

French Speaker urges end to Azeri blockade of Artsakh



French parliament speaker Yael Braun-Pivet expressed serious concern over Azerbaijan's continuing blockade of the Lachin Corridor and reaffirmed France's support for Armenia's territorial integrity during an official visit to Yerevan on January 13.

“We are concerned because the blockade is creating a worsening humanitarian situation Braun-Pivet said after talks held with her Armenian counterpart Alen Simonyan.

“It is very important that free traffic between Armenia and Karabakh and electricity and internet connections be restored,” she told a joint news conference. “We will do everything to avoid a humanitarian catastrophe.”

French President Emmanuel Macron urged Baku to “allow free movement along the Lachin Corridor” when he phoned his Azerbaijani counterpart Ilham Aliyev late last month. According to the French readout of the call, Aliyev expressed his “intention” to do so.

However, government-backed Azerbaijani protesters have since continued to block the sole road connecting Artsakh to Armenia on ostensibly environmental grounds. Azerbaijani officials have endorsed their actions.

Later in December, the leaders of France's mainstream opposition parties said Paris should establish "humanitarian presence" in Karabakh and seek Western economic and political sanctions

against Azerbaijan.

Braun-Pivet, who is affiliated with Macron's LREM party, spoke out against unilateral French sanctions, saying that possibilities of dialogue with Baku have still not been exhausted. She also noted that France does not recognize Karabakh as an independent republic "in accordance with international law."

The speaker of the French National Assembly also said that she is visiting Armenia because she believes France “must stand alongside brotherly countries whose territorial integrity is threatened and attacked.”

“As you know, France has always been alongside Armenia to strengthen the country’s sovereignty and independence,” she said.

Welcoming the parliamentarians, Simonyan said that Yaël Braun-Pivet is the first French National Assembly President to visit Armenia, and described the visit as historic.

“We are two nations but one civilization. Our relations are friendly and warm, France is a dear country for our country and our citizens,” Simonyan said.

The Armenian side highly appreciated France's role in displaying solidarity and support to democratic Armenia and the Armenian people against the belligerent policy and aggressive actions of Azerbaijan and its ally Turkey.

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EU planning assistance team arrives in Armenia for possible new civilian monitoring mission

On January 9, the Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan held a meeting with members of the EU technical assessment team.

The team is visiting Armenia to consider the possibility of deploying a new EU civilian mission to Armenia, the foreign ministry said.

During the meeting the sides discussed the work of the EU monitoring mission which was completed on December 19, 2022. "In this context, FM Mirzoyan highly appreciated the role of the monitoring mission in strengthening stability in



the region and preventing new aggressions against Armenia and expressed readiness to continue cooperation," the foreign ministry said in readout.

Other issues of mutual interest were also discussed.

The Head of the EU delegation to Armenia Ambassador Andrea Wiktorin also participated in the meeting.

Earlier in December, when the first monitoring mission completed its work, the EU said that "...the existing EU Monitoring Mission in Georgia (EUMM Georgia) will deploy a transitional planning assistance team in Armenia to enhance the EU's awareness of the security situation, and contribute to the planning and preparation of a possible civilian CSDP mission in the country."

Armenian Parliament Speaker congratulates Kevin McCarthy for being elected US House Speaker



Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly Alen Simonyan congratulated Kevin McCarthy for being elected US House Speaker.

"Looking fwd to boost Armenia-US traditional inter-parliamentary cooperation," Simonyan said in a twitter post.

Kevin McCarthy was elected Speaker of the US House of Representatives after heated exchanges which almost saw fellow Republicans come to blows.

It took 15 rounds of voting for Mr McCarthy to win the job, despite his party having a majority in the chamber.

FM Mirzoyan briefs US Assistant Secretary of State on deteriorating situation in Artsakh



On January 10, Foreign Minister of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a telephone conversation with Karen Donfried, the

U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for European and Eurasian Affairs.

Ararat Mirzoyan briefed his counterpart on the humanitarian situation deteriorating daily since December 12, 2022 due to Azerbaijan's blockade of the Lachin Corridor – the only road connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and the world. It was emphasized that with its actions Azerbaijan grossly violates the Trilateral Statement of November 9, 2020.

The Armenian side noted that the al-

leged environmental justifications and accusations of the Azerbaijani side for blocking the Lachin Corridor are false. Minister Mirzoyan stressed that Azerbaijan is obliged to unblock the regime of the Lachin Corridor defined by the November Trilateral Statement without any preconditions.

The Foreign Minister of Armenia also presented to the interlocutor the recent developments regarding the normalization process of Armenia-Turkey relations.

New military escalation the ultimate goal of Lachin corridor blockade, Armenian PM says



The closure of the Lachin Corridor is a provocation, the ultimate goal of which is a new military escalation, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said at the government sitting on January 12.

The blockade of the corridor has been holding for 32 days now. The functioning of the only high-voltage power line supplying electricity to Artsakh was disrupted on Monday. The accident happened in a section under the control of Azerbaijan, and it has deprived the relevant structures of Artsakh and the Russian peacekeepers of the opportunity to carry out repair works.

"The disruption of energy supply to

Nagorno Karabakh has caused new problems. There are rolling blackouts, as the local power capacities are not sufficient. Kindergartens are not working at full also because of lack of proper food supplies. Workplaces are closing, further aggravating the dire social situation in Nagorno Karabakh," PM Pashinyan said.

"My assessment remains unchanged. The illegal blockade of the Lachin corridor by Azerbaijan aims at breaking the will of the people of Artsakh to live on their native land, but I believe that will is unbreakable," Pashinyan added.

He stressed that there should be a certain vision of how to overcome the situation and urged to refrain from political statements that could take the situation to a stalemate.

The Prime Minister noted that a conversation should start between Stepanakert and Baku.

"Our colleagues in Nagorno Karabakh should not give anyone an opportunity to

blame them for disrupting constructive dialogue, or making such conversation impossible," Nikol Pashinyan said.

He stressed that "the closure of the Lachin Corridor is a provocation, the ultimate goal of which is a new military escalation. Therefore, actions that are desirable for those developing a scenario of military escalation should not be implemented," Pashinyan added.

"One of the goals of the provocations and escalation is to cover the apparent need for a direct political and official conversation between Stepanakert and Baku and push it out of the agenda," PM Pashinyan said, urging to avoid steps that could contribute to the success of these provocations.

At the same time he called on the diplomatic corps to double the efforts to raise awareness about the humanitarian situation in Artsakh and make it a subject of discussion on different platforms. "Huge work has been done in this regard, but more is needed," he said.

Armenia wasn't officially offered to join Union State, but "reality isn't as simple as it seems" – PM Pashinyan



Armenia hasn't officially been offered to join the Union State between Russia and Belarus, but "reality is not as simple as it seems," Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan said at a press conference when asked whether or not Armenia was offered

to join the Union State, and if so to present a position given that the Secretary of the Security Council Armen Grigoryan said earlier that Armenia is being pressured to do so.

"If you mean an official offer, no, there's been no official offer and there couldn't be one. But unfortunately reality isn't as simple as it seems. Sometimes one has to view in depth not as much the text of issues but the subtext. We must consider the global processes. I can say that for us, generally, the sovereignty, independence and statehood of the Republic of Armenia are absolute values. And like I said previously, we consider it our duty and mission

to do everything to ensure the eternity of our state, fatherland and statehood," the PM said.

When asked to clarify whether or not any offers on the Union State we made through unofficial channels, the PM said: "It depends on what you mean by saying unofficial channel. For example, one can consider the continuously developing narrative by analysts to be an unofficial channel, unofficial contacts too."

When asked if Grigoryan was referring to these when making the comments, Pashinyan said he assumes that Grigoryan possibly meant that, among others.

Armenia will not host drills of CSTO peacekeepers in 2023

Armenia does not consider it expedient to host drills of CSTO peacekeepers, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said at a press conference on January 10.

"The Minister of Defense of the Republic of Armenia has already informed the CSTO joint staff in writing that we do not consider it appropriate to conduct such

military exercises in the Republic of Armenia in this situation. The drills will not take place in Armenia, at least this year," Pashinyan said.

The CSTO has confirmed it received information from the Ministry of Defense of Armenia about the inexpediency of holding drills on the territory of the republic

in 2023.

The CSTO is developing proposals on the possibility of conducting training on the territory of other states – members of the organization, Press Secretary of the CSTO Joint Staff Vladislav Shchegrikovich told TASS.

Armenia should not engage in negotiations with Azerbaijan on the opening of the Lachin Corridor – Alen Simonyan



Armenia should not engage in negotiations with Azerbaijan regarding the opening of the Lachin Corridor, since Armenia is not a party to the trilateral declaration of November 9, 2020 regarding the Lachin Corridor. The authorities of Artsakh have the opportunity to directly negotiate and speak directly with Azerbaijan, and they themselves deal with the problem, and Armenia will support every decision of Artsakh, the President of the National Assembly Alen Simonyan said in a briefing with journalists.

Referring to the statement of the Artsakh Security Council, in which concern was expressed regarding a number of claims and views expressed by Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan during the press conference, Simonyan said, the Artsakh Security Council, Artsakh authorities and Artsakh representatives have the opportunity to directly negotiate and speak di-

rectly.

“And not only do they have the opportunity, but they themselves are engaged in it. And as Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan mentioned during the press conference, the Republic of Armenia will support any of their positions. And, frankly speaking, it is not clear what kind of disagreement we are talking about when you are the contacting party yourself,” said Alen Simonyan.

According to the President of the National Assembly, the authorities of Artsakh are in direct contact in one way or another with the representatives of the Azerbaijani authorities, as well as with the representatives of the Russian military contingent.

“I constantly have telephone conversations with the authorities of Artsakh. At the moment, these contacts have decreased, but these contacts exist and there are people who carry out these contacts. I can say that this connection has existed for a long time. I think the authorities of Artsakh should note that Armenia has declared that it will support their every decision and will continue its efforts in the direction of solving this problem,” stressed Alen Simonyan.

To the question why Armenia does not negotiate with Azerbaijan on the Lachin Corridor issue, the President of the Na-

tional Assembly answered that if Armenia becomes a party, then it will cancel the trilateral declaration on November 9, 2020.

Simonyan does not rule out that Azerbaijan’s goal is to involve Armenia in this dialogue in order to try to force the opening of a similar corridor through the territory of Armenia.

“I assume that the Lachin corridor was closed precisely for the reason that, for example, such a corridor would be forced on us through the territory of Armenia. Why should we enter into that conversation?” said Simonyan.

According to him, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia did not participate in the trilateral meeting with Russia and Azerbaijan scheduled in December in Moscow because of the Lachin Corridor.

To the question if this means abandoning the Artsakh problem, as the opposition claims, Simonyan answered that it is absurd to give such a qualification.

“What we are doing is the maximum that Armenia can afford. Abandoning it would be leaving the cooperation somehow, but Armenia is doing everything and will continue to do everything,” concluded Simonyan.

Russia explains why UN Security Council joint statement was not adopted

Russia continues to work in direction of complete unblocking of Lachin Corridor in accordance to the 9 November 2020 trilateral statement signed between the leaders of Armenia, Azerbaijan and Russia, the Russian Foreign Ministry spokesperson Maria Zakharova said at a press briefing.

“Consistent steps are being taken by the Ministry of Internal Affairs, the Ministry of Defense and the peacekeepers in the direction of de-escalation. A solution acceptable for all parties must be found. Presently only humanitarian aid convoys are passing along the corridor,” Zakharova said.

At the same time, Zakharova said that public provocations and attacks against the



Russian peacekeepers are unacceptable for them. “That process can significantly harm the Armenian-Azerbaijani normalization,” she added.

Speaking about the United Nations Security Council not adopting a joint statement after the emergency meeting on the Lachin Corridor, Zakharova said that the

French authors of the statement ignored Russia’s proposals.

“It was emphasized that despite our constructive approach, the French authors of the document ignored the overwhelming majority of the Russian proposals. Our Western partners did not find the courage to lay out facts in the text. Particularly, to mention the trilateral statement between the leaders of Armenia, Russia and Azerbaijan, which is the fundamental pillar for the Armenian-Azerbaijani normalization. Anyhow, we will engage not in populism but rather substantial work to resolve the situation around Lachin Corridor,” Zakharova said.

MEPs say Brussels should do more over Lachin corridor



Nathalie Loiseau, a French MEP and chair of the European Parliament's Subcommittee on Security and Defense, says the blockade of Lachin Corridor is "illegal, cruel and contradictory with Baku's claims that the territory belongs to Azerbaijan."

"Which country would intentionally

prevent its own people from receiving food or medicine?" Loiseau told *POLITICO*.

She also pointed out that the EU is a major buyer of energy coming from Azerbaijan. "It makes our voice important. We mustn't shy away from defending universal values. If we don't do it, who will act?"

Markéta Gregorová, an MEP from the Greens/EFA grouping and a member of both the parliamentary delegation to Armenia and the EU-Azerbaijan Cooperation Council, told *POLITICO*: "We could play a bigger role when we are helping negotiate."

"Given we have a lot of economic and other relations with both countries, there are ways in which we can persuade them — but we aren't using these."

She added that there is a common understanding in the European Parliament that more needs to be done. "But we're a little bit dependent on what the Commission and Council decide to do."

According to Gregorová, an agreement signed between Brussels and Baku last summer to step up the import of natural gas in an effort to replace sanctioned Russian supplies has undermined the EU's ability to apply pressure. "Given the memorandum of understanding on gas from Azerbaijan, it's clear that has an impact, and the reaction has been much weaker and slower."

UK says closure of Lachin corridor risks severe humanitarian consequences

The UK Government continues to monitor the situation in Nagorno-Karabakh and on the Armenia-Azerbaijan border, Lord Ahmad, UK Minister of State for the Middle East, North Africa, South Asia and United Nations at the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office said in response to a question by Lord Alton of Liverpool.

"The UK Government has repeatedly urged the Armenian and Azerbaijani Governments to thoroughly investigate all allegations of war crimes and other atrocities in recent years. It is essential all allegations of mistreatment, abuse and summary killings are urgently and fully investigated by the appropriate authorities," he said, when



asked by Lord Alton of Liverpool about the assessment of warnings of genocide, and other atrocities, being committed against the Armenian population of Nagorno-Karabakh.

in response to a question by Baroness

Caroline Cox regarding the closure of Lachin corridor, Lord Ahmad said: "The UK Government has made clear that the closure of the Lachin corridor risks severe humanitarian consequences. Our Embassies in Baku and Yerevan continue to urge the Governments of Armenia and Azerbaijan to abide by all commitments in relation to the Lachin corridor in good faith, and to settle the remaining conflict issues as soon as possible. The UK has spoken at the Organization for Security Co-operation in Europe and at the United Nations Security Council, as well as in Baku, to urge the immediate reopening of the corridor given the risk of severe humanitarian consequences."

OSCE Chairman-in-Office "carefully following" Lachin corridor situation, announces visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan



OSCE Chairman-in-Office, Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of North Macedonia Bujar Osmani said that he is carefully following the situation around the Lachin corridor and announced that he will hold visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan.

The OSCE Chairman-in-Office held two separate telephone conversations with the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, Ararat Mirzoyan, and the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, Jeyhun Bayramov, the OSCE said in a press release.

"The conversations with the ministers focused on the situation in the South Caucasus region, with a particular emphasis on the Lachin corridor. Minister Osmani emphasized that he is carefully following the situation around the Lachin corridor. He

expressed his concerns about its effect on the daily lives of the civilian population. He called for all sides to ease tensions and engage in constructive and productive dialogue.

Chairman Osmani assessed that measures for building trust and normalizing relations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, as part of the OSCE toolkit, are key elements to overcome ongoing challenges that affect people on the ground.

In this context, OSCE Chairman-in-Office Osmani reiterated

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page 5 ➔ his readiness for personal engagement to help defuse tensions, and contribute to efforts towards sustainable peace. He also announced that he will hold subsequent separate visits to Armenia and Azerbaijan," the OSCE said.

The Lachin Corridor is blocked by Azerbaijan since 12 December 2022. The corridor is the only travel and supply route for the 120,000 Armenians of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). The blockade has caused a humanitarian crisis. Shortages of essential products such as food and medicine

prompted Nagorno Karabakh authorities to introduce rationing. Hospitals are keeping planned surgeries on hold. 1,100 residents of Nagorno Karabakh, including 270 children who were in Armenia when the road was blocked are unable to return to their homes.

We have all grounds to project at least 7% economic growth for 2023, says Armenian Prime Minister

The Armenian government is projecting 7% economic growth for 2023, Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said at a press conference when asked on the GDP of the country, if the government has data to what extent the inflow of Russian nationals contributed to the Armenian GDP in 2022, and the GDP projections for 2023 and whether or not the risks and possibilities due to the Ukrainian conflict were considered.

"The Statistical Committee is the authorized body that will publish the 2022 data. I assume it will be around 12,5-13%. It is obvious that the role of the citizens who moved from Russia to Armenia is significant. Before the well-known events we had projected 7% economic growth for



2022, but in fact it turned out more, and we are happy for that. We are forecasting again 7% growth for 2023. And we must work to ensure that growth, at least. We have dynamics in the economy, we've done sufficient steps to ensure it," Pashinyan said.

"We provided a 10-billion-dram assistance package to the high tech sector, which we believe will not only keep the

professionals who've moved to Armenia, but will also bring new inflow. We've returned 30,6 billion drams in revenue tax in the year to those who've acquired apartments. There's an ongoing construction boom now in Yerevan and elsewhere across the country, and this is highly important. And it is important that the economic growth isn't only at the expense of construction, but also services, manufacturing, liberalization of the energy market, which are very serious and institutional reforms, which in turn generate very serious economic dynamics, and we have all grounds to believe that we will ensure at least 7% economic growth in 2023," the Armenian Prime Minister said.

Turkey lifts ban on direct cargo trade with Armenia



Turkey has lifted the ban on direct

air cargo transportation from Armenia, Spokesman for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs Vahan Hunanyan says.

"The Turkish side informed us today that the ban on direct air cargo transportation has been lifted," Hunanyan said in response to media questions.

He reminded that the direct air cargo transportation between Armenia and Tur-

key was one of the agreements reached at the meeting of special representatives on July 1, 2022.

"We expect that the other agreement, the possibility for citizens of third countries to cross the land border, will also be implemented as soon as possible," the Spokesperson said.

World Bank forecasts 4.1 economic growth in Armenia in 2023

The World Bank forecasts 4.1 economic growth in Armenia in 2023. The GDP growth is expected to stand at 4.8 in 2024.

Global growth is projected to slow to its third-weakest pace in nearly three decades, overshadowed only by the 2009 and 2020 global recessions. Investment growth in emerging market and developing economies is predicted to remain below its

average rate of the past two decades. Any additional adverse shocks could push the global economy into recession.

Small states are especially vulnerable to such shocks because of their reliance on external trade and financing, limited diversification, elevated debt, and susceptibility to natural disasters. Immediate policy action is needed to bolster growth and investment, including redirecting existing

spending, such as agricultural and fuel subsidies.

	2020	2021	2022a	2023f	2024f
GDP at market prices (average 2010-19 US\$)					
Albania	-3.5	8.5	3.5	2.2	3.4
Armenia	-7.2	5.7	10.8	4.1	4.8
Azerbaijan	-4.3	5.6	4.2	2.8	2.6
Belarus	-0.9	2.6	6.2	-2.3	2.5
Bosnia and Herzegovina *	-3.1	7.5	4.0	2.5	3.0
Bulgaria	-4.0	7.6	3.1	1.7	3.3
Croatia	-6.6	13.1	6.6	0.8	3.1
Georgia	-6.8	10.4	10.0	4.0	5.0
Hungary	-4.5	7.1	5.1	0.5	2.2
Kazakhstan	-2.5	4.1	3.0	3.5	4.0
Kosovo	-5.3	10.7	3.1	3.7	4.2
Kyrgyz Republic	-8.4	3.6	5.5	3.5	4.0
Moldova	-7.4	13.9	-1.5	1.6	4.2
Montenegro	-15.3	13.0	5.9	3.4	3.1
North Macedonia	-4.7	3.9	2.1	2.4	2.7
Poland	-2.0	6.8	4.4	0.7	2.2
Romania	-3.7	5.1	4.6	2.6	4.2
Russian Federation	-2.7	4.8	-3.5	-3.3	1.6
Serbia	-0.9	7.5	2.5	2.3	3.0
Tajikistan	4.4	9.2	7.0	5.0	4.0
Tunisia	1.9	11.4	4.7	2.7	4.0
Ukraine	-3.8	3.4	-35.0	3.3	4.1
Uzbekistan	1.9	7.4	5.7	4.6	5.1

Source: World Bank

Nagorno Karabakh to issue ration stamps

The government of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh) is planning to issue ration stamps for food and other essential products amid the ongoing Azeri blockade.

Azerbaijan is keeping the Lachin Corridor blocked since December 12, 2022. The corridor is the only road connection and supply route of Artsakh with Armenia and the rest of the world.

The mechanisms for introducing the system have already been developed, the government said following a meeting chaired by State Minister Ruben Vardanyan, who heads the emergency headquarters of the government during the blockade.

The ration stamps will initially be ap-



plied for several types of essential products. The system will be introduced within several days.

After holding town hall meetings across Artsakh, the State Minister said that the meetings proved that “the hardships of the blockade did not break the people’s spirit”. He said the people have brought forward questions and issues. “Three types

of issues were raised – local issues concerning the specific settlement, general issues requiring systemic solutions, and complaints. There are also urgent issues which must be solved as a priority,” Vardanyan said, adding that most questions concerned the ration stamp system.

“The meeting also addressed the possibility of transporting severely-ill patients through the International Committee of the Red Cross - ICRC, as well as reuniting separated families with minors. Coordinated work with the ICRC was highlighted in these directions,” the government of Artsakh said in readout.

The situation in the food, medication, petroleum and diesel fuel markets, as well as ongoing work to ensure uninterrupted energy and water supply, and functioning of other infrastructures was discussed.

The situation in Artsakh pharmacies is critical

Due to the closure of the Stepanakert-Goris interstate highway (Lachin Corridor - ed.) by the Azerbaijanis, the shortage of certain types of medicines and baby food increases further in the pharmacies of Artsakh.

Shushan Nazaretyan, a pharmacist of the “Gedeon Richter” pharmacy chain operating in the capital of Artsakh, said that at the moment, there is a great demand for baby milk, baby diapers and antibiotics. “Children up to 6-7 years old need liquid antibiotics to prevent emerging infectious processes, and there are no liquid antibiotics at all. There are also no antipyretic drugs for children of the same age group. We were able to solve the problem with substitute medicines for a week or two, but they have already run out,” Nazaretyan said.

According to her, there are no drugs or



insulin syringes for diabetic patients in the network. And if this situation persists for another week, the pharmacy will be completely empty.

According to Lilit Barseghyan, pharmacologist of “Li Pharma” pharmacy, the demand for antipyretic and blood pressure drugs is high among the citizens. “The number of antibiotics is also very limited. After the blockade, we received antipyretics for children and medicines for diabetes patients three times. We also received

a limited amount of baby food. They are already running out. We hope that we will have replenishment in the next few days, for which we will be very grateful,” said Barseghyan, emphasizing that the medicines are sold at the previous prices.

According to Eleonora Grigoryan, pharmacologist, owner of “Ellen” pharmacy in Stepanakert, they had not been in such a situation for about 40 years. “The pharmacy is almost empty. Most of the citizens also need essential medicines. There is no price change. Very often, depending on the circumstances, we even provide the residents with the medicine free,” added Grigoryan.

Since December 12, Azerbaijan keeps the only highway connecting Artsakh to the world, the Lachin Corridor, closed, and citing false environmental reasons.

Azerbaijan's claims do not sound credible to anyone: Artsakh's Minister of State calls for sanctions against Baku

Azerbaijan's claims do not sound credible to anyone, because the whole world knows that nothing happens in an authoritarian country "under the responsibility of environmentalist," Artsakh's Minister of State Ruben Vardanyan said in an interview with *Swedish National Radio*.

"Can you remember how many environmental protests have taken place in Azerbaijan in the last 10 years?" he asked.

"We do not have mechanisms in Artsakh to put pressure on a country that has signed a document confirming the right to freely use the corridor, and violating it. We demand that the international community provide us with a humanitarian air corridor so that we can bring food and basic necessities. However, Azerbaijan does not allow this either. Therefore, we perceive this as a state policy, a state position that



very clearly shows that they want to get us all out of here and carry out ethnic cleansing in order to get Artsakh without Armenians," Vardanyan said.

Speaking to *Byline Times*, the State Minister presented the situation in Artsakh resulting from the blockade.

"Twenty-four days we are into this blockade," he said. "We get a little bit of food from the Red Cross and Russian

peacekeepers. But in reality, we don't have basic foodstuffs. No fruit, no vegetables. We have a little grain and meat and some milk. Other things do not exist anymore." "No cigarettes," he added meaningfully.

Vardanyan said he was among 5,000 natives of Artsakh who will be apart from their families this Christmas. "My wife and four kids planned our Christmas many months ago."

Thanks to the Azerbaijan blockade they are stranded: "For the first time in my life I am apart from my family at Christmas. Basically, we are hostages to Azerbaijan while we can't get access to the road." He called on the international community to impose sanctions if Azerbaijan persisted with the blockade.

Concrete international pressure on Azerbaijan needed to end the siege of Artsakh – FM Mirzoyan

As a landlocked developing country, Armenia is a long-standing advocate of promoting inclusive and equitable regional and cross-border connectivity in our region and beyond, which would unlock the trade and transit potential of the South Caucasus, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said in his remarks at the Voice of the South Virtual Summit-2023.

"Efficient cooperation between the landlocked and transit countries and unblocking of all regional transport communications is key to removing political barriers to the free movement of people, goods and services, particularly, in times of global recession and in terms of realization of the economic and social rights of all peoples," Minister Mirzoyan said.

"In this regard, we are interested in advancing cooperation within the framework of North-South connectivity, as well as the Persian Gulf – the Black Sea international transport corridor. Armenia considers India's potential and prospective role for these projects as quite significant," he added.

"As we speak about connectivity and free movement of people, for more than a month already the entire world has witnessed a flagrant violation of these principles:

under made-up ecological concerns, a group of Azerbaijani government agents has been blocking the Lachin corridor – the only lifeline connecting Nagorno-Karabakh to Armenia and to the rest of the world. By discrediting the global environmental agenda and violating the right to free movement, Azerbaijan keeps hostage 120,000 Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh, including 30,000 kids and several thousands of disabled persons. Because of the Azerbaijani unlawful blockade, the people of Nagorno-Karabakh today face a humanitarian catastrophe. There is an acute shortage of essential goods, food and medicine. The danger of malnutrition, especially child malnutrition is tangible. Hundreds of families left on different sides of the Azerbaijani blockade remain separated," Ararat Mirzoyan stated.

He appreciated the unequivocal calls by the international community and particularly by the majority of the UN Security Council members during the urgent meeting of the UN SC held on December 20, 2022, to end the blockade and ensure access to Nagorno-Karabakh for international organizations.

However, he added, the continuous provocations and aggressive actions of



Azerbaijan have come to demonstrate that the absence of strong and appropriate accountability measures only encourages Azerbaijan to continue testing the determination and willingness of the international community to take action.

"Currently, concrete pressure on Azerbaijan from our international partners, including G-20 members, is needed with the aim of ending the inhumane siege of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh and returning to the negotiation table," the Foreign Minister said.

"We also consider it necessary to deploy an international fact-finding mission to Nagorno-Karabakh and the Lachin Corridor to assess the humanitarian situation on the ground, as well as to ensure unhindered humanitarian access to Nagorno-Karabakh for relevant UN bodies," he concluded.

Citizens of Armenia and Georgia can now travel with ID cards: Yerevan hosts sitting of intergovernmental economic commission

The friendship of the Armenian and Georgian peoples based on common values, cultural and historical commonalities is the solid foundation of our active interaction and a reliable guarantee for the future, Armenian Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan said at the 2th session of the intergovernmental commission for economic cooperation between Armenia and Georgia.

The Prime Minister commended the level of intergovernmental relations between the two countries and added that the further expansion and deepening of relations with Georgia is one of the important priorities of Armenia's foreign policy.

He added, however, that there is clear mutual understanding on the need to expand and deepen the economic relations to identify the untapped potential and make a more effective use of the existing opportunities.

"In that regard, a significant place in the agenda of today's session of the intergovernmental commission is reserved for the promotion of mutual investments, strengthening of business ties, creation of more favorable conditions for small and medium businesses, interaction between the sectoral departments of the two countries and issues aimed at the development of joint economic programs," he said.

"As a result of the coronavirus pandemic, the economies of almost all countries suffered significant negative effects, and our countries were not spared, as a result of which the indicators of mutual trade decreased somewhat in 2020 and 2021 compared to 2019. However, in January-November 2022, the volume of trade turnover, according to RA statistics, increased almost twice compared to 2021, amounting to 759 million USD. Here, the Georgian side has published a higher

figure – 1 billion, and I am sure that you counted more correctly than we did," PM Pashinyan stated.

"I am sure that the positive dynamics of foreign trade indicators will be maintained in the following years, thanks to the growth of the economies of our countries and the development of cooperation," he added.

Noting that both Armenia and Georgia recorded double-digit economic growth in 2022, Nikol Pashinyan said "our interaction and good relationship played a very important role here."

"The priority given to the transport sector within the framework of bilateral cooperation and the cooperation in a number of international transport structures give us the opportunity to take realistic steps in the initiatives providing connection between both North-South and East-West routes. These are also issues of the strategic dimension of our discussions, which we must continuously work on," he added.

Regular passenger transportation between Armenia and Georgia is carried out both by land and by air. As for cargo transportation, it is necessary to make additional efforts and carry out joint continuous work to ensure easier movement, including through modern technological solutions. In this context, I would like to emphasize the importance of the commissioning of the new bridge named "Berekamutyun" at the Bagratashen-Sadakhlo checkpoint of the Armenian-Georgian interstate border in August last year," Pashinyan noted.

He said Armenia attaches great importance to railway transport cooperation and the expansion of multimodal transport, including the organization of sea transport.

"For Armenia, Georgia, as a transit country also has a great role in terms of reliable and safe supply of energy resources, communication and telecommunications.

In 2022, 365 million kWh of electricity was exported from the Republic of Armenia to Georgia, which is more than the exports from Armenia in the previous 10 years combined," the Prime Minister said, expressing hope that the dynamics would be maintained.

He hailed the bilateral cooperation in other fields like education and culture. "Today, the Armenian-Georgian cooperation in the field of culture is entering a qualitatively new phase, in which the status of merely perceiving each other's cultures is changing to the level of forming a unified cultural field based on the principle of cooperation, and jointly positioning ourselves in the international cultural and tourism market," he said.

He thanked the Georgian partners for the renovation of the State Armenian Drama Theater named after Petros Adamyan in Tbilisi, as well as for supporting the activities of the theater troupe.

"The tourism sector also has significant development potential in our two countries. In 2022, the number of tourists visiting Armenia was more than 1.6 million, increasing by about 90% compared to the same period last year. I am sure that mutual tourist visits between our two countries also have the potential to grow. I would like to mention that according to preliminary data, the number of visitors from Georgia to Armenia in 2022 was about 190 thousand and this number obviously has the potential to increase," PM Pashinyan said.

He attached importance to the signing of a Memorandum of Understanding between the Republic of Armenia and Georgia on reciprocal visa-free travel for citizens of both countries, which means that citizens of the two countries will be able to travel without a passport, just using ID cards.

Iran will not accept any geopolitical changes of borders in region – Speaker of Parliament

Iranian Parliament Speaker Mohammad Baqer Qalibaf reiterated Iran's stance that Iran will not allow changes of borders in the Caucasian region, IRNA reports.

Qalibaf made the comments at a meeting with his Turkish counterpart Mustafa Sentop and Azeri counterpart Sahiba Garafarova.

"We can have good relations with each other in the regional and global arena, and the closer the regional countries are the better for the region. We must not allow extra-regional countries to interfere here. We will not accept any geopolitical change on the borders [in Caucasian region]," the Iranian Speaker of Parliament said.



Humanitarian catastrophe in Artsakh a textbook example of ethnic cleansing



The humanitarian catastrophe in Artsakh is a textbook example of ethnic cleansing, Armenia's former President Armen Sarkissian writes in an article published by *TIME*.

By Dr. Armen Sarkissian

For the past five weeks, the region of Nagorno-Karabakh, sandwiched between Azerbaijan and Armenia, has been blockaded by Azerbaijan. As much of the world celebrated Christmas and New Year, over 120,000 Armenian residents of the region—the oldest continuously inhabited Armenian homeland, dotted with Armenian churches and monasteries and monuments predating the spread of Christianity to Europe by decades—were cut off from the world.

A group of Azerbaijani citizens identifying as “environmental activists” barricaded the Lachin corridor, a mountainous road that serves as the only path between Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh, since December 12. The flow of food and medicine fell to a trickle before the supplies essential for the continuation of normal life gradually disappeared altogether. A place that once received 400 tons of food and medical supplies daily now barely receives a few carloads on a good day. Hos-

pitals have indefinitely put surgeries on hold. Children are going hungry. There is an acute shortage of fuel as temperatures drop to below -4°C , and families are burning scraps to heat their homes.

Armenians, a people who endured a protracted genocide under the Ottoman Empire before being exposed to Soviet autocratic rule in the 20th century, are being subjected to collective punishment in the 21st century with the intent of driving them out of their home.

Nagorno-Karabakh, a historically Armenian territory, is known to Armenians as Artsakh. Despite its history and demography, it was handed to Soviet Azerbaijan in 1921 by Joseph Stalin, who implemented the imperial method of disrupting cohesive national and ethnic communities to keep diverse populations in check. In 1988, the people of Artsakh voted overwhelmingly in a referendum to dissolve Moscow's artificial cartography, secede from Soviet Azerbaijan and assert their Armenian identity.

This defiant act of self-determination resulted in yet more massacres of Armenians, whose wish was not honored. Upon the USSR's collapse, Artsakh ended up inside the Soviet frontiers inherited by Azerbaijan. The Armenians, however, defeated Azerbaijan in the First Nagorno-Karabakh War, which lasted until 1994, when the

region proclaimed its autonomy. Then, in 2020, at the peak of the COVID-19 pandemic, Azerbaijan launched a surprise offensive—now known as the Second Nagorno-Karabakh War—with the open involvement and assistance of Turkey.

Azerbaijan wanted the land—without the people who inhabit the land. Its battlefield gains were followed by a ruthless effort to raze all traces of Armenian history. While Armenia maintains a medieval mosque in its capital, has excellent relations with the Islamic world and welcomes people of all faiths, Azerbaijan has taken to disfiguring and destroying Armenian churches in the territory it took as a matter of policy. Hundreds of Armenian servicemen still remain in Azeri captivity.

The humanitarian catastrophe we are now witnessing—or, more accurately, the world is refusing to witness—is a textbook enactment of ethnic cleansing. More than a dozen nongovernmental organisations, including Genocide Watch, have issued a stark warning that Azerbaijan's blockade is “designed to, in the words of the Genocide Convention, deliberately inflict conditions of life calculated to bring about the end of a national, ethnic, racial or religious group in whole or in part. All 14 risk factors for atrocity crimes identified by the UN Secretary-General's Office on Genocide Prevention are now present.”

The only lifeline for Armenians in Artsakh is that slender road that connects them to Armenia.

Volunteers at home and in Armenian diaspora communities are doing all they can to help. As the former president of Armenia, I have decided to give the pension set up for me in law to humanitarian causes in Artsakh. Such efforts cannot, however, succeed in isolation. History—Armenian history—teaches us that the success of genocidal campaigns is always dependent on the silence of the world. It is time for the international community to speak up.

When Azerbaijan Opens Wide its Purse, Money-Grabbers Rush to Take Their Share

BY HARUT SASSOUNIAN, PUBLISHER, THE CALIFORNIA COURIER

Journalist Till Bruckner wrote a lengthy investigative article regarding Azerbaijan handing some of its vast petrodollars to politicians, businessmen, and universities around the world. Even prominent individuals and institutions prostitute themselves when a huge amount of money is thrown at them. Bruckner's article, "Corruptistan Azerbaijan: How to Build Yourself a Stealth Lobbyist, Azerbaijani style," was posted on the website of "Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project."

The article states: "The rise of Brenda Shaffer, a scholar and oft-quoted expert in the field of energy politics illustrates just how vulnerable the American foreign policy establishment is to manipulation by foreign agents. Supported by an overseas regime and an assorted network of overt and undercover lobbyists, she used oil money to build her academic credentials, then in turn used those credentials to promote Azerbaijan's agendas through Congressional testimony, dozens of newspaper op-eds and media appearances, countless think tank events, and even scholarly publications. She's still doing it."

When testifying before the House of Representatives' Committee on International Relations in 2001, Shaffer was introduced as "the director of the Caspian Studies Program and a post-doctoral fellow in the international security program at the Belfort [Belfer] Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government."

In her remarks, Shaffer asked Congress to repeal Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act that barred direct US aid to the government of Azerbaijan. Members of Congress did not know that "the Caspian Studies Program she headed at Harvard was set up in 1999 through a \$1 million grant from the US Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and a consortium of oil and gas companies led by Exxon, Mobil, and Chevron, all of which had commercial interests in the region. The chamber of commerce is a pro-Azerbaijan pressure group whose Board of Directors includes a vice

president of SOCAR, the Azerbaijan state-owned energy company, and top lobbyists for BP and Chevron."

The chamber issued a press release in 1999, stating that the Caspian Studies Program's aim was to "help shape informed policy," regarding Azerbaijan. The Kennedy School of Government, in its own press release, announced that Graham T. Allison, Director of Harvard's Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs, and Pres. Ilham Aliyev, then first vice president of Azerbaijan's oil company, SOCAR, would speak at its inaugural conference.

In 2000, then-President Heydar Aliyev attended an Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce event, telling the guests: "I cheer the opening of a new chair at Harvard University relating to Azerbaijan and [the] Caspian area. I am thankful for the assistance of American-Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce rendered for it." Allison, a former Assistant Secretary of Defense and Dean of Harvard's Kennedy School, was removed from the chamber's Board of Trustees after OCCRP pointed out his name.

OCCRP repeatedly asked the chamber for a copy of its financial statements, however, the chamber did not provide them, which is illegal.

The chamber listed such prominent individuals as "Henry Kissinger, Zbigniew Brzezinski, James A. Baker III, Brent Scowcroft and John Sununu" as members of its "Honorary Council of Advisors."

Shaffer "led the Caspian Studies Program until 2005. During her tenure, she wrote 14 op-eds for leading U.S. and Israeli newspapers including the International Herald Tribune and the Jerusalem Post. Most called on American policy makers to pay more attention to the region. One exhorted the United States to stop funding for the disputed Nagorno-Karabakh." In May 2006, journalist and lobbying expert Ken Silverstein wrote an article titled, "Academics for Hire," in Harper's Magazine, accusing prominent academics of performing "intellectual acrobatics on behalf of the [Caspian] region's rulers." He singled out Shaffer for especially harsh criticism.

Silverstein accused Harvard's Caspian

Studies Program of lacking "intellectual integrity," highlighting its connection with Azerbaijan Chamber of Commerce and specifically pointed out "Shaffer's 2001 plea to Congress to repeal sanctions against Azerbaijan."

Silverstein cautioned in his article: "Caspian watchers beware: the next time you see or hear an 'independent' American expert talking about how the region's rulers are implementing bold reforms, check the expert's credentials to see just how independent he or she truly is."

Bruckner wrote: The following month, "the International Herald Tribune ran its third Shaffer op-ed, about ethnic Azerbaijanis and other minorities in Iran." Since then, Silverstein outed her as an "academic for hire whose career was fueled by Azerbaijani lobbying outfits and Western oil companies invested in Azerbaijan."

Bruckner complained to the editors of the New York Times, Washington Post, Reuters, Bloomberg, Foreign Affairs Journal, and Wall Street Journal for publishing Shaffer's op-ed articles without disclosing her connections to Azerbaijan.

Shaffer also frequently participated in think tank panel discussions. Two days after Azerbaijan's 2013 fraudulent presidential election, Shaffer spoke at Carnegie Endowment for International Affairs, praising the repressive country's "vibrant press," its fierce political debates, and its "realistic" voters!

"During December 2014 alone, Shaffer appeared on TV screens via Fox Business and Al Jazeera America, and commented on energy issues in print via the Jerusalem Post, London Times, The Australian, NPR, and Foreign Policy magazine. (Only weeks earlier, Foreign Policy itself had run a piece on Azerbaijan's lobbying efforts by a different author that mentioned Shaffer's SOCAR connection)," wrote Bruckner.

It is shameful that think tanks, universities, and politicians eagerly take the money offered to them by Azerbaijan, thereby encouraging the repressive regime to continue giving large sums to cover up its human rights violations.

Over 1000 jobs cut, businesses closing during blockade - official

More than 1000 jobs were cut, businesses are temporarily shut down during the ongoing Azeri blockade of Artsakh, the State Minister's Advisor Mesrop Arakelyan said.

He said the government is planning relief programs for heavily affected sectors, as well as reforms of the economic structure.

Arakelyan said that the economic structure of Artsakh changed significantly after the 2020 war. New spending made in 2021-2022 led to numerous budgetary and economic issues. The 2023 state budget, which was approved before the blockade, outlined approximately 50 billion drams in revenues. "But since the first day of the blockade it was obvious that we can't have that level of revenues. And during this one month many sectors and companies are unable to work, which not only leads to significant drop in tax revenues but also job cuts. Regrettably, over 1000 jobs have been cut and businesses are temporarily shutting down," Arakelyan said.

The Lachin Corridor is blocked by Azerbaijan since 12 December 2022. The



corridor is the only travel and supply route for the 120,000 Armenians of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh). The blockade has caused a humanitarian crisis. Shortages of essential products such as food and medicine prompted Nagorno Karabakh authorities to introduce rationing. Hospitals are keeping planned surgeries on hold. 1,100 residents

of Nagorno Karabakh, including 270 children who were in Armenia when the road was blocked are unable to return to their homes. Furthermore, Azerbaijan has barred repair crews from accessing the area where the only high-voltage power line supplying Artsakh with electricity from Armenia was damaged on January 9.

Diplomatic Courier: Armenian ex-President's book on "Small States" among 15 books to look forward to in 2023

The Diplomatic Courier has listed Armenian ex-President Armen Sarkissian's upcoming book in the list of 15 books to look forward to in 2023.

In the book "The Small States Club: How Small Smart States Can Save the World" Armen Sarkissian explores how comparably tiny political entities punch well above their weight on the international stage, arguing that smallness is a strength.

Sarkissian's book is said to be part-memoir and part-homage to Armenia, a country very much on my list of places to visit in the coming years.

The former President of Armenia argues that small states can navigate the complex challenges of the twenty-first century in smarter ways than 'greater' powers. For smallness – often regarded as a weakness – can be a strength. It may induce insecurity in states, but also endows them

with an instinct for survival. Large states are ponderous; small states can be agile and adaptive.

Drawing on his deep experience as a scientist, businessman, diplomat and head of state, Sarkissian offers captivating portraits of small states, from Africa to Europe to Asia, that have overcome seemingly insuperable odds to establish themselves as oases of political stability, cultural tolerance, technological innovation, financial prudence and scientific research. Sarkissian returns to the uncertain beginnings of these small states to demystify their improbable rise. Along the way, he introduces us to a cast of tenacious leaders with a knack for converting crisis into opportunity.

Sarkissian ends with a poignant homage to his motherland. Part memoir, part manifesto, it is a stirring insight into the

world's oldest Christian country, which is at once an ancient civilization, a small state and a global nation.

Armen Sarkissian PhD is a world-renowned theoretical physicist, diplomat, politician and businessman. Armenia's former president (2018-22) and prime minister (1996-7), he has served as head of the University of Cambridge's Eurasia Centre, and held top positions at Harvard and Chicago Universities, the University of London and the World Economic Forum.



India could modify Armenia's SU-30SM fighter jets to carry BrahMos supersonic cruise missile and Astra BRAAM – Forbes

Armenia could request Indian expertise and systems to improve the four SU-30SM fighter aircraft of the Armenian Air Force, because India has an enormous fleet of the “Flankers”, according to an article in *Forbes* magazine.

“Rumor has it that Armenia is “keen” on having India supply weapons and train fighter pilots for its Russian-built Su-30SM Flanker fighter jets,” *Forbes* reported citing an [article](#) by IDRW.

Aside from operating such a large number of these fighters for 20 years, India has also acquired and developed formidable non-Russian armaments for them.

“What makes the Indian Su-30MKI different from the Flankers operated across the world is that it is a beautiful integration of various weapons, sensors, and avionics



from all over the world,” an ace Indian fighter pilot told local media in January.

These missiles notably include an air-launched version of the indigenous BrahMos supersonic cruise missile, giving the Su-30MKI a substantive standoff capability, and the Astra beyond-visual-range air-to-air missile (BRAAM), *Forbes* reports.

Indian engineers could modify the Ar-

menian aircraft to carry the Astra and even the BrahMos, according to the article.

“Defense ties between India and Armenia have noticeably increased in recent months. Yerevan became the first foreign customer for the Indian-built Pinaka multiple-launch rocket system (MLRS) when it ordered four batteries for an estimated \$250 million in 2022. Furthermore, the

two countries are concerned about growing trilateral military ties between Turkey, Azerbaijan, and Pakistan. Therefore, it would make sense if they cooperate to improve Armenia’s Su-30 fleet,” noted Paul Iddon for *Forbes*. He added however, that, “any Armenian acquisition of additional Su-30s could spur Azerbaijan to respond by acquiring modern fighters.”

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Forbes lists Armenia among 50 best places to visit in 2023

Forbes has listed Armenia among the the 50 best places to travel In 2023.

“Armenia is a beautiful country with a rich history and culture. It’s home to stunning landscapes, including the Caucasus Mountains and Lake Sevan, as well as many ancient architectural wonders, such as the Temple of Garni and the Monastery of Haghpat—some of which are recognized by UNESCO. And if you’re big into the outdoors, you can enjoy nearly as much



hiking as your heart desires on the 861 ki-

lometers (535 miles) of the [Transcaucasian Trail](#) that runs through Armenia,” Caroline Lupini writes.

It’s noted that the country is also known for its delicious cuisine, which features a variety of fresh herbs and spices. “If you’re into food, don’t miss the Armenian specialties of khash (a rich bone-broth), dolma (stuffed grape leaves), manti (baked dumplings) and, of course, homemade pickles with every meal.”

Bilzerian brothers to host charity poker tournament for Children of Armenia Fund

Poker players from across the country will gather in Las Vegas on February 11 for a Charity Poker Tournament hosted by Adam and Dan Bilzerian in support of the Children of Armenia Fund, [Asbarez](#) reports.

All proceeds will go towards COAF’s work in rural Armenia, including the establishment of a Child & Family Center, which will be named in honor of the tournament’s winner. COAF’s CFCs offer children and families access to early childhood education, speech therapy, and psychosocial services, bridging the resource gap in rural communities. In 2022, the Bilzerian Foundation established a Child & Family Center in the village of Karakert, providing critical support for 5+ communities in the Armavir region.

“We are so grateful for the support demonstrated by the Bilzerian family,” says COAF Senior Director of Development, Haig Boyadjian. “Paul Bilzerian, and his sons Adam and Dan, are proud of their Armenian heritage and feel strongly about making a lasting impact for generations of Armenia’s children.”

In their quest to uplift their ancestral homeland and her people, Dan and Adam Bilzerian are determined to find new, compelling ways to bring attention to the plight of Armenians, particularly as Artsakh continues to face the stranglehold of Azerbaijan’s blockade. World-renowned poker players and businessmen, the brothers are using their influence on social media and with their family foundation to support nonprofit work in Armenia.

By partnering with COAF to host a Poker Tournament, the Bilzerian brothers are raising COAF’s visibility within their community. Both brothers will play in the Charity Tournament, giving guests the opportunity to go head-to-head with globally ranked players, within the exclusive atmosphere of Dan Bilzerian’s estate. “Our family looks forward to hosting a fun and profitable event benefiting a very worthy cause,” says Dan Bilzerian.

The deadline to register for the Bilzerian Foundation’s Charity Poker Tournament is February 1. Interested individuals are strongly encouraged to register early and [online](#), as space is limited and the

event is expected to sell out quickly.

The Children of Armenia Fund is a non-profit, non-governmental organization that employs community-led approaches aimed at improving the quality of life in rural Armenia, with a particular focus on children and youth. COAF’s target development areas are education, healthcare, social and economic development. COAF launched its programs in 2004, starting in one village and expanding to 66 villages in Armavir, Aragatsotn, Lori, Gegharkunik, Shirak, and Tavush regions, impacting more than 107,000 beneficiaries and invested more than \$70 million in rural Armenia.



Rosa Linn shines spotlight on Artsakh blockade

Rosa Linn brought her Eurovision-worthy songwriting to the iHeartRadio ALTer EGO presented by Capital One. On Saturday, January 14th, Linn joined an iconic lineup of some of the biggest names in Alternative Rock as they gathered for a night of music at the Kia Forum in Los Angeles, [iHeartRadio](#) informs.

Linn started her set by showing off her impressive vocal range with the song, “Hallelujah.” For her next song, Linn sang



“Choices” before introducing herself as “Rosa Linn from Armenia” and revealing to the crowd it was “such a dream to be

here.”

For her final song, Linn busted out the breakthrough single that landed her in the Eurovision Song Contest 2022, representing Armenia, and kick started her career.

Rosa Linn took the opportunity to take her stance against the ongoing blockade of Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh by donning a jacket that read “Stop The Blockade” and holding the Armenian flag high up high as she belted her final notes.

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Armenian Identity Card

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

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

The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID)

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

- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) worldwide network enables cardholders to elect and get elected to the leadership of The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) network structures.
- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can benefit from the possibility of discounts intended for HyeID cardholders when shopping for products and services in various countries of the world.
- The Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) cardholders can participate in queries and referenda initiated by the HyeID network and vote on issues of national interest to Armenians.
- Ensure the security

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

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