

## Armenian PM addresses congratulatory message on Army Day



Improving the Army’s combat readiness, arsenal and the military service conditions is our priority, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in a congratulatory address on the occasion of Army Day.

On the 30th anniversary of formation of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia, the Prime Minister said “during these three decades the Armenian Army has had both glorious days and passed through many challenges.”

“The Armenian people appreciate the heroism of all our heroes, those soldiers, officers, generals and volunteers who have fought until the end for the defense, security, sovereignty and territorial integrity of the Homeland,” he noted.

“Today we are pursuing the path of systematic reforms aimed at further developing the Armed Forces, by re-assessing the past path of the Army, the advantages, shortcomings and problems it had. The Republic of Armenia will have a professional army, and the Government will carry out that work tirelessly, without

despondency and pessimism, but with optimism on the path of building our security environment. Improving the Army’s combat readiness, arsenal and the military service conditions is our priority.,” PM Pashinyan said.

“Since 2018, the Government of Armenia has started the process of improving the social and living conditions of servicemen, and it will be continuous. Each soldier and officer of the Republic of Armenia must feel the state’s support, and we will be consistent in that process. Military service should deserve special public respect and appreciation, which must be expressed also by the system of special social guarantees to the servicemen and their families,” he continued.

The Prime Minister emphasized that “in parallel, service assessment criteria for intellectual, professional, physical and psychological preparedness should also be raised, and the public respect and appreciation towards the Army should be based on these points.”

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## Armenia, Luxembourg keen to promote political dialogue



On a working visit to Luxembourg, Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan held a meeting with the Foreign Minister of Luxembourg Jean Asselborn.

The Foreign Ministers of the two countries commended the cooperation in the fields of democracy, protection of the rule of law and human rights, as well as the fight against corruption. Ararat Mirzoyan and Jean Asselborn expressed their willingness to promote the political dialogue between the two countries.

It was emphasized, that ahead to the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between Armenia and

Luxembourg, the first official visit of the Foreign Minister of Armenia during the history of bilateral cooperation will serve as a new impetus for utilizing the untapped potential of collaboration.

Sides exchanged views on deepening the Armenia-EU partnership, in the context of which – the effective implementation of the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement was emphasized.

The interlocutors underlined the importance of cooperation between the Parliaments of the two states, particularly through the Armenia-Luxembourg friendship groups.

The Ministers commended the effective cooperation within the framework of international organizations, including the CoE, OSCE, and the United Nations, and expressed mutual readiness to undertake efforts towards strengthening the close cooperation at the multilateral level.

The Foreign Ministers of Armenia and Luxembourg discussed issues of regional

and international security. The sides exchanged views on the solution of humanitarian issues resulting from the aggression unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh. Minister Mirzoyan expressed gratitude for the clear position of Luxembourg since the first days of the 44-day war, including for the adoption of the resolution by the Parliament of Luxembourg condemning the armed hostilities unleashed by Azerbaijan against Artsakh.

Both sides stressed the need for a comprehensive and lasting settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, within the mandate of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairmanship.

During the meeting, sides touched upon the process of normalization of relations between Armenia and Turkey without preconditions. The importance of establishing preconditions for cooperation between the states of the region and for sustainable development was emphasized.

## Armenia attaches special importance to steady progress in relations with India – Pashinyan to Modi

Armenia attaches special importance to the steady progress of relations with friendly India, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in a congratulatory message to the Prime Minister of the Republic of India Narendra Modi on the occasion of the country's National day.

“This year we are marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between the Republic of Armenia and the Republic of India and I have to state with satisfaction that the tra-

ditional warm relations and mutual support of our countries and peoples dating back to centuries ago, continue to be strengthened, and the interstate interactions and ties are expanding and deepening,” the Prime Minister said.

“Armenia attaches special importance to the steady progress of relations with friendly India. I am convinced that ahead of the important jubilee, by joint efforts, it will be possible to give new quality and new content to all areas of mutual interest



for the comprehensive and continuous development of the Armenian-Indian cooperation,” he continued.

PM Pashinyan wished good health and success to Narendra Modi and peace and prosperity to the friendly people of India.

## Armenian Foreign Minister meets Luxembourg's Prime Minister

On January 26, within the framework of the official visit to Luxembourg, Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan held a meeting with the Prime Minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel.

Underlining that 2022 marks the 30th anniversary of establishment of diplomatic relations, the sides commended the friendly relations and mutually beneficial cooperation between the two countries over the past three decades.

Ararat Mirzoyan and Xavier Bettel touched upon the prospects of developing

the Armenian-Luxembourg relations anchored on mutual trust, respect and common values, expressing mutual readiness to deepen the political dialogue between the two countries, the collaboration within multilateral platforms, cooperation in the spheres of economy, IT, science and education through joint efforts.

Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan conveyed to the Prime Minister of Luxembourg Xavier Bettel the invitation of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan to visit Armenia.

After the meeting, the Foreign Minister of Armenia and the Prime Minister of Luxembourg had a tour in the capital, where the state flag of Armenia was raised in front of the Chamber of Deputies, the Government and the Foreign Ministry in honor of the official visit of the Foreign Minister of Armenia. During the tour, Ararat Mirzoyan and Xavier Bettel continued to exchange views on important issues on the bilateral agenda.



## Armenian, Georgian justice ministries ramp up cooperation



Armenian Minister of Justice Karen Andreasyan and Georgia's Minister of Justice Rati Bregadze signed a memorandum on cooperation during the latter's visit to Armenia.

"We have a broad agenda that we'll try to cover during the next two days," Andreasyan said, thanking Minister Bregadze and his delegation for visiting Armenia.

"During our first meeting, which took place in Italy during the European Council's ministerial meeting, we raised a number of issues of concern for Armenia,

because we are currently undergoing important reforms. The other important direction is the unified offices where the citizens of our countries receive all public services. Armenia has excellent lasting experience in this very sector and the practice of introducing the Justice Houses which Georgia has implemented is very important for us, because we are just starting the

formation and development of the Justice Houses," Andreasyan said.

In turn, the Georgian Minister of Justice thanked Andreasyan for the warm reception and said: "We agreed in Venice that we'll actively cooperate and I am glad that we've already started the work. Currently Armenia and Georgia have very warm relations. I think there has never been this kind of relations. And this is certainly thanks to our prime ministers. I am sure that our meeting and cooperation is the reflection of the relations and I hope that we will also

warmly and closely cooperate and that we will contribute to the development of the two countries with our work," Minister Bregadze said.

Minister Bregadze added that they've brought their mobile Justice House and an innovation device which enables persons under probation to receive all services that are being rendered at probation bureaus.

Minister Andreasyan and Minister Bregadze agreed to organize a Congress of Armenian and Georgian Lawyers in Georgia in February.

"We've agreed to work in the direction of fighting falsification of documents, this will enable to protect the rights of the citizens of our countries. We will also jointly contribute to education and carry out student exchange. At the initiative of Karen Andreasyan, we will very actively cooperate in the sector of [extradition] of convicted prisoners and detainees," the Georgian Minister of Justice said.

page 1 ➔ On the occasion of the Army Day, Nikol Pashinyan expressed gratitude to all volunteers, soldiers, officers and generals who were at the roots of the formation of the Armenian Army.

"I would like to thank all defenders

of our Homeland, all servicemen for the sacrifices they made for unconditionally serving our country and people in these difficult conditions. I also like to thank their families for their patience, endurance, and for standing firm with their servicemen

relatives and the Homeland," the Prime Minister added.

"I bow to our heroic martyrs. Their memory is immortal, their work is sacred. God bless the Armenian army," he concluded.

## 73rd Republic Day of India celebrated in Yerevan

The 73rd Republic Day of India was celebrated at the Embassy of India in Yerevan (Armenia) on 26th January, 2022, Noyan Tapan was informed from the Embassy of India.

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of Republic of India to Armenia and Georgia, K. D. Dewal unfurled the national flag in the morning of 26th January in presence of a large gathering comprising of Indian nationals and Armenian friends of India.

On the occasion, Ambassador read out



the address to the nation by the Hon'ble President of India Shri Ram Nath Ji Kovind delivered on the eve of the 73rd Re-

public Day.

Ambassador conveyed his greetings to all attendees and congratulated them on the Republic Day of India. Befitting the occasion, a cultural programme was also performed by the local Armenian artists from Indo-Armenian Friendship NGO and Indian students of Medical Universities in Armenia Ambassador K. D. Dewal handed over token gifts to the artists.

Keeping in view of the Corona advisory in Armenia

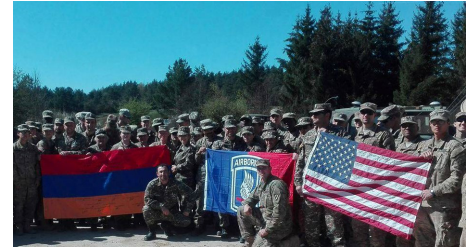
## US Embassy congratulates Armenia on Army Day, expresses gratitude for partnership

The Embassy of the United States in Armenia addressed a congratulatory statement on social media on the occasion of the 30th anniversary of the Armenian Armed Forces on January 28.

“As Armenia honors its armed forces today, we recognize those who have served and express our gratitude for Armenia’s

partnership with us, including in international peacekeeping efforts. We honor those who have fallen in defense of their nation and salute the families and citizens who support them”, the Embassy said in a statement.

*The Republic of Armenia and Armenians around the world celebrate the 30th*



*anniversary of foundation of the Armenian Armed Forces on January 28.*



Armenia’s Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan and Armenia’s special representative for dialogue with Turkey Ruben Rubinyan could attend the Antalya Diplomacy Forum, Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu has said.

## Armenian FM, special representative could attend Antalya Diplomacy Forum: Cavusoglu

“We invited the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan and his Special Representative Ruben Rubinyan. Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan said that they could join the Forum,” Cavusoglu said.

Speaking at an online press conference on January 24, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said “it is very likely that Armenia will accept the invitation.”

The Antalya Diplomacy Forum will be

held on March 11-14 in southern Antalya province, under the motto “Recoding Diplomacy” and will be attended by several heads of states, ministers, academicians and members of the press.

The gathering, where the most important regional and global issues on the world’s agenda will be discussed in a solution-oriented platform, will provide leaders, politicians, prominent academics, thinkers, opinion leaders, diplomats

## Feryal Clark MP calls on UK Government to recognize the Armenian Genocide

British MP Feryal Clark has called on the UK Government to recognize the Armenian Genocide.

“What happened to Armenian people 100 years ago was a genocide, and it is about time that our government recognized that,” she said during the debate on Holocaust Memorial Day,

“I was born in south-east Turkey and grew up hearing stories about the horrors faced by the Armenian people in that region. Almost 100 years ago, a whole culture and a whole people were systematically destroyed and had their identity erased in an act of appalling violence. Families were torn apart, with children never seeing their parents again. Some 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were killed. Vibrant, centuries-old communities were simply wiped off the face of the map,” Feryal Clark said.

“Now, over a century later, the fight of Armenian communities around the world

for justice and recognition goes on. The Armenian community in the UK has been consistently at the forefront of that fight. I praise the work of the Armenian National Committee, which is a fantastic advocate for the UK Armenian diaspora. There are many colleagues across the House who have been passionate friends of the Armenian community in the UK. In particular, I pay tribute to the hon. Member for East Worthing and Shoreham (Tim Loughton), who sits alongside me as a co-chair of the all-party parliamentary group for Armenia, and my right hon. Friend the Member for Warley (John Spellar) for their tireless campaigning on this issue,” the lawmaker added.

“Despite their campaigning and that of so many others in the UK, the Government are several steps behind the position of many of our European neighbors. France, Germany, Austria, Poland and Denmark are just some of the countries that have



taken the step of acknowledging that the horrendous acts that occurred constitute a genocide. The devolved Administrations in Cardiff and Edinburgh have also taken that important step, yet still our government refuse to do so. In April last year, we saw the incredibly important moment when President Biden recognized the Armenian genocide, the first time the American Government had officially done so. Why then, are we in the UK so far behind others when it comes to recognition?” she continued.

“It is time that the Government acted to provide Armenian communities in the UK with the recognition they have been fighting for. What happened to Armenian people 100 years ago was a genocide, and it is about time that our government recognized that,” Feryal Clark concluded.





Azerbaijan hasn't clarified yet which part from the proposals of the Armenian side aimed at the de-escalation of the situation on the border, the reduction of tension and the increase of security and stability level, are acceptable for it, Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan told reporters during the visit in the Yerablur Military Pantheon on the Army Day.

"Discussions are continuing ... We are now trying to get clarifications about what exactly is unacceptable to them, on what grounds, and what new solutions there

## Azerbaijan hasn't clarified yet which part from Armenia's proposals is acceptable for it – FM Mirzoyan

could be," Mirzoyan told journalists.

The discussion is constantly taking place, continues, and now we are trying to get clarifications over which part is acceptable in particular, with what explanation and accordingly what new solutions could be", the FM said.

On January 14 Russian foreign minister Sergei Lavrov said at a press conference that during his phone talk with the Armenian FM the Armenian side presented new proposals over the border delimitation and demarcation with Azerbaijan which have already been sent to Baku.

On January 19 Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said that the Armenian side

has prepared a package of measures aimed at de-escalating the situation on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border zone, reducing the tension and increasing the level of security and stability and conveyed it both to the Russian side and at Russia's mediation to Azerbaijan and partners. Later Azerbaijan said that the preconditions of Yerevan about border delimitation are unacceptable for Baku. This was followed by the statement of the Armenian Foreign Ministry according to which the Armenian side doesn't have preconditions in the issue of delimitation, the talk is about the agreements reached.



The US administration is committed to continuing to work closely with the Republic of Armenia in the areas of justice, the rule of law, and the strengthening of democratic institutions, ARMENPRESS reports Ambassador of the USA to Armenia Lynne Tracy said during the meeting with President of the Constitutional Court of Armenia Arman Dilanyan.

Dilanyan received Lynne Tracy on January 27. The Ambassador was accompa-

## USA is committed to continuing cooperation with Armenia in justice and other spheres – Ambassador

nied by Kelly Strickland, USAID Deputy Director, Office of Democratic and Decentralized Governance, Alexis Haftvani, Head of the U.S. Embassy's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs.

Welcoming the American colleagues, Arman Dilanyan highly valued the US-American cooperation, the continuous work on the implementation of the bilateral agenda in the judicial sphere. Arman Dilanyan noted that the Constitutional Court of the Republic of Armenia has an ambitious agenda of internal reforms, is determined to implement it, and the assis-

tance of international partners, including the United States, will further promote their successful implementation.

Ambassador Tracey thanked for the opportunity of the meeting, noting that the US administration is committed to continuing close cooperation with the Republic of Armenia in the areas of justice, the rule of law, and the strengthening of democratic institutions. In this context, Ambassador Tracey highlighted the internal reform process launched in the Constitutional Court.

During the meeting, the interlocutors exchanged views on the prospects of implementing joint programs.

## Effective cooperation of Armenian and Russian Armed Forces an integral element of allied relations – Embassy

The effective interaction of the Armed Forces of Russia and Armenia is one of the integral elements of the entire complex of Russian-Armenian allied relations, the Russian Embassy in Armenia said in a statement on Armenia's Army Day.

"The armed forces of independent Armenia and its servicemen are the true sons of their Fatherland, who are distinguished by courage and valor. They are the proud successors of the glorious military traditions of the generation of heroes of the

Great Patriotic War, who forged our common Victory shoulder to shoulder. Their fidelity to duty and selfless service to the Motherland is, without exaggeration, the main guarantee of peace and prosperity of the country," the Embassy said.

"In today's complex, rapidly changing world filled with various challenges, the effective interaction of the Armed Forces of Russia and Armenia is one of the integral elements of the entire complex of Russian-Armenian allied rela-

tions. Bilateral strategic cooperation in the military sphere plays a key role in protecting the national interests and sovereignty of our states," the statement reads.

On the day of the 30th anniversary of the formation of the Armed Forces of Armenia, the Russian Embassy wished the military leadership of the Republic, all the servicemen of the Armenian army and veterans and their families good health, prosperity and a peaceful sky above their heads.

## Ambassador Abbas Badakhshan Zohouri calls for higher awareness between Armenians and Iranians

Armenians and Iranians - two neighbors and friendly nations having millennia-old historical ties - are marking the 30th anniversary of the establishment of diplomatic relations between their modern states – the Republic of Armenia and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

On the occasion of this important anniversary, the Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Islamic Republic of Iran to the Republic of Armenia H.E. Abbas Badakhshan Zohouri gave an interview to ARMENPRESS, noting that the historical relations between the peoples of Iran and Armenia are a very good foundation for the further expansion of the bilateral interstate ties.

Ambassador Zohouri underscored that especially in the economic sector the partnership should reach the excellent level of the political relations.

“It’s been almost two years that I am in Armenia, and it is my impression that we should raise the level of our awareness about each other,” Ambassador Zohouri said, stating that relations can be improved

in all areas because there are no big obstacles for doing so.

Among a number of issues, the Ambassador attaches importance to the intensification of contacts between Armenian and Iranian business communities and the completion of the renovation projects of interstate roads.

The Persian Gulf-Black Sea International Transport Corridor Project (the North-South Road in Armenia being part of it) initiated by Tehran can greatly contribute to the development of transport connection.

“We are speaking about a situation when the huge population of the Indian ocean and Persian Gulf basin is acquiring a convenient route for transporting shipments to the Black Sea and Europe, and as a rule all countries located at the entire length of this route will mostly benefit from it,” the Iranian Ambassador said.

According to Ambassador Zohouri, one of the most influential and important sections of the project is a section of the Tranche 4 of North-South, which would



connect Kajaran and Sisian through a number of bridges and tunnels.

The main transit route viewed by Iran is the Norduz-Syunik-Yerevan Road.

Iran welcomes the negotiations process between Armenia and Azerbaijan on unblocking transport and economic connections which is carried out in adherence to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of the countries. The Iranian Ambassador said that if the Nakhijevan roads were to be opened, Iran and Armenia would get a shorter railway connection by the Julfa-Nakhijevan route.

At the same time, Ambassador Zohouri underscored that the newly proposed options cannot be a reason for ignoring the importance of the road through Syunik province and the North-South project.

## Deputy PM Grigoryan assures gas price will not increase for needy families

Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Mher Grigoryan reassures that the gas price for needy families will not rise this year, and as for the Eurasian Economic Union, he said that the discussions on the gas supply tariffs within the Union are being held.

“At this moment I can only say for sure that the gas tariff for needy people will not increase. This opportunity exists as the gas price on border will not change in 2022. We just have a situation that there was a formula by an agreement signed in 2013 the implementation of which starts in 2022”, he told reporters at a briefing.

Gas price is formed by several components, one of which and the most important is the price on border. As for the price for the business, the deputy PM proposed to wait and see what kind of tariff plan will

be made as a result of the discussions in the Public Services Regulatory Commission. However, he thinks that the difference between the gas price on border and the gas price in the world is so big that there should not be any competitive shock for the Armenian producer. “Not only our manufacturers, but also the gas consuming producers of our region depend on the gas price. The gas price has increased for all, there are countries where the price has increased much more than it could for the potential businesses in Armenia. I don’t think it will have a competitive shock effect for those businesses which consume gas or electricity a lot”, Mher Grigoryan said.

As for the question relating to the gas price in the EAEU, he said that the rule of the common market will enter into force



from 2024. He attached importance to two components – the cost of gas and transportation, its cost. According to him, the latter is a subject of much more complex discussions. And the discussions on this continue in the EAEU. Grigoryan hopes that a common model will be achieved. “There is a consensus about the single gas price, it wouldn’t be difficult to come to that consensus, but there are discussions and debates about the gas transportation, in other words, the supply tariffs. I hope there will be unity in the EAEU on this matter”, Mher Grigoryan said.



## Prospects for California-Syunik cooperation discussed

Consul General of Armenia in Los Angeles Ambassador Armen Baibourtian had a discussion with California State Assemblymember Chris Holden regarding launching of an institutionalized cooperation between California and Syunik.

The conversation focused on Assemblymember Holden's last year's resolution on the establishment of sister state/province relationship between the State of California and the Armenian southernmost Province of Syunik and prospect of implementation of cooperation projects.

The resolution was adopted at the California State Assembly on September 2, 2021. According to the established procedure, the resolution must also be approved



by the California State Senate.

As far as the state legislative session was adjourned in September 2021, the process has resumed with the commencement of the new session in January of the present year.

The resolution aims to create a basis for mutual interests and effective cooper-

ation between the U.S. State of California and the Province of Syunik of the Republic of Armenia.

Moreover, it will serve as a stimulus to encourage and facilitate the implementation of mutually beneficial educational, economic, and cultural exchanges and programs.

Chris Holden was elected to the California State Assembly in 2014. He is a member of the California Armenian Legislative Caucus. Chris Holden has also served as the Mayor of Pasadena, a city which has a tangible Armenian population. He is the Chair of the California State Assembly's Utilities and Energy standing committee.

## Eurasian Development Bank to provide \$1,7 million grant to Armenia

The Eurasian Development Bank (EDB) will allocate a 1 million 719 thousand USD grant to Armenia from its Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development.

The Armenian government approved

the respective agreement at the January 27 Cabinet meeting.

The Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures Gnel Sanosyan said the goal of the program is to increase the level of energy saving in buildings of

public significance. The measures will lead to 50% energy saving in about 20 buildings.

Sanosyan said the program's first phase has already been implemented with rather good results.

## Armenian Air Force equipped with new multifunctional helicopters

The aviation of the Armenian Armed Forces has been equipped with new modern, multifunctional helicopters designed to carry out firing, transportation and sanitary tasks, the Ministry of Defense reports.

On this occasion a solemn event was held at Erebuni Airport on January 25 attended by the Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Lieutenant General



Artak Davtyan.

On the eve of the anniversary of the formation of the army, the command of the military unit reiterated that the air force is ready to fulfill the set tasks, "to keep the country's air gates unshakable."

The Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces was briefed on the tactical-technical characteristics and features of the helicopters.

## Estonia first to ratify Armenia-EU Common Aviation Agreement

Estonia has ratified the Armenia-EU Common Aviation Agreement, becoming the first EU member state to do so, the Armenian Mission to the EU informs.

"We are glad to learn that EU Council received the first notification of ratification of Armenia-EU Common Aviation Agree-

ment signed in November 2021. Estonia kick-started the process. Looking forward to the ratification by Armenia and other EU member states," the Armenian Embassy in Belgium/Mission to EU said in a Twitter post.

Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mir-

zoyan, European Commissioner for Neighborhood and Enlargement Olivér Várhelyi, the Foreign Minister of Slovenia, Stanislav Raščan, who was the Chair of the Council of the European Union, signed the Armenia-EU Common Aviation Agreement on November 15, 2021.

## Army and education the cornerstones of statehood: President Sarkissian issues message on Army Day

Dear compatriots,

Today is the Army Day. The Armenian Armed Forces are 30 years old.

Regardless of the situation, our Army has been and remains the guarantor and protector of our security and identity.

Let us remember with gratitude and bowing all those who fought for our Motherland, Armenia, and Artsakh, who sacrificed their lives for our independence and freedom.

I wish health to all the injured ...

Together with all of you, I look forward to our captive compatriots. We must continue our efforts to return them home and quickly find the missing.

We must all be united with the Army,



keep its back strong, strengthen it, and consolidate around the army.

The army and education are the most important cornerstones of our statehood. The world is changing rapidly, and it depends on us how to use these changes for the well-being of our state and people.

For this, we must have educated citizens ready to defend our Homeland, organized, disciplined, technically equipped, technologically advanced and efficient Armed Forces, a competitive and developing economy, and, of course, a society that is ready to support the Army at all times.

Dear servicemen,

Every one of you is the unique axis of the Army.

Our Homeland and we all look at you with hope and faith, respect, pride, and confidence; we will build new victories together.

Glory to the Armenian Army!

## President's Office reacts to reports on Armen Sarkissian's "dual citizenship"

The President's Office has said the publication by Hetq.am on President Armen Sarkissian's dual citizenship at the time of appointment is an "attempt to divert public attention with fake agenda."

When announcing his resignation, President Armen Sarkissian drew the public's attention to the real problems and challenges facing the country, describing the situation as a "nationwide crisis," his Office said.

The Office reiterated that the assessment of the situation and the main rea-

sons for the resignation are listed in Mr. Sarkissian's [statement](#).

Hetq.am claimed in a [post](#) on January 24 that Armen Sarkissian was a citizen of St. Kitts and Nevis at the time of his appointment as President of Armenia, but did not provide further details.

The Prosecutor's Office said on January 25 it had forwarded the publication to the National Security Service.



The Armenian Constitution requires presidential candidates to have resided in Armenia in the last 6 years and have held only Armenian citizenship in the due period to be eligible for the presidency.

## Armenian Parliament Speaker addresses PACE



Twice in the last three years, Armenia has reaffirmed its commitment to democratic values through a non-violent, velvet revolution in 2018 and after the devastat-

ing 44-day war in 2021, Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Alen Simonyan said in an address to the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE).

He drew attention to the fact that Armenia has passed the decisive test of democracy and the rule of law, successfully conducting the June 20, 2021 parliamentary elections.

Speaking about the 44-day war and its aftermath, the Speaker said "the biggest challenge remains the security of our country."

Alen Simonyan stressed that the Armenian people and our democratic achievements have been under constant threat since September 2020. He noted that only peace can ensure long-term security and stability, the final implementation of which also depends on other countries in the region, with the support of European institutions.

He reaffirming the need for a just and long-term settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, including the safe return of Armenian prisoners of war and other hostages.



## Hrant Dink defended the Armenian Cause in a unique own way. Rene Leonyan

### *The testimony of Reverend Dr. Rene Leonyan*



On January 19, 2022, I could not be anywhere but in Istanbul, - to honor the memory of **Hrant Dink**. Fifteen years



ago, at Hrant's funeral, I attended that exciting and unbearably painful ceremony. At that time I was working in Armenia where I represented the Armenian Evangelical World Council and the Armenian Missionary Association of America. More than a hundred thousand people were present there, not counting the millions of Turks who were watching the event live on television. I will never forget the posters: "We are all Hrant", "We all are Armenians".

The huge accompanied the non-stop applause of Turkish citizens leaning on

their windows. On that day, the entire population of Turkey (Turks, Alevi, Kurds, Armenians, Greeks, Jews...) was identified with Hrant and Armenians.

Lost in this crowd, I could not believe my eyes. At the cemetery, together with the Reverend of Istanbul, we addressed with condolences to the Dink family and to the participants gathered near the cemetery. What an ordeal!

For the first time I met Hrant and his wife, Rakel, in the summer of 1980 at the "Camp Armen" in Tuzla, on the seafront, 60 km from Istanbul. This camp belonged to the Armenian Evangelical Church of the *Gedik Pasha*, district of Istanbul, and the Camp was headed by **Hrant Guzelian**. My wife, **Sylvie**, and I spent a month at the camp helping out with educational and spiritual programs. Hrant and Rakel Dink assisted the camp Director with a good team of volunteers.

They were both from the Armenian Evangelical Church in Istanbul...

A few days ago I went to Tuzla to find out about the current situation. It should be noted that the Turkish authorities illegally confiscated that camp



in the late 1980s. How did I feel about rediscovering these "magical" places that allowed some 2,000 children to have fun in the Armenian and Christian environment, - to preserve their identity?!

In the recent years, after a large protest movement, the Camp has become the property of the church again. Although the buildings have been demolished, a new project is being prepared to host children and young people in the future.

As for Hrant Dink, he later became a charismatic figure, and his influence crossed all borders. Really, in a sense, Hrant Dink no longer belongs only to his family or the Armenian community. He has become a symbol for humanity. During his lifetime, Hrant Dink took part in many actions, not only to restore the dignity of the Armenians in Turkey, but also of all the citizens of the country. He wanted a Turkey where all the peoples could have their place with no complexes, and where individuals could express themselves without fear.

On Wednesday, January 19, 2022, we were in Istanbul to express our devotion to Hrant Dink. At first, with the family and friends we visited the Armenian cemetery in the Balekji district - prayers, meditation, words of consolation.

Then, with thousands of people, we were in front

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At a UN Security Council debate on “War in cities – protection of civilians in urban settings” Armenia’s Permanent Representative to the UN Mher Margaryan has referred to the consequences of brutal use of force by Azerbaijan against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh.

“Armed conflicts characterized by intense level of warfare with massive and targeted use of heavy weaponry and prohibited armaments turn densely populated areas, cities and settlements into zones of devastation. Placement of military installations and positions within or in close vicinity of residential neighborhoods poses a life threat to civilians, further compromising their safety and security,” the Armenian envoy said.

“In our region, we are faced with the consequences of brutal use of force by Azerbaijan against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh that claimed thousands of lives, brought devastation to civilians, destruction of residential buildings, hospitals, schools, churches and critical infrastructure,” he added.

Mr. Margaryan reminded that the cities

## Armenian envoy briefs UN Security Council on consequences of Azerbaijan’s aggression against Artsakh

of Stepanakert, Shushi, Martakert, Martuni and Hadrut were targeted by multiple launch rocket systems, heavy artillery, UAVs and prohibited weapons, such as cluster munitions.

“Launching a war in the middle of global pandemic, in gross violation of existing ceasefire agreement and the International Humanitarian Law, must be acknowledged for what it represents – a premeditated, carefully planned and executed attempt to inflict maximum casualties in full demonstration of an intent to destroy, in whole or in part, an ethnic group as such. No amount of distorted narrative or false justification for a military action can alter the truth and the facts on the ground,” the Ambassador said.

“Obstruction and politicization of safe and unhindered humanitarian access by the UN agencies to Nagorno-Karabakh has undermined the international efforts to conduct comprehensive assessment of the humanitarian situation, as well as that related to the protection and recovery needs and human rights of the affected population,” Mher Margaryan noted.

The stressed that Armenia appreciates the unique role of the International Committee of the Red Cross in addressing the immediate life-saving needs of the popula-

tion in Nagorno-Karabakh and channeling the urgent humanitarian assistance.

“The activities of the Humanitarian Response Centre of the peacekeeping forces of the Russian Federation in Artsakh have been instrumental for providing vital assistance and services to the population, while conducting humanitarian demining and clearing residential areas and agricultural fields from thousands of unexploded ordnance and explosive objects,” the envoy noted.

“The United Nations and the international community should have the ability and capacity to identify and address the situations of gross violations of International Humanitarian Law and international human rights law, to ensure that people trapped in conflict situations are not left behind and have access to humanitarian assistance, in line with the principles of humanity, neutrality, impartiality and independence,” he emphasized.

“While we recognize that there might be inherent limitations in the working methods of international structures, allow me to conclude by emphasizing the need to be impartial, but not value neutral,” he said.

## Bill calls for naming part of 101 Freeway for Armenian-American Katcho Achadjian

A bill introduced by Republican California Assemblymember Jordan Cunningham on January 26 seeks to name a portion of the 101 Freeway for the late lawmaker Kacho Achadjian, the *San Luis Obispo Tribune* reported.

Achadjian, who passed away in March, 2020 was beloved member of the California State Assembly, representing San Luis Obispo for six years, before which he was a 12-year member of the San Luis Obispo County Board of Supervisors.

“Katcho was my friend and mentor,” Cunningham said in a press statement Wednesday.

“He was an American success story and a true public servant who always put

the Central Coast first. His legacy of energetic representation, consensus-building and public service is a model for all that seek elected office. While he will always be missed by the Central Coast community, the renaming of this segment of Highway 101 ensures that he will never be forgotten.”

“Katcho was the heart and soul of his family,” his wife, Araxie said in Cunningham’s news release Wednesday. “His love for his community was unconditional; his contributions to society were innumerable; his pride for this nation was unmatched. ... Thank you to Assemblyman Cunningham and this legislative body for honoring Katcho’s memory in such a meaningful



way. We are sincerely grateful for their efforts.”

Achadjian, who grew up in Lebanon and moved to California, was a life-long member of the Homenetmen. In 2016, he and his wife, were named honorary presidents of the Navasartian Games.

In 2013, Achadjian joined the first California State delegation to Armenia and Artsakh led by the

➡ page 11



## PACE adopts resolution on Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Armenia, reiterates demand for release of POWs



The Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE) adopted a resolution on the Functioning of Democratic Institutions in Armenia, adopting all amendments proposed by the Armenian delegation and rejecting the amendments proposed by the Azerbaijani side, head of Armenia's delegation to PACE Ruben Rubinyan informs.

During the discussion, the co-rapporteurs and other speakers praised the democratic path and reforms chosen by Armenia.

The resolution mainly referred to the achievements of the democratic reform process in Armenia, future steps, electoral reforms, the mechanisms of checks-and-balances, judicial reforms, the general political atmosphere in the country, the situation of the media, as well as the strengthening of democratic culture in the political field.

In general, the Assembly welcomes the fact that Armenia has successfully emerged from the serious political crisis triggered by the outcome in the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. The crisis was resolved with the early elections in June 2021, which were organized in a democratic manner, notwithstanding the highly polarized environment.

The Assembly also welcomed the pursuit of reforms, the launch of new projects since the change of political leadership in 2018 and the degree to which Armenia has co-operated with the Council of Europe,

including at the level of its parliamentary delegation.

The Assembly noted that the recent conflict had a major impact on Armenia, as described in its Resolution on "Humanitarian consequences of the conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan / Nagorno-Karabakh conflict." In particular, it again expressed its consternation at the number of people killed from all sides and reiterated its demand for the return of all Armenian prisoners of war in accordance with paragraph 8 of the Trilateral Statement.

It also reaffirmed the importance of cultural and religious heritage and the urgent need to establish mechanisms required for its protection and restoration. It once again deplores the increasing number of speeches or acts that are not conducive to the easing of tensions or the establishment of normal relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan. In addition, the Assembly calls again on the Armenian authorities to release, without delay, all landmine maps in their possession to the Azerbaijani authorities.

It once again called for a just and lasting resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, within the framework of the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group. Finally,

it called for the implementation of the recommendations of the Commissioner for Human Rights contained in her memorandum on the humanitarian and human rights consequences of the conflict.

With regard to elections and electoral reform, the Assembly commended Armenia for the conduct of the last two national elections, held in December 2018 and June 2021, which were free of the irregularities that had tainted many elections in the past. As regards the snap election in June 2021, it is also pleased to note that the opposition has accepted the results, after having used the legal means at its disposal to challenge them, and has not boycotted the new parliament's activities.

Overall, the Assembly welcomes the marked improvement in the electoral framework, both in terms of the legislation on political parties and the funding of electoral campaigns, and in terms of the voting system, as noted by the Venice Commission and the OSCE/Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR).

The Assembly called on the Armenian authorities to complete the reform of the electoral framework by taking on board the recommendations of the Venice Commission and the OSCE/ODIHR, in particular as regards providing a precise legal definition of campaign expenditure, abolishing the ban on bi-nationals standing for election, penalizing "slander" during election campaigns and enabling voters to challenge voting results in their constituency. It also calls on Armenia to implement the recommendation of the Congress of Local and Regional Authorities of the Council of Europe by ensuring all local elections are held on the same day and at least six months from parliamentary elections.

page 10 → Armenian National Committee of America-Western Region, and upon his return worked with his colleagues to create the first California Armenian Legislative Caucus.

A recipient of the Mkhitar Gosh Gratitude Medal bestowed by Artsakh President Bako Sahakian, Achadjian was also

honored as the ANCA-WR Legislator of the Year at its annual gala banquet in 2013.

Throughout the six years of his tenure, he generously assisted in ensuring the success of numerous ANCA-WR events, including annual Advocacy Days in Sacramento, serving as a panelist at the 2015 ANCA-WR Grassroots Conference, travel-

ing to Los Angeles from San Luis Obispo to enthusiastically support ANCA-WR town halls and banquets, and highlighting the ANCA-WR by recognizing its chair, Nora Hovsepian, as one of 80 Women of the Year in the State Capitol in 2015.

In 2016, Achadjian ran for Congress in California's 24th District.



On 30 January 1992 Armenia and the Netherlands institutionalized the centuries-old ties. During the last three decades the two countries have developed strong interstate relations anchored on mutual respect, trust and common values.

Armenia and the Netherlands cooperate in a number of spheres: political, trade, economy, science, education, IT and culture, justice, territorial administration and Infrastructure, decentralized cooperation, etc. The business ties are particularly active in the spheres of agriculture, dairy industry, high-tech, and others.

In the context of the relations with the EU and its member-states, the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement – the new legal framework of the Armenia EU relations is of high impor-

## Armenia and the Netherlands celebrate the 30th anniversary of diplomatic relations

tance as an essential tool for promoting reforms in Armenia.

On December 12, 2019, the House of Representatives, as well as the Senate of the Netherlands ratified the Armenia-EU Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement.

In October 2019, the Armenian-Dutch friendship circle was established. It comprises politicians, businessmen, artists and scientists. The Armenian side was led by Alen Simonyan, the Deputy Chairman of the National Assembly of Armenia and from the Netherland side Joël Voordewind, the Deputy Chairman of the Foreign Relations Committee of the Parliament, Spokesman for the Christian Union Party.

The Netherlands supports the common position of the EU on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, as well as the efforts of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs aimed at the peaceful settlement of the conflict.

Armenia and the Netherlands have close cooperation in the framework of international organizations. Armenia and the Netherlands cooperate in the international fora for promoting the genocide prevention agenda, particularly by co-sponsoring relevant UN resolutions.

On February 22, 2018, the Dutch House of Representatives adopted a decision recognizing the Armenian Genocide. During the same session, another decision was adopted regulating the participation of the government of the Netherlands in the commemoration events dedicated to the victims of the Armenian Genocide.

Tigran Balayan has served as Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Republic of Armenia to the Kingdom of the Netherlands since October 2018.

Nico Schermers is the Ambassador of the Netherlands to Armenia.

of the former office of the page 9 ➔ “Agos” Daily created by Hrant whose editor he was. The rally passed in the calm, dignified atmo-



sphere, intermitted by slogans chanted by the attentive crowd who loudly called for justice for Hrant.

Rakel Dink made a keynote speech. Very excited, Rakel recalled the absence caused by Hrant’s passing away. She insisted on the need for truth and justice. A staunch believer, Rakel quoted also several passages from the Bible, including the text of a letter to Ephesians, 5:11: “Have nothing to do

with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.”

So Rakel encouraged us to condemn injustice and to walk in the way of hope.

Hrant Dink used to tell his Turkish interlocutors: “Talk to me, tell me about your sufferings, and what is in your heart, and I, I will open my heart, I will tell you about my sufferings.” Hrant, like many intellectuals in Turkey, dreamed of a just, democratic, egalitarian Turkey. He defended the Armenian Cause in his own way. He managed to win the sympathy of millions of Turkish citizens. He wanted a real dialogue between Turks and Armenians.

And that dialogue could be based only on truth and justice. For that, the sinner must admit his guilt and have the courage to apologize. The goal, of course, is to achieve one day a strong, sincere reconciliation. Hrant Dink paved the path in his unique way.

Today, his influence continues to be felt in all the spheres of the life.

...The Turkish authorities must show courage to fully identify the real perpetrators of the murder. Following Hrant Dink, let good-willed men and women stand up and work for the rapprochement of human beings, - to end hatred, injustice and contempt.







## “Narine+” dairy factory opens in Artsakh

ter – “Narine +” lactic acid product is produced on the basis of the endemic lactic acid bacterium of Artsakh. Artak Beglaryan emphasized the policy of

commercialization of the results of the research carried out at the Artsakh Scientific Center and the promotion of public health, emphasizing the

The State Minister of the Artsakh Republic Artak Beglaryan and the Minister of Education and Science Lusine Gharakhanyan, attended the opening ceremony of the “Narine+” dairy factory at the Artsakh Scientific Center.

The State Minister got acquainted with the organization of the production carried out according to the results of the center’s research, using the technological equipment provided by the “ArmBiotechnology” Scientific-Production Center of the National Academy of Sciences of the Republic of Armenia.

The first product of the cen-



## Covid passes and face mask rules end in England

Face coverings and Covid passes are no longer legally required in England, after the relaxation of Plan B rules came into effect on January 27, the *BBC* reports.

Health Secretary Sajid Javid said the measures could be lifted due to the vaccine rollout’s success and a better understanding of Covid treatments.

The PM’s official spokesman said mask wearing would now be “a matter of personal judgment”.

But some shops have said they will continue to ask people to wear them.

Rail operators also said passengers would be expected to wear face coverings. But all said they would encourage, not force, customers to comply.

London Mayor Sadiq Khan has said masks will remain mandatory on Transport for London services, calling on people to “do the right thing”.

Public health guidance urging people to



wear a face covering in crowded and enclosed spaces when coming into contact with strangers will remain, the government said.

Organisations will also be able to choose if they require Covid passes from those visiting their venues.



## Armenian wines to be showcased at ProdExpo international exhibition in Moscow

will participate in ProdExpo, the 29th International exhibition for food, beverages and food raw materials from February 7-11.

The expo will take place in Expocentre Fairgrounds, Moscow. Armenian wines will be showcased in Pavilion 8, hall 1, stand № 81C20.

ProdExpo features foodstuffs from across the globe, from essential food and beverages to exquisite specialty as well as organic, sport and healthy food, halal, kosher, and exotic products.

It is also Russia’s largest showcase of alcoholic beverages and wines from more than 30 countries.

On the initiative of the Vine and Wine Foundation of Armenia, Armenian wines

## Armenian entrepreneur Stepan Aslanyan joins Forbes Business Council

Armenian entrepreneur Stepan Aslanyan has joined the Forbes Business Council.

“We’re pleased to recognize Laurie Sewell with Servicon Systems Inc., Natasha Miller with Entire Productions, and Stepan Aslanyan with Hexact, Inc. as outstanding leaders and new members of Forbes Business Council,” the Council said in a post on LinkedIn.

Forbes Councils is an invitation-only organization where top executives and entrepreneurs build professional skills and gain connections and visibility on Forbes.com. Members are grouped into relevant councils to ensure



maximum benefit for the community as a whole.

Stepan Aslanyan is a serial entrepreneur

with 20+ years of experience and multiple successful exits in different geographical markets.

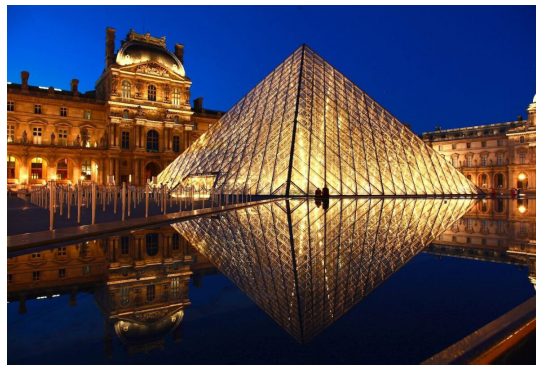
Trained as a medical doctor, Stepan found his true calling in the technology sector heading companies including Smart Systems and Menu Group UK, a pioneer in the food delivery service popularized by the likes of Uber eats.

After a successful exit, Stepan then founded Hexact in 2019 where he is serving as CEO with a mission to empower anyone with the true power of the cloud + AI to save time and scale like never before.

## Armenia’s Erebuni Museum to cooperate with Louvre

The Historical and Archaeological Museum-Reserve of Erebuni in Yerevan will cooperate with the Louvre Museum.

The perspectives of cooperation were discussed during the meeting between the director Erebuni Museum Mikael Badalyan, and the director of the Center for Research on Historical and Cultural Heritage Khachik Harutyunyan with Ariane Thomas, Director of the Department of Oriental Antiquities at the Louvre and her deputy Vincent Blanchard.



The meeting was held within the framework of the program of cooperation of the Armenian and French specialists and their

professional exchange implemented by the Embassy of France in Armenia.

During the discussions, a number of agreements were reached on future cooperation between the Louvre and Erebuni.

In particular, the specialists of the Louvre will provide assistance in the creation of the new exhibition of the Erebuni Museum, as well as in the professional training of specialists of the Erebuni Museum.

The parties declared their readiness to implement joint programs and cooperation in the field of Urartology.

## Eurovision 2022: Armenia to perform in first semi-final

Armenia will perform in the first semi-final of Eurovision Song Contest 2022 in Turin.

The Eurovision Song Contest 2022 Semi-Final Allocation Draw took place in Palazzo Madama e Casaforte degli Acaja (Madama Palace), Turin, alongside a ceremony which saw the Host City Insignia pass from previous hosts Rotterdam to Italian friends.

Hosted by Carolina Di Domenico and Mario Acampa, live from Madama Palace, the Semi-Finals lineups were determined

randomly by drawing countries from 6 pots (based on historical voting patterns) to determine in which Semi-Final (and which half of that show) they would compete in.

The ‘Big 5’ countries (France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the United Kingdom) do not compete in the Semi-Finals, but it was randomly decided which of the two each country will be able

to vote on.

The exact running order will be decided by producers at a later date.





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## Armenian Identity Card

The goal of the Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) non-profit organization is to unify Armenians worldwide in a common platform so that through contacts, queries and referenda they can express their views and positions regarding issues of general interest to Armenians around the world and issues of particular interest to Armenian communities in various countries.

Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) also makes it possible to establish business networks, the cardholder can participate in various charitable projects, and can obtain discounts from Armenian and non-Armenian businesses all over the world. Armenians should feel themselves to be full-fledged "citizens" of a reborn Armenia and the Armenian Identity Card is the «passport» for all Armenians.

The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID)

network is an effective environment where Armenians can implement various projects and pan-Armenian programs. At the heart of HyeID is the creation of an Armenian database which will become the reliable and objective basis to realize the potential of all Armenians around the world. Based on that database, it will be possible to implement various permanent and temporary initiatives through the Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) organization.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) worldwide network enables cardholders to elect and get elected to the leadership of The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) network structures.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can benefit from the possibility of discounts intended for HyeID cardholders when shopping for products and services in various countries of the world.

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can participate in queries and referenda initiated by the HyeID network and vote on issues of national interest to Armenians.

- Ensure the security and privacy of The Armenian Identification Card (HyeID) cardholders.

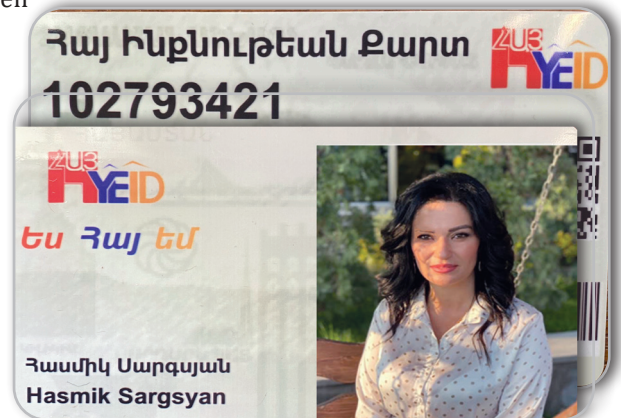
The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders who live in the Diaspora intend to utilize the possibilities made available through HyeID to form a Diaspora representative body — Diaspora Armenian Parliament — through democratic elections.

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