

Which European countries get the most time off over Christmas? Armenia among leaders

Europe is a varied continent with plenty of different Christmas traditions. However, one thing that everyone gets is holiday. Every single country in Europe has at least one statutory day off in the period between 15 December and 15 January, The Guardian reports.

Who gets the most though?

The majority of countries in Europe are Christian, whether that is Catholic, Protestant or Orthodox and bearing that in mind there are four key dates to look for:

25 December – Catholic/Protestant Christmas Day, which is the purported anniversary of the birth of Christ

New Year's Day – in terms of the Gregorian calendar, which every single country gets as a holiday

6 January – Epiphany, when Jesus was supposed to



have appeared to the Magi (or three wise men) 7 January – Russian Orthodox Christmas Day.

Around that there are several eves and saints' days but those four are the bedrock of the holiday season. There are secular days too, usually related to revolutions or new declarations of statehood that happened to fall in this time of year.

Russia, the home of the Eastern Orthodox

Church, has the most days off over the Christmas period of any European country. Every day between New Year and the day after Russian Orthodox Christmas is a holiday, giving them eight off in total.

Closely following the Russians with seven are Armenia and Liechtenstein. The latter country gets Christmas Eve through to Boxing Day off as well as the two days either side of the New Year.

In This Issue

President Sargsyan attends CSTO meeting in Moscow p.2

Armenia, Turkmenistan mull the launching of direct flights p.3

Clooney wife to represent Armenia at ECHR p. 5

The 6 most ancient countries of the world: Armenia among them p.14

Planned Armenian genocide memorial ruffles Ankara p.16

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President Sargsyan attends CSTO meeting in Moscow

Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan participated at 23 December the session of the Collective Security Council of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in Moscow.

Speaking at the session, President Sargsyan briefed his counterparts on the situation in the South Caucasus, particularly the incidents at the Armenian-Azerbaijani border and the line of contact and underlined that Armenia deems the escalation of tension around the Karabakh conflict and the militarization of the region unacceptable.

"The documents we adopted today are targeted at fighting the existing and emerging challenges with joint effort. I'm confident they will contribute to the development of the CSTO and the wellbeing of our countries and peoples," President Sargsyan said.

"The adoption of decisions on the fur-



ther reinforcement of mechanisms of coordinating the foreign policy will be conducive to the raise of the organization's rating," the President said.

Serzh Sargsyan said the creation of the CSTO joint air force would be a proper step for the development of military cooperation

between the CSTO member states.

He voiced confidence that the information security package would also serve for the intensification of cooperation between the corresponding structures of the member states.

Nagorno-Karabakh will not enter EEU: Belarus Deputy FM

Nagorno-Karabakh will not become part of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) after Armenia's accession, Belarusian First Deputy Foreign Minister Alexander Mikhnevich said while presenting the draft law on the ratification of the treaty on Armenia's accession to the EEU, BelTA reports.

"We were concerned about the fact that

the territories that do not form part of Armenia could join the Customs Union. The Armenian side appeared to be understanding of this requirement, of our request. A memorandum stating that Nagorno-Karabakh is not part of Armenia was attached to the agreement. The Armenian side made an official verbal statement," Alexander Mikhnevich noted.

He also emphasized that there are no obstacles for Armenia to become de facto member of the Customs Union and the EEU.

Besides, Alexander Mikhnevich pointed out that before the agreement on Armenia's accession to the EEU was signed, the country had done a lot of work to bring its regulations in line with the ones already adopted by Belarus, Russia, and Kazakhstan.

Yerevan 'still committed' to closer ties with West

Armenia's leadership has assured Western powers that it will continue deepening relations with them even after joining the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU), the outgoing U.S. ambassador in Yerevan, John Heffern, said on December 19.

John Heffern said that the United States trusts in these assurances because it believes that closer ties with the West are "not incompatible" with Yerevan's membership in the Russian-led alliance of ex-Soviet states. The U.S. and the European Union are therefore trying to help Armenia develop a "strategic" capacity to closely cooperate with both the West and Russia, he said.

"We think that Armenia can benefit from both," Heffern told a farewell news conference in the U.S. Embassy in Yerevan.

Heffern's incoming successor, Richard Mills, made similar statements during U.S. congressional hearings on his candidacy held in September. "We have stressed since Armenia's decision [to join the EEU] that strengthened economic collaboration with the United States and Europe can complement Armenia's future membership in the Eurasian Economic Union," he said.

"We want to do that in every sector. Economic sector, diplomatic, political and even security," stressed Heffern. He argued that membership in the Russian-led Collective Security Treaty Organization has not kept Armenia from increasingly cooperating with NATO. "Both organizations benefit from Armenia's participation," he said.

U.S. President Barack Obama described U.S.-Armenian relations as

"strong" and pledged to strengthen them when he congratulated President Serzh Sargsyan on Armenia's Independence Day in September. "The deep bonds between the United States and Armenia are strong," Secretary of State John Kerry said in a separate statement.



Ukrainian investors buy into Armenian Airline



A Ukrainian investment fund announced the purchase of a 49 percent stake in Armenia's leading airline on December 19, pledging to help restart soon its commercial flights that were suspended two months ago.

Vladimir Bobylev, the chief executive of the East Prospect Fund, pledged to invest at least \$30 million in the troubled Air Armenia carrier. Armenian news agencies quoted him as saying that it plans to

replace and expand the company's small fleet of aircraft in the coming months.

It was not clear how much the fund, registered in the British Virgin Islands but headquartered in Kiev, paid for the minority share. It valued Air Armenia at \$50 million on its website.

Air Armenia specialized in cargo shipments by air until Armenia's flagship airline, Armavia, went bankrupt in April 2013, leading to the full liberalization of the Armenian civil aviation sector. The small carrier took over some of Armavia's flights later in 2013.

Air Armenia halted the flights to a dozen destinations in Russia and Europe in late October as a result of a financial dispute with Russia's national air navigation service. It accused the Rosaeronavigatsia agency of scaring away its customers with false statements about its outstanding

debts. Aviation experts believe that the company also struggled to compete with much larger Russian airlines.

According to Bobylev, Air Armenia is currently undergoing restructuring and should be able to resume flights in March. "I would like our fund to be presented not so much as a new Air Armenia shareholder but as an investor," the Arka news agency quoted him as telling a joint news conference with Arsen Avetisyan, Air Armenia's director and main official shareholder.

"We have understandings on \$30 million [in investments] for the first phase of operations but won't confine ourselves to that figure," he said.

On its website East Prospect presents itself as a fund manager specializing in "problematic assets." Its investment portfolio, estimated at \$2.5 billion, mainly consists of mining operations in Ukraine.

Armenia, Turkmenistan mull the launching of direct flights



Political consultations between the Foreign Ministries of Armenia and Turkmenistan were held in Yerevan.

From the Armenian side the consultations were chaired by Deputy Foreign Minister Shavarsh Kocharyan. The Turkmen Co-Chair was First Deputy Minister Vepa Khajiyev.

The parties hailed the current level of bilateral relations. They attached importance to the implementation of the agreements reached at the 6th sitting of the Armenian-Turkmen Intergovernmental Commission on Economic Cooperation

held in Yerevan on December 23, and stressed the need to deepen and develop the cooperation in the fields of culture, sports, education and science, agriculture, healthcare, tourism and others.

Reference was made to the perspectives of expansion of the legal framework

between the two countries, the opportunities of launching direct flights, as well as cooperation within the framework of international organizations.

Issues on international and regional agenda were also discussed.

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Armenian Security Chief Warns Opposition

The head of Armenia's most powerful security agency has warned opposition groups against trying to forcibly topple the government, saying that such attempts would meet with a "resolute" response.

Gorik Hakobyan, the director of the National Security Service (NSS), blasted unnamed opposition politicians "making irresponsible calls for uprisings and a violent overthrow of the authorities" as he marked a professional holiday of the former Armenian branch of the Soviet KGB on Saturday.

"We will take all necessary measures to resolutely thwart any illegal action aimed at disrupting the country's constitutional order. This is not a threat. We just see a need to warn," Hakobyan told hundreds of NSS officers at a special meeting that was also attended by Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan and the heads of other law-enforcement bodies.

In his speech cited by the Armenpress news agency, Hakobyan stressed that the NSS has no intention to crack down on dissent or limit citizens' freedom of assembly. He said it would only act strongly against attempts to "provoke mass disturbances and clashes."

The warning appeared to be addressed to Armenia's three leading opposition parties that held in September and October a series

of nationwide protests purportedly aimed at achieving "regime change" in the country. One of their leaders has described their campaign as a "velvet revolution."

Contrary to some expectations, those rallies did not develop into non-stop anti-government protests apparently because of a cautious stance taken by Prosperous Armenia (BHK), the largest of the parties challenging President Serzh Sargsyan. Still, the opposition trio has pledged to continue its campaign in the coming months.

"I don't have the competence or desire to comment on the statements made by the NSS chief," BHK spokesman Tigran Urikhanyan said on December 22. "I see nothing in his statements which is directed at the BHK."

But Armen Martirosyan, a leader of the opposition Zharangutyun (Heritage), described Hakobyan's statement as a sign of mounting government fears. "The authorities are worried not just about activities of opposition forces," he told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "They know very well what policies they have implemented and the resulting socioeconomic situation."

Martirosyan made clear that the Armenian opposition could take "large-scale actions" next spring. "There is no going back," he said.

Heritage Party likely to participate in next month's conference called by PAP leader

Deputy chairman of the opposition Heritage party Armen Martirosyan thinks that next month the party will participate in the conference called by the Prosperous Armenia Party (PAP) leader.

On Wednesday leader of the PAP Gagik Tsarukyan disseminated a statement where he said that on January 20 he invited political forces, public organizations, civil initiatives and movements to the event.

Earlier this week Tsarukyan's spokesperson said that the PAP leader wants to hear opinions of different political forces and jointly determine further steps "because vitally important issues will have to be tackled".

On October 10 and 24 the PAP, the Armenian National Congress and Heritage parties held rallies in Yerevan as part of what they described as a popular movement. During those rallies calls for a change of government were made. On December 10, International Human Rights Day, the three parties also held a joint rally and a march.

Many think, however, the 'hot autumn' promised by the opposition thus ended.

Addressing this issue on Thursday



Armen Martirosyan told reporters: "The perceptions of the hot autumn that existed did not come true, because my expectation was a complete change of government, but if we look at the political processes, it was indeed 'hot'. We had two perfect rallies; we had the government's retreat and readiness to discuss the 12 points."

Upon ArmeniaNow's request, the Heritage representative addressed expectations from 2015 and predicted a difficult year for Armenia.

"Depending on the behavior of Russia, it will become clear whether sanctions will go deeper or not, whether the oil price will go up or down, whether the ruble exchange rate will rise or fall," Martirosyan said, meaning Western sanctions imposed on Russia related over the crisis in Ukraine.

"If Russia's social-economic state improves, it will positively impact Armenia, if not – naturally it will have an adverse effect on Armenia," he concluded.

Former police intel officer gives testimony in Hrant Dink case



Former Trabzon police intelligence branch chief Faruk Sari gave his testimony to Istanbul's prosecutor as a suspect in the murder case of Armenian-Turkish journalist Hrant Dink in 2007, the Hurriyet Daily News reports.

The prosecutor had demanded the arrest of Sari for his role in the "intended murder that took place due to negligence." However, an Istanbul court decided that Sari would be tried without arrest on probation on Dec. 24.

Prosecutor Gökalp Kökçü interrogated Sari on Dec. 24 as part

of the ongoing trial. The Dink murder case is being retried after the Interior Ministry allowed the prosecution of several public officials who were accused of negligence in the course of events which ended in the murder.

Dink was assassinated by Ogün Samast, who is serving 22 years and 10 months in a high-security F-type prison, in broad daylight on a busy street outside the office of the bilingual Turkish-Armenian weekly Agos in Istanbul's Sisli district on Jan. 19, 2007. The assassination caused outrage across the country, sending hundreds of thousands to the streets in mass rallies.

When the prosecutor asked why he did not take any measures to prevent the murder, Sari responded that he had no information about the murder attempt. The prosecutor sent him to the court, demanding his arrest. The court released Sari on probation. The investigation into Dink's murder took a different path after the government launched a fight against the so-called "parallel structure," which the government uses to refer to the movement of U.S.-based Islamic scholar Fethullah Gülen. The Justice Ministry has cleared the way for investigations into nine civil servants accused of negligence in Dink's murder.

Clooney wife to represent Armenia at ECHR



Amal Ramzi Alamuddin, the wife of prominent Hollywood actor and human rights activist George Clooney, will be one of the attorneys representing Armenia next month at the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR), according to Harut Sassounian, the publisher of The California Courier newspaper.

Sassounian describes Mrs. Clooney as "a highly regarded attorney specializing in international law, criminal law, human rights, and

extradition" who has been involved in several major lawsuits, including the defense of Julian Assange of WikiLeaks and former Ukrainian Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko.

"With such impeccable credentials, Mrs. Clooney will be a great asset to Armenia's legal team in Strasbourg, in the appeal of Perincek vs. Switzerland before the Grand Chamber of the European Court of Human Rights on January 28," Sassounian writes in a column,

according to Asbarez.com.

Under the provisions of the Swiss law, in 2007, Turkish nationalist Dogu Perincek was convicted for denying the Armenian Genocide. Failing to win two appeals against the judgment, Perincek appealed the Swiss ruling to the ECHR, which on December 17 ruled that the Swiss courts' rulings violated the appellant's right to freedom of expression. Switzerland later appealed the ECHR ruling and Armenia will be engaged as a third party in the appeal hearing.

Last year, when ECHR's lower court was considering Perincek's case, Armenia did not participate. Turkey, however, intervened by submitting extensive documentation questioning the veracity of the Armenian Genocide. This time around Armenia will take part with a strong legal team," writes Sassounian.

"It is imperative that on the eve of the Armenian Genocide's Centennial in 2015, ECHR's Grand Chamber reverse the lower court's flawed ruling, restoring the integrity of Swiss laws and preventing Turkey and Perincek from exporting their genocide denialism to Europe and beyond!"

Symposium on the Armenian vity of Ani to be held at Columbia University

Symposium on “Monuments and Memory: Material Culture and the Aftermaths of Histories of Mass Violence,” with a Focus on the Ruins of the Armenian City of Ani, to be Held at Columbia University, February 20, 2015, Massis Post reports.

In commemoration of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, a groundbreaking symposium will be held at Columbia and sponsored by the Armenian Center of Columbia University, Columbia’s Institute for the Study of Human Rights and the Institute for Comparative Literature and Society. Peter Balakian, Donald M. Constance H. Rebar Professor of the Humanities at Colgate University, and Rachel Goshgarian, Assistant Professor of History at Lafayette College, are organizers and hosts of the event.

The symposium will be groundbreaking in its comparative analysis of Jewish monuments in eastern Europe, Muslim monuments in the Balkans, and Armenian Christian monuments in Turkey. Issues of preservation, social justice, and restitution will be discussed.

“The goal of this conference is to place the lamentable situation of Armenian monuments in Turkey into larger contexts,” said Dr. Rachel



Goshgarian, Assistant Professor of History at Lafayette College. “After visiting so many Armenian constructions in Turkey — in various states of repair or disrepair — over the course of the past ten years, one question consistently came to my mind: what happens to monuments when they kind of lose their monumentality? This question is worthwhile in many contexts, but in the framework of modern Turkey, offers us the opportunity to consider the differences between the ways in which people living with Armenian mon-

uments might differ from overarching governmental actions or concerns.”

“The aftermath of human rights violence is always long and complex and the fate of material culture and especially major and sacred monuments such as churches, synagogues and mosques raise complex issues about restitution, identity, and social justice,” said Balakian. “Our symposium will bring together some major scholars from around the world to discuss these issues and others.”

Turkey’s provocations will continue into 2015: Hayk Demoyan

Turkey will keep on with its provocative actions, especially ahead of the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, Director of the Armenian Genocide Museum Institute (AGMI) Hayk Demoyan told reporters today. According to him, the processes aimed at frustrating the events prepared by the Armenian side for 2015 are already apparent.

“There are attempts to neutralize the influence of events organized by the Armenian agencies or the Diaspora. The second policy, which we conditionally call ‘penetration attempt,’ is the organization of parallel events in Armenia and Diaspora by Turkish historians and people under Turkish influence,” Demoyan said. Among the examples he noted the



presentation of Hasan Cemal’s book in Yerevan and Paris.

He said the provocations will continue into 2015, and added that our compa-

triotis in the Diaspora have a serious work to do in this regard. He urged to be cautious of Turkish traps ahead of the Genocide centennial.

Economist: Inflation in Armenia inconsistent with currency depreciation

The Armenian government's claims that the December inflation was conditioned by the dram's devaluation and is within the projected limits cannot be true, economist Bagrat Asatryan said on Thursday.

The former Central Bank governor believes there is no direct correlation between the devaluation of the national currency and inflation, although Armenia is mostly an importing country and naturally it is not possible to avoid inflation.

"There is dependency, but it is nothing, if we count based on current developments, then inflation must have been only 0.3-0.5 percent. There is no direct correlation; simply in Armenia the pricing policy is not efficient. The gas price has not increased yet, and it is what affects price formation most," Asatryan told reporters today.

Emphasizing that mistrust toward the government is the main cause of the dram's drastic devaluation and the panic and the main cause for the economic situation that followed, the economist said that it was possible to prevent the situation if the government implemented a correct policy.

"They say that exchange offices did speculations, but they are made exactly for that. They must get out of such a level of debate and work ethic and make decisions regarding the financial system, they must make problems public and think about their solutions," Asatryan said.

The dram depreciated drastically on December 17, which many observers evaluated as "a day of panic currency buying", when the dram exchange rate hit its historic lows at above 600 AMD, after which it quickly rebounded settling at 455-465 AMD per dollar.

"Approaches and decisions toward stabilization of the financial system are important, and the Central Bank has that potential," Asatryan said. "The policy implemented during the dram devaluation was a result of political pressure."

"For 20 years we've been spending money to have an independent Central Bank. But what do we have now?" he said, adding that risks for the banking system have increased today.

Armenian Central Bank raises refinancing rate after currency fall

Armenia's Central Bank has raised its key refinancing rate from 6.75 percent to 8.5 percent, citing the need to curb inflation after the national currency, the dram, registered a fall by more than 10 percent.

The Central Bank kept its refinancing rate unchanged at 6.75 percent in September and November after cutting it from 7.00 percent in August.

It said the monthly inflation in November stood at 1.3 percent, compared to the inflation of 1.0 percent in October.

Prices for some basic foodstuffs and other essentials shot up in Armenia earlier this month amid a dramatic depreciation of the national currency, the dram. Amid what many observers described as "panic currency buying" by December 17 the dram hit its historic lows at over 600, before rebounding quickly to its current levels of 450-460 per US dollar. The prices for most goods that were raised by retailers also decreased, but some of them still remain higher than the "pre-crisis" level.

Weaker dram not immediately triggers increase in exports, says association head

Armenian exports are falling, says Raffi Mkhchyan, the head of Armenia's Exporters Union, citing statistics showing that in November, compared to the same period of 2013, the fall made 18 percent.

"The most important and tangible question is that people have a false opinion that when the dram depreciates large-scale exports will start, it is not exactly so and has never been, time and other factors are necessary for that," Mkhchyan told reporters on Tuesday, addressing the situation when the national currency is getting weaker against the dollar, which according to economic theories should be auspicious for exporting businesses.

According to Mkhchyan, Armenia is not famous for large scales of export. "Nor can we say that Armenia can surprise the world with its volumes of production," he added.

"The situation of the last 10 days were a considerable damage to the economy, we lost many agreements, mostly with Russia.

The main reason was the instability of the ruble, which devaluated by 50-60 percent, nevertheless, we can review and change agreements quickly, and we can work with Russia with dollars," he said. (While the Armenian dram was falling, the Russian ruble was falling to a greater extent last week, making it even less profitable for Armenian exporters to supply goods to Russia).

According to Mkhchyan, after



Armenia becomes a member of the Eurasian Economic Union (EEU) from January 1, Russia will not create favorable financial conditions for Armenia.

"We will not immediately feel the consequences of what happened in Armenia recently, that will come in 2015," he said.

On December 17 the Armenian dram fell to as low as 600 AMD/1US\$ for a while before rebounding and prices for some goods were raised by up to 30 percent. Today at most currency exchange offices one dollar can be bought for 455-460 AMD.

On Monday, during a reception for the business community, Armenian President Serzh Sargsyan said that some of the current year's difficulties and uncertainties that have objective reasons are likely to continue in Armenia in 2015. H also spoke about challenges and opportunities of Eurasian integration.

"I have no doubts that our entrepreneurs are competitive and have what to say and will have their role in the new economic union as well," Sargsyan said.



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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, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system. Price: 135.000 USD
- ♦1698. **Aram str.**, Newly built, 14/5, 62sq.m, 1 bedroom, capitally repaired, AC, security system, parking. Price: 120.000 USD.

2 ROOMS

- ♦3003. **Sayat-Nova str**, 5/3, 105sq.m, 2 bedrooms, stone building, capitally repaired. Price: Negotiable
- ♦1560. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 10/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.
- ♦2818. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, furnished. Price: 400.000 USD
- ♦1156. **Komitas Ave.**, Hambarzumyan str. 5/3, 110sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.

3 ROOMS

- ♦3012. **Aram str**, Newly built, /7th floor, 136sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking, facing to bulvar, Price: 300.000 USD negotiable.
- ♦2998. **North Ave**, Newly built, 9/6, 181sq.m, 3 bedrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, parking, Price: 700.000 USD
- ♦2682. **Aram Str.**, Newly built, 13/6 187sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 open balconies, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system. Price: Negotiable.
- ♦2895. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, AC. Price: negotiable
- ♦2802. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 8/4, 166sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 460.000 USD.
- ♦2990. **North Ave.**, Newly built, 11th floor, 295sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, parking. Price: Negotiable.

PREMISES

- ♦1789. **Charents str.** Land-1270sq.m, 5 storied building, each floor-400sq.m., basement, capitally repaired, parkings. Price: 4.000.000 USD negotiable
- ♦1598. **Komitas, Nairy Zaryan str.**, 1000 sq.m., working restaurant, 1st line, capitally 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., capitally repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: Negotiable
- ♦2013. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capitally repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 1.300.000\$ negotiable
- ♦2012. **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1, 2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capitally 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, capitally repaired. Price: 200.000 USD
- ♦2175. **Tumanyan str**, Ground and 1st floor of the building, 600sq.m, ground floor 300sq.m, 1st floor-220sq.m, basement-80sq.m., - 1st line, zero level, 2 entrances, facade-15m, 4 window glasses, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, Price: 3500 USD per sq.m,
- ♦2172. **Isahakyan str**, 92sq.m, 1st line, 7 degrees above zero level, facade-9m, 2 window glasses, h-3.20m, 2 halls, cabinet, bathroom, capitally repaired, heating system. Price: 450.000 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 460.000USD
- ♦1402. **Hr. Kochar Str.**, 1100 sq. m., facade -25 m. Price negotiable.
- ♦2090. **Lori region**, close to Stepanavan, Gyargyar village, 6 hectares, forest 2 hectare has building permits, 3 water source, electricity. Price: 100.000USD.
- ♦2406. **Avan**, Mher Mkrtychyan block, 1000 sq.m., electricity, gas, water, the district is inhabited. Price: 30USD 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, Barbysus str.** Land - 800 sq.m, 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system, elevator. Price: 2.300.000 USD.

- ♦3583. **Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capitally 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, capitally 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, capitally 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, capitally 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, capitally repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, gar-



- den. Price: 2.000.000 USD
- ♦3590. **Blur, Barbysus str.**, Land-450 sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 680.000 USD
- ♦3651. **Blur, Barbysus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 1.700.000 USD.
- ♦3401. **Antarayan str**, Newly built, land-700sq.m, 3 storied bld-690sq.m, 5 bedrooms, capitally repaired. Price: 1.300.000 USD
- ♦3712. **Cascade** Newly built, land-450sq.m, 4 storied bld-600sq.m, zero state. Price: 550.000 USD

NEWLY BUILT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

- ♦74. **Cascade**, Verin Antarayan. 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 Antarayan. 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: 1500-1600USD 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. **Antarayan 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. **Baghramyan 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

- 2302 **North Ave**, Newly built, 11/4, 137sq.m, 2bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 2295 **North Ave.**, Newly built, 16/15, 173sq.m., 2bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished. Price: 5000 USD
- 2290 **Bayron str.**, Newly built, /5th floor, 220sq.m, 2bedrooms, study, open kitchen, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, climate control, furnished, parking. Price: 4000 USD
- 1780. **Amiryan str**, Newly built, /13th floor, 82 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 1700 USD negotiable.
- 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, 2bedrooms, 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.
- 2243. **Buzand str**, Newly built, 17/4, 125sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD
- **Amiryan str**, Newly built, 14/5, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, partly furnished. Price 2000 USD

3 ROOMS AND MORE

- 2303 **Hanrapetutyan str** Newly built, 9/5, 165sq.m, 3bedrooms, 1bathroom, 1 guest toilet. capitally repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 2286. **Sose str**, Newly built, 12/2, 154sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 1700 USD

- 2257. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 17/16, 160 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, capitally repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 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, 8/4, 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, heat-



- ing 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, climate 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

- 1335 **Baghramyan str.**, Land-200sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished. Price: 3000 USD
- 1336 **Aygedzor**, Land-1000sq.m, 2 storied bld-240sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooom, capitally repaired, furnished. Price: 2000 USD
- 1337 **Davtashen** Land-406sq.m, 3 storied bld-306sq.m, 4bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capitally repaired, furnished. Price: 3900 USD
- 1323. **Monument, Babayan str**, Land-400sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capitally repaired. Price: Negotiable
- 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. **Djrvej**, 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

- 2049. **Teryan str**, ground floor+basemnet, 1st line, 200sq.m, repaired. Price: 6.000 USD
- 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 sq.m., 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. **Zarobyan str.**, /parallel to Baghramyan 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.
- 2033. **Abovyan str**, 388sq.m, Ground floor of the building, 3 degrees above zero level, window glasses, h-3m., basement-235sq.m, capitally repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 15.000 USD
- 2031. **Vardanants str**, 500sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, facade-20m, window glasses, without divisions, ,basement-250sq.m, Price: 8000 USD
- 2027. **Sayat Nova str**, 95sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, 7 degrees above zero level, 4 window glasses, capitally repaired. Price: 4.000 USD

VivaCell-MTS News: Supporting Our Heritage Preservation, Investing in Our Future - the Armenian Children and Upgrading Services Indeed

"Ars Lunga" Duo and the jubilees of the year

In the frames of the "Concert in the Foyer" of the Alexander Spendiaryan National Opera and Ballet Theater and the "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project a concert took place on 16 December: "Ars Lunga" duo and violinists **Mary Margaryan** and **Lusine Harutyunyan** performed duos written for cello and piano and trios written for violin, cello and piano



by Armenian composers whose anniversary have been celebrated in 2014, including **Komitas** (145), **Vladilen Balyan** (90), **Avet Terteryan** (85), **Geghuni Chtchyan** (85), **Tigran Mansuryan** (75), **Edward Hayrapetyan** (65) and **Armen Smbatyan** (60).

The idea of creating and implementing the "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project belongs to "Ars Lunga" duo, namely to cellist **Aram Tatalyan** and pianist **Julietta Vardanyan**. The program encompasses a wide range of traditions of Armenian academic music from the beginning of the 20th century till now. Works of young Armenian musicians have also been included in the project; some of them presented a number of their works to "Ars Lunga" duo. The General Partner of the "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project is VivaCell-MTS.

"In the world of art this year is significant because it marks the anniversaries of a number of prominent figures in Armenian classical music. This is a great opportunity to once again remember and honor our classics, but it is also important to assess and support the contemporary composers of classical music who say a new word in art. Today's concert has combined these two ideas and certifies that our creative mind is alive and is not limited to past achievements," mentioned VivaCell-MTS General Manager **Ralph**

Yirikian.

The "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project has several parts.

In the first part of the "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project the "Ars Lunga" duo has compiled works of 60 Armenian composers of the 20th -21st centuries, written for cello and piano, has performed them and recorded them in compliance with modern requirements of technology. The result of the project was the release of collections which make sets of 12 CDs and are completed with brochures presenting the biographies of the composers.

At present the "Ars Lunga" duo is working on the second part of the "Anthology of Armenian Chamber Music" project which will present complete works for piano trio (piano, violin, cello) by Armenian composers.

Innovative and Creative Learning Centers provided to Lori children

Creativity Lab opened in the Village of Tumanyan as a result of VivaCell-MTS and COAF Collaboration

VivaCell-MTS and the Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) helped realize a long-expected dream of the children from Tumanyan community of Lori Marz: a technology classroom, Creativity Lab, was established in the local school, to be used by all the schoolchildren and teachers of Tumanyan community, as well as youth from the neighboring villages.

A Creativity Lab is a learning center corresponding to the requirements of contemporary education, equipped with a smart board, modern computers, as well as special mobile furniture. The latter is adaptable for working individually, in pairs and in groups.

The creative environment existing in such educational facilities as creativity labs allows for implementation of multifunctional activities and correlation of various tasks, including classes with the application of computers and technologies, training sessions, discussions, readings, games and intellectual activity. The projects initiated and implemented jointly by COAF and VivaCell-MTS aim at ensuring the equal development of rural communities and supplement the village schools with informational and communication technologies.

The Tumanyan Creativity Lab is the fifth technologically enhanced facility established as part of COAF-VivaCell-MTS partnership. Earlier in 2013-2014, the children from

Sardarapat, Vanand and Hatsik communities of Armavir Marz and Arteni community of Aragatsotn Marz also became beneficiaries of the joint project.

"VivaCell-MTS considers important everything related to children's education and their future, and supports the implementation of such projects. Children, especially in the regions, need access to educational tools, information sources, they need support in getting proper education and opportunity to decently live and work in their homeland.



This project is another step on the way to achieve those objectives", VivaCell-MTS General Manager **Ralph Yirikian** stated.

In the words of **Anoush Yedigaryan**, COAF Director, "The concept of Creativity Labs was first introduced in Armenia and has been widely acclaimed as a cutting-edge means of ensuring an optimal learning and creative environment for the younger generation, and providing them with contemporary educational opportunities. COAF's experience and analysis of the educational component of its comprehensive development programs has demonstrated that these inspirational initiatives raise the students' level of interest towards education and contribute to high performance results".

Education plays an important role for the population of Tumanyan community, which is very educated. The local school is home to 124 students. The newly opened Creativity Lab will be one of the key tools for developing the creative skills of rural children and raising the overall level of education in the region. Moreover, considering the fact that Tumanyan is located on Yerevan-Tbilisi highway and has also a strategic geographical location, it is expected that the new Creativity Lab will serve not only Tumanyan community, but also the whole Tumanyan Region of Lori Marz. At the initiative of Ayb School, on December 14, international The Hour of Code event was held at the school.

This event was organized for the first time in Armenia, with the joint support from VivaCell-MTS, UITE and Microsoft.

Armenia hosted the international The Hour of Code event for the first time

At the initiative of Ayb School, on December 14, international The Hour of Code event was held at the school. This event was organized for the first time in Armenia, with the joint support from VivaCell-MTS, UITE and Microsoft. The international event The Hour of Code is a global movement reaching more than 100 million from over 180 countries. Around 45 thousands schools participate at this global event. It gathers under one roof the lovers of technology, games and programming. The event is an opportunity to learn the fundamentals of various programming languages and approaches. The participants are not required to know any programming language prior to taking part in the Hour of Code event.

The idea behind organizing the global event is grounded on the belief that every student should have the opportunity to learn computer science. It helps nurture problem-solving skills, logic and creativity. By starting early, students will have a foundation for success in any 21st century career path. The only requirement is that the participants should be conversant in English and should have a laptop or a tablet with them. The pupils of elementary schools have also shown interest in the event.

Any school can host an Hour of Code anytime, but the grassroots campaign goal is for tens of millions of students to try an Hour of Code during December 8-14, 2014, in celebration of Computer Science Education Week.

VivaCell-MTS supported with implementing the initiative the Hour of Code in Armenia for the first time out of the strong belief that knowledge gained during the school years remains for a lifetime. The readiness of the Company to provide new quality to the educational programs has an important mission. It will increase the willingness to discover and to create something new among those, who are engaged in the programming science.

"BirthLink" NGO and VivaCell-MTS continue their partnership to improve neonatal care in the country

VivaCell-MTS General Manager Ralph Yirikian and Director of "BirthLink" NGO Kathy Mellor visited the maternity department in the central hospital in Masis. This

hospital has received equipment for immediate reanimation and warming of sick and small babies, monitoring and management of respiratory difficulties and the provision of intravenous fluids. The provided equipment will help support sick and low birth weight babies after delivery, with provision to stabilize babies before transfer to Yerevan or regional centers. By improving facilities, transfer of some babies can be avoided.

The project with VivaCell-MTS concentrates on the first day of life to ensure each maternity facility has doctors and nurses with the right knowledge and equipment to improve survival of the vulnerable newborn babies. In addition to the equipment being provided, education, training and support for the medical staff continues.

This is now the seventh year of cooperation



between "BirthLink" and VivaCell-MTS, to improve the care of sick and premature babies in Armenia, and thereby reduce neonatal mortality. The project commenced in 2008, and till now has supported twelve neonatal departments in Yerevan and twenty-three departments in seven regions of Armenia with about AMD 535 million of support from VivaCell-MTS.

"A child is the guarantee of a full-fledged family, and the family is the guarantee of a sustainable society. And, in its turn, the sustainable society is the most important precondition for any country's development and progress. We want to struggle for the life of every child born in Armenia, we want those children to not only bring happiness to their parents, but also to become healthy and valuable individuals for our society, our country. VivaCell-MTS and "BirthLink" NGO have their contribution in this struggle, standing next to Armenian doctors, providing them with the necessary equipment, and, why not, also psychological support for making their tough, but invaluable work more effective", commented VivaCell-MTS General Manager Ralph Yirikian.

The 'Every Newborn' action plan, led by World Health Organization and UNICEF, believes that nearly 3 million babies and women can be saved each year through

investing in quality care around the time of birth and special care for sick and small newborns.

More than 80% of all newborn deaths result from poor preventable and treatable conditions - in particular, those necessary in cases of complications due to prematurity and infections. Improving quality of care around the time of birth will save most lives, but needs healthcare professionals with good knowledge and well equipped facilities to make the difference.

4G/LTE is made available in Armavir and Vagharshapat

Armenia's 4G/LTE network covers 45,7% of the populated territories of the country

VivaCell-MTS has launched 4G/LTE networks in Armavir and Vagharshapat towns of Armenia. From now on the benefits of 4G services are available to the whole population of these two major towns of Armavir region. In order to ensure 100% coverage in both cities, VivaCell-MTS deployed 6 4G/LTE base stations in Armavir and 7 base stations in Vagharshapat. Together with Armavir and Vagharshapat, Armenia's 4G/LTE coverage now makes up 45,7%.

Previously 4G/LTE technology providing 150Mbps at the downlink and 50 Mbps in the uplink was made available in the following cities: Yerevan (100%), Gyumri (100%), Vanadzor (100%), Dilijan (90%) and Tsaghkadzor (100%).

By the end of 2014, after completing the deployment of 37 additional 4G/LTE base stations in the capital city, VivaCell-MTS will achieve the targeted 250 LTE sites (eNodeBs).

VivaCell-MTS is still the only mobile operator in Armenia providing 4G services on a commercial basis.

"VivaCell-MTS started operation with a challenging target in mind - achieving the state when mobile communication will be made available to a shepherd in a remote mountain. At present, no one can be surprised at the fact that VivaCell-MTS' voice and data services are made available even in the most under-populated areas of the country. Now our target is to ensure that the innovative 4G/LTE technology is available not only to the residents of the capital, but to the residents of other towns as well," Ralph Yirikian commented. "All over the world, 4G/LTE serves is a major catalyst of business development and growth. Armenia should not be an exception," Mr Yirikian added.

Sergey Smbatyan Conducted the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra With Non-Stop Applause And a New Year Surprise: Hayfilm Non-Stop and Cartoon Non-Stop

21 DECEMBER, KATOWICE, POLAND. - Andrew Voynowski for The Highlights, via phone.

Today at jam-packed NOSPR Hall the Polish National Radio Symphony Orchestra played under the guidance of the Founding Artistic Director and the Principal Conductor of the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia Sergey Smbatyan.

During the sold-out concert the Suite "The Adventures of Robin Hood" by Erich Wolfgang Korngold, Violin Concerto by Samuel Barber and the legendary "An American in Paris" by George Gershwin were performed.

The soloist was Peter Tarcholik, violin.

Young Armenian conductor and the Orchestra musicians deserved non-stop "Bravo!" and "Encore!" by the audience where this author met numerous Armenians came to Katowice from Germany, Austria as well as other parts of Europe specifically to attend the concert led by their compatriot Sergey Smbatyan.



The concert was recorded for the Public Radio of Poland and broadcasted by the radio.

Notably, the NOSPR is the newest concert hall in Europe at present.

And, as we've informed The Highlights readers in our Weekly's previous issue, Youth Orchestra continues organizing its Non-Stop concert series initiated in 2012 and entitled Hollywood Non-Stop that have become beloved by the audience, especially the youngest one, so...

This time Hayfilm (Armenian Film Studio) Non-Stop and Cartoon Non-Stop will be presented to the audience in the eve of the New Year holidays. The concerts will be held

on the December 27th and 28th at Alexander Spendiaryan Armenian National Academic Theatre of Opera and Ballet at 15.00 and at 19.00 respectively.

If the Cartoon Non-Stop is a favourite project among our youngest audience, Hayfilm Non-Stop will be presented for the very first time. The soundtracks of famous Armenian movies will be performed, - such as "A Piece of Sky" by Tigran Mansuryan, "The Men" by Robert Amirkhanyan, "The Bride from the North" by Arno Babajanyan, "The White Dreams" by Tigran Mansuryan, "Pepo" by Aram Khachaturian, "The Chaos" by Edward Mirzoyan, etc.

In general, 17 soundtracks of the Armenian films will be performed during the concerts.

The General Sponsor of Hayfilm Non-Stop is "Tashir" Charity and the General Sponsor of Cartoon Non-Stop is "Tashir Pizza". (Let's also remind that the SYOA General Partner is VivaCell-MTS, Armenia's leading telecom operator company).

"Christmas Concert for Friends": the Lithuanian Embassy Presents Ciurlionis and Dvarionas Music CD in Armenia



By **Gourgen James Khazhakian**

Chief Correspondent

In the spirit of approaching Christmas the Lithuanian Embassy in Yerevan kindly invited to a "Christmas Concert for Friends", the presentation of the CD "Winter Sketches" with music of the Lithuanian composers **Mikalojus Ciurlionis** (who also was a painter and a poet) and **Balys Dvarionas** recorded by pianist and composer **Hayk Melikyan**, the Honored Artist of the Republic of Armenia, a young but already internationally recognized musician with absolutely unique imagination.

The concert/presentation was organized at the National Gallery of Armenia with support of the Embassy of Lithuania to Armenia as well as the Ministry of Culture of the Republic

of Armenia.

The solo album of Lithuanian music was released within the "Embassy CD Series" initiative by the pianist, two other CDs, the Swiss and the Polish ones have been released before.

To remind, exactly a year ago a special concert was organized in Armenia dedicated to the Baltic states 20th century and contemporary music within the 1900+ World Piano Music Series (www.1900plus.org). The latter aims at presenting the piano music (composed after the year of 1900) of different nations to the Armenian audience. It was launched in 2009, and Russian, French, Japanese, Polish, Swiss, American, German and Italian concerts have been organised since then.

"We are very happy for completion of all the preparations for today's concert so presenting the Armenian audience this nice and symbolic program. The CD presented it the third one within the "Embassy CD Series", after the Polish and the Swiss albums. Our special thanks to the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lithuania to Armenia His Excellency Mr **Erikas Petrikas** and Mrs **Petrikene** for very pleasant and inspiring cooperation that has been lasting for two years already, Minister of Culture of Armenia Mrs **Hasmik Poghosyan** and very hospitable management of the Natl Gallery, " Hayk Melikyan's Artistic Director A. Hakobyan told the audience that included high-ranking officials of Armenia, Ambassadors of the US - **John Heffern**, of the UK- **Katherine Leach**, of France - **Jean-Francois Cherpentier**, of



Brazil - **Edson Monteiro**, of Russia - **Ivan Volinkin**, of Romania - **Sorin Vasile**, of Ukraine - **Ivan Kukhta**, of Lebanon- **Jean Makaron**, of Kuwait - **Bassam Alqabandi**, others, numerous reps of the Armenian creative and intellectual elite

As to the concert, we strongly believed it would not be a big exaggeration to say it was an amazing one.

So it was not by chance that Melikyan's play attracted many rounds of applause that turned to an ovation.

(Yours truly and his neighbors at the Hall, in particular, was especially amazed by performance of works by the Great **Frederic Chopin**, especially his Polonaise Op.53. And the "Winter Sketches" by prominent Lithuanian composers were very interesting ones indeed.)

And the Lithuanian Embassy made a really nice Christmas gift for the guests, - Melikyan's above mentioned CD that was signed by the Artist for the guests who formed a quite long line.



Azeri-Israeli Propagandist Throws Stones at Armenia from Glass House



By *Harut
Sassounian*

*Publisher, The
California Courier*

The JNS.org website (Jewish and Israel news) posted a venomous, anti-Armenian article by Arye Gut with a bombastic headline: "Anti-Semitism in Armenia: A Clear and Present Danger."

JNS.org identifies the author as "an Azerbaijani Israeli" who is "a board member of the Israeli-Azerbaijani International Organization, official coordinator of the 'Justice for Khojaly!' international campaign in Israel, and an expert in international relations."

Dozens of Azeri and Turkic media outlets rushed to reprint this Armenophobic propaganda, stressing that it originated from a 'popular' Jewish news source. The article may have been written in Baku, planted in Israeli and Jewish publications, and then reprinted in Azerbaijan to lead readers into thinking that it comes from an objective third party source.

Gut claims that Armenia's Jewish minority "shrunk dramatically" after the end of "a more tolerant" Soviet rule! He admits, as an afterthought, that "Armenia's ongoing economic collapse" is equally responsible for the dwindling number of Jews "from more than 5,000 to just a few hundred." Gut fails to mention, however, that during the same period over one million Armenians also left their homeland due to abysmal economic conditions.

The Azeri-Israeli author further accuses Armenians of "cultural violence," referring to the existence of anti-Semitic books and TV programs. Yet he grudgingly acknowledges that "such unfortunate incidents" occur "in many countries." If that is the case, why is he singling out Armenia? Could it be that he has ulterior motives? As "official coordinator of the 'Justice for Khojaly!' international campaign in Israel," is Gut a paid agent or doing all this hard work - writing pro-Azerbaijan/anti-Armenia articles - out of the goodness of his heart?

Gut goes on to defame Armenians, claiming that "around 1.3 million out of 2.2 million adults in Armenia expressed anti-

Semitic attitudes." He misleads readers into thinking that he has personally interviewed 1.3 million Armenians all of whom supposedly made anti-Jewish statements! What Gut is referring to is Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) flawed global survey which reported that 58% of a random sample of 500 Armenians, interviewed mostly by telephone, expressed anti-Semitic views. As Gut's figure of 1.3 million Armenians comes from ADL's survey, he should have also mentioned the results of the same survey for his beloved Azerbaijan - one of the worst violators of human rights in the world - which shows that 2.4 million Azeris harbored anti-Semitic sentiments, almost double the number of Armenians!

Since Gut is concealing Azerbaijan's figures, let's expose them to see how they compare with those of Armenia, based on the results of ADL's 11-question survey:

1. 3.2 million Azeris and 1.5 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews are more loyal to Israel than to the country they live in."

2. 3.4 million Azeris and 1.6 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews have too much power in the business world."

3. 3.2 million Azeris and 1.5 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews have too much power in international financial markets."

4. 2 million Azeris and 1 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews still talk too much about what happened to them in the Holocaust."

5. 3.4 million Azeris and 1.3 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews don't care what happens to anyone but their

own kind."

6. 2.5 million Azeris and 1.1 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews have too much control over global affairs."

7. 2.5 million Azeris and 1.1 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews have too much control over the United States government."

8. 2.4 million Azeris and 1.2 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews think they are better than other people."

9. 2.3 million Azeris and 0.9 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews have too much control over the global media."

10. 2 million Azeris and 0.8 million Armenians replied "probably true": "Jews are responsible for most of the world's wars."

11. 2.4 million Azeris and 1.4 million Armenians replied "probably true": "People hate Jews because of the way Jews behave."

ADL's Global Survey results are even more devastating for Turkey - 34 million Turks out of an adult population of 49 million are found to be anti-Semitic.

Gut concludes his anti-Armenian diatribe by depicting the so-called "Khojaly massacre" as "one of the worst tragedies of the 20th century," thereby raising the alleged killing of "613 people" in Khojaly during the Karabagh war to the level of 6 million victims of the Jewish Holocaust and 1.5 million victims of the Armenian Genocide!

Gut must be unaware of Benjamin Franklin's famous words: "Don't throw stones at your neighbors, if your own windows are glass!"



Armenian and Kurdish village names restored in Van

The Van Metropolitan Municipal Council restored the old names of 704 neighborhoods, the Armenian Weekly reports quoting Turkish newspapers.

The municipality has said that it will use these old names in its official documents. In each local municipality research was conducted to identify the old names of the neighborhoods.

In Baskale 81 villages and neighborhoods received their old names back; in Çaldıran 86; in Çatak 34; in Edremit 18; in Ercis 105; in Gevas 37; in Gürpınar 174; in Ipekyolu 50; in Muradiye 41; in Özalp 53; and inside the city proper 25.

The decision was approved by members of the council who were from the pro-Kurdish party as well as the ruling party. Reportedly, village signs will also be changed and include the Kurdish and



Armenian names.

Before the Genocide, there were around 90,000 Armenians living in 350 villages in what is today the province of Van, according to Les Arméniens dans

l'Empire Ottoman à la veille du génocide by historians Raymond Kevorkian and Paul Paboudjian. There were 382 churches and 65 monasteries in the area.

The 6 most ancient countries of the world: Armenia among them

The first states emerged about 6,000 years ago, but not all of them have survived. Some disappeared forever, others have only their name left. A Russian website presents the six modern countries that have maintained links with the Ancient World. These include Armenia, Iran, China, Greece, Egypt and Japan.

“The history of Armenians statehood counts 2,500 years, but its roots should be looked for even deeper, in the Kingdom of Arme-Shupria (12th century BC), which, according to historian Boris Piotrovsky, grew into a Scythian-Armenian union in the 7-6th centuries BC,” the russien7.ru website reminds.

According to the report, Ancient Armenia was a conglomerate of kingdoms and states, which existed simultaneously or successes each other. The website notes that the term “Armenia” was first mentioned in the Behistun inscription (521 BC) of the King of Persia, Darius I, who used the name to describe the Persian satrapy on the territory of the disappeared



Kingdom of Urartu.

The Kingdom of Ararat that was later formed in the valley of Araks Ruver served as a basis for three others – Sofena, Lesser Armenia and Great Armenia. Starting from 3rd century BC the center of the political and cultural life of the Armenian nation moved to the Ararat Valley.



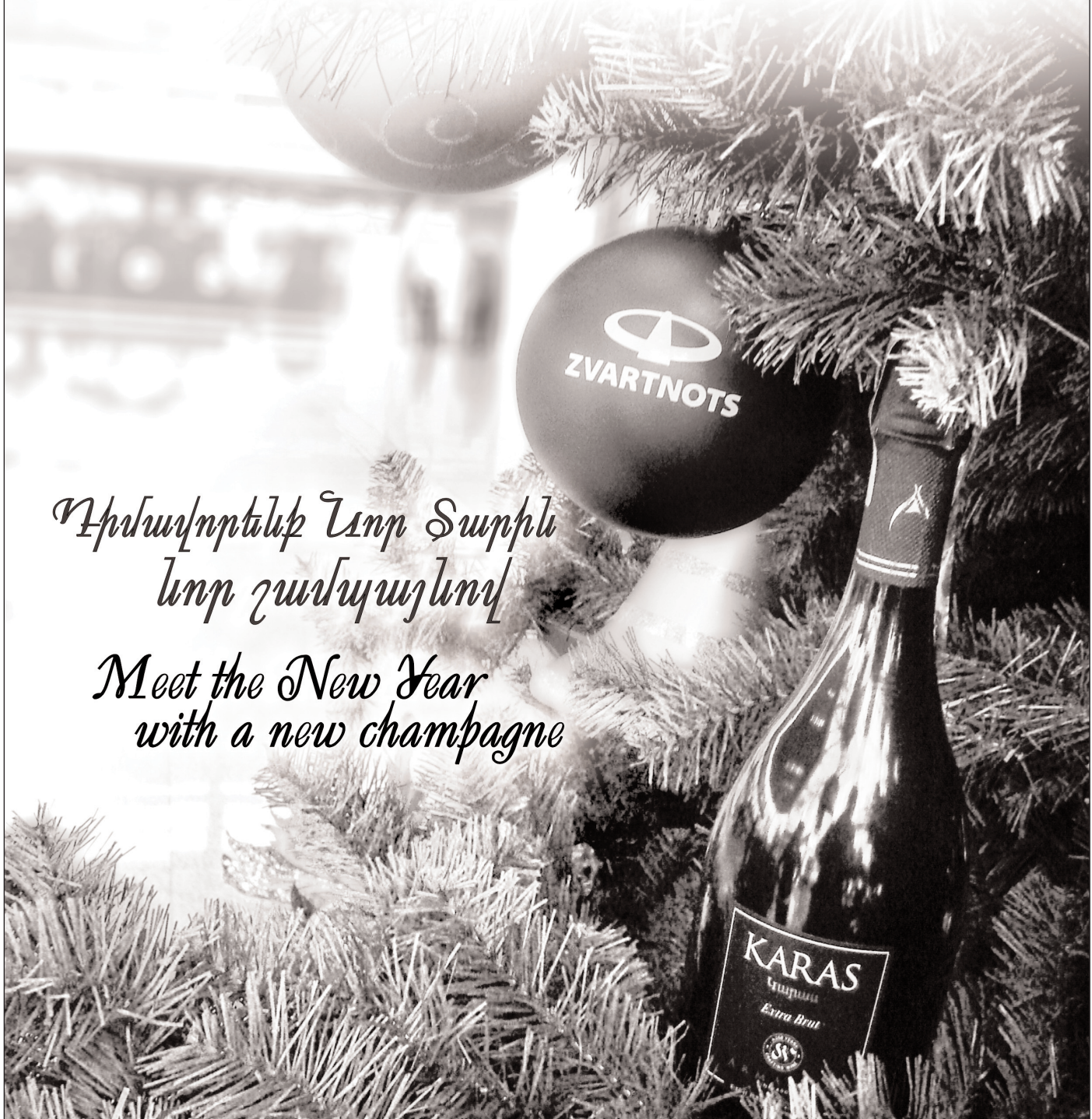
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Լոյր շարկարչոյ*

*Meet the New Year
with a new champagne*



AI-Monitor: Planned Armenian genocide memorial ruffles Ankara

A proposed art project commemorating the 1915 mass slaughter by the Ottoman Turks of the empire's Armenian subjects has sparked a tug-of-war between the Turkish government and Switzerland's ethnic Armenian community, sharpening decades of mutual suspicion and resentment and pitting the federal government in Bern against the local government in Geneva, where the monument is to be placed, AI-Monitor writes.

With only months to go before the April 24 centenary of the genocide, the stakes are higher than ever — and so far, Turkey is prevailing. In early December, the Swiss Foreign Ministry declared that it opposes erecting the Armenian monument in the canton of Geneva because “it is important for federal authorities to preserve the absolute impartiality of Geneva,” where the United Nations and various other international organizations are headquartered, Turkey's semi-official Anadolu news agency crowed.

More likely, the Swiss are responding to Turkish bullying, Armenian activists and diplomatic observers say. The UN has reportedly also sided with Turkey. A UN spokeswoman in Geneva declined to comment.

“It is an international scandal that Swiss diplomacy surrendered so voluntarily to Turkish pressure,” complained Vicken Cheterian, a Geneva-based ethnic Armenian academic in an interview with AI-Monitor. “A beautiful artwork is now in exile in search of a safe haven where it can rest, to reflect the memory of a people sacrificed and humanity in denial.”

The project, called “Reverberes de la Memoire,” or “Streetlights of Memory,” consists of eight lampposts placed in an arc in parkland lying between the International Red Cross building and the Palais des Nations, where the United Nations' precursor, the League of Nations, once stood. The lamp posts will soar to nine meters (29.5 ft.) and sprout elongated chrome tear drops in which pedestrians can view their own reflections. The pillars will be inscribed with texts about exile and dispossession by acclaimed French Armenian psychoanalyst Janine Altounian, whose parents survived the genocide.

A Turkish Foreign Ministry spokesman did not return calls for comment. But Turkish officials speaking on condition of strict anonymity privately acknowledged to AI-Monitor that the Swiss government had been “encouraged” to scupper the bronze memorial, which was conceived in 2008 by the French Armenian artist Melik Ohanian. In keeping with Switzerland's federal laws, the final say rests with the cantonal government in Geneva, expected to deliver its verdict in mid-January. Stefan Kristensen, a Swiss Armenian activist, says should the local administration follow the Foreign Ministry's advice, the project organizers will pursue the matter in court. “There is no legal basis for caving to pressure from Bern and Ankara,” Kristensen told AI-Monitor.

Sympathy for the Armenians among the Swiss people is nothing new. In the late 19th century, when the ruling Ottoman Sultan Abdul Hamid II ordered pogroms against the Armenians, more than 400,000 Swiss citizens (13.7% of the population) signed a petition demanding that their federal government intervene with the Sublime Porte to end its brutality.

Swiss pharmacist Jacob Kunzler and his wife, Elizabeth, figure prominently in the Armenian pantheon of heroes. Between 1899 and 1922, the couple saved thousands of Armenian orphans in Turkey and Lebanon.

Moreover, Switzerland has laws that criminalize denying or justifying genocide. In 2007, a federal court found Turkish writer and leftwing politician Dogu Perincek guilty of racial discrimination for calling the

genocide “an international lie” on Swiss soil. The case wound up in the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR) in 2013. The Strasbourg-based court concluded that Switzerland had violated Perincek's right to free speech. In March, Switzerland appealed to the ECHR's 17-judge Grand Chamber to overturn the ruling. Armenia waded in on Switzerland's side with its own team of lawyers. The latter is said to include Amal Alamuddin, the much-respected Lebanese-born international human rights lawyer married to actor George Clooney. In a further twist, Alamuddin's great uncle, Najib, is said to have been married to Kunzler's daughter, Ida.

Perincek was merely parroting Turkey's official line. Turkey denies that the 1915 tragedy constitutes genocide. Imposing its own version of events — that most of the Armenians died of exposure, starvation and disease during forced deportations to the Syrian desert — has long been a cornerstone of Turkish foreign policy. Sabotaging planned genocide memorials is an integral part of this. Thus, when the ethnic Armenian residents of the California town of Montebello decided to build a monument to honor the victims of 1915 in the mid-1960s, Myron Goldsmith, a retired army major who doubled as Turkey's honorary consul general, lobbied the city council to prevent its construction.

The episode was colorfully depicted in journalist Michael Bobelian's 2009 book “Children of Armenia: A Forgotten Genocide and the Century-Long Struggle for Justice.” We learn, for instance, that Goldman accused the Armenians of “concocting a Communist plot” and that the State Department “contacted Montebello's city council to pressure it to shut down the project.” In the end, the council voted in favor of the monument but “bowed to the State Department's wishes,” spurning Armenian demands for the genocide to be mentioned in its dedicatory plaque. A former Turkish intelligence officer who requested anonymity claimed in remarks to AI-Monitor that the Turkish government had “wasted hundreds of thousands of dollars” in covert operations to deface Armenian genocide memorials. California is home to the largest Armenian diaspora community in the United States, and three Turkish diplomats were murdered there in revenge killings carried out by ethnic Armenians between 1973 and 1982.

In 2011, the battle against monuments shifted to Kars, a city close to Turkey's sealed border with Armenia, where a former mayor commissioned a sculpture that was meant to symbolize reconciliation. Turkey's President (then Prime Minister) Recep Tayyip Erdogan called the work a “freak” and an “abomination” that needed to be demolished and replaced with “a beautiful park.” Demolition of the two giant figures facing each other, hands extended in a gesture of peace, duly began in April of that year, with their decapitation.

“It cost more money to destroy the monument than to build,” observed former mayor Naif Alibeyoglu.

Such actions run counter to the recent softening in Turkey's official stance — last year, Erdogan went as far as to offer an apology of sorts when he acknowledged the suffering endured by the Armenians in a statement made that April 24.

Using the word “genocide” is no longer a criminal offense in Turkey. Yet, Turkey's sustained efforts to suppress commemorative monuments are “a pernicious kind of aggression against our right to remember, to celebrate the fact that we are still alive,” said Heghnar Zeitlian Watenpaugh, an art historian at the University of California, in an email interview with AI-Monitor. Should Ankara succeed in permanently switching off Geneva's “Streetlights of Memory,” the wounds of the past will be even harder to heal.



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The world is wonderful

By Siranuysh Eghiazaryan

We Armenians are amazing people – full of kindness, anger and love, devoted, talented and thankful, tolerating, forgiving and hardworking.

My company sent me on a business trip to USA – to write interesting stories about Armenians' life there.

In this unique mix of nations from all over the world it's so hard to get oriented when you're not familiar with this country's traditions, culture, language and law.

I want to stop exactly here. I liked this country and I bow my head to the country where people respect the law and it is equal for everyone. For example New York City Mayor's driver license can be suspended for driving violations. Bravo!

I want to understand how is it possible when my law-hater compatriots, especially who has immigrated during the last years, easily respect American law without any regrets, fast get integrated to American society and become the part of it. Maybe we are law-abiding but we even don't doubt about it? Anyway.

Armenians come to USA and try to compare it with Armenia, remember Armenian warmth, friendship, moral and spiritual values. They miss everything, but still living here. They love their country from far away. Why?

While working in Europe I met an Armenian woman, who became my book's first heroine. It's already more than 20 years since she came, she has her own clinic, houses, she lives wealthy, but still missing Armenia, she doesn't want to sell her house in Yerevan and she will not go back as well.

When I asked why she doesn't want to go back to Armenia, she replied that she can't and doesn't want to live in a country where the law is nothing.

Due to my profession I used to talk to a lot of very different people. Part of them are Armenians whose families has escaped from genocide a century ago, part of them came to realize their dreams to become rich and wealthy, the other part has just escaped from their own country because of their own objective and subjective reasons, and the rest of them has come to be together with their families. Many of them have become angry, cold and have lost their human qualities.



I couldn't write this article if my heroine didn't tell me her little story about Varduhi Jaharljyan, a person, who just remains humane in this cruel world.

"-Hello, my name is Saten, I came from Armenia and need a place to live.

And from the other side of the line a woman with a pleasant voice told me all the conditions and I decided to go.

After arriving I met a smiley, nice and very cheerful woman- Varduhi Jaharljyan. I liked the house but I was standing confused and didn't know what to do, because during the last 2 days I had lost all my money and that time I was in a very stupid situation in a foreign country.

But her attitude gave me a courage and I announced that I can't pay my rent for the moment, so I can only give her one, I think the most expensive, family jewelry that I have. She looked at me and said: "Live as much as you want. Humanity is not lost yet". I think you can imagine how hard can be such a situation for a woman in a foreign country and without a place to live. I couldn't hide my excitement. My soul was storming with the feelings of happiness and gratitude.

After a while Varduhi brought me the first necessary things for living and also organized a dinner for me. Not only Varduhi, but also her aunt Gegharpi, a 75 years old woman with a light of kindness on her face, and Varduhi's sister Manush Akhoyan did everything to help me to feel comfortable bringing sofa, chairs, TV, etc. They surrounded me with care, love and

warmness. I was feeling me happy and calm.

In America without a car it's like without feet. Public transport works not very well and not everywhere. So I hadn't a chance to access it.

So Varduhi accompanied me everywhere, helped to solve my document problems in the governmental organizations and also translated my speech when I needed it.

Varduhi who has already become my close friend has 2 wonderful children – Hasmik and Raffie. Both of them are polite, smart, organized and with high moral values. In that short period I loved them a lot, I found a family on the other side of the ocean, where soars love and kindness.

Appreciation is the highest human quality and this Christmas time I appreciate everything. I want Varduhi's home to be filled with joy, child laugh, and even though she has given her life to her children, I want to see knocking on her door that strange and familiar feeling of love. I want her to meet the morning with new love, cause only love can save the world.

And finally, in the end as a conclusion I would like to say "-Thank you!"-was telling me Saten her story. She was excited and thankful, and I was comparing her with hundreds of people that I know and felt for a moment that the world is wonderful and humanity still living here.

I met Varduhi, Saten... and that's enough to prove it.

Preparing to see in 2015: New Year, old traditions in Armenia

Red, blue, green, lemon green, white... They say these colors will be the colors of 2015, the Year of the Blue Wooden Goat according to the Chinese zodiac. Astrologists say the year is going to be peaceful and fruitful, a year of will and persistence and finding new ways.

Despite the financial hardships in 2014, especially at the end of the year when amid a period of currency market volatility and rising prices many Armenians even thought of cutting their traditional New Year celebration expenses, the starting holiday season promises to be no less abundant than the previous ones.

Supermarkets and stores in capital Yerevan and in the provinces are crowded in the days leading up to the New Year Feast as people make purchases for what is going to be a nearly two-week "marathon" of celebration and hospitality with a lot of eating, drinking, visiting and hosting each other.

Chef and poetess Sonia Tashchyan reminds everyone of what Armenians traditionally used to have on their tables for the New Year: pasuts tolma, roasted grains of wheat, dried fruits, the goods remaining from the previous year's yield, which is supposed to contribute to good crops also in the New Year.

Meanwhile, the central meals on Armenian New Year tables today are a pork leg and a turkey. There have been anecdotal reports about crocodile meat increasingly becoming a competitor as it sells at Yerevan supermarkets at a price of about \$1,000 a kilo today (whereas last year it was only \$770). Inflation!

The Armenian Apostolic Church celebrates Holy Nativity on January 6 and the period of the New Year celebration also coincides with the Christmas Fast.

"After the adoption of Christianity our New Year table has been a table of Christmas fasting," Tashchyan reminds, adding that dishes included various salads of beans, sorrels, pastries, etc., but no meat.

"Of course, in some regions they also put ghapama (a stuffed pumpkin dish) on the New Year table," she says, stressing that concentrating on eating and drinking only diminishes the true meaning and joy of the New Year celebration.

Zodiac Weekly Forecast

Aries (Mar. 20–Apr. 19) :

Your energy level is good. Hopefully you are getting a needed break from your career this holiday season for R&R. Aspects favor relationships to friends and Significant Others. No doubt there are parties and fun times that will help you relax.

Taurus (Apr. 20–May 19):

This holiday season may find you traveling or alternatively, hosting people who live at a distance. Give attention to good health practices. There are opportunistic viruses that sneak around and look for a good host at this time of year. It will be a challenge to stay on your diet at this time.

Gemini (May 20 – June 20) :

Your mind is restless and more easily drops into worry mode this week. You have financial concerns about the big picture. The Twins rarely worry, but things feel a bit different now. Find a variety of interesting things to read. For relief get out and about and visit places you haven't seen.

Cancer (June 21–Jul y 21) :

At present your rational mind tells you one set of facts while the heart/instincts are in another camp altogether. Take your conflict to a higher place--not one of either/or, but both/and. A larger perspective would satisfy both ends of the equation. The result will be truly creative.

Leo (July 22 –Aug. 21):

You are wanting to take part in the joys of the season, but this year your life is complicated by major demands of your responsibilities. It is complicated by issues of your cohorts. They may be ill or somehow unavailable to handle their share of the work. You will probably be glad when the season is over.

Nutrition expert Hasmik Abovyan also advises people to be reasonable in their eating and drinking habits during the holiday season.

"At least sugary, carbonated beverages should be avoided," she says, adding that too much salt in the meals is also a bad idea.

Although the New Year is considered a family holiday, which is usually celebrated with family members at home, in recent years there is a new tendency among Armenians to gather at New Year's Eve at restaurants that offer various New Year Night show programs – from 10 pm on

Virgo (Aug 22–Sep. 22) :

The "rules" and the world's expectations have you tied up like a pretzel right now. The harder you struggle, the tighter those binds seem to become. It's like a Chinese puzzle. Sometimes if you relax on the control issues, the solution comes through. Give it some space.

Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

You need time to think about an issue concerning your relationship to family. Your heart says one thing and your mind another. When we feel this issue, we usually are unable to move forward in any significant way. It is generally best to withhold judgment until a good solution develops.

Scorpio (Oct. 23–Nov. 21) :

Watch your mouth. It may get you in trouble. There are elements of obsessive thinking and criticism involved. Be intentional about keeping an open mind and don't insist on a black and white answer. It is possible someone is doing this to you, but you can resist falling into that trap.

Sagittarius (Nov. 22 –Dec. 20):

You are normally the party type and usually enjoy the holiday season. But this year you may be feeling somehow isolated, which is rarely the case for you. It is possible that you have financial concerns and must curtail your spending. You may not feel as well as normal so perhaps you need to rest.

Capricorn (Dec 21 – Jan 19) :

You are knee deep in concerns and complications. In your heart of hearts, you want a sabbatical and rightly so. The Goat frequently takes on too many responsibilities for his own good. At this time in your life it is truly a challenge to uncomplicate anything because everything depends on everything else. Take the best break you can.

December 31 to the next morning. Prices for such events range from 10,000 to 80,000 drams (\$22-\$180).

As for the most important holiday feature, the New Year tree, it has not avoided "inflation pressures" this year either. Prices for natural fir-trees range from 60,000 to 120,000 drams (about \$130-\$260), whereas last year fir-trees were available from 50,000 drams (about \$110). Prices for artificial Christmas trees at the end of 2014 range from 10,000 to 200,000 drams (about \$22-\$440).



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