## Joint communique adopted at the third meeting of the "3+3" regional cooperation platform



Turkey - The foreign ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia and Turkey meet in Istanbul, October 18, 2024.

The Third meeting of the "3+3" Regional Cooperation Platform was held on 18 October 2024, in İstanbul, upon the invitation of H.E. Mr. Hakan Fidan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey and in presence of H.E. Mr. Ararat Mirzoyan, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia, H.E. Mr. Jeyhun Bayramov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, H.E. Mr. Seyed Abbas Araghchi, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Islamic Republic of Iran and H.E. Mr. Sergey Lavrov, the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Russian Federation.

In the Meeting, the Ministers:

- 1. Recalled the previous meetings of the "3+3" format held in Moscow and Tehran.
- 2. Emphasized the significance of reconvening the "3+3" Regional Cooperation Platform amidst the current complex developments that endanger regional and international peace and stability and agreed to further enhance cooperation within the "3+3" format.
- 3. In light of the crucial necessity for having good neighborly relations that stem from joint endeavors to realize mutual interests, reaffirmed the importance of the peaceful settlement of disputes, respect for sovereignty, political independence, territorial integrity, inviolability of internationally recognized borders, non-interference in internal affairs, prohibition of the threat or use of force and respect for human rights, based on all the principles of the Unit-

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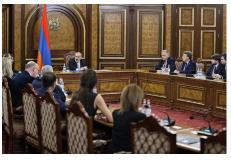


### Prime Minister receives ambassadors of the EU Member States accredited in Armenia

Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan received ambassadors extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the European Union Member States accredited to Armenia, led by the head of the EU delegation, Ambassador Vassilis Maragos.

According to a readout issued by the PM's office, Pashinyan emphasized Armenia-EU multi-sector cooperation and once again emphasized the Armenian Government's readiness to deepen and expand multi-sector relations with European partners. In this context, Nikol Pashinyan emphasized the need for effective and consistent implementation of the agreements reached in October of last year in Granada with the President of the European Commission Ursula Von der Leyen, as well as in the statement adopted as a result of the Armenia-EU-US high-level meeting in Brussels in April of this year.

Vassilis Maragos referred to the



process of implementation of the steps envisaged by the above-mentioned statements and emphasized the EU's continued support in promoting democratic and economic reforms in Armenia, including the development of private sector capacities. The head of the EU delegation also emphasized the start of dialogue with Armenia on visa liberalization, the decision to provide assistance to our country from the European Peace Facility.

Next, the discussions on the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace treaty were touched upon. Prime Minister Pashinyan emphasized the commitment of the Armenian side to the peace agenda and emphasized the readiness of our country to sign the agreement based on the agreed articles and continue further discussions on other issues. In the context of ensuring peace and stability in the region, the interlocutors highlighted the effective activity of the EU observation mission in Armenia.

The sides exchanged ideas on the possibilities of unblocking regional communication channels. The head of the EU delegation, Vassilis Maragos, expressed the EU's support for Armenia's sovereignty and the "Crossroads of Peace" project of the Armenian Government.

During the meeting, other issues of regional importance were also touched upon.

### Armenian Parliament Speaker briefs Turkish counterpart on **Crossroads of Peace project**

Armenian National Assembly Speaker Alen Simonyan and Turkish Grand National Assembly Speaker Numan Kurtulmush met in Geneva.

The parties discussed a wide range of issues related to the normalization of Armenian-Turkish relations.

The Speaker of the Armenian National Assembly presented to the Turkish side the latest developments in the process



of peace treaty negotiations between

Armenia and Azerbaijan and reaffirmed the committment of the Armenian side to the peace process.

Alen Simonyan also presented the "Crossroads of Peace" project initiated by the Armenian government to his Turkish counterpart.

At the end of the meeting, the parties reached an agreement to continue contacts.

#### Mirzoyan, Fidan discuss Armenia-Turkey normalization

Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan called for the implementation of Turkish-Armenian interim agreements to normalize bilateral relations when he met with his Turkish counterpart Hakan Fidan in Istanbul on October 18.

The Ministers held talks there after a multilateral meeting of the foreign ministers of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Iran, Russia and Turkey that took place within the

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framework of the so-called "Consultative Regional Platform 3+3."

"The Ministers discussed issues on the bilateral agenda and the ongoing Armenia-Turkey dialogue aimed at full normalization of relations," read an Armenian Foreign Ministry statement on the talks. "Minister Mirzoyan reaffirmed the importance of implementation of the agreements reached in the process."

Views were exchanged also on regional developments.







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ed Nations Charter.

- 4. In line with the primary role of the regional countries and highlighting the importance of dialogue, seizing regional cooperation opportunities, and the ability to frankly converse on prominent international issues, discussed the outstanding issues that concern the region.
- 5. Commended the positive dynamics in normalization and development of relations between all the countries of the region.
- 6. Stating the constructive role regional economic cooperation plays in regional confidence building, prosperity, and stability, which in turn benefits all the peoples of the region by providing economic and commercial development opportunities by transforming conflictual topics; agreed to further explore opportunities of cooperation in the fields of transport, communication, trade, energy, investment and connectivity.
- 7. Underscored the importance of

- cultural cooperation and people-to-people contacts with a view to encouraging joint projects in education, science, tourism, culture, and sports.
- Concurred that bilateral talks will complement multilateral consultations towards sustainable regional peace and economic development.
- 9. Reiterated that the doors of the "3+3" Platform will always be open for Georgia to join.
- 10. Exchanged views on the escalating situation in the Middle East and strongly condemned grave breaches of the principles of the UN Charter and international humanitarian law that could jeopardize regional peace and security, and urged for respect for international law, end to all aggressions and atrocities through immediate ceasefire, and unhindered access to humanitarian assistance for those affected.
- 11. Acknowledging the increase in terrorist and criminal activity in ar-

- eas close to our region, expressed their commitment to cooperate against all forms and manifestations of terrorism in accordance with relevant UN Security Council resolutions.
- 12. Underlined the importance of the regular ministerial meetings of the "3+3" Regional Cooperation Platform, as well as consultations in the areas of common interest towards enhancing and solidifying an environment of trust and cooperation in the region.
- 13. Agreed that the venue and the date of the next meeting will be agreed through diplomatic channels.

The Foreign Ministers of the Republic of Armenia, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the Islamic Republic of Iran and the Russian Federation thanked the Minister of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Turkey for the good reception and successful holding of this meeting.

## Secretary Grigoryan, German Federal Police chief discuss possibilities of security cooperation



Secretary of the Security Council of Armenia, Armen Grigoryan, during his visit to Germany, met with the President of the Federal Police of Germany Dieter Romann.

"During the meeting we attached importance to the activities of the EU civilian monitoring mission in Armenia, and

within this framework I stressed and especially valued the German side's contribution as part of the mission's activities," Secretary Grigoryan said in a statement.

The possibilities of bilateral cooperation between Armenia and Germany in the security sector were also discussed.

## Armenia and Azerbaijan on the cusp of an accord, Parliament Speaker says

Armenia and Azerbaijan are on the cusp of an accord, Armenian Parliament Speaker Alen Simonyan said in an address to the 149th Assembly of the Inter-Parliamentary Union.

He reminded that when the peace process started months ago, Azerbaijan wanted Armenia's agreement on five internationally recognized points. "I am pleased to announce that to date,

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we have agreed on 16," Simonyan said.

"The perfect must no longer be the enemy of the good. The time to make peace has come. The time for peace is now. We invite Azerbaijan to muster the political will, seize the moment and join us to make the possible a reality," the Speaker stated.

He reaffirmed that Armenia is ready to sign a peace treaty even today.





#### Armenian, US military officials discuss defense cooperation, regional security

On a working visit to the United States, Armenia's First Deputy Minister of Defense, Chief of the General Staff of the Armed Forces, Lieutenant General Edward Asryan held a meeting with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff of the United States Armed Forces, General Charles Brown.

During the meeting, the sides discussed issues

of mutual interest, acknowledging the continued development of Armenia-US



defense cooperation.

The American side reaffirmed its

commitment to supporting the ongoing transformation and reforms of the Armed Forces of the Republic of Armenia.

The importance of sustaining joint activities was underscored, and a range of issues related to regional security were also addressed.

The Armenian delegation also participates in the Association of the United States Army (AUSA) Annual Meeting

and Exposition, taking place in Washington, D.C., from October 13 to 16.

### Iran cautions Azerbaijan against presence of outsiders in region

The president of Iran has warned the sovereignty of no state should be disregarded, the president said, warning,

Azerbaijan of the unfortunate consequences of outsiders establishing a foothold in the region, Tasnim News Agency reports.

In a meeting with Deputy Prime Minister of Azerbaijan Shahin Mustafayev, held in Tehran on October 14, President Masoud Pezeshkian reaffirmed Iran's respect for the territorial integrity of the Republic of Azerbaijan.

Iran maintains that



however, that the establish-

ment of the foreign countries' foothold in the region would not be in the interests of the nations in the region.

"We believe that we can ensure security and address our problems through cooperation. This is the principled policy of the Islamic Republic of Iran's administration, which we have always emphasized," Pezeshkian added.

### Armenia-EU relations have never been this strong, top security official says

On a working visit to the Czech Republic, Armen Grigoryan, the Secretary of Armenia's Security Council, participated in the "Forum 2000" conference in Prague.

The Secretary spoke about Armenia-EU relations, emphasizing the importance of the new bilateral partnership agenda, as well as the launch of the official dialogue on visa liberalization.

He noted that the Armenia-EU relations, which have expanded to embrace

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the security sector, have never been as strong as today and tend to develop stably, taking into account the bilateral desire.

The Secretary also emphasized that bilateral relations are based on democracy. In this context, he attached importance to the activities of the EU civilian mission and the work carried out within the framework of the European Peace Instrument.

In the second part of the conference, Secretary Grigoryan answered the questions of the attendees.







### Armenia ready to relaunch all communications passing through its sovereign territory - Minister



The Republic of Armenia is ready to relaunch all communication passing through its sovereign territory and create new ones to ensure the safety of goods, vehicles, people, pipelines, electric lines passing through Armenia without any discrimination, Minister of Territorial Administration Gnel Sanosyan said at the world congress

of the International Road Federation in Istanbul.

"The Crossroads of Peace project we propose implies that all the economic and transport infrastructures of the region should be unblocked and operate under the sovereignty and jurisdiction of the country, based on the principle of equality and reciprocity," the Minister said.

"In the current geopolitical conditions, the creation of new, reliable and viable communication channels, as well as the relaunching and safe operation of previously functioning transport infrastructures, has become of primary importance for all countries of the world, because the presence of developed infrastructure and

proportional territorial development are essential for the sustainable development of all countries and the well-being of people are among the most important factors of security," he stressed.

"The complete unblocking of economic infrastructures between all the states of the region, the development of channels and the increase of the level of interconnection are among the priorities of the government of the Republic of Armenia," Sanosyan said.

He emphasized that Armenia has developed the Crossroads of Peace project guided by the drive to establish lasting and stable peace in the South Caucasus.

## UK aware of detention of ethnic Armenians and regularly raises the issue with Baku – Stephen Doughty

The UK Government is aware of the detention of Ruben Vardanyan and other ethnic Armenians as a result of September 2023's military action in Nagorno-Karabakh, UK Minister of State for Europe, North America and Overseas Territories Stephen Doughty said in response to a question by Andrew Rosindell MP.

The lawmaker asked the Minister whether he has had recent discussions with his Azerbaijani counterpart on the detention of Ruben Vardanyan and



Armenian political prisoners in Baku.

"We have consistently urged the Azerbaijani authorities, including ahead of COP29, to ensure that those in detention are afforded a fair trial and are provided safe conditions, in accordance with Azerbaijan's international obligations and commitments," Stephen Doughty said.

"We have been consistent in calling for the release of all remaining prisoners of war, and the return of the remains of the deceased, from the conflicts between Armenia and Azerbaijan. British Embassy Baku regularly raises our concerns with the Azerbaijani authorities at senior levels." the Minister said.

#### Brussels hosts 5th session of Armenia-EU Civil Society Platform

On October 15, the 5th session of the Armenia-EU Civil Society Platform took place in Brussels under the chairmanship of Platform Co-Chairs Lusine Hakobyan and Simo Tiainen. The representatives of the European Commission, European External Action Service, European Economic and Social Committee as well as heads of different Armenian and European civil society organizations attended the meeting.

In his speech, the Head of the Mission of Armenia to the EU, Ambassador Tigran

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Balayan stressed the important role of the civil society in promoting the Armenia-EU Partnership. Ambassador Balayan touched upon the achievements registered during the past months and the efforts made by the Armenian Government aimed at the strengthening of the partnership with the

He presented to the audience Armenia's consistent efforts to establish peace in the region, emphasizing that if international partners adopt a principled

position, it will be possible to reach the signing of the already agreed text of the peace treaty with Azerbaijan and the release of the Armenian hostages illegally held in Baku.

The EU officials and NGO representatives assessed the process of reforms in Armenia positively and assured that their organizations will continue to be consistent in solving the above-mentioned issues.







## Armenian government approves 2024-2040 strategy to improve demographic situation

The Armenian government has approved the 2024-2040 strategy for improving the demographic situation in the country. The strategy will contribute to the achievement of the following goals: creating an environment that promotes family well-being, where the birth of each child contributes to the development of human capital, reducing risk factors for death, and promoting a healthy environment to reduce the deterioration and loss of human capital throughout the human lifespan.



Conditions for active, healthy and dignified old age will be ensured with involvement of representatives of the older

generation in the socio-economic life of the country and increasing their potential, reducing the motivations leading to emigration and ensuring competitiveness in the processes of formation, preservation and involvement of highly qualified human capital.

As a result, it is expected to have a balanced and stable structure of the population, aimed at the development of the longterm human capital and the improvement of the quality of life.

#### Colliers International secures \$250 million mandate to build state-ofthe-art World Trade Center in Yerevan



Leading diversified project management firm, Colliers Project Leaders – Middle East, has won the mandate to deliver end-to-end project management solutions for Armenia's new World Trade Center in Yerevan, valued at USD ~250 million.

A public-private partnership between the Armenian government and Renshin Ltd., the project is designed to be a stateof-the-art mixed-use development that will be home to commercial spaces, offices, retail outlets, hotels and exhibition halls. Well known for its expertise in the real estate industry and project management, Colliers has a proven track record of delivering large-scale, marquee projects including the World Trade Center in Bengaluru, India.

Colliers Project Leaders has a growing presence in the Middle East and has earned widespread recognition for its delivery of superior projects over the years, across segments like infrastructure, residential, education, healthcare and office. Known for its visionary leadership and the adoption of advanced tools and technologies, redefining project management in the Middle East.

"We have always placed a strong emphasis on consistently growing our capabilities to keep up with the needs of the market. Whether it is the adaption of global best practices or the development of pioneering technologies, our end goal has always been to deliver superior outcomes. A project of this scale requires industry-leading strategic and technical

expertise, which is our proven capability. We are grateful to Renshin Limited and the Government of Armenia for entrusting us with this marquee assignment and look forward to collaborating with our internal and external stakeholders in Middle East, India and Georgia to bring it to life," says Sankey Prasad, Chairman & Managing Director, Middle East & India, Colliers.

"The World Trade Center Yerevan project is a mixed-use, net-zero, landmark real estate development promising to become the new face of Yerevan. To deliver upon this promise, we are engaging the top talent, top expertise, and top global firms. After a rigorous and tough tendering process, we are glad to announce that Colliers Project Leaders were selected to become our trusted partners. Looking forward to work with our esteemed Colliers colleagues in this unique endeavor," says Artashes Tonoyan, CEO & Executive Committee Chair, World Trade Center Yerevan.

#### New Tax Convention between Armenia, Japan 'agreed in principle'

The Government of Japan and the Government of the Republic of Armenia have agreed in principle on the new tax convention between the two countries, Japan's Ministry of Finance informs.

The new Convention reinforces or introduces provisions for clarifying the scope of taxation in the two countries, eliminating international double taxation and preventing tax evasion and avoidance,

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and is expected to promote further mutual investments and economic exchanges between the two countries.

The new Convention will be signed after the necessary internal procedures have been completed by each of the two Governments. Thereafter, the Convention will enter into force after the completion of the domestic procedures in each of the two countries.



Next



## Armenia Hosted the Consulting Event of the Year: International CMC Conference was held with Participants from 30 Countries



From October 7-11, for the first time the prestigious International CMC Conference was held in Armenia marking one of the most significant events for the Armenian Consulting and Business Community. More than 150 participants and consultants from 30 countries came to Armenia to discuss innovations and priorities in the Consulting.

Over 30 representatives, along with 35 guests and speakers from leading Consulting firms from different countries, arrived in Armenia to become part of the international event.

"The success of the Conference is obvious, and I especially emphasize the importance of holding such a prestigious event as the International CMC Conference in Armenia. The Conference initiated several significant partnership agreements that will have a substantial impact on the Consulting and Business communities' future development. More than 45 delegates arrived in Armenia to participate in the annual IMC Armenia conference, further highlighting Armenia's important role in the consulting market. I would also add that the consulting conference held in Armenia, organized by the IMC Armenia, was marked as the best," said Silva Mesropyan, IMC Armenia Executive Director.

Ucom was the technological partner of

The Noyan Tapan Highlights

the prominent International CMC Conference. Within the scope of the cooperation, the General Director of Ucom Ralph Yirikian joined the event as a speaker sharing his expertise on "The Intersection of Technology and Sustainability."

"It is good to see the matter of sustainable development being seriously discussed in Armenia, especially at international level and with the involvement of leading specialists. Ucom also attaches great importance to sustainability, particularly through our corporate social projects, so we couldn't stay away from such an event. We hope that in the near future every process in our country will be based on sustainable approaches and we will go through a rapid development,"- emphasized Ralph Yirikian, General Director of Ucom.

The International CMC Conference covered a diverse range of topics centered on technology, sustainability, and business transformation.

Keynote speeches addressed the rise of AI agents and humanoid robots, emphasizing their impact on industries and the global economy. Sessions on digitalization and traceability explored the future of compliance and sustainability in business, while discussions on digital transformation and ESG consultancy

highlighted the growing importance of sustainable practices and governance in modern companies.

Panel discussions focused on the future of workforce dynamics, the role of AI in transforming industries, and the challenges businesses face in navigating the digital landscape. These discussions emphasized the need for adaptability and innovation in a rapidly changing world.

Master classes provided hands-on learning, covering the intersection of technology and sustainability, steps for digital transformation, and navigating sustainability journeys.

In the frames of the conference, on October 9, the Constantinus International Award Ceremony was held. The award is considered the Oscar of the consulting industry and international recognition and is being granted for projects offering innovative solutions in consulting. In 2024 projects from 9 countries were recognized as winners and for the first time, Armenian companies and initiatives were also listed.

The project "Assessment of organic origin fertilizers sector status in Armenia and support to the GoA with cost-benefit and VC studies," was awarded the title of Armenian National Champion.

During the conference, various presentations were delivered by Joseph Wozniak, Head of Trade for Sustainable Development at ITC, David Yang, Ph.D., a serial entrepreneur from Silicon Valley, Leonid Kirakosyan, a partner at McKinsey's Zurich office, Lars Sudmann, a leadership consultant. Keynote speeches and panel discussions were also held by industry leaders such as Sanovbar Ayubova, Wesley Paterson, Dancho Dimkov, Nick Warn, Natalia Makova, Fani Xylori and many others.

The International CMC Conference 2024 with the tagline "Digital Horizons: Innovations for a Sustainable Tomorrow," was organized, branded and implemented by the Institute of Management Consulting of Armenia (IMC Armenia).



## Armenian PM more optimistic about the future of the country than in 2018 or 2019



Prime Minister Nikol Pashinyan visited "Renderforest" company operating in the field of information technologies.

During the tour, the company's managers noted that the company is an online design platform where users can create videos, graphics, presentations, as well as websites. "Renderforest" is said to use embedded artificial intelligence and machine learning modules to help users

retrieve websites and videos within minutes.

It was reported that "Renderforest" is used in 180 countries of the world, the company has about 26 million users worldwide. 15,000 new users join the company every day. In the course of its activity, the company was able to attract investments of around 35 million dollars to Armenia.

It was noted that the

platform can be used for free, but paid add-ons are offered which ensure the company's financial flows. The leading countries in terms of sales are the USA, Germany, the United Kingdom, France, Brazil, Canada, Japan, Russia, Turkey, etc. "Renderforest" was included in 2019 by G2 company in the list of 100 best programming companies in the world, being the only Armenian company on the list.

Nikol Pashinyan was also briefed on the activities of the "Ardi" Academy founded by the "Renderforest" company. It is an educational initiative aimed at teaching the main digital specialties of the fourth industrial revolution in Armenia. In

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addition to more than a dozen specializations included in marketing, design and IT professional directions, entrepreneurship, algorithmic thinking, English language, etc. will also be taught at the academy.

Next, Prime Minister Pashinyan answered the questions of the company's employees. The Prime Minister thanked for the invitation and noted that he was impressed by the company's activities. Nikol Pashinyan added that he believes that the environment is the most important thing for any process. "Of course, people primarily shape the environment, but it is also the physical, urban environment that affects thinking," said the Prime Minister.

The Head of the Government said that he wants to make a statement that may seem strange to many. "That optimism



and strange statement is as follows. I must admit that today I am much more optimistic about the future of Armenia than I was in 2018 or 2019. I'm sure this is a strange statement to many, and I'm announcing it publicly for the first time to emphasize the importance of the environment. It is related to the fact that in 2018, 2019, when I was thinking about the future, about the paths leading to the future, while going through all those paths, I entered a dead end in the plane of thinking, not seeing a continuation or seeing something else," said the Prime Minister. According to Nikol Pashinyan,

today the situation is somewhat different, because he sees many risks, but at the same time he also sees the possibility of overcoming and managing these risks, and the continuation of the future path through managing these risks.

"And what is the end of that path or what is the theoretical goal of that path that we want to realize in practice?" We call it the concept of Real Armenia, it is directly related to the concept of the state, the meaning of which is as follows: the Republic of Armenia and the state in general has a very practical purpose and is a tool to ensure the well-being of its own citizens. It is not a tool, a base or a platform for having a larger state, but a tool for ensuring the well-being of its own citizens within internationally recognized borders,

with the understanding that by well-being we must understand freedom, justice, security and other concepts derived from these three basic concepts," the Prime Minister noted.

According to Nikol Pashinyan, well-being is something that is formed by work. According to the Head of the Government, the next fundamental problem in our reality is the perception of work. "And what is work? Is work suffering, or is work nevertheless pleasure, self-expression, freedom, cre-

ativity, a situation that a person can, for example, think before going to bed in the evening, so that morning comes on early, so that again he can go to work," said the Prime Minister, emphasizing once again the importance of the environment in this regard.

The questions addressed to Nikol Pashinyan related to the improvement of the quality of education, the existing problems, the steps to solve them, the development of the field of information technologies, the plans of the Government in that direction, artificial intelligence and other topics.





### Freedom on the Net 2024: Armenia ranked as 'free" country

The Freedom House has ranked Armenia as a "free" country in its annual *Freedom on the Net 2024: The Struggle for Trust Online* report.

Armenia's neighbor Georgia is also ranked a "free" country; Azerbaijan, Turkey and Iran are "not free."

According to the report, Armenia's online environment remains open, improving during the coverage period because the government did not block websites or social media platforms. However, the government did detain people over online speech critical of the government, and individuals in the country have frequently been targeted with spyware.

Internet access is widespread in the capital, Yerevan, and is expanding throughout the country. The reliability and speed of internet connections across Armenia have generally improved in recent years. Public Wi-Fi is readily available in Yerevan

but more limited in other cities.

According to the most recent data from the International Telecommunication Union (ITU), Armenia had a fixed-line broadband penetration rate of 18.5 percent and a mobile broadband penetration rate of 103 percent in 2023. The ITU also reported that 77 percent of individuals had access to the internet.

According to the Freedom House, global internet freedom declined for the 14th consecutive year. Protections for human rights online diminished in 27 of the 72 countries covered by *Freedom on the Net* (FOTN), with 18 earning improvements.

Kyrgyzstan received this year's sharpest downgrade, as President Sadyr Japarov intensified his efforts to silence digital media and suppress online organizing. China shared its designation as the world's



worst environment for internet freedom with Myanmar, where the military regime imposed a new censorship system that ratcheted up restrictions on virtual private networks (VPNs).

At the other end of the spectrum, Iceland maintained its status as the freest online environment, and Zambia secured the largest score improvement. For the first time in 2024, FOTN assessed conditions in Chile and the Netherlands, both of which showcased strong safeguards for human rights online.

## Armenia, Turkey agree to jointly assess technical requirements for border crossing through Gyumri-Kars railway

Armenia has finalized the construction and technical equipment of the Margara border checkpoint on the Armenia-Turkey border, Foreign Minister Ararat Mirzoyan said at the ministerial meeting of the "3+3" regional platform.

"Additionally, Armenia and Turkey have already agreed to jointly assess the technical requirements for the border crossing by the Gyumri-Kars railway. This comes to complement already implemented decisions on the establishment of direct flights between Armenia and Turkiye and reciprocally lifting bans for air cargo trade," he said.

The Foreign Minister noted that the operation of the Gyumri-Kars railway between Armenia and Turkey, along with the railway connection between Armenia and Azerbaijan, will immediately provide an effective link between the Persian Gulf.

the Black Sea, the Caspian Sea, and the Mediterranean.

"With this vision in mind, as you are all aware, we have proposed to Azerbaijan modalities of relaunching our rail infrastructure, simplifying border crossing and customs procedures and ensuring some additional security mechanisms with full respect for the sovereignty and jurisdiction of both countries," FM Mirzoyan said.

### Armenian, Iranian FMs discuss regional security issues

On October 18, in Istanbul, Minister of Foreign Affairs of Armenia Ararat Mirzoyan had a meeting with Minister of Foreign Affairs of Iran Seyed Abbas Araghchi. The meeting took place within the framework of the Ministerial session of the "3+3" regional consultative platform.

The Ministers of Foreign Affairs of Armenia and Iran discussed issues on the agenda aimed at further development of bilateral cooperation.

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Ararat Mirzoyan and Seyed Abbas Araghchi exchanged views on regional security issues. Within the framework of the vision of ensuring stability in the South Caucasus, the interlocutors touched upon the normalization process of Armenia-Azerbaijan relations, including the importance of signing a peace treaty.

The principled approach on unblocking regional economic and transport communications, with respect for sovereignty and jurisdiction, was reaffirmed.







## UN climate conference again being hosted by an authoritarian petrostate – Financial Times



Azerbaijan's hosting of COP29 next month means the climate conference is being held for the third year running in an authoritarian state with a dubious human rights record, and for the second year in a petrostate, the *Financial Times* writes in an editorial.

"To ensure developing countries, and indeed fossil fuel producers, are part of a global solution to climate change, it is important they can take charge of COPs. But after Egypt and the United Arab Emirates,

Azerbaijan — where the autocratic Ilham Aliyev succeeded his father as president in 2003 — also seems to hope hosting the event can greenwash its reputation," the editorial board writes.

The Financial Times reminds that this year's COP takes place only 14 months after Azerbaijan chose to resolve by force a three-decadedispute with neighboring Armenia. Azerbaijan was only awarded COP29 after Armenia lifted a veto in return for the release of 32 Armenian prisoners of war.

"Allowing countries such as Azerbaijan to host global events can in theory shine a spotlight that forces autocrats to behave better. But Aliyev, who won a stage-managed fifth election victory in February, seems unfazed," the editorial reads.

Rights groups last week called for

pressure on Baku to reverse a "vicious" further clampdown on critics, media and civil society under way ahead of the COP. Domestic rights defenders estimate the country has around 300 political prisoners.

According to the Financial Times, "Azerbaijan, which has pledged a "COP of peace", should live up to that spirit by signing a peace deal with Armenia before it begins."

"International governments and attendees should use the opportunity to press the host country on its democratic record. They and the UN's climate arm must ensure rights are respected during the conference. And reforms are badly needed to tighten the process of awarding COPs — and the obligations of the hosts," article concludes.

### Turkey shuts down broadcaster after Armenia Genocide row

Istanbul-based Acik Radyo announced on October 16 it was being shut down by the authorities, six months after a guest talked about the "Armenian genocide" on air, AFP reports.

But it has vowed to fight on and find a way to keep working.

Turkey's broadcasting watchdog RTUK had already suspended Istanbul-based Acik Radyo from broadcasting for five days in May for the programme in question, which it said incited hatred.

The media regulator withdrew the station's license in July but the radio had been broadcasting until now.

"Acik Radyo's terrestrial broadcast will be cut off today at 1300 local time (1000 GMT). Stay tuned for developments," the station said on X, formerly Twitter.

The sanctions came after a guest on a show in April called the 1915 killings of Armenians in the dying days of the Ottoman Empire "genocide," a term that Turkey fiercely disputes.

Acik Radyo urged its listeners to raise "an even clearer and louder voice" against the shutdown.

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"Our radio has become an amplifier for civilian voices in many fields from the struggle for climate and the environment to public health, and from gender equality to multiculturalism," the station said Friday.

"Acik Radyo has not restricted itself to radio frequencies, and there can be no doubt that it will continue its duty as an independent medium. Our radio cannot and will not be silenced," it added.

Acik Radyo said it would pursue legal means against the measure.

The station, which has been broadcasting for three decades, describes itself as a station "open to all sounds, colors and vibrations of the universe."







## Swiss lawmakers call on Federal Council to organize international peace forum on Nagorno-Karabakh

A motion introduced by the Foreign Relations Committee of the Swiss National Council is calling on the Federal Council to organize an international peace forum on the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict.

The aim is to facilitate an open dialogue between Azerbaijan and representatives of the Nagorno-Karabakh Armenians, conducted under international supervision or in the presence of internationally relevant actors, in order to negotiate the safe and collective return of the historically resident Armenian population.

"Since Azerbaijan's last military advance in September 2023, Nagorno-Karabakh has been emptied of its Armenian population, except for a few people who are unable to travel. Fearing another genocide like that perpetrated against the Armenians in 1915, the historical population was forced to leave their homeland within a few days. The region has since experienced documented ethnic cleansing: Armenian cultural heritage, such as

churches, monasteries and cemeteries, are systematically destroyed or reinterpreted under the guise of "renovation" with forged historical documents. Despite these serious developments, the Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh maintain their desire to return to their homeland under security guarantees from the international community, to determine their own political future and to exercise democratic self-government," the motion reads.

The legislators note that Switzerland has successfully acted as a neutral mediator in international conflicts on several occasions in the past. "Most recently, the Federal Council hosted a peace conference on Ukraine on the Bürgenstock in June 2024. Switzerland has also already provided valuable services in relation to Armenia: in October 2009, under Swiss mediation, the "Zurich Protocols" were signed between Armenia and Turkey, which aimed to normalize bilateral relations. Federal Councilor Micheline Calmy-Rey was even

awarded Armenia's medal of honor for her commitment," they remind.

The lawmakers stress that given the close cooperation between Switzerland and Azerbaijan in the field of energy policy, it is in the Swiss Confederation's economic interest to promote lasting and stable peace in the region. "This includes, in particular, the restoration of the basic rights of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh. An international peace forum organized by Switzerland could make a decisive contribution to resolving the conflict, enable the return of the displaced persons and thus contribute to stabilizing the entire region."

"Switzerland has the unique opportunity to use its proven role as a neutral mediator to initiate a constructive dialogue between the conflicting parties. Such a commitment would not only continue Switzerland's humanitarian tradition but would also strengthen its position as a reliable partner in international diplomacy," the motion says.

# EU Ambassador to Armenia attends 10th technical meeting for coordination of international assistance to ANPP and ANRA



EU Ambassador to Armenia attended the "10th Technical Meeting for

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Coordination of the International Assistance to Armenian Nuclear Power Plant

(ANPP) and Armenian Nuclear Regulatory Authority (ANRA) which took place in Metsamor, the European Union delegation in Armenia has issued a statement on Facebook.

According to the statement, the EU cooperation in the field of nuclear safety since the nineties has been marked by the exchange of technologies, best practices, training, radioactive waste management and nuclear safeguards. The EU's financial support to nuclear safety in Armenia, amounting to over €70 million in grants since the nineties, is a clear sign of the EU commitment.

According to the source, the Ambassador also mentioned the 4 ongoing projects at ANPP for €11 million and 1 ongoing project at ANRA for €1.5 million, under the European Instrument for International Nuclear Safety Cooperation (INSC).







### WCIT2024/DigiTec: A Technological Intelligence Wave with Cutting-**Edge Trends and Innovators was concluded**



Armenia hosted the most significant technological event of the year—the World Congress on Innovation and Technology, WCIT2024/DigiTec from October 4-7. The event was held at the Karen Demirchyan Sports and Concert Complex, with the DigiTec Expo also taking place at the Meridian Expo Center as part of the program.

Under the headline "THE POWER OF MIND: AI Beyond Limits, Within Ethics," WCIT 2024/DigiTec will serve as a global platform to amplify the impact of information technologies, emphasizing the importance of applied sciences, investments, and presence across diverse regions and economies.

The World Congress on Innovation and Technology, WCIT2024/DigiTec, was held in Armenia for the second time, once again organized by the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE). The event successfully amplified the full potential and resources of the tech community.

"WCIT2024/DigiTec - the technological information wave continued the tradition of keeping Armenia at the center of the global tech community, fostering collaborations and new connections within the industry. I am pleased that, once again, the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE) successfully organized the Congress in Armenia, and the achievements will become even more tangible and promising in the future," highlighted Alexander Yesayan, President of the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE).

establish branches, and develop business centers within its borders," said Hayk Karapetyan, Executive Director of the Organizing Committee of WCIT2024/DigiTec.

As part of the program, more than 16 keynote speeches, 21 panel discussions, and 4 fireside chats were held, emphasizing the ethical boundaries of Artificial Intelligence and the impact of innovations across various sectors.

Over three days, more than 133 renowned speakers and 25 moderators delivered presentations on the application, significance, and future of artificial intelligence (AI). These discussions deeply reshaped the audience perception of AI, covering a broad range of topics from music to healthcare and fintech.

One of the most captivating and inspiring moments of WCIT2024/DigiTec was the speech delivered by Alex Yemenidjian, former CEO of the globally renowned MGM



The congress hosted around 6,000 participants from Armenia and abroad, who emphasized the event's significance and relevance for both Armenian society and the international community.

"Armenia has firmly positioned itself as a tech hub on the global technological map, and WCIT2024/DigiTec showcased the country's technological capacity to key industry players, encouraging them to collaborate on academic research projects,

company. Yemenidjian shared invaluable life lessons with the audience, reflecting not only on his own journey but also on the legacy and contributions of the legendary Kirk Kerkorian, one of the founders of Las Vegas, who also made significant investments in Armenia. Such speeches are particularly important for the young generations, as they always inspire, offer unique insights into

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the formula for success







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and ways to overcome challenges.

The event's great success was achieved thanks to the support of over 50 partners and collaborators. A total of 12 cooperation and Memorandum of Understandings (MoU) were signed, a number of joint events and discussions were conducted, furtherly enhancing the impact of the conference.

Throughout the three days of WCIT2024/DigiTec, more than 200 volunteers supported the core team, assisting visitors and guests with navigation and providing help with organizational matters, ensuring the smooth flow of the event.

WCIT2024/DigiTec in Armenia hosted international delegates and speakers from various countries, including Arvid Bell, Esther Wojcicki, Ibrahim Gedeon, and other renowned speakers.

Elon Musk, CEO of SpaceX, Tesla, and X, sent his greetings to WCIT2024/DigiTec. He expressed his excitement about the opportunity to discuss bringing Starlink to Armenia and collaborating on several exciting projects with the local tech community. Musk highlighted topics ranging from space exploration to the development of open and transparent AI, which he believed would push the boundaries of human understanding.

A notable moment at the congress was the presence and speech of Razmig Hovaghimian of Armenian origin, the Founder and CEO of Viki, Pixel Labs, and Play Time Ventures . In addition to delivering Elon



Musk's message, Hovaghimian shared his own life lessons, insights on technology, and advice for startups on how to succeed, offering his unique vision for the future.

The opening of WCIT2024/DigiTec was marked by an unprecedented concert by the Armenian State Symphony Orchestra at Republic Square, conducted by Sergey Smbatyan. The concert was accompanied by a synchronized visual show generated by Artificial Intelligence, blending music and cutting-edge technology in a world-class synthesis. Following the orchestra, American singer-songwriter Jason Derulo delivered an exclusive performance.

Stephen Ibaraki, Global Chairman of REDDS Capital, Francesca Bertazzo, Collection Strategy at the world-famous Calvin Klein, and Rev Lebaredian, Vice President of Nvidia, delivered speeches.

Special guests at the conference were Nubar Afeyan, co-founder of the biotechnology company Moderna, and internationally renowned CEO of Agenus, Dr. Garo H. Armen, they were on the stage with specially invited moderator and guest Richard Quest, British journalist, editor at CNN Business.

As part of the WCIT2024/DigiTec, the World Innovation, Technology and Services Alliance (WITSA) announced the winners of the 2024 Global Innovation and Tech Excellence Awards. 21 recipients were selected, including organizations and projects recognized for their significant contributions to the development of the global technology sector.

Dr. Garo H. Armen, Chairman and CEO of Agenus, Inc., was nominated for the WITSA Eminent Person Award. In 2010, WITSA established its highest honor, the WITSA Eminent Person Award, to recognize individuals who have made a significant and profound positive impact on the lives of others.

At the WCIT2024/DigiTec, WITSA announced that Pandai Education from Malaysia has emerged as the global champion of the WITSA World Cup (WWC) held among scaleups.

Organized in collaboration with BANA Angels, for the first time in Armenia, the Investor Tour was held as part of the WCIT2024/DigiTec. 35 investors from 12 countries arrived in Armenia to participate in an event aimed at exploring Armenian startups, companies, and investment opportunities.

WCIT2024/DigiTec was organized by the Union of Advanced Technology Enterprises (UATE) in collaboration with partners such as the Government of Armenia, represented by the Ministry of High-Tech Industry, Fastex, Fast Bank, TEAM Telecom Armenia, Yandex, Picsart, and many other supporting partner organizations.

### Daron Acemoglu among recipients of the Nobel Economics Prize 2024

American economist of Armenian descent Daron Acemoglu is among the recipients of the 2024 Nobel Prize in Economy.

He shares re prize with Simon Johnson and James A. Robinson. The winning work is about prosperity between nations.

The three economists "have demonstrated the importance of societal institutions for a country's prosperity," the Nobel committee of the Royal Swedish Academy of Sciences said at the announcement in Stockholm.

Acemoglu and Johnson work at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

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and Robinson conducts his research at the University of Chicago.

"Reducing the vast differences in income between countries is one of our

time's greatest challenges. The laureates have demonstrated the importance of societal institutions for achieving this," Jakob Svensson, Chair of the Committee for the Prize in Economic Sciences, said.

Daron Acemoglu is the second Diaspora Armenian to receive the Nobel Prize. In 2021 Ardem Patapoutian received the Nobel Prize in physiology and medicine.

Meanwhile, Nobel laureate Emmanuelle Marie Charpentier also revealed her Armenian identity in an interview with Public Radio of Armenia in September 2022.







## Armenian Minister of High-Tech Industry Mkhitar Hayrapetyan visits "Bazoomq" Space Research Laboratory

On October 15, the Minister of High-Tech Industry of the Republic of Armenia Mkhitar Hayrapetyan visited the "Bazoomq" space research laboratory to learn about its activities, current programs, and future plans, as well as to discuss cooperation opportunities.

Accompanied by the co-founders of "Bazoomq," Hayk Martirosyan and Avetik Grigoryan, Hayrapetyan toured the laboratory's territory, familiarized himself with the ground instal-

lation for satellite communication, visited the flight control room, and explored the small satellite development laboratory.

Mkhitar Hayrapetyan was presented with the history, activities, current projects, and long-term goals of the laboratory. The discussion included the



laboratory's first mission, "Hayasat-1," and the long-term plans related to future missions. The importance of satellite-based Earth observation for Armenia was also addressed.

The minister was also introduced to the DeepSat startup, which focuses on

new space technologies, particularly VLEO (Very Low Earth Orbit) technologies. The co-founders of the startup, Davit Baghdasaryan, Nerses Ohanyan, and Hayk Martirosyan, provided a detailed presentation of DeepSat's activities, vision, and solutions.

Mkhitar Hayrapetyan emphasized the importance of "Bazoomq" activities for Armenia and the role of public-private

cooperation in the development and advancement of technologies and innovation. The minister noted that the development of space activities is one of the key priorities for Armenia. An agreement was also reached to collaborate on creating a strategic document for the space sector.

# Opening Center of Armenian Studies in Kazakhstan University under discussion

Armenia wants to open a Center of Armenian Studies at one of Kazakhstan's universities, the Minister of Education, Science, Culture and Sport Zhanna Andreasyan has said.

Andreasyan was part of President Khachaturyan's delegation during the visit to Kazakhstan.

Speaking with Armenpress, Andreasyan said the Armenian Culture Days events held in Kazakhstan will enable the Kazakh society to have a better understanding about the contemporary Armenian culture.

"This is not a one-time event, we've had many interesting events in the past too. We've been actively celebrating the birth anniversaries of Kazakh poets. We have a Kazakh Center in the Yerevan State University where relevant translations are done. In addition, we plan to open a Center of Armenian Studies in one of

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the universities in Kazakhstan, we are now discussing this," Andreasyan told Armenpress.

The reciprocal events carried out by the two countries are aimed at presenting each other's culture and raising awareness among the people.

"In this context I attach great importance to the fact that the Armenian Culture Days events held in Kazakhstan are held as part of the celebrations marking the 100th anniversaries of birth of Charles Aznavour

and Sergei Parajanov. The cultural heritage presented here is of global significance," the minister said.

She added that the Kazakh side is very interested in the Kipchak-language manuscripts stored in Matenadaran.

"During the Kazakh President Kassym-Jomart Tokayev's visit to Armenia he also visited the Matenadaran and got acquainted with the manuscripts. We are now forming a joint scientific group to study the manuscripts," Andreasyan said.

The minister underscored the dynamics and potential for development of intercultural relations between Armenia and Kazakhstan, including in education, because the public administration academies of the two countries, the Yerevan State University, the Slavonic University of Armenia and other universities are actively cooperating with Kazakh educational institutions.

#### **TUMO Center to open in Astana**

The TUMO Center for Creative Technologies has signed an agreement



with Astana Hub to launch the coming TUMO Center in the National Center for Artificial Intelligence, alongside tech giants like Google and TikTok.

"Together, we hope to empower young Kazakhs with future-proof skills for a digital world," TUMO said in a social media post.

Armenian President Vahagn Khachaturyan was present at the signing ceremony.

TUMO is a free educational program founded in 2011 that empowers teenagers to take charge of their learning. TUMO covers over 20 focus areas, including animation, computer programming, robotics, writing, and sustainable cities.

The program teaches students additional skills such as collaboration, problem-solving, and creative thinking, which are essential for success in the world.

#### School in France named after Missak Manouchian

By the unanimous decision of the Council of the Ile-de-France region, the central high school of the city of Châtenay-Malabry near Paris has been named after Missak and Meline Manouchian, the Armenian Embassy in France informs.

This is the first school in France to bear the name of the Armenian hero of the Resistance Movement.

Missak Manouchian's poems were read out by students of the school. The principal of the school, as well as the teachers of history and philosophy, I briefed the younger generation on the goals of the initiative, the need and importance of perpetuating the heroic figures of Manouchian and his comrades-in-arm laid to rest in the Pantheon of the greatest French figures by the decision of the French Pesident.



The opening ceremony of the school was also attended by the member of the council of the Ile-de-France region and Mayor of Châtenay-Malabry Carl Segaud,

President of the Aude-de-Seine department Georges Sifredi, Prefect of the department, Benoit Trevisan, Armenia's Ambassador to France, Hasmik Tolmajian.

## Leiden University Libraries to digitize Armenian manuscripts

The Leiden University Libraries will digitalize its collection of the Armenian manuscripts and ancient books, including the first printed Armenian Bible, made in Amsterdam in 1666, Armenia's Ambassador to the Netherlands Viktor Biyagov

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said in a post on Twitter.

The Ambassador expressed gratitude to Dr. Arnoud Vrolijk, curator of Oriental Manuscripts and Rare Books at the Leiden University Libraries.





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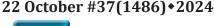
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