

# Due to Efforts of the First Lady Rita Sargsyan a Unique Kindergarten with Inclusive Teaching (for Children with Autism) Opens



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*see p.p. 6-7*



## Artsakh President visits U.S. Congress



By  
*Siranush Ghazanchyan*

In a first-ever visit to the U.S. Capitol by an Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) head of state, President Bako Sahakyan delivered a powerful pro-peace and prosperity message to the American people, thanking U.S. legislators for ongoing aid programs and encouraging continued U.S. leadership toward a durable, democratic resolution of outstanding Artsakh-Azerbaijan status and security issues, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

“Our people are building an independent, sovereign, democratic state and civil society,” said President Sahakyan. “We are committed to these ideas consciously. They have been inherited from generation to generation, constituting part and parcel of the Armenian civilization.”

Citing Artsakh’s democratic and economic progress over the past 25 years, President Sahakyan noted “Representatives of numerous countries, including the United States, who

periodically visit Artsakh, carry out observation missions in various elections also point to our achievements registered on this path. Artsakh people have earned the right to become a full member of the international community and to be integrated into the civilized world.”

President Sahakyan concluded, noting “Washington has a tangible role in maintaining peace and stability in our region, peaceful and just settlement of the Azerbaijani-Karabakh conflict conducting its mediation mission as a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk group. Cementing and deepening ties with the United States of America have always been and will remain among the fundamental directions of our foreign policy.”

“Artsakh President Bako Sahakyan’s visit to Washington, DC marks a major milestone in U.S.-Artsakh relations – representing both a clear rejection of Baku’s reckless bid to block bilateral dialogue and a bold reaffirmation of America and Artsakh’s shared commitment to open discourse as the only viable path to

peace,” said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. “As we’ve long said, Artsakh is a very American story, the victory of a free people over foreign rule. So it’s particularly meaningful that Artsakh’s head of state was – in the spirit of the bilateral U.S.-Artsakh Travel and Communication Resolution – so very warmly welcomed in our U.S. Capitol.”

The Artsakh briefing and reception on Capitol Hill featured Congressional participation by Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Jackie Speier (D-CA) and David Valadao (R-CA), Vice-Chair Adam Schiff (D-CA), and Representatives David Cicilline (D-RI), Jim Costa (D-CA), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), and Brad Sherman (D-CA). They each welcomed the President and his delegation, which included Foreign Minister Masis Mayilian, Parliamentarians David Ishkhanian and David Melkounmyan, and the President’s Deputy Chief of Staff David Babayan. They were accompanied by Artsakh’s Representative in the United States, Robert Avetisyan. Also in attendance was Armenian Ambassador to the U.S. Grigor Hovhannisian and his Embassy team.

Opening up the Congressional briefing, Rep. Pallone cited the importance of lifting artificial barriers to dialogue and travel to Artsakh. “When we were there (in Armenia) in September,” explained Rep. Pallone, “we were strongly urged by the Administration, by the State Department not to go to Artsakh, which I think is very wrong that they continue to do that. That is one of the reasons that we introduced this bill (H.Res.697) – to make it clear that travel and communications with Artsakh – even though it is not recognized by the United States – is

very important.” Support for H.Res. 697, introduced in January, 2018, is growing with 12 cosponsors to date. Congressman Pallone went on to stress the importance continued visits to Artsakh as well as the continuation of U.S. assistance to Artsakh and the implementation of the Royce-Engel proposals for peace in the region.

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Jackie Speier (D-CA), one of two Members of Congress of Armenian descent, announced that she would be leading a Congressional delegation to Armenia and Artsakh this year “to help everyone understand and appreciate what a grand and prosperous country it is and how important it is for Artsakh to be recognized as part of Armenia.”

Following the briefing, Rep. Schiff told the ANCA of the importance of implementing the Royce-Engel proposals. “That [the proposals], of course, are supported by Artsakh and Armenia but opposed by Azerbaijan, which has consistently been a belligerent and aggressor, but in the absence of that kind of deterrent, there is a grave risk that Azerbaijan may provoke a conflagration in the region,” said Rep. Schiff. “As Aliyev struggles with conflicts and unpopularity at home and spends billions on his military, there is a great temptation to use that, and we have to insist upon the peace as well as hold those who violate it accountable.”

Congresswoman Anna Eshoo (D-CA), also of Armenian and Assyrian descent and from Rep. Speier’s neighboring district, spoke fondly of her trip to Armenia last September, and of her “Armenian family” present on Capitol Hill and across the United States, all dedicated to advancing pro-Armenia and Artsakh priorities.





## Armenia, Denmark agree to facilitate visa issuance

*By Siranush Ghazanchyan*

On March 14, the meeting between Edward Nalbandian, Foreign Minister of Armenia and Anders Samuelsen, Foreign Minister of Denmark took place in Copenhagen.

Welcoming Edward Nalbandian, Anders Samuelsen expressed hope that the visit will give a new impetus to the Armenian-Danish relations. Thanking for the invitation and hospitality, Minister Nalbandian noted that the Copenhagen meetings give a good opportunity to discuss steps undertaken towards further strengthening and deepening of Armenia-Denmark cooperation, and the joint programmes of mutual interest.

At the meeting the interlocutors touched upon the Armenian-Danish agenda issues, exchanged views on the ways of further developing the bilateral and multilateral cooperation in different spheres.

Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Denmark discussed the issues of activating the bilateral political dialogue, intensification of trade and economic relations and cooperation in international structures. Both sides highlighted the importance of high-level reciprocal visits and contacts. In this context the Foreign Ministers underlined the importance of holding regular consultations between the Foreign Ministries of the two countries.



Touching upon the expansion of bilateral legal framework, Edward Nalbandian acknowledged with satisfaction,

that within the framework of this visit it is envisaged to sign three agreements.

During the meeting the sides touched upon the issues related to Armenia-EU relations, Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement.

Edward Nalbandian briefed his counterpart on the joint efforts of Armenia and the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chair countries aimed at exclusively peaceful settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The sides exchange views on a number of issues of regional and international importance.

Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Denmark signed the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Kingdom of Denmark on the facilitation of the issuance of visas.



## Russia reiterates commitment to Karabakh conflict settlement

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## Armenia to abolish Ministry dealing with International Economic Integration

Armenia's new cabinet to be formed after the expected resignation of the current government next month will not include a key ministry set up shortly before the country's formal accession to a Russian-led trade bloc in 2015, it transpired during the debate on adjustments in the government structure in parliament on March 6.

Under proposed changes the Ministry of International Economic Integration and Reform will be abolished and the institution of three deputy premiers, including the first vice premier, each having his or her own apparatus, will be introduced.

Justice Minister David Harutiunyan, who presented the bill, said the changes were conditioned by the country's transition to the parliamentary form of government that required synchronization of the legislation with the new Constitution.

He did not specify why the ministry that was deemed important in view of Armenia's accession to the Eurasian Economic Union and also coordinated the government's policies in the field of foreign economic relations in general was not included in the structure of the next government to be formed after Armenia completes its transition to the parliamentary form of government with the end of the current president's term on April 9.

David Harutiunyan only said that the structure of the government is always a "matter of political expedience."

"There are countries that have only seven ministries. And there are countries that have as many as 60 ministries. In every case it is the government that decides what ministries it should have and it pres-



ents this decision to the National Assembly [for approval]," the minister explained.

Under the proposed changes the Police and the National Security Service, which are currently bodies affiliated with the government, will directly report to the next prime minister.

Armenian opposition members fear this move will consolidate power in the hands of the prime minister and will even put him in a position where he may be beyond the reach of justice.

Opposition Yelk faction member Gevorg Gorisyan raised the issue during the parliamentary debate. "What if the prime minister commits, for example, high treason or what if questions arise

about his being compatible with his office, what structure should investigate this then?... Don't you think that there may be a conflict of interests here?" he queried.

Justice Minister Harutiunyan said that there is the Prosecutor's Office for such investigations. He added: "There are countries where the Prosecutor's Office is subordinate to the Ministry of Justice, but it does not mean that the Prosecutor's Office is in any way dependant on the Ministry of Justice. Subordination does not mean that proper functional independence is not ensured by the law. And in this case the matter should concern exactly functional independence."

## Official admits problems with pharmaceutical sales restrictions

A senior Health Ministry official in Yerevan has acknowledged certain difficulties faced by professionals in the public health domain connected with the introduction of a controversial pharmaceutical sales restriction system after the Armenian government moved to partially suspend the process earlier this week.

Lines of customers originated at pharmacies in Yerevan and other towns across Armenia on February 28 one day before the gradual entry into force of a government ban on over-the-counter sales of antibiotics and other types of medication. Confusion persisted also in the following days as many customers were not aware of the restrictions or had problems with doctors' writing out proper prescriptions.



Starting from March 1, pharmacies, in particular, were not allowed to sell, without prescriptions signed by doctors, antibiotics, hormone therapy drugs and painkillers containing codeine – a total of 2,700 of roughly 4,700 medicines that can be legally purchased in Armenia. Ministry of-

officials said that the measure is necessary to curb self-treatment that can cause serious harm to people's health.

Responding to widespread discontent among the public, the Armenian government decided on March 6 to soften the ban. In particular, the current ban concerns only antibiotics,

psychotropic and antiviral drugs. The bans on over-the-counter sales of medication for injections and hormone therapy drugs will come into effect in July and October, respectively.

Deputy Health Minister Sergey Khachatryan admitted they had had certain concerns even before the introduction of the new system. And those concerns, he said, were confirmed during the very first day. "Although a lot of preparatory work had been done, in practice a number of problems began to emerge in connection with the filling [of prescriptions], patients' visiting doctors, the lists of drugs for over-the-counter sale and sale by prescription only. Now we are monitoring these issues and coming up with solutions," the official said.



## Armenian city of Sevan wins EU grant to create innovative business environment



The city of Sevan in Armenia has received a grant through the EU-funded 'Mayors for Economic Growth' (M4EG) initiative to implement a project to improve the business environment, boost economic development and create new jobs in the city.

Sevan, in Gegharkunik marz (region), joined the EU's M4EG initiative in 2017. It

has now received a grant through this multi-annual initiative and been recognised as the first and only winning city in Armenia as a result of the call.

EU Ambassador Piotr Świtalski congratulated the Mayor on the city's winning proposal: "Promoting economic development in Armenia is a priority for the European Union, and it is an important factor to start this development in the regions. The economic development of any country is related to the equal development of the regions."

The new project entitled 'EU4Sevan: SME platform for Business Development and Innovation' will be implemented from 2018-2020 (24 months), and aims to create the conditions to improve the city's business environment, boost economic development and create new jobs.

The project is aiming to transform Sevan into a financially independent, economically sustainable and socially attractive community.

## Armenia has highest female unemployment rate among post-soviet countries

According to the latest report of the International Labor Organization (ILO) published ahead of March 8, International Women's Day, among post-Soviet countries Armenia has the highest unemployment rate among women.

Thus, according to the data, 17.3 percent of Armenian women aged above 25 are unable to find a job. For comparison, in Latvia, which is next country to Armenia in the report, only 8.6 percent of women face unemployment.

Unemployment among women in neighboring Georgia is 7.7 percent, while in Azerbaijan it is 4.8 percent.

According to the data released by the National Statistical Service of Armenia last year, there are 76,624 officially registered unemployed people in Armenia, of whom 50,593, i.e. more than 60 percent, are women.

"There is no appropriate environment that would promote the protection of women's rights," Ani Kojoyan, a lecturer at Yerevan State University (YSU), told RFE/RL's Armenian service (Azatutyun.am).

She said that there is no problem with legislation, but there is a difference between being written on paper and applied. "In the case of women the employer may also take into account whether the potential candidate for a job is married or unmarried, whether she has a child or can have a child later that would require a maternity leave... I want to note that this also depends on women themselves. If women realize what rights they have and are not afraid to stand up for their rights at appropriate instances, it can be a good example for both the em-

ployer and other women," she said.

Women not only experience more difficulty in getting jobs, but also receive lower salaries. Numerous studies in Armenia have shown that women's average monthly salary is lower than men's in all sectors of the economy, and this is in the case when women are not inferior to men in terms of education.



"Women often make more headway in the higher education system... But where do these women go in the future? When a woman does not immediately get a job, underestimation of her skills and abilities may actually take place. There are, in fact, many factors that contribute to this," Kojoyan explained.

The United Nations also addressed the issue of inequality in women's and men's salaries in Armenia late last year. Authors of the 2017 report entitled "Worlds Apart: Reproductive Health and Rights in an Age of Inequality" asserted that many Armenian men demand that women have higher education, but later do not allow women to work.

Presenting the report, the then United Nations

Population Fund (UNFPA) Armenia Assistant Representative Garik Hayrapetyan insisted that the elimination of discrimination between women and men could have a positive impact on the country's economic development. "You cannot leave 50 percent of the population out. Seven-nine percent of men have reported that they will not and do not allow their wives to work. If 7-9 percent [of women] do not work because of this, and I think that the percentage is much higher because this is a latent issue, Armenia has a burden of about \$60 million on its GDP," he said.

According to the ILO's report, women's unemployment rate worldwide is around 6 percent, which is higher than men's unemployment rate by 0.8 percent.

The researchers note that the number of male employers is four times higher than the number of female employers and this tendency is also true for senior positions.

It is also noted that women agree more often than men to work without concluding a contract, bypassing the labor code and without joining trade unions.

According to YSU lecturer Kojoyan, the problem is also urgent for Armenia. "The State itself should be interested in developing mechanisms to ensure that women become taxpayers, because otherwise the State itself loses. On the other hand, if I look at it from a feminist perspective, this is first of all a violation of women's rights, and programs should be aimed at raising the legal awareness of women, making them more demanding," she said.



# One More Nice Gift from the First Lady Rita Sargsyan: Fully Renovated and Equipped Kindergarten in Yerevan Nor Nork District 60 children with autism will be fully integrated among others...



By  
**Gourgen  
James  
Khazhakian**  
Chief  
Correspondent

The Highlights, within at least a decade, has been covering charitable activities of the Armenia's First Lady **Rita Aleksandrovna Sargsyan** that ranging from the "Gift the Life" Fund saving lives of the children suffering from the God damned cancer and other heavy diseases and "Aragil" (Crane) Program helping to Ladies in both Republic of Armenia and Artsakh Republic to become mothers to huge cultural projects like opera staging. And the children have always been in the focus of those activities.

On 7 April, a really remarkable event took place in Yerevan Nor Nork district: after the completion of renovation works the N114 kindergarten, with a renovated yard, new equipment and design, and even a new name, "Tsiatsan" (Rainbow) that meets the best its its look and colorful solutions.

Notably, no renovation has been done in this kindergarten since its foundation, and today this nursery school having more than 40-year history has opened its doors completely renovated for 350



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pupils.

The honour of inauguration was given to Yerevan Mayor Taron Margaryan and the First Lady Rita Sargsyan.

The program of complete renovation of this pre-school was carried under the Patronage of the RA First Lady by means of charity funds "Luys" and "Biayna". The rooms, the kitchen and the as-

sembly hall were equipped with the assistance of Yerevan Municipality.

As Armenpress author wrote "...starting from flowers in the yard to every part of the interior is a result of imagination and hard work of First Lady of Armenia Rita Sargsyan".

And those who toured inside the kindergarten could have a chance to be convinced that such a



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statement was not an exaggeration or a courtesy...

One of the kids of the kindergarten, "Captain" Hrant, toured the building with First Lady Rita Sargsyan and the Yerevan Mayor **Taron Margaryan** and told about new nice opportunities the new kindergarten provides to kids.

Very importantly, 60 out of 350 kids attending the kindergarten are children with general develop-

Everything has been done for the children to grow up in a warm and beautiful atmosphere, and I am convinced that a bad man simply cannot grow up here, Mrs Sargsyan said.

And now we've got the group rooms: the First Lady here gave unique and interesting solutions as well.

The first room is called "Four Seasons". The

*"I love children very much, so for me it's quite easy to work with them. What you do with love, you easily succeed"*, Rita Sargsyan said. (Let's remind that Mrs Sargsyan has had a huge experience of working with children as a music teacher in a kindergarten in Artsakh).

And the photographs will tell The Highlights readers how the kids, in turn, love Mrs Sargsyan!



ment disabilities (the autistic ones, mostly). The kindergarten from now on provides them with perfect conditions to feel like in their own home.

In addition to the doctor's room, renovated kitchen, gym, the kindergarten also has a room for logopedist and psychologist equipped with necessary items.

*"I am just afraid that kids will not want to go home from here"*, half-jokingly said the First Lady.

room is decorated with decorative trees depicting four seasons of the year as well as with different toys.

The second one is the "Animal Room"...

The third room was decorated with the photos of the kids of the group. The next room, which, according to our colleague "is the most favorite room of the First Lady", was called "Sailors' Room". And "the sailors'" "Captain" was Hrant indeed...

...Those who were present there at that memorandum could confirm that the atmosphere was a really festive one, informal and warm. A mom of a kindergarten child especially thanked the First Lady Rita Sargsyan for, in her words, "making dream coming true"...

Head of the Nor Nork District Armen Ulikhanyan considers this kindergarten as one of the best of Yerevan, and it is hard not to agree with him...



## The 100 Year Old Armenian Police Recently...



*Compiled by*  
**Gourgen**  
**James**  
**Khazhakian**  
**Chief**  
**Correspondent**

### Congratulatory Remarks of the Head of the RA Police Vladimir Gasparyan on the International Women's Day

On the occasion of Spring and Beauty Day, on behalf of the Police Board and personally myself, I congratulate our Lady colleagues who hold the honorable title of the police officer with dignity and have equal commitment with the men to their humane mission, at the same time being indispensable guardian angels of family home and happiness.

Congratulations to our Lady veterans who passed a glorious and exemplary way and today passes their incomparable experience, love and faith in the police officer to the new generation of policemen.

I congratulate the spouses, mothers, sisters and daughters of the police officers who are also in service as a reliable back-

importance of close cooperation between the Armenian and French law enforcement agencies particularly in the field of maintenance of public order and security during the Yerevan Summit of La Francophonie to be held in 2018, Samvel Hovhannisyan presented the preparatory work undertaken.

Expressing gratitude for the warm welcome, Bruno Balduk expressed willingness to support the Armenian Police with their experience.

Other issues of mutual interest were also discussed during the meeting.

public from March 15 to March 16, as well as 17 cases of theft, 6 cases of swindling, 1 case of official forgery or official negligence have been solved, 4 cases of detection of narcotics have been registered.

From earlier committed crimes 2 cases of theft and 1 case of illegal felling of trees have been solved.

Over the past 1 day, 6 road traffic accidents have been registered in the republic: 6 people got bodily injuries of varying levels of gravity.

### Armenian and Georgian law enforcement officials meet in Lori province

On Thursday, March 15 Armenian and Georgian law enforcement officials met in Lori province. The Armenian side was represented by Deputy Chief of the General Department on Combating Organized Crime and Heads of Police Provincial Departments of Police of the Republic of Armenia, the Georgian side was represented by Heads of Regional Departments of Georgian Ministry of Internal Affairs.

During the meeting, the two sides discussed issues related to deepening interaction between the two law enforcement bodies, joining efforts in the fight against crime, taking joint measures to counteract



bone for their family members serving the law and the nation.

I congratulate all the women.

Peace, security, well-being to families of all of you.

Happiness to you, my dears!

God bless you.

### Armenian-French cooperation in the fight against crime

On Wednesday, March 14, Deputy Head of Police of the Republic of Armenia, Major-General Samvel Hovhannisyan received Bruno Balduk, Internal Security Attaché of the French Embassy in Armenia.

Highly appreciating the cooperation of the Armenian and French police structures, Samvel Hovhannisyan underlined the need for international cooperation in the fight against crime. Highlighting the



### Criminal situation in the Republic of Armenia (March 15-16)

According to the operations reports of Police of the Republic of Armenia, all the 5 cases of infliction of bodily injuries registered in the territory of the re-

a number of offenses and challenges.

Arrangements were made to periodically hold practical meetings and ensure rapid exchange of information for the benefit of the two countries' security.

### Vienna-Yerevan flight passenger detained

Thanks to operational and investigative measures taken by officers of the "Zvartnots" airport Line division of Police of the Republic of Armenia, Artin K., born in 1953, was detained at 6.10 am after the arrival of the Vienna-Yerevan flight. The detainee had been wanted by Shengavit division of Police charged under paragraph 1 of part 3 of Article 178 of the RA Criminal Code (fraud).

Source:  
police.am



## Armenia's Leading Telecom Operator Recent News

### Company's GM Donated 10 new PCs to Amasia Middle School...

Amasia village of Shirak region is known for its severe and long-lasting winters. The settlement, that shares borders with Turkey in the West and Georgia in the North, gets isolated from the world for months because of heavy snowfall and blizzards. The village life gets frozen as well, and the community residents have no occupation in that period.

Amasia village school has 180 pupils. The teachers do their best to instill curiosity, capabil-

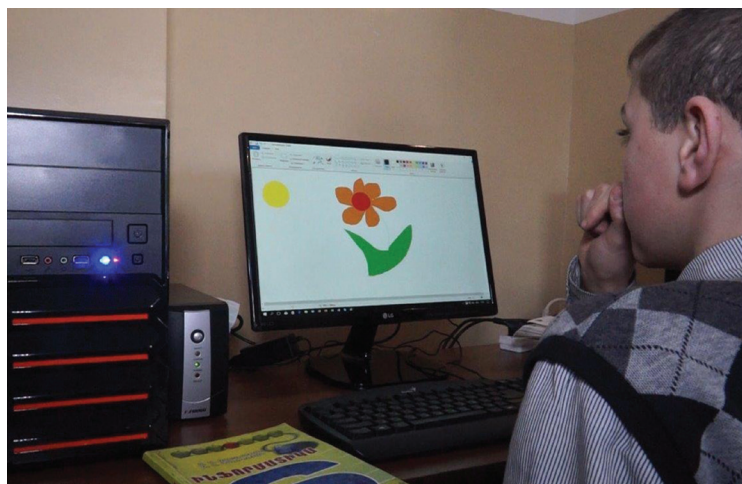
*proving the educational process have had positive outcomes: the children are now more interested in the subject and show better results. The gift has been a true surprise for us. He who appreciates the importance of education, deserves utmost respect,"* noted principle of the school **Karine Hartenyan**.

**Notably, Amasia middle school has received 10 new computers owing to the personal donation of VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager Ralph Yirikian.**

**And...**

the students of the 1st Business School in Armenia. These were people who have already obtained a profession, but are interested in business activities and who get trained in the first professional platform created in 2015. The students studying the experience of Armenian and international experts will be able to either run own businesses or become managers in the future.

During the meeting, VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager Ralph Yirikian answered the questions of the students, who also got acquainted with the Company's culture of management, the marketing steps it takes for the promotion



ity of critical and analytical thinking in children. As the roads are often closed, the children do not have the opportunity to visit the village library or Gyumri to get books. The only way of connecting with the world and getting up-to-date information is the computer.

The informatics classroom of the school has been replenished with ten new computers. The children, having the opportunity to study the subject more deeply, are now excited and more enthusiastic. As the informatics teacher Anush Aghayan notes, the lessons have become more effective and have the potential to serve the children as the foundation for advanced learning.

*"The practical measures taken towards im-*

### Presented VivaCell-MTS Business Management Model to Students of the First Business School in Armenia

How to manage a healthy business, how to come up with flexible ideas in a competitive fora, how to retain leading positions? Which skills one needs to possess to be a manager? The Armenia's leading telecommunications operator's culture of management and customer care continue to be viewed as a good model worth for sharing experience.

This time VivaCell-MTS headquarters hosted

of innovations, as well as the technologies are regularly invested into for the Company's operations.

*"The success of the business starts with choosing a model of management. Responsible approaches and civilized culture of service are as important as the new ideas, flexible marketing solutions, accurate calculations, forecasts and analyses of risks and successes. Our competitive advantage is the result of the sum total of all these,"* said Armenia's leading telecom operator Founding GM Ralph Yirikian.

The meeting with the General Manager of the Company concluded with an interactive discussion.



## Artsakh State Minister hosted at Australia's NSW Parliament



**By Siranush Ghazanchyan**

The Armenian National Committee of Australia led a delegation including the visiting cof the Re-

public of Artsakh, The Hon. Arayik Harutyunyan to the Parliament of New South Wales (NSW), where a meeting was held with members of the

NSW Armenia-Australia Friendship Group.

The Republic of Artsakh's Representative to Australia, Kaylar Michaelian was also in attendance, and the meeting was chaired by Mr. Jonathan O'Dea MP – the Chair of the NSW Armenia-Australia Friendship Group.

Mr. Harutyunyan thanked the Parliament of NSW for standing with the Armenians of the Republic of Artsakh by recognising their Independence and rights to self-determination. He also personally thanked Mr. O'Dea, Dr. Hugh McDermott MP: State Member for Prospect and Mr. Damien Tudehope MP for their speeches in Parliament earlier this month, commemorating the 30th Anniversary of the Sumgait Massacres.

Mr. Harutyunyan also visited the Armenian Genocide Memorial Khatchkar within the Peace Garden of Parliament House, and paid his respects to the 1.5 million victims of the first genocide of the 20th century, which was recognised by the NSW Parliament in 1997, and reaffirmed in 2013.

## Thomas De Waal: No major geopolitical contestation in Karabakh conflict

Unlike other post-Soviet conflicts there is a political equilibrium in the Karabakh conflict, says Thomas De Waal, senior fellow with Carnegie Europe. "There is no major geopolitical contestation in this conflict," Waal said at an international conference in Yerevan on "Prospects of Peace in Nagorno Karabakh."

According to him, the major powers are more interested in their bilateral interest with Baku and Yerevan rather than resolving the conflict

"The same applies to Russia. Russia's main interest in this region is not based on this conflict, it's based on its relationship with Baku and Yerevan."

He said "there is a remarkably strong consensus between the United States, Russia and Europe on how this conflict should be resolved."

He stressed that there is ambiguity on the Nagorno Karabakh status issue, there's no clear international stance on what the final status should be.

According to the expert, there is much more diplomatic information war around this conflict. "We see Armenians and Azerbaijanis arguing endlessly about historical issues and legal precedents. This is perpetuated by the ambiguous status of Nagorno Karabakh."

He said Yerevan and Baku are cautious in making concessions because fashions change regarding the issue of secession.

"The instinctive attitude in the world is that secession is a bad thing, but we also have exceptions here. We can name Eritrea, East Timor, South Sudan and, of course, Kosovo recognized by most of the major Western powers."

"I think the Kosovo precedent had major effect in inspiring the Armenian side not to give up on the sovereignty issue," Thomas de Waal said.

He said fashions have changed in a different way since 2014 in Crimea. The fashion is now to talk much more strongly about territorial integrity. "We see routine statements by Western leaders about territorial integrity of Georgia and Ukraine. This, in turn, has inspired Azerbaijan."

"This was indeed a major issue at the Eastern Partnership summit, where Azerbaijan wanted the territorial integrity in the final statement, in the end the final statement."

In this situation where fashions change it is not surprising that the sides take the "wait and see" attitude to see how the international stance on the final status changes.

## Azerbaijani side fails to lead OSCE Mission to its front-lines



On March 15, in accordance with the arrangement reached with the authorities of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh Republic), the OSCE Mission conducted a planned monitoring of the ceasefire regime on the Line of Contact between the armed forces of Artsakh and Azerbaijan, to the south-east from Kuropatkino settlement of the Martuni region.

From the positions of the Defense Army of the Republic of Artsakh, the monitoring was conducted by Field Assistants to the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairperson-in-Office (CiO) Mihail Olaru (Moldova) and Ghenadie Petrica (Moldova), as well as staff member of the Office of the CiO Personal Representative Martin Schuster (Germany).

From the opposite side of the Line of Contact, the monitoring was conducted by Field Assistant to the Personal Representative of the OSCE CiO Ognjen Jovic (Bosnia and Herzegovina) and Personal Assistant to the CiO Personal Representative Simon Tiller (Great Britain).

The monitoring passed in accordance with the agreed schedule. However, the Azerbaijani side did not lead the OSCE mission to its front-line positions.

From the Artsakh side, the monitoring mission was accompanied by representatives of the Republic of Artsakh Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Defense.





## U.S. Congressmen awarded Artsakh's Presidential Medals of Gratitude



By  
*Siranush Ghazanchyan*

During the Congressional luncheon and briefing in Washington, Artsakh Republic President Bako Sahakyan announced the awarding of Presidential Medals of Gratitude to a number of U.S. legislators, including Senator Jack Reed (D-RI), House Foreign Affairs Committee Chairman Ed Royce (R-CA) and Ranking Democrat Eliot Engel (D-NY), and Representatives David Cicilline, Jim Costa, Brad Sherman, Adam Schiff, and David Valadao. The Medal of Gratitude is awarded to individuals, organizations, and collectives for significant contribution in restoring and developing the economy, science, culture, social spheres of the NKR as well as for defending and promoting interna-

tional recognition of the Republic.

After thanking President Sahakyan for the honor, Rep. Cicilline noted, "I know that the relationship between Artsakh and the United States is a strong and important one and we will continue to do everything we can to support the aspirations of your countrymen and women and be sure that they enjoy freedom and independence and self-determination." He went on to praise the active efforts of the Armenian community in his state in support of Artsakh freedom and recognition. "Rhode Island was the first state in the country to recognize the independence of Artsakh," said Rep. Cicilline, citing the efforts of ANC-Rhode Island leader Ani Haroian and his own staff member Lisa Sarkisian Tatarian.

Immediately after the briefing,

Rep. Cicilline issued a separate statement marking the occasion of President Sahakyan's visit, noting, "Since the fall of the Soviet Union, a new generation in Artsakh has grown up in freedom and under a democratic government of its own choosing. Artsakh has continued to strengthen its democracy, having held several parliamentary and presidential elections. Freedom House has consistently rated Artsakh more democratic than Azerbaijan."

Rep. Sherman explained that "For 22 years I have served on the Foreign Affairs Committee – and Mr. President, this award is very important to me because one of the first things I did on the Committee was to introduce an amendment which would provide direct aid to the people of Artsakh. The State Department opposed it on the theory that it would be an implicit recognition of your independence. I thought, as they say in Silicon Valley, that's not a bug, that's a feature. And so, we secured \$12 million to help people who needed help, who were suffering as a result of war and hostility – and we implicitly recognized the Republic of Nagorno Karabakh – now the Republic of Artsakh," noting the important next step of explicitly recognizing Artsakh's independence.

"It was a great honor to be the first member of Congress in over a decade to touch soil in Nagorno Karabakh and see it for myself," said Central Valley California Con-

gressman David Valadao (R-CA), who travelled to Artsakh in September, 2017, after having successfully spearheaded the Valadao Amendment securing \$1.5 million in U.S. assistance for ongoing demining efforts through the HALO Trust. "I still remember driving around Nagorno Karabakh and seeing all the families, the kids outside their living lives. You hear on the outside of the shelling, the sniper fire and the rocket fire in such a small country but people are living their lives just like our families here. So the resilience, the strength, the courage, of so many people is amazing to see," concluded Rep. Valadao.

"It was an honor to be awarded the Gratitude Medal by President Sahakyan today," said Rep. Costa. We must continue to do all that we can to support the democratic independence of the Republic of Artsakh and the nation's rightful exercise of self-determination." On February 27th, Rep. Costa issued a powerful video statement marking the 30th anniversary of the Sumgait pogroms against Armenians. He was later joined by Representatives Pallone and Schiff in condemning the attacks and calling for justice for the victims.

President Sahakyan is on a week-long working visit to Washington, DC, where, in addition to meetings with Congressional leaders, he and his delegation will be meeting with media representatives and think tank experts.

## Street in Istanbul to be renamed in honor of Hrant Dink

Istanbul's Sisli district municipal council has decided to rename a street in honor of slain Armenian editor and journalist, Hrant Dink, the Armenian Weekly reports.

According to a report in Turkey's Cumhuriyet newspaper, the decision to change Samanyolu (Milky Way) street to Hrant Dink Street has been sent for approval to the Istanbul Metropolitan Municipality Assembly. The report also indicates that another street—Isik (Light) Street—will be renamed in honor of Ugur Mumcu, an investigative journalist for Cumhuriyet, who was assassinated by a car bomb in 1993.

The decision to change the two street names came at a March 8 session of the Sisli Municipal Council.



Dink was assassinated on Jan. 19, 2007, outside of his office in Sisli. Since then, tens of thousands have gathered every year on Jan. 19 to hold a commemoration event and to demand answers from Turkish

authorities regarding his death.

As editor-in-chief of the bilingual Turkish-Armenian Agos newspaper, Dink advocated for Turkish-Armenian reconciliation and human and minority rights in Turkey. He was sharply critical of the Turkish government's denial of the Armenian Genocide, and was prosecuted three times for insulting Turkishness. He was also threatened several times by Turkish nationalists before his assassination.

"We wanted these two intellectuals—these martyrs of the press and of democracy—live on. Hrant Dink and Ugur Mumcu were major figures in Turkey's struggle for democracy, collective peace, and progress with their writings, books, and research," Sisli Mayor Hayri Inönü said about the renaming.



## Armenia reiterates commitment to contribute to security in Lebanon

By Siranush Ghazanchyan

It is with great sense of responsibility that Armenia has engaged in UNIFIL mission seeking to contribute to the efficient activities aimed at ensuring peace in friendly Lebanon, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said at the Ministerial Meeting on Support to Lebanon.

"Lebanon is the quintessence of the Middle East with its multicultural, multiethnic and multi-religious structure that is the reflection of almost the whole region within the boundaries of one state. It is a challenge, since everything happening in the region can resonate in this country, at the same time it is an asset in terms of benefits born of the diversity," Minister Nalbandian stated.

"For these very reasons Lebanon may have an impact on the regional situation either exacerbating its wounds, or at the current turbulent times act as an island of peace, representing an example of coexistence for others. All these add to the significance of this state for the regional security and stability and in helping this country to effectively address the challenges. We anticipate that this conference will make a tangible contribution in this regard and will be followed by not less meaningful steps," he added.

"The importance of the situation in Lebanon for Armenia goes beyond its regional significance. For centuries the Armenian nation has constituted part of the Lebanese and in general the Middle East mosaic. Today this country hosts the largest Armenian community in the region, and continue to be one of the cultural and spiritual centers of our people. Traditionally Armenians have been active in all spheres of the social life in Lebanon, including the politics. Today they are represented both in the Government and in the Parliament. The Armenians shared the whole difficulties that befell on the people of Lebanon and look forward to make their contribution to the safe and secure future of the state. The Republic of Armenia stands by the people of Lebanon in reaching these aspirations," Armenia's top diplomat stated.

"On numerous occasions Armenia has expressed its support to the friendly people of Lebanon. It has been once again reiterated during the February official visit of the President of Lebanon to Armenia, as well as during the Armenian Prime Minister's official visit to Lebanon three days ago," he noted.

The Foreign Minister reminded that starting from November 2014 the Armenian platoon composed of 32 peacekeepers has been serving under



the Italian command in the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon (UNIFIL). "It is with great sense of responsibility that Armenia has engaged in this mission seeking to contribute to the efficient activities of the UNIFIL aimed at ensuring peace in friendly Lebanon."

"UNIFIL is not the only peace-building operation that Armenia has joined. The United Nations Assistant Secretary General for Peacekeeping Operations stated in this regard that "Armenia's support is important not only for its contribution but also for the Armenian history and the challenges overcome during it". Indeed,

history teaches us that security is a common endeavor," Minister Nalbandian said.

"We are looking forward to more effective cooperation between Armenia and Lebanon in defence and security fields based on the precise proposals that are already on the table, as well as the new ideas," he added.

"The role of Lebanon in the region is not limited to its strategic importance, but indeed, the traditional ethno-confessional colorfulness and the richness of historical-cultural heritage that it represents. These are universal values that require global protection," Minister Nalbandian concluded.



## Sharmazanov urges CSTO to condemn Baku's "non-constructive actions"

Edward Sharmazanov, Vice-President of the Armenian National Assembly, had a meeting with Pyotr Ryabukhin, Executive Secretary of the CSTO Parliamentary Assembly.

The parties attached importance to the reinforcement of parliamentary cooperation between CSTO member states and emphasized the need to solve conflicts exceptionally in a peaceful way.



"The Azerbaijani leadership's non-constructive statements and actions are condemnable, and the CSTO PA is obliged to react very strongly," Sharmazanov said.

According to him, the recent military exercises in Azerbaijan were a violation of international standards.

During the meeting the parties stressed the unacceptability of bellicose rhetoric.



## “Berdy Glukh” Fortress, One of the Most Ancient Armenian Monument



*Compiled by*  
**Gourgen  
James  
Khazhakian**  
Chief  
Correspondent

The “Berdy Glukh” fortress (“the Head of the Fortress” in Armenian) was erected in the II-I millennium BC. It is located on the slope of the plateau in the north-west quarter of the City of Gavar, Gegharunik Marz. The northern slope of the plateau is less steep than the southern slope, covered with dense forest, so it became impassable. On the southern slope there are traces of dwellings as well as walls, in the clutch of which large rocky debris rolled down from above was traced.

In the masonry of the Fortress there are two building layers: of before-Urartian and Urartian periods. A lapidary inscription of Urartian King Rusa I was discovered in 1827 on the territory of the “Berdy Glukh” fortress.

The Fortress was surrounded on all sides

by a fortification wall with high towers. The median wall divided it into two parts: smaller western and eastern where the settlement surrounded by a wall was located. The main entrances were in the north-east and south-west corners from where the road led to the Citadel. Since ancient times, the Citadel has been used as a cemetery. Chapel of Surb (St) Stepanos with numerous khachkars (cross-stones) built



in 1374 belongs to serf monuments.

A large necropolis was in the central part of the City of Gavar, on the site of the state theatre building. In the process of archaeological excavations, in place of the necrop-

olis, the artifacts were discovered here that associated with graves at the territory of the “Berdy Glukh” Fortress.

Similar graves were discovered on the southern (the so-called “Khacher” - Crosses) slope. Here, a cave with group graves was discovered and excavated. The clay ware found in the burial places dates back to the 9th-8th centuries BC. On a significant part of the necropolis excavations were conducted by a well-known archaeologist and ethnographer Yervand Lalayan.

There is no a spring or a stream in the vicinity of the “Berdy Glukh” fortress. The Fortress was supplied with water from the Gavar River through an artificially constructed underground passage. An underground passage was partially opened in 1964. Here, burnt clay tubes with a diameter of 8-10 cm were found.

On the Gavar River, a bridge built by stone slabs has been preserved; it is one of the rarest buildings on the territory of the Armenian Highland.

The protected zone of the monument covers an area of about 2.75 hectares.





## Armenian community starts growing buckwheat thanks to EU

Buckwheat is now being produced in Armenia thanks to the EU-funded European Neighbourhood Programme for Agriculture and Rural Development (ENPARD). But what will the production of buckwheat do for Armenian communities?

“Cultivating the same crops, we reached the point when field-crop cultivation was not economically profitable,” says Koryun Smbulyan, Head of “Nor Hatik” Cooperative in the village of Bavra, Shirak province.

“And if field-crop cultivation is not profitable, it means that cattle-breeding is also not profitable.”

According to Koryun, after years of continuously harvesting the same crops such as wheat, barley and potatoes, the soil in Bavra has degraded and it now contains no useful sub-



stances.

The ENPARD project promoted field-crop cultivation, which the farmers were previously unaware of. “Now we try to grow and process buckwheat. We are a nation with a 30-40-thousand-year history. We have not grown and processed this crop before. Now we are trying,” Koryun says.

The ENPARD programme was launched in Armenia in January 2015 and will last for three years. It is designed to support agricultural institutions, encourage the development of farmers’ associations and improve access to more affordable food in the European Neighbourhood countries.

*EU Neighbours*

## Historical maps of Armenia on display at National Library of Estonia

The “Armenia in old maps” exhibition organized by the Embassy of Armenia to Estonia (residence Vilnius) was solemnly opened at the National Library of Estonia. The event was attended by high-ranking officials from Estonian state agencies, public, political and cultural figures, Ambassadors accredited in Estonia, journalists and representatives of the Armenian community.

“The purpose of the exhibition is to display the millenia-old Armenian history through maps drafted by foreign cartographers. The exhibition presents both periods of descent as well as ascent in the Armenian history,” Tigran Mkrt-

chyan, Ambassador of Armenia to Estonia, said in his opening remarks.

Condemning the attempts of aggression against Armenian history, the Ambassador added that the source of senseless attempts of denial of the Armenian genocide, as well as presenting Yerevan as a non-Armenian territory is the same-Armenophobia, the injection of which is commencing in kindergartens and schools. Ambassador Mkrtchyan also noted that the state which appeared on the political map just a hundred years ago, for the past decades has been attempting to apply pseudo-academic aggression towards Armenian



history, which should everywhere and always be unequivocally condemned.

Jane Anderson, director of the Tallinn National Library, said: “Using this opportunity, I congratulate on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Republic of Armenia: it is a wonderful idea to celebrate this historic and worthy event for Armenia by presenting the country’s territorial developments over the centuries. The display of such a cartographic material proves that in the rapidly changing times a valuable part of the cultural heritage has been preserved”.

Presenting the maps, Rouben Galichian said: “As a result of my 40-year research of historical maps preserved in libraries and museums around the world, Armenia is represented in 60 different maps in different periods of history. Of course, it is not possible to present the story entirely exclusively by maps: at the same time, with one glance an opportunity is created to perceive the history of the country in a figurative way”.

The exhibition, held with the support of the Estonian National Library and the Union of Armenians of Estonia, will be open until April 4.





## International Legal Expert Affirms Artsakh's Right of Self-Determination



**By  
Harut  
Sassounian  
Publisher,  
The California  
Courier**

[www.TheCaliforniaCourier.com](http://www.TheCaliforniaCourier.com)

A colloquium was held on February 27, 2018, at the European Parliament in Brussels on the legal right of self-determination for Nagorno-Karabagh (Artsakh). It was hosted by European Parliament deputies Michèle Rivasi (Verts/A LE) and Lars Adaktusson (EPP); and co-organized by the Armenian Legal Center for Justice and Human Rights, Tufenkian Foundation, and the European Armenian Federation for Justice and Democracy. The speakers at the colloquium were: Dr. Alfred de Zayas, a UN Independent Expert on the promotion of a democratic and equitable international order; Dr. Paul Williams, Professor of Law, American University Washington College of Law and co-founder of Public International Law & Policy Group; Dr. Sergey Markedonov, Associate Professor at Russian State University; Armine Aleksanyan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Artsakh Republic; and moderator Giro Manoyan, Board Member of the Armenian Legal Center for Justice and Human Rights.

Prof. Alfred de Zayas started his legal argument by quoting from the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights which stipulate that “All peoples have the right of self-determination.”

Furthermore, international legal expert de Zayas emphasized that according to the two UN Covenants, “duty bearers of the right of self-determination are all States parties to the Covenants, who are not merely prohibited from interfering with the exercise of the right, but ‘shall promote’ its realization proactively.... They must not only respect the right, but implement it. Moreover in modern international law, self-determination is an erga omnes [towards everyone] commitment stipulated in numerous articles of the UN Charter and in countless Security Council and General Assembly resolutions. The empowerment of peoples to enjoy hu-

man rights without discrimination and to exercise a degree of self-government is crucial for national and international stability. Otherwise, a significant potential for conflict remains.”

Significantly, Prof. de Zayas stressed: “Even though self-determination has emerged as a jus cogens [compelling law] right, superior to many other international law principles, including territorial integrity, it is not self-executing.” Among “legitimate claimants to the right of self-determination,” Prof. de Zayas included the Kurds, Sahraouis, Palestinians, Kashmiris, Igbo of Biafra, and Tamils of Sri Lanka. He also mentioned as examples “the Russian-Ukrainian entities of Lugansk and Donetsk, the Republic of Pridnestrovia (Transnistria-Moldavia), the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabagh), Abkhazia, and Southern Ossetia... among peoples that have achieved self-determination through effective separation from State entities with which they had hitherto been associated, but their international status remains inchoate because of the political bickering among the great powers and consequent lack of international recognition.”

Prof. de Zayas added that people seeking self-determination “are entitled to the full protection of the International human rights treaty regime. A solution to the impasse can only be through peaceful negotiation, since the use of armed force against self-determination would violate numerous international treaties, including the UN Charter, the human rights Covenants, and the Geneva Red Cross Conventions.”

“If there is a compelling demand for separation,” de Zayas insisted, “it is most important to avoid the use of force, which would endanger local, regional and international stability and further erode the enjoyment of other human rights.” In addition, “The implementation of self-determination is not exclusively within the domestic jurisdiction of the State concerned, but is a legitimate concern of the international community.”

Prof. de Zayas explained that the principle of territorial integrity is only valid in the case of an external attack: “The principle is not intended for internal application, because this would automatically cancel out

the jus cogens [compelling law] right of self-determination. Every single exercise of the right of self-determination that results in secession has entailed an adjustment to the territorial integrity of the previous State entity. There are too many precedents to count.”

There should be no discrimination among people who seek self-determination, according to Prof. de Zayas: “The independence of the former Soviet republics and the secession of the peoples of the former Yugoslavia created important precedents for the implementation of self-determination. These precedents cannot be ignored when modern self-determination disputes arise. It is not possible to say yes to the self-determination of Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovenia, Croatia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Kosovo, but then say no to the self-determination of the people of Abkhazia, Southern Ossetia or Nagorno Karabagh. All these peoples have the same human rights and must not be discriminated against. As in the case of the successful claimants, these peoples also unilaterally declared independence. There is no justification whatever to deny them recognition by applying self-determination selectively and making frivolous distinctions that have no base in law or justice.”

For those who juxtapose the principle of territorial integrity to self-determination, Prof. de Zayas countered: “The principle of territorial integrity is not sufficient justification to perpetuate situations of internal conflict that may fester and erupt in civil war, thus threatening regional and international peace and security.”

Finally, Prof. de Zayas suggested that “In order to ensure sustainable internal and external peace in the twenty-first century, the international community must react to early warning signs and establish conflict-prevention mechanisms. Facilitating dialog between peoples and organizing referenda in a timely fashion are tools to ensure the peaceful evolution of national and international relations. Inclusion of all stakeholders must be the rule, not the exception. In conclusion, let us celebrate the implementation of self-determination of peoples as an expression of democracy, as indeed democracy is a form of self-determination.”



## EMS Conference

### Emil Artin International Conference

**Dedicated to the 120<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Emil Artin (03.07.1898-20.12.1962)**

**Yerevan, the Republic of Armenia, May 27-June 2, 2018.**

#### The conference is organized by:

- Armenian Mathematical Union
- Yerevan State University
- American University of Armenia
- Committee of Emil Artin Junior Prize in Mathematics
- Institute of Mathematics of National Academy of Sciences of Armenia
- University of Bergen

Academically supported by the Steklov Mathematical Institute of the Russian Academy of Sciences.

The aim of the conference is to provide a forum where specialists will meet to share ideas of latest research in Algebraic Structures, Mathematical Logic, Number Theory, Pure and Applied Mathematics, Discrete Mathematics and Computer Science.

The conference will be held at the Yerevan State University and American University of Armenia.

#### Conference Topics:

- Classical and non-classical Algebraic Structures,
- Algebra and Logics, Number Theory,
- Geometry and Topology, Analysis and Equations,
- Boolean and De Morgan functions, Cryptography and Discrete Mathematics, Applied Mathematics,
- Universal Algebra, Computer Science and IT,
- Artin L-functions, Dynamical Systems,
- Quantum information theory, Quantum Logic and Quantum Computation, Quantum Groups and Quantum Quasigroups.

#### Invited speakers that confirmed their participation:

- Sergey Adian (Steklov Mathematical Institute of Russian Academy of Sciences)
- Ara Basmajian (City University of New York, Hunter College, USA)
- Lilya Budaghyan (Bergen University, Norway)
- Tullio Ceccherini-Silberstein (Universita' del Sannio, Italy)
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- Artur Sahakyan
- Vladimir Sahakyan

**Registration fee** for the conference is \$200 for participants and covers the conference materials and coffee breaks. **Banquet:** \$50. All fees are due upon arrival, at the registration desk.

#### Important dates:

The deadline for conformation of participation and submission of abstracts is April 1, 2018 by E-mail address: [amu@ysu.am](mailto:amu@ysu.am). Please submit one-page abstract in LaTeX and PDF formats (in English) to [amu@ysu.am](mailto:amu@ysu.am).

Working days: May 28, 2018 (Registration, 9:30; Opening ceremony, 10.00) – June 1, 2018.

Arrival: May 27, 2018; departure: June 2, 2018.

**Additional information can be requested by e-mail:** [amu@ysu.am](mailto:amu@ysu.am)

**The conference website:** <http://math.sci.am/conference/artin120>

We are looking forward to welcome you in Yerevan, Armenia for the Emil Artin International Conference.

Sincerely,

Prof. Yu. Movsisyan

President of the Armenian Mathematical Union





## **EUROPEAN CHAMPIONSHIP 2018**

**OFFICIAL INFORMATION LETTER.**  
**IFK Kyokushin European Open Championship**  
**Among children, girls, youths and juniors,**  
**men and women in weight categories**

**April 7-8, 2018, Armenia, Yerevan**

**Place:**

**Yerevan, "MIKA" sports complex, str. Manandyan, 41 building**

**Organizer:**

**Ministry of sport and youth affairs of the Republic of Armenia and  
 Armenian Kyokushin karate federation**

**Principal Judge:**

**Alex Kerrigan**

**Guest of honour:**

**Hanshi Steve Arneil, Shihan David Pickthall, Shihan Liam Keaveney**

**Participation:**

**Eligible from among children, girls, youths and juniors,  
 men and women in weight categories**

**The competitions will be kept by the rules of IFK**  
**2 people from a country in each weight category from the same organization**



## Zodiac Weekly Forecast



### Aries (March 20–April 19)

In the time between now and mid-May your attention will be drawn to career and life direction. Activity in the outer world picks up speed. Authorities and others may be challenging, so have your ducks in a row if you take initiatives. Use this time to improve your “product” or your presentation.



### Taurus (April 20 – May 20)

You may be surprised by a visit from the past. It could be a person or information that becomes apparent. Although you might be pleased to see this person, it is not the best idea to take up where you left the relationship. Just smile, go to dinner, and be pleasant together, but bypass the invitation to make it bigger.



### Gemini (May 20–June 20)

This is an especially social week for the Twins. There are likely to be errands, multiple messages, and visitors, coming and going. Your children may be part of the festivities. Your travels will take you back to someplace you have previously been.



### Cancer (June 21–July 21)

You have likely been dealing with a decision concerning joint property or family issues. You have spent a few weeks in this process. Although you want to come to a final solution, that may elude you right now. Be patient and know that the right answer will come soon. Set it aside to percolate before you act.



### Leo (July 22–August 21)

The news for you this week is a mixed bag. You have aspects favoring the law, travel, publishing, education and the internet. Meanwhile you may have concerns about debt, taxes, and an inexplicable loss. Just remember that Mercury is close to retrograde. What is lost will be found and errors will be corrected eventually.



### Virgo (August 22–September 22)

There is a “guardian angel” working on your behalf. You may never know who this person is, but just be aware that you are favored. You are likely to have mild good fortune coming into your life through investments, partner’s resources, inheritance, or payments from taxes, insurance, or debts owed to you.



### Libra (Sep. 23–Oct. 22)

A talkative individual may land upon you to act as a mirror for his/her need to communicate. Stay in touch with yourself and don’t allow your time to be usurped without your interior permission. Sometimes Libra can fall into the role of “captive audience” which wastes your time and energy.



### Scorpio (October 23–November 21)

Remain conservative in financial decisions. Do not take on debt lest you regret it. Mars, your ruling planet, shifts your attention on the 13th to fresh territory. During the next seven weeks, your activities and feelings will be intensified in the life sector related to vehicles, short distance travels, politics, communications, education, your neighborhood, and siblings. Use caution while driving because your accelerator foot may be a bit itchy.



### Sagittarius

(November 22–December 20)

The new business/career direction of the past several months is straining to be expanded. Normally the Archers are always in favor of advancing, but just right now that instinct is holding you back. You are right to wait for more definitive signs before you take a big risk. It may be several months before you can be certain.



### Capricorn (December 21–January 19)

What you do in your business and financial life now will have greater than usual impact in the future. The problem is that you do not yet feel clear about where you should expand and where you need to contract. Conservative choices are best for a while. Don’t force the decision.



### Aquarius (January 20–February 17)

Remain conservative in your decisions. This is not the time for an expansive new move. It is better to save your resources for better opportunities in the future. Don’t consider this a statement of gloom. Settle yourself and your desires until you are really prepared to expand.



### Pisces (February 18–March 19)

There is a New Moon in your sign on the 17th of March. This suggests the beginning of a new start for you that could require considerable time before it flowers. Take special care of your emotional and physical health this week. It is possible that an old emotional scab will be scratched open for a short time.



# ARMENIA

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## Dean Cain hopes every government will recognize Armenian Genocide



Superman actor Dean Cain hopes all countries will recognize the Armenian Genocide as “it is a historical fact.”

Cain writes, produces and directs history documentaries and recently co-produced Architects of Denial, about the Armenian Genocide, for which he was awarded the Armenian Order of Honor.

Speaking to the Jerusalem Post, Cain said he wouldn't tell a foreign country what to do, but hopes every government would recognize the genocide, because “it's a historic fact.”

“I do understand the political ramifications in the US – it's because we have diplomatic relations with Turkey. For anyone who studies

genocide or history, it's very clear the genocide took place. It's not the people of Turkey today who did it, or even the government... It was horrible – call it what it was,” said Cain, who paying his first visit to Israel.

Cain met with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu Tuesday. In a video Netanyahu posted on Facebook, Cain is seen calling the Prime Minister “the real Superman.”

As for what Cain wants to tell Israelis while he's here, the actor said: “I'm so excited to be here and share Israel with my son, take in the sites and meet the people. It's a place I always dreamed of visiting.”



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The publisher: NT Holding LTD  
Circulation: 1500 print copies and  
15,600 copies by e-mail list in PDF format  
Շաբաթը՝ 2.25 մամուլ, տպաքանակը՝ 1500  
Լրատվական գործունեություն իրականացնող՝  
ԼՏ հոլդինգ ՍՊԸ  
Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝  
03ԱՑ898368, տրված 11.01.2013 թ.

President of the NT Media Holding:  
**Tigran Harutyunyan**  
Editor-in-Chief of the Media Holding:  
**Gayaneh Arakelyan**  
Director of the Weekly:  
**Marina Harutyunyan**  
Chief Correspondent: **Gourgen Khazhakian**  
Proofreader: **Susanna Mkrtchian**  
Layout: **Diana Grigoryan**  
Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ. Հարությունյան  
Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993.  
**ISSN 1829-0604**  
Registration certificate and the date:  
273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

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