Armenia-US Strategic Dialogue: Further strengthening of bilateral economic cooperation discussed in Yerevan



Within the framework of the Armenia-US Strategic Dialogue, the meeting of the working group on economy and energy was held under the co-chairmanship of Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia Paruyr Hovhannisyan and U.S. Assistant Secretary of Commerce for Global Markets Arun Venkataraman.

Participating in the meeting were representatives of state institutions, including the Foreign Ministry, Ministry of High-Tech Industry, Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure, Ministry of Economy from the Armenian side and representatives of the Department of Commerce and Department of State from the American side.

Deputy Foreign Minister Paruyr Hovhannisyan highly appreciated the Armenia-U.S. partnership anchored on common democratic values, human rights and the rule of law. The further strengthening of Armenia-U.S. cooperation aimed at promoting prosperity and ensuring stability and peace in the region was emphasized.

During the meeting, the possibilities of deepening cooperation in the fields of trade, investment, energy and high technologies, improvement of business regulations, and implementation of joint projects were discussed. The parties outlined the priorities of further work and further steps in this regard.

PM Pashinyan receives the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia Speaker of Parliament apologizes for losing temper while confronted by heckler

Armenia plans to participate in US-led KFOR and Saber Junction military exercises in Europe

Cyprus Parliament adopts resolution condemning Azerbaijan

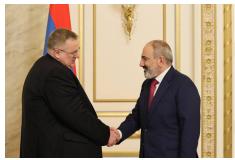
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PM Pashinyan receives the Deputy Prime Minister of Russia



Prime Minister of Armenia Nikol Pashinyan received Deputy Prime Minister of the Russian Federation Alexey Overchuk on April 4. Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Mher Grigoryan also participated in the meeting; Noyan Tapan was informed from the Office of the Prime Minister.

In his speech, Prime Minister Pashinvan noted.

"Dear Alexey Logvinovich,

I welcome you and I am very happy for our meeting.

I must note with satisfaction that we

have a high intensity of contacts between the representatives of the Republic of Armenia and the Russian Federation, but despite this, there is a need for more dynamic contacts, because our agenda is so full that it is not always possible to cover all issues.

I am sure that today we will discuss a wide range of issues: economic and political issues, issues related to the regional and international situation. It is always a pleasure for me to meet you and have the opportunity to discuss all these issues. Welcome":

The Deputy Prime Minister of Russia said,

"Dear Nikol Vovaevich,

Thank you very much: I am also very pleased to meet with you and discuss the issues of our bilateral agenda. First of all, I would like to mention the strategic nature of the relations between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Armenia. Of course, these are relations that have been built to their current form over the past 30 years, but in fact have a centuries-old history and have more than once faced various challenges, including economic crises, changes in the global trade and economic system.

Despite this, we continue to strengthen our cooperation in the economic sphere, and last year we had very good indicators of mutual trade turnover growth. Investments from Russia to Armenia are also in good progress. We are really happy with the success recorded by the economy of Armenia as a part of the large economy of the Eurasian Economic Union and the advantages that the Union provides are certainly visible."

The interlocutors discussed issues related to the Armenian-Russian cooperation agenda. Trade and economic relations and other topics of mutual interest were discussed.

Armenian, Italian Foreign Ministries hold political consultations

On April 4, the Foreign Ministries of Armenia Italy held political consultations in Yerevan. The consultations were headed by Paruyr Hovhannisyan, Deputy Foreign Minister of Armenia, and Edmondo Cirielli, Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy.

The parties discussed the results of the last consultations held in Rome in February and commended the high level political dialogue between the two countries. A wide range of bilateral issues were

discussed, including the ways of expanding economic ties between Armenia and Italy, as well as cooperation in cultural, educational, scientific and a number of other fields. The sides also touched upon the multilateral cooperation, including the enhanced Armenia-EU partnership.

Paruyr Hovhannisyan briefed his Italian counterpart upon the current challenges in the region and Armenia's ongoing efforts to establish peace. Touching upon the recent aggressive actions of

Azerbaijan and the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh due to the illegal blockade of the Lachin corridor, the Deputy Minister noted that Azerbaijan's attitude is aimed at completely disrupting efforts to establish stability and peace in the South Caucasus. In this context, he stressed the importance of implementing the decision of the International Court of Justice of February 22 and emphasized the imperative of sending an international fact-finding mission to the Lachin corridor.

Armenia, Romania keen to develop bilateral ties based on historical and cultural commonalities

On April 3 in Bucharest the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan met with Vasile-Daniel Suciu, the Vice-Chairman of the Chamber of Deputies of Romania.

The interlocutors discussed issues of activation of parliamentary ties between the two countries and the organization of regular visits. Both sides emphasized the importance of developing cooperation between Armenia and Romania based on the historical and cultural commonalities between the two peoples and the existing potential.

After the meeting, Ararat Mirzoyan and

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Vasile-Daniel Suciu took part in the opening ceremony of the exhibition dedicated to the famous Romanian figure of Armenian descent, general Hakob Zadik (Iacob Zadik), held in the Chamber of Deputies. During the event, Varuzhan Pambukchyan, a Member of the Parliament of Romania, Chairman of the Group of National Minorities, and Varuzhan Voskanvan, First Vice-President of the Writers' Union of Romania, Chairman of the Union of Armenians of Romania, gave remarks. The contribution of representatives of the Romanian-Armenian community to the socio-political, scientific, educational and

cultural life of Romania during different periods of time was highlighted, one of the vivid examples of which is the activity of General Hakob Zadik, who was honored by Romania and other countries.

On December 16, 2019, during the solemn reception held in the Chamber of Deputies of Romania on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the Union of Armenians of Romania, the latter, as a sign of centuries-old Armenian-Romanian friendship, donated a khachkar (cross-stone) to the Romanian Parliament, which is installed in one of the halls of the Parliament.





Border guards deployment locations on Armenian-Azerbaijani border partially clarified



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan reported "certain improvement" of the situation as a result of clarifications of the Armenian and Azerbaijani border guards' deployment locations in the Tegh-Kornidzor section.

He said that the locations of deployment in 7 out of 12km are clarified, while

work is still ongoing for the other 5km.

The Lachin Corridor is being rerouted due to the opening of the Kornidzor-Tegh road – which is connecting Armenia to the Lachin Corridor. As a result, the Armenian border guards must assume the protection of the 12km section of the Armenia-Azerbaijani border. No direct border protection was carried out in that area neither by Armenia nor Azerbaijan in accordance with a previous agreement on ensuring the temporary route of the Lachin Corridor.

"And as you know, during the assumption of direct border protection some problems emerged, which the NSS informed about, stressing that misinterpretation of maps took place during the deployment of the two sides. In some

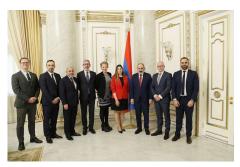
areas, by our assessment, the Azerbaijani side deployed and conducted engineering works some 100 to 300 meters deep into territory of Armenia. After that, an agreement was reached for cartographers of both sides to clarify the situation. During that time, work has been implemented for clarifying the deployment locations of the border guards. And the situation has improved to some extent. In particular, the deployment locations in 7km of the 12km are clarified, while the work on the other 5km is still in progress," Pashinyan said.

He reiterated that the Armenian government's position remains that of avoiding an escalation. Pashinyan expressed hope that the adjustment work will be carried out in a constructive atmosphere.

Nikol Pashinyan discussed the cooperation agenda with the members of the Swedish Parliament

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received on April 4 the deputies of the Sweden-Armenia friendship group of the Swedish Parliament, headed by Björn Söder, the leader of the group.

Welcoming the visit of the Swedish parliamentary delegation to Armenia, the Prime Minister noted that the two countries have dynamically developing relations, and Sweden, as a member of the EU, is an essential partner for Armenia. Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the importance of Sweden's support to the RA reform agenda and strengthening of democracy and noted the role of inter-parliamentary cooperation in deepening bilateral ties.



Björn Söder thanked the Prime Minister for the high evaluation and noted that Sweden is also interested in developing a partnership with Armenia. Introducing the delegation members, he considered the contacts with the Armenian partners effective and shared the details of their visit.

Issues related to cooperation within

the framework of partnership with the European Union were discussed at the meeting.

Thoughts were exchanged on regional developments and security challenges. In this context, the role of the long-term observation mission of the EU has been emphasized on both sides. The need for continuous efforts by the international community was noted to ensure stability and peace in the region.

The deputies of the Sweden-Armenia friendship group reaffirmed support for democratic reforms in Armenia and noted that Sweden would continue to contribute to that process.

Armenia plans to participate in US-led KFOR and Saber Junction military exercises in Europe

On April 6, the United States Department of Defense reported on its website that Armenia will participate in the upcoming U.S.-led Defender 2023 multinational military exercises. However, shortly afterwards the report was edited and Armenia was removed from the list of participating nations.

ARMENPRESS asked Defense Ministry

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spokesperson Aram Torosyan to comment.

ARMENPRESS: The United States Department of Defense reported on its website that Armenia will participate in the upcoming U.S.-led Defender 2023 multinational military exercises. However, shortly afterwards the report was edited and Armenia was removed from the list of participating nations. After all, is the

Armenian military going to participate in these exercises?

Torosyan: This year, the Armenian Ministry of Defense is planning to participate in two other military exercises organized by the US army command in Europe – KFOR (Kosovo Force) and Saber Junction military exercises.





The dates of possible deployment of CSTO peacekeepers in Armenia depend on the Armenian side. Zakharova



The dates of possible deployment of CSTO peacekeepers in Armenia depends on the Armenian side, ARMENPRESS reports, Maria Zakharova, the official representative of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation, announced during a briefing, talking about the possibility of sending a CSTO mission to Armenia. She said that "the ball is in Yerevan's court".

Zakharova recalled the statement of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that Russia is satisfied with Armenia's continued interest in receiving CSTO peace-keepers. Moscow is convinced that this step will contribute to the stabilization of the situation in the region. Both Russia and other allies are ready for it.

Zakharova recalled the statement of Russian Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov that Russia is satisfied with Armenia's continued interest in receiving CSTO peace-keepers. Moscow is convinced that this step will contribute to the stabilization of the situation in the region. Both Russia and other allies are ready for it.

"Such decisions are coordinated and adopted in the CSTO and approved at a high level. When the Armenian partners are ready, the parties will be able to return to the work of strengthening the specific types of the observation mission of the organization," she said.

According to Zakharova, the ball is in Yerevan's court.

Armenian FM Ararat Mirzoyan said during a joint press conference with his Russian counterpart in Moscow on March 20 that the draft decision to send a CSTO mission is on the table, and work on the draft continues. At the same time, Yerevan expects a political assessment from its partners regarding Azerbaijan's September aggression. In his turn, Sergey Lavrov stated that the possibility of sending a mission still exists, the CSTO is absolutely ready.

Senior MP comments on CSTO document on deployment of mission

Armenia never rejected the deployment of a CSTO monitoring mission on its territory, but the document envisaging the deployment is still in the phase of amendments, the Chairman of the Parliamentary Committee on Foreign Affairs MP Sargis Khandanyan told reporters.

"Armenia never rejected the deployment of a CSTO monitoring mission, but the document envisaging the deployment is still in the phase of amendments. And it is important for the records to be made,



which we believe would objectively present what actually happened against the

sovereign territory of Armenia. Naturally, without accepting this and without assessing the situation in detail, it will be difficult to imagine what kind of a mission and in what territory the mission is to be conducted," Khandanyan said.

"And when Armenia will consider the draft document in a given stage to match Yerevan's position and desires, that's when it will be possible to speak about the deployment of a CSTO monitoring mission," he added.

Speaker of Parliament apologizes for losing temper while confronted by heckler



Speaker of Parliament Alen Simonyan on April 6 apologized to all citizens of Armenia for spitting at a heckler in downtown Yerevan for being called a "traitor."

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"First of all I'd like to thank everyone who supported me during these days and I want to close this topic once and for all, to not allow such everyday topic to continue being circulated alongside the serious issues facing our country.

Indeed, democracy implies that an official must and can be criticized, and why not, provocations could also take place. We must not give in to them. I regret that I lost my temper from the personal insult against me. I am sure that any Armenian with dignity would not have tolerated such

an insult, however the high responsibility carried by an elected official must have a restraining role. This is also a lesson for me, because most probably, my team members and I will face such situations in the future as well. This is also a proper occasion for the opposition to revise its rhetoric, its tactic of delivering personal insults and to return to the framework of civilized debate. On this given incident I'd like to apologize to all citizens of the Republic of Armenia," Simonyan said in a statement.





Cyprus Parliament adopts resolution condemning Azerbaijan

The Parliament of Cyprus has unanimously adopted a resolution condemning Azerbaijan and urging the latter to immediately reopen the Lachin corridor, the Armenian National Committee of Cyprus informs.

The resolution was presented for consideration by ARF Cyprus committee and the Armenian National Committee of Cyprus in cooperation with

the Representative of the Armenian Community. The document was discussed and



adopted at the plenary session on April 6. The Armenian National Committee of Cyprus thanks the parliamentary parties of Cyprus and reaffirms its commitment to continue working on the protection of the international interests of Armenia and Artsakh.

The committee is convinced that it will be possible to overcome the Turkish-Azerbaijani expansionist ambitions and geopolitical challenges by uniting nationwide efforts and ensur-

ing the support of various circles of the international community.

Armenian, Danish Foreign Ministries hold political consultations



On April 5, political consultations between the Ministries of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia and the Kingdom of Denmark were held in Copenhagen. The Armenian delegation was headed by Ara Margarian, Director of the European Department of the MFA of Armenia, and the Danish delegation was headed by Anders Tang Friborg, Political Director of the MFA of Denmark.

During the consultations, the parties discussed a wide range of issues of the Armenian-Danish bilateral political agenda and emphasized the need to intensify high-level political dialogue, trade and economic ties. The parties touched upon the Armenia-EU partnership, the implementation of the Comprehensive and Enhanced Partnership Agreement (CEPA), and the reform agenda of Armenia.

The parties exchanged views on a number of issues on the international and regional agenda. They also touched upon the importance of continuous cooperation on multilateral platforms.

The Director of the European Department presented the difficult security situation in the South Caucasus and Armenia's ongoing efforts to establish peace. Touching upon the recent aggressive actions of Azerbaijan and the humanitarian crisis in Nagorno-Karabakh due to the illegal blockade of the Lachin corridor, he noted that Azerbaijan's actions are aimed at disrupting efforts to establish peace in the region. In this context, Ara Margarian stressed the importance of implementing the decision of the International Court of Justice of February 22 and emphasized the imperative of sending an international fact-finding mission to the Lachin corridor.

Preparatory work under way: Chief of Revenue Committee on possible opening of Margara checkpoint on Armenia-Turkey border



The State Revenue Committee, in cooperation with other state bodies, is preparing for the opening of the Margara checkpoint on the Armenian-Turkish border when a final decision is made, Head of the State Revenue Committee Rustam Badasyan told reporters after the government sitting.

"We are carrying out preparatory work to ensure that customs procedures are smoothly implemented at the border crossing point," Badasyan said, commenting on the possible opening of the border.

Armenia and Turkey have reached

agreement to open the land border for nationals of third countries and diplomatic passport holders. The commitment of the parties was confirmed during the meeting between Armenian and Foreign Ministers Ararat Mirzoyan and Mevlut Cavusoglu in Ankara.

Armenia delivered 200 tons of humanitarian aid to Turkey through Margara Bridge in the aftermaths of the devastating earthquake, marking the first time the border was opened for the past 30 years.

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Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures visits Georgia, Armenian-Georgian Business Forum on agenda

Armenian Minister of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures Gnel Sanosyan is leading a delegation to Georgia on a three-day visit to discuss bilateral cooperation and participate in an Armenian-Georgian Business Forum.

During the visit Sanosyan met with the Georgian Minister of Regional Development and Infrastructures Irakli Karseladze.

Karseladze highlighted the consistent development of the good-neighborly



relations with Armenia and reiterated readiness to work closely with Sanosyan to further deepen bilateral cooperation, the ministry said in readout.

The sides exchanged views on road construction and infrastructure development, as well as exchange of experience in de-centralized format and possibilities for deepening cooperation.

A memorandum of understanding on cooperation was signed between the ministries.

Digital economy is transforming our lifestyle – Central Bank governor at Doing Digital Forum



Digital economy is changing the lifestyle of people and the ways of doing business, the Governor of the Central Bank Martin Galstvan said at the first Doing Digital Forum in Yerevan organized by SPRING PR with support from Ameriabank.

"We hope that the rapid technological breakthroughs will allow our society to become more productive and prosperous. There is some caution because it could take away jobs and the whole world from us. Overcontrolling people could lead to the application of sophisticated tools without proper validation of capabilities. If this isn't properly controlled it will have horrific consequences of distribution because only a few will be able to make use of the technological advance," he said.

Galstyan said the Central Bank focuses on three main areas - cooperation with the private sector, creation of infrastructures and data.

He added that Armenia is making investments in cybersecurity capacity.

Galstyan said that the transforming analytical and innovative solutions are the way for advance for them. He said they want to ensure more citizens

benefiting from a more digital and sustainable economy.

The governor of the cenbank described the forum as a great opportunity to speak about digital and technological issues.

Deputy Prime Minister of Armenia Mher Grigoryan also delivered remarks.

"It is commendable that such platforms are guided by the private sector and the professional community," Grigoryan said. "The digital future must become reality through the significant role of the citizens and the private sector, and the government will make efforts to introduce a policy of open and accessible data and forming the critical infrastructure, rules of gameplay and a safe and favorable environment. This is the fundamental approach of the government in implementing digital reforms."

A wide range of agenda issues of Armenian-American economic cooperation were discussed

On April 4, Minister Vahan Kerobyan received US Trade Representative (USTR) Europe and Middle East Office Director Jason Buntin and US Trade Representative Deputy Assistant Generalized System of Privileges (GSP) Laura Buffo.

During the meeting, a wide range of issues on the agenda of Armenian-American economic cooperation were discussed, in particular, issues related to the

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strengthening of economic ties between

Armenia and the United States, increasing trade turnover and diversification of exports, as well as issues related to the export of US goods through the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP).

Reference was also made to providing access to payment platforms in Armenia, PayPal services, the development of venture funds, and the capital market in Armenia.







GRECO records Armenian anti-corruption reforms, level of compliance upgraded

The Council of Europe's Group of States against Corruption (GRECO) released the Second Interim Compliance Report on Armenia corruption prevention in respect of members of parliament, judges and prosecutors.

The Second Interim Compliance
Report assesses the measures taken by the authorities of Armenia to
implement the recommendations issued in the Fourth Round Evaluation Report on Armenia.

GRECO, in its Fourth Round Evaluation Report, addressed 18 recommendations to Armenia. In the Interim Compliance Report, GRECO concluded that seven recommendations (v, vi, x, xii, xiii, xiv and xvii) had been implemented satisfactorily or dealt with in a satisfactory manner and eleven recommendations (i-iv, vii-ix, xi, xv, xvi and xviii) had been partly implemented. Now, in the second report, GRECO



concludes that some steps have been made by Armenia to comply with the outstanding recommendations under the Fourth Evaluation Round. Of the eighteen recommendations included in the Fourth Round Evaluation Report, nine recommendations have now been implemented satisfactorily or have been dealt with in a satisfactory manner. Nine recommendations have been partly implemented.

More specifically, recommendations v, vi, x, xii, xiii, xiv, xv, xvii and xviii have been implemented satisfactorily or dealt with

in a satisfactory manner and recommendations i-iv, vii-ix, xi and xvi have been partly implemented.

Public consultation in the law-making process has been made mandatory for draft laws initiated by the Government. A draft code of ethics for MPs and draft amendments to the National Assembly's Rules of Proce-

dure intended to establish a mechanism to monitor members' compliance with ethical norms have been developed.

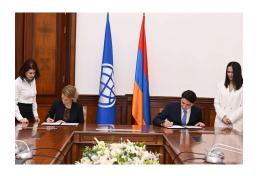
GRECO noted that the Armenian government continues taking active steps for implementing the outstanding recommendations.

Armenia overcame the GRECO evaluation incompatibility process and is no longer listed as having a "globally unsatisfactory" level, which it was listed from 2015 to 2019.

Armenia will receive a loan of 92.3 million euros under the new agreement

A "Green, Resilient, and Inclusive Development Policy Loan" agreement worth EUR 92,300,000 was signed between the Republic of Armenia and the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development.

The agreement was signed by RA Minister of Finance Vahe Hovhannisyan and Director of the World Bank's Armenian Office Carolin Geginat. Budget support funds will be directed to financing the deficit defined by the RA Law "On the 2023"



State Budget of the Republic of Armenia".

The project plans to implement the

following processes:

- Promoting climate change mitigation and adaptation and improving the regulatory framework for environmental management
- Strengthening equality and promoting human capital development
- Increasing the effectiveness of the anti-corruption framework and the justice sector.

Armenian Economy Minister meets with Italy's Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation

Armenian Minister of Economy Vahan Kerobyan has met with the delegation led by Italian Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation Edmondo Cirielli.

The Noyan Tapan Highlights

"I praised the friendly relations between the Armenian and Italian peoples, the common interests and the great potential of economic cooperation between the two countries. I presented the Economy Modernization Act and the Gagarin Investment Project, within which we can effectively cooperate as well," Kerobyan said in a statement.





Azerbaijan violates agreement with Russian peacekeepers, bars civilians from returning to Nagorno Karabakh



Azerbaijan violated on April 4 an agreement reached with Russian peace-keepers in Nagorno Karabakh (Artsakh) and barred a group of Nagorno Karabakh Armenians – including children - from returning home after being stranded in Armenia due to the blockade of Lachin Corridor.

"27 civilians separated from their families for several months – including elderly, children and people with disabilities – were en route from Armenia's Goris to Stepanakert on April 4, around 15:30, under an agreement with and accompanied by the Russian peacekeepers," Nagorno Karabakh's Ombudsman Gegham Stepanyan said in a statement. "Despite a previously reached agreement on the return, the Azerbaijani government agents posing as eco-activists in the blockaded section of the Goris-Stepanakert highway in the

Shushi section barred the passage of the Russian peacekeepers' vehicles carrying the civilians. This resulted in the citizens being stranded there for over five hours. The vehicles are now returning to Goris after ineffective negotiations between the Russian side and the Azerbaijanis."

Some of the Azerbaijanis even entered one of the vehicles.

During that time, four civilians in the cars felt sick and three of them lost consciousness. The Russian peacekeepers took them to the Republican Medical Center in Stepanakert. The remaining 23 people are returning to Goris.

Stepanyan added that this incident once again proves the Azerbaijani authorities' "explicit and obvious" conduct of lying and misguiding the international community with its fake narrative claiming that there is no blockade.

"Furthermore, by allowing people to exit Artsakh in different ways, but banning entry, Azerbaijani authorities are explicitly carrying out ethnic cleansing, as Ilham Aliyev had admitted in his January 10 statement," Stepanyan said.

He added that while hundreds of civilians in Goris are deprived of the opportunity to reunite with their families, Azerbaijan is exploiting the atmosphere

of impunity and is not cooperating neither with the Russian peacekeepers, nor the ICRC or other international organizations over this issue.

Stepanyan added that the reason of Azerbaijan's brazen behavior and disregard for the ICJ ruling and calls from the international community is the impunity, the disregard for the peacekeeping mission, and the absence of targeted and punitive measures by all international actors.

The United Nations' highest court – the International Court of Justice (ICJ) - ordered Azerbaijan on February 22 to "take all steps at its disposal" to ensure unimpeded movement of persons, vehicles and cargo along the Lachin Corridor in both directions. The Lachin Corridor has been blocked by Azerbaijan since 12 December 2022. Azerbaijan has been ignoring the ICJ ruling and multiple calls by the international community to open the corridor.

Nagorno Karabakh healthcare authorities later reported that the four people - all women - who were taken to the Stepanakert hospital after feeling sick and losing consciousness in the Lachin Corridor are in non-life threatening condition after receiving treatment.

At a meeting with Mexican senators, the President addressed the blockade of the Lachin humanitarian corridor



President of the Armenia Vahagn Khachaturyan on April 5 received Mexico's senators Alejandra del Carmen León Gastélum and Indira Kempis Martínez.

As ARMENPRESS was informed from the office of the President of Armenia, welcoming the guests, President Khachaturyan noted that Armenia highly appreciates the adoption of the document on the recognition of the Armenian Genocide by the Senate of Mexico on February 8 of this

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year and the invaluable contribution of the senators in that matter.

"I am happy for this meeting, which creates an opportunity to send you words of gratitude for your political position in the Mexican Senate, especially in the context of supporting the Armenian Genocide recognition process. It is very important for us that you have taken that step, since the Armenian Genocide is one of the most painful pages in the history of our nation.

I would also like to thank you for your position and support regarding our current situation. I am about the aggression carried out by Azerbaijan against Nagorno Karabakh and Armenia in September of last year."

Thanking for the reception, Alejandra del Carmen León Gastélum noted: "The Armenian Genocide is, first of all, about the violation of human rights. The senators understand very well that the topics

that concern the violation of human rights must be constantly visible so that such crimes never happen again."

During the meeting, the President of Armenia presented the Mexican parliamentarians with details about regional realities, the origin and content of the Karabakh conflict. Vahagn Khachaturyan also touched on the issue of the blockade of the Lachin humanitarian corridor by Azerbaijan, as a result of which the 120,000 people of Nagorno-Karabakh are facing the threat of a humanitarian crisis.

During the conversation, the importance of inter-parliamentary cooperation, as well as the need to activate high-level mutual visits, was emphasized by both sides. Reference was made to the opportunities for the development of cooperation in the fields of culture, tourism and trade and economy and the most effective realization of the existing potential.



Armenian Ambassador briefs French MPs on humanitarian crisis in Artsakh



Armenia's Ambassador to France Hasmik Tolmajian met with members of the newly formed France-Armenia friendship group of the French National Assembly. Uniting more than eight dozen deputies representing different political groups, the Armenia-France friendship group is one of the strongest groups of the National Assembly. Hovhannes Gevorgyan, the representative of Artsakh in France, was also present at the meeting.

Ambassador Tolmajian emphasized the importance of the special Armenian-French relations and the existing high-level political dialogue, as well as the special role of inter-parliamentary cooperation, including parliamentary friendship groups, in the relations between the two countries.

The Ambassador briefed the deputies on the consequences of the humanitarian crisis created in Nagorno-Karabakh as a result of the aggression carried out by Azerbaijan, as well as the illegal blocking of the Lachin Corridor, and the existential threats the population of Artsakh is facing today.

Referring to the effective cooperation established between the Embassy and the friendship group, the ambassador also highly appreciated the important activity carried out by the French National Assembly, aimed at drawing the attention of the international community to the humanitarian crisis created in Artsakh. From this point of view, Ambassador Tolmajian also expressed gratitude for the adoption of the resolution condemning the Azerbaijani aggression by the National Assembly on November 30, 2022, as well as for the periodic parliamentary visits to Armenia, highlighting, in particular, the official visit of the delegation led by the President of the French National Assembly to Armenia in January.

The president of the friendship group, deputy of the department of Bouches-du-Rhone, Anne-Laurence Petel, expressed concern about the situation in Armenia and Artsakh due to the Azeri threat, reaffirmed the friendship group's solidarity with Armenia and support for the 120,000 people of Artsakh.

Edmon Marukyan briefs British officials on Azerbaijan's blockade of Lachin corridor



At the invitation of the British John

Smith Foundation and the Center for Democracy and Peace Building, Edmon Marukyan, Ambassador-at-Large at the Armenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs, participated in discussions on the challenges of the region in Oxford and London.

Within the framework of the visit, Marukyan met with high-ranking officials of the Foreign Office dealing with South Caucasus issues at the United Kingdom MFA, presenting detailed information about Azerbaijan's blockade of the Lachin

Corridor, non-implementation of the decision of the UN International Court of Justice, and the latest actions of the Azerbaijani authorities.

At the meeting organized for British think tanks in the Parliament of the United Kingdom, he presented the details of the negotiation process of the peace treaty and the recent actions of Azerbaijan, as well as the position of the Republic of Armenia on the discussed issues.

108th anniversary of Armenian Genocide to be commemorated in Times Square



The 108th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide taking place in Times Square, New York, on Sunday, April 23, 2023 at 1:30 pm, will feature headline speakers David L. Phillips, Director of the Program on Peace-building and Rights at Columbia University's Institute for the Study of Human Rights and founder of the Artsakh Atrocities Project – who will be presented with the Knights and Daughters of Vartan Humanitarian Award – and Robert Avetisyan, Permanent Representative of the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh to the U.S.

Hosted by the Knights and Daughters of Vartan, the impactful event, now in its 39th year, will feature remarks by elected officials and a musical interlude by Huyser Ensemble, accompanied by the Holy Martyrs Armenian Day School and the Brooklyn Armenian School.

In conjunction with the Times Square Commemoration, the Knights

and Daughters of Vartan will sponsor its annual global student essay contest that gives Armenian youth the opportunity to express their voices and concerns regarding genocide awareness and human rights. Winners will be announced at the Commemoration and selections from each essay will be read.

The momentous Armenian Genocide Commemoration will reinforce the memory of the first genocide of the 20th century that claimed the lives of 1.5 million Armenian martyrs by the Young Turk Party of the Ottoman Empire. Thanks to the overwhelming support by Members of Congress, both the U.S. House of Representatives and Senate unequivocally stated U.S. affirmation of the Armenian Genocide in 2019, preceding President Joe Biden's acknowledgement on April 24, 2021.

The Armenian Diaspora will continue its vigorous efforts to remember, to honor, and to educate the world about this devastating chapter in world history that continues to be denied today by the Turkish government, and will not rest until Turkey recognizes the Armenian Genocide.

"As the next generation of Armenian Americans, we strive to continue bringing awareness to the Armenian Genocide here in the U.S., while ensuring the strength and vitality of the Armenian people," said

Co-Chairs Haig Gulian and Christopher Artun. "We appreciate the ongoing support from our diasporan communities to hold our annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration year after year in such an influential location as Times Square, in New York City. We look forward to gathering together once again to honor our ancestors and utilize our collective efforts towards global recognition."

The annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration in Times Square is sponsored by the Knights of Vartan and Daughters of Vartan, a national fraternal organization, and co-sponsored by the Armenian General Benevolent Union, Armenian Assembly of America, Armenian National Committee of America, Armenian Democratic Liberal Party, Tekeyan Cultural Association, Armenian National Council of America, Armenian Bar Association, and the Armenian Missionary Association of America: participating organizations include the Diocese of the Armenian Church, Prelacy of the Armenian Church, Armenian Presbyterian Church, Armenian Evangelical Union, Armenian Catholic Eparchy, Armenian Network of Greater New York, Homenetmen Scouts of NY & NJ, Armenian Youth Federation, and national Armenian youth organizations.

Police investigating anti-Armenian flyers found in Glendale

The discovery of anti-Armenian flyers posted outside St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church in Glendale prompted a condemnation by city officials, *ABC7* reports.

"Unfortunately, anti-Armenian hate and racism is alive and well, and my community continues to be targeted, harassed and traumatized by these acts that have been taking place across the country," Glendale city clerk Suzie Abajian said.

Eleven flyers were found, with one that called for Azerbaijan and Turkey to "complete Armenian Genocide."

The flyer claims to be from supporters of Israel, includes Hebrew, and is signed from a rabbi. The Glendale Police Department, however, said it has no reason to believe the Jewish community has any connection to the flyers.

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"The Glendale Police Department and I stand with the entire Glendale community against all incidents of hate," Glendale police Chief Manuel Cid said in a statement. "We will use all the resources available to us to fully investigate any criminal acts associated with this incident while we work in collaboration with our community leaders moving forward."

Glendale police Capt. Robert William said during a Friday afternoon news

conference that a similar incident happened in Beverly Hills.

Glendale is home to the largest Armenian American population in the U.S. The Armenian community says they're angry and scared.

"The threat of genocide is not protected speech, but a threat of violence that should be addressed appropriately," Abajian said. "I do not feel safe walking on the streets of our city with the knowledge that some people would like to see Armenians erased from the face of the planet."

Glendale police say surveillance video they reviewed showed a person holding a satchel filled with the flyers, and they believe there could be more around the city.



Ottoman Parliament and Senate in 1918 Acknowledged 'the Armenian Massacres'

By Harut Sassounian

I wrote an article in January 2016, titled: "Turkey was first country to recognize the Armenian Genocide in 1918." However, most people are still unaware that 'the Armenian Massacres' were discussed and acknowledged by the Ottoman Parliament and Senate in 1918. More recently, two Armenian members of the Turkish Parliament, Selina Dogan and Garo Paylan, raised the issue of the Armenian Genocide in the Parliament on January 14, 2016. Earlier, in November 2014, Parliament member Sebahat Tuncel submitted a resolution on the Armenian Genocide to the Turkish Parliament, asking Erdogan to issue an apology, declare April 24 as an official Day of Mourning, make public the documents in the Turkish archives about this mass crime, and pay material and moral restitution to the descendants of the victims. The proposed resolution was ignored by the Turkish Parliament. Since writing my 2016 article, I came across a detailed analysis written by Prof. Ayhan Aktar in the History Workshop Journal, titled: "Debating the Armenian Massacres in the Last Ottoman Parliament, November - December 1918." That debate took place following the defeat of the Ottoman Empire in WWI and occupation of Constantinople (Istanbul) by the victorious allied countries. In the last two months of 1918, the Ottoman Parliament discussed over several days the Armenian Genocide, described at the time as massacres. A motion was presented which stated: "A population of 1 million people guilty of nothing except belonging to the Armenian nation were massacred and exterminated, including even women and children." In response, Interior Minister Ali Fethi Okyar declared: "It is the intention of the government to cure every single injustice done up until now, as far as the means allow, to make possible the return to their homes of those sent into exile, and to compensate for their material loss as far as possible.... Yes, Gentlemen, I also say that our officials butchered many

Armenians, including women and children and that their properties were plundered." A Parliamentary Investigative Committee was set up to collect all relevant documents showing the actions of those responsible for the 'Armenian deportations and massacres.' The evidence was turned over to the Turkish Military Tribunal, and those found guilty were hanged or given lengthy prison sentences. Here are some excerpts from Aktar's article: "Discussion of the Armenian massacres in the Ottoman Parliament began with motions calling the Union and Progress governments to account. When on November 4, 1918 the Ottoman Parliament convened in Istanbul the political attempts to find the perpetrators started with the first motion, tabled by Baghdat-Divaniye Deputy Fuat Bey a few days earlier. This demanded that members of the Sait Halim Pasha and Talaat Pasha cabinets be tried by the High Court.... Clause 10 [of the motion] made direct reference to the Armenian deportations and to the Teshkilat-i Mahsusa (the Special Organization), an irregular military force organized by the CUP [Committee of Union and Progress] leadership that had carried out deportations and massacres." Some of the parliamentarians who belonged to the old guard of Unionists, which were the majority in the parliament, without denying the Armenian massacres, made excuses similar to today's Turkish Government, stating that Turks were also killed during this period. Six Armenian deputies of the parliament submitted a motion demanding that "the deportation decision of May 27, 1915 and the decree of September 27, 1915 concerning expropriation of abandoned properties and real estate should be revoked, and that those deported from their native land be permitted to return. It further asserted that the administrative measures facilitating the sharing out among local notables of properties which had belonged to deported Armenians went absolutely against the spirit of the Ottoman Constitution of 1876."

In response to accusations that some Armenians on the Eastern front had rebelled against the Ottoman Empire, Armenian Deputy Matyos Nalbandian responded: Even if some Armenians had committed illegal acts, it does that justify "the removal and extermination of all Armenians" and "the confiscation and plunder of their properties." Nalbandian also made a distinction between the Turks killed at the warfront and the innocent Armenian civilians who were massacred. A similar discussion took place in the Ottoman Senate on Nov. 21, 1918. Ahmet Riza Bey made a motion demanding that "the atrocities committed under the name of deportation' be investigated; that the negative impact throughout the country be determined; and that those involved in these affairs be prosecuted." Former Governor and Minister of Interior, Reshit Akif Pasha, stated that his investigation indicated that "these orders of deportation had been given by the well-known Minister of Interior [Talaat Pasha] and officially communicated to [governors in] the provinces." On December 9, 1918, Minister of Justice Haydar Molla told the Ottoman Senate that the crimes against Armenians were committed by state officials, politicians and ordinary Turks. Importantly, none of the deputies, regardless of their party affiliation or background, denied the occurrence of the deportation and massacres of Armenians. On December 21, 1918, the Ottoman Parliament was dissolved by Mehmed Vahdettin, the last Sultan of the Ottoman Empire. "When the Parliament finally reconvened with the newly-elected deputies on January 12, 1920, it was dominated by supporters of the resistance movement which had developed in Anatolia, under the leadership of Mustafa Kemal Pasha (later Ataturk)," wrote Aktar. The Turkish Military Tribunals in 1919-20 tried and sentenced to death in absentia the masterminds of the Armenian massacres, Enver, Djemal and Talaat, the Young Turk leaders who had fled the country.

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COAF launches fundraiser for the children of Artsakh

The Children of Armenia Fund (COAF) has announced a fundraiser in support of the children and families in Artsakh during these turbulent times. Despite the ongoing blockade, COAF says it remains steadfast in its mission to provide crucial interventions, such as early childhood education, speech therapy, psychological care, and social work support.

The organization first launched its programs in Stepanakert in 2022, providing access to preschool education and speech therapy to children ages 3-6, as well as critical psychological and social services to support both children and adults affected by the ongoing crisis in the region. As the situation in Artsakh intensifies, children are most affected, with significant emotional stress such as insomnia, nightmares and difficulty expressing themselves.



COAF's team of nine dedicated women in Stepanakert is addressing the devastating impact of the recent war on the well-being of children in the region. In response, COAF is providing essential psychological programs aimed at helping children cope with the trauma and challenges. All of the education program instructors are psychologists, ensuring that children receive the best possible care and support.

As the situation in Artsakh continues to deteriorate, COAF's Artsakh Spring appeal aims to provide a glimmer of hope for the children and families impacted by the conflict by offering comprehensive support services.

This appeal presents a unique opportunity for people

worldwide to unite and make a tangible difference in the lives of those in need. By donating to COAF, supporters can join a movement that prioritizes the well-being of affected children and families while also contributing to the long-term resilience of these communities. This is an opportunity to demonstrate that these communities are not forgotten and to create a significant impact on their lives.

Israeli activist Yaron Weiss starts five-day journey across the Galilee to raise awareness about Artsakh



Yaron Weiss, Israeli activist and author, expert on the countries of the Caucasus, is starting a five-day journey across the Galilee dedicated to the people of Artsakh.

"The landscape of the Galilee, the region where I live always reminds me the landscape of Artsakh. The size of the area

is also the same," Weiss said in a Facebook post as he announced the journey.

"I remember those days when I crossed Artsakh by hiking on the 'Janapar Trail' - The first national trails network in the Caucasus. Unfortunately these days most of the 'Janapar Trail' is under hostile occupation," he said.

"In recent months, the people of Artsakh are in difficult situation under siege. In addition tens of thousands of refugees cannot return to their homes. One of the main reasons of the worst situation is also due to the use of Israeli-made weapons that changed the balance of forces in the conflict," he added.

"To sympathize with the people of Artsakh and to raise awareness in Israel and the entire world about their difficult situation, I decided to go on a journey of crossing the Galilee from the western side in the Mediterranean Sea to the eastern side in the Jordan Valley on shores of the Sea of Galilee," Yaron Weiss said.

He plans to hike for several days, holding the flag of Artsakh in order to remind the many people that he's going to meet along the way that "this journey is dedicated to those heroes who live in their ancient homeland despite all the difficulties. The homeland that is very similar to the Galilee."

"I would greatly appreciate if you follow the journey on social media and share. You are more than welcome to join me on the Trail," Weiss concluded.

Next



Samsung Innovation Campus in Armenia celebrates the graduation of its first cohort of students

Samsung Innovation Campus, a technology-based educational IT programme by Samsung Electronics with its Armenian campus at the international school UWC Dilijan, celebraten the graduation of its first cohort of students. A class of 30 youngsters from Yerevan, Gyumri, Vanadzor

and other communities of Armenia have successfully completed the training course and presented their individual projects — mobile applications on the Android OS.

The participants of Samsung Innovation Campus (SIC) have passed a 9-month project-based course, divided into 5 modules:

Fundamentals of Java programming language

Introduction to Object Oriented Programming

Fundamentals of Android Application Programming

Algorithms and data structures

Fundamentals of mobile application server side development

After completing the course, the students presented their individual projects, which they have developed using the knowledge and skills acquired at SIC, as their final test for certification. The projects were presented to an evaluation panel consisting of Samsung-certified instructors, educators in the field of computer science and tech industry representatives.

"We are honored to have Samsung serving as UWC Dilijan's partner for this pioneering initiative. A lot of work has been done to deliver the first results and

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achieve success. I can now say with confidence that our cooperation with Samsung opened a new page in our capacity to contribute to the development of Armenia," said Veronika Zonabend, UWC Dilijan Co-Founder and Chair of the Board.

"This is an exciting day in the development of the Samsung Innovation Campus programme in Armenia. This intensive course bodes well with aspirations of Armenia as a hub for IT and a science-based economy. Our participants, with the help of highly-qualified Armenian instructors supported by Samsung Electronics CIS, demonstrated the skills they have acquired as part of the course as well as tenacity and desire to succeed. They make us, and I hope Samsung, proud," said Vardan Avagyan, Project Manager of Samsung Innovation Campus.

"Samsung Innovation Campus helps young people from all over the world to unlock their potential and career opportunities. Together with UWC Dilijan we are proud to contribute to the education of youth in Armenia and raise future IT talents. Samsung Innovation Campus educational programmes not only increase students' digital literacy and provide important IT related skills, but also

contribute to the expansion of the innovative IT technologies throughout the country, developing its economic, social and other areas. Today we celebrate the first graduates of Samsung Innovation Campus Armenia who present truly impressive results thanks to the great attention of UWC Dilijan Management and the dedicated project's team. There are plenty of opportunities ahead

of us and we are looking forward to continuing our work together," said Mr. DH Kim, Senior Advisor at Samsung Electronics CIS RHO.

UWC Dilijan and Samsung Electronics, a world leading technological company, have established Samsung Innovation Campus in Dilijan, Armenia in 2021. The initiative is aimed at making a contribution to Armenia by enabling Armenian youth to develop their IT skills and learn the concepts related to Android mobile programming.

Samsung Electronics operates various technology-based education programmes to nurture young talent that is capable of leading society in the future. One of these programmes is Samsung Innovation Campus which at UWC Dilijan is built around the delivery, over the next three years, of a combination of online sessions and in-person training for 100 children annually. The initiative focuses on 14-16 year-old Armenian children. Samsung Electronics has equipped the facility with the stateof-the-art technology, including 25 computer stations, smart boards and other devices essential for the delivery of the Samsung Innovation Campus programme in Armenia.







Israel's Petah Tikva names park after Charles Aznavour



A public park in the city of Petah Tikva, Israel, was officially named after Charles Aznavour on April 2, Chancellor of the Armenian Patriarchate of Jerusalem Fr. Aghan Gogchian informs.

The decision was unanimously approved by the City Council of Petah Tikva, headed by Mayor Rami Greenberg.

Attending the ceremony were representatives of the Armenian clergy, Ambassador of the Republic of Armenia to Israel, Arman Akobian.

The inscription on the plaque reads: Singer, songwriter, actor, worldknown French crooner, who dedicated his life to his homeland Armenia and was bestowed the title of National Hero. During WWII, the Aznavour family saved dozens of Jewish families from extermination.

Nine Armenians on Forbes 2023 Billionaires List

Nine Armenians have made it to the Forbes 2023 World's Billionaires list. Globally, Forbes has counted 2,640 ten-figure fortunes, down from 2,668 last year.

Sergei Galitsky (Arutyunyan), founder of Magnit, one of Russia's biggest supermarket chains and cosmetics retailers with more than 26,000 stores, ranks 905th on the list.

Samvel Karapetyan, owner of the \$2.8 billion Tashir Holding and a commercial real estate developer, eanks 1,104th.

Albert Avdolyan, who owns Far East and Siberian coal mining and gas companies, is ranked 1368th.

Artem Khachatryan, co-founder of the Russian discount retailer Fix Price, is 1434th.

Russian-Armenian entrepreneur Andrey Andreev (Andrey Ogadzhanyantshas), who built five online dating sites and apps since 2004: Mamba, Badoo, Bumble,







Chappy and Lumen, ranks 1616th.

Chairman of Corporación América International Eduardo Eurnekian, the son of Armenian immigrants to Argentina, who first operated in the textile industry, comes 1575th.

Noubar Afeyan, the founder and CEO of Cambridge, Mass. life sciences innovation firm Flagship Pioneering, is 1804th.

Kim Kardashian, who parlayed reality TV stardom into a ten-figure fortune, the vast majority of which comes from her stake in Skims, her shapewear business, ranks 2259th.

Kardashian shares the 2259th place with Ruben Vardanyan, co-founder of the investment company Troika Dialog in the early 1990s.

Altogether, the planet's billionaires are now worth \$12.2 trillion, a drop of \$500 billion from \$12.7 trillion in March 2022. Nearly half the list is poorer than a year ago, including

Elon Musk, who falls from No. 1 to No. 2 after his pricey acquisition of Twitter helped sink Tesla shares. Bernard Arnault, head of luxury goods giant LVMH, takes his place as the world's richest person, marking the first time a citizen of France leads the ranking.

The United States still boasts the most billionaires, with 735 list members worth a collective \$4.5 trillion. China (including Hong Kong and Macau) remains second, with 562 billionaires worth \$2 trillion, followed by India, with 169 billionaires worth \$675 billion.

Armenian Souls: Concert at Versailles to mark the anniversary of Armenian Genocide



The "Armenian Souls" concert at the Royal Chapel of Versailles on April 22 will

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mark the 108th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

"Armenia, again threatened by hostile neighbors, needs to feel the friendship and brotherhood of France, which was the first to show its support in 1896 in the face of the Turkish massacres, through the voice of Jean Jaurès, renewed and amplified during the 1915 genocide loudly denounced by Anatole France. This concert is part of the National Commemoration of the

Armenian Genocide," the Royal Chapel said as it announced the concert.

It will bring together Armenian and French musicians. The concert will feature young virtuoso Narek Kazazyan, dazzling player of Kanun, cellist Astrig Siranossian, duduk and shvi (Armenian flute) plyer Helbert Asatryan, the Holy Cross Church Choir of Yerevan, the only professional men's choir linked to a church in Armenia, directed by Shahe Keshishian.





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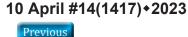
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The goal of the Armenian Identity Card (HyeID) non-profit organization is to unify Armenians worldwide in a common platform so that through contacts, queries and referenda they can express their views and positions regarding issues of general interest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

• The Armenian Identity Card (Hye-ID) 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 Hye-ID 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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