

Park of Life to be established in Yerevan in memory of fallen soldiers - PM Pashinyan’s address on the occasion of 30th anniversary of Independence



Armenia - A concert dedicated to the 30th anniversary of Armenia’s independence is held in Yerevan’s Republic Square, September 21, 2021.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan, together with his wife Anna Hakobyan, attended the main event dedicated to the Independence Day of the Republic of Armenia in the Republic Square of Yerevan. The event was attended by the President of the Republic of Armenia, the Speaker of the National Assembly, the Deputy Prime Ministers, representatives of the legislative, executive and judicial branches, citizens.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan delivered a congratulatory message dedicated to the 30th anniversary of the Republic of Armenia, which runs as follows,

“Honorable President of the Republic of Armenia,
Honorable President of the National Assembly,
Distinguished Members of the Government, Security Council,
Members of the parliament,
Distinguished representatives of the Judiciary,
Dear parents, relatives of our martyrs,
Dear attendees,

Let’s first honor the memory of all our martyrs who sacrificed their lives to the Motherland and its Independence with minute of silence.

Thank You.

➡ page 3

Arsen V. Ghazarian: “Tehran and Baku Must Negotiate”



The Head of the business community of Armenia about furas (cargo trucks) from Iran

Chairman of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen of Armenia (UMBA) Arsen Ghazarian commented on the situation on the Goris-Kapan roads.

Tehran should deal with Baku on the issue of fares of trucks on some sections of the Goris-Kapan route, President of the Union of Manufacturers and Businessmen of Armenia Arsen Ghazarian said in an interview with Sputnik Armenia, commenting on the situation with Iranian trucks passing along this highway in the Syunik region of Armenia. Earlier it was reported that Azerbaijani police is stopping and checking Iranian trucks, and, according to some data, they take money for travel from Iranians.

The road on a number of sites is controlled by the Azerbaijani side.

As Mr Ghazarian noted, at one time between Armenia and Iran also operated the provision about charging road duties, but later the sides agreed on its cancellation. “The amount that is being charged now from the Iranians (by the Azerbaijani policemen - ed.) is \$ 260: \$130 at the entrance and \$130 upon departure,” he said.

According to Mr Ghazarian, the Azerbaijanis consider these sections their territory and, based on this logic, charge the duty from foreign drivers.

Previously, the Deputy Mayor of the Goris City Karo Kocharyan in an interview with Sputnik Armenia stated that the Azerbaijani police is already checking Armenian trucks on the Goris-Kapan highway in the Syunik region as well.



Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan held a meeting with his Indian counterpart Subramanyam Jaishankar.

The interlocutors touched upon a wide range of issues on bilateral agenda, expressing satisfaction with the high level of traditional Armenian-Indian warm relations based on close ties. Both sides expressed readiness to raise the cooperation to a qualitatively new level.

The parties agreed to start substantive

Armenian, Indian FMs discuss developments around International North-South Transport Corridor

discussions on cooperation on specific programs in various fields. In this context, the importance of intensifying the high-level reciprocal visits was emphasized.

Ministers Mirzoyan and Jaishankar hailed the mutual support of Armenia and India within the framework of international structures.

The interlocutors also discussed the current developments around the International North-South Transport Corridor.

The Foreign Ministers of Armenia and India touched upon regional and international security issues. Minister Mirzoyan briefed his counterpart on the situation created as a result of the intrusion of Azerbaijani forces into the sovereign territory of

the Republic of Armenia.

In this context, the Minister praised India's principled position, as well as its continued support for a peaceful and comprehensive settlement of the Karabakh conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship format. Minister Mirzoyan reaffirmed Armenia's position on supporting India on the issues of Jammu and Kashmir.

The parties also discussed the situation in Afghanistan.

The meeting of the Foreign Ministers of Armenia and India took place in the capital of Tajikistan, Dushanbe, where Ararat Mirzoyan participated in the work of the CSTO structures.

UK Ambassador sees opportunities for cooperation with Armenia in the field of science and technology

The Minister of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia Vahagn Khachaturyan received the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the UK to Armenia John Gallagher.

As Noyan Tapan was informed from the Ministry, the Minister welcomed the Ambassador and presented the scope of the main functions and programs implemented by the Ministry, which include a number of issues related to digitalization, ecosystem creation, and the implementation of educational programs. Khachaturyan expressed confidence that within the framework of the reforms implemented in Armenia, there is a great potential for deepening cooperation with Great Britain in the sphere of high-tech industry.

Assessing the achievements of Great

Britain in the field of high-tech industry, the Minister highlighted the opportunities of exchange of experience, provision of consulting assistance, which will have a positive impact on Armenia. In connection with the re-equipment of industrial enterprises and the introduction of new technologies, the Minister offered the Ambassador to consider the possibility of establishing joint ventures.

Congratulating the Minister on the appointment, the Ambassador noted that the role of the Ministry of High-Tech Industry is very important for the development of the country, and that the Ministry has outlined quite ambitious programs, the potential of which exists in the country.

Ambassador John Gallagher sees many opportunities for cooperation with a

country like Armenia, which is recording developments in the field of science and technology.

The parties also touched upon the opportunities for cooperation between the two countries, particularly in educational, innovative, investment and market development programs.



Armenia, Iran leaders discuss organization of uninterrupted cargo transportation between the two countries



Iran's President Ebrahim Raisi and Armenia's Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan discussed on September 17 ways of deepening bilateral commercial ties complicated by an Azerbaijani checkpoint set up on the main highway connecting the two neighboring states.

Raisi and Pashinyan met on the side-

lines of a Collective Security Treaty Organization summit in Tajikistan as Azerbaijani officers stopped and demanded hefty payments from Iranian trucks transporting goods to and from Armenia for the sixth consecutive day.

More than a hundred such trucks were reportedly stranded on September 16 at a 21-kilometer section of the highway which the Armenian government controversially ceded to Azerbaijan following last year's war in Nagorno-Karabakh. Azerbaijani authorities set up the checkpoint there on Sunday after again accusing Iranian trucks of illegally shipping cargos to Nagorno-Karabakh.

The Armenian government's press office said Pashinyan and Raisi discussed,

among other things, ways of "organizing unfettered cargo shipments between the two countries" as well as "processes taking place in the region." It gave no details.

It was Pashinyan's second meeting with Raisi in less than two months. The two men held their first face-to-face talks in early August when the Armenian premier visited Tehran to attend Raisi's swearing-in ceremony held in the Iranian parliament.

During those talks Pashinyan reaffirmed his government's readiness to have Iranian companies participate in its plans to refurbish Armenian highways leading to the Islamic Republic. The two governments set up in May a working group tasked with looking into practical aspects of such participation.

page 1

But you are standing alive with your old and new wounds, You are standing thoughtful, on the mysterious path of the new and old.

With a groan from the depths of your heart, you are speaking to the God Pondering of a deeply hidden symbolism in your torments, Pondering about the Word you will tell the world, And you will become the country, where our spirits strive, Motherland of hope, Motherland of light.

These words of Hovhannes Tumanyan probably most accurately express the situation of our homeland, the Republic of Armenia, which is already 30 years old. What will we see if we look back at the 30-year history of our independent state? We will see successes and failures, we will see victories and defeats, we will see tears and joy, we will see inspiration and despair, we will see rapture and disappointment, we will see wars, both victorious and defeated.

The burden of the 44-day war in 2020 is hovering over this square, and perhaps this circumstance is the symbol of the crossroads that the great Tumanyan is talking about. How to live after this tragedy, how to look into the eyes of the children, widows, fathers and mothers of the victims, how to make their sacrifice not be considered meaningless.

This formula is perhaps our biggest task, to formulate the guideline of our life and future at this point of 30 years of independence for the coming decades of our independent state. My formulation is



the following.

History has shown and proved that victory in wars has not always been victory in general, in the same way the defeat in wars has not always been defeat in general. We must transform our defeat into victory, but we must also transform our formula for victory, because history has shown that it is not always necessary to defeat others for a victory. To win means to overcome despair, to overcome hopelessness, to overcome the fate, to overcome death.

So where are our martyrs?

They fell so as Armenia can live, they fell so as Artsakh can live. And as long as Armenia lives, as long as Artsakh lives, they are alive. When the Republic of Armenia is developing, when Artsakh is developing, their sacrifices have achieved their goal, because it's about the homeland of their children, their brothers and sisters.

And I want us to see the presence of our martyrs with us today, to see them as a symbol of life, and not of death, to make them symbol of victory over death, symbol of overcoming despair, overcoming hopelessness.

We have been discussing for a long-time what kind of project we should carry out to eternalize the memory of the victims of all the Artsakh wars, symbolizing their presence, their living next to us. And we decided to establish the Park of Life in the Yerevan Botanical Garden, where trees symbolizing the aliveness and presence of all the victims of all the Artsakh wars will be planted, and the culmination of the park will be the Tree of Life, symbolizing the lives of all our martyrs sacrificed to the homeland.

It will not be a memorial, it will be a park of life, where children will run, make noise, play, young people will have fun, adults will walk and talk, and that park will be about that they fell in order all these people, Armenia and Artsakh can live. And the living Armenia, living Artsakh, peaceful and developing Armenian statehood must become the victory they shaped.

Here, in the heart of this bright square, wrapped in Armenian flags and guarded by the guard of honor, these trees will be moved to the botanical garden, symbolizing the beginning of a new era in the history of the Republic of Armenia, the beginning of an era of peaceful development.

Live Armenia and rise, live Artsakh and rise, for the sake of the martyrs who fell for you to rise.

Congratulations on the 30th anniversary of the independence of the Republic of Armenia”.

Macron congratulates Armenia in Armenian



French President Emmanuel Macron has once again posted in Armenian to congratulate the country's President Armen Sarkissian on 30th anniversary of Armenia's independence.

France will spare no effort to find a lasting solution to the conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship, Macron said in the mes-

sage.

“I appreciate the significant path that the Armenian people have taken exactly 30 years ago since gaining independence to build a modern, democratic state. Thus, overcoming a number of trials, your country has managed to strengthen the activities of the institutions,” Mr. Macron said.

“France and Armenia are connected with a privileged relationship deeply rooted in history. These close and trusting friendly relations continue today in all spheres. I hope that this connection, which is the wealth of our bilateral relations, will deepen in various areas of cooperation, such as culture, education, healthcare or economy,” he added.

“France wants to play a role in bringing peace to the region, and it is in that spirit that it stands by Armenia to help it over-

come the challenges it faces a year after the bloody war in Nagorno-Karabakh. In this regard, France will be particularly committed to preserving the region's rich cultural heritage, which reflects the uniqueness and richness of the South Caucasus,” Emmanuel Macron continued.

Finally, he said, “we will spare no effort to find a lasting solution to the conflict within the framework of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship, to stabilize the situation in the South Caucasus in favor of regional development and prosperity.”

The French president stressed that it also implies the resumption of the dialogue between Armenia and Azerbaijan under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs. “France, as a co-chairing country, is ready to support this issue.”

PM Pashinyan presents the priorities as Armenia takes over chairmanship of CSTO

During the summit of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in Dushanbe, Armenia took over the chairmanship of the organization.

A decision was made to hold the next meeting of the CSTO Security Council in Yerevan in the fourth quarter of 2022.

It was also decided to hold large-scale CSTO military exercises in Tajikistan in the near future, which will involve various units of the Armed Forces of the CSTO member states.

Addressing the summit, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said the Armenian side would like partners to focus on consistent joint work aimed at the dynamic development of the organization and increase of the effectiveness of its mechanisms.

“In our opinion, it is necessary to continue working on deepening foreign policy coordination and mutual assistance to develop coordinated approaches to international and regional issues affecting the interests of the CSTO member states. To this end, we attach great importance to the holding of regular multi-level consultations, including in the “high-level group,” of which the Deputy Foreign and Defense Ministers are members. In our opinion, the



practice of adopting joint statements has justified itself, and it must continue,” PM Pashinyan stated.

“The logic of development of the situation in different regions of collective security has clearly shown the need to modernize crisis response mechanisms. The need for crisis monitoring, forecasting and prevention mechanisms is obvious. In practice, all this will take place, including through the full operation of the Crisis Response Center,” he added.

The Prime Minister noted that Armenia intends to work closely with the CSTO member states to increase the level of combat effectiveness, combat readiness, harmony and mobility of the CSTO forces. “There is no doubt that the potential of the CSTO Collective Forces needs to be modernized, developed, supplemented with

modern technologies, including drone, equipped with modern means,” Pashinyan said, attaching importance to improving the management of all this.

“It will be of great importance for our organization to further improve the measures and mechanisms for combating terrorism, extremism, ensuring information security, fighting against drugs, illegal migration, and human trafficking,” Pashinyan continued.

He added that the Armenian side proposes to take steps to strengthen CSTO’s authority in the international arena, including through expansion of cooperation with other interested international organizations. In this regard he attached importance to making maximum use of and developing the experience of joint work with the US, OSCE and other organizations.

“During the Armenian presidency, we intend to resume the practice of holding security conferences in Yerevan, taking into account the already established dialogue with the CSTO, OSCE and UN bodies. We have already heard a matching approach from our Kazakh friends, we are ready to work closely together,” Nikol Pashinyan said.



Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan held a telephone conversation on September 17 with French counterpart Jean-Yves Le Drian, discussing a number of issues, the Armenian foreign ministry reports.

The two ministers praised the constant development of the Armenian-French unique relations and reaffirmed their inter-

Armenian, French FM's discuss NK conflict's peaceful settlement over phone

est to expand the multi-sectoral cooperation. They agreed to discuss in the future the prospects of boosting the economic partnership, including through the implementation of new development programs in Armenia.

The Armenian and French FM's discussed the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, highlighting the necessity of resuming the peaceful settlement process within the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship. Ararat Mirzoyan said Armenia and its people highly value the position and steps of the French government and parliament during and after the 2020 aggression launched by

Azerbaijan against Artsakh.

The officials exchanged views also on the post-war humanitarian situation and highlighted the quick repatriation of Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives from Azerbaijan.

They also discussed the current situation caused by the recent illegal incursion of the Azerbaijani armed forces into Armenia’s sovereign territory. The ministers stressed the need for de-escalation of the situation and efforts for stability.

The Armenian FM also thanked the French side for the constant support in fighting COVID-19.

US committed to helping the sides negotiate a long-term political settlement of the Karabakh conflict – Blinken

US Secretary of State Antony Blinken has sent best wishes to the people of Armenia on the 30th anniversary of independence.

“In the three decades since Armenia rejected oppressive communist rule and declared independence from the Soviet Union, the United States and Armenia have developed a strong partnership based on respect for human rights, the rule of law, and democratic institutions. We appreciate Armenia’s dedication to both these shared values and to its international commitments that play such a vital role toward strengthening peace and stability in the region,” Blinken said in a message.



“We value the important contributions that Armenian-Americans have made that enrich communities across the United States and add to our nation’s vibrancy. These cultural connections

and our people-to-people ties continue to strengthen the bond between our nations,” he added.

As a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, the United States remains committed to helping the sides negotiate a long-term political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and address the humanitarian impact of the fighting, including the release of all detainees, accounting for those missing, and the full and expeditious exchange of remains,” the Secretary of State said.

“On this important day, we congratulate Armenia and look forward to building upon our strong bilateral relationship,” he concluded.

Armenia takes Azerbaijan to top UN Court



The Republic of Armenia on September 16 instituted proceedings against the Republic of Azerbaijan before the International Court of Justice, the principal judicial organ of the United Nations, with regard to alleged violations of the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (CERD).

The Applicant contends that “[f]or decades, Azerbaijan has subjected Armenians to racial discrimination” and that, “[a]s a result of this State-sponsored policy of Armenian hatred, Armenians have been subjected to systemic discrimination, mass killings, torture and other abuse”.

According to Armenia, these viola-

tions are directed at individuals of Armenian ethnic or national origin regardless of their actual nationality. Armenia claims that “[t]hese practices once again came to the fore in September 2020, after Azerbaijan’s aggression against the Republic of Artsakh and Armenia” and that “[d]uring that armed conflict, Azerbaijan committed grave violations of the CERD”.

The Applicant alleges that “[e]ven after the end of hostilities”, following a ceasefire which entered into effect on 10 November 2020, “Azerbaijan has continued to engage in the murder, torture and other abuse of Armenian prisoners of war, hostages and other detained persons”.

In the Application, Armenia claims, inter alia, that Azerbaijan “is responsible for violating the CERD, including Articles 2, 3, 4, 5, 6 and 7”. Armenia further contends that “[a]ll good-faith efforts by Armenia to put an end to Azerbaijan’s violations of the CERD through other means [have] failed”.

Armenia therefore requests the Court

“to hold Azerbaijan responsible for its violations of the CERD, to prevent future harm, and to redress the harm that has already been caused”.

As a basis for the Court’s jurisdiction, the Applicant invokes Article 36, paragraph 1, of the Statute of the Court and Article 22 of the CERD, to which both States are Parties.

The Application also contains a Request for the indication of provisional measures, filed pursuant to Article 41 of the Statute of the Court and Articles 73, 74 and 75 of the Rules of Court.

According to the Applicant, the purpose of its Request is to “protect and preserve Armenia’s rights and the rights of Armenians from further harm, and to prevent the aggravation or extension of this dispute, pending the determination of the merits of the issues raised in the Application”.

Armenia thus requests the Court to indicate certain provisional measures “as a matter of extreme urgency.

Queen congratulates Armenian President on Independence Day

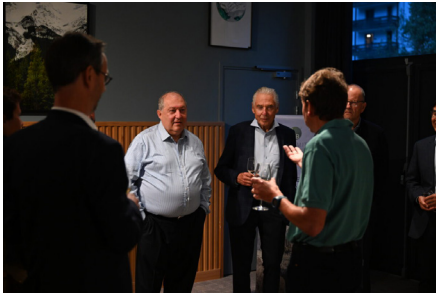
Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland has sent a congratulatory message to Armenian President Armen Sarkissian on the 30th anniversary of Armenia’s independence.

The message reads:

“On the occasion of Independence Day, I would like to convey my congratulations to Your Excellency and send my best wishes to the people of Armenia.

“I am hopeful that after a difficult year, we can look forward to overcoming global health challenges and having better times in the future.”





President Armen Sarkissian had a working meeting with the heads of more than two dozen well-known international companies, foundations and organizations (including Google, Cargill, Nestlé, Revolution, Highgate, OneRagtime) on the sidelines of the Summit of Minds in Chamonix, France.

The meeting was a unique opportunity to present Armenia's economic potential, areas with significant development potential and spheres of interest for cooperation.

The President touched upon the business environment in Armenia, attractive spheres for investments and investment opportunities.

President Sarkissian presents Armenia's economic potential to heads of major international companies

Speaking about the difficulties and challenges caused by the coronavirus pandemic and war, President Sarkissian particularly said that one should be able to find the right way out of the current situation, create conditions for economic development, outlined the most promising and serious development opportunities.

Answering the questions of the businessmen, President Sarkissian presented his vision of a strong Armenia of the future, noting that the greatest advantage of the Armenian nation – human resources, the whole potential of Armenia and the Armenians – should be used for the development of the country.

As one of the potential competitive advantages of our country, President Sarkissian emphasized its bridging role between the European Union and the Eurasian Economic Union, which opens new and seri-

ous opportunities for foreign businessmen and investors.

The President noted that he is ready to support as much as possible the companies and businessmen that are interested in cooperation with Armenia.

President Sarkissian invited the participants of the meeting to take part in the Third Armenian Summit of Minds scheduled for October 23-24 in Dilijan, Armenia.



TUMO announces \$50 million “TUMO Armenia” campaign to extend its learning network nationwide

Marking TUMO's 10 year anniversary and the inauguration of the new TUMO Gyumri building, the TUMO Center for Creative Technologies on September 18 announced a five year, \$50 million initiative to make its leading edge educational program available to all teenagers throughout Armenia and Artsakh, *PRNewswire* informs.

With 110 satellite facilities called TUMO Boxes connected to 16 fully equipped TUMO Hubs in regional centers, the program will serve 80 thousand students and reach all young Armenians even in the most remote villages.

A \$10 million seed fund donated by the Yemenidjian family will launch and support hubs in Vanadzor, Kapan and Koghb, along with TUMO Boxes that feed into these and three existing hubs. To raise the



remaining \$40 million, TUMO is kicking off an international fundraising campaign.

The Armenian General Benevolent Union and Elie & Elzbieta Akilian have each pledged to match up to \$10 million of funds raised in the first 2 years of the campaign. With \$10 million in seed funding, a \$20 million fundraising goal, and an additional \$20 million in matching contributions, the deployment initiative is already underway.

The announcement was made during the anniversary celebration of the official opening of the new TUMO center in Gyumri in the presence of government representatives, partners and friends. TUMO founders Sam and Sylva Simonian joined via live video and gave opening remarks.

“Our vision has always been to empower all young Armenians to achieve their full potential,” said Sam Simonian. “And now we are setting out to fulfill that vision throughout Armenia and Artsakh.”

Also attending were Armen Yemenidjian, representing the Yemenidjian family, Vasken Yacoubian and Vera Setrakian on behalf of AGBU, Elie Akilian, on behalf of Elie & Elzbieta Akilian, via video feed, and TUMO CEO Marie Lou Papazian.

“All roads must fully function” – Armenian Deputy PM



The Armenian government is carrying out intensive work to resolve the problems regarding the Goris-Kapan Road section as well as to improve the bypass through

Tatev to find alternative solutions, Deputy Prime Minister Mher Grigoryan said addressing the obstructions of Iranian cargo shipments in the Azerbaijani-controlled road section.

“We are now working intensively in two directions, both to resolve the problem and in terms of finding alternative solutions. I think the works will continue intensively in both directions, and eventually we will find some solution to this problem. If we give an alternative infrastructure

solution it would certainly be a very good solution, because it would balance the situation,” Grigoryan said at a press briefing.

The Deputy PM further noted that an infrastructure solution to the roads in Syunik implies mitigation of security and other risks, as well as a technical solution which would make traffic safer until a final solution is given to all remaining issues.

“All roads must be there and must fully function. That’s our desire and goal,” he said.



Armenian CodeSignal company secures \$50 for its tech hiring platform

In less than a year after raising \$25 million in Series B funding, technical assessment company CodeSignal announced a \$50 million in Series C funding to offer new features for its platform that helps companies make data-driven hiring decisions to find and test engineering talent, *TechCrunch* reports.

Similar to attracting a big investor lead for its B round — Menlo Ventures — it has partnered with Index Ventures to lead the C round. Menlo participated again and was joined by Headline and A Capital. This round brings CodeSignal’s total fundraising to \$87.5 million.

Co-founder and CEO Tigran Sloyan got the idea for the company from an experience his co-founder and friend Aram Shatakhtsyan had while trying to find an engineering job. Both from Armenia, the two went in different paths for college, with Shatakhtsyan staying in Armenia and

Sloyan leaving for the U.S. to study at MIT. He then went on to work at Google.

“As companies were recruiting myself and my classmates, Aram was trying to get his resume picked up, but wasn’t getting attention because of where he went to college, even though he was the greatest programmer I had ever known,” Sloyan told TechCrunch. “Hiring talent is the No. 1 problem companies say they have, but here was the best engineer, and no one would bring him in.”

They, along with Sophia Baik, started CodeSignal in 2015 to act as a self-driving interview platform that directly measures skills regardless of a person’s background. Like people needing to take a driver’s test in order to get a license, Sloyan calls the company’s technical assessment technology a “flight simulator for developers,” that gives candidates a simulated evaluation of their skills and comes back with a

score and highlighted strengths.

The need by companies to hire engineers has led to CodeSignal growing 3.5 times in revenue year over year and to gather a customer list that includes Brex, Databricks, Facebook, Instacart, Robinhood, Upwork and Zoom.

The new funding enabled the company to launch its Integrated Development Environment for candidates to interact with relevant assessment experiences like codes, files and a terminal on a machine that is familiar with them, so that they can showcase their skills, while also being able to preview their application. At the same time, employers are able to assign each candidate the same coding task based on the open position.

In addition, Sloyan intends to triple the company’s headcount over the next couple of months and expand into other use cases for skills assessment.

Armenia and Europol sign agreement to combat cross-border serious organized crime

On 16 September, Europol and Armenia signed a strategic cooperation agreement to expand cooperation to combat cross-border criminal activities.

The agreement will enable both partners to work on some key areas such as migrant smuggling, cybercrime, drug trafficking, asset recovery, money laundering, organized property crime and trafficking in human beings.

The agreement allows for the exchange

of general strategic intelligence as well as strategic and technical information and operational information with the exception of personal data, and will lead to the secondment of a Armenian Liaison Officer to Europol.

The signing of the Agreement on Strategic Cooperation concludes the successful negotiations between Armenia and Europol on how to effectively join forces to fight serious and organized crime.



After entry into force of the agreement, this new level of cooperation will be important for tackling priority crime areas affecting both the European Union and Armenia.

COAF and AMAA Partner to Revamp Dairy Production in Lori Region of Armenia

Yerevan — Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) signed a four-year Memorandum of Understanding with the Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) on September 17 to upgrade dairy production in six communities of the Lori region. By improving the pasture and livestock feed production across the region, this project will enhance the quality of raw milk and establish a demand for high-quality dairy products, ultimately impacting regional price dynamics and increasing the revenue of rural milk producers.

The event was held at the COAF SMART Center and attended by representatives from the Strategic Development Agency (SDA) and World Wide Fund For Nature (WWF), Caritas Armenia, AMCOR, as well as mayors of the beneficiary communities.

In a constant endeavor to improve the livelihoods of rural children, COAF has integrated Economic Development in its multilayered effort to create the right socio-economic environment for collective progress. As part of its Economic Development program, COAF has earlier launched a project in partnership with the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). This program has resulted in developing a raspberry value chain in the Lori region by providing berry seedlings, establishing a drip irrigation system, and training over 50 households in berry production and cultivation.

Drawing on successes achieved in this project, COAF is eager to replicate this model for Armenia's underdeveloped dairy value chain. In joining forces with the AMAA, COAF will be able to make a sustainable impact on Lori's dairy market by optimizing four existing businesses



through innovative and renewable technologies in milk processing. Simultaneously, two new dairy production businesses will be established that will benefit from the enhanced reproductive performance of dairy animals. The improved quality of milk will allow the new businesses to improve livestock production, produce high-quality cheese, and compete in local and international markets.

As part of the project's capacity-building programs, local farmers will be trained for artificial insemination and cultivation of corn, alfalfa, and sainfoin. Per partners' estimates, more than 70 job opportunities will be created throughout the project.

About COAF

The Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that employs community-led approaches to improve the quality of life in rural Armenia, with a particular focus on children and youth. COAF's core development areas are education, healthcare, social services, and economic development. COAF launched its programs in 2004, starting in one village and expanding to 64 villages in the Armavir, Aragatsotn, Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak, and Tavush regions, impacting more than 107,000 beneficiaries.

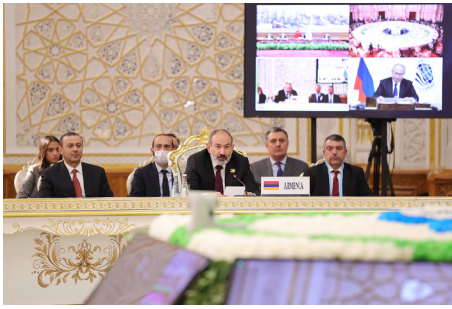
Since 2015, COAF has developed and implemented its signature SMART Initiative. COAF SMART is designed to advance generations of rural Armenians through cutting-edge education, focused both on innovation and capacity-building. The first COAF SMART Center was inaugurated on May 27, 2018, near the village of Debet, Lori Region, and will be replicated in communities throughout Armenia.

About AMAA

The Armenian Missionary Association of America (AMAA) was founded on June 7, 1918 in Worcester, Massachusetts. Immediately after the devastating earthquake of 1988 in Armenia, the AMAA worked tirelessly to relieve the pain of those affected by the earthquake by providing food, clothing, medicine, and medical equipment.

In 1991, after the independence of Armenia and following the registration of the AMAA in Armenia, the new headquarters opened in Yerevan. Currently the AMAA operates from dozens of offices in various regions of the Republic of Armenia and Artsakh with more than 475 employees. The mission of AMAA Armenia is the promotion of the Armenian people's welfare. The organization strives to help them improve their lives by providing financial, medical, social, educational, spiritual, cultural and employment assistance. Since 1991 AMAA Armenia reached out to more than 100 000 beneficiaries in difficult life situations. The AMAA has a special focus on child welfare and education, however, it also maintains the integrity and quality of its services to other parts of society.

Armenia strongly interested in effectively curbing the threat of international terrorism – PM



In Dushanbe, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan participated in a joint meeting of the Collective Security Treaty Organization and the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, attended by member states of the two organizations. The situation in Afghanistan was discussed during the meeting.

At the beginning of his speech, Prime Minister Pashinyan greeted the heads of the “delegations” of the states. “First of all, I would like to congratulate all those present on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization.

Over the years, the SCO has emerged as a potential platform for regional security and cooperation.

I would like to thank the President of Tajikistan, Emomali Rahmon, for the warm reception and organization of today’s meeting.

“Our meeting comes at a time when radical change in Afghanistan has created a whole new situation in the country. Their nature has a significant impact not only on developments in the country and the region, but also on the situation and events around the world,” PM Pashinyan said, addressing the meeting.

“We are closely following developments in and around Afghanistan. The initial statements about the end of hostilities, the general amnesty of government officials, the intention to form an inclusive coalition government, respect for women’s rights in the Islamic legal system, and the desire to eradicate drug production in the country were welcomed by the international community. Prompt and full implementation of such measures would contribute to the establishment of peace, order and stability in the country,” the Armenian PM added.

He noted, however, that these intentions are yet to be reflected in the steps taken by the Taliban. “We are convinced that the guarantee of a long-term settlement of the situation in Afghanistan is a fair political process with the involvement of all Afghans and the representation of all ethnic and religious communities in the

country.”

He noted that it’s necessary for all parties to show restraint, to reaffirm their readiness to resolve their differences exclusively through dialogue and negotiations.

“As a CSTO member state, we wanted peace and tranquility in all areas of collective security within the CSTO area of responsibility. Armenia is strongly interested in effectively curbing the threat of international terrorism in the CSTO and SCO regions. In the absence of an adequate response at the right time, this could lead to further escalation of the situation, with the penetration of terrorist networks into neighboring countries, especially conflict zones,” Pashinyan stated.

“We strongly condemn terrorism and extremism in all their forms and manifestations. The use of terrorist organizations by certain countries to achieve certain military-political goals is especially unacceptable,” he added.

He called for closer dialogue, cooperation, first of all, at the level of law enforcement agencies, special services, exchange of information, experience, as well as effective joint actions to neutralize the threat of terrorism within the framework of our Organization.

Iran’s Raisi congratulates Armenia on Independence Day, hails the level of bilateral ties

Iran’s President Ebrahim Raisi has congratulated Armenian Prime Minister and the people of Armenia on Independence Day.

“It is gratifying that in the past years the mutually beneficial relations between the two neighboring countries, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Republic of Armenia, have progressed, developed in quantitative and qualitative terms. However, in regional and global conditions, the two countries’ great potential has given greater impetus to the deepening of bilateral rela-



tions and necessitated the implementation of previously reached agreements, redoubled efforts, the discovery of new areas of cooperation and the strengthening of structural ties between the two countries,

especially in the fields of transportation and energy,” Mr. Raisi said in a message to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan.

He said it was no coincidence that the new governments of the two countries started their activity in the same period, and voiced hope that due to the diligence and vigilance of the parties and the efforts of the respective bodies of the two countries it would be possible to reach significant achievements in terms of regional security and stability, and reinforcement of interests of the two friendly peoples.

Head Of New Armenian Anti-Corruption Body Appointed

The Armenian government on September 16 appointed a long-serving senior law-enforcement official as head of a newly established agency tasked with investigating corruption cases.

The Anti-Corruption Committee (ACC) will inherit most of its powers from divisions of four Armenian law-enforcement bodies that have long prosecuted corruption-related crimes. One of them, the Special Investigative Service (SIS), will be dissolved after the ACC starts operating in full next year.

The ACC will be headed by Sasun Khachatryan, the SIS chief until now. He was nominated for the post by a government commission that declared him the winner of a job contest organized by it.

Speaking during a cabinet meeting in Yerevan immediately after his appointment, Khachatryan expressed confidence



that the new agency will increase the efficiency of the government's fight against corruption. He said the ACC will start operating by the end of October and will finally take shape "in the course of next year."

Khachatryan, 44, worked as a senior prosecutor under Armenia's former governments and was appointed as SIS chief shortly after Nikol Pashinyan came to power in 2018. Pashinyan has repeatedly

claimed to have eliminated "systemic corruption" in Armenia since then.

The SIS and other law-enforcement agencies have launched dozens of high-profile corruption investigations mainly targeting former senior state officials, including ex-Presidents Robert Kocharyan and Serzh Sargsyan.

Supporters of Kocharyan and Sargsyan, who now lead major opposition alliances, as well as other critics of Pashinyan say that most of those corruption cases are based on dubious charges and aimed at boosting the prime minister's popularity, rather than the rule of law. They have accused Khachatryan of acting on Pashinyan's orders.

The outgoing SIS chief again denied executing such orders earlier this week.

'Armenian people continue to make great strides in bolstering democracy and rule of law' – Congresswoman



Co-chair of the bipartisan congressional Armenian Caucus, Congresswoman Jackie Speier has addressed a video message on the 30th anniversary of Armenia's independence.

"It's almost two years ago to the day when I last visited Armenia and I was deeply moved by the incredible warmth, resilience, and hospitality of the American people in our homeland. I was especially impressed by the bright young people that I met and who will no doubt find Armenia's next chapter.

They are brilliant inspiring and capable, and I expect great things from them. One only needs to look to Armenia's parliament where over 1/3 of the 132 parliamentarians are first time public officeholders. To

see the younger generation hard at work to change their country for the better is really terrific. Armenians also understand that woman's equality and contributions are key to a peaceful and prosperous democracy. Women make up approximately 25% of the Armenian parliament and the percentage of women political candidates has increased by 17% since 2012.

In fact enshrined in the constitution of Armenia is the guarantee of gender equality between men and women, something that the United States still does not have in its constitution some 233 years after its ratification.

We in the United States could certainly learn a thing or two about representative democracy from Armenia. Armenia's democratic progress is even more striking given the difficulty and painful history it arises from, as well as last year's tragic war in Artsakh. The violence last fall caused an appalling loss of life and displaced nearly 100,000 people from their homes.

I was proud to lead the effort in the House of Representatives this year to include \$50 million in appropriations for

humanitarian assistance to Armenia to help rebuild and \$2 million to fund the life-saving humanitarian demining program in Artsakh.

The people of that region deserve to live work and play without fear of aggression and the deadly aftereffects of war. Despite these grave threats and challenges the Armenian people continue to make great strides in bolstering democracy and strengthening the rule of law. Armenia's progress as a testament to its people and to its leaders who have guided it through this transformation with compassion and determination.

So Happy Independence Day Armenia! I will be celebrating with you and looking forward to a time when I can return once again to experience the wonderful hospitality in our beautiful country.

I know that the future of Armenia is bright and by working together we can ensure peace and prosperity for Armenia and the United States, as we further strengthen our unshakeable bond", the Congresswoman said in her message.

European Court finds the freedom of expression of Armenian Haykakan Zhamanak daily was violated in 2008



Chamber's judgment¹ in the case of **Dareskizb Ltd v. Armenia**, the European Court of Human Rights held, unanimously, that there had been **a violation of Article 10 (freedom of expression)**, of the European Convention on Human Rights, **and a violation of Article 6 § 1 (right to a fair trial)**.

The case concerned actions by State

authorities during a state of emergency following a presidential election in 2008, during which the applicant company was prevented from publishing its newspaper, *Haykakan Zhamanak*. It also concerned the court proceedings that followed.

Armenia's incumbent Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan was the editor-in-chief of *Haykakan Zhamanak* daily at the time and

held the post until 2012.

The Court found in particular that the restriction on publication had had no purpose other than to limit criticism of the Government and had thus gone against the core of the right to freedom of expression as protected under the Convention.

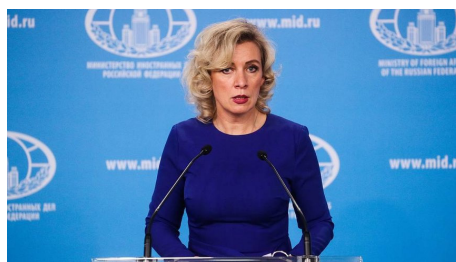
It furthermore found that the Administrative Court's refusal to hear the applicant company's case, claiming jurisdictional issues, had specifically denied the applicant company access to a court.

The Court ruled that the respondent State is to pay the applicant company, within three months from the date on which the judgment becomes final in accordance with Article 44 § 2 of the Convention, EUR 9,000, plus any tax that may be chargeable, in respect of non-pecuniary damage, to be converted into the currency of the respondent State at the rate applicable at the date of settlement.

Moscow expects Baku and Yerevan to respond to proposals on border issue – Zakharova

Moscow has submitted its proposals on the process of delimitation and demarcation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border to Baku and Yerevan and expects a quick response, official representative of the Russian Foreign Ministry Maria Zakharova told reporters on September 16 *TASS* reports.

"We are closely monitoring the situation in certain sections of the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan. The development of the situation, including near the village of Vorotan, reiterates the need for an early start of the process of delimi-



tation of the Armenian-Azerbaijani border with its subsequent demarcation. Russian proposals in this regard have been submitted to both Baku and Yerevan, we expect a quick response," the diplomat said.

Zakharova added that the Russian side will continue joint efforts with Azerbaijan and Armenia to unblock economic and

transport ties in the region in line with the trilateral statements of November 2020 and January 2021.

She noted that Moscow and Baku are in contact on the topic of joint military exercises of Azerbaijan and Turkey in Nagorno-Karabakh. "The Russian position on this matter was brought to the attention of official Baku," she said, adding that "it was accepted with understanding by the Azerbaijani partners."

Zakharova refrained from further public comment, noting that they are in contact with the Azerbaijani partners.

U.S. House set to vote on measure demanding release of Armenian POWs, requiring investigation into Azerbaijani war crimes



The U.S. House Rules Committee cleared the path for full House consideration of an ANCA-backed amendment led by Representatives Tony Cardenas (D-CA), Adam Schiff (D-CA), and Brad Sherman (D-CA) calling for Azerbaijan's immediate release of Armenian prisoners of war and requiring an investigation into the use of U.S. technology in drones used by Turkey and Azerbaijan to target civilians during their 2020 attacks against Artsakh.

The Rules Committee also voted to allow full House votes on pro-Artsakh/Armenia amendments led by Representatives Frank Pallone (D-NJ), David Valadao (R-CA), Dina Titus (D-NV), and Jim McGovern (D-MA).

The amendments will be voted on during House consideration of the FY2022 National Defense Authorization Act (H.R.4350), which may begin as early as today.

"We thank Chairman McGovern and his colleagues in the House leadership and on both the Armed Services and the Rules Committees for providing each member of the U.S. House of Representatives with the opportunity to cast up-or-

down votes on amendments demanding the immediate release of Armenian POWs, requiring an investigation of Azerbaijani war crimes, a report on U.S. aid to Artsakh, banning the Grey Wolves, and other ANCA-backed amendments to the National Defense Authorization Act," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "We encourage our community activists and coalition partners – in the hours leading up to these House floor votes – to continue weighing in with their legislators, via calls, emails, and tweets."

The Cardenas-Schiff-Sherman amendment states it is the sense of Congress that "Azerbaijan must immediately and unconditionally return all Armenian prisoners of war and captured civilians." It goes on to demand a report from the Secretary of Defense on the use of U.S. technology in Turkish drones used by Azerbaijan to attack Armenia and Artsakh during the 2020 war. The bi-partisan amendment was also cosponsored by Representatives Gus Bilirakis (R-FL), Judy Chu (D-CA), Anna Eshoo (D-CA), Young Kim (R-CA), Raja Krishnamoorthi (D-IL), Andy Levin (D-MI), Zoe Lofgren (D-CA), Frank Pallone (D-NJ), Katie Porter (D-CA), Janice

Schakowsky (D-IL), Jackie Speier (D-CA), Dina Titus (D-NV), and David Valadao (R-CA). The full text of the amendment is available [here](#).

"It is critical that we get a full accounting of the facts as we look to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its actions in Nagorno Karabakh last year," said Rep. Cardenas. "I am glad to have worked closely with Reps. Schiff and Sherman to produce an amendment that does exactly that. This report is critical to getting a clear picture of the extent of Azerbaijan's actions and any potential violations of international law. Additionally, it will make clear that the United States Congress expects Azerbaijan to honor its obligation to carry out the unconditional return of any remaining Armenian prisoners of war safely to Armenia. I am thankful for the bipartisan group of cosponsors that has joined us in this effort, and will work hard to see that the report gets done." Rep. Schiff concurred, adding, "It is unconscionable that as we approach the one-year anniversary of the war in Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan continues to illegally detain Armenian service members and captured civilians – a reality made even more horrific by ongoing reports that these prisoners of war are subject to torture in violation of international human rights conventions." Rep. Schiff went on to note, "With this amendment, we are making it absolutely clear to the Aliyev regime that they have the obligation to release these prisoners immediately and unconditionally, and that the Biden administration should take every possible diplomatic action, including through the OSCE Minsk Group, to hold them to account."

Maral Najarian repatriates to Armenia

Maral Najarian, a Lebanese Armenian, who spent four months in Azerbaijani captivity, has repatriated to Armenia, the Diaspora High Commissioner's Office reports.

Ms. Najarian had a meeting with High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs Zareh Sinanyan and the Office's Head of Repatriation Hovhannes Aleksanyan on September 15.

She described her experience in an Azerbaijani prison, her release and current health condition. Reference was made to how the Office can help Maral find a job in Armenia.



"Maral's experience and her unwavering patriotism make her an exemplary figure for the global Armenian community," the Office said.

Najarian, along with her sister Ani, repatriated to Artsakh from Lebanon just before the start of the war on September 27. On November 9, Najarian told her sister that she was in Goris and would be heading towards Artsakh to retrieve her belongings with her friend Viken Euljekjian, a fellow Lebanese Armenian. That would be the last time the sisters would speak. Najarian and Euljekjian were kidnapped in Berdzor by Azerbaijani Armed Forces. Maral was released in March, while Euljekjian is still in captivity.

Library of Congress spotlights books, maps, photos on the history, politics and culture of Armenia



As Armenia celebrates the 30th anniversary of independence, the Library of Congress spotlights the plenty of books, periodicals, newspapers, maps and photographs on the history, politics and culture of Armenia.

September 21 marks the 30th anniversary of Armenia's Independence from the Soviet Union. The day in 1991 was the second time Armenia declared independence in the 20th century. The foundations of statehood were laid during the short-lived First Republic established on May 28, 1918, before the Bolshevik takeover in 1920.

The Library of Congress has a wealth of books, periodicals, newspapers, maps

and photographs on the history, politics and culture of Armenia and its expansive diaspora communities. A significant part of the Armenian-language material is held in the African and Middle Eastern Division (AMED).

The Library has shared an illustration from a book published in Soviet Armenia (1961) depicting Armenian epic hero David of Sassoun from AMED's Armenian Rarities Collection; a plan of Armenia's capital Yerevan (1920) during the First Republic from the Geography and Maps Division, and an image of Armenian women sewing shirts for the army (1918) from the Prints and Photographs Division.

CSTO to hold "Thunder-2021" special exercise in Armenia

From 24 to 28 September, a special exercise "Thunder-2021" will be held on the territory of the Republic of Armenia featuring units of anti-drug services, internal affairs agencies and special services that are part of the special forces of the Collective Rapid Reaction Forces of the CSTO. The exercise will be held in accordance with the 2021 plan for joint training of command-and-control bodies and formations of forces and means of the CSTO collective security system.

During the first phase, the combined special forces groups of the competent authorities of the CSTO member states and the Armed Forces of Armenia will work out training and practical tasks in mountainous terrain.

Special forces from the CSTO member states, together with units of the Armed Forces and Border Troops of Armenia, will work out interaction, acquire experience and skills in participating in a special operation in conditions as close as possible to

combat.

During the second phase of the exercise, competitions in tactical shooting from military weapons will be held, practical actions of joint operational-combat groups of special forces will be played out.



Armenian President, WHO Director General discuss vaccination process



On a working visit to Geneva, President Armen Sarkissian had a meeting with the Director General of the World Health Organization, Tedros Adhanom Ghebreyesus.

The Armenian president and the head of the World Health Organization talked about the process of vaccination against COVID-19. They noted that vaccination is the main means and opportunity to fight against the epidemic, for its prevention and treatment, and for restoring normal life.

The parties expressed concern over the fact that Armenia is still among the countries with a low vaccination rate and has recently found itself in the red zone, which implies possible restrictions for the country and its citizens. Vaccine is an affordable, safe and effective way to overcome the sit-

uation. In this context, President Sarkissian attached importance to the support of international partners.

President Sarkissian invited the WHO Director General to Armenia to meet with partners in the field of healthcare and participate in the third Armenian Summit of Minds scheduled for October 23-24 this year. The President proposed to organize a discussion within the framework of the summit on innovative measures for the treatment of COVID 19 and prevention of its new outbreaks.

Sweden to reintroduce entry ban on residents of Armenia

The Swedish Government has decided to ban from entering the country all persons travelling from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Japan, and Serbia since they have been removed from the list of epidemiologically safe third countries.

The decision to ban entry for the six countries has been announced by the Ministry of Justice of Sweden and will enter into force next Monday, September 20, [SchengenVisaInfo.com](https://www.schengenvisa.info) reports.

"The Government has adopted amendments to the temporary ban on entry into Sweden. The decision means that the ban



will be reintroduced for entry from a number of countries in accordance with the Council of the European Union's updated recommendations for travel into the EU Member States," the statement of the Ministry of Justice reads.

This means that starting from Monday, only travelers reaching Sweden for abso-

lutely necessary purposes can enter from Albania, Armenia, Azerbaijan, Brunei, Japan, and Serbia. Travel for essential purposes is only allowed to those who hold a Swedish residence permit, travelers who transit through the territory of Sweden, healthcare workers, travelers who carry out essential duties, researchers in health and medical care, and elderly staff, among others.

Vaccinated travelers may soon be exempted from the entry ban, but an official statement regarding the matter hasn't been given yet.

Yerevan to have a modern skate park

Yerevan will soon have a modern public skate park. The construction of the recreation area is in the final stage, the Yerevan City Hall informs.

"We have been waiting for this skate park for about eight years, with the park skateboarding in Armenia will open a new page and reach a new level. This will allow us to have competitive skateboarding. Here we will be able to organize not only local competitions, but also host guests from different countries," said Emil Sardaryan, President of the Skateboarding Federation

of Armenia.

The Union of Armenians of Ukraine has taken responsibility for the improvement of about 5,000 square meters of public space. This is one of the best examples of community-private partnership.

The program was launched last year when Mayor Hayk Marutyan signed a contract with the donor, President of the Union of Armenians of Ukraine Vilen Shatvoryan. The area is expected to have an aid station, a skate rental point, a public bathroom, the green areas free from construction will be

improved and supplemented with a unique landscape design. An energy saving policy will be applied.



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