

**Thousands rally in Los Angeles for Armenia's PM**



*U.S. -- Armenian Americans attend a rally held by Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan in Los Angeles, September 22, 2019.*

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan urged Diaspora Armenians to invest in Armenia, regularly visit their ancestral homeland and become its citizens as he addressed thousands of them at a rally held in Los Angeles on September 22.

Pashinyan spoke before the crowd that gathered in the city's Grand Park after holding meetings with Armenian American organizations. He began his hour-long speech by thanking Armenia's worldwide Diaspora for its "invaluable" assistance provided to the country since independence. He also thanked those California Armenians, many of them born and raised in Armenia, who supported last year's "Velvet Revolution" that brought him to power.

"We hope that the Diaspora will stand by the economic revolution taking place in Armenia just like it stood by the political revolution in Armenia," said Pashinyan. "And I want to invite all Diaspora entrepreneurs to Armenia because in today's Armenia you won't come across the obstacles that have existed before. In Armenia, systemic corruption has been rooted out and the rule of monopolies and oligarchy eliminated."

Pashinyan then renewed his calls for a "great repatriation" of ethnic Armenians from the United States and other parts of the world. "Great repatriation means, for example, physically staying and living in Armenia for one or two months

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## RA PM, LA Mayor discuss cooperation prospects

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and spouse Anna Hakobyan were hosted at the Los Angeles city hall during their working visit to the United States, the PM's Office told Noyan Tapan

The official reception at the city hall was followed by the private meeting of the Armenian PM and Mayor of Los Angeles Eric Garcetti.

The LA mayor welcomed the Armenian PM, his delegation members and highlighted the PM's visit to the US and Los Angeles. "We are delighted to host you, Mr. Pashinyan, at the Los Angeles city hall. The Armenian community of LA is very successful and is actively engaged in our city's public-political life. Los Angeles and Yerevan are sister cities, we are cooperating effectively and attach importance to the cooperation with Armenia in general", the LA Mayor said.

The Armenian PM thanked the LA Mayor for the warm welcome and the assistance provided for organizing a meeting at the



Grand Park. Pashinyan said half of the agenda of his visit to the US is dedicated to the cooperation with California and Los Angeles. "Following the radical political changes we are moving on the path of implementing major economic changes, recording an economic progress, and the cooperation with our partners in this process plays a key role. As of today we have a good dynamics in economic growth, we are recording good results in eliminating the systematic corruption and monopolies, ensuring technological progress and improving the business climate. The constant

cooperation with our American partners, including the state of California and the city of Los Angeles, as well as the exchange of experience will contribute to the success of these processes. I also want to express gratitude to the Los Angeles city authorities for the attitude shown to the Armenian people", PM Pashinyan said.

The sides also discussed the cooperation development prospects in tourism, IT spheres. Both highlighted the importance of establishing a direct air communication. An agreement was reached to boost the contacts to develop concrete mutually beneficial cooperation programs and record practical results.

At the end of the meeting the Armenian PM and the Los Angeles Mayor exchanged symbolic souvenirs.

After the meeting the officials departed to the Grand Park in central Los Angeles to participate in the meeting. The LA Mayor delivered opening remarks at the meeting.

## Armenia, India to try to use existing great potential in science, education and culture



Minister of education, science, culture and sport Arayik Harutyunyan received Ambassador of India to Armenia Mr. Kishan Dan Dewal, the ministry told Noyan Tapan.

The Armenian minister congratulated the Ambassador on appointment, wishing productive activity in Armenia.

Minister Harutyunyan said despite the centuries-old friendship between the Ar-

menian and Indian peoples, as well as the great development potential of the bilateral ties in science, education and culture, the two states still do not sufficiently utilize the cooperation opportunities.

In his turn the Ambassador said he is starting the series of meetings with the Cabinet members from the meeting with minister Harutyunyan. He informed that the Indian

Prime Minister is also in the United States these days and is expected to meet with the Armenian PM who is also there on a working visit.

Talking about the cultural cooperation and exchange programs, the Ambassador raised the issue of the possibility to shoot Indian films in Armenia. He also came up with offers, inviting the Armenian artists to participate in festivals of national song and dance in India.

Minister Harutyunyan considered possible the programs of joint filmmaking, proposing to hold culture days in the two countries in coming years. The Armenian minister informed that last year the number of Indian students studying in Armenia surpassed 1200, and this year nearly 600 applications have been submitted, and in this regard, he highlighted the issue of cooperating with one of the Indian universities.

The officials also discussed the cooperation opportunities in science, preservation of historical-cultural heritage and archaeological spheres.

## Armenian, Azerbaijani FMs discuss Karabakh peace process

Armenian Foreign Minister Zohrab Mnatsakanyan and Azerbaijani Foreign Minister Elmar Mammadyarov held a meeting in New York mediated by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs Igor Popov (Russia), Stefan Visconti (France), Andrew Shoffer (US). Andrzej Kasprzyk, Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office, also participated in the meeting.

The interlocutors discussed a wide range of issues related to the peaceful settlement of the Karabakh conflict and assessed the current situation.

The Armenian Foreign Minister hailed the activity of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-



Chairs and the Personal Representative of the OSCE Chairman-in-Office.

The Armenian side attached importance to taking steps to reinforce the ceasefire and reduce tension, including through implementation and application of corresponding mechanisms.

The need for consistent steps to build an atmosphere of confidence was also emphasized, including through the implementa-

tion of previously achieved arrangements.

Concerning the Armenian citizens detained on the territory of Azerbaijan, the Armenian side emphasized the necessity of ensuring their repatriation.

From the point of view of promoting the peace process, Minister Mnatsakanyan attached importance to ensuring proportionality of the commitments undertaken by the parties in the settlement process, reaffirming Armenia's principled position and approaches in the process.

The parties outlined further steps in this direction, including the visit of the co-chairs to the region and a regular meeting of foreign ministers in the near future.

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every year," he explained.

"Real estate prices in Armenia and Yerevan are substantially rising now," he said. "Buying a home in Yerevan, in Armenia means making a very good and reliable investment ... Every Armenian must have a home in Armenia."

"Repatriation also means owning a business in Armenia and, more importantly, having citizenship of the Republic of Armenia. Every [Diaspora] Armenian must have Armenian citizenship," declared Pashinyan.

Pashinyan proceeded on Monday to New York where he is due to give a speech at a session of the UN General Assembly.

On Saturday, U.S. President Donald Trump congratulated the

Armenian leader on the 28th anniversary of Armenia's declaration of independence from the Soviet Union.

"The United States welcomes the close cooperation between our nations and your government's commitment to democratic and economic reform," Trump wrote in a letter publicized by Pashinyan's press office. "We strongly support the desire of the Armenian people, as expressed during last year's peaceful events throughout Armenia, to live in a democratic country that respects the rule of law and is free from corruption."

"I look forward to building on the partnership between our two countries in the years ahead," added Trump.





## Pashinyan, former Security Chief step up war of words

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and Artur Vanetsyan, the former head of Armenia's National Security Service (NSS) forced to resign last week, have traded fresh and more bitter recriminations.

Vanetsyan hit out at Pashinyan when he announced his resignation in a statement issued on September 16. He said that the latter's "impulsive" leadership style is not good for Armenia and runs counter to the NSS "officer's honor."

Pashinyan swiftly rounded on Vanetsyan through his press secretary. His chief of staff said afterwards the former NSS chief was sacked because the prime minister was dissatisfied with his work.

Visiting the United States on Sunday, Pashinyan accused Vanetsyan of showing "disrespect for the officer's honor" by making the "statement against his commander-in-chief." "Would an officer do such a thing?" he told a news conference held in Los Angeles. "Do you know what that means? That means throwing your shoulder straps into a trash bin."

"That is disrespectful towards Armenia's armed forces," he said, likening Vanetsyan to Soviet generals who staged a failed coup d'état in August 1991.

Vanetsyan hit back at Pashinyan in equally strong terms on Monday, saying that the premier is misleading Armenians and "again not thinking about consequences of his words." "Imagine what will happen if I suddenly start speaking up without thinking about consequences," he warned in written comments to the "Hraparak" daily.

Vanetsyan claimed that following his resignation Pashinyan has been "sending people to me to ask me to keep silent for a while so that the situation calms down." "But I can see now that he is once



again breaching understandings and making incomprehensible and, in essence, shallow populist statements," he said.

"I insist with certitude: time will tell who or what will end up in a trash bin," added the 39-year-old career officer of Armenia's most powerful security service.

Pashinyan appointed Vanetsyan as NSS director two days after the Armenian parliament elected him prime minister in May 2018. Vanetsyan quickly became one of the most influential members of his entourage, overseeing a number of high-profile corruption investigations.

Pashinyan has not yet publicly explained why he decided to replace the NSS chief. His spokesman, Vladimir Karapetyan, suggested last week that Vanetsyan might have secret ties to Armenia's former leadership. Vanetsyan strongly denied that.

## Former Police chief Hayk Harutyunyan found dead



A former chief of the Armenian police, Hayk Harutyunyan, has been found shot to death in his home, law-enforcement authorities said on September 24.

Armenia's Investigative Committee said Harutyunyan had a gunshot wound to his head when police officers discovered his body in his country house in Bjni, a village 45 kilometers north of Yerevan, on Monday night. They also found a pistol and a spent cartridge lying next to him, read a statement released by the committee.

The statement added that the law-enforcement agency is conducting an investigation into a suicide resulting from threats, humiliation or negligence. Investigators have already questioned "witnesses" and

established that Harutyunyan "consumed a considerable amount of alcohol" prior to his death, it said.

Harutyunyan ran the Armenian police from 1999-2008, during former President Robert Kocharyan's rule. He headed two other security agencies after Kocharyan was succeeded by Serzh Sarkisian in April 2008. The 63-year-old had held no state positions since being dismissed in 2014 as chief of a Justice Ministry division managing Armenia's prisons.

Harutyunyan was a key witness in an ongoing investigation into the March 2008 post-election violence in Yerevan, which left eight opposition protesters and two police servicemen dead. Unlike Kocharyan and several other former senior officials, he was not arrested or indicted following last year's "Velvet Revolution" which toppled Sarkisian.

Citing anonymous sources, two Armenian news websites alleged that moments before his death Harutyunyan complained to another person that he is being pressured by the authorities to give false incriminating testimony against Kocharyan and a retired senior police officer.

A spokeswoman for the Investigative Committee, Naira Harutyunyan, dismissed those claims as untrue. She said at the same time that investigators have interrogated an unnamed person who "was with [Harutyunyan] at the site of the incident." The latter assured them that the former police chief did not allege any pressure exerted on him in connection with the 2008 unrest probe or any other issue, Harutyunyan wrote on Facebook.

In a separate post, Harutyunyan announced that the Investigative Committee has moved to question the authors of the two news reports about "circumstances of the case subject to clarification."

Meanwhile, residents of Bjni who knew Harutyunyan personally expressed shock at the news of his death. The mayor of the village where Harutyunyan is understood to have spent most of his time in recent years said he would never expect the police general to commit suicide.

"I can't imagine him doing that," he told RFE/RL's Armenian service. "He was not a weak guy; he was a very tough guy."

## Governor of Vayots Dzor Province announces decision to resign



Governor of Armenia's Vayots Dzor Province Trdat Sargsyan issued a statement announcing his resignation.

"Dear residents of Vayots Dzor Province, Dear citizens and friends,

Taking into account the recent painful incident in Yeghegnadzor town, I consider it necessary to present the following clarifications:

As I said previously, I was at home during that incident: I have presented proofs for this fact to the investigation body. I am con-

fidant that an objective investigation will be carried out and those found guilty will be punished.

Nevertheless, once again denying my connection to this incident, in addition attaching more importance to the establishment of a political ethic and a political responsibility in new Armenia, I announce that I made a decision to step down as Governor of Vayots Dzor Province after the completion of the large-scale strategic military exercises which launch today.

It was a great honor for me to serve in such a unique province like Vayots Dzor, communicate and work with the residents of the province every day who are proud, diligent people full of love towards life and belief towards the future.

I would like to thank the Armenian Prime Minister and my political team for the trust given to me at this responsible period", the

Governor said in the statement.

He also thanked the staff of the governorate for joint work.

"I am confident that the works will continue in Vayots Dzor province and the life of its residents will gradually improve", he said, adding that he prays for the recovery of Ara Mkhitarian.

*On September 17 a brawl occurred in Yeghegnadzor town, involving Lieutenant Colonel Ara Mkhitarian and Harutyun Grigoryan, assistant to the governor of Vayots Dzor Province. According to some reports, Governor of Vayots Dzor Province Trdat Sargsyan also was involved in the incident. Lieutenant Colonel Ara Mkhitarian has been hospitalized and is in critical condition. Harutyun Grigoryan has been charged and is arrested.*

## Defense Minister praises results of mobilization drills

Minister of Defense Davit Tonoyan says he is happy with the process of the ongoing mobilization which has been declared as part of the Armed Forces Engagement, Countering Adversary Aggression strategic military exercises.

"This kind of exercises, when we are involving thousands of people in mobilization drills, have never happened before.

And I am very thankful to everybody, because only after 6 hours thousands of people subject to service reported to military commissariats and stations. I am satisfied with the results, even for me this was unexpected," Tonoyan said.

He reminded that during the 2016 April War the military didn't declare mobilization, however the number of volunteers was high.

"During the April operations we didn't declare mobilization. During the April operations the Yerkrpah and other popular public organizations simply voluntarily



expressed their desire to be involved in defending our fatherland, defending Artsakh," the minister said.

*A simulated martial law has been declared as part of the ongoing military exercises in Armenia, Colonel Samvel Asatryan – the head of the Information Department of the Armenian Armed Forces General Staff's Administrative Apparatus told a news conference on September 24.*

*"In accordance to the 2019 readiness plan of the Armenian Armed Forces the Armed Forces Engagement, Countering Adversary Aggression large-scale strategic military exercise has commenced on*

*September 24 in Armenia, including state and local-self-governing bodies. At 06:00 the government's decision on declaring a simulated martial law has been received. The command bodies and troops of armed forces have been ordered to complete combat readiness level," Asatryan said.*

*The purpose of the exercises is the practical testing of military engage-*

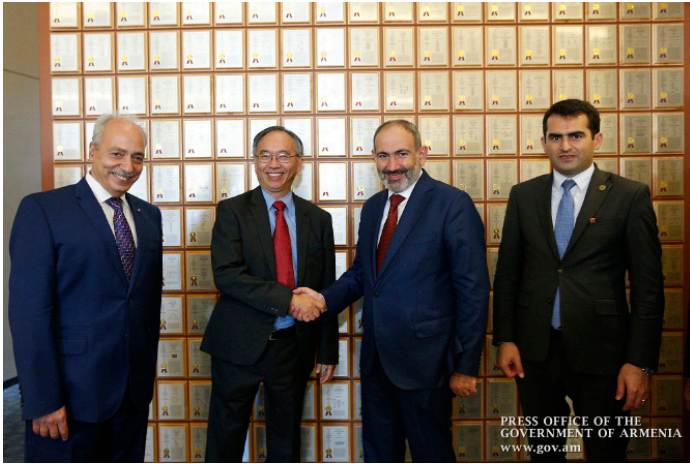
*ment and combat utilization plans, training of involved forces and resources, conveying practical experience to governmental and local self-governing bodies, military command circles and mobilization resources in the direction of implementing mobilization objectives, studying and clarifying the possibilities of the involved forces, resources, mobilization bodies and harmonizing the actions of command staffs.*

*The drills will involve live fire exercises in different attack scenarios.*

*The drills will take place until October 5.*



## Pashinyan discusses development of cooperation with Synopsys executives



Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan continues his working visit in the United States, the PM's Office told Noyan Tapan.

In the Silicon Valley the PM visited the Synopsys headquarters where he was hosted by company President Chi-Foon Chan. Synopsys has a branch in Armenia – the Synopsys Armenia, which operates since 2004 with over 700 employees.

Chi-Foon Chan welcomed the Armenian PM's visit to the company, stating that they attach importance to the cooperation with Armenia and its constant development. He in-

troduced the company's activity directions, projects and stated that Synopsys has 120 offices in different countries of the world and the total number of its employees is nearly 13,000. According to him, Synopsys is constantly increasing its activity volumes and also plans to expand its operation framework in Armenia. Synopsys Armenia President Yervand Zoryan, who also attended the meeting, said Synopsys Armenia is one of the steadily developing and effective branches of the company both in program and personnel terms and plans to increase the number of its employees by 100

annually.

PM Pashinyan thanked for the reception and stated that Synopsys is a valuable partner for Armenia. "The Armenian government has declared the technology sector a priority, and we attach importance to the cooperation with the Synopsys. We are interested in attracting investments in the field of high technologies, creating jobs, preparing specialists and are ready to boost this process with the tools of the government", the Armenian PM said.

Pashinyan introduced the government's programs and initiatives in IT sector aimed at creating a favorable ecosystem for technological startups and investments.

The sides reaffirmed the readiness to develop the cooperation and exchanged views on the future joint actions. The Synopsys President said this year Synopsys Armenia is celebrating the 15th anniversary of foundation and invited the PM to take part in the

event which will take place in November.

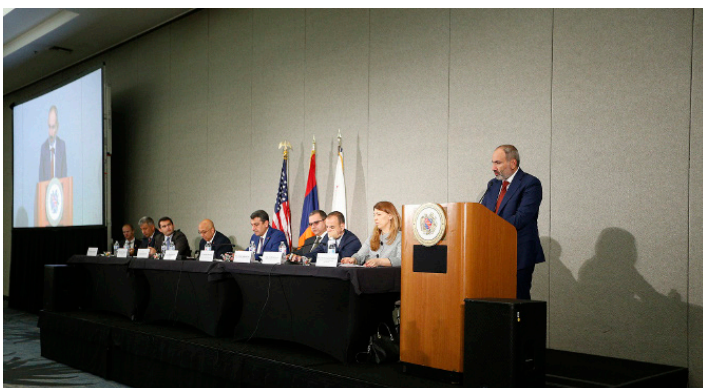
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Thereafter, the Armenian PM met with the ethnic Armenian representatives of several high technological companies operating in the Silicon Valley. Pashinyan said this meeting is important and is a good opportunity to jointly discuss the cooperation opportunities. He said the technological sector is one of the priorities of the Armenian government, with the goal to make Armenia an intellectual country.

The IT sector representatives welcomed the Armenian PM's visit to the Silicon Valley and stated that they are interested in the opportunities to make investments and operate in Armenia in the technological sector.



## Armenia best matched for doing business with California – PM



Armenia is the country, which best matches for doing business with California, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said in an address to California's business community.

"We see tremendous opportunities for tapping into California's huge trade and investment potential," the Prime Minister added.

He said "wine-making, information technologies, tourism and agriculture are among the most developed sectors of Armenia's economy."

At the same time, these are the areas where California keeps global leadership for many years, Nikol Pashinyan added.

"There is a fertile ground for joint business initiatives. The existence of the vigorous Armenian community, which is bounding our countries, is yet another compelling argument proving that we should be working together to strengthen trade and involvement relations between Armenia and California," Pashinyan said.

"Armenia is known for its rich cultural heritage, vibrant history, hospitality and amazing landscape. But this is not enough to make the image of our country complete. Today we change the way we manage our country and our economy," the Prime Minister stated.

At the same time, he said, we have to ensure that the Armenian economy is dynamic and responsive to the changes that are taking place around the world.

"Last year the Armenian people opted for change. We chose freedom and democracy over autocracy and demonstrated that nothing is stronger than will, belief and action of the people. However, political change is only the first step. We shall translate the will and aspiration of our people into economic and social development, Pashinyan stated.

## Head of Russian Federal Tax Service Mikhail Mishustin announced as a Keynote Speaker at WCIT 2019

Mikhail Mishustin, Head of the Federal Tax Service of Russia, will be joining the 23rd World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2019) as a Keynote Speaker in Yerevan, Armenia. He will be speaking on the Law & Regulation of ICT Panel during the congress from October 6 to 9.

Mr. Mishustin will discuss the digital transformation of the economy and society and how these changes impact tax administration. The Law & Regulation of ICT Panel will explore how analog law and regulation can keep pace with the ever-changing realities of a tech world that moves at a digital speed.

“We are very proud to have a well-known dignitary such as Mr. Mishustin on this panel to give an important perspective on such a crucial matter in the modern world of technology” said the president of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE, Armenia), Alexander Yesayan.

Mr. Mishustin has been Head of the Federal Tax Service since 6 April 2010. He was appointed Deputy Head of the Russian



Federal Tax Service in 1998, and went on to serve as Deputy Minister of the Russian Federation on Taxes and Levies from 1999 to 2004. In 2008 he became President of the UFG (UFG Asset Management) group of companies – one of the largest companies working in Russia in the field of asset management, private equity, and, together with Deutsche Bank, domestic mutual funds.

Joining the discussion on Law & Regulation of ICT alongside Mikhail Mishustin, will be Olga Mack, Vice-President of Strategy at Quantstamp; Francesca Lagerberg, Head of Global Network Capability Team at Grant Thornton International, and Axel

Pawlik, Managing Director of the RIPE Network Coordination Centre.

The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT 2019), one of the oldest and most influential ICT events in the world, will be held in Yerevan this year from October 6-9. The three-day congress will gather over 2500 participants from around 70 countries: information and communication technology leaders, CEOs and investors, policy makers and government officials, academics, and technologists. This year's theme is The Power of Decentralization: Promise and Peril.

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*WCIT 2019 will be held in Yerevan on October 6-9, 2019. The Congress is hosted by Armenia with the support and under the high patronage of the Government of the Republic of Armenia. The World Congress on Information Technology (WCIT) was established by the World Information Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA). Its main organizing body is the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE).*

## EU and EBRD-supported investment fund to invest 70 million EUR in Armenian economy



The European Union (EU) and the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD) provided up to EUR 16 million to support the launch of the Amber Capital EU-Armenia SME Fund (the Fund), a private equity fund seeking to raise a total of EUR 70 million for investment in small and medium-sized enterprises in Armenia, ARMENPRESS was informed from EBRD office in Armenia.

The Fund will be managed by Amber Capital, an international investment firm with an established office and team of professionals in Armenia, and will seek to build a diversified investment portfolio across sectors including renewable energy, agriculture, manufacturing, tourism, information technology and logistics.

Through its equity investments, the Fund will seek to enhance the competitiveness of beneficiary SMEs including through improving corporate governance and transparency and helping them to internationalize. The facility also includes capacity-building consultancy offered to local enterprises, through the EU-supported EBRD Advice for Small Businesses programme, to enhance the investment readiness and promote competitiveness of the SMEs.

“The EU is a key partner for economic development and prosperity in Armenia”, said Katarina Mathernova, Deputy Director-General for Neighborhood Policy and Enlargement Negotiations at the European Commission. “The EU is proud to be adding a new innovative tool to unleash the potential for SME development in Armenia, creating jobs and providing concrete benefits to the people. We are confident that the EU-Armenia SME Equity Fund will support the growth and competitiveness of the Armenian economy, attract foreign direct investment and help further develop innovation based on the talents of Armenians”.

Armenian government has started building an innovative and inclusive economy, where small and medium-sized enterprises

will play an important role. In this period of fundamental changes, the newly established EU-Armenia SME Equity Fund will contribute significantly to the economic advancement of the country and will create new opportunities for entrepreneurs”, said Tigran Avinyan, Deputy Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia.

“Armenia has strong history of entrepreneurship and a huge entrepreneurial potential. We are excited to support the launch of this private equity fund that will help to diversify the financing opportunities available to SMEs. This project will also help to improve the investment climate and overall diversification of the economy. We are grateful to our long-standing partner, the EU for the strong support of this project”, said Matteo Patrone, EBRD Managing Director of Eastern Europe & Caucasus.

“We are very excited to be a part of this initiative, pioneering the concept of institutional private equity in Armenia. The Fund will bring together the best of the two worlds: the highest quality investor base and strategically important corporate clients to create strong and long-lasting



## Kocharyan again denied bail



(RFE/RL – Yerevan)- Three days after deciding not to recognize Robert Kocharyan's arrest and prosecution as unconstitutional, a court in Yerevan also refused on Friday to release the former Armenian president from prison on bail.

Anna Danibekyan, the judge presiding over the trial of Kocharyan and three other former senior officials, thus dismissed defense lawyers' assertions that he never attempted to hide from justice or obstruct the criminal investigation into the 2008 post-election violence in Yerevan.

The lawyers requested bail for their client on Tuesday immediately after Danibekyan rejected their interpretation of a recent ruling handed down by Armenia's Constitutional Court. The trial prosecutors objected to the bail request. One of them spoke of a "very high risk" of Kocharyan going into hiding and/or exerting "illegal influence" on witnesses in the event of his release.

The Constitutional Court ruled on September 4 that an article of the Armenian Code of Procedural Justice used against Kocharyan is unconstitutional because it does not take account of current and former senior Armenian officials' legal immunity from prosecution. According to the ex-president's attorneys, this means that he must be set free and cleared of coup charges.

The lawyers said on Tuesday that Danibekyan bowed to what they called strong pressure exerted on her by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan and his political allies. One of them, Hayk Alummyan, condemned the judge in even stronger terms after she refused to grant Kocharyan bail.

"The court has thus become a tool for Mr. Kocharyan's political persecution," Alummyan charged in the courtroom. The court is now acting like a government tool."

Alummyan went on to demand that Dan-

ibekyan recuse herself from the case. "You are unable to administer justice in this case because you are under the influence of the force persecuting Mr. Kocharyan for political purposes," the lawyer told her.

The 41-year-old judge said she will respond to the demand at the next court hearing which she scheduled for October 7.

The high-profile case was assigned to Danibekyan less than a month ago. Kocharyan's trial was previously presided over by another judge, Davit Grigoryan. The latter ordered Kocharyan freed from custody on May 18. He also suspended the trial, questioning the legality of the coup charges leveled against the man who ruled Armenia from 1998-2008.

Grigoryan was suspended by judicial authorities in July after a law-enforcement agency charged him with forgery. The judge denies the accusation.

The Constitutional Court ruling on the case also angered the authorities. Pashinyan denounced it as "illegal," while the pro-government majority in the Armenian parliament decided to appeal to the high court to replace its chairman, Hrayr Tovmasyan. Majority leaders accused Tovmasyan of serious procedural violations and conflict of interest.

Kocharyan, his former chief of staff Armen Gevorgyan and retired army Generals Seyran Ohanian and Yuri Khachaturov stand accused of overthrowing the constitutional order in the wake of a disputed presidential election held in February 2008. The prosecution says that they illegally used the Armenian military against opposition protesters that demanded the rerun of the ballot.

All four defendants deny the accusations. Kocharyan, who was also charged with bribery early this year, has repeatedly



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partnerships. We aim to become a catalyst for change with the introduction of best corporate governance standards, technology transfer and development of capital markets", said Anush Simonyan, CEO of Amber Capital Armenia.

The EU is the biggest provider of financial support and a key reform partner in Armenia that provides on average 1 million euro per week to contribute to a stronger governance, stronger economy, stronger connectivity and people to people contacts. With annual allocations of €40 million in grants, its current substantial portfolio focuses on supporting the reform agenda of the government, private sector development, education and regional development. In addition, since 2014 more than €1 billion in the form of blended loans and grants has been invested in the energy, agriculture and transport sectors. The EBRD is the leading institutional investor in Armenia, active in all sectors of the economy. Since the start of its operations in Armenia in 1992, the EBRD has invested €1.36 billion in 178 projects in the country's financial, corporate, infrastructure and energy sectors, with 90 per cent of investments in the private sector.

Amber Capital EU-Armenia SME Fund is created to promote the development of SMEs in Armenia through the first Armenia only equity fund.

EU provided a commitment of 11 million EUR through a partial guarantee scheme that has allowed to attract private investors to the fund, and 4 million EUR for the provision of expertise to Armenian SMEs.

EBRD provided commitments of up to EUR 5 million • Amber Capital provided commitment of up to EUR 5 million.

The fund will provide financing to strengthen the competitiveness of Armenian SMEs and support their access to international market, in particular EU.

accused Pashinyan of waging a "political vendetta" against him. The authorities deny political any motives behind the case.

Kocharyan declared a state of emergency and ordered army units into Yerevan late on March 1, 2008 amid violent clashes between protesters and security forces which left ten people dead. He handed over power to Serzh Sarkisian, his preferred successor and official election winner, in April 2008.



## Armin Wegner Asked Franz Werfel Not to Write His ‘Forty Days of Musa Dagh’

By Harut Sassounian

### Part II

This is the continuation of the letter written by Armin T. Wegner to Franz Werfel in 1932, which is being published for the first time:

“Already in 1915 I became friends with Johannes Lepsius. As I traveled by train, from Constantinople through Asia Minor to Baghdad, I witnessed the entire deportation. I repeatedly sent material to Lepsius for his collection. I have lived in close relationship with Armenians and Turks for several years, and have spoken their language, albeit very imperfectly. Hiding under my stomach bandage, I smuggled the pictures that I had taken of the horror scenes in the desert. I transported them, at the risk of death, across the border along with the refugees’ letters to the American embassies. In 1919, in a public event in Urania [a scientific society in Berlin], with the help of Johannes Lepsius, I showed the pictures in a sensational lecture. As a result, almost a pogrom broke out between the immigrant Armenians and Turks. Soon afterwards I published my book, ‘The Road of No Return’ (‘Der Weg Ohne Heimkehr’), revealing personal experiences from that time. I related most of the experiences from the days of the deportation, for my Armenian novel.

At short intervals, two more books were published — ‘In the House of Happiness,’ (‘Im Hause der Glückseligkeit’) and my ‘Turkish Novels,’ (‘Türkische Novellen’) which also include two stories from the persecution of Armenians. At about the same time, in 1921, my novella ‘The Storm on the Women’s Bath’ (‘Der Sturm auf das Frauenbad’) — the description of an Armenian massacre — appeared in the Berliner Tageblatt. In the same year I published the stenographic report ‘The Court Case of Talaat Pasha’ (‘Der Prozess Talaat Pascha’), to which I was invited, along with Johannes Lepsius and others, as a witness.

In 1925, I began to write my Armenian novel, which I had already planned during the war. The first announcements of the work can be found around the same time in the Kirschner, and in Albert Sörgel’s history of literature, where the book had

been announced with the title ‘The Expulsion’ (‘Die Austreibung’). But, as I set out to portray the vast epic of deportation and extermination of an entire race of people, I soon realized that my work would be piecemeal if I confined myself to describing only the end of this tragedy.

So the work grew under my hand, more and more, beyond what I originally had planned. The entire fate of the people, and the struggles of the peoples of the Middle East, should be presented in it. The antagonism of races, religions and classes were laid bare. It was not my will, but the inner nature of that work, which became a four-volume novel. I’ll give you a short outline of the blueprint that I shared with the academy two years ago.

The first volume deals with the prehistory of the novel — the youth of the main hero, who was born in a small Asian town in 1890. In 1896, during the massacres of Abdul Hamid, he loses his parents and grows up an orphan in the Syrian orphanage in Jerusalem. The actual content of the first volume, then, describes life in a small Asian city, the contrast of the Turks and Armenians, their conflicting as well as common revolutionary activities, and it finally leads to Constantinople in the court of Abdul Hamid. This volume will be titled ‘In the Shadow of God.’

The second volume, titled ‘Eternal Hatred,’ leads first into the mountains of an Armenian village. It shows the differences between Kurds and Armenians, and finally depicts the outbreak of the revolution of 1908 in Asia Minor and Constantinople, the removal of Abdul Hamid and the victory of the Young Turks, and ends in a general fraternization and reconciliation of Turks and Armenians in the age of the Constitution.

The third volume, which will probably carry the title ‘The Scream of Ararat,’ begins with the outbreak of the World War. This volume will also contain the conversation between Lepsius and Enver Pasha, which Lepsius himself has so impressively recorded. The novel always shifts between the ruling classes, the leading authorities, and the people. The Young Turkish leaders, and the whole diplomacy of Europe, play their part. The book ends with the actual beginning of the deportation.

The fourth volume, titled ‘The Desert,’ then brings the extermination of the Armenian people in the steppes of Mesopotamia. This part also contains the scenes of those two thousand refugees who had rescued themselves on a mountain and were then brought to Egypt by a ship of the Entente — scenes that I suppose to be the inspiration for the title of your planned book, ‘The Forty Days Musa Dagh.’ An epilogue to the last volume describes the murder of Talaat Pasha in the streets of Berlin.

The entire work is expected to retain the repeatedly announced title ‘The Expulsion.’

Although I began writing the Novel as early as 1924, it was interrupted by my other poetic and journalistic works. In the years 1925 to 1927, the project matured to its full extent, and from the beginning of 1930, I had to start the whole work once again. In 1928 my novel ‘Moni’ (the novel of a two-year-old child) was published in the ‘Berliner Tageblatt.’ At the same time, I offered the book to the publishing house Zsolnay in Vienna (in March 1928), and declared my readiness for a contractual bond for my planned work in progress, the Armenian novel, as a great portrayal of people. But Zsolnay refused. I then signed a contract with the Deutsche Verlags-Anstalt in Stuttgart (in the spring of 1928), for my multi-volume novel on the Armenian deportation, and at that time I received a considerable advance.

The great economic hardship, the pressure to feed a family and the not quite satisfactory sales of my other books, slowed down my work. Driven by financial obligations, I had to accept extensive journalistic work, again and again, which required long trips to foreign countries. In 1930, Thomas Mann applied on my behalf to the Prussian Academy of the Arts (Section of Poetry), referring to my work. At his instigation, I submitted to the Academy a more detailed plan of my great Armenian novel. I enumerated the various stations of the above listed individual volumes. Fortunately, the academy gave me considerable support for this work. But unfortunately, all of these sums were not enough to allow me to labor on the huge work with peace of mind.”

## Biden calls for U.S. recognition of Armenian Genocide

U.S. Democratic presidential frontrunner and former Vice President Joe Biden has called for an official U.S. recognition of the 1915 Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey.

“The United States must reaffirm, once and for all, our record on the Armenian Genocide,” Biden said in a letter to the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA) released by the lobby group on September 20.

“We must never forget or remain silent about this horrific and systematic campaign of extermination that resulted in the deaths of 1.5 million Armenian men, women, and children and the mass deportation of 2 million Armenians from their homes,” he wrote. “If we do not fully acknowledge, commemorate, and teach our children about genocide, the words “never again” lose their meaning.”

“Failing to remember or acknowledge the fact of a genocide only paves the way for future mass atrocities,” he added.

Biden, who is seeking the Democratic Party’s nomination for the 2020 presidential election, was a strong backer of Armenian genocide recognition as a member the



U.S. Senate. In particular, he co-sponsored in 2007 a relevant resolution that never reached the Senate floor.

The ANCA noted this fact in a statement. But it also pointed out that former President Barack Obama failed to honor his campaign pledges to reaffirm his recognition of the genocide if elected.

“The Obama-Biden Administration ... pivoted hard against the spirit and letter of its high-profile campaign pledge to recognize the Armenian Genocide, deepening official U.S. complicity in Turkey’s genocide denials and ongoing obstruction of justice for this crime,” read the ANCA statement.

In 2010, Biden controversially claimed

that then Armenian President Serzh Sarkisian had asked Washington not to “force” the issue of genocide recognition while Turkish-Armenian negotiations are in progress. Sarkisian denied the claim.

In May 2015, Biden joined Sarkisian and over two thousand Armenian Americans in attending a ceremony to mark the 100th anniversary of the Armenian genocide held at Washington’s National Cathedral.

In an April 2015 statement, Obama again avoided using the word “genocide” in reference to the mass killings. He at the same time implicitly praised Pope Francis for honoring the victims of what the pontiff called “the first genocide of the 20th century” in a Vatican Mass. Obama also paid tribute to Henry Morgenthau, America’s First World War-era ambassador in Constantinople who tried to stop what he saw as a “campaign of race extermination” by the Ottoman Turks.t!

## Another U.S. Presidential Hopeful Vows Armenian Genocide Recognition

U.S. Senator and Democratic presidential candidate Elizabeth Warren has reaffirmed her strong support for U.S. recognition of the 1915 Armenian genocide in Ottoman Turkey.

Warren also vowed to help “strengthen the U.S.-Armenia relationship” when she congratulated the Armenian Assembly of America on the 28th anniversary of Armenia’s independence marked on Saturday.

“I believe that if we do not recognize the horrors of the past, we risk those horrors being repeated in the future,” she wrote in a letter publicized by the Assembly on Monday. “That is why I am an original cosponsor of a bipartisan Senate resolution that recognizes the Armenian Genocide and



encourages widespread education of this tragedy.”

“I was honored to speak at the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day centennial ceremony in April 2015 at the Armenian Heritage Park in Boston, and I will continue supporting efforts to bring recognition to the genocide,” added the senator

from Massachusetts, a U.S. state with a sizable Armenian community.

Warren is one of the main candidates vying for the Democratic Party’s nomination for the 2020 presidential election. A Reuters/Ipsos poll conducted earlier this month showed her solidifying her status as a top contender behind Joe Biden and Bernie Sanders.

Biden likewise wrote to the Assembly and another Armenian-American lobby group last week, saying that the United States must officially recognize the Armenian genocide “once and for all.” He too had cosponsored a genocide resolution in the U.S. Senate in the past.



## Garo Paylan visits Armenian community of Alfortville, France



Massis Post – Garo Paylan, the MP of the People’s Democratic Party (HDP) paid a historic visit to the Armenian community of Alfortville, France.

Paylan who is of Armenian descent, was specifically invited by the Armenian Council of Europe (ACE) for the screening of “RED” produced and directed by Turkish political scientist Kadir Akin.

Garo Paylan began his visit by meeting the Parish Council of the Armenian Apostolic Church, chaired by Raffi Pohanian.



The priest of the parish, Der Dirayr Keledjian, then prayed for him by inviting him to stand above a receptacle, unique in a church, containing the land of various regions of Western Armenia brought by the parishioners.

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The visit continued with an exciting exchange with students from the Saint-Mesrop-Arabian school group, to whom he asked for the origin of their families. He invited those who did not know how to answer, to ask their parents at home on the evening making them aware of the importance of these historic lands.

The director of the school, Agnès Minas, and the members of the Board of Directors of the Management Association, chaired by Karin Lerian also had the opportunity to talk privately with the Armenian MP.

Garo Paylan then paid tribute to the victims of the Armenian Genocide by laying a wreath at the feet of the Khatchkar of Al-

fortville.

Paylan also visited Alfortville’s Armenian Youth Center, where he met with various Armenian journalists, and was received by the Social Democrat Hunchakian Party Executive Committee of France headed by Saro Mardiryan.

Paylan joined Kadir Akin and held a private meeting with the Mayor of the City of Alfortville, Michel Gerchinovitz, the deputy of Val-de-Marne, Luc Carvounas and the co-president of the CCAF, Ara Toranian, before attending a screening of “RED” at the Alfortville Cultural Center to a full capacity crowd.



## Armenia has serious ambitions in technology field: Sarkissian delivers speech at Cybertech



Cybertech international conference on cyber-security launched in Rome, Italy.

Armenian President Armen Sarkissian is also taking part in the conference.

In his remarks on the topic “Armenia as an emerging regional center on cyber-security matters and an attractive place for investments”, the President touched upon several issues. He said Armenia is a classic example of a country of the 21st century. Armenia is an ancient country with ancient people, has a great history, has been a trade partner in different countries of the world and is the first country to adopt Christianity.

“I believe that the 21st century belongs to the country like Armenia, we have a high-level education system, especially in the field of natural sciences. Being a small country, it has a great nation. Several times more Armenians, rather than those in Armenia, live in different countries of the world who are engaged in various sectors”, the President said.

Mr. Sarkissian said Armenia pays a special attention to education, educational

programs. According to him, one can find in Armenia unique educational programs, such as the TUMO the experience of which is introduced in different countries of the world. He also mentioned the AYB educational program, Quant, etc.

Armen Sarkissian also talked about the new presidential initiative ATOM (Advanced Tomorrow) aimed at developing science and technologies in Armenia. Within the frames of the project it is planned to create a city of science and technologies which will include leading international technological companies and organizations, research centers and universities. He invited the conference participants to participate in this project.

“We have many achievements, including the startups. The Seaside Startup is being held in Armenia. In this regard I believe that I am also a president of a “startup”, and our startup is called Armenia. Young, but ancient nation that has good qualities, serious ambitions to become great as each startup strives”, he said, expressing hope that this conference will also be held in Yerevan.

The executives of Leonard S.p.A., RSA Security, Israel Electric Corporation, Europe Kaspersky and other companies also delivered remarks at the conference. The speakers stated that in line with the technological developments the cyber-attacks are gradually growing.

Banking sector, financial system, health-

care, infrastructures, management, etc.: numerous fields which are targeted by cyber-attacks involving both large and small organizations, as well as individuals. The digital society is expanding every year, but in line with this the cyber-attacks increase. The speakers said that the leaders of the field have a responsibility regarding the security of the digital society. In this context they highlighted the importance of Cybertech conference which is a good platform to find solutions.

*From Tel Aviv and Rome, to Tokyo, Singapore, Panama, and more, Cybertech is the cyber industry's foremost B2B networking platform conducting industry-related events all around the globe. Its conferences and exhibitions serve as the go-to place to make business happen and learn all about the latest technological innovations, challenges, and solutions to combating threats within the global cyber arena.*

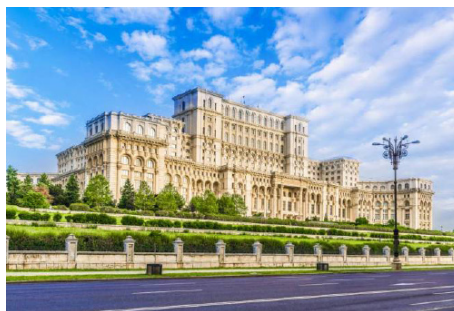
*Cybertech events feature top executives, government officials, leading decision-makers from a wide range of sectors including critical infrastructure, insurance, retail, health and government, defense, R&D, manufacturing, automotive, and more! Multinational corporations, startups, private and corporate investors, venture capital firms, experts, and clients—come and meet all the key players from the cyber industry and be immersed in everything there is to offer.*

*The conference will last on September 25.*

## Romania's Chamber of Deputies adopts bill to declare October 12 Day of Armenian language

Romania's Chamber of Deputies (lower house of Parliament) unanimously adopted the bill on declaring October 12 as a Day of Armenian language, alphabet and culture, Armenian Ambassador to Romania Sergey Minasyan told Armenpress.

“I was very proud and delighted to attend today the debate of the bill on declaring October 12 as the Day of Armenian language, alphabet and culture, which was unanimously adopted also by the Chamber of Deputies. I want to thank all members of the Romanian Parliament, specifically ethnic Armenian MPs Varuzhan Pambukchyan



and Varuzhan Voskanyan for initiating the bill”, Ambassador Minasyan said.

Earlier the Ambassador said that he met

with the Speaker of the Chamber of Deputies and Members of Parliament to discuss the aforementioned bill. The sides also discussed the cooperation prospects between the Armenian and Romanian parliaments at bilateral and multilateral formats, attaching special importance to the active contacts and intensification of cooperation between the legislative bodies of the two countries.

On September 18 the Senate (upper house of Parliament) of Romania adopted the bill on declaring October 12 as a Day of Armenian language, alphabet and culture.



## First ever concert of AI-generated music to be performed in Yerevan



The specially formed WCIT World Orchestra will perform the first ever concert of music written live by artificial intelligence (AI), in which the musicians perform the score as it is being written.

The idea for the FREE outdoor concert in Republic Square comes from Sergey Smbatyan, Music Director of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra, who will also conduct the orchestra.

The concert is part of the opening ceremony of the World Congress of Information Technology (WCIT), one of the largest IT events in the world, which will be held this year in Yerevan, Armenia.

The WCIT World Orchestra is formed of more than 100 professional musicians: 75 drawn from orchestras in the 14 countries that have previously hosted WCIT and 30 from the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra.

Established in 1978, the WCIT – the signature event of the World Information Technology & Services Alliance, a consortium of ICT associations from 83 countries, representing 90% of the industry – is held annually in different countries around the world. A key topic in 2019 is Artificial Intelligence and speakers include leaders from the world's biggest tech companies such as Microsoft, Pixar, Intel, VMware, Siemens and Reddit alongside international media representatives including Kim Kardashian West.

For the first time, the Congress will include a music-related project in the form of the WCIT World Orchestra, which has been put together in a collaboration between the WCIT, the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra and Sergey Smbatyan, the Orchestra's Artistic Director.

The WCIT World Orchestra will comprise musicians from the 14 countries that have previously hosted the Congress, as well as 30 musicians from the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra to represent this year's hosting country, making it one of the most cross-continental orchestras in the world.

In the first concert of its kind, the musicians of the WCIT World Orchestra will perform two works as they are being composed live by AI. The technology will create two pieces of music live in front of the audience. The first will be a composition based on the anthems of the 15 previous (and current) host countries to create a new 'WCIT anthem'. For the second composition, the AI technology will generate a new work based on its database of traditional Armenian chants.

The artificial intelligence – or 'artificial talent' as conductor Sergey Smbatyan refers to it – will transmit each musical part to tablets on the musicians' stands in order for them perform the music as it is being created. Sergey Smbatyan will also be seeing the full score for the first time. The process

will have been tested with the technology in rehearsal, but the musicians will only see the new music for the first time as it is composed during the concert.

**Sergey Smbatyan**, Artistic Director and Principal Conductor of the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra, as well as the founder of the WCIT World Orchestra, said, "This ambitious creative endeavour will explore uncharted territory, creating symbiosis where art, culture, and technology meet. I like to call this type of AI 'Artificial Talent', as it brings together these two definitive fields. The whole world will witness this extraordinary fusion of music and technology, and gives us the opportunity to showcase the power of music. The creation of this orchestra underlines the importance of culture within the technology sphere, and once again proves that music transcends boundaries and does not recognise nationality."

A spokesperson from WCIT said: "The world has witnessed AI make developments and improvements in spheres such as mechanical engineering and transportation. Now, this Orchestra and this concert will convey a powerful message to the world – they'll demonstrate new horizons for the future of art, science and engineering all working together. We're thrilled to have the first ever musical project at WCIT, and we think the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra are the perfect musicians to execute such an ambitious venture."

The opening concert on the 6th October will take place outdoors in Yerevan's iconic Republic Square and will include state-of-the-art visualisations which will convey to the audience what is happening on the stage and how the music is appearing to the musicians. The concert will also feature music from eminent Armenian composers, a piece by Aram Khachaturian and a performance from Grammy-nominated Dutch DJ, Armin van Buuren.

The World Congress of Information Technology 2019 takes place in Yerevan, Armenia from 6th – 9th October. The opening concert is at 8pm on the 6th October in Republic Square, Yerevan and is free to attend.

## VivaCell-MTS: Modern Technology Instead of a Wood Stove



Borderland Koghb, the largest village in Tavush region, is 4.5 km away from the state border. The elders of the village joke that they live almost an urban life. They have two schools, two kindergartens, a house of culture and an art school. Their main occupation is horticulture and gardening. Without the cautious and frightened response of the children to the camera, the fact of being on the border may not even be felt, at the first glance. The camera carried on the shoulder is perceived by the kindergarten children as a firearm. It's ignored later and the playing continues, quietly.



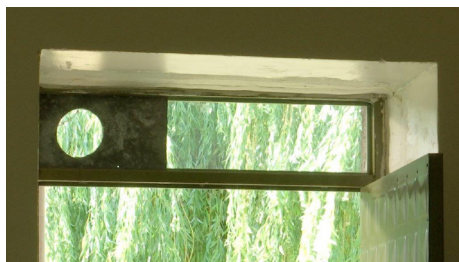
The first kindergarten in Koghb was built several dozens years ago. The kindergarten's non-typical building was first heated with coal and then with wood stoves in the years that followed the collapse of the Soviet system. Modern technological solutions, especially the option of heating the building with alternative energy, have been unavailable to the kindergarten. Old-fashioned heating has been a difficult and dangerous process. Five stoves were installed in different rooms of the kindergarten, which houses 60 children. Although these stoves have been in constant focus of attention of the staff, the danger and inconvenience have always been considerable.

*"It is very difficult to heat the building in the winter months. We use wood stoves*

*mostly, and sometimes electric heaters for heating. It is almost impossible to secure a stable heating. Rooms are often filled with smoke. Not to mention the effort of keeping the moving kids away from shimmering stoves. I think the village should not be different from the city in this regard. This is particularly true for borderland villages. Attention should be high,"* said the principal of the kindergarten **Alina Mamyan**.

In summer, the problem was presented to the partners, who have experience in solving similar problems. The response was not delayed. VivaCell-MTS and the Foundation for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC) are already undertaking practical measures. The partners strive to provide a warm winter for young children. The project is also environmentally justified. Outdated and inefficient methods will be replaced by modern technology. Centralized heating system supported with solar water heaters will be placed.

*"Children shall be saved from memories about hardships. This is particularly important for the future. The hot burning metal or the smoke filling the room can't cause positive emotions. Maybe many years ago wooden stoves were normal or were the only solution for heating the room but today it is not normal as there are modern and safer technologies of heating. This is a program that allows, with the help of innovative*



*technologies, changing the everyday life of the children living in borderland communities, as well as the lives of their teachers. I am glad that with a partner organization we can be useful to them,"* VivaCell-MTS



Founding General Manager **Ralph C. Yirikian**.

The implementation of energy-saving heating systems in the borderland and remote settlements is one of the important steps in establishing a network of ecovillages. In this way, it'll be possible to integrate these villages into a process, which is based on sustainable development's four components: environment, economy, culture and society. The program will significantly reduce community spending, and then the savings can be directed to solve other issues.

### About "Eco Villages Network" project

Eco villages network includes selected intentional or traditional communities throughout Armenia, that are consciously designed through locally owned, participatory processes to regenerate their social, cultural, economic and natural environments.

The core idea behind the whole concept of the ecovillages is integrating the four dimensions of sustainability – ecological, economic, cultural and social – through integral, participatory design.

The project is a new format of the long-term cooperation between the Foundation



for the Preservation of Wildlife and Cultural Assets (FPWC), VivaCell-MTS and the Global Ecovillages Network (GEN) in the field of environmental protection and sustainable use of natural resources.



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