

Name of Armenia's new national airline announced



The Armenian National Interests Fund (ANIF) and Air Arabia Group, the Middle East and North Africa's first and largest low-cost carrier (LCC) operator, announced on September 1 that the new national airline to be launched by their joint venture company will be named 'Fly Arna.'

The name was chosen by the Board of Directors of the joint venture company from over 500 suggestions received in response to the 'Name the Airline' competition announced in July 2021.

Following a comprehensive review, the name of the airline was chosen as 'Fly Arna' – with the word 'Arna' being derived from the name "Armenian National Airlines" by combining the first two letters of the words "ARmenian" with the first letter of "National" and the first letter of "Airline". The competition aimed to engage the citizens of Armenia to participate in naming their new national airline reflecting the commitment of ANIF and Air Arabia Group to promote stakeholder participation.

"I thank everyone for the active participation in the contest. It is both inspiring and a sign of a shared vision of a successful endeavor we all aspire for the project," said David Papazian, CEO of ANIF. "Despite the current challenges of the pandemic, we are confident of the new opportunity that exists for "Fly Arna" to de-

liver a winning proposition that will benefit the nation and our people."

Adel Al Ali, Group Chief Executive Officer of Air Arabia, said: "The new name represents the aspirations of the people of Armenia and is the result of a national competition, underlining how the joint venture company prioritizes the interests of the community. "Fly Arna" will mark the beginning of a new era for Armenia's aviation sector, and also create significant value to the economy by boosting the tourism, hospitality and business sectors."

More than 800 participants suggested the 500 names via email and on ANIF's social media pages. The name was chosen to be most inclusive and reflecting the spirit of the joint venture company to transform the aviation sector of the country.

"Fly Arna" will operate as a low-cost passenger airline with Yerevan's Zvartnots International Airport (EVN) as its base. The company will apply for the Airline Operation Certificate in the coming weeks. More details about the launch date, fleet, and destination network will be announced in due course.

ANIF and Air Arabia Group had announced the agreement to launch Armenia's new national airline in July 2021.

France reiterates full support for the people of Armenia: Le Drian congratulates Mirzoyan on appointment

p. 2

Russia calls on Armenia, Turkey to normalize ties

p. 4

50 Diaspora professionals join the Armenian Government

p.7

Russian FM reveals details from signing of 2009 Zurich Protocols, note to FM Nalbandian

p. 5

France reiterates full support for the people of Armenia: Le Drian congratulates Mirzoyan on appointment



French Foreign Minister Jean-Yves Le Drian sent a congratulatory message to Ararat Mirzoyan on his appointment to the post of RA Foreign Minister. The message reads:

“Dear Mr. Minister,

I cordially send you my warm congratulations on the occasion of assuming the post of the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, expressing my

gratitude in advance for the prospect of working closely with you in an atmosphere of trust.

Your country has faced a number of security, economic and health challenges in recent months. I would like to reaffirm France’s full support for the Armenian people who are going through this difficult phase.

There are privileged relations between France and Armenia, based on deep historical and cultural ties, with a rich agenda. The quality of the Armenian-French political dialogue obliges us to deepen our economic cooperation in favor of, in particular, the unblocking and diversification of the Armenian economy.

France will continue to assist Arme-

nia in overcoming the aftermath of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, which has resulted in numerous casualties, and, as a co-chair of the Minsk Group, will continue to pursue a comprehensive solution to the conflict.

If the incidents of recent months underscore the need to work on the demarcation and demarcation of your country’s borders, we want the positive dynamics of the recent exchange of prisoner-of-war and mine maps to help restore trust between the parties. France acts as a player of peace in the South Caucasus region and stands by Armenia to achieve the expected peace.

Please accept, my Excellency, the assurances of my highest consideration. “

US encourages reengagement in substantive negotiations on Karabakh: Blinken congratulates Mirzoyan on appointment

The US encourages reengagement in substantive negotiations under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs as soon as possible, US Secretary of State Antony Blinken said in a congratulatory message to Armenian Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan.

“I warmly congratulate you on your appointment as foreign minister. The United States has a longstanding commitment to supporting the Armenian people’s democratic aspirations, and we look forward to cooperating with you to forge stronger bilateral ties based on our shared democratic values,” Secretary Blinken said.



“As a co-chair of the OSCE Minsk Group, we remain committed to working with you to support a comprehensive and sustainable political settlement of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. We encourage reengagement in substantive negotiations

under the auspices of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs as soon as possible,” he added.

“The United States is a partner in your government’s efforts to strengthen the rule of law, combat corruption, and bolster democratic institutions, while respecting human rights and fundamental freedoms. The U.S. Embassy team in Yerevan is ready to assist you and your government maintain robust ties between our two countries. Together, we can advance our joint interests in Armenia’s sovereign, democratic, peaceful, and prosperous future,” the Secretary of State said.

Armenian, Russian top prosecutors discuss return of Armenian captives from Azerbaijan



Prosecutor General of Armenia Artur Davtyan met with Russian Prosecutor General Igor Krasnov in the city of Vladivostok, the Office of the Prosecutor General of Armenia told Noyan Tapan.

The officials discussed the process and results of the cooperation between their offices, as well as issues on raising the effi-

ciency of mutual communication.

Artur Davtyan thanked the Russian side for the invitation to participate in the 6th Eastern Economic Conference, expressing confidence that such events contribute to investments in economies and use of more practical mechanisms for protection of rights of investors.

Both sides highly valued the frequency of meetings between the Prosecutor Generals, which, they said, gives a new impetus to strengthening the practice of operational solving of ongoing issues, raising the mutual trust level between their offices.

The meeting also focused on issues re-

lating to ensuring peace, stability and security in the region after the 2020 Artsakh War.

Artur Davtyan thanked the Russian side for its peacekeeping mission in Artsakh, for ensuring the security of more sensitive sections of the borders of Armenia. He drew the attention of his Russian counterpart on the destabilization actions of Azerbaijan.

The necessity of implementing the requirements of the 2020 November trilateral statement, in particular those relating to the return of Armenian servicemen and other civilians who are illegally held in Azerbaijan, was discussed at the meeting.

Financial assistance provided to Artsakh following November is approaching 100 billion AMD: by another decision of the Government, additional financial assistance will be allocated to Artsakh

The Government made a decision to make redistribution and amendments in the law on "State Budget of the Republic of Armenia, 2021", amendments in the Government decision No. 2215-N of December 30, 2020, and on providing an interstate credit to the Government of the Republic of Artsakh, allocating funds to the Ministry of Labor and Social Affairs of the Republic of Armenia. The total amount of allocated funds is 13.4 billion AMD.

The Prime Minister said, "Since November 2020, our actual allocations to Artsakh are approaching 100 billion AMD. Before this allocation, we had actually spent 77 billion AMD, and 85 billion AMD had been allocated. Now we are allocating another 13 billion AMD, making the total allocations, excluding the actual expenditure, 98 billion AMD. This is an important record. Of course, we must not forget that the logic of pure support must be replaced, as soon as possible, with the logic of development, but what is being done is a necessity and vital. We are working very closely with the Government of Artsakh in this direction, so that the content of the programs should shift from the logic of assistance to the logic of development".

The Government approved the draft decision to make redistribution in the law on "State Budget of the Republic of Armenia, 2021", amendments in the Government



decision No. 2215-N of December 30, 2020, and allocating funds to the Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports of the Republic of Armenia.

It's planned to hold an amateur road cycling "Cup of the Prime Minister of the Republic of Armenia" on the 40 km long section of the Shorzha- Sevan Peninsula in 2 age groups for women and men on September 19, 2021. The total cost of the event will be about 25.7 million AMD. In total, there will be about 80 award winners. The winner of the first place will receive 1 million AMD, the second - 600 000 AMD, the third - 400 000 AMD, the 4th - 150 000 AMD, the 5th - 100 000 AMD, 6-10 - 75 000 AMD each, and the 11th-20th places - 50 000 AMD each. An exchange of views was held in connection with the holding of non-professional seasonal tournaments in Armenia, other issues related to the holding of competitions in other sports and the expansion of the circle of participants were

discussed.

The Government approved the draft decision to make redistribution and amendments in the law on "State Budget of the Republic of Armenia, 2021", amendments in the Government decision No. 2215-N of December 30, 2020, which is conditioned by the necessity to carry out capital repairs of 6 road sections in 2021. It is planned to repair 51.1 km of road, the cost of which is 7.6 billion AMD. In response to the Prime Minister's question whether the Government continues to move forward with the logic of constructing 500 km of roads annually, Deputy Prime Minister Suren Papikyan noted that in 2021 construction of another 500 km of roads will be ensured, which does not include subsidized road construction and North-South. For his part, Minister of Territorial Administration Gnel Sanosyan reported that this year construction of 200 km roads with subsidies is planned.

Referring to the issue, Nikol Pashinyan said, "I want to remind that in 2019 we set the bar of 500 km per year, where we did not count the work done with subventions and the "North-South". So the real outcome is over 500 km, and it's very important. As for subsidies, we must definitely improve the mechanism related to community budgets, which we have already agreed on".

Armenian FM, OSCE Secretary General discuss situation resulting from Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression



Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan had a telephone conversation with OSCE Secretary General Helga Maria Schmid.

Ararat Mirzoyan noted that Armenia values the role of the OSCE as a comprehensive regional organization based on the

concept of cooperative security.

Minister Mirzoyan stressed that the Armenian side is interested in deepening cooperation in all three areas of OSCE security – military, political, economic, environmental and human. In this context, the parties emphasized the importance of continuation of the cooperation with the executive bodies of the OSCE, especially within the framework of the cooperation program with Armenia.

The parties referred to the situation created by the Azerbaijani-Turkish aggression

against Artsakh. Ararat Mirzoyan stressed the need to resume the process of peaceful settlement of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict under the auspices of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

The Foreign Minister also noted that Armenia is committed to the establishment of lasting peace in the region, but the provocative actions of Azerbaijan, including the intrusion of the Azerbaijani Armed Forces into the sovereign territory of Armenia, create new sources of tension, disrupting regional security and stability.



RUSSIA -- Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov speaks at the prestigious Moscow State Institute of International Relations during the traditional opening of the school year known as "Day of Knowledge" in Moscow, September 1, 2021

Russian Foreign Minister Sergei Lavrov expressed hope on September 3 that Armenia and Turkey will normalize their relations after last year's war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

"Now that the groundwork has been laid for a political process and the unblocking of all [Armenian-Azerbaijani] transport and economic links after the end of the war there I think that it would be totally logical if our Turkish and Armenian colleagues resumed their efforts to normalize relations," Lavrov said during a youth forum in Mos-

Russia calls on Armenia, Turkey to normalize ties

cow.

"We are ready to assist in that in the most active way," he said, echoing a statement made by a Russian Foreign Ministry spokeswoman on Thursday.

Turkey has for decades made the establishment of diplomatic relations and opening of the border between the two countries conditional on a resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict acceptable to Azerbaijan. Baku claims that its victory in the six-week war stopped by a Russian-brokered ceasefire last November put an end to the conflict.

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan spoke on August 27 of "some positive signals" sent by the Turkish government of late and said his administration is ready to reciprocate them.

Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan responded by saying that Ankara is open to normalizing ties with Yerevan. But he appeared to echo Baku's demands for a

formal Armenian recognition of Azerbaijani sovereignty over Nagorno-Karabakh.

A senior Armenian pro-government lawmaker said earlier this week that Pashinyan's administration will not accept any Turkish preconditions.

Armenia and Turkey came close to normalizing bilateral relations in 2009 when their foreign ministers signed two relevant protocols in Zurich, Switzerland in the presence of Lavrov and the top U.S. and European Union diplomats.

Ankara subsequently linked their ratification by the Turkish parliament to a Karabakh settlement. As a result, Armenia's former government formally annulled the protocols in 2018.

Lavrov revealed on Friday that during the 2008-2009 Turkish-Armenian rapprochement he "warned" then Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian that the Turks will not drop their preconditions.

Armenian official rejects Turkish 'preconditions'



Armenia wants to normalize its relations with Turkey but will not accept any preconditions set by Ankara, a senior Armenian official said on August 31.

Eduard Aghajanyan, the chairman of the Armenian parliament committee on foreign relations, said Yerevan continues to believe that Turkish-Armenian relations must not be linked to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict or the 1915 Armenian genocide issue.

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan spoke on Friday of "some positive signals" sent by the Turkish government of late, saying that his administration is ready to reciprocate them.

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Commenting on Pashinyan's remark the following day, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said regional states should establish "good-neighborly relations" by recognizing each other's territorial integrity and sovereignty. "If Yerevan is ready to move in that direction Ankara could start working on a gradual normalization of relations with Armenia," he said.

In that context, Erdogan was understood to echo Azerbaijan's demands for a formal Armenian recognition of Azerbaijani sovereignty over Nagorno-Karabakh.

"We certainly welcome positive rhetoric whenever it comes from Azerbaijan and Turkey," Aghajanyan told RFE/RL's Armenian Service. "But unfortunately, Erdogan's statement contained points resembling preconditions, which do not help to launch that [normalization] process at all."

"I can't imagine ... Azerbaijan being a decisive factor in Turkish-Armenian relations as has been the case in the last 20-30 years," he said.

Aghajanyan, who is a senior member of Pashinyan's Civil Contract party, also made clear that Yerevan will not stop seeking a greater international recognition of the Armenian genocide in the Ottoman Empire for the sake of a Turkish-Armenian rapprochement.

"I think that the Turkish should also be conscious of this," he said.

Turkey completely closed its border with Armenia in 1993 and has refused to establish diplomatic relations with Yerevan since then out of solidarity with Azerbaijan. It provided Azerbaijan with decisive military support during last year's war in Nagorno-Karabakh.

Armenia needs support of intl. partners for repatriation of POWs – Justice Minister meets Head of ICRC delegation

For ensuring the return of Armenian prisoners of war and civilians held in Azerbaijan, Armenia needs the strong support of international partners and the strengthening of international pressure in this regard, Justice Minister of Armenia Karen Andreasyan said during the meeting with Thierry Ribo, Head of the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) Delegation to Armenia.

The Minister praised the ICRC mission during and after the 44-day war unleashed by Azerbaijan for visiting the Armenian POWs and civilian hostages in Azerbaijan and ensuring their communication with their families.



He shared with Thierry Ribo deep concern over the torture, inhuman and degrading treatment of Armenian captives and

hostages in Azerbaijan.

The head of the ICRC delegation presented the activities carried out by the organization in the post-war period and touched upon other issues of mutual interest.

At the request of the guest, among other issues, Karen Andreasyan referred to the reform agenda of the Ministry of Justice.

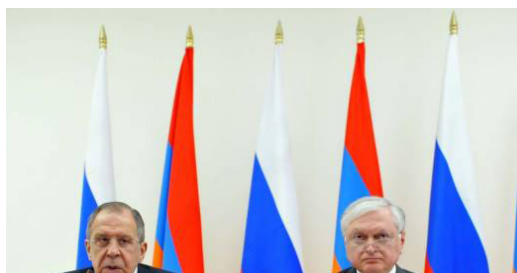
The interlocutors stressed their readiness to further deepen the existing cooperation between the two institutions.

Russian FM reveals details from signing of 2009 Zurich Protocols, note to FM Nalbandian

ARMENPRESS - Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov revealed what he had told the Armenian Foreign Minister Edward Nalbandian in 2009 ahead of the signing of the Zurich Protocols.

Lavrov was asked on the matter by a participant of the Educational Marathon. "The letter [you sent to Nalbandian] related to the signing of the protocols on normalizing relations between Armenia and Turkey. You'd written only six words in that letter. 'Edward, agree to the ceremony without statements.' And how did these six words convince your Armenian colleague to stop resisting?"

In response to the question, FM Lavrov said: "If you have looked into this topic, you ought to present the context. The context was that in 2008 our Armenian friends told us that the Turks are proposing to agree on the documents for restoring diplomatic ties, normalizing relations, cooperation and joint projects. We said that's very good and asked whether there were any preconditions. No, no preconditions. Then the matter reached the signing, it was planned to take place in Zurich, naturally



with participation of the Armenian and Turkish foreign ministers.

US Secretary of State Hilary Clinton also arrived there, the EU representative came, myself and someone else also. We were to witness this important event, but before the signing our Turkish colleagues said 'yes, we will sign it all, but we have to make a reservation over the Nagorno Karabakh issue. The text of the reservation contradicted Armenia's position.

And I said to my colleague that I had warned him that I didn't believe all that would take place without preconditions. But we were where we were. Everyone had arrived, and now a deadlock. As a result, the Turkish colleague agreed to retract that formal condition, but our Armenian col-

leagues were saying that they must make a statement where Armenia would present its position regarding the Nagorno Karabakh issue. At that time, the Turkish minister said if you make a statement, I will make a statement also.

We were sitting there watching football while the two ministers were arguing until late in the night. We understood that we have to somehow get out of that situation, and I wrote a note to him [Nalbandian] asking him not to insist on the topic of commentary [statement]. And that's how it happened. As a result, the documents were signed, but later they got lost because of the same reason that the sides had different positions around the Karabakh resolution process."

FM Lavrov added that now, when the war is over in Nagorno Karabakh, there are the bases for a political process, unblocking of transport and economic ties, and it would be reasonable for Armenia and Turkey to restart efforts in the direction of normalizing relations. He said Russia is ready to actively support this.



Minister of Finance of Armenia Tigran Khachatryan received UK Ambassador John Gallagher on September 3.

‘‘During the meeting the parties discussed the Government Program of Armenia of 2021-2026, the particularities of foreign debt of Armenia and the manageability of debt, also the introduction of the

environment for foreign investors’’, ARMENPRESS reports reads the message released by the Ministry of Finance.

Congratulating the minister on the occasion of being appointed and wishing productive work at the new position, the Ambassador informed that the UK carefully follows and highly appreciates the reforms

Minister of Finance receives UK Ambassador to Armenia John Gallagher

system of the management of public finance and reform strategy. It was specially emphasized that currently Armenia does its best for creating favorable, predictable and stable

implemented by the Government of Armenia.

The Minister wished productive work to the Ambassador for the benefit of the development of friendly relations between the two countries. Referring to cooperation in different fields Ambassador Khachatryan particularly gave importance to the continuous support of the UK Government in forming an institutional environment in Armenia, and the importance of exchange of experience in the field of management of public finances.

The opportunities of broadening the cooperation were highlighted by both sides, as well as agreed to continue dialogue on the issues on the agenda.

The UK announces £500,000 in funding to support UNDP to respond to last year’s Nagorno-Karabakh conflict

The UK has provided half a million pounds to help clear landmines in and around Nagorno-Karabakh, to make the area safe, prevent injuries and save lives following last year’s conflict.

The funds given to the United Nations Development Programme will help with training and personnel to support mine clearance and make contaminated land safe for human use in and around Nagorno-Karabakh.

As a leading force for good in the region, the UK was the first country to announce humanitarian support following the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh conflict, with £1 million donated to the International Committee of the Red Cross to support those affected.

Now the UK is calling on other countries to support the UN initiative to help thousands of people affected by the conflict to rebuild their lives and return to the region after being driven from their homes by conflict or unexploded munitions.

Minister for the European Neighbor-



Azerbaijan through the provision of training and technical demining support to those helping make the area safer. But there’s more work to be done. That’s why we’re calling on our international partners to also support the collective effort needed if we are to ensure the safety of all people in the region.’’

The funding will be used by the UN to deliver support with local and national demining organizations in Armenia and Azerbaijan including through technical, strategic and management support.

A significant number of landmines and unexploded ordnance remains across the region which poses an indiscriminate threat to life. The UK continues to encourage both Armenia and Azerbaijan to commit to sign the Ottawa Treaty that seeks to eliminate the use of landmines around the world.

hood and the Americas, Wendy Morton, said:

‘‘The territories in and around Nagorno-Karabakh are amongst some of the most heavily mined in the world, with frequent reports of civilians losing their lives or suffering life-changing injuries.

‘‘The UK’s donation will be used to harness the UN’s expertise and reduce the risk to civilian life in both Armenia and

50 Diaspora professionals join the Armenian Government



Another 50 highly qualified Diaspora Armenian professionals from 20 countries are joining the Armenian Government.

The Office of the High Commissioner for Diaspora Affairs has commenced its 2021 iGorts program, which, for the second year in a row, will allow Dias-

pora Armenian professionals to work in Armenia's state administration system. Program director Liana Simonyan introduced the new iGorts participants to the agencies where they will work. Experienced American-Armenian professional Marina Nercessian (Boston University) and Syrian-Armenian Hagop Makdis (Aleppo University) joined the Armenian Ministry of Education, Science, Culture and Sports. Estonian-Armenian Alina Ovanesso (University of Tartu) and Russian-Armenian Arevik Margaryan (Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public

Administration) will work at the Ministry of High-Tech Industry.

American-Armenian Vahe Avagyan (Columbia University) and Russian-Armenian Argishti Ginoyan (Russian Presidential Academy of National Economy and Public Administration) joined the staff of the Central Bank of Armenia.

The professionals will arrive throughout September and join in the work of about 20 state agencies. The professionals will work in those departments for one year, implementing programs and developing strategies and new ideas.

Armenia receives 27,500 doses of AstraZeneca vaccine



Armenia has received a donation of 27 500 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines from Lithuania. EU Civil Protection Mechanism was activated in order to support the transportation of the vaccine cargo, the EU Delegation to Armenia reports.

Lithuania's Ambassador to Armenia

Inga Stanytė-Toločkienė, the Chargé d'affaires a.i. at the EU Delegation to Armenia Jan Plešinger, and the RA Deputy Minister of Health Lena Nanushyan officially received the donation in the National Centre for Disease Control and Prevention.

"The donation by Lithuania and activation of the EU Civil Protection Mechanism is a very good example of Team Europe spirit, which embodies cooperation of the EU Member States' Embassies, the EU Delegation to Armenia and the Armenian authorities. On behalf of the EU Delegation, we would like to thank Lithuania for its donation and we hope it will contribute to the fight against the Covid-19 infection that is again spreading across Armenia.

Vaccination remains the most important tool in this fight and we hope trust will eventually be built within Armenian society that will help to slow down the pandemic through vaccination," said chargé d'affaires a.i. at the EU Delegation to Armenia Jan Plešinger.



The Armenian government has commented on the report published by Moody's Investors Service ("Moody's") which affirmed Armenia's Ba3 local and foreign currency long-term issuer ratings and foreign currency senior unsecured rating. The outlook remained stable.

Moody's reaffirms stable outlook of Armenia's economic growth – Finance Minister

During today's Cabinet meeting, Minister of Finance Tigran Khachatryan says given that Moody's last assessment was made in 2019, after which in 2020 Armenia's economy faced major risks because of the COVID-19 pandemic and the Artsakh War, this assessment records increase in the resistance of the country's economy to such risks.

He says that the economic policy of the Armenian government from this perspective is effective.

"This is a very important signal for in-

ternational investors because it reaffirms the stable outlook of Armenia's economic growth and the favorable economic policy of the government for investments", he said, adding that the report has a special place to matters relating to the management of the state debt.

"Although the government debt-GDP has increased in 2020, comprising 63.5%, Moody's says that it attaches importance to the Armenian government's policy to reduce this from 60% in next five years", the minister stated.

The status of Artsakh should be finally clarified on the basis of peoples' right to self-determination – Armenian PM

Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan has issued a statement on Artsakh Republic Day:

Dear compatriots,

30 years ago on this day, the people of Artsakh announced the establishment of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic through a declaration adopted by the legitimate authorities.

By that the Armenians of Artsakh confirmed their right to dispose of their life and future and live freely. That decision was reinforced through a general referendum held on December 10 of the same year. Thus, this manifestation of the will of the people, which was the result of the Karabakh movement that had began in 1988 and was based on our people's aspiration for democratization and freedom, became one of the examples of the expression of the right of nations to self-determination in the 20th century.

This was carried out in accordance with the letter and spirit of USSR legislation and constitutional law and was flawless both in its form and content.

The people of Artsakh exercised their legal right; any violence against it is directed against humanity, human civilization, natural human rights.



This was the case with the violence against the people of Artsakh immediately after the declaration of independence, the war, after which the term “Nagorno Karabakh conflict” entered the agenda of international relations. The OSCE Minsk Group was established, the three Co-chair countries of which were endowed with a mediation mission aimed at the settlement of the conflict. Unfortunately, the conflict was not resolved, the violence continued, reaching its most disgusting manifestation in 2020, unleashing war against the Republic of Artsakh which pursued the goal of resolving the conflict by force.

That war, despite all the efforts of the adversary, did not achieve its goal. Today Artsakh, though wounded, is still standing and enjoys the full support and assistance of Armenia and all Armenians.

We remember all our martyrs who fell

in the struggle for the freedom of Artsakh, and we bow to them.

The right of the people of Artsakh to self-determination is sacred. It cannot be suspended by the use of force. That is why we insist at all international platforms today that the Nagorno Karabakh conflict is not settled. This is also evidenced by the statements of the Co-chair states. The conflict is awaiting its comprehensive settlement through a peace process based on the well-known principles proposed by the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs.

As a result of the process, the status of Artsakh should be finally clarified on the basis of the right of nations to self-determination. The resumption of the peace process within the framework of the Minsk Group Co-Chairs will also be a significant factor in establishing and maintaining stability in the region.

We well understand that in the 21st century nations can not survive, be competitive, develop without favorable conditions for economic and scientific progress.

Therefore, the stability of the external environment, the lasting peace, really become imperative for all the peoples of the region.

ARF Hay Dat Office opens in Artsakh



On September 2, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Artsakh David

Dat aimed at protecting the interests of the Republic of Artsakh, recognizing the Ar-

Babayan participated in the ceremonial opening of the ARF *Hay Dat* Office in Stepanakert.

Welcoming the opening of the Office in Stepanakert, the Foreign Minister highly appreciated the multi-year activity of the *Hay*

menian Genocide, and resolving various issues of Pan-Armenian significance.

David Babayan touched upon the issues of foreign policy and current geopolitical developments, noting in this context the importance of preserving the status of Artsakh as a geopolitical subject and the process of its international recognition.

Among the pivotal preconditions for success the Minister noted the proper and coordinated work, consolidation of the Homeland-Diaspora relations, and preservation of Artsakh as one of the Pan-Armenian supreme values.



Artsakh authorities will continue to seek international recognition of the country's independence, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs said on the 30th anniversary of proclamation of the Artsakh Republic.

Thirty years ago, on September 2, 1991, a joint session of deputies of all levels of the Nagorno Karabagh Autonomous Region and the Shahumyan region proclaimed the Nagorno Karabagh Republic, laying the foundation for the creation of an independent democratic state.

The proclamation of the republic fully complied with the norms of international law and the existing at the time legislation of the USSR, which provided autonomous formations and national minorities living in compact groups with the right to independently decide their own destiny and determine their political status. The decision to create an independent state was confirmed on December 10, 1991 by free expression of the will of the people of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabagh) in a nationwide referendum.

"The adoption of the 2 September 1991 declaration on the proclamation of the republic became one of the key milestones in the struggle for national liberation of the Armenians of Artsakh, which was based on

Artsakh authorities will continue to seek international recognition of the country's independence – MFA

the aspiration of the people for self-determination, restoration of historical justice and reunification within a united Armenian state to break free from the persistent threat of physical destruction," the Foreign Ministry said in a statement.

"Against the backdrop of Azerbaijan's continued attempts to resolve the Azerbaijan-Karabagh conflict by the use or threat of force and deprive the Armenians of Artsakh of their homeland through terror, ethnic cleansing, massacres and massive human rights violations, the creation of an independent state was not only an important political step, but also a historical necessity. Global geopolitical changes in the early 1990s and growing regional tensions required decisive steps for the self-organization of the society and the formation of state institutions necessary to repel the impending armed aggression by Azerbaijan and ensure the right of the people of Artsakh to peace and development," the statement continued.

"Since its independence, the Republic of Artsakh has gone through numerous trials, including devastating wars and heavy losses. Nevertheless, neither terror and threats, nor blockade and repeated armed aggressions could break the will of the people of Artsakh and their determination to defend the independence and sovereignty, as well as to strengthen and develop

their statehood," the Ministry added.

"We are convinced that the Armenian statehood in Artsakh is the main guarantor of the preservation of national identity, dignity and ensuring a secure future, as well as a means for the people to exercise their inalienable right to determine their own political destiny," it continued.

"On this momentous occasion, we pay tribute and gratitude to those who fought for the dignity, freedom and independence of Artsakh, and bow our heads to the memory of those who sacrificed themselves in this sacred struggle. Their courage and heroism will always serve as an example of selfless service to the Homeland and dedication to a national cause," the Foreign Ministry stated.

"While remaining committed to the ideals, goals and principles of the national liberation movement, the people and the authorities of the Republic of Artsakh will continue with unwavering determination to seek international recognition of the country's independence and restoration of its territorial integrity, to strengthen and develop sovereign statehood," it concluded.

Long live the Nagorno Karabagh Republic!

Honor and glory to all fighters for freedom and independence of Artsakh!

Serbia detains North Macedonian diplomat on Armenia's request

The law enforcement bodies of Serbia have detained North Macedonian diplomat Mile Milenkovski on the basis of an international arrest warrant issued by Armenia, North Macedonian *Alsati TV* reports.

The detention took place on August 27 as Milenkovski was crossing the border point "Presevo" to enter the territory of North Macedonia. However, the news was confirmed by the country's Ministry of Foreign Affairs on Friday, September 3.

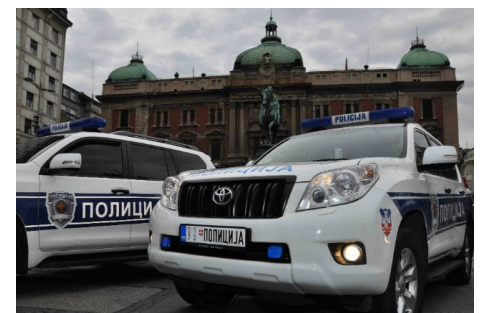
"The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia confirms that an employee of the Ministry, who is currently assigned to our OSCE Mission to Vienna, was detained in the Republic of Serbia on 27.08.2021. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Serbia has

officially has reported this to the Embassy of North Macedonia in Belgrade. According to the report, the competent court in Serbia has ordered extradition detention on the basis of an international arrest warrant for a crime he is accused of having committed during his private trip abroad," the Foreign Ministry stated.

According to the TV channel, the Serbian authorities acted in accordance with the request of the Armenian side, which is investigating the case, in which Milenkovski is one of the defendants.

At the same time, the diplomat is a relative of the former head of the country's national counterintelligence Sasho Mijalkov, who is currently serving a prison term for abuse of office.

According to Armenian law enforcement agencies, in 2018, three diplomats from North Macedonia, led by Milenkovski, helped a former Armenian government official flee the country on a private jet.



U.S. Congressional leaders stand in solidarity with Artsakh on 30th anniversary of Independence



A bipartisan group representing the Congressional Armenian Caucus joined with Armenians across the U.S. and around the world in marking the 30th anniversary of the Republic of Artsakh's (Nagorno Karabakh) independence, pledging to continue efforts to strengthen U.S.-Artsakh ties and push back against ongoing Azerbaijani and Turkish aggression, reported the Armenian National Committee of America (ANCA).

"We mark Artsakh's independence with our work, together, with our Congressional allies – advancing a targeted array of ANCA-backed legislative initiatives blocking U.S. military aid to Azerbaijan and securing U.S. humanitarian assistance to Artsakh," said ANCA Executive Director Aram Hamparian. "In particular, we look forward, in the coming days and weeks, to cooperating with our Congressional friends, coalition partners, and community activists to stop all Defense Department funding for Azerbaijan's army – through the FY22 National Defense Authorization Act."

In videos shared with the ANCA and premiered during September 2nd Artsakh Independence Day celebrations hosted by ANC International in Artsakh's capital city, Stepanakert, Members of Congress congratulated the people of Artsakh for their commitment to peace and democracy, as they continue to recover from the September, 2020 war launched by Azerbaijan, with Turkey's military backing. During the 44-day onslaught, over 5,000 Armenians were killed, more than 100,000 displaced from their ancestral homes, and hundreds

of Armenians illegally taken as prisoners of war. The Independence Day program coincided with the official opening of the Armenian National Committee of Artsakh offices.

Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs Frank Pallone (D-NJ) and David Valadao (R-CA), and Vice-Chair Adam Schiff (D-CA), were joined by Representatives Judy Chu (D-CA), Jim Costa (D-CA), Anna Eshoo (D-CA) and Rep. Jim McGovern (D-MA) in sharing powerful words of solidarity with the Artsakh people, videos and excerpts of which are provided below.

Rep. Frank Pallone (D-NJ): "I've never seen a more resilient people than the people of Artsakh, faced with all this aggression and all these problems from their neighbors around them, and I just want you to know that we in Congress remain supportive of you. We're working diligently with President Biden and his Administration with the spending bills to try to see and get as much help to Artsakh, to rebuild as possible, and also to penalize Turkey and Azerbaijan for their aggression. Also, I would like to see, ultimately, official recognition of Artsakh as a state, as a country, an engagement in an official way between the United States and Artsakh, and also really move forward with the peace process."

Rep. David Valadao (R-CA): "On September 2nd, 1991, the people of Artsakh voted overwhelmingly to stand up to ongoing Azerbaijani aggression – in a fight for freedom to determine their own destiny. [...] I visited Artsakh in 2017 and saw first-hand the dedication of its people to peace and self-determination – foundational values that the U.S. and Artsakh share. I have led efforts on the House floor to ensure expanded U.S. aid to Artsakh, to strengthen U.S.-Artsakh relations, and save lives through demining efforts. [...] I stand with the people of Artsakh and Armenia in condemning Azerbaijani aggression and will continue working with my Congressional colleagues to secure the release of Armenian POWs, zero-out mil-

itary aid to Azerbaijan, and increase U.S. assistance to Artsakh and Armenia."

Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA): "Today we come together to mark Artsakh's independence day – when 30 years ago, the brave people of Artsakh declared their independence from the Soviet Union. And while Artsakh's path has never been an easy one, the war over the past year or so has tested the people of Artsakh in unimaginable ways. Your resilience in the face of adversity is an inspiration to all of us. So, on this important day, let's rededicate ourselves to confronting the many threats to the people of Artsakh. Because independence is just the beginning of the struggle for liberation."

Rep. Judy Chu (D-CA): "Thirty years ago, in an embrace of democracy and self-determination, the people of Artsakh voted overwhelmingly for independence. Sadly, this peaceful vote was met with years of violence, including the war in the summer of 2020, that left homes and villages destroyed and claimed far too many lives. But I have been to Artsakh and I know how strong the people there are. That is why I am proud to stand with the people of Artsakh and Armenians everywhere. I am committed to ensuring the support needed, to help Artsakh not only rebuild but thrive."

Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA): "It's an honor and a great pleasure to shine light on the achievements and contributions made by the people of Artsakh. As we saw with the great American experiment, the path to freedom is never easy. However, we know that freedom and independence are worth fighting for. After three decades, Artsakh and her people have made great strides. Here in America, certainly in my home in the San Joaquin Valley, CA – the land of William Saroyan – Armenian Americans have contributed to the vibrancy and strength of our own democracy. Please know, my colleagues and I have pledged to continue to work in the U.S. Congress to ensure a free and prosperous Artsakh during these challenging times."

‘Ball is in Turkey’s court; it must take actions without expecting anything from Armenia’ – Agos daily’s Estukian

The ball in terms of the normalization of the Armenian-Turkish relations is in Turkey’s court, and it is Turkey that must take actions on this path, Editor of Armenian section of the Istanbul-based Agos daily Bagrat Estukian told Armenpress, commenting on the recent so-called exchange of “positive signals” between Yerevan and Ankara.

Mr. Estukian says at this moment Armenia has no need to negotiate and more-over sit at a bargaining table with Turkey, because Turkey has refused from establishing diplomatic relations with Armenia and it also has unilaterally closed the border. Therefore, Estukian added, Turkey must record progress on this matter, without expecting anything from the Armenian side.

“These days Erdogan [President of Turkey] is talking about a five-party agreement, meaning Armenia, Azerbaijan, Russia, Turkey and Iran, and doesn’t rule out that Georgia could be the 6th factor. Whereas, our problem is bilateral. It is the following: immediately after the independence of Armenia, Turkey, by officially

recognizing Armenia, has refused to establish diplomatic relations. Therefore, in this sense, the ball is in its court, it should take actions on this path. At the same time, citing the Artsakh war, Turkey has blocked the Armenia-Turkey land border. Here as well it should record progress without expecting anything from us, because these borders have been closed because of Turkey’s unilateral decision, not because of negotiations. Today, if the borders should reopen, it’s again Turkey’s unilateral decision. There is no material for negotiation with us. Therefore, we do not need to negotiate with Turkey or moreover, to sit around a bargaining table”, Bagrat Estukian said.

According to Estukian, what Turkey’s Erdogan has recently said about the Armenian-Turkish relations received quite a broader reaction in Armenia than in Turkey itself. Estukian notes that Erdogan’s statements that Ankara is ready to work on gradually normalizing the relations with Armenia, was not a prepared statement, but just an offhand response to the journalist’s



question.

“What President Erdogan said was not about plans. He expressed mood, and he has expressed that mood before, at the end of the 44-day war, stating that those relations in Caucasus, and of course, the Armenia-Turkey relations as well would gradually normalize. However, till now we have not seen any concrete action yet. Therefore, we have not taken into consideration that statement very seriously. It was not a discovery of any development, it was just a discovery of a mood”, Bagrat Estukian said.

Interview by Aram Sargsyan



Ambassador of the United Kingdom to Armenia John Gallagher has addressed a message over the UK’s contribution to supporting mine action in areas in and around Nagorno Karabakh.

In his message the Ambassador says that the “impact of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, particularly the loss of life and livelihoods, has been devastating for the region”.

“I am proud that the UK was the first international partner to donate to the International Committee of Red Cross humanitarian response. We gave a million

UK encourages Armenia and Azerbaijan to sign convention which commits to halting spread of landmines

pounds (660 million drams). We are currently working with the UNDP in the communities of Syunik, Vayots Dzor and Gegharkunik to provide psychological support and help create new economic opportunities for those affected by the conflict”, the Ambassador said.

He added that the UK is also committed to help in clearing up all the weapons, landmines and explosives that remain after the war, endangering lives and limiting the use of the land.

“So, I am delighted that the UK’s Minister for the European Neighborhood Wendy Morton has announced the contribution of 500,000 pounds (330 million drams) to support UNDP efforts in and around Nagorno Karabakh. We hope other

international partners will support the UN with this important work and we call on all parties to work with the UN to have a full access for the UN and other international humanitarian agencies across all areas affected by the conflict.

Our contribution also recognizes the UK’s commitments to help rid the world of landmines. That is why we firmly support the Anti-Personnel Mine Ban Convention.

The UK strongly encourages Armenia and Azerbaijan to sign this Convention, known as the Ottawa Treaty, which commits to halting the spread of landmines.

Together we can contribute to a more peaceful and prosperous future for all those affected by last year’s conflict”, the UK Ambassador said.

California Assembly panel passes resolution on sister state relationship with Armenia's Syunik



Massis Post – Assemblymember Chris Holden's resolution, ACR 105, that establishes a sister state relationship between California and the Armenian Province of Syunik – the southernmost province in Armenia, passed the Assembly Committee on Jobs, Economic Development, and the Economy on Thursday.

The resolution declares California's solidarity with Syunik and will encourage and facilitate mutually beneficial educational, economic, and cultural exchanges. The resolution is joint authored by Assemblymember Adrin Nazarian, and coauthored by Assemblymembers Lisa Calderon, Laura Friedman, Vince Fong, Jesse Gabriel, Christina Garcia, Mike Gipson, Tom Lackey, Kevin Mullin, Luz Rivas, and Senators Bob Archuleta, Andreas Borgeas, Maria Elena Durazo, Bob Hertzberg, and Anthony Portantino.

"For thousands of years, the state of

Syunik has had profound historical and cultural significance for Armenia and the world," said Assemblymember Chris Holden. "Strengthening our relationship with the Syunik comes at a critical time as regional powers like Azerbaijan and Turkey pose a threat to its existence."

"I enthusiastically thank Assemblymember Chris Holden for initiating this resolution of paramount importance," said Consul General of Armenia in Los Angeles, Ambassador Armen Bairbourtian. "The establishment of a California-Syunik Sister State relationship will develop a multidimensional partnership between the U.S. State of California and the Armenian Province of Syunik. My gratitude also goes to all the state legislators supporting the resolution."

State Senator Anthony J. Portantino (D – La Cañada Flintridge) released a statement in support of the measure.

"Today's resolution adopting the Province of Syunik as California's sister state is an important declaration of friendship and I am proud to support this endeavor. Many of my neighbors and constituents have family and friends living in Syunik. ACR 105 serves as a connecting bridge to the Province of Syunik and I am confident

the relationship will bring prosperity for both regions and facilitate mutually beneficial educational, economic, and cultural exchanges. In 2019, I introduced SB 302 to re-establish the California-Armenia Trade Office in hopes of building a vibrant business relationship between California and Armenia. Governor Newsom signed an agreement to establish the first California Trade and Services Desk in Armenia. The formal MOU between GO-Biz and Impact Hub Yerevan was signed earlier this year. The establishment of a sister state relationship is a continuation of our efforts to strengthen ties with Armenia and represents the strong bond between people of California and Armenia."

Syunik is one of the original provinces of the ancient Kingdom of Armenia and is currently bordered by Artsakh or Nagorno-Karabakh, Azerbaijan, and Iran. Syunik is home to the Armenian Stonehenge, Karahounj, that dates back to the bronze age; The Ughtasar Mountain petroglyphs that are 7,000 years old; the 9th Century Tatev Monastery that served as a center of scholastic and spiritual activity. The most populated town in the province is its capital, Kapan with 43,000 residents.

The Kingdom of the Netherlands is ready to assist Armenia in the implementation of judicial reforms.

The issues of Armenia-Netherlands's cooperation were discussed on September 6 by the Minister of Justice Karen Andreasyan and the

Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Kingdom of the Netherlands to Armenia Nico Schermers. The Ambassador was briefed on the priorities of the Ministry, and emphasizing that the Netherlands is open for all proposals.

Karen Andreasyan presented the five big dreams related to the sphere of justice,



aimed at the improvement of the Constitution, reforms, in the penitentiary and

probation systems, improvement of the judicial system through the examination of morals, reforms in the sphere of compulsory execution, digitalization of the judicial system. In this context, the Minister noted that the spheres are large, noting that it will be difficult to implement the reforms in that direction without the support of international partners. Ambassador Schermers expressed the readiness of the Netherlands to deepen cooperation in a number of areas.

15th Conference of the International Association for Armenian Studies held at the University of Halle, Germany



the Center, Prof. Dr. Armenuhi Drost-Abgaryan, in her turn, considered as not only a great honour to be the 15th host of the General Conference, but also a great gift on the eve of the birthday of the “Mesrop” Center for Armenian Studies, which is celebrated each year on September 6th. In her speech, Ms. Abgaryan stressed that despite the exist-

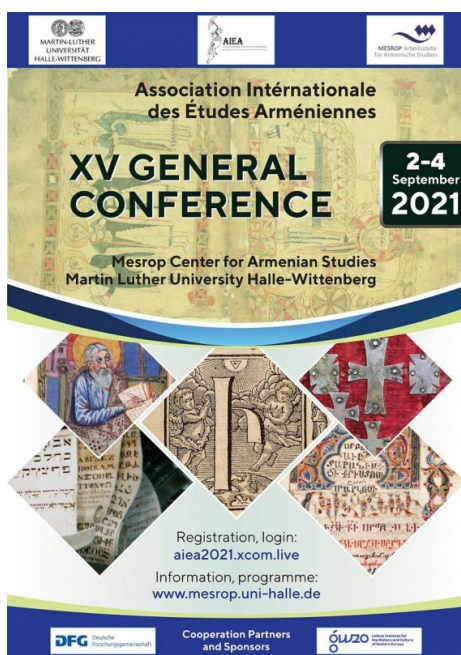
The 15th General Conference of the International Association for Armenian Studies was held at the Martin Luther University in Halle-Wittenberg, Germany, September 2-4. It was held in digital format this year due to the restrictions caused by epidemic situation, but this did not in any way hinder the involvement and unprecedented activity of a large number of participants.

During three days, about 100 representatives from 20 countries, including prominent professors and scholars, discussed current issues and challenges in various fields of Armenology. On the first day of the conference, the participants were greeted by AIEA President Valentina Calzolari, the Vice-President of the Saxony-Anhalt Parliament Wolf Gallert, Director of the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe/GWZO Christian Lubke (Leipzig), RA Ambassador to Germany Ashot Smbatyan, the Head of the MESROP Center for Armenian Studies, member of AIEA Scientific Organizing Committee Prof. Dr. Armenuhi Drost-Abgaryan (Halle).

In his speech, the RA Ambassador made a special reference to the wide geography of the conference organizers and participants, by emphasizing in this context the specifications and significance of establishing a dialogue and enhancing cooperation between states and peoples through science and culture. He, particularly, stressed the valuable activity of the “Mesrop” Center for Armenology and its long-term contribution in the development of Armenology abroad. The Head of

ing obstacles due to the current epidemic situation in the world, the conference is committed to the path it has taken and determined to pursue essential researches in the field of Armenology and facilitate the scholarly exchange.

This year the AIEA Jubilee Conference



poster and cover of the programme booklet were symbolically embellished by the Artsakh Gospels from the 12th century, the oldest Armenian manuscript in Germany, which is kept in Halle.

During the three-day sessions and lectures of the conference, Armenian and foreign scholars, leading specialists and experts in the field have made a thematic reference to the modern history of the Soviet and post-Soviet period, examination of valuable works of Armenian medieval

literature and folklore, were raised the issues related to the history of law, political science and intercultural relations. During the 3 plenary sessions the keynote lectures were given by Vahan Ter-Ghevondian (Yerevan) on the edition series of the *Matenadaran: Yesterday, Today, Tomorrow*, Vahe Tashchyan (Berlin) with his observations on the Armenian history of the Ottoman period and the preservation issues of the Armenian cultural heritage, Christina Maranci (Boston) on new evidence for wall paintings in Armenian churches, and during the 20 parallel sessions, more than 90 participants had performances on Armenology, inter alia, Michael Stone and Yana Tchekhanovets (Jerusalem) with new discoveries of Armenian inscriptions and archaeology of the Holy Land, Rubina Perroomian (Los Angeles) on the Stalin's reign of terror in Armenia and Genocide survivors' memoirs as testimony, and so forth.

In addition, it should be noted, that the study of Armenian culture took root in Germany during the epoch of Reformation, Pietism and Enlightenment, furthermore, the Armenian language became an integral part of the educational program of the Francke Foundations in Halle. This tradition is rooted in the modern era, as well, and since 2010, Armenology is part of the curriculum at the Martin Luther University Halle-Wittenberg which is unique in Germany, together with the “Mesrop” Center for Armenian Studies. Since 2021, a cooperation agreement exists between the “Mesrop” Centre for Armenian Studies and the Leibniz Institute for the History and Culture of Eastern Europe (GWZO). The aim is to strengthen Armenian Studies in Central Germany in the long term. The collaboration between the two academic institutions focuses on a mutual exchange of experience between the two cooperation partners, the organization of joint academic events, as well as, publications in the field of Armenology. For the future, an institutional consolidation of the relevant research infrastructure in Central Germany is planned.

70 representatives of Germany's tourism sector to visit various sights of Armenia



Nearly 70 representatives of Germany's tourism sector, including tour-operators, tour agencies, trade associations, air companies and news agencies, have arrived in Armenia to participate in "Fvw DRV Destination Forum" event, which is aimed at strengthening the touristic relations between Armenia and Germany. During the

press-con-

ference dedicated to the event Minister of Economy of Armenia Vahan Kerobyan thanked the representatives of the tourism sector of Germany for organizing the "Fvw DRV

Destination Forum" event in Armenia. Kerobyan stressed that such events are important for Armenia, as they move forward the tourism sphere in Armenia by one big step, helping companies operating in the field to expand their international ties and geography.

"We attach great importance to the projects implemented in the field of tourism

jointly with the "German Agency for International Cooperation" company. This four-day event shows Armenia's interest in developing the Armenian-German economic and tourism ties," Kerobyan said.

According to the Minister of Economy, tourism is one of the priority spheres for Armenia's economic development.

"It's not a secret that Germany is Armenia's major economic partner among the EU Member States. The deepening of relations with Germany is one of the key directions of Armenia's foreign economic policy, where cooperation in the field of tourism is a priority", Kerobyan emphasized.

The Minister said that the highest increase in the number of visits to Armenia from European Union countries since 2019 is from Germany.

The German guests had tour in Armenia to discover its sights and touristic potential. A business forum was held on September 2.

COVID-19 antibodies can last for at least 12 months, study says

Yerevan State Medical University after Mkhitar Heratsi has presented the preliminary results of COVID-19-related research, which has been carried out by university specialists since May 2020 in cooperation with YSMU young researchers, clinical residents, students.

A total of 8,000 tests were performed on about 1,500 patients who overcame COVID-19 infection. Participants in the research were monitored for one year on a monthly basis and continue to be monitored.

The result showed that COVID-19 is indeed a new coronavirus infection. In 6-7% of cases, no antibodies were found after the disease. However, there were cases, where antibodies remained in COVID-19 patients for more than a year.

In one case a person with antibodies caught the infection again.

Post-coronavirus brain changes were also studied. Those are mainly manifested by memory impairment, disorientation and depression.

The effects of COVID-19 on the development of neurodegenerative diseases such as Alzheimer's and Parkinson's, as well as some autoimmune diseases such as multiple sclerosis were also studied. Young people are believed to be affected.

The possible effects of COVID-19 on the

neuropsychological development of chil-



dren are being investigated. University experts are currently conducting research to identify the mechanisms of the above changes.

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