

Armenian President arrives in Austria for an official visit

The President of the Republic of Armenia Serzh Sargsyan arrived in Vienna on June 10 for a two-day official visit.

Austrian President Heinz Fischer welcomed his Armenian counterpart with military honors. The Presidents of the two countries had a private meeting at the Presidential Palace, after which the negotiations continued with participation of delegations from the two countries.

Several bilateral agreements are expected to be signed in Vienna. A “Declaration on Friendly Relations and Partnership” between the two countries will be signed by the Presidents, a joint action plan for science, research and industry and an agreement on air communication will also be signed.

In Vienna, the President of Armenia will hold meetings with the President of the Austrian National Council Barbara Prammer, Chancellor Werner Faymann, the Mayor of Vienna Michael Hupl and the Cardinal Archbishop of Vienna Christoph Schonborn. Additionally, Serzh Sargsyan will visit the Austrian Federal Economic Chamber. Before taking part in the opening ceremony of an Armenian-Austrian economic forum together with President Heinz Fischer, the President will hold a meeting with the President of the Chamber Christoph Leitl.

On his official visit, President Serzh Sargsyan will visit the memorial to the famous Austrian writer and humanitarian Franz Werfel to pay tribute to his memory and lay flowers at the memorial. Furthermore, at Saint Hripsime Armenian Apostolic



Church he will pay tribute to the memory of the Armenian Genocide victims and will lay flowers at the monument. Serzh Sargsyan is also due to visit the Mekhitarist Congregation in Vienna.

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Armenia dismisses Azeri reports on fighting in Nakhijevan



Spokesman for the Armenian Ministry of Defense Artsrun Hovhannisyan has dismissed the claims of Azerbaijani media that the Armenian armed forces attacked the village of Lakatag in the Nakhchivan Autonomous Republic.

Regnum agency quoted Azerbaijani media as saying that fighting was under way in the village and residents were forced to flee their homes.

"The reports do not correspond to reality, no shot has been fired from the Armenian side," Artsrun Hovhannisyan told Noyan Tapan.

Civic campaigns to continue despite politicization of their demands by opposition

The struggle of two civil movements that attracted broad section of the population in the past few months will continue regardless of the 12-point dem (against) and list presented to the government by the four parliamentary minority parties.

Two of the demands of the opposition regard the elimination of the mandatory component of the pension reform and reconsidering the system of speed and traffic cameras and parking rules in Yerevan. The four parties expect the government to address the issues by autumn.

Nevertheless, the two civic campaigns, Dem.am, campaigning against the unpopular pension reform, and Out of Our Pockets, demanding the reconsideration of the system of speed and traffic cameras as well as controversial "red lines" parking rules, say they will continue their struggle despite this "politicization".

Tonight Dem.am plans to hold a "support march" in central Yerevan trying to provide unified support for those who are under pressure from their employers not to withdraw from the pension system. "Out of Our Pockets", meanwhile, also plans a "disobedience march" to show to the government their determination in the campaign.

Members of the civil initiatives realize that no matter how hard they try not to politicize their movements because their goal is not entering politics, they cannot prevent that from happening, as political parties also campaign against the same things and



same errors.

"The struggle of any force or unit against the pension reform can be viewed as positive only. Every single demand for the elimination of the mandatory component exhilarates our struggle, however, we will try not to politicize the actions of our team," Dem.am member Gevorg Hayrapetyan told ArmeniaNow.

"Out of Our Pockets" campaign member Vardan Hakobyan mentioned that they will continue their fight "on the ground".

"If something is impossible to change on the ground, with thousands of bills, nothing will change; it is possible to achieve change on the ground with the help of struggle. Regardless of others' demands, our demands will remain in force," he said.

Another member of the team, Arsen Petrosyan, emphasized that even if the political "Quartet's" demands are heard, the government will demand more time.

"But we do not have that time. During that time hundreds of thousands of people will be penalized, this question must be solved as soon as possible."

Armenian President congratulates Queen Elisabeth II on birthday, visits British Embassy

President Serzh Sargsyan sent a congratulatory message to Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom and His Excellency Mr. David Cameron, the Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, on the occasion of the public holiday in the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland – the Official Birthday of Queen Elizabeth II.

The president sent his best wishes to the Queen, the Royal family and the British people and expressed confidence that the Armenian-British relations will continue to enlarge and advance for the benefit of the well-being of the two people.

In his congratulatory message to Prime Minister David Cameron, President Serzh Sargsyan assured that they should make joint efforts at strengthening the friendly relations between Armenia and the United Kingdom and create new prospects for further promoting mutually beneficial cooperation both at bilateral and multilateral levels. The President of Armenia wished the United Kingdom prosperity and continuous progress.



In addition, Serzh Sargsyan on June 9 visited the Embassy of the United Kingdom in the Republic of Armenia, congratulated Ambassador Katherine Jane Leach and the staff on the occasion of their national holiday. The President sent good wishes to the whole staff, wished them successes in their everyday activities of strengthening and promoting the Armenian-British relations.

Armenia hosts international consultations on Syria



The two-day international consultations on the “Crisis in Syria: Challenges to Religious Communities” kicked off at the Mother See of Holy Etchimadzin. The meeting opened with a prayer by His Holiness Karekin II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians. Participating in the conference are representatives of Christian Churches from the Middle East, Syria, Russia, different European countries and the United States.

Ambassadors of Iran, Germany, Italy to Armenia, representatives of the Russian Embassy and the UN Office in Yerevan, Armenian diplomats, representatives of the Syrian Armenian community were present at the opening ceremony.

Speaking at the meeting, Armenian Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan voiced hope that it would contribute to the establishment of political and inter-religious dialogue in Syria.

“We feel pain when we witness the

long-lasting domestic political crisis in the Middle East, particularly Syria, which grew into a civil war that claimed human lives and caused irreversible losses,” the Prime Minister said, adding that the Syrian crisis had painful consequences for the Christian churches, as well. He said any attempt to give religious nature to the conflict is reprehensible, as “we are confident that all religious preach peace.”

“Throughout its centuries-long history the Armenian people have paid with blood for their peace and independence. The Armenian authorities are making great efforts to solve the Karabakh issue in a peaceful way through negotiations on the basis of internationally accepted principles and norms, at the same time respecting the



right of self-determination of the people of Artsakh,” the Prime Minister said.

“We are a nation subjected to genocide at the turn of the 20th century and deprived

of its historic homelands –Western Armenia. On the eve of the 100th anniversary



sary of the Armenian Genocide the Armenian people again experienced that bitter pain, when in spring of the current year the radical groups supported by Turkey penetrated into the Armenian-populated city of Kessab in Syria,” PM Hovik Abrahamyan stated.

The Prime Minister voiced hope that the recent presidential elections in Syria would contribute to the launching of dialogue to solve the existing problems and reconstruct the country.

The two-day consultations will focus on the following topics: “Political developments in Syria and the humanitarian perspective,” “The Presence and of Christians in the Middle East and testimonies of developments in the Arab World,” “The Armenian communities in the Middle East and Syria and their perspectives.”

Shots from the Azerbaijani side registered before the start of the OSCE monitoring

On June 10, in accordance with the arrangement reached with the authorities of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, the OSCE Mission conducted a planned monitoring of the Line of Contact between the Armed Forces of Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan in the Hadrut direction near Horadiz settlement.

From the positions of the NKR Defense Army, the monitoring was conducted by Field Assistant of the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office Yevgeny Sharov (Ukraine) and staff member of the Office Peter Svedberg, as well as by representative of the OSCE High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) Lieutenant-Colonel Dan Harvey (Ireland).

From the opposite side of the line of contact, the monitoring was conducted by Personal Representative of the OSCE

Chairman-in-Office Ambassador Andrzej Kasprzyk and his Field Assistant Khristo Khristov (Bulgaria), as well as by representative of the OSCE High-Level Planning Group (HLPG) Colonel Ilhami DeghirmEnchioghlu (Turkey).

Before the start of the monitoring, shots were fixed from the Azerbaijani side towards the Karabakh positions, but the monitoring passed in accordance with the agreed schedule. However, the Azeri side did not lead the OSCE mission to its front-lines.



From the Karabakh side, the monitoring mission was accompanied by representatives of the NKR Ministries of Foreign Affairs and Defense.

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The perspective of Armenian-Turkish relations as seen by Turkish Ambassador to Georgia

In an exclusive interview with the Public Radio of Armenia, Turkish Ambassador to Georgia Zeki Levent Gümrikkü talks about Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan's statement issued on the eve of the Armenian Genocide anniversary, the Armenian-Turkish relations and the ways to move on, the two protocols pending in the parliament and the Nagorno Karabakh issue.

By Gita Elibekyan

On the eve of April 24 Turkish Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan issued a message on "the events of 1915" in several languages. Who was the message addressed to?

The message was addressed first and foremost to the Armenian population worldwide, not only in Turkey and Armenia, but to the Armenians all over the world. This was the first time that a Turkish Prime Minister addressed the Armenian population directly on this issue. As such, the message was truly of historic nature. Because, so far there have been several contacts between the Turkish and Armenian authorities and we have also exchanged views through media and intermediaries. But that was the first time a Turkish Prime Minister decided to address the Armenian population directly and tell them how we feel about the events of 1915.

I think the message was addressed particularly to those who lost their beloved ones in 1915 during the relocation. In this regard, the key elements of the message are that we recognize the inhumane consequences of the relocation of 1915, we share the grief, pain and suffering of the Armenian population as a whole and that we express condolences to the children and grandchildren of those who lost their lives during those events. So, they were a particularly important target audience of the message.

The message was also addressed to those who want a better future for Armenia, for Turkey and for the people of this region. In this context, the message stressed our commonalities and our special relations dating back to history. And based on this very special relationship, the message has been focused on the future, encouraging us to work together to build a better and common future.

Why was Erdogan's message issued now?

I think the Prime Minister realized that not addressing the Armenian population directly was giving certain third parties a chance to exploit the relationship between us for their own agendas. So, I think that's why he thought it's time now

for him to address the Armenian population directly and tell them what we stand for, what we think about our past, our present, but most importantly, our common future. In other words, we thought that the more we don't have this direct communication, the longer our relationship will be based on misunderstandings and prejudices. Therefore, the Prime Minister decided to dispel this kind of considerations and address the Armenian population directly. I think it was well received worldwide.

The reason why it was issued on April 23 is because we know that on April 24 the Armenians remember the events of 1915 worldwide. It was probably thought that it would be better to make such a communication right before April 24, when everyone was focusing and trying to remember what happened in 1915.

Speaking on US broadcaster PBS, PM Erdogan declared that the fact of Armenians living in Turkey today is a proof that there was no genocide. Does the presence of Jews in Germany prove there was no Holocaust?

I don't think it's good to draw parallels between different events. What PM Erdogan meant was that there has never been hatred against Armenians on the part of the Turkish people. On the contrary, Armenians have always had a very high standing in Turkey that goes all the way back to the Ottoman Empire. But even today there is a growing number of Armenians coming to Turkey, working in Turkey, having very good relations with their Turkish neighbors in Turkey.

For genocide to occur, there has to be a deliberate act to eradicate a certain group of people based on their ethnicity or faith, etc. What the Prime Minister meant is that there has never been such a negative relationship, such an antagonism between Turks and Armenians. Today, the fact that we see Armenians in increasing numbers coming to Turkey, working with their Turkish counterparts shows that this is not the case now either. And I think that in the future if we manage to normalize our relations, the two peoples will further benefit from this deep-rooted relationship.

Turkey closed the border with



Armenia in 1993, which was actually a hostile action against our country. Does Turkey consider Armenia and Armenians as enemies?

No, of course not. In fact, in Turkey we don't consider anyone as our enemies. Our Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu said once that Turkey has only friends and potential friends. Even with those who we don't have good relations with now, we will do everything possible to improve our relations in the future in order to make them our friends. This is the general outlook of our foreign policy. But particularly, we don't see Armenians as our enemies.

The reason for the closure of the border between Turkey and Armenia was the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia, and the occupation of the Azerbaijani territories by Armenia. But since then we have kept the channels of communication open between Turkey and Armenia. In 2009 we even reached the level where we signed protocols on normalization of our relations, which had not only envisaged the establishment of diplomatic relations, but also the opening of borders. So, based on certain requirements and a process to be followed, we are very much ready to open the borders, establish diplomatic ties and normalize our relations in general with Armenia.

Given that the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia was the reason why we had to close our borders with Armenia in 1993, we're also trying to contribute to the resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict. In this regard, we are a member of the Minsk Group. We're not the one of the Co-Chairs of this group, but we are an active member of it, and we are always trying to help resolve this issue peacefully sooner rather than later. Of course, we're in close touch with Azerbaijan, but we're also trying to talk about this issue to Armenia, because the resolution of this conflict will certainly open new avenues of coopera-

tion and will help us realize the potential of our region in a much better way.

In today's relations with Armenia Turkey constantly brings forward the Karabakh issue and the Khojalu tragedy. Before the events in Khojalu Armenians were massacred in different settlements of Azerbaijan – Sumgait, Baku, Kirovabad, Getashen, Martunashen and Maragha, but Turkey prefers to keep silent about this. What standards does Turkey use to assess which nation has the right to live and which one is to be annihilated?

Turkey in principle is against any aggression towards innocent people anywhere in the world. There is no doubt about that. But the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan has a long history. Today, when you look at the region, you see that the Azerbaijani territorial integrity is still being violated. Not only Nagorno Karabakh, but also 20% of the Azerbaijan proper, the seven regions around Nagorno Karabakh, is under the occupation of the Armenians. I think that is something we need to redress through the efforts of the Minsk Group and resolve this issue peacefully. After 20 years, what needs to be done now is to accelerate this process and resolve this conflict as soon as possible, because, as I have said, its resolution is definitely going to make us realize the true potential of our region.

For instance, you know how Turkey, Georgia and Azerbaijan are benefiting greatly because of the trilateral cooperation they enjoy. There is no reason why Armenia should not be a part of this. We have started this trilateral cooperation as a core of a larger regional cooperation and we definitely want Armenia to be a part of it, contributing to and benefiting from such cooperation. But in order to do it, we first need to resolve the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia and normalize relations between Turkey and Armenia. And when we do that, we'll see that this part of the world, the Caucasus, has a great potential for not only its inhabitants but much more widely, particularly given the energy and transport characteristics of the countries of the region.

How do you assess the fact that Turkey closed its border with Armenia because of a third country, although it has always been declaring that it wants peace and stability in the region?

Armenia and Azerbaijan are neighbors, and when we see one country occupying certain parts of another country, we cannot just remain indifferent to that. Moreover, given the special relationship

between Turkey and Azerbaijan, we felt that we had to react. In the beginning we have done a lot to stop this aggression and to find a way of dialogue and an agreement between the two countries. But unfortunately that wasn't possible then. So that's why we decided to close our borders. But since then we're trying to help the two countries resolve this conflict with the contribution of the international community and particularly the Minsk Group.

But when it comes to whether this is a precondition for the normalization between Turkey and Armenia, no it's not a precondition. But we need to see that the resolution of conflicts in this region is part of a larger regional perspective of peace. If you want to make progress in one piece of this puzzle in a lasting and sustainable way, you have to keep an eye on the other aspects of regional dynamics. That's why we're saying that Turkish-Armenian normalization has to go hand in hand with the resolution of other conflicts, first and foremost the conflict between Azerbaijan and Armenia. Positive steps in one or the other have to be mutually reinforcing. That's what we want to do. The steps towards normalizing the relations between Turkey and Armenia must help the resolution of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, and those positive steps on that front should help the normalization between Turkey and Armenia. Only then we can build a regional perspective of peace, where everyone will enjoy the dividends of peace. Without making it a precondition, we think that it is more practical and more realistic way to look into these two issues in parallel with each other and try to create a mutually reinforcing relationship between the two.

And that's exactly what we are doing. This is also why we are coming up with some creative new formulas and ideas all the time. For example, I was in Yerevan in December with my Minister and we had a long talk with Minister Nalbandian. We considered certain ideas on how to revitalize the process of normalization between Turkey and Armenia in a way that will be mutually reinforcing with the efforts to resolve the Armenian-Azerbaijani conflict. I think that's the right way to go, and we will continue to work in that direction.

In 2009 Armenia and Turkey signed two protocols in Zurich. When will the Turkish Parliament ratify the documents?

The protocols are still at the parliament waiting for ratification. There has to

be a certain process for that. But we all know why the ratification process has not been completed at the time of the signing in 2009. Because shortly after the signing of the documents the Armenian Constitutional Court issued a statement about the protocols, where it created a completely new context, which was against the word and spirit of the protocols. It somewhat divided the protocols into pieces, and decoupled certain parts from its entirety. What you and we understand from the protocols became too different from each other. That's why we were not able to go on with the ratification given that sort of differences in their interpretation.

Furthermore, as I said, we've always believed that the protocols and the normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia is part of a larger regional context, and that the normalization of Turkish-Armenian relations has to go hand in hand with the resolution of other conflicts in a mutually reinforcing manner. This is also the reason why we are somewhat delayed in the ratification and moving ahead with the normalization of relations.

But again, it's not a precondition. I'm underlining it once again that it is just a practical concern that Turkish-Armenian normalization is part of a larger regional context. In order to make it a sustainable process, in order to make it contribute to the regional peace and stability, we need to keep an eye on other issues that are affecting regional peace like the Azerbaijan-Armenia conflict. So, I think first and foremost we need to create such a dynamic framework, where the two issues will mutually reinforce each other. One step in one front should yield positive results in the other. So, that is the kind of framework we're trying to create, and we are committed to do that in the future as well.

It is in this framework that we are still committed to the normalization of relations and to the ratification of the protocols. However, for that we need to work closely with Armenia. We need to talk, we need to see what sort of issues are keeping us from going in that direction faster. I think that by talking and by engaging in a meaningful dialogue with Armenia we might make some progress in that direction. In fact, that's why my Minister traveled to Armenia in December and talked to his counterpart Mr. Nalbandian in the margins of the Black Sea Economic Cooperation Organization meeting. And I think that in the future if we are able to continue that

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Senators Carl Levin, Michael Bennet co-sponsor Armenian Genocide Resolution

Senate Armed Services Committee Chairman Senator Carl Levin (D-MI) and Senator Michael Bennet (D-CO) recently cosponsored S.Res. 410, the Armenian Genocide resolution, reported the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly). In addition to Levin and Bennet, S.Res. 410, which passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on April 10th, has the support of Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid (D-NV), Senate Majority Whip Dick Durbin (D-IL), Select Committee on Intelligence Chairwoman Diane Feinstein (D-CA), Select Committee on Ethics Chairwoman Barbara Boxer (D-CA), and Sens. Ed Markey (D-MA), Jack Reed (D-RI), and Sheldon Whitehouse (D-RI).

S.Res. 410 was introduced on April 3rd by Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Robert Menendez (D-NJ), a long-time champion of Armenian issues and powerful voice for justice, along with Senator Mark Kirk (R-IL), who previously served as Co-Chair of the Armenian Caucus during his tenure in the House of Representatives.

Chairman Levin and Senator Bennet have strong records in support of

Armenian American issues, particularly US reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide. Levin, who is retiring this fall, has cosponsored successive Armenian Genocide resolutions throughout his 36-



year tenure. Senator Bennet has also cosponsored previous Armenian Genocide resolutions since his arrival to the Senate in 2009.

“We stand with the Armenian people in remembrance of the genocide that took place nearly a century ago in the waning days of the Ottoman Empire,” Senator Bennet told the Assembly. “The catastrophic loss of life, systematic killing, and displacement of innocent civilians

was dreadful and unthinkable. We also reaffirm our commitment to ensuring that such a tragedy will never happen again,” Bennet said.

Michigan and Colorado are two of 43 US states to have recognized the Armenian Genocide and both have substantial records affirming this historical truth. Colorado Governor John Hickenlooper (D) signed a proclamation recognizing the Armenian Genocide in 2011, while the Colorado legislature passed SJR 14-032, a bill marking the “Colorado day of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide” on April 24, 2014. Former Michigan Governor James Blanchard proclaimed “Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day” in 1990, while the state’s legislature adopted a resolution in 2002 that annually marks April 24th as Michigan’s “days of remembrance of the Armenian Genocide.”

Having passed the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, S.Res.410 now awaits a vote on the Senate floor. “We urge the Senate to act and adopt this important human rights legislation,” stated Assembly Executive Director Bryan Ardouny.

The perspective of Armenian-Turkish relations...

From page 5

dialogue, if we are able to understand each other, we will be able to come closer to the ratification of protocols and normalization of relations between Turkey and Armenia.

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan recently invited the Turkish leader to visit Armenia on April 24, 2015, the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Do you think the Turkish President will accept the invitation?

Let me not comment on this before I see the statement in its entirety. Maybe, we’ll talk about it later on. But based on our positions on the events of 1915, I think first and foremost we need to have a dialogue between our governments, historians and peoples to understand how we both see that particular part of our history. Rather than imposing our memories on each other, we have to work in order to come up with a just and common memory.

That’s the reason why in fact Turkey has long time ago proposed to establish a

joint commission of historians to study that particular period in history and to shed light on this chapter of our common history. But unfortunately, so far we haven’t had a positive response from the Armenian side about that proposal. I think that this is a must. If we are to agree on how we view our past, we need to get together and have an open dialogue.

To this end the Turkish side has also opened its archives in its fullest extent. Now, anybody, an Armenian researcher or researchers from all over the world can come to Turkey, can go to our archives and can look at each and every document from that particular period. We believe that Armenia should also open its archives. The third parties – Russia, US, UK, Germany, France – who have documents that can shed light on that particular era, should also do the same.

Only through such a dialogue and joint study we can establish the facts and reach a common and just memory without imposing our own memories upon each other. This is why our Prime

Minister’s message has made quite an important stress on this particular matter. We expect the Armenian side to positively respond to our proposal for a joint historical commission, so that we might start working on this project sooner rather than later.

Would you like to add anything?

I think that Prime Minister Erdogan’s message has to be analyzed very carefully. As I said it is truly of historic nature that a Turkish Prime Minister for the very first time addressed the Armenian population directly on the issue of the events of 1915. So I think that rather than seeing it as a tactical move, one has to read it without any prejudice. I would just humbly appeal to all my Armenian friends and colleagues to read that message carefully and to see what it really means, what it really tries to get across to the Armenian people. And based on this I believe we can indeed establish a very meaningful and promising dialogue, which Turkey is definitely ready to be engaged in.

65 Armenian families forced out of Mosul amid extremist takeover

According to sources at the Armenian Prelacy in Iraq, 65 Armenian families and a priest in Mosul were forced out of the city after Islamist militants raided the city and took control of Iraq's second largest city, Asvarev reports quoting Aztag Daily newspaper.

Insurgents raised black flags over parts of the city on Tuesday, as soldiers fled their posts after Sunni extremists known as the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS) took the city after four days of heavy fighting against Iraqi forces.

"When the battle got tough in the city of Mosul, the troops dropped their weapons and abandoned their posts, making it an easy prey for the terrorists," Osama Nuajaifi, the speaker of Iraq's parliament who hails from Mosul, said during a news conference in Baghdad, according to Time Magazine. "Everything is fallen. It's a crisis. Having these terrorist groups control a city in the heart of Iraq threatens not only Iraq but the entire region."

According to Time.com, terrified residents were streaming out of the city—the International Organization for Migration reports 500,000 people have left their homes since Saturday—and there were reports that water and electricity were cut off. On its Twitter account, ISIS gloated about seizing arms and vehicles abandoned by the city's supposed defenders. Elsewhere in the country, its fighters have been spotted driving Humvees captured from government forces in previous encounters.

The situation was dire in more ways than one. Besides its symbolic importance as Iraq's second-largest city—and the historic home of the country's oil industry—Mosul has crucial strategic sig-



nificance. It sits near both Turkey and the largely autonomous Kurdish zone of northern Iraq, but most importantly functions as Iraq's most prominent doorway to Syria, where ISIS emerged as one of the main rebel forces arrayed against Syrian President Bashar Assad, reported Time.

Despite warnings from analysts that the insurrection was at heart a political problem that might only be worsened by a heavy-handed military response, al-Maliki announced his government had created a Crisis Unit and was preparing a counter-offensive that, according to one report, would include civilian volunteers armed by his government. Nuajaifi, the parliament speaker, warned: "They will reach every corner of Iraq if it doesn't stop," reported Time Magazine.

Activists Protesting Dismantling of Historic Building in Downtown Yerevan Detained



By Narek Aleksanyan

Activists attempting to thwart the demolishing of a historic building in downtown Yerevan built by a prominent merchant family were detained by police late Monday evening.

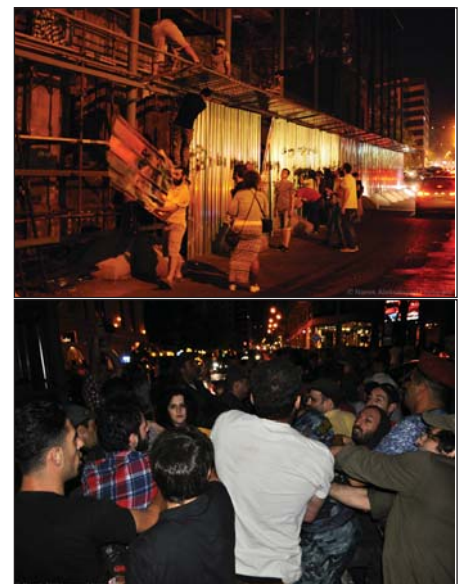
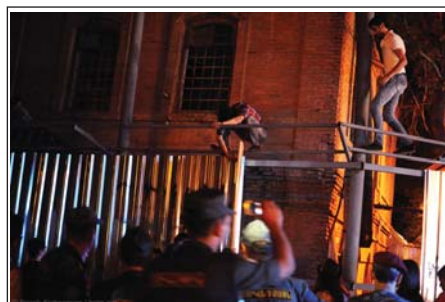
Activists began to tear down the metal partitions erected around the Afrikyan house and erase the numbers on the stones. When they had almost completely torn down the sheets, police officers appeared on the scene, demanding an explanation. The activists said they are trying to save historical and culture values that are being destroyed.

An altercation ensued, resulting in police detaining Vahagn Gevorgyan. Other activists attempted to prevent police from detaining anyone else. Chanting "Victory!" and "Free, Independent Armenia!" they marched to Kentron Police Division where their friend was taken. Media reports [AM] indicate that other activists may have been detained.

The Afrikyan house located at 11 Teryan St., constructed at the end of the 19th century and belonging to the merchant Armen Afrikyan, served as a center where political figures, entrepreneurs, artists, and other prominent members of

the city used to meet. The Afrikyans were also Yerevan City Council members.

The building, recognized as having eminent public interest, was purchased by Millennium Construction, which intends to dismantle it, reconstructing the façade in another part of the city, and build a hotel in its place.





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1 ROOM

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- 1440.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 110 sq.m., 1 bedroom, h-3m, euro repaired, heating system, .furnished, parking.. Price: 350.000 USD.
- 1715- **Sayat Nova Ave.**, 5/4, 70sq.m, stone bld, h-4m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 110.000 USD
- 1680- **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/4, 68sq.m, 1 bedroom, old repair, possibility of gas. Price: 86.000 USD.
- 1674. **Abovyan str.**, 2nd floor, 70sq.m., 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 135.000 USD
- 1698- **Aram str.**, Newly built, 14/5, 62sq.m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, AC, security system, parking. Price: 120.000 USD.

2 ROOMS

- 1560. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 10/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.
- 2818. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, Ac, furnished. Price: 400.000 USD
- 1156. **Komitas Ave.**, Hambardzumyan str. 5/3, 110sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, kitchen is furnished. Price: 150.000 USD negotiable..
- 2949. **Aram str.**, Newly built, 1st floor, 143 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, zero state, Price: 2000 USD per sq.m.
- 2300. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.

3 ROOMS

- 2682. **Aram Str.**, Newly built, 13/6 187sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 open balconies, capially repaired, heating system, 2AC, 2 garages, view to garden. Price: 550.000 USD negotiable.
- 2958. **Pushkin str.**, 5/2, 140 sq.m., stone building, 4 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system. Price: Negotiable.
- 2895. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, AC. Price: negotiable
- 2802. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 8/4, 166sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, central heating, AC, security system. Price: 320.000 USD.
- 1104. **Komitas Ave.**, Aram Khachatryan str., 5/2, 125sq.m., stone bld, h-2.75m., 3 bedrooms, office, 2 bathrooms, old repair, gas, garage. Price: 130.000 USD
- 2950. **Aram str.**, Newly built, 5th floor, 176 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, office, zero state, Price: 310.000 USD
- 2836. **Pushkin str.**, 4/4,5, 400sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 460.000 USD.
- 2990. **North Ave.**, Newly built, 11th floor, 295sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: Negotiable.

PREMISES

- 1789. **Charents str.** Land-1270sq.m, 5 storied building, each floor-400sq.m., basement,

capially repaired, parkings. Price: 4.000.000 USD negotiable

- 1598. **Komitas, Nairy Zaryan str.**, 1000 sq.m., working restaurant, 1st line, capially repaired. Price: negotiable.
- 1603. **Northern Ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 160 sq.m., zero level, window glasses. Price: 2.600.000 USD.
- 2035. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m., 1st line, facade-55m., capially repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: Negotiable
- 2013. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capially repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 1.300.000\$ negotiable
- 2012. **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1,2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capially repaired, AC. Price: 1.100.000\$ negotiable
- 2155. **Mashtots ave.**, 3storied building, 540sq.m., each floor-180sq.m, window glasses, parking. Price: 3.600.000 USD
- 2020. **Hr. Kochar str.**, Land-300sq.m, 1st line, 4storied building, 1080sq.m., each floor-270sq.m, h-3.6m, without divisions, parkings, 3 access. Price: 1.400.000 USD negotiable
- 1986. **Cascade**, Land 1000sq.m. 3storied building 1200sq.m., unfinished, parking. Price: 1.000.000 USD.
- 2167. **Sayat Nova str.**, newly built, 38sq.m, capially repaired. Price: 200.000 USD

LANDS

- 2122. **Davitashen**, 1800 sq.m., water, gas, electricity, possible to sell separately 600 sq.m., and 1200 sq.m. Price: 150 USD per sq.m.
- 2121. **Demirchyan str.**, 1338 sq.m., building permits. Price: 2million USD.
- 2013. **Cascade**. 1000 sq.m. building permits, first line, gas, water and electricity possibilities. Price 460.000 USD
- 1402. **Hr. Kochar Str.**, 1100 sq. m., facade - 25 m. Price negotiable.
- 2090. **Lori region**, close to Stepanavan, Gyargary village, 6 hectares, forest 2 hectare has building permits, 3 water source, electricity. Price: 100.000 USD.
- 2406. **Avan**, Mher Mkrtchyan block, 1000 sq.m., electricity, gas, water, the district is inhabited. Price: 30 USD per sq.m
- 2310. **Monument, Babayan str**, 1000 sq.m, facade-25m, privatized, Price: 350 USD negotiable
- 2107. **Monument**, 2400sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: 400 USD per sq.m.
- 2413. **Ashtarak roadway**, 1000sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: Negotiable
- 2414. **Demirchyan str.** land-750sq.m., building permits. Price: 750.000 USD.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- 3348. **Blur, Barbyus str.** Land - 800 sq.m, 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control. Price: 1.2 million USD
- 3146. **Aygestan**, Land-500 sq.m., 5 storied bld-765 sq.m., each floor-180 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, heating system, elevator. Price: 2.300.000 USD.
- 3583. **Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price: 1.350.000 USD.
- 3432. **Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m , 3 storied bld.- 501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, central heating, AC,

boiler room garden, swimming pool, sauna, garage, security system. Price: 1.000.000 USD

•3576. **Avan**, Tsarav Akhbyur /near Botanical garden/, Land-560sq.m., 4 storied building-560sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, a kitchen, office, capially repaired, heating system, swimming pool, garden, 2 car parking. Price: 850.000 USD

•3606. **Avan**, Tsarav Akhbyur/near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m., 3 storied building-750sq.m., 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capially repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking.



Price-1.500.000 USD

- 3574. **Blur**, Land-779sq.m., 2 storied building-720sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 2.000.000 USD
- 3590. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450 sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 680.000 USD
- 3651. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 1.700.000 USD.

NEWLY BUILT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

- 74. **Cascade**, Verin Antarayin. 136-315 sq m., walls plastered, electricity, water, gas, euro windows, no exploitation fees. Price: 1200 USD per sq.m, parking -15.000 USD.
- 107. **Monument**, Verin Antarayin. inhabited, 8 floors, gas, windows, street view -1000 USD per sq.m., city looking -1500 USD per sq.m., parking - 4 million USD preliminary.
- 87. **Sayat-Nova str.**, 21 floors, 3 bedrooms - 188 sq.m., 199 sq.m., Price 1900 USD per sq.m., 2 bedrooms have a beautiful sight - 117 sq.m., 120 sq.m., 124 sq.m., Price: 1700 USD per sq.m., climate control, gas.
- 93. **Kievyan str.**, Given to the operation in October 2011, 16 floors, walls plastered, windows, exterior doors, h -3, 15 m, gas, parking. Price: 1500-1600 USD per sq.m, parking-12 000 USD. Possible with mortgage, for 13 years term.
- 94. **Masiv**. 3floors, 8 flats, each flat has 3 bedrooms, 210 sq.m., parking. Price: negotiable.
- 130. **Antarayin str.**, 34 flats, 110-275 sq.m., 4 penthouses-200-275sq.m, available services-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 131. **Busand str.**, commercial, office and residential areas, penthouse, available services-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable



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1 ROOM

- ♦2037. **Baghranyan str.**, 5/2, 60sqm, 1 bedroom, euro repaired, gas, heating system, AC, modern furnished, equipped. Price: negotiable
- ♦2189. **Vardanants str.**, Newly built, 24/12, 90 sqm, 1 bedroom, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD.
- ♦2099. **Sayat-Nova Ave.**, 12/6, 1 bedroom, capitally repaired, gas, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 600 USD.
- ♦1972. **Northern ave.**, 8/4, 80sq.m., 1 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, open kitchen, capitally repaired, climate control. Price: 1200 USD
- ♦2171. **Tumanyan str.**, Newly built, 5th floor, 94 sq.m., 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, capitally repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD
- ♦2367. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 9th floor, 98 sq.m., capitally repaired, heating system, furnished equipped. Price: Negotiable.

2 ROOMS

- ♦942. **Teryan str.** 4/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped. Price: 1500 USD.
- ♦1950. **Buzand/Mashtots area.** Newly built, 8th floor, 163 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, furnished, open balcony. Price: 2500 USD.
- ♦1681. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- ♦1535. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 7/4, 82sq.m., 2 bedrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable.
- ♦2089. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 8/6, 120sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, furnished, equipped. Price: 2500 USD
- ♦1738. **Amiryan str.**, 8/8, 159sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable
- ♦1951. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 13th floor, 122sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control. Price: 2500 USD
- ♦1406. **Sayat Nova ave.**, 7/3, 110sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable
- ♦2187. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 9/5, 120 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 2.200 USD
- ♦2109. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 10/4, 137sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.

3 ROOMS AND MORE

- ♦2257. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 17/16, 160 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: Negotiable
- ♦2253. **Abovyan str.**, Newly built, 11th floor, 260sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 3500 USD
- ♦2021. **Teryan Str.**, Newly built, 9/8, 9, 245 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished. Preliminary price: 3500 USD.
- ♦2005. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/8, 130 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, parking. Price: 2200 USD.
- ♦1723. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/4., 170

sq.m 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, open kitchen, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD.

- ♦1981. **Vardanants Str.**, Newly built, 14/14, 140 sq m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, 3 open balconies, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- ♦1793. **Teryan str.**, Newly built, 8th floor, 260 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, study, capitally repaired, climat control, parking, unfurnished (possible to furnish), Price: 3500 USD.
- ♦1720. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 16/10, 179 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, central heating, AC, cellar- 25sq.m, with or without furniture, parking, Price 3000 USD negotiable
- ♦2195. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capitally repaired, climate control, AC, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- ♦2261. **Hin Yerevantsi, /North Avenue/,** Newly built, 10/3, 124sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 1700 USD
- ♦2084. **Tumanyan str.**, 4th floor, 200sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- ♦2252. **Northern ave**, 7th floor, 350 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, open balconies, capitally repaired, climate control, parking. Price Negotiable.

PRIVATE HOUSES

- ♦1191. **Aygestan**, Land-400 sqm, 2 storied bld.- 270 sqm, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathroom, study, capitally repaired, partly furnished, garden, swimming pool, garage. Starting Price: 3500 USD.
- ♦1248. **Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m, 3 storied bld. - 501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capitally repaired, central heating, AC, sauna, boiler room garden, swimming pool, garage, alarming system, security system.



Price: 8000 USD.

- ♦999. **Aygedzor**, Land -1000 sqm, basement + 2 floors- 310 sqm, capitally repaired, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, newly furnished, equipped, sauna, swimming-pool. Starting Price: 5000 USD.
- ♦1094. **Noy block**, Land-450sqm, 2 storied building - 220sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden. Price: 2000USD.
- ♦1195. **Nork, Armenakyan str.**, Land - 2000 sq.m, 4 storied bld.-520 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, sauna, gym, furnished, swimming-pool, garden. Price: 4.000 USD negotiable.

♦1142. **Djrevej**, Bagrevand community. Land-1000 sq.m., 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, pantry, playing room, capitally repaired, no furniture/ can be furnished, if necessary /garage for 2 cars. Price: 4 000 USD.

- ♦1293. **Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520 sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price: 7.000 USD
- ♦327. **Nork-Marash**, Land-500sq.m., 4 storied building-600 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking. Price-4000 USD
- ♦1306. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m., 3 storied building-750sq.m., 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capitally repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking, with or without furniture. Price: 6000-8000 USD negotiable
- ♦1288. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-560sq.m., 4 storied building-560 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, a kitchen, office, capitally repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, 2 car parking. Price: 5000 USD
- ♦1197. **Blur**, Land-779sq.m., 2 storied building-720sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capitally repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 8000 USD
- ♦1312. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable
- ♦1317. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable.
- ♦1323. **Monument, Babayan str**, Land - 400 sq.m, 3 storied bld-300sq.m, each floor-100sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable

PREMISES

- ♦1693. **Malatia-Sebastia** 4 storied building, 1200sq.m, each floor-300sq.m, 2 separate entrances, climate control, 2 elevators, basement, parking. Price: 15USD per sq.m.
- ♦1526. **Byuzand str.**, 5/semi-basement, 170 sqm., 4-5 degrees below zero level, window glasses, cellar - 50 sq.m., 6 rooms, the largest is 30 sq.m., 2 entrances, 2 lavatories. Price 2000 USD per month, negotiable.
- ♦1408. **Zarobyanyan str.**, /parallel to Baghranyan str./, 2 storied building, 600 sqm. ground floor- hall and kitchen, 1st floor 5 rooms, bathroom, open balcony, capitally repaired, gas, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable.
- ♦1462. **Teryan str.**, 3 storied building, 800 sq.m., capitally repaired, AC, parking, Price: 10.000 USD.
- ♦1945. **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1, 2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capitally repaired, AC. Price: 8000 USD
- ♦1943. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capitally repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 7000 USD
- ♦1868. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m., 1st line, facade-55m., capitally repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: 15.000 USD.
- ♦2087. **Northern ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 100sq.m, 1st line, zero level, capitally repaired, window glasses. Price: Negotiable.

Turkey and United States Conspire to Issue April 24 Statements



By Harut
Sassounian

Publisher, The
California Courier

While it is not surprising to learn that Turkey and the United States have coordinated their official declarations on the Armenian Genocide, recent revelations have confirmed their shameful behind-the-scenes schemes.

In a speech delivered in Australia late last year, former US Ambassador to Armenia John Evans revealed for the first time that the State Department regularly conferred with the Turkish Embassy in Washington on the content of the US President's annual April 24 statement on the Armenian Genocide.

This clearly reflects the degree of collaboration between Turkey and the United States on the genocide issue, and even more appalling, American officials' succumbing to the gag rule imposed by a denialist regime!

The American-Turkish collusion on the Armenian Genocide issue was recently corroborated by Deniz Kahraman in the *Aydinlik* Turkish newspaper, revealing that the two governments jointly drafted the statement that Prime Minister Erdogan issued on April 23, 2014. He offered condolences to Armenians, Turks, and others who died from various causes during World War I, thus equating the deaths of Turkish soldiers with Armenian Genocide victims.

Basing his information on unnamed diplomatic sources, Kahraman wrote that the White House had been fully aware of the content of Erdogan's statement in advance of its release. In fact, the Turkish Prime Minister's text was prepared with U.S. input and finalized by officials in both countries. It appears that the initial text was prepared by the Turkish Foreign Ministry, after which the White House made some modifications, "based on U.S. sensitivities" on this issue. On April 21, the Turkish Foreign Ministry forwarded the final text to Prime Minister

Erdogan's office which released it to the public on April 23.

Kahraman also revealed that in return for accepting U.S. modifications of Erdogan's statement, Washington offered to block the pending Armenian Genocide resolution in the Senate, after its adoption by the Foreign Relations Committee in early April.

Aydinlik reported that Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has personally followed since last year the Armenian Diaspora's preparations for the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide. Turkey is reportedly evaluating its countermoves, which include convincing the Armenian government to revive the comatose Armenian-Turkish protocols, while simultaneously energizing the mediating efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group to resolve the Karabagh (Artsakh) conflict through public diplomacy.

According to *Aydinlik*, Ankara is evaluating its plans on how best to counter Armenians who are pursuing their demands from Turkey through three separate channels: "legal, political, and public opinion." Kahraman reported that a serious political rift emerged last June between Turkey and the US, after which Washington started pressuring Turkey to

take more resolute steps on the Armenian Genocide issue and normalize relations with Israel. To appease the United States, the Turkish Prime Minister issued a statement on April 23, on the eve of the 99th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

Aydinlik also reported that the decision of the European Court of Human Rights in favor of Turkish denialist Dogu Perincek had strengthened Ankara's hand in international circles. However, Washington wanted Turkey to be more accommodating on the Armenian Genocide issue. That is why Turkish and US officials orchestrated the release of a public statement by Erdogan on April 23, right before Pres. Obama's own statement on April 24.

It is therefore not surprising that State Department spokeswoman Jen Psaki had high praise for Erdogan's April 23 statement, describing it as a positive step that would pave the way for improved relations between Armenia and Turkey. Unbeknownst to the public, the State Department was in fact praising a statement that it had helped draft.

While Turkey and the United States are playing a dishonest game of publicly supporting each other's privately orchestrated statements on the Armenian Genocide, Foreign Minister Davutoglu let the cat out of the bag by announcing in Parliament that Erdogan's April 23 message of condolences was part of the Turkish campaign to undermine Armenian efforts to commemorate the Centennial of the Genocide.

Finally, I wish to remind all those who have wrongly claimed that Erdogan's April 23 message was an unprecedented pronouncement by a Turkish leader, almost 90 years ago, on June 22, 1926, Pres. Kemal Ataturk made a truly bold statement in an interview with the *Los Angeles Examiner*: "These leftovers of the Young Turk Party who should have been made to account for the lives of millions of our Christian subjects who were ruthlessly driven en masse from their homes and massacred..."



Armenian community criticizes Turkish authorities over Kessab failure

Turkey's Armenian community has criticized Ankara's indifference towards Armenians from Syria's Kessab region fleeing from the war-torn country and seeking shelter in Turkey, also bringing attention to the inadequacy of Turkish-Armenian associations, including the Armenian Patriarchate, in helping Kessab Armenians settle in Turkey, Today's Zaman reports.

The Turkish-Armenian community came together on Saturday in a conference to discuss the problems of Kessab Armenians, whose predicament appeared in the Turkish media earlier in April when two Armenian sisters from Kessab, Satenik (82) and Surpuhi (80) Titizian, arrived in Yayladagi after being escorted by Syrian rebels to the Turkish-Syrian border. They were offered refuge in Vakifli village, the only remaining Armenian village in Turkey.

Kessab is located on the Mediterranean coast of northern Syria, close to the border with Turkey. Having been populated by Armenians for centuries, Kessab is a town with a Christian population in a country with a majority Islamic population. As the Syrian civil war continues, some areas of the country have been taken over by extremist and Islamist militants. Kessab came under attack by some of those militants. The Turkish government has been criticized over its complacency and even support for rebel extremists who have found safe haven in Turkey near the Syrian border to carry out operations.

"The Titizyan sisters were not brought to Turkey, they were kidnapped," said Aris Nalci, a Turkish-Armenian journalist from IMC TV during an event held about the life of Kessab Armenians in Vakifli village on Saturday.

Before the Titizyan sisters came to Turkey, there were reportedly 130 people living in Vakifli, mostly elderly individuals. On May 5, 19 more ethnic Armenians from Syria, most of them elderly and on wheelchairs, joined the Titizyan sisters in Vakifli. After most moved on to Lebanon, there are now only six Kessab Armenians

left in Vakifli. An old man who was also planning to leave for Lebanon died of a heart attack in Vakifli and was buried there.

"They were people in the depths of despair," said an old Armenian resident from Vakifli, sharing his experiences and impressions. He welcomed the arrival of ethnic Armenians fleeing Syria to Turkey to their village, which is within view of the Syrian-Turkish border in Hatay province.

"It was a very emotional moment for me when I heard them murmuring to each other that they were among Armenians after they noticed we were all speaking Armenian," the old man said.

Ankara had said in April that Turkey's doors are "wide open" to the largely Armenian residents of the Kessab region of Syria, which is under the threat of clashes between Syrian rebel forces.

Turkey has been criticized by



Armenians worldwide for providing assistance to al-Qaeda-linked terrorist groups who are killing Armenians in Syria. Dismissing the criticisms, Foreign Minister Ahmet Davutoglu has argued against what he called the "wrong image of Turkey," adding that the country's doors are wide open for Armenians living in Kessab.

He also said Turkey had made official statements about the case of Kessab Armenians since the beginning of the clashes near Kessab and has informed the acting Armenian patriarch and other minority leaders in Turkey about the incidents.



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Երեւանից 35 րոպե
հեռավորությամբ






The Great Silk Way and Armenian-Chinese Relations

By Artashes Mikaelyan



Dr.(Ph) economy, professor of Moscow Institute of Management, Economy & Innovation, member of Moscow Armenian Diaspora, consulter of Minculture of RF, Head of Moscow Department of Interregional Foundation "Eurasian Dialogue of Cultures & Civilizations".

Having gained political independence in 1991 Republic of Armenia acquired a right to join the world economic system and thus became a part of the world economy. In the process of making and putting into life the strategic Program of Armenia's social-economic development it is necessary to take into account all changes and development vectors of the world market as one whole whose parts are interdependent and mutually connected.

Armenia is in close friendly relations with Russia and strives to make these relations better and deeper (whatever the reasons for this cooperation might be - economic, state security or others); to join the system of the world market Armenia has to make a choice from three main alternatives:

1. To join the European Unit and Western market. For this alternative Armenia has neither competitive advantage or material basis, nor goods that could meet the demands of this market and comply with its standards, or a real opportunity to occupy a steady niche in this market.

2. To tie the main perspective of Armenia's social-economic development with the market of the Customs Union, including Russia.

3. To keep on cooperating with Russia and the Customs Union and at the same time to look for some new possible vectors of economic development and cooperation by using her traditional historical ties and relations.

By way of example of the latter alternative the relations of Armenia with Iran and China could be given. Such relations are complementary rather than contradicting the market relations with Russia and the Customs Union both in economic and geopolitical respect. The development of such cooperation will introduce into Armenia's economy a possibility of certain diversification, having in view the fact that Armenia has a long-lasting history of traditionally active trading relations with the above-mentioned countries.

Development of Armenia's economic relations with Iran is made somewhat difficult for unfavorable and tense relations between Iran and the West which has got especially strained lately in connection with Iran introducing its nuclear program. Meanwhile the relations with China are rather friendly and favorable for cooperation.

For centuries-long period, in the times of the Great Silk Way (GSW), Armenia had trading relations with China and made a considerable contribution in the development and functioning

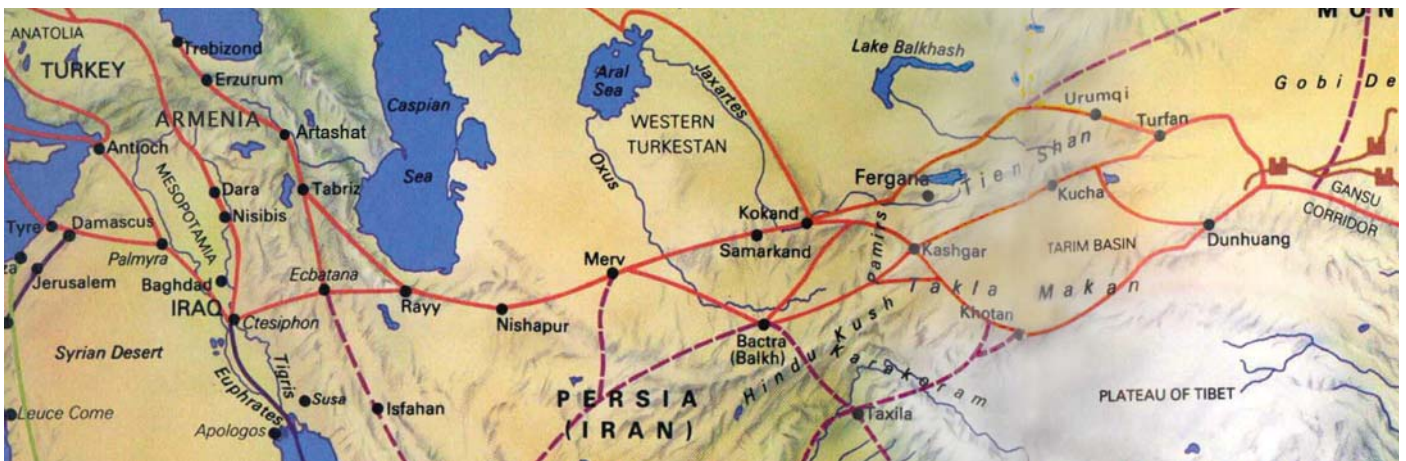
of the GSW.

The GSW makes its start from the Chinese city of Sian from which it made two branches - one to the North, the other - to the South. The Chinese called their country Chzhun Guo, which means "the centre and the universe". China is known to the world as a birthplace of silk, paper, gunpowder and tea. The GSW is one of the seven wonders of the world. The wall has been preserved in its original state. By the way, the principle of building the GSW was widely used by ancient Armenian builders. The GSW started to be used as a trade way as early as the second century BC, in the reign of the Emperor U-di. A person in attendance, Djan Tsyau by name, suggested to the Emperor that they should export silk out of the country and



change horses, fruit, wine and other goods for silk. In the hot Asian climate silk was a comfortable and beautiful commodity owing to which it was in great demand. Besides silk China exported porcelain, metal dishes, rice, tea, cosmetics etc. and from Asia and the Caucasus to China a number of goods were imported such as horses, military uniform, gold, silver, half-precious metals, leather, wool, cotton clothes, lions, tigers, hunting dogs, etc. The GSW was a powerful impulse for Armenian trade: the volume of commodity circulation increased, market got enlarged. The Armenian Tsar of all Tsars Artashes with his own means built a wide road leading to Armenia's capital - Artashat and called the road "Tsar's Road". The caravans of Armenian merchants consisted of around 200 camels, as a rule merchant caravans had guides - armed people who accompanied the caravan and saw to its security. Among the guides there were clergymen, singers, cooks, doctors, craftsmen and other service staff. The process of goods exchange and sale could last for several months. Armenian merchants carried on negotia-





tions with their clients at the table with ample food and refreshments which gave them certain competitive advantage in the process of selling and buying. To secure the process of non-stop trade the merchants returned to their country to take some more goods while some people from the service staff stayed in the market places to receive extra profit; in this way a kind of "small business" was established. The merchants married and had their own families, for whom they built new settlements with developed infrastructure: schools, churches, hospitals, etc. they established publishing offices to print books and papers. The book of the well-known Armenian historian Movses Khorenatsi "The History of Armenia" (the 5th c. AD) tells that Armenian merchants built a lot of churches and spread Christianity among the Chinese people.

Millennial history of Armenian-Chinese relations is reflected in different spheres of life of the two ancient peoples - economic, cultural, national, etc. thus, etymology of many words is connected with China. For example, the Armenian word "chnashkharhik" contains a Chinese element, the root of the Armenian word for porcelain "chenapaky" also contains a Chinese element, this word means "the glass brought from China". Two tsar dynasties in Armenia - the Mamikoyans and the Orbelyans - are of Chinese origin. The first translation of the Bible into the Chinese language was made by an Armenian clergyman and teacher of the Chinese language Hovhannes Ghazaryan, a citizen of the town of Kanton, the sponsors of the translation being Armenian merchants.

Armenian-Chinese relations were praised in songs and were described in fiction. One of such pieces is the poem of a well-known Uzbek poet who lived in the Middle Ages - Alisher Navoyee. His poem "Fahrad and Shirin" is devoted to the love

story of Fahrad, a Chinese hero, the heir of the tsar Dynasty, to an Armenian beauty Shirin. In the name of his love to the girl Fahrad built a road through the mountain chain, constructed a magnificent palace decorated with sculptures and beautiful fountains and gave it to his beloved Shirin as a present. The poem glorifies love and is translated into many languages of the world.

The Chinese notion "syaokan" which means "a society of people of average well-being" is in harmony with the Armenian saying "one who is not satisfied with little will never achieve much".

Armenian-Chinese relations are the object of contemporary study of Armenian scholars. Thus, in 2011 the Institute of History by RA National Academy of Science arranged an international forum "Civilizational contribution of Armenia in the history of the GSW". In the framework of the forum some issues related to civilization interrelation of Armenian and Chinese cultures were examined. A lot of scientific treatises devoted to Armenian-Chinese relations have been published since the 4th century AD. These works or documents that confirm their existence are kept in Matenadaran - M. Mashtots Institute of Ancient Manuscripts. The famous German organization "Max Plank" in cooperation with the teacher Garret Gellenthal from Oxford University in 2014 having carried out a scientific research introduced an on-line map on which they marked genetic ties of the peoples from different countries of the world. According to the data presented in this research, the Armenian gene in the Chinese gene pool makes 3.9%, while the gene of the neighboring Japanese people makes 0.6%. According to the same source, the Armenian gene is present in the gene pool of 33 world nations, including the gene pool of Lezgins (13.8%), Georgians (12.4%), Iranese (7.5%), etc.

The GSW played a great role in the process of formation of mode of life as well as religious, economic, cross-cultural relations between states and nations and thus contributed to the process of interpenetration and fusion of cultures and values of different civilizations. It is noteworthy that all the countries through which the GSW passed provide security for merchants and their goods irrespective of their religious or racial status.

Subsequently, English "East Indies" company in its pursuit to win Chinese market brought to China and spread there a large lot of opium by which act England kept the country in the state of slave dependence for 200 years. Numerous barbarian invasions brought to the fact that in the 15th century the GSW stopped functioning.

(to be continued)



A Cypriot Company's Armenian Shareholders and Ishkhan Zakaryan's Partial Discoveries

The Control Chamber of the Republic of Armenia (RA) in its last report recorded the ineffective management of grants transferred to a Cyprus company. But Ishkhan Zakaryan's "discoveries," as always, do not receive the proper attention by Armenia's law enforcement agencies. In this case as well, no criminal case was launched. And the Cyprus company provided no clarification.

The company Four Assist Development Consulting Limited registered in Cyprus in 2012–2013 received \$704,000 from Armenia in order to prepare a draft accounting legal framework and manual and develop and implement an automated accounting system.

The RA Ministry of Finance on June 13, 2012 (there was a change in the contract in May 2013), signed a contract with Four Assist Development Consulting valued at \$704,000, which, excluding taxes, was transferred to the Cypriot company's account. RA Minister of Finance Vache Gabrielyan both signed the contract and made the change later. On the same day, June 13, 2012, the Cypriot company signed a subcontract valued at \$288,000 with the company PHP Partners registered in the Republic of Armenia.

Four Assist Development Consulting: an International, Offshore, and Armenian Company

Four Assist Development Consulting was registered in Cyprus in 2006. Hetq asked the Ministry of Finance whether they know who the company's founders or shareholders are. The ministry didn't answer the question.

According to the Cyprus state registry, Four Assist Development Consulting's biggest shareholder is the RA citizen Gnel Sedrakyan, with 1550 shares. He worked as an advisor to the RA Ministry of Finance in the early 2000s. He also has been involved in several European Commission programmes in Armenia.

Other significant shareholders include Yiannis Hadziyiannakis (1300 shares). He has worked for over 5 years in the RA Ministry of Finance and RA Ministry of Economy, participating in one of the European Commission projects.

Sebastien Dubost owns 775 shares. From 2000–2003, he was acting head of the European Commission Delegation's branch office in Armenia and has been a team leader of numerous European Commission projects.

The RA citizen Irina Grigoryan, though small, also has a share (250 shares). She is a qualified accountant. She has worked as an advisor for the finance ministries of Armenia, Georgia, and Tajikistan. She has experience in the European Commission's development assistance programmes. There are also other

shareholders.

It's not the first time, it turns out, Four Assist Development Consulting has implemented a project in Armenia. Hetq asked the Ministry of Finance what other programmes and at what costs the company implemented projects in Armenia. Again, there was no answer. As clarified by head of the ministry's information and public relations department Sophie Simonyan, they replied only "within the scope of their authority, and they cannot provide any other information."

Four Assist Development Consulting in 2011–2012 through European Commission funds implemented also a programme called "Strengthening of the Arbitration System for the Ministry of Justice of the Republic of Armenia". During the same period, with a grant from the World Bank and the Ministry of Finance, the company implemented the "Strengthening Public Sector Internal Audit" project. The RA Ministry of Finance could not have not known about this, and it definitely was not outside of "the scope of [their] authority".

The "Implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards Strategy" project valued at \$704,000 was implemented with joint financing from the World Bank and the RA state budget.

The RA Control Chamber examined the grant funds the World Bank provided to Armenia in the Foreign Financing Projects Management Centre state institution, as well as the legitimacy and effectiveness of the RA state budgetary funds. The Control Chamber declared that the entire volume of work stipulated in the contract was implemented by PHP Partners under a subcontract.

"A natural question arises: if any Armenian company can implement the work with \$288,000, why is it being carried out by a Cypriot company at a cost of \$704,000?" asks the Control Chamber in its report.

Furthermore, the Control Chamber discovered that the drafting of the accounting legal framework regulating public sector accounting standards, piloting of the automated accounting system into four companies and the capacity building of those companies — none of this work was completed. The companies weren't equipped, and one expert from each of only three of the four companies underwent training, with no one from the fourth company undergoing training. Instead of training the approximately 50 accountants of the bodies included in the pilot phase and RA Ministry of Finance personnel, only 31 were trained.

The RA Ministry of Finance, in response to a written request by Hetq, said that

\$469,000 was allocated within the scope of the grant program to "Implement International Public Sector Accounting Standards Strategy 2" and around \$235,000 was paid in taxes to the state budget.

"The RA Ministry of Finance did not see the subcontract signed between the companies Four Assist Development Consulting Limited and PHP Partners registered in Armenia; moreover, it was not obliged to see and assess the subcontracting company. The RA Ministry of Finance assessed and recognized Four Assist Development Consulting Limited as the winner. Due to the [afore]mentioned, the RA Ministry of Finance has no information regarding the amount of money allocated to the subcontractor noted in the subcontract signed between Four Assist Development Consulting Limited and PHP Partners," the finance ministry replied to Hetq.

"We participated in the tender as a subcontractor; that is, by participating in the tender, it was already known that we're with Four Assist Development Consulting Limited. It's written that we signed a contract on the same day, but we had applied together already two months ago," says PHP Partners Director Hovhannes Petrosyan.

PHP Partners CJSC has been operating since late 2005. Founding the company and occupying key positions are former employees of the state apparatus. Of the overall \$469,000, PHP Partners received \$240,000, according to the director; the rest, \$229,000, Four Assist Development Consulting Limited commanded.

"When we read the Control [Chamber's] report, we said, they praised us a bit too much — we didn't do that much," jokes head of PHP Partners' accounting services Vigen Yeghoyan. "Perhaps we did more in terms of volume, but one thing is very important: the cost of our one hour is 1 dram, while an international expert is much more costly. In terms of quality, their experience is irreplaceable."

Hovhannes Petrosyan says they developed the work and Four Assist Development Consulting studied other countries' experience, and in the case of problems, they consulted with the Cypriot company, and Four Assist Development Consulting Limited mainly provided the solutions. Four Assist Development Consulting and the company's experts implemented the testing of the prepared material.

Petrosyan also confesses that first, they have little experience in this field, which would significantly weaken their chances of winning the tender. Second, the tender was international, and no company from Armenia directly participated in it. "If you look, you

won't see any major project in Armenia that a local consulting firm has won directly," says Petrosyan. He said as a subcontracting company, they are currently implementing a project for the Control Chamber.

As to how Four Assist Development Consulting Limited managed its \$229,000 share is not known. The Ministry of Finance didn't respond to this question of Hetq's either, while the RA Control Chamber, in response to the same question in writing, said: "In order to form the final conclusions regarding the ques-

tions you raised and to present the situation objectively, as well as to collect additional information on the costs of the goods and services purchased, according to the provisions of RA Law on Control Chamber Article 4 and Article 19 Section 4, a cross-check of the supplier companies must be conducted. And since Four Assist Development Consulting Limited is not a resident company and is found outside of the territory of the Republic of Armenia, the RA Control Chamber as prescribed by legislation cannot

carry out a cross-check."

Four Assist Development Consulting Limited shareholder Irina Grigoryan says that Four Assist Development Consulting sent a letter to RA Control Chamber and asked amendments be made to the report. Hetq tried to get answers to a number of questions from Irina Grigoryan. She responded by email that she is currently in Moldova but is prepared to respond to Hetq's questions in writing. Once the answers to these questions are received, Hetq will publish them.

"Your inaccuracies are potentially damaging to our company's reputation"

The Cyprus registered company Four Assist Development Consulting Ltd (4Assist) has taken the Control Chamber of Armenia to task for publishing a number of inaccuracies regarding 4Assist that appeared in its "2013 Annual Report", demanding that corrections be made.

In a May 21, 2014 letter penned by 4Assist Authorised Representative Maria Tasioula to Control Chamber Chairman Ishkhan Zakaryan, she writes that the report contained "certain inaccuracies regarding the project "Implementation of International Public Sector Accounting Standards Strategy 2" that we [4Assist] implemented from June 2012 to June 2013 on behalf of the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Armenia."

In her letter, a copy of which 4Assist made available to Hetq, Tasioula lists these inaccuracies, and describes them as "violating the rights of 4Assist and harming our international business reputation."

Maria Tasioula has also responded to a number of questions Hetq sent to 4Assist shareholder Irina Grigoryan.

In response, Maria Tasioula writes: "Four Assist Development Consulting Limited has been in existence long before the project in question was even conceptualised, i.e. since 2007, and has an international presence in many more countries than Armenia, as stated above."

In her letter to the Control Chamber Tasioula notes that: "The contract notice of the Ministry of Finance required a leader company with international experience in public sector accounting. Four Assist Development Consulting Limited possesses this experience, unlike PHP Partners CJSC whose experience is limited to Armenia. Therefore, the division of works was provided by Four Assist Development Consulting Limited as leader-company with PHP Partners CJSC being given their part of the work on the basis of their knowledge of the Armenian context."

To bolster her argument that 4Assist

took the lead role in the project and did all the work, Tasioula writes: "It must be noted that Four Assist Development Consulting Limited provided, among other things, two internationally qualified accountants (including the team leader of the project) for the implementation of the project and a range of quality control and backstopping services."

The 4Assist representative concludes her letter by stating that: "PHP Partners CJSC would not have the technical capacity and international exposure to provide these services. Thus, the presence of Four Assist Development Consulting limited was a necessary condition for the execution of the contract."

In her response to Hetq, Tasioula notes that: "We would like to clarify that according to the minutes of opening of financial offers published by the MoF [Ministry of Finance] on 30 March 2012, our financial offer for this project was almost half the price of the second best offer (925,000 USD).

Responding to the Hetq question as to why the programs were drafted in Cyprus and not Armenia, Tasioula wrote:

"4Assist is an international consulting firm operating worldwide since early 2007, which is 5 years before the concerned project in Armenia started. Our business interests go well beyond Armenia, as we have explained above and in our Note to the Chamber of Control. Our current focus is to work in Africa, Asia and Eastern Europe where we consider that there is prospect. Our company is based in Cyprus, which is an EU Member State. We have never considered opening a branch in Armenia because the scope of business there is limited."

In response to our question as to what links exist between Armenian shareholders of the Cypriot registered 4Assist and government officials in Armenia, Tasioula writes:

"In the course of their international pro-

fessional career our partners have worked also in Armenia through a number of successful international projects. None of our partners have had any relations with Armenian public officials other than professional. It is important to clarify that none of our partners has ever worked in any ministry as a public servant; instead, as stated above, they have been advisers to the Government of Armenia through international projects."

These 'revelations' by Armenia's Control Chamber appear to have shocked the directors of 4Assist. In addition, they were annoyed by a passage in an earlier Hetq piece where we noted that 4Assist never clarified the revelations made by Control Chamber Chairman Ishkhan Zakaryan.

In this regard Tasioula wrote Hetq that: "...provided no clarification", which is a false statement. We were never asked to provide clarifications neither during the audit nor after the publication of the Control Chamber report. We only found out ourselves about this from the Armenian press. Nevertheless, on May 21 we submitted to the Control Chamber a letter addressing the report's incorrect statements and inaccuracies and asked them to revise the relevant sections. We haven't received a response to date."

4Assist never responded to Hetq's inquiry as to how much payment the company received for each program implemented in Armenia. Its guarded response was that:

"4Assist has very limited business activity in Armenia compared to its worldwide presence. Our very few projects in Armenia were awarded to us on a competitive basis including a set of technical and financial criteria in line with the international donor rules and procedures for competitive tenders. You may find the projects we have implemented in Armenia on our website."

hetq.am

"KAAR-MED"

PRIVATE CLINIC CENTER FOR WOMEN'S HEALTH

The Private Clinic "KAAR-MED" has been functioning on the market for medical services for more than 15 years. The Clinic is located in Warsaw (10 Bitwy Warszawskiej street) close to the centre of the city within easy reach of Dworzec Zachodni railway station and other city communications networks.

Our Patients can use a private parking located directly at the entrance to the Clinic with special places for ambulance and disabled people. Clinic is fully adapted and friendly for wheelchair users.

The Clinic specialisation is gynaecology and obstetrics including full pregnancy care, "one day surgery" and aesthetic medicine procedures as well as plastic and cosmetic gynaecology. "KAAR-MED" employs gynaecologists and physicians of all specialisations who have clinical experience gained in leading Warsaw hospitals.

We offer a wide range of laboratory, microbiological and genetic tests, diagnostic imaging techniques (USG) including prenatal tests such as pregnancy ultrasound, prenatal imaging findings, Harmony Prenatal Test, Doppler ultrasonography tests and many others.

The "KAAR-MED" Clinic is fully outfitted with the latest medical equipment used for diagnosis and treatment of the entire range of gynaecology and obstetrics diseases:

- Voluson ultrasound imaging system (pictures)
- Toshiba ultrasound imaging system
- Colposcope
- Cryosurgery machine
- Electrocoagulation apparatus
- ELLMAN Pelleve Unit (radio frequency surgery and wrinkle reduction system)
- Other equipment by "Aesculap" and "Stainless" companies

Our clinic fulfils all the official norms (stated by the Direction of the Health Minister of Poland of 02.02.2011) concerning professional, technical and sanitary conditions for health care organizations.

We are looking forward to see You in "KAAR-MED" Clinic and shall do our best to make You feel comfortable, safe and professionally treated here.

**10 Bitwy Warszawskiej,
02-362 Warsaw, Poland**

Information and registration:

**+48 22 823 04 52
+48 22 201 90 95
+ 48 50 910 74 05**



New Transport Projects in the Region

Sevak Sarukhanyan

Ph.D., Deputy Director of "Noravank" Foundation

Recently there has been a surge in work on international transport projects. This concerns also the South Caucasus and Caspian region, where several projects are close to completion. Unfortunately, these projects may to a certain extent negatively affect the regional interests of the Republic of Armenia.

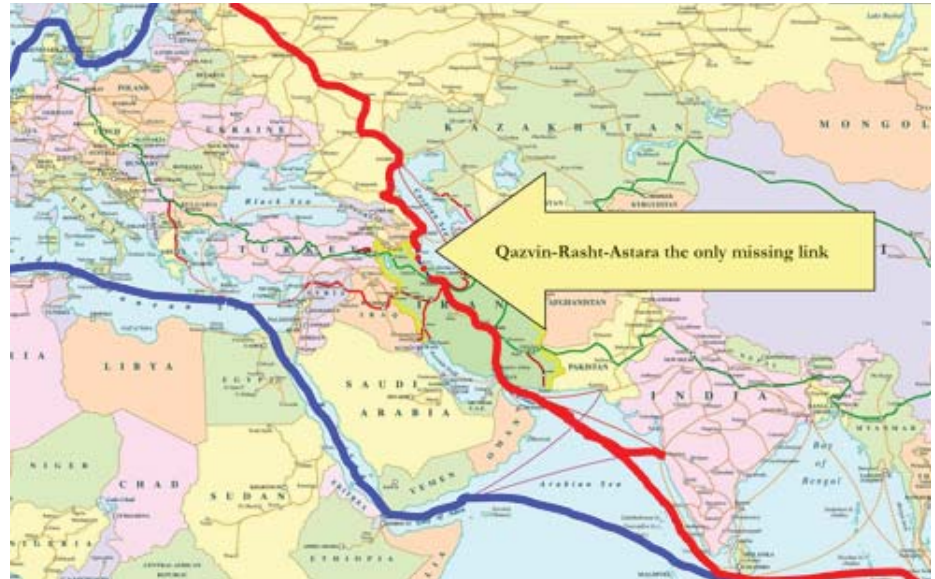
Qazvin-Rasht-Astara: the Final Phase?

In early May 2014 discussions intensified around prospects of Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway that would connect Iran and Azerbaijan. They were especially boosted by Azerbaijani president's visit to Tehran in April, the significance of which was highly appraised both by Iran and Azerbaijan.

It would not be true to say that I. Aliyev's visit produced strategic changes in Iran-Azerbaijan relations, as the documents signed during the visit did not have strategic significance and were related to some narrow, small areas. At the same time, the top-level Iranian-Azerbaijani negotiations broke the ice in the interstate relations that was formed in recent years. This was also demonstrated by the Iranian official media reports, where discussions between Aliyev and Rouhani about Karabakh issue were reported with short information at the end about the conflict, which almost literally repeated the Azerbaijani standpoint, i.e. occupation of 20% of territory, Armenian military units and 1 million refugees.

In any case, after the negotiations between Iranian and Azerbaijani presidents, discussions intensified on implementation of joint projects with participation of both countries. In May one of these projects was brought to forefront, which is the construction of Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway that would not only connect the railroads of Iran and Azerbaijan, but also would create a direct transportation channel from the Persian Gulf to Baltic Sea. This is a project of global significance, implementation of which was halted due to Iran's isolation and strained Iranian-Azeri relations. However, recently there has been some progress made in both of these dimensions.

Thus in May, answering to a question from the official Iranian IRNA news agency, Gilan province Governor General Mohammad Ali Najafi said that the Iranian



president has instructed all relevant ministries to finish construction of the Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway as soon as possible.

Gilan province Governor General's answer would have probably drawn no much attention, because under the ongoing economic crisis in Iran there are no government funds to finance large projects. However on May 7, 2014, during the Session of the Council for Rail Transport of CIS held in Astana, Mohsen Pour Seyed Aqaie, Managing Director of Iran Railways Organization (which has a status of an observer in the Council), met his Azerbaijani and Russian counterparts and a trilateral agreement was reached that Russian Railways JSC will build Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway track. A day later this was confirmed by Vladimir Yakunin, who described the project as important and promising.

Russia's interest in this project can be explained both by strategic and tactical considerations. In strategic terms it creates beneficial prospects for Russia, as it allows Moscow to become an international transit hub. Tactically the project is important, too, since it breathes life into the potential Russia-Iran "oil deal" that has been actively discussed recently. In this potential deal Iran is supposed to export \$15 billion worth of oil to Russia and receive services and goods in exchange. Given the limitations of the export-oriented part of the Russian economy, such export of goods seems hard to implement. However, as far as the services are concerned (e.g. constructing a railroad), the capabilities of Moscow are not that limited. In this respect Qazvin-Rasht-Astara project is beneficial for Russia both

strategically and tactically.

Caspian railway chain

Iran's step up of activities in the area of transportation is not limited to Qazvin-Rasht-Astara project. Iran's president has ordered to speed up construction of Iran-Turkmenistan-Kazakhstan railway. According to Abbas Ahmad Akhouni, Minister of Roads and Urban Development, it will be completed in October 2014. This is not just for the Iranian section of the railroad, but the whole project. This means in near future the Iranian railroads will be connected to Azerbaijan and Russia through Qazvin-Rasht-Astara, and to Turkmenistan and Kazakhstan through a second project. The first one would also allow Iran to connect to Georgian railways and port of Poti through Azerbaijan, whereas the second one opens opportunities to link the railroads of Iran and China through construction of the Kazakhstan-China railway.

In part, the reason for acceleration of works on these two projects is that Iran attempts to use the window of opportunity created by some improvement of relations with the West, in order to get economically and politically more interconnected with the neighboring countries.

At the same time it has to be noted that Qazvin-Rasht-Astara railway construction significantly diminishes prospects of constructing Iran-Armenia railway, because both projects essentially solve the same problem from the geographic point of view, that is, establishment of a South-North transport corridor. Under such circumstances implementation of one project decreases the chances of the other one materialize.

Orran celebrated International Children's day on June 1st

On this beautiful occasion, some 50 guests, including celebrities and journalists enjoyed the children's performance and a tasty BBQ feast prepared and donated by Marriott Armenia.



WHAT? WHEN? WHERE?**Enjoy your leisure****13 June**

19:00 Dark SHOCKolate
H. Ghaplanyan Drama Theatre
19:00 Natalie Filion
H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre
20:00 Hamlet. W. Shakespeare
Hamazgayin Theatre
21:00 Special Jazz Nights with
Vahagn Hayrapetyan & Laurent Robin
Ulikhanyan Club

14 June

12:00 14:00 Gnome's Song
H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre
12:30 14:00 15:30 The Frog Prince. Play
for kids
Yerevan State Marionette Theatre
16:00 Scotch & Whisky. Optimistic come-
dy. Director of the play: Arshaluis
Harutiunyan Yerevan State Chamber
Theatre
18:00 An Armenian's Fate. Play for kids.
Small hall H. Tumanyan State Puppet
Theatre
19:00 Stabat Mater- Tango. Ballet in 1 act
Alexander Spendiaryan State Academic
Opera and Ballet Theatre
19:00 Aram Khachaturian Piano
Competition Gala Concert and Awarding
Ceremony. A. Khachaturian Concert Hall
19:00 My Blossoming Peach Tree. Author:
Nelly Shahnazaryan. Drama without a
break
G. Sundukian National Academic Theatre
19:00 Mama Mia. K. Ludwig. Comedy in
2 acts
H. Ghaplanyan Drama Theatre
19:00 Love Stir. Marc Camoletti. Play in 2
acts
H. Paronyan State Theatre of Musical
Comedy
20:00 Hamlet. W. Shakespeare
Hamazgayin Theatre
21:00 Group Fiesta (Soloist Sona)
Malkhas Jazz Club
21:00 Special Jazz Nights with
Vahagn Hayrapetyan & Laurent Robin
Ulikhanyan Club

15 June

12:00 14:00 Cock-a-doodle-doo H.
Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre
12:30 14:00 15:30 The Dog and the Cat.
Based on Hovhannes Tumanian's tale
Yerevan State Marionette Theatre
18:00 Little Red Riding Hood. Author:

Charles Perrault. Play for kids H.
Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre. Small
Hall
19:00 Brahms Gala Featuring Sergey
Khachatryan & Narek Hakhnazaryan with
the APO
Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall
19:00 A Streetcar Named Desire. Author:
Tennessee Williams. Drama in 2 acts
G. Sundukian National Academic Theatre
19:00 Ah, Anna, Anna, or Passion Sunday,
Marc Camoletti. Romantic comedy in 2
actssion Sunday H. Ghaplanyan Drama
Theatre
19:00 The Owners of Our House. Comedy
in 2 acts
H. Paronyan State Theatre of Musical
Comedy
19:00 Cabaret. Author and director of the
play: Ara Yernjakyan
Yerevan State Chamber Theatre
21:00 Vahagn Hayrapetyan Jazz Trio
Malkhas Jazz Club
12:00 14:00 Cock-a-doodle-doo. Play for
kids
H. Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre
20:00 Hamlet. W. Shakespeare
Hamazgayin Theatre

16 June

19:00 Anush. A. Tigranyan. Opera in 3
acts
Alexander Spendiaryan State Academic
Opera and Ballet Theatre
21:00 Group Reminor and Forsh
Malkhas Jazz Club

17 June

19:00 Requiem for the Living. Author:
Levon Shant
Henrik Malyan Theatre
19:00 Man in a Palm. Poetry, Evening of
Literature and Music
H. Ghaplanyan Drama Theatre
19:00 Flowers of Evil. Mimodrama in 1
act State Pantomime Theater
21:00 Jazz quartet (Soloist Zara)
Malkhas Jazz Club

18 June

16:00 Under Ground. Pessimistic Comedy.
Author: Ara Yernjakyan
Yerevan State Chamber Theatre
19:00 Talalyan Brothers' Cello Festival
Concert.
Komitas Chamber Music House
19:00 Wednesday Film Night Series.

Surviving Picasso
Naregatsi Art Institute
21:00 Crossroads Blues Band (Soloist
Amiryan Misho)
Malkhas Jazz Club
19:30. Let's Go to Our Ergir. "Zartonk"
presents: Agassi, Arabo and Honoured
Artist of Armenia, Nersik Ispiryanyan
"Tarontsiner" Folk Song and Dance
Ensemble Artash Tarontsi Sahak
Kurekhyan. The evening will be hosted by
the Honoured Artist of Armenia, Sargis
Najaryan.
Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall

19 June

16:00 Royal Concert. Musical-amusing
show. Author and director of the play Ara
Yernjakyan Yerevan State Chamber
Theatre
18:00 Group Exhibition. Art through
AMI's Eyes Naregatsi Art Institute
19:00 Traviata. G. Verdi. Opera in 4 acts
Alexander Spendiaryan State Academic
Opera and Ballet Theatre
19:00 Marriage. Comedy. Author: N.
Gogol
Henrik Malyan Theatre
19:00 Ardalion. Historical Mimodrama
State Pantomime Theater
21:00 Jazz Trio (Soloist Aghvan)
Malkhas Jazz Club

20 June

16:00 Royal Concert. Musical-amusing
show. Author and director of the play
Ara Yernjakyan
Yerevan State Chamber Theatre
18:00 Illusions. Author: Viripaev H.
Tumanyan State Puppet Theatre
19:00 Poor Petros.
Sos Sargsyan Hamazgayin Theatre
19:00. Zaven Vardanyan - 70. 2014-15
jJubilee concert cycle dedicated to Zaven
Vardan'a 70th anniversary
Conductor. Zaven Vardanyan. Soloists:
Berj Karazian, tenor Magda Mkrtchian,
soprano Poghos Beazbekyan, bass Sargis
Bazhbeuk-Melikyan, bass Vahagn
Margaryan, baritone Artsvik Demurchyan,
soprano Tigran Ohanyan, tenor Arevik
Gyulbudaghyan, soprano Gohar Azizyan,
mezzo soprano
Program: R. Wagner: Der Ring des
Nibelungen Excerpts from the operas "Das
Rheingold", "Die Walkure", "Siegfried"
and Gotterdammerung.
Aram Khachaturian Concert Hall

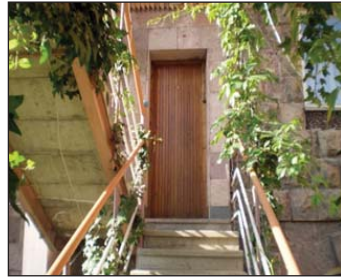
Apartment for rent

A comfortable apartment in the center of the city, close to hotel "Bass." It is second floor of the house, with separate entrance from the street. The apartment has a dining room, two bedrooms, a kitchen, a bathroom and two balconies. It has a heating system, permanent cold and hot water, TV satellite, air conditioners and all other facilities. There is a nice view to Mount Ararat. The house has a nice garden and it is close to Proshyan and Baghramyan streets.

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