

The 44- day war served as a profound lesson for me - Prosecutor General



Armenia - Prosecutor-General Anna Vardapetyan addresses the Armenian parliament, May 3, 2024

Prosecutor General Anna Vardapetyan stated in the National Assembly that two proceedings were launched in Armenia concerning the Azerbaijani aggression during the 44-day war, along with another proceeding regarding the forced displacement of individuals from Nagorno-Karabakh.

“The proceedings I mentioned are not open to public discussion because they are subject to secrecy regulations. Additionally, the actions concerning specific individuals involved are not to be disclosed. However, the 44-day war served as a profound lesson for me, both as a citizen of

Armenia and later as the chief prosecutor,” stated Vardapetyan.

The Prosecutor General noted that she drew several conclusions from those lessons.

“First of all, we are currently undergoing significant personnel and professional reforms within the military prosecutor’s office. We are increasing the number of military prosecutors and enhancing their professionalism so that the military prosecutor’s office does not become subservient to particular interests but can instead consistently monitor proceedings with the perspective of an impartial observer.

Also, from a preventative standpoint, the military prosecutor’s office regularly conducts visits to military units, which I personally attend. The purpose of these visits is not to intimidate but to convey that every action carries consequences. Our aim within the army is not only to address the consequences but to prevent and deter military personnel from engaging in criminal behavior due to interpersonal relationships.

In addition, we file numerous petitions. Personally, I communicate with the Minister of Defense regarding every corruption case,” stated Vardapetyan.

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European Commission ready to contribute to the implementation of Armenian Government's priorities



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received the delegation led by the European Commission's Director-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations, Gert-Jan Koopman.

The Prime Minister welcomed Mr. Koopman's visit to Armenia and emphasized the importance of continuous development of Armenia-European Union relations. In this regard, Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the key importance of the Armenia-EU-US high-level meeting in Brussels on April 5 and stressed the need for effective implementation of the agreements reached. The Prime Minister expressed confidence that Mr. Koopman's visit will contribute to the formation of the program of measures and agenda and its further promotion.

Gert-Jan Koopman noted that the European Commission is ready to contribute to the implementation of the priorities of the Armenian government in close cooperation in order to strengthen the resilience of our country and economic growth. The European Commission's Director-General of Neighborhood and Enlargement Negotiations expressed confidence that Armenia-EU relations will continue to develop and expand dynamically.

The interlocutors discussed a wide range of issues related to Armenia-EU cooperation.

Foreign Minister of Armenia, Director-General of the European Commission discuss Armenia-EU partnership agenda issues

On April 30, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a meeting with Gert Jan Koopman, the Director-General for Neighbourhood and Enlargement Negotiations of the European Commission.

The interlocutors discussed a number of issues of the Armenia-EU partnership agenda. Both the process of effective implementation of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement and the issues of cooperation beyond the Agreement, in new directions were touched upon. Views were exchanged on issues under discussion and existing perspectives, the foreign ministry said.

According to the source, during the meeting, the high-level tripartite meeting held in Brussels on April 5 and issues of continuous cooperation with partners in the direction of strengthening Armenia's resilience and economic diversification were touched upon.

Ararat Mirzoyan and Gert Jan Koopman also touched upon regional programs. In the context of ensuring economic development in the South Caucasus, Ararat Mirzoyan stressed the importance of unblocking transport communications, highlighting the opportunities provided by the implementation of the "Crossroads of Peace" initiative developed by the



Government of the Republic of Armenia.

It is noted that the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and the Director-General of the European Commission also discussed regional security issues. Ararat Mirzoyan briefed on the latest developments in the normalization process of relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Foreign Ministers of Armenia, Ukraine discuss regional issues

Armenian Minister of Foreign Affairs Ararat Mirzoyan had a telephone conversation with his Ukrainian counterpart Dmytro Kuleba.

The interlocutors discussed issues related to the agenda of bilateral relations and political dialogue.

The Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Ukraine also touched upon regional issues.

Emphasizing the efforts to achieve lasting peace and stability in the South Caucasus, Ararat Mirzoyan attached importance to the unconditional respect for the principle of territorial integrity in the process of border delimitation, the commitment to the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration and the position expressed by international partners, inclining the Foreign Ministry

of Ukraine in this regard.



Pashinyan again defends border concessions to Azerbaijan

(RFE/RL) - Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan continued to defend on May 1 his controversial decision to hand over contested border areas to Azerbaijan, saying that he is stripping Baku of a reason to invade Armenia.

“As long as the border is not delimited there may be some reason for conflict,” Pashinyan told Armenian Public Television. “This is why we start [the delimitation process] from places with the greatest potential for conflict, in order to keep the situation as manageable as possible.”

“Many say that we are surrendering four villages to Azerbaijan,” he said. “I will say that we are taking the four villages from Azerbaijan as an argument for internationally legitimizing its aggressive policy towards Armenia.”

Pashinyan’s political opponents maintain that the unilateral concessions will on the contrary encourage Azerbaijan to demand more territory from Armenia and take or threaten military action for that purpose.

The border areas in question are adjacent to several villages in Armenia’s northern Tavush province. Many of their residents are strongly opposed to their



Armenia - Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visits a border village in Tavush province, April 17, 2024.

handover, saying that it would leave their communities dangerously exposed to Azerbaijani attacks.

Hundreds of them have been holding a nonstop protest outside one of those villages, Kirants, in a bid to scuttle the process. They have been joined by Yerevan-based opposition activists and people from other parts of the country.

The areas which Pashinyan’s government agreed to give up used to be occupied by small Azerbaijani villages captured by Armenian forces in 1991-1992. For its part, Azerbaijan seized at the time large

swathes of agricultural land belonging to several Tavush villages. None of that land will be given back to Armenia under the terms of a border deal reached by Yerevan and Baku on April 19.

Pashinyan was careful not to express confidence that Azerbaijan will agree to withdraw from there as a result of the border delimitation process. He stressed only that the process will be based on a 1991 declaration in which newly independent Soviet republics recognized their Soviet-era borders.

Armenia, US extend Agreement on Cooperation in the Area of Counterproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction



Armenian Defense Minister Suren Papikyan received on May 2 US

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Armenia, Kristina Kvien.

The parties discussed the current state of cooperation between the Republic of Armenia and the United States in the defense field, as well as future development prospects. The sides commended the current level of cooperation, and the American side expressed readiness to continue supporting the defense reforms being implemented in Armenia.

Additionally, the meeting addressed issues related to regional security.

At the conclusion of the meeting, Minister Papikyan and Ambassador Kvien signed an agreement to extend the validity period of the Agreement between the Government of the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the United States of America Concerning Cooperation in the Area of Counterproliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction.

The State Department announced Blinken's participation in the settlement process between Yerevan and Baku



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken is personally engaged in the efforts to resolve the crisis between Baku and Yerevan, According to State Department spokesman Vedant Patel.

"This is a region in which the Secretary of State is personally deeply involved.

During his tenure, he regularly communicated with those two countries," he said during the briefing.

"We continue to believe that peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan is possible, and we will continue to work towards that goal,"

Azerbaijan wanted no clear Armenia-Azerbaijan border, but the stronger party to exercise its rights - Rubinyan

The Vice-Chairman of the National Assembly of Armenia, Ruben Rubinyan, announced that prior the agreement on delimitation between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan wanted Armenia and Azerbaijan not to have any clear border. Azerbaijan preferred a blurred border, where the stronger party could exercise its rights, Ruben Rubinyan said in the parliament, addressing the criticisms of the opposition.

Rubinyan stressed that Azerbaijan had been attempting to retract from the agreement to acknowledge each other's territorial integrity and to conduct delimitation and demarcation based on the Alma-Ata Declaration for months.

"After months of negotiations, in April, an agreement was reached and a protocol was signed in which both parties reaffirmed that the Alma-Ata Declaration would serve as the basis for the delimitation," stated Rubinyan.



This implies that the administrative borders that existed between the Armenian and Azerbaijani SSRs at the time of the collapse of the Soviet Union, that is, as of 1991, will be restored.

"Why was Azerbaijan trying to avoid this? The answer is as follows: Azerbaijan wanted Armenia and Azerbaijan not to have any border, so that the stronger party could exercise its rights.

The following logic was considered: each country borders are there where its army can assert control," said the Vice

President of the National Assembly.

According to him, the parliamentary opposition has undertaken the task of legitimizing that logic, which he finds strange. Rubinyan believes that the opposition presenting a draft statement to the National Assembly, suggests that the 1993 contact line should serve as the basis for delimitation, it implies that the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan should not be delimited based on documents and maps with legal justification but on a contact line.

"And the line of contact itself means a line that was formed as a result of the following: Each country could stand wherever it was able to, that is, again, the right of force was used.

You legitimize the right to force. When force begins to act, your allies will not fulfill their obligations, and what has happened many times will happen," Rubinyan addressed the opposition.

Armenian border protesters march to Yerevan

An outspoken archbishop and his supporters began marching on May 4 to Yerevan from a border village in the northern Tavush province that has been the epicenter of two-week protests against the Armenian government's territorial concessions to Azerbaijan.

Archbishop Bagrat Galstanyan, who has emerged as the top leader of the protests, said they are taking their campaign to the streets of the capital to try to scuttle the handover of border areas adjacent to the village of Kirants and nearby Tavush communities. Many local residents have been up in arms against it, citing grave security concerns.

"The Tavush for the Homeland movement has decided that the people must just go to Yerevan ... to demand that this process here and elsewhere be stopped," Galstanyan said in Kirants before starting the 160-kilometer journey to Yerevan.

The decision was announced two days after police cracked down on Kirants protesters who tried to stop authorities from clearing an adjacent area of landmines and make other preparations for its handover to Azerbaijan. The police presence in and around the village remained strong after the crackdown.

Galstanyan, who heads the Tavush



diocese of the Armenian Apostolic Church, said the protesters led by him plan to reach Yerevan on May 9. He gave no details of their actions planned there. His announcement drew statements of support from Yerevan-based opposition politicians and public figures who pledged to join the campaign.

Blinken urges Aliyev to release those unjustly detained in Azerbaijan



US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has again urged Azerbaijan to adhere to its international human rights obligations and commitments and release those

unjustly detained in Azerbaijan.

Blinken spoke by phone with Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev on April 28. The Secretary commended President Aliyev for last week's announcement that Armenia and Azerbaijan agreed to use the 1991 Alma Ata declaration as the basis for border delimitation and emphasized its importance to the two sides concluding a durable and dignified peace.

The Secretary urged President Aliyev to keep up the momentum with his Armenian counterpart, reiterating U.S. willingness to support those efforts.

Secretary Blinken underscored the desire for a strong U.S.-Azerbaijan bilateral relationship, noting the efforts to cooperate on mutual energy, climate, and connectivity goals, and to ensure the success of COP 29 in Baku.

He welcomed Azerbaijan's release of Gubad Ibadoglu to house arrest as a humanitarian gesture and called for his full, expeditious release. Secretary Blinken again urged Azerbaijan to adhere to its international human rights obligations and commitments and release those unjustly detained in Azerbaijan.

Astana will not act as mediator in upcoming Armenia-Azerbaijan talks in Almaty

Kazakhstan will not act as a mediator in the upcoming negotiations between the foreign ministers of Armenia and Azerbaijan in Almaty, TASS reports, quoting the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Kazakhstan Aybek Smadiyarov.

"We are planning such negotiations in Almaty. We are now in contact with our colleagues in Azerbaijan and Armenia. The upcoming negotiations will be held exclusively between the parties. We are

not talking about the mediation of Astana, we are only providing goodwill services," said Smadiyarov.

The representative of the Foreign Ministry recalled that the President of Kazakhstan, Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, during his recent visits to Azerbaijan and Armenia, had mentioned the importance of establishing a strong and long-term peace between the countries.

Earlier, in an interview with *Armenpress*, Armenian Foreign Ministry

spokesperson Ani Badalyan said that Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Jeyhun Bayramov are scheduled to meet in Almaty.

Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev, following his meeting with Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan during his official visit to Armenia on April 15, announced that Astana is ready to provide a platform for negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan.

Armenian Opposition wants urgent meeting with Western Envoys

Armenia's two main opposition groups on May 2 asked the Yerevan-based ambassadors of the United States and major European countries to urgently meet with them to discuss what they called growing human rights abuses committed by the Armenian authorities.

Senior lawmakers from the Hayastan and Pativ Unem alliances appealed to the U.S., French and British ambassadors and the head of the European Union Delegation in Armenia just hours after the Armenian police used force against protesters in the northern Tavush region trying to prevent the handover of adjacent border areas to Azerbaijan.

"Recent reports from several human rights organizations clearly highlight the increase in police violence, attempts to limit freedom of speech and the right to peaceful assembly, control of the judicial system, and widespread recourse to arrests," they said in a joint letter. "Many activists and opposition politicians are now in prison on trumped-up charges."

They said they want to discuss with the Western envoys their countries "tolerance" of these practices.

"We want to receive from them an answer to a very clear question: is the end result of 'reform' programs financed by them the establishment of a police state in Armenia?" Hayastan's Artsvik Minasyan told reporters.

"It seems that these [Western] representatives simply do not understand the situation created in Armenia or trust in fake news which these authorities and their satellites are trying to communicate to them," he said.

The authorities deny using excessive force against the protesters. Three dozen of them were arrested early on Thursday from the epicenter of the protests in the Tavush village of Kirants.

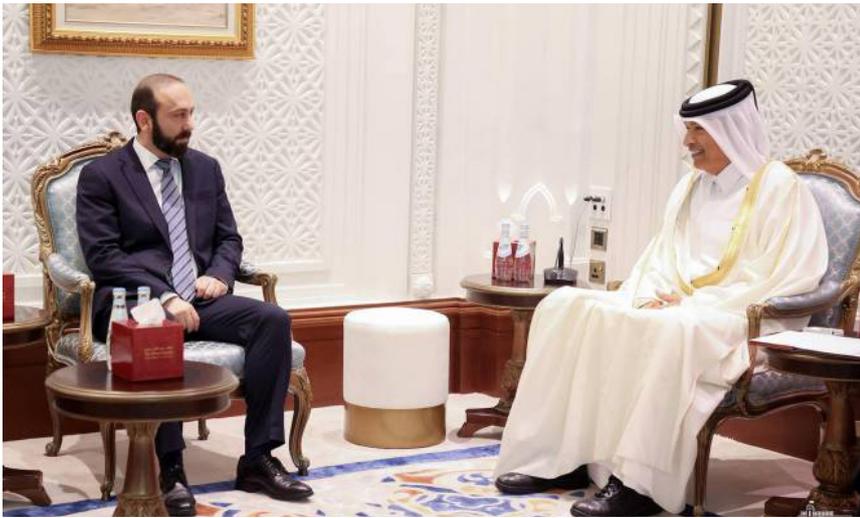
Both the United States and the European Union have welcomed a controversial Armenian-Azerbaijan border delimitation deal that commits Armenia to making the



territorial concessions to Azerbaijan opposed by many Tavush residents.

The Western powers have supported Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and what they call democratic reforms implemented by his administration throughout his six-year rule. As recently as on April 28, U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken praised Pashinyan's "vision for a prosperous, democratic, and independent future for Armenia". Armenian opposition and other critics of Pashinyan's government have accused the West of turning a blind eye to its undemocratic practices for geopolitical reasons.

Armenian Foreign Minister highly appreciated the meeting with Chairman of the Consultative Assembly of Qatar



The Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan highly appreciated the meeting with the Chairman of the

Consultative Assembly of the State of Qatar Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Ghanim, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia made

a note about this in his microblog on X.

According to the Armenian Foreign Minister, the economic and transport connection was emphasized during the meeting and the Qatari official was presented also “Crossroads of Peace” and efforts aimed at durable stability.

“Appreciated interesting conversation with Speaker of Shura Qatar Hassan bin Abdullah Al-Ghanim on Armenia- Qatar agenda, ties with Arab countries as well as regional issues. Emphasizing economic & transport connectivity, presented also “Crossroads of Peace” and efforts aimed at durable stability”, mentioned in Mirzoyan’s post.

Armenia’s Deputy Prime Minister meets with World Bank Group Executive Director

Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan received Eugene Rhugenaath, the World Bank (WB) Group Executive Director representing the constituency of countries that includes Armenia, Grigoryan’s office said.

At the beginning of the meeting, Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan emphasized the importance of Armenia’s cooperation with the World Bank, noting that it is not only a donor organization for Armenia, but also an important



partner, with the support of which key

reforms are being implemented in the country.

During the meeting, the Deputy Prime Minister presented the World Bank official with the Government’s vision for the development of the most important sectors. In particular, he addressed existing problems and outlined planned reforms in the fields of education, healthcare, and the capital market.

Prospects of strengthening economic cooperation between Armenia and Canada discussed in Ottawa

On April 29, H.E. Ambassador Anahit Harutyunyan met with Ms. Sara Wilshaw, Canada’s chief trade commissioner.

The sides discussed the prospects of strengthening and deepening economic cooperation between Armenia and Canada, expressing confidence that the bilateral economic relations have a great potential for development.



The interlocutors welcomed the first business mission of the Canada Eurasia Chamber of Commerce to Armenia which was successfully completed several days ago.

The issue of implementing joint educational and professional development programs was touched upon.

World Bank supports Armenia's green, inclusive and sustainable development

The World Bank's Board of Executive Directors approved a Development Policy Operation (DPO) in the amount of \$116 million equivalent for Armenia to enable reforms aimed at promoting green, resilient and inclusive development. The DPO includes loan financing from the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) in the amount of EUR 92.3 million (\$100 million equivalent) and a grant from the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCF) in the amount of \$16 million.

This budget support will help the Government of Armenia to build climate resilience and reduce vulnerabilities to future shocks.

"This development policy operation supports a package of reforms designed to improve social equity, strengthen human capital, support the emergence of stronger institutions, and promote climate mitigation and adaptation in Armenia," said Carolin Geginat, World Bank Country



Manager for Armenia.

The operation supports the Government's five-year action plan for 2021-2026. It includes actions that will fortify anti-corruption measures by implementing a robust framework with a whistleblowing system and gift monitoring mechanism for public servants. Further, it is aligned with the Paris Agreement. Specifically, the operation will support the government's reforms in the following areas:

Fostering climate change mitigation and adaptation and improving the

regulatory framework for environmental management;

Enhancing equity and promoting human capital development;

Strengthening the anti-corruption framework and improving justice sector efficiency.

Since starting its operations in Armenia in 1992, the World Bank has provided around \$2.7 billion from IBRD, International Development Association (IDA), and various trust funds. Armenia became a donor to IDA in 2023. The World Bank is committed to continuing its support to Armenia in its development path for reducing poverty on livable planet.

The GCF is Financial Intermediary Fund, established in 2016 to provide concessional financing to eligible middle-income countries. The GCF contributions made available to Armenia under this operation were provided by the Governments of the Netherlands and the United States of America.

Armenian Defense Ministry medical battalion participates in "Vigorous Warrior 2024" multinational military exercise

Since April 30, 2024, the mobile field hospital of the Department of Military Medical Support of the Ministry of Defense of Armenia has been deployed at the Bakonykuti military training ground in Varpalota, Hungary, in order to participate in the Vigorous Warrior 2024 multinational military exercise organized by the NATO Centre of Excellence for Military Medicine.

Military medical units from the armed forces of 32 countries and 7 civilian organizations are participating in the largest international military medical event.

The event will last until May 10.

The medical unit of the Armenian Armed Forces is participating in this event as a Role 2 field hospital.

During the exercises, the next round of medical evaluation of the mobile military

medical unit, in accordance with NATO standards, is also planned to be conducted.



There is a real momentum for the establishment of lasting peace - Armenian Foreign Minister's interview to Al-Jazeera

During the official visit to the State of Qatar on April 28-29, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan gave an interview to the leading news channel Al-Jazeera with around half a billion audience. The interview was published in Arabic and English versions.

During the interview Minister Mirzoyan spoke about the vision of Armenia on reaching lasting peace in the region, the process of normalization of relations with Azerbaijan, the "Crossroads of Peace" project, developed by the Government of Armenia, the situation around Gaza and Armenia's approaches for the settlement of the conflict as well as Armenia's relations with Russia, the EU and the U.S.

The whole interview is presented below.

Question: Let's talk about the relations with Azerbaijan. What is the situation now, after the developments around Nagorno-Karabakh?

Answer: Well you probably know that we are engaging in a peace process with Azerbaijan and the Armenian side truly believes that there is a real momentum for the establishment of lasting peace in our region based on certain principles, for instance, the mutual recognition of territorial integrity. The Prime Minister of Armenia and the President of Azerbaijan have publicly reassured, we confirmed several times that mutual recognition of the territorial integrity between the countries should take place based on the 1991 Alma-Ata Declaration and the further delimitation process of the border between the two countries also should take place on the basis of Alma-Ata Declaration. To put the long story short, this is basically a document which was signed by eleven former Soviet Union Socialist Republics in 1991, and in this document, these Republics stated that former administrative borders between Socialist Republics are now recognized as internationally recognized borders between already independent countries. Basically, we have the border and mutual recognition of the territorial integrity and delimitation based on the Alma-Ata Declaration, this means that borders existed in 1991 they should be reproduced on the ground now, and interestingly, just recently the heads of respective border commissions of the two countries, the Deputy Prime Ministers of

both countries, came to an agreement that delimitation should take place according to the Alma-Ata Declaration and the Rules of Procedures of the delimitation also should refer to this Declaration. This is one of the principles, and if we succeed in having the reference to the Alma-Ata Declaration as a political basis for the delimitation, as a political basis for the mutual recognition of territorial integrity in the draft of the peace treaty over which we negotiate, then we can say that we are very close to the final settlement.

Question: Is there an obstacle in the process of delimitation and implementation of the agreed principles? Is there an obstacle to finalizing these agreements in order to reach the full normalization of relations?

Answer: The problem is that despite the fact that our leaders have numerous times reconfirmed the mutual recognition of territorial integrity based on the Alma-Ata Declaration, which I just mentioned, we see that our neighbors are still reluctant to make concrete and strong reference to the Alma-Ata Declaration in the draft of the peace treaty, a more comprehensive document which is going to be signed by the two countries. So as I said, as soon as we come to an agreement on this issue in the context of a peace agreement, we will get very close.

There are a couple of other issues, for instance, the unblocking of the regional transport infrastructure, which is also being discussed. In this context it is important to know that Armenia is not only ready but is interested in becoming a part of international transit routes that is why our Government came up with the initiative of "Crossroads of Peace": we believe that if this unblocking takes place, it will not only be beneficial in terms of economic prosperity for the countries of the region but also will become a significant factor of peace in the region. So we are ready to unblock all the regional transport infrastructure, mainly with Azerbaijan, but also with Turkey, understanding that this project will help to connect East to West, North to South, and if this is implemented this will be another interesting way to connect the Gulf countries with Black Sea economic region. According to this concept, unblocking should take place with the full respect of the sovereignty

and jurisdiction of the countries, but also according to the principles of equality and reciprocity.

Question: Is Yerevan, at this stage, reviewing its relations, alliances, and affiliations with certain regional or international formats? Is membership in the European Union and NATO on Armenia's agenda?

Answer: You know that during a recent couple of years, there were several incursions into the sovereign territory of the Republic of Armenia, and we are a member of CSTO: Collective Security Treaty Organization, the mission of which is to protect the sovereign territories and the borders of the member states. So when we had these invasions we did not see proper action from the Organization in which we are. And we should also remember that the CSTO is also a political-military alliance which, as I said, is called to protect the borders of the member states. The absence of a proper reaction raised several questions in Armenian society, and we don't want to be a part of a mechanism that does not work. We are still a member of the CSTO, but we should work on making sure that all the mechanisms which are prescribed work, and there is a need for that.

Question: Therefore, does it assume different relations with Russia?

Answer: There are some issues and some questions in the context of the Armenian-Russian relations, and yes, we have a dialogue over these issues. Among them, there are issues on which we need a mutual complete understanding, but I believe there are issues in all relations. But also with the democratic reform agenda and making sure that we have a proper level of stability along the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan, we are in the middle of the process of deepening our relations with some other countries, with the European Union, with the United States of America: they are our main partners in terms of democratic reforms, but also economic diversification, etc. Now, it is already the second year that the presence of the EU Civilian Monitoring Mission along the Armenian-Azerbaijani border is one of the significant factors in this situation.

Question: Mr. Mirzoyan, the Israeli war in Gaza has been going on for about six months. How does Yerevan follow this war, what are its consequences?

Answer: We are strongly against targeting civilians, we have faced a similar situation in Nagorno-Karabakh when more than 100,000 Armenians had to flee their ancestral homeland to save the lives of their family members, so we stand strongly against targeting the civilian population. Just recently we sent some humanitarian assistance to help to ease the situation and the suffering of the people who found themselves in the similar situation. But in general, we have always supported a

peaceful resolution of the conflict, but also the two-state solution for the long-standing conflict and the Palestinian issue. Besides that, we are ready to preserve the cultural and spiritual heritage, particularly when it comes to the written heritage we have a famous and world-known depositary for the manuscripts so we can temporarily host the manuscripts, if there is a need, from the conflict zone, preserve them and then return when everything is settled.

Question: Mr. Mirzoyan, you sent humanitarian aid to Gaza, but what about Yerevan's approach to stopping the ongoing war and making some proposals about it? Do you discuss it in certain international circles?

Answer: We are lobbying for a peaceful settlement and the end of hostilities, and if official Yerevan can be of help in this context we are more than ready.

We see Armenia's sincere commitment to achieving peace - Lithuanian Ambassador's interview

Peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan is the key prerequisite for a stable and prosperous South Caucasus. We see Armenia's sincere commitment to peace and appreciate clear steps undertaken in that direction. There is no doubt that the peace process must end with a sustainable, comprehensive, lasting peace and a commitment of both sides to respect it, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Lithuania to Armenia, Andrius Pulokas, said in an interview with Armenpress.

The interview has addressed Armenia-Lithuania relations, prospects for the development of relations between the two countries, Lithuania's views on the current situation in the South Caucasus, as well as the rapprochement of Armenia-European Union relations, Lithuania's possible role in it, and other issues.

- Mr. Ambassador, Armenia and Lithuania have always had warm and friendly relations. How would you assess the present level of political dialogue between the two countries and what important points would you highlight?

The political dialogue is very intense and has been increasingly active since Armenia's Velvet revolution of 2018. The main challenge is to maintain the pace and provide concrete content – every political process must be focused on a result that must be clear and tangible. Lithuania and Armenia share common historical connections and experiences. Having walked the difficult path of transformation itself, Lithuania is an example of successful reforms. Our successes and lessons learnt are close to the context of Armenia, we understand each other very well, thus the transfer and implementation of experience useful to Armenia is and will remain one

of the main tasks in the near future.

Armenia, with the support of the EU as the main partner for the reform agenda and the involvement of civil society, has every opportunity to become the leader in democratic reforms in the South Caucasus. Of course, provided the pace of reforms is maintained or even strengthened, and we continue seeing Armenia confidently climbing up different international democracy, rule of law, transparency rankings. Lithuania is ready to cooperate at all levels in order to strengthen Armenia's resilience at this very difficult stage of historical turning point. The key word is diversification, and in this area, knowing Lithuania's difficult but very fruitful path in diversifying its economy, energy, and other areas, together we could do more to strengthen Armenia's resilience and sovereignty.

- Last year, in October, the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Ingrida Šimonytė visited the Republic of Armenia. She announced that Lithuania intends to support the deepening of relations between Armenia and the European Union. Being an experienced member country celebrating its 20th anniversary at the organization this year, how could Lithuania contribute to the deepening of relations between Armenia and the EU?

I am very happy that the EU is being seen and discussed more and more in Armenia. Active involvement of the EU in Armenia means more support for sustainable democracy, resilience, security and sovereignty, and most importantly - peace in the entire South Caucasus region. For this, we call for the active use of all the instruments provided by the EU: the CEPA agreement, which will soon be

supplemented by the new EU-Armenia partnership agenda, and the EU mission in Armenia. We also expect Armenia to receive support through the European Peace Facility, and to start a dialogue on visa liberalization.

Lithuania is one of the most active supporters and enthusiasts of Armenia's rapprochement – as close as possible – with the EU, we firmly believe that Armenia belongs to the European family, and Armenia's future lies in the European Union. Our experience tells us that one should always have a little more ambition than the possibilities sometimes seem to allow – our path to Europe was not the easiest one either, but we always saw the meaning in it and consistently followed that path. I believe that the idea of European integration should become central and dominant both in Armenia's political agenda and in public life. We always encourage Armenia to be more ambitious in dreaming, planning and working and the maximum ambition is of course EU membership, as soon as possible. Ambition is not a political declaration, but rather the constant patient and tiring work, and the efforts of the entire state and society. Some call it homework, and it is precisely this homework that Lithuania contributes to, for example, in supporting reform of Armenia's internal affairs system, offering the best practice in the field of environment, as well as in other important sectors.

- Months ago, the European Parliament overwhelmingly adopted a resolution on the need for closer ties between the EU and Armenia and a peace agreement between Armenia and Azerbaijan. With that resolution, the European Parliament also called to consider the possibility of granting Armenia the ➔ page 11

We would like to see recognition of Armenian Genocide by Brazil, Ambassador says



We would like to see recognition of the Armenian Genocide by Brazil, Armenia's Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary to Brazil Armen Yeghanyan said in an interview with [Correio Braziliense](#).

According to the diplomat, there is not a single Armenian in the world who does not have at least one family member who died or was affected by the Armenian genocide between 1915 and 1923. He stated

that the non-recognition of the Armenian genocide sent a very dangerous signal to other perpetrators.

"The Holocaust, the Rwandan genocide and many other crimes against humanity could have been avoided if the international community had learned a lesson from the Armenian genocide," Ambassador Yeghanyan said.

Asked why Brazil does not recognize the Armenian Genocide, the Ambassador said "the Federal Senate of Brazil actually recognized the Armenian Genocide in 2015 and recommended the President of the Republic that he also recognize it, which we greatly appreciate."

"Many Brazilian federal deputies make statements every year in Congress in honor of the Armenian victims. Additionally, there are several memorials, including an Armenian khachkar (cross-stone),

dedicated to 1.5 million victims of the Armenian genocide in São Paulo. Much work has been done, but we would like to see recognition of the Armenian Genocide at all levels of the Brazilian government," he noted.

Speaking about Turkey's failure to recognize the Armenian Genocide, Armen Yeghanyan said "it is regrettable that a country that aspires to join Europe and has the ambition to be a defender of peace initiatives does not recognize the Armenian Genocide, the crime that was condemned by 63 military courts of the modern Turkish state."

"By denying the Armenian Genocide, the modern Turkish state sends a dubious signal to the international community regarding its commitment to human rights and universal freedoms," the Ambassador stated.

Torture, mutilation cases reported amid Azerbaijan's September aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh-Armenian Ombudsperson

During the Azerbaijani aggression against Nagorno-Karabakh in September 2023, there were cases of torture, mutilation of bodies, and targeting of civilian objects. Armenian Human Rights Defender Anahit Manasyan stated this during the presentation of the annual report on the activities of the Human Rights Defender in 2023 at the National Assembly.

Anahit Manasyan noted that from the very beginning of the forced deportation

from Nagorno-Karabakh, she visited registration centers in Syunik and Vayk. As a result of interviews with more than 350 people conducted by the staff of the Human Rights Defender, an extraordinary public report was published.

"Cases of torture, mutilation of bodies, and targeting of civilian objects were documented there, I mean, during the September events, as well as various problems related to human rights resulting from the

blockade of the Lachin Corridor prior to that," said Manasyan.

She considers the greatest achievement related to this to be the fact that, for the first time, such a report from the Human Rights Defender of Armenia was referenced in the observations presented by the Council of Europe Commissioner for Human Rights, Dunya Mijatovic.

USCIRF recommends listing Azerbaijan among "countries of particular concern"

In its 2024 Annual Report, United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) recommends the US Government to designate Azerbaijan as a "country of particular concern," or CPC, for engaging in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, as defined by the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA).

It also urges the Government to allocate funding to the U.S. Agency for International Development and U.S. Embassy in Baku to restore, preserve, and protect

places of worship and other religious or cultural sites in Nagorno-Karabakh and surrounding territories.

The report notes that in 2023 the Azerbaijani government continued to pose a threat to religious sites in and around the region of Nagorno-Karabakh. In May, the chairman of the official State Committee for Work on Religious Affairs Mubariz Gurbanli urged Armenian Apostolic priests to leave the Dadivank Monastery, falsely claiming that they had no ties to the religious site. Although a United Nations

mission to Nagorno Karabakh in October concluded that it "saw no damage ... to cultural or religious structures," other organizations remained concerned by the potential for damage or destruction in the region. In November 2023, Caucasus Heritage Watch (CHW), a research initiative supported by Cornell University, reported damage to the historical Meghretso's Holy Mother of God Church in Shushi. That same month, CHW released satellite imagery that indicated probable damage to two Armenian cemeteries also in Shushi.

page 9 ➡ **status of a candidate for EU membership. In your opinion, how realistic is it to grant Armenia the status of a candidate for EU membership, and how would you evaluate the adoption of that resolution itself?**

Armenia is a democratic state, and democracy on our continent has a very specific address - the EU. I would think that there is still a historical chance to jump on the same European train together with the so-called EU-Associated trio – Ukraine, Moldova, and hopefully Georgia as well. I remember the integration process of three Baltic States, more than 20 years ago. The Baltic countries also moved at different speeds, yet we joined. I understand that it may sound bold today, but I remember Lithuanian experience very clearly - the idea of Europe at the time of accession had taken over Lithuania like a virus, we all got infected by the idea of Europe and thus gained immunity to totalitarianism and Sovietism (as well as oligarchisation, by the way). Lithuania's move towards EU membership was based on the understanding that the EU is where we belong, because this organization represents the same values of democracy and the rule of law, which we share, and – let us not hide that as well – the same norms, standards and the level of prosperity we wanted to reach. And the whole process of preparation for the EU accession with related reforms, was about constructing a modern, effective, resilient state, taking over new methods of governance, raising the quality of public services. Looking back, I can confidently say that this process was the best thing that happened to Lithuania in the 20th century. Still today we are the biggest supporters and enthusiasts of the EU. We succeeded, and I believe, Armenia must succeed as well. Aspiring for membership is valuable in itself. So, we did not waste time, we did not reinvent the wheel, we adopted the best European experience.

- Mr. Pulokas, since the 2020, Azerbaijan continues to take destabilizing actions in the region of South Caucasus. It is well known that as a result of an ethnic cleansing perpetrated by Azerbaijan in September of 2023 more than 100 of thousands of Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh were forcibly displaced. How do these steps influence the peace agenda in the region?

This was a great tragedy, with thousands of Nagorno Karabakh residents

fleeing their homes, and this displacement taking place against the backdrop of a lengthy blockage of the Lachin corridor. We understand the frustration and disappointment of people whose lives have been broken, abandoned by those whom they had once considered the guarantor of their security. Armenia's government and all the people have demonstrated a unique solidarity in ensuring shelter and dealing with all the problems. Along with many other countries, Lithuania provided humanitarian aid. I believe that the people of Nagorno Karabakh should have the opportunity to return safely to their homes. Peace can only prevail in the South Caucasus through good-faith negotiations, while coercion has never led to any good, and playing with people's destinies, using them as a tool is simply not justifiable. This also applies to the return of all the detainees, which is a very important step towards restoring trust.

- Beginning from 2021, Azerbaijan has attacked Armenia several times occupying Armenia's sovereign territories, even now, Azerbaijan refuses to withdraw its troops from those territories. What kind of steps can and should be taken by the international community, particularly the European Union, to force Azerbaijan to stop the aggressive policy against Armenia?

Peace between Armenia and Azerbaijan is the key prerequisite for a stable and prosperous South Caucasus. We see Armenia's sincere commitment to peace and appreciate clear steps undertaken in that direction. There is no doubt that the peace process must end with a sustainable, comprehensive, lasting peace and a commitment of both sides to respect it, with eventually completed process of border delimitation and demarcation, based on internationally recognized borders – the same borders which existed at the moment of the dissolution of the USSR, - and with the opening of regional communications across all the borders.

Lithuania consistently supports the mediation efforts of the EU and the US in peace negotiations. Peaceful South Caucasus is in the interest of the entire democratic community. There is nothing beneficial for small countries when larger regional powers try to maintain their monopoly. This is why conflict resolution must be re-internationalized – more Europe means more respect for the rules-based international order.

Lithuania not only firmly expresses its political support for the peace process, but also is ready to share its still fresh experience on border delimitation and demarcation, as we were one of the first countries to fully delimit and demarcate all its land borders after the collapse of the Soviet Union. Again, we have a unique experience, as we went through a long and difficult negotiations process. Our neighborhood is not very easy as well, yet we managed to complete those processes based on the principles of international law, and this practice can be used in South Caucasus as well.

It is important that the international community expresses its clear position and condemns the actions of countries that do not respect the core principles of international law. For us in Lithuania, values are at the heart of the foreign policy, and we behave accordingly. We fight for the countries that are striving for their freedom, security, and democracy. We also realize that the fate of the South Caucasus depends greatly on the outcome of Ukraine's heroic struggle for its country's sovereignty and territorial integrity. Russia's war in Ukraine has shown that Russia kills, destroys, and breaks any principles of international law daily. In this context, it is very important that Armenia is trying to diversify its political and security partnerships as well as providing humanitarian support to Ukraine and activating the level of political dialogue. Armenia itself knows very well the price of independence and democracy.

-Mr. Ambassador, in recent years there has been a lot of talks about the need to unblock the regional communications in the South Caucasus. Azerbaijan demands the so-called "Zangezur corridor" from Armenia by threatening at the same time to get it by force. How would Lithuania assess such an aggressive and unprovoked behavior of Azerbaijan?

Lithuania geographically has similarities with Armenia: the Kaliningrad region of the Russian Federation, like the Nakhichevan region of Azerbaijan, is an exclave for which communication with the mainland country is important. Again, the accession to the EU played a crucial role in this area as well. The EU, Lithuania and Russia agreed on the so-called Kaliningrad transit scheme, and now, even in the conditions of the Russian war in Ukraine, mainland Russia's

➡ page 12

page 11 ➡ and Kaliningrad region's residents travel through the territory of Lithuania. We managed to harmonize two main things, namely full control of Lithuania in its territory and maximum convenience for travelers to transit without unnecessary obstacles. We have repeatedly shared our experience with both Yerevan and Baku. I believe that some elements of this so-called simplified transit model could be useful in regulating the movement of persons in Armenia. After all, it is a European experience and a model of success. As regards the rhetoric, we understand its importance, and we would prefer the term "transit" rather than "corridor". After all, we are in the 21st century.

In response to these claims of the Azerbaijani side, last year the Government of Armenia initiated the "Crossroads of Peace" project. What is your opinion on this initiative and how does Lithuania see the peace in the region of South Caucasus?

This idea is indeed logical and understandable, it is an effort to restore functional cooperation among the neighboring countries, using the existing and future transport infrastructure. Regional transport arteries and global transport links must also operate in Armenia. They must work in all directions and for all modes of transport. It might even make sense to expand the project to include pipelines, power lines, etc. After all, it would be beneficial for everyone, it would stimulate the economic growth of the entire region, as well as trade and cross-border cooperation. However, implementation of such a project would require engagement of all the regional partners. I hope that the EU can offer certain stimulus for them to also accept the idea of open communications.

The development of economic ties and mutual trade usually leads to even deeper cooperation and increase of mutual trust, which is the basis for peace. The South Caucasus has every opportunity to become

one of the fastest growing and prosperous regions. The EU could also contribute to the restoration of communication links in the region and the implementation of the Crossroads for Peace initiative.

- Economic cooperation between Armenia and Lithuania: What was the trade volume between the two countries in 2023? What trends are seen in the bilateral export and import markets?

The available data on trade between Lithuania and Armenia are very different. We belong to two different trade blocs - EU and EEU, therefore re-exports are seen differently in our statistics. According to Lithuanian data, in 9 months of the last year, bilateral trade amounted to over 100 million EUR, yet only a small part were goods of Lithuanian origin. The level of economic-trade cooperation does not match the level of active political dialogue, so we will have to do a lot to increase mutually beneficial economic links and to transform intensive political dialogue into sustainable economic relations. At the same time, of course it is key that trade relations are not exploited to circumvent sanctions.

- Mr. Pulokas, which economic areas are of greatest interest in the relations between Armenia and Lithuania, and what should the two countries do to develop economic ties?

Both traditional trade areas such as food products, beverages, or tourism services, as well as high-tech sectors demonstrating impressive growth rates, have good prospects. For trade exchanges, the main challenge remains expensive and complex logistics. A direct flight between Vilnius and Yerevan would be truly beneficial for our daily cooperation.

- Mr. Ambassador, are there any planned high-level visits from Lithuania to Armenia in the near future?

Last year, a historic visit took place – the Prime Minister of the Republic of Lithuania Ms Ingrida Šimonytė visited

Armenia for the first time. The Prime Minister of Armenia also visited Lithuania a few years ago, the Presidents of the countries also exchanged visits in the last few years, the exchange of visits of various institutions continues on a regular basis. Just a few weeks ago Speaker of the Armenian Parliament visited Lithuania. This spring, several ministerial visits to Vilnius and Yerevan took place.

- Thank you for the interview opportunity. Is there anything else you would like to add?

It's no secret that Armenia has many friends in Lithuania and this circle has been expanding rapidly in recent years. Historically, our nations have always been extremely close, starting with the Middle Ages and close coordination between our independence movements. We understand and sympathize with each other's experiences. Lithuanians feel great sympathy for Armenia's effort to diversify its relationships and move closer to the West. It is not only a feeling, but also concrete willingness to contribute with proactive support.

For any ambassador, such an environment is very favorable, so we must make the most of this chance. After starting my term in Armenia, I constantly meet open and sincere people who are full of benevolence, new ideas and striving to pursue shared values. I am very grateful for the attitude and warm feelings of Armenians towards my country. For its part, Lithuania will continue to support Armenia in its efforts to increase resilience, protect democracy and establish a closer dialogue with the EU.

We admire the perseverance of the Armenian people to firmly defend your democratic choices, despite all the challenges - this only proves that our countries are moving in the same direction, and shared democratic values are the most important foundation of this relationship.

Interview by Davit Mamyan

Irvine dedicates spot for Armenian Genocide memorial

Irvine dedicated land in its Great Park over the weekend for an Armenian genocide memorial that was added to plans last year, the [Orange County Register](#) reports.

City officials, along with the Orange County Armenian Genocide Memorial

Committee, held a dedication ceremony on Sunday, April 28, in the Great Park for the future memorial. It will be located on the edge of a forested part of the park being called the "Heart of the Park," with a clearing in front of the memorial.

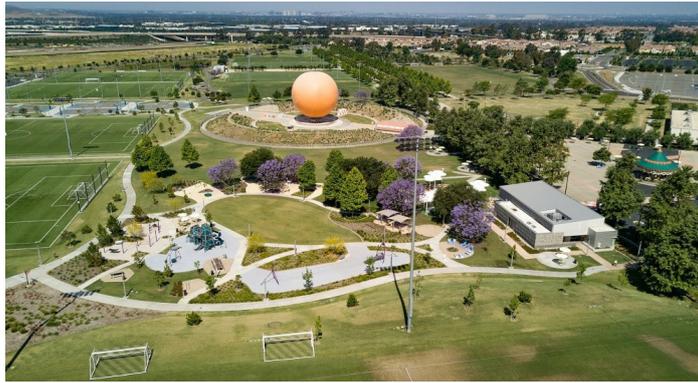
But the memorial is not just about

remembering what happened in the past, said Garo Madenlian, a founding member of the Orange County Armenian Genocide Memorial Committee, but is also intended to call attention to current or future atrocities.

Madenlian pointed to ➡ page 13

page 12 — the ongoing conflict between neighboring countries Armenia and Azerbaijan, saying Armenians are being targeted again. Earlier this month, a human rights organization asked the International Criminal Court to investigate claims that Azerbaijan is committing genocide against Armenians.

“It makes it more important to have something like this, to remember, never forget, but to be proactive to not let it continue to happen,” said Madenlian, an attorney who chairs the



Orange County Armenian Center.

The memorial is meant to “serve as an abstract or personified concept representing a memorializing of the tragedies

of the past, the present thriving community and the hopeful aspirations for the future,” city officials said in an announcement of the dedication, noting the city’s large Armenian American community.

The design for the memorial is still being worked on, said Madenlian. “The idea is for it to be a place that’s peaceful and quiet.”

The community plans to hold its annual gathering there once it’s completed, he said.

AGBU Distributes High-Capacity Generators Donated by France to Strategic Locations in Armenia

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) was charged with distributing four 100 KW diesel generators originally destined for Nagorno-Karabakh as part of a humanitarian aid mission funded by several municipalities and regions of France and facilitated by the Coordinating Council of Armenian Organizations of France (CCAF) in partnership with AGBU France.

It was nine months into Azerbaijan’s deadly blockade of the Lachin Corridor - the only road connecting Armenia to Nagorno-Karabakh - when Mayor of Paris Anne Hidalgo arrived in Armenia with a delegation of representatives of the French regions and cities, including the City of Paris, Marseille, Strasbourg and Lyon and the main French regions: Île-de-France, Auvergne Rhône Alpes, Hauts de France, Occitanie, Sud, Pays de la Loire. Their goal was to accompany a 10-truck convoy of vital humanitarian equipment and supplies to the people of Nagorno-Karabakh who had been isolated from the world and in desperate need of basic utilities, especially electricity. To this end, they collectively granted AGBU France 180,000 euros to deploy this emergency humanitarian aid.

“As the scarcity of goods and services escalated since the blockade was imposed in December 2022, the generators were meant to alleviate the human suffering from lack of heat, light, and power necessary for hospitals, schools, churches, and governing institutions to function.

“When Azeri troops denied the convoy entry through the Lachin Corridor, Mayor Hidalgo made urgent public appeals to the international community and statements



to the international press, demanding that Azerbaijan open the road for humanitarian purposes, as required by international law. These attempts were rebuffed by Azerbaijan, leaving valuable emergency aid stranded in Armenia.

“With the agreement of all donors, AGBU took responsibility to redeploy the generators to vulnerable communities in Armenia. This would become part of AGBU’s overall crisis response plan designed to avoid repetitions of the dire scenarios that played out in Artsakh in recent years,” the press release by AGBU reads.

“The availability of these four generators was most timely,” stated AGBU Central Board Member and AGBU France co-President Nadia Gortzounian. “We are highly alert to any possibility that border regions inside Armenia proper could lose power due to aggressions and undermining tactics by Azerbaijan. Witnessing the chaos that comes with lack of electricity, AGBU was fully onboard to fulfill the request from our partners and friends from France.”

Determining how best to allocate these generators, AGBU considered such criteria

as the potential recipient’s pivotal role in crisis response, past emergency events, energy needs, and overall community impact. The selection process identifying four sites that stood to benefit most from these powerful back-up sources, was realized in agreement with local authorities.

Goris Polyclinic: A vital emergency hub, this health facility seamlessly converts into an emergency hospital during crises but lacks a reliable backup energy source.

Goris Municipality: This administrative nerve center of southern Armenia, and in close proximity to Azerbaijan, requires uninterrupted power to avert operational disruptions in the face of adversities like infrastructure damage or severe weather events.

Sisian Municipality: A linchpin for communication and management, this area requires continuous connectivity to fulfill its strategic functions.

Martuni Maternity Hospital: A critical lifeline to mothers and newborns, this facility is highly vulnerable, as witnessed during the Artsakh War of 2020, when Azeri forces bombarded maternity wards and other health care centers in Nagorno-Karabakh. An auxiliary power source is essential to save innocent lives.

On March 28th in Martuni and April 4th in Sisian and Goris, the AGBU Armenia team orchestrated the delivery of generators to each location, marking a significant step towards bolstering the resilience of the communities involved and the overall national security of the country.

Grammy-nominated artist Aloe Blacc to premiere “SHINE” honoring Aurora humanitarians

Chart-topping and Grammy-nominated artist Aloe Blacc will debut a new single, “SHINE,” in honor of the Humanitarians supported by the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative, a foundation that seeks to address on-the-ground challenges around the world.

Blacc will premiere the new anthem on May 9 at the 2024 Aurora Prize for

Awakening Humanity Ceremony in Los Angeles. The Aurora Prize will award \$1 million to one Humanitarian based on their demonstrated record of courage, commitment, and impact. “SHINE” was inspired by the fortitude and fearlessness of heroes who fight for justice and humanity. The new single will be released on streaming services the same evening of its live debut, May 9, 2024, at 9 p.m. PT.

“I have always had a profound admiration for those who have endured and overcome dehumanizing experiences, such as Nelson Mandela, who eventually led his



nation out of darkness,” Blacc said. “Brave people such as Abdulhadi Al-Khawaja, Denis Mukwege, and Nasrin Sotoudeh, who are willing to risk their lives for the sake of others, give me a sense of hope that good will conquer evil.”

A native of Southern California, Blacc fell in love with music and started writing lyrics at a young age, going on to top global charts with “I Need a Dollar” and “The Man.” He also co-wrote and performed vocals on the megahit song “Wake Me Up” produced by Avicii, which topped the charts in 22 countries. Blacc has long

been involved in philanthropy, extending his commitment to social issues through his partnership with the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.

“Music has the power to uplift and unite all of humanity. We are grateful to Aloe Blacc for sharing his tremendous talent with Aurora and through “SHINE”, helping us continue to spotlight the important work of humanitarians around the world,” said Armine Afeyan, Executive Director of the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative. Afeyan

added: “We applaud Aloe for channeling his talent to benefit society at large and hope that as others listen to “SHINE,” they will connect with the power of his lyrics and message of hope.”

“All humans have a right to joy, safety, dignity, and humanity. We are all here to experience the best that life has to offer,” Blacc said. “With “SHINE,” I offer words of affirmation and motivation to encourage positive social transformation. I hope this song will motivate others to join the global humanitarian movement inspired by the Aurora Humanitarian Initiative.”

In the FIDE classification table, Armenia has 8 representatives



The International Chess Federation, FIDE, has published the ranking table for the month of May, Armenia has 4 representatives in the men’s ranking table. Hayk Martirosyan ranks 55th, Gabriel Sargsyan ranks 64th, Samvel Ter-Sahakyan ranks 84th and Hrnt Melkumyan ranks 95th.

Levon Aronian, the former leader of the Armenian men’s chess team and now representing the US, is 22nd in the ranking table.

In the women’s ranking table Elina Danielyan ranks 48th, Anna Sargsyan ranks 73rd, Lilit Mkrtychyan ranks 84th and Mariam Mkrtychyan ranks 98th.

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Noyan Tapan

The publisher: NT Holding LTD
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ՆՏ Հոլդինգ ԱՊԸ

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

Weekly Newspaper, Since May 4, 1993

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

Համարի թող. պատ.՝ Մ.Հարությունյան

ISSN 1829-0604
Գրանցման վկայականի համարը՝
03ԱՑՑ8368, տրված՝ 11.01.2013թ.
Registration certificate and the date:
273.110.00512, 15.12.1995

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