

Nikol Pashinyan says his party will have constitutional majority in the Parliament and will form Government



Armenia - Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan votes at a polling station in Yerevan, June 20, 2021.

Armenia’s acting Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has said his Civil Contract Party will have constitutional majority and will form government, after the Central Electoral Commission announced results from all polling stations.

“According to the preliminary results of the elections as published by the Central Electoral Commission, in the newly-elected parliament the Civil Contract party will have a constitutional majority (at least 71 MPs out of 105) and will form a government led by me,” Pashinyan said in a Twitter post.

According to preliminary results, the Civil Contact has received 53.92 % of the vote, the Hayastan Alliance comes second with 21.04 %, I Have the Honor Alliance is third with 5.23 % of the vote.

Prosperous Armenia Party and Republic Party have received 3.96 % and 3.04 % of the votes, respectively.

According to the Central Electoral Commission, 49.4% of voters (or 1,281,174 citizens) cast their ballot in the snap

parliamentary elections.

A total of 2,593,572 citizens were eligible to vote in the election.

Meanwhile, Kocharyan’s Hayastan Alliance issued a statement on June 21 saying that the published results of the parliamentary elections “are highly controversial and do not inspire confidence” and challenged the election results.

“They are in stark contrast to the various manifestations of public life we have witnessed over the past eight months, to all the results of public opinion polls, including international, and finally, to common sense,” said a statement issued by the bloc.

Only 49.4 percent of Armenia’s voters took part snap parliamentary elections on June 20

“The very large gatherings by opposition forces during the campaign, the apparent small number of supporters of the regime, the crisis of confidence in the country, indicated the existence of completely different public sentiments,” added the statement.

Armenia Alliance to contest election results at Constitutional Court <p>p. 2</p>	This is not a power struggle; this is struggle for returning statehood to people – Robert Kocharyan <p>p. 4</p>	Armenia’s Engineering City inviting companies to apply for Resident status <p>p.7</p>	All POWs must be immediately repatriated: Netherlands says will continue raising this issue <p>p. 5</p>
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Erdogan's visit to occupied territories of Artsakh undermines international efforts to establish stability in the region – Armenian MFA



The Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs has strongly condemned the joint visit of the Presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan to the Armenian historic and cultural center of Artsakh – Shushi, which is currently under the Azerbaijani occupation, as an outright provocation against regional peace and security.

“It is noteworthy that this visit was preceded by the destruction of the religious, historical and cultural heritage of the forc-

ibly displaced indigenous Armenian population, including the desecration of the St. Holy Savior Ghazanchetsots Cathedral – targeted by the Turkish-Azerbaijani forces during and after the war against Artsakh, as well as the complete destruction of the memorial commemorating the victims of the Armenian Genocide,” the Ministry said.

“Such actions of the Turkish and Azerbaijani authorities, aimed at consolidating the consequences of the use of force against the people of Artsakh, significantly undermine the international efforts to establish stability in the region and are utterly unacceptable. Restoration of the rights of the Armenians of Artsakh, which includes de-occupation of the territories of the Republic of Artsakh and safe return of the displaced population, is essential for overcoming the Turkish-Azerbaijani geno-

cidal threat against the Armenian people,” the statement reads.

According to the Foreign Ministry, these provocative actions clearly reveal the false and misleading nature of the statements coming from the official Ankara and Baku on their intentions to normalize the relations with Armenia and the Armenian people.

“We once again emphasize that the elimination of the consequences of the recent Turkish-Azerbaijani aggression against Artsakh should be undertaken within the frameworks of the comprehensive settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co Chairmanship,” the Ministry stated.

Armenian President sends congratulatory letter to President-elect of Iran

President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian sent a congratulatory letter to Ebrahim Raisi on being elected as new President of Iran, the Armenian President's Office told Noyan Tapan

The letter reads:

“I believe that under your leadership Iran will continue the development and prosperity path.

Armenia values the consistent strengthening and deepening of existing friendly relations and constructive dialogue with Iran, which is one of the key conditions for ensuring our countries' progress and regional stability. The desire of our friendly nations to recognize each other and cooperate comes from centuries, and today broad opportunities exist for this.

I hope the Armenian-Iranian warm



friendly relations will continue developing and expanding in all areas with joint efforts, registering positive dynamics for a qualitatively new level of cooperation between our peoples”.

President Sarkissian wished Ebrahim Raisi good health and working achievements, and to the brotherly people of Iran – peace and welfare.

Iran's ultraconservative cleric and judiciary chief Ebrahim Raisi has won the presidential election held on June 18, receiving 17,8 million votes according to the preliminary results.

28 million 600 thousand people participated in the voting.

The final results will be published within the day.

Four candidates were running for the president: Secretary of the Expediency Discernment Council Mohsen Rezaee (more than 3 million 300 thousand votes), Chief Justice Ebrahim Raisi, Deputy Parliament Speaker Amir-Hossein Ghazizadeh Hashemi (over 1 million votes) and former Governor of the Central Bank Abdolnaser Hemmati (more than 2 million 400 thousand votes).

Armenian President, OSCE ODIHR Director, OSCE PA Secretary General highlight strengthening of democratic institutions

President of Armenia Armen Sarkissian received on June 21 OSCE ODIHR Director Matteo Mecacci and OSCE PA Secretary General Roberto Montella, who carried out observer mission during Armenia's early parliamentary elections.

As Noyan Tapan was informed from the press service of the President's Office, the guests presented information to President Sarkissian about the works done

during the observer mission, provided their remarks over the electoral process, as well as delivered the full version of their report.

President Sarkissian thanked the heads of the institutions and the observer mission for their works. The sides exchanged views on the importance of strengthening democratic values and institutions in Armenia, as well as the cooperation between the OSCE ODIHR and the OSCE

Parliamentary Assembly with Armenia. In particular, they referred to the cooperation with the presidential institution.

The OSCE ODIHR Director and the OSCE PA Secretary General noted that their institutions have been cooperating with Armenia for years and are ready to continue supporting the capacity building of democratic institutions.

The people of Armenia made a second revolution – Nikol Pashinyan



Armenia's acting Prime Minister, leader of Civil Contract Party Nikol Pashinyan called vote a "second revolution."

"The Armenian people carried out a second revolution within the past three years. If the first one was a non-violent velvet revolution, the second one is again democratic, but a 'steel revolution'," Pashinyan said, speaking at the Civil Contract headquarters after the preliminary results put his party ahead with nearly 60% of the vote.

He pledged to fulfil all agreements reached during the election campaign.

Pashinyan noted that the page of

election fraud is now closed. He thanked the Police, the National security Service for preventing cases of bribery and other violations.

Nikol Pashinyan invited supporters to the Republic Square on Monday, June 21 to hand over the "steel mandate" to the Prime Minister-elect and his team.

He also thanked international partners – Russia, the US, the EU, France, Iran, Georgia and others for supporting Armenia on its difficult path.

Authorities deny false data on Artsakh War missing

The Armenian authorities denied on June 17 opposition allegations that they are grossly underreporting the number of Armenian soldiers and civilians who went missing during the autumn war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Former President Serzh Sargsyan, who leads an opposition alliance running in Sunday's parliamentary elections, claimed on Wednesday that as many as 1,064 people remain unaccounted for seven months after a Russian-brokered ceasefire stopped the war.

Sargsyan publicized a document drawn up earlier this year by a state insurance fund that compensates the families of military personnel killed, wounded or missing in action. He accused the authorities of hiding the real number of missing residents of Armenia and Karabakh.



Armenia's government and Investigative Committee insisted on Thursday that the number currently stands at 275.

The document cited by Sargsyan was sent by the insurance fund to Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan's office in April. Pashinyan spoke around that time of 321 Armenians missing from the Karabakh war.

According to the fund's deputy director, Smbat Saiyan, it has paid monthly

compensations to the families of 1,083 missing persons until now.

"This doesn't mean that the number of missing persons now stands at 1,083 because after the first payment we have had cases where a person stopped being considered missing. That is, their whereabouts or the fact of their death has been established or their dead body has been identified," Saiyan told RFE/RL's Armenian Service.

Saiyan said 475 families are continuing to receive monthly compensations for their missing members. He suggested that the smaller number given by the Investigative Committee is more accurate and up-to-date.

According to official figures, at least 3,700 other Armenian soldiers and civilians were killed during the six-week war.

EU stands by Armenia: Charles Michel congratulates Nikol Pashinyan on election win



President of the European Council Charled Michel has congratulated Armenia's acting Prime Minister Nikol

Pashinyan on election win.

"Warm congratulations to Nikol Pashinyan on elections victory. The EU stands by Armenia in support of deepening reforms. We are also ready to further support regional stabilization and comprehensive conflict settlement," Charles Michel said in a Twitter post.

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Armenia Alliance to contest election results at Constitutional Court



Armenia Alliance has declared it does not accept the results of the June 20 parliamentary elections and will contest them at the Constitutional Court.

The Alliance has expressed gratitude to citizens who supported them in the snap elections. “This inspires confidence that hundreds of thousands of our citizens concerned about the country not only saw the existential threats facing the Armenian people, but also endorsed the solutions proposed by the Armenia Alliance,” it said in a statement.

The Alliance reaffirmed its earlier approach that the results of the parliamentary elections are highly

controversial and do not inspire confidence.

“We have serious grounds to consider these elections illegitimate and to declare that with such results the National Assembly does not reflect the real balance of power. Our observations and information from the bloc’s election headquarters show that the violations started long before the election day. And the preliminary summary of the alarms of our proxies from many polling stations on election day proves that it is a matter of systematic and pre-planned falsification of the election results,” the statement reads.

The Armenia Alliance says will use all the tools to challenge the election results, including appealing to the Constitutional Court. It will also launch political consultations with other participating forces to discuss the possibility of lodging a joint appeal to the Constitutional Court.

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Defense Chiefs discuss more Russian troop deployments in Armenia

The Armenian and Russian defense ministers have reportedly discussed a possible deployment of more Russian troops along Armenia’s border with Azerbaijan.

Vagharshak Harutiunyan and Sergei Shoigu again spoke by phone on June 16 amid a continuing Armenian-Azerbaijani military standoff at disputed portions of the border.

The standoff began after Azerbaijani troops advanced several kilometers into Armenia’s Gegharkunik and Syunik provinces on May 12-14, triggering an Armenian military buildup there.

In a statement on the phone call, the Armenian Defense Ministry said the two ministers looked at “ways of resolving the existing situation at the Armenian-



Azerbaijani border.”

“Vagharshak Harutiunyan and Sergei Shoigu also discussed the deployment alongside the Armenian Armed Forces of Russian border guards at border sections of Syunik and Gegharkunik,” added the statement. It gave no other details.

The Russian Defense Ministry issued no statements on Shoigu’s latest phone call with his Armenian counterpart.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said

late last week that Yerevan and Moscow are now exploring the possibility of Russian troop deployments to the two Armenian border regions. He said Russian military officials have visited those areas to inspect “possible deployment sites.”

Pashinyan proposed on May 27 that Armenia and Azerbaijan withdraw their troops from the contested border sections and let Russia and/or the United States and France, the two other countries co-chairing the OSCE Minsk Group, deploy observers there. Baku effectively turned down the proposal.

Russia already deployed army soldiers and border guards elsewhere in Syunik following the Armenian-Azerbaijani war in Nagorno-Karabakh stopped by a Russian-brokered ceasefire in November.

All POWs must be immediately repatriated: Netherlands says will continue raising this issue

During the June 16 session of the foreign affairs committee of the Parliament of the Netherlands, the MPs and acting Foreign Minister Sigrid Kaag touched upon also the recent Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression against Artsakh and the subsequent developments.

During the debate Dutch lawmakers have addressed

dozens of questions to the acting Foreign Minister relating to the consequences of the Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression, stopping the EU-Azerbaijani cooperation, imposing sanctions on the Azerbaijani authorities, eliminating the consequences of the aggression, Turkey's provocative role, etc.

Before the session the acting Dutch FM has submitted a 4-page letter to the Parliament where she touched upon



the history of the Karabakh conflict, the settlement process, the aggression unleashed against Artsakh, as well as the post-war developments and the necessity of immediately repatriating the Armenian prisoners of war.

Particularly, in the letter acting FM Sigrid Kaag reaffirmed the position of the Netherlands to contribute to the final settlement of the conflict with a joint international action, adding that

the Netherlands plans to continue the works within the EU and the OSCE frameworks. In addition, she also reiterated the Dutch position that all prisoners of war must be immediately repatriated, noting that the Netherlands will continue raising this issue.

Sigrid Kaag has also touched upon the recent opening of the so-called "Trophy Park" in Baku, Azerbaijan, stating that such steps

are provoking hatred. The acting minister has also reaffirmed the importance of the preservation of cultural heritage and emphasized the necessity of sending a UNESCO mission to the region, holding those accountable for war crimes, as well as touched upon the issue of providing humanitarian aid to those affected from the conflict and the EU's possible support to the demarcation and trust restoration matters.

Aliyev admits to keeping more Armenians captive for political purposes

During a conversation with Turkey's President Recep Tayyip Erdogan, Azerbaijani President Ilham Aliyev has confessed to holding a number of Armenians prisoners for political purposes.

According to Armenia's Human Rights Defender Arman Tatoyan, the conversation that took place during Erdogan's visit to the occupied territories of Artsakh, is an irrefutable evidence that the Azerbaijani authorities:

1) illegally keep all Armenian captives as hostages for use in political bargaining;



2) commit human trafficking – a criminally punishable act;

3) continuously mislead the international community claiming that the captives are terrorists or saboteurs;

4) organize false criminal proceedings

against captives.

This discussion between the Presidents of Turkey and Azerbaijan certifies that the Armenian captives are being illegally held in Azerbaijan for exchange in parts with some mined maps.

The Office of Armenia's Human Rights Defender has translated the video into Russian and English and analyzed it.

It will be sent as an official letter of the Human Rights Defender to the specialized UN bodies, OSCE, CE and other international structures.

Armenia has great ambitions and potential in space research

Armenia is a country with great ambitions and potential in the field of space research, acting Minister of High-Tech Industry Hayk Chobanyan said at the Global Space Exploration Conference (GLEX-2021) in Saint Petersburg. He attached importance to cooperation with key players in the field and participation in international events.

“Introduction of digital technologies and digitalization in all fields, including space research, is a priority in the world today. Taking into account that space exploration is accompanied by technological progress, the Armenian government is investing in the development of this direction. We strive to work with the world’s leading countries to use space for peaceful purposes and to



engage in other global projects,” the acting Minister said.

A specialized exhibition has been opened within the framework of the conference, which will last until June 18, plenary sessions with the participation of space agency heads are planned. Thematic discussions, negotiations, a

cooperation forum, a special session dedicated to the 60th anniversary of Yuri Gagarin’s flight will take place.

GLEX 2021 has been organized by Roscosmos State Corporation in cooperation with the World Astronomical Federation.

The conference brings together scientists, engineers, designers from different countries eager to explore the space and

willing to share their thoughts and plans with partners.

GLEX-2021 is attended by about 800 representatives from 59 countries, including China, India, the United States, Canada, Mexico and Brazil. A total of 576 reports will be presented within the framework of the event.

Russia to provide 3.2 million USD for UNDP project aimed at assisting Armenia’s most affected regions



The government of Russia will provide 3.2 million dollars to the UNDP project aimed at assisting the most affected

most affected regions of Armenia in post-conflict recovery. For that purpose, 3.2 million dollars have been allocated from

regions of Armenia in post-conflict recovery, the Russian Embassy in Armenia said on Facebook.

“The Russian government decided to finance the project of the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) which will help the

the budget”, the Embassy said.

The Embassy of Russia has already officially informed the Armenian side about the decision.

The Embassy also noted that Russia is providing financial aid in a coordinated manner to the initiatives of the UN organizations aimed at Armenia’s comprehensive development. The volume of that aid in implementing projects in the fields of healthcare, education, socio-economic development, industry competitiveness increase, environment, disaster management, energy, has totaled nearly 70 million USD since 2010.

Armenia's Engineering City inviting companies to apply for Resident status

The process of accepting applications from engineering and high-tech companies for Resident status of the Engineering City continues, the Enterprise Incubator Foundation informs.

Eight engineering companies have already received the status of a resident company in the Engineering City and have joined the big engineering family.

If the companies meet the participation criteria and are granted EC resident status, they will be given the opportunity to acquire land plots as a donation with an ownership right to build their offices. They will also have access to shared advanced and prototyping labs, manufacturing machinery and equipment.

Application is open to companies operating in the following areas:

- material science
- electronics (radio electronic)
- measuring equipment and systems
- radio-frequency equipment and systems
- aerospace equipment and systems

- robotics
- semi-conductor equipment
- Advanced Driver Assistance System (ADAS)
- biomedical equipment.

The general terms and conditions of participation, as well as other details, can be found [here](#). Since the number of spots is limited, applications will be processed on a first-come, first-served basis.

The Engineering City is located on 3 hectares of land on Bagrevand Street, Yerevan. As a result of the project, it is expected to create a new-format ecosystem in which engineering and high-tech companies can develop and implement innovative ideas for local and international markets, with the use of modern infrastructure.

The Engineering City is a Public-Private partnership project, which is implemented by

Enterprise Incubator Foundation with the support of the Government of Armenia, the World Bank, the Ministry of High-Tech Industry, in cooperation with the private sector.

The Enterprise Incubator Foundation (EIF) is one of the largest technology business incubators and IT/High-Tech development agencies in the region. Established in 2002, the foundation supports the development of information and communication technology sector in Armenia through creating a productive environment for innovation, technological advancement and company growth.



Armenia, Lithuania sign protocol on implementation of Readmission Agreement



On June 15, Armen Martirosyan, the Ambassador of Armenia to Lithuania and Agnė Bilotaitė, Minister for the

the Republic of Armenia and the Government of the Republic of Lithuania.

Interior of Lithuania signed the Protocol on Implementation of the Agreement on Readmission

between Armenia and the European Union signed between the Government of

Before the signing ceremony, Ambassador Martirosyan made a note in the guest book, the Embassy of Armenia to Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia informs.



Armenia's elections competitive and well run, but marred by aggressive rhetoric, international observers say



Armenia's early parliamentary elections were competitive and well-managed within a short time frame. However, they were characterized by intense polarization and marred by increasingly inflammatory language from key contestants, as well as by the sidelining of women throughout the campaign, international observers said in a statement today.

The joint observation mission from the OSCE Office for Democratic Institutions and Human Rights (ODIHR), the OSCE Parliamentary Assembly (OSCE PA), and the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe (PACE), concluded that the electoral legal framework is generally comprehensive, but some shortcomings still remain. The observers noted that while recent changes in the electoral system were broadly debated and supported by the majority of political parties and civil society groups, the fact that amendments were adopted so close to the elections caused legal uncertainty and left little time to implement the new rules or inform voters about the changes.

"Despite the limited time for the implementation of the recent amendments to the electoral code, the administration of the elections was positively assessed by the majority of our observers," said Margareta Cederfelt, Special Co-ordinator and leader of the short-term OSCE observer mission.

by increasingly aggressive language and accusations, worsening the high degree of polarization and further reducing attention to political programmes and policy.

Election day itself was generally peaceful, and observers made an overwhelmingly positive assessment of the voting processes in the polling stations visited. However, many polling stations were inaccessible for voters with disabilities, and there was frequent overcrowding. There were also some cases of interference in the voting process by party or alliance proxies. At the same time, observers found that the vote counting process went well and was highly transparent.

"The deep polarization didn't detract from a well-run election," said George Katrougalos, Head of the PACE delegation. "It is to be hoped that the results will be accepted by all parties across the political spectrum, and the harsh rhetoric of the campaign will be consigned to history."

During the brief campaign period, candidates were able to campaign freely, and the fundamental freedoms key to democratic elections were generally respected. Observers noted that in some cases there was pressure on workers in both the private and public sector to take part in specific campaign events, while allegations of vote buying and the misuse of state resources continued throughout

"Most of our observers also assessed election day positively, up to and including the vote count."

National security issues dominated the political discourse in the pre-campaign and campaign periods. However, the debate was driven

the campaign period. Despite the fact that women candidates were included in the party lists, observers noted that their visibility during the campaign was markedly low.

"While the recently introduced electoral changes have resulted in larger representation of women in the candidate lists, they remained largely absent from the public discourse during the campaign," said Kari Henriksen, Head of the OSCE PA delegation. "It is important that women are not just equally represented, but are also given the opportunity to engage actively in public and political life."

Freedom of expression is guaranteed by the constitution. However, cases of journalists being harassed in the course of their duties raises questions about respect for media freedom. The observer mission's media monitoring found that several media outlets made a visible effort to cover a wide range of contestants, organizing debates that helped ensure voters had enough information to make an informed choice on election day. At the same time, there are long-standing concerns about the political affiliation of private broadcasters.

"All candidates could campaign freely throughout the election process, and it was good to see the election authorities deliver on their mandate professionally," said Eoghan Murphy, Head of the ODIHR election observation mission. "But the antagonistic language we heard during the campaign was not in any way constructive for an informed public debate."

The international election observation mission to the Armenian parliamentary elections totaled 341 observers from 37 countries, composed of 249 ODIHR-deployed experts and long-term and short-term observers, 71 parliamentarians and staff from the OSCE PA, and 21 from PACE.

Armenian lawmaker raises POW issue at PACE



On their way to occupier Shushi, she asks Mr. Aliyev: “Are there many Armenian prisoners of war in Baku? And he happily responds “Yes, yes, there are so many prisoners of war.” She then says “Oh, so good. Return them in small portions.”

Member of the Armenian delegation to the Parliamentary Assembly to the Council of Europe (PACE) Tatevik Hayrapetyan raise the issue of Armenian prisoners of war at PACE summer session.

She presented the conversation that took place between Azerbaijani President Ilham Alyev and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan’s wife.

“This is literally what they say,” Hovhannisyan said, stressing that this is a behavior of leaders of two Council of Europe member states.

“This not only contradicts the logic of international law, this is insane, inhumane. Every time we come here, the families of the prisoners of war ask us what Europe is doing, what we are doing here. We say they discuss, they condemn, and as a result

we have very little portions of prisoners of war, but there are so many families still suffering,” the MP said.

“It has been more than half a year the statement on ceasefire was signed, and Armenia has done its part of the deal, while Azerbaijan, it’s Azerbaijan that refuses,” she noted.

“Peace is not simply a beautiful word. We value peace more than anyone the world, because we know what it means to be in war, what it means to lose the beloved ones, but peace means actions, peace means hard work, and the Azerbaijan way of making peace is to enter the sovereign territory of Armenia, to keep the Armenian POWs as hostages, dehumanize the Armenian people on state level, and then come to this hemicycle and beautifully talk about peace,” Hayrapetyan stated.

CIS, CSTO observers report no major violations during Armenia elections

Observers from the Collective Security Treaty Organization believe that the early parliamentary elections in Armenia were held in full compliance with the country’s legislation, Kanybek Imanaliev, coordinator of the observation mission from the Parliamentary Assembly (PA) of the CSTO, told a press conference on June 21.

“The elections were organized and held in full compliance with the country’s legislation. Of course, there are no perfect elections, there were shortcomings. For example, yesterday morning we were at the polling station, where we did not see a single party representative. We also recommended the CEC polling stations in foreign countries. According to our



estimates, under the conditions of the pandemic, the turnout of 49.4% reflects the mood of the voters,” he said.

Snap parliamentary elections in Armenia were held in accordance with the electoral legislation of the republic, said the head of the CIS observation mission Ilkhom Nematov. “The voting was held in

accordance with the requirements of the electoral code. Observers from the CIS did not record any major violations that could affect the results of the elections,” he said.

Nematov informed that the mission visited more than 800 polling stations across Armenia.

The early parliamentary elections in Armenia were very competitive, Igor Komarovsky said.

“If the results, which testify to a convincing gap, remain unchanged, I characterize this as the choice of the Armenian people, who really had who to choose from. The competition in these elections was more than high, and the wise Armenian people made their choice,” Komarovsky said.

Russian, U.S. President issue joint statement on strategic stability



The presidents of the US and Russia issued a joint statement on June 16 about “strategic stability” to reduce the threat of nuclear war.

Washington and Moscow have demonstrated that “even in periods of tension, they are able to make progress on our shared goals of ensuring predictability in the strategic sphere, reducing the risk of armed conflicts and the threat of nuclear war,” said the statement by US President Joe Biden and his Russian counterpart

Vladimir Putin after meeting face-to-face for over three hours in Geneva.

Reporting progress on efforts to reduce the threat of nuclear warfare after the summit, which was the first since Biden took office in January, the two leaders said talks earlier this year that led to a historic extension of the New Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty (START) exemplifies their commitment to nuclear arms control.

“Today, we reaffirm the principle that a nuclear war cannot be won and must never

be fought.

“Consistent with these goals, the United States and Russia will embark together on an integrated bilateral Strategic Stability Dialogue in the near future that will be deliberate and robust. Through this Dialogue, we seek to lay the groundwork for future arms control and risk reduction measures,” they added.

At a UN Conference on Disarmament meeting in Geneva on April 2, the US and Russian envoys both hailed the extension of the New START, telling the arms control body that the accord serves the interests of both nations.

The US and Russia said at the regular session of the conference that the two countries had completed the necessary legal procedures to extend the New START Treaty for five years.

“The New START verification mechanism is the type of system that I, and others, have promoted in this body as absolutely necessary to any effective disarmament effort,” said Ambassador Robert Wood, the US envoy to the arms control body at the time.

US, EU committed to working towards peace and stability in the Caucasus

The United States and the European Union are committed to working towards peace in the Caucasus.

“We resolve to work towards long-term peace, resilience, and stability in the South Caucasus, the US and EU said upon the conclusion of the summit in Brussels

The leaders of the European Union and the United States, met in Brussels on June



15 to renew their Transatlantic partnership, set a Joint Transatlantic Agenda for the

post-pandemic era, and commit to regular dialogue to take stock of progress.

“We are determined to continue to stand in support of the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the EU’s Eastern partners and will support the reform path of Ukraine,

Georgia, and the Republic of Moldova,” the leaders said in a statement.

Aurora will support nine new projects in Artsakh



The Aurora for Artsakh program created to help children and adults facing a grave humanitarian crisis in the aftermath of the 2020 Artsakh (Nagorno-Karabakh) war continues to assist projects that support and facilitate the region's long-term social development. As announced earlier, one of the guiding principles of the program remains keeping it fast, efficient, and unencumbered by bureaucracy.

In the current phase, Aurora will support nine new projects focused on finding sustainable solutions for a wide range of issues, including proper healthcare, social reintegration, empowerment and education. The projects were selected following the Aurora Dialogues event titled "Partnership for Artsakh" that took place in UWC Dilijan on May 2, 2021. It brought together partners from the Aurora for Artsakh program, representatives of local and diaspora organizations, NGOs and charity foundations, Artsakh officials, and the media, who agreed that for the region to succeed, a special priority should be given, among other things, to human resources and high-quality specialists in Artsakh who will be involved in the restoration work on the ground.

Here are the projects:

1. Involving medical professionals from Armenia and abroad in the

medical institutions of Artsakh (in cooperation with the Ministry of Health of the Republic of Artsakh);

2. Supporting Wounded Soldiers: Social Integration Program (in cooperation with the Aznavour Foundation and "Support to Wounded Soldiers and Soldiers with Disabilities" NGO);
3. Supporting the beekeeping program for displaced families (in cooperation with the "For Artsakh" National Movement NGO);
4. Organization of Wushu classes for the children living in the border villages of Artsakh (in cooperation with the Artsakh Wushu Kung Fu Federation);
5. Bilingual (French-Armenian) workshop on dramatic art for youth from Artsakh (in cooperation with the Framart Cultural Foundation and the French-Armenian Union);
6. Lead by Compassion (LwE) (in cooperation with Refugees United Soccer Academy (iACT) and GOALS ARMENIA);
7. Founding a bakery for a displaced family in the village of Khnatsakh in Artsakh (in cooperation with the "Jraghactsner" Charitable

Foundation);

8. Economic Empowerment of Youth Affected by NK Conflict (in cooperation with the "SOS Children's Villages" Armenian Charitable Foundation);
9. "2020 Artsakh War: Losses, Challenges & Steps for Resilience-Building" (a research project in cooperation with the Armenian Association of Social Workers).

"The projects supported in this phase are focused on the social development of the families affected by the war, healthcare, culture, education, and sports, and will help different population groups, from children to elderly people, further increasing the number of beneficiaries of the Aurora for Artsakh program. Notably, a great deal of attention is paid to the creation of development opportunities for the youth of Artsakh," said Narine Aghabalyan, Head of Aurora for Artsakh Program.

In total, since the launch of the program in November 2020, it has provided support to 80 projects in cooperation with 55 partners, both local and international, and allocated \$1,740,000 to help those affected by the war. The program also contributed to strengthening Aurora's partnerships with distinguished international entities like SOS Children's Villages, iACT and the Aznavour Foundation, among others.

Aurora for Artsakh will continue through 2021 into 2022 and keeps expanding by reviewing new project proposals and accepting those who meet the selection criteria into the program. We are grateful to our supporters whose generosity makes this possible and urge everyone to make a donation to the program through the #AraratChallenge movement.

High Commissioner's Office looking for Diaspora Youth Ambassadors

The Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs announces the launch of the Diaspora Youth Ambassador Program, with the generous support of the Jinishian Memorial Foundation. The program aims to create a dynamic network of Armenian youth, who will have the



opportunity to become Diaspora youth representatives of the homeland in their respective communities around the world.

The program will target 25 youth, 22 to 35 years old, from the Armenian communities of the Diaspora for a period of one year, during which two weeks will be spent in Armenia.

The successful candidates will have the opportunity to come to Armenia for two weeks from September 26 till October 9 and participate in a series of lectures, workshops and meetings to increase their knowledge about the most pressing political, social and economic issues in Armenia, as well as to gain a deeper understanding about community engagement, participation and advocacy.

The program will be a blend of theoretical and practical work and will be conducted in Armenian. It will also include excursions to historical, cultural and memorial sites, as well as visits to educational, scientific and tech institutions in Armenia. The youth will have the opportunity to participate in social and cultural events, as well as in various volunteering opportunities available during the time of visit. At the end of the two-weeks training period in Armenia, the youth will also participate

in a "Youth Forum", during which they will collectively draft a youth policy paper to set the framework for sustainable cooperation between the communities of the Diaspora and the homeland.

Upon their return to their respective communities of the Diaspora, the youth will be engaged in producing media content for local and international outlets, and will plan and implement community meetings and repatriation talks with the members of the Armenian Diaspora communities.

Successful candidates will incur the cost of tickets from and to their country of origin as well as purchase a two-week travel insurance. The program will fully cover the following costs for each program participant:

- accommodation during the two-weeks stay in Armenia;
- three meals a day during the stay in Armenia;
- entrance fees to museum, cultural and social events;
- all in-country transportation costs.

After the two-weeks program in Armenia, the candidates will return to their communities in the Diaspora to plan and implement media advocacy campaigns and will actively organize community

meetings and repatriation talks with the members of the Diaspora communities. The selected youth will have the opportunity to become Youth Armenian Diaspora Ambassadors, who will represent the Office in existing forums, youth groups and professional networks, serving as a link between the communities

and the homeland. They will actively maintain a youth network through an appropriate electronic platform, which will retain the engagement of the selected participants throughout the program.

The participants of the program will be selected based on the following selection criteria.

Program applicants should:

- be 22-35 years old youth of Armenian origin;
- living in the Diaspora for at least 5 years;
- should be active and representative members of the Armenian community in the Diaspora;
- should possess a good understanding of Armenian;
- are committed to contribute to the advancement of Armenian interests worldwide and to work towards the reinforcement of Armenia-Diaspora relations;
- experience in media content production is desirable.

Applications are open starting June 1, 2021. The submission deadline is June 25, 2021, at 00:00 – Yerevan time. Only shortlisted candidates will be invited for interviews during the month of July prior to the final selection to the program.

Transcaucasian Trail: Thru-hiking route across Armenia launched

The Armenian section of the Transcaucasian Trail has been launched.

For the past five years, the team has been chipping away at the monumental task of creating a 3,000-kilometer trail network across the Caucasus. It's been slow work finding old trails, building new trails, and creating the resources necessary to help hikers have a safe and enjoyable experience.

This marks the first country section in the international TCT. The Armenia trail will connect to Georgia, eventually taking hikers all the way to the Greater Caucasus.

Stretching 832 kilometers from Lake Arpi in the north to the town of Meghri in the south, the Armenia route is part ancient trails, part newly built trails, part Soviet jeep tracks, and part open terrain. It incorporates historic routes between villages and cultural monuments that have been explored and mapped by our team in Armenia, as well as newly constructed trails that connect these historic routes together.



Together, it's a preliminary route that experienced and self-sufficient hikers should be able to use to traverse the length of Armenia.

The Transcaucasian Trail has put together a small team to test the route, including representatives from the Transcaucasian Trail Association, the TCT NGO of Armenia, the TCT NGO of Georgia, and the wide network of hikers and partner organizations who have helped bring the trail to life.

Tom Allen, Roffi Petrossian, and Meagan Neal— are aiming to thru-hike the whole route. Along the way, they will be

joined at various points by other members of the TCT community.

The **40 days of self-supported hiking** started at Lake Arpi on Monday. From there the team will head south through some of Armenia's most spectacular cultural and natural landscape, traveling through 6 regions of Armenia, walking an average of 25km a day and camping along the way.

"We'll climb some of Armenia's most iconic peaks, including Azhdahak and Khustup. We'll walk beside the gorgeous lakes of Arpi and Sevan. We'll explore the national parks of Dilijan and Arevi and the canyons and gorges of Dzoraget and Debed. We'll visit the dramatically positioned Noravank and Tatev monasteries, pass through the Yeghegis and Arax valleys, and follow the Arpa and Vorotan rivers. And we'll conclude the journey in Meghri, Armenia's southern gateway," Meagan Neal said.

COAF provides first set of homes to displaced families from Artsakh

Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) has secured permanent housing for 13 families from Artsakh who were displaced after the Artsakh War. Two of these families, the Margaryans and Chirkinyans, moved into their new homes in the villages of Debet and Dsegh (Lori region) on June 11. The implementation of the initial phase of the project meets the housing needs of over 100 people from Artsakh.

COAF's "Moving Mountains" fundraiser held last December was partially devoted to building houses for displaced families in the immediate aftermath of the conflict. The organization aims at building and renovating a total of 10,000 square feet of housing area at the cost of \$430 per square foot, adding up to 13 homes with an average living space of 750 square feet. The homes are fully furnished with running

water, heating, electricity, internet and appliances such as refrigerators, washing machines, vacuum cleaners, televisions and kitchenware.

"COAF's response to the crisis has been swift in terms of mobilizing resources and providing displaced compatriots from Artsakh with shelter and humanitarian aid," stated COAF managing director Korioun Khatchadourian. The organization's founder Garo Armen has also stressed the urgency of providing housing in Armenia proper to avoid the tragedy of a community of Armenians living in trailers (domiks) for decades like they have since the 1988 earthquake.

COAF is also taking steps to ensure displaced families from Artsakh are integrating into their newfound communities. Access to COAF's

education, healthcare, social and economic programs has been a major component of the services being provided to youth and adults alike.

"A variety of criteria were assessed and brought into our final choice of families to receive housing. But providing homes to those who had intentions to leave Armenia and Artsakh played a decisive role in our decision-making process because it allowed us to keep them in the country," says project manager Ovsanna Yeghoyan.



New premises of Lycée Anatole France inaugurated in Yerevan

The Ambassador of France in Armenia, Jonathan Lacôte, and the Director of Agency for French Education Abroad (AEFE), Olivier Brochet inaugurated on June 14 the new premises of the Lycée Français Anatole France in Yerevan, the French Embassy in Armenia informs.

Armenian Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia, Artur Martirosyan attended the event.

This building provided by the Armenian government will allow the Lycée to host



more students both French expatriates or Armenians (already a majority). Thanks to cooperation with AEFE, It will enter a new stage of development from September

1, 2021.

The Anatole France Lycée is part of the worldwide network of 540 AEFE schools located in 139 countries. It is the only French school in Armenia, founded in 2007. It has 260 students aged 2 to 18.

All its levels of education are approved and recognized by the French Ministry of National Education. The educational complex also has a department of Armenian high school licensed by the Ministry of Education of Armenia.

American University of Armenia to open new student dormitory in Yerevan

The American University of Armenia celebrates the 30th anniversary this year and the milestone will be marked by opening of a new modern student dormitory.

Located next to the Sergei Parajanov Museum in Yerevan, this newly built dormitory will accommodate 56 AUA students from both abroad and across the country, who will not only have comfortable conditions to stay and effectively prepare for classes, but will also be involved in a number of planned events.

Back in 2016, the building, donated by philanthropists George and Caroline

Najaryan, was successfully renovated and furnished with a grant from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) Abroad Hospitals Program.

The opening ceremony will be attended by the university management, trustees, directors of academic programs, administrative departments, students, guests. The event will be attended by Armenia's Deputy Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sports Karen Trchunyan, US Ambassador to Armenia

Lynne Tracy, the newly appointed Director of the USAID Armenia Office John Allelo. Mr. Adam Phillips from USAID Washington Office will greet the participants with a video message.



Boxing champion Arthur Abraham donates CCT ambulances to Yerevan State Medical University hospitals

Boxer, world champion Arthur Abraham donated two CCT ambulances to Yerevan State Medical University (YSMU) with the support of Tovmasyan Charity Foundation.

Armen Minasyan, Vice-President for Clinical Affairs, expressed gratitude for the important donation. He said that one of the ambulances will serve the Muratsan University complex, the other

will be used by the Mikayelyan University complex.

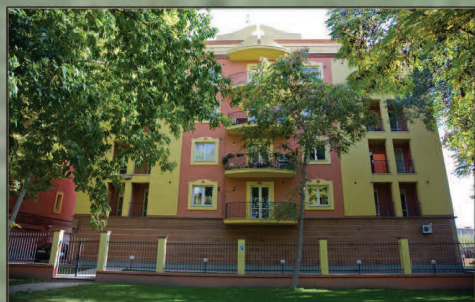


Benefactor Arman Mailyan, who arrived from Barcelona, mentioned that the CCT ambulances were manufactured in Germany and brought from Spain. He said some of the ambulances were sent to Artsakh.

The new comfortable ambulances are equipped with all the necessary equipment for emergency medical care and resuscitation.

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