal, suggesting that Armenia exchange one Armenian territory, Artsakh, for another Armenian territory, Meghri. Oskanian's speculative words gave Pashinyan a reason to blame him for even considering such a bad idea.

I concluded my editorial in 2000 with the following words: "Armenia has nothing to gain and much to lose from such an exchange." I am still of the same opinion.

Finally, for those who think that since Armenia lost most of Artsakh in the 2020 War, maybe Oskanian was correct about considering the exchange of Meghri for Artsakh, I must say that Azerbaijan's insatiable appetite is not satisfied by the conquest of Artsakh or even Meghri. Azerbaijan's imperialistic ambitions extend to the takeover of the entirety of Armenia. The more Armenia's leaders make territorial concessions, the more Azerbaijan will be encouraged to demand further Armenian territories. The only solution is to arm Armenia's military with modern lethal weapons and defend its territory from further Azeri incursions.

## Group of Armenian civil society organizations concerned over Charles Michel's statement

A group of Armenian civil society organizations have expressed concern regarding the recent statement made by the President of the European Council Charles Michel.

Below is the full statement released by the group of civil society organizations:

"The undersigned civil society organizations in Armenia express their alarm over the press statement of July 15 made by Charles Michel, President of the European Council, following the latest trilateral meeting with Prime Minister Pashinyan and President Aliyev. Specifically, we are concerned that the announcement equates the Lachin Corridor and Aghdam as options to address the current humanitarian crisis. This proposal disregards the fact that the source of the humanitarian crisis is Azerbaijan's continued blockade of Nagorno-Karabakh (NK), subjecting its population to hunger and malnutrition to force submission to their demands, or worse, push them physically out of the territory. Moreover, it does not solve other ongoing violations of human rights, including freedom of movement, access to health services, access to education, etc. We fear that should this proposal be pursued, it will worsen the current dire situation, putting the lives of people in Nagorno-Karabakh at risk.

"The Lachin Corridor does not have an alternative. The February 2023 Preliminary Order (reaffirmed in July 2023) of the International Court of Justice confirms the importance of keeping the corridor open for the free passage of people, goods, and vehicles. However, the Azerbaijani side has not only ignored the Order but has further tightened the months-long blockade. Instead of addressing the root cause of the humanitarian crisis, the discussion of "alternative" routes, such as Aghdam, diverts the international community's attention from the source of the problem – the illegal



blockade of a humanitarian corridor and the policy of ethnic cleansing by the Azerbaijani government. Making the Aghdam road operational would inadvertently support this policy by giving additional political and economic leverage to Azerbaijan over the Armenian population in NK and further undermining their rights.

"Using hunger as a negotiation tactic should not be normalized. If the current situation of a total blockade persists, the act of offering food and supplies through Aghdam resembles hostage-taking and undermines any efforts to build trust between NK and Azerbaijan within the context of a possible Baku-Stepanakert dialogue. Should the international community yield to Azerbaijan's unlawful actions and clear intentions of ethnic cleansing, it would effectively validate the wrongful closure of the Lachin Corridor and the captivity of 120,000 individuals since December 2022. Furthermore, this endorsement would legitimize the non-adherence to the ICJ's order and discredit all existing and future agreements or international legal rulings.

"Additionally, the statement refers to the facilitation of the release of soldiers who inadvertently cross to the other side. While this is an important issue, it is crucial that the fate of all detainees and prisoners of war is not forgotten. There are at least 35 confirmed prisoners of war and other civilian detainees in Azerbaijan. There have been reliable reports that they have been subjected to torture

and inhuman and degrading treatment. Two of them were kidnapped earlier this year from Armenia proper, and the court in Azerbaijan sentenced them to lengthy prison sentences for "trespassing" for allegedly attempting to supply a group of "saboteurs" and for "armed terrorism conspiracy". Similar sham trials have also occurred in relation with other detainees captured during and after the 44-day war. It is obvious that access to justice is impossible under the current circumstances. Moreover, Azerbaijan appears to hold these detainees as a bargaining chip during the process of negotiations.

"Thus, we earnestly request that the international community:

- prioritize efforts to immediately unblock the Lachin Corridor in accordance with the ICJ ruling,
- Unite efforts in facilitating the immediate and unconditional release of all prisoners of war and other detained persons.

Democracy Development Foundation  
Analytical Centre on Globalization and Regional Cooperation (ACGRC)  
Center for Rights Development NGO  
"Asparez" Journalists' Club  
"For Equal Rights" Educational Center  
NGO  
Helsinki Citizens' Assembly-Vanadzor  
Non-Discrimination and Equality Coalition  
Public Journalism Club  
Peace Dialogue NGO  
Protection of Rights without Borders  
NGO  
Real World, Real People NGO  
Transparency International Anti-Corruption Center  
Regional Center for Democracy and Security  
Union of Informed Citizens  
Women's Support Center"

## Friendship City established between Troy, New York and Artsakh's Martakert



The ANC of Albany has secured a Friendship City between Troy, New York, and the town of Martakert, Republic of Artsakh. ANC of Albany Co-Chair Antranig Karageozian thanked the City Council and Mayor of Troy at the City Council meeting where the resolution was voted upon. The establishment of a Friendship City between Troy and Martakert comes amid 7-month genocidal blockade that Azerbaijan has imposed upon Artsakh.

Welcomed for its importance in creating awareness about Martakert and the ongoing genocide of the Armenian Nation, the resolution allows for both cities to exchange cultural ideas and concepts including the establishment of economic and social ties.

Troy is home to a multigenerational Armenian-American community, who first established roots in the capital of New

York in the late 19th centuries during the Hamidian massacres, during which hundreds of Armenian refugees chose Troy as their new home. Several churches and cultural organizations soon established in the region, creating a new "little Armenia." Despite being displaced from their ancestral homeland, the Armenians of Troy maintain traditions from the Old Country, such as "Madagh" traditional community dinners and other events. Armenians have been part of the political scene in Troy as well, for several years, Armenian-American Harry Tutunjian served as Mayor.

The town of Martakert is home to a population of 5,000 and is surrounded by several smaller villages. The local economy and social landscape is diverse, boasting more than 80 commercial enterprises, several schools and libraries, as well as various cultural institutions. Martakert is an integral part of the Armenian highlands and has had an Armenian presence since at least the 1st century BCE. Martakert and the encompassing areas possess both a natural and material richness, containing several millennia-old sites, such as Pre-Christian tombs, a church constructed in the 13th century, several ancient cemeteries, and a nearby medieval village. During the first Artsakh War, just 30 years

ago, Martakert was left in utter ruins after a brief Azerbaijani occupation. Recent escalations as well as the recent 2020 War have led to new complexities, leaving the future of the region uncertain.

"We know the importance of strengthening ties and relationships on the federal and state level, but are as diligent in our efforts on the local level. Thank you to Troy Mayor Patrick Madden and Troy City Council Chair Carmella Montello for their support in the establishment of this Friendship City. We stand shoulder to shoulder with our compatriots in Artsakh and wanted them to know that though they are faced with the unthinkable – genocide – they are not alone. We encourage all of our fellow ANCs to pursue this same agenda of establishing Friendship Cities and informing the American people – on the federal, state and local level – on the active genocide happening in Artsakh as we speak," said Karageozian.

Friendship Cities with Artsakh have been established throughout the Eastern Region between Granite City, Illinois and Ashan, Republic of Artsakh; Cranston, Rhode Island, and Stepanakert, Republic of Artsakh; and now Troy, New York and Martakert, Republic of Artsakh, this year.

## Darfur Now director Ted Braun visits Armenia



U.S. filmmaker Ted Braun will visit Armenia July 20-25, 2023, to conduct workshops and masterclasses for aspiring and emerging documentary filmmakers as part of the U.S. State Department's American Film Showcase (AFS) program, the U.S. Embassy said in a press release. AFS is the premier American film diplomacy program of the U.S. State Department.

In partnership with U.S. Embassies, AFS organizes screenings, workshops, and master classes in more than 60 countries per year. AFS offers global audiences insight into American society and culture through film, and empowers local filmmakers with tools to tell their own stories. The U.S. Embassy in Yerevan is partnering with the Investigative Journalists NGO (Hetq) and the Tumo Center for Creative Technologies, to organize intensive workshops and masterclasses with Ted Braun on documentary storytelling and conflict reporting for aspiring and emerging documentary filmmakers and mid-career journalists.

"Documentary storytelling has the power to inspire us, and shape the world around us. The U.S. Embassy is proud to bring

Ted Braun to Armenia, whose films have shown the impact documentary filmmakers can have to raise awareness of social justice issues, and advance positive change," said U.S. Ambassador to Armenia Kristina Kvien.

Writer/director Ted Braun is best known for his award-winning documentary film Darfur Now, which raised international awareness of the genocide in Western Sudan and sparked a global social action campaign, and his feature documentary Betting on Zero, which exposed allegations of global economic corporate crime. He is a professor at the University of Southern California's (USC) School of Cinematic Arts where he teaches screenwriting and is the Joseph Campbell Endowed Chair in Cinematic Ethics.

## Armenian Summer Festival held in London

On July 16th, Ambassador Varuzhan Nersesyan participated in the 13th annual Armenian Summer Festival, organized by the Diocese of the Armenian Church of the United Kingdom and Ireland.

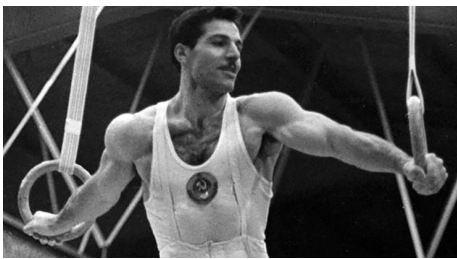
In his welcoming speech, Ambassador Nersesyan highlighted the event's cultural significance, celebrating Armenia's rich history, culture and cuisine. He also emphasized the



pivotal role of the British Armenian community in strengthening bilateral relations between Armenia and the UK, expressing his commitment to advancing these ties.

The festival was attended by His Grace Bishop Hovakim Manukyan, the Primate of the Armenian Diocese of the United Kingdom and Ireland, as well as Members of the UK Parliament and the Mayor of Ealing.

## Armenia puts into circulation silver collector coin dedicated to Olympic Champion Hrant Shahinyan



On July 20, 2023, the Central Bank of Armenia has put into circulation a silver collector coin dedicated to the 100th anniversary of Hrant Shahinyan's birth.

Hrant Shahinyan (1923-1996) is a prominent Armenian gymnast, the first Armenian champion of the modern-day Olympic Games, a double gold and double silver medalist (Helsinki, 1952), a double gold prize-winner of the World Championship (Rome, 1954), a seven-time and an absolute champion of the USSR, an Honored Master of Sports of the USSR (1951), an Honored Coach of the Armenian SSR (1961), an Honored Activist of Physical Culture and Sports of the Armenian SSR (1966)

Shahinyan was born in the village of Gyulagarak (Lori region, Republic of Armenia). In 1930, the family moved to Yerevan, where he started attending a gymnastics class. In 1939, he won the title of the USSR absolute champion among juniors

In the early days of the Great Patriotic War, he voluntarily left for the frontline; with his leg injured he was able to resume

gymnastics only in 1946.

Shahinyan achieved his first serious success at the World Festival of Youth and Students in Budapest in 1949, winning six gold medals at once.

According to the decision of the International Gymnastics Federation, one of the first exercises performed by Shahinyan on the pommel horse is called "Shahinyan's twist."

After finishing his sports career, Shahinyan switched to coaching. In 1958-1996, he served as Director of the Specialized Sports School for Young Gymnasts under the Ministry of Education of the Republic of Armenia, and in 1967-1969, as Chairman of the Sports Committee of the Armenian SSR.

The legendary sportsman earned many awards for his services to the motherland and exceptional sports achievements, including a prize "For Fair Play" awarded by the International Olympic Committee in 1994. In 2005, the National Olympic Committee of Armenia introduced a "Hrant Shahinyan" medal

The streets in the cities of the Republic of Armenia, the Yerevan Olympic Children and Youth School of Gymnastics, the Chair of Gymnastics of the Armenian State Institute of Physical Culture and Sport are named after Hrant Shahinyan.

Collector coins are made of precious



metals and are issued to present to the society the national, international, historical and cultural, spiritual and other values of the country, to immortalize these values in the metal and to meet the demands of the numismatic market.

Like any other currency the collector coins have face value which makes them the means of payment. However, the face value of these coins is much lower than their cost price which includes the cost of the precious metal used for manufacturing of the coin, mintage and other expenses. Low face value and high cost price allow these coins to be considered as the items of collection and not the means of payment used in money circulation. The collector coins have also the sale price set by the Central Bank of Armenia. As the items of collection the collector coins are issued in very restricted quantities and are not reissued. Numismatists, collectors and all interested persons can buy the Armenian collector coins in the sales salon "Numismatist" which is in the building of the Central Bank of Armenia and is open for everyone.

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The publisher: NT Holding LTD  
 Լրատվական գործունեություն իրականացնող՝  
 ՆՏ Հոլդինգ ՍՊԸ

Ծավալը՝ 2.25 մամուլ, տպաքանակը՝ 1500  
 Circulation: 1500 print copies and  
 15600 copies by e-mail list in PDF format

Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993

President of the NT Media Holding:  
**TIGRAN HARUTYUNYAN**  
 Editor-in-Chief of the Media Holding:  
**GAYANEH ARAKELYAN**  
 Director of the weekly:  
**MARINA HARUTYUNYAN**  
 Chief Correspondent: **GOURGEN KHAZHAKIAN**  
 Computer Design: **Ashot Khalapyan**

Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ.Հարությունյան

**ISSN 1829-0604**  
 Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝  
 03ԱՑԳՑ68, տրված՝ 11.01.2013թ.  
 Registration certificate and the date:  
 273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

E-mail: [contact@nt.am](mailto:contact@nt.am)  
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