

## EU Urges Democratic Elections In Armenia



*Armenia - Piotr Switalski, the head of the EU Delegation in Armenia.*

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## Armenia, Georgia sign 2016 Military Cooperation Plan

A Georgian delegation led by Defense Minister Tinatin Khidasheli has arrived in Armenia for an official visit. Following an official welcome ceremony, the Defense Ministers of the two countries signed the 2016 Military Cooperation Plan.

"Although Armenia and Georgia have chosen different security systems, it will not hamper the cooperation on a common bilateral agenda aimed at the reinforcement of security and stability in the region," Armenian DM Seyran Ohanyan told reporters following the meeting.

"I think we can see the best example in Afghanistan, where Armenian and Georgian peacekeepers are serving together for the sake of common peace and stability. I'm here to speak about issues that unite us. Peace in the Caucasus is the first thing that unites us, and we cooperate in that direction," the Georgian Defense Minister said.

Referring to issues of Armenian-Georgian cooperation in the context of Georgian-Turkish and Georgian-Azerbaijani relations,



Tinatin Khidasheli said "the question is about strategic partnership." "Georgia has a NATO-member neighboring country in the face of Turkey, which is of great importance to us," she said.

The Georgian Defense Minister refrained from commenting on the vote of the Georgian delegation on the two anti-Armenian reports at the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, but advised to look at the issue from the perspective of security.

## Two anti-Armenian reports at PACE come to prove Azerbaijan's non-constructive stance: Edward Nalbandian



"Azerbaijan's approach on the settlement of the Karabakh conflict contradicts not only that of Armenia, but also the Minsk Group Co-Chairs," Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian told a press conference on February 2.

Summing up the activities of the past year, Minister Nalbandian said "Armenia, in cooperation with the OSCE Minsk Group, maintained efforts towards the peaceful resolution of the Karabakh conflict." At the same time, he blamed Azerbaijan for the frequent violations of the ceasefire regime and the use of heavy weapons.

The Minister added that the two anti-Armenian reports considered by the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe a few days ago come to prove

Azerbaijan's non-constructive policy.

"It was an attempt by Azerbaijan to take the Karabakh issue from the Minsk Group format to a different platform, thus causing damage to the settlement process. This is not the first time Azerbaijan is trying to use the PACE podium for taking the issue into a different direction," Minister Nalbandian said.

Minister Nalbandian said the Iran deal was the most significant achievement in international relations in 2015. "The lifting of sanctions against Iran will boost the development of Armenian-Iranian relations," he said.

As for the willingness of Iran to assume a mediating role in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict, Minister Nalbandian noted that "the lack of

progress in the talks is not because of "bad" mediators, but because of lack of will on the part of Azerbaijan."

Relations with Russia are a key element in the foreign policy of Armenia, Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian said.

"Strengthening the allied, strategic partnership with Russia is high on Armenia's foreign policy agenda," he said. Nalbandian recalled that in 2015 the Presidents of the two countries had held about a dozen meetings in the bilateral and multilateral formats.

Minister Nalbandian reminded that during a dozen of meetings last year the Presidents of the two countries reached a number of agreements of strategic importance in the political, military and technical, science and education, cultural and other areas.

The Minister added that the membership in the Eurasian Economic Union as of January 2014 "stemmed from Armenia's strategic interests" and "opened up new opportunities for the country's economic development." Besides, Armenia assumed the chairmanship of the Collective Security Treaty Organization (CSTO) in September 2015. The country "continues to act as an initiator and active participant in this association," the Armenian Foreign Ministry said in a statement on Tuesday.

## EU Urges Democratic Elections In Armenia

YEREVAN (RFE/RL)

A senior European Union official on February 5 called on the Armenian authorities to prevent serious irregularities in parliamentary elections due in May 2017, saying that their conduct could determine "the future of Armenia."

Piotr Switalski, the head of the EU Delegation in Yerevan, warned of "further stagnation" in the country that might follow the vote. "The elections of 2017, the first elections under the new constitutional arrangements, may have a really big role for the future of Armenia," he said in a speech.

"It's not simply about another election," emphasized Switalski. "I think it's about the future of Armenia in a larger sense, it's about the confidence of the people in the political governance of Armenia, and it's also about Armenia's image in the international community."

The 2017 elections will determine who will govern Armenia after President Serzh Sargsyan completes his second and final term in April 2018. Under Sargsyan's controversial constitutional changes enacted in December, Armenia will switch to the parliamentary system of government by that time. The next president of

the republic will be elected by the parliament and have largely ceremonial powers.

Switalski stressed the importance of a new Electoral Code, which the authorities plan to enact this spring, for the proper conduct of next year's polls. The EU hopes that they will "consult" with European experts and make sure that the code is also acceptable to the Armenian opposition, he said.

"We hope very much that the final shape of the Electoral Code will have a consensual character," added the diplomat. "It will be very important for the next elections."

Serzh Sargsyan and his Republican Party of Armenia (HHK) have already promised to enact new electoral legislation that will provide for a democratic contest. Their political opponents are highly skeptical about these assurances, pointing to what they call a falsification of the constitutional referendum held on December 6. Shortly after the referendum the EU urged the authorities to properly investigate "credible" allegations of fraud voiced by the opposition, independent observers and media.

Piotr Switalski reiterated the EU calls. "For us, [ongoing fraud investigations] will be a very important signal as to how to prepare ourselves for the next elections," he said.

## U.S. 'not opposed' to closer Armenia-Iran ties

The United States does not object to Armenia's plans to step up economic cooperation with neighboring Iran following the lifting of international sanctions against Tehran, the U.S. ambassador in Yerevan, Richard Mills, said on February 5.

"Armenia has the sovereign right to pursue strong, mutually beneficial relations with as many nations as it wishes," Mills said in written comments to RFE/RL's Armenian service.

"With respect to Iran, the U.S. Government gratefully acknowledges the part Armenia played in making possible the diplomatic engagement that led to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, by fully respecting the international community's sanctions on Iran over the years, even when that effort came at some cost to Armenia and its economy," he said, referring to Iran's nuclear deal with the U.S. and other world powers.

"With the advent of Implementation Day on January 16, it is natural for Armenia to start thinking about the impact that the lifting of sanctions might have on its political and economic ties with Iran," added the diplomat.

Asked whether the U.S. believes closer ties with Iran could help to ease Armenia's heavy dependence on Russia for energy resources, Mills said: "We

have long encouraged Armenia to diversify its energy supply, including exploring opportunities for alternative/renewable sources and greater regional integration, for the sake of greater energy efficiency and to avoid overdependence on any one party or source."

Armenia was quick to welcome the July 2015 agreement on Iran's controversial nuclear program and the resulting sanctions relief. Senior Armenian officials have said the landmark deal will speed up the implementation of Armenian-Iranian energy projects regarded as strategically important by Yerevan.

President Serzh Sargsyan and his Iranian counterpart Hassan Rouhani discussed the new opportunities for boosting Armenian-Iranian commercial ties in a phone call late last month.

The two neighboring states already signed in August last year a final agreement on the construction of a new power transmission line which is due to significantly boost exports of Armenian elec-



tricity to Iran.

Yerevan hopes that greater oil revenues and the unfreezing of its assets in the U.S. and Europe will also enable Iran to finance the construction of a major hydroelectric plant on the Armenian-Iranian border. The \$350 million project has for years been stalled due to a lack of funding and serious restrictions on Armenian banking operations with Iran.

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## New Armenian Ombudsman Nominated

The ruling Republican Party (HHK) all but predetermined on Friday the appointment of Arman Tatoyan, currently a deputy minister of justice, as Armenia's new human rights ombudsman.

The position has been vacant since its previous holder, Karen Andreasyan, unexpectedly stepped down on January 12. Under the Armenian constitution, Andreasyan's successor will be chosen by the parliament in which the HHK has a solid majority.

The HHK's parliamentary faction nominated Tatoyan for the job after meeting with him behind the closed doors. His candidacy needs to be endorsed by the National Assembly's standing committee on legal affairs before being debated on the parliament floor. The committee is headed by Hovannes Sahakyan, a senior HHK member.

"I believe that I can work in an uninhibited way and stand with citizens in accor-



dance with the ombudsman's mission," Tatoyan told reporters after meeting with HHK deputies.

Andreasyan has still not given clear reasons for his resignation. The former human rights defender was publicly attacked by several HHK parliamentarians in October when he presented the National Assembly with an annual report on the work of his office. He denounced the harsh criticism as a smear campaign ordered by

an unnamed government-linked individual.

Some Armenian newspapers have claimed that Andreasyan quit under pressure from Mikael Minasyan, Sargsyan's influential son-in-law and Armenia's ambassador to the Vatican.

Tatoyan insisted that he has no ties with Minasyan. "I don't know Mr. Minasyan personally and have never had a chance to socialize with him," he said.

The U.S. Embassy in Armenia praised Andreasyan's track record when it "noted with regret" his resignation on January 20. "He has been a tireless and effective champion for those who were defenseless; those who feared their voices might be silenced if they voiced unpopular messages; and any Armenian who fought for his or her rights as a citizen to be respected," it said in a statement.

The HHK leadership has denied forcing Andreasyan to resign.

## OSCE concerned over armed clashes between Armenian, Azerbaijani forces



OSCE Chairman-in-Office, German Foreign Minister Frank-Walter Steinmeier has called for the creation of a mechanism to investigate violations in the Kaabkh conflict zone.

"As regards the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, armed clashes along the line of contact and the border between Armenia and Azerbaijan give us cause for concern," the OSCE Chairman-in-Office wrote in an article published by the Huffington Post.

"Germany is campaigning for an intensification of the negotiations under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group. One important step to this end would be the creation of a mechanism to investigate violations of the ceasefire," he added.

Frank-Walter Steinmeier said the conflicts in Transdniestria, Nagorno-Karabakh and the Southern Caucasus cannot be called "frozen". "Each year they continue to bring hardship to the people affected and stagnation to the regions involved. We want to stabilize the ceasefires, build trust and improve the day-to-day lives of the people by taking small but tangible steps, such as improving economic exchange."

## Armenian soldier killed in Azeri firing

Tensions were high at the line of contact between the armed forces of Nagorno Karabakh and Azerbaijan on February 5, the NKR Ministry of Defense reported.

The rival used artillery weapons of different caliber as it fire more than 1,500 shots in the direction of the Armenian positions.

Private of the NKR Defense Army Simon Chavshyan was killed as a result of firing from the Azerbaijani side. Probe into the details of the incident is under way.

The NKR Defense Ministry offers its condolences to the families and friends of the soldier.



## The region is on the threshold of a new phase of Syrian crisis: Ruben Safrastyan



"The region is on the threshold of a new phase in the Syrian crisis," Director of the Oriental Studies Institute of the Armenian National Academy of Sciences Ruben Safrastyan told a press conference on February 5.

"Ground forces of other countries will be deployed in Syria soon. Saudi Arabia has already declared about the intention to send forced. The US-led coalition is seri-

ously considering the opportunity to deploy foreign troops," he said.

Safrastyan added that "Turkey is also mobilizing forces at the Syrian border, but has not reached the ultimate goals it pursued when getting involved in Syria."

Commenting on the recent developments in Turkey-Vatican relations, Safrastyan warned against hasty conclusions. "Let's wait and see what happens next," he said.

Remind that Turkey returned its ambassador to the Vatican on Thursday, nearly 10 months after withdrawing him in protest against Pope Francis' description of the century-old massacres of Christian Armenians as genocide. Muslim Turkey promptly recalled its envoy.

The decision came after the Vatican on Wednesday praised Turkey's willingness to open its archives to historians and create a joint commission of scholars to explore

past events.

Ruben Safrastyan believes that "what Pope Francis did on April 12, 2015, was simply unprecedented." Reaching targets through treachery and intrigues has always been an indispensable part of Turkey's policy, which find sits reflection on the Syrian front, as well. The political scientist said, however, that the policy has been a failure so far.

To solve his personal problems, Erdogan escalated the domestic situation in the country months ago by inciting tensions against Kurds. Erdogan solved his issues through elections, but created a situation that had not been in place for decades. Safrastyan is confident the situation will further deteriorate in the future. "The Turkish policy of the recent months aims to engage the US and NATO into a conflict with Russia, but Turkey has failed here, as well," he said.

## Tigran Sargsyan takes up his duties as Chairman of EEC Board

On February 1, 2016, the updated EEC Board started its work under the leadership of the new Chairman of the Eurasian Economic Commission, Tigran Sargsyan, according to the website of the Eurasian Economic Commission.

It was approved in last December at the session of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council by the Presidents of Eurasian Economic Union (EAEU).

By the decision of the Supreme Eurasian Economic Council, each country of the Union (Armenia, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, and Russia) is now represented in the Council by two, instead of three, members of the Board (Ministers).



Therefore, from February 1, the Board consists of 10 members.

However, the Presidents of the EAEU countries have maintained continuity: eight of ten newly appointed EEC Ministers previously held similar positions.

The only new face in the Board, other than the Chairman, is Veronika Nikishina (representative of the Russian Federation) who replaced her predecessor Andrey Slepnev as Minister for Trade.

In accordance with the Decision of the Supreme Council of the Eurasian Economic Union, a new position was introduced to the Commission - Member of the Board - Minister in charge of Domestic Markets, Informatisation, and Information and Communication Technologies. This post has been taken by Karine Minasyan (Republic of Armenia).

According to the Treaty on the EAEU, the EEC Board's term of office is four years.

## Tehran plans to increase gas supplies to Armenia fivefold

Iran is considering the possibility of increasing gas exports to Armenia by five folds, as part of construction of a new electricity transmission line between the two countries, director of the National Gas Export Company of Iran Alireza Kameli said on February 7, Sputnik News reports.

The gas export is carried out in exchange for the purchase of electricity between the two sides, the media report-

ed, citing Kameli.

"On the basis of a joint agreement, the possibility exists to increase the amount of gas exports by five times," Kameli said, as quoted by the Mehri news agency.

Iran exports nearly one million cubic meters of natural gas to Armenia daily, the official added.

The new electricity networks are expected to increase the volume of power



trade between Iran and Armenia from the current 300 megawatts to about one thousand megawatts.

## Yerevan Insists on lower Russian gas price



Prime Minister Hovik Abrahamyan on February 4 publicly pressed Armenia's Russian-owned gas distribution network to help his government convince Russia to cut the price of its natural gas delivered to the South Caucasus country.

Abrahamyan appealed to the Gazprom-Armenia operator three weeks after announcing that Yerevan is seeking a lower cost of Russian gas in view of the sharp drop in international oil prices. Russian-Armenian negotiations on the matter have yielded no agreement yet.

"The decrease in the volume of gas consumption [in Armenia] clearly shows that the [Gazprom-Armenia] company can have more earnings in case of lower prices," Abrahamyan said as he opened a weekly session of his cabinet.

"I think that the Gazprom-Armenia management has a lot of work to do in presenting this business logic to the public and its superiors, as a result of which the mutually beneficial nature of our negotiation proposal will become clear to both the Gazprom company and the Russian Federation," he said.

"I think that global economic and geopolitical developments

are making obvious not only the necessity but also the possibility of reducing the gas price," added the premier.

Abrahamyan did not disclose the extent of a price reduction sought by the Armenian government or specify whether the Russians are reluctant to accept it. His unusual appeal to Gazprom's Armenian subsidiary might have been an indication that Moscow is driving a hard bargain in the ongoing negotiations.

Energy and Natural Resources Minister Yervand Zakharyan declined to shed light on those talks when he addressed the Armenian parliament on Wednesday. "I can only say at this point that those negotiations are continuing," he said.

Zakharyan would also not be drawn on the Russian gas price that would now be acceptable to Yerevan.

Gazprom, which supplies at least 80 percent of Armenia's gas, lowered the price from \$190 to \$165 per thousand cubic meters less than a year ago. It had previously cut the tariff in 2013 in return for Yerevan's decision to join the Russian-led Eurasian Economic Union (EEU). At that time the Russian giant charged European countries an average of almost \$350 per thousand cubic meters of its gas.

The subsequent collapse of oil prices, which also determine international gas tariffs, offset much of the Russian discount for Armenia. Gazprom's tariff for Europe averaged \$238 per thousand cubic meters last year. It is expected to fall to \$180 next month.

Abrahamyan said on Thursday that cheaper gas is "essential" for the competitiveness of Armenian manufacturers using it. Those of them that are heavily reliant on exports to Russia have been hit hard by a sharp depreciation of the Russian ruble caused by the decreased oil prices.

Late last month Zakharyan dismissed suggestions that Armenia will be better off if it cuts back on Gazprom supplies and significantly increases instead the presently modest volume of gas imports from Iran. He insisted that Russian gas is cheaper for Armenia even at the current price.

## EIB supports with EUR 51m upgrade of strategic transport infrastructure in Armenia

**The European Investment Bank (EIB) is lending EUR 51 million to the Republic of Armenia to finance rehabilitation of the M6 interstate road, the crucial transport corridor in Armenia representing the interconnection of the country with Georgia and thus the EU and being significant particularly for Armenia's exports and imports.**

The EIB funds will support the rehabilitation and upgrading along some 90 km of the M6 road between Vanadzor in central Armenia and Bagratashen at the North eastern border between Armenia and Georgia. The road follows a deep valley and features several hairpin bends, steep inclines, narrow bridges and three tunnels which will be upgraded. The M6 rehabilitation will help to improve traffic fluidity, levels of service, time savings and increase overall road safety, expected to result in a reduced number of road accidents, injuries and fatalities.

EIB Vice-President László Baranyay, responsible for EIB operations in Armenia commented: "The EIB loan will support the upgrade of Armenia's priority M6 road infrastructure representing connection of Yerevan with Tbilisi. This transport infra-

structure serves as major link of Armenia with Europe and other countries of the Commonwealth of Independent States through Georgia's Black Sea ports carrying over 60% of Armenia's international traffic".

In addition to EIB, the Asian Development Bank is expected to provide support to the project. The total costs of the project that will be promoted by the Ministry of Transport and Communication is EUR 102 million.

Currently, the EIB lending commitment in Armenia covers twelve projects, most of them supported by EU grants, and amounts to some EUR 270 million. It supports a well-diversified investment portfolio important for the country's development in the areas of transport, energy, water and solid waste sector infrastructure and indirectly financing the undertakings of small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) through EIB partner financing institutions. Both parties have ongoing discussions regarding the future priorities of EIB activities in Armenia and the promising pipeline of new operations for the upcoming years.

## Armenian Minister justifies monopolies



Yerevan - (RFE/RL) The existence of business monopolies is inevitable in a country like Armenia and the authorities in Yerevan are therefore not seeking to eliminate them, Economy Minister Karen Chshmarityan said on February 3.

"The government has not fought and will not fight against monopolies," he told a news conference. "Our legislation and policies are aimed instead at tackling abuse of monopolist positions, price collusion and other practices specified by the law."

"Should we not allow the emergence of monopolies? That's not possible in Armenia," insisted Chshmarityan.

Some lucrative forms of business in Armenia, notably imports of fuel and foodstuffs, have long been controlled by large companies belonging to government-linked individuals. Local and foreign economists say the resulting lack of competition in those sectors translates into disproportionately high prices and hampers faster economic growth.

A World Bank survey released in 2013 said that oligopolies control 20 percent of economic activity in Armenia, making it the most monopolized economy in the former Soviet Union. World Bank officials have repeatedly called on the Armenian

government to create a level playing field for entrepreneurs in all sectors.

In particular, the existence of de facto monopolies is widely blamed for the fact that the retail prices of gasoline in Armenia have dropped by only about 20 percent since oil prices began rapidly falling in summer 2014. The oil prices have tumbled more than three-fold in the past 18 months.

Levon Zurabyan, a leader of the opposition Armenian National Congress (HAK), challenged the government to explain this huge price disparity during a question-and-answer session in parliament on Wednesday. "Because of this deliberate monopolization, the Armenian economy is now choking," he said.

Deputy Prime Minister Vache Gabrielyan told Zurabyan that the government has asked the State Commission on the Protection of Economic Competition (SCPEC) to investigate the gasoline prices and determine just how market-based they are now. The anti-trust body has rarely slapped major fines on lucrative firms holding dominant positions in their respective sectors.

Another opposition lawmaker, Nikol Pashinyan, decried a monopoly on sugar imports to Armenia that has long been enjoyed by Samvel Aleksanyan, one of the country's richest men affiliated with President Serzh Sargsyan's Republican Party (HHK). Pashinyan pointed to "lingering rumors" that Aleksanyan is massively evading taxes and that Sargsyan has "personal share" in the tycoon's revenue.

The chief of the government staff, Davit Harutiunyan, brushed aside the allegations, saying that Pashinyan is only keen to score political points with false statements.

Serzh Sargsyan reportedly defended the sugar monopoly when he met with members of the Armenian community in the Czech Republic during a September 2014 visit to Prague. "Do you want a dozen people to import sugar to a small country?" the "Aravot" daily quoted the Armenian president as saying.

## Dram Dilemma: Armenian national currency shows tendency towards depreciation

After a period of relative stability Armenia's national currency is showing signs of depreciation as for the first time in more than a year the Central Bank has set the dram's official exchange rate at above 490 per \$1.

The period of the dram's high volatility in December 2014, when it lost about 20 percent of its value within just several days, was followed by more than a year of relative stability against the background of falling national currencies in other former Soviet countries.

The biggest plunge has been taken by the currencies of Russia, Azerbaijan and Kazakhstan, all of which are major oil exporting nations.

Armenia, which has no fossil fuel reserves, showed the least rate of currency depreciation during 2015 - at only 1.8 percent.

The World Bank's Yerevan Office Manager Laura Bailey

last month said she did not see any jeopardy to dram stability, but some local economists still predicted that the situation at the currency markets of Russia and other former Soviet states with which Armenia has trade links will inevitably have an impact on the dram as well. After trading at under 480 drams per \$1 for quite a long time, the dram began to gradually lose its ground late last year. In the past several days exchange offices in Yerevan already purchased the greenback for 492 drams, selling it for 496.

In Armenia, whose imports considerably exceed exports, any depreciation of the national currency contains risks of inflation, as the cost of imports in dram terms increases. At the same time, among other things, a stronger dram against the Russian ruble means stiffer competition for Armenian manufacturers on the Russian market due to a higher cost of their products in dollar terms.



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## 1 ROOM

- 1696.**Tumanyan str.**, 5/4, stone bld, 1 bedroom, h-3m, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 160.000 USD.
- 1440.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 110 sq.m., 1 bedroom, h-3m, euro repaired, heating system, furnished, parking,. Price: 350.000 USD.
- 1715- **Sayat Nova Ave.**, 5/4, 70sq.m, stone bld, h-4m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 110.000 USD
- 1680- **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/4, 68sq.m, 1 bedroom, old repair, possibility of gas. Price: 86.000 USD.
- 1674. **Abovyan str.**, 2nd floor, 70sq.m., 1 bedroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 135.000 USD
- 1698-**Aram str.**, Newly built, 14/5, 62sq.m, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, AC, security system, parking. Price: 120.000 USD.

## 2 ROOMS

- 3003.**Sayat-Nova str**, 5/3, 105sq.m, 2bedrooms, stone building, capially repaired. Price: Negotiable
- 1560.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 10/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.
- 2818.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 120sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, furnished. Price: 400.000USD
- 1156.**Komitas Ave.**, Hambardzumyan str. 5/3, 110sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, kitchen is furnished. Price: 150.000 USD negotiable.
- 2949.**Aram str.**, Newly built, 1st floor, 143 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, zero state, Price: 2000 USD per sq.m.
- 2300.**Northern ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 400.000 USD.

## 3 ROOMS

- 3090 **Dzorap Newly built**, 190sq.m, 2 bedrooms, study, 2 bathrooms, capially renovated, parking, Price: 460.000 USD
- 3090. **Busand str./Near Republic Square/**, Newly built, /6th floor, 116sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms one in master bedroom, capially renovated, open balcony. Price: 350.000 USD negotiable
- 3046.**Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 9/9, 81sq.m., without divisions. Price: Negotiable.
- 3012.**Aram str**, Newly built, /7th floor, 136sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking, facing to bulvar, Price: 300.000 USD negotiable.
- 2998.**North Ave**, Newly built, 9/6, 181sq.m, 3bedrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking, Price: 700.000 USD
- 2682.**Aram Str.**, Newly built, 13/6 187sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, 2 open balconies, capially repaired, heating system, 2AC, 2 garages, view to garden. Price: 550.000 USD negotiable.
- 2958.**Pushkin str.**, 5/2, 140 sq.m., stone building, 4 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system. Price: Negotiable.
- 2895.**Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, AC. Price: negotiable
- 2802.**Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 8/4, 166sq.m, 3bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, central heating, AC, security system. Price: 320.000 USD.
- 1104.**Komitas Ave.**, **Aram Khachatryan str.**, 5/2, 125sq.m., stone bld, h-2.75m., 3 bedrooms, office, 2 bathrooms, old repair, gas, garage. Price:

130.000 USD

- 2836.**Pushkin str.**, 4/4,5, 400sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 460.000 USD.
- 2990.**North Ave.**, Newly built, 11th floor, 295sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: Negotiable.

## PREMISES

- 1789.**Charents str.** Land-1270sq.m, 5 storied building, each floor-400sq.m., basement, capially repaired, parkings. Price: 4.000.000 USD negotiable
- 1598.**Komitas, Nairy Zaryan str.**, 1000 sq.m., working restaurant, 1st line, capially repaired. Price: negotiable.
- 1603.**Northern Ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 160 sq.m., zero level, window glasses. Price: 2.600.000 USD.



- 2035.**Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m., 1st line, facade-55m., capially repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: Negotiable
- 2013.**Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capially repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 1.300.000\$ negotiable
- 2012.**Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1, 2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capially repaired, AC. Price: 1.100.000\$ negotiable

- 2155.**Mashtots ave.**, 3storied building, 540sq.m., each floor-180sq.m, window glasses, parking. Price: 3.600.000 USD
- 2020.**Hr. Kochar str.**, Land-300sq.m, 1st line, 4storied building, 1080sq.m., each floor-270sq.m, h-3.6m., without divisions, parkings, 3 access. Price: 1.400.000 USD negotiable
- 1986.**Cascade**, Land 1000sq.m. 3storied building 1200sq.m., unfinished, parking. Price: 1.000.000 USD.
- 2167.**Sayat Nova str.**, newly built, 38sq. m, capially repaired. Price: 200.000 USD
- 2175.**Tumanyan str.** Ground and 1st floor of the building, 600sq.m, ground floor 300sq.m, 1st floor-220sq.m, basement-80sq.m, - 1st line, zero level, 2 entrances, facade-15m, 4 window glasses, capially repaired, heating system, AC, Price: 3500 USD per sq.m,
- 2172. **Isahakyan str**, 92sq.m, 1st line, 7 degrees above zero level, facade-9m, 2 window glasses, h-3.20m, 2 halls, cabinet, bathroom, capially repaired, heating system. Price: 450.000 USD

## LANDS

- 2122.**Davitashen**, 1800 sq.m., water, gas, electricity, possible to sell separately 600 sq.m., and 1200 sq.m. Price: 150 USD per sq.m.
- 2121.**Demirchyan str.**, 1338 sq.m., building permits. Price: 2million USD.
- 2013.**Cascade**. 1000 sq.m. building permits, first line, gas, water and electricity possibilities. Price 460.000USD
- 1402.**Hr. Kochar Str.**, 1100 sq. m. facade -25 m. Price negotiable.
- 2090.**Lori region**, close to Stepanavan, Gyargyar village, 6 hectares, forest 2 hectare has building permits, 3 water source, electricity. Price: 100.000USD.
- 2406.**Avan**, Mher Mkrtyan block, 1000 sq.m.,

electricity, gas, water, the district is inhabited. Price: 30USD per sq.m

- 2107.**Monument**, 2400sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: 400 USD per sq.m.
- 2413.**Ashtarak roadway**, 1000sq.m, building permits, building project. Price: Negotiable
- 2414.**Demirchyan str.** land-750sq.m., building permits. Price: 750.000 USD.

## PRIVATE HOUSES

- 3739.**Nork Marash** Land- 2000sq.m, two separate houses, total bld-600sq.m, capially repaired, swimming pool, sauna, guard house. 2 car parking, garden. Price: 950.000 USD
- 3348.**Blur, Barbyus str.** Land - 800 sq.m, 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control. Price: 1.2 million USD
- 3146.**Aygestan**, Land-500 sq.m., 5 storied bld-765 sq.m., each floor-180 sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, hjeating system, elevator. Price: 2.300.000 USD.
- 3583.**Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price: 1.350.000 USD.
- 3432.**Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m , 3 storied bld.-501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, central heating, AC, boiler room garden, swimming pool, sauna, garage, security system. Price: 1.000.000 USD
- 3606.**Avan**, Tsarav Akhbyur/near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m., 3 storied building-750sq.m., 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capially repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking. Price-1.500.000 USD
- 3574.**Blur**, Land-779sq.m., 2 storied building-720sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 2.000.000 USD
- 3590 **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450 sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 680.000 USD
- 3651.**Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: 1.700.000 USD.
- 3401.**Antarayan str**, Newly built, land-700sq.m, 3 storied bld-690sq.m, 5 bedrooms, capially repaired. Price: 1.300.000 USD
- 3712 **Cascade** Newly built, land-450sq.m, 4 storied bld-600sq.m, zero state. Price: 550.000 USD

## NEWLY BUILT RESIDENTIAL BUILDINGS

- 142. **Verin Antarayan str.**, 14 floors, 65-133sq.m, capially renovated, parking. Price: 900-1300 USD
- 74.**Cascade**, Verin Antarayin. 136-315 sq m., walls plastered, electricity, water, gas, euro windows, no exploitation fees. Price: 1200 USD per sq.m, parking -15.000 USD.
- 107.**Monument**, Verin Antarayin. inhabited, 8 floors, gas, windows, street view -1000 USD per sq.m., city looking -1500 USD per sq.m., parking -4 million USD preliminary.
- 87.**Sayat-Nova str.**, 21 floors, 3 bedrooms -188 sq.m., 199 sq.m., Price 1900 USD per sq.m., 2 bedrooms have a beautiful sight - 117 sq.m., 120 sq.m., 124 sq.m., Price: 1700 USD per sq.m., climate control, gas.
- 93.**Kievyan str.** Given to the operation in October 2011, 16 floors, walls plastered, windows, exterior doors, h -3, 15 m, gas, parking. Price: 1500-1600USD per sq.m, parking-12 000 USD. Possible with mortgage, for 13 years term.
- 94.**Masiv**. 3floors, 8 flats, each flat has 3 bedrooms, 210 sq.m., parking. Price: negotiable.
- 130.**Antarayan str.**, 34 flats, 110-275 sq.m., 4 penthouses-200-275sq.m, available sevice-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 131.**Busand str.**, commercial, office and residential areas, penthouse, available sevice-car wash, cleaning service, garbage removal service, parking. Price: Negotiable



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### 1 ROOM

- 2037. **Baghranyan str.**, 5/2, 60sqm, 1 bedroom, euro repaired, gas, heating system, AC, modern furnished, equipped. Price: negotiable
- 2189. **Vardanants str.**, Newly built, 24/12, 90 sqm, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD.
- 2099. **Sayat-Nova Ave.**, 12/6, 1 bedroom, capially repaired, gas, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 600 USD.
- 1972. **Northern ave.**, 8/4, 80sqm, 1 bedroom, 2 bathrooms, open kitchen, capially repaired, climate control. Price: 1200 USD
- 2171. **Tumanyan str.**, Newly built, 5th floor, 94 sq.m., 1 bedroom, 1 bathroom, capially repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped. Price: 1000 USD
- 2367. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 9th floor, 98 sq.m., capially repaired, heating system, furnished equipped. Price: Negotiable.

### 2 ROOMS

- 2302 **North Ave**, Newly built, 11/4, 137sq.m, 2bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 1780. **Amiryan str**, Newly built, /13th floor, 82 sq.m, 2 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 1700 USD negotiable.
- 942. **Teryan str.** 4/3, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, furnisred, equipped. Price: 1500 USD.
- 1950. **Buzand/Mashtots area**. Newly built, 8th floor, 163 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, furnished, open balcony. Price: 2500 USD.
- 1681. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 6/2, 130 sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1535. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 7/4, 82sq.m, 2bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable.
- 1738. **Amiryan str.**, 8/8, 159sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 1951. **Busand str.**, Newly built, 13th floor, 122sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control. Price: 2500 USD
- 1406. **Sayat Nova ave.**, 7/3, 110sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable
- 2109. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 10/4, 137sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, central heating, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 2243. **Buzand str**, Newly built, 17/4, 125sq.m, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD
- **Amiryan str**, Newly built, 14/5, 120sqm, 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, partly furnished. Price 2000 USD

### 3 ROOMS AND MORE

- 2358 **V. Sargsyan str**, Newly Built, 7/4, 145sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, one guest toilet, capially renovated, furnished, underground parking. Price: 3000 USD negotiable
- 2353 **V. Sargsyan str.** 8/5, Newly built, 98sq.m, 2bedrooms, capially renovated, furnished, Price 1500 USD
- 2347 **Teryan str.** Newly built, 10/8, 320sq.m, 3bedrooms, office, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished. Price: Negotiable
- 2277. **Kievyan str.** duplex, 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, with or without furniture. Price: Negotiable.
- 2310 **Busand str.**, Newly built, 190sq.m, 3bedrooms, 3bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2500 USD
- 2316 **Northern Ave**, Newly built, 6th floor,

- 227sq.m., 4bedrooms, 2bathrooms, guest toilet, capially repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2500 USD
- 2303 **Hanrapetutyun str** Newly built, 9/5, 165sq.m, 3bedrooms, 1bathroom, 1 guest toilet. capially repaired, furnished, parking. Price: 2000 USD
- 2257. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 17/16, 160 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, parking. Price: Negotiable
- 2005. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/8, 130 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, furnished, parking. Price: 2200 USD.
- 1723. **Northern Ave.**, Newly built, 8/4., 170 sq.m 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, open kitchen, capially repaired, furnished, equipped. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1981. **Vardanants Str.**, Newly built, 14/14, 140 sq m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, 3 open balconies, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 2000 USD.
- 1793. **Teryan str.**, Newly built, 8th floor, 260 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, climate control, parking, unfurnished (possible to furnish), Price: 3500 USD.
- 1720. **Amiryan str.**, Newly built, 16/10, 179 sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, central heating, AC, cellar- 25sq.m, with or without furniture, parking. Price 3000 USD negotiable
- 2195. **Northern ave.**, Newly built, 3rd floor, 300sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capially repaired, climate control, AC, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- 2261. **Hin Yerevantsi**, /North Avenue/, Newly built, 10/3, 124sq.m., 2 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped, parking. Price: 1700 USD
- 2084. **Tumanyan str.**, 4th floor, 200sq.m, 3 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- 2252. **Northern ave**, 7th floor, 350 sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, open balconies, capially repaired, climate control, parking. Price Negotiable.



- itally repaired, climate control, AC, parking. Price: 5000 USD
- 1335 **Baghranyan str.**, Land-200sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished. Price: 3000 USD
- 1336 **Aygedzor**, Land-1000sq.m, 2 storied bld-240sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished. Price: 2000 USD
- 1337 **Davtashen** Land-406sq.m, 3 storied bld-306sq.m, 4bedrooms, 2bathrooms, capially repaired, furnished. Price: 3900 USD
- 1323. **Monument, Babayan str**, Land-400sq.m, 3storied bld-300sq.m, 4bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired. Price: Negotiable
- 1248. **Aygedzor**, Land - 1021 sq m ,3 storied bld. - 501 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, central heating, AC, sauna, boiler room garden, swimming pool, garage, alarming system, security system. Price: 8000 USD.
- 999. **Aygedzor**, Land -1000 sqm, basement + 2 floors- 310 sqm, capially repaired, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, newly furnished, equipped, sauna, swimming-pool. Starting Price: 5000 USD.
- 1094. **Noy block**, Land-450sqm, 2 storied building - 220sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 2 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden. Price: 2000USD.

### PRIVATE HOUSES

- 1195. **Nork, Armenakyan str.**, Land - 2000 sq.m, 4 storied bld.-520 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, sauna, gym, furnished, swimming-pool, garden. Price: 4.000 USD negotiable.
- 1142. **Djrvej**, Bagrevand community. Land-1000 sq.m., 3 storied bld.-700 sq.m., 5 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, pantry, playing room, capially repaired, no furniture/ can be furnished, if necessary /garage for 2 cars. Price: 4 000 USD.
- 1293. **Nork-Marash**, Land-1100sq.m, 2 storied bld-520 sq.m, 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, swimming pool, garden. Price: 7.000 USD
- 327. **Nork-Marash**, Land-500sq.m., 4 storied building-600 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking. Price-4000 USD
- 1306. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-1000sq.m., 3 storied building-750sq.m., 6 bedrooms, 5 bathrooms, 2 kitchens, capially repaired, heating system swimming pool, garden, sauna, 2 car parking, with or without furniture. Price: 6000-8000 USD negotiable
- 1288. **Tsarav Akhbyur** /near Botanical garden/, Land-560sq.m., 4 storied building-560 sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 4bathrooms, a kitchen, office, capially repaired, heating system, furnished, equipped, swimming pool, garden, 2 car parking. Price: 5000 USD
- 1197. **Blur**, Land-779sq.m., 2 storied building-720sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 6 bathrooms, study, capially repaired, heating system, sauna swimming pool, garden. Price: 8000 USD
- 1312. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-450sq.m., 4 storied building-470sq.m., 3 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable
- 1317. **Blur, Barbyus str.**, Land-900sq.m., 5 storied building-800sq.m., 4 bedrooms, 3 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, garden. Price: Negotiable.
- 1323. **Monument, Babayan str**, Land - 400 sq.m, 3 storied bld-300sq.m, each floor-100sq.m, 4 bedrooms, 4 bathrooms, capially repaired, heating system, AC, furnished, equipped. Price: Negotiable

### PREMISES

- 2049. **Teryan str**, ground floor+basemnet, 1st line, 200sq.m, repaired. Price: 6.000 USD
- 1693. **Malatia-Sebastia** 4 storied building, 1200sq.m, each floor-300sq.m, 2 separate entrances, climate control, 2 elevators, basement, parking. Price: 15USD per sq.m.
- 1526. **Byuzand str.**, 5/semi-basement, 170 sqm., 4-5 degrees below zero level, window glasses, cellar - 50 sq.m., 6 rooms, the largest is 30 sq.m., 2 entrances, 2 lavatories. Price 2000 USD per month, negotiable.
- 1408. **Zarobyan str.**, /parallel to Baghranyan str./, 2 storied building, 600 sqm. ground floor- hall and kitchen, 1st floor 5 rooms, bathroom, open balcony, capially repaired, gas, heating system, parking. Price: Negotiable.
- 1462. **Teryan str.**, 3 storied building, 800 sq.m., capially repaired, AC, parking. Price: 10.000 USD.
- 1945. **Mashtots Ave.**, 5/1, 2, 140sq.m., window glasses, capially repaired, AC. Price: 8000 USD
- 1943. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 265sq.m., 1st line, capially repaired, heating system, cellar. Price: 7000 USD
- 1868. **Tumanyan str.**, Ground floor of the building, 220sq.m., 1st line, facade-55m., capially repaired, h-5m., cellar. Price: 15.000 USD.
- 2087. **Northern ave.**, Ground floor of the building, 100sq.m, 1st line, zero level, capially repaired, window glasses. Price: Negotiable.
- 2033. **Abovyan str**, 388sq.m, Ground floor of the building, 3 degrees above zero level, window glasses, h-3m., basement-235sq.m, capially repaired, heating system, AC. Price: 15.000 USD
- 2031. **Vardanants str**, 500sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, facade-20m, window glasses, without divisions, ,basement-250sq.m, Price: 8000 USD
- 2027. **Sayat Nova str**, 95sq.m, ground floor of the building, 2 entrances, 7 degrees above zero level, 4 window glasses, capially repaired. Price: 4.000 USD

## Innovative approaches to diaspora engagement discussed in Yerevan



The United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) and the Ministry of Diaspora of the Republic of Armenia held a conference on February 3 on innovative approaches to diaspora engagement and use of remittances for child well-being in Armenia.

The conference was organized within the framework of the "Social Response to Labour Migration in

Armenia" project, funded by the European Union and implemented by UNICEF in Armenia. The objective of the conference was to familiarize a wide range of stakeholders with innovative ways of diaspora engagement worldwide in various spheres of the country's development, present the recently developed research on international experience and practices of the

use of diaspora and migrants' support for child-focused reforms and discuss their potential application in Armenia.

Diaspora and migrants' support, complementary to official development strategies, policies and practice, has a great potential in contributing to local and social sector development and furtherance of new and alternative child-related reforms, including alleviating child poverty and benefitting the most vulnerable families and children.

Addressing the event, Armenian Deputy Foreign Minister Ashot Hovakimyan said the relations with the Diaspora are of great importance for Armenia.

"The conference is a good opportunity to discuss the innovative approaches towards Armenia-Diaspora cooperation strategy, and creation of a cooperation network for involving the Diaspora in the development of the Homeland," he said.

## Arman Saghatelyan appointed as Executive Director of Public Radio of Armenia

Arman Saghatelyan has been appointed as Executive Director of the Public Radio of Armenia. The candidacy was confirmed at a sitting of the Council of Public Television and Radio Company of Armenia. Born on August 26, 1975, Arman Saghatelyan graduated from Armenian Agricultural Academy in 1997 and completed his post-graduate studies at the National Academy of Sciences in 2000.

In 1997-1999 he served his compulsory military service at the information department of the Ministry of Defense.

Saghatelyan worked as a civil expert on public relations in the



Ministry of Defense in 2000-2004 and hosted a TV program Zinuzh (armed force). Between 2010 and 2011 he worked as Adviser to Director of the "Public Relations and Information Center" State Non-Commercial Organization. Saghatelyan was the Director of the ArmRadio FM 107 Radio, and worked as Deputy Director

General of the "Pan-Armenian Media Group" CJSC. Between 2011 and 2013 he headed the the scientific-educational center of information and public communication technologies at the Yerevan Brusov State University of Languages and Social Sciences

He holds an Associate's Degree in Political Science and has authored over a dozen of scientific articles and educational programs.

Arman Saghatelyan worked as RA President's Spokesman from 2013 to 2015. Saghatelyan has been awarded with "participant of 1992-1994 military operations" and "Garegin Nzhdeh" medals.

## Genocidaire Talaat's last interview shortly before his assassination



By *Harut Sassounian*

*Publisher, The California Courier*

Aubrey Herbert, British diplomat, adventurer, intelligence officer, and Member of Parliament, conducted a rare interview with Talaat Pasha, in February 1921, just days before his assassination in Berlin by Soghomon Tehlirian.

As all-powerful Grand Vizier of the Ottoman Empire, its despotic ruler and mastermind of the Armenian Genocide, Talaat had fled Turkey in November 1918 to avoid prosecution by the new regime. The 23-page interview with Talaat was published in 1924 (London) and 1925 (New York) in Herbert's memoirs titled, "Ben Kendim: A Record of Eastern Travel."

Herbert first met Talaat in 1908 while stationed at the British Embassy in Constantinople (Istanbul). Eleven years later, Herbert received an unexpected letter from Talaat seeking a meeting with him "in any neutral country." Desperately seeking to rehabilitate his diabolical image in the West, Talaat claimed that "he was not responsible for the Armenian massacres, that he could prove it, and that he was anxious to do so." Herbert turned down Talaat's request telling him: "I was very glad to hear that it was not he who was responsible for the Armenian massacres, but that I did not think any useful purpose could be served by our meeting at that time."

However, Herbert reversed his decision in February 1921, after Sir Basil Thomson, Director of British

Intelligence, ordered him to leave immediately for Germany and meet Talaat. The secret rendezvous took place on February 26, in the small German town of Hamm.

Talaat told Herbert again that "he himself had always been against the attempted extermination of the Armenians." More incredibly, Talaat claimed that "he had twice protested against this policy, but had been overruled, he said, by the Germans."

Forgetting his own claims of innocence in the massacres, Talaat justified the mass killings by accusing Armenians of stabbing his country in the back during the war. Contradicting himself again, Talaat declared his support for Armenians by claiming that "he was in favor of granting autonomy to minorities in the most extended form, and would gladly consider any proposition that was made to him."

Talaat then switched the blame to the British for the Armenian killings: "You English cannot divest yourselves of responsibility in this matter. We Young Turks practically offered Turkey to you, and you refused us. One undoubted consequence has been the ruin of Christian minorities, whom your Prime Minister has insisted on treating as your allies. If the Greeks and Armenians are your allies when we are at war with you, you cannot expect our Turkish Government to treat them as friends."

Herbert and Talaat then decided to move to Dusseldorf, Germany, where they continued their discreet conversation for two more days. Herbert reported Talaat's paradoxical attempt to cover up his role in the Armenian Genocide, while justifying this

heinous crime. Talaat stated that "he had written a memorandum on the Armenian massacres which he was very anxious that British statesmen should read. Early in the war, in 1915, the Armenians had organized an army, and had attacked the Turks, who were then fighting the Russians. Three Armenian deputies had taken an active part; the alleged massacres of Moslems had taken place, accompanied by atrocities on women and children. He had twice opposed enforced migration, and he had been the author of an inquiry which resulted in the execution of a number of guilty Kurds and Turks."

Ironically, Talaat boldly told Herbert that he was not afraid of being assassinated. "He said that he never thought of it. Why should anyone dislike him? I said that Armenians might very well desire vengeance, after all that had been written about him in the papers. He brushed this aside." Two weeks later, Talaat was assassinated in Berlin by Soghomon Tehlirian!

Concluding his interview of Talaat, Herbert observed: "He died hated, indeed execrated, as few men have been in their generation. He may have been all that he was painted - I cannot say. I know that he had rare power and attraction. I do not know whether he was responsible or not for the Armenian massacres."

Only experts of that time period can verify the authenticity and accuracy of this lengthy interview. If true, what exactly were Talaat's aims in proposing "an Anglo-Turkish alliance" and why was the British government so anxious to talk to him?

## Ralph Yirikian's Personal Support to People Living in Borderland Village of Khachik

The housing problem of two more families is solved in the the borderland Khachik village of Vayots Dzor region. With the personal support of VivaCell-MTS Founding General Manager **Mr Ralph Cesar Yirikian** a family has finished the construction of their half-built house, and another one has renovated the roof of its house. For the housing project Fuller Center for Housing Armenia has yet again undertaken the organization of the construction works.

*rible when you feel that not the enemy but your own house can put the life of your family under danger. My family is one of those living in a shelter of 4th level of damage rate. With help of the great man now we have not only a safe but also a decent and a comfortable home. Frankly speaking it was not a surprise for us; we believed that Mr Yirikian can't stay indifferent. May God bless him and his family,"* said **Kamo**, the father of the Kourekhyan family.

ovate the dilapidated asbestos roof that was completely decomposed and the house was damaged due to rains and thaws.

*"There are people who by their nature demonstrate the classic example of being a humanist – be that in work, in family, in everyday life. It is impossible to imagine Ralph Yirikian without helping someone. On behalf of my family I want to extend our gratitude to him and his family for becoming a helping hand for*



Ralph Yirikian and Fuller Center for Housing Armenia President Ashot Yeghiazaryan visited Khachik community to share the joy of housewarming with the families.



Four months ago the **Kourekhyans** still lived in a house of 4th level of damage rate that could not be renovated; even more, there was a danger that it could collapse any moment. Four years ago the family started the construction of their new house but could build only the walls and the ceiling. Support was needed for completing the construction of the half-built house and they got it. Now everything has changed; the family feels the magic power of the good will.

*"Our village is on the border, and we have somehow adapted to living with the feeling of danger. But it is even more hor-*



For the Hovhannisyans living in neighborhood of the Kourekhyans the year was fruitful too; thanks to the support of Mr. Yirikian the family could ren-

*us,"* said **Vardan**, the Hovhannisyans family father.

**A note from The Highlights:**

*We want to ask a couple of questions aloud:*

*First, does still in Armenia a field or a big group of people remain that has not enjoyed yet VivaCell-MTS corporate and its Founding General Manager Mr Ralph Cesar Yirikian's PERSONAL help?*

*Second, are the Armenia's Leading Telecom Operator and its Leader the ONLY business entity/person that are able to help OUR COMPATRIOTS IN NEED?!!*

## "Remember Tchaikovsky: Sergey Smbatyan Took the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra for Perfection"

### SYOA Head Conducts the Biggest Orchestra of Bosnia and Herzegovina with Ovation



By **Gourgen James Khazhakian**  
Chief Correspondent

On 5 February the Artistic Director and Chief Conductor of the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia (SYOA) **Sergey Smbatyan** conducted Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra in Sarajevo National Theatre. The soloist was **Ran Jia** (piano, China), a laureate of Khachatourian International Competition. Pieces of Ludwig Van Beethoven and Pyotr Tchaikovsky were performed. Below The Highlights readers can find essential extracts from the stories on the concert and the guest conductor published in Radiosarajevo.ba.

In a story entitled as *"Remember Tchaikovsky: Sergey Smbatyan Took the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra for Perfection"* the author says that the Fourth Symphony by Tchaikovsky performed by the orchestra and young guest conductor from Armenia Sergey Smbatyan will be remembered as one of the best Tchaikovsky performances.

The article says: *"... (The Fourth Symphony of the famous Russian composer is a complicated work that requires good technical and physical capability, well-organized team and an exclusive musical sensitivity of the orchestra. And Armenian conductor succeeded to get all four components from the musicians. His energy conquered both the orchestra and the audience, so we all were not given respite. The first part of the Symphony, the most complicated one, presented us all the grace of the brass section, and the concert has proven that the Sarajevo Philharmonic is able to compete the best orchestras in the region..."*

And... *"The audience reacted to Smbatyan's conducting by an ovation at the end of the concert, and that ovation is an indication of the fact that the audience has excellent criterias"*, the author says and heaping praise to the pianist Ren Jia of China, as she, having *"elegantly-fragile look"*, masterfully played Beethoven *"with ruthless force"*, and... *"Beethoven's genius comes to the fore during the performances that Ren Jia gave us"*.

The same author, **Vesna Andree Zaimovic**, published an article in the eve of the concert entitled as *"He Played with the London Symphony and John Malkovich, and Tonight He Performs in Sarajevo"*.

The story, in particular, says: *"Sergey Smbatyan, a young Armenian conductor, is conquering the world with his art. In his career Smbatyan played with Mariinsky Orchestra, Moscow Philharmoniker,*

*Warsaw Philharmoniker, Korean Chamber Orchestra and also the London Philharmony Orchestra... He has had joint work with the famous actor John Malkovich in an interesting music project, and played a concert with a prominent artist Maksim Vengerov in Windsor"*. In his interview before the concert Sergey Smbatyan said that his most important project was creation of the State Youth Orchestra of Armenia that has been headed and conducted by him. *"My initial idea ten years ago was to bring together musicians and to play music, but I could not even to dream then that we'll turn*



*to an Orchestra that we have today, with the state status, financial support, big repertoire and 4-5 concerts per year given abroad. So, again, it is the top achievement in my career. Heading the orchestra is not mere the music and the concerts... That's why I am striving to be in Armenia as much as possible..."*

The author asks: *"But, nonetheless, he conducted the London Philharmony, the some thinks it could be a pinnacle of his career..."*

Smbatyan responds: *"Yes, I've worked with the three biggest orchestras in London, and I've conducted Dresden Philharmoniker, Israel Philharmony Orchestra, leading Korean orchestras as well.. Today you can find really great orchestras all over the world, and that is because we have a lot of good musicians. But how important is to have good musicians, so it is also no less important the selection of repertoire."*

And why Sergey Smbatyan has chosen Tchaikovsky to perform in Sarajevo?

*"I studied Tchaikovsky at the Conservatory, so that composer was something like the foundation of my musical knowledge. The Fourth Symphony of Tchaikovsky is a wonderful music. It is*

*based on the Russian traditional songs, and their fascination contained in the all of the author's compositional strategy. This is a symphony in which everything is beautiful, and very complicated, not only in technical, but also in the musical sense. There are not so many works in music literature that make each member of the orchestra to play with the same degree of enthusiasm. The Fourth Symphony of Tchaikovsky gives the opportunity to enjoy playing and to give the best of myself. I am sure that we will perform well in Sarajevo."*

And ... *"Since Smbatyan comes from Armenia which has a significant and well-known musical tradition, we ask the conductor if he has any contact with this type of expression"*.

*"You're right, we have a really strong and rich musical tradition. Even our traditional instrument duduk has become popular in many examples of film music. Our music tradition is something that gives us opportunity to build new musical stories. Our orchestra performs a combination of Armenian folk and symphony music time after time"*.

According to the author, the young conductor expressed his pleasure he came to Sarajevo and met with Sarajevo Philharmonic: *"I am very glad that I'm here and I'm working with the Sarajevo Philharmonic Orchestra as so many young professionals play within it. I think it is good that this orchestra gives the opportunity to young musicians.... They provide a stimulus and new energy. In the Sarajevo Philharmonic I feel a great deal of enthusiasm and desire to do better. I know that this is the biggest orchestra in Bosnia and Herzegovina, and that in addition to concerts they play operas and ballets which is a difficult and demanding thing..."*

Finally, Maestro Smbatyan was asked by the journalist about his collaboration with the world famous actor **John Malkovich**. *"First of all, we're good friends. You know, Malkovich is a big fan of composer Alfred Schnittke works, and he wanted to show his legacy to the world. That is how the project Report on the Blind in which the famous actor is the narrator, with a soloist on the piano Ksenia Kogan, with myself as conductor was performed in Seoul, Korea, and has experienced tremendous success. Next year we will have a lot of concerts across Europe... John Malkovich is really the best actor, and he has an amazing mind, as it was evidenced by his fascination by Schnittke and his contemporary music. Rarely you meet someone who is not a musician but knows so much about this composer. He is really trying to expand your horizons, and I am happy to know him and to work with him"*, Smbatyan said.

## Australian Senator slams "ludicrous" anti-Armenian statement on Karabakh by MP Simpkins

Senator Joe Bullock of Western Australia has delivered a speech in Australia's Senate, blasting the anti-Armenian stance on Nagorno-Karabakh recently expressed by his fellow Federal Australian politician, MP for Cowan, Luke Simpkins, the Armenian National Committee of Australia reports.

Simpkins, the Chair of the Azerbaijan Australia Parliamentary Friendship Group, recently travelled to Azerbaijan as a guest of the petro-Dictatorship, and has since refused to meet with the Armenian side of the Nagorno-Karabakh issue. Despite this unbalanced approach, and despite the Australian media questioning his relations with Azerbaijan and his other activities abroad, Simpkins has remained steadfast in what the Armenian National Committee of Australia (ANC Australia) has called his "assumed role as the chief communicator of the Azeri propaganda in Australia's Parliament".

On the first 2016 sitting day of Parliament, Bullock spoke in Australia's Senate, recalling his late-2015 meeting with an ANC Australia delegation headed by Republic of Nagorno Karabakh MP, Davit Ishkhanyan.

He proceeded to call out Simpkins' "uncritical support for Azerbaijan", sighting the history of the region of Nagorno-Karabakh and why this democracy does not deserve the treatment the West Australian MP is serving. In his speech, Bullock also acknowledged the historical reality of the Armenian Genocide, as well

as the rights to self-determination for the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh.

After highlighting the historical background of how Nagorno Karabakh was always Armenian, and explaining the oppressive Azeri regime forcing the Armenians of the region to vote for Independence in a referendum, Bullock said:

"To speak, as the Member for Cowan [Simpkins] has repeatedly done in the other place [House of Representatives], of the 'illegal occupiers of the Nagorno-Karabakh region of Azerbaijan' is ludicrous. How can a people who have lived continuously in this region for centuries illegally occupy their own land?"

Bullock added: "Furthermore, such uncritical support for Azerbaijan's absurd demand that this brave little nation commit suicide, dismantle its 25-year-old democracy and hand over its people to the tender mercies of the Azerbaijan government can only serve to strengthen the intransigence of the Azerbaijanis in refusing to recognise the reality of Nagorno-Karabakh's nationhood." "As Nobel Peace prize winner Andrei Sakharov said in November 1989, shortly before his death: 'For Azerbaijan the issue of Karabakh is a matter of ambition; for the Armenians of Karabakh, it is a matter of life or death!'"

Bullock concluded his powerful address by saying: "[Nazi Germany Propaganda Minister] Joseph Goebbels may have notoriously preferred guns to butter, but the Australian government



needs to take care that its efforts to increase exports of butter to Azerbaijan do not result in the Azerbaijanis more confidently turning their guns onto the brave citizens of Nagorno-Karabakh."

ANC Australia Executive Administrator, Arin Markarian welcomed the speech made by Senator Bullock in the Senate. "It is refreshing that we have legislators in Australia like Senator Bullock, who received a visit from an Armenian delegation, then researched the issues we advocated, before reaching a conclusion on his own, which he has now communicated to Parliament," said Markarian.

"He has shone a light on the plight of the Armenians of Nagorno Karabakh, and advocated for their rights to self-determination on what is their native land."

Markarian concluded: "We commend Senator Bullock for this, and for leading Australian political discourse on this issue back to the moral high ground, like Mr. John Alexander has done before him in the House of Representatives."

## Arman Navasardyan: Armenia should participate in Syria peace talks



Iran's Deputy Foreign Minister recently voiced his country's willingness to assume a mediating role in the settlement of the Karabakh conflict. "Iran wants to

play a decisive role in the region, but it's hard to say to what extent its actions will be pro-Armenian," Amb. Navasardyan said.

"Tehran has its own interests. When it comes to Karabakh, Tehran opposes the deployment of a foreign contingent in its neighborhood," he said, noting that official Yerevan should carefully analyze the situation before making statements.

Arman Navasardyan believes that aside from its own issues, Armenia should participate in Syria talks. "We are the only nation with statehood to have a community there," he said. The Ambassador added,

however, that "Armenia should be on alert and maintain balance, when it comes to tension between superpowers."

As for Azerbaijan, Navasardyan said "its condition is worse than it could seem at first sight." "The country has considerably cut its military budget, has problems with Talishs, etc." "To put it short, Azerbaijan is in fever," he said.

Ambassador Navasardyan commended the Armenian foreign policy for the simple reason that it manages to actively cooperate with NATO despite being a member of CSTO.

## AGBU launches new WebTalks video series on Armenian arts, history and more

The Armenian General Benevolent Union (AGBU) has launched its latest in Education Innovation, the AGBU WebTalks online video series. AGBU WebTalks aims to capture and preserve the insights of engaging, dynamic thinkers from around the world, speaking on a wide range of Armenian topics.

With these short videos, AGBU WebTalks seeks to create a rich repository of knowledge and provide easy access to reliable information to meet the demands of an increasingly connected and visual world. This new platform will bring together expertise on Armenian topics in one easily accessible online resource.

"Every generation has its own approach to dealing with questions of identity and community. This multigenerational sharing and learning platform focuses on access, dissemination and preservation of the knowledge and insight of scholars, intellectuals, artists and many others on topics pertaining to the Armenian reality. The curated content allows individuals to navigate and explore their Armenianness through different perspectives shared by leading experts and opinion makers," says Lena Sarkissian, AGBU Central Board Member and Director of Program Development at the Zoryan Institute's International Institute for Genocide and Human Rights.

AGBU WebTalks debuts with five videos, produced in partnership with the Zoryan Institute, an international academic and scholarly center devoted to the documentation, study and dissemination of material related to issues of universal human rights, genocide, diasporas and Armenia. The videos were filmed during the "Responsibility 2015" international conference held in New York in March 2015 as part of the centennial commemorations of the Armenian Genocide and feature interviews with journalists Laure Marchand and Guillaume Perrier; human rights lawyer Geoffrey Robertson; historian Raymond Kévorkian; psychologist Israel Charny; and professor of history Richard Hovannisian. The themes of the aforementioned videos revolve around politics and the Armenian Genocide. The videos currently in production explore a diverse array of topics from art and architecture to classical, jazz and folk music.

"AGBU remains committed to enhancing education with innovation. With high quality, accessible content, we can not only ensure that Armenians have an archive of our history, but we can utilize these tools to further our mission by promoting Armenian subjects to be used in non-Armenian universities and schools. Now, with AGBU WebTalks, we can encourage professors of art, architecture, history and linguistics to incorporate



the Armenian story into their syllabi, giving us a new platform for integrating our heritage in classrooms around the world," added Ani Manoukian, AGBU Central Board Member.

AGBU WebTalks is part of a larger multimedia platform currently in development. Set to launch later this year, this online platform is a global access point offering innovative multimedia educational tools to foster and promote the learning of Armenian language, history and culture. "As part of this larger platform," added Lena Sarkissian, "the WebTalks series provides a living repository of our distinguished minds as well as a living archive of our community activities. It is all about making connections—to knowledge, to leading experts, to one's history, to one's culture, to one's identity, to being Armenian. Thus, AGBU provides one more opportunity to help forge the future of the Armenian world."

## Hayastan Fund reconstructs Tchaikovsky music school

The Hayastan All-Armenian Fund is implementing a multi-year renovation project at Yerevan's Tchaikovsky Secondary Music School, with the sponsorship of the fund's Eastern US affiliate. Founded in 1939, the school provides a curriculum that combines music and general education. Currently it has more than 600 students.

The extensive renovations are expected to be completed by the beginning of the 2016 academic year. To date, the campus, which was built in 1973, had undergone seismic retrofitting, a complete structural redesign, and a slew of upgrades. The improvements include a new roof, new doors and windows, and new heating, air-conditioning, electrical, water, plumbing, and security systems. Other significant enhancements include the addition of an

elevator and evacuation staircases.

The main building of the campus has been thoroughly modernized and now features a sizeable foyer. The renovations have also included the reconstruction of the gym and the transformation of the concert hall into a state-of-the-art auditorium, complete with a new stage and amenities for performers and audiences alike. Thanks to the refurbishments, the school's symphony orchestra, string quartet, brass band, choir, and jazz band now have comfortable and fully appointed rehearsal rooms.

The final phase of renovations will include the construction of wheelchair ramps at the entrance of the school, a completely upgraded lighting system throughout the grounds, and the installation of pavilions and benches in the inner courtyard. Artistic

touches, including a relief sculpture on the facade of the main building, created by architect Jim Torossian, as well as the interior relief sculpture and stained-glass windows, will continue to lend the school an esthetic character all its own.

In 2014, the Tchaikovsky Secondary Music School celebrated the 75th anniversary of its founding. Legendary composer Aram Khachaturyan has called the storied school a "foundry of musicians." Its alumni have included Eduard Tadevosyan, Ruben Altunyan, Vahram Sarajev, Jean Ter-Mergeryan, Levon Chaushyan, Sergey Smbatyan, Tigran Hamasyan, Aram Talalyan, Vahagn Hayrapetyan, Armen Babakhanyan, Stepan Lusikyan, and other musical giants who are the pride of the Armenian people.

## Armenian Assembly of America opposes bailout for Azerbaijan



In a letter sent this week to Secretary of State John Kerry and Treasury Secretary Jack Lew, the Armenian Assembly of America (Assembly) urged the U.S. to oppose any proposed bailout for Azerbaijan's corrupt and authoritarian regime, especially with U.S. taxpayer dollars. According to recent media reports, the U.S.-backed International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank are contemplating a \$4 billion bailout for Azerbaijan, while at the same time Standard and Poor's downgraded Azerbaijan's bond rating sending a warning to investors that they are considered specu-

lative junk.

"Rather than reward one of the most corrupt dictatorships in the world, whose president, Ilham Aliyev, received the first ever Organized Crime and Corruption Person of the Year award, bestowed by the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project, Azerbaijan should be urged to make much needed reforms and use its oil resources for the betterment of its people and not at the expense of Christian Armenians," the Assembly letter stated. Further, the letter highlighted that "Azerbaijan's president continues his policy of trying to resolve the dispute over Nagorno Karabakh by threatening to wipe Armenia off of the map."

The Assembly's response comes as 2015 saw the highest number of Armenian casualties of Azerbaijani snipers and heavy artillery fire since the 1994 cease-fire agreement, including the targeting of Armenian schools and other civilian areas along the Armenia-Azerbaijan border and Nagorno Karabakh-Azerbaijan Line of Contact.

"The notion of bailing out a corrupt, foreign regime that continues to blockade and attack its Christian neighbor is out of step with America's values," stated Assembly Board Co-Chairmen Anthony Barsamian and Van Krikorian. "We urge the United States to use its considerable influence as a leading member of the IMF and World Bank to oppose any such bailout," they continued.

## Goodbye, Antoura Memoir to be presented at Armenian Society of Los Angeles

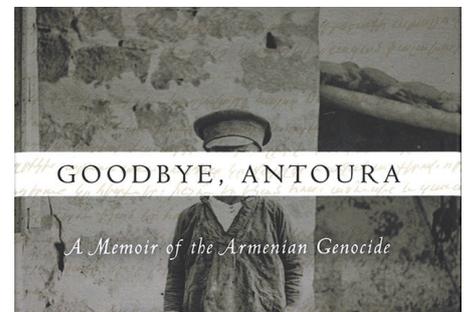
Massis Post - The noteworthy memoir, *Goodbye, Antoura: A Memoir of the Armenian Genocide* (Stanford Univ. Press, 2015), by the late Karnig Panian, will be the focus of a program on Thursday, February 18 at the Armenian Society of Los Angeles in Glendale, CA. The event is organized by the National Association for Armenian Studies and Research (NAASR) and co-sponsored by the Ararat-Eskijian Museum, Hamazkayin Armenian Educational and Cultural Society, Hamazkayin Jemaran Association, Nor Serount Cultural Association, and Tekeyan Cultural Association.

Featuring remarks by the author's daughter, Houry Panian Boyamian, Principal of St. Stephen's Armenian Elementary School in Watertown, MA, the event will also include presentations by Dr. Richard G. Hovannisian, Professor Emeritus of Modern Armenian and Near Eastern History, UCLA, and Adjunct Professor of History, USC, as well as independent researcher Maurice Missak Kelechian. Dr. Keith David Watenpaugh of the University of California, Davis, will

provide comments via video, and Dr. Viken Yacoubian of Woodbury University and the Hamazkayin Central Executive Board will serve as Master of Ceremonies.

Born in the Anatolian village of Gurin, Karnig Panian was only five years old when World War I began. Four years later, American aid workers found him at an orphanage in Antoura, Lebanon. He was among nearly 1,000 Armenian and 400 Kurdish children who had been abandoned by the Turkish administrators, left to survive at the orphanage without adult care. He grew up to become an educator and vice-principal at Djemaran, the Armenian Lyceum, based in Beirut, Lebanon.

His memoir, *Goodbye, Antoura*, offers the extraordinary story of what he endured in those years-as his people were deported from their Armenian community, as his family died in a refugee camp in the deserts of Syria, as he survived hunger and mistreatment in the orphanage. The Antoura orphanage was another project of the Armenian Genocide: its administrators, some benign and some cruel, sought to transform the children into Turks by



changing their Armenian names, forcing them to speak Turkish, and erasing their history.

*Goodbye, Antoura* was translated by Simon Beugekian and edited by Aram Goudsouzian. It includes a foreword by Dr. Vartan Gregorian and an introduction and afterword by Prof. Keith David Watenpaugh.

Panian paints a painfully rich and detailed picture of the lives and agency of Armenian orphans during the darkest days of World War I. Ultimately, Karnig Panian survived the Armenian Genocide and the deprivations that followed. *Goodbye, Antoura* assures us of how humanity, once denied, can be again reclaimed.

# Clark University grants first-ever doctoral degree in Armenian Genocide Studies



Clark University is privileged to stand at the forefront in establishing the Armenian Genocide as a distinct focus of doctoral study, setting a landmark on Jan. 5, when Khatchig Mouradian became the first student to complete a Ph.D. in Armenian Genocide Studies at the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

Mouradian defended his dissertation, *Genocide and Humanitarian Assistance in Ottoman Syria (1915-1917)*, before Professors Taner Akçam and Debórah Dwork, who served as co-directors of his dissertation committee. Raymond Kévorkian, Director of the Nubarian Library in Paris, served as the third committee member.

"This graduation marks a historic turning point in Armenian Genocide research," Akçam said during a celebration to honor Mouradian, held Jan. 29 in the Strassler Center's Rose Library.

"He is not only the first Doctor of our Armenian Genocide track but also the first doctorate in North America after so many years of silence in the field."

The event also celebrated Asya Darbinyan, a third-year doctoral student who defended the prospectus of her dissertation, *Russian Response to the Armenian Genocide: Humanitarian Assistance for Armenian Refugees on the Caucasus Frontline of WWI (1914-1917)*.

Dwork, director of the Strassler Center, commented on both milestones:

"The award of the first Ph.D. in Armenian Genocide Studies is a huge step forward in the field. Happily, the first recipient is followed by a robust pipeline of students pursuing groundbreaking dissertation projects. The Armenian Genocide continues to be beset by deniers. These young scholars' research shows how risible such arguments are. Scholarship trumps propaganda."

Mouradian is currently a visiting assistant professor at the Division of Global Affairs at Rutgers University and is the coordinator the Armenian Genocide Program at Rutgers' Center for the Study of Genocide and Human Rights (CGHR). He teaches courses on imperialism, mass violence, and concentration camps in the history and sociology departments at Rutgers. Mouradian is also an adjunct professor in the philosophy and urban studies departments at Worcester State University, where he teaches courses on urban space and conflict in the Middle East, genocide, collective memory, and human rights.

Mouradian was the editor of the *Armenian Weekly* from 2007-2014. The recipient of numerous awards, Mouradian held the Gulbenkian Armenian Studies research fellowship in 2014 to study the Armenian community in China in the 20th century. The Organization of Istanbul Armenians awarded him the first Hrant Dink Freedom and Justice Medal in 2014.

Carolyn Mugar and her late husband John O'Connor '78, who was a Clark University trustee, donated the first-ever endowed Chair in Modern Armenian History and Armenian Genocide Studies at any university. They challenged others to join them in supporting this innovative professorship named in honor of Carolyn's parents Stephen and Marian Mugar, as well as Robert Aram '52 and Marianne Kaloosdian. Clark alumnus Robert Kaloosdian, a lawyer in Watertown, MA, and former president of the Washington, D.C.-based Armenian National Institute, is a leader in Armenian affairs. In 2002, the Kaloosdian Mugar Chair was established in the History Department and as a constituent member of the Strassler Center for Holocaust and Genocide Studies.

"The award of the first Ph.D. in Armenian Genocide Studies is a huge step forward in the field. Happily, the first recipient is followed by a robust pipeline of students pursuing groundbreaking dissertation projects. The Armenian Genocide continues to be beset by deniers. These young scholars' research shows how risible such arguments are. Scholarship trumps propaganda." ~ Debórah Dwork

Taner Akçam joined Clark University as Kaloosdian/Mugar Professor in fall 2008. A leading genocide scholar and an authority in the history of political violence and torture in late Ottoman and early Republican Turkey, Akçam is the first scholar of Turkish origin to acknowledge the Armenian Genocide and to publish groundbreaking research on this topic.

Clark University is committed to scholarship and inquiry that addresses social and human imperatives on a global basis, and has played a prominent role in the development of several academic disciplines, including psychology, geography and interdisciplinary environmental studies. The pioneering Strassler Center program in Armenian Genocide Studies embodies the University's history of academic innovation.

## Charles Aznavour: *I hope Armenia will finally live in peace*

In his youth, Charles Aznavour was dismissed as being too short (at 5 feet 3 inches), too unattractive (he often jokes himself about his nose job), and having an unusual raspy, hoarse voice.

However, the French Armenian singer proved his early critics wrong, by building a successful career spanning nine decades, *The National* writes.

"They said I shouldn't sing, but nevertheless I continued to sing until my throat was sore," he says. His tenacity paid off - and then some.

Now 91, he has appeared in more than 60 films, written more than 1,200 songs, sung in eight languages and sold more than 180 million records.

His style revolutionized the classic French chanson style, creating his own "Aznavourian" genre: a mix of French soul music, blues, jazz, ballads, pop music and lyrical poetry.

After starting his career at the tender age of 9 - when he dropped out of school and started performing with his sister Aida in plays - he is still writing and releasing new songs and albums, touring the world and performing live.

Charles Aznavour made his UAE debut with a concert at Dubai World Trade Centre on Friday, organized by Alliance Française Dubai, as part of Dubai Classics.

What keeps him going after all these years?

"My love for life," he said, in an exclusive interview with *The National*. "I am very lucky to have found my vocation and met interesting people who have fuelled and nourished my curiosity.

"I was able to lead this life because I was born and raised in an artistic family with few means but rich with love and support."

Last month, he topped *People With Money* magazine's list of the highest-paid singers of 2015, with an estimated \$46 million in combined earnings.

He is often described as "France's Frank Sinatra". He teamed up with the American legend in 1993 for a duet on *You Make Me Feel So Young*.

Just a tiny sample of this prolific artist's French hits include: *La Bohème* (1965), his signature song; his first hit *Sur Ma Vie* (1956); *Tu t'laisses aller* (1960); *Il faut savoir* (1961); *Les comédiens* (1962); *La mamma* (1963); *Et pourtant* (1963); *Hier encore* (1964); *For Me Formidable* (1964); *Que c'est triste Venise* (1964); *Emmenez-moi* (1967) and *et Désormais* (1969).

His signature tracks in English are 1970s hits *She*, which has been covered by artists including Bryan Ferry, *Il Divo* and Elvis Costello, and was the theme song for the 1999 film *Julia Roberts* movie *Notting Hill*; and *The Old Fashioned Way*, which



was also recorded by artists as diverse as Fred Astaire and Shirley Bassey.

As well as Sinatra, he has collaborated with musical greats including Julio Iglesias, Andrea Bocelli, Elton John, Liza Minnelli and Plácido Domingo.

Known for his powerful stage presence and his charisma, Aznavour says a sense of humour has proved important through the years.

"Humour plays an important role in my life because it enables me to face even the most difficult of situations," he says.

Inspired as a child by another legend, Maurice Chevalier, and having worked with Édith Piaf, whose song *La Vie en rose* has become a national treasure for France, it is fitting that as the last surviving artist from the golden age of entertainment, he has earned a seat next to them.

"I have had a beautiful life, for a son of an immigrant," he says. "I'm grateful for what life has given me. Even though I had to work very hard in my career, working makes me happy. The memories of my family and my childhood are my favourite ones."

Born Shahnour Varenagh Aznavourian in Paris on May 22, 1924, to an artistic father and mother who had fled the Armenian genocide. The family, including older sister Aida, intended to travel to the United States but a visa never came.

Aznavour was dubbed "Charles" by a hospital nurse who couldn't pronounce his name - and it stuck. His parents settled in Paris and opened a small Armenian restaurant, *Le Caucase*, to which they would invite Hungarian orchestras, and offer free lunches to the less fortunate and friends.

The family's struggle with poverty, and life on the road as a young performer during the second world war - when his father hid several Armenian and Russian Jewish immigrants from the German Army - made their way into his songs.

"Like most Orientals, we had a very united family," he says. "I loved my youth, even if it was sometimes a bit harsh

- but we could always count on our family and on all the immigrants that were around us.

"We were genuinely happy and it had nothing to do with money or power. We were all just thankful to be alive and together in France."

Married three times, with six children, Aznavour values his privacy.

"One of the most painful memories I have is losing my son, Patrick, in the 70s," he says. "I don't like to talk about it a lot and I try to keep my private life to myself."

Besides being an artist, he is also a diplomat and a humanitarian, with a special focus on Armenia, "the country of my soul and roots".

"My culture has traces of Armenian culture but the country of my heart and of my language is France," he says. "I hope Armenia will finally live in peace and that all the problems will be resolved with its borders. We are all cousins and brothers, when you think about it, and it is only politics and religion that separate us."

In 1975 Aznavour, wrote the ballad *Il's sont tombés* to mark the 60th anniversary of the Armenian genocide. In 1988, he launched a fund-raising campaign to help his stricken homeland after an earthquake killed 50,000 people. Unesco appointed him as their permanent ambassador to Armenia. In 2008 he was given Armenian citizenship and, a year later, he accepted the position as Ambassador of Armenia to Switzerland.

"I am not trying to boast but I have to admit that for an uneducated son of an immigrant, I could have done far worse," he says.

His most recent album was last year's *Encores*, which included tracks about his childhood, Piaf and a tribute to the French wartime resistance movement. But do not ask him to rank it against any of his previous work.

"I think of my songs as my own children, so I have no favourites," he says. "I love them all equally the same - but there are a few songs that I am especially proud of.

"Some of them are not very well known. I could, perhaps, mention *L'instant Présent* because it's about the present moment, which is challenging to write about. I also like the songs on my last album, *Encores*, because they are recent - but really I like think of all of them as my babies."

And if he could change anything, what would it be?

"For myself, I already had a nose job 60 years ago," he says. "For the world around me, I know it seems a bit cheesy but if people could live together in peace and harmony that would be great."

**Zodiac Weekly Forecast**

**Aries (March 20-April 19)**



A new beginning from June of 2015 has come to a turning point. You may not even recognize it anymore because so much time has passed. This is the time to decide to pour significantly more energy into it or quietly let it slip back to the

ethers. (Clue: It probably is in the arena of friends, siblings, or vehicles.)

**Taurus (April 20 -- May 20)**



You are feeling restless and need to try something new. Commute by a different route or go somewhere you have never visited before. Take your partner on a hike. It is important to make note of these restless feelings and do something about

them. Otherwise you can become hard to live with, even for yourself.

**Gemini (May 20-June 20)**



You likely are studying carefully and preparing to make a big decision about your financial resources. Others might accuse you of overthinking the situation, but for you this is a serious matter that will

have long term implications. You've thought this over for several months and are now ready to finalize the matter.

**Cancer (June 21-July 21)**



You have likely been dealing with a decision concerning property or family issues. You have spent a few weeks in this process and now you have arrived at a conclusion. If it is a purchase or a sale,

you have the cosmic green light. Whatever the decision, you have made a good choice for everyone concerned.

**Leo (July 22-August 21)**



You are in a position to mediate effectively between two people or two groups. You have a sense of the big picture and can bring harmony to the fore. You are in high gear this week. You must use your

wits and think quickly. You rather like this kind of stimulation, but use caution with the heavy foot.

**Virgo (August 22-September 22)**



You have been cogitating over a decision concerning home, hearth, and family for quite some time. The time has come and you feel more confident about the solution. It appears to me that you have mulled as long as you need and it is now a

good time to take action. Those in romantic relationships are ready now to get serious or let go.



**Libra (Sep. 23-Oct. 22)**

A fairly recent change in your home and family life is getting on your nerves. This is a week in which it particularly is bothersome. You may feel trapped in a situation in which the rules are not apparent, but more covert.

Now is the time to say at least part of what is on your mind so that aggravations can be minimized.



**Scorpio (October 23-November 21)**

There may be a minor skirmish with a partner or roommate over the sharing of resources. This is not the ultimate deal breaker and the moments of discomfort pass fairly quickly if your relationship is

basically sound. Don't turn the issue into a disaster.



**Sagittarius (November 22-December 20)**

Think carefully about what is truly important to you now, at this time in your life. Don't allow old habits or rules from the past to make your decision for you. If

you do let that happen, you will truly resent the outcome. Rise above your circumstances to a level that can see beyond your ego and the situation becomes more workable.



**Capricorn (December 21-January 19)**

Read the lead paragraph carefully. One or more structures that you have built into your life are showing signs of crumbling. If you look straight at the problem you may be able to nip it before it

becomes serious. Maybe that structure or plan actually needs to go. Perhaps it is impeding you from moving forward.



**Aquarius (January 20-February 17)**

You are under considerable pressure to get things accomplished at this time. This could be a time that you decide to let go of the high pressure or its opposite: you may feel it is important enough to put more

energy into it. If someone external or internal is pressuring you, consider whether the effort is worth the cost.



**Pisces (February 18-March 19)**

You may feel as though you came from another planet this week. Communications may be misunderstood, snarled, or lost altogether. Compensate for this problem by concentrating on speaking the truth as you know it, and listening very carefully to what the other

tells you. Then ask for confirmation.

## Bottles from the cradle of wine: Armenia and Georgia

By David Williams  
The Guardian

What kind of wine were they making 5,000 years ago?

These wines may not get close, but they do hint at the colourful and unique history of winemaking in this part of the world

**Zorah Karasi Areni Noir,  
Armenia 2013:**

An idle question prompted by the vivid opening chapter of *A Natural History of Wine*, a fascinating new book by American academics Ian Tattersall and Rob Desalle: what kind of wines were they making 5,000 years ago in the cave at the feet of the Lesser Caucasus Mountains known as Areni-1? It was

here, in modern-day Armenia in 2011, that archaeologists discovered the world's earliest winery, dating back to circa 3,000 to 3,500 BC. I may not have found an answer tasting the 2014 vintage (available in May) of Italian-Armenian Zorik Gharibian's Karasi made from Armenia's most planted grape variety (which, like the cave, takes its name from the village of Areni). But, as with the 2013, the sense of history brings an added frisson to a vibrant, highly polished red.

**Iago Bitarishvili Chinuri Qvevri 8,  
Kakheti, Georgia 2013:**

Gharibian, who was born to an ex-pat Armenian family in Iran, but who settled and started a successful business in Italy after being sent to an Armenian school in Venice during the Iranian revolution, is

one of a handful of returning members of the Armenian diaspora to play a part in the recent revival of its wine industry. And, like many, he has been drawn to the traditional winemaking technique of using clay pots (or "karasi") to age his wines. These vessels are also used in some of the many exciting wines coming out of neighbouring Georgia, another country with a claim to being the birthplace of wine, with Iago Bitarishvili's arrestingly chewy, honeyed white among the best of these "qvevri" wines.

**Khareba Saperavi, Kakheti,  
Georgia 2013:**

You can get a hint of the tantalising mix of the red wine-like tannin, subtle herby-bitterness, and faintly coppery colour of the best Georgian "orange" qvevri wines in Marks & Spencer's beginner's guide to the style, *Tblvino Qvevris 2013* (£9). More serious exploration would lead to the excellent Pheasant's Tears, and the inky, grippy, earthy, sour black cherry-scented red they make in qvevri from the local saperavi variety (£17.99 for the 2013 Saperavi, Red Squirrel Wine). This is quite magnificent with lamb, either roasted or stewed, Georgian-style, with aubergine. Made in stainless steel rather than clay, Khareba's bold but supple saperavi is not quite as complex, but with its liquorice and juicy black berries, it also pairs beautifully with lamb.





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